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# Investment, trade between Kuwait, US growing steadily

## Kuwaiti ambassador calls on US companies to invest in Kuwait

### Amir heads to Italy on private visit



KUWAIT: HH the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on Saturday left for Italy on a private visit. HH the Amir was seen off at the airport by HH the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and other senior officials. — KUNA

WASHINGTON: Kuwait's Ambassador to the US Jassem Al-Budaiwi said that trade and investment between Kuwait and the US have continued to grow "steadily", calling on American companies to take advantage of the many incentives provided by Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA) to establish their businesses in Kuwait.

In remarks at a reception held on his behalf by the US Kuwait Business Council at the US Chamber of Commerce, Budaiwi said that US products "have long been a favorite not only in Kuwait but worldwide", and that trade between the two countries has "rebounded to its normal levels and continues to grow despite the dual challenges of the advent of the coronavirus pandemic and the instability currently permeating the region".

"This resilience is one of the focal points of the strong relations that bind the US and Kuwait closely together," Budaiwi affirmed. He added that "from a trade and investment point of view, Kuwait, despite its small size, represents a vital trade partner to the US". He said Kuwait Investment Authority (KIA) has invested in the US "across a wide portfolio". "There is so much potential, so much room for further growth and investment," he stressed.

Budaiwi affirmed that there are many investment opportunities in Kuwait to take advantage of, noting



WASHINGTON: Kuwait's Ambassador to the US Jassem Al-Budaiwi speaks at the reception. — KUNA

that "the government has put a lot of effort towards making direct investment more attractive, most notably through establishing the Kuwait Direct Investment Public Authority".

Vice President of Middle East Affairs at the US Chamber of Commerce Steve Lutes said in an interview with KUNA that the US Kuwait Business Council "is the vehicle that we use to grow, deepen, expand US-Kuwait relationship when it comes to commerce, trade and investment". He added that there are "some key areas that we really want to expand collaboration", such as in the knowledge-based economy, in the digital economy and in health-care and life sciences. — KUNA (See Page 3)

### News in brief

#### KU to admit 300 expat students

KUWAIT: Kuwait University is set to announce the acceptance of its first batch of expatriate students, who applied in line with its policy to diversify its student body to attain a higher global ranking. 'Almost 300 expat students from over 1,000 applicants have been accepted to Kuwait University after applying online between August 21 and 27,' based on their grades achieved in high school, sources told Kuwait Times. Admittance is restricted to science and arts colleges.

#### 5 expats get ownership nod

KUWAIT: Five approval decrees have been issued to allow expatriates to own a variety of properties in Mangaf, Mishref, Khaldiya and Abdullah Al-Salem. The approvals came from the justice minister, who affirmed the authorizations are in accordance with laws of the Cabinet regarding real estate ownership. Requests from Jordanian, Lebanese, Syrian, Tunisian and Yemeni nationals have been approved.

#### Kuwaiti attacked in Cairo

CAIRO: Kuwaiti Ambassador to Egypt Ghanem Al-Ghanem stressed Saturday that the embassy has been monitoring the health condition of a Kuwaiti man attacked in Cairo. The embassy is also following investigations by Egyptian authorities with the attackers after they were arrested, he added. The condition of the Kuwaiti man is stable and he was likely to leave the hospital later on Saturday. — KUNA

#### Lightning strikes kill 23 in India

PATNA: At least 23 people were killed in lightning strikes during monsoon storms in eastern India, officials said Saturday. The deaths in Bihar state occurred during fierce weather between Wednesday and Friday, with the victims largely being farmers and laborers. Eleven people were killed across several parts of the state on Friday in addition to the 13 who died over the preceding two days. — AFP

## Russians bid farewell to Gorbachev

MOSCOW: Russians on Saturday paid their final respects to the last leader of the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbachev, in a ceremony held in Moscow without much fanfare and with President Vladimir Putin notably absent. Several thousand mourners queued up to quietly file past Gorbachev's open casket as it was flanked by honor guards under the Russian flag in the historic Hall of Columns. The hall has long been used for the funerals of high officials in

Russia and was where the body of Joseph Stalin first lay in state during four days of national mourning after his death in 1953.

After several hours the coffin was taken out of the hall in a procession led by Dmitry Muratov, the Nobel Peace Prize-winning editor-in-chief of independent newspaper Novaya Gazeta, which Gorbachev helped found. The coffin was taken to Moscow's prestigious Novodevichy Cemetery, where it was lowered into the grave to the sounds of a military band playing the Russian national anthem and a gun salute. Gorbachev was buried next to his wife Raisa, who died from cancer in 1999.

With Russia facing increasing international isolation over its military

Continued on Page 6



MOSCOW: Honor guards stand by the coffin of Mikhail Gorbachev, the last leader of the Soviet Union, during a memorial service at the Column Hall of the House of Unions on Sept 3, 2022. — AFP

## Shock, anger after bid to kill Kirchner

BUENOS AIRES: Messages of shock and solidarity poured in from around the world Friday after a man tried to shoot Argentine Vice President Cristina Kirchner at point-blank range. As tens of thousands of Argentines took to the streets in a mass denunciation of political violence, the Pope, the UN, United States and Latin American leaders sent messages of support. Kirchner, 69, survived the

attack outside her Buenos Aires home Thursday after a loaded handgun aimed directly at her face at close range apparently failed to go off.

Kuwait's foreign ministry on Saturday voiced Kuwait's strong condemnation and denunciation of the attempt on Kirchner's life. In a press statement, the ministry reiterated Kuwait's principled and unwavering position based on decrying violence, extremism and terrorism, and backing all efforts aiming at wiping out such phenomena. The ministry underlined that Kuwait stands side by side with Argentina and supports all measures it may take to safeguard its security and stability.

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BUENOS AIRES: This screen grab shows a man pointing a gun at Argentine Vice President Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner as she arrives at her residence on Sept 1, 2022. — AFP

## India unveils homemade aircraft carrier

KOCHI, India: India debuted its first locally made aircraft carrier on Friday, a milestone in government efforts to reduce its dependence on foreign arms and counter China's growing military assertiveness

in the region. The INS Vikrant, one of the world's biggest naval vessels at a length of 262 m, will formally enter service after 17 years of construction and tests. It inherits the name of a retired carrier famed for enforcing a blockade against Pakistan's naval forces during the 1971 Bangladeshi independence war.

"Today, INS Vikrant has filled the country with a new confidence, and has created a new confidence in the country," Prime Minister Narendra Modi said at the ship's commissioning ceremony in southern Kerala state. "We've joined the league of those

select nations who can construct such large aircraft carriers at home," he added. Around 1,600 sailors will crew the Vikrant, which will initially service fighter jets redesignated from India's only other aircraft carrier.

That vessel was bought second-hand from Russia, which has long been a major arms supplier to New Delhi. Modi's government has sought to wean the country off its dependency on foreign military purchases and build a domestic defense hardware industry.

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## Local

# ASEAN nations showcase rich textile heritage at Sadu House

Free daily workshops offer visitors hands-on experience



KUWAIT: Sadu House officials and ASEAN ambassadors pose for a group photo during the ASEAN textile exhibition at Sadu House. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



Thailand's stall



Indonesia's stall



Vietnam's stall

By Majd Othman

KUWAIT: ASEAN embassies in Kuwait have collaborated with Al Sadu Weaving Society to organize an 'ASEAN Textile Exhibition & Workshop' from Sept 1 to 6, 2022 at the Sadu House. The exhibition, which aims to promote the heritage of ASEAN textiles among the Kuwaiti public, feature both fashionable and national dresses, local garments as well as handmade clothes. The exhibition displays textile products from Malaysia, Brunei, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Thailand, silk and cotton materials from Vietnam, batik prints from Indonesia, and tribal design fabrics from the Philippines.

Sadu House, which promotes traditional Kuwaiti textiles, will host daily fabric lesson classes and workshops on Indonesia's batik making, Thailand's silk cloth flower creating, Philippines' bracelet weaving and Malaysia's traditional headgear folding.

Sheikha Bibi Duaj Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Chairwoman of Sadu House, told Kuwait Times: "Throughout our cultural seasons, we collaborate with embassies to host workshops and lectures, build bridges between cultures, and provide our local community with the skills acquired from these different cultures. Traditional Kuwaiti designs can be adopted using complex or simple techniques, colors, patterns and motifs," she said. "These events show how different textiles bring humanity closer, weaving together a global citizenship



Rooge Thammongkol, Thailand's Ambassador to Kuwait.



Exhibitors show their country's textiles.

wonderful story behind them, about the people who made them as well as the philosophy behind the fabric."

Speaking of the inclusion of Sadu in UNESCO's cultural heritage list, Shaimaa Al-Amin, Director of Programs and Public Relations at Sadu House, told Kuwait Times of the need to preserve the textile industry, especially traditional ones, both locally and globally. She also spoke of Kuwait and Sadu House's interest to promote textile industries from other cultures, especially ASEAN countries, whose textile industry boasts of a heritage from the 14th century.

"We at Sadu House are pleased with the impressive attendance and are grateful for the wonderful initiative provided by ASEAN embassies to offer free textile workshops, which were fully booked," Amin added. The exhibition is open to visitors from 10 am to 2 pm and 4 pm to 8 pm, while some textiles and handicrafts are also available for sale to visitors.



Sheikha Bibi Duaj Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Chairwoman of the Sadu House

where people feel connected through their culture," she pointed out.

Thai Ambassador to Kuwait Rooge Thammongkol told Kuwait Times: "Textiles originated more than 800 years ago in South Asia. This kind of heritage needs to be preserved and promoted among our Kuwaiti friends to show that we have a long history of textiles, which is aligned with the history of Sadu art, especially with the technical side of processing textiles. With our joint efforts, for the first time all ASEAN countries got together to be a part of this exhibition in Kuwait. We

hope next year, we will exert more efforts to exchange experts and students between Kuwait and ASEAN countries."

Indonesian Ambassador to Kuwait Lena Maryana said: "This event displays the richness of the textiles of Asian countries. ASEAN countries have a rich textile culture with batik, silk, and so on. Visitors are only given a glimpse of our textile heritage. They will be amazed if they visit all Asian countries and discover the diverse kinds of beautiful Asian textiles. Visitors can see different kinds of textiles in the exhibition, which have a



Brunei's stall



Cambodia's stall



Laos' stall



Malaysia's stall



Myanmar's stall



Philippines' stall

Local

# Trade a part of strong Kuwait-US relations: Ambassador Al-Budaiwi

## Bilateral ties open up investment opportunities

WASHINGTON: Jasem Al-Budaiwi, Kuwait's Ambassador to the US, said that trade and investment between Kuwait and the US have continued to grow 'steadily', calling on American companies to take advantage of the many incentives provided by Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA) to establish their businesses in Kuwait.

Speaking at a reception held for him by the US Kuwait Business Council at the US Chamber of Commerce, Ambassador Al-Budaiwi said that US products "have long been a favorite not only in Kuwait but across the globe" and that trade between the two countries has "rebounded to its normal levels and continues to grow despite the dual challenges of the advent of the pandemic and the instability currently seen in the region."

"This resilience is one of the focal points of the strong relations that bind the US and Kuwait closely together," he affirmed. He added that "from a trade and investment point of view, Kuwait, despite its small size, is a vital trade partner to the US." He also noted that the Kuwait Investment Authority (KIA) has invested "across a wide portfolio" in the US.

projects." He noted that Kuwait "would like to see similar engagement from the US' private sector with its counterparts in Kuwait."

"The government has put a lot of effort towards making direct investment more attractive and there are many ways to facilitate entry into the Kuwaiti market for US companies and ensure that they experience a safe and welcoming environment. It is time to see American investors and businesses play a crucial role in our economic cycle," he remarked.

Al-Budaiwi also spoke at length about Kuwait's "grand plan for the future through Kuwait Vision 2035," also known as New Kuwait, aimed at transforming Kuwait into a financial, investment, and trade hub regionally and internationally. On his part, Steve Lutes, Vice President of Middle East Affairs at the US Chamber of Commerce said that the US Kuwait Business Council "is the vehicle that can help us grow and deepen the US-Kuwait relationship, in commerce, trade and investment." He added that there were "some key areas that we really want to collaborate on—in the knowledge-based economy, digital sphere and in healthcare and life sciences."

Speaking about the growth and investment opportunities, Al-Budaiwi said that "Kuwait has clearly demonstrated its trust in the US by continuing to invest in American companies, markets, and

"As we transition to cleaner fuels and technologies, I think there's a huge opportunity there. It's an area where I think there's already a lot of US-



KUWAIT: Jasem Al-Budaiwi, Kuwait's Ambassador to the US with Vice President of Middle East Affairs at the US Chamber of Commerce with members of the US Kuwait Business Council. —KUNA

Kuwait collaboration, but we can work on that and utilize the technology and innovation that US companies can bring to the table."

"We've done well, but we shouldn't rest on that

and we should really think creatively about how we can work together to grow and that also includes the small and medium sized businesses and entrepreneurs." — KUNA



KHARTOUM: Relief from Kuwait on its way to affected areas. — KUNA

## Flood-ravaged Sudan commends Kuwait's support

KHARTOUM: Sudan lauded Kuwait's humanitarian efforts in supporting those affected in the recent flash floods that ravaged the country. Speaking at a press conference, Adam Ibrahim, Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid in Sudan, stressed the importance of Kuwait's endeavors for the cause, thanking the Kuwaiti government and people for their developmental and humanitarian support.

about 1,000 Sudanese families. The aid is also expected to cover more hard-hit states in the upcoming days. Locally, individual organisations have helped around 1,100 families while more assistance is being prepared to support 2,200 families in the affected states.



Fahad Al-Thufairi, Kuwait's Ambassador in Khartoum.

Youssef bin Baghdad, Deputy Director-General of Direct Aid and Khaled Abdel Rahim, Sudan's charity chief said that convoys of food, shelter and medical aid have been sent to Sudan's Gezira and River Nile States. They added that preparations were underway to help face the health and environmental consequences faced by the country and to help with the reconstruction process.

"Kuwait's timely help with supplies, food and shelter helped to alleviate some of the destruction caused by the annual flash rains and floods," noted Fahad Al-Thufairi, Kuwait's Ambassador in Khartoum, adding that further efforts were being made to counter the consequences of the flood.

Anwar Al-Hassawi, Vice President, Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS), said that a rapid response initiative has been launched to hand out foodstuff to

Sudan's flash floods resulted in the death of 104 people this year, in addition to the destruction of more than 80,000 houses and the destruction of 123,000 agricultural fields. The country announced a state of emergency on August 21, due to the damage caused by the floods. — KUNA

## Commercial complexes popular as summer entertainment havens



KUWAIT: With a spike in temperatures in Kuwait, many people opt for large commercial complexes to relax with their families. These complexes or malls not only offer a respite from the heat but have diverse facilities for dining and entertainment leaving people spoilt for choice. — KUNA

## Cancer cases on the rise in Kuwait

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: Consultant of internal medicine, gastroenterology and hepatology Dr Wafaa Al-Hashash said colon and rectal cancer cases have increased in Kuwait in recent years. "Around 3,842 cancer cases were registered in Kuwait in 2020, according to World Health Organization (WHO) figures," she said, adding 1,719 mortalities and 10,885 cancer cases were recorded in the past five years.

Dr Hashash said on a global scale, WHO statistics show 10 million deaths were attributed to cancer, with a prediction that around 28.4 million more cancer cases will be diagnosed by 2040. She said one out of five persons around the world is expected to get cancer dur-

ing their lifetime, with one out of eight men and one out of 11 women dying of complications from the disease. "New estimates indicate that more than 50 million persons will survive five years after having a history of suffering from cancer," she added. On the most prevalent types of cancer, Dr Hashash said that one out of four women have breast cancer, while colon, womb, lung and thyroid cancers are also common among women. "Breast cancer makes up 21 percent of cases in both genders, followed by colon and rectal cancer, with thyroid cases making up 7 percent," she explained. Among men in Kuwait, Dr Hashash said 14 percent of colon and rectal cancer cases were recorded, followed by 13 percent of prostate cancer cases and 7 percent lung cancer cases.



Dr. Wafaa Al-Hashash

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## News in brief

Laila Gallery sold  
for around KD 40m

KUWAIT: Bukhamseen Holding has sold Laila Gallery to a local investor for about KD 40m. "The deal enhances the group's position in the market and helps them to look for good investment opportunities in the region," sources told Kuwait Times.

Municipality minister announces  
decision to nationalize dept jobs

KUWAIT: Informed sources have revealed to Kuwait Times, that the municipality minister has announced her decision to let go of expatriate employees whose services are not required at the department. The source also added that more workers would be asked to leave from the housing committee and that their contracts to work elsewhere in the government would also be revoked. "The minister has asked different sectors and management in the government to provide her with the names of expatriate workers and their specializations, tenure of their stint and their salaries, in lieu of her efforts to localize the jobs they currently hold."

National Guard announces  
lottery for new recruits

KUWAIT: The management of the National Guard has announced a public lottery for employing new recruits with high school certificates, on their official social media pages. "Acceptance procedures at the National Guard are based on the qualities of transparency and equality, in order to provide a fair opportunity for all applicants," Dr Jadaan Fadhel said, wishing all participants success on the selection.

Sea piracy may  
affect fishing season

KUWAIT: Dhaher Al-Suwayan, Head of Kuwait's Fisherman's Union spoke about the importance of defeating piracy at the Kuwaiti sea borders. "The coast guard does a fine job in keeping the seas of Kuwait safe, but we continue to maintain constant communication with the security and the Kuwaiti army to solve the issue of piracy," adding that the pirates were skilled in escaping and avoiding capture, citing a recent case where five boats were illegally taken, requiring a strong intervention from the army. "This year over 80 boats have been stolen averaging two to three boats a day," he added. Highlighting the negative effects of piracy on the fishing season, Al-Suwayan explained that the pirates were equipped with weapons and stole the fishermen's equipment and belongings and that the fishermen were fearful of going back to the sea.

Cabinet decrees on CSC  
and Agriculture committees

KUWAIT: Two directives have been issued regarding the Civil Service Commission (CSC) and the Agriculture Committee, with the former henceforth being under the Ministry of Interior (MOI), while the agriculture committee would be under the supervision of the purview of the Cabinet. "Decrees have also been issued regarding the transfer of financial supervisors to the upper commission of planning and development," sources told Kuwait Times. "Meanwhile, the Cabinet has also instructed the termination of all contracts regarding managerial commissions in government sectors, in line with the government's aim to review the work of these councils."

KFF firefighters  
douse vehicle fire

KUWAIT: The Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) successfully put out fire from a burning vehicle on Friday, leaving all occupants unharmed, the public relations department at the KFF announced. "The central command promptly sent a fire squad to the scene, who were able to put out the fire, causing material damage only."

## Photo of the day



KUWAIT: An aerial view of Hawally. —Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

Amman Book Fair highlights  
Kuwait's cultural contributions

AMMAN: Kuwaiti participants at the Amman International Book Fair reiterated the country's eagerness to partake in cultural festivals and book fairs highlighting Kuwait's contributions in enriching Arab culture.

Held on the sidelines of the 21st edition of the exhibition, the participants unanimously agreed that contributing to such exhibitions is a positive step in galvanizing regional cooperation across cultural and literary fields.

Meanwhile, the Chief Editor of Al-Arabi Magazine, Ibrahim Al-Mulaifi, said that Kuwait's participation at the exhibition promised a range of diversified cultural programs, several seminars and an exhibition of stamps and photos, showcasing the support provided by Kuwait to the Palestinian people since the beginning of the Nakba, historically referred to as the Palestinian catastrophe.

The participation of several publishers and a group of Kuwaiti writers as well as intellectuals in the annual book fair highlights the significance of such fairs in disseminating knowledge and cultural communication between both sides, he added.

Meanwhile, Dr. Layla Al-Musawi, Representative of Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS), expressed KFAS' enthusiasm in enhancing its presence on various digital platforms



AMMAN: KU representative Rawia Al-Matar at the Kuwait pavilion at Amman Book Fair. —KUNA



AMMAN: Ibrahim Al-Mulaifi, Chief Editor of Al-Arabi magazine at the book fair. —KUNA

to be at pace with the digital transformation that has accelerated the dynamics of reading practices in the region. She outlined KFAS' active presence in cultural activities in the Arab world, through the printing of selected books and scientific journals, in addition to the organization's participation in various regional book fairs.

Rawia Al-Matar, the supervisor of the Kuwait University section said that the university displayed eleven titles at the exhibition, focusing on a sum-

mary of studies and research papers prepared by the university in various subjects such as economics, political sciences, psychology, literature and social sciences.

She highlighted events such as the Amman International Book Fair as good venues for promoting university research papers that contribute to the dissemination of science and knowledge, adding that the turnout for the exhibition was excellent.



KUWAIT: ICSK members of staff greet students.



KUWAIT: ICSK teachers and staff members greet students with sweets.

ICSK reopens with  
festive welcome  
for all students

KUWAIT: The Indian Community School Kuwait (ICSK) was all set to welcome its students back after a long break, as the school resumed fully for the first time after two years, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The campus sported a celebratory appearance, as students took the walk through the welcome corridor created by the teachers and led by the head of

the institution, Dr. V. Binumon, Principal of ICSK Senior. In line with the school's tradition, the children were welcomed with cards and sweets at the school gate and the presence of cartoon characters, Dora and Mickey, added to the entertainment. Many students shared their experience of being back at school, in an on-the-spot interview.

Mini Shaji, Deputy Vice Principal of ICSK Senior, delivered the welcome note at the assembly, where she expressed the school's happiness to see all the students back in full attendance after the pandemic. Susan Rajesh Pothan, Vice Principal of ICSK Senior, gave instructions to the students on public etiquette and routines within the campus, detailing the rules and regulations of the school.

Dr. V Binumon, Principal and Senior Administrator of ICSK, in his address, asked the students to have a positive mind set, reminding the students about the importance of equal participation in academic as well as non-academic activities. He spoke at length about the significance of the summer program, Flora Snap, an environmental awareness event where trees would be planted, requesting the students to make the program a great success. This was followed by a song by the school choir, Swaranjali. The students spent the rest of the day interacting with their teachers and friends while the classes resumed, as planned. The day ended on a positive note with a well-planned dispersal of students.



KUWAIT: ICSK students at the school assembly.



KUWAIT: Cartoon characters entertain students at the gate.



Ousted Sri Lankan president faces arrest calls on return from exile

## 'No police, no law': Anarchy in Palestinian suburb of Jerusalem



ZAPORIZHZHIA, Ukraine: UN vehicles transporting members of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspection mission drive on a road outside Zaporizhzhia city, after their visit to the Russian-held Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant in southern Ukraine on September 1, 2022, amid the Russian invasion of Ukraine. —AFP

# West, Russia trade pressure on energy

## Ukraine claims it has bombed Russian base nuclear plant

KYIV: Western powers and Moscow hit back at each other Friday with painful pressure measures on energy as Ukraine said it bombed a Russian base near a nuclear plant that has caused growing concern. The Group of Seven major industrial democracies vowed to move urgently to set a price cap on Russian oil imports, a crucial source of revenue for Moscow and its war in Ukraine.

"Russia is benefitting economically from the uncertainty on energy markets caused by the war and is making big profits from the export of oil and we want to counter that decisively," German Finance Minister Christian Lindner said in a press conference after the move was announced.

The aim of the price cap on oil exports was to "stop an important source of financing for the war of aggression and contain the rise in global energy prices", he added. Ahead of the decision, the Kremlin warned that the move would destabilize oil markets. It has shown it is willing to use gas supplies to Europe as leverage in what the United States has denounced as "weaponization" of energy. As if on cue, Russian gas giant Gazprom said it had halted gas deliveries to Germany for an indefinite period as there were leaks in a turbine.

Gazprom earlier said it expected a resumption on Saturday of gas shipments through Nord Stream, a pipeline-denounced at its inception by Russia's critics—that links St Petersburg to Germany under the Baltic Sea. "The reliability of the operation, of the whole system, is at risk," Kremlin spokesman

Dmitry Peskov said, blaming a lack of spare parts. Siemens Energy, the German manufacturer of the turbine where Gazprom said it identified problems, said that the leaks identified by the Russians were not a reason to stop operation.

### Fighting near nuclear plant

The showdown on energy comes amid growing alarm over Europe's largest nuclear plant,



### G7 vows to set price cap on Russian oil imports

Zaporizhzhia, which is under occupation of Russian troops. Ukraine said it bombed a Russian base in the nearby town of Enerгодar, destroying three artillery systems as well as an ammunition depot.

Dmytro Orlov, the pro-Kyiv mayor of Enerгодar in southern Ukraine, told AFP from his location in exile that phone services in the town were badly disrupted. A 14-strong team from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is visiting Zaporizhzhia, with the UN nuclear watchdog's chief,

Rafael Grossi, saying that the site had been damaged in fighting.

The Ukrainian army charged the Russian forces had removed their equipment from the site before the UN team arrived on Thursday. Russian troops seized control of the site in early March. There have been repeated attacks in the vicinity but both Moscow and Kyiv have denied responsibility and blamed each other.

UN inspectors spent their second day at Zaporizhzhia on Friday. Russia's envoy to Vienna, Mikhail Ulyanov, said six IAEA inspectors would stay behind for several days and that two more would remain there "on a permanent basis". "We welcome this because an international presence can dispel the many rumors about the state of affairs at the nuclear power plant," he told Russian news agency RIA Novosti.

Red Cross director general Robert Mardini on Thursday warned the consequences of hitting the plant could be "catastrophic", saying "the slightest miscalculation could trigger devastation that we will regret for decades". "It is high time to stop playing with fire and instead take concrete measures to protect this facility ... from any military operations," he told reporters in Kyiv.

Ukraine has accused Russia of storing ammunition at Zaporizhzhia and deploying hundreds of soldiers there. It also suspects Moscow is intending to divert power from the plant to the nearby Crimean peninsula, annexed by Russia in 2014. —AFP



Helicopter drops water on a wildfire in Castaic, California.

## Thousands told to evacuate as wildfire spreads in Calif

LOS ANGELES: Thousands of people were ordered to evacuate their homes in northern California on Friday as a wildfire spread rapidly across more than 1,000 acres in extremely hot conditions. Footage from a local ABC affiliate news channel showed several buildings ablaze in the so-called Mill Fire, which the Siskiyou county fire department warned was growing at a "dangerous rate of spread."

Towns including Weed, Lake Shastina and Edgewood were placed under mandatory evacuation orders, children from a local high school were bussed to safety, and a large animal and livestock evacuation shelter was set up. "Immediate threat to life. This is a lawful order to leave now. The area is lawfully closed to public access," said the evacuation order.

The inferno came as California and parts of Nevada and Arizona broiled under another day of blistering temperatures. A stubborn bubble of high pressure sitting over the region has sent the mercury soaring, with temperatures above 100 degrees Fahrenheit (38 Celsius) in many regions.

"September is off to a searing start in the West with record breaking temperatures and fire weather expected to expand and settle over that part of the country this Labor Day weekend," wrote the National Weather Service in its daily bulletin.

Siskiyou is part of a largely forested and relatively less populous region of northern California that has been hit badly by wildfires in recent years. In 2014, more than 150 buildings were destroyed in the town of Weed—which has a population of nearly 3,000 people—by the Boles fire.

Scientists say global warming, which is being driven chiefly by the unchecked burning of fossil fuels, is making natural weather variations more extreme. A persistent drought lasting more than two decades has also left much of the American West baked and tinder dry, leaving it vulnerable to hotter, faster and more destructive wildfires. —AFP

## Pandas and Trump teach HK kids about security crimes

HONG KONG: Rows of fidgeting Hong Kong schoolchildren looked on as a short film explained what constitutes a national security crime, using former US President Donald Trump as an example—and a warning. The TV was surrounded by dozens of stuffed panda toys, which the children were assured they could play with later if they listened attentively.

The screening was at Hong Kong's first patriotic education centre, which teaches students about the city's new national security law as well as China's history and achievements.

Beijing imposed the sweeping law on Hong Kong to snuff out dissent after huge and sometimes violent democracy protests in 2019 — and schools have been ordered to instill a new sense of patriotism into children. As the new academic year began on Thursday, another group of some 40 students from Pui Kiu College, known for its patriotic teaching, were among the first visitors.

"Can anyone tell me why national security matters," a retired teacher-turned-volunteer guide, who gave her surname Kan, asked the chirping crowd. "Without national security, humankind cannot live well," a student answered. "Well said," Kan replied. "People cannot live well, nor can the pandas."

Kan told AFP her "most important" task was helping children understand the four new offences under the security law: secession, subversion, collusion with foreign forces and terrorism.

### Trump and Lai

During Kan's talk, Trump and the January 6, 2021 Capitol Hill riot were used to illustrate subversion—the offence of trying to topple or undermine the government. For foreign collusion, she used jailed Hong Kong pro-democracy media tycoon Jimmy Lai—without naming him. Lai and senior editors from



HONG KONG: This picture taken on September 1, 2022 shows a television screen showing an image of former US president Donald Trump beside toy pandas on display inside the Patriotic Education Centre in Hong Kong. — AFP

the now-shuttered Apple Daily newspaper are facing an upcoming trial on collusion charges for allegedly lobbying for international sanctions against Hong Kong. Then Kan turned to the moment Hong Kong's legislature was broken into by democracy protesters in 2019.

"What offence was committed by the children who looked like they were going mad in the legislative council," Kan asked. "Terrorism," some students replied. "They didn't set a fire or kill people," Kan said, nudging them towards the offence of subversion.

### Political conversion

The centre is operated by the city's largest pro-Beijing teachers union in a vacated school at the foot of Lion Rock—a mountain popularly considered a symbol of the city's can-do spirit.

Until recently, Hong Kong teachers could also join a pro-democracy union but it closed in the wake of the political crackdown. The huge 2019 ral-

lies came after years of growing demands for Hong Kongers to have a greater say in how their city is run. Leaders in Beijing and Hong Kong have dismissed calls for democracy and instead portrayed the movement as a foreign-directed plot to destabilise all of China.

Hong Kong's new leader John Lee, a former security chief who helped lead that crackdown, attended the centre's inauguration ceremony in July. "In the past, some ill-intentioned people... smeared national education for a long time," he said at the time. "I fully believe the centre will become... a learning field that nurtures a new generation of youth who love China and Hong Kong."

Kan told AFP that she used to attend the annual vigils in Hong Kong to commemorate democracy protesters killed by Chinese troops in Tiananmen Square. "But after I saw how violent it became on TV (in 2019), I had a big turn," she said, referring to the protests. "I regret how late I began to love my country," she said as tears welled up in her eyes. —AFP

## International

# 'No police, no law': Anarchy in Palestinian suburb of Jerusalem

## A no-man's land, Kufr Aqab is increasingly turning into a local version of the Wild West

**JERUSALEM:** One evening in January 2021, Arafah Rajabi, exasperated by yet another night of roaring cars below his window in an east Jerusalem Palestinian suburb, went downstairs to complain. Fifteen minutes later, he was shot dead, another victim of the chaos in his Kufr Aqab neighborhood, a no-man's land which is increasingly turning into a local version of the Wild West.

Located around 10 kilometers (six miles) from the centre of Jerusalem, the town is among a handful of locations with a unique status in the Zionist entity-Palestinian conflict. Zionist entity considers Kufr Aqab part of Jerusalem, which it fully controls after annexing the east of the city in the 1967 war. But to get there you need to cross a Zionist entity's military checkpoint and pass a concrete wall several meters high which separates Jerusalem from the occupied West Bank.

Tens of thousands of people live in the five-square-kilometer (two-square-mile) area, which lies behind the security barrier Zionist entity began erecting in 2002 to protect it from deadly Palestinian attacks.

Neither the Jerusalem municipality nor Zionist entity's interior ministry could provide an updated number of Kufr Aqab's residents. Most residents have Zionist entity residency and pay their taxes to the Zionist-controlled municipality, allowing them to work in Zionist entity.

But another part of the neighborhood is under the Palestinian Authority's jurisdiction, with Ramallah-based security forces prohibited from operating on the Zionist entity's-annexed side.

The Zionist entity's police rarely venture into Kufr Aqab, and the lack of patrols creates the ideal

conditions for crime, arms trade and drug trafficking, residents say. "There are non-stop gunshots, there is no authority, no police, no law," sighed Imane Rajabi, 37, who has been raising her four children alone since her husband, Arafah, was shot dead by residents armed with M16s.

"It's a jungle, and you don't know who to complain to," she continued, saying it took Zionist entity police several days to act following her husband's death. Contacted by AFP, Zionist police said "sever-



**'It's a jungle, and you don't know who to complain to'**

al suspects were arrested and indictments were filed to court" over the killing. The police "constantly takes action all over Jerusalem, including in the eastern and northern neighborhoods of the city and in Kufr Aqab," they said in a statement.

### 'Lawless' zone

But about 10 residents interviewed by AFP described a non-existent Zionist entity police presence and the near-total absence of municipal services. Besides a few Hebrew signs here and there, there was no indication of Zionist entity's jurisdic-

er of attorney because they understand... there may be restrictions on their ability to visit," he said.

Ahmed Yassin, a Palestinian-American who divides his time between Monterey, California and the West Bank, is among thousands visiting Ramallah to see extended family and reconnect with their roots. "I've been to a wedding every day for the past two weeks, I'm exhausted," he joked.

His wife Maggie said they did not come to see tourist sites like the Dead Sea frequented by other Americans. "We come to see our family, and enjoy the country and to teach our kids about the Palestinian culture," she said.

### 'Draconian'

The new rules will deprive "thousands of Palestinian families of the right to live together without interruption and to live a normal family life", said HaMoked, the Zionist entity rights group that led the supreme court appeal against the measures. Canadian doctor Benjamin Thomson, one of the 19 plaintiffs involved in the legal challenge, said the Zionist entity move would disrupt the work of health professionals. "These draconian measures will severely impact their work, and impair the lives of the Palestinian people," said Thomson, director of the Keys of Health project aimed at rebuilding healthcare in the Palestinian territories.

Foreign spouses visiting the West Bank will be limited to three- or six-month permits, with limits also placed on foreign volunteers. "This is micro-managing, with the purpose to damage the Palestinian social fabric," said Sam Bahour, a Palestinian-American businessman who moved to the West Bank from Ohio in 1995. The regulations will disrupt the visits of thousands living abroad without Palestinian identity cards.

Currently Palestinians with a foreign passport



**JERUSALEM:** The family of late Arafah Al-Rajabi who was killed in January 2021, his widow Imane, father Noureddine, and son Abdullah speak during an interview at home in the Palestinian Kufr Aqab suburb of east Jerusalem near the West Bank city of Ramallah. —AFP

tion and Kufr Aqab, which continues to expand, seems to have been increasingly separated from Jerusalem and incorporated into the sprawling metropolis of Ramallah.

In 2017, then-minister for Jerusalem affairs Zeev Elkin acknowledged the route taken by the Zionist entity barrier had been an "error" that had turned Kufr Aqab into a "lawless" zone.

Bullet casings are strewn on the ground in the corner of an alley, and rubbish nobody bothers to collect can be found everywhere. On the main street, it is not uncommon to see vehicles driving in the wrong direction and motorcycles performing

wheelies and stunts. Colorful billboards assail passers-by, and buildings sprout up without any regard to planning rules.

"The place is up in the air, it doesn't really belong to Zionist entity or the Palestinian Authority," said Ziyad Shahade, whose money exchange office overlooks the chaotic main road, with its incessant traffic jams and horns. The Jerusalem municipality told AFP that "despite the many challenges created by the erection of the security barrier," it was "doing everything in its power to provide [Kufr Aqab] inhabitants with all the services they needed and were entitled to." —AFP

## Emigre Palestinians hurry back to visit fearful of Zionist rules

**RAMALLAH:** All summer, Palestinians from the millions-strong diaspora have been flocking to the West Bank, fearful new Zionist entity rules expected to take effect next week could make future visits hard if not impossible.

Under the regulations, first published in February to a storm of protest, foreign passport holders including Palestinians living abroad will no longer be able to obtain visas on arrival and instead have to apply for them at least 45 days in advance.

The measures will place significant curbs on the ability of foreigners to study, volunteer or work in the West Bank, in a major blow to student exchange programs operated by the European Union among others. In most cases foreigners will no longer be able to arrive via Zionist entity's main airport near Tel Aviv but only through the land crossing between Jordan and the West Bank, which was seized and occupied by Zionist entity in 1967.

The new rulebook drafted by COGAT, the Zionist entity's defense ministry body responsible for Palestinian civil affairs, is expected to come into force on Monday after being delayed twice by legal challenges. In the West Bank city of Ramallah, Palestinian lawyer Rasem Kamal said he has been inundated with clients from the diaspora wanting to register power of attorney amid deep uncertainty about arranging their affairs.

"Many people are rushing to come to the West Bank and finish their business here or give the pow-



File photo of a protester waving a Palestinian flag during a demonstration in Santiago December 11, 2017. —AFP

and no Palestinian ID can avoid the huge queues at the Allenby Bridge land crossing with Jordan by flying into Ben Gurion airport near Tel Aviv.

There they risk being arbitrarily denied entry after sometimes invasive security checks but under the new rules they will have to join the thousands with Palestinian IDs at the overstretched Allenby Bridge. The formalities can take 12 hours or more during peak periods in summer.

Asked by AFP, COGAT said the new regulations were a "two-year pilot" aimed at making the entry process "more efficient and more suited to the dynamic conditions of the times". The number of US citizens denied entry is a major barrier to Zionist entity entering a visa-waiver agreement with the United States, something successive Zionist governments have coveted. —AFP

## UN envoy meets with Polisario Front in Algeria

**ALGIERS:** The UN's Western Sahara envoy, Staffan de Mistura, met Saturday with representatives of the Polisario independence movement in Algeria as part of a regional tour, Sahrawi sources said. The Algerian-backed Polisario Front wants an independent state in the Western Sahara, a vast stretch of mineral-rich desert which Morocco sees as a sovereign part of its own territory. De Mistura met at a Sahrawi refugee camp with Khatri Addouh, the Polisario's chief negotiator, and Omar Sidi Mohamed, the group's permanent representative to the United Nations.

The camp is located in Tindouf, where the Polisario Front is based in far southwestern Algeria near the borders with Morocco and Western Sahara. Announcing the visit on Friday, a UN spokeswoman said de Mistura was "looking forward to deepening consultations with all parties concerned on the prospect of constructively advancing the political process in Western Sahara".

The Italian-Swedish diplomat also met a group of Sahrawi youth and women, according to the Sahrawi news agency SPS. On Sunday, he is scheduled to hold talks with Polisario leader Brahim Ghali, the movement's UN representative told AFP. —AFP

## Russians bid farewell to...

Continued from Page 1

action in Ukraine, many of those in attendance at the hall pointed to Gorbachev's opening of the country to the rest of the world. "It was a breath of freedom, which was lacking for a long time, an absence of fear," 41-year-old translator Ksenia Zhupanova said at the entrance to the hall. "I am against shutting us out from the outside world, I am for openness, for dialogue. This is what Mikhail Sergeyevich showed the world," she said, using Gorbachev's patronymic.

The mourners were of all ages, some old enough to remember the years of Soviet stagnation before Gorbachev came to power, others young enough to have only lived in Russia under Putin. The Kremlin had said Putin would not attend Saturday's funeral due to his "work schedule". Gorbachev died on Tuesday at the age of 91 following a "serious and long illness", the hospital where he was treated said.

In power between 1985 and 1991, he sought to transform the Soviet Union with democratic reforms, but eventually triggered its demise. One of the great political figures of the 20th century, he was lionized in the West for helping to end the Cold War and trying to change the USSR. But many in Russia despised him for the economic chaos and loss of global influence that followed the Soviet collapse.

He had spent most of the last few decades out of the political limelight and his death this week was barely acknowledged in official circles in Russia. State television on Thursday showed images of Putin, alone, laying a bouquet of red roses near Gorbachev's open casket at the hospital where he died. Putin had a call with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Saturday, the Kremlin said, during which the two discussed Ukraine and Erdogan passed on his condolences for Gorbachev's death.

The only senior foreign figure to attend was

Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban, who laid flowers at the casket. "Many things were needed for Central Europe to get rid of Communism peacefully, without loss of life or bloodshed. One of them was Mikhail Gorbachev. God rest his soul!" Orban said in a post on Facebook. Before the Ukraine conflict, Orban had one of the closest relationships with Putin of any EU leader, but the Kremlin said there were no talks planned during his visit to Moscow.

After Gorbachev's death, tributes poured in from Western capitals, where he is remembered for allowing countries in Eastern Europe to free themselves from Soviet domination and for signing a landmark nuclear arms reduction pact with the United States. Known affectionately in the West as "Gorby", he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1990.

Flags were also flying at half-mast in Berlin on Saturday, in memory of the man who held back Soviet troops as the Berlin Wall fell in 1989. In Russia, Gorbachev's steps towards peace and reform have been overshadowed by the economic troubles that followed the fall of the Soviet Union. Putin, who called the Soviet collapse the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the 20th century, has spent much of his more than 20-year rule reversing parts of Gorbachev's legacy.

By cracking down on independent media and political opposition, critics say, Putin has worked to undo Gorbachev's efforts to bring "glasnost", or openness, to the Soviet system. And with the launch earlier this year of the military campaign in Ukraine, he has sought to reassert Russian influence in one of the countries that won its independence when the Soviet Union fell apart.

On the streets of Moscow this week some expressed their continued anger and bitterness at Gorbachev, but those who turned up for Saturday's funeral paid tribute to his legacy. "(Gorbachev) helped the development of the country, the bringing of freedom of speech and freedom of thought," said 19-year-old Irina Kaplanova. He was not an "absolutely ideal politician", she said, but was "a great reformer, and a person who acted in accordance with their conscience and knew how to admit mistakes". —AFP

## India unveils homemade...

Continued from Page 1

It has invested heavily in local construction, with more than three dozen other naval ships and submarines currently being built in the country's shipyards. The outlay comes at a time of increasing concern among military top brass over the strategic challenge posed by China's increasing presence in the Indian Ocean. Last month New Delhi joined Washington in raising security concerns when neighbor Sri Lanka allowed a port visit by a Chinese research vessel accused of spying activities. India and the United States are both members of the so-called

## Shock, anger after bid to...

Continued from Page 1

The dramatic incident was captured on video. Police were investigating whether the attacker, arrested at the scene, had acted alone. A case of aggravated homicide has been opened. The man in custody was identified as 35-year-old Fernando Andre Sabag Montiel, a Brazilian man who has an Argentine mother. He had previously been arrested for illegal weapons possession, according to police sources quoted by the Telam news agency.

Images from his social networks showed the man sporting a Nazi tattoo, and police told reporters they had found 100 bullets in an apartment he had been renting on the outskirts of Buenos Aires. Footage of the incident shows a man pointing a handgun directly at Kirchner, who was president from 2007 to 2015 and faces corruption charges dating from that time. The gun failed to go off.

Quad, a security alliance focused on the Indo-Pacific and aimed at providing a more substantive counterweight to China's rising military and economic power. "The security concerns of the Indo-Pacific and the Indian Ocean region were ignored in the past but it is our top priority today," Modi said.

Friday's commissioning ceremony also saw the unveiling of a new naval flag without a British colonial symbol left over from India's colonial era. The new ensign replaces a prominent Saint George's Cross, the national flag of England, with the royal seal of the Hindu warrior-king Chhatrapati Shivaji. "It is a historic date, we've made history and discarded a sign of our subjugation," Modi said during his address.

Shivaji is lauded by many for challenging the Muslim Mughal dynasty, which ruled much of the subcontinent prior to British colonization, and which Hindu nationalists see as an era of foreign subjugation. —AFP

The incident took place in Buenos Aires' upscale Recoleta neighborhood where supporters have gathered every night since Aug 22, when Argentine prosecutors announced they would seek a 12-year sentence against Kirchner and lifetime ban from politics in an ongoing graft case. "I saw this arm come up over my shoulder behind me with a gun, and with people around me, he was subdued," a witness, who did not give his name, told AFP.

Another, who would only give her first name, Teresa, said: "We were waiting for our beloved Cristina. And she just came down to greet everyone, like every night, to greet the people. And all of a sudden, there was a commotion, and it was that guy who pointed (a gun) at her." The scene of the crime was cordoned off by police Friday, with a handful of Kirchner backers gathered nearby.

President Alberto Fernandez announced to the nation that "Cristina remains alive, because for a reason that has not yet been technically confirmed, the gun which contained five bullets did not fire despite the trigger having been pulled." He said this was the "most serious event that has happened since we restored democracy" in 1983. The president declared Friday a public holiday. —AFP

International

# Ousted Sri Lankan president faces arrest calls on return from exile

## Rights activists vow to press for Rajapaksa's prosecution on a litany of charges

**COLOMBO:** Deposed Sri Lankan president Gotabaya Rajapaksa faced calls for his arrest Saturday after returning home from self-imposed exile under the protection of his successor's government.

Rajapaksa fled the island nation under military escort in July after a huge crowd stormed his official residence following months of demonstrations sparked by an unprecedented economic crisis. The 73-year-old announced his resignation from Singapore and spent weeks under virtual house arrest at a Bangkok hotel before his return late on Friday. Leaders of the protest campaign that toppled his government said Rajapaksa, who lost his presidential immunity after leaving office, should now be brought to justice.

"Gotabaya returned because no country is willing to accept him, he has no place to hide," Joseph Stalin, the leader of a teachers' trade union that helped mobilize demonstrators, told AFP.

"He should be arrested immediately for causing such misery for the 22 million people of Sri Lanka," he added. "He can't live freely as if nothing has happened." Rajapaksa's government was accused of chaotic mismanagement as the Sri Lankan economy spiraled into a blistering downturn. The crisis saw acute shortages of food, lengthy blackouts and long queues at gas stations for scarce fuel supplies after the country ran out of foreign currency to pay for vital imports. Sri Lanka's main opposition alliance, the Samagi Jana Balawegaya (SJB), has yet to comment on Rajapaksa's return, but a former minister from the bloc said the ousted leader needed to be prosecuted. "Gotabaya must be held to account for his crimes before and during his presidency," Ajith Perera told reporters in Colombo.

Rajapaksa was garlanded with flowers by ministers and senior politicians after disembarking from his flight in Colombo. He was driven in a security convoy to a new official residence in the capital provided to him by the govern-

ment of President Ranil Wickremesinghe, his successor. Wickremesinghe depends on Rajapaksa's Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP) party to govern and on Friday passed an austerity budget—a precondition for an International Monetary Fund bailout—with the grouping's support. "Gotabaya's return demonstrates that the SLPP is still powerful despite the humiliation they suffered," Hasith Kandaudahewa, a senior lecturer on international relations at the University of Colombo, told AFP.

But Kandaudahewa said the return of the deeply unpopular Rajapaksa had the potential to undermine his successor. Rajapaksa began receiving guests at his new home on Saturday with his elder brother-former president Mahinda Rajapaksa—one of the first to call on him, witnesses said. Mahinda was serving as premier in his brother's administration when too he was chased from his home by a mob incensed by an attack on protesters by government loyalists.

### 'Bring him to justice'

Rights activists have vowed to press for Gotabaya's prosecution on a litany of charges, including his alleged role in the 2009 assassination of prominent newspaper editor Lasantha Wickrematunge. "We welcome his decision to return so that we can bring him to justice for the crimes he has committed," Tharindu Jayawardhana, a spokesman for the Sri Lanka Young Journalists' Association, said Friday. Several corruption cases lodged against Rajapaksa stalled after he was elected president. Rajapaksa also faces



Gotabaya Rajapaksa



COLOMBO: Sweepers work outside the government residence of former president Gotabaya Rajapaksa after he returned, in Colombo on September 3, 2022. —AFP

charges in a US court over Wickrematunge's murder and the torture of Tamil prisoners at the end of the island's traumatic civil war in 2009.

### 'Prosperity and splendor'

Rajapaksa won a landslide election in 2019 after promising "vistas of prosperity and splendor" but saw his popularity nosedive as the country's crisis worsened. His government was accused of introducing unsustainable tax cuts that drove up government debt and exacerbated the country's economic problems. The coronavirus pandemic also dealt a

hammer blow to the island's tourism industry and dried up remittances from Sri Lankans working abroad—both key foreign exchange earners. Wickremesinghe was elected by parliament to see out the remainder of Rajapaksa's term. He has since cracked down on street protests and arrested leading activists. The government defaulted on its \$51 billion foreign debt in April and the central bank forecasts a record eight percent GDP contraction this year. After months of negotiations, the International Monetary Fund agreed on Thursday to a conditional \$2.9 billion bailout package to repair Sri Lanka's battered finances. —AFP

## What's in a name? Czechs learn to live in 'Czechia'

**PRAGUE, Czech Republic:** Nearly three decades after Czechoslovakia peacefully split into two states, Czechs are still looking for a proper name in English for their country. "The Czech Republic" has been widely used, though the shorter "Czechia" has slowly been catching on since its official registration by the United Nations in 2016. Today the European Union and NATO member's current stint at the helm of the rotating EU presidency offers an opportunity for a breakthrough.

"We are seeking to unify the presentation of our country abroad and at home after a long 30 years," Deputy Foreign Minister Martin Dvorak, an advocate of "Czechia", told AFP. "It is absurd to have 27 EU members and 29 NATO members using their short names and Czechia as the only member country stating its political status," as a republic, he added. The foreign ministry promotes the shorter name, while Prime Minister Petr Fiala's office has largely used "the Czech Republic" on its website and social networks.

To make matters worse, at times the

two names show up in tandem. When it took over the EU presidency on July 1, the government rolled out a website hailing the "natural beauty of Czechia" in one sentence and the cultural heritage of "the Czech Republic" in the next.

"The current mess... in naming our country is the biggest obstacle to creating a 'brand'. We want to change it," said Dvorak. "We can see some diplomats are having a hard time getting used to it, but the trend is already clear."

### The feel of slugs

Czechia was used in Latin texts centuries ago as an equivalent to Bohemia, referring to the western part of the country comprising Prague. In the first English translation of the Czech anthem—titled "Where is my home?"—poet Josef Václav Sládek wrote "Czechia, my fatherland" in the 19th century.

After the Czechoslovakia (Ceskoslovensko) split, there were no doubts about Slovakia or "Slovensko" as the name broke away as smoothly as the country itself. But Czechs were reluctant to use the short name, also because of opposition in the eastern historic lands of Moravia and Silesia, which felt it slighted their territory. Former Czech president Vaclav Havel once said hearing "Cesko" felt like "having slugs creeping down" his body.



Prague, capital of the Czech Republic (Czechia). —AFP

The current head of state, Milos Zeman, in contrast is known for pushing Czechia as a more practical title. Fellow fans of the name already founded the Cesko/Czechia initiative back in 1997. On their website, they argue that the one-word version is a good fit for the country's entire history, as it makes no allusion to any political system. The initiative also waves aside concerns that Czechia is easy to confuse with Chechnya, the Russian republic.

"Country names cannot bow to the level of geographic knowledge," said linguist

Jiri Felix, pointing to the potential for confusion of existing names such as Slovakia and Slovenia or Austria and Australia.

Since UN registration, the short version has won over institutions and social media giants including Google, the CIA and the European Union's statistics office, Eurostat. Media outlets have largely stuck to the "Czech Republic", although the Associated Press has recently said the shorter name was "acceptable" in its stories if the author explains that Czechia and Czech Republic are one and the same. —AFP

## Belgium arrests British conman wanted by France

**BRUSSELS:** A British conman who featured in a Netflix documentary and was wanted in France after injuring two police officers while fleeing a raid has been arrested in Belgium, police said on Saturday.

Robert Hendy-Freegard, a 51-year-old former bartender, has been on the run since late August, when he hit two officers with his Audi A3 in a remote village in central France before speeding away.

Earlier this year, he was the subject of a three-part Netflix documentary "The Puppet Master: Hunting the Ultimate Conman" which appeared to have brought about the raid in France. He was detained on Friday near Brussels and was due to appear before a judge later on Saturday, a spokesman for the Belgium federal police told AFP.

Hendy-Freegard had been illegally breeding dogs and living on-and-off in the village of Vidaillet in the sparsely populated Creuse region of central France since 2015,

according to local officials. French workplace and animal rights inspectors came to the house with police officers on August 25 to examine the premises, but Hendy-Freegard started his vehicle and hit two officers before speeding off.

Both officers were injured, with one requiring hospital treatment for a nose wound, with Hendy-Freegard facing charges of attempted murder of a public official which carry a maximum 30-year jail term. The convicted fraudster has been dubbed "The Puppet Master" for his ability to exert control over his victims.

He was jailed for life by a London court in 2005 for deception, theft and kidnapping in an extraordinary trial that heard from seven people whose money he used to enjoy luxury cars and five-star holidays.

The kidnap charges were later quashed on appeal, meaning he was released from prison in 2009 — when outraged victims warned he would strike again. In the Netflix documentary, the children of a woman believed to be his current partner, Sandra Clifton, said she had disappeared after meeting him. In February, a retired local couple living close to the house watched the documentary and recognized Clifton. They then contacted her daughter online.

During his London trial, Hendy-Freegard was said to have lived by the motto "Lies have to be big to be con-



BRUSSELS, Belgium: This general view shows the exterior of The Justice Building 'Palais de Justice' in Brussels on September 3, 2022, where it is believed that British fugitive Robert Hendy-Freegard is being held by authorities after fleeing France in late August 2022. —AFP

vincing". He had persuaded his victims to believe he was a British intelligence officer and they were on the run from terrorists. —AFP

Others have voiced concern that the loss of anonymity might put some prospective donors off. "It's a complicated question," said Joanna (not her real name), who has donated her eggs in the past and can see the dilemma that could face future donors. "It's asking me to agree to something way, way into the future. If I have kids then, it (the revelation) could have an impact on them." But Dr Eustache said the "vast majority" of donors agreed with the change in the law. PMAnonymy, which campaigns for "access to origins", concurred.

In countries like Britain and Sweden, where anonymity rules were relaxed several years ago, the number of donors dropped off initially but then recovered and exceeded initial levels. The organization said the new law would assist thousands of donor-conceived people in "an essential personal quest". They might want to "put a face to this man or woman, know who they get their physical characteristics from, find out their medical history, sort out what they owe to genetics and what to nurture", —AFP

## New French law eases donor babies' search for origins

**PARIS:** People born as a result of sperm or egg donations in France will now have easier access to the identity of their donors, under a new law that came into effect on Thursday. The law on "access to personal origins" says donors must consent to their identity being disclosed to any resulting biological children if the latter request it when they become adults.

People have "the right to know how they came into the world", said Adele Bourdelet, of the ADDED association for donor-conceived children. While the requirement to be identifiable applies to future donors, a commission will be set up to help today's donor-conceived adults discover more about their

biological origins if they wish to. Past donors still have the right to refuse their identity being revealed. "The reform had become inevitable because society has changed," said Dr Florence Eustache, vice-president of the CECOS federation of hospital fertility clinics. When artificial insemination was introduced more than four decades ago, infertility was something of a taboo subject and parents might have hidden from their child that they were conceived using donor cells.

But for many years now, psychologists have advised families to be open with the information, and as early as possible. As in the case of adoption, some donor-conceived people are keen to discover their biological origins. Others don't feel this is an important part of their identity, said ADDED's Bourdelet.

She said she hoped the reform would not lead to fewer parents revealing to their children how they were conceived, for fear that an emotional link might one day develop between the latter and their donors.

## Myanmar junta leader to visit Russia

**YANGON:** The leader of Myanmar's military junta will travel to Russia next week for economic talks, state media in the Southeast Asian nation reported Saturday. Min Aung Hlaing's visit comes as both governments face diplomatic isolation—Moscow for its February invasion of Ukraine, and Naypyidaw for a military coup last year.

He will attend the Eastern Economic Forum in the far-eastern city of Vladivostok. The Global New Light of Myanmar said. Representatives from China, India, Japan, Kazakhstan and other countries will also attend. The general will hold talks with Russian government officials to "further cement the cooperation" and friendly ties between the two countries' economies and governments, the report said.

Since the putsch that ousted Aung San Suu Kyi's civilian government in February last year, Myanmar has faced Western sanctions and a downgrade in relations. Min Aung Hlaing is unlikely to be invited to the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) leaders' summit in Phnom Penh in November, with the bloc frustrated over a lack of progress on resolving the country's political crisis.

Myanmar has been in chaos and its economy paralyzed as the military regime struggles to crush resistance. More than 2,200 people have been killed in the crackdown, according to a local monitor. Russia, meanwhile, is under a variety of international sanctions after its February invasion of Ukraine.

Since then, Myanmar's ruling generals have sought to deepen ties with major ally and arms supplier Moscow—whose invasion the junta has said was "justified". The junta chief undertook a "private visit" to Moscow in July, where he reportedly met officials from Moscow's space agency Roscosmos and nuclear agencies, while second in command Soe Win also visited Russia late last month. During a trip to Naypyidaw in early August, Russia's foreign minister Sergei Lavrov backed the junta's efforts to "stabilize" the country and hold a national poll next year. But US Secretary of State Antony Blinken warned the international community to reject the junta's "sham elections". —AFP

## Indian police arrest alleged teen serial killer

**BHOPAL:** A 19-year-old Indian man accused of killing four security guards in a weeklong murder spree has been arrested, police told AFP Saturday. Shiv Prasad allegedly bludgeoned to death three men employed as guards in isolated areas of Sagar district, near the central industrial city of Bhopal, in a string of attacks that began last Saturday. A fourth man was killed in Bhopal in the early hours of Thursday, a day before Prasad was apprehended. "The accused wanted quick fame and money and apparently got addicted to crime sites and videos on social media," Sagar district superintendent Tarun Nayak told AFP. "We are investigating his involvement in some other crimes," Nayak added. —AFP

# Business

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 2022

## India overtakes UK to become world's fifth largest economy

### India's GDP expanded 13.5% in April-June quarter, the quickest pace in a year

LONDON/NEW DELHI: India has overtaken the UK to become the world's fifth-largest economy and is now behind only the US, China, Japan and Germany, according to IMF projections.

A decade back, India was ranked 11th among the large economies while the UK was at the fifth position. Britain has dropped behind India to become the world's sixth largest economy, delivering a further blow to the government in London as it grapples with a brutal cost-of-living shock.

The assumption of India overtaking the UK is based on calculations by Bloomberg using the IMF database and historic exchange rates on its terminal.

"On an adjusted basis and using the dollar exchange rate on the last day of the relevant quarter, the size of the Indian economy in 'nominal' cash terms in the quarter through March was \$854.7 billion. On the same basis, the UK was \$816 billion," stated a Bloomberg report.

The former British colony leaped past the UK in the final three months of 2021 to become the fifth-biggest economy. The calculation is based in US dollars, and India extended its lead in the first quarter, according to GDP figures from the International Monetary Fund.

The UK's decline down the international rankings is an unwelcome backdrop for the new prime minister. Conservative Party members choose Boris Johnson's successor on Monday, with Foreign Secretary Liz Truss expected to beat for-

mer Chancellor of the Exchequer Rishi Sunak in the run-off.

The winner will take over a nation facing the fastest inflation in four decades and rising risks of a recession that the Bank of England says may last well into 2024. By contrast, the Indian economy is forecast to grow more than 7 percent this year. A world-beating rebound in Indian stocks this quarter has just seen their weighting rise to the second spot in the MSCI Emerging Markets Index, trailing only China's.

With India being the world's fastest growing major economy, its lead over the UK will widen in the next few years. India's GDP expanded 13.5 percent in the April-June quarter, the quickest pace in a year, to retain the world's fastest growing economy tag but rising interest costs and the looming threat of a recession in major world economies could slow the momentum in the coming quarters.

Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth of 13.5 percent year-on-year compares to a 20.1 percent expansion a year back and 4.09 percent growth in the previous three months to March, according to official data released earlier this week.

The growth, though lower than the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) estimate of 16.2 percent, was fuelled by consumption and signaled a revival of domestic demand, particularly in the services sector. Pent-up demand is driving consumption as consumers, after two years of pandemic restrictions, are stepping out and spending. The services



NEW DELHI: India has overtaken the UK to become the world's fifth-largest economy and is now behind only the US, China, Japan and Germany, according to IMF projections.

sector has seen a strong bounce back that will get a boost from the festival season next month. But the slowing growth of the manufacturing sector at 4.8

percent is an area of worry. Also, imports being higher than exports is a matter of concern. — Agencies

## Russia halts gas supplies to Germany

MOSCOW: Russia has halted gas deliveries to Germany via a key pipeline for an indefinite period, after saying Friday it had found problems in a key piece of equipment, a development that will worsen Europe's energy crisis. Russian gas giant Gazprom said Friday that the Nord Stream pipeline due to reopen at the weekend would remain shut until a turbine is repaired.

In a statement, Gazprom indicated it had discovered "oil leaks" in a turbine during a planned three-day maintenance operation.

Gazprom added that "until it is repaired... the transport of gas via Nord Stream is completely suspended". Resumption of deliveries via the pipeline which runs from near St Petersburg to Germany under the Baltic Sea, had been due to resume on Saturday. Gazprom said it had discovered the problems while carrying out maintenance with representatives of Siemens, which manufactured the turbine in a compressor station that pushes gas through the pipeline.

On its Telegram page it published a picture of cables covered in a brown liquid. Earlier in the day, the Kremlin warned the future operation of the Nord Stream pipeline, one of Gazprom's major supply routes, was at risk due to a lack of spare parts.

"There are no technical reserves, only one turbine is working," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters.



MULHEIM AN DER RUHR, Germany: In this photo taken on Aug 3, 2022, a turbine of the Nord Stream 1 pipeline is pictured at the plant of Siemens Energy, where the engine is stored after maintenance work in Canada. — AFP

"So the reliability of the operation, of the whole system, is at risk," he said, adding that it was "not through the fault" of Russian energy giant Gazprom. The turbine-maker Siemens Energy said in a statement that the oil leaks blamed by Gazprom was "not a technical reason for stopping operation". "Such leakages do not usually affect the operation of a turbine and can be sealed on site," it said, adding that it was "not contracted for

maintenance work".

Following the imposition of economic sanctions over the Kremlin's invasion of Ukraine, Russia has reduced or halted supplies to different European nations, causing energy prices to soar. The Kremlin has blamed the reduction of supplies via Nord Stream on European sanctions which it says have blocked the return of a Siemens turbine that had been undergoing repairs in Canada. —AFP

wanted to avoid "another Chernobyl", referring to the world's worst nuclear accident in another part of Ukraine in 1986, when it was still part of the Soviet Union.

This week, a 14-strong team from the International Atomic Energy Agency visited Zaporizhzhia, with the UN nuclear watchdog's chief Rafael Grossi saying the site had been damaged in fighting. Russia's envoy to Vienna, Mikhail Ulyanov, said six IAEA inspectors would stay behind for several days and that two more would remain there "on a permanent basis".

### 'Gas weapon'

The Russian invasion of pro-Western Ukraine has killed thousands of people and caused millions to flee their homes. Western powers have reacted by dispatching military aid to Kyiv in a bid to stem the Russian advance, and slapping economic sanctions on Moscow. On Friday, the Group of Seven major industrial democracies vowed to move urgently to set a price cap on Russian oil imports, a crucial source of revenue for Moscow.

As if on cue, Russian gas giant Gazprom said it had halted gas deliveries to Germany for an indefinite period as there were leaks in a turbine. Its German manufacturer said that was not a valid reason to halt gas flows. EU Economy Commissioner Paolo Gentiloni on Saturday however said the European Union was "well prepared" in the event of a total halt in Russian gas deliveries, thanks to storage capacity and energy-saving measures.

"We are well prepared to resist Russia's extreme use of the gas weapon," he told reporters on the sidelines of an economic forum organised by The European House-Ambrosetti.

## Turkey offers to mediate in Ukraine nuke plant standoff

ISTANBUL: Turkey's Recep Tayyip Erdogan offered on Saturday to mediate in the standoff over a Russian-occupied nuclear power station in war-torn Ukraine that has raised fears of an atomic disaster.

Alarm has grown in recent weeks over shelling hitting the area of Europe's largest nuclear plant, Zaporizhzhia. Ukraine on Friday said it bombed a Russian base in the nearby town of Enerгодар, destroying three artillery systems as well as an ammunition depot.

Erdogan on Saturday told his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin "that Turkey can play a facilitator role in the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, as they did in the grain deal," the Turkish presidency said. Ukraine, one of the world's largest grain exporters, was forced to halt almost all deliveries after Russia invaded in late February, raising fears of a global food crisis.

Exports of grain across Black Sea ports resumed after Kyiv and Moscow in July inked a deal with the United Nations and Turkey acting as guarantors. There was no immediate mention of Erdogan having also spoken to Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky on Saturday to offer his mediation.

Last month, Erdogan warned of the danger of a nuclear disaster when he visited Lviv for talks with the Ukrainian leader. The Turkish leader said he

## Fears of 'massive' bills as energy crisis hits UK schools

LONDON: Rachael Warwick, who oversees three schools in southeast England, has had to sign a new contract to heat and light their buildings at tariffs that she describes as "eye-watering".

The executive head teacher of Ridgeway Education Trust in Oxfordshire calculates that if the schools she runs use the same amount of energy as before, their annual bill will go up from £250,000 to £1.1 million (\$290,000 to \$1.3 million). "It's massive... We are looking for £900,000 pounds additional, unbudgeted money," she told AFP, saying that paying this would exhaust financial reserves within a year. The schools in the trust will do "sensible things" to cut energy use but raising such a large amount would require firing 30 teachers, she added. Publicly funded schools in England are sounding the alarm as soaring energy prices hit their already tightly constrained budgets. This comes as schools are expanding activities after pandemic curbs.

UK households and businesses are also facing severe financial hits from energy bills that have soared in the post-pandemic era, exacerbated by Russia's war on Ukraine. A spokesperson for the government's education department told AFP: "We are aware of the inflationary pressures facing schools and know that rising costs will impact schools differently." The department pointed to a £4-billion rise in funding for schools announced last year and said it was recommending energy deals. England's commissioner for children, Rachel De Souza, vowed "schools must absolutely not close" in an interview with The Telegraph late Friday.

### Forgotten

In the campaign to become the next Conservative party leader and UK prime minister, neither Liz Truss nor her rival Rishi Sunak, made firm commitments to help schools cover huge additional costs.

"I really hope that when we have a new PM, things will be done with the urgency it requires," said Warwick, stressing that while the energy crisis affects all sectors including health, "schools can't be forgotten. It's an essential public service." She called on the government to set an energy price cap for schools, similar to that for domestic users. "I think Liz Truss has been quite clear about what her priorities are—a lot of stuff about tax cuts—but there hasn't been any mention of bailing out public sector bodies," said John Dickens, editor of the Schools Week newspaper.

"The public sector—schools and other institutions—they seem to have been forgotten about a little bit." Head teachers and unions are urging the government to do more. "We will be making representations to the new government ministers when they are in post next week to put this at the top of their priority list," said Julian Gravatt, deputy chief executive of the Association of Colleges, which includes institutions teaching children aged 16 to 18. —AFP



KHARKIV, Ukraine: A worker cleans debris in the library of a school building following a missile strike in Kharkiv on September 3, 2022, amid the Russian invasion of Ukraine. —AFP

In the European Union, "gas storage is currently at about 80 percent, thanks to the diversification of supplies," even if the situation varies from one country to another, Gentiloni said.

Ukraine has accused Russia of storing ammunition at Zaporizhzhia and deploying hundreds of soldiers there. It also suspects Moscow is intending to divert power from the plant to the nearby Crimean peninsula, annexed by Russia in 2014. —AFP



## Business

# 'We've gone back 50 years': Pakistan farmers count cost from flood havoc

## Islamabad owes billions to foreign creditors

**SAMMU KHAN BHANBRO, Pakistan:** Pakistan's farmers are still counting their losses from the devastating floods that have put a third of the country under water, but the long-term impact is already clear. "We have gone back 50 years," said Ashraf Ali Bhanbro, a farmer in Sindh province whose 2,500 acres of cotton and sugarcane-on the verge of being harvested-have now been wiped out.

More than 33 million people have been affected by the floods caused by record monsoon rains, and one of the worst-hit areas is Sindh in Pakistan's south. The province is bisected by the mighty Indus River, along whose banks farming has flourished for millennia with records of irrigation systems dating back to 4,000 BC.

Sindh's problems are two-fold. The province was drenched by record rains locally, but that water has nowhere to drain because the Indus is already at full flow, swollen by tributaries in the north, and has burst its banks in several places.

"At one stage it rained continuously for 72 hours," said Bhanbro, adding he has lost at least 270 million rupees (\$1.2 million) on inputs alone. "That was the cost incurred on fertilizers and pesticides... we don't include profit, which might have been much higher as it was a bumper crop."

Unless flooded farmlands can be drained, farmers like Bhanbro will not be able to plant a winter wheat crop-vital for the country's food security. "We have one month. If water is not discharged in that period, there will be no wheat," he said at his farm in Sammu Khan village, around 40 kilometers (25 miles) northeast of Sukkur. Pakistan was for years self-sufficient in wheat production, but more

recently has relied on imports to ensure silos are full as part of its strategic reserves.

### Pakistan owes billions

Islamabad can scarcely afford imports-even if it purchases discounted grain from Russia, as is being discussed. The country owes billions to foreign creditors, and only last week managed to convince the International Monetary Fund to resume funding that can't even service foreign debt, let alone pay a flood-damage bill estimated at \$10 billion.

Driving along an elevated highway from Sukkur to Sammu Khan provides a shocking view of the devastation wrought by the floods.

In some places there is water as far as the eye can see: where cotton crops are visible in flooded fields, their leaves have turned brown, with hardly a boll to be seen. "Let's forget the cotton," said Latif Dinno, a farmer in Saleh Pat, 30 kilometers north-east of Sukkur.

The big landowners will likely ride out the floods but tens of thousands of farm laborers face terrible hardships. Many only get paid for what they pick, and supplement their earnings by growing food on tiny plots of land in villages scattered across the province.

Those too are under water, and tens of thousands have fled their flooded homes to seek shelter on higher ground. "There is nothing left to pick," said Saeed Baloch, who labors every season with members of his extended family, pooling their earnings. It's not just the farmers that are affected, but every link in the supply chain is feeling the strain.

"We are doomed," said Waseem Ahmed, a cotton



KARACHI, Pakistan: Volunteers of the Charity Al-Khidmat Foundation prepare relief bags for flood-affected people in Karachi on September 3, 2022. —AFP

trader in Saleh Pat, who like many in the industry paid advances to fix purchase prices and hedge against inflation and market fluctuation.

"Against 200 maund (about 8,000 kg, 18,000 pounds) expected, only 35 maund has been reaped," he said, adding he had shelved plans to expand his business. At a small collection store in a usually vibrant cotton market in Sindh, two boys

poked half-heartedly at a heap of wet cotton, checking to see if anything could be salvaged.

"The market is shut down and even the ginning factories are closed," trader Ahmed said, pointing to a row of closed shops. The sense of helplessness is overwhelming, but cotton picker Dinno hopes for divine intervention. "We look up to Allah. He is the ultimate savior," he said. —AFP

## In Louisiana, first US climate refugees find new safe haven

**SCHRIEVER, US:** Joann Bourg stands in front of her new home, about an hour's drive from the low-lying Louisiana island where she grew up-an area gradually sinking into the Gulf of Mexico.

"I'm very excited. I can't wait to just move on in," Bourg told AFP. "I've been waiting for this day forever." Bourg is one of about a dozen Native Americans from the Isle de Jean Charles who have been relocated to Schriever, less than 40 miles (60 kilometers) to the northwest-the maiden beneficiaries of a federal resettlement grant awarded in 2016.

They are the first so-called "climate refugees" in the United States, forced from their homes due to the consequences of climate change. "The house we had back there on the island-well, that has been home forever. Me and my siblings all grew up there, went to school down there," Bourg recalls. "It was peaceful."

But the family home-as with many others on the island-was destroyed. There is only one road connecting Isle de Jean Charles to the mainland, and it is sometimes impassable due to high winds or tides. Residents are mainly of Native American descent-several tribes sought shelter on the island from rampant government persecution in the 1800s.

But climate change has transformed the island into a symbol of the scourge that plagues much of hurricane-prone Louisiana-coastal erosion.

### 90 percent under water

Eventually, 37 new homes will be built in



Schriever to accommodate about 100 current or former residents of Isle de Jean Charles, thanks to a \$48 million federal grant initially allocated in 2016.

"This is the first project of its kind in our nation's history," state Governor John Bel Edwards, who was on site to see the residents close on their new properties, told AFP. "We've had people over the years that we would buy their homes out and move them. But we've not done whole communities like this and moved them to one place before because of climate change." Since the 1930s, Isle de Jean Charles has lost "about 90 percent" of its surface area to the encroaching bayou waters, explains Alex Kolker, an associate professor at the Louisiana Universities Marine Consortium.

The island was already fragile, but climate change heightens the risks, he says-sea levels are rising, the ground is sinking and erosion is rampant. More fre-

quent and fiercer storms intensify the problem. "This community is one of the most vulnerable communities in Louisiana, and Louisiana is one of the most vulnerable places in the US," Kolker says.

The road to Isle de Jean Charles is lined with dozens of homes, many of which are stripped down to the pilings. A year ago, Hurricane Ida slammed into Louisiana as a dangerous category 4 storm; it was the second most damaging hurricane on record in the state, after the devastation of Katrina in 2005.

The storm ripped part of Chris Brunet's roof off his home. The 57-year-old placed a sign in front of his home: "Climate change sucks." Seemingly indifferent to the voracious and omnipresent mosquitoes, and occasionally speaking the old Acadian French associated with the area, Brunet says hurricanes are nothing compared to so-called "saltwater intrusion" destroying canals and other waterways. —AFP

## US announces \$1.1bn arms package for Taiwan

**WASHINGTON:** The United States on Friday announced a new \$1.1 billion package of arms to Taiwan, vowing to keep boosting the island's defenses as tensions soar with Beijing. The sale comes a month after House Speaker Nancy Pelosi defiantly visited the self-governing democracy, prompting mainland China to launch a show of force that could be a trial run for a future invasion.

The package — the largest for Taiwan approved under President Joe Biden's administration — includes \$665 million for contractor support to maintain and upgrade a Raytheon early radar warning system in operation since 2013 that would warn Taiwan about an incoming attack.

Taiwan will also spend some \$355 million to buy 60 Harpoon Block II missiles which can track and sink incoming vessels if China launches an assault by water. The arms also include \$85.6 million for more than 100 Sidewinder missiles, a mainstay of Western militaries for their air-to-air firepower.

The announcement comes one day after Taiwanese forces shot down an unidentified commercial drone amid a sudden spate of mysterious incursions that have unnerved the island. A spokesperson for the State Department, which approved the sale, said the package was "essential for Taiwan's security."

"We urge Beijing to cease its military, diplomatic and economic pressure against Taiwan and instead engage in meaningful dialogue with Taiwan," the spokesperson said. The State Department said that the United States still recognizes only Beijing, which claims the island as its own. "These proposed sales are routine cases to support Taiwan's continuing efforts to modernize its armed forces and to maintain a credible defensive capability," the spokesperson said.



AT SEA, Undefined: In this file handout image courtesy of the US Navy taken on August 28, 2022 the Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser USS Chancellorsville (CG 62) transits the East China Sea in the Taiwan Strait during routine underway operations. — AFP

"The United States will continue to support a peaceful resolution of cross-Strait issues, consistent with the wishes and best interests of the people on Taiwan," he said. The sale needs the approval of the US Congress, which is virtually assured as Taiwan enjoys strong support across party lines. Ahead of the visit of Pelosi, who is second in line to the White House, Biden officials quietly made the case to China that she did not represent the administration policy as Congress is a separate and equal branch of government.

The weapons approval, by contrast, clearly comes from the Biden administration although it is consistent with sales since 1979 when the United States switched recognition to Beijing but agreed to maintain Taiwan's capacity for self-defense. Biden, on a trip to Tokyo in May, appeared to break with decades of US policy by saying the United States would defend Taiwan directly if it is attacked although his aides later walked back his remarks, insisting that US policy remained ambiguous. —AFP

## US stocks fall after Gazprom shutdown announcement

**NEW YORK:** After following European equities higher Friday, Wall Street stocks reversed course, finishing sharply lower after Russia kept shut a key gas pipeline to Germany. US stocks had initially gained following August jobs data that showed employment growth moderating and unemployment ticking higher in a report seen by investors as lessening pressure on the Federal Reserve to increase interest rates.

But markets did a 180-degree turn midday as worries increased about the winter ahead after Russian gas giant Gazprom moved to keep natural gas deliveries to Germany off-line. In a statement, Gazprom indicated it had discovered "oil leaks" in a turbine during a planned three-day maintenance operation, a statement that was seen skeptically in light of international condemnation of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

The announcement by Gazprom came the same day as the G7 nations said they would work to quickly implement a price cap on Russian oil exports, a move which would starve the Kremlin of critical revenue for its war effort. Fear of shortages of natural gas has driven futures contracts for electricity in France and Germany to record levels.

"You can draw a line to that Gazprom news," said Briefing.com analyst Patrick O'Hare. "We're going to continue to be stuck with this energy crisis hitting Europe and the prospect of a recession there." After opening higher, the broad-based S&P 500 finished at 3,924.35, down 1.1 percent for the day and 3.3 percent for the week. The Gazprom announcement came after European bourses had already closed, with London, Paris and Frankfurt all posting solid gains following the US jobs data.

Labor Department data showed US employment increased by 315,000 jobs last month, which was in line with what economists were expecting but at a much slower pace than the 526,000 hires in July. —AFP

## India raids online payment firms over 'illegal loans'

**NEW DELHI:** India's financial crimes agency said Saturday it had raided the offices of several online payment platforms, including local market leader Paytm, for allegedly facilitating illegal loans by Chinese nationals. The Enforcement Directorate said it had received several complaints of extortion and harassment from members of the public who had taken small loans through mobile apps.

It said that investigations had found the apps were run by entities registered at fake addresses and traced back to Chinese nationals. The agency said in a Saturday statement that popular Indian payment gateways, including Razorpay and Cashfree, were "generating proceeds of crime" from the loan companies. Officers searched the offices of both companies and Paytm in the tech hub Bangalore on Friday, the statement said. The agency added it had seized around \$2 million from the accounts of the entities that controlled the loan apps.

A report by India's central bank last year said it had found around 600 illegal loan apps operating in the local market. Authorities have cracked down on the online money-lending operations, and the raids came a day after the Reserve Bank of India issued new operating guidelines for the industry. Police in New Delhi last month arrested 22 people for allegedly extorting money on the pretext of giving loans, local media reported. —AFP

## Google allows Parler app back into Play Store

**SAN FRANCISCO:** Google allowed social media network Parler back into its Play Store Friday, more than a year after banning the platform popular with conservatives in the wake of the insurrection at the US Capitol. Google pulled the Parler app from its online marketplace just days after the deadly attack on the seat of US government on January 6, 2021, saying it had allowed "egregious content" that could incite more violence.

Parler had become a haven for far-right personalities who say they have been censored by other social media platforms such as Twitter. The attack on the Capitol, incited in part by online misinformation and violent rhetoric on sites such as Parler, was carried out by far-right supporters of former president Donald Trump, who sought to overturn the results of the 2020 election which he lost to Joe Biden.

Parler was allowed back in the Play Store after meeting requirements regarding removing abusive posts and blocking users who break the app's rules, according to Google. "All apps on Google Play that feature user generated content are required to implement robust moderation practices that prohibit objectionable content," a Google spokesperson said in response to an AFP inquiry.

"Apps are able to appear on Google Play provided they comply with Play's developer policies." Parler agreed to abide by Play Store rules and modified its app for Android-powered mobile devices to comply with its policies, according to Google. —AFP

## Business

# Google's immersive Street View could be glimpse of metaverse

## Meta investing in creating online realms for work, play, shop

**MOUNTAIN VIEW, US:** Fifteen years after its launch, a Google Maps feature that lets people explore faraway places as though standing right there is providing a glimpse of the metaverse being heralded as the future of the internet. There was not yet talk of online life moving to virtual worlds when a "far-fetched" musing by Google co-founder Larry Page prompted Street View, which lets users of the company's free navigation service see imagery of map locations from the perspective of being there.

Now the metaverse is a tech-world buzz, with companies including Facebook parent Meta investing in creating online realms where people represented by videogame-like characters work, play, shop and more.

"Larry Page took a video camera and stuck it out the window of his car," Google senior technical program manager Steven Silverman said, while showing AFP the garage where the company builds cameras for cars, bikes, backpacks, and even snowmobiles dispatched to capture 360-degree images worldwide. "He was talking to some of his colleagues at the time, saying, 'I bet we can do something with this.' That was the start of Street View."

Street View lets people click on locations in Google Maps to see what it might look like were they at that spot, and even look around.

Now, the internet behemoth is introducing an "immersive view" that fuses Street View images with artificial intelligence to create "a rich, digital model of the world," Miriam Daniel, Google Maps Experiences vice president, said in a post. "You'll be able to experience what a neighborhood, landmark, restaurant or popular venue is like—and even feel like you're right there before you ever set foot inside," Daniel said.

"With a quick search, you can virtually soar over Westminster to see the neighborhood and

stunning architecture of places, like Big Ben, up close."

Google will start rolling out immersive view later this year, starting in Los Angeles, London, New York, San Francisco and Tokyo.

### From maps to metaverse

Street View imagery has been gathered in more than 100 countries and territories, ranging from places such as Mount Fuji and Grand Canyon National Park to the Great Barrier Reef.

"If you want to see what it's like to go down a ski slope, you can see where that snowmobile has gone," Silverman said, nodding toward a maroon snowmobile in the garage in the Silicon Valley city of Mountain View, California. "That trike was really funny because it went around Stonehenge; and we put it on a barge and went down the Amazon River," he said of another vehicle.

He pointed to a backpack camera system taken for a zip-line ride in the Amazon, to provide a bird's-eye perspective. Years spent capturing the real world in 360-degree imagery bodes well for Google when it comes to a future in which internet life shifts to immersive digital worlds, said Creative Strategies tech analyst Carolina Milanese.

"It absolutely plays into the metaverse," Milanese said.

"The idea of a digital twin of the world is certainly one aspect of it that Google will solve," Silverman reasoned that, in a sense, Street View has been giving users a virtual experience for more than a decade, and the imagery naturally lends itself to depicting the real world in virtual settings.

"Ideally, that metaverse, that world that we move into, we're going to be there," Silverman said.

Scores of tech firms have been rushing to invest in building the metaverse, a loose term covering



**MOUNTAIN VIEW:** Google Inc. employees stage a walkout in their call for a safe workplace outside the Googleplex on the Google Corporate Campus Headquarters in Mountain View, California.

the growing ecosystem of interactive online worlds, games and 3D meeting places that are already attracting millions of users. Facebook renamed its parent company to Meta last year to emphasize its virtual reality vision, and opened Horizon World virtual reality platform to the North American public.

Earlier this year, Japanese giant Sony and Lego's Danish parent firm announced a \$2 billion investment in US gaming powerhouse Epic Games for its work toward joining the metaverse vision for

the internet's future. In the form of video games such as Epic's hit Fortnite, the precursors of the metaverse already exist in minimalist ways, with people coming together not only to play, but also to interact and participate in events.

What started as a "far-fetched idea" by Page is "critical to our mapping efforts—letting you see the most up-to-date information about the world, while laying the foundation for a more immersive, intuitive map," Google Maps product director Ethan Russell said in a blog post. —AFP

## Italian economy grows faster in second quarter

**ROME:** Italy's gross domestic product rose by 1.1 percent in the second quarter compared to the previous three months, the Istat national statistics agency said.

The figure — up from 1.0 percent estimated in late July — is an improvement on the first three months of the year, when growth was just 0.1 percent. Growth in the eurozone's third largest economy was driven by an expansion of industry and services, while agricultural production fell. Despite soaring energy prices, the Bank of Italy raised its growth forecast for 2022 in mid-July, expecting GDP to increase by 3.2 percent, compared to 2.6 percent previously.

Last year, the economy bounced back from a sharp and deep recession sparked by coronavirus lockdowns in 2020.

But the war in Ukraine, the risk of a winter energy crisis and soaring inflation — 8.4 percent in August, the highest since 1985 — all loom large. Meanwhile Prime Minister Mario Draghi, a former European Central Bank chief considered a safe pair of hands, will leave office following elections on September 25, in which a hard-right coalition is tipped to take power. —AFP

## Oil slick from cargo ship off Gibraltar reaches shore

**GIBRALTER:** Small amounts of oil from a bulk carrier that collided with a gas tanker off Gibraltar has reached the shoreline of the British territory and neighbouring Spain, local officials said Friday.

The head of Gibraltar's government, Fabian Picardo, told Spanish news radio Cadena Ser that a slick from the stricken vessel had reached "parts of the coast of Gibraltar." "But it was a small slick, we don't want there to be any slick, but it was small," he added. Crews have been deployed to "begin the clean-up of oil from the shoreline," the government of Gibraltar said in a statement. Gibraltar's department of environment has received reports "of small numbers of oiled birds," it added.

Meanwhile the mayor of the Spanish town of La Linea de la Concepcion which borders Gibraltar said an oil slick from the carrier had reached its beach, forcing its closure. "What has arrived is a slick which, frankly, is worrying but we are not talking about a tragedy," Juan Franco told local reporters.

The carrier — the OS 35 — has been beached off Gibraltar since the two vessels collided late on Monday off the territory located on the southern tip of the Iberian peninsula. The captain of the damaged ship was detained for questioning on Thursday for allegedly not obeying Gibraltar port orders initially after the collision.

Booms were placed around the stricken cargo ship but some oil still managed to escape the floating barriers. Gibraltar officials said Friday that all of the diesel on the ship had been removed, and the priority now was the removal of the heavy fuel oil that is still on board. Divers on Thursday sealed two tank vents that leaked fuel from the bulk carrier and the amount of oil that is leaking is "significantly reduced", the government of Gibraltar statement said. —AFP

## California opens cooling centers to check heat wave

**LOS ANGELES:** It is too hot in Nelly Amaya's place when the mercury surges into triple digits, driven by the punishing heat wave gripping the western United States. "We don't have air conditioning at our house, we only have a fan," Amaya, a retiree, told AFP.

"We come here because we can't stay at home," Amaya is one of hundreds of people in Los Angeles who are making use of the 40 cooling centers set up by the county's emergency department as a fearsome heat dome sends temperatures soaring.

The centers have been established in libraries, recreation and park facilities, and senior living facilities, offering shelter in air-conditioned rooms and cold drinks during the heat of the day.

Forecasters have issued an excessive heat warning for most of California, as well as parts of Nevada and Arizona, with thermometers logging highs over 110 Fahrenheit (43 Celsius) in some places.

The oppressive heat is expected to last well into next week, smothering a holiday weekend, with little relief in the way of cooler nights. Doctors say when temperatures remain elevated for long periods—particularly overnight—it puts strains on the human body that can cause a cascade of illness, sometimes even leading to death.

## Greenpeace UK drops boulders on seabed to block fishing

**LONDON:** Greenpeace UK on Friday said it had dropped 18 large boulders on the seabed in a marine conservation zone off the coast of south-west England to prevent "destructive" industrial fishing.

The environmental campaigners sailed to the western part of the Channel between the UK and France, loaded with the boulders of Portland limestone, each weighing between 500 and 1,400 kilograms (1,100 and 3,100 pounds). The giant rocks were dropped on Thursday from its Arctic Sunrise research vessel in an area of the South West Deeps (East) Conservation Zone, which lies some 190 kilometers (120 miles) off Land's End, the most westerly point of mainland England.

Greenpeace said the boulders will make it impossible for bottom-towed fishing gear to be dragged along the seabed and devastate marine life there. Artists created a giant ammonite sculpture—inspired by the fossil often found in Portland limestone—out of one of the boulders, which was also placed on the seabed.

"Right now, there's an industrial fishing frenzy happening in UK waters, and what's our government doing about it?" asked Greenpeace UK's head of oceans, Will McCallum.

"Greenpeace UK has created this underwater boulder barrier as a last resort to protect the oceans. We'd much rather the government just did their job," McCallum said it was "outrageous" that bottom-trawlers are allowed to operate on the seabed in protected areas.

"They destroy huge swathes of the marine ecosystem and make a mockery of our so-called 'protection'," he added. The action comes after the latest round of UN talks to try to secure protection for marine life in international waters broke up

without agreement.

Greenpeace said the 4,600-square-kilometre (1,776-square-mile) South West Deeps is "one of the most heavily fished so-called Marine Protected Areas in the UK".

It cited figures from the Global Fishing Watch monitoring agency that said that 110 vessels—more than half of them from France—fished for 18,928 hours in area in the 18 months to July.

Of that, industrial vessels with bottom-towed fishing gear spent 3,376 hours fishing in the zone.

Neil Whitney, a fisherman from East Sussex in southern England, said bottom-trawling was "like ploughing a combine harvester through a



**LOS ANGELES:** A pedestrian crosses a street while carrying a pair of oscillating fans during a heat wave in downtown Los Angeles, California on September 2, 2022. —AFP

conditions and prevent further emergency measures, including rotating power outages," California Independent Service Operator said. The heat dome is expected to last well into next week, with thermometers set to peak at 116 degrees Fahrenheit in some densely populated areas around Los Angeles over the upcoming Labor Day holiday weekend.

It is not unusual for southern California to experience heat waves in September, but temperatures above 100 degrees Fahrenheit are considered hot even for a place almost perpetually baked by sunshine. Scientists say global warming, which is being driven chiefly by the unchecked burning of fossil fuels, is making natural weather variations more extreme. Heat waves are getting hotter and more intense, while storms are getting wetter and, in many cases, more dangerous. —AFP



**A giant limestone boulder is prepared before being dropped into the sea from the Greenpeace ship Arctic Sunrise in an area of the South West Deeps (East) Conservation Zone, which lies some 190 kilometers (120 miles) off Land's End, the most westerly point of mainland England on September 1, 2022.—AFP**

without agreement.

Greenpeace said the 4,600-square-kilometre (1,776-square-mile) South West Deeps is "one of the most heavily fished so-called Marine Protected Areas in the UK".

It cited figures from the Global Fishing Watch monitoring agency that said that 110 vessels—more than half of them from France—fished for 18,928 hours in area in the 18 months to July.

Of that, industrial vessels with bottom-towed fishing gear spent 3,376 hours fishing in the zone.

Neil Whitney, a fisherman from East Sussex in southern England, said bottom-trawling was "like ploughing a combine harvester through a

national park".

"They're able to take out entire ecosystems, and if they cause a fishery to collapse, they just move on to the next one," he added. "Industrial fishing, like fly-shooters (vessels which tow lead-weighted ropes along the seabed) and supertrawlers (trawlers over 100 meters long), are killing our marine environment, and small-scale UK fishermen like me are losing out big time."

He said it was "absurd" that bottom-trawling was legal in MPAs. "MPAs are supposed to be the areas where fish stocks can recover, so that we fish for generations to come. It's a case of common sense." —AFP

# A spectacular cultural show marks Indian Embassy's Onam celebration

Indian Ambassador highlights Kerala's rich heritage, culture



Indian Ambassador Sibi George and Joice Sibi pose for a group photo with performers.



Ambassador Sibi George, Joice Sibi and their son Jeff Thampuran pose for a photo with performers.



Chenda percussion



Kathakali performance



Mohiniyattam dance

By Sajeev K Peter

**KUWAIT:** A spectacular cultural show, colorful pageantry and a traditional feast highlighted the Indian Embassy's Onam celebration, held on September 1 as part of the state facilitation event on the southern Indian state of Kerala. A large number of people including Kuwaiti dignitaries, diplomats and members of the Indian diaspora joined the embassy in celebrating Kerala's biggest festival, reflecting the rich cultural traditions of the state.

Extending warm greetings to all on the occasion, Indian Ambassador Sibi George said: "Onam is a special occasion for the Indian community in Kuwait. Over the years, Onam has become one of the most-celebrated and most-awaited festivals of India in Kuwait, not only by the Indian community, but also by many Kuwaitis."

The ambassador pointed out that even during the last two years, despite the challenges of the pandemic, Onam was celebrated with a lot of enthusiasm among families and in smaller groups, and virtually too. He congratulated all Indian associations and groups for putting in efforts to celebrate India in Kuwait through hundreds of events.

"The embassy extends all support to their activities in their endeavors to celebrate India and in their efforts to contribute in further strengthening our vibrant relations with this friendly country," he added. "By celebrating Onam, we are celebrating our history, our civilizational ethos, our family values and above



Thiruvathira dance

all the spirit of 'Vasudaiva Kudumbakam' (The World is One Family)," he remarked.

#### Cultural legacy

In his concluding remarks, the ambassador spoke about the cultural legacy and classical art forms of Kerala, from Kathakali to the martial art of Kalaripayattu, which make Kerala unique, and the role Kerala is playing today towards the well-being of the world through the healing touch of Ayurveda. He invited Kuwaiti friends to include Kerala on their next itinerary to India along with other sought-after destinations like Delhi, Goa, Agra

and Jaipur.

"Visiting Kerala is a unique experience, since it is the place where West met the East, where history was made, where the world came to shop, where St Thomas came to introduce Christianity, where the Cheraman Juma Mosque was built in 629 CE, which makes it the first mosque in India," he said. The ambassador felicitated the winners of a quiz competition that was held during the event.

#### Onam pageantry

Earlier, an impressive Onam procession took off from the forecourt of the embassy to



Traditional Onam feast

the auditorium, which was led by the mythical King Mahabali and accompanied by a group of Chenda players, tiger dancers and performers. An intricate and giant floral decoration (pookkalam) was laid out on the forecourt to mark the occasion.

The members of the executive committee of Indian Business Promotion Council (IBPC), Friends of Kannur Expats (FOKE), Anjali School of Dance, Sriшти School of Classical Dance and Indian community members staged a variety of cultural programs. Performances of classical dance forms like Mohiniyattam, Kerala Natanam,

semi-classical numbers and Onam songs enthralled the audience. The classical dance performance of Kathakali, a 400-year-old art form from renowned 'Kalyana Sougandhikam' by brilliant actor Jaikrishnan, captivated the audience.

A detailed tailor-made video highlighting trade opportunities, tourism potential and technological prowess of Kerala was showcased during the event. The highlight and the finale of the celebration was the traditional Onam feast (Onasadya), a sumptuous Kerala meal comprising over 20 items, which was served to the guests on fresh plantain leaves.

## IT'S RAINING DIAMONDS ACROSS THE UNIVERSE, RESEARCH SUGGESTS

It could be raining diamonds on planets throughout the universe, scientists suggested Friday, after using common plastic to recreate the strange precipitation believed to form deep inside Uranus and Neptune. Scientists had previously theorized that extremely high pressure and temperatures turn hydrogen and carbon into solid diamonds thousands of kilometers below the surface of the ice giants.

Now new research, published in Science Advances, inserted oxygen into the mix, finding that "diamond rain" could be more common than thought. Ice giants like Neptune and Uranus are thought to be the most common form of planet outside our Solar System, which means diamond rain could be occurring across the universe. Dominik Kraus, a physicist at Germany's HZDR research lab and one of the study's authors, said that diamond precipitation was quite different to rain on Earth.

Under the surface of the planets is believed to be a "hot, dense liquid", where the diamonds form and slowly sink down to the rocky, potentially Earth-size cores more

than 10,000 kilometers (6,200 miles) below, he said. There fallen diamonds could form vast layers that span "hundreds of kilometers or even more", Kraus told AFP.

While these diamonds might not be shiny and cut like a "nice gem on a ring", he said they were



formed via similar forces as on Earth.

Aiming to replicate the process, the research team found the necessary mix of carbon, hydrogen and oxygen in a readily available source-PET plastic, which is used for everyday food packaging and bottles. Kraus said that while the researchers used very clean PET plastic, "in principle the experiment

should work with Coca-Cola bottles". The team then turned a high-powered optical laser on the plastic at the SLAC National Accelerator Laboratory in California.

"Very, very short X-ray flashes of incredible brightness" allowed

them to watch the process of nanodiamonds—tiny diamonds too small to see with the naked eye—as they formed, Kraus said. "The oxygen that is present in large amounts on those planets really helps suck away the hydrogen atoms from the carbon, so it's actually easier for those diamonds to form," he added.

New way to make nanodia-

monds? The experiment could point towards a new way to produce nanodiamonds, which have a wide and increasing range of applications including drug delivery, medical sensors, non-invasive surgery and quantum electronics. "The way nanodiamonds are currently made is by taking a bunch of carbon or diamond and blowing it up with explosives," said SLAC scientist and study co-author Benjamin Ofori-Okai. "Laser production could offer a cleaner and more easily controlled method to produce nanodiamonds," he added. The diamond rain research remains hypothetical because little is known about Uranus and Neptune, the most distant planets in our Solar System. Only one spacecraft—NASA's Voyager 2 in the 1980s—has flown past the two ice giants, and the data it sent back is still being used in research.

But a NASA group has outlined a potential new mission to the planets, possibly launching next decade. "That would be fantastic," Kraus said. He said he is greatly looking forward to more data—even if it takes a decade or two. —AFP

## Webb telescope captures its first image of exoplanet

The James Webb space telescope has taken its first image of an exoplanet—a planet outside our solar system—as astronomers hail the device's performance since its launch last year. Images from the most powerful space telescope ever built have thrilled observers in recent months as it orbits the Sun a million miles (1.6 million kilometers) from Earth.

Its latest pioneering pictures show the exoplanet, called HIP 65426 b, is a gas giant with no rocky surface and could not be habitable. "This is a transformative moment, not only for Webb but also for astronomy generally," said Sasha Hinkley, astronomy professor at the University of Exeter, who led the observation team. Webb's infrared gaze and coronagraphs-telescopic attachments that block out starlight—enable it to take direct images of exoplanets.

"It was really impressive how well the Webb coronagraphs worked to suppress the light of the host star," Hinkley said in a NASA statement on Thursday. The HIP 65426 b exoplanet is six to 12 times the mass of Jupiter and young—about 15 to 20 million years old, compared to the 4.5-billion-year-old Earth.



This annotated image obtained from NASA shows a James Webb Space Telescope direct image of a planet outside our solar system. —AFP

The telescope, which only released its first images in July, has already revealed dazzling new detail of the Phantom Galaxy and of the planet Jupiter. The Hubble space telescope previously captured direct exoplanet images, but in far less detail. "I think what's most exciting is that we've only just begun," said Aarynn Carter, of the University of California. "We may even discover previously unknown planets." The \$10-billion Webb telescope is a collaboration between NASA, the European Space Agency and the Canadian Space Agency. It is expected to operate for approximately 20 years. —AFP



A woman leaves a note as people gather to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the death of Lady Diana Spencer. — AFP



Lady Diana and Charles, Prince of Wales, acknowledge the crowd as they arrive in a carriage at Buckingham Palace on July 29, 1981, after their wedding in St Paul's Cathedral.



In this file photo taken on November 11, 1988 Britain's Princess Diana looks on at Orly, near Paris, at the end of her official visit to France.

# BBC pays £1.4 million to charity over controversial Diana interview

The BBC said Friday it had donated sales proceeds derived from a 1995 interview with Princess Diana to charity after it was found she was tricked into the bombshell expose. A record 22.8 million people watched the "Panorama" interview, in which Diana detailed infidelity in her marriage with heir-to-the-throne Prince Charles. Retired senior judge John Dyson said in an independent report published in May that BBC journalist Martin Bashir commissioned faked bank statements then showed them to the princess' brother to

persuade her to appear.

The British broadcasting giant said Friday it had paid a total of £1.42 million (\$1.64 million) to seven charities linked with the princess. They include homeless charity Centrepoin, English National Ballet, Great Ormond Street Hospital Children's Charity, The Leprosy Mission and the National AIDS Trust. "Given the findings of Lord Dyson, we think this is the right and appropriate course of action," said the corporation.

Questions had long been asked about how Bashir

persuaded Diana to talk on the BBC's flagship current affairs program, which won a string of television awards. In it, she famously said "there were three people" in her marriage-her, Charles and his long-time mistress and now wife, Camilla Parker Bowles, and also admitted adultery.

Bashir was little-known at the time of the interview but went on to have a high-profile career on US television networks, interviewing stars such as Michael Jackson. Bashir apologized, saying the faking of the bank statements to suggest Diana's clos-

est confidantes were being paid to keep tabs on her was "an action I deeply regret".

But he maintained it had "no bearing whatsoever on the personal choice by Princess Diana to take part in the interview". Diana and Charles formally divorced in 1996. She died aged 36 in a high-speed car crash while being chased by paparazzi photographers in Paris the following year. Charles married Camilla in 2005. —AFP

## 'ROARING TWENTIES'

A period of economic prosperity and social and cultural changes after World War I and the deadly Spanish flu pandemic, ended with the US stock market crash that led to the Great Depression

### Economic Boom

- US becomes a dominant economy
- European countries still reeling from the effects of WW I

Dow Jones Stock Price Index US\$/share

GDP per capita, selected countries US\$ thousand, 1990 PPPs\*

Country	1910	1920	1930
Britain	~1.5	~2.5	~3.5
France	~1.2	~2.0	~2.8
Germany	~1.0	~1.8	~2.5
Italy	~0.8	~1.5	~2.2
Spain	~0.6	~1.2	~1.8
Russia	~0.4	~0.8	~1.2
Australia	~0.5	~1.0	~1.5
US	~1.8	~3.5	~5.0
Argentina	~0.7	~1.4	~2.1
Brazil	~0.5	~1.0	~1.5
Mexico	~0.4	~0.8	~1.2
Japan	~0.3	~0.6	~1.0
India	~0.2	~0.4	~0.6

\*purchasing power parity

Average earnings in US, \$  
Price of a Ford Model T, \$

### "It was an age of miracles, it was an age of art, it was an age of excess ..."

F. Scott Fitzgerald on the 1920s, from "Echoes of the Jazz Age" (1931 essay)

- Bob haircut
- Cloche hat
- Cigarette
- Pump shoes with pointed toes
- Hemline above the knee, legs showing
- Garter or coloured stockings
- One-button suit jacket
- Oxford bags (wide-legged trousers)

### Dances, Movies, Arts and All That Jazz

Dance crazes such as the "Charleston," "Shimmy," "Fox Trot," and "Lindy Hop." Brazilian Samba also becomes popular

Rhythmic, lively and easy-to-dance jazz, -- rooted in African-American music from the South -- becomes the sound of the decade

Prohibition\* in US result in illegal bars (speakeasies), and nightclub culture featuring jazz

\*federal law restricting liquor

### Fast, Frivolous, Flapper

Cultural symbol of the "new" woman, rejecting past conventions, roles and fashion

Right to vote (ratified in US in 1920, other countries like Britain, Ireland, Ecuador, Iceland, Mongolia, Kazakhstan, followed with either full or partial suffrage)

Better education, new and more job opportunities

Chrysler Building, New York

Art Deco or "style moderne" features geometric or stylised forms

### ON THE AIR

Radios become a household hit worldwide while movies feature sound, dialogue

% of households with radios, US

1925: 19%  
1929: Up to 40%

### Mass Consumerism and Futurism

- Advertising, access to credit lead to increased spending
- Expansion of "mass media"
- More access to electricity leads to development of new technologies and products

Car production and sales lead to - assembly line (mass) productions - migration to the suburbs by many Americans - automobile economy (service stations, motels)

Automobile Ford's Model T

Cars on the road in the US (million)

1919: 6.7  
1929: 23

Ready-to-wear clothing  
Vacuum cleaner  
Refrigerator  
Iron  
Radio  
Washing machine

Sources: US Federal Reserve, Britannica, Encyclopedia, Smithsonian, IPU, medias, mobmuseum, thepeoplehistory.com

## 'Cosmoss': Supermodel Kate Moss launches wellness brand

British supermodel Kate Moss on Thursday launched a website selling her own beauty and lifestyle products called Cosmoss, becoming the latest star to venture into branded e-commerce. Moss follows celebrities such as US actress Gwyneth Paltrow who has forged a second career marketing wellness products on her Goop website. With her sculpted cheek bones, grungy style and famous boyfriends including US actor Johnny Depp and British musician Pete Doherty, Moss epitomized the 1990s-era fashion scene and its hard-partying lifestyle.

But in an interview on BBC radio's "Desert Island Discs" in July, Moss said that she now prefers trips to the garden centre and meditation to clubbing, and is "not into being out of control anymore". Vogue magazine reported that Moss, 48, spent two-and-a-half years developing the products for her new brand.

So far the Cosmossbykatemoss.com website sells a small range of vegan-friendly products including tins of herbal teabags for £20 (\$23), facial oil containing CBD (£105) — an active ingredient in cannabis-and perfume with essential oils (£120). Moss recommends using the products in combination in "rituals" that "balance body and soul with the natural environment and the circadian cycles". Cosmoss is not Moss's first venture into personal branding.

She designed a line of clothing for teen fashion chain Topshop-which closed its physical stores during the pandemic-and gave her name to lipsticks by Rimmel. In 2016 she launched a talent agency, Kate Moss Agency, signing her own daughter, Lila Moss, as well as other offspring of stars such as Ella Richards (granddaughter of Keith) and artists such as Rita Ora. In May, Moss testified at former boyfriend Depp's defamation trial against his ex-wife Amber Heard. The model said that reports that Depp once threw her down a flight of stairs were untrue. —AFP

Lifestyle | Features



The Artemis I unmanned lunar rocket sits on the launch pad at the Kennedy Space Center. —AFP

## NASA postpones rocket launch to Moon after fuel leak

NASA on Saturday scrapped a second attempt to get its new 30-story rocket off the ground and send its uncrewed test capsule toward the Moon after engineers detected a fuel leak. With millions around the globe and hundreds of thousands on nearby beaches waiting for the historic launch of the massive Space Launch System (SLS), a leak near the base of the rocket was found as ultra-cold liquid hydrogen was being pumped in. "The launch director waived off today's Artemis I launch," NASA said in a statement. "Multiple troubleshooting efforts to address the area of the leak... did not fix the issue."

Though the area around the launch site was closed to the public, an estimated 400,000 people had gathered nearby to see—and hear—the most powerful vehicle that NASA has ever launched climb into space. The initial launch attempt on Monday was also halted after engineers detected a fuel leak and a sensor showed that one of the rocket's four main engines was too hot. Early Saturday, launch director Charlie Blackwell-Thompson had given the go-ahead to start filling the rocket's tanks with cryogenic fuel. About three million liters of ultra-cold liquid hydrogen and oxygen were due to be pumped into the spacecraft, but the process soon hit

problems. No new date for another try was immediately announced. After the latest delay, there are backup opportunities on Monday or Tuesday. After that, the next launch window will not be until September 19, due to the Moon's position. The purpose of the Artemis I mission is to verify that the Orion capsule, which sits atop the SLS rocket, is safe to carry astronauts in the future. Mannequins equipped with sensors are standing in for astronauts on the mission and will record acceleration, vibration and radiation levels.

It will take several days for the spacecraft to reach the Moon, flying around 60 miles (100 kilometers) at its closest approach. The capsule will fire its engines to get to a distant retrograde orbit (DRO) of 40,000 miles beyond the Moon, a record for a spacecraft rated to carry humans. The trip is expected to last around six weeks and one of its main objectives is to test the capsule's heat shield, which at 16 feet in diameter is the largest ever built.

On its return to Earth's atmosphere, the heat shield will have to withstand speeds of 25,000 miles per hour and a temperature of 5,000 degrees Fahrenheit (2,760 degrees Celsius) — roughly half as hot as the Sun. Artemis is named after the twin sister of the Greek god Apollo, after whom the first Moon missions were named.

Unlike the Apollo missions, which sent only white men to the Moon between 1969 and 1972, Artemis missions will see the first person of color and the first woman step foot on the lunar surface. A government audit estimates the Artemis program's cost will grow to \$93 billion by 2025, with each of its first four missions clocking in at a whopping \$4.1 billion per launch. —AFP

## Timothee Chalamet hungry for blood in Venice



(From left) French US actor, Timothee Chalamet, Canadian actress Taylor Russell, Italian director Luca Guadagnino, US actress Chloe Sevigny and British actor Mark Rylance pose during a photocall for the film "Bones And All" presented in the Venezia 79 competition at the 79th Venice International Film Festival at Lido di Venezia in Venice, Italy. —AFP

Fast becoming the defining Gen Z film star, Timothee Chalamet is testing the stomachs of his many fans with a bone-crunching, blood-splattered "cannibal romance" that premiered in Venice on Friday. "Bones and All", competing at the Venice Film Festival, reunites the 26-year-old with Italian director Luca Guadagnino following their much-loved romance "Call Me By Your Name", which earned Chalamet his first Oscar nomination. Known for his daring red carpet styles, Chalamet did not disappoint with a backless, blood-red bodysuit.

The film puts him alongside relative newcomer Taylor Russell as two young lovers in 1980s rural America, who face the usual coming-of-age challenges, but must also contend with an uncontrollable need for human flesh. At least they did not have to deal with social media, Chalamet told reporters. "It was a relief to play characters who are wrestling with an internal dilemma, absent the ability to go on Reddit or Twitter or TikTok to see how you fit in," he said.

The "Dune" star sounded less than optimistic about the state of the world and the pressure felt by his generation.

"To be young now... is to be intensely judged," he said at the press conference, which was delayed by the frenzy of fans as he arrived on the Lido island. "It's tough to be alive now. Societal collapse is in the air. It smells like it. Without wanting to be pretentious, hopefully that's why these movies matter because the role of the artist, so I'm told, is to shine a light on what's going on." His co-star agreed it was "scary" to be young at this moment. "Opinions are flooded into your everyday in such a drastic and severe way," Russell said. "The hope is you can find your own compass in all of it but that seems a difficult task now."

### 'Intensely isolated'

The 11-day Venice Film Festival runs until September 10, with 23 films competing for the hearts of a jury led by actor Julianne Moore. Critics have been divided on the entries so far. An early frontrunner for best actress award is Cate Blanchett who earned rave reviews for her complex turn as an impassioned but predatory classical music conductor in "Tar". But there were a mixed of laudatory and so-so reviews for US satire "White Noise"

starring Adam Driver that opened the festival on Wednesday.

And many reviewers agreed that "Bardo"—a fantastical semi-autobiography from Mexico's two-time Oscar-winner Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu—was ambitious but "outrageously narcissistic", in the words of The Guardian. "Bones and All" also received mixed verdicts, ranging from Variety ("a dull ramble") through Deadline ("an imperfect masterpiece") to The Guardian calling it a five-star "heartbreaking banquet of brilliance".

It is the first US-based film from Guadagnino, who was also behind comedy-drama "A Bigger Splash" and horror remake "Suspiria". The 51-year-old said he waited so long because "the vastness and complexity of the United States of America merited the perspective of a more mature person".

Chalamet said the film focuses on "intensely isolated young people, without identity yet" and that it was made at the height of the coronavirus pandemic when he, too, felt "cut off from the social contact that helps us understand where we are in the world". —AFP



In this file photo US actress and activist Jane Fonda speaks about her movement to push for political action on climate change during a luncheon at the National Press Club in Washington, DC. —AFP

## Actress Jane Fonda says has cancer

US actress and activist Jane Fonda announced Friday that she has cancer, and has begun chemotherapy. The 84-year-old Oscar winner, a prominent supporter of the Democratic Party vowed to fight the "very treatable" illness. "I've been diagnosed with non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma and have started chemo treatments," she wrote on her verified Instagram account. "This is a very treatable cancer. 80 percent of people survive, so I feel very lucky."

"I'm also lucky because I have health insurance and access to the best doctors and treatments." Fonda, an avowed environmentalist and social campaigner, said her position was more fortunate than that of many others in her situation. "Almost every family in America has had to deal with cancer at one time or another and far too many don't have access to the quality health care I am receiving and this is not right."

Fonda first appeared on screen in 1960, and scored Academy Awards for best actress for "Klute" (1971) and "Coming Home" (1978). She has scored five other Oscar nominations in her career, four of them for best actress. Fonda continues to work, and appears as the voice of an elegant dragon who is the CEO of a luck-making operation in the Apple TV+ animation "Luck". She also stars in the popular, long-running Netflix hit "Grace and Frankie". —AFP



Grab of a file video released by Brazil's National Indian Foundation (FUNAI) showing the hut of a tribesman believed to be the last known survivor of an isolated Amazonian community in Brazil and who is known as "Tanaru Indian" or "the man of the hole." —AFP photos



Grab of a file video taken and released by Brazil's National Indian Foundation (FUNAI), showing a tribesman believed to be the last known survivor of an isolated Amazonian community in Brazil and who is known as "Tanaru Indian" or "the man of the hole," as he looks on in the forest.



Photo shows a tribesman in a loincloth, believed to be the last known survivor of an isolated Amazonian community in Brazil.

## 'Man of the hole' dies, last known survivor of Amazon tribe

For more than 20 years he lived alone in the Brazilian Amazon eating nuts, fruit and game—a symbol of the struggle of indigenous people who exist in isolation in the rainforest. Now this man whose very name was unknown is dead, and his passing has made headlines around the world. His life was marked by massacres that left him as the lone survivor of a small tribe attacked by gunmen apparently hired by ranchers seeking to exploit the pristine Amazon.

He was found dead lying in a hammock on August 23 in Tanaru Indigenous Territory. Authorities found no signs of violence and believe he died of natural causes. The man was covered in the bright feathers of a bird called the guacamaya, a kind of macaw, local news reports said. The

Tanaru Indigenous Territory covers 8,000 hectares (30 square miles) of protected rainforest in Brazil's southwestern Rondonia state, bordering Bolivia. The reserve is surrounded by sprawling cattle ranches.

Rife with rogue miners and wood cutters whose work is illegal, it is one of the most dangerous regions of Brazil, according to the Survival International NGP. The Tanaru land "is like an oasis of green in the sea of destruction," said NGO director Fiona Watson.

### An arrow shot

The "man of the hole" was first spotted in 1996 by a documentary team traveling with officials of the National Indian Foundation, a government agency that was probing a massacre committed against his tribe. Proving the presence of indigenous people in the Tanaru forest area was necessary in order to grant the area legal protection. The footage was featured in a documentary called "Corumbiara" in 2009. In it, the man's eyes are seen peering out from inside a straw hut. A spear pokes out at one point, as if to scare visitors away. But no one utters a word.

Over the years Funai teams came back with representatives of neighboring tribes to try to determine what language the man spoke and learn more about his people. But he made clear he did not want to engage anyone. Feeling threatened, one time he shot an arrow that left a

visiting team member seriously wounded. "One can only imagine what this man was thinking, going through, living on his own, not able to speak to anybody and I think very frightened because any outsider for him represented a threat, given his terrible experience," Watson said.

After that, authorities just tried to patrol his territory and look for signs that he was still alive. In the last known footage of him alive—shot in 2011 but not released until seven years later—he is seen semi-naked cutting down a tree with an axe. Besides bows and arrows that showed he hunted, there were gardens where he grew fruit and vegetables, such as papaya and manioc.

"We saw one of his gardens and it was full of produce—very beautifully kept," said Watson who visited the site in 2005. But what most fascinated researchers were the many holes he dug—some two meters (seven feet) deep and with sharp spears at the bottom.

Funai said officials found 53 places that had been his home in the Tanaru territory, always with the same structure: a small straw hut with one door and a hole. The holes were used to trap animals but experts think they may also be a place for him to hide from intruders or had some kind of spiritual purpose. The holes, Watson said, are "a mystery that has died with him," as is the history of the Tanaru people. Funai has identified 114 indigenous groups that live in isolation in Brazil's part of the Amazon. —AFP

## Stars rally around Spanish boy bullied at school

An 11-year-old boy in Spain who is seen in a viral video being bullied at school on his birthday is getting support from celebrities including French footballer Antoine Griezmann. In the video the boy named Izan is seen curled up and crying while his classmates from a school in Mallorca insult him to the tune of "Happy Birthday".

"Today my brother celebrated his eleventh birthday. He happily bought a cake to celebrate in class," his older brother Marcos wrote in an Instagram post where he posted the video. "And instead of singing 'happy birthday' to him, his classmates gave him the delicious surprise to sing calling him fat," he added. When Izan came home he broke down crying, saying "he didn't want to live anymore," Marcos added.

During the past four years Izan had been insulted and spat on by his classmates while teachers saw and did nothing, he added. The post was picked up by an Instagram soft news account called Es.decididiario which urged its over 700,000 followers to wish Izan a happy birthday in a video message. Dozens of people answered the call, including Griezmann who plays for Atletico Madrid and invited the boy to attend one of the club's matches.

"I wish you a happy birthday, celebrate it well with your friends and family. Enjoy, life is beautiful. A big hug, be strong and I'm waiting for you here," he said in his message. In a 40-minute video compilation of the messages posted by the news site, other famous faces appear including model Jon Kortajarena and actor Aron Piper, a star of Netflix teen drama "Elite". In a video posted Friday, Izan thanked everyone who sent a message, saying it had given him a boost and urged people "to do something" so similar situations do not repeat themselves. —AFP

## Sports

# Duplantis given 'wake-up call' as Obiena steals pole vault win

## 'I am human and I make mistakes and I definitely made some today'

**BRUSSELS, Belgium:** Armand 'Mondo' Duplantis vowed that any danger of becoming complacent would be shelved after he suffered a rare defeat at Friday's Diamond League meet in Brussels. Duplantis failed three times at 5.91 metres, falling to the mat on the third botched effort with a gaping mouth in stunned disbelief.

Ernest John Obiena of the Philippines passed at the same height on the third time of asking, which left the Filipino also shaking his head in disbelief, so dominant has Duplantis been in his event. It was the first defeat of a sparkling season that has seen the 22-year-old US-born Swede win 17 competitions, 14 achieved with vaults over the six-metre barrier.

Those victories have seen Duplantis seal world indoor gold in Belgrade in March and world outdoor honours in Oregon in July. Both were achieved with world record vaults, of 6.20 and 6.21m respectively.

"I did a lot of things poorly technically," said Duplantis, a meticulous perfectionist in a notoriously technically-testing discipline that needs mastery of the runway approach, proper handling of the pole and complete confidence in the exacting projection upwards and over the bar.

"It's rare for me to jump the way I did. Maybe I needed a bit of a wake-up call. I've got to come back next year and do something more special for the people that came out." Duplantis maintained that he felt he could have jumped higher.

"But I didn't jump as I would have liked, for sure. I am human and I make mistakes and I definitely

made some today. "I didn't find the good rhythm on the runway today. I was just thinking about the wrong things. It happens sometimes."

"It's not that easy. You need to be in the exact angle and you need the speed to take off and I didn't find that today."

### Come back stronger

Duplantis said he would aim to improve by the time of next week's Diamond League finals in Zurich. "In Zurich I'll try to come back a little stronger than here. I want to put up another good performance at the end of the year and end on a high."

For very many meets, Duplantis has completely dominated his competition. Waiting patiently to enter at a height that has normally seen a couple of rivals already out, the Swede makes sure of the victory and then goes to plus-6m before deciding whether to have another tilt at the world record.

Asian champion Obiena, a bronze medallist at the Eugene worlds, has a personal best of 5.94m, which he vaulted in Oregon. That height put the Filipino third on this season's world outdoor list, behind Duplantis and American Chris Nilsen, who went clear at 6m dead in May.

And Obiena made the most of his opportunity as Duplantis failed in his three attempts. "It took a lot of luck, a good day and some excellent calls to beat Mondo today," said Obiena. "It's always my goal to win, but I definitely have the magic number of 6m on my mind. That's what I'm training for and



**BRUSSELS, Belgium:** Kenya's Sabastian Kimaru Sawe celebrates a 15km world record in the men's one hour race during the IAAF Diamond League "Memorial Van Damme" athletics meeting at the King Baudouin Stadium in Brussels on September 2, 2022. —AFP

I really think that I'm capable of jumping that height. "It's only a matter of time and some good circumstances."

Nilsen finished third and was not happy. "Third with 5.71m is all I can say. No one produced any good marks today except Ernest John with a first

Diamond League win," he said. "Everyone is a little tired with the end of the season. I am ready to go to the Diamond League Final. In Zurich the goal is a top three and 5.90m. "If I make this I will shoot for 6m. I maybe need to do some speedwork because I felt kind of sluggish today." — AFP

## 'Brave and calm' for India showdown: Pakistan's Rizwan

**SHARJAH:** Pakistan's Mohammad Rizwan says his side are striving to stay "brave and calm" for their second clash with India as the arch-rivals prepare for their next Asia Cup showdown on Sunday.

Babar Azam's team crushed Hong Kong with a 155-run victory on Friday to seal their spot in the final four of the tournament, an entree to the T20 World Cup in October-November.

Afghanistan first play Sri Lanka in Sharjah on Saturday, but it's the much-awaited India-Pakistan battle that is expected to pack the Dubai stadium a day later.

"Playing India is always a pressure game. The whole world, even beyond Asia, wait for it," Rizwan, who hit an unbeaten 78 against Hong Kong, told reporters on Friday.

"The pressure will be equally on India and us, but the result will be with whoever remains brave and keeps calm," added the wicketkeeper-batsman. Pakistan posted 193-2 and skittled out Hong Kong for a paltry 38 in Sharjah to bounce back from their opening loss to India, who won both their matches in Group A.

"I tell players, whether you play India or Hong Kong, it's a game of bat and ball," said Rizwan, 30. "So keep it simple. Yes, it's a big game and our confidence is high but only hard work is in our hands, as the result is from God."

Every India-Pakistan match draws packed stadiums and millions of viewers on TV and digital platforms. The two rival nations only play each other in multi-nation events thanks to years of political tensions that have occasionally erupted into war.

Fans from both countries anticipate a third meeting in next week's final.

"We have to play good cricket and make the final," said Rizwan. "Our fans demand that we give our best and it is visible this time that the boys are giving it their all."

Rizwan and skipper Azam played a starring role in their team's 10-wicket win over India in last year's T20 World Cup — a match that is still talked about on both sides.

Meanwhile, Pakistan on Saturday suffered a new Asia Cup blow with fast bowler Shah Nawaz Dahani ruled out of the key India clash due to a suspected side strain.

Dahani is the third Pakistan quick to be forced out with injury after Shaheen Shah Afridi and Mohammad Wasim left the team ahead of the six-nation tournament in the United Arab Emirates.

Pakistan lost the opener to India but hammered Hong Kong by 155 runs to enter the Super Stage of the tournament, which acts as a tune-up for the T20 World Cup in Australia.

The team said Dahani's injury "happened while bowling in the match against Hong Kong in Sharjah on Friday". "As in the case with any suspected side strain injury, the medical team will monitor him for the next 48-72 hours, following which they will make decisions, including carrying out a scan and further participation in the tournament," read a team statement.

But it is feared that Dahani will have to sit out the rest of the matches, with Hasan Ali, who made the team in place of Wasim, his likely replacement in the XI.

Afghanistan and Sri Lanka are the other two teams in the Super Four from Group B after Bangladesh bowed out. —AFP

## Zimbabwe stun Australia in third ODI win

**TOWNSVILLE, Australia:** Zimbabwe stunned a nearly full-strength Australia by three wickets on Saturday to claim a historic victory in the third one-day international in Townsville. After leg-spinner Ryan Burl (5-10) played a starring role in dismissing the hosts for a lowly 141, Zimbabwe overcame a wobbly chase to beat the cricket powerhouse for the first time in Australia when they hauled in the target in the 39th over, triggering scenes of celebration.

It was a consolation victory for Zimbabwe to conclude the three-match series. "We showed a whole lot of fight... it was a testament to the work the boys put in," said Zimbabwe skipper Regis Chakabva, who top-scored with a composed 37 not out.

The tourists started the chase impressively, with Takudzwanashe Kaitano and Tadiwanashe Marumani posting a 38-run opening stand. But Australia quick Josh Hazlewood turned the game on its head with the wicket of Kaitano (19) in the ninth over, and soon after dismissed Wessly Madhevere and Sean Williams on consecutive deliveries.

A nervous Zimbabwe, seeking just their third victory against Australia from 32 ODIs, batted defensively and slumped to 77-5 after Murumani (35) fell to towering all-rounder Cameron Green. Chakabva calmed the nerves and was joined by an inspired Burl, who hit a six off player-of-the-series Adam Zampa to get Zimbabwe within sight of a famous victory. He fell with five runs needed but there was no late twist.

## US teen Li grabs two-stroke lead at LPGA Dana Open

**WASHINGTON:** American teen Lucy Li fired a bogey-free seven-under par 64 to seize a two-stroke lead after Friday's second round of the LPGA Dana Open. Li, a 19-year-old prodigy of Chinese heritage who played in the US Women's Open at age 11, stood on 10-under 132 after 36 holes at Highland Meadows Golf Club in Sylvania, Ohio.

"Hitting it really good," Li said. "Just got a few more putts to drop today." Chinese 19-year-old Yin Ruoning and Spain's Carlota Ciganda, who shared the 18-hole lead with South Korea's Choi Hye-jin, each fired 69s to share second on 134.

Defending champion Nasa Hataoka of Japan fired a 66 to stand on 135 with Choi, Taiwan's Hsu Wei-ling, Germany's Caroline Masson and American Lexi Thompson. After two victories this year on the US women's developmental tour, Li has already secured a 2023 LPGA berth.

"Just having that good experience will definitely help me going into the weekend," Li said. Li shared ninth last week in Canada, her best LPGA finish, to qualify for this week's event as she chases her first LPGA title. "I've never led an LPGA event before, so we'll see," Li said. "It's kind of a new experience." Li, who started on the 10th hole, birdied the 12th and reeled off three birdies in a row starting at the 14th before adding another at the par-5 18th. She also birdied the par-4 third and par-3 sixth holes.

"I was just hitting it really good, especially on (my) front nine and made a lot of good putts," Li said. "On the back nine I made a lot of good saves for par so that really kept the momentum going." Li won the inaugural girls 10-11 age group title at the 2014 Drive, Chip and Putt Championship at Augusta National, becoming one of the first female champions of any sort at the home of the Masters.

Yin, who also began on the back nine, answered



**TOWNSVILLE, Australia:** An Ibis bird flies by as Australia's batsman Steve Smith bats during the third one-day international (ODI) cricket match between Australia and Zimbabwe at the Riverway Stadium in Townsville on September 3, 2022. —AFP

### 'Relentless with the ball'

"You turn up to international sport and you can get beaten on any day, and we saw that today," said Australia captain Aaron Finch. "They were relentless with the ball early on." In their first series in Australia since 2004, Zimbabwe struggled to be competitive in the opening two matches at the same venue and were routed for just 96 on Wednesday.

In a confidence boost, Chakabva won the toss for the first time in the series and his accurate attack claimed regular wickets against Australia's misfiring batting order. Only two batters reached double figures, with star opener David Warner (94) playing a lone hand in Australia's innings lasting just 31 overs.

After Zimbabwe's probing seamers tore through Australia's top-order, an inspired Burl claimed five wickets in a whirlwind 18 balls starting with the key scalp of Glenn Maxwell, who helped rebuild the innings with a half-century partnership alongside Warner. The dangerous Maxwell holed out for 19 in the 27th over and Burl got on a roll in his career best performance, including dismissing Warner, who fell just short of his 19th ODI century. Zimbabwe bowled out Australia for the first time in ODIs and the eventual triumph fuelled their bid to climb the ODI Super League ladder, which goes towards qualification for next year's 50-over World Cup in India. —AFP



**SYLVANIA:** Ana Belac of Slovenia watches her tee shot on the fifth hole during the second round of the Dana Open presented by Marathon at Highland Meadows Golf Club on September 02, 2022 in Sylvania, Ohio. —AFP

bogeys at the 11th and par-5 17th with birdies on the next hole each time. She also birdied the par-5 seventh and the ninth. "Teeing off super early, I just feel part of me still in the bed," Yin said. "Just tried to save some pars out there, make some putts."

World number 421 Yin, a rookie making only her 12th LPGA start and coming off a wrist injury, missed the cut in seven of her nine prior LPGA starts this year. "I just need to keep putting and keep shooting good shots," Yin said. "I need to work on my approach and driver shot a little bit and I think everything will be fine."

World number 40 Ciganda made birdies at the third, ninth and par-3 14th holes with a lone bogey at the fifth. "Overall, I played good," Ciganda said. "Made a couple of saves, gave myself some chances. I would have liked a couple more birdies but I'm in a good position going into the weekend." —AFP

## Leclerc tops final Dutch GP practice

**ZANDVOORT, Netherlands:** Ferrari's Charles Leclerc topped the times ahead of George Russell of Mercedes in Saturday's third and final practice for the Dutch Grand Prix, the pair edging out local hero and runaway series leader Max Verstappen.

Red Bull's world champion was third in a closely-matched session that raised the prospect of a tight and competitive qualifying session at the short and compact Zandvoort circuit. Leclerc was quickest with a best lap in one minute and 11.632 seconds to outpace Russell by 0.066 seconds with Verstappen a tenth of a second behind.

Carlos Sainz was fourth in the second Ferrari, less than two-tenths off the 24-year-old Dutchman's pace, ahead of seven-time champion Lewis Hamilton in the second Mercedes and Sergio Perez, who was sixth in the second Red Bull.

The top six were separated by only half a second. Two-time champion Fernando Alonso was seventh for Alpine ahead of four-time champion Sebastian Vettel of Aston Martin, the man he is set to replace next year, with Mick Schumacher ninth for Haas and Lando Norris 10th for McLaren.

It was a session with few notable incidents that saw the times improve throughout as the conditions encouraged greater speed. On another perfect, dry late-summer's day, with an air temperature of 23 degrees and the track at 29, Perez was the first man out followed by Gasly. For several minutes, they were the only cars on track.

Verstappen made a dramatic entrance after 12 minutes by topping the timesheets immediately in 1:12.309 with Sainz slotting in second behind him, six seconds adrift. It was a statement lap from the Dutchman in front of his vast army of fans in the 105,000 crowd, packed into the tight and picturesque circuit in the North Sea sand dunes. Despite complaining of lack of grip, Verstappen trimmed his time to 1:12.196 after 22 minutes with Leclerc in pursuit, 0.5sec adrift, and Hamilton third, six-tenths off the pace. —AFP

Sports

# All Blacks run rampant in emphatic win over Argentina

‘When you’ve had a few losses, it’s easy to shut down a little bit’

**HAMILTON, New Zealand:** The All Blacks put their Rugby Championship troubles behind them with a 53-3 dismantling of Argentina in Hamilton Saturday, as New Zealand coach Ian Foster lauded his team's ambition. The rampant home side scored seven tries in an emphatic display to avenge last week's shock loss to the Pumas, with the outcome leaving both teams on two wins and two losses in the Rugby Championship.

Up 24-3 at halftime, New Zealand's display was vastly more clinical than last week's 25-18 defeat in Christchurch. On that occasion, the Pumas' resolute defensive wall and breakdown physicality held sway, but the All Blacks found ways to overcome those hurdles in their most eye-catching performance of a turbulent year.

It brings some relief for under-fire coach Foster, who has now overseen three wins from his last nine Tests in charge—a record he will hope to improve in two remaining Rugby Championship Tests against Australia this month.

Foster said he was proud of his players. “I just love the ambition. When you’ve had a few losses, it’s easy to shut down a little bit,” he said. “That’s what I think we saw in the in the last quarter last week, and this week’s been about sort of just trying to change that and getting them just to trust the rugby players that they are. I was really pleased with the ambition particularly early when it was very wet.

“I thought we played with a bit of width and then spread them out a bit.” Despite the weather conditions, New Zealand made only three handling errors while unleashing several thrilling attacking moves.

They created first-half tries to Ethan de Groot, Caleb Clarke and Reiko Ioane while Jordie Barrett,

Ardie Savea, Brodie Retallick and Beauden Barrett crossed after the interval. Argentina wing Emiliano Boffelli, who scored 20 points with the boot last week, landed a solitary penalty for his team's only points.

**Under pressure**

Captain Sam Cane, whose position is also under scrutiny, expressed relief. “It was massively important (to win), we were under a bit of pressure. We weren't happy with what we dished up last week,” he said. “This week, we were in the game right from the start and we're able to turn that into points. That was a pretty enjoyable night.”

Argentina counterpart Julian Montoya said his team learned some valuable lessons. “We need to keep working to be better. Last week we weren't world champions, this week we are not the worst of the world,” he said.

“We need to look inside now and try to improve because in a couple of weeks we have South Africa. Congrats to New Zealand, they played really well.” New Zealand's forwards laid the platform, dominating the breakdown in a key reversal of last week, while they benefited from a strategy that entailed more kicking variations. Argentina couldn't match the ball-running prowess of the All Blacks forwards, led by No.8 Savea and hooker Samisoni Taukei'aho—an area Foster said they had focused on.

“We carried well, we carried smart and (there was) a big difference in the officiating, too. The breakdown was very different to last week and that gave us a lot of confidence to play with the ball.” The visitors were on the back foot from the start, when lock Tomas Lavanini dropped the first pass of the game.



HAMILTON: New Zealand's Will Jordan runs with the ball during the rugby union Test match between New Zealand and Argentina at FMG Stadium in Hamilton on September 3, 2022. —AFP

Fly-half Richie Mo'unga slotted a penalty goal—his first of 14 points—and converted a close-range try from prop de Groot. New Zealand were 17-0 ahead inside the first quarter, when quick hands and an injection of speed from the impressive centre Ioane put wing Clarke across in the left corner.

Boffelli kicked his only penalty shot but the visitors paid soon afterwards for a yellow card shown to Lavanini for a professional foul. New Zealand

exploited the numerical advantage to send Ioane over, capping a dominant first-half display.

Argentina enjoyed more territory in the second spell but they failed to capitalise and began to fade, allowing New Zealand to surge clear in a contrasting finish to their final-quarter struggles last week. Fullback Jordie Barrett began a late try-scoring flood, followed by Savea and replacements Retallick and Beauden Barrett. —AFP

## Zain Premier Football League results

By Abdellatif Sharaa

**KUWAIT:** The second round of Zain Premier Football League was completed over the weekend. Nasr Football Club met Sahel on Thursday. The match started with Sahel playing exceptionally well and drew first blood 13 minutes into the match by its Algerian player Tarek Aggoun, then Nasr quickly equalized in the 17th minute with a shot by Mohammad Daham. Several attempts were made by both teams in the first half, but Nasr's Nigerian player Dennis Sesugh scored the goal in the 43rd minute.

Both teams gave defense little attention in the second half as both wanted to come out winners and both had chances to score, but failed to materialize them, and it was not until the added time when Nasr's Brazilian player Francisco Torres, made the score 3-1.

Al-Nasr now has 4 points in third place while Sahel in eighth place with zero points.

Kuwait Football Club entered its match against Tadhamon on Thursday, determined to make up for its first round loss, and succeeded to score their first goal in the second minute of the match by Ahmad Al-Dhafiri. Tadhamon players were not able to threaten Kuwait's goal during most of the first half, then in the 31st minute referee Saud Al-Samhan granted Kuwait a penalty kick which was scored by Tunisian Taha Khenissi in the 31st minute making the score 2-0.

Tadhamon did not seem to be worried about the result and hardly made any serious attacks against Kuwait, and things became more complicated in the 75th minute when defender Samuel Sarfo from Ghana saw red. The match ended with the score of 2-0. Kuwait, the current league champion, is in sixth place with 3 points, while Tadhamon is in 9th placed and pointless.

On Friday, Qadsiya met Fahaheel and managed to score one goal by Bernard Henry from Cote d'Ivoire in the 30th minute. Qadsiya now tops the table with 6

**Zain Football Premier League Standings**

Rank	Team	P	W	T	L	+	-	+/-	P
1.	Qadsiya	2	2	0	0	4	2	2	6
2.	Kazma	2	1	1	0	4	1	3	4
3.	Nasr	2	1	1	0	4	2	2	4
4.	Salmiya	2	1	1	0	3	2	1	4
5.	Jahra	2	1	1	0	2	1	1	4
6.	Kuwait	2	1	0	1	2	1	1	3
7.	Arabi	2	0	2	0	3	3	0	2
8.	Sahel	2	0	0	2	3	6	-3	0
9.	Tadhamon	2	0	0	2	0	3	-3	0
10.	Fahaheel	2	0	0	2	0	4	-4	0

**Zain Premier Football results of the second round:**

Arabi	2	Salmiya	2
Sahel	1	Nasr	3
Tadhamon	0	Kuwait	2
Fahaheel	0	Qadsiya	1
Jahra	1	Kazma	1



Kuwait Football Club and Tadhamon Sports Club battle for the ball.



Qadsiya and Fahaheel Sports Club.

points, although there are still some doubts about Qadsiya's performance.

Fahaheel on the other hand had a good performance, but it leaned more on defense and this did not help them score any goal, and in fact Qadsiya added a second goal in the 80th minute, which was disallowed after referring to the VAR technology.

The match ended with the score of 1-0 leaving Fahaheel in 10th and last place without a point.

The final match of round 2 was between Kazma and

Jahra, which saw a dramatic finish. Jahra scored early in the 11th minute of the match by Isaka Abudo Diarra from Ghana.

Kazma, following Jahra's score attempted to score the equalizer making one attack after the other but goal keeper Bader Al-Sanoon's heroics kept his net clean.

Kazma's Jordanian player Emad Azzi finally had a ball that crossed the goal line in the 90+2 minute giving his team one point by his equalizer. Kazma now is in second place with 4 points and Jahra in 5th with 4 points also.

## Juve held by Fiorentina ahead of PSG clash

**FLORENCE, Italy:** Juventus were held to a 1-1 draw at Fiorentina on Saturday in another underwhelming Serie A display ahead of their trip to Paris Saint-Germain midweek. Massimiliano Allegri's side had the chance to go top temporarily of Italy's top flight against fierce rivals Fiorentina but after taking an early lead through Arkadiusz Milik on his first Juve start they failed to earn the win.

Juventus sit fourth on nine points, just behind leaders Atalanta and level with third-placed Inter Milan, who face off with AC Milan in a bumper Saturday which closes with Lazio hosting Liverpool's midweek opponents Napoli.

They can count themselves fortunate to have left Florence with a draw after Christian Kouame levelled midway through the first half and Mattia Perin saved Luka Jovic's penalty just before the break. “We could have done better with some of our counter-attacks, but we should have closed the match out in the first half,” said Allegri, who is under pressure from supporters.

“The boys played well, I saw good commitment and we kept our five-match unbeaten run going.” A poor performance which featured just four shots is not a good omen for Juve heading into Tuesday's Champions League Group H opener at PSG.

Milik has made a great start to his Juve career and turned in his second goal for the club since arriving last week with nine minutes on the clock. The Poland forward added to his late strike against Spezia on Wednesday when he reacted quickly to the arrival of Filip Kostic's stinging volley, meeting the ball with his chest and opening the scoring. Fiorentina responded and after a few half chances Kouame levelled in the 29th minute by expertly finishing under Perin following a counter-attack launched from a Juve corner. Ivorian Kouame's strike was Fiorentina's first goal in the league since the first half of their opening day win over promoted Cremonese.

The hosts' passionate support was already creating a racket and they increased the volume when after a VAR review referee Daniele Doveri awarded their team a penalty for debutant Leandro Paredes' clear handball.

But they went into the half-time break deflated as Mattia Perin pushed Luka Jovic's spot-kick on to the post and made sure Juve went into the break level. Fiorentina were the only team trying for the win as the match wore on but Perin saved a point for Juve again in the dying seconds when he kept out Sofyan Amrabat's late screamer with a stunning save. —AFP

## Freiburg go top of Bundesliga, Bayern held at Union

**BERLIN:** Bayern Munich coach Julian Nagelsmann said Saturday his team lacked their usual energy after they were held to a draw for the second week in a row at Union Berlin and knocked off top spot in the Bundesliga.

Union battled to a well-earned 1-1 draw at home to Bayern, allowing fellow high-fliers Freiburg to leapfrog their way into first after they beat Bayer Leverkusen in a five-goal thriller. “In the end it was a fair result. The energy which I've praised so often in the last few weeks wasn't really

there today,” said Nagelsmann, adding that his side would need to perk up in their Champions League opener against Inter next Wednesday.

“Union showed today what makes them so strong. In the end, it was a top of the table clash in which both sides deserved to draw,” added Bayern striker Thomas Mueller. After their impressive start to the season, Union had begun the day hot on Bayern's heels with only goal difference separating the two teams.

They showed why early in the first half, taking the lead through Sheraldo Becker with a brilliantly worked free-kick to stun the champions and send the home crowd into ecstasy. Their celebrations were cut short a few minutes later as Bayern immediately turned the screws and Kimmich levelled the scores with a fizzing, first-time finish from the edge of the area. Bayern were repeatedly thwarted by Danish goalkeeper Frederik Ronnow

as both sides had chances to win the game in a thrilling battle after the break.

**Freiburg steal top spot**

Their second slip in as many weeks mean the champions are now in third, behind Borussia Dortmund and surprise leaders Freiburg, who beat Leverkusen 3-2. Leverkusen took the lead on 16 minutes, Kerem Demirbay prodding the ball in after some penalty-box pinball.

Yet Freiburg hit back with two quick goals after half time, Matthias Ginter heading in the equaliser from a corner early before Michael Gregoritsch capitalised on a defensive error to turn the game on its head.

Chelsea loanee Callum Hudson-Odoi then set up Patrick Schick with a fine cross just minutes after coming off the bench for his debut, but Ritsu Doan restored Freiburg's lead just a few minutes

later. Elsewhere, former Bayern coach Niko Kovac's difficult start to life at Wolfsburg continued with a 4-2 defeat to Cologne.

Wolfsburg took the lead through Lukas Nmecha after just two minutes, but they were booed into the tunnel at half time after Cologne stormed from behind to take control of the game. Dejan Ljubicic levelled the scores with a cool finish at the end of a delightful passing move, before a Paulo Otavio own goal and a Florian Kainz penalty gave the visitors a deserved 3-1 lead at the break.

Nmecha gave the hosts late hope with a goal in the second half, before Sargis Adamyan restored Cologne's two-goal lead. Two Niclas Füllkrug goals fired Werder Bremen to a 2-0 victory over bottom side Bochum, while Schalke are still looking for their first win of the season after a 1-1 draw at Stuttgart. —AFP

## US Open dream over as Serena bows out

Tiger, Michelle Obama lead tributes to 'the greatest' Serena



NEW YORK: USA's Serena Williams waves to the audience after losing against Australia's Ajla Tomljanovic during their 2022 US Open Tennis tournament women's singles third round match at the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center in New York. — AFP

NEW YORK: Serena Williams bowed out of the US Open and headed into retirement on Friday after a battling loss to Australia's Ajla Tomljanovic while world number one Daniil Medvedev crushed the giant-killing dreams of Chinese youngster Wu Yibing with an emphatic victory.

On another night of searing emotion in the Billie Jean King Tennis Center's main Arthur Ashe Stadium, 23-time Grand Slam champion Williams finally met her match in Tomljanovic, losing 7-5, 6-7 (4/7) 6-1 in an attritional slug-fest lasting more than three hours.

The defeat was almost certainly Williams' last ever appearance in Grand Slam singles event, the final act of a 27-year professional career that saw the 40-year-old American become a sporting and cultural icon who many believe is the greatest women's tennis player in history.

"It's been a fun ride," a clearly emotional Williams said in an on-court interview following her loss. "It's been the most incredible ride and journey

I've ever been on, I mean, in my life. "I'm just so grateful to every single person that's ever said, 'Go, Serena,' in their life. You got me here."

Although Williams has not definitively announced her retirement, she said in a *Vogue* magazine essay last month that she would "evolve" away from tennis after the US Open. Williams said Friday that she was excited by the prospect of her life after tennis.

"I'm ready to, like, be a mom, explore a different version of Serena," she said. "Technically in the world I'm still super young, so I want to have a little bit of a life while I'm still walking." Golf superstar Tiger Woods and former US first lady Michelle Obama were among a legion of admirers who paid tribute to Williams following her US Open exit.

"@serenawilliams you're literally the greatest on and off the court," tweeted Woods. "Thank you for inspiring all of us to pursue our dreams."

Obama meanwhile saluted Williams' rise from the gritty Los Angeles neighborhood of Compton to the

pinnacle of her sport. "Congrats on amazing career, @SerenaWilliams! How lucky were we to be able to watch a young girl from Compton grow up to become one of the greatest athletes of all time," tweeted Obama.

In other matches, Tunisia's fifth-seeded Ons Jabeur made it to the fourth round at the 10th attempt with a 4-6, 6-4, 6-3 victory over 31st seed Shelby Rogers. "I know that I don't play the best on hard courts, but it's always amazing to see how I'm improving, how I'm pushing my limits," Jabeur said.

Jabeur will face 18th seed Veronika Kudermetova in the last 16. The Russian blew past Hungary's Dalma Galfi 6-2, 6-0. US teenager Coco Gauff meanwhile reached the last 16 with a 6-2, 6-3 defeat of compatriot Madison Keys.

In the men's draw, defending champion Medvedev ended the run of China's Wu to set-up a blockbuster last-16 clash against Nick Kyrgios. Medvedev eased past world number 174 Wu, who

came through qualifying, 6-4, 6-2, 6-2.

Medvedev, who won his maiden Grand Slam title in New York last year, is delighted with his form as he approaches the business end of the tournament. "If you ask me what I could improve, I don't see many things," he said. "Maybe a little bit less double-faults, but that's if we're trying to dig somewhere."

"If I continue this way, I have good opportunities to do something big." Wimbledon runner-up Kyrgios made the fourth round for the first time by seeing off America's J.J. Wolf 6-4, 6-2, 6-3. Kyrgios says he is relishing the opportunity of playing on the big stage against Medvedev.

"Win or lose, I'm proud of how far I've come," he said. "I've worked hard to be in the fourth round. I want to be there. I think that's where every tennis player wants to be, playing the best players in the world in the best stadiums in the world, getting paid well. I'm looking forward to it." — AFP

## Everton keeper denies Liverpool; Havertz seals win

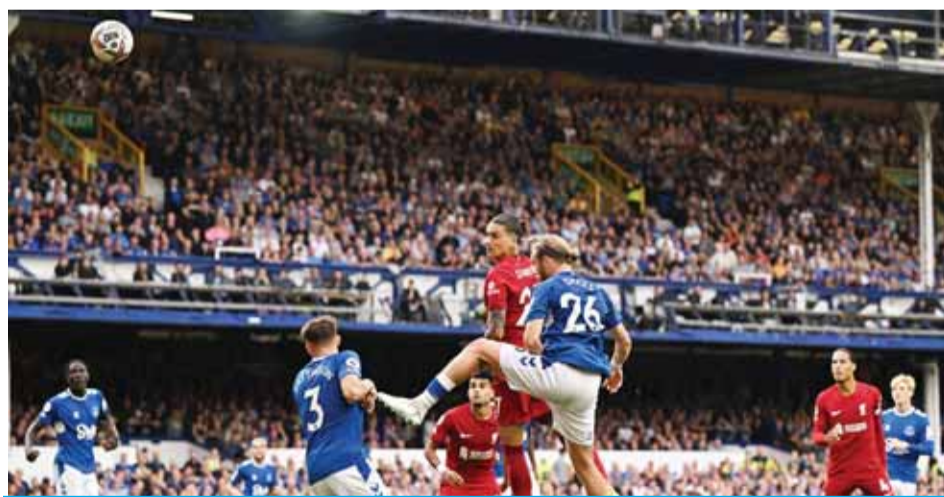
LONDON: Kai Havertz scored the late winner as big-spending Chelsea fought back for a controversial 2-1 win against West Ham, while Liverpool boss Jurgen Klopp praised Everton keeper Jordan Pickford's "spectacular" display in Saturday's goalless Merseyside derby.

Having embarked on a £250 million (\$280 million) spending spree in the summer transfer window, Chelsea are expected to deliver on their new owners' eye-watering investment. The early returns had been mixed as Chelsea crashed to defeats against Leeds and Southampton.

So when Michail Antonio gave West Ham a shock 62nd minute lead with a close-range finish, the critics were sharpening their knives at Stamford Bridge. But Ben Chilwell equalised in the 76th minute, just three minutes after the England left-back replaced Marc Cucurella.

Chilwell headed Thiago Silva's lofted ball past his marker, spun around and poked his shot through Lukas Fabianski's legs from a tight angle. Kai Havertz cleverly finished off Chilwell's cross to complete Chelsea's escape in the 88th minute of a thrilling finale.

There was still more drama as Maxwel Cornet appeared to equalise in stoppage-time, only for the goal to be controversially disallowed by VAR for Jarrod Bowen's foul on Mendy. Thomas Tuchel's side remain unconvincing but they are up to fifth place after their third win in six games, while West Ham boss David Moyes was livid with



LIVERPOOL: Liverpool's Uruguayan striker Darwin Nunez (C) heads this attempt over during the English Premier League football match between Everton and Liverpool at Goodison Park in Liverpool, north west England on September 3, 2022. — AFP

the officials for denying his team a point.

At Goodison Park, there was more VAR intrigue as Conor Coady thought he had put Everton ahead with a close-range finish from Neal Maupay's shot in the second half. But Coady's goal was correctly disallowed for offside after a VAR check.

There could easily have been goals aplenty but for a man of the match display from Pickford and some fine stops from his Liverpool counterpart Alisson Becker. "Wow, what can you do? It was a great derby, super intense, with a lot of really spectacular saves," Klopp said.

"We hit the post three times and Pickford made so many saves. I don't know how many derbies I've been in, but it's quite a few and they're always difficult here." Everton are now without a victory in their first six games this term, while Liverpool's momentum was checked after winning their previous two matches.

Unbeaten Tottenham made it four wins from six games with a 2-1 victory against Fulham in north London. Pierre-Emile Hojbjerg broke the deadlock for Tottenham in the 40th minute, sweeping home from Richarlison's pass.

Harry Kane increased Tottenham's lead in the 74th minute from Ryan Sessegnon's cross to become the third highest goal-scorer in the Premier League history, with 188 goals taking him past Andy Cole. Only Alan Shearer (260) and Wayne Rooney (208) are now above Kane in the scoring chart.

Kane's goal also moved him level with Thierry Henry's tally of 43 in Premier League London derbies. Fulham's Aleksandar Mitrovic curled home in the 82nd minute, but Tottenham held firm.

Managerless Bournemouth came back from two goals down to win 3-2 in a thriller at Nottingham Forest. — AFP

## Rodrygo keeps Real perfect with Betis win

MADRID: Rodrygo scored the winner as Real Madrid made it four wins from four in La Liga on Saturday with a 2-1 victory that ended Real Betis' perfect start to the season. Vinicius Junior struck for the third game running as Madrid took an early lead at the Santiago Bernabeu, but Sergio Canales soon equalised with a goal against his former club.

Rodrygo secured maximum points for Carlo Ancelotti's side just past the hour with his first goal of the campaign. Madrid moved three points clear of second-placed Betis, but Barcelona could trim the gap to two if they beat Sevilla later on Saturday. Playing at home for the first time this season as renovation

work continues on their iconic ground, Madrid had a lucky early escape when Nabil Fekir appeared to be fouled in the area. The incident went unpunished and was not reviewed, but Fekir was unable to continue and had to be replaced by Luiz Henrique. Madrid promptly inflicted a sucker punch as Vinicius raced onto David Alaba's ball over the top, lobbing Betis goalkeeper Rui Silva for the opening goal. Betis, who began the season with wins over Elche, Mallorca and Osasuna, hit back when Borja Iglesias laid off a throw-in for Canales to drive through the legs of Thibaut Courtois.

Vinicius should have immediately restored Madrid's lead, blazing over a cross from Rodrygo. Silva then made a miraculous stop to claw out Aurelien Tchouameni's header. Karim Benzema skewed over and then failed to convert from point-blank range moments after half-time, the Frenchman ultimately denied by a crucial touch from Silva. — AFP



MADRID: Real Madrid's Spanish defender Dani Carvajal (L) fights for the ball with Real Betis' Spanish midfielder Sergio Canales during the Spanish league football match on September 3, 2022. — AFP