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KUWAIT: LAND OF GIVING

Kuwait by Your Side: 130,000 donors raise KD 20.7m

Bader Al-Kharafi: Zain pledges \$10m to quake victims

Kuwait Times, Kuwait News participate in campaign

Turkish envoy praises Kuwait's humanitarian support



KUWAIT: Zain Vice Chairman and Group CEO Bader Nasser Al-Kharafi announced Zain Group will donate \$10 million to support people affected by the earthquake in Turkey and Syria.

KUWAIT: Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Sheikh Salem Al-Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah said "generous donations" for quake-hit people in Syria and Turkey during the "Kuwait by Your Side" campaign reflect the philanthropic nature of the people of Kuwait. Speaking to Kuwait TV on Saturday, Sheikh Salem thanked the individuals and corporations who contributed to the aid campaign.

The fundraising drive collected more than KD 20.7 million from nearly 130,000 donors. Zain, Kuwait's leading digital service provider, pledged \$10 million towards humanitarian efforts. Zain Vice Chairman and Group CEO Bader Al-Kharafi said in a phone-in to the campaign that Zain Group will donate \$10 million to support people affected by the earthquake.

Media personality Abdullah Boftain, Deputy Editor-in-Chief of Kuwait Times and Managing Partner of Kuwait News, par-

ticipated in the livestreaming of the "Kuwait by Your Side" fundraising campaign on Kuwait TV. Boftain sent a message to journalists worldwide to avoid rushing to repost videos that violate the sanctity of the dead. He urged colleagues to maintain journalistic integrity, stressing that human beings are not material for a scoop.

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Soon after the quake hit on Monday, the Kuwaiti leadership, government and people rushed to offer a hand to the brotherly peoples of Syria and Turkey, which comes as no surprise for Kuwait, the foreign minister pointed out. Sheikh Salem extolled HHH the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah for his timely direction to send aid to the quake-hit people in Syria and Turkey. He thanked HHH the

Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and HHH the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Nawaf Al-Sabah for their instructions to competent government agencies to spare no effort in sending the assistance and following up on the relief campaign.

The minister hailed as great the contributions to the campaign by Minister of Information and Culture and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Abdul-Rahman Al-Mutairi and Minister of Social and Community Development Affairs and Minister of State for Women and Childhood Affairs Mai Al-Baghli. Launched at noon on Saturday at the behest of the political leadership, the aid campaign "Kuwait by Your Side" continued until midnight. It was co-organized by the ministries of social affairs, foreign affairs and information, and covered live by Kuwait TV.

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US jet shoots down 'object' over Canada

OTTAWA: A US fighter jet shot down an unidentified object over Canada on Saturday, the second such incident in North American skies since the dramatic downing of a suspected Chinese spy balloon a week ago. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said a joint US-Canadian military operation led to the takedown of the object, the latest in a series of mysterious air intrusions. "Canadian and US aircraft were scrambled, and a US F-22 successfully fired at the object," Trudeau tweeted Saturday.

Shortly after the 3:41 pm (2041 GMT) downing of the object, aviation authorities shut down part of the airspace over the northwest US state of Montana after detecting what they called a "radar anomaly," the US Northern Command said. In a sign of jitters over possible intrusions, Northern Command said US fighter jets took to the skies but "did not identify any object to correlate to the radar hits." Skies were then reopened to commercial air traffic.

The object shot down in the Yukon was "small, cylindrical" in shape, said Canada's defense minister, Anita Anand. "The object was flying at an altitude of approximately 40,000 feet, had unlawfully entered Canadian airspace, and posed a reasonable threat to the safety of civilian flight," Anand told reporters. Trudeau said Canadian forces in the Yukon "will now recover and analyze the wreckage of the object".

He said he spoke with US President Joe Biden over the latest incursion, while Anand also said she spoke with US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin. The new incursions into Alaska and the Yukon came after the United States said Wednesday that suspected Chinese spy balloons like the one it shot down Feb 4 were part of a "fleet" that has spanned five continents. NATO also voiced concern. Anand, however, said "it would not be prudent for me to speculate on the origins of the object at this time."

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Quake deaths top 33,000, toll could double

KAHRAMANMARAS, Turkey: The UN denounced Sunday a failure to get desperately needed aid to war-torn regions of Syria, while warning that the death toll of over 33,000 from an earthquake that also devastated Turkey could double. A UN convoy with supplies for northwest Syria arrived via Turkey, but the agency's relief chief Martin Griffiths said much more was needed for millions whose homes were destroyed.

"We have so far failed the people in northwest Syria. They rightly feel abandoned. Looking for international help that hasn't arrived," Griffiths said on Twitter. Supplies have been slow to arrive in Syria, where years of conflict have ravaged the healthcare system, and parts of the country remain under the control of rebels battling the government of President Bashar al-Assad, which is under Western sanctions.

The UN convoy of ten trucks crossed into northwest Syria via the Bab al-Hawa border crossing, according to an AFP correspondent, carrying shelter kits including plastic sheeting, ropes and screws and nails, as well as blankets, mattresses and carpets. Bab al-Hawa is the

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Kuwait slams Zionist entity's brutal crimes

CAIRO: Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Sheikh Salem Al-Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah renewed Kuwait's strong condemnation of "unjustifiable (Zionist) brutality" against the Palestinian people in the occupied territories. "Kuwait followed, with profound concern, the recent escalation of the brutal crimes which constitute a flagrant violation of the relevant UN Security Council resolutions and



KUWAIT: Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Sheikh Salem Al-Sabah attends the conference.

international law," Sheikh Salem in his address to the high-level Conference in Support of Jerusalem, hosted at the Arab League headquarters in Cairo on Sunday.

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First stage of Delhi-Mumbai highway opens

NEW DELHI: India on Sunday inaugurated the first stage of its longest expressway, a route linking New Delhi and Mumbai, as it makes a concerted infrastructure push to catch up with geopolitical rival China. The ambitious \$13 billion project will eventually cut the road travel time between the country's two biggest cities in half, to 12 hours.

India is the world's fastest-growing major economy and will soon be rec-

ognized as its most populous country, but its infrastructure remains decades behind that of its northern neighbor. A sign over one of the new four-lane carriageways proclaimed "Welcome to Delhi-Vadodara-Mumbai Expressway" - a route that spans a total of 1,386 km.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi opened the 246-km first stage Sunday, linking the capital with the tourist city of Jaipur in Rajasthan. It was a "sign of developing India", he said, adding that "such investments in railways, highways, subway lines and airports are a key to pushing the country's growth rate, attracting more investments and creating fresh jobs".

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HATAY: A Turkish soldier walks among destroyed buildings on Feb 12, 2023. — AFP



CAIRO: (From left) Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, Jordanian King Abdullah II and Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi talk to delegates during the Arab League's Conference in Support of Jerusalem on Feb 12, 2023. — AFP



DAUSA, India: People stand along the newly inaugurated Delhi-Dausa-Lalsot section of the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway in Rajasthan on Feb 12, 2023. — AFP



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Local

Turkish envoy praises Kuwait's timely humanitarian support

KRCS provides meals to earthquake victims



KUWAIT: Turkish Ambassador Tuba Sonmez with (KRCS) officials. — KUNA

KUWAIT: Kuwait's 'humanitarian' and timely response to the earthquake that struck Turkey and Syria deserves much praise, Turkey's Ambassador Tuba Sonmez said on Sunday, nearly a week after the natural disaster unfolded.

Turkey is grateful for the copious amounts of Kuwaiti aid that has flowed into the regions affected by the quake, the envoy said during talks with

Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) chief Dr Hilal Al-Sayer, citing ongoing efforts to ensure that the aid effectively reaches those most in need. Ankara will never forget Kuwait's "humanitarian response" to the devastating earthquake that left thousands of people dead or injured, while causing heaps of destruction in its wake, she underlined.

KRCS will be persistent in its efforts to ensure



Kuwait Red Crescent Society's team in Turkey.

that the aid reaches the Turkish and Syrian regions hardest hit by the earthquake, the charity's chief emphasized.

Meanwhile, Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) on Sunday in cooperation with Turkey's Red Crescent Society supplied and dispersed meals to earthquake victims. In a statement to KUNA, head of the KRCS delegation team in Turkey, Nabil

Al-Hafez said 250 meals were donated to those victims in Gaziantep. Adding, a shipment of 150 tons of supplies will be provided and will include blankets, tents, food, medical items, amongst other equipment, and will be donated to areas in both Syria and Turkey. The Qatari Red Crescent will also be helping with the donation and logistical aspects of the process, Al-Hafez added. — KUNA

In my view

Mitigating damage from earthquakes is possible

By Lawyer Mohammad Al-Muthaffar

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Last Monday, we woke up to heartbreaking news of a major earthquake in Turkey and Syria. The earthquake left thousands of people dead and many more wounded. It also resulted in the collapse of buildings and infrastructure and the destruction of public and private property. These disasters are from God Almighty and are difficult to predict or prepare for, despite our best attempts. It's also difficult to avoid their grave outcomes.

Earthquakes are a natural phenomenon resulting from increased stress to tectonic plates as they move. This is followed by rebounds called seismic waves. The phenomenon occurs because of the breaking and displacement of rocks due to the accumulation of internal stresses on the earth as a result of geological influences driving the movement of plates.

The earthquake arises as a result of volcanic activities or as a result of the presence of slips in the layers of the earth's crust. In addition to their devastating effects on buildings, transportation and facilities, earthquakes lead to cracks in the ground, depletion of springs, the emergence of new springs, rises and depressions in the earth's crust, as well as the occurrence of high waves under the sea (tsunamis).

But in some countries, such as Japan, where earthquakes occur frequently, we find that they have prepared well for such disasters, in anticipation of their sudden occurrence. We find that they have built buildings that can withstand these tremors. It's time for countries that are highly exposed to such earthquakes to follow Japan's lead to be able to reduce the effects of these earthquakes.

Many expat staff in MoE without valid residency: Official

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Education (MoE) has revealed that there are employees working in departments of the ministry without a valid residency permit in violation of the Iqama law.

Director of the Human Resources Department at the Ministry of Education Saud Al-Juwaiser stated, "We would like to inform you that there is a group of expatriate employees working in the ministry in all educational regions without a valid residency permit. Based on a decree, it is prohibited to harbor, house or use any foreigner whose residence in the country is illegal. Therefore, they are considered to be in violation of the residency law," he said.

"Therefore, I kindly ask you to circulate to all school principals a warning and periodic review of the residency of their expatriate workers so that we will not be notified by the Ministry of Interior in this regard. Notify the ministry's General Office's Human Resources Department at the Passports Department in the event that you find any employee who does not have a valid residency permit so that we can implement the procedures followed," Al-Juwaiser added.



Al-Ahmadi Governorate leaders attend the event. — KUNA

Call for preemptive campaigns to fight drug menace

KUWAIT: Launching preemptive awareness campaigns are necessary for the overall state

Sabah Al-Ahmad development contract signed

KUWAIT: The Public Authority for Housing Affairs has signed deal with S3 company for developing lands and real estate by which the company would finance, develop, operate and perform maintenance in Sabah Al-Ahmad residential area. The development of the area will include building a hotel, markets and entertainment centers. The company had signed a commitment document with the authority last November after winning the bid for the project. Director of the authority, Nasser Al-Khuraibet said: "All procedures have taken place in accordance with the law and the investment regulations issued by ministerial decision and

Wives of Kuwaitis to wait longer for citizenship

KUWAIT: The Kuwaiti government is expediting the request to amend the regulations around granting nationality to the wife of a Kuwaiti man, according to informed sources. The amendments are expected to allow the wife to obtain Kuwaiti nationality after her Kuwaiti child turns 18 years old. The current law grants them nationality after the child turns five.

The resigned government submitted a request to the National Assembly to discuss the establishment

Municipality tows away 9 vehicles

KUWAIT: The director of the general hygiene and public works department at the Municipality branch in Mubarak Al-Kabeer, Fahad Al-Qurayfah said that the department is paying great attention to raise the quality of hygiene in areas that are under his responsibility. The Municipality will tow away anything that could spoil the general aes-

thetics of the place and disrupt traffic movement through field campaigns in order to maintain a civilized appearance to the governorate.

"The supervisory team of the General Cleanliness and Road Occupancy Department carried out field trips from Feb 5 until Feb 8 which resulted in the removal of nine neglected cars, baqalas, and scrap containers, in addition to placing 32 stickers on neglected cars, boats and commercial containers prior to their removal after the end of the specified period," Al-Qurayfah explained.



Pre-emptive awareness campaign for Kuwait's anti-narcotics efforts.

efforts to tackle the evils of narcotics, said Governor of Al-Ahmadi on Sunday. Speaking at the opening of an awareness exhibition against drugs in the Ahmadi educational district, Governor Sheikh Fawaz Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah affirmed that the event came in line with the Kuwaiti government's efforts to battle drug addiction and narcotics.

He expressed support towards the government efforts to prevent drugs from proliferating in the

country, commending the recent operations, which resulted in the confiscation of large quantities of narcotics. Delivering similar remarks, head of public relations at the National Anti-drugs Media Project (Ghiras) Khaled Al-Fadhli said that they were keen on partaking in the exhibition to assist youth and steer them away from drugs. He noted that Ghiras would continue to lend support to all those willing to prevent the spread of drugs in the country. — KUNA

its amendments, as well as the partnership law between the public and private sectors." Khuraibet appreciated the role of the authority's board of directors in approving investment projects, which "brought us to this stage by signing a partnership contract to start implementing investment projects that serve citizens."

Anwar Al-Hulaila, vice director of investment and private sector projects affairs, said: "The investment opportunity (S3) is located on an area of 40,121 square meters in the service district of the residential city of Sabah Al-Ahmad. It includes the development of a traditional market that contains a commercial center, a hotel and green areas on 25 percent of the site area, with a total building area of more than 75,000 square meters which will serve the residents of the city and neighboring areas." "The project is inspired by the old traditional Kuwaiti markets and will include modern design elements. It will offer a variety of commercial activities, restaurants, cafes, a family entertain-

ment center, a cinema, a total rental area of more than 23,000 square meters, with the provision of more than 500 car parks in multiple floors, in addition to the Hampton Hilton Hotel," he added.

The total estimated development cost of this project amounts to more than 20.5 million Kuwaiti Dinars, said Hulaila, with total expected revenues of more than KD 27 million over 32 years. He added that the project will have a positive impact on raising the standard of living in residential cities, by providing the required services and commodities through the private sector, according to studies prepared by the authority to verify the feasibility of developing them. "This also reduces the financial and administrative burden on the authority by converting non-income-producing lands into assets with lucrative and growing returns as well as ensuring access to the highest quality standards through competition between private sector companies and creating investment and job opportunities for Kuwaiti youth," he said.

discussions impossible. The commission, sources said, is expected to answer directly to the Council of Ministers, not a single ministry and will be independent of the Ministry of Interior and the ministry's Higher Department of Nationality and Passports. Led by an undersecretary, it will only deal with the affairs of Kuwaitis, as it will be responsible for granting Kuwaiti nationality and investigating nationality fraud.

Sources added that the commission won't be conducting DNA tests for Kuwaitis to reveal the validity of the registration of other Kuwaiti individuals in the nationality files, given constitutional doubts previously raised by the assembly in that regard. About 400,000 Kuwaitis, sources revealed, have fabricated their nationalities, as thousands have falsely registered as Kuwaitis in order to obtain monetary benefits.



Local

Kuwait Times, Kuwait News join 'Kuwait by Your Side' campaign

Abdullah Boftain participates in livestream of national fundraising drive on Kuwait TV

By Faten Omar

KUWAIT: Media personality Abdullah Boftain, Deputy Editor-in-Chief of Kuwait Times and Managing Partner of Kuwait News, participated in the livestreaming of the "Kuwait by Your Side" fundraising campaign on Kuwait Television (KTV) on Saturday for the victims of the earthquake in Turkey and Syria.

The ministry of social affairs, in cooperation with the ministries of foreign affairs and information, organized the national fundraising drive. The campaign began with a live broadcast on KTV at noon and ended at midnight. The fundraising drive collected more than KD 20 million from more than 129,000 donors.

The fundraising campaign came in implementation of the directives of HH the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah within the framework of the humanitarian role of Kuwait to help victims of this disaster, which resulted in thousands of deaths and injuries.

From the first moments of the earthquake, Kuwait rushed to support the Syrian and Turkish peoples in facing their ordeal, to provide all support needed by collecting donations to support them and mitigate the moral and material effects of the earthquake. More than 30,000 people have been killed and tens of thousands injured after the magnitude 7.8 earthquake struck Turkey and Syria last Monday. Workers in Turkey and Syria are still trying to pull survivors from the rubble and there have been some harrowing stories of success, and thousands of rescue workers are scouring flattened neighborhoods despite freezing weather that has deepened the hardship of millions now in desperate need of aid.

Since the earthquake occurred, 16 Arab countries have officially announced the establishment of air bridges and the provision of urgent relief and medical aid to support Turkey and Syria, namely Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait, the UAE, Egypt, Lebanon, Algeria, Jordan, Bahrain, Libya, Tunisia, Palestine, Iraq, Mauritania, Sudan and Oman.



KUWAIT: Zain Vice Chairman and Group CEO Bader Nasser Al-Kharafi announces Zain Group will donate \$10 million to support people affected by the earthquake during a phone-in to a segment of a televised fundraising campaign hosted by Abdullah Boftain, Deputy Editor-in-Chief of Kuwait Times and Managing Partner of Kuwait News on Feb 11, 2023.

Zain pledges \$10 million to quake victims

KUWAIT: Zain, Kuwait's leading digital service provider, pledged \$10 million towards humanitarian efforts for people affected by the earthquakes in Turkey and Syria. During the fundraising drive "Kuwait by Your Side" which was streamed live on Kuwait Television, Zain Vice Chairman and Group CEO Bader Al-Kharafi said in a phone-in that Zain Group will donate \$10 million to support people affected by the earthquakes. Kharafi praised the role played by Kuwait to support humanitarian cases, affirming that as part of its corporate social responsibility strategy, Zain is committed to helping those in need by offering aid in any form.



ANTAKYA: An aerial photo shows collapsed buildings in Antakya on February 11, 2023, after a 7.8-magnitude earthquake struck the country's southeast earlier in the week. —AFP

Charity bodies fully support Kuwait's initiatives: Al-Baghli

KUWAIT: Social Affairs and Social Development Minister May Al-Baghli has visited a number of charity organizations and met with authorities to make sure that the working mechanism is running smoothly and that they have all necessary support to remove all obstacles in order to do their role in the best way possible.

"These initiatives come within the framework of the royal directives and instructions of the council of ministers to sponsor and support charitable efforts in the country within the framework of the humanitarian role led by Kuwait," the ministry announced in a press statement. The ministry stated that Al-Baghli's tour on Sunday included the "Insan Charitable Society, the Kuwaiti Society for Relief and the Beit Al-Khair Society."



KUWAIT: Social Affairs and Social Development Minister May Al-Baghli in conversation with officials of charity organizations.

"The Ministry is keen on communicating directly with charities, facilitating their work in accordance with the law and providing them with the necessary care to carry out their role. Charitable work in Kuwait enjoys the support and care of all state institutions, led by the Social Affairs Ministry for the continuation of humanitarian assistance," the statement added.

Al-Salam Charity donates KD 350,000 to quake-affected

KUWAIT: Al-Salam Society for Humanitarian and Charitable Works announced on Sunday the allocation of over KD 350,000 from its annual campaign "Kuwait Trucks" for those impacted by the earthquake in Syria and Turkey. Speaking to KUNA, Society's Public Relations Director Dhari Al-Baijan said during the relief work in Turkey, the total donations for the campaign exceeded KD 1.3 million, with 357 trucks, of which over KD 350,000 have been allocated so far for earthquake-struck people. The charity continues to urgently send aid to the stricken areas in Syria and Turkey since the disaster



Dhari Al-Baijan



ter occurred, and an additional relief plane is scheduled to arrive on Monday, loaded with 1,000 tents for those affected, in cooperation and coordination with the official authorities in Kuwait, Al-Baijan added.

He pointed to the charity's efforts in its annual campaign in order to target the largest possible segment, especially considering the humanitarian conditions there, at a time when the society harnessed all its capabilities to contain the current crisis, in addition to its charitable activities directed at Syrian refugees in the camps. The charity's presence since the first moments of the disaster in the Turkish city of Antakya enabled it to sense the tragic situation and measure the extent of the need for aid by the residents of the affected areas, he stated.

The urgent relief supplies consist of foodstuffs, clothes, blankets, heating devices, medical tools, tents and other necessities for a decent life, Al-Baijan said. Al-Salam Charity launched its annual campaign for the benefit of the displaced from Syria and Yemen on December 23 last year, and it was scheduled to end on Saturday, but the closing event was cancelled and the request for an extension from the authorities in Kuwait was cancelled due to the current situation in Syria and Turkey. — KUNA



Al-Salam Charity allocates KD 350,000 to earthquake-struck people in Syria and Turkey. —KUNA

Is Kuwait at risk of deadly earthquakes?

By Ghadeer Ghloom

KUWAIT: The disastrous effects of a powerful earthquake that hit southeastern Turkey and northwestern Syria is overwhelming people from all around the globe. Countries across the world including Kuwait are sending aid to support the victims of the deadly quake and help rescue workers. The tragedy prompted many people in Kuwait and neighboring countries to voice concerns about possible aftershocks in Kuwait, even though the country is considered safe and away from quake-prone areas.

How close is Kuwait to the fault line of the recent earthquake?

Referring to the distance between Kuwait and the epicenter of the recent earthquake, Supervisor of Kuwait National Seismic Network at Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) Dr Abdullah Al-Enezi told Kuwait Times: "Kuwait is far from the fault line of the earthquakes, as the epicenter is approximately 1300 km from Kuwait." Thus, Kuwait can hardly be in danger from the recent earthquake. But minor tremors were felt in some places, Enezi said. "The earthquake that hit Turkey and Syria barely affected Kuwait. A few tremors were felt in some of the buildings, especially high-rise buildings and those near the coast," he said.

The closest fault line to Kuwait

The closest fault line to Kuwait is in the Zagros Mountains in Iran, which according to Enezi are approximately 300 km away from Kuwait. He also said the earthquakes that occur in this area are either average or strong, but their effects are limited. The earthquake that occurred on the border



Dr Abdullah Al-Enezi



Faraj Al-Jeri

between Iran and Iraq in 2017 was a magnitude 7.3. It rattled buildings but no casualties or material damage were reported.

Is Kuwait safe from disastrous outcomes due to earthquakes?

Principle research associate Faraj Al-Jeri said: "Presently, Kuwait is not at risk of earthquake disasters. Most of the earthquakes in Kuwait are either light or average, thus, Kuwait can be considered safe. Since the foundation of Kuwait National Seismic Network, no major earthquake has been recorded."

Additionally, Enezi said: "For the short-term, it can be claimed that Kuwait is safe from major earthquakes, even though people might worry about the occurrence of a major earthquake. The significant factor in case of earthquakes relies on the quality of the buildings' structure. The solidity of buildings and quality of the material used determine whether the earthquakes are disastrous or not."

This issue was also highlighted by Jeri. "This underlines the importance of safety and solidity of buildings rather than the earthquakes. Earthquakes cannot be stopped or predicted as they are a natural phenomenon. The quality of the buildings is important in withstanding earthquakes. By taking care of the necessities required during construction, we may be able to prevent buildings from collapsing when they are hit by an earthquake," added Jeri.



JABLEH, Syria: Search and rescue operations continue in the regime-controlled town of Jableh in the province of Latakia, northwest of the Syrian capital, on Feb 12, 2023, in the aftermath of a deadly earthquake. —AFP

KFAS celebrates women scientists

KUWAIT: The Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS) kicked off Sunday its activities to highlight the contributions and success of 11 Kuwaiti female researchers in the fields of science and technology. In a press release, KFAS said the event, called "Women in the Eyes of Social Sciences", coincides with the International Day of Women and Girls in Science, which falls on Feb 11. The day was first designated by the United Nations in 2015 to emphasize the important role that women and girls play in science and technology and close the existing gap between men and women in STEM fields. The celebration will include an exhibition to be held at the Kuwait University Shuwaikh campus and 360 mall on Feb 14-20. It will then be on display at the Avenues Mall between Feb 20-26. KFAS said it hoped the exhibit would inspire girls and women to engage in the fields of science, technology and innovation, while contributing to the sustainable development of society. — KUNA

Quran competition back after three-year COVID hiatus

KUWAIT: More than 1,500 people participated in the 15th edition of the late Mubarak Abdulaziz Al-Hassawi Quran competition held in Kuwait, organizers reported. The competition, held by Mabarrat Al-Mutamayzeen, a Kuwaiti charitable organization which supports memorizers of the Quran, is back after a three-year hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Al-Mabarrah held the qualifying rounds at Kuwait University's Faculty of Sharia with 1,700 participants, including 250 Kuwait University students.

"It is a positive and encouraging competitive environment for citizens to memorize and recite the Quran, as 53 citizens competed in memorizing and reciting the Quran in full," said Jazaa' Al-Suwaileh, general supervisor of the competition. "There is heavy competition within all age groups, which are divided into 10 different categories." About 54 percent of participants were female, with most of them participating in the 5-part memorization category and 22 of them competing to recite the entire Quran. "Women's participation annually is greater and more distinguished than the participation of men," said the Chairman of the Board of Directors of Al-Mabarrah, Youssef Al-Sumaie. The competition is for citizens only and the judges are mostly Kuwaiti, with many being winners of previous editions.

Cancer patients, doctors face mental health struggles

Workshop discusses importance of cancer awareness, explores medic burnout

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: Cancer Aware Nation (CAN) held a workshop for service providers and cancer patients with support from Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS). Chairman of CAN, Oncologist Dr Khalid Al-Saleh, gave a lecture on burnout experienced by service providers and the exhaustion health professionals are exposed to due to time constraints and lack of control over organization of work, in addition to the lack of smoothness in organizational work and weak leadership. Other reasons for exhaustion include work getting out of control, exhaustive work environment, working a long time without leave and little sleep or relaxation, adding that being emotionally close to a patient also causes exhaustion.

Dr Saleh divided exhaustion into joint, personal and work environment levels. He said a survey was conducted on exhaustion levels in dealing with the patients, which revealed 5.26 percent of medics enjoy work, 60.53 percent feel they are under pressure and that they use all their energy and 26.95 percent experience physical and emotional exhaustion. Dr Saleh said exhaustion rates due to dealing with patients is 10-70 percent among nurses and 30-50 percent among doctors and their assistants who provide weak service compared to their colleagues who have rest periods and work in comfortable environments. He said countries that do not pay attention to exhaustion factors create a strained relation between healthcare providers and patients.

Oncologist at Kuwait Cancer Control Center Iman Rashid Al-Tawheed spoke about the places that treat



KUWAIT: Participants pose for a picture at the Cancer Aware Nation (CAN) workshop for service providers and cancer patients.

cancer in the country - KCCC and NBK Children's Hospital, along with the stem cells treatment unit. She spoke about the best means to protect against cancer, saying awareness is part of a doctor's job that they are happy to do to reduce the burdens of exhaustion. She said among the important awareness messages is to avoid breathing polluted air, practice sports daily and avoid alcohol and smoking of all types, in addition to eating healthy food. As for women, she said, breastfeeding their children can help them avoid getting cancer. Dr Tawheed said positive communication between doctors and patients is necessary and gives more comfort to patients and doctors.

Psychologist Nadia Saad Al-Obaidi said the psychological symptoms that a cancer patient goes

through are different according to the affected organs in the body and the patient's personality and condition.

Dr Obaidi said psychological support must be a joint effort between the doctor, psychologist, nurses, family and friends, and the most important element in psychological support comes from the doctor who suffers from exhaustion and cannot provide this basic service to patients. Assistant head nurse Haneen Al-Rashidi spoke about the important role of nursing in treating cancer patients. She said it is important for nurses to be aware of the treatment plan so that they can provide the best nursing care. Chairperson of the coordination committee of the 8th Gulf Week for Cancer Awareness Dr Husna Majid Al-Shaheen thanked those who made the workshop possible and appreciated KFAS's role in spreading awareness.

Gulf Bank holds first-ever 'Fekrety' innovation contest

KUWAIT: As part of its keenness to motivate and encourage innovative ideas, Gulf Bank has concluded the first edition of 'Fekrety' Innovation Tournament, which aims to foster innovation amongst all bank employees, giving them the opportunity to be heard, to bring forth positive, valuable changes to the bank, the industry, and the wider community. The tournament took place last Saturday at Al Shaheed Park, with the attendance of Gulf Bank's top management and employees, who participated by voting for the most promising and innovative ideas. It is worth mentioning that Mr. Sulaiman Al-Anjeri, COO of 'Dabdoob' - the GCC's largest online toy store - was also invited to the event as a guest speaker to thoroughly speak about innovation in Kuwait's competitive business landscape.

The 'Fekrety' Innovation Tournament and all innovation initiatives led by Gulf Bank fall in line with Kuwait's Vision 2035. Innovation is a key pillar in



KUWAIT: 'Fekrety' Innovation Tournament is aimed at fostering innovation among all Gulf Bank employees.

Kuwait Vision 2035, which focuses on adopting smart and digital technologies, and innovating its services to drive the economy and improve the quality of life. Gulf Bank aims to bring all its talents into this sphere of influence, giving them a chance to play a key role in achieving the vision. The Head of Digital Transformation and Innovation Unit at Gulf Bank, Mai Al-Owaish, said that competitions are a natural way to spark innovations. The Fekrety tournament, she added, is an opportunity for all employees, from various departments in the bank, to contribute to developing the customer experience. Referring to the slogan "Innovation for All", she further explained that providing the best services and products to customers is a collective goal for various departments, employees and officials.

Al-Owaish indicated that Gulf Bank seeks to unleash all horizons of innovation amongst employees, without setting any limitations, regardless of how premature the ideas might be. The Digital Transformation and Innovation Unit will help in developing the ideas and train the employees to provide customers with simplified and more accessible services. She added: "Gulf Bank has a great human capital and a distinguished group of talents and expertise from various fields, characterized by a high degree of efficiency and professionalism. We must make the most of their capabilities and help them unleash their ideas and innovations." Al-Owaish also pointed that all the managers in the bank are keen to encourage their teams to present innovative ideas that contribute towards providing customers with easier, simpler, and innovative services. This aligns with Gulf Bank's 2025 strategy, which places the customer experience at the forefront.

Gulf Bank is leading a successful journey of digital transformation, by providing technological solutions to customers, enhancing the outstanding employees' performances based on their interaction and participation principles, and by adopting the highest international standards in risk management practices. Al-Owaish stated that Gulf Bank takes responsibility in contributing to Kuwait's digital transformation and 2035 Vision and is committed to supporting talents in society. She further mentioned that 2022 witnessed the first Datathon and Hackathon competitions, which aim to provide society with a new set of skills and challenges. These competitions are great tools for future generations to employ their skills in sustainable development, and to strengthen the economy and contribute towards the collective benefit of society through data and digital services.

Gulf Bank's vision is to be the leading Kuwaiti Bank of the Future. The Bank is constantly engaging and empowering its employees as part of an inclusive and diversified workplace in recognition of every employee's role in delivering customer excellence and serving the community at large. With its extensive network of branches and innovative digital services, Gulf Bank is able to give its customers the choice of how and where to conduct their banking transactions, all while ensuring a simple and seamless banking experience. Gulf Bank is committed to maintaining robust developments in sustainability at environmental, social and governance levels through diverse sustainability initiatives, strategically selected to benefit both the internal and external community. Gulf Bank supports Kuwait Vision 2035 "New Kuwait" and works with various parties to achieve it.

Warba Bank inks e-sports deal with Venue 56

KUWAIT: Warba Bank announced signing a strategic partnership with Venue 56 Center to sponsor the bank's activities in 2023. The partnership comes in support of the joint e-sports activities between the bank and the center, in addition to the development of both individual and team e-sports, which have seen success in various countries in the world.

Ayman Salem Al-Mutairi, director of marketing and corporate communications at Warba Bank, said: "The interest of young people in Kuwait in electronic sports is growing, as is the case all over the world. Today, electronic sports have become of major importance and are considered among sports that contribute to self-development and help players keep pace with the era of digitization." Mutairi explained that the Venue 56 Center is an experienced center in the field of e-sports, and that this agreement is the beginning of the bank's contribution to making the e-sports world a success. He added that it will be followed by many partnerships that will contribute to improving this field.

Mohamed Salah Al-Ayoub, the founder of Venue 56 Center said: "We are pleased today with this



KUWAIT: The strategic partnership will contribute to serving youth in Kuwait and developing the e-sports sector.

strategic partnership with one of the most growing banks in Kuwait, as Warba Bank is considered one of the most supportive banks for youth businesses during the recent period." Ayoub stated that this partnership will be over the course of 2023 and will contribute to developing joint work to serve youth and e-sports, in addition to achieving the aspirations of athletes in the field of e-sports. He pointed out that the center was established to serve e-sports in all its fields and help Kuwaiti youth keep up with regional and international competition, in addition to preparing highly skilled teams for national representation.



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Texans of Chinese descent fret that 'dreams have smashed'

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BERLIN: Berlin's Deputy Mayor and the Green party's top candidate Bettina Jarasch (R) arrives to cast her vote for the state's repeat elections at a polling station in Berlin on February 12, 2023. —AFP

Scholz's Social Democrats risk upset

Rerun in Berlin is only the second time in German post-war history

BERLIN: German Chancellor Olaf Scholz's Social Democrats face the prospect of an embarrassing loss on Sunday during the rerun of a chaotic 2021 regional election in Berlin. The German capital, one of the country's 16 federal states, has been ordered by the courts to return to the ballot boxes as the last vote on September 26, 2021, failed to meet basic democratic standards.

Opinion polls in the run-up to the election put the CDU conservative opposition in pole position, ahead of Scholz's SPD, who came first in 2021.

If the trend is confirmed, it would mark the first time in over 20 years that the CDU has topped the regional vote in the capital. SPD general secretary Kevin Kuehnert underlined the impact of the local vote on a national level, warning that it could determine whether Scholz continued to have strong SPD-led states behind him as he seeks to implement his plans for Germany.

Any upset risks shifting the balance of power in the Bundesrat, the upper house of the federal parliament, which represents the regional states. "A lot has changed since" the vote in 2021, making for an unusual contest, said Thorsten Faas, professor in political science at Berlin's Freie Universitaet. The Russian invasion of Ukraine has shifted the political landscape and the timing of Sunday's vote — no

longer falling on the same day as federal elections — means turnout will likely be lower, he told AFP.

'Difficult and challenging'

The rerun in Berlin is only the second time in German post-war history that a state election has been declared invalid, after irregularities were reported in a vote in Hamburg in 1991.

Incumbent Mayor Franziska Giffey, who leads a fractious coalition between the SPD, the Greens and the far-left Die Linke, has described the ordered repeat vote as a "difficult and challenging situation, particularly in the current crisis" with soaring energy prices in the wake of the Ukraine war.

Opposition parties have made hay with the electoral debacle, as well as an outcry surrounding violent clashes during New Year's celebrations in the city and tussles over transport policy.

CDU challenger Kai Wegner might claim a mandate to lead a coalition government in the city, if his party comes top with 25-26 percent of the votes as suggested by opinion polls. The balance of power in the Berlin Senate after the vote however could still be in Giffey's favour, offering her an easier way to remain mayor by marshalling current partners.

But the Social Democrat has insisted that she is campaigning for the "SPD to remain the strongest political force in this city".

Marathon vote

The organisation of the 2021 election on the same day as a national vote, a local housing referendum and the Berlin marathon had led to widespread logistical problems. Ballot papers got stuck in traffic as roads were closed for the race, with lines forming outside polling stations struggling to process votes.

Federal election officials found voting irregularities in Berlin districts equivalent to about half the city. The German parliament has also resolved for national elections to be partly repeated in Berlin, with the date of that vote yet to be set.

The 2021 fiasco is a further stain on the reputation of the capital, where administrative snags are commonplace. Sunday's election will take place under the watchful gaze of international election observers from the Council of Europe, invited in by the city itself to restore trust.

Berlin has also called up an army of 42,000 election helpers — 8,000 more than last time around — and plans to give polling stations extra ballots to avoid shortages. —AFP

NY truck attacker may face death despite Biden pledge

NEW YORK: President Joe Biden promised to abolish capital punishment for federal crimes, but the US government is due to argue, beginning Monday, that an Uzbek man should get the death penalty for killing eight people in New York half a decade ago. The same 12 jurors who last month convicted Sayfullo Saipov of several murder and terrorism charges will decide whether he should be jailed for life or sentenced to death.

Although the Biden administration declared a moratorium on all federal executions, if Saipov receives the sentence he could be put to death, either under a future president or if the moratorium is lifted. Saipov, now 35, drove a rented pickup truck down a Manhattan bike path as New Yorkers prepared to celebrate Halloween on October 31, 2017.

The dead included a group of five friends from Argentina. At least 12 other people were injured before police shot Saipov in the abdomen. It was the deadliest attack in New York since the September 11, 2001 Al-Qaeda hijackings brought down the World Trade Center.

Saipov, who moved to the United States in 2010, claimed to have acted in the name of the Islamic State jihadist group, which described him as one of its "soldiers." He expressed no remorse during his trial, which heard harrowing testimony from victims.

Immediately following the attack, then-president Donald Trump called for Saipov to be executed, and the Department of Justice (DOJ) sought the ultimate penalty in its initial filings. Under Biden, the DOJ has maintained that stance, prompting criticism from human rights groups.

"It is not too late for the Biden administration (to) make good on the president's campaign promise to relegate the cruel, unusual, unreliable and racist federal death penalty to the dustbin of history," said Brian Stull, deputy director of the American Civil Liberties Union's (ACLU) Capital Punishment Project.

The Trump administration oversaw a record 13 executions in its final months, ending a 17-year spell in which federal authorities had not carried out any. Biden has not issued a complete ban on the death penalty, but his attorney general, Merrick Garland, announced the moratorium in July 2021.

The president has been criticized for not commuting the sentences of 44 federal inmates waiting on death row. Saipov's lawyer, David Patton, wrote in a court filing dated January 30 that there was "ample evidence" that the decision to seek the death penalty was "both arbitrary and based on impermissible factors such as his religion and national origin." Garland has also allowed the DOJ to pursue the death penalty for Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, convicted of the 2013 Boston Marathon bombing, which killed three people and injured hundreds.

Observers say the two examples suggest the DOJ favors capital punishment for terror offenses. "In this narrow area of criminal law, where you're dealing with horrific terrorist acts, the attorney general believes in his mind and heart that the death penalty is an appropriate punishment," said Pace University law professor and former prosecutor Bennett Gershman.

Unlike under Trump, Gershman added, the current approach is evidence the DOJ has independence from the White House. Other experts believe the department uses the threat of capital punishment to pressure suspects to plead guilty in exchange for life terms. —AFP

Resources in short supply as rescue efforts press on

JABLEH: As Syria's earthquake rescue efforts near the one week mark, an unsettling silence blankets the area as a search dog sniffs around a flattened home in the coastal town of Jableh. It has been hours since the last rescue, when two people were pulled from the rubble by rescuers with only the most basic equipment.

"There is no hope" for survivors, said Alaa Moubarak, the head of Jableh's civil defence. "Even so, with every step, we stop and scream: is anyone alive?" The canine trained to detect life circles the area for 30 minutes and trots back without a single bark.

There are no more survivors. This scene plays out almost daily in Jableh, where the hopes of finding anyone alive under the rubble are quickly vanishing amid a lack of resources. Of the 52 residents of the five-storey building being searched, only 14 have made it out alive.

They include a woman and her young son who were lifted from beneath the rubble Friday to a jubilant crowd that held out hopes that more could still be alive beneath the building. The woman died en route to the hospital.

Jableh is located in Latakia, a province largely under government control and one of the worst hit by the earthquake. Monday's 7.8-magnitude quake that struck near the Turkish city of Gaziantep, about 40 kilometres (25 miles) from the Syrian border, killed more than 28,000 people, including at least 3,574 in Syria. In Latakia province alone, the quake has killed at least 638 people, according to local authorities.

'Manual labour'

The canine scavenging the rubble on Saturday is only one of a handful available in the region. It was flown in by a 42-member search and rescue team from the United Arab Emirates, equipped



JABLEH: Emirati rescuers continue their search and rescue operations in the regime-controlled town of Jableh in the province of Latakia, northwest of the Syrian capital, on February 12, 2023, in the aftermath of a deadly earthquake. —AFP

with sensors, search cameras, special drills and fuel containers.

"If we had this kind of equipment, we would have saved hundreds of lives, if not more," said Moubarak. Other teams on the ground lack the means and advanced search equipment, often digging with nothing but their hands or shovels.

"For 12 years we have not received new equipment... 90 percent of our stock is out of service," said Moubarak. Depleted by war, Syria lacks the most basic resources, let alone search and rescue equipment. A punishing energy crisis means the country can barely provide electricity and fuel for cars, forcing international rescue teams to source their own stock as part of planning efforts.

At the foot of another flattened building around 500 metres (1,640 feet) away, a construction engineer affiliated with Syria's defence ministry echoed similar concerns. "We don't have any modern high-tech devices... like those that detect openings, or equipment for rescue and communications," said the man, who asked not be identified because he is not authorised to speak to the media. "Our work can mainly be described as manual labour."

'Still a chance'

In Jableh's dense neighbourhoods, hundreds of spectators gather at every search site, crowding around rescue teams to provide information on which victims are still unaccounted for. Some watch from windowsills so close to the destruction that they could reach out and scoop up the debris in their hands. The rescue dogs often run in their direction, identifying them as the closest living body. Mohammad al-Hamadi watched from the pavement as the Emirati team dug through what was once his residence, now reduced to shreds of concrete.

The 23-year-old who had to be carried into the search and rescue zone because the quake nearly crushed his right leg — is the sole survivor of his family. Both his parents and his brother, who was sleeping in bed beside him, all lost their lives in the tragedy. "The building caved over our heads. I was completely buried," he said, adding that only his finger poked through the concrete chunks. "They had to lift me by the finger." Nearby, Colonel Hamad al-Kaabi, the head of the Emirati rescue force, said the chance of finding survivors at this point was so slim that emergency teams were permitted to use excavators and heavy machinery to clear the rubble. —AFP

International

Cyprus votes for new president in tight run-off election

Winner needs 50 percent plus one vote to succeed Anastasiades as republic's eighth

NICOSIA: Cyprus went to the polls Sunday for a tightly fought presidential runoff between two career diplomats seeking the top post in the south of the divided Mediterranean island. Polling stations close at 6:00 pm (1600 GMT) in the race to succeed two-term conservative President Nicos Anastasiades as head of state and government of the small EU member country.

Former foreign minister Nikos Christodoulides, 49, faces 66-year-old fellow diplomat Andreas Mavroyiannis after last Sunday's inconclusive first round. Christodoulides, who defected from the conservative ruling DISY party to run as an independent, scored 32.04 percent a week ago, against 29.59 percent for Mavroyiannis, who is backed by the communist AKEL party. Top concerns for many voters are the cost of living crisis, irregular immigration and the island's almost half-century of division between the Greek-speaking south and a Turkish-occupied statelet in the north recognised only by Ankara.

But many disaffected voters will simply opt for "the least worst candidate—a characteristic in most elections, but more so in this one," said Andreas Theophanous of think tank the Cyprus Center for European and International Affairs. The winner needs 50 percent plus one vote to succeed Anastasiades as the republic's eighth president.

The outgoing president urged Cypriots to come out "en masse to participate in this electoral process", adding that "this is our duty. The people decide, the

majority decides and the minority respects." Turnout at noon had reached 35.4 percent of registered voters, slightly up on the participation rate at that time in the first round, election officials said.

'Close race'

Cyprus has been divided since 1974, when Turkish forces occupied its northern third in response to a Greek-sponsored coup, but voters appeared split over whether the division was a priority in the election. Retiree Dora Petsa, 75, said she expects the new president "to settle the Cypriot question". But Louis Loizides, 51, said the country has "too many internal problems", ranging from the economy to immigration, having taken in large numbers of asylum seekers, including many who cross the UN-patrolled Green Line. The ruling DISY has been knocked out of the presidential race for the first time in its history, and the conservative party's decision to back neither candidate has thrown the run-off wide open. Pre-poll favourite Christodoulides last week unexpectedly squeezed out DISY leader Averof Neofytou, 61, who came third with 26.11 percent, despite the incumbent's endorsement.

Communist-backed Mavroyiannis surprised observers by beating Neofytou and closing the gap with the centrist-backed Christodoulides. Nonetheless, Christodoulides has a slight edge as he will get the bulk of disaffected DISY votes, said Theophanous.



NICOSIA: Cypriot presidential candidate Andreas Mavroyiannis casts his vote during runoff at the third elementary school of Aglanzia polling station, in the capital Nicosia, on February 12, 2023. — AFP

Analyst Fiona Mullen of Nicosia consultancy Sapiencia Economics said she believes the race could be "quite close". "The DISY leadership is officially not backing anyone but is unofficially backing Mavroyiannis," she said. "So it will boil down to how much they can shift a party base whose instincts will be more Christodoulides than Mavroyiannis." The bad

feeling within DISY towards him is seen as the biggest threat to a Christodoulides victory.

Rising prices

Mullen argued that Mavroyiannis must convince voters that his backer AKEL will not drive economic policy if he wins. The communists have been widely criticised for their handling of the 2012-2013 financial crisis, which almost bankrupted the eurozone country before a bailout from international lenders.

But AKEL's secretary-general, Stefanos Stefanou, struck a hopeful note after voting, telling journalists that to "the new generation, we owe a better Cyprus". Mavroyiannis has already taken the unusual step of naming his future finance minister, respected lawyer Charalambos Prountzos, an expert in corporate and energy law, if he is elected. "Prountzos is closer to a DISY profile than an AKEL one," said Mullen.

Theophanous said the electorate would nevertheless decide on how convincing Mavroyiannis is on the economy "despite his minister of finance". The new government will be under pressure to root out corruption, address higher energy bills, labour disputes and the struggling economy. UN-backed talks on the future of the divided island, frozen for nearly six years, will also be on the new leader's agenda. If elected, Mavroyiannis has promised to reopen negotiations from day one. Christodoulides has demanded changes before talks are revived. — AFP

Seven policemen killed in Peru operation

LIMA: Seven police died Saturday in an ambush while traveling in a coca-growing valley in southern Peru, the national police said. The attack took place in La Convencion province in the Cusco region, in a wide valley known as VRAEM (the acronym stands for Valley of the Rivers Apurimac, Ene and Mantaro).

The armed forces there have been fighting drug gangs and the remnants of the Shining Path leftist group for decades. "We regret the loss of our police brothers, who were ambushed when they were traveling in a police vehicle in the town center of Natividad in #Vraem, where 7 police officers have died and one police officer has survived," the national police said on Twitter.

In August 2022, the Peruvian Army claimed to have seriously injured Shining Path leader Victor Quispe Palomino, or "Comrade Jose," in an operation against "terrorist camps." A year and a half earlier, in January 2021, the Peruvian military dealt a severe blow to the guerrillas-known in Spanish as the Sendero Luminoso-by killing in the VRAEM the group's number two, a man known as "Comrade Raul," one of the most wanted men in Peru and a brother of Comrade Jose. Almost all Shining Path leaders are dead or imprisoned, but their remnants number some 350 members, 80 of whom are armed. —AFP

Bolsonaro plans to return to Brazil in coming weeks

WASHINGTON: Former Brazilian president Jair Bolsonaro said late Saturday that he plans to return to Brazil "in the coming weeks" after arriving in the United States in December. "I too want to return to Brazil. I intend to return to Brazil in the coming weeks," the right-wing ex-leader said during a meeting with Brazilian supporters in Boca Raton, Florida, according to a video broadcast by CNN Brasil.

Bolsonaro traveled to the United States in late December, several days before supporters stormed government buildings in Brasilia in an attempt to overturn the election victory of his rival, leftist Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva. Bolsonaro has repeatedly cast doubt on Lula's narrow win.

"We had governance without corruption. We worked with heart, with honesty. No retaliation, or persecution, is justified," he said on Saturday. Bolsonaro, 67, is under investigation in Brazil over an alleged role in the January 8 assault on national institutions. Six hours after mobs stormed Brazil's presidential palace, Congress and supreme court, Bolsonaro denied any responsibility. Lula said on February 2 that he was "certain" the former president had "prepared the coup."

The incident in Brasilia has been compared to the January 6, 2021 assault on the US Capitol by supporters of former US president Donald Trump. On Saturday, Bolsonaro told his supporters in Florida they "must face the problems." "Sometimes we have to take risks, it is worth it. You can be sure that the majority of

the Brazilian people are with us," he said.

The former army captain arrived in the United States on December 30, just before Lula's inauguration on January 1. Bolsonaro kept a low profile during his first weeks in Florida—his only known outings were a trip to a supermarket and a KFC restaurant to eat fried chicken alone.

But he has since made public appearances, giving two speeches before Saturday to cheers from supporters. He previously told CNN Brasil that he had planned to return to Brazil by the end of last month, and was considering moving his departure earlier for health reasons.



MIAMI: File photo shows former Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro speaks during a "Power of the People Rally" at Trump National Doral resort in Miami, Florida, on February 3, 2023. — AFP

But then in late January, Bolsonaro's lawyer said he had applied for a six-month visa to stay in the United States. One of his sons, Senator Flavio Bolsonaro, has suggested the ex-president had no date for a return to Brazil. "It may be tomorrow, or six months from now, or he may never come back," he said. — AFP

N Zealand readies for impact of Cyclone Gabrielle

WELLINGTON: New Zealand's prime minister on Sunday warned residents to hunker down and prepare an evacuation plan as a cyclone began pummeling the northern tip of the country. Cyclone Gabrielle is forecast to envelop the upper half of the North Island over a 48-hour period from Sunday evening, two weeks after parts of the same region experienced devastating flooding. Auckland remains under a state of emergency after flash floods swamped the city on January 27, resulting in four deaths and forcing thousands from their homes. Debris from that deluge remains on the streets of the country's biggest city, which now faces another bout of heavy rainfall and severe winds.

Prime Minister Chris Hipkins said everyone should be ready to face the threats posed by flooding, huge ocean swells and strong winds. "Our main message to people across the country is to please take the severe weather warning seriously and to make sure you're prepared," he told journalists.

"Make sure you've got your grab-and-go kits, make sure you know where you need to go in the event you need to evacuate your homes." The MetService weather bureau measured wind gusts of up to 140 kilometres per hour (86 miles per hour) in northern New Zealand on Sunday morning. "This system poses a very high risk of extreme, impactful, and unprecedented weather over many regions of the North Island from Sunday to Tuesday," the MetService said. The cyclone is forecast to weaken slightly as it moves slowly south on Monday and Tuesday. —AFP

KUWAIT: LAND OF GIVING...

Continued from Page 1

Kuwait's 'humanitarian' and timely response to the earthquake that struck Turkey and Syria deserves much praise, Turkey's Ambassador Tuba Sonmez said on Sunday. Turkey is grateful for the copious amounts of Kuwaiti aid that has flowed into the regions affect-

ed by the quake, the envoy said during talks with Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) Chief Dr Hilal Al-Sayer, citing ongoing efforts to ensure that the aid effectively reaches those most in need.

Ankara will never forget Kuwait's "humanitarian response" to the devastating earthquake that left thousands of people dead or injured, while causing immense destruction in its wake, she underlined. KRCS will be persistent in its efforts to ensure that aid reaches the Turkish and Syrian regions hardest hit by the earthquake, Dr Sayer emphasized. — Agencies

Sheikh Salem commended Resolution 781 of the Arab Summit, held in Algeria in early last November, to convene the high-level Conference in Support of Jerusalem, saying that the resolution signaled that Palestine continues to be a top priority for Arab countries. He appreciated the great efforts made by Palestinian Foreign Minister Riyad Al-Maliki to lobby for the gathering.

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas on Sunday accused the Zionist entity of having "crossed all red lines" in the occupied West Bank and east Jerusalem and urged world leaders to put an end to its actions. The international community must "protect" the Palestinian people and "put a stop to (Zionist) aggression... (and) unilateral actions", the head of the Palestinian Authority told the Arab League meeting in Cairo. "(Zionist) intransigence and practices have crossed all red lines", he said at the gathering attended by Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi and Jordan's King Abdullah II.

In a video address, UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres affirmed the international body's "clear position against unilateral actions," citing "illegal settlements in east Jerusalem" in particular. Sisi - whose country retains its traditional role as a Middle East mediator - vowed to "continue to work with the two sides of the conflict to revive the political process and restore calm in the West Bank and Gaza".

King Abdullah, whose country acts as custodian of Muslim and Christian holy sites in Jerusalem, said Arab leaders "must galvanize efforts to support the resilience of our brothers" in the Palestinian territories. US President Joe Biden told Abdullah last week that Washington supports a "two-state solution" in the Palestinian-Zionist conflict. "Mr Biden tells me he supports a two-state solution, but then does nothing at all," Abbas added. — Agencies

US jet shoots down 'object' over...

Continued from Page 1

US and Canadian planes flew together to take on the object Saturday, the US Department of Defense and Anand said. "President Biden authorized US fighter aircraft assigned to NORAD to work with Canada to take down a high-altitude airborne object over northern Canada today," Pentagon Spokesman Pat Ryder said in a statement, referring to the North American Aerospace Defense Command. An F-22 fighter jet fired an AIM 9X missile that brought it

down, he said. The White House said Biden and Trudeau spoke Saturday, and "commended NORAD's and US Northern Command's strong and effective partnership and agreed to continue their close coordination to detect, track, and defend our airspace". The object taken out over the Yukon, which borders Alaska, came after fighter jets downed another object Friday off the US state's north coast near the village of Deadhorse.

Search and recovery operations for the remains of that object continued Saturday but were hindered by Arctic "wind chill, snow, and limited daylight", Northern Command said in a statement. "Recovery activities are occurring on sea ice," it said, adding that the Pentagon could offer "no further details... about the object, including its capabilities, purpose, or origin." —AFP

Kuwait slams Zionist entity's...

Continued from Page 1

Sheikh Salem, leading Kuwait delegation to the gathering, recalled the Zionist onslaught on the West Bank city of Jenin, where dozens of unarmed civilians were killed or injured, and the repeated storming of Al-Aqsa Mosque in occupied Jerusalem. Expressing condolences to the families of the Palestinian martyrs, he said, "Kuwait calls on the international community to respond urgently and effectively to these violations and provide full protection to the brotherly people of Palestine."

"Such brutality risks undermining the prospects of peace and fueling violence in the region," the minister warned, holding the Zionist occupation authorities responsible for the consequences of the aggression. On the legal status of Jerusalem, Sheikh Salem reiterated, on behalf of Kuwait, strong opposition to any unilateral attempts by the Zionist entity, the occupying authority, to tamper with the historical and legal status of the holy city, including the Muslim and Christian shrines there.

"Kuwait maintains strong belief in the legitimacy of the Palestinian cause and the righteous struggle of the Palestinian people against the (Zionist) occupation. Accordingly, Kuwait stands by the Palestinian people and back their options for realizing a fair and comprehensive solution, ending the occupation, ensuring the return of refugees to their homeland, and establishing an independent state within the pre-June 4, 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital, in keeping with the relevant UN resolutions, the two-state vision and the Arab initiative for peace," he stressed.

First stage of Delhi-Mumbai...

Continued from Page 1

Asia's third-largest economy has made a renewed push to decouple itself from an increasingly assertive China's supply chains and build up its own economic capacity since a deadly military clash on their Ladakh frontier in 2020. A wary New Delhi has expedited many key projects, and Modi's government this month

announced an unprecedented 33 percent increase in infrastructure spending. The Indian premier is expected to open at least a dozen major railways, highways, expressways and port projects in the next few months. India has one of the world's largest rail networks - employing 1.3 million people - but it is badly outdated and needs huge investments in both track and rolling stock, with authorities seeking to tap private capital to do so. For its part, Beijing has poured hundreds of billions of dollars into infrastructure over many years and China now boasts an extensive motorway system, gleaming airports and by far the world's largest high-speed rail network. —AFP

Quake deaths top 33,000, toll...

Continued from Page 1

only point for international aid to reach people in rebel-held areas of Syria after nearly 12 years of civil war, after other crossings were closed under pressure from China and Russia. Assad on Sunday thanked the United Arab Emirates for providing "huge relief and humanitarian aid" with pledges of tens of millions of dollars in aid as well. But security concerns prompted the suspension of some rescue operations, and dozens of people have been arrested for looting or trying to defraud victims in the aftermath of the quake in Turkey, according to state media. A Zionist emergency relief

organization said Sunday it had suspended its earthquake rescue operation in Turkey and returned home because of a "significant" security threat to its staff.

Miraculous tales of survival still emerged, though experts caution that hopes for finding people alive in the devastation dim with each passing day. A seven-month-old baby named Hamza was rescued Sunday in southern Hatay province more than 140 hours after the quake, while Esma Sultan, 13, was also saved in Gaziantep, state media reported. The United Nations has warned that at least 870,000 people urgently need hot meals across Turkey and Syria. In Syria alone, up to 5.3 million people may have been made homeless. Almost 26 million people have been affected by the earthquake, the World Health Organization (WHO) said as it appealed Saturday for \$42.8 million to cope with immediate health needs after dozens of hospitals were damaged. —AFP

International

Texans of Chinese descent fret that 'dreams have been smashed'

'This law here is discrimination against one people simply because where they are from'

HOUSTON: With his hat, big belt buckle and cowboy boots, Ly looks the part of a Texan and even speaks with a twang. He's served in the US Navy but on Saturday, he was doing battle on a different front—against a proposed law that would bar Chinese citizens from owning property in Texas. About 300 protesters marched through Houston's Chinatown on Saturday, shouting "Stop Chinese hate" and "Texas is our home." Demonstrators wearing a Chinese dragon costume marched alongside, and others pounded and clanged drums and cymbals.

Their ire is aimed at a proposal by Republican state Senator Lois Kolkhorst that would bar Chinese, Russian, North Korean and Iranian citizens or businesses from purchasing property in the state. "I'm a veteran of the United States Navy. I feel that there are many patriots in the military... Some of them probably have the same last name as me. And they cannot... buy any house or land or property in Texas (under this bill). That doesn't make any sense," said Ly, 23, who declined to give his full name.

He said he had just obtained US citizenship a few days earlier. "This law here is discrimination against one people simply because where (they are) from. We are all created equal," said Nancy Zhao, a 50-year-old accountant.

The distress of people like Zhao and Ly comes as tensions mount between the US and China over a host of issues, including the status of Taiwan and the intrusion earlier this month of a Chinese balloon into US airspace.

After the balloon drifted across the country, President Joe Biden ordered the military to shoot it down, and it fell into the Atlantic Ocean off South Carolina on February 4. The Pentagon called

it a surveillance airship. Proponents of the Texas bill say it is needed for national security, and Kolkhorst says it will not affect legal residents, or green card holders.

But ironclad legal protections are not written clearly into the bill as it stands now, experts say, and issues such as how it would affect dual nationals (those who are citizens of the United States and another country, like China) are either not addressed or ambiguous, leading immigrants to fear the worst.

"I worked 18 years," said Frank Win, a 31-year-old scientist. "I paid my tax. You know, I'm working hard. And we just had a little boy last July. So we're thinking about buying a new house for him." "But now this bill came out, it's suddenly like, all my American dreams have been smashed."

'Used as a scapegoat'

In the stores of Houston's Chinatown, English mixes with Mandarin. Stores, including gun shops, have signs in both languages. In Texas, most people over age 21 can carry handguns openly. Of the state's 28.8 million inhabitants, 1.4 million self-identify as Asian and 223,500 consider themselves to be of Chinese origin, according to official data. While Chinese migrants made up the bulk of the protesters, others in the march said they feel they may be affected as well, such as Nikki Hafizi, a member of the US-Iranian community in Houston.

"They do this to remind us that we shouldn't have the same rights everyone else does," Hafizi said. "I'm a dual citizen so if I can ever afford a home I guess this would apply to me," she said, noting that she remains an Iranian citizen even after obtaining a US passport and citizenship.

"For a long time, our community has been used



HOUSTON: Demonstrators hold a protest in Houston, Texas, against a bill that would forbid Chinese nationals from buying properties in Texas, on February 11, 2023. — AFP

as a scapegoat for the rest of the world," said Gene Wu, a state lawmaker. "So during COVID-19 people blamed Asian Americans... We are not responsible for anything that goes on in the rest of the world."

"And we're here to say no, no more." In addition to Kolkhorst's bill, called SB 147, another one on the agenda, sponsored by Republicans Donna Campbell and Tan Parker, would prevent "hostile foreign governments" from buying or leasing farmland in Texas.

It would expand an existing 2021 law that bars

citizens and companies from China, Iran, North Korea and Russia from connecting to critical infrastructure, like the energy grid. Among those who came to support the protest was Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee, who brought several Asian children on stage.

"No to SB 147, because the Statue of Liberty has not fallen, and the American flag is still standing," Jackson Lee said. "Stop the Asian hate, stand for the American flag." —AFP

Greece, Turkey urge better relations after earthquake

ANTAKYA: Greece's foreign minister visited Turkey on Sunday in a show of support after the country was hit by a devastating earthquake last Monday, despite a longstanding rivalry between the two NATO countries. Foreign Minister Nikos Dendias was met with a warm embrace by his Turkish counterpart Mevlut Cavusoglu, according to footage on state-run ERT TV, before they boarded helicopters to quake-hit regions.

His arrival marks the first visit by a European minister to Turkey since the earthquake. "I would like to convey to the Turkish leadership and the Turkish people the warmest condolences of the Mitsotakis government and the entire Greek people for the losses after the two devastating earthquakes", Dendias said during a press conference with Cavusoglu in Antakya, referring to Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis.

"This is showing the solidarity of Greek people with Turkey and the Turkish population. Greece was one of the first countries to call and propose help to Turkey after the earthquake," Cavusoglu added.

'Dialogue'

Greece and Turkey have a history of rivalry going back centuries, but it has been exacerbated by territorial and energy disputes—and more recently by Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's bombastic threats of invasion.

But the two neighbours, which lie on seismic fault



ADANA: Handout photograph taken and released on February 12, 2023 by the Greek Foreign Ministry shows Greece's Foreign Minister Nikos Dendias (L) and his Turkish counterpart Mevlut Cavusoglu talking to local authorities during their visit to Adana, after a 7.8-magnitude earthquake struck the country's southeast. —AFP

lines, also have a tradition of helping each other in natural disasters. Cavusoglu recalled mutual aid when quakes struck Turkey and Greece in 1999, when he said at the time that "We don't have to wait for another earthquake for developing our relations".

"I said this as a simple citizen back then, but I think the same today as Turkey's foreign minister," he said. "I hope we will make efforts for finding a solution to our disagreements with dialogue in a sincere way."

Dendias also said that "We do not need to wait for natural disasters to improve our relations", while adding that Greece's effort to help Turkey would continue. The Greek government has so far sent 80

tonnes of medical and first aid equipment as well as rescuers who along with other European rescuers have saved 205 people, Dendias said.

"Greece will do everything it can to support Turkey at this difficult time, either bilaterally or within the EU," he said. The Greek rescue mission will be departing from Turkey and returning to Greece on Sunday, the Athens News Agency reported, as the search-and-rescue operations enter the fifth and final stage, in which digging machines start to take over and rescuers gradually depart. The Greek mission arrived in Turkey on February 7 and managed to find five people alive in the rubble, as well as recovering the bodies of another five people. —AFP

Nigeria's 'outsider' rallies in Lagos for final election sprint

LAGOS: Appealing to Nigeria's youth to come out and vote, outsider candidate Peter Obi on Saturday rallied thousands of supporters in Lagos in his last stage of campaigning before this month's presidential election. Chanting "Obi, Obi, we will follow you", crowds danced to Afrobeats stars on stage in a Lagos sports stadium, blowing plastic horns and waving flags for a candidate promising a "new Nigeria".

Obi, 61, has emerged as the first third party candidate to challenge the dominance of Nigeria's ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) party and main opposition Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) who between them have governed since the end of military rule in 1999.

Nearly 100 million will vote on February 25 in Africa's most populous nation to choose the successor to President Muhammadu Buhari, who steps down after two terms with Nigeria struggling with widespread insecurity and economic malaise.

Former southeast Anambra state governor, Obi has captured the interest of many young voters with a campaign offering hope for change from the patronage politics and old guard candidates fielded by the mainstream parties.

"When we win the election, it is the beginning of a new Nigeria," he told the crowd. "We are not going to change everything overnight... I assure you what we will do here nobody will believe it. Hold us responsible." Some polls show Obi leading, but analysts say the wealthy businessmen faces a challenge to win over enough voters in the mostly Muslim north, a key block of ballots that helps determine Nigeria's election. To win the presidency, candidates must garner the most ballots and also 25 percent of the votes in two thirds of the country's states. —AFP



LISBON: Teachers demonstrate for better wages and against government plan for a new recruiting system in Lisbon. —AFP

Thousands join Portuguese teachers' protests

LISBON: Thousands of teachers from across Portugal marched through the streets of Lisbon on Saturday in the latest round of protests demanding higher pay and better working conditions. More than 150,000 people took part in the rally, according to the National Federation of Teachers (FENPROF), the profession's main union.

"This is probably the biggest demonstration of teachers" in Portugal, said FENPROF secretary general Mario Nogueira. "We are outraged," Augusto Figueiredo, a technology teacher from Rio Maior, about 100 kilometres (62 miles) north of Lisbon, told AFP. "Miserable salaries, discriminatory

appraisals, inhuman schedules... this is the reality of our profession today," added the 64-year-old. "We're really tired, no one is listening to us, this government needs to listen to us," Joao Tristao, a sports teacher, told AFP.

Teachers are calling for an improvement in the terms of tenure and career progression, and salaries to keep pace with inflation. They also want their real working hours to be taken into account. "This working time must be recognised," said Maria da Luz Ribeiro, an English teacher who worries about "the future of teachers and schools in Portugal".

"I was forced to work longer to try to improve my pension," said the 68-year-old, who stopped working last year. Saturday's national demonstration comes after a series of protests and rotating strikes by region, which have led to school closures.

The ministry of education insists the teachers' strike movement has run out of steam since the end of January. The ministry is set to meet unions for a new round of talks next week. —AFP

News in brief

IS attack in Syria kills 11

BEIRUT: At least 11 people, mostly civilians, were killed in a central Syria attack blamed on the Islamic State group, a war monitor said Sunday. The IS group "attacked about 75 people on Saturday while they were collecting truffles in the Palmyra area, in the eastern countryside of Homs", the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said. The attack killed "10 civilians, including a woman, and a member of the (Syrian) regime forces," it said, adding that others remain missing. Syria's state news agency SANA reported the attack but gave a lower death toll, saying IS "terrorists" fired machine guns and killed four civilians, including a woman. Ten others were wounded in the attack, some "critically", the news agency added. After the jihadists lost their last scraps of territory following a military onslaught backed by a US-led coalition in March 2019, IS remnants in Syria mostly retreated into desert hideouts in the country's east. —AFP

Iran's Raisi to visit China

TEHRAN: Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi will head to China within days for a three-day visit aimed at strengthening economic cooperation, state media reported on Sunday. Raisi will set out for Beijing on Monday evening in response to an official invitation by Chinese President Xi Jinping, Iran's state news agency IRNA said. Both presidents met for the first time last September in Uzbekistan at a summit for the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, where the Iranian president called for expanded ties. On his upcoming trip, Raisi is expected to hold private talks with Xi, and delegations from both countries are due to sign "cooperation documents", according to IRNA. The agency added that Raisi will also take part in meetings with Chinese businessmen and Iranians living in the country. Iran and China have strong economic ties, especially in the fields of energy, transit, agriculture, trade and investment. —AFP

Chile sees improved wildfires

SANTIAGO: Chile's wildfire emergency, which has left 24 people dead and destroyed vast tracts of forest, is beginning to ease, authorities said Saturday. The deadly fires in Chile's center-south have ravaged more than 440,000 hectares (1.1 million acres), but are becoming less of a threat. "We have 12 new fires, and at some point in this crisis we had 86 new fires in a single day. That means that we are in a better situation," said Interior Minister Carolina Toha. The largest fires, however, likely cannot be put out until the end of February, she said. The latest count shows 312 blazes still active, 98 of which are being fought. Since February 3, fires have claimed at least 24 lives and left 2,674 people injured in the regions of Maule, Nuble, Biobio and La Araucania. A spokesperson for the National Forestry Corporation (Conaf) told AFP that fires are currently affecting mainly fields and forests, with residential areas less impacted. "There are communities that are still in danger, but the risk... is decreasing," said Rolando Pardo, head of Forest Fire Prevention at Conaf. He said that during the first four days of the crisis, about 80 emergency alerts were received daily, but that has since decreased to around three a day. —AFP

Business

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2023

Boursa Kuwait net profit increases by 13.3% to reach KD 18m for 2022

The Board of Directors proposes dividend distribution of 85 fils per share

KUWAIT: In a meeting of its Board of Directors on Sunday, Boursa Kuwait announced that it has recorded net profit of KD 18 million for the financial year ended December 31, 2022, a 13.3 percent increase from its 2021 total of KD 15.9 million. The company also recorded operating revenue of KD 35.2 million over the same period, an increase of 12.8 percent over its KD 31.2 million total in 2021. Meanwhile, operating profit for the 2022 financial year came in at KD 22.6 million, or an increase of 22 percent over the total of KD 18.5 million recorded in 2021, while the company's earnings per share increased 13.3 percent from 79.15 fils in 2021 to 89.67 fils for the financial year ended December 31, 2022.

Additionally, the Group's total assets came in at approximately KD 119.6 million as of December 31, 2022, which is an 8.3 percent increase versus the 2021 total of KD 110.4 million, while shareholders' equity attributable to equity holders of the parent company increased from KD 60.6 million as of December 31, 2021, to KD 65.5 million as of December 31, 2022, an increase of approximately 8.1 percent.

As a result, Boursa Kuwait's Board of Directors proposed the distribution of cash dividend of 85 fils per share for the financial year ended December 31, 2022, which is approximately 94.8 percent of the company's profit. The proposed cash dividend distribution is subject to approval by the Annual General Assembly as well as approval from the relevant regulatory authorities.

Commenting on the results, Boursa Kuwait Chairman Hamad Mishari Al-Humaidhi said: "I am pleased to announce that Boursa Kuwait was successful once again in delivering remarkable results, as we recorded an increase of 13.3 percent in our net profit from KD 15.9 million in 2021 to KD 18 million this financial year, a reflection of our company's solid operational model, strong financial health, and resilience. Thanks to the efforts of our highly trained and skilled workforce, we were able to reach tremendous performance levels, overcoming the challenges presented throughout the year and prevailing through the state of turmoil caused by the geopolitical tensions gripping the financial scene around the world."

Al-Humaidhi added, "The exchange continues to implement its effective strategy to develop a more liquid capital market, solidifying its role as a key cog in the development of the national economy and working to attract investments from all over the world. The company continued to raise the profile of the Kuwaiti capital market around the world to attract local and international investors from different investment orientations.



Hamad Mishari Al-Humaidhi



Mohammad Saud Al-Osaimi

This strategy, in line with the "New Kuwait 2035" vision, aims to contribute to the transformation of our country into a financial and investment center in the region, advancing the national economy seeking to place the Kuwaiti capital market on the investment map as one of the Middle East's finest. I would like to thank my fellow Board members, the Executive Team and the esteemed Boursa Kuwait employees for their efforts to develop and enhance the company and the Kuwaiti capital market."

Boursa Kuwait's Chief Executive Officer Mohammad Saud Al-Osaimi also commented on the company's results for the year, saying: "Despite the fluctuations in capital markets around the world as well as economies seeing unprecedented inflation levels, with many states drafting economic policies to curb them, Boursa Kuwait was able to develop its operations, as the total market capitalization increased 12.9 percent compared to 2021 to reach KD 46.7 billion. We were also successful in attracting institutional international investors, as total foreign turnover activity was up 29 percent, with a total traded value of KD 5.5 billion, a testament to their increasing confidence in Kuwait's capital market."

Al-Osaimi added, "The Kuwaiti capital market witnessed a resurgence of activity in the first half of 2022, as well as a relatively stable second half compared to capital markets around the world. Boursa Kuwait continued to promote the Kuwaiti capital market and its listed companies, highlighting the unique investment opportunities present within them to both benefit market participants and increase its liquidity. Additionally, the exchange continues to offer products and services that meet

- Total operating revenue reaches KD 35.2 million, an increase of 12.8%
- Operating profit jumps to KD 22.6 million, an increase of 22%

Exceptional performance

The Kuwaiti capital market capped off 2022 with an exceptional performance, as total market capitalization increased 12.9 percent from KD 41.4 billion in 2021 to reach KD 46.7 billion. Meanwhile, total foreign turnover activity increased by 29 percent in 2022, as the total value of trades made by foreign and GCC investors came in at KD 5.5 billion, while active investing by international investors came in at around KD 760 million. In addition, total foreign turnover activity made up 18 percent of the total trades in the Kuwaiti capital market, compared to the previous year's 14 percent of turnover activity, while institutional investor activity increased from 54 percent of total turnover activity in 2021 to 61 percent in 2022, an increase of around 13 percent.

The "Premier" Market posted total capitalization of KD 37.4 billion, with almost 22.6 billion shares traded at a value of KD 10.8 billion on over 1.6 million trades, while the "Main" Market posted a total capitalization of KD 9.3 billion, with over 3.3 billion shares traded at a value of over KD 3.9 billion on 1.3 million trades during 2022.

the needs of all stakeholders, streamlining their processes and improving their overall experience in the market. We recently updated our rulebook to incorporate rules for Mandatory Executions, as well as updating the order mechanism for market makers. The exchange also canceled the buy-in session premium, as part of its efforts to offer greater flexibility to investment banks, asset management firms and financial brokerage companies. In addition, the number of market makers, which help increase market liquidity and efficiency as well as facilitating trades, increased from five to seven, making the market for a total of 61 securities in the Kuwaiti capital market."

Since its inception, Boursa Kuwait has worked diligently to create a thriving capital market that attracts local and foreign investors through a broad spectrum of new products and services, infrastructure upgrades, and market reform initiatives, as part of its multi-phase market development plans.

The company was fully privatized in 2019, the first government entity in the country to successfully undergo the process, bringing about greater



levels of efficiency. Boursa Kuwait also self-listed in September 2020 and has made great strides in sustaining its operations and business continuity in the face of uncertainties and challenges.

Over the past six years, the company has rolled out numerous market reforms and new initiatives as part of its comprehensive multi-phase market development (MD) plans. The company also showcases some of the standout listed companies and the investment opportunities that reside in the Kuwaiti capital market through its series of roadshows and Corporate Days, putting these companies in touch with some of the world's leading investment firms and financial institutions and highlighting their financial health and business strategies and outlooks, in an effort to help investors gain an in-depth understanding of the benefits and opportunities of investing in Kuwaiti companies.

23 firms ready to go public on Saudi bourse

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia has 23 companies approved to list on the kingdom's stock exchange, the head of the kingdom's Capital Market Authority (CMA) said on Sunday. There are also more than 75 applications pending approval to list and 70 signed mandates with financial intermediaries and advisers in the early part of the process. CMA Chairman Mohammed bin Abdullah Elkuwaiz told a conference in Riyadh, according to Bloomberg.

Companies that secure approval from the CMA have six months to launch their public share sales. The Saudi Exchange is the Arab world's largest, with a market capitalization of about \$2.65 trillion.

"If you look at this in tandem, it gives us an indication that we still have a very, very healthy pipeline," Elkuwaiz said at the Saudi Capital Market Forum. The Saudi stock market had 49 new listings last year, in which companies raised about 40 billion riyals (\$10.66 billion), he said, adding that the market watchdog is also planning to create a regulatory framework for dual listings.



RIYADH: Traders monitor share movements at the Saudi Stock Exchange (Tadawul) in Riyadh.

The Saudi exchange's chief executive, Mohammed Al-Rumaih, said in a separate panel at the conference that the bourse plans to launch depository receipts representing shares in a for-

eign company but traded locally. The exchange also plans to introduce single stock options, a vehicle that gives investors the right to buy or sell a stock at a fixed price at a future date. —Agencies

MSCI review puts India's Adani shares back in the red

MUMBAI: Global stock index compiler MSCI said it was reviewing the status of equities in India's Adani Group, ending a brief rally for the troubled conglomerate, as it fends off allegations of market manipulation. The business empire of Indian billionaire Gautam Adani lost around \$120 billion in value after US short-selling investment group Hindenburg Research accused it of artificially inflating share prices. It clawed back some of that this week after

pledging to repay \$1.1 billion worth of early loans in a move meant to reassure investors.

But nine of the 10 listed entities linked to the firm slipped back into the red in early Mumbai trading after the MSCI announcement, with flagship Adani Enterprises plunging 9.1 percent.

US-based MSCI said in a statement, published early Thursday India time, that the review was triggered by investor concerns about the "eligibility and free float determination of specific securities" associated with Adani Group. "MSCI has determined that the characteristics of certain investors have sufficient uncertainty that they should no longer be designated as free float pursuant to our methodology," the firm added. "This determination has triggered a free float review of the Adani Group securities." MSCI defines a free float as the propor-

tion of shares that can be bought publicly in share markets by international investors.

Hindenburg has accused Adani of artificially boosting the share prices of its units by funneling money into the stocks through offshore tax havens.

Adani has repeatedly denied the allegations and accused the US investment firm of a "maliciously mischievous" reputational attack. The tycoon is known as a close associate of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who opposition lawmakers accuse of abetting Adani's rapid rise that saw him until last month hold the title of Asia's richest man. The stock market bloodbath has since seen him drop down from third to 17th on Forbes' real-time billionaires list. Adani has defended his group's operations, insisting last week that the "fundamentals of our company are very strong". —AFP

Canada adds 150,000 jobs in January

OTTAWA: The Canadian economy defied projections by adding 150,000 new jobs in January, but scads of new job seekers kept the unemployment rate at a steady 5 percent, the national statistical agency said Friday. The unemployment rate was just slightly above a record low of 4.9 percent recorded last June, while the size of the labor force has continued to grow.

The strong employment gains, according to Statistics Canada, were driven primarily by people aged 25 to 54. The gains—which mirrored similar strong hiring activity in the United States—were recorded across several industries, led by a bounce back in wholesale and retail trade (+59,000), health care and social assistance (+40,000) and educational services (+18,000), the agency said.

The majority of those jobs were in full time work. At the same time, employment declined in transportation and warehousing (-17,000). "The music has clearly not stopped for the Canadian labor market," Desjardins analyst Royce Mendes commented in a research note, describing the job gains as "massive." Total hours worked rose in January too, notably in the construction industry that is sensitive to interest rate hikes, he pointed out.

The sector's apparent "re-acceleration even after all of the rate hikes of the past year will be concerning to Bank of Canada officials," Mendes opined. The central bank recently announced a pause in its aggressive monetary policy after eight hikes over the past year to 4.5 percent, in a bid to tame inflation. But it warned also that it could start hiking rates anew if the economy does not cool, as hoped. Royal Bank of Canada economist Carrie Freestone noted that job postings are still up 50 percent from pre-pandemic levels, despite coming down a bit in recent months.

She predicted that the labor market would not remain tight in the near term as interest rate hikes, after a lag, start impacting demand for goods and services. "Moreover, with record high participation and fewer unemployed Canadians to fill jobs, job creation is not sustainable at the current pace," she concluded. —AFP

Business

Cuban worker exodus a 'catastrophe' as island grapples with economic crisis

Nicaragua's visa opening for Cubans kicks off largest exodus

HAVANA: Like other businesses across Cuba, Nel Paradiso is grappling with a worker shortage amid unprecedented levels of people fleeing the island nation. In just over a year, the central Havana restaurant has seen 50 employees leave. "There wasn't enough time to replace the personnel," said hiring manager Annie Zuniga, 26. After being forced to close its doors due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Nel Paradiso had been open for only two months when Nicaragua, an ally of Havana, abolished visa requirements for Cubans.

That move in November 2021 kicked off the island's largest exodus since the Communist regime came to power over six decades ago. "Nicaragua's opening was a blow... from 50 workers, in one week we were left with 30," Zuniga told AFP. Of the 60 employees recruited during the last 14 months, only 10 still live on the island. Replacing employees that emigrate has become a time-consuming and costly task. "We haven't been able to create a united and lasting team because when we think, 'good, this is the team'... one of them comes to me and says, 'this is my last week, next week I'm leaving.' It's a catastrophe," said Zuniga.

The wave of emigration comes at a time when the 11.1 million Cuban population is aging and the country is wrangling with its worst economic crisis in three decades. Inflation is rampant and daily queues to buy food and fuel are interminable, while it is near impossible to find many medicines and power cuts are frequent. The lack of staff "puts us in difficulty," said Nel Paradiso head waiter Norberto Vazquez. Also a sommelier professor, Vazquez says he has trained more than 50 people who are no longer in Cuba. "Some students tell me, 'professor, the only thing I'm thinking about is how I will leave,' and that gives me incalculable grief," he said.

Most Cubans that emigrate are highly educated and between 19 and 49 years old, according to Havana University. Many industries are affected by the exodus, including tourism, a vital part of the country's economy that was badly hit by the pandemic. Some 30 percent of employees at the Parque Central hotel, a business part-owned by the government and by Spanish group Iberostar, emigrated and its executives were forced to contract students to cover the vacancies, a source told AFP under the condition of anonymity.



HAVANA: In this file photo, people queue outside the US embassy in Havana. According to official US statistics, in 2022 border authorities intercepted more than 313,000 Cubans that entered the country illegally. —AFP

'Incalculable grief'

In 2022, US border authorities intercepted more than 313,000 Cubans who entered the country illegally, according to official data. Most Cubans fleeing the island attempt to reach the United States, usually via Central America. However, sea crossings between Cuba and the US state of Florida—a treacherous 140-kilometer (87-mile) journey often in unsuitable vessels—have also soared.

'Feel you have no future'

Frenchman Stephane Ferrux has been running a travel agency in Havana since 1995. He said 60 of the agency's service providers emigrated in one year. And it was not just for economic reasons as some of them earned \$1,500 a month, a sum 45 times the average in the island nation. "When you cannot find anything" due to shortages of most products, "and you feel you have no future, even if you have the

means, that triggers the fleeing," said Ferrux.

Even embassies and universities have been affected. In January, the "desperate cry" of a university science professor went viral on social media. "The laboratories are emptying... the best ones are leaving," the professor complained.

President Miguel Diaz-Canel admitted in October that "emigration is high in Cuba," and blamed US laws for encouraging it. "Every young person who abandons their studies and work to emigrate" represents "a defeat" for the country, he said. —AFP

IMF urges El Salvador to address bitcoin risks

WASHINGTON: The International Monetary Fund has warned El Salvador—the only country to adopt bitcoin as a legal currency—against the risks involved in expanding its reliance on the crypto currency. The

warning came in a report Friday that followed an experts' mission to the Central American country.

It found that Salvadoran growth had been "robust" last year but that vulnerabilities, including the linkage to bitcoin, remained. El Salvador in September 2021 adopted bitcoin as a legal currency, alongside the US dollar. Tech-savvy president Nayib Bukele advocated the move as a way to bring more Salvadorans, many of them lacking bank accounts, into the formal economy.

The change meant that every Salvadoran business—even neighborhood shopkeepers—had to accept the cryptocurrency as payment. But the IMF and World

Bank warned that doing so could leave the country more vulnerable to money laundering and other illicit activity that could affect underlying stability. "While risks have not materialized due to the limited bitcoin use so far," the report said, its use could grow, due partly to "new legislative reforms to encourage the use of crypto assets."

In this context, it added, "underlying risks to financial integrity and stability, fiscal sustainability, and consumer protection persist." The IMF experts said it was "essential" that Salvadoran authorities provide "greater transparency over the government's transac-

tions in bitcoin and the financial situation of the state-owned bitcoin wallet" known as Chivo. "Given the legal risks, fiscal fragility and largely speculative nature of crypto markets, the authorities should reconsider their plans to expand government exposures to Bitcoin," the report said. The Salvadoran economy grew 2.8 percent in 2022, the report said, crediting an effective government response to the COVID-19 pandemic, "the unprecedented reduction in crime, and strong remittances and tourism revenues." But the IMF cautioned that a pronounced slowdown in the US could undermine exports and remittances. —AFP



شركة الصفاء للاستثمار
AL SAFAT INVESTMENT COMPANY

KUWAIT BOURSA WEEKLY REPORT

WEEK ENDED ON 9 FEBRUARY 2023

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Market	M. Cap (KD ml)	Last Close	WTD %	MTD %	YTD %	Quantity Traded	Value Traded	No. of Trades	P/E	P/B	% of Total M. Cap
Premier Market	38,199	8,201.47	0.5%	1.4%	3.2%	358,093,203	183,777,514	27,686	16.9	1.4	77.7%
Main Market	9,977	5,543.07	-1.4%	-1.4%	-0.5%	442,993,055	64,874,089	22,015	12.7	0.8	22.3%
All Share	48,176	7,339.91	0.1%	0.9%	2.5%	801,086,258	248,651,602	49,701	13.5	0.8	100%

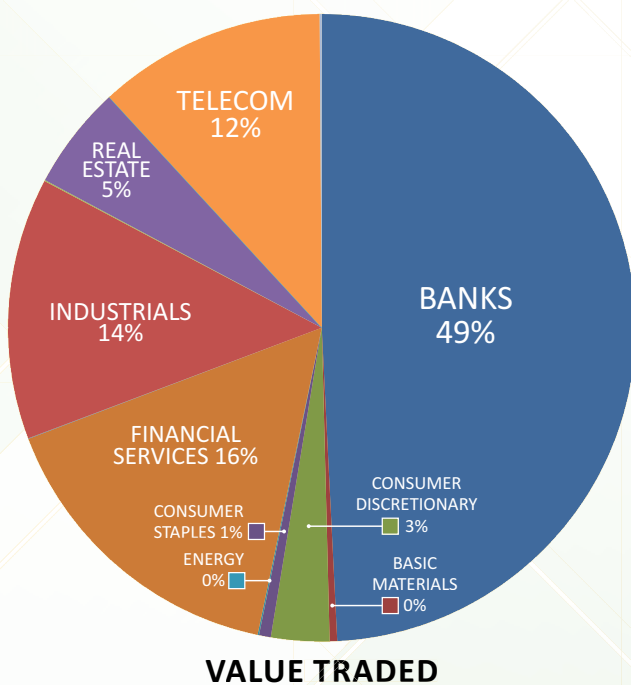
Sector	M. Cap (KD ml)	Last Close	WTD %	MTD %	YTD %	Quantity Traded	Value Traded	No. of Trades	P/E	P/B	% of Total M. Cap
Banking	31,035	1,843.38	0.9%	1.7%	4.6%	195,163,726	122,371,565	14,339	22.7	1.3	62.21%
Basic Materials	764	856.50	-1.2%	-0.8%	0.0%	1,222,632	958,649	315	8.3	1.3	1.09%
Consumer Discretionary	946	1,411.18	-0.1%	0.5%	-0.8%	28,352,657	7,461,793	2,773	13.6	1.0	2.12%
Consumer Staples	144	473.43	-0.4%	-1.3%	0.4%	3,878,075	1,507,199	292	NM	0.9	0.32%
Energy	227	1,084.67	-1.5%	-1.3%	-7.9%	3,811,616	191,736	355	11.5	0.6	0.51%
Financial Services	4,422	1,260.10	-0.3%	0.5%	1.9%	320,836,269	39,670,853	11,102	11.4	0.7	9.92%
Health Care	222	447.32	5.1%	0.8%	-3.1%	148,583	68,004,470	42	14.0	2.3	0.50%
Industrials	3,491	992.19	0.2%	1.3%	-5.2%	67,614,084	33,527,674	6,888	12.9	0.9	7.81%
Insurance	647	1,574.13	0.5%	1.3%	1.3%	483,610	128,291	68	10.5	0.8	1.45%
Real Estate	2,535	1,174.40	-1.6%	-1.2%	-1.3%	133,011,412	13,294,490	6,004	15.9	0.6	5.66%
Technology	10	734.05	3.0%	5.5%	-0.1%	4,100	393	4	NM	0.9	0.02%
Telecommunications	3,534	1,152.10	-5.0%	-3.8%	-1.4%	45,102,959	29,206,265	7,314	13.3	2.0	7.93%
Utilities	199	476.32	0.6%	-0.5%	-1.6%	1,456,535	264,687	205	14.9	1.7	0.45%

Top Gainers					
Stock	last Close	Change %	Volume	Value	Trades
ATC	500	31.58%	148,503	67,956,030	41
FACIL	191.0	9.14%	3,340,094	626,054,024	325
NCCI	122	7.96%	17,781,295	2,109,307,881	434
NOOR	185	5.71%	2,036,047	371,716,477	259
TIJARA	57	5.37%	5,857,180	330,883,722	326

Top Losers					
Stock	last Close	Change %	Volume	Value	Trades
ENERGYH	73.4	-22.74%	286,856	23,457	128
MAZAYA	39	-15.37%	19,612,858	821,318	632
MADAR	98	-13.36%	4,381	449	6
STC	602.0	-11.47%	29,613,544	20,219,372	5,158
MASAKEN	22.5	-11.42%	123,375	2,957	22

Top Volume					
Stock	Last	Change %	Volume	Value	Trades
KFH	867	3.58%	95,697,238	82,088,437	7,147
GFH	79.1	1.28%	78,977,232	6,169,004	1,815
AAYAN	151	3.42%	57,320,190	8,435,485	911
KPROJ	116	-0.85%	46,914,723	5,559,624	962
NRE	93	-8.82%	41,408,276	4,068,181	1,955

Top Value					
Stock	Last	Change %	Volume	Value	Trades
KFH	867	3.58%	95,697,238	82,088,437	7,147
STC	602	-11.47%	29,613,544	20,219,372	5,158
AGLTY	610	1.33%	31,671,546	19,258,601	3,265
NBK	1,110	-0.80%	14,972,505	16,805,031	2,591
AAYAN	151	3.42%	57,320,190	8,435,485	911



Market Summary:

- Premier and Main Markets' weekly volume and value increased by 21% and 20%, and 35% and 53%, respectively.
- The Premier Market index is yet to overcome a critical resistance level while the Main Market index is still struggling to hold onto current support.
- Technically, the All Share index closed at 7339, with support levels at 7318, 7286, and 7214, and resistance at 7379. The Premier index closed at 8201, with support levels at 8184, 8116, and 8064, while resistance at 8273. The Main index closed at 5543, with support levels at 5526, 5513, and 5495, while resistance at 5550.

Business

Despite successes, Arab region faces major challenges: IMF

Growth in GCC could drop; public debt a concern: Georgieva

DUBAI: Notwithstanding the successes, the Arab region, like so much of the world, faces significant challenges as it confronts multiple crises, said IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva in her remarks at the seventh Arab Fiscal Forum, in Dubai. The Arab Fiscal Forum is hosted by Arab Monetary Fund.

"Today, I would like to focus on one of the most pressing regional issues: How to strengthen the resilience of public finances to protect our people, our economies, and our climate. Now is the time to move the ball forward, not just on sovereign debt," she remarked. As the global economy slows, growth is also expected to drop in the Middle East and North Africa—from 5.4 percent in 2022 to 3.2 percent this year before ticking up to 3.5 percent in 2024. The OPEC+ production cuts would reduce overall revenue for the oil exporters. For oil importers, the challenges would continue. Public debt is a particular concern, with several economies in the region facing elevated debt-to-GDP ratios—some close to 90 percent," she said.

The IMF forecast last month that economic growth in MENA would slow to 3.2 percent this year, before ticking up to 3.5 percent in 2024. Inflation was seen surpassing 10 percent in 2023, according to a full copy of Georgieva's speech published by the IMF.

And for the fourth consecutive year, the IMF expects inflation in the region to surpass 10 percent—above the global average. For the region's emerging market and low-income economies, this reflects the lingering effects of higher food prices and, in some cases, exchange rate depreciations. The IMF expects inflation to gradually decline as commodity prices settle and tighter monetary and fiscal policies have their intended effect. For the Gulf Cooperation Council countries, we expect inflation to remain contained.

"Over the past five years, GCC countries have provided \$54 billion in financing for budget and balance-of-payments needs. They have also supported low-income countries, and fragile and conflict-affected states in the region, through debt reduction and food security support. This includes \$10 billion in support announced by the Arab Coordination Group last year. Donor countries can fur-

ther support regional economic stability and growth through multilateral initiatives," she said.

The IMF has provided members in the region nearly \$20 billion in financial support since the start of the pandemic. And more than \$37 billion came to the Arab world from our record \$650 billion allocation of Special Drawing Rights in 2021.

"We are now working with countries with stronger reserves to channel these assets to countries with greater needs. This also means channeling SDRs to our Poverty Reduction and Growth Trust to continue providing zero-interest loans to low-income countries," she said.

She said the IMF is proud to partner with its members in the region and its new office in Riyadh, another demonstration of regional leadership and teamwork, which will further strengthen its engagement for the benefit of the people in the Arab world.

Talking about the IMF collaboration in the GCC region, "We appreciate the excellent collaboration over the years. Together, we have come a long way and our partnership with the region has grown stronger. 2023 marks an important milestone: 20 years after Dubai hosted the IMF-World Bank Annual Meetings, we are bringing them to Marrakech in October," she said.

Throughout these years, the Arab world has made impressive advances and demonstrated true global leadership. Think about the annual World Government Summit starting tomorrow, or hosting the Conference of the Parties for a second successive year in the region," she added.

"But for the region too, we worry about risks. Russia's war in Ukraine and climate disasters could worsen food shortages for the most vulnerable. Add to this persistently high unemployment, especially among young people, and you have a significant risk to social stability. Tighter global or domestic financial conditions could lead to high borrowing costs and, in some cases, a financing crunch. Domestically, delays in much-needed reforms could weigh on regional prospects and government finances," she added.

She highlighted three guiding principles for countries to use fiscal policies to build resilience and then focus on how they can team up to score points on

issues that we can only address together.

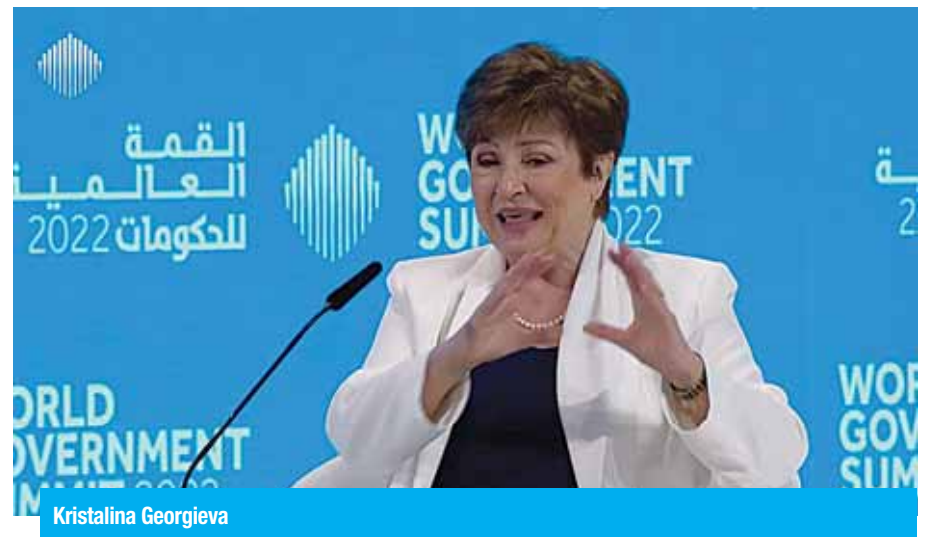
Building resilience through fiscal policies

On fiscal policy, she offered three guiding principles. The first is having a robust framework to conduct fiscal policy and manage fiscal risks. "With today's shock-prone and uncertain world the conduct of fiscal policy takes on added significance but also added complexity. Just look at the volatility of energy and food prices in the region—requiring governments to step in to protect the vulnerable, while still maintaining development plans and investment. This requires resources and careful planning," she said. Morocco is doing it by phasing out expensive, untargeted subsidies in favor of targeted social support. Mauritania has instituted a fiscal anchor to cope with volatile mineral export revenues, and increased fuel prices 30 percent by reducing subsidies. And some energy exporters are building buffers when prices are high, to prepare for oil price volatility.

Governments must also manage many fiscal risks, including from public guarantees and losses by state-owned enterprises, which could destabilize debt and require drastic cuts to vital spending. Egypt is helping manage these risks by improving its monitoring of them.

In addition, several Arab countries are adopting credible medium-term fiscal frameworks. These are key to mitigating risks when they materialize while enabling governments to maintain essential spending, stabilize debt, and build investor trust. The IMF is helping members institute such frameworks. And our fiscal risk toolkit helps to identify risks, quantify their potential costs, and prioritize actions to address them. The second principle is long-term planning and investment to address climate challenges.

From North Africa to Central Asia, the region is warming at twice the speed of the rest of the world. Beyond urgently reducing greenhouse gas emissions everywhere, we need efforts across multiple fronts. For instance, investment in climate-resilient infrastructure and early warning systems are critical for increasing regional resilience. So is investing in renewable energy and making regional



economies less carbon intensive.

Governments in the region have identified multi-year financing needs of over \$750 billion for these actions. Enabling the environment for private climate finance through the right policies and financial solutions is key to meeting these needs. "Here, too, the IMF is doing its part. We have put climate at the heart of our work, and are working with partners to make progress on the climate finance agenda. And this includes our new Resilience and Sustainability Trust, which aims at improving policies and providing affordable long-term financing to address climate challenges. We are already in discussions with Egypt and other countries for RST funding," she pointed out. The third principle is to boost tax revenues.

"If we are to invest in a more resilient future, we will need to further strengthen tax policy and administration. Many countries in the region have made good progress in expanding their tax capacity. And yet, the average tax-to-GDP ratio, excluding hydrocarbon-related revenue, remains at about 11 percent—less than half of what could potentially be collected," she said.

This can be increased by improving tax policy design and phasing out inefficient tax exemptions. For example, Algeria is broadening the tax base and making the tax burden more equitable. Bahrain and Saudi Arabia have raised substantial revenue by introducing value-added taxes. And the UAE is set to phase

in a corporate income tax, she said.

The other key to boosting revenue is modernizing tax administration, and using digital tools can help. Jordan has done this, and the Palestinian Ministry of Finance is doing similar work. Somalia is also deploying policy and administrative reforms to rebuild its tax capacity. Actions like these should raise revenue by increasing compliance—and IMF capacity development can help you design and implement them.

Deepening international cooperation

But today, for some countries, domestic policies are simply not enough to resolve another pressing challenge: unsustainable debt.

Giving the global economic outlook, she said, global growth remains weak, but it may be at a turning point. After expanding by 3.4 percent last year, we see growth slowing to 2.9 percent in 2023 and rebounding slightly to 3.1 percent in 2024. We released our latest forecast two weeks ago. While less gloomy than in October, we still project slower growth, and the fight against inflation remains a priority for 2023.

On the positive, we see inflation declining from 8.8 percent in 2022 to 6.6 percent this year and 4.3 percent in 2024—although for most countries, it will still be above pre-pandemic levels. China's reopening is helping, as well as resilient labor markets and consumer spending in the US and the EU, she said.



CAPE TOWN: Opposition Economic Freedom Fighters party leader Julius Malema protest on stage as South African President Cyril Ramaphosa attempts to deliver his 2023 state-of-the-nation address (SONA) at the Cape Town City Hall in Cape Town. —AFP

Can a disaster allay S Africa's energy crisis?

CAPE TOWN: South Africa will get an electricity minister and the government will assume additional powers to tackle crippling blackouts under a new, controversial measure—the extent of which remained largely unclear on Friday. President Cyril Ramaphosa declared a state of national disaster during his annual state-of-the-nation address on Thursday night in a bid to fast-track efforts to pull the country out of its worst ever energy crisis.

This would unlock additional funds and resources and allow for the government to leapfrog some bureaucratic hurdles and accelerate new energy projects, according to analysts. But the announcement was thin on detail, leaving many to wonder what will happen in practice—and raising concerns about possible malpractice in a country reeling from graft scandals. Energy analyst Ted Blom said declaring a state of disaster was "long overdue" but it was difficult to assess how the one proclaimed by Ramaphosa would play out "because we don't know what the government actually plans to do". South Africa has experienced record blackouts, known as loadshedding, over the past year, as its creaking coal-generated power system has failed to keep pace with demand.

In his speech in Cape Town, Ramaphosa said the state of disaster would enable government to support battered industries like the food sector, through measures including "the rollout of generators, solar panels and uninterrupted power supply". The "most immediate task is to dramatically reduce the severity" of outages in "the coming months and ultimately end" the power cuts "altogether", the president said.

Debt-laden power utility Eskom has struggled to maintain its infrastructure, suffering from the effects of

endemic corruption that hollowed out its coffers during former president Jacob Zuma's tenure.

Last month, the state-owned firm said power cuts could be a permanent feature for the next two to three years, as it moves to upgrade its ageing power stations. The blackouts have affected essential services and infrastructure, triggering water shortages in continent's most industrialised economy.

'Looting frenzy'

Ramaphosa announced he intends to appoint an electricity minister to oversee the crisis and work with Eskom. South Africa's main opposition party the Democratic Alliance (DA), criticized the move, saying the new role would cost taxpayers around 37 million rand (\$2 million) a year and only add "yet another ministerial portfolio" to an "already bloated and inefficient cabinet". The party, which had previously called for a "ring-fenced" state of disaster on Eskom, vowed to challenge the government's new "sweeping" measure in court, fearing it could lead to a "looting frenzy" of state funds.

"South Africa has been down this road before. During the COVID-19 disaster," DA leader John Steenhuisen said in a statement. "Our country simply cannot survive another round of the looting and irrationality." Thousands of contracts awarded for COVID-19 services and supplies worth more than \$900 million were probed by South African detectives investigating corruption and malfeasance in the wake of the pandemic. Energy analyst Mark Swilling, of Stellenbosch University told AFP the state of national disaster "could be a help" if the government did things "properly" and was to be held accountable.

But Blom said that an energy minister was "not the right way to go", since political interference has been the main reason behind Eskom's collapse. The power cuts "can be stopped in 90 days if the government appointed people who knew what they were doing," Blom told AFP. The ruling African National Congress, in power since the advent of democracy in 1994, has been battered by graft, cronyism and a moribund economy, which have drastically diminished public confidence in the party. —AFP

EU readies response to US green plan

BRUSSELS: Confronted by competition from Washington's vast green tech investment plan, European leaders opened the way Friday towards a relaxation of their own restrictions on state aid.

Meeting at their summit in Brussels, the 27 leaders agreed that a response was necessary to counter rising energy bills and the threat of unfair American competition. But member states were divided on how far to go without risking a subsidy race with Washington or causing damage to the level playing field within their own single market.

The language adopted by the leaders in their summit statement said any reforms to state subsidy rules should be "targeted, temporary and proportionate". But they said state aid "procedures need to be made simpler, faster and more predictable, and allow for targeted, temporary and proportionate support to be deployed speedily". Tax credits, for example, would be focused on supporting Europe's already planned green transition to low or zero-carbon technology—and maintaining competitiveness.

At the EU leaders' next summit at the end of March, European Commission president Ursula von der Leyen will have to present a reform package that member states can agree on.

"We want to be pragmatic, it means that we are using the means that are available," said European Council president Charles Michel, who represents the leaders in Brussels. "It means that we need to adapt the state aid regime but in a way that makes sure that we defend the integrity of the single market ... and take into account global competitiveness." This balancing act will have to be performed by the Commission, which is seeking to loosen the straitjacket of anti-subsidy rules to allow states to back EU-based businesses.

This, like the feared US Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), will focus on green tech like solar and wind power or efforts to cut emissions and boost efficiency in industry. But the idea has received a cool reception among the partisans of free markets and fans of state intervention—and between large states with budgets to spare and smaller rivals.

'Too much?'

The summit statement stresses that, while competing with foreign rivals is important, "The integrity of and the level playing field in the Single Market must be maintained."

The Netherlands' Premier Mark Rutte is among those skeptical of going too far. "We were worried that on state aid, you would open up too much,"



BRUSSELS: 27 EU leaders agreed that a response was necessary to counter rising energy bills and the threat of unfair American competition.

Rutte said. "And that would mean that you would basically threaten to undercut one of the things which is really working in the EU, which is the internal markets."

"But I think it is now temporarily targeted, very much focused on the on innovation, clean technology, the clean economy, precisely the issues where we have to compete with US because of the inflation Reduction Act in Washington." European capitals fear the US subsidies for clean tech will lure investment across the Atlantic, and torpedo the bloc's recovery plans.

But some members fear abandoning controls on subsidy will allow big players like France and Germany—already stepping up their own state aid—to overwhelm smaller economies.

Subsidy controls were already loosened as part of the response to the COVID pandemic, and countries such as Italy, Austria, Denmark and Finland oppose making it meaningless. "On this topic, there'll always be two for and 25 against," one European diplomat joked—referring to Germany and France's ability to back their own firms.

France and Germany are not in agreement, however, about new joint financing schemes.

Here, Paris sides with Rome and others in promoting new shared investment funds to pool European investment to boost industry and fight off US and Chinese competitors.

Fund only 'noted'

Von der Leyen has promised to draw up a blueprint within the next five months for a so-called "Sovereignty Fund" to fund joint investment in strategic businesses. But Germany and other net contributors to EU funds—such as Sweden or Austria—oppose joint borrowing or increased EU membership contributions to pay for it. In the statement, agreed after a summit that went late into the night and on into the early hours of Friday, the members agreed to only "take note" of the idea.

And even France's President Emmanuel Macron, the Sovereignty Fund's great champion, admitted that Europe could find enough funding to respond to the US plan within the existing pool. —AFP



Models wearing creations by Proenza Schouler gather backstage prior to their runway show during New York Fashion Week. — AFP photos



Models wearing creations by Proenza Schouler gather backstage prior to their runway show during New York Fashion Week.

AT NEW YORK FASHION WEEK, PROENZA SCHOULER OFFERS FUNCTION, LESS FANTASY

US fashion label Proenza Schouler on Saturday presented a low-key, functional collection, without its past conceptual showiness, as the brand marks its 20th anniversary at New York Fashion Week. This year, designers Lazaro Hernandez and Jack McCollough said they broke with their typical creative process. Most often, "we get wrapped up in like a narrative or a theme or a vibe," Hernandez said after Saturday's show. "This season... we started with literally

headshots of the women in our lives that we look up to and respect on a personal level, on a stylistic level."

Those women included American actor Chloe Sevigny, who opened the show on Saturday wearing a suit and a long skirt of leather, a material used prominently in the collection. Long an avant-garde and conceptual label, Proenza Schouler has evolved in recent years to build a more pragmatic wardrobe. This fall and winter 2023 col-

lection appears to be a culmination of that trend.

"We're tired of all this fantasy, and like, Instagram clothes," Hernandez said. The collection—clothing with character but less swagger—includes several relatively classic pantsuits and many below-the-knee skirts, accented with high boots, often in leather. Still, Proenza has not abandoned sophistication.

Fluid dresses opened in multicolored petals as models walked the runway.

One bright yellow suit featured a wide collar that stretched past the shoulder, while the flap of an asymmetrical dress fell along an arm. The designers displayed that they know, with a light touch, how to transform a silhouette with subtlety.

The 20th-anniversary collection opened "a new chapter for us," McCollough said. "It's like the beginning of something else. Something maybe more adult. We've grown up in front of all

of you guys. It's time to grow up and be an adult." He said Proenza's new way of conceiving their clothes was appealing and freeing. "Sometimes theme can be nice, and that you have a device to kind of tap into. But it's also freeing to just get rid of it altogether," McCollough said. "And just think about individual garments, and the spirit of a woman." —AFP

'Our pope': DR Congo dandies honor fallen icon

Flamboyant dandies paraded near the tomb of one of their icons in DR Congo's capital Kinshasa, flaunting coveted designer labels in stark contrast to the grinding poverty surrounding them. Dozens of extravagantly dressed dandies, known locally as sapeurs, turned up on Friday to commemorate the death of Servedo Niarco, a pop star and one of the most famous of Congo's legendary dandies. Niarco, who died in 1995, epitomizes the fanatical pursuit of elegance for many in the abysmally poor central African country.



His 1989 hit, "La Religion Ya Kitendi," eulogized dressing well as one of life's highest goals. On the anniversary of Niarco's death, sapeurs strutted up and down the pavement of Kinshasa's main thoroughfare, the Boulevard du 30 Juin, before gathering around his grave in an adjacent cemetery. One sapeur named Ibrahim sported an ankle-length plaid skirt paired with a jacket and long white cape.

A 52-year-old dandy who gave his name as Maitre Contrebasse showed off blue dungarees from Japanese fashion designer Yohji Yamamoto. "It's very expensive," said the school mathematics teacher. Devotees of the subculture called "La Sape"—often spend huge sums on coveted fashion brands.

The DRC is one of the poorest countries in the world, where two thirds of the population of about 100 million people live on under \$2.15 a day, according to the World Bank. Some of the sapeurs wore outfits of their own design and evoked the mystical significance of dressing well. Kadhi Kadhitiza, who delighted in challenging onlookers on his knowl-

edge of luxury brands, wore a burlap suit of his own making, decorated with cowrie-shell buttons.

He called Niarco "our pope," and noted that God himself had fashioned garments of skin for Adam and Eve after they sinned in the Garden of Eden. "Everyone has their way of praying," said Kadhitiza, 53.

'God of La Sape'

The dandies later converged on Niarco's tomb, going one by one to pay their respects, with some reciting the names of the brands they were wearing. "This is Donatelli," said one sapeur standing inside the small mausoleum, demonstrating his white-and-gold T-shirt.

He then pointed to his Givenchy shoes and his skirt, from Paris-based fashion house Comme Des Garçons, before holding aloft his hat's Kenzo label. Another sapeur led a group in prayer. "Oh God of La Sape," he called out. "You were the first stylist, the first designer, who did not want to see the nakedness of man after Adam's sin".

"Sape" stands for Societe des Ambianceurs et des Personnes Elegantes, which roughly translates from French as the Society of Ambiance Makers and Elegant People. Central Africa's dandy tradition, which was born in neighboring Congo-Brazzaville, traces its origins to the colonial era when locals encountered European fashion. It is for many a means of escape and something joyful and carefree in the midst of poverty, corruption and conflict.

'Show of force'

Andre Yoka Lye, a director at the national arts institute in Kinshasa, said the sapeur phenomenon became more pronounced during the post-World War II economic boom in colonial Belgian Congo. Followers of the movement were then dedicated to imitating European style and living joyfully.

But their motivations changed when Congo plunged into the economic doldrums after independence in 1960, Yoka said. "La Sape is a kind of demonstration of strength beyond one's means," he explained. But Yoka said he thought many modern sapeurs were frivolous figures, particularly given that conflict is raging in the DRC's east.

The M23 rebel group, allegedly backed by Rwanda, has captured swathes of territory and displaced hundreds of thousands of people in eastern Congo since late 2021. "We're at war," Yoka said. "We shouldn't be dressing like circus clowns". There were nonetheless allusions to the conflict during the sapeur parade on Friday.

One dandy wore glasses dripping with beads, which he said represented the tears of the people in the east. Kadhi Kadhitiza, the dandy wearing the burlap suit, said the sapeur tradition is an indelible part of Congolese culture. "It's for the Congolese, for us," he said. — AFP



This file photo shows a view of construction works conducted by the Western Wall Heritage Foundation to build an underground floor at the Plaza of the Western Wall, the holiest site where Jews are allowed to pray, in the Old City of Jerusalem. — AFP photos



This file Zionist Government Press Office aerial picture taken on June 12, 1967 shows the remaining buildings in the Mughrabi Quarter in Jerusalem's Old City by the Western Wall and the Al-Aqsa mosque compound following the Six Day War.



This file photo shows a general view of the Western wall in Jerusalem, with the Dome of the Rock Mosque in the Al-Aqsa Mosque complex in the background.



This file photo shows a view of construction works conducted by the Western Wall Heritage Foundation to build an underground floor at the Plaza of the Western Wall (center).

Fears for remains of Jerusalem's lost Mughrabi quarter

At Jerusalem's Western Wall plaza, a recent excavation has alarmed some heritage specialists who fear the traces of a centuries-old Arab neighborhood razed by Zionist entity may disappear. There are no signs on the expansive plaza to recall the history of the Mughrabi neighborhood, or Moroccan quarter, which was demolished by Zionist forces after they captured east Jerusalem in the 1967 Six-Day War. The area now bustles with tourists and worshippers who cross the stone square to the Western Wall, which marks the holiest site where Jews can pray.

The only indication of its North African heritage is a Moroccan flag, flying discreetly in a nearby private garden. Last month, excavations which the Zionist Antiquities Authority said aimed "to strengthen, stabilize and improve infrastructure" at the site "revealed parts" of the Mughrabi quarter and uncovered the remains of homes.

French historian Vincent Lemire said the discoveries included walls nearly a meter high, traces of paint, a cobbled courtyard and a system to drain rainwater. "No one expected to discover so many remains of the Mughrabi quarter, so well preserved," said Lemire, who has authored a book about the neighborhood's destruction.

For a brief time, "we could literally walk in the middle of the ancient Mughrabi quarter—in its streets, in its courtyards, in its houses," said Lemire, who also heads Jerusalem's French Research Centre. Within days, AFP journalists saw that some stone remains appeared to have been removed and the area was covered up once more.

'Deeply concerned'

The district was initially founded in the 12th century by Saladin, who defeated the Crusader kingdom in Jerusalem. It was established for Muslim pilgrims from North Africa as it stood below the Al-Aqsa



This file photo shows the al-Mughrabi ramp, leading from the Western Wall (Wailing Wall) to the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound (background) in Jerusalem's Old City.

mosque, the third-holiest site in Islam. The mosque compound is above the Western Wall and is also holy to Jews, who refer to the site as the Temple Mount.

After Zionist forces seized east Jerusalem and its Old City in June 1967, Mughrabi residents were forcibly evicted and the neighborhood was demolished overnight. "From previous archaeological activities in the Old City and its surroundings, we are deeply concerned" about the recent findings, said Alon Arad, director of Zionist organization Emek Shaveh, which fights against the politicization of archaeology.

He said the IAA's priority was to create a vast archaeological site which celebrates only the Jewish heritage of Jerusalem. The IAA has been involved in numerous controversial digs in east Jerusalem, which Zionist annexed years after the 1967 war.

Among them are excavations in a Jewish settlement area in the Palestinian neighborhood of Silwan, just beyond the Old City walls, and tunnels beneath the Western Wall plaza. The tunnels are now a vast museum displaying ruins dating to the time of the Second Temple, which the Romans destroyed in 70 AD, leaving only the Western Wall standing. The 1996 public opening of the tunnels sparked violent

clashes between Zionist security forces and Palestinians that killed more than 80 people. Palestinians fear their use threatens the foundations of Al-Aqsa mosque.

'Lost forever'

Arad accused Zionist authorities of "silencing any other heritage or cultural affiliation" and of using excavations for the "Judaisation" of the Old City. The IAA disputed Arad's claims as baseless, telling AFP that it works on "all the antiquities of Jerusalem, from all the cultures and religions that lived in the holy city". The remains discovered last month are too recent to be considered antiquities, the IAA said, but the findings were documented and details would be published in a scientific journal.

The body did not respond to an AFP question about a potential public display. Morocco, which revived relations with Zionist entity in 2020, "seeks to promote 'intangible Judeo-Moroccan heritage'," said Ali Bouabid from the North African country's Abderrahim Bouabid foundation think tank. "It's a strange contrast: when one celebrates diversity loudly, while in silence the other organizes its disappearance," Bouabid told AFP. —AFP

Lifestyle | Awards



British singer Harry Styles celebrates after receiving the album of the year award for "Harry's House" during BRIT Awards 2023 ceremony and live show in London.



British singer Harry Styles performs on stage during BRIT Awards 2023 ceremony and live show in London.



British indie rock band Wet Leg celebrates after receiving the group of the year award. — AFP photos

HARRY STYLES SWEEPS BOARD AT BRIT AWARDS, ACKNOWLEDGING 'PRIVILEGE'

British singer Harry Styles won the top awards on Saturday at the UK's biggest popular music prizes, the Brit Awards, while acknowledging his "privilege" for triumphing in a supposedly gender-neutral category that featured no female artists. Styles made multiple appearances on stage, winning awards for artist of the year, album of the year, song of the year for "As It Was" and best pop/R&B act. "This night has been really, really special to me and I will never forget it," Styles said. "I'm so so proud to be a British artist in the world out there."

The awards ceremony for the second year running handed out a gender-neutral main prize for British artist of the year. This title was introduced last year to increase inclusivity after non-binary singer Sam Smith was automatically excluded from previously gendered categories in 2021. Yet, controversially, the category had an all-male shortlist this year, and Styles in his acceptance speech named women artists who were originally short-listed for the category but did not make the final list.

"I'm really really grateful for this and I'm very aware of my privilege up here tonight so this award is for Rina, Charli, Florence, Mabel and Becky", he said, referring to Rina Sawayama, Charli XCX, Florence Welch, Mabel and Becky Hill.

The Brit Awards chairman Damian Christian told Music Week this month that it was "disappointing to see the lack of



British rock band The 1975 celebrates after receiving the best rock and alternative act of the year award.

female representation", blaming a lack of eligible 2022 releases by big female stars. Styles' clutch of awards came as little surprise after the former One Direction band-member earlier this month won the coveted Grammy award for album of the year for "Harry's House", which was the UK's biggest-selling album last year.

Styles' reference to his "privilege" on Saturday came after he prompted mockery with his Grammy acceptance speech by saying "this doesn't happen to people

like me very often". Critics pointed out that Styles as a white 29-year-old Englishman hardly falls into any underprivileged category.

Beyonce wins
US star Beyonce won the international artist of the year and best international song categories, while she did not attend in person. It was also a big night for several young acts making their recording debuts last year. Wet Leg, an indie rock

band from the Isle of Wight off England's south coast, won the group of the year category and also best new artist after releasing their catchy debut single "Chaise Longue" - which they performed at the ceremony-and their eponymous debut album.

One of the band members got a huge cheer at the show with a political aside that was bleeped out on the television broadcast: "F**k the Tories". They beat the UK's 2022 Eurovision Song Contest entry, Sam Ryder, who was the first ever contestant from the flamboyant Eurovision event to be shortlisted for a Brit award-for best new artist.

Ryder came second at Eurovision with his song "Space Man", losing to Ukraine but achieving the UK's highest place at the contest for two decades. "I used to be on the wedding circuit before this," he commented during the Brits show, upbeat despite not winning. "I feel a responsibility to show immense gratitude." Rapper Aitch, 23, whose debut album Close to Home included NFT technology, won in the best hip hop/grime/rap category, beating top star Stormzy. The Brit Awards were first held in 1977. The event is run by British Phonographic Industry, a trade association that represents the UK music industry. — AFP



British singer Becky Hill celebrates after receiving the best dance act of the year award.



British indie rock band Wet Leg performs on stage during BRIT Awards 2023 ceremony and live show.



(From left) Kid Harpoon, Harry Styles and Tyler Johnson pose with the Album of the Year Award for "Harry's House" in the press room.



French DJ David Guetta celebrates after receiving the best producer of the year award.



Kid Harpoon accepts the Album Of The Year award for "Harry's House" onstage.



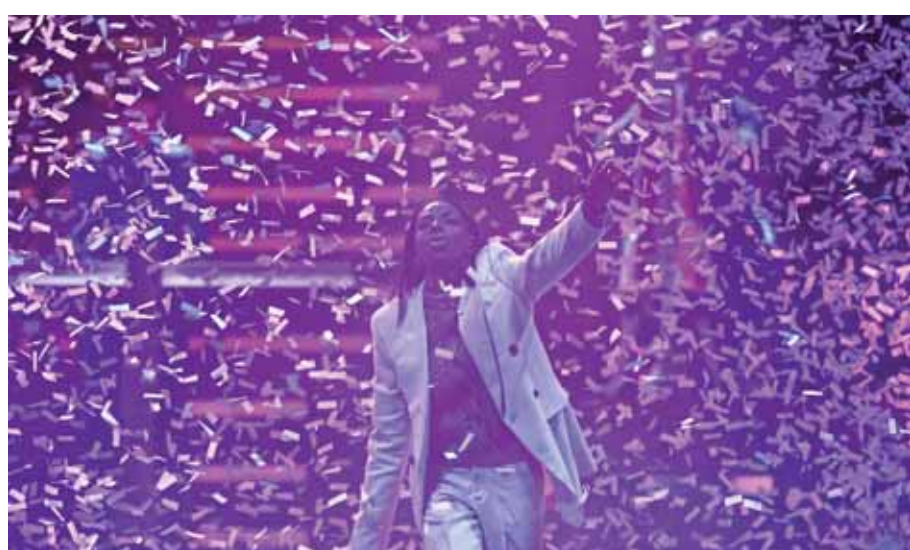
British rapper Aitch celebrates after receiving the best hip hop, grime and rap act of the year award.



US singer and flutist Lizzo performs on stage during BRIT Awards 2023 ceremony and live show in London.



Mexican actress Salma Hayek poses on the red carpet upon arrival for the BRIT Awards 2023.



British singer Cat Burns performs on stage.



US model Kristen McMenamy poses on the red carpet upon arrival for the BRIT Awards 2023 in London on February 11, 2023.

Lifestyle | Features



French DJ David Guetta performs on stage during BRIT Awards 2023 ceremony and live show. — AFP photos



British singer Sam Smith performs on stage.

Nominees and winners

Album of the Year
Harry Styles - Harry's House

Song of the Year
Harry Styles - As It Was

International song of the Year
Beyonce - Break My Soul

Best alternative / rock
The 1975

Pop / R&B
Harry Styles

Artist of the Year
Harry Styles

Best international artist
Beyonce

Best new artist
Wet Leg

Best dance
Becky Hill

Producer of the year
David Guetta

Best group
Wet Leg

Best international group
Fontaines DC

Rising Star
Flo

Best hip-hop / rap / grime
Aitch

Songwriter of the year
Kid Harpoon



A bull rider gets ready to perform during a traditional bull riding event during the celebration of a religious feast held in honor of the Candelaria Virgin.



Bull rider Eveling Perez poses for a picture with her team before performing on a traditional bull riding event.

When Eveling Perez was a teenager, she became fascinated by bull riding but her brother told her it was only for men in Nicaragua, where machismo was and still is the norm. She ignored him. Now the 33-year-old cook takes part in rodeo shows, riding a bucking bull. Perez earns \$200 every time she mounts one, her right hand gripping the animal's harness while her left arm is stretched out for balance. Hundreds of spectators at a festival in Tipitapa, around 30 kilometers (20 miles) from the capital Managua, cheer and applaud as her body shudders with the violent bucking of a beast that weighs hundreds of kilograms and is desperate to shake her off.



A bull rider falls off a bull during a traditional bull riding event during the celebration of a religious feast held in honor of the Candelaria Virgin.

The goal is to stay on the bull for at least eight seconds. That is no tall order for the 1m60cm (5 foot 3) Perez, who trains regularly, including daily two-kilometer runs to stay in form. But the nature of the sport means she suffers frequent



Women rodeo bull riders buck tradition in macho Nicaragua

injuries, even bone fractures. As unusual as it is to see women taking part in the hugely popular rodeos in Nicaragua, Perez is not the only one on her team.

And she hopes that one day, women bull riders will no longer be so rare. "I would like that not just myself and my teammate, but that many more women take part to represent the feminine sex," said Perez. There are some obstacles to

women's participation, though, as bull riders agree they are at a physical disadvantage. "Of course it's more difficult for a woman," said Carlos Conde, one of Perez's male teammates. However, he insisted women can make up for a lack of speed and strength through bravery.

Perez acknowledges she could never squeeze the bull with her legs as much as a man, whose limbs are often longer and

more powerful. She also said men have greater flexibility, "but we women try to do it because it's unusual to see a woman riding a bull, but it's possible."

Marvin Bolanos, from the rodeo riders' association, says there are ever more women taking part-not just in bull riding but all sorts of activities previously reserved for men. And whereas once there was resistance from some macho

egos trying to protect their monopoly on bull riding, attitudes are slowly changing. "You can't be macho. You have to let women" ride bulls, said Francisco Orozco, who owns a dozen of the rodeo animals. — AFP



A bull rider performs during a traditional bull riding event during the celebration of a religious feast held in honor of the Candelaria Virgin in Teustepe, Nicaragua.



A bull rider falls off a bull while performing during a traditional bull riding event.— AFP photos

Sports

Lakers down Warriors without LeBron, Kings win in overtime over Mavericks

LOS ANGELES: The Los Angeles Lakers, with LeBron James sidelined and their new recruits still getting up to speed, snapped a three-game skid with a 109-103 victory over the NBA-champion Golden State Warriors on Saturday. The back-and-forth battle in San Francisco was just one of the close games on a Saturday that saw the Sacramento Kings triumph in overtime to spoil recent Mavericks acquisition Kyrie Irving's first game alongside new teammate Luka Doncic.

Dennis Schroder led the Lakers with 26 points. Rui Hachimura added 16 and D'Angelo Russell newly arrived in a trade deadline deal - chipped in 15 with five rebounds and six assists. Anthony Davis had a quiet scoring night with just 13 points on five-of-19 shooting. James's absence with a sore ankle less than a week after he became the NBA's all-time leading scorer and the injury absence of Warriors star Stephen Curry robbed the contest of some glamor, but there was plenty of drama.

It was tied with 5:01 to play, but a Hachimura three-pointer put the Lakers up for good. While he was not an offensive force, Davis grabbed 13 rebounds and came up with two of his three blocked shots in the final two minutes. "One thing about me, I'm able to shift my mind on the defensive end," Davis said. "So I'm not getting foul calls, I'm not making shots, I never give up on the other end. Rebounds, blocked shots, whatever my team needs me to do."

In Sacramento, De'Aaron Fox's 36 points included 14 in overtime as the Kings beat the Mavericks 133-128. Kings center Domantas Sabonis scored 22 points and pulled down 14 rebounds for his league-leading 44th double-double of the season. Irving, playing his third game

for the Mavs since he was acquired in a trade from the Brooklyn Nets, scored 28 points. He teamed up for the first time with Mavs star Doncic, who scored 25 points and pulled down nine rebounds as he returned from a bruised heel.

Dallas had led wire-to-wire in a 122-114 victory over the Kings on Friday. A day later the Kings led by as many as 13 points in a game that featured 14 lead changes. Back-to-back baskets from Fox put the Kings up 121-117 with 2:53 left in overtime. Irving's three-pointer with 24.6 seconds remaining pulled the Mavs within 127-126 but Fox made six free throws as the Kings sealed the win.

The Miami Heat pulled off a second nail-biting victory in as many nights, beating the Magic 107-103 in overtime in Orlando. One night after Jimmy Butler's buzzer-beating dunk gave Miami a win over Houston, the Heat escaped again. They trailed by 10 midway through the fourth quarter, and even though this time Butler saw a potential game-winner miss at the buzzer in regulation time, they had enough in the tank in the extra session.

Tyler Herro scored 23 points, Butler added 22 and Gabe Vincent scored 20 for Miami, who played their 40th "clutch" game of the season - a game with a five-point margin at any stage of the final five minutes. "Home or away it's must-see," Heat coach Erik Spoelstra quipped of his team's penchant for late-game drama.

Sixers edge Nets

The victory moved the Heat within one and a half games of the Brooklyn Nets for fifth in the Eastern Conference after the Nets fell 101-98 at home to the Philadelphia 76ers. Sixers center Joel Embiid scored 37 points and grabbed 13 rebounds



SAN FRANCISCO: JaMychal Green of the Golden State Warriors going up to shoot gets fouled from behind by Wenyen Gabriel of the Los Angeles Lakers at Chase Center on Feb 11, 2023. —AFP

and James Harden scored 29 points in his first game in Brooklyn since he was traded to the Sixers by the Nets last year. Harden, who was traded at his own request, shrugged off the boos of the crowd.

"I don't get caught up in homecomings or the outside distractions," Harden said. "I think our

focus was just to come here and win a game and we did a good job of that tonight." Denver's two-time reigning NBA Most Valuable Player Nikola Jokic delivered his league-best 20th triple-double of the season in a 119-105 victory over the Hornets in Charlotte. —AFP

Aussie cricketers blasted over India 'humiliation'

SYDNEY: Australia's rout by India in the first Test at Nagpur was slammed as a "humiliation" and an "embarrassment" Sunday, with calls for changes ahead of the second Test. The world number one side were crushed by an innings and 132 runs inside three days on a bone-dry pitch on Saturday, outclassed by spin twins Ravichandran Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja. Australia's second innings' 91 was its lowest-ever total in India.

"Pat Cummins' side has been humiliated in the first Nagpur Test match," The Australian broadsheet wrote. "There's no blaming the wicket when the opposition post 400, but there's potential to blame the state of mind the Australians approached the game in." It said questions must be asked about the decision to drop Travis Head, one of their standout players during the home summer, and over how much longer veteran opener David Warner can remain in Test cricket after failing again.

The Sydney Morning Herald said Australia had been dealt "a brutal reality check in their quest for world domination by India's spin masters", while Sydney's Daily Telegraph urged change. "The axing of Travis Head looked silly on day one and positively stupid on day three after Australia's dreadful performance," said the Telegraph. "He must return. But Travis Head alone would not have raised the Titanic."

Former captain Allan Border said the team should be "embarrassed" and would be left with "so many scars". "I hope our players are embarrassed by that performance. It's just poor all around. It's hard to believe it's happened so quickly," he told Fox Sports. "It seems like we overthought this particular tour and who should be there, who shouldn't be there. We've started as badly as we possibly could. Hopefully that's rock bottom."

Mark Waugh, a selector during Australia's 2017 campaign in India, also said Head and allrounder Cameron Green, if fit, should be recalled for the second Test in Delhi. "There have been too many bruises from this game to move forward (with the current side)," he said. "If Cameron Green is fit, he has to come in and Head has to come back in." That would likely see Matt Renshaw dropped, with Scott Boland also at risk if Green were to return. Mitchell Starc could also be an option, with the pace spearhead expected to link up with the team this week after recovering from a serious finger injury. —AFP

Odermatt outguns Kilde for gold

COURCHEVEL, France: Marco Odermatt scorched to gold in the men's downhill at the World Ski Championships in Courchevel on Sunday to ensure a Swiss speed double after Jasmine Flury's shock win in the women's race. Odermatt, who has yet to win a downhill on the World Cup circuit - having notched up seven second places, laid down a near-perfect run on L'Eclipse piste to clock a winning time of 1min 47.05sec.

Norway's Aleksander Aamodt Kilde won his second silver of the championships, at 0.48sec, after his second place in Thursday's super-G. Unheralded Canadian Cameron Alexander claimed bronze (+0.89). "It was for me the perfect run, maybe the best downhill I have ever shown," said Odermatt, the runaway leader in the World Cup overall standings thanks to his domination of the super G and

strength in the giant slalom.

"We did another great battle, I guess. But just one can win. He (Kilde) would deserve the gold medal as well, but today it was on my side. I felt it was a perfect run, when you look and you know some fast skiers had already been down, I knew it was good." Hitting speeds of 125km/h and negotiating jumps up to 50 m long, Odermatt was in control after the initial gliding section, aggressively holding his line in an exemplary display of speed skiing in bright, sunny conditions.

Kilde was always going to be Odermatt's main threat, the Norwegian having won five of the eight men's World Cup downhill races this season. As he streaked through the finish line, the big screen showing him with a time slower than Odermatt, the Swiss jumped out of the 'leader's chair' in exultation, hugging a teammate in delight and punching the air.

'Hard nut to crack'

"I tried my best, but being one of the favorites, you have a lot of pressure," said Kilde. "Also, I knew that Odermatt had delivered something really, really



COURCHEVEL, France: Switzerland's Marco Odermatt competes during the men's downhill event of the FIS Alpine Ski World Championship 2023 on Feb 12, 2023. —AFP

good. So I tried to charge as hard as I could. I messed up a couple of turns and that cost me. But it's still quite incredible, and the way I feel now is super. I really tested myself. For sure Marco and I will battle for the rest of the season and I will keep trying to beat him. He is a hard nut to crack. In downhill, I've been in front of him until today, but that is all a part of it."

A Canadian on the podium was not unexpected but it was a surprise it was Alexander rather than James Crawford, who had won the super-G gold. Alexander, with his sole World Cup podium a downhill victory in Kvitfjell in March last year, held on to third from Austria's combined silver medallist Marco Schwarz (+0.93), with Crawford finishing fifth (+1.01). —AFP

Coleman wins 60m crown at Millrose Games after Lyles DQ

NEW YORK: World record-holder Christian Coleman defended his Millrose Games 60-meter title in a 2023 world-best of 6.47 seconds on Saturday after world 200m champion Noah Lyles was disqualified. Both Americans are looking to the 100m in August's World Championships and the 2024 Paris Olympics as top stars took an early status check at the Armory in the World Athletics Indoor Tour Gold series meet. Lyles flinched in the starting block and was disqualified for a false start but protested the decision and was allowed to run. Coleman jumped ahead at the start and surged to the finish, ignoring the distraction to make the most of his opportunity. "You've got to be a professional in those moments, try to stay composed, stay relaxed and stay locked in, and just execute your race plan," said Coleman. Lyles crossed the line next in 6.53 but it was Jamaican Travis Williams who placed second, edging Noah's brother Josephus Lyles after both ran personal bests of 6.59. "He's a great competitor. I knew he would have some closing speed," Coleman said of Noah Lyles. "Just tried to get to the line first." Lyles, the reigning world 200m champion, won the 60 last week in Boston in a personal best 6.51.

Coleman, who set the 60m world record of 6.34 in 2018, won the 2018 world indoor 60m title and took the 2019 world outdoor 100m title. Kenya's Noah Kibet won

the men's 800 in 1:44.98, a personal best and season leader. The 18-year-old African, a 2022 world indoor runner-up, beat American Isaiah Harris by .66 of a second. In the shot put, two-time reigning Olympic champion Ryan Crouser won with 22.58m and reigning outdoor women's world champion Chase Ealey won on 20.03m - both Americans producing season world bests. "Really good start to the season for me," Crouser said. Reigning 400 world indoor champion Jereem Richards from Trinidad and Tobago won the 400 in 45.84 with American Noah Williams second in 46.20.

Yared Nuguse won the men's mile in an American record 3:47.38, this season's world leading time, with Britain's Neil Gourley second in 3:49.46 and 2022 champion Ollie Hoare of Australia third in 3:50.83.

Britons Muir, Kerr win

Britain's Laura Muir, the Tokyo Olympic 1,500m runner-up, won the women's mile in 4:20.15. The 29-year-old reigning European and Commonwealth Games champion from Scotland beat American Josette Andrews by .73 of a second. "It was amazing," Muir said. "That last lap I said, 'I haven't done all this hard work for nothing.'" Britain's Josh Kerr, who took Tokyo Olympic 1,500m bronze, won the men's 3,000 in a meet-record 7:33.47. The 25-year-old Scotsman defeated Guatemala's Luis Grijalva by .39 of a second.

Reigning Olympic champion Katie Moon cleared a season-leading 4.81m to win the women's pole vault with fellow American Bridget Williams on 4.76 and 2016 Olympic champion Katerina Stefanidi of Greece third on 4.62. Bahamian Devynne Charlton, last year's world indoor runner-up, took the women's 60m hurdles in 7.91.



NEW YORK: Christian Coleman poses after winning the UCS men's 60-meter dash during the 115th Millrose Games at The Armory Track on Feb 11, 2023. —AFP

World 2022 indoor runner-up Aleia Hobbs won the women's 60 in 7.04 with US compatriot Tamari Davis second in 7.08. "I've been in that weight room," Hobbs said. "I'm way stronger than I have ever been. Putting the work in and it's paying off."

Alicia Monson won the women's 3,000m in an American record and world leading 8:25.05. Aje Wilson, the reigning 800 indoor world champion, stretched her Armory win streak to 19 races over the past decade by winning the 600 in 1:24.85 and Abby Steiner won the women's 300 in 35.54. —AFP

Foster outduels Vargas for vacant WBC crown

WASHINGTON: O'Shaquie Foster outboxed previously unbeaten two-division champion Rey Vargas on the way to a unanimous decision Saturday in their fight for the vacant World Boxing Council super-featherweight title. Foster, 29, grabbed his chance in his first world title bout, stretching his winning streak to 10 in a row and taking his record to 20-2 with 11 knockouts. "Man, it feels great," said the 29-year-old Foster, whose career was slowed by a four-month spell in prison five years ago. "This journey has been crazy."

Judges at the Alamodome in San Antonio, Texas, saw it clearly for Foster, whose speed and agility left Vargas groping. Judge Tim Cheatham scored it 117-111, Alejandro Rochin saw it 119-109 and David Sutherland made it 116-112. Foster said the victory came down to "dedication and hard work." "I've got a great team around me," he said. "Just getting away from the distractions, getting myself



SAN ANTONIO: Rey Vargas goes toe to toe with O'Shaquie Foster in the WBC Super Featherweight World Championship at Alamodome on Feb 11, 2023. —AFP

mentally and physically right ... now, you know, I'm on top. It's crazy."

Mexico's Vargas fell to 36-1 with 22 wins inside the distance. The WBC super-bantamweight champion from 2017 to 2019, Vargas had captured the WBC featherweight title last July at the Alamodome with a split decision over Filipino Mark Magsayo. —AFP

Makhachev wears down Volkanovski to retain UFC crown

PERTH: Islam Makhachev defended his UFC lightweight world title on Sunday, wearing down Alexander "The Great" Volkanovski both on his feet and on the ground to secure a unanimous points decision in Perth. Russia's Makhachev derailed the Australian's campaign to become just the fifth fighter to hold two world titles simultaneously in UFC history, despite a fiercely partisan crowd.

"So hard an opponent," a breathless Makhachev said after a thrilling top of the bill contest at UFC284. "I am the greatest fighter in the world right now." The 31-year-old Makhachev stretched his unbeaten streak in the UFC to 12 fights and his overall record to 24-1 as he made good on his threats to overpower the smaller Australian, with the judges' cards reading 48-47, 48-

47, 49-46. The surprise from Makhachev was his striking, as he picked his shots with precision landing overhand lefts and probing rights. The Russian also made four trademark takedowns to leave the energetic Volkanovski looking for answers. A huge right from the Australian landed late in the fifth to raise local heartbeats but Makhachev held on.

Dagestan-born Makhachev has been schooled throughout his career by Khabib Nurmagomedov - arguably the greatest fighter in UFC history - and boasted 11 submissions on his record coming into Perth. The expectation was that Makhachev would look to quickly take the fight to the floor but the Australian's fitness and ground defense managed to take it the distance.

It all came down to numbers with too many strikes landed by Makhachev and a greater number of takedowns executed. The win moved Makhachev above Volkanovski in the UFC pound-for-pound rankings. "I showed why I am number one," said Makhachev. "You guys have to improve more. I thought he was going to be easy on the ground but this guy, he proved me wrong." —AFP

Sports

Champions League returns with Europe's best out to stop English

PARIS: The Champions League knockout stage kicks off this week with a blockbuster showdown between Paris Saint-Germain and Bayern Munich topping the bill, doubts surrounding all of the English contenders and talk of a break-away Super League resurfacing again. Three and a half months have passed since the group stage ended, an unprecedented pause in the Champions League season caused by the break for the World Cup.

Since the tournament in Qatar there has been another transfer window of record spending by Premier League clubs, whose £815 million (\$1 billion) outlay on new players in January represented 79 percent of the total across Europe's biggest five leagues according to analysts Deloitte. That provides the backdrop to the return of the Champions League, with the financial gulf between the Premier League and the continent greater than ever and the promoters of the break-away Super League project revealing their new vision of how the competition might look.

Bernd Reichart, the chief executive of the A22 group promoting the Super League, this week told German

newspaper Die Welt that "the foundations of European football are in danger of collapsing. It's time for a change." He presented the idea of a Super League with 80 teams, all places based on sporting merit and no permanent members.

Pressure on Man City, Chelsea

But there is not yet anything concrete in place, and for now clubs from outside England will be aiming to stop the cash-rich Premier League teams dominating the latter stages of the Champions League. There are nevertheless doubts surrounding all the English sides taking part in the last 16, even Pep Guardiola's Manchester City.

The 2021 runners-up are desperate to get their hands on the trophy for the first time but are still reeling after being charged with over 100 breaches of financial rules by the Premier League, leaving them at risk of serious punishment including the possibility of relegation.

The Abu Dhabi-backed club will still be favorites to overcome RB Leipzig, but they have appeared flawed domestical-

ly of late and perhaps the uncertainty surrounding the future will leave them feeling greater pressure to perform in Europe this season. Tottenham Hotspur, runners-up in 2019, have been up and down under Antonio Conte but will be fancied against an AC Milan side who have collapsed, going seven games without a win before this weekend - hardly the best preparation for their first Champions League knockout tie in nine years.

Chelsea spent more than a third of all the money lavished by the Premier League in January. That increases expectations at Stamford Bridge, but only three of their January recruits can feature in their European squad. The 2021 Champions League winners have won just once in eight games and now face a Borussia Dortmund side who have won six on the bounce, and have Sebastian Haller fit again after treatment for testicular cancer. Then there is Jurgen Klopp's Liverpool, languishing in mid-table at home ahead of their rerun of last season's final against reigning champions Real Madrid, whose coach Carlo Ancelotti is confident English clubs are not about to have things all their own way.

Napoli eyeing double

"I don't think this will end the competitiveness of European competitions," Ancelotti said when asked about the Premier League's spending. Then again, with key players like Karim Benzema and Luka Modric in the twilight of their careers, Real do not look like the force they were last season, although which of Europe's superpowers is in peak form? Not PSG, who have lost four times already in 2023 and are without the injured Kylian Mbappe for the first leg against Bundesliga leaders Bayern.

Elsewhere it would be a stretch to suggest that Inter Milan, who face Porto, look like genuine contenders, while Benfica should beat Club Brugge but have lost their star player, Enzo Fernandez, to Chelsea since the group stage. Could there be a new name on the trophy? Napoli are running away with the Serie A title and Luciano Spalletti's team, who play Eintracht Frankfurt in the last 16, are eyeing what would be an utterly remarkable double. "You can either stick or twist," Spalletti said recently. "We have no doubts on that, we have made our decision to gamble and go for the double." —AFP

PSG beaten by Monaco ahead of Bayern clash

PARIS: A Paris Saint-Germain side missing the injured Lionel Messi and Kylian Mbappe and hit by a stomach bug warmed up for their Champions League showdown against Bayern Munich by falling to a 3-1 defeat at Monaco in Ligue 1 on Saturday. All the goals came in the first half at the Stade Louis II, with Aleksandr Golovin putting Monaco ahead inside four minutes and Wissam Ben Yedder doubling the home side's lead.

The 16-year-old Warren Zaire-Emery pulled one back for PSG but Ben Yedder scored his second of the game, and 19th goal this season, to make it 3-1 in first-half stoppage time. PSG remain top of the table, although their lead has been reduced to five points over Marseille, who won 2-0 at Clermont. Monaco are now up to third, seven points behind the leaders, but seeing

the gap to their rivals reduced is the least of PSG's worries right now, after they went down to their second defeat in four days. Also beaten by Marseille in the last 16 of the French Cup in midweek, Christophe Galtier's team have now lost three times in seven league outings in 2023. PSG will be without Mbappe, their top scorer, due to a thigh injury for the Champions League last-16 first leg with Bayern at the Parc des Princes on Tuesday. Galtier must also hope that Messi recovers in time from the hamstring complaint that prevented him from travelling to the principality.

Stomach bug

PSG were also without playmaker Marco Verratti, fellow midfielder Renato Sanches and defender Nordi Mukiele due to injury before it emerged that several members of the squad were laid low by a stomach bug on the morning of the game. "We are having to do what we can with the players we have available just now. It is bizarre to say that when you're PSG but that is the situation," said Galtier.

Experienced players such as Sergio Ramos and Achraf Hakimi only appeared in the second half before



MONACO: Paris Saint-Germain's Brazilian forward Neymar vies with Monaco's Malian midfielder Mohamed Camara at the Louis II stadium on Feb 11, 2023. —AFP

Presnel Kimpembe made his first appearance since prior to the World Cup following injury. PSG were already 3-1 down by the time any of them came on and would have suffered a heavier defeat had goalkeeper Gianluigi Donnarumma not been in inspired form. —AFP

Mueller keeps Bayern top, Union second

MUNICH: Bayern Munich strung three wins together for the first time since November, beating Bochum 3-0 at home in the Bundesliga on Saturday ahead of next week's Champions League clash with Paris Saint-Germain. Surprise challengers Union Berlin stayed right on Bayern's heels however, winning 2-1 away at RB Leipzig to come within one point of the Bavarians in Saturday's late game.

Bayern lacked fluidity early against a strong Bochum side in their afternoon fixture but were gifted a goal in the first half, when veteran forward Thomas Mueller pounced on an under-hit back pass from Bochum defender Saidu Janko to score. Bayern's Bochum-born midfielder Leon Goretzka almost doubled the lead one minute before half-time, but headed wide from right in front.

In-form French forward Kingsley Coman made it 2-0 on 64 minutes, while former Arsenal winger Serge Gnabry

won and converted a penalty with just over 15 minutes remaining to give his side a comfortable win. Bayern, who started the season with three straight 1-1 draws, have now won three matches on the trot ahead of Tuesday's trip to face PSG in the Champions League.

Despite the win, a frustrated Bayern boss Julian Nagelsmann said his side needed to improve before the PSG meeting. "We played well in the first six minutes, after that we weren't in the game," he said. "The substitutions brought fresh momentum (but) we have to improve by Tuesday."

In Saturday's late game, Union came from behind to win 2-1 at Leipzig, reclaiming second spot on the ladder. Leipzig hit the lead thanks to a Benjamin Henrichs long-range stunner after 24 minutes and looked in full control. Union hit back with an even more stunning strike by Janik Haberer after 61 minutes, the midfielder volleying in while unmarked from the edge of the box to set up a grandstand finished.

Union continued to push and won a penalty after 71 minutes when French defender Mo Simakan handled in the box. Union center-back Robin Knoche stepped up and hammered his shot direct and hard, grabbing a 2-1 lead for the visiting side. Leipzig had a late equalizer ruled



MUNICH: Bayern Munich's German midfielder Leroy Sane tries to score against Bochum's German goalkeeper Manuel Riemann on Feb 11, 2023. —AFP

out for offside and Union held on for a famous away victory. Union captain Rani Khedira toasted the "surreal" nature of his side's victory. "It's a development that nobody could have imagined. It's all a bit surreal. "Sometimes we don't really know how we do it. It wasn't a nice victory, but a hard-fought win." —AFP

Atalanta go third with win at Lazio as Roma stumble

MILAN: Atalanta climbed into the Serie A Champions League places with a 2-0 win at rivals Lazio on Saturday as fellow top-four hopefuls Roma stumbled to a 1-1 draw against lowly Lecce. Goals from Davide Zappacosta and Rasmus Hojlund saw the Bergamo club jump from sixth to third, leapfrogging Lazio, reigning champions AC Milan and Roma in the fierce battle to qualify for Europe's top club competition.

Maurizio Sarri's Lazio, who could have overtaken city rivals Roma with a win at the Stadio Olimpico, dropped to sixth and lie two points off the top four. Atalanta, Roma and

fifth-placed Milan are level on 41 points but remain some 15 points behind runaway leaders Napoli. Atalanta made the breakthrough in a breathless encounter in the Italian capital when Zappacosta unleashed a sweet strike into the top corner in the 23rd minute. Young Danish striker Hojlund doubled the advantage for Gian Piero Gasperini's men in the 65th minute, converting Ademola Lookman's cross as Lazio were made to pay for not taking their opportunities. "We play these types of matches and they give you a lot of confidence," said Gasperini. "To reach the Champions League would be extraordinary."

Jose Mourinho's Roma occupy the final Champions League spot after dropping two points at 14th-placed Lecce as Netherlands star Georginio Wijnaldum made a long-awaited return from injury. They made a terrible start when an under-pressure Roger Ibanez turned the ball into his own net from a corner in the seventh minute. Paulo Dybala equalized from the penalty spot 10 minutes later following a Lecce handball as Roma reacted strongly to the early setback. —AFP



ROME: Lazio's Italian defender Nicolò Casale and Atalanta's Danish forward Rasmus Hojlund go for a header on Feb 11, 2023 at the Olympic stadium. —AFP

Sevilla continue Liga revival, Valencia lose amid protest

BARCELONA: Youssef En-Nesyri and Bryan Gil helped Sevilla to a 2-0 win over Real Mallorca on Saturday in La Liga to record a fourth consecutive home victory. Elsewhere Valencia fell to a disappointing 2-1 home defeat by Athletic Bilbao amid a large fan protest against Peter Lim's ownership of the club. Jorge Sampaoli's Sevilla rose provisionally to 12th, four points clear of the relegation zone, bouncing back strongly after their thrashing by Barcelona last Sunday.

Mallorca, who beat champions Real Madrid the same day, were far tamer at the Ramon Sanchez-Pizjuan. Morocco striker En-Nesyri sent the hosts ahead with a simple finish after running on to a long ball, with Mallorca's defense asleep. It was his third goal in three league games, having failed to score in his first 14 top-flight appearances this season.

Gil, on loan back at his former side from Tottenham, doubled the lead from point blank range after 40 minutes when Jesus Navas's cross slid all the way through to him. Sevilla could not extend their lead after the break but the fans were content with the victory which continued their revival after a terrible start to the season. "Today the team was far superior to a side that is very difficult," said Sampaoli. "They had just come from beating Real Madrid and have a lot of defensive strength, and we had a first half where we could have scored many more goals. This superiority is exciting going forward for the future."

Valencia's defeat by Athletic Bilbao at Mestalla left the east coast side 18th, in the relegation zone. Thousands of supporters protested against Lim, gathering outside the stadium before kick-off to show their discontent as they have done on multiple previous occasions. They did not enter the stadium until the 19th minute, leaving stands vacated in large areas at the start of the game.

The club are badly struggling this season, with the defeat by Athletic leaving them a point behind Espanyol, 17th, who face Real Sociedad on Monday. Samu Castillejo sent Los Che ahead but Nico Williams levelled for the Basques after half an hour and Oihan Sancet slotted home the winner. Fans whistled and jeered at full-time after Voro's side fell to their 11th defeat in 21 league games.

Earlier Real Betis moved provisionally fifth with an entertaining 3-2 win at Almeria, ending their own poor run of one win in six games across all competitions. Sergio Canales was the visitors' key player, scoring and setting up the winner for veteran Mexican midfielder Andres Guardado. On Sunday league leaders Barcelona visit Villarreal among other games. —AFP

Classifieds

Change of Name

I, **AJAY**, holder of Passport No. N2713384 do hereby change my name to AJAY (as Given name) KUMAR ARYA (as Surname) for all purposes. I will henceforth be known in the name AJAY KUMAR ARYA and I also undertake to carry out this name change in all my documents. (C#3152)

I, **Lambani Rajesh** (Old Name) Mother (Old Name) Lambani Lakky, holder of Indian Passport No: V7774427, H.No. 3-100/1, Koratpally (Vill), Dichpally (Mdl), Nizamabad (Dist), Telangana, India 503175, Change my given name as Sri Ram, Surname as Gugloth, Mother Given name as Ammi. (C#3153)

I, **Jose Francisco Cruz**, holder of

Passport No. Z4824892, resident of Castelvaddo, Nagoa, South Goa, India, do hereby change my name to JOSE FRANCISCO and Surname to DA CRUZ for all purposes. I will henceforth be known in the name JOSE FRANCISCO DA CRUZ and I also undertake to carry out this name change in all my documents.

I, **Jayden Simon Cruz**, holder of Passport No. U0614482, resident of Castelvaddo, Nagoa, South Goa, India, do hereby change my name to JAYDEN SIMON and Surname to DA CRUZ for all purposes. I will henceforth be known in the name JAYDEN SIMON DA CRUZ and I also undertake to carry out this name change in all my documents.

I, **Deodita Cruz**, holder of Passport No. T4010092, resident of Castelvaddo,

Nagoa, South Goa, India, do hereby change my name to DEODITA and Surname to RODRIGUES for all purposes. I will henceforth be known in the name DEODITA RODRIGUES and I also undertake to carry out this name change in all my documents. (C#3154)

I, **Pooja Sharma**, holder of Indian Passport No. U6096088 having permanent address RZF-773/19, Street No. 14, Raj Nagar Part II, Palam Colony Delhi-77, residing in Kuwait at present, hereby declare that henceforth my name will be read as: Given Name Pooja Milind and Surname Saraswala. (C#3155)


I, **have** changed my name from MOHAMMED KHALID NOOR MOHAMED to MOHAMMED KHALID NOOR MOHAMMED SHEIKH as per documents. (C#3156) - 13-02-2023

Hospitals & Clinics



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

Clinics

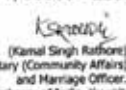
Kaizen center	25716707
Rawda	22517733
Adaliya	22517144
Khalidiya	24848075
Kaifan	24849807
Shamiya	24848913
Shuwaikh	24814507
Abdullah Salem	22549134
Nuzha	22526804
Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764



NOTICE
February 1, 2023

Mr. Darryl Patrick Noronha, Indian national, son of Mr. Andrew Caridade Noronha, resident of A 601 Sai Samarpan Navghar Road, Near S N College, Shiv Shakti Nagar, Bhayander East Thane, Maharashtra 401105 and Ms. Sara Susan Joseph, daughter of Mr. Joseph Mathew Kailath, resident of Alitharamoottil Mulakuzha, Chengannur, Alappuzha, Kerala 689505 both Indian Nationals presently residing in Kuwait, have given notice of intended marriage between them under the Foreign Marriage Act, 1969. If anyone has any objection to the proposed marriage, he/she may file the same with the undersigned according to the procedure laid down under the Act/Rule within thirty days from the date of publication of this notice. Communications in this regard can be made by Email (cw2.kuwait@mea.gov.in) / letters / telephonic calls (00965 - 22550171, 00965 - 22533125).



(Kamal Singh) Ruffoni
First Secretary (Community Affairs)
and Marriage Officer,
Embassy of India, Kuwait,
Email: cw2.kuwait@mea.gov.in



RABAT: Real Madrid's players celebrate with the trophy at the end of the FIFA Club World Cup final against Saudi Arabia's Al-Hilal at the Prince Moulay Abdellah Stadium on Feb 11, 2023. — AFP

Real win fifth Club World Cup

RABAT: Real Madrid lifted the Club World Cup for a record fifth time with a pulsating 5-3 win over Al Hilal on Saturday in Morocco. Vinicius Junior and Fede Valverde struck twice each, while Karim Benzema also scored on his return from injury in Madrid's spectacular victory over their Saudi Arabian opponents. Carlo Ancelotti's side, who qualified as Champions League winners last season, had far too much attacking quality for their opponents to handle.

Madrid's emphatic triumph at Rabat's Prince Moulay Abdellah stadium secured their second piece of silverware of the season, after winning the European Super Cup in August. It also provided welcome respite from their La Liga campaign, where they sit eight points behind rivals Barcelona, who also beat them in the Spanish Super Cup final in January.

Madrid also won three Intercontinental Cups in 1960, 1998 and 2002 - a match between European and South American champions, which merged with the Club World Cup in 2005. "We are very happy, for the

eighth time Madrid are champions of the world, it was what we had to do," Ancelotti told Telecinco. "We're happy, it was a good game. I think we were good up front, with Vinicius, Karim, Valverde, who got two, and up top the team had mobility and quality."

Ancelotti brought Benzema back into the starting line-up after he had missed the semi-final win over Al Ahly with a thigh injury, with Rodrygo dropping to the bench. The 35-year-old striker created the opening goal for Vinicius with a short pass to send the Brazilian winger through on goal. After a frustrating spell in Spain because of racist abuse from the stands and opponents targeting him on the pitch, Vinicius was able to enjoy himself in Morocco, netting in both of Madrid's matches and crowned player of the tournament.

"We are delighted with him because he keeps improving, he's much more effective," Ancelotti told reporters. "He scores in almost all the games and makes the difference in all of them." The same went for

the team as a whole, glad to take a short break from their domestic battle with Xavi Hernandez's Barcelona to earn the title of world champions. "We are improving," added Ancelotti. "We have to consider there were mistakes at the back, the team is coming back, like Karim, (Eder) Militao, (Thibaut) Courtois. "This trophy will give us a boost for the rest of the season."

Valverde rifled the second goal home through defender Ali Albulayhi's legs, leaving goalkeeper Abdullah Al-Mayoof unsuspected. Former Porto striker Moussa Marega pulled one back for the 2021 Asian Champions League winners, sliding a shot past Andriy Lunin, who should have done more to keep it out. The Ukrainian goalkeeper, standing in for the injured Courtois, was celebrating his birthday but despite the win he had a game to forget. For a short period it seemed the Saudi Arabian side were going to truly test their more illustrious rivals, but Madrid stepped up a gear in the second half and secured an entertaining victory.

Turning on the style

Vinicius set up Benzema early in the second half with a stunning cross using the outside of his boot and the French forward made no mistake from close range. Uruguayan midfielder Valverde netted his second goal after a slick combination with defender Dani Carvajal, finding his form and goals again after a dip in form. Al Hilal pulled another goal back through ex-Atletico Madrid striker Luciano Vietto, who dinked an effort past Lunin.

Vinicius quickly hit back with a clinical strike but Vietto pounced with a clever turn and finish to cut the distance to two goals again. Marega sent a good chance wide with 10 minutes to go, letting Madrid off the hook when he might have forced a nervy finale. An Asian confederation side has never won the tournament, with European sides lifting the trophy every year since Brazil's Corinthians won in 2012. Earlier Brazilian Copa Libertadores winners Flamengo finished third with a 4-2 win over Egypt's Al Ahly. — AFP

Rashford strikes as Man Utd late show sinks Leeds

LEEDS: Marcus Rashford extended his hot streak with the late goal that inspired Manchester United's 2-0 win against old rivals Leeds on Sunday. After Rashford scored to spark United's comeback from two goals down in Wednesday's 2-2 draw with Leeds, Rashford tormented the Yorkshire club once again. Rashford netted with 10 minutes left at Elland Road to make it four successive Premier League games with a goal for the England forward, who has scored in eight of his last nine appearances in the competition.

Following Alejandro Garnacho's frustrated reaction to being substituted on Wednesday, the Argentine teenager made amends as he came off the bench to seal United's hard-fought victory five minutes after Rashford's goal. United's win was just their second in their last five league games, although they have now lost just once in their last 17 matches in all competitions. Erik ten Hag's side moved up to second place, although Manchester City would go back above them if they beat Aston Villa later on Sunday.

More importantly, United are seven points clear of fifth placed Tottenham in the race to qualify for the Champions League via a top four finish. The clash was marred by offensive taunts from the stands, with Leeds fans singing about the 1958 Munich air crash that killed several United players and their rivals in the away end responding by chanting about the deaths of two Leeds fans in Istanbul in 2000.

Fourth bottom Leeds are without a win in their last nine league games and would drop into the relegation zone if Everton beat Liverpool on Monday. Since sacking Jesse Marsch on Monday, Leeds have seen their move for Rayo Vallecano boss Andoni Iraola blocked by his club, while Feyenoord's Arne Slot and West Brom's Carlos Corberan ruled themselves out of contention. Leeds chief executive Angus Kinnear insists the search is "well advanced", but Michael Skubala was in charge for a second game on a caretaker basis.



LEEDS: Leeds United's US midfielder Weston McKennie is booked for this foul on Manchester United's English striker Marcus Rashford at Elland Road on Feb 12, 2023. — AFP

Bitter rivals

Amid a cacophonous noise at Elland Road, Leeds made a frenzied start, with Crysenicio Summerville firing over after a mistake from United left-back Tyrell Malacia. In keeping with the aggressive tone of one of English football's bitterest rivalries, there were early bookings for Summerville and Leeds team-mate Junior Firpo for a pair of crude fouls. In the midst of a frenetic clash littered with fouls, Bruno Fernandes's attempt to chip Illan Meslier was halted by a block from Robin Koch, with the United midfielder's appeal for handball waved away.

Summerville was denied by David De Gea when he tried to poke home at the near post. Fernandes wasted a golden opportunity when he ran clean through on goal after Max Wober's mistake, only to shoot straight at Meslier. Summerville carried the

main threat for Leeds and he forced a good save from De Gea soon after the interval. United were on the back foot and Luke Ayling went close with a shot that deflected narrowly wide off Luke Shaw. After scoring United's equalizer against Leeds in midweek, Jadon Sancho had been rewarded with his first league start since October, but the England forward was largely anonymous and came off after an hour. United defender Diogo Dalot almost ended the stalemate with a fierce strike against the bar from the edge of the area. De Gea had to make a smart save with his foot to deny Summerville's drive from a tight angle before United finally made the breakthrough in the 80th minute. Shaw whipped over a teasing cross and Rashford found space to thump in a powerful header from 10 yards, with the forward's 21st goal this season surviving a VAR check for offside. — AFP

Olympic chief Bach shares 'grief, suffering' of Ukrainian athletes

COURCHEVEL, France: Olympic chief Thomas Bach said Sunday that he shared the "grief and human suffering" of Ukrainian athletes, stressing that it was not up to individual governments to decide who takes part in international sporting competition. Ukrainian athletes, Bach said on the sidelines of the World Ski Championships, "know how much we share their grief, their human suffering and all the effort we're taking to help them" in the wake of Russia's invasion of their country almost 12 months ago.

Bach added: "It is not up to governments to decide who can take part in which sports competitions because this would be the end of international sport competitions and of world championships and Olympic Games as we know it." Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, who has called for a boycott of the 2024 Paris Olympics if Russian athletes are allowed to take part, said Friday their presence would be a "manifestation of violence".

Ukraine has reacted furiously to the International Olympic Committee's announcement last month that it was exploring a "pathway" to allow Russian and Belarusian competitors to take part in the Paris Games, under a neutral flag. Kyiv fears Russia's President Vladimir Putin, whose forces will soon move into a second year of their invasion of Ukraine, will seek to gain political advantage from the participation of Russians at the Olympics next year. IOC president Bach has described Ukraine's calls for a boycott of the Games as contrary to the "principles we stand for".

"Our mission is a peace mission," Bach said Sunday. "History will show who is doing more for peace, the ones who try to keep lines open and communicate or the ones who want to isolate and divide... our role is bringing people together. "We're trying to find a solution that is giving justice to the mission of sport, which is to unify not to contribute to more confrontation and more escalation." Bach added: "With every Ukrainian athlete, we can, from a human point of view, understand their reactions, we share their suffering, that's why we're in full solidarity with them, this is why we are supporting them, whether they're in Ukraine or outside. — AFP