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**3** Commerce minister: China has active role in Kuwait economy

**7** Philippines, China trade blame over collisions in disputed sea

**8** German solar industry looking to rise again

**16** Pollard breaks England hearts to send South Africa into final



## Kuwait to launch air bridge for aid operations to Gaza

1,750 children killed by Zionists • 120 incubator babies at risk after fuel cut



GAZA: (Left) A Palestinian man holds the hand of a child killed along with others in Zionist air strikes on Deir Al-Balah at the morgue of the Al-Aqsa Hospital in the central Gaza Strip on Oct 22, 2023. (Right) A blood-covered man reacts after recognizing a person killed in a Zionist strike outside a makeshift morgue marked "the black zone" in the yard of the Kuwait Hospital in Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip on Oct 22, 2023. — AFP photos

### NEWS IN BRIEF

#### Nurse accused of Zionist support

KUWAIT: A complaint was filed by a Kuwaiti lawyer on Sunday at the public prosecution, the first of its kind, against an Indian nurse working at Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hospital. The nurse allegedly supported the actions of the Zionist entity killing Palestinian children and bombing the Baptist hospital in Gaza. She also raised the flag of the Zionist entity on her accounts on social media, in violation of the laws of Kuwait and an Amiri decree declaring war between Kuwait and the Zionist entity.

#### India sends aid to Gaza

NEW DELHI: India on Sunday flew 38.5 tons of humanitarian aid to Egypt's Sinai region for Palestinian civilians from the embattled Gaza Strip, the foreign ministry said. An Indian air force Boeing C-17 transport plane "carrying nearly 6.5 tons of medical aid and 32 tons of disaster relief material for the people of Palestine" departed for Egypt's El Arish airport, foreign ministry spokesman Arindam Bagchi said. — AFP

#### Zionists strike Syria airports

DAMASCUS: Zionist strikes on Sunday put out of service war-torn Syria's two main airports, state media reported citing a military source, with the transport ministry saying flights were re-routed to Latakia. "At around 5:25 am (0225 GMT), the (Zionist) enemy carried out... an air attack... targeting Damascus and Aleppo international airports, leading to the death of a civilian worker at Damascus airport and wounding another," the military source said. The wounded worker later died. — AFP

KUWAIT: Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Salem Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah announced on Sunday the launch of relief operations through an air bridge to Palestinians in the Gaza Strip. Speaking to KUNA, Sheikh Salem said this initiative is in response to call of the Palestinian people and as per directions of HH the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Nawaf Al-Sabah.

This is an extension of Kuwait's unwavering position on the Palestinian cause, and an attempt to alleviate suffering brought about by the Zionist occupation. The Kuwaiti air bridge will launch on Monday and continue on a daily basis this week, consisting of humanitarian relief plane loads carrying urgent supplies and medical necessities to the Gaza Strip through Al-Arish in the Sinai Peninsula in Egypt.

### US amps up military posture in Mideast over 'escalations'

WASHINGTON: The United States warned Iran or its allies against any "escalation" in the wake of the Zionist entity's war with Hamas, two top US officials said Sunday, hours after the Pentagon moved to step up military readiness in the region. "We are con-

### US univs face pressure to back Zionists

NEW YORK: With the Zionist-Hamas conflict unleashing furious emotions, American universities have struggled to walk an almost impossibly narrow line: Satisfying the demands of rich donors that they more clearly support the Zionist entity, while also respecting protesters' rights of free expression. Several wealthy Americans have threatened to withdraw their financial support from prestigious private schools like the Ivy League's Harvard University in Massachusetts, or the University of Pennsylvania, known as UPenn.

The Wexner Foundation, which works to prepare young Jewish leaders in North America and the Zionist

entity, went a step further: Ending its partnership with Harvard's Kennedy School. Citing what it called the "dismal failure of Harvard's leadership to take a clear and unequivocal stand against the barbaric murders of innocent (Zionist) civilians by terrorists," the Wexner family, founders of the Bath & Body Works chain, formally severed their ties to the school.

Meantime, Marc Rowan, the CEO of the Apollo Global Management investment fund and a major donor to UPenn, demanded the resignation of the school's president, Elizabeth Magill. He criticized her in particular for the school's hosting two weeks earlier of a festival of Palestinian literature which, he said, included some "well-known anti-Semites and fomenters of hate and racism".

Kenneth Griffin, the CEO of the Citadel investment fund and one of

cerned at the possibility of Iranian proxies escalating their attacks against our own personnel, our own people," Secretary of State Antony Blinken said on CBS News. "We expect there is a likelihood of escalation. No one should take advantage of this moment to escalate to further attacks on (the Zionist entity) or, for that matter, attacks on us or our personnel."

Blinken said the United States, which has sent two carrier groups to the eastern Mediterranean, was "taking every measure to make sure that we can defend them. And if necessary, respond decisively".

The lives of at least 120 newborn babies on incu-

batators in war-torn Gaza's hospitals are at risk as fuel runs out in the besieged enclave, the UN children's agency warned Sunday. More than 1,750 children have already been killed by Zionist strikes launched against the Gaza Strip in retaliation for the Oct 7 Hamas attacks, according to the Palestinian territory's health ministry.

Hospitals face a dire lack of medicines, fuel and water not only for the thousands wounded in more than two weeks of the war between Gaza militants and the Zionist entity but also for routine patients.

Continued on Page 6



Lloyd Austin

Continued on Page 6



CAMBRIDGE, Massachusetts: Supporters of Palestine gather at Harvard University to show their support for Palestinians in Gaza at a rally on Oct 14, 2023. — AFP



# Kuwait inflation rises

## Consumer Price Index increases by 73.3 percent

**KUWAIT:** Data from the Central Statistics Department showed that the Consumer Price Index in Kuwait increased by 73.3 percent last September on an annual basis. Statistics said in a statement to the Kuwaiti news agency (KUNA) on Sunday that the inflation rate in Kuwait rose in September by 31.0 percent on a monthly basis compared to last August.

The increase in inflation on an annual basis came due to an increase in the prices of all the main groups affecting the movement of indices, especially food, education and clothing. She stated that the index of the first group (food and beverages) increased last September by 68.5 percent. Compared to the same month in 2022, the price index of the second group (cigarettes and tobacco) also increased by 30.0 percent year-on-year.

The index of indices of the third group (clothing) increased by 10.7 percent. The prices of the sector (housing services) increased by 13.3 percent, and the inflation rate in the fifth group (home furnishings) increased by 89.2 percent. It was reported that the price index of the sixth group (the health sector) increased by 42.2 percent, while the transportation sector witnessed an increase of 74.2 percent in September compared to the same month in 2022.

According to the statistics, the prices of the eighth group (telecommunications) increased by 74.1 percent. On an annual basis, the inflation rate in the ninth group (entertainment and culture) increased by 14.3 percent, while the prices in the tenth group (education sector) increased by 72.0 percent. Also, the prices of the group (restaurants and hotels) rose year-on-year last August by 54.3 percent, and the prices of the miscellaneous goods and services rose 32.4 percent.

The Consumer Price Index (inflation) in August (excluding food and beverages) increased by 3.3 percent year-on-year. The Consumer Price Index is a tool for measuring price levels generally between two periods, either monthly or annually and is usually a base indicator for measuring growth or deflation. Through it, the state can make economic and trade decisions and draw up financial and monetary policies.

### Gold hits \$1,981

Meanwhile, gold prices rose by 2 percent at the end of last week's trading to close at \$1,981 per ounce against the backdrop of escalating tensions in the Middle East. A specialized report issued on Sunday by the Kuwait Company said that the yellow metal achieved its best performance in three months due to increased demand and being considered a safe haven amid geopolitical risks.

The report added that gold prices rose sharply during last week's trading sessions to touch \$1,997 per ounce before closing at \$1,981, indicating the entry of new groups of investors who got rid of high-risk assets and resorted to the precious metal. He explained that gold futures closed at \$1,994 per ounce after touching the level of \$2,009 per ounce, the highest level since last July.

He pointed to the decline in the yield of US Treasury bonds, especially the benchmark 10-year bonds, which fell seven basis points, which represents support for gold prices in conjunction with the decline in the US dollar exchange rate against other major currencies. He said that the markets expect the US Federal Reserve (Central Bank) to keep interest rates steady at its next meeting, indicating that the poli-



**KUWAIT:** A vendor sells freshly caught shrimp at a fish market in Kuwait City. Data from the Central Statistics Department showed that the Consumer Price Index in Kuwait increased by 73.3 percent last September on an annual basis. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

cy of raising interest rates is nearing completion.

The report stated that this week's economic calendar will contain important data affecting the direction of the yellow metal, the first of which is the US Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI), the release

of GDP for the third quarter in its preliminary reading, durable goods orders and the US central bank's inflation gauge, which data will be influential in market movements in parallel with the development of accelerated events in the Middle East. — KUNA

In my view

## I hope Donald Trump wins



Azzah Al-Ghamdi

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**U**SA is a vital and important country, and the election campaign between President Joe Biden and Donald Trump is heating up. I love the political orientation of the American Republican Party. Certainly, the main reason for supporting for US President Donald Trump is that he belongs to the Republican Party. The other reason is my conviction in the political position of former US President as well as his morals.

I applauded him because of his opposition to the activities of the World Health Organization (WHO) during the Corona pandemic. More so, I respect Trump because of the way he resolved some social and political issues. He did not forget the American people, and their issues are on top of his priorities as a leader.

As a Muslim, I salute people who adhere to the heavenly religions, despite my hopes that they will embrace Islam and recognize Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as the messenger of God and the final Prophet. I hope that the blessings of Islam will spread to the entire world. On the other hand, I respect other religions. I appreciate Trump's position—urging American schools to teach the Bible to children. The world needs people with good morals. I also admired Trump and his appreciation for the late Queen Elizabeth.

What the US former president said about Meghan Markle (the wife of the UK's Prince Harry) was the view of everyone who has morals. There is no respectable wife who exposes the secrets of her husband's family in public. Even if there is a family problem, it will be immoral to expose them to the media. Trump's position on Meghan indicated that he is a respectable man and does not accept such behavior. I hope the former president wins again. The US former president was subjected to a series of attacks, insults and abuse until he was investigated as a criminal defendant on fabricated and false charges for which there is no evidence.

Trump's victory will improve the standard of the American economy. He is a successful businessman, and he is good at trade and negotiations. He will be able to support the American economy and generate funds to improve the standard of living of the American people. Trump has a high sense of patriotism. He is proud of America's great history. I hope Donald Trump will win in the next presidential elections so that he can bring justice to the oppressed.



**Boom Al-Muhallab:** This dhow represents Kuwaiti culture and gives Kuwaitis a chance to reflect on their national identity.



**The Souk at the Avenues:** Kuwaiti new generations can enjoy this cultural memory and experience the old Kuwaiti tradition.

## Kuwait artifacts and architecture reflect cultural identity

By Malecha Suhail

**KUWAIT:** The evolution of cultural memory and identity in Kuwaiti architecture and artifacts in Kuwaiti museums is exceptionally significant, especially in Kuwait's rich maritime history, the Iraq invasion in 1990 and other cultural aspects. Kuwait's memory and identity are thoroughly established and embedded into the minds of Kuwaiti communities through its significant architecture and artifacts with an exceptionally unique look attributed only to Kuwait.

So, what is cultural memory? It is a term used for groups of people who share a certain memory when they look at the public displays of objects and architecture. These cultural memories are often shown in different historical objects and museums. These often impose a certain meaning that depicts where people come from and how they remember themselves.

The Kuwait Liberation Tower, which associates its cultural memory and national identity with its freedom from the Iraqi war is the reason why this landmark bestows great importance on Kuwaiti identity. Acts of bravery and sacrifice are acknowledged through proper memorials, displayed walls of martyrs in different public places such as Kuwait International Airport, as well as shared on social media platforms to mark its annual anniversaries.

Construction of the Liberation Tower was halted during the invasion, and it was completed after the war and was given the name of Liberation Tower due to its freedom from Iraq. This only signifies how much cultural meaning the Liberation Tower carries through the memories of the Iraq invasion.

Other than that, Kuwaiti communities from all different paths of life reflect on the deep meanings of Kuwaiti architecture and what really makes them who they are. A battle-like memory sheds its light in a profound way. The cultural memory didn't affect a single individual but the entire new-generation Kuwaiti community despite not being born during times of the Iraq war. These are the impacts of cultural memory where events like these occurred and how much impact architecture and objects carry emotionally in Kuwaiti communities.

## India-Kuwait info tech conference kicks off

**KUWAIT:** Embassy of India, Kuwait will organize an 'India-Kuwait Information Technology Conference' on Oct 23 in which a delegation representing around 20 prominent ITES sector companies from



**Locals walk around Souk Al Mubarakiya.**



**Liberation Tower - A significant cultural memory.**

Moreover, jewelry is an essential part of Kuwait's cultural identity. The historical tradition of Kuwaiti women wearing 'Al Baghma', 'Hejel', 'Terchiya' and 'Al Khazzama' were very popular in the past. Stone and beaded necklaces were worn before, and these objects still hold value in Kuwaiti women's hearts today. These pieces of jewelry are displayed in museums where Kuwaiti visitors can look and reflect on this cultural memory and reflect on their artistic Kuwaiti identity. These objects can depict how much value a single piece of jewelry can carry through its historical background and encourage Kuwaiti women to preserve their culture.

Going back to history, Kuwait has been a significant maritime port for a long time. It carries generations of skilled pearl divers and has been a huge part of local trading with other Gulf countries. The Kuwait Maritime Museum, where the maritime dhow is displayed outside the museum, called Boom Al-Muhallab, was used for pearl diving. This ship being publicly displayed only depicts the diverse maritime history Kuwait has, where civilians who pass by roads look at it and think of Kuwaiti pearl diving trends that cannot be compared to other regions. Kuwaitis can look back and be proud of their national identity and cultural memory. One can imagine their ancestors being a part of such rich history and feel at one with other local Kuwaiti communities.

What makes up the Kuwaiti heritage? How do Kuwaitis really think about their ancestral culture that is deeply rooted in ancient historical objects

and architecture? One of the historical places that comes to mind is Souk Al-Mubarakiya, where streets are filled with local markets, a popular grand bazaar for people to enjoy shopping in traditional Kuwaiti style. Souk Al-Mubarakiya is seen as a prominent symbol of Kuwaiti cultural memory, where Kuwaiti communities can think about their traditional roots as they go through the tasks of everyday life.

Historical objects around this area include wooden double doors that are present in each market. Varieties of spices, meat, fish, gold jewelry and perfume are sold that remind Kuwaiti visitors of their ancestral culture as they walk around Souk Al-Mubarakiya. This area was the main hub for Kuwaiti shopping before the discovery of oil. In this modern era, when Kuwaitis think about their culture, Kuwait's cultural memory is crucially associated with the local and beautifully designed malls. The Avenues consists of different sections inside the mall. One significant section, called The Souk, is inspired by the Souk Al-Mubarakiya.

Due to Kuwait's hot climate, Kuwaiti communities can enjoy and experience the desert feel in the mall as they tap into their Kuwaiti cultural memory by walking in this area. The architecture is a striking fusion of the old Kuwait and a modern one that resonates with Kuwait's culture, where local people from old and new generations can enjoy the Arabian ambiance and contemplate their Kuwaiti identity.

India is participating. The conference is being conducted in association with Indian Business & Professional Council (IBPC) and the National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM), India with the support of Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI), a press release issued by the Indian Embassy said.

The invitees include prominent stakeholders including ministries, government offices, as well as private sector companies in Kuwait. The event will consist of an inaugural session followed by a panel discussion which will highlight India's caliber in the

global IT sector, the release said. The inaugural session will comprise remarks by Ambassador of India, chairman of CAIT, board member of KCCI, chairman of IBPC and presentations by the leading IT companies from India giving information on IT sector and potential of India-Kuwait projects and experiences.

The event will also include a lively and information-rich interaction through panel discussions, presentations and videos. In addition, a B2B session is also planned in which Kuwaiti companies will have an opportunity for a one-on-one session with the visiting Indian delegates, the release added.

# China to play active role in boosting Kuwait economy

## Minister underscores accommodating digital economy



**KUWAIT:** The Minister of Commerce and Industry and Minister of State for Youth Affairs, Mohammad Al-Aiban, stated Kuwait's keenness for China to have an active role in developing its contributions to housing cities, infrastructure, and energy projects and for these contributions to have a solid impact on Kuwait's economy. The Ministry of Commerce said in a press statement Sunday that Al-Aiban discussed with his Chinese counterpart the development of trade exchange between both sides following the end of the economic conference of trade ministers of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries and China, which was held in the Chinese city of Guangzhou.

During this meeting, they discussed developing trade exchange, diversifying trade relations between them, and expanding cooperation in non-oil fields. The non-oil fields that have been addressed

are construction, free zone, economic zone, manufacturing, digital transformation, renewable energy, environmental protection, and others, in addition to investment in both countries.

Kuwait looks forward to enhancing the level of trade cooperation between both countries and further deepening cooperation in the investment field, as the statement quoted Al-Aiban as saying. He underlined that China is one of the largest exporters of imports to Kuwait and one of Kuwait's largest trading partners in the non-oil field. Al-Aiban delved into the recent visit of His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to China, signing the bilateral cooperation agreement for the years 2024-28 between both sides.

Multiple agreements included many areas to enhance the current gains in cooperation in the field of oil and expand

cooperation in non-oil fields, he pointed out, adding that these agreements and memoranda of understanding are being followed up and work is underway to implement them. On his side, Chinese Minister of Commerce Wang Wentao confirmed that Kuwait has become one of the crucial countries for China with regard to renewable energy, infrastructure projects, energy, housing, and other projects.

Wentao pointed to the high rates of investment between them, expressing hope that the volume of investment will increase further by the Kuwaiti side in the promising fields in China in innovation, artificial intelligence, the production of electric cars, and other matters and new projects on the economic scene. He pointed to the importance of the Chinese economy and its growth, which witnessed a significant increase in gross domestic product (GDP) this year and overcame the COVID-19 crisis.

### Digital economy

Kuwait minister underscored establishing adequate infrastructure to accommodate the growing digital economy and adapt to arising challenges. He explained that the digital economy encompasses trade, electric services, data analysis, and artificial intelligence. Al-Aiban spoke of the importance of trade facilities, saying that the future of trade and investments relies on smooth sailing trade and eradicating obstacles. He clarified that to keep up with expanding international trade, new policies and adequate mechanisms must be adopted.

The Minister commended on trade relations between Kuwait and China, saying that they had undergone significant leaps over the past few years, as China is considered Kuwait's largest non-oil commodity supplier and the second-largest oil buyer. Mubarak Al-Ka-

beer port, stated Al-Aiban, is an opportunity for broadening horizons as it sets out to create direct navigation lines and augment supply chains. He added that the strategic partnership between the two nations is based on the Kuwait Vision 2035 and the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative through a comprehensive program on economic cooperation and re-visiting the Silk Road.

The Silk Road project, expounded by the Minister, reflects Kuwait's strategic vision of a financial and commercial regional and international hub, regaining its pioneering position in the field. He stated that the resumption of free trade negotiations between the GCC and China contributes to deepening relations, creating work opportunities, and broadening horizons. The minister hailed organizing such conferences to develop ties and achieve mutual benefit. — KUNA

## Palestine envoy thanks Kuwait

By Palestinian Ambassador Rami Tahboub

**“O**n behalf of Mahmoud Abbas, President of the State of Palestine and Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization, and on behalf of the Palestinian community in Kuwait, I extend my thanks, appreciation, and gratitude to the Amir His Highness Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the Crown Prince His Highness Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmed Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, as well as to the government and people of Kuwait for the launch of the air bridge for relief operations for Palestinians, who are being subject to genocide in the besieged Gaza Strip.

“This decision of the brotherly state of Kuwait is nothing but an extension of the honorable positions of this dear country towards the Palestinian people and their just national cause and firm support for the rights of our people to obtain their freedom and independence as well as to establish their independent state with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital.”

“Time and again, Kuwait declares in word and deed that its relationship with Palestine is an organic relationship with its roots in the earth and its branch in heaven. A great greeting and pride to Kuwait as well as its leadership and its great people, children, women, youth, and men.”



## Arab women call for end to Gaza killings

**CAIRO:** The Arab women's committee of the Arab League has stressed the urgent need to end the military escalation in the Palestinian territories. The women called for a “transparent international investigation” and the prosecution of those responsible for “this heinous crime”. The committee condemned the acts of violence against women and children in the Palestinian territories, calling for an “immediate cessation” of the occupation's aggression, the need to address the “tragic” situation, and the commitment to protect the human rights of women and children.

In this context, the committee referred to the shelling of the Baptist Hospital by Zionist forces, which resulted in the martyrdom of about 500 Palestinians, “which is considered a war crime against unarmed civilians”. It stressed that “this unethical action is completely contrary to international laws

prohibiting the targeting of medical facilities in times of conflict.”

It called on the international community to work in the spirit of justice to achieve a peaceful political solution to the Palestinian issue, end the suffering of the Palestinian people, and bring peace to the region. The committee stressed that the solidarity of the international community, standing in unity and joint action represent “the key to achieving peace and justice in the region,” noting the importance of ensuring justice for the victims and their families at this critical time.

The committee urged the international community to increase diplomatic pressure to stop the violence and for all concerned parties to act immediately to ensure the protection of women and children and to provide them with the necessary care, including psychological and social support. Humanitarian organizations and international institutions also called for the need to respect international humanitarian law and provide the necessary support to the Palestinian people. — KUNA



**GAZA:** Members of a medical team carry a boy injured in a Zionist airstrike at a makeshift emergency ward set up outside the Kuwait hospital, in Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip. — AFP

## China and GCC eye closer trade ties

**TOKYO:** China and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) on Sunday agreed to deepen exchange and cooperation in areas including trade and investment, the digital economy, sustainable development and infrastructure, Chinese state media reported, citing the ministry of commerce. The agreement came at an economic and trade ministerial meeting held in the southern Chinese city of Guangzhou, the Global Times reported, saying it was a concrete action to implement the economic and trade achievements of the first China-Arab States Summit and the China-GCC Summit, as well as to promote the deepening of China-GCC economic and trade cooperation under the China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), the report said.

During the meeting, the two sides reached a broad consensus on topics such as jointly safeguarding the multilateral trading system, promoting two-way investment, deepening cooperation in the industry chain and supply chain, upgrading the level of connectivity and promoting energy transformation. Describing the prospect of greater cooperation as “broad,” Beijing's Commerce Minister Wang Wentao said that Chinese modernization will bring new opportunities for China-GCC cooperation.

The GCC member states are actively promoting

industrial diversification, and the prospects for China-GCC economic and trade cooperation are broad. Wang noted that the two sides will reach an early agreement on a free trade agreement, support and promote World Trade Organization (WTO) reform, actively promote the operation of the joint investment commission and support cooperation between sovereign wealth funds from both sides.

China and the GCC will work together to promote industrial synergy, deepen the “oil and gas cooperation model,” and encourage enterprises of both sides to carry out investment and cooperation in line with market-oriented principles, Wang said. The two sides will also pragmatically explore opportunities for infrastructure cooperation in areas such as ports, aviation, communications and pipelines.

They agreed to “deepen exchanges and cooperation in trade and investment,” the digital economy, sustainable development, infrastructure and other areas based on platforms such as the economic and trade ministerial meeting, so as to continuously cultivate new growth points of economic and trade cooperation between China and the GCC, said the ministry.

### BRI cooperation

Chinese President Xi Jinping proposed strengthening the institutional building for international Belt and Road cooperation, the state-run Xinhua News Agency reported. Xi made the remark in his keynote speech at the opening ceremony of an international forum marking the 10th anniversary of the Belt and Road Initiative

(BRI). “China will work with its Belt and Road Initiative partner countries to strengthen the building of multilateral cooperation platforms covering energy, taxation, finance, green development, disaster reduction, anti-corruption, think tanks, media, culture and other fields,” Xi was quoted as saying.

China will continue to host the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation and establish a secretariat for the Forum, he said. The Chinese leader also said his country will work with all parties involved to usher Belt and Road cooperation into a new stage of high-quality development and make relentless efforts to achieve modernization for all countries.

“Global modernization should be pursued to enhance peaceful development and mutually beneficial cooperation and bring prosperity to all,” Xi said. He also unveiled that Beijing will support an open world economy, with its total trade in goods and services expected to exceed \$32 trillion and \$5 trillion, respectively, in the 2024-2028 period. In addition, China will establish pilot zones for Silk Road e-commerce cooperation and enter into free trade agreements and investment protection treaties with more countries, he said.

Furthermore, Xi pledged that China will continue to advance scientific and technological innovation as one of the major steps to support the joint pursuit of high-quality Belt and Road cooperation. The country will also increase the number of joint laboratories built with other Belt and Road parties to 100 in the next five years and support young scientists from other countries to work on short-term programs in China, he said. — KUNA

In my view

## Bridge between worlds

Dana Al-Qattan

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**T**he literary world comes with many friends and foes, wounds, healing and the familiar and unfamiliar. Fiction helps humans grapple with the uncertainty of their own lives. It's a place to be and belong. The Kuwait Times newspaper has gone through many generational changes. With local and international news, it offers a continuum of knowledge about current affairs for English speaking citizens/residents. Many different communities of different ages exist in Kuwait, but not many of them understand each other.

There is an importance in reading fiction (whether novels, short stories or comic books). Reading fiction teaches us empathy and continually improves it through the emotional struggles or difficult situations that the characters face. It is the chance to get out of our bodies and lives and intrinsically live another, getting an insight on many different lives on a deeper level. It also improves one's creativity and vocabulary, and widens our perspectives of the world, as well as teaches us critical thinking and offers paths to improve our lives.

Sitting in a small coffeeshop reading, Fatemah Al-Matrouk, 24, when asked if she reads a newspaper, answered no, but said she does follow Kuwait Times on Instagram. Fatemah is an avid reader of fiction and said she would read the news more if eventually there was a fiction section added (acting as a stress reliever): “That is why I don't like reading the news, lots of bad stuff happening.” Which is why adding a fiction section can mend and allow those two parts to exist, as surely Fatemah is not the only one who feels this way.

Reem Ali, 27, and Carolina Roeles, 19, were in an excitable conversation when they were asked why they believe reading fiction is important. Reem, who has been a reader her entire life, believes that fiction “teaches you morals in an indirect way”, while Carolina believes “it helps you escape reality, especially when you are reading the news.”

Not many people are readers of fiction — it is quite rare to see a book in hand, so having quick access to a fiction section can really bridge that gap. Now will a fiction section in the newspaper take away its “seriousness”? Carolina had a quick reply to that: “I think adding a fiction section will attract more people, especially as in this generation, nobody really reads the news anymore. The fiction section will make them more interested and then they'll be seeing what's going on.”

Adding a fiction (or literary) section to the newspaper will have many societal benefits. It would represent local writers, allowing them to have a voice and exposure. Nourah Al-Saleh, an artist and writer, said having a fiction or artistic section “allows local artists and creators to represent the artistic side of Kuwaiti culture”. It will offer the creative youth of Kuwait an opportunity to show their work and feel accepted and understood.

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## Govt eyes strategic salary alternative

KUWAIT: The government said that the strategic salary alternative is one of its priorities that may take longer to approve due to its complexity and the fact that it is undergoing further studies by the concerned authorities. Ministerial sources said: "There is continuous coordination between the authorities in this regard. The government is convinced about increasing the salaries of employees who do not have financial allowances and establishing equality and justice among workers in government agencies, as many employees aren't receiving bonuses. Moreover, there are employees with the same academic qualification and specialization who do not receive high salaries with bonuses," sources added.

The sources pointed out that the strategic salary alternative needs a special budget that can bear the increase for at least the first five years. "Then, this alternative can contribute to reducing salary spending in the state budget, which will inflate more if not addressed, especially since this inflation cannot be controlled if oil prices remain as they are," the sources added. Sources pointed out that the strategic alternative must be approved in such a way that it will not cause a decrease in the number of Kuwaiti employees in the private sector, noting that "the strategic salary alternative, according to the government's vision, is to reduce spending (on salaries) in the budget by reducing allowances."

## Ministry of Electricity activates electronic messaging system

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy announced the activation of the electronic messaging system to receive and send correspondence to companies and individuals. In a statement, the ministry called on companies wishing to register to fill out the form through the ministry's website or visit the public registry department at the ministry's building to fill out and approve the form.

"Companies wishing to fill out the form must bring an authorization letter from the company, a copy of a valid civil ID for the commissioners, and the approval of a valid signature for the company from the Public Authority of Manpower," the ministry said. It pointed out that the original invoices will be delivered manually to the concerned authorities in the ministry, indicating "the manual receipt of correspondence and documents will be stopped three months after the ministry's announcement."

### Photo of the day



KUWAIT: Women walk past a dumpster bearing a sticker with Zionist flag in Kaifan, Kuwait. The deaths caused by Zionist barbaric aggression on the Gaza Strip went up to 4,651 while 14,245 were injured, said the Palestinian health authorities on Sunday. 1,873 children were among the dead. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

# KFAS and London School of Economics sign agreement

## Program provides training and research opportunities

KUWAIT: The Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS) said that the cooperation agreement (Kuwait Program) with the London School of Economics and Political Science provides training and research opportunities to develop the capabilities of Kuwaiti researchers and enhance their communication with the international research community.

The Director General of the Foundation, Dr. Amina Farhan, said on Sunday: "The renewal of the five-year cooperation agreement is aimed at supporting the capabilities of Kuwaiti researchers through the establishment of workshops, academic training opportunities, and collaborative research grants." Farhan added that the agreement program focuses on supporting efforts to prepare research that is related to public policies and share its results with specialists and decision-makers to formulate policies in the country. It will also enhance research in various disciplines such as public health, energy, environment, education, and economics.

"The agreement seeks to fund 15 collaborative projects between Kuwait's researchers and the London School of Economics and Political Sciences in the fields of diversifying energy sources, improving the level of health care, developing the educational system, supporting digital transformation, diversifying the economy, as well as environmental protection and improving water and food security in Kuwait," she clarified.

She explained that the agreement will provide opportunities for 20 Kuwaiti researchers to join the university for a period ranging from two to three months through the research fellowship program, which provides support to researchers to complete their research projects, provided that all research is translated into Arabic for the benefit of all specialists and decision-makers in the country.

She pointed out that the program will organize an annual conference in Kuwait to provide a platform that brings together researchers, specialists, and decision-makers to discuss issues and challenges from a scientific and applied perspective with the aim of formulating effective and sustainable solutions and plans.

"The agreement comes within the framework of the Foundation's efforts to promote scientific and research culture and develop the capabilities of individuals and public institutions and its keenness to continue the process of cooperation with interna-



KUWAIT: Officials from Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS) and the London School of Economics and Political Science sign the five-year cooperation agreement.

tional research centers to support local researchers, noting that the relationship between the Foundation and the university extends for more than 16 years," Farhan stressed. She stated that the Kuwait Program will start announcing the opening of applications in the coming weeks through the program's website, in addition to the communication accounts of the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences.

## Kuwaiti-French exhibition to showcase research projects

KUWAIT: MILSET has announced the launch of the 17th Kuwaiti-French scientific exhibition on the 4th of December in cooperation with the French embassy and the participation of scientific and research projects in hydroponics for 60 students. Adnan Al-Mir, the head of MILSET, said in a press statement on Sunday that the exhibition is being held under the auspices of the Minister of Education, the Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, Dr. Adel Al-Mane, and the ambassador of France to Kuwait.

Al-Mir added that the exhibition will be held in joint cooperation with the general technical direction of science at the Ministry of Education and the Kuwaiti society of hydroponics, with the support of the National Bank of Kuwait. He explained that



a series of specialized courses in agriculture will be organized. A number of specialists from the Kuwaiti society of hydroponics will participate in the exhibition to offer training on hydroponics, its importance, methods, and materials used. In turn, the president of the Kuwaiti society of hydroponics, Fawaz Al-Quryan, praised the importance of the exhibition as a scientific project, appreciating the interest of the student office in this important activity. — KUNA



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Iran journalists who covered Amini death get jail sentences

## US synagogue head murdered as police warn against speculation

Page 6

Page 7



LONDON: People take part in a "March For Palestine" on Oct 21, 2023, to "demand an end to the war on Gaza". — AFP photos

# Nearly 100,000 march for Palestine in London

## Thousands of people demand ceasefire in multiple protests across Europe

LONDON: Police in London say nearly 100,000 people marched in the British capital in an event organized by pro-Palestinian groups, one of several such protests across Europe. Demonstrators held signs reading "Freedom for Palestine", "Stop Bombing Gaza" and "End (Zionist) Apartheid". Many waved Palestinian flags and some chanted "5, 6, 7, 8, (Zionist) entity is a terrorist state" and "Free Palestine". The Zionist occupation launched devastating air and ground bombardments of Gaza after Hamas attacked occupied areas near the border with Gaza. The relentless bombing has killed 4,385 Palestinians, while 1,400 people were killed in the Hamas assault. The London march brought traffic at the Marble Arch landmark to a standstill, and police said on X (formerly Twitter) that almost 100,000 had attended. It broke up peacefully close to Downing Street.

"We came to show our support because we can't stay silent, watch the news, and then do nothing," Mariam Abdul-Ghani, an 18-year-old student whose family is from

the Palestinian territories, told AFP. David Rosenberg, a member of the Jewish Socialists Group, said he was there "to give solidarity and to disrupt that narrative that says it's Muslims versus Jews, Palestinians versus (Zionists). "I'm 65 but there's people here in their 20s and 30s, who have grown up in mainstream Jewish households, who cannot stand what is supposedly done in their name," he added.

### Protests in Europe

"I do have cousins, family and friends (there)", said Nivert Tamraz, a 38-year-old marketing consultant, who came with her children so they "understand that sometimes everyone has to stand for humanity and not just shy away." "I have a friend whose family is in Gaza, they can't even get in touch with them, it's horrible for them, they don't know if they are dead, if they are alive," she added. Other demonstrations took place in Birmingham, central England, Cardiff in Wales and the Scottish city of Glasgow.

There were also protests in other European countries. Pro-Palestine rallies took place in several French cities. In the southern city of Lyon, more than 1,000 people turned out to one demonstration, which was authorized at the last minute. There were also demonstrations in the southern Mediterranean city of Marseille, in Rennes, in the northwest, and in the northeastern city of Metz.

Earlier this week, France's top administrative court, the Council of State, overturned a number of bans on such demonstrations imposed by regional authorities. They had issued the bans after Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin ordered them to do so on public order grounds. Thousands also marched in cities across Spain including the capital Spain, Barcelona, Zaragoza and San Sebastian. And in Italy, thousands marched in support of Palestinians in the northern city of Milan.

The first aid trucks arrived in the war-torn Gaza Strip from Egypt on Saturday, bringing humanitarian relief to the Hamas-controlled



BARCELONA: Demonstrators attend a rally in support of Palestine on Oct 21, 2023.

Palestinian enclave. Hours later, the Zionist occupation announced it was stepping up its bombardment of the Hamas-controlled territory. The occu-

pation has massed tens of thousands of troops and hundreds of tanks along the Gaza border for a widely anticipated ground invasion. — AFP

## More aid enters Gaza as Zionists step up attack

RAFAH: A new convoy of 17 aid trucks entered war-torn Gaza on Sunday as Zionists stepped up strikes on the Palestinian enclave which is suffering a "catastrophic" humanitarian situation due to the full siege imposed by the occupation. With fears of a wider conflagration mounting, Iran said the region could spiral "out of control" and Zionist Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu warned Lebanon's Hezbollah that if it got involved, it would be "the mistake of its life".

More than 40 percent of Gaza's housing has been damaged or destroyed since the Zionist occupation began bombing the strip following Hamas' attack on Oct 7, according to the UN citing local authorities, and the occupation has halted food, water, fuel and electricity supplies.

Sunday's delivery of 17 trucks of aid through Gaza's Rafah crossing with Egypt was the second such operation in two days, with 20 lorries having arrived on Saturday following negotiations and US pressure. Separately, an AFP journalist in Gaza saw six trucks leaving the Rafah terminal after filling up from dwindling fuel stocks held at the crossing.

The United Nations estimates that about 100 trucks per day are required to meet the needs of Gaza's 2.4 million residents given the "catastrophic" humanitarian situation. The head of the UN agency for Palestinian refugees warned fuel supplies would run out in three days. "Without fuel, there will be no humanitarian assistance," Philippe Lazzarini said. The occupation has massed tens of thousands of troops around the enclave for an anticipated ground invasion. It's increased its attacks overnight and killed "dozens of terrorists" in and around Gaza City, including the deputy commander of the Hamas rocket network, military spokesman Daniel Hagari said on Sunday.

The Gaza health ministry said overnight raids on the Gaza Strip killed at least 80 people and destroyed more than 30 homes. In central Gaza's Deir al-Balah, an AFP journalist saw the bodies of children on the bloodied floor of a morgue. A man clutched his dead toddler and people wept as they identified the bodies of relatives. More than 260 people died in 24 hours, according to the health ministry toll, which said 1,873 of those killed in the past fortnight were children.

Om Ahmad Abu Sanjar was sleeping in her Rafah home when she "woke up to the glass shattering on us and bricks falling". "We got out miraculously," she told AFP. The scale of the bombing has left basic systems unable to function, with the UN saying dozens of unidentified bodies were buried in a mass grave in Gaza City because cold storage had run out.

Zionist authorities have warned more than one million residents in northern Gaza to move south for their safety, and the UN says more than half of the territory's population is now internally displaced. Hundreds of thou-

sands of civilians are believed to remain in and around Gaza City in the north, unwilling or unable to leave. On Sunday, Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian said that if Washington and the Zionist occupation "do not immediately stop the crime against humanity and genocide in Gaza, anything is possible at any moment and the region will go out of control". Fresh fire was also exchanged across the border with Lebanon, which the Zionist military warned could be dragged into the war by Hezbollah. On a visit to troops near the border, Netanyahu said Hezbollah would make "the mistake of its life" if it started a war with the occupation. "We will strike it with a force it cannot even imagine, and the significance for it and the state of Lebanon will be devastating," Netanyahu added.

Western leaders have warned Hezbollah against intervening but the group has said it is ready to step up involvement. The occupation has evacuated dozens of northern communities, and nearly 4,000 people in Lebanon have fled border areas for the southern city of Tyre. — AFP



DEIR AL-BALAH: A man reacts as he carries the shrouded body of his child, in front of the morgue of the Al-Aqsa hospital in the central Gaza Strip, following a Zionist strike on Oct 22, 2023. — AFP

## CONDOLENCES



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Wish to offer their deepest & heartfelt condolences on the sad demise of their colleague

**Mr. Zulfiqar Ahmad**  
(General Manager at Enaya Insurance Company & former GIG - Kuwait Colleague)

May his soul rest in peace and may God grant comfort and strength to the bereaved family members

May Allah Almighty Rest His Soul In Peace

## International

# US synagogue head murdered as police warn against speculation

## Motive in stabbing unknown as of Sunday

DETROIT: The president of a US synagogue was found dead with stab wounds outside her home on Saturday, as police cautioned against speculation over the motive for the murder. Police requested FBI assistance in investigating the slaying of Samantha Woll, 40, who presided over the Isaac Agree Downtown Synagogue, which serves metropolitan Detroit.

Police Chief James White urged "that everyone remain patient" while the investigation is underway despite "many unanswered questions." "It is important that no conclusions be drawn until all of the available facts are reviewed," White said in a statement.

The murder came amid growing tensions in Jewish and Muslim communities across the United States over the US support for the escalating Zionist attack on Gaza and the West Bank in occupied Palestine. Emergency personnel found Woll dead "with multiple stab wounds to her body," police said. A trail of blood led officers to Woll's nearby home, "which is where the crime is believed to have occurred." The motive in the killing "is unknown," a police statement added.

The Detroit office of the FBI told AFP in an email that it "will assist the Detroit Police Department as requested." "We are shocked and saddened to learn of the unexpected death of Samantha Woll, our Board President,"

the synagogue posted on its Facebook page. "At this point we do not have more information."

Woll, who led the synagogue since 2022, was also active in Democratic Party affairs, working for US congresswoman Elissa Slotkin and on the campaign of Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel, the Detroit Free Press said. "I am shocked, saddened and horrified to learn of Sam's brutal murder. Sam was as kind a person as I've ever known," Nessel posted on X, formerly Twitter.

Detroit Mayor Mike Duggan said he was "devastated" to learn of Woll's death. "Just weeks ago, I shared a day of joy with Sam at the dedication of the newly renovated Downtown Synagogue," Duggan posted on X. "It was a project she successfully led with great pride and enthusiasm."

Slotkin, who served as a CIA officer before entering Congress, said Woll sought to build "understanding across faiths, bringing light in the face of darkness." The Free Press said Woll had been active in a grassroots organization aimed at building ties between young Muslims and Jews. A Muslim member of the US House representing the Detroit area, Rashida Tlaib, described Woll as "my friend" and said she was "shocked" at the murder. "I have no words," Tlaib posted on Facebook. — AFP



DETROIT: Detroit police officers work near the scene where Samantha Woll (inset) was found dead on Oct 21, 2023. — AFP photos

## Arab Americans fear return to post-9/11 hate

WASHINGTON: In the days following Hamas' attack on the Zionist occupation and the escalated Zionist assault on Gaza and the West Bank, many Arab and Muslim Americans have worried over signs of a return to the atmosphere of suspicion that hung over their communities in the United States after 9/11.

Those fears were brutally underscored when a little boy of Palestinian origin was stabbed to death in Illinois. Six-year-old Wadea Al-Fayoume was stabbed 26 times last week by his family's 71-year-old landlord, according to police, who charged the assailant with hate crimes. The man shouted, "You Muslims must die" at the child's mother, who was seriously injured in the attack, according to text messages the mother sent to the murdered boy's father while in the hospital and cited by the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR).

According to police, Wadea and his mother "were targeted by the suspect due to them being Muslim." President Joe Biden, who has given his unwavering support to the Zionist occupation, said he was "shocked and sickened" by the assault, and stressed his rejection of Islamophobia. The little boy "paid the price for the atmosphere of hate and otherization and dehumanization," said Ahmed Rehab, head of the CAIR office in Chicago. "We've warned about not recreating the same mistake we had in the post-9/11



PLAINFIELD, Illinois: Community members attend a vigil for six-year-old Palestinian-American Wadea Al-Fayoume on Oct 17, 2023. — AFP

environment," he said. "But here we are," Sarah Suzuki Harvard, 30, grew up in Plainfield, Illinois, where Wadea Al-Fayoume was killed. "We're returning to the Islamophobic levels of 9/11 — and it's only going to get worse," she said on X, formerly known as Twitter.

The former-journalist-turned-comedian, whose father is Moroccan and mother is Japanese, told AFP

she remembers a difficult environment in the years following the Sept 11, 2001 Al-Qaeda attacks in New York and Washington, and the "harassment" she witnessed as a child. The situation was so bad, she said, that her family decided to change their last name to avoid discrimination.

When she learned of the little boy's murder, she

said she felt "so much pain and heartache." "Then I was scared, because my family lives there," she said. "I texted my dad: 'Please be careful when you go to the masjid (mosque). I love you. Make sure you tell my aunt and uncle.'"

Zenjabela, a 23-year-old New Yorker of Palestinian descent who preferred not to give her full name, said she had felt "hostility" directed at her in recent days, adding she had seen people in her neighborhood being verbally abused for saying "as-salaam alaikum" — a Muslim greeting that means "Peace be upon you" in Arabic. "I've never felt so much anxiety about perception of Muslims and Palestinians and Arabs in general," she told AFP.

Against this backdrop of rising tensions, some US elected officials have released statements that many have called inflammatory. "The United States should have no part in providing aid to Gaza for the same reason the US didn't provide aid to Nazi Germany. Aiding Gaza will only prolong the rule of Hamas," Republican Senator Tom Cotton of Arkansas posted on social media.

Florida's governor Ron DeSantis, who is running in the Republican party's presidential primary election, declared the United States could not accept any refugees from Gaza because "not all of them are Hamas, but they are all anti-Semitic." "How incredibly destructive and dangerous that rhetoric is," Democratic Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez told CNN.

"We just had a six-year-old boy stabbed 26 times ... because of rhetoric like that," she said. "It is unacceptable. It is reckless and no leader in the United States of America should be amplifying a message like that." — AFP

## Kuwait to launch air bridge...

Continued from Page 1

"We have currently 120 neonates who are in incubators, out of which we have 70 neonates with mechanical ventilation, and of course this is where we are extremely concerned," said UNICEF spokesman Jonathan Crick.

Power is one of the main worries for the seven specialist wards across Gaza treating premature babies to help with breathing and provide critical support, for example when their organs are not developed enough. The Zionist entity ordered a complete blockade of the territory after the Hamas attacks. Amid widespread electricity cuts, the World Health Organization warned on Thursday that hospitals had already run out of fuel for generators. The WHO said that about 1,000 people needing dialysis will also be at risk if the generators stop.

The Zionist entity fears that fuel could help Hamas,

although the limited supplies still in Gaza were being diverted to keep the generators for medical equipment running. "If they (babies) are put in mechanical ventilation incubators, by definition, if you cut the electricity, we are worried about their lives," the UNICEF spokesman told AFP. Gaza's health ministry said on Saturday that 130 premature babies were in danger of dying due to the lack of fuel.

Around 160 women give birth each day in Gaza, according to the UN Population Fund, which estimates there are 50,000 pregnant women across the territory of 2.4 million people. While the Zionist entity says its strikes are aimed at Hamas, children make up a huge proportion of the 4,385 dead reported by the Hamas-run health ministry.

Whole families, including pregnant women, have been killed in strikes and each day parents can be seen in devastated streets carrying the bodies of infants in white shrouds. Doctors at Najjar hospital in Rafah spoke on Thursday of how they had tried in vain to save an unborn infant from a woman killed in an air strike on her family's home. Hours earlier, eight children were killed as they slept in a house in Khan Younis in southern Gaza. — Agencies

ordered the activation of air defense systems and notified additional forces that they may be deployed soon. Austin did not say how many US troops would be added to those already in the region.

The Pentagon's moves came after what Austin had earlier described in a statement as "detailed discussions" with Biden. "These steps will bolster regional deterrence efforts, increase force protection for US forces in the region, and assist in the defense of (the Zionist entity)," Austin said. The steps continued the Biden administration's response since Hamas militants in the Gaza Strip stormed the Zionist entity on Oct 7. Austin said he had activated deployment of a Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) battery and additional Patriot battalions "throughout the region". "Finally, I have placed an additional number of forces on prepare-to-deploy orders as part of prudent contingency planning, to increase their readiness and ability to quickly respond as required," Austin said.

Tensions are rising along the Zionist entity's northern border with Lebanon after the Zionist army traded fire with the Iran-backed militant group Hezbollah amid fears of a new front opening as the Zionist entity battles Hamas. In south Lebanon on Saturday, Hezbollah said four of its fighters were killed. — AFP

## US univs face pressure to...

Continued from Page 1

Harvard's biggest donors, and Ronald Lauder, heir to the Estee Lauder cosmetics group and another UPenn donor, have also expressed their displeasure, according to American media.

"Leaders are criticized for not speaking out quickly or forcefully enough. They're being forced to choose sides. And yet there are many who say that given a diversity of perspectives on campus, there can't be an institutional position on such complex global issues," said Lynn Pasquerella, president of the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AACU).

At Harvard, President Claudine Gay did condemn the Hamas attacks of Oct 7, but her critics say her words were too timid and came too late. Leaders of Stanford University, in California, and Columbia, in New York, have also been urged to clearly take their distance from pro-Palestinian student groups that accuse the Zionist entity, in their leaflets and at their rallies, of committing "genocide".

But a group of Harvard professors has also called for an end to the online harassment of students who supposedly signed an incendiary letter against the Zionist entity. A vehicle driving near campus carried a large screen displaying names and photos under the title: "Harvard's leading anti-Semites."

Student protesters at Columbia have faced a similar backlash. "What we are hearing directly is that some students on some campuses are feeling nervous to talk — nervous, perhaps, to protest," said Kristen Shahverdian, who works on education issues at PEN America, which promotes literature and free expression. "That feeling of fear, I think, is palpable for some on campuses," she said.

In the United States, freedom of expression is fiercely protected, and leaders on several campuses invoke the so-called Kalven Committee report of 1967. Issued by the University of Chicago at a time of angry protests against the Vietnam War and amid rioting over civil rights, the report concluded that the role of universities should be to promote a diversity



NEW YORK: A woman chants slogans as people rally in support of Palestinians in Brooklyn on Oct 21, 2023. — AFP

of opinions, not to take stands on contentious issues.

Pasquerella said the pressure from donors undermines the purpose of American higher education, which is "to promote the unfettered pursuit of the truth and the free exchange of ideas". For her part, Shahverdian said donors should be "aware that freedom of expression is an integral part of higher education — and that does mean, at times, speech that one might really disagree with very strongly."

The pressure on universities also reflects flagging public investment in higher education, according to Pasquerella, making institutions more dependent on private donors and leaving professors and administrators feeling "coerced because they're afraid of losing donations". Harvard, which has an enormous endowment of close to \$51 billion, says it derives some 8 percent of its operating revenue from gifts.

All this has happened against a backdrop of the growing polarization of American society, split between Democrats and Republicans. A recent Gallup opinion poll found that the number of Americans expressing "a great deal" or "quite a lot" of confidence in higher education has dropped from 57 percent in 2015 to 36 percent this year. — AFP

## US amps up military posture in Mideast...

Continued from Page 1

Blinken's words echoed — and served to reinforce — an earlier message from Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin, who warned of a "prospect of significant escalation of attacks on our troops" in the region. Their comments came amid growing fears that pro-Iranian Hezbollah militants in southern Lebanon, or other groups supported by Tehran, might take advantage of the tense situation over Gaza to enlarge the conflict and further stretch the Zionist entity's military. But Austin, speaking on ABC News, issued a stern warning: "If any group or any country is looking to widen this conflict and take advantage of this very unfortunate situation that we see, our advice is: Don't. We maintain the right to defend ourselves and we won't hesitate to take the appropriate action."

The comments from the two most senior members of President Joe Biden's cabinet came hours after the Pentagon said it was upping readiness in the region in response to "recent escalations by Iran and its proxy forces". Austin

## International

# Iran journalists who covered Amini death get jail sentences

## Authorities questioned or arrested more than 90 journalists since protests: Media

TEHRAN: Iran's judiciary on Sunday announced lengthy jail sentences for two female journalists who were arrested after reporting on the death last year of Mahsa Amini, which sparked nationwide protests. Elaheh Mohammadi, 36, and Niloufar Hamed, 31, were both found guilty of collaboration with Iran's arch enemy the United States, the judiciary's Mizan Online website said.

In its ruling, the Revolutionary Court sentenced Mohammadi to six years in jail, and Hamed was handed seven years in prison, said Mizan. The pair were also each given five-year sentences for conspiring against state security and one for propaganda against the Islamic republic, the website said, adding that the sentences would be served concurrently.

Mohammadi, a reporter for Ham Mihan newspaper, and Hamed, a photographer for Shargh newspaper, have been held in Tehran's Evin prison since September 2022. Their trials started in May. Hamed was arrested less than a week after Amini's death when she went to the hospital where the young woman was being treated and posted a photo of the grieving family on social media.

Mohammadi was arrested after going to Amini's hometown of Saqez, in the western Iranian province of Kurdistan, to cover her funeral which turned into a demonstration. The verdicts against Hamed and Mohammadi, who were tried separately, are subject to appeal, Mizan said. Their lawyer has yet to react to the rulings.

In August, Iranian media reported that authorities

had questioned or arrested more than 90 journalists since the protests triggered by Amini's death in different cities erupted across the country. Elaheh's sister, Elnaz, also a journalist, was arrested and kept in Evin prison for a week in February and given a three-year suspended sentence in September.

### Alleged US "cooperation"

On the first day of her trial, Hamed told the court she had worked "as a journalist within the framework of the law and had not committed any act against the security of Iran", according to comments reported by her husband, Mohammad Hossein Ajorlou, on social media. Their trials were held behind closed doors and criticized by their families and lawyers.

International organizations defending journalists, such as Reporters Without Borders (RSF), have also condemned the trials and demanded their release. In August, the judiciary said their trials were not only linked to Amini's death but also to their alleged cooperation with the United States, according to the NGO United for Iran based in California.

Tehran and Washington severed diplomatic ties after the 1979 Islamic Revolution which toppled the US-backed shah. The lawyer for the two journalists, Mohammad Ali Kamfirouzi, was detained in early January for more than three weeks before being released on bail.

During the months-long Amini protests, several hundred people including security forces were killed and thousands were arrested over their partic-

law enforcement in an unprofessional and dangerous manner", state broadcaster CCTV reported, citing the foreign ministry.

In another incident, a Philippine coastguard vessel escorting the routine resupply mission was "bumped" by what the Philippine task force described as a "Chinese Maritime Militia vessel". China, however, accused the Philippine boat of "deliberately" stirring up trouble by reversing in a "premeditated manner" into a Chinese fishing vessel.

Video released by the Philippine military showed the bow of the Chinese coastguard ship and the stern of the resupply vessel briefly touching. The Philippine vessel continues on its course. It is not clear if there was any damage. A second resupply boat was able to reach the grounded BRP Sierra Madre and "successfully resupply our troops and personnel stationed there", the statement said. "The National Task Force for the West Philippine Sea condemns in the strongest degree the latest dangerous, irresponsible, and illegal actions of the CCG and the Chinese Maritime Militia done this morning," the task force said in a statement.

It said the "provocative, irresponsible, and illegal



BRUSSELS: Belgian Foreign Minister Hadja Lahbib (left) and Belgian Interior Minister Annelies Verlinden (right) lay flowers at a commemoration for the victims of a terrorist attack where two Swedish nationals were killed. — AFP

dled immediately. The prosecutor did not mention on Sunday why the Tunisian had been jailed, but Belgian media reported he committed several murders.

The shootings of the two Swedish fans on Monday, just before the start of a Belgium-Sweden international football match, have renewed debate in Belgium over judicial and administrative errors in following up on radicalized persons, particularly by the immigration services, though Lassoued was not on the authorities' radar.

Official documents showed that Lassoued had lodged asylum applications in Norway, Sweden, Italy and Belgium. He had stayed in Belgium illegally after his bid for asylum was rejected in 2020. An order was issued for his expulsion in March 2021 but never carried out. Police shot and killed Lassoued after tracking him down on Tuesday. Over the weekend the government announced that more staff would be deployed for the prosecutor's office and the federal police in Brussels. — AFP

ism in the past, however, the Shakahola tragedy has registered the highest number of fatalities in Kenya's recorded history," the Senate commission of inquiry said in its report.

It added that the self-proclaimed pastor had faced charges back in 2017 for his extreme preaching, but "the criminal justice system failed to deter the heinous activities of Paul Mackenzie in Shakahola". Mackenzie was acquitted on charges of radicalization in 2017 for illegally providing school teaching — he rejected the formal educational system which he claimed was not in line with the Bible.

In 2019, he was also accused of being linked to the death of two children "who had succumbed to starvation and suffocation and buried in a shallow grave in Shakahola Forest". He had been released on bail, pending trial. The commission of inquiry also pointed to failings in the local police force, which had received "recurring complaints by religious leaders and the local community against his activities from as early as 2017". The complaints related to Mackenzie's opposition to formal education and medical treatment, as well as "radicalizing adults to resign from their jobs and join the church" and "holding people hostage". — AFP



NICOSIA: A woman looks at a picture of Iranian reporters Niloufar Hamed and Elahe Mohammadi posted on Twitter on Nov 2, 2022. — AFP

ipation in the demonstrations. Seven men were also hanged over their links with the "riots" — the term Iranian officials use to describe the protests.

The latest court ruling follows the sentencing of Amini's lawyer, Saleh Nikbakht, last week to one year in prison for propaganda against the state

and speaking with foreign and local media about the case. In February, Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei agreed to pardon or commute the sentences of a "significant number" of convicts, although Mohammadi and Hamed were not among those released. — AFP

## Manila, Beijing trade blame over sea collisions

MANILA: Beijing and Manila traded blame on Sunday for two collisions between Chinese vessels and Philippine boats on a resupply mission to Filipino troops on a remote outpost in the disputed South China Sea. The incidents happened near Second Thomas Shoal in the Spratly Islands, a hotly contested region where Beijing deploys ships to assert its claims over almost the entire sea.

A Philippine government task force said the "dangerous blocking maneuvers of China Coast Guard vessel 5203 caused it to collide with the Armed Forces of the Philippines-contracted indigenous resupply boat" about 25 kilometers (15 miles) from Second Thomas Shoal. China said the "slight collision" happened after the resupply boat ignored "multiple warnings and deliberately passed through

action" of the Chinese coastguard boat had endangered the safety of the crew on the supply boat. China claims almost the entire South China Sea, through which trillions of dollars in trade passes annually, and has ignored an international ruling that its assertion has no legal basis. Second Thomas Shoal is about 200 kilometers (124 miles) from the western Philippine island of Palawan, and more than 1,000 kilometers from China's nearest major landmass, Hainan island. China said "responsibility lies entirely with the Philippines" for Sunday's incidents. As China moves ever more confidently to assert its claims to sovereignty over the waters, officials and experts have warned of the potential for collisions. "This is exactly the kind of event that can happen given their dangerous maneuvering," said Jay Batongbacal, director of the University of the Philippines' Institute for Maritime Affairs and Law of the Sea. — AFP



This videograb taken by the Armed Forces of the Philippines on Oct 22, 2023, shows a collision between a Chinese Coast Guard ship (left) and Philippines' resupply boat (right) during a resupply mission in the South China Sea. — AFP

## Brussels attacker had escaped from Tunisian prison

BRUSSELS: The gunman who shot dead two Swedish football fans in Brussels last weekend had escaped from a Tunisia prison where he was serving a long sentence, which prompted Tunisian officials to seek his extradition from Belgium, prosecutors said Sunday. Belgian authorities received the extradition request in August 2022 but it was not dealt with.

Justice Minister Vincent Van Quickenborne resigned Friday over what he called a "monumental error". The capital's chief prosecutor Tim De Wolf offered an explanation to the press on Sunday. "The serious under-staffing at the Brussel prosecutor's office played a role, but ... that does not justify it," he said. De Wolf said the extradition file had been received in September last year and had probably been forgotten in a file cabinet. "None of the colleagues involved remember what became of this specific file a year ago. There is no trace of it being handled," he said.

The attacker, 45-year-old Abdesalem Lassoued, had been sentenced "to more than 26 years in prison in Tunisia in 2005, but had escaped from prison in January 2011," the prosecutor said. Tunisian authorities "signaled" the case on July 1, 2022, via Interpol, De Wolf added. At that time the document mentioned only "a prison escape", he said. It was followed by a "series of annexes" six weeks later, but the file was lost at the prosecutor's office.

Interior Minister Annelies Verlinden said on Saturday that a lack of detail in the first "red notice" from Interpol meant the dossier had not been han-

## Probe into Kenya cult leader suggests justice system failure

NAIROBI: An inquiry into a suspected cult leader accused of inciting at least 428 of his followers to starve themselves to death, has pointed to "failures" in Kenya's security and criminal justice systems, according to a report seen by AFP on Saturday.

Self-proclaimed pastor Paul Nthenge Mackenzie has been in police custody since mid-April after the discovery of human remains in the Shakahola forest near the Indian Ocean coast. The former taxi driver and founder of the Good News International Church is accused of preaching to his followers to starve to death "to meet Jesus".

While starvation appears to be the main cause of death, some of the victims — including children — were strangled, beaten or suffocated, according to autopsies carried out by the government. "Kenya has experienced deaths linked to religious extrem-



Retired Officers Association: A cooperation protocol with Ad Zone Advertising Company aims to raise community awareness



The signing of the protocol was attended by members of the Board of Directors and company officials.

The Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Retired Officers Association, Major General Ret. Faisal MUSAED Al-JAZZAF, signed a cooperation protocol with Ad Zone Advertising Company, represented by Mr. Muhammad RUMAIH Al-MUTAIRI, Chairman of the Board of Directors, with the aim of cooperating in events and purposeful activities concerned with volunteer and humanitarian work and community awareness through the company's support of these events. And disseminating preventive programs through advertisement screens to achieve community security. The agreement also stipulated that both parties participate in activities organized by other parties with the aim of exchanging experiences and achieving the best results that serve society and enhance the role of youth and their national affiliation to serve Kuwait and stay away from all negative phenomena.

The signing of the protocol was attended by members of the Board of Directors and company officials.



rassociationkw

Retired Officers Association

Kuwaiti Army - Police - National Guard and General Fire Force

f t in Adzonekw

www.ad-zone.net



Free Zone, Waves Business Center, Block 02 Building 04, Ground Floor, Office D

# Business

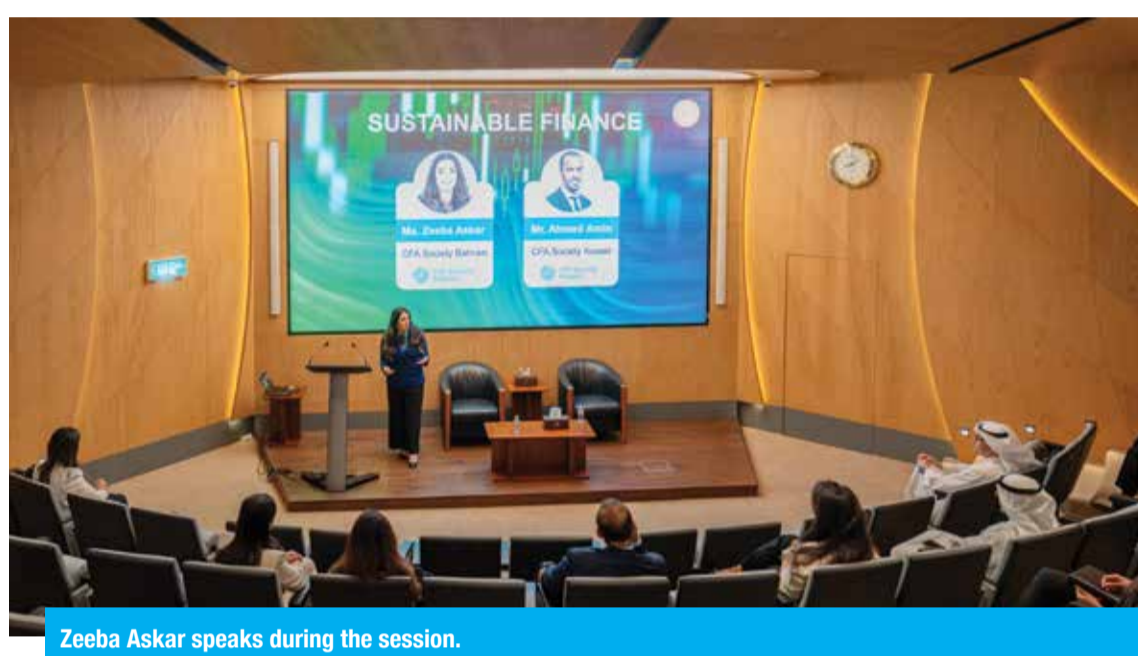
MONDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2023

## Boursa Kuwait holds awareness session on sustainable finance

Session held in commemoration of World Investor Week



KUWAIT: Naser Meshari Al-Sanousi and other analysts pose for a group photo.



Zeeba Askar speaks during the session.

**KUWAIT:** In its continuous efforts to raise financial awareness in the investment community and shed light on the latest developments and trends in the international investment community to participants in the Kuwaiti capital market, Boursa Kuwait organized a series of sessions and workshops during the month of October, the latest of which was a collaboration with the Certified Financial Analysts Society (CFA) and its chapters in Kuwait and Bahrain on sustainable finance, held on Wednesday, October 18, 2023.

The workshop was held in commemoration of World Investor Week, which ran its seventh installment this year. World Investor Week is an initiative launched by the International Organization of Securities Commissions (IOSCO) and supported by the World Federation of Exchanges (WFE). The annual event brings together stock exchanges, capital market authorities and asset management firms to champion the cause of investor education and safeguarding.

Naser Meshari Al-Sanousi, Senior Director of Marketing and Communication at Boursa Kuwait spoke on the occasion, saying, "Boursa Kuwait con-

### Event focused on policies and guidelines and the future of sustainable finance

tinuously partners with local and international institutions to develop and enhance the market, and deepen its participants' understanding of the latest tools and financial instruments used in the international investment community. Boursa Kuwait is proud of its strategic partnership with the CFA Society, and continues to collaborate with the Society for the sixth year in a row, in an effort to raise financial literacy levels and awareness in the Kuwaiti capital market through organizing awareness sessions and workshops with informative topics, in addition to enriching the Boursa Academy website with content that empowers investors.

The session was conducted by Zeeba Askar, Chartered Financial Analyst from the CFA Society Bahrain, who provided attendees with an overview

of sustainable finance, its market size, examples of effective sustainable capital market issuances in the region. The session also delved into an examination of the guidelines for bonds and sukuk, which are a form of fixed income, and detailed the different types of bonds, including green and social bonds. Askar also spoke about the increasing relevance of sustainable bonds in a variety of industries including energy, infrastructure, transport, information technology & communications (ICT), essential services and food security, as well as affirming their versatility and wide applications across various sectors.

Zeeba Askar, President of the CFA Society Bahrain, was ecstatic about her collaboration with Boursa Kuwait and the opportunity to share insights on sustainable capital markets with a focus on green

and social bonds, saying, "This session provided a pragmatic and informative overview of sustainable finance, including region-specific insights and actionable guidance for sustainable bond investments. Developing sustainable capital market instruments will shape the future of the industry and create business opportunities while serving to achieve the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals."

Organizing workshops and developing informative content on its Boursa Academy Online platform and social media channels comes as part of Boursa Kuwait's Corporate Sustainability strategy which aims to meaningful impact on the communities where it operates. Through these initiatives, the bourse seeks to equip all market participants with an in-depth understanding of the functioning of capital markets and various tools and techniques required to make informed investment decisions and effectively meet investors' needs. It is also in line with Goal 4 – Quality Education – and Goal 17 – Partnership for the Goals – of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



Al Safat Investment Company booth at Watheefti exhibition.

### Al Safat Investment participates in Watheefti exhibition

**KUWAIT:** Al Safat Investment Company Director of Marketing and Public Relations Sara Al-Mukaimi said the company supports young talents in accordance with its strategic plans that are approved by the board of directors and is keen on implementing it in practice.

Al-Mukaimi, speaking on the sidelines of Al-Safat's participation in Watheefti exhibition, which is considered the largest employment exhibition in Kuwait, said Al Safat is among the leading companies that is keen on providing training and expanding cooperation with promising Kuwaiti talent to fulfill their job ambitions.

She added the company has prepared a well-thought-out plan to serve its goals, and its participation in the exhibition comes within that framework. The company follows a series of procedures and flawless rules based on a sustainable and conducive work environment that functions in accordance with the right institutional practices.

Al-Mukaimi said Al Safat seeks to continue its achievements to maintain its influential presence in the investment sector in a way that qualifies it to keep moving towards its strategic priorities in all fields. "It is no secret that the company dedicates part of its efforts to achieve the required balance in the employment sector in a way that is in tune with



its strategy to support employment services and opportunities in the country," she said.

Al-Mukaimi also commended the exhibition for its impeccable organization and the wide range of participation from financial institutions, service entities and investment companies, reflecting the unity of interest in building a conducive atmosphere in Kuwait to further develop its manpower sector.

Al-Mukaimi stressed the importance of Kuwaiti companies supporting young cadres and equipping them for the labor market with appropriate skill sets. The success of Al Safat Investment Company in achieving the right proportion of Kuwaitization in the employment sector lies in its ability to select competencies capable of meeting customer needs and services needed for the market, she added.

### Supply chains and logistic services conference in Riyadh

**RIYADH:** The Supply Chains and Logistic Services Conference kicked off in Riyadh on Sunday with the participation of 64 international speakers. Saudi Minister of Transportation and Logistics Services Saleh Al-Jassar inaugurated the conference where 52 agreements to boost supply chains and logistic services were signed.

The conference encompasses essential keynote presentations, a concurrent exhibition, and a range of specialized workshops. Additionally, it features a dedicated section for financing solutions and supply chain matters, along with various complementary events and activities. The conference boasts around eight distinct workshops, attracting approximately 770 participants taking part in the "Logithi" event, organized into 70 teams. Among its focal points, the conference delves into the crit-



RIYADH: Saudi Minister of Transportation and Logistics Services Saleh Al-Jassar inaugurates the conference. — KUNA

ical themes of adaptability and sustainability within supply chains, crucial for the transition to a circular economy. Moreover, it addresses the evolution of specialized supply chains within the Kingdom, while also examining the influence of global supply chains in enhancing distribution operations, among other pertinent subjects. — KUNA

### German solar industry looks to rise again

**BITTERFELD-WOLFEN, Germany:** A decade after a wave of bankruptcies all but wiped out the German solar industry, the sector is looking to reestablish itself in the face of stiff competition from abroad.

Overproduction in China and massive government subsidy programs in the United States mark the struggle to stay profitable for a business that used to boom in Germany. In Bitterfeld-Wolfen, a solar cell plant opened in 2021 by the Swiss group Meyer Burger on the site of defunct German producer Q-Cells is a sign of a possible renaissance.

"We managed to recruit a number of former employees in the sector, and we are benefitting from their know-how," the director of the Meyer Burger factory, Jochen Fritsche, told AFP.

At the plant in the eastern German city, a million of the blue cells roll off the line each day, ready to be assembled into the modules that make up solar panels. Production at the factory is largely automated, with just some 50 employees overseeing the non-stop manufacturing process via computer screens.

First, the silicon wafers that form the basis of the cells are dipped in a chemical solution. Then they are given a reflective grey coating, dried and cut in two. The outcome of this high-precision industrial pro-



BITTERFELD-WOLFEN, Germany: An employee oversees the production process of solar cells at a machine at the solar cell plant of Swiss group Meyer Burger in Bitterfeld-Wolfen, eastern Germany. — AFP

cess — the details of which are closely guarded by Meyer Burger — is a cell which is said to yield 20 percent more energy than the competition. "Technology is the core of our business and it's what is allowing us to rebuild production in Europe," Gunter Erfurt, Meyer Burger's CEO, told AFP. The group's factory is located at the heart of what was once heralded as "Solar Valley", an area in the middle of former communist East Germany that hosted a high concentration of solar energy businesses in its heyday in the 2000s. German manufacturers were global leaders in solar at the time, carried along by healthy government subsidies. But the public funding was slashed in 2010, leading many of the businesses to go bust. Thousands of jobs were cut in Solar Valley, while Chinese competitors took the top spot in the industry. — AFP



AL-SHALL ECONOMIC REPORT

# IMF lowers GCC growth outlook

## War on Gaza to trigger fresh economic repercussions

KUWAIT: The IMF issued its October 2023 report on the outlook for the global economy which we discussed in another article of this weekly report. The IMF included its expectations about the potential performance of the GCC economies. Compared to last April's forecasts, its October report growth expectations are disappointing. Within six months between the two reports, the IMF reduced its growth expectations by almost half, or from a 2.9 percent growth rate in the April report to 1.5 percent in this month's report.

Each country's potential performance within the GCC system varied greatly between the two reports. While the performance remained constant at 2.4 percent for Qatar in both reports, the reduction affected the other five GCC countries. The highest absolute reduction affected Saudi Arabia, whose growth expectations dropped by 2.3 percent as the forecast in April's report were around 3.1 percent, while in this month's report it became only 0.8 percent. The differences were all negative for the other three countries, between 0.5 percent at the highest for Oman and 0.1 percent at the lowest for the UAE and Bahrain was in between with a 0.3 percent decrease. Growth remained positive for five countries. Kuwait's growth expectation was at 0.9 percent in the April report. The IMF reduced its growth estimates by 1.5 percent, turning it into a contraction of 0.6 percent.

Contrary to the IMF's expectations for the GCC economies' performance, which dropped in its October report to about half of its expectations in last April's report, the IMF raised its expectations for the global economy performance from 2.8 percent in last April's report to 3.0 percent in its current report. Two world economies weigh about 42.8 percent of the global economy size and have the most influence in determining its path. The USA's economy weighs 25.8 percent of the global economy size; expectations indicate its performance improvement from 1.6 percent in April report to 2.1 percent in the October report. That increase compensates and excels forecasts for China's economic growth, which will decline slightly from 5.2 percent in the April report to 5.0 percent in the October report. The report adds that inflationary pressures are now under control more than they were in the past. It seems likely that the global economy has become closer to a safe landing than before. The state of uncertainty is still at its highest levels; the war on Gaza is a new factor that increases the repercussions of geopolitical risks as well as the Ukraine war.

They are accompanied by risks resulting from the tightening of both monetary and financial poli-

| Country                 | Apr-23 | Oct-23 | Change | Apr-23 | Oct-23 | Change |
|-------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
|                         | 2023   |        |        | 2024   |        |        |
| Qatar                   | 2.4%   | 2.4%   | 0.0%   | 1.8%   | 2.2%   | 0.3%   |
| UAE                     | 3.5%   | 3.4%   | -0.1%  | 3.9%   | 4.0%   | 0.1%   |
| Kuwait                  | 0.9%   | -0.6%  | -1.5%  | 2.7%   | 3.6%   | 0.9%   |
| Bahrain                 | 3.0%   | 2.7%   | -0.3%  | 3.8%   | 3.6%   | -0.2%  |
| Saudi Arabia            | 3.1%   | 0.8%   | -2.3%  | 3.1%   | 4.0%   | 0.8%   |
| Oman                    | 1.7%   | 1.2%   | -0.5%  | 5.2%   | 2.7%   | -2.5%  |
| Weighted Average Growth | 2.9%   | 1.5%   | -1.4%  | 3.3%   | 3.7%   | 0.4%   |

| Country | Apr-23 | Oct-23 | Change | Apr-23 | Oct-23 | Change |
|---------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
|         | 2023   |        |        | 2024   |        |        |
| China   | 5.2%   | 5.0%   | -0.2%  | 4.5%   | 4.2%   | -0.3%  |
| Germany | -0.1%  | -0.5%  | -0.4%  | 1.1%   | 0.9%   | -0.2%  |
| India   | 5.9%   | 6.3%   | 0.4%   | 6.3%   | 6.3%   | 0.0%   |
| Japan   | 1.3%   | 2.0%   | 0.7%   | 1.0%   | 1.0%   | 0.0%   |
| UK      | -0.3%  | 0.5%   | 0.7%   | 1.0%   | 0.6%   | -0.3%  |
| USA     | 1.6%   | 2.1%   | 0.5%   | 1.1%   | 1.5%   | 0.4%   |
| France  | 0.7%   | 1.0%   | 0.3%   | 1.5%   | 1.3%   | -0.2%  |
| Spain   | 1.6%   | 2.5%   | 0.9%   | 2.0%   | 1.7%   | -0.3%  |
| World   | 2.8%   | 3.0%   | 0.2%   | 3.0%   | 2.9%   | -0.1%  |

cies and the possibility of an error in the timing of their relaxation. Perhaps this is what prompted the Fund to reduce its expectations for global economic growth in 2024 from 3.0 percent in the April report to 2.9 percent in the October report. The report believes that the drive of global growth this year was the 2 service sector, specifically the tourism sector and the related hospitality activities. The sector was also a major source of high inflation rates; its reduced growth in 2024 will also contribute to further curbing inflation levels.

Contrary to the service industry economies in France and Spain, whose growth forecasts increased by about 0.25 percent and 0.94 percent for 2023 between the April and the October reports, respectively, the Fund lowered its growth forecasts

for industrial houses such as China and Germany by 0.2 percent and 0.5 percent, respectively. It also continued to reduce them by 0.3 percent and 0.2 percent respectively for 2024. A potential crisis for the real estate sector in China contributes to reducing growth expectations for the entire global economy. In conclusion, we want to point out two things. The first is that the highest reduction in growth expectations has affected the economies of the GCC countries, as it does not seem that reducing oil production to support prices has achieved its goals yet. The second is that changing expectations at such a high level in the 6-month period between the two reports reflects how turbulent the world is, and the unknown factors influencing it have become more than the known ones.

## Foxconn under tax and land use probe in China

TAIPEI: Taiwanese tech giant Foxconn is under tax and land use investigations at several of its sites in China, state media reported on Sunday.

Chinese authorities are inspecting Foxconn's sites in southern Guangdong province and Jiangsu in the east, as well as carrying out on-site investigations into the company's land use in central Hunan and Hubei provinces, China's state-run Global Times reported. The newspaper did not specify what authorities are looking into, nor any offences that Foxconn may have committed.

"Compliance with the law is a basic principle for our group worldwide," Foxconn said in a statement Sunday. "We will actively cooperate with the relevant (authorities) for the operations concerned," it added, without providing further details.

Foxconn is one of the world's largest contract producers of electronics, and is a key supplier for Apple's iPhones. It is also China's largest private-sector employer, with more than a million employees nationwide. The investigation comes two-and-a-half months before presidential elections in self-ruled Taiwan, which China claims as its territory and has vowed to take one day.

Foxconn's founder, billionaire Terry Gou, has cut ties with the firm to focus on his long-shot bid to run as an independent candidate in Taiwan's January 2024 elections. The 72-year-old failed to become the opposition Kuomintang (KMT) party's nominee in 2019 and analysts say he has only a slim chance of winning. Critics have alleged that Gou has a cozy relationship with the Chinese leadership, although Gou says he can bring peace between Taipei and Beijing. — AFP



شركة الصفاة للاستثمار  
AL SAFAT INVESTMENT COMPANY

# KUWAIT BOURSA WEEKLY REPORT

WEEK ENDED ON 19 OCTOBER 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 | 31,688         | 7,375.79   | 1.9%  | -1.9% | -9.1% | 512,598,159     | 198,757,365  | 40,408        | 17.3 | 1.2 | 77.3%             |
| Main Market    | 9,307          | 5,543.67   | 1.1%  | -3.0% | -0.9% | 363,060,347     | 40,513,427   | 18,963        | 12.4 | 0.7 | 22.7%             |
| All Share      | 40,995         | 6,737.56   | 1.7%  | -2.2% | -7.6% | 875,658,506     | 239,270,792  | 59,371        | 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                | 24,517         | 1,640.17   | 2.2%  | -2.4% | -8.6%  | 251,435,274     | 122,593,881  | 19,995        | 16.7 | 1.1 | 59.81%            |
| Basic Materials        | 446            | 789.48     | -2.2% | -5.2% | -8.7%  | 3,925,284       | 2,509,168    | 951           | 9.2  | 2.2 | 1.09%             |
| Consumer Discretionary | 1,001          | 1,490.43   | 0.4%  | -4.3% | 0.2%   | 47,639,557      | 13,203,949   | 5,356         | 12.4 | 0.9 | 2.44%             |
| Consumer Staples       | 177            | 582.95     | 0.2%  | -2.2% | 21.5%  | 3,301,950       | 1,630,830    | 264           | 73.5 | 1.1 | 0.43%             |
| Energy                 | 194            | 928.34     | -2.1% | -3.4% | -18.5% | 1,953,854       | 93,812       | 217           | 9.2  | 0.6 | 0.47%             |
| Financial Services     | 4,427          | 1,206.37   | 0.2%  | -2.6% | -4.0%  | 312,279,232     | 40,496,685   | 13,412        | 26.6 | 0.8 | 10.80%            |
| Health Care            | 233            | 469.66     | 0.0%  | -1.1% | 1.7%   | 15              | 6.32         | 1             | 12.0 | 0.9 | 0.57%             |
| Industrials            | 3,078          | 887.47     | 0.7%  | -3.5% | -17.7% | 40,512,777      | 22,043,720   | 5,842         | 12.4 | 0.9 | 7.51%             |
| Insurance              | 910            | 2,224.06   | 0.2%  | 0.1%  | 43.4%  | 403,829         | 42,822       | 77            | 10.5 | 0.9 | 2.22%             |
| Real Estate            | 2,522          | 1,176.55   | 0.3%  | 0.1%  | -2.7%  | 173,765,864     | 17,091,840   | 6,741         | 14.2 | 0.6 | 6.15%             |
| Technology             | 9              | 622.01     | -2.8% | 11.9% | -10.7% | 116,656         | 9,258,29     | 40            | NM   | 0.8 | 0.02%             |
| Telecommunications     | 3,285          | 1,074.76   | 4.5%  | 0.2%  | -9.0%  | 39,172,180      | 19,350,118   | 6,224         | 10.1 | 1.4 | 8.01%             |
| Utilities              | 196            | 468.42     | 0.0%  | -4.3% | -5.3%  | 1,152,034       | 204,703      | 251           | 14.4 | 1.6 | 0.48%             |

Top Gainers

| Stock     | last Close | Change % | Volume     | Value     | Trades |
|-----------|------------|----------|------------|-----------|--------|
| RASIYAT   | 192        | 20.00%   | 10,947,183 | 1,900,462 | 787    |
| IFAHR     | 319        | 18.15%   | 19,946,942 | 5,779,821 | 2,655  |
| EKTITAB   | 20.1       | 11.05%   | 41,480,538 | 753,739   | 1,209  |
| SULTAN    | 106        | 9.28%    | 520,481    | 54,052    | 122    |
| ALMUTAHED | 266        | 9.02%    | 2,987,628  | 795,889   | 226    |

Top Losers

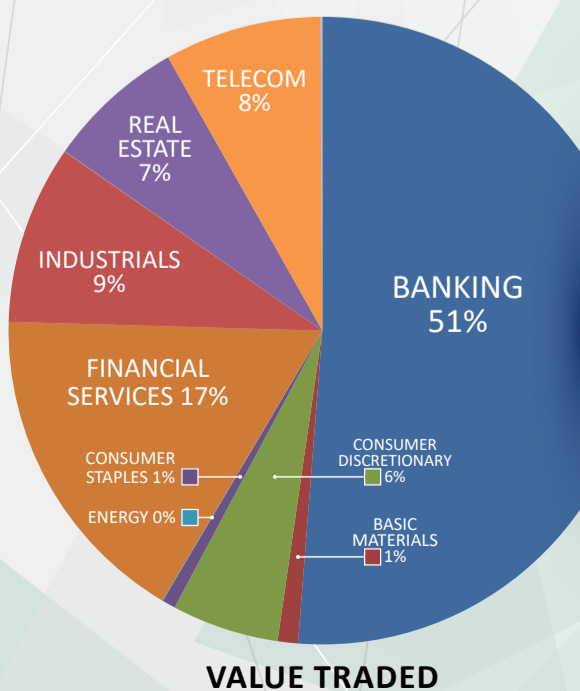
| Stock    | last Close | Change % | Volume    | Value  | Trades |
|----------|------------|----------|-----------|--------|--------|
| EMIRATES | 30         | -16.20%  | 214,540   | 6,425  | 16     |
| SENERGY  | 32.7       | -6.57%   | 1,670,830 | 56,379 | 115    |
| WARBACAP | 118        | -5.60%   | 450,058   | 55,509 | 159    |
| IPG      | 426        | -5.33%   | 27,371    | 11,489 | 21     |
| UPAC     | 189        | -5.03%   | 177,515   | 31,851 | 53     |

Top Volume

| Stock   | Last | Change % | Volume     | Value      | Trades |
|---------|------|----------|------------|------------|--------|
| KFH     | 720  | 1.55%    | 86,088,440 | 62,287,350 | 7,457  |
| KIB     | 154  | 1.32%    | 43,771,162 | 6,758,568  | 1,717  |
| AAYAN   | 155  | 0.65%    | 42,017,310 | 6,437,625  | 812    |
| EKTITAB | 20.1 | 11.05%   | 41,480,538 | 753,739    | 1,209  |
| GBK     | 254  | 0.00%    | 40,592,701 | 10,355,260 | 1,812  |

Top Value

| Stock   | Last | Change % | Volume     | Value      | Trades |
|---------|------|----------|------------|------------|--------|
| KFH     | 720  | 1.55%    | 86,088,440 | 62,287,350 | 7,457  |
| NBK     | 892  | 4.45%    | 32,068,580 | 28,391,857 | 4,745  |
| ZAIN    | 489  | 5.62%    | 36,236,132 | 17,641,057 | 5,302  |
| GBK     | 254  | 0.00%    | 40,592,701 | 10,355,260 | 1,812  |
| BOUBYAN | 598  | -0.33%   | 13,070,767 | 7,849,388  | 1,650  |



### Market Summary:

- Premier market volume and value increased by 27% and 30%, while Main market volume and value dropped by 20% and 30%, respectively.
- Premier and Main indexes are still struggling despite the exceptional jump in the middle of the week.
- Technically, the All Share index closed at 6737, with support levels at 6705 and 6621, while resistance at 6759. The Premier index closed at 7375, with support levels at 7343 and 7195, while resistance at 7454. The Main index closed at 5543, with support levels at 5526, 5495, and 5447, with resistance at 5550.

## Business

# Ajeel: KFH's digital leadership is a competitive advantage

## KFH joins discussion panel on significance of digital transformation

**KUWAIT:** As part of the bank's strategic partnership with the National Leadership Institute (NLI), Kuwait Finance House (KFH) Executive Manager Digital Transformation Tareq Al-Ajeel participated in the first discussion panel on the significance of digital transformation. The conference brought together participants from different sectors, notable financial institutions, and field experts.

During the discussion panel, Al-Ajeel stated that KFH online application has achieved massive success and was ranked first on Apple store, primarily for its efficiency, ease of use and innovative banking and financial solutions. "At the end of Q3 of 2023, KFH customers carried out more than 152 million digital banking transactions through KFHonline on mobile and website, with a growth of about 40 percent compared to the same period last year," he added.

Al-Ajeel pointed out that this remarkable growth in customer usage of online digital banking affirms KFH's leadership in offering innovative digital financial solutions, enhancing the banking experience of customers and providing the Bank with a

competitive edge. He went on to say that KFH has maintained its strength and leadership in offering distinguished digital banking services, noting that the pandemic contributed to accelerating the digital transformation journey of KFH which made significant leaps prior to the pandemic phase. He revealed that during the total lockdown, KFH continued serving its customers round the clock through its online digital platforms.

Meanwhile, Al-Ajeel pointed out that investing in FinTech and infrastructure development is at the heart of KFH's strategy as it has become a necessity. Therefore, KFH is keeping pace with the developments in this industry including Artificial Intelligence, cyber security, and machine learning, as well as enhancing its relationships with FinTech providers through strategic partnerships.

He noted that Open Banking and Application Programming Interface (API) are reshaping the banking sphere, therefore banks must adopt and benefit from these applications to improve their overall performance and enhance customer experience.

Additionally, he mentioned that KFH cooperates with world-class companies to provide unique and top-tier services, such as the cooperation with Ripple to launch instant cross-border payments service by using Ripple's technology. He also stressed that KFH will continue to explore new partnerships with emerging technology enterprises and FinTech providers with the intention of designing and delivering innovative financial solutions to customers. It is worth noting that KFH's participation in the Breaking Barriers conference stems from its keenness to develop and empower the national leadership capacities, in addition to its interest in enhancing the education system in Kuwait by participating in all the relevant initiatives and events, which constitute a valuable opportunity to address challenges and explore new avenues that contribute to accelerating knowledge transfer, empowering the next generation of national talents, focusing on scientific innovation and forming purposeful partnerships for rising leaders amid a rapidly developing global scene.



Tareq Al-Ajeel participates in the first discussion panel on the significance of digital transformation.

## Gulf Bank launches awareness campaign for women's health

**KUWAIT:** In alignment with its commitment to fostering community sustainability principles, and in observance of Breast Cancer Awareness and Mental Health Month, Gulf Bank has initiated its yearly campaign in October, dedicated to promoting women's health and safety.

The bank extended its support by offering complimentary health check-ups to its female employees, including preliminary examinations to stress the importance of early detection over a three-day period. Further examinations, including mammograms, were conducted if recommended.

Additionally, the bank organized a workshop on women's empowerment and self-defense, held in collaboration with the UFC Gym Kuwait. This event included discussions highlighting the significance of early screening and breast cancer awareness, conducted in partnership with DISC Kuwait.

Gulf Bank's Human Resources facilitated a panel discussion featuring Dr Mohammed Al-Suwaidan, Medical Director and Consultant Psychiatrist from Mindwell Center Kuwait, shedding light on the importance of mental health amidst life pressures and strategies to navigate them effectively for positive professional outcomes. Moreover, as part of the WOW initiative, and in collaboration with the non-profit Safira Organization, the bank designed various workshops, aimed at empowering women in their professional lives. These workshops covered essential topics such as goal setting, critical thinking, seizing opportunities, and achieving work-life balance. Experienced experts such as Dr Reem Al-Baghli, Engineer Maha Al-Baghli, Dr Bodour Al-Suwait, and trainer Ahmed Al-Najjar conducted these sessions.

Salma Al-Hajjaj, the General Manager of the Human Resources Department at Gulf Bank, emphasized the bank's dedication to participating actively in such initiatives and events annually. She stressed the importance of raising health awareness, encouraging regular health check-ups for early disease detection, and reducing mortality rates. These initiatives are part of the bank's ongoing efforts to strengthen the foundation of its workforce, addressing various societal concerns, particularly those impacting women. It's important to highlight that these initiatives align with global campaigns in October, dedicated to increasing awareness about breast cancer. This disease continues to be the most common cancer among women worldwide, emphasizing the crucial role early detection plays in facilitating prompt recovery.

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 the Bank both internally and externally. Gulf Bank supports Kuwait Vision 2035 "New Kuwait" and works with various parties to achieve it.



Salma Al-Hajjaj

## Saudi to use new technology to compile FDI data

**RIYADH:** In an important step towards economic transparency and precision, Saudi Arabia has planned to unveil a new world-class methodology for compiling Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) statistics, according to media reports.

The initiative, a collaborative effort between the Kingdom's government entities, and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), aims to align Saudi Arabia's FDI reporting with global best practices. The initiative is a testament to the commitment outlined in Vision 2030, Saudi Arabia's blueprint for economic growth and diversification. The vision emphasizes adherence to international standards and administrative best practices to achieve the highest levels of transparency and governance, the report said.

Over the past two years, the Ministry of Investment of Saudi Arabia (MISA), the General Authority for Statistics (GASTAT), and the Central Bank of Saudi Arabia (SAMA) have diligently worked to enhance the quality and transparency of the Kingdom's FDI statistics. Technical assistance from the IMF has played a crucial role in shaping the new methodology. Endorsed by the IMF, the innovative methodology employs surveys to generate quarterly figures and analyzes financial statements for highly accurate yearly statistics. It encompasses 20 FDI indicators, covering countries, sectors, and administrative regions.

The Minister of Investment Khalid Al-Falih stated that the new methodology is part of broader reforms aimed at enhancing data accuracy and transparency in Saudi Arabia. These efforts align with the maturation of the economy and investment ecosystem catalyzed by Vision 2030 and the National Investment Strategy (NIS).

Al-Falih said: "Improving the transparency and



RIYADH: Saudi Arabia is poised to unveil a new world-class methodology for compiling Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) statistics.

quality of the Kingdom's FDI statistics will empower investors to make more confident and informed decisions, while enabling the Kingdom to adapt its policies to attract even more investment." President of GASTAT Fahad Al-Dossari confirmed the approval of the FDI methodology after technical assistance from the IMF, aligning it with international practices outlined in the IMF's Balance of Payments Manual. He highlighted that the methodology will contribute to improving accuracy and cover more FDI indicators. Al-Dossari said, "FDI statistics will assist decision-makers in designing policies to create an attractive investment ecosystem and highlight investment opportunities in the Kingdom."

MISA Deputy Minister for Economic Affairs and Investment Studies Saad Al-Shahrani underscored the importance of high-accuracy data in measuring progress and development, as well as in monitoring the local economy and the performance of Saudi investment. The IMF, in its recent Article IV Consultation, expressed support for Saudi Arabia's continuous efforts to enhance FDI data compilation. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) confirmed that the new methodology adheres to international standards, while the World Bank endorsed the recommendations made by the IMF in its technical assistance report on Saudi Arabia. — Agencies

## Mawani and SGP sign deal to set up logistics park

**RIYADH:** The Saudi Ports Authority (Mawani) and Saudi Global Ports (SGP) have signed a deal to build a fully integrated logistics park spanning over one million square meters at King Abdulaziz Port in Dammam, with an investment nearing one billion Saudi riyals.

The agreement was signed in the presence of Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Minister of Energy, Minister of Transport and Logistic Services Eng Saleh bin Nasser Al-Jasser, and Singaporean Minister of Manpower and Second Minister for Trade and Industry Dr Tan See Leng.

The Minister of Transport and Logistics Services and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Saudi Ports Authority Eng Saleh bin Nasser Al-Jasser stated that this agreement falls under both local and international private sector investments.

The objective of these investments is to establish multiple high-performance logistics zones that will enhance the efficiency of the logistics sector, improve

service quality, increase handling numbers, and generate additional job opportunities. The initiative is expected to strengthen the role of the logistics sector in supporting the national economy and reinforce the Kingdom's position as a global logistics hub connecting three continents. This aligns with the National Strategy for Transport and Logistics Services and Vision 2030.

Al-Jasser emphasized that the contracts signed with the private sector over the past two years to develop and expand investments in logistics areas illustrate the attractiveness of Saudi ports and the Saudi logistics sector. They also highlight the vast and promising opportunities within this crucial sector, which plays a significant role in driving economic growth and achieving sustainable development.

The agreement was signed by President of the Saudi Ports Authority, Omar Hariiri and CEO of the Saudi Global Ports Company, Edward Tah. Hariiri stressed that this new logistics park is part of the Mawani initia-



RIYADH: Officials during the signing of the agreement between Mawani and SGP to establish a fully integrated logistics park.

tive to expand the number of logistics parks within Saudi ports to 12. This expansion is expected to elevate the Kingdom's position in the global logistics services performance index from its current 38th place to the 10th. Furthermore, it will solidify its regional leadership in logistics.

The Saudi Global Ports Company operates two container terminals at King Abdulaziz Port in Dammam, which is a joint venture between the Saudi Public Investment Fund, the Singaporean PSA International Company, and Al-Balagaa Group. — Agencies

## Gas prices remain volatile amid Mideast conflict

By Rania Gule

**KUWAIT:** Natural gas prices decreased this week, and currently, natural gas is trading at \$3.26 per million British Thermal Units (MMBtu). Gas supplies to Europe remained higher than average despite the closure of gas imports from Zionist occupation through Egypt. With European gas storage tanks filled up to 85 percent, it seems that the European Union is prepared to face the early cold temperatures before the arrival of winter. Even with geopolitical tensions threatening to escalate in the Middle East, one of the world's largest natural gas demand sources, Europe, seems to have the capacity to sustain itself for an extended period.

At the same time, the US Dollar Index (DXY) has been fluctuating with high volatility and instability. Geopolitical tensions in Palestine are supporting the flow of liquidity into safe-haven assets. On the other hand, yields on US Treasury bonds have risen to their highest levels in years, with 10-year US Treasury bonds surpassing 5 percent at

one point. A fundamental rule in financial markets is that yields above 5 percent represent a turning point, where high yields on bonds and securities may begin to harm the economy and potentially lead to a recession shortly, weakening the strength of the US dollar.

I believe that the market drivers influencing natural gas prices are the escalating events in the Middle East at present. The latest data from the Egyptian Ports Authority shows that liquefied natural gas (LNG) vessels are departing ports with only partial loads of LNG due to the closure of gas fields in the occupied Palestinian territories.

With the increasing frequency of nightly shelling in Middle Eastern countries and the deployment of drones by a US military carrier, the United States could be drawn into war, which could lead to an increase in gas prices in the near term. According to estimates from the Institute of Energy Economics, Japan (IEEJ), the world will need \$7 trillion to ensure an adequate supply of gas until 2050. Today, the markets are eagerly awaiting some important data in addition to geopolitical news and developments in the Middle East conflict. The Baker Hughes Gas Rig Count report is scheduled to be released this evening at approximately 17:00 GMT. It's worth noting that the previous figure was 117, which is still far from the high number of 167 in 2022. No market expectations have been set, and it is believed that this data will significantly impact the markets by the end of the day and

the weekly closures of natural gas and other assets.

Natural gas prices remain elevated, up more than 25 percent since the start of the conflict in Gaza. With the approach of the winter season, I anticipate increased price volatility. Gas prices could see a significant decline as temperatures drop and winter officially begins. Prices will also be influenced by heightened risks due to tensions in the Middle East during the winter period. I expect a substantial increase in demand for natural gas and petroleum derivatives, leading to unusual price movements in the markets.

Given the current geopolitical headlines and the technical price action on the daily chart, I anticipate sharp fluctuations in the short and medium term. There are no significant resistance levels in place to prevent further price increases, except for the \$3.65 level, which was last seen on January 17. If this level is breached and confirmed, prices are likely to climb towards the 2023 high, near \$4.3080.

From another negative technical perspective, the bearish scenario becomes active if the trend channel fails to act as support near \$3.37 and prices remain consistently below it, closing the week lower. In this case, natural gas prices could briefly decline to around \$3.07, which is near the peak support from mid-August. If the decline below this level turns into a primary trend, prices may drop below \$3 towards the area near the 55-day simple moving average at approximately 2.98 units.

Note: Rania Gule is market analyst at XS.com

## Business

# Al-Sager: NBK made solid profits under various economic conditions and cycles

## On the sidelines of analysts' conference for results of 9M2023

**KUWAIT:** Isam J Al-Sager, Vice Chairman and Group CEO at National Bank of Kuwait (NBK), said that the bank achieved the highest quarterly profits to-date, as it continued to deliver solid profitability trends, while affirming the group's ability to generate positive results in various economic conditions and cycles.

On the sidelines of an analysts' conference for the results of 3Q2023, Al-Sager said that NBK's profits remain founded on diverse and sustained revenue streams while witnessing growth momentum across our various business sectors.

"In pursuing our strategic objectives, the group continues leveraging its resilient business model, diversification strategy, healthy balance sheet, ample liquidity and strong capitalization to further solidify our position and reinforce prospects for future growth," Al-Sager affirmed.

"NBK will remain opportunistic in all its key growth markets with special focus on GCC, mainly KSA; as we are approaching the market on all fronts through our reputable franchise, wealth management expertise and digital capabilities," Al-Sager added.

### A challenging year

In terms of his outlook for the Egyptian market in the near term, Al-Sager emphasized that this year was a very challenging year for the Egyptian economy as inflation and devaluations continues to pressure on the market while the recent sovereign rating downgrades added further challenges to the already deteriorated situations.

He further elaborated that the situation may lead to some pickup in defaults across the system, but NBK is not expecting anything material in its operations because of the Group's risk appetite in Egypt and the diversity of the Group's loan book.

"The Egyptian economy is one of the largest and the most diversified in the region and has a lot of potential in growth once back on track," Al-Sager noted.

"As for NBK, I think the devaluation of the Egyptian pound will mainly impact the group in terms of contributions of Egypt which keeps getting smaller when we translate local accounts to KD for consolidation. Egypt representation remains small in the group context with less than 5 percent of total group assets, and I think it will continue to be that way for some time," Al-Sager added.

When asked about the mortgage law, Al-Sager stressed the importance of passing that law to lift



### Isam Al-Sager

- Our profits remain founded on diverse and sustained revenue streams while witnessing growth momentum across our various business sectors.

- The group will continue leveraging its resilient business model and diversification strategy to further solidify its position and reinforce prospects for future growth.

the burden on fiscal position on one hand and to clear the queue of the housing authority applications given the increasing demand to provide residential housing to citizens, adding that we have witnessed serious developments on the mortgage law throughout the year including the passing of a new law to establish Housing Cities companies recently, which should accelerate housing distributions with the participation of the private sector given the opportunity.

"The mortgage law is listed among the priorities of the government's legislative agenda; and we maintain our optimistic view that both laws will be approved by the parliament, and we hope this will take place during this upcoming parliamentary cycle," Al-Sager confirmed.

### Positive momentum

Al-Sager provided an update on the projects market and the recent pickup witnessed recently, assuring that although we witnessed a lot of delays in awarding mega projects during the past few years, the current positive momentum dominates the scene with project awards reaching close to KD 2 billion year-to-date. He also explained that the recent hike in oil prices, if continues, will be positive for business sentiment as this will pave the way for the govern-

ment to continue with its commitment to spend on infrastructure; reflecting positively on non-oil GDP growth and business credit activity, especially that there are promising signs for projects in queue to be awarded this year, given the positive circumstances.

### Strong market leadership

Al-Sager highlighted that through benefiting from the substantial technological infrastructure, NBK's strategic investments continues to strengthen the group's position as a market leader, expanding its capabilities to attract a broader customer base and nurturing the capabilities of its digital banking services. He also confirmed that the Bank aims to enhance its reliance on data analytics, artificial intelligence and machine learning to enhance customer's experience.

### Sustainable path

"In line with our strategic approach to implement best ESG practices and initiatives, NBK advanced its responsible banking services to customers to support their efforts towards green transition initiatives. In order to be a trendsetter among the private sector institutions in prioritizing ESG, we remain committed to the significance of such endeavors in driving the journey of sustainable growth," Al-Sager noted.

### Sujith Ronghe

- We have a strong operating performance combined with a healthy balance sheet, comfortable liquidity levels and a strong capital base.

- NBK has a more favorable asset mix, from the growth in loans and investment securities, helping the increase in yield.

## NBK MONEY MARKETS REPORT

### US retail sales show strength of consumer

**KUWAIT:** Retail sales in the United States surged beyond expectations amid further evidence of consumer resilience, with the monthly reading coming in at 0.7 percent for September versus estimates of 0.3 percent growth. Although the figure is slightly lower than August's revised reading of 0.8 percent, it shows that consumer demand remains robust in the face of tightening credit conditions, resumption of student loan payments, and elevated energy prices. The core figure, which excludes auto and gas sales, also rose beyond expectations at 0.6 percent versus the forecasted figure of 0.2 percent. Consumer spending has been the main driver of the US avoiding a recession, and represents close to 70 percent of US GDP.

Retail sales represents a third of consumer spending and indicates that the economy is still expanding beyond expectations and not decelerating as much as the Federal Reserve would like to bring inflation down to their 2 percent target. Several Fed speakers warned in recent weeks that the full effect of tightening credit conditions is yet to be felt in the economy, and could end up leading to softer retail spending and employment figures which would relieve inflationary pressures.

### Unemployment claims

In another sign of a robust labor market, unemployment claims in the US came in at 198,000 down 13,000 from last week's figure and below estimates of 210,000. Continuous claims was up to 1.734 million from 1.698 million previously. These figures

show that the labor market remains historically tight, and a persistent dynamic in contributing to upwards inflationary pressures.

Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell stated on Thursday that the Fed is "Committed to achieving sufficiently restrictive policy stance" after bond yields soared to highs not seen since 2007. US 10-year treasury yields were last seen trading at 4.94 percent, and approaching the 5 percent mark for the first time in 16 years. "Higher bond yields are producing tighter financial conditions, which the Fed wants," Powell said. Despite this, he warned that "More evidence of above-trend growth, or that labor market no longer easing, could warrant further monetary policy tightening." Additionally, he claimed that "There may still be meaningful tightening in the pipeline" referring to previous hikes that are yet to be felt in the economy. He has referenced bond yields multiple times in his speech, indicating that they are volatile but that "Higher yields will take some pressure off the fed to raise rates." Finally, Powell claimed that the Fed "will watch" and "let market yield rise play out." The greenback traded sideways over the week and was down slightly, closing at 106.163.

Annual inflation in the United Kingdom held steady at 6.7 percent surpassing the expected figure of 6.5 percent. On a monthly basis, this represents an increase of 0.5 percent versus 0.4 percent forecasted. Core CPI, which excludes food and energy, rose 6.1 percent versus a consensus of 6.0 percent. The sticky inflation reading comes amid a rise in energy prices which trickled down to other sectors of the economy. The country is also suffering from elevated food prices and high inflation in the services sector. The UK is the country with the highest inflation rate among G7 economies, and taking rates to 5.25 percent has squeezed households while inflation remained sticky. The Bank of England officials have constantly lamented that wage growth is contributing to inflationary pressures, with the June-August reading showing that wages increased by an annual rate of 7.8 percent, outpacing inflation. Despite this, markets are still overwhelmingly pricing in a pause for the next BoE meeting.

### UK retail sales falls sharply

Retail sales data in the United Kingdom is sending recessionary signals, coming in at -0.9 percent versus a previous increase of 0.4 percent. The huge miss in the reading comes amid an environment of tightening financial conditions, as well as affecting the housing market and consumer sentiment. Core retail sales which excludes fuel also declined 1 percent after expanding by 0.6 percent the previous month. The weakness of the UK consumer and subsequent economic data may relieve pressure on the Bank of England to deliver a rate hike, as they face the highest rate of inflation among their G7 peers. The sterling traded sideways and ended the week at 1.2165.

### Positive sentiment out of China

China's economy grew more than expected, rising 4.9 percent annually in the third quarter versus expectations of 4.4 percent growth. On a quarterly basis, this represents an increase of 1.3 percent versus 0.5 percent in the previous quarter. Recent figures coming out of the world's second largest economy seem to indicate that economic recovery is back on track following a difficult period post-COVID lockdowns. Authorities introduced a series of fiscal stimulus policies to revitalize consumer demand and boost the economy. It seems that the stimulus is finally taking effect, with a surprise on the upside regarding recent growth, retail sales, unemployment, and industrial production figures. Unemployment figures eased to 5 percent from 5.2 percent previously, while retail sales and industrial production grew more than expected at 5.5 percent and 4.5 percent respectively in September. Despite the positive economic data, property slump worries continue, as the authorities balance between initiating stimulus, intervening to stop the weakening of the Yuan against the dollar, and managing the debt crisis in the real estate sector. The USD/CNY currency pair is up on the week, last trading at 7.3155.

### Kuwait

Kuwaiti dinar  
USD/KWD closed last week at 0.30895.



Around 30,000 businesses have been opened by Ukrainian refugees in Poland.

### Ukrainians open businesses in Poland en masse

**WARSAW:** Olena Romanova fled Ukraine for Poland when Russia invaded in February last year, leaving behind a successful facial massage salon business. Together with three business partners, the 52-year-old is now offering the same service in Poland — one of around 30,000 businesses that have been opened by Ukrainian refugees in Poland since then.

"We realized we needed to develop to not go crazy," said Romanova, who left the Ukrainian capital Kyiv with one of her daughters on the first day of the war and had to leave her husband

behind. Romanova is one of around a million Ukrainians currently living in Poland. One in 10 new businesses being opened in the country is owned by a Ukrainian.

"It was very challenging when we started working here in Poland, because you don't know the language, the laws. You don't know the industry, the labor market, the products and services," she said. In the beginning, she said she and her co-owners "pulled each other up".

"I'm not sure if I would have been able to do it if I was here alone, based on my psychological state," she said. A fifth of the Ukrainian businesses that are sprouting up despite Poland's sluggish economy are in construction. A large number are in tech and the rest are in services like hairdressing. Karina Synyevych, a 36-year-old from Kyiv, works for the popular Ukrainian Chernomorka fish restaurant chain which has now

opened two branches in Warsaw.

She said that starting and running a business in Poland was more organized and transparent than in Ukraine. "In Poland, it takes longer. In Ukraine, you can open everything faster, but there is more

chaos," she said. When the first Chernomorka opened in Warsaw in December, the first customers were all Ukrainians who left reviews about the pleasure of the home cooking and speaking their native language. — AFP

### Solid performance

Group CFO at NBK Sujit Ronghe confirmed that NBK's results in 9M2023 reflect a solid operating performance by the Group and demonstrate the continued growth in the Bank's business on the back of higher interest rates, healthy balance sheet, ample liquidity, and strong capitalization.

"The Group reported a loan growth of 3.8 percent during 9M23. Given the current geo-political and the general macroeconomic situation, we continue to expect the overall loan growth for 2023 to be in mid-single digit range," Ronghe stated.

He further confirmed that Net Interest Margin (NIM) improved to 2.57 percent in the first nine months of the year, benefiting from higher interest rates and stronger volumes compared to last year. In general, we expect that the current environment of higher interest rates will continue for a longer period than previously anticipated.

Speaking of some of the major challenges going forward, Ronghe mentioned that it appears that interest rates would remain high well into the next year. From that point of view, NBK has historically benefitted in terms of higher interest margins and net interest income when the interest rates remain high, explaining that, higher interest rates mean there will be tough competition for achieving business growth and deals. From a net interest income viewpoint, the challenge could actually come once interest rates start decreasing.

When asked about the growth trends of NIM in 3Q2023, the drivers of change, the outlook going forward and the repricing mechanism, Ronghe responded that the growth in NIM in the 3Q2023 was mainly driven by the 25bps hike in CBK discount rate as well as in international rates, confirming that NBK also had a more favorable asset mix, from the growth in loans and investment securities, helping the increase in yield.

"With respect to the yield forecast in the future, if the interest rate scenario remains constant for next few quarters, we would expect yields to remain stable. There is room for upside with respect to the repricing of consumer loans. Consumer loans in Kuwait reprice every 5 years; meaning that loans booked in 2018 or 2019 are subject to repricing during this year or in 2024. There is a positive gap between 2018-2019 interest rates and the current levels. This would benefit the Bank to an extent with respect to consumer loans portfolio," Ronghe concluded.

### China tightens curbs on graphite exports

**BEIJING:** China announced new curbs on exports of certain types of graphite, key to making batteries for electric vehicles, days after the United States slapped fresh restrictions on outflows of high-tech microchips. Washington said this week it would ramp up restrictions on exports of cutting-edge semiconductors crucial for powering artificial intelligence systems — its latest effort to curb Beijing's access to advanced tech.

China has branded Washington's policy unfair and has imposed its own measures, declaring in July that certain products containing gallium and germanium — key raw materials for chipmaking — would be subject to stricter export controls. And under measures unveiled Friday by the Ministry of Commerce, exporters must apply for permits to sell two types of graphite to foreign customers. "Based on the need to uphold its national security and interests, China has implemented export controls on certain graphite items in accordance with the law," the ministry said.

Graphite is commonly used to make lithium-ion batteries for mobile phones, electric vehicles (EVs) and other products. China was the world's leading graphite producer last year, accounting for an estimated 65 percent of total production, according to the United States Geological Survey.

The export controls will include high-purity, high-strength and high-density graphite material; and natural flake graphite. Three further kinds of "highly sensitive" graphite materials included in the list were already under temporary curbs, according to the announcement. Global graphite consumption is expected to soar as demand continues to grow for EVs and the batteries that power them. The commerce ministry said the move was "conducive to better implementing our international anti-proliferation and other obligations, (and) safeguarding the stability of global industrial supply chains".

"Recently, the Chinese government has... taken the decision to make optimizations and adjustments to (graphite) inflows and outflows," it said. "China's normal adjustment of export controls does not target any specific country or region, and exports that comply with the relevant regulations will receive permission," it said. Daniel Kollar, the Shanghai-based Head of Intralink's Automotive and Mobility Practice, told AFP "this is arguably the most effective way for China to influence the battery market, since almost all lithium-ion batteries rely on graphite anodes and China controls the lion's share of the global market". "If strictly enforced, China's export controls will help maintain and potentially grow the country's position in the battery space... leaving other countries' battery companies at a disadvantage until alternate graphite sources can be found," Kollar said.

"It lays bare the fact that US and EU electrification plans are endangered if there is no derisked battery supply chain." Trade and technology have been at the centre of simmering tensions between Beijing and Washington in recent years. The European Union has also signaled that it is seeking to reduce its reliance on trade with China in technology and other areas. — AFP

## Lifestyle

# ROLLING STONES RETURN WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM A BEATLE



A limited edition, boxset containing The Rolling Stones' new album "Hackney Diamonds" is seen on sale in Sister Ray Records in London.



Fans gather at night for the release of the The Rolling Stones' latest album, "Hackney Diamonds" at a music store in Geesteren. — AFP photos



(From left) Ron Wood, Keith Richards and Mick Jagger of legendary British rock band, The Rolling Stones, pose as they arrive to attend a launch event for their new album "Hackney Diamonds" at Hackney Empire in London.



Singer Mick Jagger of The Rolling Stones during Desert Trip at the Empire Polo Field in Indio, California.



US singer Lady Gaga attends the 95th Annual Academy Awards in Hollywood, California.



US singer Elton John gestures to the audience after performing the song "Bennie and the Jets" during a stop of the Farewell Yellow Brick Road: The Final Tour at Allegiant Stadium in Las Vegas, Nevada.



Singer Sir Paul McCartney attends the 2011 New York City Ballet Fall Gala at the David Koch Theatre at Lincoln Center in New York City.

The Rolling Stones burst back to life on Friday with "Hackney Diamonds", their first album in 18 years, featuring megastar cameos from Elton John, Lady Gaga and even their old rival, Paul McCartney. Now in their seventh decade of making music together, the legendary British band is back with their 24th studio album. McCartney joins in for the first time, playing bass on the punky "Bite My Head Off".

Back in their 1960s heyday, much was made of the rivalry between the Stones and the Beatles, but it was al-

ways more marketing than reality, with John Lennon singing on the Stones' "We Love You" in 1967.

"Paul and I have always been friends," Stones frontman Mick Jagger, 80, told France 2 this week. McCartney's appearance was something of an accident, Keith Richards told Guitar Player magazine.

"He happened to be around and dropped by," Richards said. "I don't even think he intended to play bass on a track, but once he was in there, I just said, 'Come on, you're in. You ain't leaving till you play.'"

While McCartney and Elton John's contributions are somewhat hard to pick out, Lady Gaga and Stevie Wonder make more of an impact on "Sweet Sounds of Heaven", a blues-y ballad in the vein of classics such as "You Can't Always Get What You Want".

#### 'Hackneyed duds'

Reviews have been mostly polite rather than gushing. The Guardian gave it four stars, saying: "If this is the end, they're going out with a bang", while the LA Times called it "surprisingly spry, sparked by the deathless riffs".

There has indeed been plenty of hype ahead of the release, with some saying it is their best piece of work since "Some Girls" in 1978. But others were deeply unimpressed by the sleek production from Andrew Watt, used to working with popstars like Justin Bieber and Dua Lipa.

"Hackney Diamonds" is old London slang for "broken glass", but was used as a pun by Pitchfork, who called the album "a bunch of hackneyed duds, polished until the character has disappeared."

No one is pretending it comes

close to the legendary run between 1968 and 1972 that saw the release of "Beggars Banquet", "Let It Bleed", "Sticky Fingers" and "Exile on Main St." in quick succession. Nor does it head in any new directions.

"The group seemed to concede years ago that, with such a legendary discography, new albums and attempts at new styles are almost superfluous," wrote Variety. "(But) if there's a better way to end the Rolling Stones 60-plus-year recording career, it's hard to imagine what it could be," it added. — AFP

## The Rolling Stones in dates

As legendary English rock band The Rolling Stones release their first album in nearly two decades, AFP looks back at standout moments in more than 60 years together.

- July 12, 1962: A young band called "The Rollin' Stones" gives its first concert at the Marquee Club, one of London's top jazz venues.
- 1964: Their first album, "The Rolling Stones" is a big hit in Britain.
- 1965: "(I Can't Get No) Satisfaction" comes out, written by Mick Jagger and Keith Richards, and catapults the band into the big time. The song has since been widely covered by artists from Aretha Franklin to Britney Spears.
- 1967: After a seizure of amphetamines at Richards' home, he and Jagger are handed prison sentences that are later cancelled after a popular outcry.
- July 3, 1969: Guitarist Brian Jones, one of the band's founding members with a history of drug use, drowns in his swimming pool at the age of 27 shortly after the band fired him.
- December 6, 1969: A teenager is stabbed to death at a chaotic free concert headlined by the Stones in Altamont, California. The gruesome murder, caught on camera, is seen as symbolising the end of the "peace and love" 60s.
- 1970: The Rolling Stones' logo of ruby red lips is created by a London design student for the poster of the band's European tour. It goes on to become one of the most recognizable in the music industry, appearing over the years on countless band memorabilia. In 2008 the Victoria and Albert Museum buys the original drawings.
- 1985: Jagger releases a solo album "She's the Boss", sparking a war between the singer and Richards, who says he should be focusing on the band. Richards responds with his own solo record "Talk is Cheap" (1988).
- 1995: Microsoft pays several millions of dollars for the rights to use the Stones' song "Start Me Up" for the first Windows ad campaign.
- February 8, 2006: Over one million fans throng Copacabana beach in Rio de Janeiro for a free gig during the group's "A Bigger Bang" tour.
- March 25, 2016: The Stones become the first Western band to perform on the communist island of Cuba, with a free gig in Havana.
- 2022: They mark their 60th anniversary with a tour throughout Europe, but without drummer Charlie Watts, who had died in 2021.
- October 20, 2023: Release of their new album "Hackney Diamonds" featuring an array of stars including Lady Gaga, Paul McCartney, Elton John and Stevie Wonder. — AFP

## Britney Spears set to hit bestseller list with tell-all memoir

Two years after escaping her father's guardianship, Britney Spears recounts her years as a superstar who became a victim of her success in a highly anticipated memoir being published on Tuesday.

One revelation from "The Woman in Me" has already made headlines, with Spears saying she felt pressured into having an abortion while dating fellow popstar Justin Timberlake between 1999 and 2002.

"If it had been left up to me alone, I never would have done it," she writes. "It's one of the most agonizing things I have ever experienced in my life."

The publishers have kept a tight lid on most of the contents -- unsurprising since Simon & Schuster reportedly paid more than 15 million dollars for the rights. It was not a risky bet, however -- the book is already topping the pre-sale chart at Amazon US. It is being released on Tuesday in around 20 countries and 10 languages. "Reliving everything has been exciting, heart-wrenching, and emotional, to say the least," Spears told People magazine.

The emotional turmoil means the 41-year-old singer has only recorded a small section for the audiobook, leaving the rest to actress Michelle Williams. "There are so many hard things to read in the news about my book," she wrote on her Instagram



US singer Britney Spears arrives for the premiere of Sony Pictures' "Once Upon a Time... in Hollywood" at the TCL Chinese Theatre in Hollywood, California. — AFP

this week. "Then I woke up this morning and said it's all relative... nothing really matters at this point."

#### Up and down

Spears came from a very humble background and found early fame on "The Mickey Mouse Club" alongside other future stars Ryan Gosling and Chris-

tina Aguilera. At 16, she became one of the most famous women on the planet with 1998's iconic "... Baby One More Time", which sold 10 million copies to become one of the biggest hits of all time.

Eight more albums followed, often selling in the millions, including "Oops!... I Did It Again" and "In the Zone", combined with spectacular world tours.

Growing up in the media glare, relentlessly sexualized by her marketing from a young age, Spears lost her footing in 2007. A highly public breakdown in which she shaved her head and was filmed attacking a paparazzi's car led to her father, Jamie Spears, taking legal control over her life.

It meant he controlled her finances, career decisions and even whether she could see her children or marry -- which Spears described as tantamount to "abuse". Her fans organized a campaign -- #FreeBritney -- aided by media investigations that finally led a court to remove her father as guardian in September 2021.

She apparently no longer speaks to her family. Her life has hardly been smooth sailing since then -- her marriage to model Sam Asghari ended in August after just 14 months. But Spears at least looks set to add a number one bestselling book to her list of artistic accomplishments. — AFP



Dimche Ackov stands in his garden near the town of Veles in central North Macedonia. — AFP photos



Dimche Ackov stands in a field near his house near the town of Veles.



Dimche Ackov walks in his garden near the town of Veles.

## 'Embrace discomfort' to save planet, says N Macedonia pioneer

One day Dimche Ackov had enough of the stress and pollution of urban life and chucked in his job and headed out into the North Macedonia countryside for a fresh start. Nearly 10 years later, Ackov has channeled his burnout into a fully-fledged mission to educate people about living closer to nature.

His home, constructed entirely from locally-sourced, natural materials, is now a kind of workshop and school, where hundreds visit every year to learn the ways of sustainable living.

"When I came here to live this way, I didn't have any knowledge. I started to research natural building and I saw that those workshops for natural building were very expensive," said Ackov, who lives near the former industrial town of Veles, once branded one of the most polluted in the world. "I promised myself that if I ever learn to build those

houses, I will share that knowledge for free."

The journey has not been without its pitfalls, with a steep learning curve. "I didn't even know what a hoe was," the dreadlocked Ackov said of his tentative attempts to live off the land. But the effort paid off, and Ackov built himself a beehive-shaped home from bags of soil that is cosy in winter and cool in summer. It has its own well, solar panels, vegetable garden and a fridge made from clay.

#### 'Make one small change'

To share the knowledge he has accumulated along the way, Ackov has hosted more than 40 workshops in the last eight years. After the workshops many people "see the environment with different eyes", he told AFP. "Then you can't destroy it anymore. You feel a part of it." Ackov believes in embracing the "discomfort" of living in nature.

The goal is "to give up something harmful, to make one small change. If today, millions of people don't take a plastic bag, a huge change will be made," he said. Tiny North Macedonia, with a population of only 1.8 million people, is facing some steep environmental challenges. Air pollution, inadequate waste treatment and illegal logging are major problems.

A recent international study found it had some of the worst air pollution in Europe, with almost two-thirds of people living in areas with more than four times the World Health Organization guidelines for dangerous air particles.

Despite the hurdles, Ackov believes "now is the time to fix what was damaged before". "We are now small streams, but we will all get together in one river and make huge changes. I am a big optimist, otherwise I wouldn't live this way." — AFP

Lifestyle

# 'We love singing': Filipinos find joy in karaoke

**A**t a busy tricycle terminal in Manila, driver Edgar Soriano slips a coin into a karaoke machine and belts out his favourite song while waiting for passengers.

Karaoke is wildly popular in the archipelago nation where it's never too early -- nor too late -- to grab a microphone and sing a tune.

Machines can be found everywhere from cheap bars in far-flung villages to modern KTV joints in the cities, and many families have their own or rent one for parties. For as little as five pesos (nine US cents) a song, many in the poverty-afflicted country can experience a few minutes of entertainment in the day.

Soriano, 53, smiles as he stands in a tiny eatery on a hot weekday afternoon singing the lyrics of British musician Albert Hammond's "When I'm Gone", which he seems to know by heart.

The karaoke machine is one of six at the terminal, but drivers and passengers waiting for a ride appear unbothered by the competing songs reverberating through speakers.

"I always sing that song, it's my favourite," said Soriano, wearing a long-sleeved Jordan top and tracksuit pants. After consulting a well-thumbed plastic folder of songs, street-sweeper Bernardo Aguire, 67, settles on Frank Sinatra's "My Way", and pops a coin into the slot. It is a bold choice in a country where the song has reportedly got people killed -- allegedly because they sang it poorly.

Aguire, unfazed by the stories that have become an urban legend, finishes his rendition unscathed. Felomina Hernane, 52, owns the eatery where the karaoke machine cranks up at 8:00 am and doesn't stop until 10:00 pm or later, seven days a week. She bought the machine to attract customers and it's been a boon to earnings, bringing in as much as 18,000 pesos (\$317) a month.

"It's a huge help for my business," Hernane told AFP. Singing makes the drivers happy, she added. "It entertains them," she said. "It's a way to relax after driving."

### 'It takes away my stress'

In a crowded neighbourhood in Manila, tricycles deliver karaoke machine casings to stores where they are fitted with speakers, amplifiers and televisions. Their prices depend on the quality of the electronics inside them, with a basic machine starting at around 19,000 pesos (\$335) and a premium version topping 46,000 pesos (\$811).

Alfred Condez works at a store overflowing with machines in various stages of assembly. It takes several hours for employees to finish wiring one, and customers are often happy to wait.

"We love singing," said Condez, 40. As if to prove his point, he picks up a microphone and stands on the footpath to test an assembled machine's sound quality, his deep voice echoing into the noisy street.

The busiest period for the karaoke assembly business is November and December, when Filipinos hold Christmas and New Year parties, said Condez. His shop sells as many as 10 machines a day during those months.



A woman singing a tune from a karaoke machine during a birthday celebration in Manila.—AFP photos



A woman singing a tune from a karaoke machine during a birthday celebration in Manila.



A woman singing into a portable karaoke setup at her home in Manila.

Karaoke took off in the Philippines in the 1980s, said Krina Cayabyab, a vocal instructor and assistant professor in the University of the Philippines' music department. But she said the country's love of singing was deeply rooted in its colonial past, starting with the Spanish and then the Americans, whose music was absorbed by Filipinos. "It's really tied into that reproducing and borrowing of stuff

that Filipinos would hear," Cayabyab said.

Some parents -- if they can afford lessons -- send their children to music schools to learn how to sing so they can develop the confidence to perform in front of others, she added.

For many Filipinos, karaoke is one of the few affordable entertainment options available to them. In a hardscrabble district of Manila, children

and young adults gather outside a small store where the karaoke machine is in high demand.

"My friends and I are just hanging out because it's boring at home," said Honey Servito, 24.

"I'm not really a singer, it's just that when we have nothing better to do at home, my friends and I go here and sing," she said. "It takes away my stress and boredom."—AFP



A woman singing into a portable karaoke setup at her home in Manila.



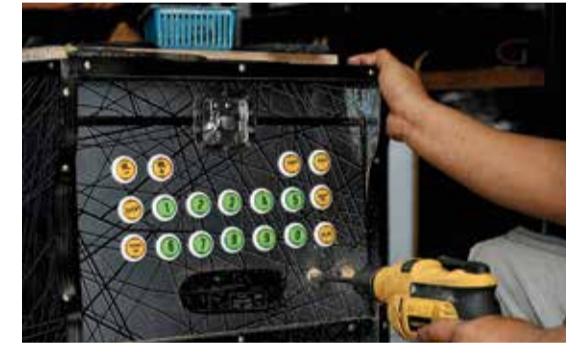
A woman singing a tune from a karaoke machine at an establishment in Baseco, Manila.



A woman inserting a coin to activate a karaoke machine in Pasig, Metro Manila.



A woman choosing songs from a list at a karaoke establishment.



A man assembling a karaoke machine at a shop in Quiapo, Manila.



A woman singing from a karaoke machine in Baseco, Manila.



A man singing karaoke at a shop as others look on in Pasig, Metro Manila.



Men assembling a karaoke machine at a shop in Manila.



Men transporting karaoke machine cabinets along a street in Quiapo, Manila.



People choosing songs from a list at a karaoke establishment in Pasig, Metro Manila.



A man (center) testing a karaoke machine at a shop in Quiapo, Manila.



A child making a song selection from a karaoke machine in Baseco, Manila.

## Sports

# Morikawa recaptures mojo at Zozo Championship, ending title drought

## Australia's Minjee Lee wins LPGA South Korea title

**INZAI:** Collin Morikawa said he had refound "the golf I miss playing" after ending a two-year title drought with a resounding victory at the US PGA Tour's Zozo Championship in Japan on Sunday.

The twice major champion finished six strokes clear at Narashino Country Club after rattling off seven birdies to card a bogey-free 63 and finish on 14-under overall. It gave the 26-year-old his sixth win on the US PGA Tour and his first title since the 2021 DP World Tour Championship in Dubai.

Morikawa said it "meant the world" to lift the trophy. "Having this two-year drought, just struggling at times, not really contending, to do what I did through this entire week—that's the golf I miss playing," said Morikawa, whose last US PGA Tour win was at the 2021 British Open.

"To see that again, it's very exciting to close out this year and to head into next year," Morikawa was playing his first tournament since being part of the American team that failed to retain the Ryder Cup in Rome.

He led after the first round of the 78-man, no-cut event on the outskirts of Tokyo but faded before roaring back into contention in the third round with five birdies on the last six holes. He picked up where he left off on the final day, hitting four birdies on the front nine to surge into the lead. He closed out the win with one last birdie to set a new record for the tournament's largest margin of victory.

### Japanese connection

Morikawa said he had no doubts that his title drought would end and it was "more about when it was going to happen". "The thoughts in your head start piling up like, what did I do

differently, what do I need to change?" he said. "I just needed to take two steps back and really understand the foundation of what made me so solid of a player." Eric Cole and Beau Hossler finished in a tie for second on 8-under. Justin Suh went into the final day with a one-stroke lead but faded badly, carding a final-round 74 to finish on 5-under.

Morikawa, who has Japanese heritage, enjoyed the support of the home fans and said he was "able to connect with the people out here". "When you're able to touch on that aspect a little more, sometimes it pulls a little bit more out of you," he said.

"When you're able to represent the United States at the Ryder Cup or the Olympics, it just drives you that much more." Xander Schauffele, who was also playing his first competition since the Ryder Cup, finished on 2-over.

The Tokyo Olympics champion was only three strokes off the lead after two rounds but plummeted down the leaderboard the following day and carded a final-round 71. Defending champion Keegan Bradley finished on 1-under, while 2021 winner Hideki Matsuyama was 5-over.

The \$8.5 million Zozo Championship was established in 2019 as the first US PGA Tour tournament in Japan. Thousands of Japanese fans turned up to watch Tiger Woods win the inaugural title for his 82nd US PGA Tour victory—equalling Sam Snead's 54-year-old record.

Meanwhile, Australia's Minjee Lee won her 10th career LPGA title in South Korea on Sunday, clinching a first victory in her parents' homeland. Lee, born in Perth to Korean parents, defeated American Alison Lee in the playoff to win the BMW Ladies Championship on the Se-



**INZAI:** Collin Morikawa of the US and his wife Katherine Zhu pose with his victory trophy during the awarding ceremony of the Zozo Championships PGA golf tournament at the Narashino Country Club in Inzai, Chiba prefecture on October 22, 2023. — AFP

owon Valley Country Club course in Paju.

The 27-year-old had led by two shots with two holes to play, but Alison Lee pulled even with birdies at the 17th and 18th. The game headed to a playoff after Minjee Lee managed pars on the final two holes. Back at the 18th for the first playoff hole, Alison Lee missed her attempt and the Australian sank her birdie putt to take home US\$330,000.

Sunday's win was her second this season, following victory at the Kroger Queen City Championship presented by P&G, where she defeated England's Charley Hull in a two-hole playoff. The South Korea tournament marked the second of four in the LPGA Tour's Asian swing, following the Shanghai event last week. The tour moves to Malaysia and Japan over the next two weeks. — AFP

## Pakistan inspired by Anwar's Chennai magic at World Cup

**CHENNAI:** Pakistan opener Imam-ul-Haq will channel the spirit of record-setting compatriot Saeed Anwar and his country's winning relationship with Chennai on Monday in an effort to revive the team's World Cup campaign.

Pakistan tackle Afghanistan at the M.A. Chidambaram Stadium where in 1997, flamboyant left-handed opener Anwar hit a monumental 194 against India. At the time it was the highest individual ODI score while Anwar's heroics also gave Pakistan a 35-run win over their arch-rivals.

Pakistan maintained their two-game undefeated run at the stadium with a six-wicket win over India in 2012. "We have a great record at this venue, so I am sure that will be a motivation," said Haq, who was only two when Anwar blitzed the India team which featured the likes of Sachin Tendulkar and Rahul Dravid in 1997.

"Although I don't have any memory of Saeed Anwar's record, that too will be a motivation." Pakistan started the World Cup with wins over the Netherlands and Sri Lanka but the 1992 champions then suffered back-to-back losses to India and Australia.

They have slipped to fifth in the 10-nation table with the top four going through to the semi-finals. "We have to admit we did not play well in those games," said Haq on Sunday. "We were not up to the mark, did not get the execution right and defeat always lowers morale."

Haq scored 36 against India in Ahmedabad but Pakistan collapsed from 155-2 to 191 all out, losing by seven wickets. The 27-year-old then scored 70 against Australia in a daunting chase of a 368-run target in Bengaluru where Pakistan slipped to a 62-run defeat.

"We dropped crucial catches and that hurt," said Haq. David Warner was on 10 when he was dropped by Usama Mir off Shaheen Shah Afridi—he went on to make 163 and share a record Australian World Cup opening stand of 259 with Mitchell Marsh who compiled 121.

"You will see a new thing tomorrow. We want to go to Kolkata with four wins in six games," said Haq, whose team will also face South Africa in Chennai on Friday. Haq also played down the threat posed by Afghanistan's spin trio of Rashid Khan, Mujeeb Ur Rahman and Mohammad Nabi at a venue renowned as a slow bowlers paradise.

"We know this ground favours spinners and they have quality spin bowlers but we have beaten them 3-0 recently in a one-day series in Sri Lanka under the same conditions," said Haq. "We all know Afghanistan is a good team and in these conditions they will be tough but we are ready for that and will execute our plans." — AFP

## Phillies rip D-backs to seize series lead in MLB playoffs

**WASHINGTON:** Bryce Harper, Kyle Schwarber and J.T. Realmuto homered to lead Philadelphia over Arizona 6-1 on Saturday in the Major League Baseball playoffs, lifting the Phillies one win from the World Series.

Philadelphia seized a 3-2 lead in the best-of-seven National League Championship Series, needing

## Max Verstappen wins US Grand Prix sprint race

**AUSTIN:** Max Verstappen will be hunting a "fun" 50th career victory from sixth on the grid in Sunday's United States Grand Prix after cruising to victory for Red Bull in Saturday's sprint race. The newly crowned three-time world champion led from pole position to the chequered flag to finish 9.465 seconds clear of revitalized seven-time champion Lewis Hamilton of Mercedes. Charles Leclerc came home third for Ferrari, 17.997 adrift.

"The pace of the car was really good today," said the 26-year-old Dutchman, who wrapped up his third consecutive drivers' title with victory in Qatar earlier in October. "But I'm going to need it tomorrow because starting P6 is going to be a bit more difficult and different from today. "It makes it more interesting and hopefully we can have a bit of fun out there with quite a bit of passing... It won't be easy because I need to pass five cars to win."

Verstappen admitted he had to survive a real challenge from Leclerc at the first corner where the Monégasque driver tried to find a way through on the inside and then when

Hamilton sought to maintain close contact in the opening laps.

"It was quite tight, but luckily there was a lot of space going into turn one so that definitely helped, but after that we could settle and do our own race and control the pace a bit. "It was always around eight- or nine-tenths (to Hamilton) for a few laps, but that was controllable and once I had cleared the Drag Reduction System (DRS) zone, we settled into a rhythm."

Verstappen might face a challenge from not only Hamilton and Mercedes, who showed much improved form with their major update package, but also Ferrari and McLaren in a race where tyre degradation and strategy are certain to be key factors.

Leclerc's Ferrari teammate, Carlos Sainz, was the only driver to choose soft tyres, a decision that ensured the team gathered valuable data ahead of Sunday's Grand Prix, in which Leclerc starts from pole with Verstappen sixth after he had a lap deleted in Friday's sprint shootout for exceeding track limits.

"We need to work to try and understand everything better to be a step ahead tomorrow," said Leclerc.

## Bagnaia in charge as Australian MotoGP sprint race canceled

**PHILLIP ISLAND:** Jorge Martin was denied the chance Sunday to close the world championship gap on leader Francesco Bagnaia after the sprint race at the Australia MotoGP was called off due to treacherous conditions. Organisers pulled the plug barely half an hour before the 13-lap dash was due to start at a soaking Phillip Island, with winds of up to 80 kilometres (50 miles) per hour forecast.

"Changes were made to the schedule to try and ensure the maximum track action in the safest possible conditions on Sunday," organizers said. "But the weather conditions—forecast to worsen throughout the day—have obliged the cancellation of further track activity."

Spain's Martin had won the last four sprints and was the pole-sitter for Australia, desperate to claw back points after finishing fifth in Saturday's grand prix to Bagnaia's second. Bagnaia, the Italian Ducati rider, will now take a 27-point lead over Pramac's Martin into next week's Thailand MotoGP with just four legs of the 20-stop season remaining.

"For me it's a lost occasion when we lose a race ... I was prepared to fight for the top position and I



**AUSTIN:** Red Bull Racing's Dutch driver Max Verstappen and teammates celebrate after winning the Sprint at the Circuit of the Americas in Austin, Texas, ahead of the United States Formula One Grand Prix. — AFP

"We have quite a lot of data to analyze after having the two cars on two different strategies. "I think this will be quite a bit of a help for us because we know how the soft tyre is behaving for tomorrow so I hope we can take advantage of that and hopefully we can win tomorrow."

Ferrari inflicted Red Bull's only defeat of the season when Sainz won the Singapore Grand Prix and they will bid to repeat that feat, but will face fierce competition from Mercedes and Mc-

Laren. Lando Norris finished a close fourth for McLaren behind Leclerc and was optimistic of a strong race Sunday in his 100th Grand Prix start.

"We have the speed in the car," he said. "And I'm happy that we can be right in this race." Hamilton said his sprint effort will help for Sunday. "We will try to keep Max behind," Hamilton said. "But ultimately I think he will be breathing down our necks before too long, with the pace that he had today." — AFP



**PHILLIP ISLAND:** Riders race through the rain during the Moto3 race at the MotoGP Australian Grand Prix in Phillip Island on October 22, 2023. — AFP

was positive," said Bagnaia. "But the wind was quite crazy and with MotoGP riders at 330kph it can become very dangerous, so for me the decision is the correct one."

Six-time world champion Marc Marquez agreed it was the only sensible move. "In warm-up it was acceptable, but then it looks like the wind was super strong and especially with these bikes, with all aerodynamics we have, it becomes a bit dangerous," said the Spanish

Honda star. Forecast gale-force winds had already seen organizers move the main grand prix forward a day to Saturday to ensure that race took place.

Martin's teammate Johann Zarco won with a last-lap overtake to clock his first victory in 120 starts. Racing did go ahead at Phillip Island on Sunday despite the bleak conditions, but several riders came to grief on the slippery track in the Moto2 and Moto3 races before the sprint was canceled. — AFP

we scored some runs. We did it not with just home runs so that's nice."

Arizona won its only World Series appearance in 2001 while the Phillies haven't taken the title since 2008. "We've got to put it on us," said Diamondbacks manager Torey Lovullo. "We made some mistakes and we didn't capitalize in some key situations. That was the difference in the game."

Wheeler and Arizona's Zac Gallen, the game one starters, returned to the mound for the pivotal contest at Phoenix. Wheeler improved to 3-0 in the playoffs, 2-0 against Arizona, going seven innings while striking out eight and allowing only one run off six hits and a walk.

"Just got to stay within myself, not try to do

too much," Wheeler said. "It was a big game for us to try and get that momentum back. That was my goal today, try and go as deep as possible with good quality innings." Gallen, a 17-game winner for the Diamondbacks in the regular season, surrendered four runs on six hits over six innings.

The Phillies opened the scoring in the first inning when Schwarber singled, advanced on Harper's single and scored on Bryson Stott's single. Harper, who reached third base on Stott's hit, then scored on a double steal play, racing home after an Arizona throw tried to deny Stott at second then beating the throw to the plate—stealing home to give Philadelphia a 2-0 edge. — AFP

Sports

# Ramos' Sevilla hold leaders Real Madrid as Atletico climb second

## Ramos produced multiple blocks and clearances to keep Madrid at bay

**BARCELONA:** Real Madrid shared a pulsating 1-1 draw with Sergio Ramos' Sevilla on Saturday, ensuring they will face Barcelona in the Clasico next weekend as leaders. Antoine Griezmann struck a hat-trick in a 3-0 win over 10-man Celta Vigo to help Atletico Madrid climb provisionally second, in hot pursuit of their city rivals.

Carlo Ancelotti's Real Madrid dropped two points in the title race but extended their lead to four points over bitter rivals Barcelona, who are in fourth place and host Athletic Bilbao on Sunday. David Alaba's own goal sent the hosts ahead but Madrid quickly pulled level through Dani Carvajal.

Madrid faced their former captain Sergio Ramos, back at Sevilla for the first time in 18 years, and the 37-year-old gave a typically all-action display to frustrate Los Blancos. Sevilla impressed, giving as good as they got in new coach Diego Alonso's first match in charge, ahead of their Champions League clash with Arsenal on Tuesday.

Los Blancos players were left unhappy by decisions to rule out goals for Fede Valverde and Jude Bellingham, the latter after Sevilla's Lucas Ocampos had gone down hurt with Madrid piling forward. "The referee did well, he had a good game, he stopped the counter-attack to look after the health of a player, I think he had a high-level game," Ancelotti told a news conference, perhaps with a hint of sarcasm.

Later the coach explained that only by speaking in this way could he avoid a suspension for revealing his true feelings. "Irony is the only way (to speak) after this match because I think that if I say what I think about the refereeing I'll receive a lot of games' suspension," Ancelotti told Real Madrid TV. "What I like most at the moment is to sit on the Real Madrid

bench. So, to avoid suspensions I don't say what I think and I use a bit of irony."

### Old friend

Madrid faced off against Ramos, 37, who rejoined his boyhood club Sevilla in September and put in a heroic defensive display at the raucous Ramon Sanchez-Pizjuan stadium. Ramos produced a stunning block as Alaba tried to turn home from close range and later squared off with his Madrid successor, Antonio Rudiger, squeezing the German's cheeks.

Sevilla goalkeeper Orjan Nyland saved Vinicius Junior's volley before the break, one of Madrid's clearest chances. The goalkeeper then denied Rodrygo early in the second half with a superb save with his legs, as the visitors hunted for the breakthrough. Ramos, in his element, produced multiple blocks and clearances to keep Madrid at bay, before Sevilla took the lead. Alaba, under pressure from Youssef En-Nesyri, accidentally turned Ocampos' cross into his own net with 15 minutes remaining.

However the Andalusians were not able to hold on to it for long, with Carvajal heading Toni Kroos's free-kick home at the near post four minutes later. Tempers frayed in the final stages as Vinicius pushed Nyland, who fell to the floor theatrically, sparking a shoving match. Sevilla said they ejected a fan after an instance of racist abuse during the game, with Spanish media running images of a man appearing to make a monkey gesture at Vinicius during the brawl.

### 'Sorry to Alvaro'

Atletico's big win at Celta was aided by home goalkeeper Ivan Villa's red card midway through the first half for felling Alvaro Morata. Griezmann



**SEVILLE:** Sevilla's Spanish midfielder #16 Jesus Navas fights for the ball with Real Madrid's English midfielder #5 Jude Bellingham during the Spanish league football match between Sevilla FC and Real Madrid CF at the Ramon Sanchez Pizjuan stadium in Seville. — AFP

tucked away the resulting penalty and hit two more to move second in La Liga's goalscoring charts on seven strikes. The Frenchman netted his second when he drove forward brilliantly from inside his own half into the Celta area, and then slipped as he tried to cross the ball, accidentally driving it past Gaita at the near post.

"It was a cross, I wanted to cross it in and for that

reason I said sorry to (Morata)," Griezmann told Movistar. The forward slotted Nahuel Molina's low cross home to complete his treble and round off a superb night for the Rojiblancos and Diego Simeone.

"Until the penalty they seemed like they could hurt us," said the Argentine coach, who admitted Rafa Benitez's Celta, 18th, had started well. "The penalty and the red card changed things." — AFP

## Martinez helps move Inter top as Khvicha revives Napoli

**MILAN:** Lautaro Martinez continued his red-hot scoring form in Inter Milan's 3-0 cruise at Torino on Saturday which moved his team top of Serie A while Khvicha Kvaratskhelia's brace at Verona put Napoli's title defence back on track.

Argentina striker Martinez nodded home his 11th league goal of the season in the 67th minute of a straightforward win in Turin as Inter went one point ahead of AC Milan, who host third-placed Juventus on Sunday night. The 26-year-old is already five goals ahead of Victor Osimhen, his nearest rival at the top of the scoring charts, after just nine matches and at his current rate would smash the record single-season haul of 36 set by Gonzalo Higuain in 2016.

Since the departure of Edin Dzeko and Romelu Lukaku in the summer Martinez has become the attacking focal point for Inter who are also the highest scorers in Italy's top flight with 24 goals. "Lauti only got back from South America a day and a half ago, but he is in great shape and he gets all the support he could need from the team," said coach Simone Inzaghi to DAZN.

Strike partner Marcus Thuram opened the scoring eight minutes before Martinez's strike when he swept home Denzel Dumfries low pass to take his league tally to three, while Hakan Calhanoglu completed the scoring from the penalty spot in stoppage time. France forward Thuram has had a brilliant start in Italy, where he was born while his World Cup-winning father Lilian played for a star-studded Parma team which won the UEFA Cup in 1999, with five assists also to his name.



**TURIN:** Inter Milan's Argentine forward #10 Lautaro Martinez fights for the ball with Torino's French midfielder Adrien Tameze Aousta during the Italian Serie A football match between Torino and Inter Milan, at Torino's Olympic Stadium, in Turin. — AFP

Asked how he has settled in at Inter, a delighted Thuram said "very well". "This is a great team, and I'm really happy to be able to contribute," he said to DAZN. Inzaghi will likely play both Martinez and Thuram on Tuesday when Inter host Salzburg in the first of two Champions League Group D matches against the Austrians. Inter will almost certainly come up against fiercer resistance at the San Siro than they did from Torino who have now gone four

matches without scoring a goal.

Ivan Juric's injury-hit team were without starting centre-forward Duvan Zapata and are set to lose defender Perr Schuurs for a long time after he was stretchered off with a knee injury following a clash with Nicolò Barella. Torino look destined for another underwhelming season as they sit 14th on nine points, one point and place behind Sassuolo who were beaten 2-0 by Lazio in the day's late match. — AFP

The team also said they had not received payment of bonuses after reaching the last 16 of the World Cup, as well as bonuses for qualifying for the tournament. "We have yet to receive full and correct payments for our historical performances at the World Cup and the numerous outstanding bonuses for qualifying in the summer of 2022," the statement said.

"We have dealt with this lack of communication, poor organization, poor management and delayed payments from the JFF time and time again. "For these reasons we take our stance in solidarity with hope to end this cycle of mistreatment." The Jamaicans are due to meet Panama on October 25 in Panama City before a home fixture with Guatemala four days later. — AFP

"It is with great disappointment we share that the 2023 World Cup roster will not be participating in the upcoming October international window for the first ever Women's Gold Cup qualifiers," the statement said.

"While this has been one of the hardest decisions we have had to make, we feel it is necessary to take such a drastic stance to put an end to the constant mistreatment we receive from the Jamaica Football Federation."

The players said the JFF had given the squad information about coaching, medical and equipment staff in "an untimely manner". The squad also complained they had only learned the identity of their new coach three days before they were due to report to camp, and then only via social media.

## Charlotte, Red Bulls book MLS playoff berths

**LOS ANGELES:** Charlotte FC squeezed past Lionel Messi's Inter Miami 1-0 to sneak into Major League Soccer's playoffs on Saturday in a nail-biting final day of regular season action. A 13th-minute goal from Charlotte's Colombian striker Kerwin Vargas was enough to seal victory for the North Carolina franchise, which had drawn 2-2 with Miami in Florida on Wednesday.

Messi was back in the starting lineup for Miami for the first time since September 20, when muscle fatigue left him sidelined and effectively torpedoed Inter's hopes of mounting a late-season charge into the playoffs. But Messi's return to club duty after the international break was not enough to inspire the Florida club against Charlotte, which finished the season in ninth place on 43 points to advance to the wild card round.

Charlotte's victory secured one of the two final remaining playoff places up for grabs in the Eastern Conference heading into Saturday's last round of fixtures. The other spot was grabbed by the New York Red Bulls, who reached their 14th straight post-season in the most dramatic way possible, with a penalty four minutes into stoppage time securing a 1-0 win over Nashville.

The Red Bulls' season looked to be ending in disappointment with the team struggling to break down Nashville. Had the score stayed at 0-0, Montreal would have crept into the playoffs just ahead of them. But with time running out at Nashville's Geodis Park, Panama international Anibal Godoy made a clumsy lunge on Red Bulls winger Luquinhas just inside the area and referee Lukasz Szpala pointed to the spot.

Red Bulls defender John Tolkin then stepped up to coolly slot home the penalty to send New York into a wild card clash against Charlotte on Wednesday. "I've not really taken any professional penalties but I wanted it," the 21-year-old Tolkin said afterwards. "I was more nervous about my mum—I knew she'd probably be having a heart attack watching at home. "This is just a testament to all the hard work we've put in this year. Everybody deserves it. We're ecstatic right now. "We came into the game knowing it's win or go home and we didn't want to leave anything out on the field." In the final round of Western Conference fixtures later Saturday, FC Dallas punched their playoff ticket with a comprehensive 4-1 drubbing on the road of the already-eliminated Los Angeles Galaxy. — AFP

## Jamaica women's team to boycott Gold Cup qualifiers

**MIAMI:** Members of Jamaica's women's football team said Saturday they will boycott next week's Gold Cup qualifiers, citing "constant mistreatment" by the Jamaica Football Federation (JFF). In a statement released by several members of the Reggae Girlz squad on social media, the team said the national federation had failed to pay players in full for their performance at the FIFA Women's World Cup.

# Classifieds

### Clinics & Hospitals

#### Clinics

|                |          |
|----------------|----------|
| Kaizen center  | 25716707 |
| Rawda          | 22517733 |
| Adaliya        | 22517144 |
| Khaldiya       | 24848075 |
| Kaifan         | 24849807 |
| Shamiya        | 24848913 |
| Shuwaikh       | 24814507 |
| Abdullah Salem | 22549134 |
| Nuzha          | 22526804 |

|                     |          |
|---------------------|----------|
| Industrial Shuwaikh | 24814764 |
| Qadsiya             | 22515088 |
| Dasmah              | 22532265 |
| Bneid Al-Gar        | 22531908 |
| Shaab               | 22518752 |
| Qibla               | 22459381 |
| Ayoun Al-Qibla      | 22451082 |
| Mirqab              | 22456536 |
| Sharq               | 22465401 |
| Salmiya             | 25746401 |

#### Hospitals

|                           |          |
|---------------------------|----------|
| Sabah Hospital            | 24812000 |
| Amiri Hospital            | 22450005 |
| Maternity Hospita         | 24843100 |
| Mubarak Al-Kabir Hospital | 25312700 |
| Chest Hospital            | 24849400 |
| Farwaniya Hospital        | 24892010 |
| Adan Hospital             | 23940620 |
| Ibn Sina Hospital         | 24840300 |
| Al-Razi Hospital          | 24846000 |

### Change of Name

**I, OSMAN BIN SALAM**, holder of Indian Passport No. M9886038 having permanent address 23-1-915 Moghalpura inside Dowdi Kalyani Hyderabad, Pin 500002, Telangana, India, residing in Kuwait at present, hereby declare that henceforth my name will be read as (given name) OSMAN BIN SALAM and (surname) BIN MAHFOOZ. #4249 – 23-10-2023

**I, CYCLEWALA SAIFUDDIN FAKHARUDDIN**, holder of Indian Passport No. M2288188, having permanent address 786/03, Al-Husen Apartment, near Chunawala compound, Thakkar Faliya, Dahod, Gujarat-389151, residing in Kuwait at present, hereby declare that

henceforth my name will be read as (surname) CYCLEWALA and (given name) SAIFUDDIN FAKHRUDDIN. #4250 – 23-10-2023

**I, STEVEN JAORAWALA**, holder of Indian Passport No. K3652734 having permanent address T-85 Choti Gol building Yusuf Azad Qawaal Marq (Belgrami road) opposite Bhabha hospital Kurla (West) Mumbai, pin 400070 Maharashtra India, residing in Kuwait at present, hereby declare that henceforth my name will be read as (given name) MUSTAALI MUZAFFAR HUSAIN and (surname) JAORAWALA. Maharashtra Gazette No. U-93039. #4248 – 20-10-2023

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## Pollard breaks England hearts to send South Africa into final

Victory takes the holders through to their fourth final



SAINT-DENIS: Players vie in a scrum during the France 2023 Rugby World Cup semi-final match between England and South Africa at the Stade de France in Saint-Denis, on the outskirts of Paris. — AFP

PARIS: Handre Pollard broke English hearts as he landed a 49-metre penalty three minutes from time to book South Africa's place in the World Cup final as they edged England 16-15 at the Stade de France on Saturday.

The Springboks trailed from the second minute when Owen Farrell landed the first of his four penalties but a late surge from the defending champions, which included a try from RG Snyman as well as Pollard's enormous match-winning kick, saw them into a fourth final where they will meet their old rivals New Zealand.

"I think they put us under pressure in exactly the right areas," said Pollard. "But jeez the fight we showed, never giving up, it is what we stand for as a team and as a nation." Farrell was extremely proud of his teammates but also gracious in defeat.

"I am unbelievably proud of this group and what they have done over this past few months together," he said. "It has not all gone our way as everybody knows, we have had everything thrown at us - it has been a rollercoaster.

"Credit to them (Springboks) fighting their way back into it and finding a way to win at the end." With England leading 15-6 after dominating and controlling play for the first 70 minutes of the game, South Africa grabbed a lifeline with Snyman's try.

After kicking a penalty to the corner, Snyman rose to collect the line-out ball and was then on hand when it came back to him to power through three England tacklers and crash over for the try. Pollard, who had been brought on after just 30 minutes for a misfiring Manie Libbok, made no mistake to reduce the gap to just two points with 10 minutes to play.

Three minutes from time, England were penalised by New Zealand referee Ben O'Keefe, who also whistled the Boks' one point win last week over France, for collapsing the scrum. From just in front of halfway Pollard coolly fired the ball between the posts to put the Boks in front for the first time.

Victory takes the holders through to their fourth final where either they or the All Blacks will become

the first team to notch up four World Cup wins. In a repeat of the 2019 final, England appeared to have turned the tables on the Boks with a superb performance in the wet and windy conditions.

England began brightly with Farrell getting his first chance off the tee after just two minutes when lock Franco Mostert was called for preventing the ball coming out of the ruck. From 35 metres Farrell made no mistake.

Eight minutes later, Farrell was again on target, this time after Bok captain Siya Kolisi was penalized in the ruck. Leading into the game, South African coach Jacques Nienaber had talked about England's ability to "strangle" teams and that is precisely what they were trying to do here, the high kicks putting South Africa on to the back foot and the quick follow-up 'offensive' defence forcing Springbok errors and turnovers.

The Boks finally got on the board from 40 metres through Libbok but his game, more suited to a dry, flat deck, was off key and he was replaced by Pollard.

The 2019 World Cup winner nailed the first penalty chance he had but two up the other end from Farrell meant England turned around with a 12-6 advantage.

South Africa returned to the field for the second half two minutes before the English and 90 seconds later brought on Faf de Klerk for Cobus Reinach, restoring the half-back partnership that won the Webb Ellis Cup in 2019.

Willie Le Roux, another veteran replacement, came close to scoring the first try 11 minutes into the second half. Cheslin Kolbe on the left wing collected a neat cross-kick from Pollard before chipping the ball through for Le Roux to chase. His boot was a touch too heavy, however, and the ball rolled through the dead ball line.

Almost immediately, Farrell slapped them hard with a stunning 48-metre drop goal to stretch the England lead to 15-6. But the South Africans are known for never giving up a lost cause and so Pollard proved. — AFP

## El Shaarawy's late strike fires Roma past 10-man Monza

ROME: Stephan El Shaarawy shot Roma to within touching distance of Serie A's Champions League places with the late winner in Sunday's 1-0 success over 10-man Monza. Italy international El Shaarawy lashed in a low finish in the 90th minute at the Stadio Olimpico in Rome, pushing Jose Mourinho's team up to sixth with their third straight league win.

Roma, who also struck the woodwork late on through Romelu Lukaku and Sardar Azmoun, are three points behind Napoli, Fiorentina and third-placed Juventus who take on AC Milan in the weekend's big match later on Sunday. El Shaarawy's first goal of the season came at the end of a tough match against Monza who had to play the entire second half with 10 men following Danilo D'Ambrosio's harsh sending off four minutes before half-time.

"When I saw Azmoun's shot, more than Lukaku's, hit the post I thought, bah, if that doesn't go in... but Stephen has a feeling for goals and scoring late so he won the match for us," said Mourinho to Sky Sport. Mourinho was sent off in stoppage time as tensions flared between the two dugouts after El Shaarawy struck, the Portuguese making a crying motion at the Monza staff.

"The only ones complaining about the referee were them. I'm not criticizing them for it but for the fact that after a match like that they had some nasty words for us," added Mourinho. "All I will say is, they are a good team with a good manager that didn't deserve to lose. I can't be more honest than that."

Defeat for Monza was harsh as the away side put up a brave fight despite being a man down for half the match, El Shaarawy's winner the first goal they have conceded from open play since being thumped by Atlanta the start of September.

Raffaele Palladino's Monza look set for another decent season in Italy's top flight after being promoted



ROME: Roma's Iranian forward #17 Sardar Azmoun (top) fights for the ball with Monza's Italian defender #05 Luca Caldirola during the Italian Serie A football match between AS Roma and Monza at the Olympic stadium in Rome on October 22, 2023. — AFP

last year and weren't fazed by new signing Papu Gomez being hit with a two-year doping ban on Friday. Gomez's suspension was a huge blow to Monza as the Argentine was brought in to replace star man Gianluca Caprari after he was ruled out for months with a knee ligament injury.

"I saw the boys out there with heart and giving their all. I praised my team after the match because they showed a lot of character," said Palladino. Roma struggled to break down Raffaele Palladino's team even after D'Ambrosio was sent off for two bookable offences.

The hosts didn't create a decent chance on goal until the 37th minute when Houssein Auoar headed Andrea Belotti's cross straight at Monza goalkeeper Michele Di Gregorio from point blank range. And on the stroke of half-time Di Gregorio again kept Roma

at bay, this time kicking away Belotti's clumsy finish from Leonardo Spinazzola's cross.

Monza responded to D'Ambrosio's red card by sitting back but it was the away side who went closest with two well-struck distance efforts from Andrea Colpani and Samuele Birindelli, the second of which was well stopped by Rui Patricio.

Lukaku had a quiet day and was unlucky in the 73rd minute when he struck the outside post, but Birindelli was denied again Patricio at the end of a rapid counter-attack. Azmoun then wasted a glorious opportunity to snatch the win with two minutes remaining when he thwacked the inside of the post following strong hold up play from Lukaku.

But with the match seemingly over El Shaarawy pounced after another Azmoun shot was blocked, sparking wild celebrations in the stands. — AFP

## Cologne beat derby rivals Gladbach

BERLIN: Cologne captain Florian Kainz scored two penalties to help his side secure their first Bundesliga win of the season, defeating 10-man Borussia Moenchengladbach 3-1 in the Rhine derby on Sunday. Kainz scored spot-kicks in each half, having been allowed a repeat chance after missing the second after Gladbach goalkeeper Moritz Nicolas advanced off his line.

Germany forward Luca Waldschmidt, who won the second penalty, added Cologne's third in injury time to seal a victory which dragged the hosts out of the bottom two. Kainz was called to the spot nine minutes into the derby clash after Manu Kone handballed on the edge of the box.

Switzerland defender Nico Elvedi headed Gladbach level from Franck Honorat's corner midway through the second half but Kone was sent off with 18 minutes remaining. The French midfielder initially saw yellow after a studs-up challenge on Dejan Ljubicic but referee Deniz Aytekin upgraded the card to red after reviewing the incident on the pitchside monitor.

Nicolas' fist connected with Waldschmidt's head while he was try to clear a cross with 15 minutes to play. Kainz, who has never missed a penalty in the Bundesliga, tried a panenka which was saved, but was given another chance, which he took, after Nicolas crept off his line.

Waldschmidt drilled a low shot into the bottom corner of the net in second-half injury time to wrap up the three points. Later on Sunday, Heidenheim host Augsburg in the final match of the weekend. — AFP