

8 Flying taxis braced for takeoff at Dubai Airshow



9 NBK-Egypt reports EGP 2.574bn in net profit by end of 3Q 2023



12 Jordan aims to score big in global gaming industry



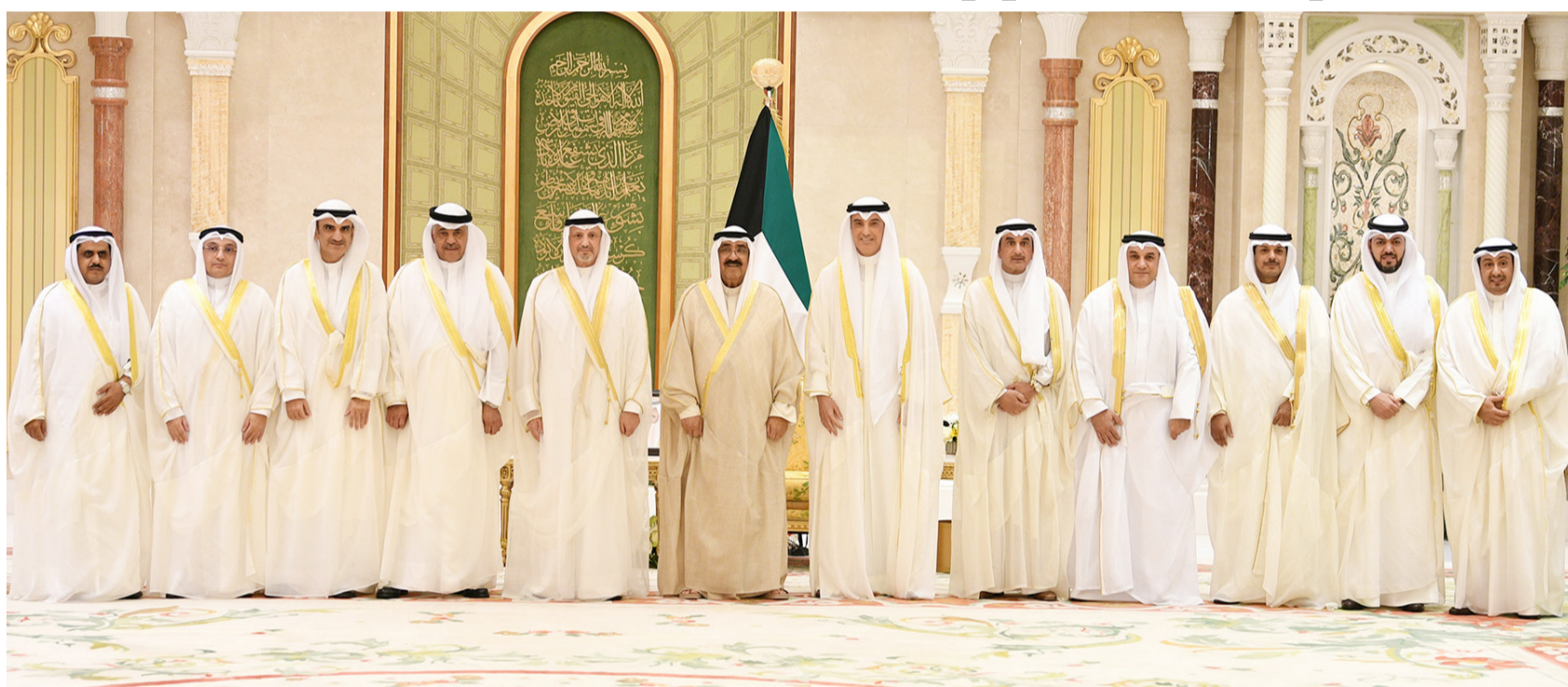
16 Kohli, Shami star as India beat New Zealand to reach World Cup final



Assembly sets legislative roadmap

Prime Minister orders probe into replies to MPs' 'unconstitutional' questions

Crown Prince receives newly appointed diplomats



By B Izzak

KUWAIT: The National Assembly on Wednesday unanimously approved its legislative roadmap for the current eight-month term, with political reforms and improving the standard of living of citizens topping the list of priorities. MP Marzouq Al-Ghanem expressed reservations because the proposed list of legislations does not include a law for national identity and another for resolving the plight of stateless people, locally known as bedoons.

A number of lawmakers said top priority should be given to legislations on political reforms, especially changing the electoral system by amending the electoral districts and the voting system. The Assembly's legal and legislative committee has invited all those interested, including civil societies, to a conference next Tuesday to discuss the issue. MP Hasan Jowhar said the one-vote voting system almost divided the society and it is time to change it by issuing a new law in line with deep-rooted Kuwaiti democracy.

Head of the legal and legislative panel MP Mohnannad Al-Sayer said the call for the conference on amending the election system came because "political reforms are the gateway for all reforms". He said the country and the people have suffered from the single-vote system, adding that during next Tuesday's meeting, all opinions will be heard and the committee will select the system accepted by the people.

Continued on Page 6

NEWS IN BRIEF

Trudeau: Stop 'killing babies'

OTTAWA: Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said Tuesday the killing "of women, of children, of babies" in the Zionist-Hamas war must stop. "The world is watching, on TV, on social media, we are hearing the testimonies of doctors, family members, survivors, kids who have lost their parents," Trudeau said. "The world is witnessing this killing of women, of children, of babies. This has to stop." — AFP

Sanchez: End 'indiscriminate killing'

MADRID: Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez on Wednesday urged the Zionist entity to end the "indiscriminate killing of Palestinians" in Gaza and the West Bank and called for "an immediate ceasefire" in Gaza. Leader of far-left party Podemos, acting social rights minister Ione Belarra, reiterated her call for Spain to break diplomatic ties with the Zionist entity and impose economic sanctions "to halt the planned genocide (the Zionist entity) is carrying out in Palestine". — AFP

Belize severs ties with Zionists

BELMOPAN: Belize on Tuesday suspended diplomatic relations with the Zionist entity, becoming the second Latin American nation to sever ties in the wake of its military offensive in Gaza. Citing what it called "unceasing indiscriminate bombing" in Gaza, Belmopan withdrew its welcome to Zionist ambassador Einat Kranz-Neiger and announced it had withdrawn the request for accreditation of its honorary consul in Tel Aviv. — AFP

Alarm as Zionist troops raid main Gaza hospital

GAZA: Zionist soldiers on Wednesday raided and then combed through Gaza's main hospital, a key objective in their war on Hamas but which has raised fears for thousands of patients and other civilians trapped inside. Both the Zionist entity and its top ally the United States say the Palestinian militants have a command center below the Al-Shifa complex, a charge denied by Hamas and leaders of the hospital that has become a focal point in the 40-day-old war.

Hamas said US President Joe Biden was "wholly responsible" for the assault, accusing his administration of giving the Zionist entity "the green light... to commit more massacres against civilians". Zionist soldiers, some wearing face masks and shooting in the air, ordered young men to surrender, a

Continued on Page 6



GAZA: Two young Palestinian children lie on a stretcher at the Al-Aqsa Hospital following Zionist bombardment in Deir el-Balah on Nov 15, 2023. — AFP

Erdogan calls Zionist entity 'terror state'

ANKARA: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Wednesday called the Zionist entity a "terror state", stepping up his condemnation of the spiraling civilian toll of its war against Hamas

militants in Gaza. Erdogan's latest — and one of the most heated — verbal attacks against the Zionist entity came two days before he plans to make a sensitive visit to Germany for talks with Chancellor Olaf Scholz.

The Turkish leader took a more nuanced line immediately after Hamas' Oct 7 cross-border attacks. But he stepped up the rhetoric as the scale of the Zionist entity's military response grew. Health officials in Gaza say more than 11,300 people, mostly civilians,

have been killed in Gaza. "I say clearly that (the Zionist entity) is a terror state," Erdogan told members of his Islamic-rooted ruling party in parliament.

"While we curse the (Zionist) administration, we do not forget those who openly support these massacres and those who go out of their way to legitimize them," he said, pointing to the United States and other Western supporters of the Zionist entity. He called the war Gaza a conflict "between



Recep Tayyip Erdogan

Continued on Page 6

France issues 'historic' Assad arrest warrant

PARIS: France has issued an international arrest warrant for Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad accused of complicity in crimes against humanity and war crimes over chemical attacks

in 2013, plaintiffs in the case said Wednesday. In one of the more than decade-long conflict's many horrors, sarin gas attacks saw more than 1,400 people suffocate to death near Damascus in August 2013.

The organizations that filed a legal complaint hailed the move, saying it was the first time a sitting head of state had become the subject of an arrest warrant in another country for war crimes and crimes against humanity. Three other international war-

rants were also issued for the arrests of Assad's brother Maher, the de-facto chief of the Fourth Division, Syrian army's elite military unit, and two generals. The Paris court's unit concerned with crimes against humanity has been investigating the chemical attacks since 2021. France can prosecute alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity committed anywhere in the world under the principle of universal jurisdiction.



Bashar Al-Assad

Continued on Page 6



Crown Prince receives credentials of Arab and foreign Ambassadors



KUWAIT: His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives credentials of European Union Ambassador on Tuesday. — KUNA photos



KUWAIT: His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives credentials of Algerian Ambassador to Kuwait on Tuesday.



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives credentials of Ethiopian Ambassador.



KUWAIT: His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives credentials of Ambassador on Belgium.



KUWAIT: His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives credentials of Ambassador of Iran.



KUWAIT: His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives credentials of Thailand Ambassador on Tuesday.

KUWAIT: His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received on Wednesday the Ambassadors of Ethiopia, Algeria, the EU, Thailand, Iran and Belgium who handed their credentials during a ceremony at Bayan Palace. Senior state

officials attended the ceremony. Ambassador of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Saeed Muhammad Jibril, Ambassador Democratic Republic of Algeria Nouredine Maryam, Ambassador of the European Union Anne Koistinen, Ambassador of the King-

dom of Thailand Ekapol Polpipat, Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran Mohammad Totonji and Ambassador of the Kingdom of Belgium Christian Domes presented their credentials on Tuesday to HH the Crown Prince. —KUNA



Experts discuss AI and Cybersecurity at forum. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

AIU hosts AI and cybersecurity GCC Forum

By Faten Omar

KUWAIT: American International University (AIU) organized the AI and Cybersecurity GCC Forum on Wednesday at the Four Seasons Hotel, in a strategic partnership with the Communication and Information Technology Regulatory Authority (CITRA). The forum aims to foster high-level dialogues, share expertise and facilitate networking opportunities in the rapidly evolving fields of AI and cybersecurity.

In his opening speech, Dr Michael Pishko, President of American International University, stated that the forum's goal is to explore and advance the understanding of the dynamic interplay between artificial intelligence and cybersecurity due to the rapid integration of AI across various sectors. He acknowledged AI's capabilities in automating complex processes, enhancing predictive analytics and revolutionizing data-driven decision-making. However, he emphasized that these advancements also introduce ethical, privacy and cybersecurity risks that require immediate and strategic responses.

Pishko highlighted that the forum focuses on the multifaceted nature of AI in the realm of cybersecurity and its role in developing advanced cybersecurity protocols, including real-time threat detection and adaptive response mechanisms. The potential risks of AI being exploited for sophisticated cyberattacks and the development of ethical AI frameworks, data privacy safeguards and resilient AI systems immune to adversarial attacks are at the forefront of discussions. Pishko emphasized that the forum is a collaborative mission to safeguard the digital future, setting a benchmark in the GCC region and contributing to the global discourse on AI and cybersecurity.

Areej Alghanim, Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees of AIU, expressed the university's commitment to being the first to hold a conference of its kind in the Gulf. She mentioned the annual event's purpose to present what is new, spread awareness, and enhance understanding in the field. The strategic partnership with CITRA signifies a commitment to knowledge and scientific exchange to meet the challenges of rapid digital development. Alghanim highlighted the cooperation between the communications authority and AIU, affirming the parties' keenness to provide societal support and education for future generations. She announced the participation of specialists from Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, UAE and the US in six workshops with over 350 participants, facilitating the exchange of experiences in the field.

During his presentation, Anas Al-Faris, Co-founder



Dr Michael Pishko



Dr Safaa Zaman



Areej Alghanim

and CEO of Intelmatix in Saudi Arabia, explored the transformative concept of "Creating Cognitive Enterprises through Decision Intelligence". He delved into the integration of decision intelligence into business strategies, emphasizing its role in shaping cognitive enterprises. Faris provided insights into the synergy between cutting-edge technologies and strategic decision-making processes, emphasizing the pivotal

role that decision intelligence plays in navigating contemporary business complexities.

Faris revealed that industrial revolutions have contributed to human progress by improving physical capabilities. He emphasized that the latest Industrial Revolution, led by artificial intelligence, enables the use of technology to support cognitive abilities and improve decision-making at a high level of cognitive functions such as perception, attention, and memory.

Faris explained the concept of a cognitive enterprise as a transformative approach to business operations, integrating advanced technologies to enhance productivity and overall performance. Organizations embracing cognitive technologies are reported to be 48 percent more likely to improve productivity. Furthermore, the adoption of cognitive technologies correlates with a substantial 2.2X increase in achieving customer retention. This shift not only leads to a 24 percent reduction in costs but also translates into a 26 percent increase in revenues and 30 percent higher profitability.

In her presentation, Dr Safaa Zaman, President of the Information Security Association, focused on the relationship between artificial intelligence and cybersecurity. She categorized the relationship into three areas: The usage of AI to develop security systems, to develop hacking tools and the critical area of developing gaps and defects in smart digital systems. Dr Zaman's working paper provided recommendations on how to deal with smart systems without invading privacy and the means to limit these penetrations.

Alghanim Industries Academy launches its third cohort

KUWAIT: Alghanim Industries, --Kutayba Alghanim Group--, one of the largest privately-owned companies in the region, proudly announced the launch of the third cohort for the Alghanim Industries Academy. This initiative marks a continued commitment to fostering the careers of young Kuwaiti graduates in various business sectors.

This year, the Academy welcomes 60 promising graduates from diverse academic backgrounds including information technology, engineering, marketing, finance, accounting, and human resources. These talented individuals were selected from a pool of over 800 applicants during a comprehensive recruitment day in October, highlighting the program's competitive edge and appeal. The Alghanim Industries Academy is uniquely designed to bridge the gap between academic study and professional practice. It provides an intensive, immersive training experience across the company's multifaceted business units. Each recruit is paired with an experienced mentor, offering personalized guidance and support, ensuring a strong foundation in their career journey.

The training encompasses a broad spectrum of sectors under Alghanim Industries, ranging from automotive to engineering, retail, and food & beverages, reflecting the company's diverse business interests. Anas Al-Ateeqi, Chief Human Resources Officer at Alghanim Industries, shared his insights: "We are immensely proud to introduce the latest group of talented young professionals to the Alghanim Industries Academy. This program transcends beyond mere employment; it's about nurturing a generation of ambitious Kuwaiti youth poised to



Anas Al-Ateeqi



From the launch ceremony.

lead in the private sector. Our commitment to nurturing local talent aligns with the 'New Kuwait 2035' vision, engaging the private sector to develop human capital and foster a sustainable economic future."

The Academy is a testament to Alghanim Industries' longstanding expertise in talent management and professional development. It operates extensive internship and career development programs, in partnership with various local and international organizations, dedicated to honing the skills of new graduates and integrating them into professional environments. With this initiative, Alghanim Industries reaffirms its role as a key player in the economic development of Kuwait and its investment in the country's future leaders.

MILSET Asia competition concludes

KUWAIT: The regional office of MILSET Asia in Kuwait announced the successful conclusion of the 17th annual Kuwait school competition in industrial applications for the current academic year. The competition, held in collaboration with the educational development and activities sector at the ministry of education, focused on "modern agricultural technology", drawing the participation of 100 students from middle and primary schools in the final qualifiers from an initial 210 students.

Adnan Al-Meer, Vice President of MILSET and Regional Head of MILSET Asia, highlighted that each participating school in the final qualifiers was represented by a team of three students for the intermediate competition and a team of four students for the primary competition, accompanied by a coach.

The intermediate stage qualifiers saw Abdullah bin Hudhafa Intermediate School for Boys from Farwaniya governorate securing the first position, followed by Ibn Al-Nafees Intermediate School for Girls from Hawally governorate in second place, and Saif Al-Dawla Intermediate School for Boys from Capital governorate securing the third spot. For the primary stage, Abdulaziz Al-Gharabally Primary School for Boys clinched the first, second and third places.

Meer expressed gratitude to Maryam Al-Enezi, assistant undersecretary of the educational development and activities sector at the ministry of education, for sponsoring the closing ceremony. The



event was attended by 60 students from the intermediate stage and 40 from the primary stage across all educational zones. MILSET Asia organized various meetings, seminars, training courses and workshops for teachers to familiarize them with the competition system, curricula, stages and procedures.

During the ceremony, Abdulrahman Burzaiq, a student from Al-Asma'i High School, delivered a speech expressing his gratitude for the leadership training provided by MILSET. He shared his experience in participating in programs and activities, including a youth rehabilitation camp in China, thanking the organization for its role in qualifying Kuwaiti youth and honing their skills.



Local

Zain promotes sustainable living at GARDENIA

Company sponsors the unique outdoor living exhibition



Zain's billboards were recycled into sustainable totes.

KUWAIT: Part of its ongoing efforts to foster a more sustainable mindset in the community, Zain has sponsored the second season of GARDENIA, the unique local destination for outdoor living, interior design, and sustainable architecture. The event is organized by Kayan Office at Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem Cultural Center and joined by over 45 public and private sector organizations.

The company continues to actively participate in local creative projects that make a social impact, especially those that share Zain's values and goals. GARDENIA's vision complements Zain's overall sustainability strategy that closely focuses on promoting sustainable living and encouraging every individual to recycle, reduce waste, conserve energy consumption, and adopt other sustainable practices that limit the effects of climate change.

At the event, Zain made available its very own recycled shopping tote bags, which are made entirely out of the company's outdoor billboard ads. Visitors were encouraged to use Zain's recycled totes for their shopping needs at GARDENIA, which can then be reused in the future. The step seeks to promote sustainable shopping, raise environmental awareness, and demonstrate a practical use case for recycling. Zain also installed recycling bins throughout the event area to promote positive change.

GARDENIA is an eco-friendly exhibition that focuses on sustainable architecture, gardening, green spaces, and outdoor living. It gathers tens of thou-



Event promoted sustainable lifestyle.

sands of plants, trees, and flowers in one place, and aims to promote sustainable, outdoor living. The event is organized by Kayan, a leading Kuwait-based architecture and construction office.

The event is held at the beautiful outdoor area of Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem Cultural Center and stretches over 13,000 sqm. GARDENIA is joined

by over 45 companies and government agencies, including the Environment Public Authority and Kuwait University's College of Architecture. In addition, over 10 informative sessions, workshops, and seminars were held for visitors, covering topics like architecture, lighting, urban planning, gardening, internal design, and more.

Emergency team braces for rainy season in Kuwait

KUWAIT: Bracing up for the upcoming rainy season in Kuwait, the Board of Directors of the Kuwait Society for Crisis and Emergency Management held a special meeting on Wednesday to discuss the emergency measures the authority has to take to avoid any possible rain-related accidents in the country.

Nasser Al-Buhairi, a member of the Board of Directors and head of the emergency team at the society, reviewed the emergency plan, preparations and equipment being used by the authorities in the country. They also reviewed the extent of their readiness

with the necessary equipment and specialized technical teams to deal with any extraordinary circumstances and respond quickly to emergency cases.

The members of the Board of Directors praised the efforts being made by the state institutions in cooperation with the oil sector and other organizations with a comprehensive emergency plan for rapid response to deal with the upcoming rainy season.

The meeting agreed that safety of citizens and residents is important and decided to focus on areas that are potentially vulnerable to rain in order to limit any possible accidents.

At the end of the meeting, the board sent a message to all citizens and residents, reminding them of the need to strictly follow the instructions issued by the authorities. It also stressed that residents must not pay heed to unofficial sources and rumors and avoid going out to sea during rain in order to ensure their safety.



A group photo of the partners of the project and attendees of the seminar. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

Water sustainability must be a priority for Kuwait: Seminar

By Passant Hisham

KUWAIT: Under the patronage of Minister of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy Dr Jassem Al-Ostad, the closing seminar of the "Kafaa" water guide project, aimed at improving water usage in Kuwait, was held on Wednesday at the Arab Planning Institute.

In her opening remarks, Ministry Undersecretary Maha Al-Asousi highlighted water sustainability as one of the ministry's top priorities, aligning with the Kuwaiti government's efforts to enhance water sustainability and security. She praised the collaboration between Kuwait Water Association and the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy in implementing the project. Asousi emphasized the crucial role of modern technology, including artificial intelligence and the Internet of Things, in testing and measuring water efficiency.

Asousi expressed hope that the outcomes and experience of the project would extend to more sectors, leveraging a financial incentive program launched by the ministry to encourage buildings to rationalize water and electricity consumption, known as "Hafez". "It's a very critical tool that serves the Kafaa program and harmonizes with its goals," she said.

Chairman of Kuwait Water Association Saleh Al-Muzaini announced the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development as another key partner supporting the project financially. Muzaini discussed the project's key achievements, including a comprehensive study on water efficiency in Kuwaiti buildings, training over 250 engineers on methods to increase water efficiency and organizing the seminar to present the project's outcomes and exchange experiences with other Arab countries.

Abdullah Fahad Al-Shami, General Director of the Arab Planning Institute, the strategic partner of Kuwait Water Association, emphasized the extreme im-



General Director of Arab Planning Institute receives an award for its efforts in Kafaa project.



Ministry of Interior receives an award for its efforts in Kafaa project.

portance of the seminar and the project. He noted the critical timing, with many parts of the world facing water resource deficiencies and quality deterioration due to climate change and population growth. Shami highlighted the institute's contribution to the project, providing training and workshops to the trainees, overseeing logistics and offering accommodation and food.

It's important to note that the closing seminar does not mark the end of the project, as it aims for a longer-term impact. The creation of a mobile app for "Kafaa" has been initiated for broader accessibility. The engineers, gathered from 15 ministries and government agencies in Kuwait, will continue implementing the outcomes of their training, focusing on detecting leaks, reducing waste and improving water use in buildings.

KU radiology dept holds event on World Radiology Day

KUWAIT: The Department of Radiology Sciences at the College of Allied Medical Sciences in Kuwait celebrated World Radiology Day, featuring informative lectures by Mona Ashkanani, Head Radiologist at Amiri Hospital, and Latifa Al-Mutairi, Radiologist at Farwaniya Hospital. Students actively participated in an exhibition showcasing various events and booths related to radiology.

Dr Laila Ghazanfar, associate professor and acting head of the department, highlighted the significance of organizing this celebration each year. The aim is to provide a fresh and creative atmosphere for students, offering a break from routine academic pressures and fostering a love for their specialized field, crucial for the job market.

Expressing gratitude for the success of the event, Dr Raed Al-Saeed, chairman of the organizing committee, emphasized the positive impact such celebrations have on students, enhancing their connection and passion for the profession.

Ashkanani reflected on the unique challenges faced by radiology technicians in Kuwait, from limited graduates to initial difficulties in hospital settings. She underscored the vital role of the radiology technician as the bridge between the radiology department,



Photos of the World Radiology Day event.

doctors and patients. Ashkanani emphasized the technician's responsibility in providing accurate reports, explaining examinations to patients and navigating challenging interactions with diplomacy and intelligence.

Mutairi highlighted the transformative impact of digital technology and artificial intelligence on diagnostic radiology and nuclear medicine. She showcased modern applications in these fields, emphasizing the need for professionals to stay updated to advance the radiology and nuclear medicine profession. The event featured a notable exhibition of radiology sciences, where student participation added a distinctive and engaging element beyond the standard educational framework.



KUWAIT: The Department of Radiology Sciences at the College of Allied Medical Sciences in Kuwait celebrated World Radiology Day.

Kuwait, Portugal sign agreement in aviation sector

KUWAIT: The Kuwait General Administration of Civil Aviation signed on Wednesday with the Civil Aviation Authority of the Republic of Portugal a bilateral agreement and a new memorandum of understanding aimed at updating bilateral arrangements and regulating air operations between them in the field of civil aviation.

The acting Director General of Civil Aviation and head of Kuwait delegation to these discussions, Imad Al-Jalawi, explained in a telephone call with KUNA that the agreement includes the rules for operating national airlines and takes into account the continued growth in air transport traffic for passengers and cargo.

Al-Jalawi said the agreement is consistent with updating the administration's open sky policy and strategy to encourage international airlines to increase their flights to and from Kuwait International Airport to enhance the movement of passengers and air cargo. He stated that it is important to connect Kuwait International Airport to the largest number of international airports through a global network of airlines, adding that the agreement enhances air transport movement in addition to encouraging trade exchange between the two countries. It also provides



KUWAIT: The Kuwait General Administration of Civil Aviation and the Civil Aviation Authority of the Republic of Portugal signed a bilateral agreement and a new memorandum of understanding on Wednesday. — KUNA

new and diverse options for serving passengers between the two countries and meets the requirements of national air carriers.

Ambassador of the State of Kuwait to the Republic of Portugal, Hamad Al-Hazeem, in a similar statement to KUNA, praised the importance of such agreements in the field of air services that contribute to strengthening economic and tourism relations between the two friendly countries. Al-Hazeem said that the agreement comes as part of strengthening and developing joint cooperation between the State of Kuwait and the Republic of Portugal within the general framework of cooperation in a number of important fields. — KUNA

Prof Chamkha achieves top global ranking in engineering research

KUWAIT: Professor Ali Chamkha, Dean of Engineering at the Kuwait College of Science and Technology, has achieved the top global ranking in mechanical engineering research, particularly in areas such as nanofluids, heat transfer, porous media and more over the last five years. This recognition comes from ScholarGPS rating, which evaluates scientists and institutions worldwide across various disciplines based on in-depth analyses of their research in terms of production, quality, and impact.

This accolade for Prof Chamkha reflects his outstanding contributions to scientific research and affirms his consistently high rankings in global institutions and platforms within the field of mechanical engineering and transportation. Chamkha has achieved numerous scientific accomplishments as a distinguished Arab scientist on the international stage.



Professor Ali Chamkha

GCC officials discuss rail project

MUSCAT: The GCC Committee of Undersecretaries of the Ministries of Transport and Communications discussed on Wednesday in Muscat setting a date for operating the GCC railway project. During the meeting the officials reviewed multiple topics, including the progress of the railway project, the Gulf Authority project budget in 2024, Gulf projects protection scheme, the GCC land transport strategy and the executive regulation of the international land transport GCC law. Oman's Undersecretary of the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology Khamis Al-Shammakhi said during the meeting that the transport sector is one of the basic pillars in the economic development. He stated that the railway project aims to enhance economic development and facilitates trade movement among the six GCC states, adding that it also boosts trade exchange with Asia, Europe and the rest of the world, which contributes to the efficiency of the supply chain system. He also added that the GCC countries are moving towards achieving zero carbon neutrality initiatives and projects and encouraging green and smart mobility initiatives, which ensures that the GCC is considered a pioneer in this field. — KUNA

'Science Month' to celebrate human passion for knowledge, says KFAS

Activities of 'Science Month 2023' kick off in Kuwait

KUWAIT: The Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS) announced on Wednesday the launch of activities for the Science Month 2023 in Kuwait which will be held for the second year in a row and will continue until next Dec 12. The Foundation stated in a press release that Science Month aims to commemorate the establishment of the Foundation in December 1976 and is an opportunity to highlight the scientific domain in the country and motivate young people to pursue science, technology, engineering and mathematics specializations to build a knowledge-based and more sustainable Kuwait.

The statement explained that the events are of great importance because they serve as dynamic platforms to celebrate the human passion for knowledge, innovation and exploration. They also focus on interest in the world of science, which makes scientific knowledge accessible to everyone and attractive to individuals of all ages. He stated that the events include presenting the latest achievements and discoveries in addition to activities that encourage practical learning, critical thinking, cooperation, and bringing together scientists, researchers, teachers, and the public to enhance dialogue between them.

The month also highlights the importance of science in facing global challenges.

He stressed that these activities play a pioneering role in enhancing scientific knowledge, igniting the passion for discovery, and paving the way for a brighter and more innovative future. He stated that Science Month this year also includes a variety of topics, namely earth, astronomy, nutrition, oil and energy, the Fourth Industrial Revolution, and materials science. He pointed out that this event was made possible thanks to the collaborative efforts of the Foundation and its affiliated centers, including the Scientific Advancement Publishing (ASPD), the Scientific Center (TSCK), the Dasman Diabetes Institute (DDI), and the Sabah Al-Ahmad Center for Giftedness and Creativity (SAGGC). The statement said that the Foundation's centers along with many research and academic institutions, will organize a large number of activities, workshops and seminars throughout Kuwait.

He stated that this year's events witness an international program in which the Foundation coordinates regionally to anticipate the environmental future in cooperation with the United Nations En-



vironment Program (UNEP) and with the participation of representatives from Kuwait and the region. The statement explained that the events will witness the participation of many companies in the sector and public benefit associations, in addition to a number of initiatives such as the Kuwaiti Environment Lens and the Kuwait Information Technology Society (KITS).



The KUNA pavilion offers a variety of activities at the World Media Congress Exhibition and Conference in Abu Dhabi.

KUNA's pavilion at WMC seeks to boost media cooperation

ABU DHABI: Kuwait News Agency's participation in the World Media Congress Exhibition and Conference in Abu Dhabi focused on enhancing media cooperation and fruitful cultural interaction between Kuwait and the rest of the world. This embodies the agency's keenness to stay up to date with the latest

technologies and innovations in the field of media and journalism.

The KUNA pavilion offers a variety of activities, visual and interactive presentations, and displays journalistic works, photo features, and special investigations prepared by the agency, making sure that visitors communicate with its team there, discuss media and journalism issues, and exchange experiences and opinions about the challenges and opportunities facing the media industry in the modern era.

KUNA's pavilion at this event embodies its commitment to continuous development in the field of media and the use of modern technology in disseminating news and information and enhancing its role in conveying events and developments to the Kuwaiti public and the world quickly and reliably. — KUNA

Kuwait's 20th Gaza relief plane takes off

KUWAIT: The 20th relief plane took off Wednesday from the Kuwaiti air bridge carrying aid from the "Fazaa for Palestine" initiative, heading to Al-Arish Airport to help Palestinians in the Gaza Strip. The plane carries 10 tons of necessary and urgent relief aid.

The Deputy Director General of the Kuwait Society for Relief (KSR) and the Supervisor of Fazaa Omar Al-Thuwaini said that the flight carries about 5 tons of food, three tons of blankets and two tons of wheelchairs. Al-Thuwaini commended the efforts made by Kuwaiti official authorities, associations and charitable bodies. He underlined that KSR, along with its partners and supporters, seeks to continue operating relief trips loaded with aid and donations, working in coordination with the official authorities there, represented by the Egyptian Red Crescent and its Palestinian counterpart, as well as the Palestinian charitable societies accredited within the Kuwaiti Ministry of Foreign Affairs system.

In this context, several Palestinian charities in Gaza announced that they would continue distributing aid from Fazaa to those affected by the aggression, as the first batch of Kuwaiti aid arrived last Thursday, loaded with medicine, through the Rafah crossing.

Since the first days of the attacks on Gaza, KSR and 22 other Kuwaiti charities launched an initiative to collect donations in response to the humanitarian conditions suffered by Palestinians in Gaza. The initiative received interaction and support from Kuwaiti governmental and civil institutions, most notably the Zakat House, General Secretariat of Endowments and Public Authority for Minors Affairs. — KUNA



Scan & Subscribe
KD 20 a year

For Individuals Only

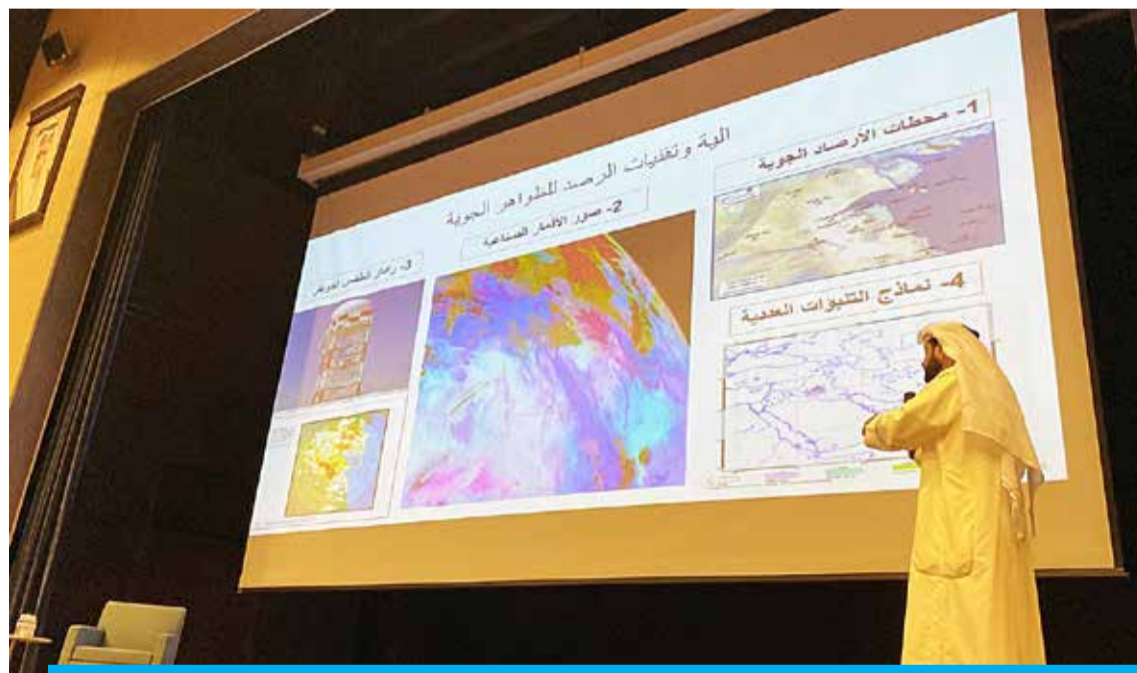


Scan Now

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



Tel: 24833199 Ext: 220



Abdulaziz Al-Muhanna during the the workshop.

KEPS holds workshop on climate

KUWAIT: Kuwait Environmental Protection Society revealed the recommendations of an expert workshop organized by the Sabah Al-Ahmad Center for Environmental Training and the "Green Schools" program, in collaboration with the ministry of education. The workshop, attended by 170 teachers, aimed to address crucial issues related to climate change in preparation for the upcoming COP28 climate summit in the United Arab Emirates.

Abdulaziz Al-Muhanna, a board member of KEPS, outlined that during the workshop, 17 scientific recommendations were put forth by participating teach-

ers and technical mentors from the ministry of education. These recommendations, now under consideration by the minister of education, will also be presented at expert workshops during the COP28 climate summit.

Muhanna emphasized the necessity of adapting schools to the challenges posed by climate change, requiring collaborative efforts from school administrations, teachers, students and parents. He highlighted the pivotal role of teachers in shaping a sustainable generation that values environmental preservation and embraces responsibility towards future generations.

The recommendations from the expert workshop were categorized into two main topics: Enhancing the school environment and improving education and awareness. Proposals to enhance the school environment included developing contingency

plans considering climate change effects, such as floods or rising temperatures, and upgrading school structures to withstand changing weather conditions, such as enhancing ventilation and cooling systems.

On the education and awareness front, Muhanna mentioned the importance of providing environmental education programs for both students and staff, emphasizing environmental protection and promoting eco-friendly practices. Strategies involve encouraging the use of mass transportation and fostering research and innovation in climate change adaptation solutions.

Muhanna stressed the significance of integrating sustainability and environmental protection topics into the curriculum, fostering a mindset that encourages students to think sustainably and make informed decisions.



From Gaza's inferno:
Bidding farewell
to dear neighbors

Thai cave experts called as Indian workers still trapped

Page 6

Page 7



RAFAH: Fadwa Kullab carries her newborn Mohammad at an UNRWA school in the southern Gaza Strip, on Nov 10, 2023. — AFP photos

Pregnant, nursing Gazans bear brunt of Zionist attack

Women forced to give birth without sterilization, anesthesia in 'hellish conditions'

RAFAH: With eyes wide open and his tiny fists clenched tightly, Mohammed Kullab is just a few days old, having started life in Gaza amid Zionist bombardment of the besieged strip. "Nobody should be born in such circumstances," sighed his mother Fadwa Kullab, who has sought shelter at a UN school building in Gaza's southern city of Rafah.

Kullab now has seven children but said Mohammed's "birth was the most difficult experience of my life". Like other mothers of newborns AFP spoke to in Gaza, she said her baby son had been refusing her breast milk. "I'm not eating well," Kullab said, stressing that she had successfully breastfed her other six children.

Breastfeeding mothers are advised to drink at least three liters (more than six pints) of water a day and eat well to produce sufficient milk — but finding clean water and food in Gaza is becoming harder by the day. Nearly two thirds of Gaza's 36 hospitals, already overwhelmed with war-wounded, have been knocked out of service due to a lack of fuel to power their generators.

Zionist soldiers on Wednesday raided and then combed through Al-Shifa, Gaza's main hospital, packed with patients and the displaced. The hospital's director had reported scores of dead buried in a mass grave in the complex on Tuesday. Among those who died were seven premature babies in its disabled neonatal unit, Gaza's deputy health minister Youssef Abu Rish said.

'I could lose the baby'

Countless new mothers in Gaza now fear the very worst, among them Kullab who said she feels helpless and unable to protect her children. She has struggled to find baby formula and nappies, she said as she cradled her tiny son, swaddled in blankets. Another woman, Najwa Salem, 37, said her newborn has jaundice, marked by yellowish skin and eyes. The condition can be worsened by low milk intake and dehydration and is often treated with daylight exposure. To minimize the risk of neurological damage, Salem would like to take her infant boy outside, but said she hesitates because of the "rubbish piling up and the bombing".

Inside the UN school classroom Salem now shares with about 70 others, the mother worried because the scar from her Caesarian section had become infected. Although she gave birth in a hospital, she said she was asked to leave after just one night "because they had too many wounded people to care for". Outside, the huge amount of dust from the incessant bombing is causing breathing difficulties that spell special dangers for infants.

Another woman, eight-months-pregnant Umm Ibrahim Alayan, complained of coughing fits since she fled her neighborhood as it was being bombarded. Her intense coughing may have provoked the early contractions she has suffered, she said, her hands flitting nervously between her rounded belly and her face. "I'm terrified, all I want to do is hold my baby in my arms," she said, sobbing. "I feel I could lose the baby at any moment."

'Utterly hellish conditions'

The UN Population Fund's top official for the Palestinian territories, Dominic Allen, said pregnant women in Gaza "have nowhere to go, there is nowhere safe". The UN says there are more than 50,000 pregnant women and an average of 180 births a day in Gaza, with a population of 2.4 million. "We estimate that a minimum of 15 percent of these births will have complications, which will require basic or comprehensive obstetric care," Allen said.

The war is creating "a high-stress environment" likely to foster "complications of birth and may lead to miscarriages", he said. The UN agency has cited the "nightmarish" case of one woman discharged just three hours after giving birth. It said there were shortages of blood to treat postpartum hemorrhage and of antiseptic for stitches and treatment after umbilical cords are cut.

So far, the UN agency has managed to get 8,000 delivery kits into Gaza. They contain umbilical cord cutters, blankets for newborns, disposable sheets and other items. But these only address a fraction of the need, and Gaza's health ministry says some women have been forced to give birth without a midwife in the overcrowded shelters.

"The nightmare in Gaza is much more than a humanitarian crisis, it's a crisis of humanity," said Allen. One aid group still working in northern Gaza's heavily bombed Jabalia refugee camp is ActionAid, helping women inside the Al-Awda hospital which has been without power for days. Surgeons there said they performed 16 C-sections



A doctor places the shrouded body of an unborn child, posthumously named Fatima, on the body of her mother Arij Marwan Al-Banna, killed in a Zionist strike on Oct 19, 2023.

on Sunday, without anesthetic or other crucial supplies. "Thousands of women in Gaza are risking their lives to give birth, undergoing Caesareans and emergency operations without sterilization, anesthesia or painkillers," said ActionAid's Riham Jafari. "These women deserve quality healthcare and the right to give birth in a safe place. Instead, they are being forced to bring their babies into the world amid utterly hellish conditions." — AFP

At least 37 people killed in Indian Kashmir bus crash

SRINAGAR: At least 37 people were killed in Indian-administered Kashmir on Wednesday when a passenger bus skidded off a mountainous road and plunged into a deep gorge, police said. The accident took place on a remote road in the Doda area, about 200 kilometers (124 miles) southeast of the region's capital Srinagar. Local government official Harvinder Singh told AFP that 37 people had been killed.

Police said they feared the death toll could rise, with at least 18 people injured in the crash taken to hospital, officials said. The accident was "caused by the driver's negligence by hitting the crash bar of the road", police officer Sunil Gupta said. "The bus tumbled down the mountain some 250 meters (800 feet)," he said.

A video clip from the site showed a grisly scene of several dead bodies, as rescuers tried to help the injured. Prime Minister Narendra Modi said the accident was "distressing" and offered his "condolences to the families who have lost their near and dear ones". "I pray that the injured recover at the earliest," he said on social media, adding that government compensation of more than \$2,400 would be offered to the next of kin of those killed and \$600 to those injured.

'Anguished'

Home Minister Amit Shah said in a post on X, formerly Twitter, that he was "deeply anguished to learn about the loss of precious lives". "The local administration is conducting the rescue operation in the gorge where the bus had the acci-



SRINAGAR: Men gather near the wrecked bus, subject to an accident on a remote mountain road in the Doda area, about 200 kilometers (124 miles) southeast of Srinagar on Nov 15, 2023. — AFP

dent." Accidents are common on India's vast network of roads, which are often poorly maintained. The country accounts for 11 percent of the global road death toll, despite having just one percent of the world's vehicles, according to a World Bank report released in 2021.

The same report estimated 150,000 car crash fatalities in India annually — or one every four minutes — causing road crashes that cost the Indian economy around \$75 billion each year, the report added. Medical expenses and loss of income push many accident survivors into poverty. In May, at least 21 people died when a bus veered off a bridge in India, reportedly after the driver fell asleep at the wheel. In July, 25 people were killed and eight others injured in western India when a bus crashed and caught fire on an expressway. — AFP

London firm on Rwanda deportation plan despite illegality

LONDON: The UK government vowed Wednesday to persevere with a controversial plan to send migrants to Rwanda, despite the Supreme Court upholding a lower court ruling that it was unlawful and should not go ahead. In a major setback for Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, a five-judge panel at the UK's highest court unanimously sided with an earlier Court of Appeal decision that the policy was incompatible with Britain's international obligations.

In a 56-page ruling, the judges agreed there were "substantial grounds" to believe Rwanda could forcibly return asylum seekers and refugees to a country where they could face persecution. But within hours of the long-awaited judgment, Sunak and his ministers said the government would press ahead with finalizing a "new treaty" with Rwanda to address those concerns.

"We anticipated this judgment ... and for the last few months have been working on a plan to provide the certainty that the courts demand," newly appointed interior minister James Cleverly told MPs. The new treaty will "make it absolutely clear" to British and European courts that the Rwanda policy "will be consistent with international law", he added.

In a call shortly after the ruling, Sunak and Rwandan President Paul Kagame "reiterated their firm commitment to making our migration partnership work", Downing Street said. "Both leaders ... agreed to take the necessary steps to ensure this is a robust and lawful policy and to stop the boats as soon as possible," Sunak's office added.

'Appetite'

The Migration and Economic Development Partnership agreed in April last year envisages sending to Rwanda anyone who has made what London calls "dangerous or illegal journeys" to Britain on boats and hidden in lor-

ries. The first deportees were aboard a plane to fly to the African country in June 2022 when a last-minute European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) injunction prevented any deportations, prompting the legal challenges. The government insists the scheme is crucial to deter "illegal" immigration across the Channel from France on inflatable vessels — an emotive issue set to feature prominently in the next general election. More than 27,000 have made the perilous journey this year — down on the nearly 46,000 who crossed in 2022, but still far short of meeting Sunak's vow to "stop the boats".

His administration says both regular and irregular immigration must be slashed to ease pressure on government-funded services, such as health and housing asylum seekers. Britain's asylum backlog stands at 122,585, after falling 12 percent from a record high in February. Sunak's government passed legislation in July barring any "illegal" arrivals from claiming asylum, but it relies on finding third countries to send them to.

Opponents criticize the choice of Rwanda, while arguing the policy is overly cruel, costly and difficult to implement. The government in Kigali said Wednesday it "take(s) issue" with the ruling that it is not a safe third country. Despite the pledge to push ahead with its Rwanda plan, there is growing speculation London will now try to strike deals with other countries. Cleverly claimed there was "an appetite for this concept", and said several other European countries were exploring similar agreements.

'Ignore the laws'

The Supreme Court decision could widen rifts in the ruling Conservative party and prompt renewed demands from right-wingers that Britain withdraw from the ECHR. Former interior minister Suella Braverman launched a scathing attack on Sunak on Tuesday, a day after he sacked her, accusing him of "betrayal" over immigration and saying he had "no appetite for doing what is necessary". In parliament on Wednesday, Sunak told MPs he was "prepared to change our laws and revisit those international relationships" if "domestic legal frameworks or international conventions" frustrated the plans. — AFP

International

Thai cave experts called as Indian workers still trapped

Response team sends medicine, food amid protests over 'slow rescue' efforts

DEHRADUN: India has sought advice from the Thai company that rescued children from a flooded cave in 2018 as it races to save 40 men trapped in a road tunnel, officials said Wednesday. Excavators have been removing debris since Sunday morning from the site in the Himalayan state of Uttarakhand to create an escape tunnel for the workers, all of whom are still alive.

Officials have "contacted the Thai company which rescued the children trapped in the cave", the state government's department of public relations said in a statement. The statement was referring to the dramatic operation to rescue 12 boys from a junior football team and their coach who were trapped for more than two weeks in the Tham Luang cave complex. No other details were given.

Authorities have also asked for help from engineering experts in soil and rock mechanics at the Norwegian Geotechnical Institute as frantic efforts to free the men stretched into a fourth day.

Rescuers said on Wednesday they had sent medicine to the 40 men, trapped since the road tunnel they were building collapsed on Sunday. "After consultation with doctors, medicine has been sent to

the workers through pipes," police officer Prashant Kumar told AFP from the site. "Contact is being maintained with the workers." No details were given about the condition of the men or how many of them were sick. Food and oxygen had also been sent to the trapped workers, he said.

'War footing'

But as rescue teams removed the vast piles of rubble, more fell from the broken roof of the tunnel and two laborers working to remove the debris were injured overnight Tuesday, Kumar said. The pace of drilling was "slow because of natural causes", but efforts were being made on a "war footing", Uttarakhand state police chief Ashok Kumar said in a statement on Wednesday.

The air force on Wednesday flew in a second drilling machine on a C-130 Hercules military plane on Wednesday to "speed up rescue work" after the first one broke down, he said. Dozens of colleagues of the trapped workers protested outside the tunnel on Wednesday, blaming authorities for "slow rescue work", one of the protesters told AFP. Photos released by government rescue teams soon after the collapse showed huge piles

of rubble blocking the wide tunnel, with twisted metal bars from its roof poking down in front of slabs of concrete.

'Patience and trust'

Engineers are using heavy machinery to drive a steel pipe about 90 centimeters (nearly three feet) wide through the debris, wide enough for the trapped men to squeeze through. "We should keep our patience and trust," Ashok Kumar said. "I am sure that we will rescue all the laborers."

The 4.5-kilometre (2.7-mile) tunnel was being constructed between the towns of Silkyara and Dandalgao to connect Uttarkashi and Yamunotri, two of the holiest Hindu shrines. The tunnel is part of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's road project aimed at improving travel conditions between some of the most popular Hindu shrines in the country as well as areas bordering China.

Experts have warned about the impact of extensive construction in Uttarakhand, where large parts of the state are prone to landslides. Accidents on big infrastructure projects are common in India. In January, at least 200 people were killed in flash floods in ecologically fragile Ut-



UTTARAKHAND: Construction workers protest against authorities for the "slow rescue work" outside the under construction road tunnel that collapsed on Nov 15, 2023. — AFP

tarakhand in a disaster that experts partly blamed on excessive development.

Construction worker Hemant Nayak told AFP that he had been in the tunnel early on Sunday when the roof caved in, but he had been on the right side of the

collapse and escaped. Small amounts of dirt had been falling into the tunnel but "everyone took it lightly", he told AFP on Tuesday. "Then suddenly a huge amount of debris came and the tunnel was closed." — AFP

'Bad Boy' Indian billionaire Subrata Roy dies at 75

NEW DELHI: One of India's most controversial tycoons, Subrata Roy has died aged 75 after a heart attack, his company said, sparking fear by some about recovering their investments. Roy, a household name in India because of his meteoric rise and eventual downfall and disgrace, died on Tuesday in Mumbai from cardiorespiratory arrest, his Sahara Group said in a statement.

The flamboyant businessman was featured in the 2020 Netflix series "Bad Boy Billionaires". Born in 1948 in the eastern state of Bihar, Roy started Sahara in 1978 with 2,000 rupees, or \$24 in today's money, growing the business into a multibillion-dollar company involved in finance, housing, manufacturing and the media.

He raised 200 billion rupees — today worth \$2.4 billion — from millions of small savers in rural India via an illegal bond scheme. Roy was taken into custody in 2014 after he failed to comply with a court order to repay money to his investors, but walked out of jail two years later. He denied any wrongdoing.

Sahara always insisted it was only helping poor and mainly rural investors, while Roy said he has been a victim of "character assassination". But Vi-

jay Kumar Tandon, a 74-year-old retired academic in the northern city of Lucknow, said he was worried after failing in the past to access his investment.

"My only recourse is reliance on government schemes to facilitate the release of my funds," Tandon said Wednesday. Urmila Devi, a small-time investor in Bihar state, said she had lost hope of recovering her money. "If the owner is dead, who will pay us?" she said. "Our claim will get lost."

The powerful businessman, known for his rags-to-riches story and mansion modelled on the White House, once had stakes in New York's Plaza Hotel as well as London's Grosvenor House. The wedding festivities of his two sons in 2004 cost more than \$60 million.

Roy was once the sponsor of the Indian cricket team, hockey team and also had a stake in the Formula One racing team, Force India. Akhilesh Yadav, chief minister of Uttar Pradesh state, said in a social media post that Roy's death was an "emotional loss", calling him a "very sensitive person with a big heart who helped countless people". — AFP



Subrata Roy

Thunberg denies public order offence after London arrest

LONDON: Swedish campaigner Greta Thunberg on Wednesday denied a public order offence, after she was arrested at a demonstration against the energy industry in central London. The 20-year-old activist — a key face of the movement to fight climate change — was among 26 people charged at the October 17 demonstration in the British capital.

Inside Westminster Magistrates Court, Thunberg, who was mobbed by photographers and camera crews as she arrived, giggled with other defendants as she waited for the hearing to start. She spoke only to confirm her name, age and correspondence address, and to enter a plea of not guilty. Four other defendants appearing alongside her also pleaded not guilty.

They were given unconditional bail until an expected two-day trial that the court was told would start at City of London Magistrates' Court on Feb 1. Climate protesters Greenpeace and Fossil Free London campaigners earlier stood outside the court with banners proclaiming "Only money out" and "Make polluters pay".

A 28-year-old charity worker from Fossil Free London who gave her name only as Josie told AFP she was there to show solidarity with those arrested. Last month's meeting involved oil executives and others for discussions about making "lots of money out of destroying our future", she added. The demonstration saw several hundred rally outside a major London hotel, blocking all entrances to the venue.



LONDON: Swedish environmental activist Greta Thunberg arrives at Westminster Magistrates Court in London on Nov 15, 2023. — AFP

Message

Maja Darlington, a campaigner at Greenpeace UK, said the group's activists joined the demonstration to send "a clear and peaceful message" to the oil bosses. Before her arrest, Thunberg had criticized "closed door" agreements between politicians and representatives of the oil and gas industry.

London police said they imposed "conditions to prevent disruption to the public" at the protest, which were then breached, prompting the arrests. Thunberg was put in a police van outside the Energy Intelligence Forum. She has since come under fire for wearing a black and white Palestinian scarf (Keffiyeh) and urging a "ceasefire now" during a climate protest in Amsterdam.

Her speech at the event on Sunday was interrupted by a man who tried to snatch a microphone from her, saying he had come for a climate protest, not to hear her other views. — AFP

Assembly sets legislative...

Continued from Page 1

MP Abdullah Al-Mudhaf stressed on the importance of changing the electoral districts and called for adopting the proposed party-list system in elections to replace the current system based entirely on individuals. MP Abdulaziz Al-Saqabi said sensitive and crucial issues facing the country can be only resolved when we have political stability, adding MPs have a historic opportunity to achieve reforms and approve the party-list system in elections. MP Abdulkarim Al-Kandari called for implementing recommendations approved by the Assembly during a special session on Palestine, saying the Zionist army has been bombarding hospitals in Gaza.

During the session, the Assembly approved a re-

quest by head of the youth and sports committee MP Mubarak Al-Hajraf to talk to the International Olympic Committee over its decision in which it implicated Kuwait's National Assembly. Hajraf said that the Assembly should talk to the IOC to clarify its position. But Ghanem insisted that the letter is unconstitutional because the committee has not met to make the decision. He added the letter also violates Kuwaiti laws, since only the foreign ministry can contact or arrange contacts with foreign entities like the IOC. The Assembly then adjourned the session until Nov 28.

Meanwhile, HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Nawaf Al-Sabah ordered the immediate formation of an ad hoc committee to study replies the premier made to MPs' questions that were deemed to be unconstitutional. The decision was made following a meeting between Assembly Speaker Ahmad Al-Saadoun and HH the Prime Minister, in which they discussed the premier's replies to MPs' questions. The Center for Government Communication said in a statement Wednesday.

level," Steve Kostas of the Open Society Justice Initiative was quoted as saying in a statement. According to a source close to the investigation, the arrest warrants were the culmination of "painstaking work" by investigators from France's specialized OCLCH unit tracking international crimes. The goal was to "go as far up the chain of command as possible," the source said. "If you stop at the helicopter pilot who dropped the bomb, he will be able to say 'I only carried out orders'. The further back you go, the greater the responsibility."

Activists in 2013 posted amateur videos on YouTube said to show the effects of the attack, including footage of dozens of corpses, many of them children, stretched out on the ground. Other images showed unconscious children, people foaming at the mouth and doctors apparently giving them oxygen to help them breathe. The scenes provoked revulsion and condemnation around the globe. A United Nations report later said there was clear evidence of sarin gas use.

Syria agreed in 2013 to join the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) global watchdog and give up all chemical weapons. The OPCW has since blamed Damascus for a series of chemical attacks during the civil war. The Syrian government has denied the allegations, which have also sparked legal complaints in Germany and other European countries. — AFP

Alarm as Zionist troops raid main...

Continued from Page 1

journalist in contact with AFP reported. About 1,000 male Palestinians, their hands above their heads, were in the vast hospital courtyard, some of them stripped naked by Zionist soldiers checking them for weapons or explosives, the journalist said.

The Zionist army described it as "a precise and targeted operation against Hamas in a specified area" of the facility as Washington, the Red Cross and World Health Organization urged utmost caution with civilian lives. The Zionist entity said the raid was being executed based on "an operational necessity" while the West Bank-based Palestinian Authority branded it a "flagrant" violation of international law.

The United Nations has said it estimates that at least 2,300 people — patients, staff and displaced civilians — are inside and may be unable to escape because of fierce fighting. Witnesses have described conditions inside the hospital as horrific, with medical procedures taking place without anesthesia, families with scant food or water living in corridors and the stench of decomposing corpses filling the air. The health ministry in Gaza says Zionist aerial bombardment and ground offensive have killed 11,320 people, mostly civilians, including thousands of children.

International concern over the fate of the people inside the hospital has been steadily increasing, especially as the civilian toll in Gaza has climbed during the war. "The protection of newborns, patients, medical staff and all civilians must override all other concerns," UN

Erdogan calls Zionist entity...

Continued from Page 1

the cross and the crescent", suggesting that Christian, Western supporters of the Zionist entity were fighting the Muslim world. "They are trying to exonerate the murderers," he said, referring to the West. "We are faced with a genocide," Erdogan added, repeating a term has used on several occasions.

Turkey this month recalled its ambassador to the Zionist entity and broke off official contacts with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, suspending recent at-

tempts by the sides to repair their rocky relations. The Zionist entity has also said it was "re-evaluating" relations with Ankara, after calling back its diplomatic staff from Turkey and other regional countries as a security precaution.

Erdogan's heated rhetoric has piled pressure in Germany on Scholz, who has been forced to defend his decision to receive the Turkish leader. Scholz this week called Erdogan's earlier accusation of fascism against the Zionist entity "absurd", calling the Zionist entity "a democracy" and "a country that is bound to human rights and international law". Defending the planned visit, which will be Erdogan's first to Germany since 2020, Scholz's spokesman Steffen Hebestreit said Germany "always had difficult partners whom we have to deal with". — AFP

France issues 'historic' Assad...

Continued from Page 1

A judicial source, who asked not to be named, confirmed the issuing of the four warrants by investigating magistrates of the Paris court's crimes against humanity section. The probe followed a complaint filed by the Syrian Centre for Media and Freedom of Expression (SCM) NGO, lawyers' association Open Society Justice Initiative (OSJI) and the Syrian Archive, an organization documenting human rights violations in Syria.

"It's a huge development," SCM president Mazen Darwish said of the warrant for Assad's arrest. "An independent jurisdiction is recognizing that the chemical attack couldn't have happened without the knowledge of the Syrian president, that he has responsibility and should be held accountable," he told AFP. The case against Assad and the others was backed by first-hand witness accounts and deep analysis of the Syrian military chain of command, Darwish said.

"This is a historic moment — with this case, France has an opportunity to establish the principle that there is no immunity for the most serious international crimes, even at the highest

International

Bidding farewell to neighbors in Gaza

The horrors we abhor unfold with renewed intensity — larger, more violent and more malevolent

By Haya Friej

GAZA: Without a hint of exaggeration, over 30 Zionist warplanes loom ominously in the skies above the northern Gaza Strip. They hover so close that we can discern them with the naked eye, flying at alarmingly low altitudes. The cacophony they create is beyond imagination — a symphony of noise and pollution that induces headaches, dizziness, and ear pain — rupturing eardrums with the thunderous breach of the sound barrier. Adding to the inferno are phosphorus and smoke gas bombs, assaulting our senses, and nearly scorching our bodies.

Moreover, night after night, the relentless assault persists, characterized by countless raids and an equivalent number of victims. In this brutal theater of war, the selective amnesia of memory convinces us that such atrocities shouldn't be repeated. We previously deemed the night of the fire belt as the epitome of adversity, a harrowing experience etched in our memories from the vicinity of Bir al-Na'ja in Jabalia during Eid in 2021.

Yet, the horrors we abhor unfold with a renewed intensity — larger, more violent, and more malevolent. It's as if they're innovating fresh methods to assail us both psychologically and physically. The haunting repetition of the same Fire Belt plays out incessantly, spanning multiple locations. Describing the relentless bombing in this war becomes a futile exercise, surpassing the bounds of imagination.

The mechanisms of mass destruction extend far beyond the vexing aircraft missiles. Various forms of extermination manifest, including blind artillery positioned at borders, naval battleships firing shells with an unsettling lack of precision, and, with ground invasion, bullets infiltrating the battle. The repercussions of nearby clashes echo within our homes, a grim testament to the multifaceted brutality of this conflict.

In Gaza, within a community steadfastly resisting the recurrence of the tragic displacement and migration events, we witness the specter of death a thousand times each day. This unwelcome visitor arrived over a month ago, persistently choosing from among us the best, the purest, and the most beautiful souls.

It wouldn't be truthful to claim that my presence remains unaffected each night; in reality, the core of my resilience begins to wane. This decline coincides with the bombardment of the homes of our peace-loving neighbors, individuals who staunchly resisted being displaced to the south when the occupation sought to impose such a move on residents of the north, towards the south of Wadi Gaza.

I vividly recall that day when we stood by our windows, hands on our cheeks, witnessing the unfolding tragedy of the latest Palestinian upheaval. Our faces betrayed the heaviness of our hearts, and conversation was minimal: we merely nodded in shared understanding. The palpable confusion lingered, and the recurring question echoed: What catastrophe has befallen our people? What impending disaster awaits? What future awaits us in the days to come?



This file photo shows a view of buildings destroyed in the north of the Gaza Strip following Zionist bombardment on Nov 8, 2023. — AFP

Not mere numbers

Families moved in clusters, men guiding their children, women navigating with vacant stares, burdened by small bags carrying their worldly possessions. Children swapped school bags for a handful of clothes, and young people clutched laptop bags containing seemingly worthless papers in this upheaval.

Each person walked with their gaze lowered, seeking refuge in the south (and who can blame a survivor?). Yet, it's a scene that demands our voices to resonate worldwide. During those moments, I found solace in the presence of my remaining neighbors, silent witnesses to the unfolding tragedy. I deliberately left my window ajar, a symbolic gesture assuring them of my solidarity. Every morning, I waved to them, a gesture conveying that I, too, shared their plight, that I would not abandon them.

However, they departed ahead of me, the narrative beginning with the crumbling of the bakery owners' abode and business, a poignant aftermath of the bombing. From the wreckage emerged wounded individuals, survivors of the violent incident. In a melancholic symphony, the fate of the shopkeepers resonated similarly, as five of them succumbed to the unrelenting violence. Those who endured, along with the injured, were painstakingly extracted from the profound craters, the scars of the relentless bombardment that marred the market shops just opposite our dwelling.

The latest devastating blow unfurled its grim tale last night when occupying forces set their sights on the residence of our neighbors, directly across from us. Sons and daughters, women, children, and men tragically died. They departed ahead of me, leaving behind a void. Those who suffered injuries won't return, for there is no sanctuary left in this place. As I ponder this desolation, a haunting question lingers: Who will extend solace to me in your

absence? Where shall I find neighbors to safeguard and befriend me?

In the wake of your final voices, I grapple with the perplexity of how an eye can blink. The impending mornings cast a shadow over my room, once graced by your vibrant presence, now indelibly etched in my memory. I envision you, drenched in the vivid red hues of your blood, veiled in the luminous white of window curtains, a haunting tableau that defies the passage of time.

This is your saga, heroes, etched in the language of blood and valor. I have chosen to share it with the world, a task undertaken with profound sadness and a measure of reverence for the gravity of the circumstance. Amid this significant juncture, I refuse to succumb to silence and prostration. You, in turn, shall not be relegated to mere figures in official statistics or news tucked away in press releases.

As morning broke, we sought refuge from our fortunes, yet life stubbornly persisted in its routine. The ceaseless bombardment painted our camp as a ring of fire, each inhabitant a target within its bounds. Venturing beyond its confines became an undertaking fraught with ominous consequences. Despite the peril, we opted to remain, our collective prayers a beacon for safety.

A poignant quote by Ghassan Kanafani echoes in my thoughts: "You will not find the sun in a closed room." I inscribed these words on the school board as the wisdom of the day, and repeatedly shared them with my students. It served as a constant reminder to them: "Open your windows, embrace life, and live in the embrace of freedom."

I threw open my window to embrace the morning sun, rising amidst the dust of a tethered homeland whose dues are paid in blood. I nodded in acknowledgment to the bombed house before me. Amongst the

ruins, I discovered a survivor, a woman, sifting through the debris for remnants of her life, only to find no trace of anything recognizable.

It baffles me how these weapons can dissolve everything — children's lockers, rooms, kitchen utensils, and women's clothes — all erased. The only remnants are a collection of stones, a poignant testament to a people who must once again dismantle them by hand, whether to search for the missing or rebuild. In the shadow of bombardment, I contemplate the profound question: How do women give birth under such relentless assault?

A newborn baby

Amidst the raging inferno, my brother braved the flames to seek an ambulance that fortuitously traversed the street. His urgent mission was to find assistance for his wife, who, in the throes of labor, was in desperate need of reaching a hospital or clinic. My uncle's car was rendered impractical due to the shattered windows from the previous night's bombing, and alternative transportation was a pressing concern.

Complicating matters further, the Al-Awda Hospital and the Indonesian Hospital in Jabalia Camp bore the brunt of heavy bombardment, seemingly part of an effort to coerce evacuation. In this dire situation, we found a stroke of luck — a home-based obstetrician and gynecologist who was able to conduct the delivery within the confines of our home.

We joyously welcomed a beautiful baby into the world, yet they have stolen from us the customary joys of celebration. How do we mark the arrival of a baby girl born amidst the pain? What future awaits a child brimming with life in a land where the cries of children echo in horror at the looming specter of death, where monstrous entities bear explosives?

I earnestly prayed for her to witness days more beautiful than ours, shielding her from the harsh reality of an occupied land where the rights of childhood are callously stripped away. Upon the restoration of connectivity and the Internet, I shared the news of the recent birth with my Bahraini friend, a daily source of concern and care. In return, he recounted a tale of a Sudanese friend of his, whose wife experienced the throes of childbirth under the curfew imposed by the Sudanese army following the October 1964 uprising. He talked to the soldiers stationed near his residence, and in an act of virility, they told him that they would take him and his wife to the hospital via a tank.

Reflecting on this narrative, I couldn't help but wish that the broader Arab populace could embrace a fraction of the generosity found in the Arab spirit, if only they could spark a revolution, an uprising capable of quelling the flames engulfing Gaza, compelling them to unite against the genocide afflicting their people. The narrative persists, an unwavering tale, as long as a vestige of life endures and a soul within the soul prevails.

NOTE: Dr Haya Friej is a Palestinian researcher from Gaza



The Philip Morris International (PMI) headquarters in Lausanne.

PMI moves towards smoke-free future in GCC markets

KUWAIT: Philip Morris International (PMI) has continued to take further bold steps of its smoke-free ambitions in the GCC region. The company, currently undergoing a massive transformation to a smoke-free organization, is focused on fostering innovative solutions that aim to reduce harm for adults who would otherwise continue to smoke cigarettes or use nicotine products.



Saim Yasin



Tarkan Demirbas

IQOS ILUMA was launched in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Bahrain, the latest innovative product in the company's growing portfolio of smoke-free products, for adult smokers who would otherwise continue to smoke. IQOS ILUMA has been developed through rigorous research and development efforts of over 1,500 scientists, engineers, medical professionals, and experts, and is PMI's first tobacco heating system to introduce breakthrough induction-heating technology which utilizes no blade and requires no cleaning. The IQOS ILUMA's non-combustible innovation, based on SMARTCORE INDUCTION SYSTEM™, prevents the burning of tobacco. Burning tobacco produces over 6,000 chemicals, of which about 100 have been identified as causes or potential causes of smoking-related diseases.



The Cube, PMI's research and development center located in Neuchâtel, Switzerland.

Tarkan Demirbas, Vice President Middle East at Philip Morris Management Services (PMMS), said: "Adult smokers may be unaware of the choices they are making, largely due to the lack of information and knowledge on products that bring harm, versus scientifically-backed products that reduce the likelihood of smoking-related disease. At PMI, we are invested in providing existing adult smokers with better alternatives through harm reduction innovations which can help them take a step back from cigarettes towards better alternatives."

"Smoking-related diseases today call for a pragmatic solution that places consumers at the forefront, while moving away from cigarettes", commented Saim Yasin, Director of Marketing & Digital, at PMMS. "IQOS ILUMA is our latest innovation in tobacco heating systems that will accelerate our goal towards a smoke-free future. Through a growing portfolio of smoke-free alternatives, we are reaffirming our commitment to create realistic, society-wide change that can reimagine the world we are living in — without cigarettes."

Since 2008, PMI has invested more than USD10.5 billion into the research, development, commercialization, and manufacturing capabilities for a portfolio of smoke-free products — such as IQOS ILUMA. By continuously innovating and expanding our multi-category smoke-free portfolio of scientifically backed alternatives, alongside plausible policies and regulations that incorporate harm reduction practices, PMI believes the delivery of a smoke-free future can be accelerated.

A breakthrough alternative

IQOS ILUMA is the latest innovation from IQOS, at the heart of it is the SMARTCORE INDUCTION SYSTEM™ that heats the tobacco from within the new generation of tobacco sticks. These newly designed sticks are to be used only with IQOS ILUMA.

The IQOS ILUMA series offers three devices at various price points to meet adult smoker and user needs in the GCC: IQOS ILUMA Prime, IQOS ILUMA and IQOS ILUMA One. All three devices use new induction-heating technology but offer different designs to allow adult users to select the device that best suits their preferences. These bladeless devices offer a cleaner way to heat tobacco from the core, without burning it, to provide a more consistent and seamless experience, no tobacco residue, and no need to clean the device.

What is Tobacco Harm Reduction?

With growing evidence on the case for tobacco harm reduction, we explore how smoke-free products are an alternative to cigarettes for adult smokers who would otherwise continue to smoke.

The reality for smokers today

Despite being aware of the evident health risks, many smokers continue to smoke cigarettes today. According to WHO, there are around one billion smokers worldwide, and it is estimated that this number will not change significantly in the coming years¹.

Smoking causes a number of serious diseases (including cardiovascular, pulmonary diseases and cancer) and increases the risk of early death. With around eight million attributed deaths every year, cigarette smoking is a formidable public health challenge for governments, regulators and public health authorities worldwide².

Quitting smoking is undoubtedly the right way to go. But how do we address those who would otherwise continue smoking? Harm reduction in the context of smoking continues to be a highly debated topic among public health officials. In some countries, the use of regulated tobacco and nicotine products to help smokers move away from cigarettes is encouraged by public health bodies. For instance, in England, the 'Stoptober' campaign encourages those who do not stop smoking to consider harm reduction alternatives³.

When a cigarette is lit, the tobacco combusts (burns) generating a smoke that contains thousands of chemicals, many of which are toxic or carcinogenic and known to be the primary cause of smoke-related diseases. Quitting smoking — or better yet, never starting — is without a doubt the best option to reduce the risk of smoke-related disease. However, for adult smokers who do not quit, the opportunity to switch to scientifically substantiated, less harmful alternatives has the potential to accelerate the decline in the number of people smoking cigarettes and reduce smoking-related harm. This is the principle of tobacco harm reduction.

Many believe that nicotine is the primary issue when it comes to smoking. Nicotine is addictive and not risk-free, but — contrary to what many believe — experts agree that nicotine itself is not the primary cause of smoking-related diseases⁴. Rather, it is the chronic exposure to the toxic chemicals in cigarette smoke that are generated when tobacco is burned that is the primary cause of smoking-related disease. On average, a cigarette burns tobacco at temperatures up to 800-900°C and generates smoke containing over 6,000 chemicals. Smoke includes around 100 toxicants that have been identified as the primary cause of smoking-related diseases such as cancer and cardiovascular disease.

Burning tobacco has been the principal source of nicotine delivery for the last 100 years or so. However, advances in science and technology have enabled the development of smoke-free products that can deliver nicotine without burning tobacco and can be a better alternative to cigarettes for adult smokers who do not quit.



Closing the awareness gap

Smoke-free products can effectively help smokers move away from cigarettes. For example, in Japan, a substantial decrease in cigarette sales was observed since the introduction of heated tobacco products in the country⁵. The obstacles adult smokers face in adopting smoke-free alternatives lie in a number of critical areas: education, policy and regulation, and institutional support.

Proven across many industry and independent studies, smoke-free products, while not risk-free, have been shown to be better alternatives over continued smoking⁶. The challenge lies in educating adult smokers about the available scientific evidence behind smoke-free products. Raising awareness of smoke-free products that contribute to harm reduction practices requires a combined effort, not just from industry players but also from public health bodies that recognize its benefits and policies.

Tobacco control measures aimed at preventing smoking and supporting quitting play a key role in reducing the harm caused by smoking. In several countries around the world including the UK⁶ and New Zealand⁷, the use of regulated novel nicotine and tobacco products is seen as an appropriate alternative for smokers who do not quit, and their use is encouraged by public health bodies.

We at PMI are also playing our part by working closely with regulators to share data from the clinical disease reduction studies we have been conducting for many years now, as our organization works towards delivering a smoke-free future. These studies allow us and the relevant bodies to understand the benefits of quitting smoking on public health in greater depth⁸.

By integrating such studies with national health policies and, as a result, gaining institutional support, more people could be informed about smoke-free alternatives, making way for a smoke-free future. If enough adult smokers around the world using tobacco would switch to scientifically substantiated smoke-free alternatives, we can rapidly address the public health impact of smoking. This is what harm reduction is, and it is time to embrace this approach.

Sponsored by Philip Morris Management Services (Middle East) Limited

¹<https://www.who.int/news/item/19-12-2019-who-launches-new-report-on-global-tobacco-use-trends>

²<https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/tobacco>

³<https://www.bhf.org.uk/take-action/campaign-with-us/stoptober>

⁴<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK294310/ch2.s6>

⁵<https://www.pmi.com/smoke-free-life/substantially-declining-cigarette-sales-in-japan>

⁶<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/e-cigarettes-could-be-prescribed-on-the-nhs-in-world-first>

⁷<https://www.hpa.org/nz/>

⁸<https://www.pmscience.com/whats-new/why-we-carry-out-disease-risk-reduction-studies>

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2023

Flying taxis are braced for takeoff at Dubai Airshow

Ethiopian Airlines signs up for 11 Airbus A350s

DUBAI: Flying taxis have been a sci-fi fixture for decades, but one operator says they are finally close to reality, first in the United States and then the United Arab Emirates and India. "What we used to think of as science fiction is now science fact," Billy Nolen, Archer Aviation's chief safety officer, told AFP at the Dubai Airshow on Wednesday. "This is happening, it is real, and you will see this in the market in 2025."

Reports of futuristic aircraft ferrying passengers over cities—and their car-choked roads—have been cropping up for years, evoking images of 1960s cartoon "The Jetsons". Yet regulatory approval from the US Federal Aviation Administration for Archer's Midnight, a four-passenger, electric-powered vertical take-off and landing (eVTOL) aircraft, is expected as soon as 2025. That will trigger "almost concurrent" certification in the UAE, said Nikhil Goel, chief commercial officer at Archer, whose major backers include Mubadala, an Emirati sovereign wealth fund.

UAE flights are expected to start in 2026 on two initial routes: from Dubai airport to the upmarket Palm development, and Abu Dhabi airport to the city-centre Corniche. "We expect the demand to be more than we can even handle. The pricing will be relatively premium at the outset," said Goel.

"But then over time, we'll deploy hundreds of aircraft in the UAE (which) will also lower the price considerably." At the same time, flights will launch in New Delhi, Mumbai and Bangalore, Goel said, calling India "a really, really big market for us".

'Fully zero emissions'

Test flights for Archer's Midnight are currently taking place in California, and rival firm Joby has performed its first experimental journeys in New York. The Midnight has a dozen propellers—inde-

pendently wired and powered, to minimize the risk of a "catastrophic" failure—and a wing, allowing it to glide in the event that it can no longer stay aloft. It will be able to fully recharge in the six or seven minutes that it takes to switch passengers between trips, and has a current maximum range of about 160 kilometers (100 miles) at about 240 kilometers per hour (150 mph).

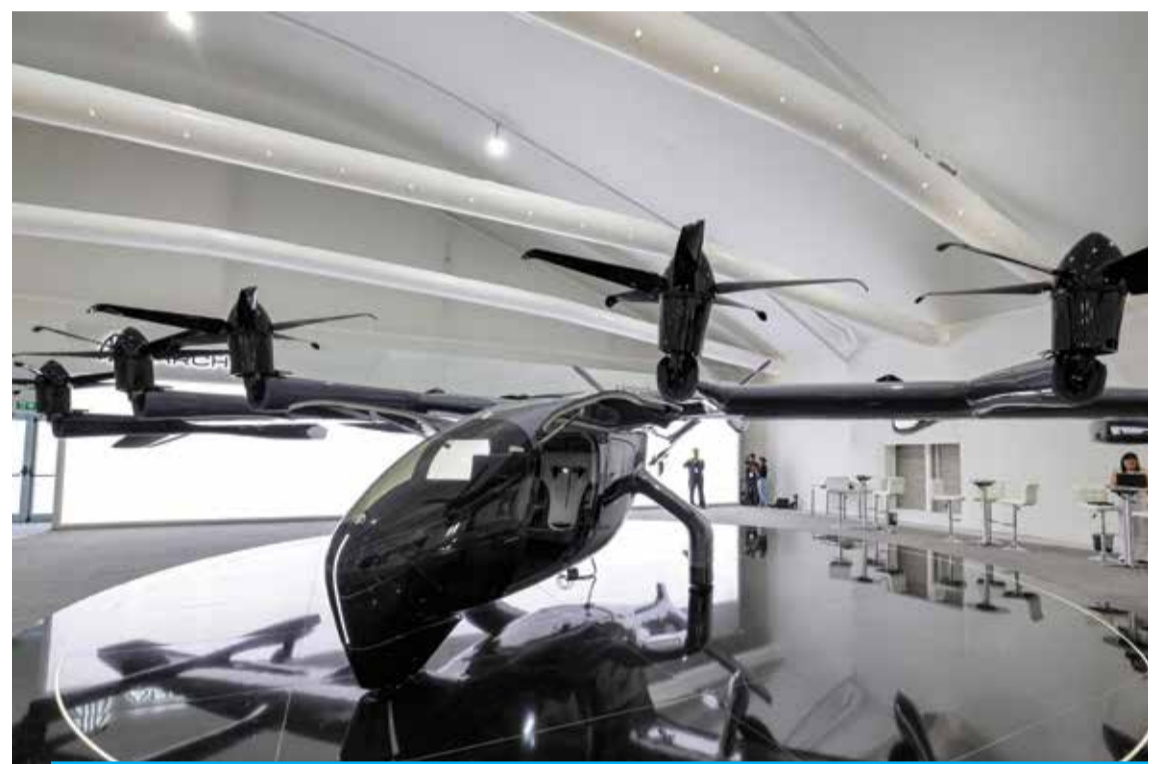
Flying the aircraft is straightforward, said Goel, who insisted that a 12-year-old in a simulator could learn it in 20 minutes. Flights will be booked as ride shares, and will initially cost about \$4-5 per passenger mile before dropping to half that in about two or three years, Goel added.

With flying taxis plying existing helicopter routes—and theoretically safer, cheaper and more environmentally friendly than helicopters—there is significant room to scale up, the company says.

"We have designed this business case to operate in urban environments, say from the airport to city centre," said Golen, the chief safety officer. "It's fully zero-emissions, fully sustainable, it is eco-friendly, it has about 100 times less noise signature than a conventional helicopter. "So it's very neighbour-friendly as well."

Meanwhile, Ethiopian Airlines pledged to buy 11 wide-bodied Airbus planes at the Dubai Airshow on Wednesday, further expanding its order book a day after purchasing 31 Boeing aircraft. The Ethiopian flag-carrier signed a memorandum of understanding for 11 Airbus A350-900s, which can serve routes ranging from short-haul to ultra-long-haul, taking its total A350 commitment to 33.

Boeing, Airbus's US rival, has dominated the orders at the week-long show so far, including a deal to supply 95 planes to Dubai's Emirates airline. "We are



An Archer Aviation electric vertical take-off and landing (eVTOL) flying taxi is pictured during the 2023 Dubai Airshow at Dubai World Central - Al-Maktoum International Airport in Dubai on November 13, 2023. — AFP

particularly excited for this fleet as it offers extra comfort to passengers," Ethiopian Airlines Group CEO Mesfin Tsew said in a statement.

"We are keen to expand our fleet size, acquiring the latest technology aircraft," he added.

On Tuesday, the carrier ordered 11 Boeing 787 Dreamliners and 20 737 MAX planes—four-and-a-half years after an Ethiopian Airlines 737 MAX crashed just after take-off from Addis Adaba, killing all 157 passengers and crew. —AFP

Dubai plans new mega-airport as competition heats up

DUBAI: Dubai is forging ahead with plans to replace the world's busiest airport with an even bigger one as passenger traffic recovers to outstrip pre-pandemic levels, a top official told AFP on Wednesday. Dubai Airports CEO Paul Griffiths said designs were being drawn up for Al-Maktoum International Airport, which will be built on the city's outskirts and should replace Dubai International in the 2030s.

He was speaking at the Dubai Airshow in the United Arab Emirates, where airlines have invested heavily in new planes. Last year, neighboring Saudi Arabia announced plans for a major new air hub in Riyadh.

"Once we've reached about 120 million (passengers a year), which is what we think our total capacity at DXB (Dubai International) is at the absolute maximum with everything optimised, we are going to need a new airport," Griffiths said. "That is going to have to happen at some stage during the 2030s. We're going to be working on those designs over the next few months. "So the trajectory is good. The confidence in the industry remains high."

Griffiths was speaking as new figures forecast 86.9 million passengers at Dubai International this year, surpassing 2019 traffic and underlining the recovery from the pandemic. Third-quarter traffic was 22.9 million, the highest since 2019, taking 2023 numbers so far to 64.5 million, nearly 40 percent higher than the same period in 2022.

Passenger numbers have not been affected by the Zionist entity war on Gaza, which is expected to hit regional economies and especially tourism. There has



DUBAI: A MANSUP series anti-ship missile is displayed at the EDGE pavilion during the 2023 Dubai Airshow at Dubai World Central - Al-Maktoum International Airport in Dubai. — AFP

been "very, very little impact of traffic to the north", Griffiths said. "In fact, in some regions it's got even stronger than before, so (there was) no impact that was discernible." He added: "We always knew when the pandemic struck, there'd be an equal and strong recovery because people under lockdown for two years were denied the ability to travel. And so that's why we've bounced back so quickly."

Dubai airport closed briefly to commercial flights from March to July 2020 for the pandemic, but was one of the first travel hubs to reopen. In 2020, it received only 25.9 million passengers, down from 86 million in 2019. No pricetag or capacity has been set for the new airport, Griffiths said, adding that it

would be designed on a modular basis rather than based around terminals—meaning it can easily expand over time. "It stands to reason that Al-Maktoum International has to be even bigger and even better (than Dubai International)," he said, calling it the "airport of the future".

"This will be a project that extends way into the 2050s, because we take the long-term view here." He added: "We are not planning an airport that has terminals. We're going to completely change the business model for airports, make them actually far more intimate and get rid of all the legacy processes that we've had to subject our customers to, for far too long." — AFP

Heat projected to kill five times more people by 2050

PARIS: Nearly five times more people will likely die due to extreme heat in the coming decades, an international team of experts said Wednesday, warning that without action on climate change the "health of humanity is at grave risk". Lethal heat was just one of the many ways the world's still-increasing use of fossil fuels threatens human health, according to The Lancet Countdown, a major annual assessment carried out by leading researchers and institutions.

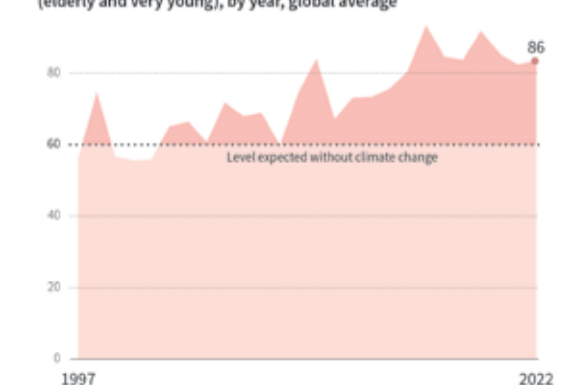
More common droughts will put millions at risk of starving, mosquitoes spreading farther than ever before will take infectious diseases with them, and health systems will struggle to cope with the burden, the researchers warned. The dire assessment comes during what is expected to be the hottest year in human history—just last week, Europe's climate monitor declared that last month was the warmest October on record. It also comes ahead of the COP28 climate talks in Dubai later this month, which will for the first time host a "health day" on December 3 as experts try to shine a light on global warming's impact on health. Despite growing calls for global action, energy-related carbon emissions hit new highs last year, the Lancet Countdown report said, singling out still-massive government subsidies and private bank investments into planet-heating fossil fuels.

Last year people worldwide were exposed to an average of 86 days of life-threatening temperatures, according to the Lancet Countdown study. Around 60 percent of those days were made more than twice as likely due to climate change, it said. The number of people over 65 who died from heat rose by 85 percent from 1991-2000 to 2013-2022, it added.

"However these impacts that we are seeing today could be just an early symptom of a very dangerous future," Lancet Countdown's executive director Marina Romanello said. Under a scenario in which the world warms by two degrees Celsius by the end of the century—it is currently on track for 2.7C—annual heat-related deaths were projected to increase 370 percent by 2050. That marks a 4.7-fold increase. —AFP

Climate change increasing dangerous heat

Days of exposure to potentially fatal temperatures* for people at risk (elderly and very young), by year, global average



*When temperatures exceed a conservative threshold over which heat-related deaths are likely to increase
Source: Lancet report on health and climate change

Greenhouse gases hit record high in 2022: UN

GENEVA: Greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere hit new record highs in 2022, with no end in sight to the rising trend, the United Nations warned Wednesday. The UN's World Meteorological Organization said levels of the three main greenhouse gases—the climate-warming carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide—all broke records last year.

Such levels of heat-trapping gases will mean further temperature increases, more extreme weather and higher sea levels, the WMO said in its 19th annual Greenhouse Gas Bulletin. "Despite decades of warnings from the scientific community, thousands of pages of reports and dozens of climate conferences, we are still heading in the wrong direction," said WMO chief Petteri Taalas.

The bulletin comes ahead of the November 30-December 12 COP28 UN climate summit in Dubai. The 2015 Paris Agreement saw countries agree to cap global warming at "well below" two degrees Celsius above average levels measured between 1850 and

1900 -- and 1.5C if possible. The global mean temperature in 2022 was 1.15C above the 1850-1900 average. "The current level of greenhouse gas concentrations puts us on the pathway of an increase in temperatures well above the Paris Agreement targets by the end of this century," said Taalas.

"This will be accompanied by more extreme weather, including intense heat and rainfall, ice melt, sea level rise and ocean heat and acidification. "The socioeconomic and environmental costs will soar. We must reduce the consumption of fossil fuels as a matter of urgency."

In 2022, carbon dioxide concentrations were at 418 parts per million, methane at 1,923 parts per billion and nitrous oxide at 336 parts per billion. These values constitute, respectively, 150 percent, 264 percent and 124 percent of the pre-industrial (before 1750) levels. Of the three major greenhouse gases, carbon dioxide (CO2) accounts for about 64 percent of the warming effect on the climate.

Global averaged concentrations of CO2 in 2022 were, for the first time, 50 percent above those of the pre-industrial era, "primarily because of emissions from the combustion of fossil fuels and cement production", said the WMO. CO2 atmospheric concentrations "continued to grow in 2023".

"Given the long life of CO2, the temperature level already observed will persist for several decades

even if emissions are rapidly reduced to net zero," the WMO warned, with Taalas adding: "There is no magic wand to remove the excess carbon dioxide from the atmosphere". Atmospheric methane is the second largest contributor to climate change, accounting for around 16 percent of the warming effect. Methane remains in the atmosphere for only about 10 years, but has a much more powerful warming impact than CO2. The methane increase in 2022 was slightly lower than the 2021 increase but considerably higher than the average annual growth rate over the last decade.

For nitrous oxide—accounting for around seven percent of the warming effect—the increase last year "was higher than that observed any time before in our modern time record", the WMO said.

Although the scientific community has a broad understanding of climate change and its implications, there are still some uncertainties about the carbon cycle—and the fluxes in the ocean, the land biosphere and the permafrost areas.

The bulletin called for greater information on certain topics. These included feedback loops in the climate system—for example, increased carbon emissions from soils or decreased carbon uptake by oceans due to climate change. The WMO is also concerned about so-called tipping points, where a certain level of change leads to a self-accelerating and potentially irreversible cascade of changes. —AFP

Business

NBK-Egypt reports EGP 2.574bn in net profit by end of 3Q 2023

Bank achieves a growth rate of 100%, setting a new historical record

KUWAIT: National Bank of Kuwait - Egypt (NBK-Egypt) has announced net profits of EGP 2.574 billion (equivalent to KD 26.5 million) at the end of the third quarter 2023. This marks a significant increase from the EGP 1.288 billion (equivalent to KD 22.8 million) recorded in the corresponding period of last year, representing an impressive annual growth of 100 percent. Net operating income stood at EGP 6.1 billion, recording a substantial increase of 96.8 percent from the EGP 3.1 billion recorded in the corresponding period last year. In the meantime, Net interest income jumped by 89 percent, reaching EGP 4.9 billion compared to EGP 2.6 billion in the corresponding period of 2022.

On the other hand, net operating income (excluding interests) increased to EGP 1.18 billion by the end of the third quarter, compared to EGP 508 million in the corresponding period of 2022, up by 132.3 percent, while cost to net operating income dropped from 37.9 percent in 3Q 2023 to 31.9 percent in 3Q 2022.

Total assets reached EGP 118.1 billion by the end of September 2023, up by 12.4 percent compared to the year-end balance of EGP 105.1 billion in 2022. Furthermore, the net balance of loans and credit facilities expanded to EGP 68.6 billion by the end of September 2023, reflecting a growth rate of 24.7 percent compared to EGP 55 billion recorded at the end of 2022. Moreover, customer deposits continued to grow, rising by 12 percent to reach EGP 94.7 billion in 3Q 2023, compared to EGP 84.5 billion by the end of 2022.

Commenting on the financial results announced by NBK-Egypt, Shaikha Al-Bahar, Deputy Group Chief Executive Officer, National Bank of Kuwait, and Chairman of NBK-Egypt, said: "NBK-Egypt successfully managed to achieve its highest historical profitability growth by the end of the 3Q 2023. This accomplishment highlights the bank's continuous accomplishments to strengthen its foothold in the Egyptian market, which is considered a key growth market for the Group. The Egyptian market is particularly significant due to its promising growth



Shaikha Al-Bahar

- NBK-Egypt posted the highest profit growth in its history, effectively strengthening its position in the Egyptian market.
- The modernization of our digital infrastructure and information technology has positioned the bank as a strong competitor in the banking sector.

opportunities and favorable prospects."

Al-Bahar emphasized that the continuous expansion of NBK-Egypt's balance sheet and the favorable progress evident in diverse financial indicators serve as a testament to the success of the bank's diversification strategy. This success is further underscored by the swift progress in its digital transformation initiatives, which aim to broaden the bank's overall market presence, especially in retail services. This strategic focus is particularly significant in the region's largest market,

- We are focused on expanding our market share, enhancing banking transactions, and elevating their quality to meet increasing demand.
- Despite operational challenges, Egypt remains a key growth market and a strategic long-term investment for the Group.
- By investing in green initiatives, we aim to play a role in the global transition to green financing and the development of a green economy.
- We are committed to extending our digital offerings and actively contribute to the ongoing trend towards digital transformation.

measured by population.

"Our efforts are directed towards enhancing the quality of our services, expanding our geographical reach, and engaging with a more diverse customer base, as we continue to leverage the notable progress the bank is undergoing in terms of advancing and modernizing our digital infrastructure, information technology, and electronic channels. These improvements mark a substantial leap forward, establishing the bank as a powerful competitor in the banking sector," Al-Bahar added.

"Egypt's operating environment is currently going through an exceptional phase, comparable to that of other emerging markets that have faced consecutive economic shocks. However, we maintain an optimistic outlook that the recent monetary and financial reform measures implemented by the government and the Central Bank of Egypt will positively impact economic performance, contributing to overall growth," she noted.

"Egypt is a key growth market for the Group, serving as a strategic long-term investment. The current growth and success we are currently experiencing affirm the Group's forward-thinking vision in choosing Egypt as a strategic investment destination. We are committed to further developing our presence in the country, driven by the rising demand for banking services and higher financial inclusion rates," Al-Bahar concluded.

Meanwhile, Vice Chairman, CEO, and



Yasser El-Tayeb

- NBK-Egypt maintains its robust performance, achieving substantial growth across all its financial indicators.
- Our focus is on reinforcing our presence in both the corporate and retail banking sectors.

Managing Director of National Bank of Kuwait-Egypt, Yasser El-Tayeb, said: "NBK-Egypt's remarkable business performance has surpassed expectations and our targets for the year, demonstrating the resilience of our business model and its ability to grow, even in the midst of various challenges present in both local and global markets."

El-Tayeb emphasized that NBK-Egypt maintains a well-balanced distribution of revenue across diverse business activities. This strategic approach is coupled with efficient operational rates and risk ratios, aligning with the dual objectives of achieving growth and ensuring business sustainability. Credit for this success is attributed to the bank's prudent policies and a sound business model, demonstrating its capability to meet customer needs and diversify income sources effectively.

El-Tayeb further explained that the majority of NBK's income sources in Egypt are well-balanced, derived from credit operations in both the corporate sector and the rapidly expanding retail banking sector. The latter has notably increased in prominence, particularly in recent years, with a very diversified credit portfolio including a wide range of businesses across various sectors ranging from large scale corporations to SMEs. Meanwhile, the retail banking portfolio is also well diversified. This solid position reflects the Bank's strength and the diversity of its revenue streams. He also highlighted that going forward, NBK-Egypt

strives to further strengthen its position in retail banking by offering innovative services and products to its retail customers, in addition to continuing the horizontal growth plan by inaugurating new branches covering key locations throughout the Egyptian market.

Furthermore, El-Tayeb highlighted NBK-Egypt's commitment to align its strategies with the global movement towards sustainable finance and the transition to a green economy. The Bank aims to actively support environmentally friendly projects that promote sustainability and the utilization of renewable energy sources to mitigate climate change, since sustainable financing has emerged as a fundamental mechanism and instrument for facilitating and maintaining enduring financial stability.

Recognizing the pivotal role of technological tools and electronic channels in the banking sector and acknowledging their significance in bolstering competitive advantages among banks, NBK has persistently and decisively advanced its support for electronic services. It actively encourages customers to broaden their utilization for payments, aligning with the overall policy of the state and the Central Bank of Egypt. In this context, NBK-Egypt aims to foster financial inclusion, bringing new segments of customers into the official banking system to contribute to the evolution towards a society with reduced dependence on physical currency.

Inflation, higher rates hit eurozone growth outlook

BRUSSELS: The European Commission on Wednesday lowered its eurozone growth forecast for 2023 and 2024, saying the high cost of living and interest rates were weighing on consumers and businesses. It revised its 2023 growth forecast to 0.6 percent, shaving off 0.2 percentage points from a previous estimate. Growth in 2024 was put at 1.2 percent, a 0.1-point downgrade.

"Still high, though declining, inflation, and tightening monetary policy took a heavier toll than previously expected," the commission said in a statement, referring to European Central Bank interest rate hikes aimed at taming consumer prices.

External demand was also weak, it said. The eurozone's economic prospects contrasted with that of the United States, which is experiencing robust annualized growth of 4.9 percent based on third-quarter data. Both Europe and the United States are grappling with persistently high inflation, triggered by the post-pandemic ramping up of demand and, in Europe's case, exacerbated by higher energy costs resulting from Russia's war in Ukraine.

Brussels sees 5.6 percent inflation for the eurozone this year, unchanged from a previous estimate, and 3.2 percent next year, a mark up from the 2.9 percent previously forecast. The European Central Bank, like the US Federal Reserve, has successively hiked key interest rates and looks set to keep them high through next year in an effort to rein in inflation. The tight monetary policy is acting as a dampener on economic activity, especially apparent in the 20-nation eurozone. "We are approaching the end of a challenging year for the EU economy, in which growth has slowed down more than expected," the EU's economy commissioner, Paolo Gentiloni, said.

"Strong price pressures and the monetary tightening needed to contain them, as well as weak global demand, have taken their toll on households and businesses."

Gentiloni said the eurozone has "lost momentum" after a strong post-pandemic showing in 2021 and 2022. "Real GDP barely grew in the first three quarters of this year," he said and was only expected to "rebound mildly" in coming quarters. Global developments with potential to roil world energy markets — particularly the case of the the Zionist entity-Hamas conflict that could spread in the oil- and gas-rich Middle East — presented "downside risks," Gentiloni said. — AFP



TOKYO: This picture taken on November 14, 2023 shows Japan's highest mountain, Mt. Fuji in the background between skyscrapers in Tokyo's Shinjuku area. — AFP

Germany poised to overtake Japan as 3rd largest economy

TOKYO: Japan's economy has gone into reverse, government data showed Wednesday, in a further blow to struggling Prime Minister Fumio Kishida.

The world's number three economy shrank by 0.5 percent between June and September compared to the second quarter, the preliminary data showed, worse than the consensus forecast of minus 0.1 percent. The drop, which followed two straight quarters of growth, was on the back of continued low consumer spending and weakness in the global economy hitting Japan's exports.

Exports grew 0.5 percent, down from 3.9 percent in the previous quarter, while imports rose 1.0 percent, further hitting overall growth. Private demand, including private residential and corporate in-

vestment, fell 0.6 percent. The economy shrank 2.1 percent compared to the same quarter last year, missing market expectations of minus 0.4 percent, Bloomberg News reported.

Economists at Dutch bank ING however called the contraction "a fleeting aberration in an otherwise positive growth environment led by the service sector."

Kishida's poll ratings have hit their lowest levels since he took office two years ago, as consumers reel from rising prices. The prime minister announced this month a stimulus package worth 17 trillion yen (\$113.2 billion) aimed at boosting the economy and easing the pain of inflation.

The government has already injected hundreds of billions of dollars into the economy over the past three years in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The latest plan involves income and residential tax reductions of 40,000 yen per person, and 70,000 yen cash handouts to low-income households.

Japan was for decades beset by deflation but, like other economies around the world, prices have risen since the Ukraine

war began in February 2022. A weaker yen, while welcome news to Japanese exporters, has made imports pricier and stoked inflation for households.

Unlike other major central banks, the Bank of Japan has kept interest rates below zero and bond yields ultra-low in a bid to boost economic growth. That has come even as inflation persists, while the Bank of Japan's stance has added to pressure on the yen, one of the worst-performing major currencies in 2023. Germany — whose economy is also faltering — is set to leapfrog Japan as the world's third-largest economy this year, partly because of the yen's slide, according to projections from the International Monetary Fund. Kishida, 66, can govern until 2025 but there has been speculation that he might call a snap election ahead of a likely tough internal leadership vote in his ruling Democratic Party (LDP) next year. In September, Kishida reshuffled his cabinet and this week his deputy finance minister Kenji Kanda quit over a tax scandal, in the third recent resignation. Some LDP members have openly criticized the premier. — AFP

US clears major hurdle in race to avert shutdown

WASHINGTON: US lawmakers on Tuesday approved a stop-gap bill to keep the government open as its funding runs out, greatly reducing the threat of a painful shutdown that would leave government workers without pay over Thanksgiving and Congress unable to address urgent crises in Ukraine and war on Gaza by Zionist entity.

With the US Capitol paralyzed by infighting for much of its latest session, neither the Democratic-led Senate nor the Republican House of Representatives passed 2024 budgets for the various federal departments by the deadline of midnight Friday into Saturday. The House approved a bill that essentially puts off the problem until January of 2024 — a presidential election year — but the majority Republicans needed help from Democrats amid a rebellion among conservatives irritated by the temporary fix.

The so-called "laddered continuing resolution" now moves to the Senate, where it is expected to get a smoother ride, giving lawmakers precious extra weeks for a broader debate on funding the government for the full year.

Worried strategists in Congress and the White House have been outlining the stakes for weeks: a shutdown would mean the world's largest economy pumping the brakes on Saturday — with up to 1.5 million public workers sent home without pay, days before the Thanksgiving holiday.

Most federal facilities — including national parks from the iconic Yosemite and Yellowstone in the west to Florida's Everglades swamp — would close and the air traffic control system could be curtailed, snarling Americans' Thanksgiving travel plans. The stop-gap bill approved by the House includes none of the policy priorities or drastic spending cuts the Republican right flank is pushing for, but more than 90 no votes from conservatives were canceled out by wide support from Democrats.

"House Democrats have repeatedly articulated that any continuing resolution must be set at the fiscal year 2023 spending level, be devoid of harmful cuts and free of extreme right-wing policy riders," Democratic House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries said, announcing his support. "The continuing resolution before the House today meets that criteria." Budget votes in Congress regularly turn into a standoff, with one party using the prospect of a shutdown to seek concessions from the other, usually without success. — AFP

Business

China retail sales surge in Oct but economy remains sluggish

Country grappling with weak consumption, faltering recovery

SHANGHAI: Chinese retail sales grew in October at the fastest rate in five months, data showed Wednesday, boosted by an extended holiday at the start of the month, though other indicators pointed to still-sluggish demand in the world's number-two economy.

The country slipped back into deflation last month, while exports continued to fall, highlighting the challenge for officials grappling with weak domestic consumption and a faltering recovery since Beijing abolished strict zero-COVID curbs in late 2022.

Retail sales jumped 7.6 percent on-year in October, according to the National Bureau of Statistics, up from September's 5.5 percent and the highest growth since May. However, Zhiwei Zhang, chief economist at Pinpoint Asset Management, wrote in a note that the big figure was "partly due to lower base last year". Food and beverage sales in particular spiked in October, growing 17.1 percent on year, as a longer-than-usual eight-day national holiday at the start of the month drew

crowds to restaurants, in contrast to the nationwide COVID curbs and business shutdowns that marked the same period last year.

Meanwhile, industrial production growth in October crept up to 4.6 percent from September's 4.5 percent, while urban unemployment stayed flat at 5.0 percent. Unemployment data no longer includes a breakdown for 16- to 24-year-olds, after it hit a record high in June of 21.3 percent.

After a tough year for the world's number-two economy, there have been flickers of life in recent weeks, with third-quarter growth coming in more than expected. A string of below-par economic data in the first half—which came despite the lifting of zero-COVID curbs at the end of 2022 -- led the government to unveil a number of targeted stimulus measures aimed at supporting key sectors, particularly the troubled property industry. "Domestic demand is still weak," Zhang said, adding though that "both monetary and fiscal policies are turning more supportive, which hopefully will help to boost domestic demand in 2024." — AFP



CENGONG: Farmers harvest vegetables at a field in Cengong, in China's southwestern Guizhou province on November 15, 2023. — AFP

Gulf Bank debuts its first Movember campaign for employees

KUWAIT: In line with its ongoing dedication to prioritize the overall well-being of its employees, Gulf Bank debuted its first Movember campaign, building on the success of last October's Breast Cancer Awareness Month. This new initiative, focused on men's health and safety, allowed male employees to undergo initial screenings for prostate cancer over a two-day period. Participants were offered substantial discounts for ultrasound or MRI scans, if required.

This campaign coincided with Movember, a global initiative held annually in November, aimed at raising awareness about the significance of regular screenings to prevent prostate cancer and encouraging men to prioritize their health. Salma Al-Hajjaj, General Manager of the Human Resources Department, emphasized Gulf Bank's commitment to sustaining a healthy work environment. She stated, "As part of Gulf Bank's sustainability strategy, we remain dedicated to enhancing the well-being of our employees, with a primary focus on preserving their health." Al-Hajjaj highlighted that the Movember campaign, catering to male employees, followed a series of health, awareness, and sports events designed for female employees throughout the month of October. She emphasized, "Our employees are our most valuable asset, and we continuously strive to nurture and support them."

Al-Hajjaj further mentioned, "These endeavors form integral components of the bank's annual initiatives, demonstrating our pledge to addressing diverse societal issues. This includes prioritizing the welfare of our employees, irrespective of gender, and extending support to individuals with special needs." She concluded by stressing on Gulf Bank's steadfast dedication to sustainability, exemplified by its pursuit of gender equality, with consistent employment benefits for all, and its rigorous adherence to sustainability standards; not only within the bank, but also extending beyond it. These efforts serve to fortify the bank's influential position in Kuwait's leadership sphere.

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

Burgan Bank unveils new 'Elite Banking' segment for customers

KUWAIT: In an effort to elevate the banking experience it offers to its more affluent customer segment, Burgan Bank announced the launch of Elite Banking, a new banking segment for distinguished customers with an array of the finest services that unlock a world of luxury. The Bank also revamped its existing Premier Banking to better serve another segment of customers. The new and revamped segments are being introduced in response to the market needs and the customers' varied aspirations, with the prime objective of upholding the highest levels of customer satisfaction across all market segments.

Available to high-income customers, Elite Banking comes with a suite of exclusive benefits including a dedicated Personal Banking Executive, priority teller service at all branches, as well as priority service through the call center. Furthermore, Elite customers receive the newly designed, sleek VISA Signature debit and credit cards, which reflects the elevated status of the service that comes with it. In regards to credit cards, Burgan Bank is proud to announce that Elite Banking customers can get a VISA Signature credit card free for life. They can also apply for the Family Banking feature that offers a completely new banking experience for customers' spouses. Adding to the suite of exclusive benefits, the new segment also comes packed with numerous other services that promise an added layer of luxury to their everyday lives. These benefits include Burgan Bank concierge services, valet parking, airport lounge access, and many more.

Celebrating the new launch, Naser Al-Qaisi, General Manager - Retail Banking at Burgan Bank, said: "We are delighted to be able to serve our customers and community no matter how dif-



Naser Al-Qaisi

Lolwa Al-Khatrash

ferent their lifestyles and aspirations may be. As a Bank that is 'Driven by You', it is ingrained in our operational DNA to constantly research the market, gain a better understanding of people's needs and accordingly address any market gaps that appear. With our latest and most celebrated achievement of the year, the launch of Elite Banking, we did exactly so, thereby offering our high-income customers a tailored experience that satisfies their banking and financial needs, all presented with an unmatched level of luxury in banking."

On her part, Lolwa Al-Khatrash, Executive Manager - Products and Segments at Burgan Bank, said: "The banking experience that any customer receives can enable them to move swiftly and with ease toward their goals and aspirations. Therefore, because the banking experience is so central to our customers' lives and capacity for success, we always present them with holistic experiences that offer them a bundle of tailored products, services, and benefits that answer to their everyday needs and lifestyles. That is why our new Elite Banking segment opens up a sea of opportunities and benefits that don't merely touch upon banking and finance, but extend to make other day-to-day experiences more pleasant and convenient."

Besides the launch of Elite Banking, Burgan Bank's



Premier Banking has been completely revamped, offering its customers a range of tailored benefits which also include the VISA Platinum card, along with an array of benefits that the cards exclusively offer to the Premier customer. Premier customers are also eligible to enjoy Burgan Bank's concierge services among other exclusive benefits and services.

It serves to note that Burgan Bank continues to take active steps toward developing new products and services that are finely attuned to the market's growing needs and aspirations, making customers' pursuits easier and more enjoyable. The Bank has previously introduced a number of unique accounts including Al-Rateb salary account and Kanz draw account.



KUWAIT: stc's executive management team, including Maziad Al-Harbi, Mohammed Al-Nusif, Meshary Al-Hamad and Khalid Al-Mayouf.

stc participates in MoneyTech summit 2023

KUWAIT: Kuwait Telecommunications Company - stc, a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and platforms to customers, enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, participated in Aljarida's second 'MoneyTech 2023' summit. stc's participation in one of the panel discussions falls in line with the company's role as a digital pioneer in the local and regional telecom and digital solutions landscape.

The MoneyTech 2023 summit was held at the Grand Hyatt hotel, where participating organizations got a chance to discuss key topics that are impacting the fintech community in Kuwait. As part of the discussions, Meshary Al-Hamad, CEO of e-Portal Holding Company (e-Portal), a wholly

owned subsidiary of stc, participated in the panel discussion titled, "The features of tomorrow's bank". Alongside his colleagues, Al-Hamad spoke about the role of telecoms in supporting the digital features of banks and the evolving cutting-edge fintech requirements through various innovative solutions. e-Portal offers an expansive line of ICT solutions that can be integrated to various business models in support of the rapidly accelerating digital era.

Al-Hamad emphasized the various disruptions that have increased the adoption rates of users and customers alike, touching on the impact of the pandemic in triggering the digital transformation journeys of numerous institutions across various sectors. Such events, as well as others, showcase the importance of digital features that can ease customer use, especially through proper implementation. Al-Hamad also highlighted the key role that stc and its subsidiaries play in the market, especially when it comes to providing a suite of integrated

solutions that can assist corporates in achieving their objectives and streamlining their operations.

The event was attended by stc's executive management team, including the CEO of stc, engineer Maziad Al-Harbi, CEO of solutions by stc Mohammed Al-Nusif and the CFO at stc Khalid Al-Mayouf alongside other executives from various participating institutions. stc's participation in the event aligns with its vision to lead digital innovation and offer cutting-edge solutions that cater to the ever-evolving needs of its customers and the broader market.

In a statement, stc indicated that platforms, such as the MoneyTech 2023 summit, are essential to driving the future of the fintech landscape in Kuwait given that market leaders and experts can join together to discuss the key developments that are occurring in Kuwait and throughout the world. Additionally, it provides participants with a chance to learn more about the innovative technological solutions that are of-

fered by leading companies in Kuwait, within the industry.

E-Portal Holding Company (e-Portal) is the specialized arm for stc in the ICT, IOT and Cloud Services aimed at offering business solutions to the enterprise segment in Kuwait. E-portal Holding Company and its subsidiaries specialize in the Information and Communications Technology sector in the State of Kuwait and amongst the most prominent companies in the ICT field, with a reputable position and a value-added customer base from both the private and government sectors. In terms of the summit, stc thanked the organizers for extending their invitation as well as making all the necessary arrangements that led to the successful turnout. The company expressed that it will continue to play an active role in the community by participating in platforms that aim to empower and strengthen the local economy across various fronts, two of which being the fintech and banking sectors as well as the telecom sector.



Meshary Al-Hamad during the panel discussion entitled "The features of tomorrow's bank."



The teacher of stained glass restoration at the School Workshop of Havana, Mirell Vazquez, talks in front of a historical stained glass window with scenes of Don Quixote in Havana. --AFP photos



The teacher of stained glass restoration at the School Workshop of Havana, Mirell Vazquez, talks in front of a historical stained glass window.



Details of a restored stained-glass window with scenes of Don Quixote.

COLOR AND LIGHT BRINGING LIFE BACK TO HAVANA'S STAINED GLASS WINDOWS



A view of a restored stained-glass window by an unknown author.



Stained-glass technique Linda Viamontes de la Torre verifies a piece of glass as part of a stained glass window she is restoring.

In a formerly posh neighborhood of Cuba's capital, stained glass windows still sparkle in what used to be the opulent family homes of the rich. The houses, which date mostly from Havana's 20th century heyday, are today in various states of conservation—some magnificent, others crumbling. But bit by bit, when money and resources allow, the windows they boast are being meticulously restored by a dedicated team, subsidized by the state.

"We want to keep this art alive, it would be wonderful not to lose it," said Mirell Vazquez, who teaches stained glass restoration at the state-run Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos school in Havana, and oversees a team of five restoration professionals, all trained by her. Vazquez has identified about 500 stained glass windows in the Vedado neighborhood that once housed the Cuban capital's most luxurious homes—many built with money from the then-flourishing sugar industry.

Most of the grand old houses no longer serve a residential purpose, having been nationalized and turned into offices or embassies. There are a wide variety of windows on display in Havana—including some of the first colonial-style examples, in the shape of colored fans with wooden frames, which became a symbol of historic Old Havana, founded in the 16th century. Then from the 20th century onward, the homes of the wealthy in Vedado were adorned in styles from Europe—with stained glass windows first imported from workshops in France and Spain, then made locally.

'Aggressive' climate

As the country's economic fortunes have declined—combined with a humid, tropical climate that is "very aggressive for stained glass windows,"



Detail of a restored stained-glass window from Maumejean House.

many of the colorful marvels have fallen into disrepair, said Vazquez. Cracks, missing parts and deformed lead are the most frequent fixes her team needs to make. And despite having government backing for their labor, they sometimes have to battle to obtain the materials they need as the country faces its worst economic crisis in decades.

Linda Viamontes de la Torre, 32, has worked as a restorer under Vazquez for two years, after an initial career in health care, and has collaborated on repairing the windows of

two Havana churches. "It is very satisfying" when a window is able to "regain its original appearance," she told AFP as she worked on a panel from a neo-Gothic church.

Havana's windows—some of the best examples of stained glass in the Caribbean—and its pool of recognized restorers, prompted the UNESCO cultural heritage body and European Union to launch a project to bring young people from elsewhere in the region to Cuba for training in the field. Chloe Cadet, a 26-year-old design student from Trinidad and Tobago and one of the

beneficiaries, said she was surprised by the city's "historical architecture and the way that it's preserved so well."

Fellow student Franklin Alberto Sanchez, a 32-year-old from the Dominican Republic, told AFP he had learned about everything from glass manufacturing to safe cutting techniques. "In my country, there is no training in stained glass restoration and conservation," he said, with plans of applying what he learned back home. "This was the best place for this course." —AFP



A view of a restored stained-glass window with a Miguel Cervantes portrait.



A young man shows a stained glass window he created during an international workshop on stained glass restoration and creation.



The teacher of stained glass restoration at the School Workshop of Havana, Mirell Vazquez, talks in front of a historical stained glass window.



A young woman observes a stained glass window she created.



A young participant in an international workshop on stained glass restoration and creation cleans an antique stained glass window.



The teacher of stained glass restoration at the School Workshop of Havana, Mirell Vázquez, talks in front of a historical stained glass door.



A view of a restored stained-glass window with a Ludwig van Beethoven portrait.

Lifestyle



Participants attend in Amman a workshop at The Jordan Gaming Lab, which was set up in 2011 to help young people develop and design their own games. - AFP photos



Participants attend in Amman a workshop at The Jordan Gaming Lab.



Nour Khrais (right), technical partner in The Jordan Gaming Lab and founder of the first mobile games development studio Maysalward, talks to his team at their office in Amman.

JORDAN AIMS TO SCORE BIG IN GLOBAL GAMING INDUSTRY

For many, gaming is a waste of time. Hours lost staring at glowing screens. But Jordan is betting on its youth to capture a slice of a lucrative global market. At the Jordan Gaming Lab, Nasser Kasabreh, 21, sits behind his computer, working on a game he has been developing over the past months. He and two friends have already designed three video games including "Drift Arabs", downloaded on Google Play more than 100,000 times. But he confides "our ambition is still much greater than this". Set up in 2011, the lab aims to help young people develop and design their own games. With the support of the King Abdullah II Fund For Development, it provides modern equipment and free educational courses to young people aged nine and above on all aspects of the gaming industry from manufacturing, to production, and even marketing.

The Fund would not disclose how much money has been spent over the years, but it represents a significant investment by the Hashemite kingdom in its young people. More than 10,000 youngsters have benefited from the training, as Jordan seeks to tap into a global video game industry worth



Nour Khrais, technical partner in The Jordan Gaming Lab and founder of the first mobile games development studio Maysalward, takes notes at his office in Amman.

around \$300 billion, according to industry specialists Accenture. Expectations are the market will only grow with the development of cloud gaming, still in its early stages, and even virtual reality.

Challenging stereotypes

Half of the population of Jordan is estimated to be under the age of 25 and according to the World Bank unemploy-

ment runs at about 23 percent. "This lab has completely changed society's idea about electronic games. Twenty years ago, I found it difficult to convince young people or their parents of the importance of making these games, today it is totally different," said entrepreneur and the lab's technical partner, Nour Khrais.

But Arab game-makers face a huge challenge. "International games intro-

duce Arabs in evil roles or as bad persons. Our youth today are developing games to change this image," Khrais told AFP. Mobile gaming is the fastest-growing gaming sector in the world — and of all the digital games produced in the region, Jordan produces more than half, Khrais said.

In a sign of the growing importance of the Middle East gaming market, the latest edition of the hugely-popular "Assassin's Creed" franchise released last month was set in 9th-century Baghdad and for the first time had Arabic subtitles. "Jordan has today become the most experienced country in electronic games in the Middle East," said Hussein Bino, the Fund's gaming lab coordinator.

'Great future'

There are now more than 12 game publishing and developing companies in Jordan, including the first mobile games development studio Maysalward — founded 20 years ago by Khrais — which now has more than 100 games on Apple Store and Google Play. Most companies have international tie-ups with some of the biggest names in the industry, and Jordan's

success has drawn other Arab countries to "invest tens of millions of dollars in our very active market", said Khrais.

There is even a Jordanian union with 10,000 members and a bus service that travels to "reach young people in remote areas", said Khrais, who was awarded the title of "Mobile Legend" at the 2023 Mobile Games Award in London. He dismissed the idea that electronic games were only for entertainment.

"It is true that it increases happiness hormones, but we are talking about ... a technology with huge revenues that exceeded \$220 billion globally and about \$8 billion in the Arab world." A fan of action games such as "Call of Duty", Yousef Alrayyan, 18, has just finished high school and hopes to study computer technology and artificial intelligence.

"My parents used to tell me that games are a waste of time, but today things are different. They encourage me and tell me: This is an important industry like artificial intelligence, and it has a great future," he said. Global revenues from gaming are now higher than the film industry, said Bino. "We want to benefit from this growth." — AFP



Comfort Dog Emi (left), a black Labrador Retriever, and Pepper, a Terrier Mix, are pictured during their mission with passengers at the Berlin Brandenburg Airport BER.



Comfort Dog Pepper, a Terrier Mix, gives the paw to its trainer during a mission at the Berlin Brandenburg Airport BER in Schoenefeld, southeast of the German capital Berlin. - AFP photos



Comfort Dog Benny, a Dachshund, is pictured during its mission at the Berlin Brandenburg Airport BER.

Paw patrol Dogs soothe nerves at Berlin's 'cursed' airport

Benny waddles up to eight-year-old Maya, performs a cheerful pirouette on his short hind legs and then nuzzles in for a cuddle. Already a little cranky from the long wait for her flight to Turkey with her family, Maya is instantly besotted with the four-year-old dachshund and her father Michael Uth a bit less harried.

Berlin's massively delayed, absurdly over-budget, far too small international airport BER, which opened in 2020 to heaps of scorn, has had to get creative to try to win over weary passengers. A pilot program is dispatching three particularly good-natured pooches along with two human trainers as on-the-ground stress relief ambassadors.

At the start of the autumn school holiday rush, Benny along with black Labrador Emi and Pepper, a terrier mix, were on their impish mission at Germany's third busiest airport. Patrolling the shiny floors of the terminal on long leashes, it doesn't take long to find travelers who could use a little comfort or entertainment.

Uth arrived at BER with Maya and five-year-old son Vincent three hours early for a three-hour flight to Antalya. "This gives them something fun to do," Uth, 38, said as his children played catch with the pups. "It's keeping their minds off the wait and the stress with all the crowds here. Happy kids is a great start to a trip."

Social media storm

BER airport had been called "cursed" by local media after the opening was delayed by nine years amid incessant technical difficulties and allegations of corruption. Its six-billion-euro (\$6.4-billion) cost was three times more than planned and BER finally opened just as air travel collapsed with the coronavirus pandemic. The facility needed a hefty bailout to stave off bankruptcy, with taxpayers asked to pump in nearly two billion euros by 2026.

Passengers often report huge check-in queues and big delays for baggage retrieval due to staff shortages. BER is Germany's second-least popular airport, according to a poll by claims management company AirHelp, after former military airfield Frankfurt-Hahn. Although conditions have generally improved, a recommendation that passengers allow at least 2.5 hours to reach their flights sparked a storm on social media.

There were bitter comparisons with the capital's decommissioned airport Tegel, which was famed for direct access to check-in gates from a taxi drop-off point. Airport spokesman Jan-Peter Haack admitted BER had a rocky start but touted now "very stable" operations with nearly 20 million passengers served last year.

He said innovations like an option to book a time slot at the security gates at no extra cost and self-service check-in and bag-drop machines had cut the



Comfort Dog Benny, a Dachshund, is pictured during its mission at the Berlin Brandenburg Airport BER.

crush at various chokepoints. But on busy days, tempers can run high. The stress relief dogs, an idea from Los Angeles's international airport, have drawn "very good feedback" from BER passengers, Haack said.

"The dogs only approach people who are really receptive — no one is forced," he said. Elisabeth Tornow, 69, who travels often to the Swiss city of Basel to visit her family, said boarding particularly frayed her nerves. "I'm not the youngest anymore and you have to climb the stairs and get pushed around finding your seat," said the retired office manager.

Unable to manage the nighttime walks, Tornow had to let her own pet go when her husband died. Playing with Pepper, she said all airports could

be improved with a few furballs. "It just calms you down when a dog's around," she said. "I wish I had a treat with me."

'Tantrum over'

Trainer Joerg Utech, 63, volunteers with the Therapy Dogs Association Brandenburg and was on his third outing at BER. The former IT specialist said he first saw the dogs in action five years ago when his wife was dying of cancer at a care home. Since then, he's watched the animals charm and engage the elderly, help fidgety children focus in school and calm fearful air travelers. He said the patrols required a special kind of animal.

"They've got to have a calm temperament but love to play too," he said. "You have to be careful that you don't have them out for more than an hour though because this is a lot of work for a dog. And if one is having a bad day and is showing us he's unhappy then we stop immediately." Utech said screaming children remained the biggest challenge. "The first time we were here, a family came along with a child who really didn't want to sit in the stroller," he said. "My colleague was there immediately with Pepper who danced for a treat. The tantrum was over and the holiday could begin." — AFP



Comfort Dog Pepper, a Terrier Mix, gives the paw to its trainer during a mission at the Berlin Brandenburg Airport BER.

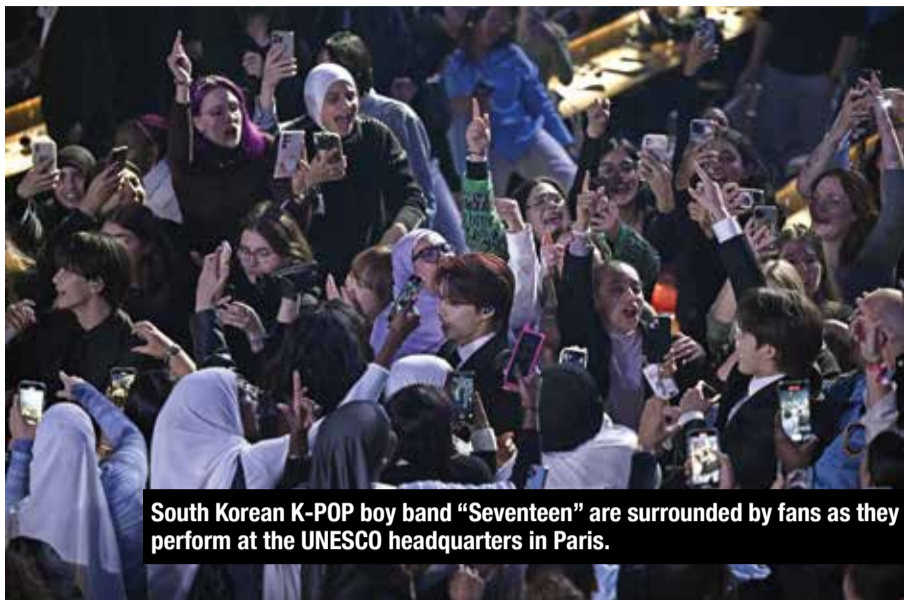


Comfort Dog Emi (right), a black Labrador Retriever, and Pepper, a Terrier Mix, are pictured during their mission at the Berlin Brandenburg Airport BER.

Lifestyle



South Korean singer Boo Seung-kwan, aka Seungkwan, delivers a speech after performing with K-POP boy band "Seventeen" at the UNESCO headquarters in Paris.



South Korean K-POP boy band "Seventeen" are surrounded by fans as they perform at the UNESCO headquarters in Paris.



South Korean K-POP boy band "Seventeen" performs on stage. — AFP photos

BOY BAND SEVENTEEN ROCKS UN AGENCY WITH K-POP

The UN's venerable culture agency caught the K-Pop fever late Tuesday as Korean boy band Seventeen turned a conference room into a bopping dance fest. With the stated aim of defending both the environment and education, the 13-member group sparked shouting and screaming among its mostly female audience. "The vibe was crazy, it was very cool," said a spokesman at UNESCO, not usually known for such relaxed language.



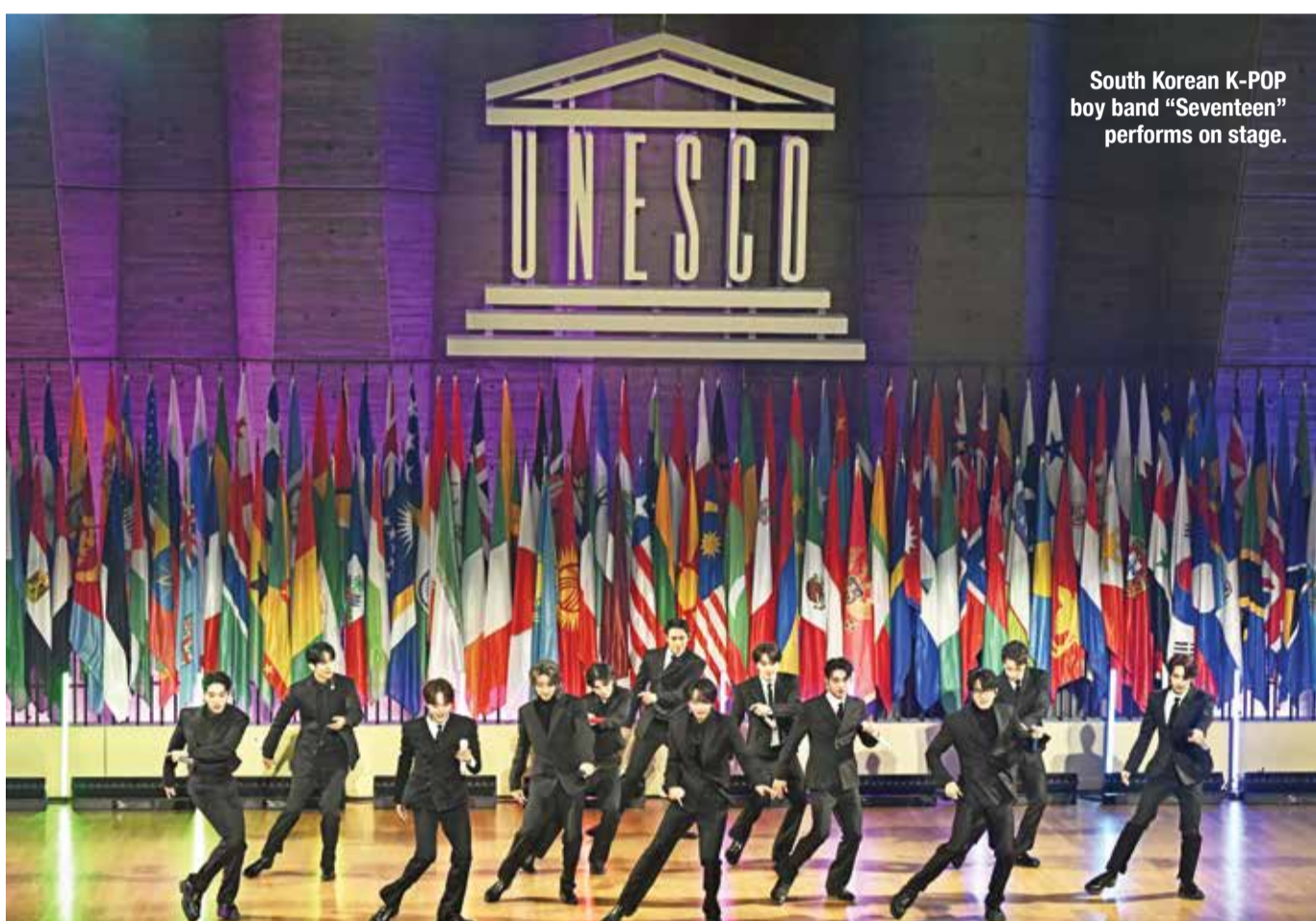
A fan takes a picture as South Korean K-POP boy band "Seventeen" performs on stage.

UNESCO's YouTube channel clocked up 145,000 visitors during the live-streamed gig, an all-time record for the agency. Some 57,000 messages were posted live. The 500 tickets for the concert, part of UNESCO's two-day Youth Fo-

rum event, were sold out in a flash, with many fans managing to book online before the link was even officially active, the spokesman said. Many stood in line in the pouring rain for hours hoping for a spot.

Seventeen, founded in 2015, is one of K-Pop's most successful acts, having sold 15 million album copies this year alone. The group's lyrics are neither political nor controversial, offering what the performers called "a positive message" in response to the world's problems. "I, along with the other members of the group, would like to take this time to share with all the young people of the world the importance of nature, the value of striving for a better future, the importance of education, and our personal stories of how we have grown closer to our dreams, one step at a time," band member Seungkwan told the audience ahead of the concert.

His band mate Mingyu said that, with their first earnings, Seventeen's members had bought 13 goats which they gifted to children in Tanzania. Band member Joshua added that the group last year had begun collecting donations to help build a school in Malawi. Siam, a 24-year-old fan, told AFP she had enjoyed the gig, including the band's messages that she called "impactful and engaging". — AFP



South Korean K-POP boy band "Seventeen" performs on stage.

US woman with rare double uterus expecting babies in both

It's double trouble, with a unique twist: A 32-year-old woman from Alabama who was born with two uteruses is now pregnant in both. Kelsey Hatcher, who is documenting her story on her Instagram account "doublehatchlings," knew from the age of 17 she has "uterus didelphys," a rare condition where a person has a double uterus,



thought to affect about 0.3 percent of females. It was during a routine eight-week ultrasound visit in May that the massage therapist and mother-of-three learned not only that she was having twins this time around—but that a fetus was present in each of her uteruses.

"We were kind of blown away! During that first ultrasound we had LOTS of laughs," she wrote in an Instagram post. "Most likely what happened is that she ovulated separately and had one egg come down each fallopian tube, meaning coming down on each side of the uterus, and then sperm traveled up on each separate uterus



and fertilization occurred separately," Shweta Patel, the obstetrician-gynecologist caring for Hatcher at the University of Alabama at Birmingham's Women & Infants Center, told ABC's "Good Morning America."

Although women with a double

uterus often face pregnancy complications, all three of Hatcher's previous children were born healthy at full term. Pregnancies in both uteruses are exceedingly rare—Hatcher said she was told the odds were 1 in 50 million—with the last widely known case occurring in Bangladesh in 2019 when Arifa Sultana, then 20, gave birth to healthy twins 26 days apart.

Hatcher is hoping to go into labor and give medicated natural birth to both Baby A and Baby B, or "the girlies" as she affectionately calls them, with a due date of Christmas. Both are said to be "thriving." But the uteruses will contract at different times, which could be minutes, hours or even days apart, and Kelsey and her husband Caleb Hatcher are aware Cesarean sections—for one, or both—could be needed, depending on how things unfold. "They like to tell me at every doctor's visit that 'You are aware, we've never had a situation like this before, this is a new case for us altogether'...But I feel like I have the best team for this situation and I'm at the best hospital at Alabama for what's going on," she said. — AFP

'Weird puking bird' tops New Zealand's avian beauty contest

A "weird puking bird" with a bizarre mating dance has won New Zealand's annual avian beauty contest, triumphing after British comedian John Oliver launched an unlikely global campaign. The unfancied Australasian crested grebe soared to an unexpected victory in the Bird of the Century ballot on Wednesday, backed by voters from far-flung cities including Tokyo, London and Paris. Oliver used his popular television show to meddle in New Zealand's beloved competition, urging viewers to back the species more commonly known by its Maori name "puteketeke".

Baffled organizers were soon in a flap as tens of thousands of votes poured in from countries across the globe, briefly crashing counting systems. With a striking plumage of black, white and brown, New Zealand's online bird encyclopaedia celebrates the water-loving puteketeke as a "majestic and distinctive" species. Oliver, meanwhile, less charitably dubbed it the "weird puking bird". Puteketeke are known for eating their own feathers in an effort to trigger their gag reflex and throw up parasites, said competition organizer Nicola Toki from conservation group Forest and Bird.

"Puteketeke began as an outside contender, but was catapulted to the top spot thanks to its unique looks, adorable parenting style—and propensity for puking," Toki said. They are also known for a strange and elaborate mating ritual which they perform with gusto but apparently limited success—it is believed New Zealand's puteketeke population has dwindled below 1,000. It involves enticing a potential mate with weeds dangling from their beaks, before chest bumping them and engaging in a chorus of chirps that experts have called the "growling cat display". "I have never identified with anything more," Oliver said.

56,000. But Oliver's meddling and so-called "fowl play" has also upset many in the bird-proud nation, with organizers forced to discard tens of thousands of suspect votes—including 40,000 cast by a single person for a penguin.



This handout photo shows a pair of Australasian crested grebes, known in New Zealand by its Maori name "puteketeke", on Lake Alexandrina in MacKenzie Country, New Zealand's South Island. — AFP photos

"We know birds inspire incredible passion, but we encourage people to channel that passion into productive efforts rather than trying to rig an election," Toki said. Birdwatcher Michael Burton-Smith told local media the overseas votes "ruffled the integrity" of the campaign. The good-natured competition is never short of controversy, with past polls plagued by suspicious numbers of Russian votes, and accusations that neighboring Austrians were trying to rig the competition. The kakapo, a chubby flightless parrot resembling a green-feathered bowling ball, was disqualified from last year's competition because it had already won too many times. — AFP

Japan movie director slams treatment of showbiz stars

Takeshi Kitano, one of Japan's most popular TV comedians and film directors, hit out Wednesday at the country's entertainment sector after two reported deaths blamed on abuse and overwork. Japanese media reported on Tuesday that one of late pop supremo Johnny Kitagawa's many alleged victims of sexual abuse had killed himself. The same day the chairman of the 110-year-old all-female musical theatre group Takarazuka Revue said he was stepping down over the recent death of one of its actresses.

"I wouldn't go as far as to say that is slavery as such, but in the entertainment

world, particularly as it is in Japan, there has been this culture of treating people as commodities, as objects to be shown off in order to make money," said Kitano, an internationally acclaimed movie director better known in Japan as a comedian and TV host. However, speaking at a packed news conference ahead of the release of his new movie, "Kubi", the 76-year-old director of "Hana-bi" (1997) and star of "Battle Royale" (2000) said things were slowly improving.

"There are many organizations or institutions within the entertainment world, they're still very much functioning with these kinds of structures or these kinds of ways. I think within Japan now this is starting to disappear," he said. In September, Japan's boyband empire Johnny & Associates admitted that its founder Kitagawa sexually assaulted young would-be stars over decades until his death aged 87 in 2019.

Allegations about Kitagawa swirled for decades but it was not until this year that they ignited full-on soul-searching



Japanese movie director Takeshi Kitano attends his press conference at the Foreign Correspondents' Club of Japan, in Tokyo. — AFP

following a BBC documentary and denunciations by victims. The 25-year-old Takarazuka Revue actress's lawyer said last week that she had killed herself in September after being bullied and overworked by senior members of the group founded in 1913. — AFP

'Alarmingly aggressive campaign'

Oliver, the star of US television show Last Week Tonight, hijacked the vote with his self-styled "alarmingly aggressive campaign" after discovering the competition was not restricted to New Zealanders. He said he erected billboards imploring the people of Mumbai, Tokyo, Paris and London to have their say. Organizers said they ended up tallying over 350,000 votes sent from almost every nation on the planet—smashing the previous record of

Sports

Australia rely on title wins and 'extra leg' in World Cup s-final

Rain is threatening the contest with downpours forecast in the eastern city

KOLKATA: Australia skipper Pat Cummins said his players will draw on experience from previous title wins in their World Cup semi-final clash with South Africa, spurred on by Glenn Maxwell's heroics having given them "an extra leg".

Five-time winners Australia went down to the Proteas in the league stage by 134 runs before they won seven straight matches to make the semi-final in Kolkata on Thursday. Australia, who lost an ODI series in South Africa in September, have beaten their rivals twice in World Cup semi-finals.

"You start from scratch every time you play," Cummins told reporters. "They're a team we've played quite a lot and know quite well." "I think what helps us is we've got a lot of guys that have been in this situation before that have won the one-day World Cup, T20 World Cup, various other tournaments in big moments. So, I think that really helps. You can draw on that in the middle of the contest."

The most dramatic World Cup semi-final between the two teams was a tied match in Edgbaston in 1999 with Australia moving into the final due to a better group stage finish. Cummins said "the 99 World Cup one, it's kind of folklore, isn't it? I've seen that replay heaps of times, you hear the stories."

Cummins, along with David Warner, Steve Smith, Glenn Maxwell, Mitchell Marsh, Mitchell Starc and Josh Hazlewood was part of Australia's 2015 World Cup triumph at home and their maiden T20 World Cup title win in Dubai in 2021.

At this World Cup, Australia began with two losses including a defeat to India in their opener but have been on a roll since and Cummins takes inspiration

from the winning streak. "You can either build it up as the most important game of your life, or you can business as usual, really," Cummins said.

"And I think with experience, I think just keeping it pretty chilled and business as usual for our group seems to be the way to go. So, you draw back on those past wins but you also just draw back on the last few weeks and know that us at our best is good enough."

'An extra leg'

Australia have witnessed some brilliant individual performances including an unbeaten 201 from Maxwell in their dramatic win over Afghanistan and a match-winning 177 not out from Mitchell Marsh against Bangladesh. Maxwell defied predictions and played through cramps from a dire 91-7 to pull the team to victory in their chase of 292 at Mumbai's Wankhede Stadium. "As a team you grow an extra leg because you feel like you can win a match from anywhere and having someone like 'Maxi' in your team... he's a superstar, he's a freak, he can win a game from anywhere. Pretty glad he's in our team."

Rain is threatening the contest with downpours forecast in the eastern city on Thursday and during Friday's reserve day. "We'll turn up, expect to play a 50-over match tomorrow, any of that shifts on us well. I'm sure in real time we can kind of adjust as needed," said Cummins. "In terms of a short turnaround, it's fine. We've played lots of ODIs where you're playing on Friday, flying to a different city playing on the Sunday. So, it's not too big of a deal." The final is on Sunday at the world's biggest cricket stadium in Ahmedabad. — AFP



KOLKATA: Australia's Cameron Green (2L) delivers a ball during a practice session ahead of their 2023 ICC Men's Cricket World Cup one-day international (ODI) semi-final match against South Africa at the Eden Gardens in Kolkata. — AFP

Babar Azam resigns as Pakistan captain after World Cup flop

LAHORE: Babar Azam said Wednesday he was resigning as Pakistan captain in all three formats following the team's Cricket World Cup flop but will continue playing for the national team. "Today, I am stepping down as the captain of Pakistan in all formats," Azam announced on X, formerly Twitter, after meeting Pakistan Cricket Board chief Zakar Ashraf in Lahore.

"It's a difficult decision but I feel it is the right time for this call. I will continue to represent Pakistan as a player in all three formats." Azam, 29, had been leading the side since November 2019 but after the failure to reach the World Cup semi-finals in India his position was immediately under threat.

"I am here to support the new captain and the team with my experience and dedication," added Azam. "I want to express my sincere thanks to the Pakistan Cricket Board for entrusting me with this significant responsibility."

Shan Masood is tipped to lead the Test side while Shaheen Shah Afridi is the likely candidate for the white ball captaincy, but no official announcement has been made. Azam said his journey had been a rollercoaster ride which culminated in a record of four wins and five losses at the World Cup.

As well as suffering an eighth defeat in eight meetings at World Cups against arch-rivals India, he also oversaw a first loss to neighbours Afghanistan. "I vividly remember the moment when I received the call from the PCB to lead Pakistan in 2019. Over the past four years, I've experienced many highs and lows on and off the field," said Azam.

"But I wholeheartedly and passionately aimed to maintain Pakistan's pride and respect in the cricket world." Ranked as the number one batsman before the World Cup, Azam failed to score big runs in India, finishing with 320 without a century over nine games. Azam led Pakistan in 20 Tests, winning ten, losing six and drawing the other four. In 43 ODIs, Pakistan won 26, losing 16 with one no result. In the shortest format, Azam led Pakistan to the semi-final of the Twenty20 World Cup in 2021 and a runners-up finish a year later.

In 71 T20Is, he enjoyed 41 wins, 23 losses with seven no results. Team director Mickey Arthur and head coach Grant Bradburn also held discussions with Ashraf but they are likely to remain in their positions. Pakistan has a tough tour of Australia coming up where they play three Tests, starting in Perth from December 12. They have lost all of their last 14 Tests in the country with their most recent victory coming back in 1995. — AFP



Pakistan's captain Babar Azam

Annual shooting championship kicks off

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah Annual Shooting Championship started at Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Olympic Shooting Complex yesterday (Wednesday) declaring the start of the 2023-2024 season with large participation by Kuwait shooters as well as shooters from the army, police and National Guard Associations, all competing for the championship title.

Secretary General of the Kuwait and Arab Shooting Federations Obaid Al-Osaimi said the championship includes the Olympic trap, skeet, for men and women, air pistol and rifle for men and women, 50 meter rifle 3 positions for men, 25 meter rapid pistol for men and the Olympic and compound archery for men and women.

He said the Higher Organizing Committee and its subcommittees completed all preparations in time to ensure the success of this dear event. He



Obaid Al-Osaimi

said the ranges and equipment are at its optimum conditions to ensure a successful launch as the event is officiated by highly experienced Kuwaiti referees who participated in officiating continental and international events.

Al-Osaimi thanked, on behalf of Chairman and board members as well as the shooting community, HH the Crown Prince for his patronage and support of this annual championship and his continued support for the shooters. He said that the support and care of the Crown Prince constituted a strong motive to develop it at all levels locally and internationally specially when he was deputy chief of Kuwait National Guard and his effective role during the signing of the joint cooperation between Kuwait Shooting Sport Club and the National Guard.

Al-Osaimi thanked the Public Authority for Sport as well as all ministries and entities that support the efforts of the shooting club and federation.



RunKuwait longest running charity race in Kuwait

KUWAIT: Fawzia Sultan Healthcare Network (FSHN) has successfully concluded the 11th edition of its annual RunKuwait Charity Race. As the primary fundraising initiative of FSHN, this event champions its non-profit mission to facilitate access to essential child healthcare services for families. The race began at 7:30 a.m. on Saturday, November 11, 2023, at Murouj, with extensive participation.

FSHN said: "Every year, our goal is to enhance RunKuwait, with a keen focus on raising awareness about our non-profit mission. Recognized as the longest-running charity race in Kuwait, this event owes its success to the unwavering support over eleven consecutive years. This commitment is crucial for us to continue providing necessary clinical care to children in need, either for free or at a subsidized cost."

FSHN added: "Thanks to our mission and the community's overwhelming support, we are able to offer free treatment to 30% of children in need at our Children's Evaluation and Rehabilitation Center. We take pride in our high-quality healthcare services, administered by a team renowned for their academic credentials, extensive experience,

and crucial clinical skills, in line with international clinical standards."

In appreciation of its sponsors, FSHN said: "We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all our partners. Their consistent and generous support underscores their commitment to social responsibility. We eagerly anticipate furthering this partnership, aiming to expand its scope in future endeavors, to achieve the non-profit objectives of Fawzia Sultan Healthcare Network."

This year's RunKuwait Charity Race was backed by Murouj, Agility, AUK - American University of Kuwait, Kuwait Proteins Company (Alpro, Quest, Vieve), Sultan, Chery Alghanim, KDD, Ali Abdulwahab Al Mutawa, Intersport, GULF INSURANCE GROUP (GIG), Kuwait Financial Centre "Markaz", ASAR - Al Ruwayeh & Partners, Kuwait Hospital, Alshall Consulting Co., Al Nibras schools, Diet Care, Hiit Fit Transformation, Aquafina, Below Zero, Al-Rai Newspaper, Al-Anba Newspaper, Al-Seyassah Newspaper, Al-Jarida newspaper, Kuwait Times, Kuwait News.

The event expanded this year to include a full family day with numerous activities, and for the first time, children were encouraged to participate in a 1K run. The inclusion of children not only added enjoyment to the event, but also reinforced the spirit of community and solidarity.

A key highlight at the event was the introduction of an awareness program through the 'Teddy Bear Clinic', which aims to make clinical visits less intimidating for children. In this innovative program,

children engaged in a mock clinic, aiding in the treatment of teddy bears under the supervision of FSHN's clinical team. The program aims to acquaint children with how to manage basic health concerns such as in order to enhance their self-reliance.

Acknowledging the athletic achievements, FSHN stated: "The winners in various categories for the 5KM & 10KM races were honored, with outstanding performances from Haya Al-Refai and Abdulrahman Al-Kanderi in the 10KM, and Haya Al-Fares and Fahad Al-Azmi in the 5KM races. Every participant, whether competing or supporting the cause, received a medal at the finish line, joining in the day's festive sports activities."



Sports

Serial winner Alonso has soaring Leverkusen dreaming of title

'With a little bit of good work or change of mood and confidence, we could do better'

LEVERKUSEN: With 16 wins and a draw in 17 matches in all competitions, Xabi Alonso's Bayer Leverkusen could scarcely have had a better start to the season. A serial winner in a club career which included stints at Liverpool, Real Madrid and Bayern Munich, Alonso was a key member of the Spain team which broke through for a first World Cup victory in 2010, bookended by two European Championships.

Alonso retired in 2017 and moved into coaching, masterminding Real Sociedad B's promotion to the second division for the first time since the early 1960s. He came to Leverkusen in October 2022, with the club wallowing in the relegation zone.

Despite some early wobbles, winning only one of his first seven games, Alonso took them to sixth place by the season's end and a Europa League semi-final. Leverkusen's brilliant start to 2023-24 has fans dreaming of a first-ever Bundesliga title. But even away from Germany's football-mad industrial Rhine-Ruhr region, plenty believe one of the game's premier players is becoming the next elite manager.

'Big potential'

In the Bundesliga, Leverkusen have picked up 31 of 33 points, equalling the record set in 2015-16 by Pep Guardiola's Bayern — where Alonso featured in midfield. Alonso told AFP and other media there is no secret behind his approach.

"I talk, work, show, improve, do collective training, individual training. I don't know the name of the techniques: it's face-to-face conversation." The coach said he knew his side had "big potential" when taking over. "With a little bit of good work or change of mood and confidence, we could do better".

While Leverkusen's pass-heavy style recalls that of Guardiola, Alonso rejected simple comparisons. "Not tiki-taka" Alonso said, explaining "many times tiki-taka is a little bit defensive possession. I have played in it, but we have other things."

Alonso's footballing philosophy might be well-defined, but the coach was careful to emphasise it is not rigid. It is clear that he understands the importance of player agency, saying "I'm not a fundamentalist that demands we have to play a certain way." "No, because you (the coach) are not the most important person. The other guys (players) are more important than you."

"I was encouraged to have my own creativity on the pitch, to make my own decisions. It's not about being robots... They have the knowledge and the quality to decide what is good." Viral videos show the 41-year-old firing perfect passes across the pitch with all the control of his playing days.

The former central midfielder smiles when asked if he is the team's best

passer and admits he misses playing the game. "I shouldn't say it, but yes. I miss (playing). It's not the same" Alonso said of coaching "playing is better, playing is much better." Former Arsenal captain Granit Xhaka, 31, arrived in summer and said the coach has already improved his game. "Alonso is showing me many, many small details on the pitch. It's something special".

'Neverkusen' no more?

Leverkusen's five second-place finishes, along with losing the 2002 Champions League final to Real Madrid, have given rise to the unwanted 'Neverkusen' moniker. Alonso, however, shot down talk of pipping perennial Bundesliga winners Bayern to the title. "The challenge now is not against Bayern. It's against what we can do, how far we can reach, and whether we deserve to be in that position."

"If we are here in this position in April, for sure, we will see, but for now it's too early. The challenge is to prove we can be consistent." The last coach to upend Bayern's Bundesliga dominance was former Borussia Dortmund, and now Liverpool, manager Jurgen Klopp.

Former Red Alonso describes Klopp as "unbelievable", saying the manager had returned Liverpool to its place among the "top, top clubs in the world".

"I would have loved to be coached by Jurgen Klopp. How he's able to de-



Spanish coach Xabi Alonso

linking him to former club Real. "I don't know when that moment will come," Alonso said of leaving Leverkusen, explaining "my feeling right now is here and my mind is 100 percent here."

"I'm enjoying it here and have many reasons to be positive about the future." Known for adept decision-making as a player, Alonso said he would "not be pushed" by others into a decision. "I will take my own decisions when I feel it is the right moment." — AFP

'100 percent here'

Alonso's success in Leverkusen has not gone unnoticed, with speculation

Giroud banned for two games after Lecce tirade

MILAN: Olivier Giroud has been banned for two games for aiming a volley of abuse at officials at the end of AC Milan's dramatic and controversial 2-2 draw at Lecce, Serie A said on Tuesday. France striker Giroud was dismissed in stoppage time at the Stadio Via del Mare on Saturday afternoon after aiming "abusive expressions" at referee Rosario Abisso following an initial booking for dissent.

Giroud, who has scored eight times this season, was then shown a straight red card and will now miss home matches against Fiorentina and Frosinone after the international break. Abisso was at the centre of controversy after Lecce were denied a stunning comeback from two goals down when shortly after Giroud's sending off Roberto Piccoli fired home what looked like being an incredible winner from distance.

However, the strike was chalked off for Piccoli standing on Malik Thiauw's foot before receiving the ball. That decision sparked fury in the previously delirious stands and enraged club president Saverio Sticchi Damiani, as well as Lecce's players and training staff.

Saverio Sticchi Damiani has been banned until December 4 for "intimidatory behaviour towards match officials" and threatening them in the dressing rooms after the match. He then alluded to a conspiracy



LECCE: AC Milan's French forward #9 Olivier Giroud receives a red card during the Italian Serie A football match between Lecce and AC Milan at the Ettore Gardiniero stadium in Lecce. — AFP

when he accused Abisso and the VAR officials of "splitting hairs" to find a way to rule out the goal.

The club's sporting director Stefano Trinchera was also banned for three matches and fined 10,000 euros (\$10,900) for similar offences aggravated by

"blasphemy", while CEO Sandro Mencucci was suspended until November 27. Being saved from defeat did little for Milan however, as Stefano Pioli's side fell eight points behind league leaders and local rivals Inter Milan. — AFP

knowledge of the contract negotiations, reported that Hayes' deal would run through 2027 and see her earn a salary that was "close if not equal" to the \$1.6 million earned by US men's football coach Gregg Berhalter.

Hayes will see out her duties with Chelsea in the WSL and then formally take up her US role next year, two months before the 2024 Olympics in Paris, where the Americans will be looking to recapture the gold medal they last won in 2012. Hayes is one of the most respected figures in the world of women's football, leading Chelsea to six WSL titles, five FA Cups and two league cups. In 2021 she took Chelsea to the final of the women's Champions League and was named FIFA's women's coach of the year.

The English coach, who started her coaching career in women's club football in the United States in 2001 after a promising playing career was cut short by injury, will now be handed the task of returning the USA to the pinnacle of women's football.

The US women have dominated women's international football for much of the past decade, winning back-to-back World Cups in 2015 and 2019. However the Americans were bundled out of the last World Cup in Australia and New Zealand in August in the last 16 -- the team's



Chelsea's English manager Emma Hayes

worst-ever showing at a World Cup. Vlatko Andonovski left as coach in the aftermath. Hayes said her appointment was the realisation of a lifelong dream, adding that the job was simply impossible to turn down. "I've dreamed about doing this job from my days as a coach in my early twenties," Hayes said. — AFP

26th Asian League Handball Champions begins Nov 17

KUWAIT: The 26th Asian League Handball Club Champions will be held from November 17th until November 27th under the patronage of Commerce and Industry Minister, State Minister for Youth Affairs Mohammad Al-Aiban.



Mohammad Al-Aiban

The tournament is hosted by Qadisiya Sports Club and matches will be at the Late Sheikh Saad Al-Abdallah halls complex in Sabah Al-Salem area. Participating teams began arriving in Kuwait Tuesday starting with Lebanon's team, Sharja from UAE, Arabi from Qatar, Jaish from Iraq, Gulf from Saudi Arabia and the rest of team are expected to arrive today.

12 teams will participate and are divided into two groups, the first include: Najma from Bahrain, who are the defending champion, Kuwait, Gharrafa from Qatar and Gulf from Saudi Arabia from Palestine, Golden Falcon from India, while the second group include the host Qadisiya, Sai from India, Arabi from Qatar, Jaish from Iraq, Sidon from Lebanon and Sharja from UAE.

Bonmati, Putellas star as Barca win Women's Champions League opener

PARIS: Ballon d'Or winner Aitana Bonmati and Alexia Putellas both scored twice as Barcelona began their defence of the Women's Champions League title on Tuesday with a comprehensive 5-0 victory over Benfica, while a ruthless Lyon hit nine against Slavia Prague. Barcelona are aiming to win the Champions League for the third time in four seasons and their strength in depth was summed up by the presence of six players in their starting line-up who played in August's World Cup final in Sydney, when Spain beat England 1-0. A crowd of fewer than 5,000 watched Putellas, who was a substitute in the World Cup final after missing almost all of last season due to a serious knee injury, head in the opener with quarter of an hour played. — AFP

Classifieds

Hospitals & Clinics

Hospitals

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

Clinics

Kaizen center	25716707
Rawda	22517733

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

Change of Name

I, Shaik Fathima W/o Server Ali, Holder of Indian Passport No. M6102861, R/o. D.No. 1/73, Masjid street, Obili Village & Post, Pengalur Mandal, Annamayya Dist, Andhra Pradesh., have changed my name as Adapala Santhamma (old name) to Shaik Fathima (new name) **#4558 - 16-11-2023**

I, Adapala Santhamma W/o A.Venkata Subbaiah (old name), R/o D.No.1/73, Obili Village and Post. Pengalur Mandal, Annamayya Dist., A.P, hereby changed my name and my husband's name as S. Fathima

W/o Server Ali Mohammed (new name) **#4557 - 15-11-2023**

I, Sunny holder of Indian Passport No. - T1939237, Indian permanent address- Village Bajrawar Bajraur Hoshiarpur Punjab-146104, India, present hereby declare that henceforth my name will be read as Sunny (Given Name) and Pathania (Surname). **#4555 - 14-11-2023**

ISAIFEE (current name in passport) holding of Indian Passport NO. MO404358 Having permanent Address Jawad Darwaza, Pipli Chowk, Nimbahera, Chittor-

garh, Rajasthan.India 312601 residing in Kuwait at present, hereby declare that henceforth my name will be read as : SAIFEE (Given Name) and BOHRA (Surname) **#4556 - 14-11-2023**

I, MD Ibadullah S/o Atallah holder of Indian passport No. t8987281 having permanent address vill-sukhipur, PO-Badshahnagar, PS-Tikaitnagar, Barabanki, Pin: 225401, Uttar Pradesh, India residing in Kuwait at present, hereby declare that henceforth my name will be read as: Mohammad Ibadullah (given name) and Khan.(surname) **#4067- 14-11-2023**

Automated enquiry about the Civil ID card is 1889988

Kohli, Shami star as India beat New Zealand to reach World Cup final

Kohli scores record-breaking 50th one-day international hundred



MUMBAI: India's Virat Kohli celebrates after scoring a century (left), while India's Mohammed Shami (right) celebrates after taking the wicket of New Zealand's captain Kane Williamson during the 2023 ICC Men's Cricket World Cup one-day international (ODI) first semifinal between India and New Zealand at Wankhede Stadium on Nov 15, 2023. — AFP



MUMBAI: Virat Kohli scored a record-breaking 50th one-day international hundred and Mohammed Shami took seven wickets as India beat New Zealand by 70 runs to reach the Cricket World Cup final on Wednesday. Kohli made 117 to surpass the ODI century record he had shared with India great Sachin Tendulkar, and Shreyas Iyer clubbed a rapid 105 in a commanding total of 397-4.

New Zealand were then dismissed for 327 despite Daryl Mitchell's 134 with paceman Shami taking a sensational career-best 7-57. The Black Caps had hope of an improbable win during a third-wicket stand of 181 between captain Kane Williamson and Mitchell at the Wankhede Stadium.

Shami, however, all but ended the chase with two wickets in three balls during the 33rd over. Star batsman Williamson fell for 69 when he flicked Shami—who had dropped him on 52 -- straight to Suryakumar Yadav at deep square leg.

And 220-3 became 220-4 when Shami had Tom Latham lbw for a duck. Shami then went on to better his previous one-day international best of 5-18 against Sri Lanka at the Wankhede earlier in the tournament by dismissing Mitchell, Southee and last man Lockie Ferguson. In Sunday's final, India will

face either Australia or South Africa who play their semi-final on Thursday.

Earlier, Virat Kohli struck his 50th one-day international century, taking him past Sachin Tendulkar's all-time record, but he will remain wary of any comparisons with his fellow cricket icon. Kohli, who equalled Tendulkar's feat of 49 tons on his 35th birthday on November 5, reached the milestone in his 279th innings in the World Cup semi-final against New Zealand at Mumbai's Wankhede Stadium.

"Virat never played for records. They happened as he progressed," Kohli's biographer Vijay Lokapally told AFP. "His batting skills and work ethic combined to create magic. Longevity leads to milestones and that is what Virat has inherited from stalwarts like Sunil Gavaskar, Kapil Dev and Sachin Tendulkar."

Kohli has invoked a similar emotional response from cricket-crazy Indian and global fans that was once enjoyed by Tendulkar. His number 18 jersey has an overwhelming presence in all Indian grounds. The number was selected because he made his ODI debut on August 18, 2008, and to honour his father, Prem, who passed away on December 18, 2006.

With more than 26,000 international runs and a total of 80 centuries across three formats, comparisons with Tendulkar are obvious but Lokapally disagrees. "He dislikes this comparison. He has his identity. Sachin Tendulkar has his. Their styles differ," said Lokapally.

"Sachin has faced some ferocious bowlers. Virat has dominated too. Sachin is incomparable. If Virat is enjoying his cricket today it is because of the reputation Indian cricket acquired courtesy of Sachin Tendulkar."

On Wednesday, Kohli reached the milestone with a double off Lockie Ferguson. He jumped for joy and sank to his knees with Tendulkar, his Bollywood wife Anushka Sharma, and football great David Beckham applauding from the stands at the Wankhede. India skipper Rohit Sharma is a distant third on the list with 31 ODI hundreds. After his record knock, Kohli said "The great man (Tendulkar) just congratulated me. It feels like a dream. Too good to be true."

'Icing on the cake'

Tendulkar on "X", formerly Twitter, wrote, "I couldn't be happier that an Indian broke my record. And to do it on the biggest stage - in the

World Cup semi-final - and at my home ground is the icing on the cake."

Known to wear his heart on his sleeve, Kohli has never shied away from a battle on the field and despite his regular brush with controversies the star remains one of the most popular cricketers. Fans invading the pitch to touch his feet and take selfies remain regular occurrences at Indian venues.

He is also fabulously wealthy, leading India's list of highest-paid athletes with earnings of \$33.9 million mainly from brand endorsements, according to analysts Sportico's 2022 list. Kohli went through an extended lean patch that spread across since 2021, failing to reach three figures in over 1,000 days.

He quit as T20 skipper in late 2021 and was soon sacked from the ODI captaincy. Kohli gave up leading the Test side too and later talked about his mental struggles during his dry phase, including how he had been "snappy" around wife Anushka.

Kohli then hit his first hundred after a gap of 1,020 days in the 2022 T20 World Cup and has not looked back. When he made his 49th century on his 35th birthday 10 days ago, Anushka wrote on Instagram: "He is literally exceptional in every role in his life". — AFP

Sinner edges Djokovic to close in on ATP Finals' last four

TURIN: Jannik Sinner edged towards becoming the first ever Italian to reach the last four of the ATP Finals on Tuesday after a thrilling 7-5, 6-7 (5/7), 7-6 (7/2) win over Novak Djokovic. World number four Sinner needed a straight-sets victory in front of enthusiastic home support in Turin over tennis icon Djokovic to guarantee passage from the Green Group with a match to spare.

And while the 22-year-old couldn't quite make that happen, a superb performance gave him his first win in four attempts over Djokovic, who is bidding to win for a record seventh time at the year-ending tournament.

"It means a lot to me," said Sinner on court. "When you win against the world number one who has won 24 Grand Slams it's obviously in the top-top." Fans made an almighty din for Sinner, chanting his name to the rafters once he claimed victory in an exciting, three-hour contest which ran way past midnight at the Pala Alpitour.

Sinner has had the best year of his career and looks to be fulfilling the promise he has long shown, winning four titles this season including the Masters 1000 event at Toronto, and looks on form in Italy. He made the first breakthrough when he capitalised on Djokovic handing him advantage in game 11 with a double fault, moving 6-5 ahead with a big backhand before claiming the set with a service game to love.

Djokovic pulled level after a bruising second set in which neither player faced a single break point, but after fighting back from 4-2 down in the decider he wilted in the tie-break and ended his winning run at 20 matches. "In these kinds of matches very few opportunities will be presented and if you don't use them then the other player will," said Djokovic. "Some you win some you lose... I don't think I've done too many things wrong in terms of my game, he was just more decisive and courageous in the moments where he needed to be."

Both players' fate will be decided in the final round of group matches, with Djokovic facing Hubert Hurkacz who has stepped in for Stefanos Tsitsipas after the Greek pulled out of the tournament with a back injury against Sinner's next opponent Holger Rune.



TURIN: Italy's Jannik Sinner returns to Serbia's Novak Djokovic during their round-robin match on day 3 of the ATP Finals tennis tournament in Turin on November 14, 2023. — AFP

And Rune will have the benefit of having played just three games before being awarded a straight-sets win. Tsitsipas was trailing the opening set of his match with Finals debutant Rune 2-1 when he was forced to quit, handing his opponent his first ever win in the tournament. The sixth seed was loudly booed by the crowd who saw barely a quarter of an hour of singles play in the afternoon session, fans angered by him playing despite persistent rumours of injury. "I'm gutted that I wasn't able to finish the match," Tsitsipas, 25, told reporters.

"My doctors and the countless visits that I had in the last few days suggested that I play... Unfortunately I felt terrible on the court. I did what I could do in best possible way to be ready and fit for this match. But it didn't work out for me." Tsitsipas said after pulling out that he had felt problems during his warm up and that once on the court he felt too much pain to complete the match. "I've gone through pain during matches in the past... But this was clearly too much to handle and I had to take the difficult decision to do what I did," he said. — AFP

Jokic leads Nuggets past Clippers, Warriors and Wolves brawl

LOS ANGELES: Nikola Jokic scored 32 points as the Denver Nuggets preserved their unbeaten home record to send the Los Angeles Clippers spinning to a sixth straight defeat in the NBA's in-season tournament on Tuesday.

A roller coaster Western Conference Group B battle in Denver saw the NBA champions overturn a seven-point deficit midway through the fourth quarter to close out a 111-108 victory. The defeat was another bitter blow for the Clippers, who have now lost six games in a row since clinching the blockbuster signing of James Harden last month.

The Clippers looked to be poised to snap that losing streak after a magnificent performance from Paul George, who finished with 35 points while Harden added 21. Yet the battle-hardened savvy of Denver proved the difference down the stretch, with the Nuggets outscoring Los Angeles 19-9 in the final minutes of the fourth quarter to snatch victory.

"They'd lost five in a row so we knew they were going to play really aggressive," Jokic said. "But we were undefeated at home this season and we wanted to keep it like that," added the Serb, who had 16 rebounds and nine assists. Jokic was given scoring support from Aaron Gordon with 20 points while Reggie Jackson added 18.

In San Francisco, a fiery clash between the Golden State Warriors and Minnesota Timberwolves ended in a 104-101 victory for the visitors, who overturned a 12-point third-quarter deficit to snatch victory. The result was overshadowed by a spectacular melee in the first quarter which saw Golden State stars Klay Thompson and Draymond Green ejected along with Minnesota's Jaden McDaniels.

Thompson was given his marching orders after a tangle with McDaniels in center court that ended with the Warriors player's shirt ripped. Green was ejected for his part in the scuffle when he dragged away the Wolves' French star Rudy Gobert in a headlock.

'Ridiculous' ejection

Warriors coach Steve Kerr was incensed by the decision to toss Thompson and insisted that Green

had merely been defending a team-mate. "There is no way Klay should have been thrown out of the game," Kerr said. "He's running up the floor and the guy grabs his jersey and is pulling on him, so Klay pulls back... that was ridiculous."

On Green's dismissal, Kerr added: "Guys on the bench were telling us Rudy had Klay, that's why Draymond went at Rudy. That's all I know—it was a bizarre way to start the game, a minute and a half in."

In Philadelphia, Tyrese Haliburton scored 33 points as the Indiana Pacers ended the 76ers' eight-game winning streak with a 132-126 victory. Haliburton drained seven three-pointers and finished with 15 assists, seven rebounds and no turnovers in a virtuoso display against the pace-setting Sixers. — AFP



DENVER: Nikola Jokic of the Denver Nuggets puts up a shot over Ivica Zubac of the Los Angeles Clippers in the third quarter at Ball Arena on Nov 14, 2023. — AFP