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# 39 more Palestinians released

Hamas willing to extend truce • 4-year-old American girl freed



**RAMALLAH:** The crowd surrounds a Red Cross bus carrying Palestinians prisoners released from Zionist entity jails in exchange for hostages released by Hamas from the Gaza Strip, in Ramallah in the occupied West Bank early on Nov 26, 2023. — AFP photos

**JERUSALEM/DOHA:** A total of 39 Palestinians held by Zionist entity were released from prison on Sunday on the third day of a prisoner-hostage exchange, according to Zionist entity's Prison Service. The announcement came after 13 Zionist hostages were freed in the Palestinian territory under the deal, along with three Thais and a Russian-Zionist dual citizen. Meanwhile, a source close to Hamas said Sunday the movement was willing to extend the current truce with Zionist entity in Gaza for two to four days beyond its initial expiry on Monday.

"Hamas informed the mediators that the resistance movements were willing to extend the current truce by two to four days. The resistance believes it is possible to ensure the release of 20 to 40 Zionist prisoners," the source told AFP, referring to hostages seized in the October 7 attacks.

As part of agreed commitments, "39 Palestinian civilians were being released today in exchange for the release of 13 Zionist entity detainees from Gaza, in addition to a detainee holding Russian citizenship and three Thais," Majed Al-Ansari said earlier in a

post on X, formerly Twitter. Zionist entity's army separately said 13 of the released hostages were back on Zionist entity territory, and another four were on their way to Egypt.

Over the course of the four-day truce a total 50 civilian hostages are expected to be freed by Hamas. In exchange, 150 Palestinian prisoners are to be released, and humanitarian aid has been entering Gaza.

Prior to Sunday evening the truce had seen 26 Zionist entity hostages freed by Hamas in exchange for 78 Palestinian prisoners held in Zionist entity jails. As a

result of parallel negotiations led by Qatar, 14 Thais and one Filipino were also freed by the Palestinian militants.

A four-year-old American girl is safely in Zionist entity after being released on Sunday from captivity in Gaza, US President Joe Biden said as he urged the pause in Zionist entity-Hamas fighting be extended to allow for more hostage releases. "She's free and she's in Zionist entity now," Biden said in a hastily arranged appearance before the media after the Zionist army announced that 17 hostages were being freed by Hamas.

**Continued on Page 6**

## Kuwait pledges unwavering support for Gaza

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait is keen on continuing its support to the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip and this commitment is evident in the Kuwaiti air bridge which features the participation of more than 30 entities, said Minister of Social Affairs, Minister of Family and Childhood Affairs Sheikh Feras Al-Malek Al-Sabah on Sunday. The minister issued this statement to KUNA prior to the takeoff of two relief planes heading towards Al-Arish city, Egypt.

The departure of the aircraft brings the total of relief aid planes to 29. The minister revealed that the amount of relief aid sent to the people of Gaza since the start of the campaign reached a total of 850 tons. Kuwait Red Crescent Society's (KRCS) director of emergency management Yusef Al-Miraj affirmed that all Kuwaiti relief shipments had arrived inside the Gaza Strip. Al-Miraj explained that Sunday's KRCS relief flight consisted of 10 tons of materials, loaded with medical and relief supplies. The KRCS's volunteers will accompany the materials to Al-Arish airport and then to the Egyptian Red Crescent in preparation for handing it

**Continued on Page 6**

## GCC joint military drill led by Kuwait Army kicks off

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait's military kicked off on Sunday joint ground exercises in conjunction with Gulf Arab forces, sponsored by Acting Chief of the General Staff, Major General Eng Dr Ghazi Al-Shammeri. In a press release, Al-Shammeri, expressed admiration for all the attendees and for hosting such drill that brings together army ground forces from all GCC countries.

Al-Shammeri said Takamol (I) reflects on the continued development of the Peninsula Shield Forces, which is one of the evidences of the success of the joint Gulf action in its military aspect, whether through its operational participation or its implementation of exercises and training at various levels with the armed forces of the GCC countries.

The exercises are taking place in the country's northwestern Median Al-Adera and Al-Abraq areas, added the statement, urging the public to steer clear of the designated locations on the day of the drills for their safety. — KUNA



The joint ground exercises in conjunction with Gulf Arab forces organized by Kuwait's military.

## Pressure mounts on Zionists for longer Gaza pause

**JERUSALEM:** Zionist entity faces mounting pressure to extend a four-day pause in its war against Hamas. After hours of delay and acrimony that underscored the fragility of the truce, a second tranche of 13 Zionist hostages was freed on Saturday by Hamas in exchange for 39 Palestinian prisoners—the same number as the previous day.

A total of 15 foreigners have also

been released during the ceasefire—mediated for weeks by Qatar, the United States and Egypt—that marks the first breakthrough after seven weeks of relentless war.

Under the deal, 50 of the roughly 240 hostages held by Hamas will be freed over four days in exchange for 150 Palestinian prisoners, with a built-in extension mechanism to prolong the process as long as at least 10 Zionist entity captives are released each day.

That increases the number of hostages returned—and there is strong domestic pressure within Zionist entity to do so—but gives Hamas a longer window in which to regroup, recover, re-arm and ultimately return to

**Continued on Page 6**



Palestinians fleeing the north walk along the Salaheddine road in the Zeitoun district on the southern outskirts of Gaza City on Nov 26, 2023. — AFP





## Local

# Govt to explore new marketing ideas to boost Kuwaiti farmers

## Sheikh Feras Al-Sabah opens activities of Al-Nuwair Market



KUWAIT: Minister of Social Affairs, Family and Child Affairs Sheikh Feras Saud Al-Malik Al-Sabah tours Al-Nuwair market on Sunday.



A woman farmer explains about her products on display at Al-Nuwair Market.



The minister checks out a product during his tour of the market. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

KUWAIT: Minister of Social Affairs and Community Development and Minister for Women and Childhood Affairs Sheikh Feras Saud Al-Malik Al-Sabah affirmed full support to Kuwaiti farmers on Sunday, indicating that new ideas for marketing Kuwaiti products will be taken into consideration, in addition to finding points of sale to market their products in a way that ensures easy access to the consumer. The minister on Sunday opened Al-Nuwair Market which is dedicated to support the products of Kuwaiti farmers in cooperation with cooperative societies union.

Sheikh Feras Al-Sabah said in a press statement on the sidelines of the opening of the market at the Sabah Al-Salem Cooperative Society that the Kuwaiti product is of high quality, indicating that the products offered by farmers in the market inspire pride and honor. He

added that the launch of the activities of the Al-Nuwair Market for the second year in a row confirms the remarkable success achieved by this exhibition.

The minister expressed pride in the Kuwaiti products on display by farmers and reminded them of the role of former social affairs minister Mai Al-Baghli in launching the first edition of the exhibition. Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Sabah Al-Salem Cooperative Society Dr Mohammad Al-Ajmi stated in a similar statement that the exhibition will be held for two days in coordination with the Union of Consumer Cooperative Societies, pointing out the keenness to provide booths and advertisements free of charge by the union.

The Al-Nuwair Market exhibition is being held for the second year in a row under the supervision and sponsorship of the ministry of social affairs, without an in-



A woman vendor showcases her products.



termediary support or affiliation with any other party either from the private sector or from the public sector organizations. The exhibition aims to encourage local

farmers and owners of local products and shed light on the quality of the local agricultural products and other products such as apiaries, dairy products, etc. One of the

objectives of the exhibition is also to establish a direct relationship between producers and consumers that benefits both parties.—KUNA

## Kuwait's gesture for Palestine a new pillar of greatness: Envoy

By Rami Tahboub,  
Palestinian Ambassador to Kuwait

The decision of the Kuwait's Ministry of Health to prepare its hospitals to receive the wounded following the brutal aggression on the besieged Gaza Strip constitutes a new pillar in the edifice of the greatness of Kuwait and no tongue can express the gratitude of the Palestinian people to the country.



Rami Tahboub

We express our profound gratitude to the State of Kuwait, headed by His Highness the Amir, His Highness the Crown Prince, His Highness the Prime Minister and the great Kuwaiti people, old and young, on behalf of their brothers in the occupied State of Palestine since the first moment of the barbaric aggression. Every day, Kuwait honors us and overwhelms us with this love and this attachment to Palestine, its people and its cause.

What Kuwait has offered and continues to offer is a medal on the chest of every Palestinian man and woman. On behalf of His Excellency the President of the State of Palestine, President Mahmoud Abbas, and on behalf of the Palestinian people everywhere, I extend to the political leadership and the High Court all appreciation and gratitude for the unprecedented support. I pray to Almighty Allah to protect Kuwait and its people from all harms and to perpetuate the blessing of security and safety.

Long live Kuwait and long live Palestine!

## Winter solstice in Kuwait falls on Dec 22

KUWAIT: Al-Ojairi Scientific Center, Kuwait announced on Sunday that the winter solstice would fall on Dec 22. The winter solstice occurs when the sun becomes at its lowest daily maximum elevation in the sky, leading to short daytime hours and long evenings. The center said in a statement, obtained by KUNA that the same month would witness a group of astronomical events like the meteor showers called the Geminids.

This event is considered one of the brightest celestial shows with up to 120 meteors passing by the hour. It is visible for the human eye in the middle of December if the conditions are appropriate which will intensify by Dec 14 and 15. The center reported that during the fourth day of the month, the planet Mercury would be at its farthest from the sun and could be seen from the sky at night. The Moon's crescent would appear on day 12th of the month and the full moon on Dec 27, it concluded. — KUNA

## Top court jails ex-defense minister

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: The court of cassation, the highest in the country, on Sunday refrained from issuing a sentence against former prime minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah in connection with a major graft case known as the army fund corruption case.

But the court, whose rulings are final, sentenced former defense and interior minister, Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah to seven years in jail

## Burgan participates in UN's 'Orange the World' campaign

KUWAIT: As part of its dedication to fostering positive change in the Kuwaiti community, Burgan Bank is proud to announce its participation in the annual two-week United Nations (UN) campaign, Orange the World, aimed at raising awareness and combating gender-based violence. Symbolically using the color to signify a brighter future for women and girls, Burgan will light its headquarters up in orange, alongside other state-owned buildings in Kuwait.

The values of the international campaign align seamlessly with the Bank's social responsibility, as well as its support of the government's efforts to achieve the fifth goal of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as part of the national development plan and the vision of a New Kuwait 2035. Expressing her enthusiasm about joining the campaign for another year, Hessa Hussain Al-Najadah, Senior Manager - Corporate and CSR Communications at Burgan Bank, said: "At Burgan, we believe that by standing together, we can make a real difference in the lives of those affected by gender-based violence. Our participation in the UN's 'Orange the World' campaign is a testament to our unwavering commitment to building a safer and more equitable world for everyone, and to empowering women as vital building blocks of a developed society." Al-Najadah added: "Burgan Bank is committed to strengthening and advancing the contributions of women in society and advocating for their rights. Our ongoing efforts focus on providing unwavering support to women as we strive to foster a sustainable future that hinges on the

assurance of equal opportunities for women's progress. We start by implementing these principles within our organization and its culture, ensuring that all our staff members enjoy equal opportunities and privileges, free from any form of discrimination."

The "Orange the World" campaign, part of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) declaration to abolish violence against women and girls, takes place annually from November 25, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, to December 10, the International Human Rights Day. It seeks to shed light on the physical, emotional, and psychological harm gender-based violence causes, and to mobilize individuals, organizations, and communities to take action against it.

along with six former senior defense ministry officials after convicting them of stealing around KD 105 million. The court also ordered the convicts to return the KD 105 million and fined them double the amount embezzled by them.

Sheikh Jaber headed the cabinet since late 2011 but stepped down in 2019 after news about the graft case became public. He was detained but later freed on bail and allowed to travel abroad for medical treatment. All the defendants denied the accusations and said they were innocent.

In the meantime, the National Assembly's legal and legislative committee began on Sunday reviewing proposed bills to change the country's election system which a number of MPs have described as the main reform legislation in the country. The meeting was attended by Speaker Ahmad Al-Saadoun. The committee is expected to finalize

the draft law to be debated by the house on Dec 19. Several MPs demanded a fair distribution of voters among the constituencies.

Also, MP Mohammad Hayef said on Sunday he was informed that a new amnesty decree has been signed by the Amir involving the release of dozens of prisoners and the return of some revoked citizenship. There has been no official confirmation on the reported amnesty.

MP Abdulwahab Al-Issa on Sunday criticized the Assembly for not including the northern economic zone draft law for debate during Tuesday's session. The lawmaker said that based on the agreed legislation roadmap, the draft law should have been placed on the agenda for Tuesday's session, but the bill is absent. He said he will demand the inclusion of the bill, adding that it is expected to create as many as 200,000 new jobs for citizens.



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This campaign also seeks to support countries globally in their efforts to attain SDGs related to women, encompassing the empowerment of women, strengthening their rights, and enhancing their societal position. Additionally, it aims to increase awareness of women's crucial role in the development process. As part of its comprehensive social responsibility program, Burgan Bank is committed to leveraging its influence and resources to support human rights initiatives and campaigns. The Bank also demonstrates a keen commitment to bolstering various development initiatives in Kuwait, affirming its continuous support for the contributions made by all stakeholders towards development, ultimately benefiting the broader Kuwaiti society.

## Joint Kuwait military delegation visits Turkey

ANKARA: A joint delegation from the Kuwait's ministries of defense and interior, and the Kuwait Fire Force visited the Republic of Turkey on Saturday to discuss cooperation in the field of the defense industry.

The delegation, led by the Assistant Chief of Staff for the Administration and Manpower Authority Maj Gen Staff Dr Khaled Al-Kandari toured several factories specialized in producing military clothing to view and learn about the readiness, capabilities and manufacturing quality, according to a statement from the Kuwaiti Ministry of Defense. On the sidelines of the visit, the delegation met with the chief of the operations directorate at the Turkish General Staff and several military top brass. — KUNA



ANKARA: The joint delegation from the Kuwait's ministries of defense and interior, and the Kuwait Fire Force during the visit of the defense facilities in Republic of Turkey.



# Zain sponsors annual NUKS USA conference in Atlanta

## Company holds exciting programs and sports competitions for students



Sheikha Al-Zain Al-Sabah with Hamad Al-Musaibeh and NUKS USA members.



Zain recognized for supporting the conference.

**KUWAIT:** As part of its extended strategic partnership with the National Union of Kuwaiti Students in the United States of America (NUKS USA), and in continuation of its efforts to support student activities abroad, Zain has sponsored the 39th annual NUKS USA conference held in Atlanta, Georgia. The event was attended by Ambassador of Kuwait to the United States Sheikha Al-Zain Al-Sabah.

Zain's participation and support to this event, considered the biggest of its kind, came to reflect the company's commitment as the main supporter of NUKS USA for over 20 years. Under this ongoing strategic partnership, Zain supports a plethora of programs and student activities held for NUKS USA members throughout the year at both Kuwait and the US.

During his opening speech at the event, Zain Kuwait's Corporate Relations Department Manager Hamad Al-Musaibeh said: "This event presents an invaluable opportunity for us to engage with the biggest gathering of students abroad. Every year, we witness a great exchange of ideas and experiences between students and guests, and that is why we are committed – as a private sector company – to support such programs."

"Zain has always been at the forefront of national institutions that support our young people, and this is especially true as the Kuwaiti community is a relatively youthful one, where young people make up its biggest part. For this, we continue to dedicate most of our programs towards supporting and empowering this vibrant segment," he added.

Al-Musaibeh concluded: "We will continue to



From Zain's padel tournament for students in Atlanta.

make our resources available to invest in the country's next generation, because we believe that young people drive growth and progress in our communities. Zain's journey to empower the youth will continue, and we consider ourselves a main partner in the success of this event." This year, Zain joined the NUKS USA conference with several exciting programs and sports competitions that created a sense of national unity, including a padel tournament for male students,

a pickleball tournament for female students, on-stage entertainment segments, a special gathering for Kuwaitis in a café, and a sports panel that featured a local athlete who shared his experiences with the students.

For over 20 years, Zain continued to be the top supporter of NUKS USA by participating in a plethora of community programs, including the annual conference in the US, the annual orientation session in Kuwait, the local NUKS USA office to guide

new students, academic sessions, cultural seminars, sports competitions, entertainment programs, workshops, and more. The programs witness wide positive reaction and participation from students every year. Zain's support to NUKS USA comes in line with its pledge as a leading national company to provide bright and enthusiastic young Kuwaitis with a great social experience, as well as listen to their ideas and experiences while they pursue their education abroad.



## Kuwait University celebrates 57th anniversary Monday

**KUWAIT:** The Kuwait University marks the 57th anniversary of its inauguration on Nov 27, 2023 which was established in October 1966 and officially opened in November 1966.

The university commenced its activities with the establishment of the College of Science, Arts and Education and the University College for Girls with 418 students and 31 faculty members. Thanks to the efforts made towards its renaissance, the university has grown tremendously, and today it has 16 scientific and humanitarian faculties, nearly 40,000 students and more than

1,600 faculty members.

Kuwait University is the first public research university in Kuwait, and it is one of the Kuwaiti governmental institutions affiliated to the ministry of education and the ministry of Higher education, which operates under the supervision of the University Council, which is chaired by the minister of education and the minister of higher education.

Kuwait University seeks to provide quality education and contribute to the production, development and dissemination of knowledge and the qualification of human cadres, to achieve the development goals of the country and the needs of the society. Throughout its accredited journey for more than half a century, Kuwait University has been keen to be the first institution with clear and specific future visions and strategies. Kuwait University seeks to achieve the desired development goals in all fields of knowledge, be it economic or social in line with the aspirations and ambitions of



the State of Kuwait. From this standpoint, the university has directed its attention towards quality, innovation and sustainable development and adopted ideas that support the future vision of the State of Kuwait for the year 2035.



**KUWAIT:** Romanian Ambassador to Kuwait Mugurel Stanescu being presented a memento during his visit to Dasman Diabetes Institute on Sunday.

## Romanian envoy visits Dasman Diabetes Institute

**KUWAIT:** Romanian Ambassador to Kuwait Mugurel Stanescu paid a field visit to Dasman Diabetes Institute, which was established by Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences. The ambassador was met by Dr Qais Saleh Al-Duwairi, director General of Dasman Diabetes Institute. The ambassador's visit aimed at getting to know closely the important institutions in Kuwait and strengthening scientific cooperation with them. During his visit to the institute, many scientific and research topics, and issues of common interests between the two sides were discussed.

The ambassador was briefed about the institute's scientific progress, its importance, and its role in the service of scientific research in Kuwait. He also discussed ways to enhance joint research and scientific cooperation with the Institute officials. In turn, the ambassador praised the institute's impressive developments and achievements.



## KUNA takes part in media forum in Jeddah

**RIYADH:** Kuwait News Agency participated in the International Media Forum titled "The Role of Media in Inciting Hatred and Violence - Risks of Misinformation and Bias" held in Jeddah on Sunday.

The one day forum was organized by the Union of News Agencies of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (UNA) with a specific focus on the Palestinian cause and involved participant-led discussion sessions aimed at fostering optimal cooperation and understanding to attain the forum's intended objectives. Deputy Director General for Administrative and Financial Affairs Mohammad Al-Mannai and Director of Marketing and Public Relation Issam Al-Ruwayeh represented KUNA at the forum. — KUNA



## Manpower bars amendments to expats' data

KUWAIT: The Public Authority of Manpower (PAM) emphasized the prohibition of amending the work permit data of expatriates such as name, date of birth and nationality. If the employer wishes to do so, they must apply for a visa cancellation service for the worker to be recruited before two weeks from the date of issuance, and then review the ministry of interior to modify the worker's database and apply for issuing a new permit.

The Authority indicated that this decision was taken following a joint coordination with the ministry of interior. "The aim is to prevent any manipulations that were previously carried out by some with the aim of circumventing the rules and recruiting some workers of nationalities whose recruitment permits have been suspended."

On the other hand, the Authority confirmed that it will continue to legalize the issuance of work permits for all professions and activities for a full year with the aim of liquidating marginal labor and supporting the national skilled labor.

A study prepared by the PAM said: "The ministry of interior should intensify its efforts with the concerned authorities to remove marginal, fictitious and violating workers, and address travel ban issues for those whose residency has expired."

The study issued a set of recommendations, including developing decisions regulating work with regard to work permits on small and medium enterprises. "Their employment is estimated at 79,000 workers registered on 4,000 small projects only," the study said. The Manpower stressed the need to stop issuing work permits for professions and specialties for which there is a Kuwaiti job seeker. They will assign all ministries and bodies concerned to follow up on workers affiliated with their government contracts with regard to valid and non-valid contracts.

### Photo of the day



KUWAIT: The Kuwait Red Crescent Society officials pose for a photo before the 29th relief plane of the Kuwaiti Air Bridge takes off on Sunday. — KUNA

# Kuwaiti oil experts expect market volatility amid Mideast tensions

## OPEC+ coalition seen extending production cut deal

KUWAIT: Oil prices went down for the fifth consecutive week due to an increase in selling of future contracts as well as a decrease in geopolitical tension over in the Middle East, which in turn eased fears over disruption of energy supplies, said experts on Sunday.

Speaking to KUNA in interviews, the experts said that a drop in strategic oil reserves in the US as well as reserves of gasoline in addition to the recovery of the US dollar index boosted economic data, which also showed a decrease in unemployment rates. The price of the Brent crude last week saw a decrease of 0.4 percent to settle at \$80.58 per barrel, while the West Texas Intermediate dropped by 0.5 percent at \$75.54 per barrel.

The oil market saw unhinged selling operations amid fears of a global recession and slow economic growth after the release of US retail data showed a fall in consumer spending, said member of the teaching staff at the College of Technological Studies of the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) Dr Mubarak Al-Hajri. He predicted that there would be an extension of the OPEC+ production cut deal. However, he noted that Russia and Nigeria were not abiding by their share in the deal approved by the coalition.

On his part, energy sector expert Jamal Al-Ghar-

abally predicted that the war unleashed by the Zionist entity on the Gaza Strip would continue after the current humanitarian truce, leading to the hike in oil prices, which might reach \$120 pb. He went on to say that drawing from the US strategic oil reserves during winter would increase prices and also increase voluntary supplies from Saudi Arabia and Russia by around one million barrels per day.

Meanwhile, oil expert Fares Al-Salem said that oil prices saw a decrease due to global demand on oil derivatives, but such situation would change with the advent of winter in North America and Europe, leading to an expected increase in energy demands this time of the year. He indicated that the status of Chinese economy remained "vague" especially with the piling up of crude oil reserves with expectation of oil import decrease by the first half of next year. These factors would encourage the OPEC+ coalition to extend its production cut deal for another pe-



Dr Mubarak Al-Hajri



Jamal Al-Gharabally



Fares Al-Salem

riod. He indicated that OPEC expected an increase in China's oil demand by 3.2 percent in the first half of 2024, while the International Energy Agency (IEA) expected an increase of 3.9 percent, less than the growth between 2016 and 2019 where it was before the pandemic at 4.5 percent annually, which would affect global demand.

Al-Salem said that China's global demand for oil was at 25 percent, which was not a factor that would lead to stability in prices without the OPEC+ production cut agreement. — KUNA



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## Alghanim Industries, Blood Bank launch blood donation drive

KUWAIT: Alghanim Industries' Automotive Support Business, in collaboration with the Kuwait Central Blood Bank, has launched a remarkable blood donation campaign. This initiative represents a profound commitment to enhancing the national blood supply and providing critical support for emergency life-saving efforts.

More than 80 donors from various sectors and companies under the umbrella of Alghanim Industries have rallied behind this campaign, demonstrating an unwavering dedication to social responsibility. Their collective participation stands as a testament to the community's resilience and underscores the significant impact that individuals can make. This collaborative endeavor holds the potential to save the lives of up to 250 patients, highlighting the indispensable contribution of each participant in safeguarding the well-being and safety of the community.

The specialized medical team from the Kuwait Central Blood Bank played a crucial role in the campaign's success, thanks to their commitment to medical excellence. Their meticulous organization ensured the campaign's adherence to the highest quality standards, facilitating prompt transportation to the Kuwait Central Blood Bank's



headquarters for use in critical medical situations. This initiative demonstrates a dedication to supporting humanitarian and community efforts, showcasing the significant impact of partnerships in addressing vital societal needs.





Fake AI porn leads to real harassment in US schools

Thousands march across globe to denounce violence against women

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KHAN YUNIS: Palestinian medics search for survivors in the debris after a Zionist strike in Khan Yunis, in the southern Gaza Strip on Nov 22, 2023. — AFP

## Entire families 'wiped out' in Gaza

'The living here are the ones who are dead'

**RAFAH:** Sahar Awwad is seated between her two nephews. Together, they are among the few survivors of an extended Gaza family of which at least 80 members have been killed in nearly seven weeks of Zionist bombardment. The entire family had fled first to a hospital in Khan Yunis, then to a school, which was initially transformed into a camp for the displaced then a clinic, in Rafah near the border with Egypt, the southernmost point of the besieged enclave.

Only 35 kilometers (20 miles) separated them from their former home in Gaza City, but the journey took them a week. Last Friday, a strike hit their home in Gaza City's Sheikh Radwan neighborhood. "More than 80 family members died. The Awwad family was wiped out," Awwad told AFP. "The survivors rushed to extract the dead and wounded from the debris and (the Zionist entity) struck a second time," she said.

"We could only bury those whose bodies had been sent flying all the way to the neighbors' homes" by the force of the explosion, she said. They were unable to reach those under the rubble. Her nephew Mossaab, 14, has had his leg amputated and his face is still covered in scars. His cousin Abboud, 12, has an IV drip protruding from his abdomen.

Abboud "doesn't know yet that his mother, two of his brothers, his sister and his grandmother are dead", Awwad said in tears. Only his father survived. When their home was struck, they were both already being treated in hospital. "That's the only reason why they weren't injured," Awwad said.

### 'Completely disappeared'

"My older brother and his entire family are dead. My sister fled the north and is dead along with her husband and their children" even though they were in the south, she added. Mossaab's extended family has "completely disappeared". Some of Awwad's other relatives have survived, only because they had already fled.

Theirs is just one among many families devastated by the 51 days of Zionist bombardment and siege on the tiny Palestinian territory, in which more than 15,000 people have been killed, according to Gaza's health ministry. The Zionist military campaign came after Hamas men infiltrated the Gaza-Zionist border on Oct 7 in an attack which the Zionist entity says killed around 1,200 people.

On the road south, Awwad's son Mohammed, who was pushing his grandmother's wheelchair, was detained by the Zionist military. "They released him yesterday, but he's in a terrible condition. He was tortured and stripped of his clothing. He couldn't speak and tell us what happened."

A few members of the family remain in Gaza City, refusing to flee until they find their loved ones and bury them. "May God have mercy on those who were lost, but I am in terror over the rest. No one is left but them."

### 'Living are dead'

Fida Zayed was only 13 when she had her first

son Udai. Today, he is 20, and they "grew up together", she said, along with her second son Qusai, 19, and her daughter Shahad, 17. Zayed was with Udai just a few days ago. "The last thing he said to me was that he was waiting for the truce on Friday, and he asked me to prepare him a feast of rice and chicken," she said.

"Dozens died in a heavy air strike. I walked over 50 bodies of dead and injured people, looking for Udai. Everything was covered in dust and smoke. I could only identify him by his belt," she said. "We were all standing together, but God chose him as a martyr." The family had to bury Udai themselves, she recalled.

"We were displaced to a school in Rafah the next day. I didn't feel like I was injured in my back," she said. "The pain in my heart and chest made me forget about my body. My heart bleeds, not my back." When she arrived at the hospital in Rafah, doctors found her wound was infected. It was cleaned and she received 17 stitches.

Before he died, Udai had received a rare Zionist permit to travel to the occupied West Bank to attend the Palestinian Authority's military academy in Jericho. He had been due to start on Oct 12, but he "travelled to another place with no return", she said. "Gaza is dark as a grave. I hope me and my children die here so we don't have to mourn each other," the mother said. "The living here are the ones who are dead." — AFP

## Thai relatives overjoyed for hostage returns



GAZA: An image grab from a handout video released by the Hamas Media Office shows newly released Thai hostages waving aboard a Red Cross vehicle, in early on Nov 26, 2023. — AFP

**BANGKOK:** Kittiya Thuengsaeng thought her 28-year-old boyfriend was among the almost 40 Thais killed on Oct 7, the day when Hamas fighters entered the Zionist entity in an attack targeting border communities and army bases. But on Friday night Thai officials shocked her with news so good it seemed impossible. "I couldn't believe my eyes," she told AFP, describing the moment she saw a photograph of Wichai Kalapat after he was released from weeks in captivity. "I had a chat with him in the morning. He was still smiling. He told me he was safe."

Thailand's foreign ministry said Saturday that 10 Thai hostages had been released by Hamas and would be returned to the kingdom "as soon as possible", after undergoing medical checks in the Zionist entity. Twenty Thais remain among the approximately 215 hostages still held by Hamas after Oct 7.

Roongarun Wichanguen, sister of 33-year-old Thai hostage Vetoon Phoom, said she got the news her brother was coming home early Saturday. "I was very happy because my hopes were very dim, but suddenly there was hope," she told AFP. She saw a photo of Vetoon, who moved from northeastern Nong Bua Lam Phu province to the Zionist entity five years ago to work on a potato farm and was in disbelief. "I zoomed in and I found my brother there in it," she said. "I had a video call with my brother and his face was happy," she added. "He said that he was not tortured, or assaulted, and had been fed good food. He was taken care of very well." A Thai official confirmed to AFP that Vetoon and Wichai were among those freed.

On Friday, a truce began following weeks of negotiations brokered by Qatar, Egypt and the United States. Under the agreement, a four-day pause in Zionist bombardment should see at least 50 hostages released from Gaza in exchange for 150 Palestinian prisoners held in Zionist jails. Hamas released 24 hostages in total on Friday, according to the Zionist entity and key mediator Qatar. — AFP

## Lebanese return to find bombed-out houses near border

**AITAROUN:** Lebanese farmer and minibus driver Abdallah Abdallah went back to his village near the Zionist border on Saturday to find that weeks of bombing had badly damaged his house and destroyed his tractor. "What can I say? (The Zionist entity) has always been criminal, it has always targeted our houses," said Abdallah, 50, his face weary as he pointed to gaping holes in the walls of his two-storey home in Aitaroun, just across from a Zionist military position.

Since Oct 7, the frontier between Lebanon and the Zionist entity has seen intensifying exchanges of fire, mainly between the Zionist entity and Hezbollah, but also Palestinian groups, raising fears of a broader conflagration. Abdallah fled after the cross-border skirmishes began, and like others, timidly returned on Saturday to inspect his home, under the incessant buzz of Zionist surveillance drones.

Few frontier residents told AFP they intended to stay, fearing renewed violence after the end of the four-day truce between the Zionist entity and Hamas that began on Friday. A source close to Hezbollah told AFP that the Iran-backed group would adhere to the truce if the Zionist entity did. "My tractor was destroyed and also the van I used to take the children in

the area to school," said Abdallah, a father of six. The ground around his house was strewn with shrapnel and burnt fruit trees stood in the garden.

### 'Everyone is afraid'

Across south Lebanon, houses with smashed walls, shattered windows or doors ripped off their hinges bear witness to the violence of recent weeks. In some villages, Hezbollah has put up banners paying homage to its "martyrs" who have been killed. The cross-border exchanges have killed 109 people in Lebanon, at least 77 of them fighters from the Shiite Muslim movement and 14 civilians, according to an AFP count. The International Organization for Migration says more than 55,000 people have fled their homes, mainly in south Lebanon, since the hostilities began.

Fatima Taha, 55, breathed a sigh of relief when she discovered her house in the village of Mais al-Jabal was mostly intact, with just a few broken windows. "We came back when they announced the truce but everyone is afraid," she said, picking lemons from a tree in her garden.

### 'Won't leave'

"Some people came just for the olive harvest but don't want to stay" because they fear renewed bombing, she added. In many villages near the border, authorities have put up signs asking residents not to use roads close to Zionist positions.

On Saturday, Zionist soldiers fired into the air to "frighten farmers" who were working on their land, according to Lebanon's official National



AITAROUN: Lebanese farmer and minibus driver Abdallah Abdallah (left) inspects his damaged home on Nov 25, 2023. — AFP

News Agency. Authorities have also warned farmers against harvesting their olives near the border, fearing the harmful effects of what Lebanon and NGOs, including Amnesty International, says is the Zionist use of the incendiary substance white phosphorus. The Zionist military has denied using white phosphorus in Lebanon and Gaza.

In Kfar Kila, just a few meters from the frontier, Yahya Ahmed, 62, inspected the damage at his cafe, whose front and windows had been smashed. "I want to clean things up and put the tables outside. I can't wait to sit here again," he said near a large tree in the courtyard. The 62-year-old, who has lived through previous conflicts in the area, decided to stay, despite the risks. "It's our country," he said. "I won't leave here." — AFP



## International

# Thousands march across globe to denounce violence against women

'We don't want to count the dead any more'



GUATEMALA CITY: Women place candles on the ground reading "438" during a vigil in memory of murdered women, on the eve of UN's International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. — AFP photos



PARIS: Women take part in a demonstration on the occasion of the international day for the elimination of violence against women on Nov 25, 2023.

WASHINGTON: Thousands of people took to the streets across the world on Saturday to condemn violence against women on the international day highlighting the crime. On the UN-designated International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, protesters marched in Europe and the Americas.

"The scourge of gender-based violence continues to inflict pain and injustice on too many," US President Joe Biden said in a statement. "An estimated one in three women globally will experience physical violence, rape, or stalking at some point in their lifetimes. It's an outrage. ... Particularly in areas of conflict, countless women and girls suffer at the hands of perpetrators who commit gender-based violence and use rape as a weapon of war."

In Guatemala, protesters kicked off commemorations on Friday evening, placing candles to write out 438 — the number of women killed so far this year. In the Chilean capital of Santiago, some 1,000 protesters marched through the streets Friday night, chanting "Not one step backward" and demanding action by the government to protect women.

A women's advocacy group estimates that 40 femicides have occurred in the country this year. Along Rio de Janeiro's famed Copacabana Beach, protesters lined up 722 pairs of women's shoes, from high-heels to sneakers, each pair before a woman's name to represent the femicides recorded in 2022 — the highest number since 2019, according to the non-governmental Brazilian Forum on Public Safety.

And in Argentina, demonstrators — including those concerned by the election of incoming president Javier Milei — in Buenos Aires combined a protest on violence against women with a show of support for the Palestinian people. Milei has suggested eliminating the Ministry of Women, Gender and Diversity — in charge of preventing gender violence — and has taken hardline stances on issues including abortion and equal pay.

#### Italy murder

In Italy, which has been shaken by the murder of a 22-year-old university student allegedly by her former boyfriend, some 50,000 people, according to the

AGI news agency, demonstrated in Rome, where the Colosseum was to be lit up in red later on Saturday.

The country has been horrified by the case of Giulia Cecchetti, who went missing for a week as she was due to receive her degree in biomedical engineering from the University of Padua. Her body was eventually found in a gully about 120 kilometers (75 miles) north of Venice, and her former boyfriend, 22-year-old Filippo Turetta, was arrested in Germany.

"This year ... takes on particularly important connotations for us... for those in this country who care about the rights, claims and emancipation of all women, following yet another femicide, the killing of Giulia Cecchetti," said Luisa Loduca, a 22-year-old librarian. In the year to Nov 12, there have been 102 murder cases with female victims in Italy, 82 of them by family members or current or former partners, according to the interior ministry.

In Turkey, some 500 women gathered in the Sisli district in Istanbul, as riot police stood by, unfurling banners reading "We will not remain silent" and "Women are united and fighting against male-state

violence." Protesters also took to the streets in Ankara.

#### 'Educate your boys'

In France, several thousand people, many wearing purple, the color of women and gender equality, wove through the chilly streets of Paris and other cities, carrying signs reading: "One rape every six minutes in France" and "Protect your girls, educate your boys". "We don't want to count the dead any more," Maelle Lenoir, an official from the All of Us activist group, told reporters, urging the government to devote more money to eradicating violence against women.

France has recorded 121 women killed so far this year in femicides, the killing of a woman due to her gender, compared with 118 in 2022, according to government data. Leonore Maunoury, 22, said that the justice system needed to be changed to deal effectively with the phenomenon, as she marched in the eastern city of Strasbourg. "Sexual violence is difficult to prove. Many cases are dismissed. The justice system is ill-adapted" to deal with the issue, she said. — AFP

## 4 dead, dozens injured in south India stampede

NEW DELHI: At least four people were killed and dozens injured Saturday evening in a stampede at a university in southern India, local officials and media reported. The stampede occurred at an outdoor auditorium in the Cochin University of Science and Technology (CUSAT) in southwest Kerala state, where a concert had been planned.

In a statement on X, Kerala state governor Arif Mohammed Khan said he was "deeply shocked and grieved to know about the sad demise of four students" at CUSAT. "Heartfelt condolences to their families. Prayers for speedy recovery of injured," he added. State Health Minister Veena George said in a statement that four people had been brought dead to the Kalamassery Medical College Hospital while four more were in critical condition, the PTI news agency reported, adding that over 60 people had been injured.

A local police official said that a crowd outside the auditorium had rushed to seek cover from a sudden downpour when a number of people slipped on some stairs and were subsequently trampled, according to PTI. One of the deadliest stampedes in recent history occurred a decade ago in India, when at least 115 people were killed on the sidelines of a religious festival in central Madhya Pradesh state. — AFP

## Russia downs Ukrainian drones over five regions

MOSCOW: Russia said Sunday it had downed Ukrainian drones over five regions, including Moscow, as well as two Ukrainian missiles over the Azov Sea, a day after a large-scale Russian drone attack on Kyiv. Russia and Ukraine have hit each with drones for months, as Moscow's offensive drags on for in to a 22nd month, with little significant movement on the front, despite fierce fighting.

Russia said the drones hit the Moscow region, other regions near the capital as well as regions bordering Ukraine. "Air defense destroyed nine drones over the territory of the Moscow, Tula, Kaluga and Bryansk regions," Russia's defense ministry said early on Sunday.

It later said that another four Ukrainian drones were downed over the Bryansk region, which borders Ukraine, as well as the southwestern Smolensk region and the Tula region, which lies north of Moscow. The attacks came a day after Ukraine said Rus-

sia had launched 75 Iranian-made Shahed drones, mostly aimed at Kyiv, in what it said was a "record" since Moscow's offensive last year.

Ukraine has upped attacks on Russia since launching its counter-offensive this summer and has hit regions close to fighting zones as well as further inland into Russia, including Moscow itself. The Russian army also said Sunday it had downed two Ukrainian missiles over the Azov Sea that it said were headed for Russia. Russia controls the Ukrainian Azov Sea coast, which fell to Moscow early in its offensive last year. Local authorities in the affected regions did not report casualties.

"I call on refraining to share photographs or videos of the drones on social media," the Smolensk governor Vasily Anokhin wrote on Telegram, adding that emergency services were working in areas that were hit. Smolensk region, which borders Belarus, has been mostly spared from drone attacks.

On the battlefield, fighting has now focused around the industrial hub of Avdiivka, which appears almost encircled by Russian forces. The fall of Avdiivka — a symbol of Ukrainian resistance since 2014 — would be a significant loss for Kyiv.

Ukraine, meanwhile, reported Russian attacks in the south and east of the country. The head of the southern city of Kherson,



KYIV: This handout photograph by Ukrainian Emergency Service on Nov 25, 2023, shows a rescuer working at the site of a drone attack in Kyiv. — AFP

Roman Mrochko, said two urban districts were shelled and that information of possible victims was being clarified. Regional authorities in the Kherson region said around a dozen villages were left without electricity due to bad weather and Russian attacks.

Kyiv has been preparing for weeks for a feared renewal of Moscow's campaign to hit its energy grid in a possible repeat of

last year, when thousands were left without power in freezing temperatures. "Due to bad weather and Russian shelling, a number of settlements in our region were left without electricity," the head of the Kherson region Oleksandr Prokudin said on Telegram. "Power supply teams are already working to eliminate the malfunctions," he added. — AFP

## 39 more Palestinians released...

Continued from Page 1

"She is now safely in Zionist entity, and we continue to press and expect for additional Americans will be released as well. And we will not stop working until every hostage is returned to their loved ones."

The White House has said that 10 Americans—seven men, two women and Abigail—were missing and presumed held hostage by Hamas.

Meanwhile, hundreds of people greeted the International Committee of the Red Cross bus carrying the Palestinians as it arrived in Al-Bireh in the occupied West Bank. Crowds chanted "God is Great" as the bus arrived, and several young men stood on the roof of the vehicle. Many in the crowd held Hamas flags and chanted pro-Hamas slogans. Many Palestinians view prisoners held by Zionist entity, including those implicated in attacks, as heroes resisting occupation, and have celebrated their release. The

arrival of the Palestinian prisoners, six women and 33 men, has brought tears and joy as they were received by their families in the occupied East Jerusalem and the West Bank.

Meanwhile, the military wing of Hamas said Sunday that the commander of its northern brigade and four other senior leaders had been killed during Zionist entity's offensive against the Islamist movement.

In a statement, the Ezzedine Al-Qassam Brigades said Ahmed Al-Ghandour was a member of its military council, and named three of the others, among them Ayman Siyyam, head of its rocket division, while its West Bank branch confirmed another leader's death. "We pledge to Allah we will continue their path and that their blood will be a light for the mujahedeen and a fire for the occupiers," the statement said, without saying when they were killed.

Wael Rajab, described as Ghandour's deputy and the former police chief in northern Gaza, had also been killed, it said, as had Raafat Salman, a senior operative in Qassam's Gaza City Brigade involved in planning the motorized glider infiltration on October 7.—AFP

campaign, Omar Al-Thuwaini said that Sunday's trip saw the society delivering 40 tons of material and consisting of 300 tents, food, winter clothes, sterilizers, medical tools and two ambulances. Al-Thuwaini affirmed the society's keenness to provide assistance to the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip until the situation stabilizes, pointing out that the selection of various relief materials was due to the strong demand by the Palestinians, especially with the arrival of winter and the shortage of medical supplies. — KUNA

## Pressure mounts on Zionists for...

Continued from Page 1

the fight, analysts say. It also increases diplomatic pressure on Zionist entity from the international community, which will become steadily less willing to countenance a return to the pounding of Gaza and the resulting humanitarian crisis.

"Time works against Zionist entity as always and against the IDF," said Andreas Krieg, of King's College London, referring to the Zionist entity military. "On one hand you want all the hostages out knowing that you can't get them out militarily and on the other you don't want to lose completely the momentum of this war," he told AFP.

And the longer a truce lasted, he said, the more the international community would lose patience with a continuation of the war, he added. But the Zionist entity's military is determined to pursue its objective of "crushing" Hamas. Visiting Zionist entity

Zionist entity has defied international criticism of its Gaza offensive, which its Hamas rulers say has killed more than 15,000 people, mostly civilians, and left an unprecedented trail of destruction in the Palestinian territory. "The real pressure to prolong the truce comes from inside Zionist entity—from the families of the hostages," said Arik Rudnitzky, from Tel Aviv University's Moshe Dayan Center.

On Saturday, tens of thousands of demonstrators packed the streets of Tel Aviv in support of the remaining hostages, chanting "Now, now, now, all of them now!" and clutching banners that read "Get them out of hell". A Zionist entity military official said the country



RAFAH, Egypt: A young Palestinian cancer patient (center) evacuated from the Gaza Strip sits on a wheelchair in the arrival hall on the Egyptian side of the Rafah border crossing on his way for treatment in the UAE on Nov 26, 2023. — AFP

was committed to freeing as many hostages as possible but expressed concern that the longer the truce lasts the more time Hamas has to "rebuild its capabilities and attack Zionist entity again". "It's a terrible dilemma," he told AFP, requesting anonymity.

The lead mediator in the negotiations for the pause in the fighting has been Qatar, whose foreign ministry spokesman Majed Al-Ansari told AFP there was a need to "maintain the momentum" for a lasting ceasefire. "That can only be done when you have political will not only from the Zionist entity's and Palestinians but also with the other partners who are working with us."

US President Joe Biden, a staunch ally of Zionist entity, on Friday said "the chances are real" for extending the truce, as he urged a broader effort to achieve a two-state solution with a viable Palestinian state existing alongside Zionist entity. With a presidential election next year, there was no stomach in Washington for a prolonged intensive operation "for months and months on end", said Krieg of King's College London. — AFP

## Kuwait pledges unwavering...

Continued from Page 1

over to its Palestinian counterpart, who in turn will distribute it in Gaza. KRCS Deputy Director General and General Supervisor of the 'Support for Palestine'



## International

# Fake AI porn leads to real harassment in US schools

## Law has been slow to catch up with technology, putting many young women at risk

WASHINGTON: When Ellis, a 14-year-old from Texas, woke up one October morning with several missed calls and texts, they were all about the same thing: nude images of her circulating on social media. That she had not actually taken the pictures didn't make a difference, as artificial intelligence makes so-called "deepfakes" more and more realistic.

The images of Ellis and a friend, also a victim, were lifted from Instagram, their faces then placed on naked bodies of other people. Other students — all girls — were also targeted, with the composite photos shared with other classmates on Snapchat. "It looked real, like the bodies looked like real bodies," she told AFP. "And I remember being really, really scared ... I've never done anything of that sort."

As AI has boomed, so has deepfake pornography, with hyper-realistic images and videos created with minimal effort and money — leading to scandals and harassment at multiple high schools in the United States as administrators struggle to respond amid a lack of federal legislation banning the practice. "The girls just cried, and cried forever. They were very ashamed," said Anna Berry McAdams, Ellis' mother, who was shocked at how realistic the images looked. "They didn't want to go to school."

### 'A smartphone and a few dollars'

Though it's hard to quantify how widespread deepfakes are becoming, Ellis' school outside of Dallas isn't alone. At the end of the month, another fake nudes scandal erupted at a high school in the northeastern state of New Jersey. "It will happen more and more often," said Dorota Mani, the mother of one of the victims there, also 14.

She added that there is no way to know if pornographic deepfakes might be floating around on the Internet without one's knowledge, and that investigations often only arise when victims speak out. "So many victims don't even know there are pictures, and

they will not be able to protect themselves — because they don't know from what."

At the same time, experts say, the law has been slow to catch up with technology, even as cruder versions of fake pornography, often focused on celebrities, have existed for years. Now, though, anyone who has posted something as innocent as a LinkedIn headshot can be a victim. "Anybody who was working in this space knew, or should have known, that it was going to be used in this way," Hany Farid, a professor of computer science at the University of California, Berkeley, told AFP.

Last month, President Joe Biden signed an executive order on AI, calling on the government to create guardrails "against producing child sexual abuse material and against producing non-consensual intimate imagery of real individuals." And if it has proved difficult in many cases to track down the individual creators of certain images, that shouldn't stop the AI companies behind them or social media platforms where the photos are shared from being held accountable, says Farid.

But no national legislation exists restricting deep fake porn, and only a handful of states have passed laws regulating it. "Although your face has been superimposed on a body, the body is not really yours," said Renee Cummings, an AI ethicist. That can create a "contradiction in the law," the University of Virginia professor told AFP, since it can be argued that existing laws prohibiting distributing sexual photos of someone without their consent don't apply to deepfakes.

And while "anyone with a smartphone and a few dollars" can make the images, using widely available software, many of the victims — who are primarily young women and girls — "are afraid to go public." Deepfake porn "can destroy someone's life," said Cummings, citing victims who have suffered anxiety, depression and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.



This photo illustration shows an AI girl generator on a cell phone in front of a computer screen. — AFP

### Fake photos, real trauma

In Texas, Ellis was interviewed by the police and school officials. But the education and judicial systems appear to be caught flat-footed. "It just crushes me that we don't have things in place to say, 'Yes, that is child porn,'" said Berry McAdams, her mother. The classmate behind Ellis' photos was temporarily suspended, but Ellis — who previously described herself as social and outgoing — remains "constantly

filled with anxiety," and has asked to transfer schools.

"I don't know how many people could have saved the photos and sent them along. I don't know how many photos he made," she says. "So many people could have gotten them." Her mother, meanwhile, worries about if — or, given the longevity of the Internet, when — the photos might resurface. "This could affect them for the rest of their lives," she says. — AFP

## 'Child soldiers', blood feuds: Sweden's gang wars out of control

UPPSALA: One night in September, teacher Thomas Cervin was woken by gunshots in his apartment building in Uppsala, the fourth largest city in Sweden. His neighbor had just become the latest target in Sweden's terrifying gang wars. Execution-style shootings carried out by "child soldiers", apartment buildings rocked by bombings, innocent relatives targeted in vendettas, and the morning news summarizing the night's death toll — all have become disturbingly routine in the normally quiet country.

"No other country in Europe is seeing anything like this," said Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson as he vowed to defeat the gangs. "Swedish legislation was not designed for gang wars and child soldiers. But we're changing that now," he said. Sweden's gang wars have smoldered for a decade over control of the drugs market.

But they took a drastic turn early this year when an internal feud led to gang members' families and loved ones also becoming targets. The Sept 13 shooting in Cervin's building in Uppsala, 70 kilometers (45 miles) north of Stockholm, was aimed at the mother-in-law of Rawa Majid, the "Kurdish Fox", and head of the notorious Foxtrof gang. She escaped unharmed. "I had no idea she was related to him," Cervin said. "That's what makes so many people scared — the people involved have friends and relatives all over the place."

### 'Ruthless'

"This new generation (of criminals) is ruthless," said Garip Gunes, who started a youth football team to keep kids in the disadvantaged Stockholm suburb of Rinkeby out of trouble. "Many parents are worried about their kids and don't let them go out except to go to school or football practice. They're worried they'll end up in the line of fire," he told AFP.

Criminology professor Felipe Estrada Dorner of



RINKEBY: Ozgur Kilic, 30, a parent and helper, oversees a training session of football club Rinkeby United, on Oct 19, 2023, near Stockholm. — AFP

Stockholm University told AFP the situation "has gotten totally out of control: they've started attacking loved ones and those who have nothing to do with these conflicts." "This is a big change from the violence that has prevailed until now." Forty-seven people have been killed in 314 shootings so far this year, police said, compared to only seven deaths in 2016.

### 'Failed integration'

The victims and the perpetrators are increasingly young. Police last year investigated 336 15- to 17-year-olds for having illegal firearms, eight times more than a decade ago, the National Council for Crime Prevention said this month. Gangs now recruit kids to carry out contract killings — some younger than 15 — knowing they can't be jailed.

"Children are contacting criminal gangs" offering to commit murders, Sweden's police chief Anders Thornberg said. These children "just don't know

people killed in the fire.

Wulumuqi is the Mandarin name for the city of Urumqi. "When I saw so many people on that street, although I was mourning, in another way I felt safe," she said, recalling the first night of the protests. "The atmosphere was sad, but also empowering."

Protests continued in Shanghai the next day, and ignited in other major cities including Beijing, Guangzhou and Chengdu, with protesters holding aloft blank sheets of A4 paper to symbolize China's lack of free speech. "It was not surprising that protests would break out in response to the anti-COVID lockdowns," the University of Toronto's Diana Fu

how to handle these weapons", Estrada Dorner said, often leading to innocent bystanders being wounded or killed. In Gottsunda, a suburb near Uppsala, Ebtesam Abowarrad agreed, and said people were scared. "The difference nowadays is that they shoot all over the place." "I never see anyone out in the streets anymore," the 40-year-old mother told AFP.

Most young gang members have been on social services' radar for years, said Evin Cetin, a former lawyer who has written a book of interviews with young gang members, "Mitt ibland oss" (In Our Midst). "These kids have been trained by criminals — they live, eat and breathe a culture of violence," she said. "Most of those I've met have an empty look in their eyes, they don't value their own lives." Prime Minister Kristersson has blamed the rise in organized crime on "naivety" over immigration. "An irresponsible immigration policy and failed integration led us here," the conservative leader said. — AFP

told AFP, noting "bread-and-butter issues" were common flashpoints in China.

"What was surprising was the blunt anti-regime rhetoric." Overt political protest is rare in China, a sophisticated surveillance state that punishes dissent harshly. Li said she had been concerned about freedom of expression before, but "thought I could live with it, because it didn't affect my everyday life". COVID changed everything — especially after being "trapped ... like a prisoner" in the two-month Shanghai lockdown. "People are only going to protest for their rights when it affects them. That's why there were so many people," she said. — AFP



SHANGHAI: A man is arrested while people gathered on a street in Shanghai on Nov 27, 2022, where protests against China's zero-COVID policy took place. — AFP

## 'Still suffocated': Mourning China's zero-COVID rallies

SHANGHAI: A year after historic protests broke out on Shanghai's bustling Wulumuqi Road, only a subtly increased police presence on main junctions betrays anything out of the ordinary. But for many involved in what became China's most widespread demonstrations in decades, it's impossible to erase the memory of the events of last autumn.

In the early hours of Nov 27, 2022, vigils for victims of a fire in Xinjiang's capital Urumqi morphed into multi-city calls to end zero-COVID measures, and even in some cases topple the ruling Communist Party and leader Xi Jinping.

Authorities responded by cracking down. But in early December they abruptly lifted the strict health restrictions that had dominated people's lives for almost three years. "Shortly after zero-COVID lifted, everyone just got back to their normal daily life. Everyone just seems to have moved on, no one's talking about it," said Li, a protester in their twenties whose name has been changed for security reasons.

For people like Li, there is another reason for the silence: police visited her last month and warned her not to demonstrate. "When I think about (what happened last year) I still feel I'm suffocated by it," Li told AFP. Like many, she believed the country's harsh COVID rules had hampered rescue efforts when she joined the vigil on Wulumuqi Road to grieve the 10

## Bangladesh stops scores of Rohingya fleeing to Indonesia

TEKNAF: Bangladesh police have clamped down on Rohingya refugees setting sail to Indonesia, officers said Saturday, after hundreds from the persecuted Myanmar minority took the long and risky sea voyage to escape squalid camps. Some said they had paid traffickers a relative fortune of \$1,000 for a place on a boat.

Bangladesh is home to one million mostly Muslim Rohingya refugees, the majority of whom fled a violent 2017 crackdown by the Myanmar military that is now subject to a United Nations genocide probe.

Conditions in the overcrowded, dangerous and under-resourced relief camps are tough, and refugees have said the situation is worsening due to cuts in food aid, deadly gang battles and a lack of jobs. As the seas in the Bay of Bengal calm after monsoon rains, human traffickers are offering hundreds of Rohingya people berths on boats bound for Malaysia and Indonesia, police officers told AFP.

### Surge in numbers

This month has seen a spike in journeys to Indonesia's westernmost province of Aceh — a voyage of about 1,800 kilometers (1,120 miles) — with more than 1,000 arrivals in the biggest such wave



ACEH: A Rohingya woman rests at an immigration building in Lhokseumawe, Aceh province on Nov 25, 2023. — AFP

since the 2017 crackdown. Police said they had "stopped and held 58 Rohingya" on Friday night as they reportedly left camps heading to board boats at Teknaf, a Bangladeshi river port just across the border from Myanmar.

"Among them nine are men, 16 are women and 33 are children. We detained two Bangladeshi human traffickers who were allegedly guiding them," Teknaf police station chief Osman Goni told AFP on Saturday. "They were ready to sail in a boat from Teknaf and were going to Indonesia and Malaysia." Goni said all 58 would be sent back to the camps.

Several Rohingya refugees who were held by police told AFP that they had paid human traffickers around \$1,000 each for a boat journey to Indonesia. "They (the traffickers) kept us in a house and said they would send us to Indonesia on a boat the next day," said Selim Ullah, a 22-year-old Rohingya refugee, who was detained with his wife and daughter.

Ullah said a sharply worsening security situation in the camps and opportunities have prompted them to pay the traffickers to sail to Indonesia. "We thought we can get a better life, education and healthcare there," he added. "We know we can die in the boat. But as we're suffering here, we've decided to go there on boats". Police say about 60 Rohingya people have been killed in violence in the camps this year. "There are bandits in the camps," Ullah said, saying they robbed and extorted people. "They abduct people at night and take them to the hills. We can't stop them." — AFP



## Business

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 2023

## The role of gold in times of crises

## The precious metal that can maintain price stability amid economic volatility

By Ghadeer Ghloom

**KUWAIT:** According to Salman Al-Naqi, Kuwaiti economist and the 2022 first-place research paper winner of the "Kuwaiti Economic Prize", gold has long been recognized as a safe-haven asset during times of economic uncertainty and global crises. That is due to its unique characteristics, such as independence from government policies, besides its limited supply, which have made it a popular choice for investors and central banks. Because understanding the role of gold as a reliable refuge becomes increasingly important in times of crises, Kuwait Times spoke to Naqi for further information about the influence of this valuable metal's prices.

Naqi explained gold's uniqueness, saying: "In times of economic uncertainty and crisis, gold is considered a safe-haven asset for investors and central banks. Gold's reputation is rooted in its unique characteristics; unlike fiat currencies, gold prices are not subject to government or central bank policies. During economic turmoil, investors



Salman Al-Naqi

often turn to gold as a refuge, driven by the perception that it can maintain value amid financial market volatility. The limited supply of gold adds to its appeal, enhancing its status as a store of wealth."

Naqi then elaborated on gold being a secure asset for investors, and the relationship between its prices and global crises. "The relationship between gold and crises is characterized by an inverse correlation with traditional assets. When financial markets face downturns, gold values tend to rise, with increased demand as investors seek a hedge against inflation, currency fluctuations and overall economic instability. For example, during the 2008 global financial crisis, the price of gold surged as investors sought the security it offered. Geopolitical tensions can also spur demand for gold as investors view it as a reliable asset transcending geopolitical boundaries," he said.

Thus, gold's precious value remains neither affected by political issues nor economic damage. "Central banks, responsible for managing and maintaining monetary policy and stability, traditionally hold gold within their reserves for several reasons. Historically, under the Bretton Woods Agreement in 1944, major currencies were pegged to the US dollar, which, in turn, was tied to gold, providing stability to the post-World War II global economy. Although the Bretton Woods system collapsed in 1971, central banks continued holding gold as part



of their reserves, influenced by the legacy of this agreement," Naqi said.

Naqi spoke about the current status of gold with regards to central banks. "Currently, central banks see gold as an insurance against unforeseen crises. Gold's liquidity and stability make it invaluable during economic dilemmas, enabling central banks to navigate turbulent periods with greater resilience. Central banks have the ability to influence

gold prices through their monetary policy decisions and patterns, impacting factors such as interest rates and currency values, as well as participating in quantitative easing (QE). Global economic conditions and central banks' responses can affect market sentiment, while direct buying or selling of gold reserves by central banks directly influences supply and demand dynamics, playing a role in shaping gold prices," he said.

## Gold prices exceed \$2,000 per ounce

**KUWAIT:** Gold prices exceeded the \$2,000 per ounce threshold at the end of last week's trading, following expectations of the imminent end of monetary tightening measures by the US Federal Reserve (central bank), said economic source Sunday.

Gold futures for next December rose by 0.5 percent to reach \$2003 per ounce, in conjunction with the decline in the index that measures the US dollar with other currencies at a rate of 0.55 percent at 103.3 points, the Kuwaiti (Dar-ALSabaek) company in a specialized report.

Expectations for US interest rates are to remain unchanged after the US (central bank) meeting scheduled early December, as analysts believe that

the United States will not raise the interest rates ceiling during the current year, with the possibility of reducing it by April next year, the report added.

Gold prices will be affected positively by any US decision to lower interest rates in the coming months, in addition to geo-political factors, namely prospected rise of military tensions in the Middle East region, it explained. The People's Bank of China (central bank) fixed base interest rates on one-year loans at 3.45 percent, and for five years at 2.4 percent, which improved gold's performance during last week's trading, it added. American economic indicators and reports will be issued during the week, which will have a direct impact on the trends of the yellow metal, especially indicating at the personal expenditure, and the purchasing managers' indexes, as well as expected speeches from several Federal Reserve officers, it added. Regarding the local market, trades increased despite rise of the gold prices, as the rate of a 24-carat gram reached KD 19.9



(about \$60). As for 22-carat gram, the rate stood at KD 18.25 (approx. \$55), whereas the price of silver was KD 285 (about \$869) per kilogram.

An ounce, a measurement unit, is also called uqiyah and is equal to 28.349 grams, while for precious metals, it is equal to 31.103 grams. — KUNA

## Texas Republicans take aim at climate change - in textbooks

**HOUSTON:** The scorching summer in Texas this year was the second hottest on record — but students in the southwestern US state might have a hard time understanding why. That's because a slew of science textbooks submitted to the state Board of Education (BOE) were rejected last week, as the Republican-dominated body moves to curtail education materials deemed too "one-sided" on climate change. Many of the rejected books taught that "humans are negatively impacting the environment. And the scare tactics that come with that, that is my main issue," Evelyn Brooks, a Republican board member, told AFP. She claimed, counter to scientists and the federal government, that "the science is not settled on global warming."

America's decentralized education system leaves curriculum management mostly up to individual states, with local school districts also having a degree of autonomy. That has led to fraught battles across the country as each jurisdiction debates how to teach climate change and other politically charged issues, such as racism and sexuality. It also leaves room for officials like Brooks in Texas, which produces 42 percent of the nation's crude oil, to push back against the "political ideology" of climate change — a concept she considers "a blatant lie."

## Increasingly polarized

Science textbooks from publisher Green Ninja were among those voted down by the Texas BOE. "It was because of our inclusion of climate change," director Eugene Cordero told AFP in an email, adding that one board member took particular issue with a prompt asking students to "create a story warning friends and family about possible future weather and climate extremes."

Textbooks from eight of 22 publishers that submitted materials to the board were rejected last week, according to a count from Glenn Branch, deputy director of the National Center for Science Education (NCSE), a nonprofit which promotes the teaching of climate change.

Some were eventually accepted, after revisions to sections on climate change and evolution — another controversial subject in the largely Christian Texas. The rejected books are not necessarily banned from classrooms, but using approved books is typically tied to getting government funding.

As broiling summers are supercharged by climate change, some fear that students won't see the bigger picture. "If kids don't understand what all of that means, and they're just going to continue to perpetuate the problem," said Marisa Perez-Dias, one of five Democratic members of the board.

Staci Childs, another Democratic board member, charged that some of her colleagues "felt like some of the materials negatively reflected how oil and gas impacts our society." In a show of just how powerful the industry is in Texas — even as the state becomes a growing hub for renewables — two of the 10 Republican members work directly for the sector. — AFP

## Saudi's top 10 banks post rise in Q3 profit on net interest income boost

**RIYADH:** The aggregate net profit of Saudi Arabia's 10 largest banks rose by 3.8 per cent on a quarterly basis in the third quarter, on the back of higher interest income and lower impairment charges, with moderated credit growth expected in the last three months of the year.

Cumulative net profit for the three months to the end of September climbed to 18 billion riyals (\$4.8 billion), professional services consultancy Alvarez & Marsal said on Sunday. Total net interest income grew 3.8 per cent quarter-on-quarter, while impairment charges fell 17.9 per cent, boosting the profits of the lenders during the period.

"Despite a slower uptick in deposits, operating income saw a positive trajectory, primarily fuelled by the growth in net interest income," said Asad Ahmed, managing director and head of Middle East financial services at Alvarez & Marsal. "While there have been challenges reflected in the deteriorating cost-to-income ratio, the broader improvement in profitability ratios signals continued positive performance."

Net interest income rose as Gulf-based banks con-



A branch of the Saudi National Bank in Riyadh.

tinued to increase interest rates in tandem with the US Federal Reserve. Most regional central banks peg their currencies to the US dollar and follow the Fed's moves on interest rate increases.

The Fed has aggressively increased its benchmark policy rates over the past several quarters in an attempt to bring inflation down to its 2 per cent range.

The loan-to-deposit ratio (LDR) for the top 10 Saudi lenders improved by 2.3 per cent quarter-on-quarter since loans and advances grew to 98.4 per cent, representing the highest level seen in the last four years, the consultancy said.

than with a transfer, but this way at least a travel option is maintained for the traveller, said outgoing Dutch deputy infrastructure minister Vivianne Heijnen in a letter to parliament.

The direct service from London to Amsterdam will not be affected, as passport and baggage checks are done in Britain before boarding and therefore not necessary in Amsterdam. Heijnen said the period of the disruption has been shortened to around six months from previous estimates of seven to 11 months.

The exact dates are not yet known, but are expected to be between June and December 2024, she added. A popular option especially for weekend visitors from Britain, Eurostar's direct service from London to Amsterdam started in April 2018.

Visitors returning to London then had to board in Brussels, with direct return service introduced

shaping the November 30 to December 12 talks. China's long-standing climate change envoy Xie Zhenhua has represented the world's leading CO2 emitter since 2007, so is a major player at the annual conference. He took part in the negotiations that paved the way for the landmark Paris Agreement in 2015.

Born in Tianjin in 1949, Xie made a career in China's green sector, before spearheading his homeland's negotiators at the climate conferences. The veteran diplomat has forged strong ties to his US counterpart, John Kerry, despite the complicated relations between the two nations. "Xie Zhenhua is a role model for future cli-

mate diplomats. He is deeply committed to climate action and is willing and able to bridge the gaps between China and the global community," said Li Shuo, at the Asia Society Policy Institute.

Eco-feminist and founder of the Rwandan nonprofit The Green Protector, Ineza Umuhozo Grace, will be one of the leading voices outside of the official negotiations seeking to influence events. She is the global coordinator for the "Loss and Damage Youth Coalition" which brings together young people from the global South and North to demand measures to help vulnerable countries bearing the brunt of climate change fallout.

These include the \$500 billion Neom mega project along the Red Sea coast as well as Qiddiya entertainment city and the Diriyah Gate heritage development. Saudi Arabia's non-oil economy grew at its fastest pace in four months in October, with business activity continuing to grow in the fourth quarter on higher client orders and improving economic conditions.

The headline Riyadh Bank purchasing managers' index reading climbed to 58.4 in October, up from 57.2 in September, the highest level since June.

Alvarez & Marsal's survey covered the kingdom's 10 largest listed banks: Saudi National Bank, Al Rajhi Bank, Riyad Bank, Saudi British Bank, Banque Saudi Fransi, Arab National Bank, Alinma Bank, Bank Albilad, Saudi Investment Bank and Bank Aljazira.



two years later. By April 2023, some 1.6 million passengers had used the rail link, Eurostar said on its website. — AFP

## Amsterdam to lose Eurostar London service for 6 months

**THE HAGUE:** Direct Eurostar high-speed train service from Amsterdam to London will be out of action during the second half of next year due to station renovation work, a Dutch official said Friday. Work to Amsterdam Central station's more than 140-year-old building means that passport and baggage controls cannot be carried out for several months and travellers will need to accomplish these in Brussels before continuing on to London.

"I realize that a direct journey is more pleasant

## Four key people to watch at COP28

**DUBAI:** King Charles III, Pope Francis and COP28 President Sultan Al Jaber might grab headlines at next week's COP28 in Dubai, but they are not the only people who will play an important role at the crunch UN climate conference. Negotiators, activists and the leaders of vulnerable small island nations are all key to

The coalition will present 10 demands at COP28, including the implementation of the loss and damage fund that was promised during COP27 last year. Stiell has served as executive secretary of the United Nation's Framework Convention on Climate Change since 2022. He regularly appears alongside COP presidents during the two-week conferences. He has no direct power over the discussions, but he uses his influential position to push major countries towards stronger action. "COP28 is our chance to make a dramatic course correction. Let's seize that chance," he recently pleaded on X (previously Twitter). — AFP



NBK Weekly Money Market Report

# Federal Reserve reiterates that rates will remain high

## UK economy found its feet again in November

**KUWAIT:** At their most recent meeting, US Federal Reserve officials showed that there is no desire to cut interest rates anytime soon, especially when inflation is still above their targeted 2 percent level. The committee members still worry that inflation could be sticky and might move higher, and that more may need to be done. In addition, the minutes revealed that members feel they should proceed cautiously and base their judgments on the entirety of incoming information and its implications for the economic outlook as well as the balance of risks. However, the minutes did not indicate that the members even discussed lowering rates, which was reflected in Chairman Jerome Powell post meeting news conference as he stated that, "the Committee is not thinking about rate cuts right now at all."

**Revised UoM consumer sentiment**  
In the US, consumer sentiment fell for the fourth month in a row, reaching 61.3 in the month of November, down from 63.8 in October. The dip indicates that despite the recent downturn, consumers are still expecting inflation rates to increase in the upcoming months, with expectations of it reaching levels of around 4.5 percent within the next 12 months, and 3.2 percent in the next 5 years. The data published by the University of Michigan shows mixed signals regarding different age groups among consumers, with young and middle-aged consumers showing strong declines in economic attitudes. Joanne Hsu, the director of the survey, mentions that consumers have been more negative this year than their actual behavior with regards to the current economic situation.

**US unemployment claims**  
The US labor market is proving to be more resilient than expected, after unemployment claims dropped to 209,000 from 233,000 previously. Expectations were for the print to come in at 226,000 claims. Furthermore, in another sign of a resilient labor market, continuing claims dropped to 1.84 million, down by 22,000 from the previous reading. Despite a historic tightening cycle by the Fed, job growth remains strong while unemployment remains historically at the low end. Meanwhile, inflation dropped from a peak of 9.1 percent to 3.2 percent last month. It is widely expected by markets that the Federal Reserve will end the year holding rates steady. The US Dollar index closed the week at 103.403.

**Europe ECB speakers**  
In a speech given by ECB's president Christine Lagarde, she stated that it is too early to "start declaring victory" in ECB's fight against inflation. Lagarde added that the current downward pressure on inflation was a result of unwinding in energy prices and a shock in supply, which accounted for two thirds of inflation surge. Lagard added that while the current interest rates are seen as sufficient to bring inflation back to 2 percent, it is expected for a small rise in inflation to occur in the upcoming months, after bringing it down from 10.6 percent in January to 2.9 percent in October.

**Eurozone PMIs**  
The latest readings to come out showed slight hope for the Eurozone's largest economy, Germany. Both manufacturing and services showed an increase from their previous readings giving confidence to the idea that eco-

### Rates - 26<sup>th</sup> November, 2023

Currencies	Previous Week Levels				This Week's Expected Range		3-Month
	Open	Low	High	Close	Minimum	Maximum	Forward
EUR	1.0911	1.0850	1.0964	1.0939	1.0830	1.1150	1.0988
GBP	1.2454	1.2444	1.2615	1.2603	1.2440	1.2835	1.2612
JPY	149.62	147.14	149.99	149.44	148.35	150.75	147.25
CHF	0.8858	0.8809	0.8874	0.8824	0.8600	0.8900	0.8740

conomic growth is plausible in the near future. Despite the positive readings, German PMIs remain in contraction territory. Over in France, output declined for the 6th consecutive month, mainly a result of weak domestic and overseas demand. As manufacturers are laying off workers, along with a highly anticipated Q4 decline, a rise in unemployment is also upon us. Unlike Germany, there seems to be no glimmer of hope for the French economy as it appears to be at a dead-end. As for the Eurozone as a whole, both the manufacturing and services sectors continued to contract, signaling a second consecutive quarter of shrinking GDP. Wages have also been increasing rapidly along with output prices at an unusual high rate, proving that inflation is still lingering in the Eurozone and is unlikely to significantly decrease in the near future. The EUR/USD currency pair ended the week at 1.0939.

**United Kingdom BoE speakers**  
Bank of England's governor Andrew


Bailey spoke on Monday, stating that the possibility of rate cuts is far too early, and that an increase in borrowing costs is still on the table if inflation persists. The speech comes following a second hold in interest rates, after 14 consecutive hikes which led inflation rates to drop from 11 percent in October of 2022, to 4.6 percent in October of 2023. However, policy makers remain cautious regarding their approach in fighting inflation. Additionally, Bailey added that the pressure on incomes due to higher food and energy prices may be the reason for wage demands.

**PMIs**  
The latest PMI news to come out show that the UK has finally left contraction territory and entered expansion territory when it comes to services. The Bank of England's decision to pause interest rate hikes, along with a clear slowdown in headline inflation have helped support business activity. The services PMI was strengthened by corporate budgets for technology as well as general spending on essential

business services. The manufacturing PMI similarly increased to 46.7 from 44.8 previously, although the PMI still remains in the contraction territory. The GBP/USD currency pair closed the week at 1.2603.

**Asia Pacific Australian Monetary Policy Meeting Minutes**  
The Head of Australia's national bank spoke last week, following the recent hike in interest rates, marking a 12-year high of 4.35 percent. Furthermore, members of the RBA expressed concerns regarding businesses passing on higher costs to consumers, leading to higher pressures on households and contributing to higher inflation. The aussie strengthened following the release, with the AUD/USD pair spiking from early November's levels 0.6370 all the way to the current trading price of 0.6582.

**Kuwait**  
Kuwaiti Dinar USD/KWD closed last week at 0.30810.



AL SAFAT INVESTMENT COMPANY

## KUWAIT BOURSA WEEKLY REPORT

WEEK ENDED ON 23 NOVEMBER 2023

(965) 22 675 140  
Al-Safat Tower, Hawalli, Beirut St.  
alsafatinvest.com  
research@alsafatinvest.com  
alsafatinvestment  
al-safat-investment-company

Market	M. Cap (KD ml)	Last Close	WTD %	MTD %	YTD %	Quantity Traded	Value Traded	No. of Trades	P/E	P/B	% of Total M. Cap
Premier Market	31,467	7,309.44	0.2%	2.3%	-9.9%	489,890,523	149,777,989	29,733	16.2	1.2	77.5%
Main Market	9,132	5,444.36	0.7%	0.9%	-2.7%	493,784,556	81,416,299	24,323	12.2	0.7	22.5%
All Share	40,600	6,664.26	0.3%	2.0%	-8.6%	983,675,079	231,194,288	54,056	13.5	0.8	100%

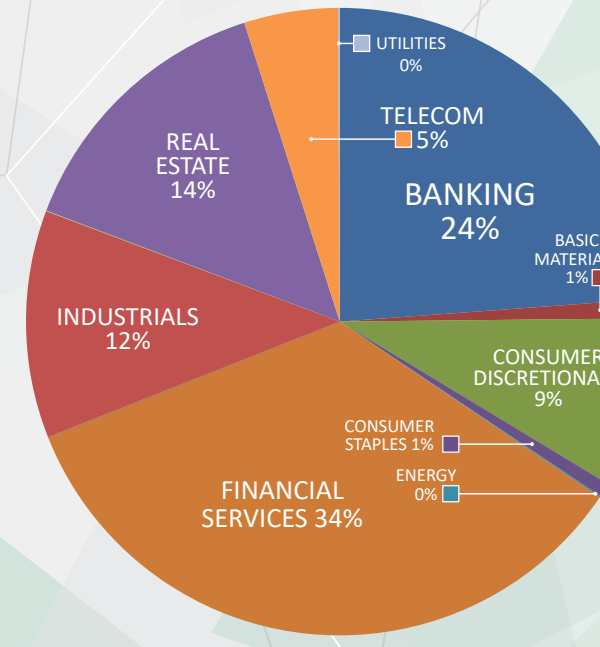
Sector	M. Cap (KD ml)	Last Close	WTD %	MTD %	YTD %	Quantity Traded	Value Traded	No. of Trades	P/E	P/B	% of Total M. Cap
Banking	23,944	1,598.06	0.0%	1.3%	-10.9%	136,993,183	55,105,880	10,053	16.3	1.1	58.98%
Basic Materials	435	770.47	-0.6%	1.7%	-10.9%	3,806,263	2,305,211	672	11.0	2.0	1.07%
Consumer Discretionary	1,008	1,467.76	3.0%	-2.4%	-1.3%	48,055,086	20,420,703	6,012	11.9	0.9	2.48%
Consumer Staples	181	593.53	-0.9%	1.5%	23.7%	3,306,135	1,675,132	199	12.5	1.1	0.44%
Energy	200	958.60	1.8%	6.3%	-15.8%	2,010,887	172,044	255	10.7	0.7	0.49%
Financial Services	4,419	1,215.77	2.4%	5.2%	-3.3%	434,114,224	79,845,827	15,879	17.5	0.8	10.89%
Health Care	233	469.74	0.0%	0.5%	1.7%	51	40.55	1	12.4	0.9	0.57%
Industrials	3,164	913.04	0.2%	2.9%	-15.4%	45,120,671	27,112,681	5,777	12.5	0.8	7.79%
Insurance	915	2,236.37	0.5%	-0.1%	44.2%	351,308	76,461	93	9.9	0.9	2.25%
Real Estate	2,551	1,189.13	0.9%	3.2%	-1.6%	287,124,394	33,100,205	10,866	16.7	0.6	6.28%
Technology	8	609.64	6.8%	1.0%	-12.4%	83,464	6,537.96	16	NM	0.7	0.02%
Telecommunications	3,347	1,094.76	-0.5%	3.9%	-7.3%	21,572,282	11,174,270	7,094	10.0	1.4	8.24%
Utilities	194	463.16	-0.6%	1.2%	-6.4%	1,137,131	199,297	139	13.6	1.5	0.48%


Stock	last Close	Change %	Volume	Value	Trades
ENERGYH	74.5	28.23%	1,484	103	5
IFA	252	21.15%	92,253,119	20,593,545	2,381
IFAHR	460	15.00%	27,967,975	12,124,403	2,664
ARABREC	64.9	12.28%	65,532,905	4,120,461	1,552
JAZEERA	1,260	12.10%	3,127,623	3,674,786	1,135

Stock	last Close	Change %	Volume	Value	Trades
KCIN	1,071	-9.62%	100	110	2
KFIC	65	-7.01%	151,841	10,034	8
INOVEST	77.1	-5.86%	583,879	45,414	32
GFC	49.4	-5.00%	7,777	382	9
THURAYA	134	-4.96%	200	27	1

Stock	Last	Change %	Volume	Value	Trades
ARZAN	200	8.70%	120,822,103	23,216,613	2,641
IFA	252	21.15%	92,253,119	20,593,545	2,381
ARABREC	64.9	12.28%	65,532,905	4,120,461	1,552
SOKOUK	46	5.26%	54,520,444	2,487,843	1,166
SANAM	185	10.12%	49,744,968	9,539,216	2,902

Stock	Last	Change %	Volume	Value	Trades
ARZAN	200	8.70%	120,822,103	23,216,613	2,641
KFH	701	-0.43%	31,173,133	21,929,737	3,804
IFA	252	21.15%	92,253,119	20,593,545	2,381
IFAHR	460	15.00%	27,967,975	12,124,403	2,664
NBK	879	0.11%	12,774,167	11,174,312	2,137





**Market Summary:**

- Premier market volume increased by 10% while value dropped by 9%. Main market volume and value increased 39% and 48%, respectively.
- Premier and Main indexes continue ascending and reclaiming previous support levels. The next phase is critical for the Premier index as it's facing critical resistance.
- Technically, the All Share index closed at 6664, with support levels at 6621, 6526, and 6487, while resistance at 6670. The Premier index closed at 7309, with support levels at 7195, 7094, and 6966, while resistance at 7343. The Main index closed at 5444, with support levels at 5424, 5393, and 5339, while resistance at 5447.



## Business

# Every industry should be held 'responsible and accountable' on climate: COP28 president

## Private sector engagement was essential to curb global heating

PARIS: The president of a pivotal UN climate summit defended on Saturday the large presence of industry representatives at the negotiations, saying private sector engagement was essential to curb global heating.

"Everyone needs to be part of this process and everyone needs to be held responsible and everyone needs to be held accountable," COP28 president Sultan Al-Jaber, of the oil-rich United Arab Emirates, told AFP in an interview.

"That includes all industries and in particular heavy emitting industries like aviation, transportation, aluminium, cement, steel, as well as the oil and gas industry," he added. World leaders, country negotiators, activists, lobbyists and figures including Pope Francis will be among the 70,000 attendees expected at COP28 in Dubai from November 30 to December 12, making it the largest United Nations climate change summit ever.

More than 1,000 businesses and philanthropic organization leaders have registered for a two-day forum on December 1-2 on the sidelines of the negotiations between political leaders on preventing the planet's climate tipping unstoppably out of control.

Businesses and industries are to announce a score of commitments at the forum, according to its organizer, Emirati businessman Badr Jafar. National negotiators at COP28 will grapple with a host of flashpoint issues, including the future of fossil fuels — oil, gas and coal — and financial aid from rich pollut-

ers for the poorer nations most vulnerable to accelerating climate disruption.

But the central focus will be a damning stock-taking of the world's limited progress towards curbing the pollutant greenhouse gas emissions fuelling the climate crisis. Jaber, CEO of UAE state-owned oil giant ADNOC, has consistently stressed his wish to engage the private sector alongside national governments to finance the transition to clean energy and help vulnerable states adapt to their changing climate.

"We also need to encourage private sector funding," he told AFP. "We need to provide the necessary insurance and the hedging mechanisms to protect the private sector, and... incentivize them to come on board and to help fix the climate finance challenge."

US and European parliamentarians have urged the UN to bring in new rules on companies taking part in COP negotiations. Asked about the demand, Jaber said the challenge was so enormous that both nation states and the private sector needed to be involved.

"Everyone must be consulted. Everyone must be given the opportunity to contribute," he said. "I will hold everyone and every industry responsible and accountable for keeping 1.5 within reach." "1.5" refers to the target set by the 2015 Paris Agreement of limiting the rise in the Earth's average temperature to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. Scientists have warned that humanity is dangerously close to exceeding that key 1.5C threshold. — AFP



NEW YORK: (FILES) The president of the upcoming COP28 climate change Sultan Ahmed Al-Jaber speaks during the Abu Dhabi International Petroleum Exhibition at ADNEC Exhibition Center October 2, 2023. — AFP

## NBK introduces exclusive offer to win KD 500 gift voucher from YouGotaGift

KUWAIT: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) always seeks to enrich customers' banking experience by providing unique and valuable offers. In this context, the bank is introducing an exclusive offer to win a KD 500 gift voucher from YouGotaGift, when booking flights through any official airline website using eligible NBK Visa Credit or Prepaid Cards.

To avail the offer, customers have to register through NBK website, and use eligible NBK Visa Credit or Prepaid Cards to book flights through the official website of any airline with a minimum amount of KD 250.

After registering and booking, the customer becomes eligible to enter the draw and get a chance to be one of 200 winners of a gift voucher worth KD 500.

Speaking on these offers, Bader Al-Janah, Head of Card Products, Consumer Banking Group, at National Bank of Kuwait said, "We are constantly striving to enrich customers' banking experience by providing

top-notch products and offers that are relevant to the expectations of their various segments, within our endeavors to deliver an impeccable banking experience."

"NBK enjoys solid relations with leading organizations across different sectors, which we strive to leverage to deliver a richer customer experience encompassing unique offers, benefits and discounts," he added. "NBK keeps close communication with customers to identify their needs and expectations, then work accordingly to meet these needs by providing top-notch services and exclusive offers that go beyond their expectations giving them a highly luxurious banking experience," he noted.

NBK Credit Cards gives the opportunity to benefit from the bank's offers all year round, in addition to offering customers a unique lifestyle thanks to their numerous unmatched benefits.



Bader Al-Janah



NBK Credit Cards offer the best payment method for the convenience and benefits they provide to customers, including NBK Rewards Program and NBK Miles Program, Purchase Protection, Extended Warranty, as well as eligibility to NBK's various draws.

YouGotaGift is the region's first marketplace for digital gift cards. It is an end-to-end digital platform that connects prepaid cards from top retail brands to consumers and businesses.



Central Bank of Kuwait

## CBK launches third cohort of 'Risk Management Program'

KUWAIT: As part of the Central Bank of Kuwait's (CBK) strategic endeavor to build highly qualified national cadres in various financial and banking fields, and develop risk management capabilities, which has great importance in enhancing the banking environment and in fortifying financial operations, the Governor of the Central Bank of Kuwait and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Institute of Banking Studies (IBS) Basel A Al-Haroon, launched the third cohort of the Risk Management Leaders Program, within the Kafa'a initiative undertaken by the CBK in collaboration with Kuwaiti banks and managed by the Institute of Banking Studies (IBS).

Al-Haroon stated that the program aims to provide participants with the necessary knowledge and skills when making appropriate decisions and develop effective risk management strategies in the banks and financial institutions.

The program will extend over a period of six months, divided into four discrete phases, the first and second phases are based in Kuwait and include training programs and practical lectures in the field of risk management, in cooperation with the London Institute of Banking and Finance in the United Kingdom and the Professional Risk Managers' International Association in the United States of America to obtain accredited and specialized certificates in this field. The program includes multiple training tracks with local and international professional lecturers. The third phase includes the submission of case studies and graduation projects, followed by the fourth phase, over two weeks of hands on field training through the Centre of Governance, Risk and Regulations, at the London Institute of Banking, which provides trainees with practical experience and professional competencies through workshops and interactive educational experiences, as well as field visits to the most important financial institutions in the UK. The program covers the costs of travel, accommodation and transportation.

With regard to eligibility for admissions to the program, the Governor indicated that the criteria for selecting participants are: The applicant must be Kuwaiti, possess an appropriate university qualification and have practical experience of no less than five years in the financial sector in Kuwait. It is also required to pass qualifying exams and interviews.

The Kafa'a initiative is a comprehensive strategic initiative that aims to build highly qualified national cadres and provide them with the necessary knowledge to progress in their careers and ready them with the necessary skills for the labor market in line with the ever-changing needs of the financial and banking industry. The initiative also aims to create a pipeline of qualified nationals able to fill leadership positions in major economic, financial and banking institutions.

## Some farmers in Iraq forced to reduce crops: NGO

BAGHDAD: Sixty percent of farmers surveyed in four provinces of drought-hit Iraq reported having to reduce cultivated areas or water used, an international rights group said Sunday. The Norwegian Refugee Council called on the Iraqi authorities to improve governance of water resources in the country that has been described as one of the most vulnerable to climate change and water scarcity.

"Climate change in Iraq is impeding the economic recovery of communities affected by conflict and precipitating risks of secondary displacement," the NRC said. The survey was conducted in July and August and relied on results from interviewing 1,079 people in Iraq's Anbar, Kirkuk, Nineveh and Salaheddin provinces, 40 percent of whom were women and 94 percent of whom were residents of rural areas.

It said 60 percent of respondents "said they cultivated less land or had to use less water due to extreme drought". "Iraq's climate is changing faster than people can adapt," said Anthony Zielicki, the NRC's interim Iraq director.

"For the 1.2 million still displaced by conflict, and the millions who have returned home, resettled or relocated, recovery from years of conflict is being crippled by extreme drought," he added. Farmers' incomes saw an increase in 2023 due to "higher than estimated rainfall", the NRC said. But that "did not necessarily trans-

## Oman sees potential for deepening trade ties

MUSCAT: While expressing dissatisfaction with limited trade with Pakistan, Oman Consul General in Karachi Engineer Sami Abdullah Salim Al-Khanjari has said although there is potential to enhance ties, not much trade is taking place despite being very close to each other.

"Pakistan has been exporting only rice, mangoes and potatoes to Oman but what about onions, chillies, carrots, lemons and other agricultural products, which can quickly reach Oman in fresh state but, unfortunately, Pakistan is nowhere in exporting all such and many other products, which are being imported from far-flung countries



Drought, dams force Iraqi farmers to abandon crops.

late into greater economic and food security for all farmers across Iraq", with women reporting higher income insecurity.

Some "15 percent of women reported not earning incomes in 2023, compared to six percent in 2022", the NRC said. Rainfall was moreover concentrated in the south, as opposed to the north in previous years, the report said.

The report comes days before the start of the COP28 climate summit set to be held in the United Arab Emirates this year. Successive years of drought have already displaced tens of

thousands from rural areas in Iraq, particularly in the southern provinces that face extreme heat during the summer.

In addition to drought, the authorities blame upstream dams built by Iraq's powerful neighbors Iran and Turkey for dramatically lowering water levels in the Tigris and Euphrates rivers which have irrigated Iraq for millennia.

A study published earlier in November by the World Weather Attribution (WWA) group blamed the "extreme" drought in Iraq, as well as Syria and Iran, on human-caused climate change. — AFP

including China, Vietnam, Australia, New Zealand, Ethiopia and Somalia," he said. He was exchanging views at a meeting during his visit to the Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI), according to a statement issued on Saturday. The CG advised the business community of Karachi to explore the export of more fruits, vegetables and other agricultural products so that the existing bilateral trade volume could be improved.

"Pakistani rice being exported to Oman is one of the best in the world whose export needs to be enhanced further. We also not only require frozen meat but also fresh meat," he said. He was of the opinion that Pakistan's textile and leather products including garments had good potential but those were not being exported to Oman, "which requires special attention".

Speaking about investment opportunities in

the Arab nation, the CG said Oman had five ports namely Salalah, Qalhat, Sohar, Duqm and Sultan Qaboos, which were among the best in the Gulf region, where investors from China, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, India and many other countries had made substantial investments.

"Saudi Arabia alone has invested more than \$1 billion while another \$1 billion is on its way. India, which is a little far from Oman as compared to Pakistan, is also making good investment in Oman but Pakistan is not there, despite being closer to us," he pointed out. "Why we are unable to improve trade? If it is a visa issue, we are dealing with it."

KCCI President Ifukhar Ahmed Sheikh hoped to see the deepening of bilateral relationship and extended full support and cooperation in achieving the common objective of enhancing trade and investment ties. — Agencies



## Lifestyle



Participants row dragon boats during a competition as part of the Water Festival on the Tonle Sap river in Phnom Penh. — AFP photos



Participants row their dragon boat during a rehearsal for the Cambodian Water Festival.



A woman dances on a dragon boat as part of the Water Festival.

# Dragon boat races return to Cambodian capital for water festival

Tens of thousands of spectators thronged the riverfront in the Cambodian capital Phnom Penh Sunday for an annual dragon boat race — the centrepiece of the kingdom's three-day water festival, cancelled during the COVID pandemic. Around 300 boats, their crews dressed in matching bright T-shirts, strained for the win as they dipped their colorful paddles into the Tonle Sap river with the royal palace behind them.

Cambodian King Norodom Sihamoni, Prime Minister Hun Manet, his father Hun Sen and senior government officials looked on as the yearly extravaganza began, with crowds urging the canoes over the final line. Concerts, parades of lantern floats bedecked with colorful neon lights — each representing a government ministry — and fireworks are all part of the three-day festival that will last until Tuesday.

"I am happy that we can meet to celebrate the water festival," 38-year-old rower Hom Phos told AFP. "I am so excited because it is our national festival." The festival was last held in 2019, after which it was halted during the pandemic. "During the COVID pandemic, everyone was worried about it, and we were not happy. But now we are happy again," fellow rower Yorn Vorn, 45, told AFP.

The festival marks the end of the rainy season when the Tonle Sap river, which joins the mighty Mekong River in front of the Royal Palace, reverses flow. Health authorities are also expected to distribute 80,000 condoms and 20,000 packages of lubricants for free to oarsmen and visitors during the festival to raise awareness about HIV and AIDS prevention.

The celebrations turned deadly on the last day of the festival in 2010, when more than 350 people were killed in a stampede on an overcrowded bridge after panic spread over rumors it was about to collapse. Then Prime Minister Hun Sen described the disaster as Cambodia's worst tragedy since the Khmer Rouge's 1975-1979 reign of terror, which killed up to a quarter of the population. — AFP



Participants row dragon boats during a competition as part of the Water Festival.



A Cambodian man (left) prays as participants row their dragon boat during a rehearsal for the Cambodian Water Festival.



Participants row their dragon boat during a rehearsal for the Cambodian Water Festival.



Participants cheer from a dragon boat during a competition as part of the Water Festival.

## 'Toxic masculinity': Russia targets women behind award-winning play

Yelena Eφος has been sending letters to Russian prisons for years, as the head of a volunteer group writing regular dispatches to the country's swelling ranks of political prisoners. But six months ago, she found herself staring down at a note she never imagined writing — a letter to her daughter, jailed over an award-winning play she directed in 2020. Russian authorities arrested Eφος' daughter, director and playwright Yevgeniya Berkovich, in May on charges of "justifying terrorism".

The offence is punishable by up to seven years in prison. "If they were going to lock anyone up, I thought it would be me for those letters," Eφος, 64, told AFP. The case against Berkovich, 38, and fellow playwright Svetlana Petriyuchuk, 43, stems from their play about Russian women who were recruited into the Islamic State (IS) group and travel to Syria to marry IS fighters before returning to Russia.

Titled, "Finist, the Brave Falcon" after a Russian folk tale, it received two prestigious "Golden Mask" awards in Russia.

But critical acclaim has counted for little since Moscow accelerated its campaign against artists and cultural figures amid its military offensive on Ukraine. Actors, directors, writers and performers have seen their work censored, been fired, forced into exile, or arrested.

Rights groups say the case against Berkovich and Petriyuchuk is particularly controversial. The charges stem from a linguistic analysis of the play using a fringe research method into extremism and terrorism called "destructology". Dismissed as pseudoscience by its critics, an analysis based on its approach found the play promoted Islamic State and advanced "radical feminism". Lawyers have dismissed the idea as absurd. A justice ministry agency has also rejected that initial interpretation, and prosecutors are seeking to keep both Berkovich and Petriyuchuk in jail while a new study is completed.

Far from "justifying terrorism", the play is an obvious criticism of the Islamic State and a cautionary tale about young Russian Muslim women recruited to join its ranks, Berkovich and her supporters argue.

### Nightmares

Last week, Eφος travelled from her home in Saint Petersburg to Moscow for a court hearing on extending her daughter's pre-trial detention. Around 20 of Berkovich's supporters also came, some chanting "we love you" as she was taken into the court in handcuffs. Berkovich urged the judge to let her return home to her two adopted daughters while she awaits trial. "Two sick children were taken from their mother six months ago... It's torture," she said.

Berkovich adopted the two girls, now in their late



Russian theater director Yevgeniya Berkovich (right) and fellow playwright Svetlana Petriyuchuk (left), detained on charges of justification of terrorism over their award-winning play about Russian Islamic State brides, are seen inside a glass defendants' cage during a hearing at the Zamoskvoretsky district court in Moscow.



In this photograph Elena Eφος shows letters to her daughter during an interview in Moscow. — AFP photos

### 'Toxic masculinity'

Berkovich comes from a storied family of activists on both sides. Eφος' mother, Nina Katerli was a writer who fought for human rights and against anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union and 1990s. After the hearing and before boarding an overnight train back to Saint Petersburg, Eφος shared some of the letters the pair have been sending to each other with AFP. In them, Berkovich gently teases her mother over a sitcom she's started watching. They never say they love each other — "it's not our way," Eφος noted — instead using pet nicknames, soft-sounding derivatives of "kot", the Russian word for cat.

The case against her daughter is a sign of Russia targeting "free women" — those who refuse to "know their place is in the kitchen," Eφος said. "Toxic masculinity" has flourished in Russia since February 24, 2022, when Moscow sent its troops into Ukraine, she said. "Our country is heading towards a traditional archaic society — a Domostroy — where feminism is of course evil," Eφος said, referring to a sixteenth-century domestic Russian code that encouraged men to hit their wives and children. — AFP



This photograph shows Elena Eφος, 64, the mother of Russian director and playwright Yevgeniya Berkovich, reading letters to her daughter during an interview in Moscow.



## Lifestyle

# GERMAN BIG WAVE SURFER TURNS TO SCIENCE TO TAME THE BREAKERS



This handout photograph shows Germany's Sebastian Steudtner surfing a wave and breaking the world record for the biggest wave ever surfed, at Praia do Norte in Nazare.



German surfer Sebastian Steudtner rides a wave during the big waves Nazare Tow Surfing Challenge in Nazare.



German surfer Sebastian Steudtner poses with his new board at the booth of German car producer Porsche of the IAA Automobile show in Munich, southern Germany.

Sebastian Steudtner already holds the world record for the largest wave ever surfed, but as the giant wave season begins, the German is looking to science and technology to chase a new high. Harnessing the technical prowess of racecar maker Porsche and autoparts specialist Schaeffler, Steudtner is seeking to dwarf his record 26.21-metre (86-foot) wave set at the Portuguese surfers' Mecca of Nazare three years ago.

"With the world record wave I realized I've reached a limit for how fast my board can go," Steudtner told AFP of his last run, involving the wave reaching the equivalent of around eight storeys. "Together with Porsche, we asked ourselves how we could make the board faster and more stable," said the 38-year-old Bavarian. Surfers who increase their speed can take on bigger swells—although it's not just a question of a "need for speed" but a question of safety as well.

"Speed is so important to us because the bigger the wave, the more speed I have to have to get away from it," said Steudtner. "The power of the wave is an absolute force," he said, "like having several buildings pushing you." Steudtner said the pressure of riding the biggest waves means surfers need to know their equipment will allow them to focus on the run itself.

Describing his record-breaking Nazare run in 2020, when he added almost two meters to the previous mark, he said: "I shoot across the wave at 80 kilometers (50 miles) an hour and concentrate 100 percent." "I don't think about the past, the present and the future. I'm in the flow. I don't have time to think 'wow, this wave is beautiful!'"

'A higher level'

Steudtner first fell in love with surfing at



German surfer Sebastian Steudtner poses with his new board at the booth of German car producer Porsche of the IAA Automobile show in Munich, southern Germany. — AFP photos

the age of nine when boogie boarding in France. With his parents' blessing, Steudtner traded landlocked Bavaria for Hawaii to pursue a career in surfing at the age of 16. He worked on construction sites to earn money, while learning to surf in his own time. "I've made a lot of decisions in my life that nobody understood at the time".

His burning curiosity may have taken him across the world but it has also propelled changes to the sport itself. "Technological innovations could take the sport 'to a higher level', he said. In order to truly let surfers harness and master the force of the ocean, surfboards need not only to be faster, but also more stable and manoeuvrable at extreme speeds. Porsche engineers helped develop a new board with an adapted nose, tail and edges to improve the hydrodynamics. Schaeffler developed a friction-reducing coating which helps the board glide through the water.

Through tests in a wind-tunnel simulator, Steudtner was able to see how he should position himself on the board as it handles monster waves. "Through changes to the board and altering Sebastian's stance, we were able to reduce air resistance by 20 percent," said Markus Schmelz, a project manager at Porsche. The innovations "made the board faster and more stable at high speeds".

The new board, colored yellow and black, has since been delivered. Steudtner, who trains daily in the gym to build up his muscle strength, was set for an autumn and winter chasing big waves. Accompanied by a team of almost 30 people, including military doctors, Steudtner said he hopes to "understand the journey of the waves in the ocean". With the power of science and design in tow, the German may be only days away from testing the board on the biggest stage of all.—AFP

## Thai authors poised for breakthrough, Hollywood boost

With a spate of critically lauded novels — one of them picked up by Netflix — a new wave of young Thai authors looks poised to break through on the world stage. Thailand boasts a rich literary tradition, with the 1920s seen as a golden age when writers tackled entrenched social issues, but while modern Thai authors have kept up that legacy, they have struggled to make a splash abroad.

That could be about to change. Pim Wangtechawat's debut novel "The Moon Represents My Heart", released in June, has catapulted her into the small but growing group of Thai authors published internationally — catching the eye of Hollywood star Gemma Chan and Netflix in the process.

And earlier this year, "Welcome Me to the Kingdom" by Mai Nardone was recognized as a New York Times editor's choice, while Pitchaya Sudbanthad's swirling 2019 novel "Bangkok Wakes to Rain" has won rave reviews. Many authors dream of a big-name screen adaptation, and Pim was no different.

"When my agent said that someone read your book, and it was Gemma, I screamed," Pim told AFP in a cafe in Bangkok, recalling the moment she learned her novel had been optioned. The English-language sections of Bangkok bookshops sometimes feel dominated by sleazy crime thrillers playing on the Thai capital's reputation for seediness and vice.

Keen to escape those stereotypes, Pim centered her novel on a time-travelling Chinese family in London and Hong Kong. "Crazy Rich Asians" star Chan hailed it as a "beautiful explo-



This photo shows Thai author Pim Wangtechawat holding a copy of her debut novel "The Moon Represents My Heart" in Bangkok. — AFP

ration of family, love and loss across the generations", but writing it was a nerve-wracking experience for Pim. "I was very scared at one point because I was like, 'Oh, am I Chinese enough to write this?'" she said.

"And then I think that white authors don't have to question, 'Am I white enough to write this book?'" Growing up in Bangkok, Pim — who has the Elvish word for "hope" and Aslan from C.S. Lewis's Narnia books tattooed on her arms — started off reading European works translated into Thai, before later reading them in the original. Part of the reason for the lack of internationally respected Thai authors, she said, was the failure of Thai schools to promote a homegrown "literature culture, writing-reading culture, the way they do in the UK for example".

While authors like Pim — who writes in English — have been published abroad with success, translated Thai novels remain vanishingly few and far between. But one author bucking that trend is Uthis Haemamool, whose latest book "The Fabulist" examines the idea of national identity. Released by Penguin in April, it was his first to be picked up by a foreign publisher, despite his having written multiple award-winning books. — AFP

## UK Booker Prize set to name first-time winner

Britain's Booker Prize for fiction will anoint a first-time winner when the 2023 recipient of the prestigious prize is announced at a ceremony in London on Sunday. None of this year's six finalists—two Americans, a Canadian, two Irish and a Kenyan author—have been shortlisted before and only one has previously been longlisted. The prize is one of the world's top literary awards and has propelled to fame countless household names, including past winners Salman Rushdie, Margaret Atwood and Hilary Mantel.

This year's six books offer "terrors, pleasures, joys and consolations", according to organizers, on themes that, among others, touch on grief, immigration and political extremism. The literary prize is open to works of fiction by writers of any nationality, written in English and published in the UK or Ireland between October 1, 2022, and September 30, 2023.

The winner will receive £50,000 (around \$63,000) and a huge boost to their profile. The short-listed novels, announced in September, were chosen from a 13-strong longlist that had been whittled down from an initial 158 works. Among them is Irish author Paul Murray's "The Bee Sting", a tragicomic saga which looks at the role of fate in the travails of one family. Murray was previously longlisted in 2010.

Kenyan writer Chetna Maroo's moving debut novel "Western Lane" about grief and sisterhood follows the story of a teenage girl for whom squash is life. Paul



Lynch's dystopian work "Prophet Song" is set in Dublin as Ireland descends into tyranny. A five-person panel also selected "If I Survive You" by US writer Jonathan Escoffery, which follows a Jamaican family and their chaotic new life in Miami.

He is joined by fellow American author, Paul Harding, whose "This Other Eden"—inspired by historical events—tells the story of Apple Island, an enclave off the US coast where society's misfits flock and build a new home. Canada is represented on the shortlist in the shape of "Study for Obedience" by Sarah Bernstein. The unsettling novel explores the

themes of prejudice and guilt through a suspicious narrator.

Although none of the novelists have won the prize before, some are no stranger to accolades, most notably Harding, who won the 2010 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction for his first novel "Tinklers". Maroo and Escoffery have made the shortlist with their debut novels. Five debut novelists have won the Booker before, the last being Douglas Stuart with "Shuggie Bain" in 2020. The Booker was first awarded in 1969. Last year's winner was Sri Lankan writer Shehan Karunatilaka for "The Seven Moons of Maali Almeida". — AFP





Taiwanese actor Akio Chen displays a trophy after winning the Best supporting actor award in the film 'Old Fox' at the 60th Golden Horse Film Awards in Taipei. — AFP photos



Taiwanese film director Hsiao Ya-chuan displays a trophy after winning the Best Director Award in the film 'Old Fox'.



Staff members from the Chinese Badlands Film Group display a trophy after winning the Best Documentary Short Film Award in the film 'The Memo'.

# TAIWAN'S GOLDEN HORSE FILM AWARDS SEES RETURN OF CHINESE STARS



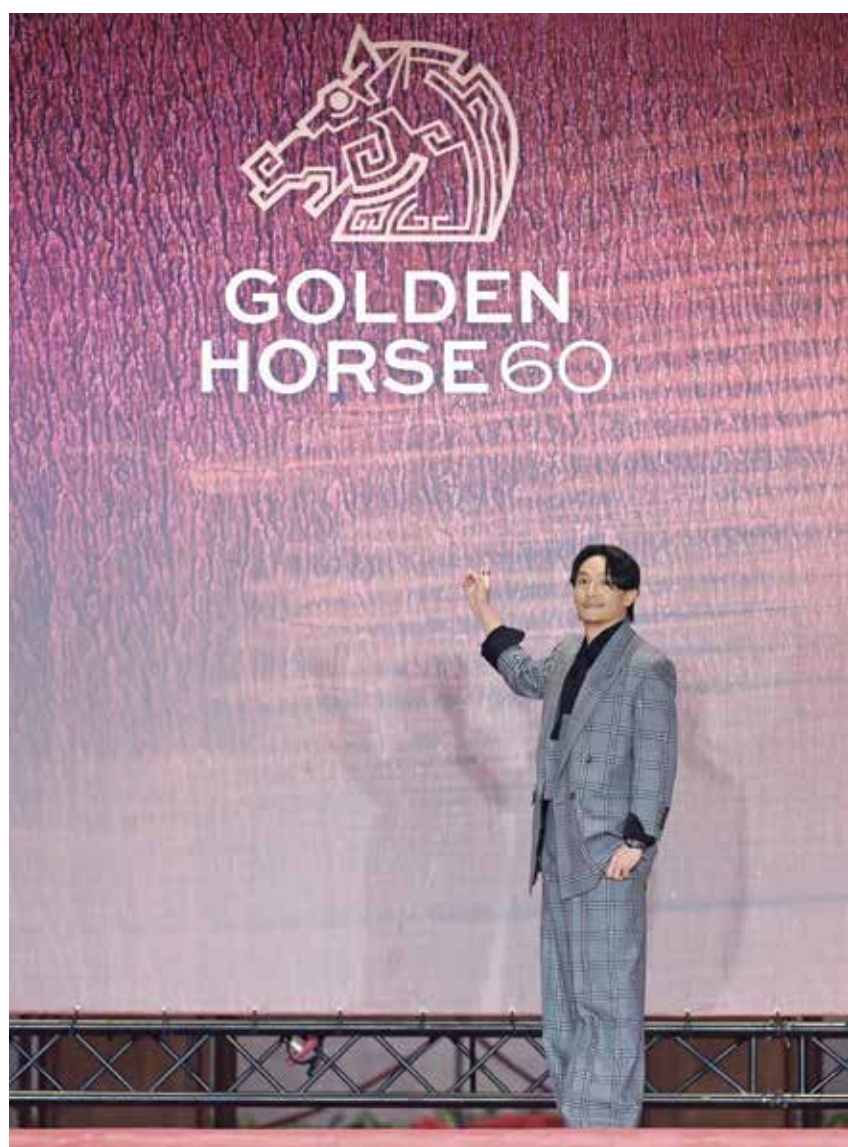
Chinese film director Huang Ji (center) and her Japanese husband also film director Otsuka Ryuji display trophies after winning the Best Narrative Feature Award and Taiwanese film editor Ching-sung Liao (left) after winning the Best Film Editing Award in the film 'Stonewalling'.



Taiwanese actress Audrey Lin (right) and actor Wu Kang-ren display trophies after winning the Best Leading Actress Award in the film 'Trouble Girl' and Best Leading Actor Award in the film 'Abang Adik'.

## Full list of the 60th Golden Horse Awards winners:

- Best director:** Hsiao Ya-chuan / "OLD FOX"
- Best supporting actor:** Akio Chen / "OLD FOX"
- Best original film score:** Chris Hou / "OLD FOX"
- Best makeup & costume design:** Wang Chih-cheng Shirley Kao / "OLD FOX"
- Best narrative feature:** "Stonewalling"
- Best film editing:** Liao Ching-sung, Otsuka Ryuji / "Stonewalling"
- Best supporting actress:** Beatrice Fang / "Day Off"
- Best original film song:** "The Usual" / "Day Off"
- Best art direction:** Huang Mei-ching, Tu Shuo-feng / "Eye of the Storm"
- Best visual effects:** ArChin Yen / "Eye of the Storm"
- Best leading actor:** Wu Kang-ren / "Abang Adik"
- Best leading actress:** Audrey Lin / "Trouble Girl"
- Outstanding Taiwanese Filmmaker of the Year:** Lin Shih-ken
- Lifetime achievement award:** Brigitte Lin, Chen Kun-hou
- Best documentary feature:** Wang Bing / "YOUTH (Spring)"
- Best documentary short film:** "The Memo"
- Best new director:** Nick Cheuk / "Time Still Turns the Pages"
- Best new performer:** Yoyo Tse / "Fly Me to the Moon"
- Best animated feature:** "Piggy"
- Best animated short film:** Ellis Chan Ka-yin, Wong Hiu-kit / "Monsoon Blue"
- Best live action short film:** Ho Sze-wai / "Before the Box Gets Emptied"
- Best original screenplay:** Sun Jie / "The Mountain Is Coming"
- Best adapted screenplay:** Wu Chin-jung, Cheng Wei-hao / "Marry My Dead Body"
- Best cinematography:** Yu Jing-pin / "Fish Memories"
- Best action choreography:** Hung Shih-hao / "The Pig, the Snake and the Pigeon"
- Best sound effects:** Tu Duu-chih, Wu Shu-yao, Chen Kuan-ting / "Snow in Midsummer"



Taiwanese actor Chang Chen arrives at the 60th Golden Horse Film Awards.

Actress Hu Ling on Saturday became the first Chinese film star to walk the red carpet of Taiwan's Golden Horse Awards since 2019, when China boycotted the self-ruled island's biggest awards show over political tensions. Chinese director Huang Ji also attended the ceremony with her Japanese husband Ryuji Otsuka, and the couple won the coveted best feature film for the social drama "Stonewalling" they co-directed.

"After winning the Golden Horse awards, we can go to a wilder world and gallop. I am especially grateful to the Golden Horse," Huang told the crowd. Beijing banned its entertainers from joining Golden Horse, dubbed the Chinese-language Oscars, after a Taiwanese director voiced support for the island's independence in an acceptance speech in 2018.

China claims democratic Taiwan as its own territory and has long blacklisted its stars over any perceived backing for the island's independence. There were no mainland films in the 2019 nomination list and several Hong Kong movies dropped out that year, while big commercial productions were conspicuously absent at both the 2020 and 2021 awards. But on Saturday, the red carpet was graced by Hu, nominated for best actress in the education drama "Carp Leaping Over Dragon's Gate".

Dressed in a shimmering gown holding a pineapple in her hands, she was accompanied by Chinese film director Yan Xiaolin and some of the film's cast. "Our film's (Chinese) name is 'Pineapple' and Taiwan's audiences have told me that pineapple means good luck" in Taiwanese culture, Hu said in a brief televised interview. Hu lost to Taiwan's 12-year-old Au-



Taiwanese producer Vincent Wang displays a trophy after winning the Best Documentary Feature Award in the film 'Youth Spring'.

drey Lin ("Trouble Girl"), the night's biggest dark horse who became the youngest ever best actress winner in Golden Horse history.

Lin also saw off Hong Kong's Jennifer Yu ("In Broad Daylight") and Chung Suet-ying ("The Lyricist Wannabe"), who both attended Saturday's event. Taiwanese Hsiao Ya-chuan bagged best director for his family drama "Old Fox," while compatriot Wu Kang-ren claimed best actor for playing a mute man in the Malaysian film "Abang Adik."

The award for best documentary short film went to "The Memo," a video diary of the pandemic lockdown made by a filmmaker couple trapped in a small Shanghai apartment. Attendance by the mainland Chinese actors was a departure from previous years.

In 2022, Chinese star Cya Liuv — nominated for best actress for Hong Kong crime thriller "Limbo" — gave the ceremony a miss, with no reasons given. Chinese director Huang Shuli collected the best documentary short film award in person last year — a rare appearance by a mainland filmmaker since the fallout. — AFP



Japanese actor Takeshi Kitano arrives at the 60th Golden Horse Film Awards.



Taiwanese actor Beatrice Fang displays a trophy after winning the Best supporting actress award in the film 'Day Off'.



Japanese actress Hikari Mitsushima arrives at the 60th Golden Horse Film Awards.



Taiwanese actress Brigitte Lin arrives at the 60th Golden Horse Film Awards.



## Sports

# Verstappen completes majestic season with record-breaking triumph

## Max cruised to a record-increasing 19th win of the year for Red Bull

**ABU DHABI:** Max Verstappen completed a majestic and record-breaking season in familiar style on Sunday when he cruised to a record-increasing 19th win of the year for Red Bull at an action-packed Abu Dhabi Grand Prix.

The three-time world champion came home 17.993 seconds ahead of Ferrari's Charles Leclerc whose bold drive was not enough for the Italian team to claim the runners-up place in the constructors' championship.

That went, finally, to Mercedes by just three points as although Sergio Perez came home second behind Verstappen on the road he was relegated to fourth with a five-second penalty, for a mid-race clash with McLaren's Lando Norris, which promoted George Russell to third.

Norris was fifth ahead of his McLaren team-mate Oscar Piastri, Aston Martin's Fernando Alonso, Yuki Tsunoda of Alpha Tauri and seven-time champion Lewis Hamilton in the second Mercedes. Verstappen ended the season as the only driver to complete every lap of the season, more than 1000 laps led, and also broke Jim Clark's 1963 record for the highest percentage of laps led in a season.

"An incredible season," said Verstappen, who also paid tribute to retirement-bound Alpha Tauri boss Franz Tost who nurtured his early F1 career. "I felt quite emotional on the in-lap as it's the last time in this car that has given me such a lot.

Russell said: "It was really tense at the end as the tyres were dropping off, but it's a massive relief to bring the car home P3. It means a huge amount to so many people back at the factory." Leclerc, who slowed to allow Perez to pass him in the clos-

ing laps, said: "He had a penalty and we had to help him finish in front of George with the five seconds... but, unfortunately, it wasn't enough... It's a shame we finished third."

The race began in hot conditions, with an air temperature of 27 degrees Celsius and the track cooling rapidly as the sun went down and the floodlights blazed on the Yas Marina Circuit. The top 12 cars started on medium compound tyres.

The Dutchman led from pole and fended off three early challenges from Leclerc to open up a one second lead before Drag Reduction System (DRS) was enabled on lap three when Perez swept inside Hamilton for ninth and Norris passed Piastri for third, having already passed Russell.

As the leaders all pitted for hards, Yuki Tsunoda took over on lap 18, giving Alpha Tauri and Tost a memorable moment, only the second time a Japanese driver had led a Formula One race. He stayed there as Verstappen weaved his way back to the front, finally taking control again on lap 23 when Tsunoda pitted, returning in 12th behind Hamilton, who survived an early bump into the rear of Pierre Gasly's Alpine with front wing damage. By lap 30, it was a familiar story. Verstappen led Leclerc by 6.5 seconds with Russell 2.1 behind in third and Norris fourth. Hamilton was eighth and Sainz 14th.

As the second stops began, Norris pitted again on lap 34, taking fresh hards. He re-joined 10th. Mercedes responded, bringing Russell in - and he came out in P9 while Hamilton battled Alonso for ninth and Sainz, on an aggressive strategy, rose to eighth.

As it stood, it was advantage Ferrari again while, at the front, Verstappen came in again on lap 44,



**ABU DHABI:** Red Bull Racing's Dutch driver Max Verstappen (C) celebrates on the podium with the trophy after winning the Abu Dhabi Formula One Grand Prix at the Yas Marina Circuit in the Emirati city on November 26, 2023.

retaining his lead to emerge with a 15-lap cruise to the flag before Hamilton passed Sainz for ninth with 10 laps to go.

It was advantage Mercedes again, but when Rus-

sell was passed by Perez, for third, the 'silver arrows' hopes hung on the five-second penalty the Mexican was given for an earlier clash with Norris as the flag came out for Verstappen. — AFP

## Lee wins Australian PGA Championship for third DP title

**BRISBANE:** Min Woo Lee held his nerve after a shaky start to fire a three-under-par 68 and win the Australian PGA Championship by three strokes from Japan's Rikuya Hoshino Sunday, earning a third DP World Tour title. The 25-year-old Australian went into the final day at Royal Queensland Golf Club in Brisbane three clear of Hoshino and mixed five birdies and a spectacular chip-in eagle with four bogeys to seal the win. He carded 20-under for the tournament, building on a successful year in which he won the Macau Open on the Asian Tour last month and earned 2024 playing rights for the US PGA Tour.

But another victory on the DP World Tour had eluded him until now, having broken through for his first European win at the 2020 Vic Open then claiming the 2021 Scottish Open. "It's unbelievable, I've always thought I could win, it took a while to get over the hump," said Lee, whose sister Minjee Lee is the women's world number five. "But two wins in the last month or so and I'm really proud of my team and myself. I made it interesting for myself early on and through the middle, but I ended up hanging on. "I know Rikuya is a really good player and he kept knocking on the door, but it was exactly same as my last win, just the playing point. I just kept coming," added Lee after his triumph in DP World Tour's 2024 season opener. Six-time Japan Tour winner Hoshino put up a gutsy fight at his first tournament in Australia, hauling in Lee's overnight three-shot advantage by the second hole.

### 'A lot of fun'

But he couldn't maintain the momentum and ended with a 68 for outright second on a day that saw Chile's Joaquin Niemann, who plays on the Saudi-backed LIV Golf tour, sink a hole-in-one at the par-three fourth. It was the second ace of the tournament after Australian Curtis Luck did the same at the 17th on Friday. Niemann carded 67 to finish fifth, two shots behind Luck in fourth. Fellow LIV Golf player Marc Leishman was third after a best-of-the-day 64 left him four strokes behind Lee. Defending champion and one of LIV Golf's superstars, Cameron Smith, missed the cut. Lee suffered early nerves, over-hitting his approach at the first to open with a bogey then par, while confident playing partner Hoshino drilled consecutive birdies as the Australian's overnight three-shot lead evaporated.

But Lee kept his cool to restore his three-shot advantage by the sixth after two well-taken birdies following aggressive drives, coupled with a bogey from Hoshino. A long-range eagle at the par-five ninth gave Lee a four-stroke cushion as he pumped the air in celebration to a huge ovation from large galleries.

"I would like to congratulate Min Woo on his amazing play," said Hoshino. "This was my first time in Australia and I had a lot of fun playing in front of such big crowds. "I was very sharp and achieved a good result, so I'll do my best to win next week as well," he added, referring to the Australian Open in Sydney which begins on Thursday. — AFP



**BRISBANE:** Min Woo Lee of Australia poses with his trophy following victory on the final day of the Australian PGA Championship at the Royal Queensland Golf Club in Brisbane on November 26, 2023. — AFP



## Al-Arabi, Khaleej to clash in Asian handball finals

**KUWAIT:** Today (Monday) marks the end of the 26th Asian Men's Club League Handball Championship being held in Kuwait with a match between Kuwait (Kwt) and Qadisiya (Kwt) to decide third and fourth place, and the final match will be between Al-Arabi (Qatar) and Khaleej (Saudi Arabia). The matches will be held at Sheikh Saad Al-Abdallah covered halls complex at Sabah Al-Salem area.

Khaleej team, which won all its matches in the preliminaries, and went past the host Qadisiya Club

in the semifinals with the score of 30-29, reaching the final match in hopes of winning the title for the first time in its history.

Khaleej will rely on a highly talented group of players, most notably Hussain Al-Sayyad (Bahrain), Youssef bin Ali, Shinnosuk Tokuda (JPN), and goalkeeper Mohammed Abdulhussain. Meanwhile Al-Arabi which led the second group in the preliminaries on goal difference with Qadisiya, and beat Kuwait in the semifinal match, seeks to win the title for the second time. Al-Arabi hangs its hopes on players Wajdi Sinen, Abdelrahman Tareq, Rafael Capote, and goalkeeper Irhad Alihodzic.

### The yellows suffered a loss!

Qadisiya lost its semifinal match to Khaleej (Saudi) by the score of 30-29. Qadisiya which was (4) goals behind in the first half, came back in the second

half and went ahead with the score of 22-21 in the 14th minutes with the heroics of its Tunisian goalkeeper Asil Nami, in addition to the shots of the Match MVP Valadan Lipovina (Montenegro).

Qadisiya could not maintain its uprising due to lack of physical fitness, prompting coach Waleed Salmeen to rest the starters but substitutes were not lucky enough, allowing Khaleej to come back and ended the match in its favor. President of Qatar Handball Association Ahmad Al-Shaabi lauded the 26th edition of the Asian Clubs Championships adding "it has been a long time since Qadisiya organized such a major continental championship, but it succeeded in the organization and the championship came out great in all aspects.

President of Saudi Arabia's Khaleej Club Alaa Al-Hamal congratulated the fans for reaching the final match for the first time in its history. He said the match with Qadisiya was tough.

## N Zealand bank on WCup form ahead of Bangladesh Tests

**SYLHET:** New Zealand coach Luke Ronchi said Sunday that his side's Cricket World Cup experience in India would help end their barren run in Bangladesh, as they prepare to face the hosts for a two-Test series. New Zealand has largely played on Asian soil this year, with series in Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh in various formats, before they played the World Cup in India over October and November.

The Kiwis put up a credible show at the tournament, losing to hosts India in the semi-final. "It's definitely going to help us," Ronchi told reporters ahead of Tuesday's match at Sylhet. "I think if we'd come straight from green wickets in New Zealand to the Bangladesh wickets, it's a big change," he added. "But for the majority of our group here, they have been in India. They've been at the World Cup.

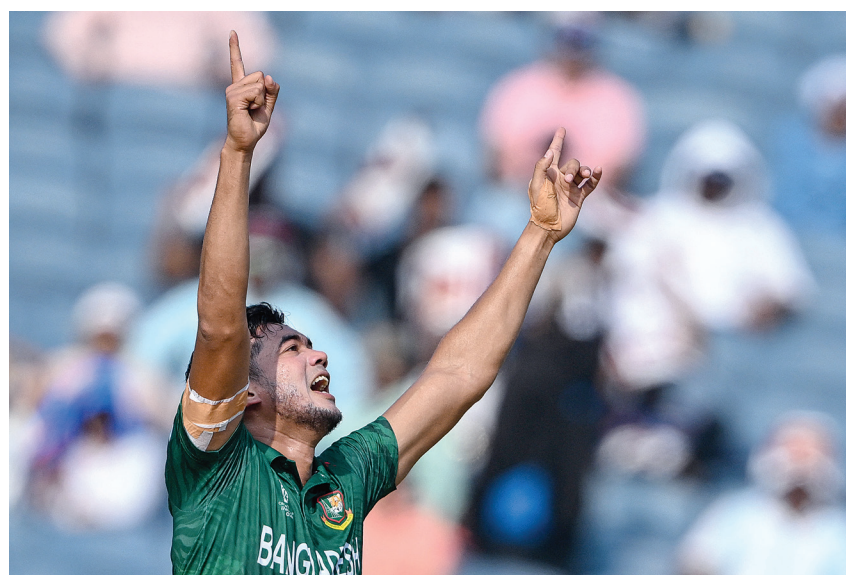
"They have been practising on different surfaces, slower and turning sort of surfaces. So that hopefully helps us for this Test series." Before travelling

to India, New Zealand ended their 15-year wait to win a series in Bangladesh, beating the home side 2-0 in the three-match one-day international series.

The Kiwis have not, however, won a Test in Bangladesh since their three-wicket win in Chittagong in 2008. Their next three Tests, including both matches in a 2013 series, ended in a draw. The visitors, who played with just one spinner back in 2013, named a spin-heavy squad for the upcoming series. This time, Mitchell Santner and Ajaz Patel join Ish Sodhi along with two spin all-rounders, Glenn Phillips and Rachin Ravindra.

Ronchi believed spinners from both camps would play a big role. "The quality of spin and pace in both sides is going to be really high," he said. Bangladesh will miss regular captain and experienced spinner Shakib Al Hasan for the series, while pacers Taskin Ahmed and Ebadot Hossain will be out due to injury.

Veteran batsman Tamim Iqbal and opener Liton Das are also not available



**PUNE:** (FILES) Bangladesh's Taskin Ahmed celebrates after taking the wicket of Australia's Travis Head during the 2023 ICC Men's Cricket World Cup one-day international (ODI) match between Australia and Bangladesh at the Maharashtra Cricket Association Stadium in Pune. — AFP

for the series due to injury and a family break respectively. "It's challenging to lose that much of experience from any team, especially for Bangladesh," said coach Chandika Hathurusingha.

He said the absences did, however,

offer a chance to test other players. "I think it's exciting, and it's an opportunity for some of the youngsters to make their name," he said. The second Test of the series will be held in Dhaka from December 6-10. — AFP

## Root joins Stokes in skipping next year's IPL

**NEW DELHI:** England batsman Joe Root has pulled out of next year's Indian Premier League, joining his red-ball skipper Ben Stokes in sitting out the glitzy Twenty20 tournament. Root, who had made his IPL

debut for Rajasthan Royals earlier this year, opted out a day before the deadline for franchises to announce their releases and retentions ahead of the auction on December 19.

"Joe Root has opted out of IPL 2024. The dressing room will miss you, Rooty," Royals said late Saturday in a post on X, formerly Twitter. Root became the second player from England to opt out of the IPL after Stokes announced his withdrawal last week in order to manage his workload and fitness.

Roots said in a statement on their website that they "respect" Root's decision. "Even in a short span

of time, Joe was able to create such a positive impact on the franchise and the players around him," said Kumar Sangakkara, Royals' director of cricket.

"His energy around the group and the experience he brought to the Royals will be missed. We respect his decision totally and wish him success in everything he does." Root was signed up by Royals for his base price of \$121,000 in the IPL auction this year.

He played three games but batted in just one, scoring 10 against Royal Challengers Bangalore in Jaipur. The IPL remains the most popular and lucrative Twenty20 league in the world. — AFP



Sports

# 'Adorable' Kia Havertz ends goal drought to fire Arsenal into top spot

## Arsenal's third successive win in all competitions

LONDON: Mikel Arteta saluted "adorable" Kai Havertz after the German sent Arsenal to the top of the Premier League with the last-gasp goal that clinched a 1-0 win at Brentford on Saturday. Havertz was a Champions League final hero for Chelsea in 2021, but he has endured a torrid time since crossing London to join Arsenal in the close-season.

The 24-year-old midfielder finally gave a glimpse of why Arteta splashed out £65 million (\$80 million) to sign him when he headed home in the closing minutes. Havertz's second goal for Arsenal was his first in his last 10 appearances, moving his team one point clear of second placed Manchester City, who were held to a 1-1 draw by third placed Liverpool earlier in the day.

"That is the beautiful thing about life. When you have challenges and you have to overcome them, it makes these moments much better," Arteta said. "That is the reason the people reacted to him like that today. It is because he is adorable and he is a joy to work with. He fully deserves more than anybody to get that win."

Arsenal's third successive win in all competitions proved they have erased the bitter taste of their controversial VAR-aided defeat at Newcastle earlier in November. Arteta's men had already won at the Gtech Community Stadium in the League Cup in September and they left it late before making it another successful trip to west London.

"I love winning and we are top of the table. This is where we have to want to be," Arteta said. "When you have an opportunity to take a bite out of everybody you have to do it. I was really curious how the team was going to do. Winter has started, it was very

cold and it is difficult coming to Brentford. I loved the way the team competed."

With on-loan Arsenal keeper David Raya not eligible to play against his parent club, Aaron Ramsdale made his first league start since September 3. Ramsdale's father recently criticised Arteta's handling of the Arsenal goalkeeping controversy, with the England international surprisingly losing his place to Raya despite recording the second most Premier League clean-sheets last season.

But Arteta's faith in Raya received a boost when Ramsdale, his confidence clearly affected by his spell on the bench, almost gifted Brentford the lead with a horrendous mistake early in the first half.

Trying to play out from the six-yard box after Gabriel's back-pass, Ramsdale panicked under pressure from Yoane Wissa.

### Havertz has the last word

Ramsdale missed his kick and the ball rolled to Bryan Mbeumo, whose shot was cleared off the line by Declan Rice before Wissa stabbed the rebound wide. Arteta refused to be drawn on Ramsdale's shaky performance, saying only: "I am really happy with the team and the way the team played and we kept the clean sheet."

After a slow start from Arsenal, they finally showed signs of life when Trossard headed Oleksandr Zinchenko's cross over before Gabriel nodded into the side-netting. Arsenal thought they had taken the lead in the 42nd minute when Gabriel Jesus met Bukayo Saka's cross with a header that was parried by Mark Flekken and Leandro Trossard nodded home from close-range.



LONDON: Arsenal's English goalkeeper #01 Aaron Ramsdale (L) jumps to stop the ball during the English Premier League football match between Brentford and Arsenal at the Gtech Community Stadium in London. — AFP

But a VAR check decided Trossard was narrowly offside, giving Arteta another dose of frustration at the hands of the review system. Brentford nearly made Arsenal pay for their lethargy as Neal Maupay's header was brilliantly cleared off the line by the stretching Zinchenko before the French forward

poked the rebound wastefully wide.

That proved a crucial moment as Havertz came off the bench to win it in the 89th minute. Saka's cross picked out Havertz's run to the far post and the German guided his header past Flekken as Arteta jumped for joy on the touchline. — AFP

## Mazzarri wins on return as Napoli go third

MILAN: Walter Mazzarri made a winning return as Napoli coach on Saturday with the champions' hard-fought 2-1 victory at Atalanta, while AC Milan held on to third in Serie A after beating Fiorentina 1-0. Eljif Elmas netted the decisive goal 11 minutes from the end at the Gewiss Stadium in Bergamo after Khvicha Kvaratskhelia's headed opener for the away side on the stroke of half-time was levelled by a similar strike from Ademola Lookman.

North Macedonia midfielder Elmas rolled home the winner from substitute Victor Osimhen's pass following Atalanta goalkeeper Marco Carnesecchi's poor clearance, making sure that Napoli stayed fourth. Mazzarri's team are still seven points behind leaders Inter Milan who travel to Turin on Sunday for the weekend's big match at second-placed Juventus. "The team dominated all last season, playing some of the best football in Europe with players who were not used to being in that position," Mazzarri told DAZN.

"There was always going to be some drop-off after that," Mazzarri returned to Napoli last week after Rudi Garcia was sacked, reprising a role he left just over a decade ago after being the man to take southern Italy's biggest club back to the upper echelons of Italian football.

The 62-year-old guided Napoli to the 2012 Italian Cup, beating undefeated league champions Juventus in the final to win the club's first major trophy in over



MILAN: AC Milan's French goalkeeper #16 Mike Maignan (C) stops the ball during the Serie A football match between AC Milan vs Fiorentina at San Siro stadium in Milan. — AFP

two decades, and to second in Serie A one year later before leaving for Inter Milan.

And he took three points from Saturday's even clash, his team recovering from Lookman's 53rd-minute equaliser and being saved from going behind in the 68th minute when Mario Pasalic's finish was ruled out for Teun Koopmeiners straying offside.

Mazzarri will also be boosted by Osimhen recovering from his hamstring injury in time for Wednesday's Champions League trip to Real Madrid. Napoli are second in Group C, five points behind leaders Madrid and four ahead of third-placed Braga, who

take on Union Berlin, with two games remaining.

"I didn't need to be in charge of Napoli to know that Osimhen is a great striker, I'd already seen him play," said Mazzarri. "I hope he gets back to his best form back as soon as he can."

Napoli were briefly third but Milan moved back above their rivals thanks to Theo Hernandez's penalty in a win in which 15-year-old Francesco Camarda became the youngest ever player to play in Serie A. France full-back Hernandez calmly slotted home from the spot in first-half stoppage time after being brought down by Fabiano Parisi. — AFP

## 'Innovative' former England manager Venables dies at 80

LONDON: Terry Venables was saluted as an "innovative" and "charming" manager after the charismatic former England, Tottenham and Barcelona boss died aged 80 on Sunday. Venables guided England to the Euro 96 semi-finals, led Barcelona to the 1986 European Cup final and won the 1991 FA Cup with Tottenham during a managerial career that made him one of English football's most admired coaches.

"We are totally devastated by the loss of a wonderful husband and father who passed away peacefully yesterday after a long illness," Venables' family said in a statement. "We would ask that privacy be given at this incredibly sad time to allow us to mourn the loss of this lovely man who we were so lucky to have had in our lives."

Venables' vibrant personality and love of attacking football established him as a firm favourite with



Terry Venables

players and fans alike. Gary Lineker, signed by Venables for Barcelona in 1986 and then Tottenham in 1989, encapsulated the feelings of the football world as he paid a heartfelt tribute to his trail-blazing former manager. "Devastated to hear that Terry Venables has died. The best, most innovative coach that I had the privilege and pleasure of playing for," he wrote on social media. "He was much more, though, than just a great manager, he was vibrant, he was

charming, he was witty, he was a friend.

"He'll be hugely missed. RIP Terry." Tottenham paid tribute to Venables' by holding a minute's applause ahead of their Premier League fixture with Aston Villa on Sunday. Both teams wore black armbands, while an image of Venables was displayed on two big screens in the Tottenham Hotspur Stadium.

Venables masterminded England's run to the last four of Euro 96 on home soil at Wembley, with the highlights including a stunning 4-1 rout of the Netherlands and a memorable 2-0 victory over Scotland.

They fell agonisingly short in the semi-finals, losing on penalties to eventual winners Germany, bringing an end to his reign after two years. England's current boss Gareth Southgate, who famously missed a crucial penalty in that shoot-out against Germany, praised Venables' empathy, as well as his tactical acumen. "Tactically excellent, he had a wonderful manner, capable of handling everyone from the youngest player to the biggest star," he said. "He was open-minded, forward-thinking, enjoyed life to the full and created a brilliant environment with England that allowed his players to flourish and have one of the most memorable tournaments in England history. — AFP

## Columbus, Cincinnati wins set up derby clash in Eastern final

ORLANDO: Major League Soccer's Eastern Conference final will be an all-Ohio affair after the Columbus Crew and FC Cincinnati won in Saturday's semi-finals. Christian Ramirez and Cucho Hernandez scored extra-time goals as the Crew beat 10-man Orlando City 2-0 after extra time on Saturday.

Then a scrappy encounter between Cincinnati and the Philadelphia Union was decided by a controversial winner late in stoppage time from Yerson Mosquera to give Cincy a 1-0 win and the right to host the conference final. The Crew had the upper hand for large stretches of the game and went close in the first half when midfielder Aidan Morris saw his shot pushed wide by Orlando keeper Pedro Gallese and then Hernandez blasted just wide after good work from the lively Diego Rossi.

Orlando were defending valiantly and threatened at times on the break, but they found themselves a man down in the 78th minute when Argentine defender Rodrigo Schlegel was sent off for a second yellow card when he bundled down a goal-bound Rossi.

Columbus pushed forward in search of the winner but they almost got caught out at the break when a poor header from Rudy Camacho fell to Facundo Torres who fed Martin Ojeda only for the Argentine to fire his shot wide. Columbus coach Wilfried Nancy introduced Ramirez for extra-time and within two minutes the moved had paid off handsomely.

Morris won the ball on the edge of the box, burst down the right and fired in a low cross which Ramirez slid into the net from close range. Orlando responded positively though with Kyle Smith forcing Crew keeper Patrick Schulte into a fine save with his left leg after being put through by a beautiful pass from Junior Urso. Schulte then did well to keep out an effort from Ramiro Enrique and then delivered a magnificent reaction save to keep out an Enrique header. But deep in the second period of extra-time, Gallese was caught out when he had pushed up near the half-way line and Hernandez rounded him and fired into the unguarded goal from over 50 yards out.

Ramirez said he was delighted to have got off the bench to make the difference. "I was just itching to get out on the pitch. I felt that we were just missing some presence in the box. So just told myself, if I get in there, I'm just gonna be inside the box - and got on the end of one," he said.

Cincinnati, the top seed in the MLS playoffs after winning the Supporters' Shield for the best regular season record, started frantically in front of a packed TQL Stadium. But while playmaker Luciano Acosta was busy and prompting Philadelphia weathered the storm of early attacks, keeping Cincinnati's strike-threat Brandon Vazquez quiet. — AFP

# Classifieds

### Clinics & Hospitals

#### Clinics

Kaizen center	25716707	Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764
Rawda	22517733	Qadsiya	22515088
Adaliya	22517144	Dasmah	22532265
Khaldiya	24848075	Bneid Al-Gar	22531908
Kaifan	24849807	Shaab	22518752
Shamiya	24849807	Qibla	22459381
Shuwaikh	24848913	Ayoun Al-Qibla	22451082
Abdullah Salem	24814507	Mirqab	22456536
Nuzha	22549134	Sharq	22465401
	22526804	Salmiya	25746401

### Change of Name

**I, Hakimuddin** Rokadia s/o Shabbir Ali Rokadiya holder of Indian Passport No. U0188194, having permanent address, Hussami Mohalla, Partapur, Banswara, Pin-327024, Rajasthan, India, residing in Kuwait at present, hereby declare that henceforth my name will be read as (given name) Hakimuddin and (surname) Rokadiya. #4566 27-11-2023

**I, Tubi** Kadaparambil holder of Indian Passport No- V7782765 having permanent address - S/o Baby Kadaparambil,

Kadaparambil house Kodange Mundaje post, Belthangady TQ, Dakshina Kannada, Karnataka, Indian Pin - 574228, residing in Kuwait at present, hereby declare that henceforth my name will be read as (given name) Tubi Joseph and (surname) Baby Kadaparambil. #4565 27-11-2023

**I, Hakimuddin** holder of Indian Passport No. V6127603 having permanent Address 118 Bahadar Pura, Bakhhal, Ujjain, Pin:456001, Madhya Pradesh, India residing In Kuwait at present,

hereby declare that henceforth my name will be read as Given Name Hakimuddin and surname Lightwala. #4563 - 24-11-2023

**I, Husain** holder of Indian Passport No. M5457327 having permanent address 78 Ibrahim Pura Bhakal, Kharakuwa, Ujjain, Pin: 456006, Madhya Pradesh, India residing in Kuwait at present, hereby declare that henceforth my name will be read as : given name Husain and surname Ajabshawala. # 4564 - 24-11-2023



## Watkins fires Villa into fourth as Spurs pay tribute to Venables

Tottenham squandered the lead in all three of their defeats



LONDON: Aston Villa's English striker #11 Ollie Watkins heads the ball during the English Premier League football match between Tottenham Hotspur and Aston Villa at Tottenham Hotspur Stadium in London, on November 26, 2023. — AFP

LONDON: Ollie Watkins fired Aston Villa into fourth place in the Premier League as they came from behind to win 2-1 at Tottenham on a day the hosts paid tribute to former boss Terry Venables. Unai Emery's side trailed to Giovanni Lo Celso's first goal of the season in the first half in north London.

But Pau Torres equalized just before the break and Watkins' 12th goal this term wrapped up an impressive result for revitalized Villa. Villa moved above Tottenham into fourth, with Ange Postecoglou's team falling two points behind them in fifth after a third successive defeat stalled their early-season momentum. Tottenham have squandered the lead in all three of their defeats, but Postecoglou could point to the injuries that have robbed him of several key players including James Maddison. "The outcome is disappointing but I thought the players did a fantastic job, playing the football we want," Postecoglou said.

"On any other day we win that game. It's fine margins. If we keep playing like that when we get ev-

eryone back we will be a pretty good side." Villa's resilient third away win in their last 11 league games underlined the improvements made by Emery since he replaced the sacked Steven Gerrard last season.

Sitting just two points behind leaders Arsenal, Villa have won four of their last five league games to spark genuine hopes of a top four challenge. "It was an amazing match. Both teams created chances. We were efficient and clinical in our attacking. I enjoyed it but I lost my energy!" Emery said.

"Of course we can get confidence when we are winning matches like today. We are willing to fight. I tell the players 'enjoy our position but we are not content.'" As an innovative former manager of England, Barcelona and Tottenham, where he won the FA Cup in 1991, Venables would have appreciated the attacking quality of both teams on the day he passed away aged 80.

With both teams wearing black armbands, a picture of Venables was displayed on each of the big

screens during a minute of applause in celebration of his life before kick-off. Tottenham were on top in the opening stages and Dejan Kulusevski blasted against the post after showing nimble footwork to prise open the Villa defence.

Postecoglou's men were back on the offensive as Bryan Gil was denied by a fine save from Emiliano Martinez. Their enterprising play reaped a deserved reward in the 22nd minute when Villa could only clear a corner to the edge of the area, where Lo Celso hammered a powerful strike that deflected in off Carlos.

### Clinical Watkins

Villa thought they had mustered an immediate response as Watkins glanced his header past Guglielmo Vicario from Lucas Digne's cross. But, after a VAR check of almost three minutes, the goal was disallowed for a tight offside against Watkins. Kulusevski was inches away from doubling Tottenham's lead with a curler before Son Heung-min's goal was chalked off

for another offside. For all their dashing play in attack, Tottenham were vulnerable at the back and Villa took advantage in first half stoppage-time.

Douglas Luiz's free-kick found Torres unmarked 10 yards out and the Spanish defender thumped his header past Vicario, with the goal surviving another extended VAR check. Villa were nearly gifted the lead early in the second half when Vicario allowed Leon Bailey's shot to squirm under him before gratefully grabbing the ball after it rebounded off the post.

Emery's men exposed the flaws in Tottenham's defence again to take the lead in the 61st minute. A neat move climaxed with Watkins playing a one-two with Youri Tielemans to open up the creaky Tottenham rearguard before the England striker guided a clinical finish into the far corner from 12 yards.

Martinez made excellent stops to repel efforts from Brennan Johnson and Pierre-Emile Hojbjerg before Son's strike was disallowed for offside to cap a frustrating afternoon for Tottenham. — AFP

## Jaiswal, Kishan help India thrash Australia to go 2-0 up in T20

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: Opener Yashasvi Jaiswal and Ishan Kishan led India's batting charge to set up a convincing 44-run win over Australia in the second Twenty20 international on Sunday. Jaiswal smashed a 25-ball 53 and fellow left-hander Kishan hit 52 off 32 deliveries to help India to 235-4 after being invited to bat first in Thiruvananthapuram.

Spinner Ravi Bishnoi and fast bowler Prasidh Krishna took three wickets each as the hosts kept Australia down to 191-9 and extend their lead to 2-0 in the five-match series. Batsmen ruled as Jaiswal lay the foundations for India's mammoth total with key contributions from fellow opener Rituraj Gaikwad, who made 58, and Rinku Singh's unbeaten nine-ball 31.

Jaiswal, who smashed nine fours and two sixes, raced to his fifty in 24 balls but soon fell to fast bowler Nathan Ellis, who got three wickets. Kishan, a wicketkeeper-batsman, raised his fifty with a six off leg-spinner Tanveer Sangha before he got out to Marcus Stoinis.

But the left-handed Rinku finished off the innings with a flurry of boundaries and sixes. In reply, Australia fell to 58-4 including Steve Smith (19), previous-match centurion Josh Inglis (two) and Glenn Maxwell (12) back in the dug-out.

Tim David, who smashed 37, and Stoinis, who hit 45 off 25 balls, attempted to hit back in their partnership of 81 as the two hit six fours and



THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: India's Tilak Varma plays a shot during the second Twenty20 international cricket match between India and Australia at the Greenfield International Stadium in Thiruvananthapuram on November 26, 2023. — AFP

six sixes between them. Bishnoi broke the stand with his leg-spin to dismiss David who mistimed a hit to long-on.

Stoinis was the next to go as the wheels came off the chase and Krishna got two more to nearly end the batting team's hopes. Skipper Matthew Wade struck an unbeaten 42 off 23 balls to reduce the margin of loss for Australia, who last week lost the opener four days after being crowned champions of the ODI World Cup. The third T20 is on Tuesday in Guwahati. — AFP

## Lakers edge Cavs on road, 76ers hold off Thunder

LOS ANGELES: Los Angeles big man Anthony Davis scored 23 of his season-high 32 points in the second half on Saturday as the Lakers earned a third straight NBA road win with a hard-fought 121-115 victory over the Cavaliers in Cleveland.

Davis added 13 rebounds and three blocked shots, helping the Lakers overcome a slow shooting night from superstar LeBron James against his former club, which honored the league's all-time leading scorer with a video tribute in the first quarter. James connected on just eight of 23 shots — one of nine from three-point range — on the way to 22 points in a nip-and-tuck game that featured 16 lead changes and never saw either team push its lead to double digits.

The Cavs' 40-point first quarter saw them up by just five, and they led 71-70 at halftime. Davis's layup — after he rebounded a James miss, put the Lakers up 111-103 with 3:48 to play. The Cavaliers cut the deficit to one with less than two minutes remaining, but James drove for a layup, came up with a steal and threw down a dunk and the Lakers held on.

"We just had to impose our will in the defensive end," Davis said, acknowledging the Lakers benefited from the second-half absence of Cleveland's Darius Garland, who departed early with a neck injury. But he hailed a "total team win" after seven of the eight Lakers players who took the court scored in double figures. Donovan Mitchell, back after missing four games with a hamstring injury, finished with 22 points and Jarrett Allen added 21 points and 14 rebounds for the Cavs. In Oklahoma City, Philadelphia's NBA Most Valuable Player Joel Embiid scored 35

points and drained six free throws in the final 9.8 seconds to help the 76ers hold off the Thunder 127-123.

Embiid came up just shy of his first triple-double of the season, adding 11 rebounds and nine assists to go with four blocked shots and a steal to help the Sixers end the Thunder's six-game winning streak.

Up by nine with 49 seconds remaining, the Sixers saw their lead cut to 121-118 on rookie center Chet Holmgren's dunk with 11.1 seconds to go.

Embiid made two free throws, and he responded again at the line after Holmgren twice cut the deficit to two points. "Obviously he put the game away," Sixers coach Nick Nurse said of Embiid, but he added that in a league where late charges have become the norm, the Sixers have to finish better.

"Great performance, a lot of good stuff, et cetera," he said. "But as everybody's seeing around the league, there's a lot of wild finishes in the games. We've got to make sure we stay locked in."

Tyrese Maxey scored 28 points and eight rebounds, and Tobias Harris added 16 points for Philadelphia. Holmgren delivered another impressive performance, leading the Thunder with 33 points to go with six rebounds and three blocked shots.

Shai Gilgeous-Alexander scored 31 for the Thunder and guard Josh Giddey finished with 10 points seven rebounds and eight assists. Giddey started despite an investigation by the NBA into an accusation that surfaced on social media that he had an improper relationship with an underage girl.

The 21-year-old Australian player has declined to comment on the matter, while Thunder coach Mark Daigneault said Friday that it was now "a league matter." In other games, the Brooklyn Nets snapped a three-game losing streak with a 112-97 victory over the short-handed Miami Heat. Mikal Bridges scored 24 points and Cam Johnson added 19 points and 10 rebounds for the Nets, who had all five starters score in double figures. — AFP