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Aimless carnage by flailing Zionists

White House sees more 'targeted' Rafah action as more children martyred in Gaza



GAZA: Palestinian women react as they identify victims at the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital in Deir al-Balah following Zionist bombardment overnight on May 23, 2024. — AFP

GAZA: The Zionist entity launched devastating air strikes on Gaza early Thursday while also saying it is ready to resume stalled talks on a truce and captive release deal with Hamas to pause the war raging since Oct 7. The Gaza Strip's civil defense agency said two pre-dawn air strikes had killed 26 people, including 15 children, in Gaza City alone. Agency spokesman Mahmud Bassal said one strike hit a family house, killing 16 people, in the Al-Daraj area, and another killed 10 people inside a mosque compound.

Fierce street battles also raged in Gaza's Jabalia and Rafah where the armed wings of Hamas and its ally Islamic Jihad said they had fired mortar barrages at Zionist troops. International pressure for a ceasefire has mounted on the Zionist entity and its Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu as three European countries said Wednesday they would recognize a Palestinian state.

The week started with the International Criminal Court's prosecutor seeking arrest warrants on war crimes charges against Netanyahu and his defense minister as well as three Hamas leaders. The Zionist entity has angrily rejected those moves, voicing "disgust" over the ICC request and labeling any recogni-

tion of Palestinian statehood a "reward for terrorism". But domestic pressure has also risen as supporters of captives in Gaza again rallied outside Netanyahu's office, passionately demanding a deal to bring them home. A newly released video showed five female Zionist soldiers in the hands of Palestinian fighters during the attack more than seven months ago. Netanyahu vowed to continue fighting Hamas to "ensure what we have seen tonight never happens again". But his office also said that the war cabinet had asked the Zionist negotiating team "to continue negotiations for the return of the hostages".

The previous round of truce talks, involving US, Egyptian and Qatari mediators, ended shortly after the Zionist entity launched its attack on Gaza's far-southern city of Rafah early this month. The Zionist entity went ahead with the assault on the last city in Gaza to be entered by its ground troops in defiance of global opposition, including from top ally the United States.

Washington voiced concerns that about 1.4 million Palestinians who had been trapped in the city would be caught in the line of fire.

Continued on Page 6

MoI: 'Unprecedented' crackdown on residency violators after amnesty

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: Interior ministry officials have warned that the ministry will launch an "unprecedented" campaign against residency violators when an ongoing three-month amnesty expires on June 17. Authorities granted the amnesty on March 17 for thousands of expats who have been living illegally in the country, giving them two options: Either to pay a fine and legalize their stay or simply leave from any border exit without the need to take permission from any authority.

Those with expired passports should obtain new passports from their respective embassies, then visit any residency department to input the new data in the ministry servers before they can easily leave. Expats who leave without paying a fine still have the right to return to the country.

Interior Ministry Undersecretary for Residency Affairs Maj Gen Ali Al-Adwani said violators can leave from any exit if their passports are valid or they can pay a fine and legalize their stay. He however warned that the crackdown this time will be extremely strict, as intensive campaigns will be launched and will be different from previous ones. He added that both the violating expats and those who give them shelter will be penalized.

Raisi laid to rest as scores bid farewell

TEHRAN: Iranian president Ebrahim Raisi was laid to rest on Thursday, concluding days of funeral rites attended by throngs of mourners after his death in a helicopter crash, state media reported. Hundreds of thousands marched in his hometown Mashhad to bid farewell to Raisi ahead of his burial following processions in the cities of Tabriz, Qom, Tehran and Birjand.

The 63-year-old died on Sunday alongside his foreign minister and six others after their helicopter went down in the country's mountain-

ous northwest while returning from a dam inauguration on the border with Azerbaijan. Once the five days of public mourning, announced on Monday, have passed, the authorities including acting President Mohammad Mokhber will focus on organizing an election for a new president set for June 28.

Men and women, who were mainly clad in black chadors and clutching white flowers, crowded the main boulevard of Mashhad, the Islamic republic's second city in the northeast where Raisi was born. Some held aloft placards paying tribute to Raisi as the "man of the battlefield" as a large truck carrying his body drove through the sea of mourners. "I have come, O king, give me refuge," said a slogan emblazoned on top of the truck.

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BIRJAND, Iran: Soldiers carry the coffin of late Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi and others during a funeral procession in this eastern city on May 23, 2024. — AFP

Memorial day for Srebrenica genocide set

UNITED NATIONS: The UN General Assembly voted Thursday to establish an annual day of remembrance for the 1995 Srebrenica genocide, despite furious opposition from Bosnian Serbs and Serbia. The resolution written by Germany and Rwanda — countries synonymous with genocide in the 20th century — received

84 votes in favor, 19 against with 68 abstentions and makes July 11 "International Day of Remembrance of the Srebrenica Genocide".

"This resolution seeks to foster reconciliation, in the present and for the future," said Germany's ambassador to the UN Antje Leendertse. Ahead of the vote, Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic warned the General Assembly that the move "will just open old wounds and that will create a complete political havoc". But he said he did not deny the killings at Srebrenica, adding that he bowed his "head to all the victims of the conflict in Bosnia".

Continued on Page 6



SREBRENICA: This photo taken on May 16, 2024 shows headstones at the Srebrenica-Potocari memorial cemetery for the victims of the genocide. — AFP

Kuwait seeks to boost integration via GCC railway

KUWAIT: Kuwait is seeking through the GCC railway mega venture to play a key role in boosting pan-GCC economic integration and sustainable development in the regional countries. Situated in the strategic north-easternmost of the Gulf, Kuwait aspires to be a regional hub for commerce and transport, with the forecast high flow of merchandise and passengers aboard the trains. The planned 2,217-km-long railway stretches from Kuwait to Dammam (Saudi Arabia), Bahrain and Qatar via the Salwa border exit. — KUNA (See Page 3)

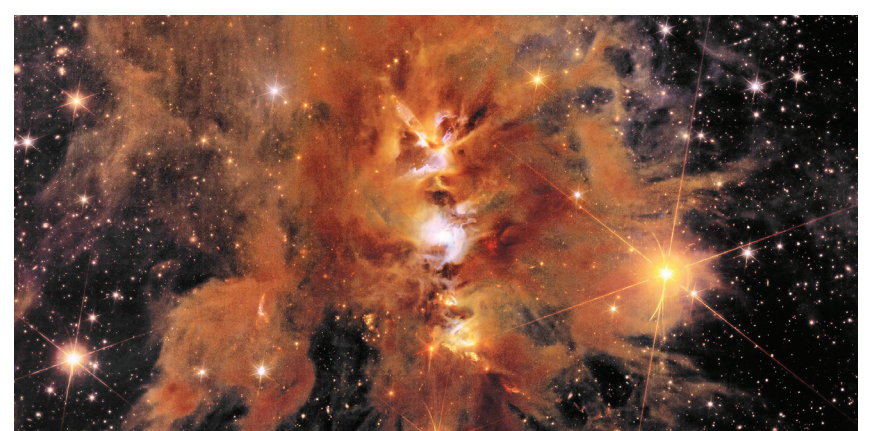
Euclid unveils new images of the cosmos

PARIS: A mindboggling number of shining galaxies, a purple and orange star nursery and a spiral galaxy similar to our Milky Way: New images were revealed from Europe's Euclid space telescope on Thursday. It is the second set of images released by the European Space Agency since Euclid launched last year on the first-ever mission to investigate the mysteries of dark matter and dark energy.

Scientific results were also published for the first time in the six-year mission, which aims to use its wide view to chart two billion galaxies across a third of the sky. Euclid project scientist Rene Laureijs told AFP that he was "personally most excited" about the image of a massive cluster of galaxies called Abell 2390. The image of the cluster, which is 2.7 billion light years away from Earth, encompasses more than 50,000 galaxies.

Just one galaxy — such as our own — can be home to hundreds of billions or even trillions of stars. Abell 2390 alone contains the mass of around 10 trillion suns, Jason Rhodes of NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory told an

Continued on Page 6



This handout image obtained on May 23, 2024 shows space telescope Euclid's new image of star-forming region Messier 78, a vibrant nursery of star formation enveloped in a shroud of interstellar dust. — AFP



Alliance founded, funded by Kuwait protects world heritage

Exhibition organized by NCCAL, EU Delegation showcases preservation efforts in conflict areas



KUWAIT: (From left) Valéry Freland, executive director of ALIPH, Anne Koistinen, EU ambassador to Kuwait and NCCAL's Secretary-General Dr Mohammad Al-Jassar open the exhibition. — KUNA photos



Valéry Freland explains one of the placards to the audience.

KUWAIT: An international alliance founded and funded by Kuwait seven years ago has helped preserve cultural heritage sites in more than 35 countries across the world, an official said late Wednesday. Valéry Freland, executive director of the International Alliance for the Protection of Heritage in Conflict Areas (ALIPH), made the remarks on the sidelines of an exhibition titled "Restoring our past, preserving our future: Protecting cultural heritage at risk", which opened at Yarmouk Cultural Centre Wednesday.

The exhibition was inaugurated under the patronage of the Minister of Information and Culture of the State of Kuwait Abdulrahman Baddah Al-Mutairi and organized by the Delegation of the European Union to the State of Kuwait, in collaboration with the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL), Dar Al-Athar Al-Islamiyah and ALIPH.

The exhibition displays the work of ALIPH in protecting and restoring cultural heritage in conflict areas including Palestine, Yemen, Sudan and Ukraine. The exhibition will remain open until Saturday, June 8, 2024. "The exhibition... aims to underscore the importance of conserving and rehabilitating heritage sites in danger. It showcases a collection of photos of cultural heritage sites of concern for ALIPH, including mosques, churches, and historical museums in several conflict-hit countries," NCCAL's Secretary-General Dr Mohammad Al-Jassar told KUNA.

Kuwait, one of the founders of ALIPH, is represented at this global initiative by Sheikha Hessa Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah,



General Supervisor at Dar Al-Athar Al-Islamiyah Sheikha Hessa Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah (in royal blue) stands among the attendees.

he added. Jassar emphasized NCCAL's role in preserving heritage sites in Kuwait and supporting any entity dedicated to protecting cultural heritage in the Arab and Islamic world.

A public-private partnership

ALIPH is the main global fund exclusively dedicated to the protection and rehabilitation of cultural heritage in conflict zones and post-conflict situations. ALIPH was founded in 2017 as a public-private partnership. Today, ALIPH is formed by eight states — China, Cyprus, France, Kuwait, Luxembourg, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates — and three private donors — Dr Thomas S Kaplan, the Getty Trust and Fon-

dation Gandur pour l'Art, Switzerland is its host country. Since its creation, other public partners — like the European Union, Monaco, Oman, Romania, and the United States of America — and private foundations — have supported ALIPH.

Anne Koistinen, ambassador of the European Union to the State of Kuwait said: "The European Union Delegation in Kuwait is proud to join hands with the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters, the ALIPH and Dar Al-Athar Al-Islamiyah in organizing this exhibition as part of Europe Month activities in Kuwait, which showcases the importance of protecting culture in conflict areas.

The European Union will continue to

advocate for the universal respect of the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the event of Armed Conflict, help partners to protect cultural heritage, and promote documentation, investigation and accountability of crimes against cultural heritage. Through joint efforts, we can ensure that future generations inherit the rich history and diverse cultures that define our global heritage. The protection and restoration of these cultural treasures are essential for fostering peace, understanding, and resilience within communities worldwide."

Valéry Freland, Executive Director of ALIPH, said: "I would like to thank the EU Delegation in Kuwait, the National Council

for Culture, Arts and Letters, and Dar Al-Athar Al-Islamiyah for their invitation to shed a light on the importance of protecting endangered cultural heritage in the face of war, crisis, or environmental threats. Kuwait was one of ALIPH's founding member states over seven years ago, and today it is an honor to show the people of Kuwait that their support has helped ALIPH finance and steer over 450 heritage protection projects in more than 35 countries. Moreover, with the support of new donors such as the European Union, ALIPH has the remit to continue and expand its mission so that the women and men behind the cultural heritage can carry out their essential work of preserving humanity's memory."



Cultural heritage sites in Palestine are showcased at the exhibition.

Kuwait urges Security Council to resolve missing persons' issue

NEW YORK: Kuwait Permanent Delegate to the United Nations Ambassador Tareq Al-Bannai reaffirmed the necessity for the Security Council to pursue a more holistic approach to complement existing measures for the protection of civilians in armed conflicts. This came during Bannai's speech on behalf of the International Alliance member states group at the Security Council meeting on protection of civilians in armed conflicts.

He stressed the importance of exchanging expertise, and providing all necessities to locate missing persons with the help of the International Committee of the Red Cross. He added that this joint action could help reduce the number of missing people cases in the long term and mitigate the negative impact on families of missing people. He also referenced the UN Secretary General's annual report to the Security Council on the protection of civilians in armed conflicts, noting that the International Committee of the Red Cross reported 40,000 missing people in 2023. Bannai stressed the importance of discussing the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 2474 on missing persons as a result of armed conflict in the upcoming Arria-formula Meeting in June. The Global Alliance for the Missing, launched in 2021, is a group of states that aim to raise awareness of the issue. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Ambassador of Japan to the State of Kuwait Morino Yasunari speaks at the event. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

Japanese embassy to hold weekly language diwanis this summer

By Passant Hisham

KUWAIT: The Embassy of Japan celebrated 28 years of Japanese language courses in Kuwait Wednesday. The embassy held the Ambassador's Commendation Ceremony for the Center of Community Service and Continuing Education on May 22, 2024, at the ambassador's residence.

She highlighted the role of the organization's members and expressed special gratitude to Honorary President Sheikha Hanouf Bader Al-Mohammed Al-Sabah for her continuous support.

"The International Women's Group celebrates this by bringing women together from different backgrounds to share their stories. By learning from each other, we gain a deeper understanding of the world and appreciate the beauty of our differences. This welcoming spirit is what makes Kuwait such a special place," said Sheikha Hanouf in her remarks.

The IWG also announced their new board members at the event. Dimitrova introduced Polina Dalmi, spouse of the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Eswatini, as the new president, along with three vice presidents: Rana Abu Shakra, spouse of the Ambassador of Jordan, Laura Duclaud, spouse of the Ambassador of Mexico and Baigalmaa Bayantsagaan, spouse of the Ambassador of Mongolia. Dalmi shared her vision for the future of the IWG, promising to build on the strong foundation laid by her predecessors.

The 35th anniversary of the IWG was a testament to the strength and solidarity of women leaders and members who have contributed to the organization's rich history. All attendees wished IWG many more years of growth, mutual understanding, and community.



The Japanese ambassador (center left) stands for the national anthems of Kuwait and Japan along with other attendees.

In his opening remarks Ambassador of Japan to the State of Kuwait Morino Yasunari expressed his gratitude for the efforts of the Center of Community Service and Continuing Education to hold Japanese language courses since 1996, in addition to the continuous cooperation between the Embassy of Japan and the center in holding the Japanese speech contest annually for the last 16 years.

During his speech, Morino Yasunari announced that the Embassy of Japan is planning to hold the Japanese Language Diwanis "Dibaniya" regularly, starting from this summer, to provide opportunities for the Kuwaitis who are learning to speak in Japanese.

Former Kuwaiti students who studied in Japan

delivered presentations to introduce their special experiences in Japan. Mishal Al-Mishaan shared his experience of studying in the University of Tokyo, completing a doctoral degree. Bader Al-Failakawi gave a presentation about his experience of studying at Himeji Dokkyo University in Hyogo prefecture and Daito Bunka University. Bader Al-Shawaf talked about his experience at Kyushu University and his stay in Kyushu region.

Many Kuwaiti students who studied in Japan and others who studied Japanese at the center attended the ceremony, as well as other esteemed guests who are interested in Japanese culture. They exchanged their opinions on how to further deepen and promote Japan-Kuwait relations in various fields.

IWG celebrates 35-year legacy of empowering women

KUWAIT: The International Women's Group (IWG) celebrated its 35th anniversary with an event that brought together members, dignitaries, and IWG leaders in a grand celebration of the organization's enduring legacy of empowering women and fostering international connections.

In her opening remarks, Antonia Dimitrova, spouse of the Ambassador of the Republic of Bulgaria and IWG President for 2023-2024, spoke of the organization's role in uniting women from diverse cultural backgrounds, emphasizing the importance of mutual understanding and support.

"In 1989, IWG began as a small group of visionary women, headed by the spouse of the then Ambassador of the Netherlands, Hanneke Veling, may her soul rest in peace. Those energetic ladies planted the seeds of initiative and laid the foundations of this group, which has overcome the challenges of time and grown stronger with each passing year."



Sheikha Hanouf (center) poses with IWG members.



KUWAIT: Antonia Dimitrova, IWG President for 2023-2024, (center left) presents an award to Honorary President Sheikha Hanouf Bader Al-Mohammed Al-Sabah at the IWG's 35-year celebration.



Sheikha Hanouf (center) sits with former IWG presidents Jasmin Shuhaibar, Rima Khaldi, Ghada Shawky and 2023-2024 president Antonia Dimitrova.

Local

Kuwait on track to complete GCC railway by 2030: Official

Project still in planning phases, with international consultation bids still under examination

KUWAIT: The State of Kuwait is seeking through the GCC railway mega venture to play a key role in boosting pan-GCC economic integration and sustainable development in the region. Situated in the strategic northernmost of the Gulf, Kuwait aspires to be a regional hub for commerce and transports. The predicted high flow of merchandise and passengers aboard the trains is expected to help Kuwait realize its vision.

The planned 2,217-kilometer-long railway stretches from Kuwait to Dammam in Saudi Arabia, then to Bahrain and Qatar. It also extends from Saudi Arabia to Abu Dhabi, Al-Ain and Muscat, the GCC Secretariat General said on its official website.

How it started

The mega project was first broached at the 2009 GCC Summit, held in Bahrain, with proposals to link up the six GCC member states via the network. The aim is to facilitate inter-GCC commerce, citizens' movement, and supporting joint enterprises in line with the bloc's trade integration strategy.

Kuwait's Public Authority for Roads and Transportation (PART) has been tasked, in coordination with relevant authorities, with taking charge of Kuwait's section of the project, which is expected to slash expenditures on road renovations and cut down fuel emissions with the decrease of cars and trucks travelling between the cities connected by rail. The project is also expected to create new jobs and facilitate the creation of new urban areas where the rail network passes.



Khaled Al-Osaimi



Tareq Al-Sultan



network should be finalized by 2030. The first section of the Kuwaiti railway stretches from the border town of Al-Nuaiseeb in southern Kuwait to Al-Shedadiyah. The train will run at 200 kilometers per hour.



bridge reaching Saudi Arabia. Last February, Director General of the Gulf Railway Authority Mohammad Al-Shabrami visited Kuwait and examined the executive plans of the railway's part in the country.

Where Kuwait stands

Khaled Al-Osaimi, PART Director General, said in remarks to KUNA that the Authority for Partnership Projects had been tasked with conducting studies and executing the venture. A feasibility study was complete in 2012 and revised in 2016, stipulating the approach to execute it in partnership between the public and private sectors.

A number of international consultancy houses had presented bids to provide consultations for the design of the project. The bids were examined and relayed to the Central Agency for Public Tenders, Osaimi indicated. Examining the bids is expected to take 12 months, after which the authority will float tenders for the execution of the project, which must be completed within 30 months. He said executing the Kuwaiti section of the

How far GCC countries are

In the UAE, construction of the railway reaching the Saudi borders has been finalized. Galfar Engineering Company declared in April that it won the project to design and build a 303-km-long railway linking Abu Dhabi with Oman - at a cost of \$3 billion. The UAE news agency, WAM, quoted Minister of Energy and Infrastructure Suhail Al-Mazroui saying that Al-Hafeet Rail is complementary to the GCC Railway network and will contribute to the planned GCC countries' economic merger.

In Qatar, authorities have finished the designs of the domestic section of the Gulf Railway and Bahrain declared that a section of the rail would be built on a

Riyadh-Kuwait train

Kuwait and Saudi Arabia agreed on June 4, 2023, to establish a railway between Kuwait and Riyadh. The high-speed train to be operated will cross the long distance in approximately two hours and a half. The Kuwaiti government declared in February the start of studying the Kuwaiti-Saudi project. Also in this vein, the CEO of Agility Tareq Al-Sultan told KUNA that Kuwait and Riyadh will support cargo and passenger transport between the two cities. He added that he hoped the GCC railway network would be expanded to include more countries in the region, such as Jordan and Iraq. — KUNA



Kuwait army chief praises Amiri Guard's defensive role

KUWAIT: Chief of the General Staff Lieutenant General Bandar Al-Mezian praised on Thursday the exceptional role played by the Amiri Guard in defense of the country and its leadership. In a statement by the Defense Ministry, Mezian, who visited the Amiri Guard headquarters, called on members to remain ready, steadfast, and vigilant in their duties towards His Highness the Amir and Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and the country. According to the statement, during his visit, Mezian was informed about the duty and tasks undertaken by the Amiri Guard as well as the measures to training members of the Guard. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Chief of the General Staff Lieutenant General Bandar Al-Mezian (center) is seen during his visit to the Amiri Guard headquarters. — KUNA photos

Information minister supports GCC media cooperation

DOHA: Kuwait Minister of Information and Culture Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi expressed on Thursday his aspirations to reinforce media cooperation between GCC countries to create purposeful media content. This came during his speech at the 27th GCC Ministers of Information meeting held in Doha. The minister stressed the importance of creating purposeful content to cope with the requirements of the current phase that witnesses rapid evolution in artificial intelligence technologies.

He said that the message of the media in the GCC have evolved in terms of form, content and momentum in shedding the light on the civilized image of the GCC and its achievements in different fields.

"One of the ways of enhancing this message is taking good care of the cadres and the quality of their training to do their jobs in content creation according to the visions of our political leadership," said Minister Al-Mutairi. He also appreciated the GCC's keenness to cooperate for the good of the region towards further development and prosperity.

Chief Executive Officer of Qatar Media Corporation (QMC) Sheikh Hamad bin Thamer, said the challenges facing the Gulf society, whether internal, regional or international, place a responsibility to improve the performance and content of media outlets, deepening the positive values of Gulf society. Sheikh Hamad affirmed the strategy for joint media cooperation of the GCC, the general framework of which was approved by the Supreme Council of the GCC in its 43rd session.

He stated that for more than seven months, they have been following the tragic events in the Gaza Strip, which became the top priorities of media outlets and platforms, explaining that the Zionist occu-

pation directly and deliberately targets those working in the media field. He noted the double standards in global media and its impact on shaping global public opinion. He said this matter calls for emphasizing the importance of joint media efforts to coordinate and work to publish and broadcast Palestinian content in various languages to build international public opinion supportive of the Palestinian cause and legitimate rights, as it was emphasized by the GCC ministerial meeting in its 159th session, held in Riyadh recently.

He expressed his hope that the Doha meeting's decisions would raise the level of integration in joint Gulf media work, in order to achieve a unified Gulf media vision. In his speech, Assistant Secretary-General for Economic and Development Affairs

at the General Secretariat of GCC Khaled Al-Sunaidi said that it is important to enact regulation for electronic commercial advertising for social media platforms in member states.

Sunaidi noted the importance of preparing a plan for raising media awareness, in addition to creating an initiative on digital safety for children in GCC countries, which is what the General Secretariat has worked on for some time, in cooperation with member states. He explained that the Electronic Media Responsibility Committee in the GCC area submitted topics to the esteemed meeting for approval, in addition to the importance of having a joint work that highlights Gulf values locally and internationally, to enhance economic sectors' role in achieving future strategic objectives. — KUNA



DOHA: GCC delegates are seen during the 27th GCC Ministers of Information meeting. — KUNA

In my view

The fourth estate



Dr Khalid A Al-Saleh

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We have often heard about the decline of daily newspapers, with many attributing this to the rise of social media. However, in Kuwait, there is a recent resurgence in the launch of daily newspapers. Following the latest speech by HH the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, may Allah protect him, the significance of Article 36 of the constitution has been highlighted.

This article decisively states that "Freedom of opinion and scientific research shall be guaranteed. Every person shall have the right to express and propagate his opinion verbally, in writing, or otherwise, in accordance with the conditions and procedures specified by law." Journalism plays a crucial role as a means of popular communication, which is particularly needed today. There are four key roles and duties that journalism fulfills. The first role is the presentation and delivery of information. This includes the presentation of reports, news, and events of interest to citizens.

The second role is entertainment. This includes entertaining content such as comic stories about daily life, sports news, fashion and acting. The entertainment aspect is essential for keeping newspapers viable as a medium. The third role involves advertisements, both for awareness and commercial purposes. Awareness ads often contain social advice, such as messages about family planning, safe driving, childcare and healthcare. Commercial ads aim to promote products and services, providing a significant portion of newspaper revenue.

The fourth role is reporting and commentary on issues. This includes writing reports on domestic and international issues and publishing columns that help deliver information, making it easier for decision-makers to take appropriate actions. Today, there is an urgent need to revive the role of journalism to provide decision-makers with honest and sincere information. By doing so, journalism can become a true fourth estate, contributing to the country's development and governance. We hope that ministers will allocate time to read newspapers or have their media departments prepare daily summaries of opinions, columns and news.

This will help decision-makers understand public sentiment and make informed decisions. Ultimately, the decision-maker is responsible for their decisions, but seeking advice from the public and having access to accurate information is invaluable. Lastly, it is important to remind every writer of the saying of our Prophet Mohammad (PBUH): "The religion is naseehah (sincere advice)." The notion that "who advises you wants to expose you" has no place in our new Kuwait. Let our religion be naseehah, and may Allah bless Kuwait.

Turkish cuisine week celebrates Turkey's timeless culinary culture

Workshop at Turkish embassy highlights diversity, sustainability of traditional dishes



Attendees are seen at the workshop hosted by the Turkish Embassy in Kuwait.

News in Brief

Jaber Hospital to expand

KUWAIT: Kuwait's Minister of Health Dr Ahmad Al-Awadhi issued a ministerial decision to establish a neurosurgery department at Jaber Al-Ahmad Hospital, reflecting the ministry's keenness to expand specialized services and facilitate citizen's access to integrated services. The Ministry of Health said in a press statement late Wednesday that the decision is part of its overarching strategy to provide high-quality services in all governorates of the country, while taking into account population growth and geographical expansion, with the goal of ensuring ease and speed of obtaining services while keeping waiting times to a minimum. — KUNA

New data center, more tamween

KUWAIT: Kuwait Municipality announced it was establishing an "urban observatory" this week. In a press statement to KUNA, the municipality said the observatory is another word for a "center specialized in the collection and analysis of data and information in the various fields of urban development". Quoted in KUNA, Director General of Kuwait Municipality Saud Al-Dabbous said the observatory will collect and process information, monitor the implementation of the country's "fourth structural plan" and provide departments in the executive branch of the municipality with data and analysis on the progress of the plan's implementation. It will also identify and report on issues related to the plan. The fourth structural plan was passed by the Council of Ministers last September. The plan lays out a road map for Kuwait's urban and economic development until 2040. The municipality also announced it was adding more tamween sites in cooperation with the Ministry of Commerce and Industry to enhance food security across all governorates. The sites range in size from 500 to 1000 square meters per site, in addition to four sites for storage, presumably warehouses, with an area ranging from 10,000 to 100,000 square meters per site. The municipality didn't say where the new sites will be. But Kuwait's former Commerce Minister Mohammed Al-Aiban had said in December that the ministry was planning 50 sites in Jaber Al-Ahmad Residential City. — Agencies



Attendees participate and observe demonstrations of Turkish culinary techniques.



By Khaled Al-Abdulhadi

KUWAIT: The Turkish embassy hosted a workshop at the embassy for Turkish cuisine week which lasts from May 21 until May 27. The Turkish ambassador showcased ways of cooking Turkish dishes at the workshop. The workshop was attended by many notable figures including the Azerbaijani and Indonesian ambassadors as well as other important local and international figures. The seven-day event features unique recipes from timeless Turkish cuisine while highlighting the sustainability of the age-old culinary tradition where dishes have been cooked for millennia with zero waste.

In 2010, UNESCO recognized the Mediterranean diet as an intangible cultural heritage of humanity. The coastal regions along the Aegean Sea among others are famed for vegetables, such as artichokes, zucchini blossoms, and local herbs, as well as seafood. The Aegean Sea region is also known for its centuries-old olive trees and olive oils — so much so that olive gardens stretch from Canakkale to Mugla, revealing the region's cultural heritage that expands with olive cultivation.

In the region, Izmir and Milas stand out as the two stops of "the Routes of the Olive Tree", which was registered by the Council of Europe. The findings in ancient Klazomenai in Urla, home to Anatolia's oldest olive oil workshop, attest to the 2,600 year old history of olive processing methods that are still being used today. Turkish Ambassador to Kuwait Tuba Nur Sonmez said during her welcome to the guests: "The cuisine contains a diverse range of choices that include modern techniques while staying true to the traditional culinary culture of Turkiye."

Shaped by thousands of years of cultures, traditions, social heritage and stories, Turkish cuisine presents its distinctive and diverse flavors to the world. Turkey has a total of 2,218 products registered by the Turkish patent institute, of which 1,637 products have designation of origin sign, 565 products have geographical indication, and 16 products are traditionally specialty guaranteed products.

The country also has 21 products registered by the European Union Commission including the Gaziantep baklava, the Aydin Kestanesi, and Aydin inciri, the Byramic beyazi, the Malatya-Kayisisi, the Milar Zeytinyagi, Taskopru Sarimsagi, the Giresun



KUWAIT: Turkish Ambassador to Kuwait Tuba Nur Sonmez poses for a photo with Turkish delicacies at the workshop. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

tombul findigi, the Antakya Kunefesi, the Suruc nari, the Caglayanerit Cevizi, the Gemlik zeytini, Edremit zeytinyagi, the Ayas domatesi and others.

Turkish cuisine is a wonderful gastronomic tradition embracing high quality. Natural ingredients with different food preservation and cooking techniques also offer numerous options for vegetarian and vegan diets.



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KUWAIT: Officials cut a ribbon to signal the start of "LuLu World of Beauty" promotion.

LuLu Hypermarket launches 'LuLu World of Beauty'

KUWAIT: LuLu Hypermarket, the retailer of choice among discerning shoppers in the region, launched the "LuLu World of Beauty" promotion that captivated the interest of beauty enthusiasts and shoppers alike. LuLu world of Beauty, which runs from 22-28 May across all outlets of the hypermarket, offers an array of value-packed promotions on cosmetics, perfumes, and wellness products. The event was inaugurated on May 22 at the hypermarket's Fahaheel outlet by popular beauty vloggers and fashion influencers, along with top management of the sponsors and LuLu Hypermarket Kuwait.

The sponsors of the event ensured that LuLu World of Beauty provided an extraordinary experience for shoppers who had the opportunity to explore a vast range of high-quality beauty products. Main sponsors such as Nivea, P&G, Unilever, Yardley, L'Oréal, Johnson & Johnson, Colgate, and Dabur added their own touch of excellence to the event, enhancing the overall beauty extravaganza.

One of the major highlights of the event was the live demonstrations conducted by famous beauty brands. Experts from these brands showcased their expertise, unveiling the latest trends and techniques in the world of beauty. In addition to the live demos, various sponsors and co-sponsors set up exhibition stalls, showcasing their finest beauty products and providing shoppers with the opportunity to examine



KUWAIT: People enjoy the opening event of the "LuLu World of Beauty" promotion week.

an extensive range of beauty options and interact with knowledgeable representatives. Adding to the excitement, free sampling beauty kits were distributed by the generous sponsors. Customers eagerly embraced the chance to try out new products and experience the quality and effectiveness of these items firsthand.

To further enhance the customers' experience, the promotional event offered free live styling and make-up services. Professional stylists and make-up artists were on hand to provide personalized consultations and create stunning looks for customers.

The success of LuLu World of Beauty can be attributed to the perfect combination of impeccable planning, the support of top beauty brands, and the enthusiasm of the attendees. LuLu Hypermarket once again proved its commitment to delivering an exceptional shopping experience that goes beyond expectations, while providing shoppers with an extensive range of products, superb quality, and exceptional customer service.



UK parties hit campaign trail as election battle starts

China holds war games, vows blood of Taiwan 'independence forces'



JENIN: Palestinian mourners carry bodies wrapped in flags during a group funeral of people killed in a raid by Zionist forces, in Jenin, in the occupied West Bank on May 23, 2024. — AFP

Two-day Zionist raid on West Bank city leaves 12 Palestinians dead

A surgeon, schoolteacher, a student and four children were among the dead

JENIN: A two-day Zionist raid on the occupied West Bank city of Jenin killed at least 12 Palestinians, health authorities and an AFP correspondent said Thursday. Zionist troops withdrew from the city early Thursday, the correspondent said, after carrying out raids in the city's refugee camp and exchanging fire with masked gunmen in a nearby neighborhood in the city center. The Palestinian health ministry in Ramallah said Zionist forces had killed 12 people including four children, and wounded 25 during the fighting which began on Tuesday morning.

The official Palestinian news agency Wafa and medical charity Doctors Without Borders reported that surgeon Usaeed Jabareen, from Jenin's Khalil Suleiman government hospital, was among those killed on Tuesday. An AFP

correspondent on Thursday saw five bodies at the hospital morgue, including Jabareen's.

A schoolteacher and a student were also among the dead, Wafa reported, quoting hospital director Wissam Bakr. Several of the bodies were draped in flags and carried among crowds of Palestinians, including armed militants, through the streets as gunfire rang out. Both Palestinian president Mahmud Abbas and Palestinian militant group Hamas condemned the raid.

Zionist's army said on Wednesday troops had "exchanged fire with armed men and killed a number of terrorists, including two terrorists who threw explosives at the forces". The army said it had raided the house of Ahmed Barakat, who was suspected of involvement in an

attack on a Zionist civilian last year. Meir Tamari, 32, was killed in May 2023 at the entrance to a Jewish settlement in the occupied West Bank, medics and military officials said at the time.

Jenin has long been a stronghold of Palestinian militant groups, and the Zionist army routinely carries out raids in the city and adjacent camp. The West Bank, which the Zionist entity has occupied since 1967, has seen a surge in violence for more than a year. At least 518 Palestinians have been killed in the territory by Zionist troops or settlers since the Gaza war broke out, according to Palestinian officials. Zionist's retaliatory offensive has killed at least 35,709 people in Gaza, most of them civilians, according to the health ministry. — AFP

Schoolkids narrowly escape Zionist strike on Hezb fighter



NABATIEH: Lebanese school boy Qassem Jaffal receives treatment at the General Hospital in Nabatieh. — AFP

NABATIEH: Lebanese school children on a minibus had a narrow escape Thursday when a drone strike killed a Hezbollah fighter in the car ahead, blowing out the windscreen of their vehicle and wounding three pupils. The injured children were hospitalized with cuts from flying glass after the aerial attack, which state media and a source close to Hezbollah blamed on the Zionist entity.

"At first, we didn't understand what was happening, and there was panic among the children," said Ahmad Qubaisi, 57, who was driving the bus with 18 children on board. "Suddenly a strike hit the car in front of us" near the town of Nabatieh, about 13 kilometers (eight miles) from (the Zionist) border, he said. "The bus' windshield shattered... I backed up and that's when the second strike hit the car" in front of him, Qubaisi added. The source close to Hezbollah told AFP that the Zionist entity was behind the strike, which killed a Hezbollah member who was named as Mohammad Ali Nasser Farran.

The attack was the latest in months of violence that has upended lives on both sides of the

Lebanon-Zionist frontier as the Zionist entity-Hamas war has raged in Gaza. Lebanon's Hezbollah, an ally of Hamas, has traded near daily cross-border fire with the Zionist entity since the October 7 attack.

At the site of Thursday's strike, an AFP photographer saw the charred car and blood stains on the road. Lebanon's official National News Agency reported "an enemy drone attack in the morning on the Kfarjal-Nabatieh road". The attack "killed a car driver" and "wounded three pupils" who were in a bus heading to school, it said. One of the children, 11-year-old Mohammed Nasser, was lying on a bed in the Nabatieh government hospital, a bandage on his bruised forehead.

"The glass shattered... and the car in front of us was burning," the boy recalled. Fearing more strikes, he said, "we put our schoolbags on our heads". Standing beside him, his aunt showed AFP his blood-stained school uniform. The boy's father, Ali Nasser, said that "I was working in my field when my brother-in-law called telling me my son had been injured". — AFP

Online abuse targets Ethiopia women activists

ADDIS ABABA: Influential Ethiopian women's rights activist Betelehem Akalework says she has been forced to move home twice in two years after enduring a barrage of online abuse, death threats and physical harassment. She and her colleagues use social media to advocate for gender equality online by challenging gender norms and attitudes towards women in Ethiopia, Africa's second most populous nation. They highlight highly sensitive issues in the conservative mainly Christian country, including sexual harassment and assault as well as harmful traditional practices such as female genital mutilation and child marriage. But their work often comes at great cost.

"My colleagues and I have received threats online that have become increasingly violent, especially after we engaged in social media activism regarding women's rights," Betelehem told AFP. "Death threats, sexual harassment, gang sexual assault and threats of physical harm are commonplace." Betelehem co-founded the Ethiopian Women Human Rights Defenders Network (EWHRDN) and an advocacy platform called Afro Feminism - Seta Set Power (Women in Power) in 2021.

Since then, her social media and email

accounts have been hacked and private information, including photos and her home address, stolen and shared online. Her contact details were posted along with photos on a prostitution page on Telegram, she said, and many men contacted her seeking sexual favors. "The revenge pictures I was confronted with was so painful... I am a married woman with two children," she said, breaking down in tears. "The attack caused unimaginable psychological damage to me and my family."

At an event in Addis Ababa, Betelehem said she was physically harassed by men who followed her to the toilet and threatened her life in a bid to silence her. "I was forced to move my home twice within two years", in 2022 and again last year. "Two of my colleagues were also forced to move under similar threats."

'So pervasive'

According to research published in May by a UK-based non-profit, online abuse against women in Ethiopia is forcing them to restrict their involvement in public life, both on and offline. "Technology-facilitated gender-based violence has been so pervasive in Ethiopia for so long that it is underestimated," Felicity Mulford, head of research at the Centre for Information Resilience (CIR), told AFP at the study's launch. "It is normalized and invisible." Women and girls in Ethiopia are subject to more online hate than men at almost 78 percent of the total, according to the CIR report.

Mulford said the research had also found that feminist activists were often accused of homosexuality, putting them at further risk.

Lella Misikir, another influential feminist active on TikTok, told AFP she has faced an increase in online abuse including death threats after starting a campaign in November 2023 to help protect women. "Fishkaye Dintse" or "My Whistle, My Voice" advises women to keep a whistle with them and use it if they encounter violence.

The 31-year-old told AFP she was physically assaulted in an Addis Ababa cafe by men who threatened to kill her if she did not give up her advocacy. Fearing for her life, Lella left social media for three months in 2023. Activists like her "are forced to avoid public places and cover our faces with hats and masks," she added.

The activists complain of a lack of action by Ethiopian authorities. Betelehem said she had approached the police to seek legal redress, armed with screenshots and online evidence of the threats she had received. "Unfortunately, they said they have no mechanisms for identifying and prosecuting the perpetrators. Instead, they advised me to leave the digital space."

The CIR said that with over 80 languages spoken in Ethiopia, social media companies lack the resources and staff to keep on top of abusive posts. Kalikidan Tesfaye, a program coordinator at EWHRDN, called for proper enforcement mechanisms to combat online attacks. "Government and social media companies must act urgently on this," she said. — AFP

International

UK parties hit campaign trail as election battle starts

The right-wingers' tumultuous time in power has been dominated by Brexit

LONDON: UK political leaders kicked off six weeks of campaigning on Thursday, firing the first angry shots in their electoral battle before the country votes for a new government on July 4. Conservative Prime Minister Rishi Sunak ended prolonged speculation about the general election in a rain-soaked speech Wednesday outside Downing Street, which some took as an omen for his Conservatives' chances at the ballot box. Sunak hit the airwaves for a round of radio and television interviews Thursday, before a whistlestop tour of Britain to insist he was right to call the vote.

But UK commentators were virtually unanimous in describing his decision to hold a vote six months before he has to as a "gamble". "I can't for the life of me imagine why he has done this," former Tory MP Matthew Parris wrote in The Times newspaper. "Rishi Sunak surely cannot believe the Conservatives can win the election this summer." The Conservatives have been in power since 2010, first with David Cameron as prime minister, then Theresa May, Boris Johnson and Liz Truss, and increasingly beset by scandal and ideological infighting with hardliners.

The right-wingers' tumultuous time in power has been dominated by Brexit and its chaotic aftermath, as well as COVID and a cost-of-living crisis, all of which has eaten into public support. The gap between them and the main opposition Labor party over the last two years has opened to 20 percentage points, handing Sunak an uphill task. A snap Survation poll of voting intentions after Sunak's announcement put center-left labor on 48 points -- its highest since November 2022 and 21 points ahead of the Tories, on 27. Survation said the results were consistent with Labor's polling throughout 2023 and this year.

France's Macron urges calm in riot-hit New Caledonia

NOUMEA: France's president held a flurry of meetings with local representatives in the restive Pacific territory of New Caledonia on Thursday, urging calm after deadly rioting, and vowing thousands of military reinforcements will stay in place to quell the "unprecedented insurrection". Emmanuel Macron arrived in the capital Noumea after a 24-hour flight seeking ways to end more than a week of looting, arson and clashes that have left six people dead and hundreds injured. The unrest erupted over a French voting reform plan that indigenous Kanaks say will dilute their voice.

As he exited the plane at Tontouta International Airport, the French leader told reporters his "absolute priority" is "a return to peace, calm, security". He was expected to spend about 12 hours on the ground. France has ruled New Caledonia since the 1800s, but many indigenous Kanaks still resent Paris's power over their islands and want fuller autonomy or independence. Voting reform plans have "breached the contract of trust" with Paris, said Victor Gogny, president of New Caledonia's senate -- a consultative body that weighs in on issues affecting Kanaks.

Since May 13, separatists have thrown up barricades that have cut off whole neighborhoods and the main route to the international airport, which remains shuttered. Peo-

Other surveys that have suggested similar results.

Anti-immigration fringe party Reform UK is snapping on the heels of the Tories, polling at 11 percent with the potential to split the right-wing vote. Brexit champion Nigel Farage announced he will not try to become an MP after seven previous unsuccessful attempts, promising instead to "do (his) bit" for Reform during the campaign.

Change?

The vote -- the first to be held in July since 1945, when labor under Clement Attlee defeated Winston Churchill's Conservatives -- is Sunak's first national electoral test. He was appointed leader by his own MPs in October 2022. The 44-year-old former financier is presenting himself as the safe choice in an increasingly dangerous world and trumpeting the Tories as the party of economic stability. Inflation has slowed to 2.3 percent, figures showed on Wednesday, a three-year low after highs of more than 11 percent in 2022.

"I know there's more work to do... but we have undeniably made progress and stability has returned," Sunak told BBC television. He repeated his mantra that labor, trounced in the last vote in 2019, was an unknown quantity, and accused Starmer of ideological flip-flopping on policy to curry favor with voters. But Starmer, who has dragged the party back to the center since taking over from his hard-left predecessor Jeremy Corbyn four years ago, said voters had a clear choice.

"Two countries, two different futures. Decline and chaos continuing under the Tories or rebuilding our country under labor," the 61-year-old former human rights lawyer said on a campaign stop. Labor is also promising economic stability, saying the Tories' reputation for sound stewardship of

ple of French and other origins have blocked off streets in their own neighborhoods in response. It had been a "totally unprecedented movement of insurrection," Macron said, adding that "no-one saw it coming with this level of organization and violence". Nightly riots have seen scores of cars, schools, shops and businesses burned. French authorities have imposed a state of emergency, placed separatist leaders under house arrest, banned alcohol sales and sent around 3,000 troops, police and other security reinforcements to quell the turmoil.

'Double or quits'

The fact that Macron is willing to make such a long journey just weeks before key European elections may show just how high the stakes are. His visit began with a minute of silence for the dead and hours-long talks with anti-independence elected officials, before visiting a police station to thank security forces. "By the end of the day" there would be "decisions" and "announcements" about next steps, Macron promised -- while adding that he could extend his stay if needed.

Security forces would also "stay for as long as necessary, even during the Olympic and Paralympic Games" to be held in Paris in July-August. New Caledonia is 17,000 kilometers (10,500 miles) from the French mainland but remains both part of France and a strategic outpost in an increasingly contested region. China, the United States, New Zealand, Japan, Arab Gulf states and France are vying for influence across the South Pacific -- seeing it as crucial geopolitical real estate.

New Caledonia is also attractive as one of the world's largest nickel producers, with up to 30 percent of global reserves. The archipelago's deadliest unrest in four decades was sparked by French plans to give voting

rights to thousands of non-indigenous long-term residents, something Kanaks say would dilute the influence of their votes. New Caledonia has on three occasions rejected independence in referendums.



LONDON: Britain's Prime Minister and Conservative Party leader Rishi Sunak holds a Q&A with staff at a distribution centre in Ilkeston in the East Midlands on May 23, 2024 as part of a campaign event ahead of a general election on July 4. — AFP

the nation's finances had been stained by Truss's short-lived tenure. Sunak replaced Truss after just 49 days, when her tax cut plans spooked financial markets, sinking the pound and increasing mortgage rates, piling fresh misery on households already hit by higher food and energy prices.

On immigration -- another key issue -- Sunak

promised that the first of the government's controversial deportation flights of failed asylum seekers will take off for Rwanda, but only after the election. Starmer, who has proposed a beefed-up border security agency and moves to "smash" people-smuggling gangs behind the crossings, called it an untested "gimmick". — AFP



NOUMEA: New Caledonia's Government President Louis Mapou (second left) and New Caledonia's Congress President Roch Wamytan (center) attend a meeting with French President Emmanuel Macron (third right), New Caledonia's elected officials and local representatives at the French High Commissioner Louis Le Franc's residence in Noumea, France's Pacific territory of New Caledonia on May 23, 2024. — AFP

But the last of those ballots took place during the

COVID-19 pandemic and was boycotted by much of the Kanak population. Macron ruled out going back on the result of the referendums, saying peace could not come at the cost of ignoring the will of the people or "somehow denying the road that has already been taken". — AFP

Aimless carnage by flailing Zionists...

Continued from Page 1

The Zionist entity has since ordered mass evacuations from the city, and the UN says more than 800,000 people have fled. US President Joe Biden's national security advisor, Jake Sullivan, said the Rafah operation "has been more targeted and limited" than feared and "has not involved major military operations into the heart of dense urban areas".

But he stopped short of saying that the Zionist entity had addressed US concerns, adding that Washington was closely watching ongoing Zionist actions. The Zionist entity's national security advisor Tzachi Hanegbi has meanwhile given a bleak assessment of the war to a meeting of parliament's foreign affairs and defense committee, according to a report by Channel 13.

He reportedly said the Zionist entity has "not achieved any of the strategic aims of the war -- not conditions for a hostage deal; we haven't toppled Hamas; and we haven't allowed residents of the (Gaza) periphery to safely return home".

The Zionist entity's offensive has killed at least 35,800 people in Gaza, mostly women and children. Urban combat has also flared again in northern areas,

including Jabalia, which Zionist forces first entered several months ago. The Zionist entity has also imposed a siege that has deprived Gaza's 2.4 million people of most clean water, food, medicines and fuel.

The sporadic arrival of aid by truck slowed further after Zionist forces took control of the Palestinian side of the Rafah border crossing with Egypt. Jordan and others have airdropped relief goods into Gaza and some aid has been shipped in via a US-built pier, but many trucks have been quickly swarmed by desperate crowds.

The Zionist entity has faced ever greater opposition to the bloody war from around the world, and pro-Palestinian protests have swept university campuses. The Zionist entity reacted with fury after Ireland, Norway and Spain said they would recognize a Palestinian state on May 28, a move praised by Palestinians and across the Arab world. The Zionist entity recalled its envoys to Dublin, Oslo and Madrid and summoned the three ambassadors for a rebuke.

Most Western governments say they are willing to recognize Palestinian statehood one day, but not before thorny issues such as final borders and the status of Jerusalem are settled. The White House said Biden opposed unilateral recognition of a Palestinian state, saying it should be realized "through direct negotiations". Irish Prime Minister Simon Harris stressed that "a two-state solution is the only way out of the generational cycles of violence". — AFP

sein Amir-Abdollahian, who was buried Thursday in the shrine of Shah Abdol-Azim in the town of Shahre Ray south of the capital.

Iranian officials and foreign dignitaries paid their respects to the late top diplomat at a ceremony in Tehran ahead of the burial. Massive crowds had gathered for a funeral procession in the Iranian capital on Wednesday to pay their final respects to the president, whom officials and media dubbed a "martyr".

Iran's conservative newspapers carried large front-page pictures of the gathering on Thursday, hailing the ceremonies as an "Epic farewell" and saying Raisi would forever remain "in the hearts of the people". Reformist dailies such as Sazandegi carried headlines that read: "The last farewell".

Tunisian President Kais Saied and Qatari Emir Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani attended an afternoon ceremony for Raisi on Wednesday in which around 60 countries took part, according to the official news agency IRNA. Member countries of the European Union were among the absentees of the ceremony, while some non-member countries, including Belarus and Serbia had representatives. — AFP

Memorial day for Srebrenica...

Continued from Page 1

Following the vote, Vucic draped himself with his country's flag, posting an image of himself, captioned "I am proud of my Serbia". Church bells rang out across Serbia on Thursday in protest. The Serbian Orthodox Church said it hoped the gesture would unite Serbs in "prayers, serenity, mutual solidarity and firmness in doing good, despite untrue and unjust accusations it faces at the UN".

Except Serbia, all of the former Yugoslav republics voted for the resolution, while several EU nations including Greece, Cyprus and Slovakia abstained. Bosnian Serb leader Milorad Dodik, meanwhile, denied a genocide had even taken place in the Bosnian city and said that his administration would not recognize the UN resolution. "There was no genocide in Srebrenica," Dodik told a press conference in Srebrenica.

Bosnian Serb forces captured Srebrenica -- a UN-protected enclave at the time -- on July 11, 1995, a few months before the end of Bosnia's civil war, which saw approximately 100,000 people killed. In the following days, Bosnian Serb forces killed around 8,000 Mus-

lim men and teenagers -- a crime described as a genocide by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and the International Court of Justice.

The incident is considered the worst single atrocity in Europe since World War II. In addition to establishing the memorial day, the resolution condemns "any denial" of the genocide and urges UN member countries to "preserve the established facts". In a letter to other UN members, Germany and Rwanda described the vote as a "crucial opportunity to unite in honoring the victims and acknowledging the pivotal role played by international courts".

However, there has been a furious response from Serbia and the Bosnian Serb leadership. In an attempt to defuse tensions, the authors of the resolution added -- at Montenegro's request -- that culpability for the genocide is "individualized and cannot be attributed to any ethnic, religious or other group or community as a whole". That has not been enough for Belgrade.

In a letter sent Sunday to all UN delegations, Serbian charge d'affaires Sasa Mart warned that raising "historically sensitive topics serves only to deepen division and may bring additional instability to the Balkans". Russia's UN ambassador, Vasily Nebenzia, said "if the goal of the sponsors was to divide the General Assembly... then they've succeeded brilliantly". — AFP

Euclid unveils new images...

Continued from Page 1

online press conference. The image also pointed towards traces of dark matter, whose invisible presence can only be detected by looking at how its gravity distorts light.

"There's so much dark matter in this cluster that it severely bends the light from some of these background galaxies," making them appear curved, Rhodes said. Dark matter and dark energy are thought to make up 95 percent of the universe -- but we know almost nothing about them. Another way the Abell 2390 image hinted at dark matter was by revealing the faint light of "orphan stars" drifting between the galaxy clusters.

"These stars are ejected from the galaxies, "creating a kind of cloud which surrounds the entire cluster," French scientist Jean-Charles Cuillandre told AFP. Astronomers believe this strange phenomenon indicates the presence of dark matter between the galaxies. Euclid also captured the deepest-ever image of the Mess-

ier 78, a nursery where stars are born 1,300 light years from Earth in the Orion constellation.

Stars are still in the process of forming in the bluish center of the image. After gestating for millions of years, they emerge from the purple and orange clouds at the bottom of the image. Laureijs emphasized that "only Euclid can show this in one shot". That is because Euclid has a very wide field view, in contrast to far-seeing fellow space telescope the James Webb, its neighbor at a stable hovering spot 1.5 million km from Earth.

Another image, of the huge galaxy cluster Abell 2764, depicts a black expanse in which one yellow star stands out. Cuillandre admitted this was the result of an error in pointing the telescope. But he said the image demonstrated "Euclid's absolutely unique ability to concentrate light," because it was still able to pick up very faint objects next to the bright star. Euclid's image of the young Dorado cluster contained a surprise. Though the cluster was already well studied, Euclid discovered a never-before-seen dwarf galaxy, the scientists said. "I've never seen anything like it," Cuillandre said. In the fifth new image, the spiral galaxy NGC 6744 -- which bears a striking resemblance to the Milky Way -- fans out against a backdrop of shining stars. — AFP

Raisi laid to rest as scores...

Continued from Page 1

Posters of Raisi, black flags and Shiite symbols were erected along the streets of Mashhad, particularly around Raisi's final resting place -- the Imam Reza shrine, a key mausoleum visited by millions of pilgrims every year. Earlier thousands of people holding images of Raisi and waving flags lined the streets of Birjand, capital of the eastern province of South Khorasan, for the procession of Raisi's coffin. Raisi was South Khorasan's representative in the Assembly of Experts, a clerical body in charge of selecting or dismissing Iran's supreme leader.

Raisi had widely been expected to succeed supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who led prayers in Tehran on Wednesday for the late president and knelt before the coffins of the eight people killed in the helicopter crash. Among them was foreign minister Hos-

International

China holds war games, vows blood of Taiwan 'independence forces'

Taipei activates military, coast guard in response to Beijing's drills

BEIJING: China on Thursday encircled Taiwan with naval vessels and military aircraft in war games, as it vowed the blood of "independence forces" on the self-ruled island would flow.

The two days of drills are part of an escalating campaign of intimidation by China that has seen it carry out a series of large-scale military exercises around Taiwan in recent years. The drills come after Lai Ching-te was sworn in as Taiwan's new president this week and made an inauguration speech that China denounced as a "confession of independence".

As the drills got underway, China's military said they would serve as "strong punishment for the separatist acts of 'Taiwan independence' forces". Foreign ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin then delivered a warning that included language more commonly used by China's propaganda outlets.

"Taiwan independence forces will be left with their heads broken and blood flowing after colliding against the great... trend of China achieving complete unification," Wang told reporters.

China - governed by the Communist Party since 1949 - claims Taiwan as part of its territory and has vowed to bring the democratic island under its rule, by force if necessary. Thursday and Friday's drills - codenamed "Joint Sword-2024A" - involve aircraft and ships surrounding the island to test their combat capabilities, China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) said.

Taiwan responded by deploying air, ground and sea forces, with the island's defense ministry vowing to "defend freedom". President Lai said he would "stand on the front line" to defend Taiwan in a speech on Thursday afternoon, without directly referring to the ongoing drills.

"Faced with external challenges and threats, we

will continue to defend the values of freedom and democracy, and safeguard peace and stability in the region," he said. China has repeatedly branded Lai a "dangerous separatist" who would bring "war and decline" to the island.

Beijing was further incensed with his inauguration speech on Monday in which he hailed a "glorious" era for Taiwan's democracy. The drills, which began on Thursday morning, are taking place in the Taiwan Strait and to the north, south and east of the island, as well as areas around the Taipei-administered islands of Kinmen, Matsu, Wuqiu and Dongyin.

China's military put out a series of posters touting what it called its "cross-strait lethality". They featured rockets, jets and naval vessels next to blood-stained text.

"The weapon aimed at 'Taiwan independence' to kill 'independence' is already in place," it declared.

A Chinese military expert told CCTV that the drills were partly aimed at rehearsing an economic blockade of the island. Zhang Chi, a professor at Beijing's China National Defense University, said the drills aimed to "strangle" Taiwan's critical Kaohsiung port to "severely impact" its foreign trade.

Meanwhile, fighter jets took off from a Taiwan airbase Thursday as the self-ruled island dispatched aerial and naval forces in response to China's launch of military drills, while Taipei's coast guard warned off Chinese vessels. Beijing commenced two days of war games, dubbed "Joint Sword-2024A", as a "strong punishment" for Taiwan's "separatist acts".

They come after the island swore in President Lai Ching-te, who said in his inaugural speech on Monday that Taiwan "must demonstrate our resolution to defend our nation".

China - which claims Taiwan as part of its terri-



HSINCHU: Two people ride a motorcycle as a Taiwanese Air Force Mirage 2000 fighter jet approaches for landing at an air force base in Hsinchu in northern Taiwan on May 23, 2024.

tory - has denounced Lai's speech as a "confession of independence". Beijing's drills began Thursday morning and are taking place in the Taiwan Strait and to the north, south and east of the island, China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) said.

In response, Taiwan's armed forces dispatched "aerial, naval and land assets", Taipei's defense min-

istry said in a statement. Four fighter jets took off at around 1 pm (0500 GMT) from a military airbase in Hsinchu, an hour southwest of Taipei. The defense ministry said in a late afternoon press briefing that it had detected 15 Chinese warships and 16 coast guard vessels around Taiwan, while 33 warplanes had "entered our response zone". — AFP

Kenyan climber dies on Everest, Nepali guide missing

KATHMANDU: A Kenyan climber has died close to Everest's summit and his Nepali guide is missing, a tourism official said Thursday, taking this season's toll on the world's highest mountain to at least three. Joshua Cheruiyot Kirui, 40, and his Nepali guide Nawang Sherpa, 44, went out of contact Wednesday morning, and a search team was deployed on the 8,849-metre (29,032-foot) high mountain.

"The team have found the Kenyan climber dead between the summit and the Hillary Step, but his guide is still missing," Khim Lal Gautam, chief of the tourism's department field office at the base camp, told AFP. Search parties also continue to look for a 40-year-old British climber and 21-year-old Nepali guide who have been missing since Tuesday morning after an ice fall collapsed as they descended from Everest's peak.

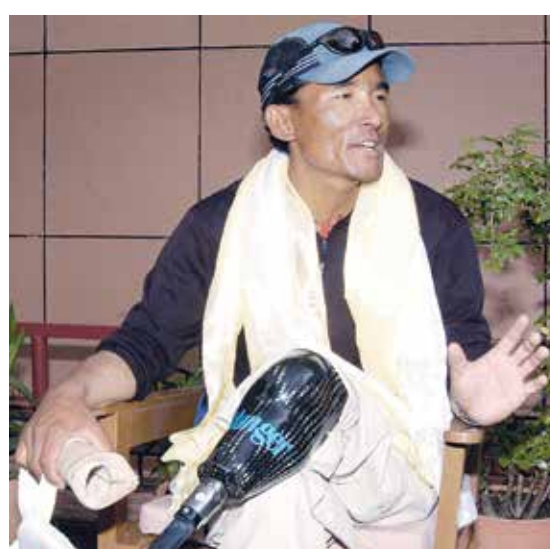
On Monday, a Romanian climber died in his tent during a bid to scale Lhotse, the fourth-highest mountain in the world. Everest and Lhotse share the same route until diverting at around 7,200 meters. Earlier this month, two Mongolian climbers went missing after reaching Everest's summit and were later found dead.

Two more climbers, one French and one Nepali, have died this season on Makalu, the world's fifth-highest peak. Nepal has issued more than 900 permits for its mountains this year, including 419 for Everest, earning more than \$5 million in royalties.

More than 500 climbers and their guides have already reached the summit of Everest after a rope-fixing team reached the peak last month. This year, China also reopened the Tibetan route to foreigners for the first time since closing it in 2020 because of the pandemic.

Nepal is home to eight of the world's 10 highest peaks and welcomes hundreds of adventurers each spring, when temperatures are warm and winds typically calm.

Last year, more than 600 climbers made it to the summit of Everest, but it was also the deadliest season on the mountain, with 18 fatalities. — AFP



KATHMANDU: Nepalese mountaineer Nawang Sherpa gestures as he addresses a press conference in Kathmandu, 23 May 2004 after conquering Mount Everest at 8,848 meters (29,028 foot) the world's highest peak. — AFP

'Blinded by love', some S Africans keep faith in ANC

JOHANNESBURG: South Africa's ruling ANC faces its toughest electoral challenge yet at next week's parliamentary vote, but the fierce loyalty of its remaining supporters should save it from a humiliating rout. Thirty years after the advent of democracy, many voters are disillusioned by the African National Congress' record in office, but millions are not willing to let go of what the late Nelson Mandela's party symbolizes. "Before the ANC rescued us we were treated as sub-humans in our own country... we were nothing," Gugulethu Sigcau told AFP in Johannesburg ahead of the May 29 vote.

"So there is no reality where I will vote for anyone else." According to the 71-year-old pensioner, black people, especially those who lived through apartheid, should be voting for the ANC because they led the struggle that "liberated our kind". Some households are split by age between those who remember the ANC's victory in the struggle against apartheid and a younger generation that knows the party through its patchy record in government.

Personal trainer April, 38, no longer talks about politics with his 62-year-old mother. "She doesn't even understand how anyone could consider voting for a party other than the ANC," he said.

He has not decided which opposition party will get his backing, but he's done with the "self-serving" ANC. But even if many of his compatriots share his disappointment, millions in the secrecy of the voting booth will put a cross by the ANC's name - and polls suggest they could get more than 40 percent.

South Africans vote in parliamentary elections next Wednesday, in what is expected to be the tightest vote since democratic rule was introduced after



the defeat of apartheid. Poor services, a prolonged energy crisis and a buckling economy have left many citizens embittered with their government.

The ANC is widely expected to lose its outright parliamentary majority for the first time, potentially forcing it to form a coalition with rival parties to remain in power. "For the first time I see so many parallels with pre-1994 here because you had a similar kind of a pressure cooker," political analyst Sanusha Naidoo said. "There was a similar question of 'Will the ANC get what they need to get?' But, 30 years on, others are still unwavering in their loyalty to the organization. Hlengiwe Ndlovu, political analyst and lecturer at the Wits School of Governance, told AFP that ANC strongholds in rural areas would play a key role in the vote.

"The major opposition parties haven't had the strategic positioning to tap into those rural constituencies," she said. Sibongile Mdluli said when she left her rural hometown to look for employment in Johannesburg she received a free house with running water and electricity "thanks to the ANC". "Whether you like it or not, the ANC has improved our lives," the 55-year-old waste worker said. The mother of four also told AFP that she would not have to insist on her children voting for the ruling party.

ata this month while seeking medical treatment in the Indian city, according to police inspector Akhilesh Chaturvedi of West Bengal state's Criminal Investigation Department.

Azim was reported missing on May 18 by family members, after they received text messages sent from his phone suggesting he had gone on business to India's capital New Delhi. Chaturvedi said security camera footage showed Azim entering a building in Kolkata with two men and a woman, and while his companions were seen leaving, he was not. When Indian detectives entered the building this week looking for Azim, they found apparent blood stains in a bedroom and a sink. No body has been found.

The ANC's election campaign messaging has been filled with nostalgia and praise of their three decades of accomplishments. "Is 30 years enough to erase the impact of colonialism and apartheid? My answer to that is 30 years is not enough. We need more time," President Cyril Ramaphosa said during the party's birthday speech in January. Ndlovu alleged the ANC was "operating from a very high level of arrogance".

"They don't see any of the oppositions as a real threat so they can't imagine waking up on the other side," she said, arguing the party failed to learn from other African liberation movements who have been ousted from power.

The youth vote could prove decisive in this election, where one in five voters are aged between 18 and 29. And many have been particularly vocal about their frustration towards the ANC in recent months. At 45.5 percent, youth unemployment is among the highest in the world.

Yet 22-year-old Gomolemo Pheko paints a different picture. An industrial physics graduate who is pursuing higher studies, he said his life would be nothing without the ANC, which helped his parents escape abject poverty and whose government funded his studies. — AFP

"A special investigations team was formed to launch a search operation to find the politician," Chaturvedi said. Bangladesh's home minister Asaduzzaman Khan told reporters in Dhaka Wednesday that the lawmaker had been killed in a "pre-planned manner".

Three men had been arrested in connection with Azim's disappearance, he added, without giving further details. "Police of the two nations are investigating the case," he said.

Faruk Hossain, spokesman for the Dhaka Metropolitan Police, said Azim himself had previously faced at least three murder charges between 2000 and 2008, which were later dropped. — AFP

News in Brief

Boeing Starliner flight delayed again

WASHINGTON: The first crewed launch of Boeing's Starliner spacecraft to the International Space Station has again been delayed, and June 1 is now a possible new liftoff date, NASA said Wednesday. The US space agency released a statement calling that day a launch opportunity and mentioning June 2, 5 and 6 as other possibilities so no day yet appears to be etched in stone. The postponement of the launch, which had been set for Saturday, marks the third delay this month for the highly anticipated mission, which would allow NASA to certify a second commercial vehicle to carry crews to the ISS, beyond Elon Musk's SpaceX. — AFP

Thai court to hear PM's removal case

BANGKOK: A top Thai court on Thursday agreed to consider a case seeking to oust Prime Minister Srettha Thavisin over his appointment of a cabinet minister with a criminal conviction. The Constitutional Court accepted a petition to remove Srettha from office, which was submitted by 40 senators under ethics rules, but it rejected an application to suspend him from his duties as prime minister while it considers the matter. The case centers on Pichit Chuenban, appointed as a minister in a recent reshuffle, who served six months in jail for a contempt of court conviction in 2008. — AFP

One killed in Colombia factory blast

BOGOTA: At least one person was killed and 33 were injured in a powerful explosion at a gunpowder and fireworks factory on the outskirts of the Colombian capital Bogota, government officials said. It was unclear what set off the explosion at the factory, Bogota Mayor Carlos Galan said on Wednesday. Emergency medical personnel and firefighters swarmed the scene, while images on social media showed a huge column of greyish smoke rising above the industrial town of Soacha late in the afternoon. The powerful blast also blew out the windows of nearby homes. — AFP

Peru's attorney general dismissed

LIMA: Peru's justice oversight board has dismissed Attorney General Patricia Benavides over accusations she used her position to shield her sister from a corruption probe. Benavides was suspended in December pending an investigation into accusations of influence peddling and improper dismissals of corruption cases. At a hearing on Wednesday, five magistrates from the National Board of Justice (JN) found Benavides responsible for serious disciplinary faults over the firing of a prosecutor investigating her sister for allegedly freeing drug traffickers in exchange for payment. — AFP

Chad junta leader to be sworn in

N'DJAMENA, Chad: General Mahamat Idriss Deby Itno, who has led Chad's junta for the last three years, is to be sworn in Thursday after an election victory hotly contested by opposition parties in the north-central African nation. Deby officially won 61 percent of the May 6 vote international NGOs said was neither credible nor free, and which his main rival called a "masquerade". Deby was proclaimed transitional president in April 2021 by a junta of 15 generals after his father, iron-fisted president Idriss Deby Itno, was shot dead by rebels after 30 years in power. The swearing-in marks the end of three years of military rule in a country crucial for the fight against jihadism across Africa's restive Sahel region. — AFP

India police probe suspected murder of Bangladesh MP

KOLKATA: Indian police are working with detectives from neighboring Bangladesh to investigate the suspected murder of a lawmaker from Bangladesh's ruling party, police officials said Thursday. Mohammad Anwarul Azim, a member of Bangladesh's Awami League party, disappeared in Kolk-

FRIDAY, MAY 24, 2024

Gulf Bank the best in Kuwait for social responsibility, community engagement

Euromoney Excellence Awards reinforce bank's leading position in serving all segments of community

KUWAIT: Euromoney magazine has named Gulf Bank the best in Kuwait for social responsibility. The announcement was made at a grand ceremony in Dubai last weekend, where the 2024 Excellence Awards were presented. The event was attended by numerous companies, banks, and major institutions from the region.

This award recognizes Gulf Bank's outstanding commitment to social sustainability, as well as its significant efforts in supporting and empowering youth, women, and individuals with special needs, both within the bank and in the broader community. These efforts are evident through a diverse and carefully curated range of initiatives and services designed to meet their needs and aspirations.



Gulf Bank wins Euromoney's 'the Best Bank in Social Responsibility'.

International recognition

On this occasion, Gulf Bank's Chief Marketing Officer, Najla Al-Eisa, said in a press statement after receiving the award, "We are delighted with this new international recognition of Gulf Bank's outstanding role in social responsibility. This honor strengthens our determination and commitment to our values and our leading role in serving the community."

She added, "We take pride in our close engagement and communication with the community. We ensure our presence among them during various events, whether directly through diverse activities or via media and social media channels." She noted that Gulf Bank has launched numerous community events and initiatives that meet the aspirations of customers and the public from different segments

Najla Al-Eisa

- Gulf Bank's exceptional role in social responsibility is recognized internationally.
- These awards reinforce our commitment to our values and our leading position in serving all segments of the community.
- We are proud to consistently engage and communicate with the community during various occasions.
- We have initiated numerous community events and initiatives that cater to the aspirations of our customers and the public.
- The "Sawa'ed AlKhaleej" team actively participates in various events organized or supported by the bank.
- The bank contributes significantly to raising awareness through its "Diraya" and "A Step Towards Change" campaigns.

and age groups, making it deservedly the closest and most responsive to the community's interests. She mentioned that the "Sawa'ed AlKhaleej" team, a volunteer group of Gulf Bank employees, actively supports our efforts to promote social sustainability principles at the various events organized or sponsored by Gulf Bank.

Social initiatives

Al-Eisa highlighted some of the social initiatives and events that Gulf Bank has launched or sponsored recently. These include the ninth edition of the Gulf Bank Marathon, the only marathon in Kuwait with international recognition, and the 18th consecutive sponsorship of the Company Program competition, organized annually by INJAZ Kuwait. Additionally, Gulf Bank organized the third edition of the Dataathon competition to empower data specialists, students, and those interested in data and analytics. They also sponsored the "Kilmitain" forum to support creative industries in Kuwait.

She remarked that in Ramadan 2024, the bank organized and sponsored several significant initiatives, such as distributing thousands of Iftar meals, providing Ramadan food packages, donating to those



Gulf Bank's Chief Marketing Officer Najla Al-Eisa receives the award during the Euromoney Excellence Awards ceremony.

affected by the war in Gaza, and organizing "NuqsatAl-Khaleej" to support small and medium-sized enterprises, among other successful events.

Promoting awareness

Furthermore, Al-Eisa emphasized Gulf Bank's significant role in enhancing financial literacy through its continued support for the "Diraya" awareness campaign, now in its fourth consecutive year. This campaign, organized by the Banking Association in collaboration with the Central Bank of Kuwait, aims to promote financial education. Additionally, Gulf Bank launched the "A Step Towards Change" campaign, with the goal of instigating a cultural shift towards reducing plastic usage.

Al-Eisa concluded by stating, "Gulf Bank has set a distinguished example of sustainability within the community. This is evident through initiatives such as the issuance of its annual Sustainability Report and the recent launch of an ambitious Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) governance strategy spanning from 2024 to 2030. This strategy serves as a clear roadmap for the next six years."

It's worth mentioning that "MEED" magazine recently honored Gulf Bank with two awards, acknowledging its endeavors in implementing diversity and inclusion initiatives and empowering women in the MENA region. Gulf Bank's vision is to be the leading Kuwaiti Bank of the Future. The Bank is constantly engaging and empowering its employees as part of an inclusive and diversified workplace in recognition of every employee's role in delivering customer excellence and serving the community at large. With its extensive network of branches and innovative digital services, Gulf Bank is able to give its customers the choice of how and where to conduct their banking transactions, all while ensuring a simple and seamless banking experience.

Gulf Bank is committed to maintaining robust developments in sustainability at environmental, social and governance levels through diverse sustainability initiatives, strategically selected to benefit the Bank both internally and externally. Gulf Bank supports Kuwait Vision 2035 "New Kuwait" and works with various parties to achieve it.

EU hits Oreo maker Mondelez with \$366 million fine

BRUSSELS: The EU on Thursday slapped a 337.5 million euro (\$366 million) fine on Mondelez, the US confectioner behind major brands including Toblerone and Oreo, for forcing consumers to pay more by restricting cross-border sales.

Mondelez, formerly called Kraft, is one of the world's largest producers of chocolate, biscuits and coffee, with revenue of \$36 billion last year. The EU fined Mondelez "because they have been restricting the cross border trade of chocolate, biscuits and coffee products within the European Union," the EU's competition commissioner, Margrethe Vestager, said.

"This harmed consumers, who ended up paying more for chocolate, biscuits and coffee," she told reporters in Brussels. "This case is about price of groceries. It's a key concern to European citizens and even more obvious in times of very high inflation, where many are in a cost-of-living crisis," she added.

The penalty is the EU's ninth-largest antitrust fine and comes at a time when food costs are a major



BRUSSELS: European Commission vice-president Margrethe Vestager addresses a press conference on May 23, 2024. —AFP

concern for European households. Businesses have come under scrutiny for posting higher profits despite soaring inflation following Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine, but that has since slowed down. The free movement of goods is one of the key pillars of the EU's single market. Mondelez brands also include Philadelphia cream cheese, Ritz crackers and Tuc salty biscuits as well as chocolate brands Cadbury, Cote d'Or and Milka.

The EU's probe dates back to January 2021 but the

cheaper than those of their giant US rivals, and Mistral raised more than \$400 million in its last funding round.

Jonas Andrusis, Aleph Alpha

German Jonas Andrusis, in his early forties with an immaculately clipped goatee and shaved head, undercuts the severe appearance with dry wit and blunt answers. During a panel on AI sovereignty on Wednesday, he was asked for his opinion on the EU's AI Act. His immediate reply—"strong negative"—was delivered with a knowing grin. He said in fact he supported the final text of the law and was more annoyed with the duration of the "planning and regulatory shenanigans". Andrusis, who spent three years working for Apple, is more likely than his European counterparts to dish out the kind of hyperbole US tech founders are known for.

He has regularly talked about AI's ability to give humans "superpowers" and said recently his firm's AI agent was essentially "conscious". He used his appearance at VivaTech to argue that Europe "should have a strong, powerful vision" for the future that encourages entrepreneurs.

Thomas Wolf, Hugging Face

Frenchman Thomas Wolf, who will take to the stage on Friday, told AFP in an interview last week it was a "call from the heart" that led him to take up AI. The 39-year-old had spent years researching quantum physics but quit in 2016 to form Hugging Face, a collaborative platform for AI models, with two other Frenchmen. "Physics was frustrating because it took three years to do an experiment, whereas with AI in a few weeks you can do incredible things," he said.

Wolf, like his countrymen at Mistral, is a champion of open-source AI models. Hugging Face claim they

suspicions had led the bloc's investigators to carry out raids in Mondelez offices across Europe in November 2019. The European Commission, the EU's powerful antitrust regulator, said Mondelez "abused its dominant position" in breach of the bloc's rules by restricting sales to other EU countries with lower prices.

For example, the commission accused Mondelez of withdrawing chocolate bars in the Netherlands to prevent their resale in Belgium where they were sold at higher prices.

The EU said Mondelez limited traders' ability to resell products and ordered them to apply higher prices for exports compared to domestic sales between 2012 and 2019. According to the commission, between 2015 and 2019, Mondelez also refused to supply a trader in Germany to avoid the resale of chocolate in Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria and Romania, "where prices were higher". Vestager said within the EU, prices for the same product can vary significantly, by 10 to 40 percent depending on the country. The issue is of grave concern to EU leaders. Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis, in a weekend letter to European Commission chief Ursula von der Leyen, urged the EU to take on multinationals and railed against different costs for branded essential consumer goods across member states. Vestager stressed the importance of traders' ability to buy goods in other countries where they are cheaper.—AFP



PARIS: This photograph shows a general view of the 8th edition of the Vivattech technology startups and innovation fair, at the Porte de Versailles exhibition center in Paris, on May 23, 2024.— AFP

have more than one million programs used by 11 million customers worldwide.

After raising \$235 million in funding last August, the Franco-American startup is valued at nearly \$4.5 billion. And like his fellow Europeans, Wolf, who set up his company in New York, believes the continent has a bright future. "We are an American company because it used to be very difficult to raise large sums of money in Paris," he said. "Today, it's really changed, you can raise \$200 million in Paris." —AFP

Nvidia profits soar on demand for AI power

SAN FRANCISCO: Nvidia said Wednesday its quarterly net profit rocketed by seven times year-on-year on demand for its chips to power artificial intelligence in data centers. The California-based company reported a net profit of \$14.9 billion, while its revenue of \$26 billion was almost four times what it took in during the same fiscal quarter last year.

Nvidia also announced a 10-for-one stock split effective June 7 to make owning shares more accessible. Nvidia shares were up nearly six percent to \$1,003.50 in after-market trades.

"The next industrial revolution has begun," Nvidia chief executive Jensen Huang said in an earnings release. "Companies and countries are partnering with NVIDIA to shift the trillion-dollar traditional data centers to accelerated computing and build a new type of data center—AI factories—to produce a new commodity: artificial intelligence."

Demand was strong for sophisticated GPUs (graphics processing units) tailored for the demands of training AI models, according to Huang. In a promising sign, interest in generative AI is expanding beyond cloud computing titans to consumer internet, automotive, and healthcare companies as well as nations seeking to build sovereign AI, Huang said. "Nvidia defies gravity again as AI companies globally continue to depend on its chips, networking hardware, and its software ecosystem," said Emarketer senior analyst Jacob Bourne.

"We can expect that more bold innovative moves from Nvidia will help it maintain its industry position for the foreseeable future." Huang said he expects demand for Nvidia chips to outstrip supply for some time to come. "We're racing every single day" with Nvidia chips being snapped up as fast as they are made, according to Huang.

US tech colossus Amazon on Wednesday announced its cloud computing division AWS will invest 15.7 billion euros (\$17 billion) to expand its data centers in Spain's Aragon region through to 2033. The move comes on the heels of its announcement this month of a 7.8 billion euro investment to build a cloud centre in Germany, and 1.2 billion euros in France to develop cloud infrastructure and logistical infrastructure of its parcel delivery service. Huang has described Nvidia chips as being at the heart of datacenters transforming into "AI generation factories" with data a "raw material" turned into experiences such as prompt-generated videos made using OpenAI's new Sora tool. In regions outside the United States, "sovereign AI" systems are adding to demand for Nvidia chips, according to the company. —AFP

Europe's AI stars step out of US shadow

PARIS: Europe's artificial intelligence companies are dwarfed in wealth and cachet by US giants like OpenAI and Anthropic and their charismatic leaders. But the VivaTech startup conference in Paris this week is allowing the founders of the continent's three most prominent firms to display a bit of the showmanship their US counterparts are famous for.

Arthur Mensch, Mistral AI

Frenchmen Arthur Mensch, who formed Mistral AI barely a year ago, was first to the stage at VivaTech, his appearance packing out the main arena. With an intense expression and tousled hair, he joined a panel discussion about AI, trust and the media.

He warned against US firms dominating the AI space, particularly with tools for journalists, which he said could lead to a scenario where "US companies are setting the editorial tone of the entire world and are basically dictating how we should think about things". "And that's really something that, by making our own technology from Europe and addressing the entire global market, we want to prevent," he said.

Mensch once worked at Google's DeepMind and formed Mistral with two of his countrymen, who were also veterans of big US tech firms. The three placed their bets on open-source AI models, which generate text from plain language queries. They are simpler and

NBK Best Bank for Women Empowerment for 'NBK Rise' and 'Best Bank for SMEs in Kuwait'

Bank recognized with two awards at Euromoney's 2024 Awards for Excellence

KUWAIT: In reiteration of its excellence in providing innovative banking products and services, as well as its leading strides in promoting sustainability, National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) was recognized with two awards from Euromoney, the leading international business magazine, within its 2024 Awards for Excellence. NBK was named "Best Bank for Diversity and Inclusion in Kuwait" for the "NBK RISE" Program and "Best Bank for SMEs in Kuwait" in the awarding ceremony held in Dubai last Wednesday.

The awards are a new addition to NBK's record of prestigious accolades, reaffirming its unique position as a leading bank in Kuwait and across the region.

Best Bank for diversity and inclusion

NBK received Euromoney's award for "Best Bank for Diversity and Inclusion in Kuwait" recognizing its Global Women Leadership Initiative "NBK Rise".

The award's criteria included showing a strong track record for initiatives promoting diversity and inclusion, demonstrating that diversity policy is having a positive effect on the performance of the bank and its offerings to clients. This award reflects the bank's unwavering dedication to providing an ideal work environment in which everyone can flourish. NBK is always committed to continuing its efforts to foster a more inclusive work environment for its employees, in line with its firm belief that diversity and inclusion are among the key factors for institutional success.

The award also comes in recognition of the bank's significant strides to foster women empowerment, as the "NBK RISE" program represents an inspiring experience that is not exclusive for NBK,

but brings together a number of leading corporations in Kuwait, who signed a pledge to increase the representation of women in leadership positions, reflecting their commitment to join forces to achieve the goals of this global initiative. NBK regards diversity and inclusion as a fundamental culture, as its recruitment policies are based on equal opportunities and largely promoting diversity by ensuring that job applicants are provided with equal opportunities without any discrimination based on their gender, age, race, religion, nationality or any other demographic characteristics, thus fostering a diverse and inclusive workplace.

NBK is also keen to promote equal opportunities, equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace through various strategic initiatives and specialized programs to empower and develop female leaders, which helped increase the number of women in leadership and supervisory positions.

Best bank for SMEs

This award recognizes the banks that can demonstrate outstanding commitment to the particular needs of small and medium-sized enterprises over the review period across financing, advice, trade, cash management and growth initiatives. This award appreciates NBK's efforts to support financing of SMEs, and also demonstrates its leading position as the top local bank in providing diverse, smooth and fast banking products and services that meet all the needs of SME clients and enable their success and growth.

NBK always seeks to provide the SME sector with a comprehensive range of competitive financing options backed by its world-class banking platform. It constantly strives to deliver outstanding services through its experienced



The National Bank of Kuwait team receiving awards on the sidelines of the ceremony held in Dubai.

Relationship Managers and specialized service channels. National Bank of Kuwait is considered the leading institution in providing corporate banking products and services to meet the needs related to business activities. The bank has

a strong track record in supporting companies to achieve their aspirations, and providing apt financial solutions that drive their success, growth, and innovation, thus strengthening and developing national economy.

News Corp makes deal to let OpenAI use its content

NEW YORK: News Corp on Wednesday announced a deal to let ChatGPT-maker OpenAI use content from its publications in artificial intelligence products. OpenAI will get access to current and archived content from News Corp properties including

The Wall Street Journal, Barron's, MarketWatch, and The New York Post, according to a joint release.

Financial terms of the deal were not disclosed, but the Wall Street Journal cited sources close to the company as saying it was valued at more than \$250 million over five years and included credits for News Corp using OpenAI technology. Authors, artists, and news groups have been accusing OpenAI and its rivals in the generative artificial intelligence market of using copyrighted content for training models without asking permission or paying.

Generative AI models are trained on mountains of data in the effort to get software to think the way

people do. "This landmark accord is not an end, but the beginning of a beautiful friendship in which we are jointly committed to creating and delivering insight and integrity instantaneously," News Corp chief executive Robert Thomson said.

OpenAI gets permission to display News Corp content in response to queries by users of its technology, according to terms of the deal. "Our partnership with News Corp is a proud moment for journalism and technology," Open AI CEO Sam Altman said in the release.

"Together, we are setting the foundation for a future where AI deeply respects, enhances, and up-

holds the standards of world-class journalism."

ChatGPT's creator is also in the process of signing content licensing agreements with media outlets—including the Associated Press, Germany's Axel Springer Group (publisher of tabloid Bild), French daily Le Monde and Spanish conglomerate Prisa Media—to enrich its models. The announcement of the agreement with News Corp comes on the heels of a new controversy, after actress Scarlett Johansson accused OpenAI of copying her voice for a new voice assistant without her permission. Altman has apologized and announced the suspension of the voice, called "Sky." —AFP

No.	Ticker	Sector	Price Movement & Performance										Valuation Multiples *				
			Open Price	Close Price	Week High	Week Low	Range	Volume	WTD Change	WTD %	YTD %	Support Level	Resistance Level	P/E	P/B	Yield	Beta
101	National Bank of Kuwait	Banking	875	863	881	863	18	28,180,921	-12	-1.37%	1.36%	860	879	13.6	1.71	3.8%	1.03
102	Gulf Bank	Banking	259	259	264	258	6	22,421,819	-1	-0.38%	-3.22%	256	261	14.8	1.25	4.4%	1.28
104	Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait	Banking	271	272	276	268	8	3,426,149	50	22.58%	22.58%	260	273	13.6	1.13	3.2%	0.94
106	Kuwait International Bank	Banking	173	179	182	173	9	73,450,278	7	4.07%	22.91%	177	180	17.5	0.67	2.7%	1.08
107	Burgan Bank	Banking	186	186	187	184	3	4,379,685	0	0.00%	13.55%	185	191	18.3	0.67	3.1%	1.31
108	Kuwait Finance House	Banking	746	744	748	739	9	41,732,282	-1	-0.13%	11.70%	725	745	22.0	2.18	2.5%	1.15
109	Boubyan Bank	Banking	592	581	592	578	14	13,563,858	-11	-1.86%	2.64%	579	593	30.9	2.44	1.3%	1.14
201	Kuwait Investment	Financial Services	180	183	188	177	11	15,068,690	1	0.55%	44.09%	178	187	8.5	0.85	5.4%	2.05
204	National Investments	Financial Services	258	254	263	254	9	8,104,958	-3	-1.17%	6.28%	248	257	28.7	1.05	5.8%	2.09
205	Kuwait Projects	Financial Services	126	124	127	122	5	40,146,087	-2	-1.59%	18.10%	122	126	NM	0.71	0.0%	0.95
212	Arzan Financial Group	Financial Services	191	185	192	184	8	5,368,059	-6	-3.14%	-11.90%	179	186	21.2	1.14	1.1%	1.23
222	Aayan Leasing and Investment	Financial Services	168	166	171	162	9	14,734,725	-4	-2.35%	-4.60%	163	166	8.9	1.12	4.5%	1.64
252	Al Imtiaz Investment	Financial Services	53.3	62	62	53.2	8.8	43,560,340	9	16.98%	9.73%	60.1	62	NM	0.40	0.0%	1.37
401	Kuwait Real Estate	Real Estate	225	222	227	220	7	12,591,490	-3	-1.33%	8.29%	220	229	18.1	1.38	1.3%	1.14
404	Salhia Real Estate	Real Estate	446	440	449	431	18	4,426,273	31	7.69%	7.69%	424	444	16.6	1.45	3.2%	0.55
413	Mabaneeh	Real Estate	809	832	833	791	42	5,514,923	22	2.72%	4.62%	825	838	17.5	1.85	1.6%	0.97
418	The Commercial Real Estate	Real Estate	136	138	144	135	9	14,622,722	1	0.73%	38.00%	137	141	17.2	0.84	2.9%	0.60
501	National Industries	Financial Services	232	240	240	230	10	33,954,143	9	3.90%	17.65%	238	241	14.0	1.03	2.1%	1.62
505	Gulf Cable	Industrials	1,223	1,199	1,241	1,176	65	1,358,186	-23	-1.88%	-8.47%	1,171	1,202	13.0	0.94	5.5%	1.09
506	HEISCO	Industrials	810	810	815	799	16	546,754	5	0.62%	-1.22%	793	815	18.3	1.93	3.7%	0.94
514	Boubyan Petrochemical	Basic Materials	675	660	675	657	18	3,639,390	-14	-2.08%	12.82%	655	677	19.9	1.34	9.1%	0.90
603	Aglity	Industrials	316	302	316	301	15	31,965,579	-11	-3.51%	-40.67%	298	330	9.0	0.82	6.5%	1.58
605	Zain	Telecommunications	474	459	483	452	31	29,150,337	-13	-2.75%	-9.47%	459	468	10.4	1.60	7.6%	0.57
623	Human Soft Holding	Industrials	2,865	2,751	2,882	2,750	132	862,276	-129	-4.48%	-15.02%	2,750	2,866	9.1	4.03	12.0%	0.66
642	ALAFCO	Industrials	207	211	212	206	6	1,020,206	4	1.93%	17.22%	210	213	NM	0.92	0.0%	1.26
654	JAZEERA	Consumer Discretionary	1,080	1,059	1,080	1,056	24	1,961,516	1	0.09%	-23.76%	990	1,100	209.5	10.31	2.6%	1.28
813	GFH Financial Group	Financial Services	84	89.7	91	83.3	7.7	89,768,579	5.9	7.04%	17.56%	86.3	90.0	9.6	1.14	5.7%	1.39
821	Warba Bank	Banking	183	185	187	183	4	39,708,820	3	1.65%	5.43%	181	188	23.7	1.02	1.5%	1.07
822	Kuwait Telecommunications	Telecommunications	543	545	546	537	9	2,417,801	-18	-3.20%	-3.20%	530	548	16.2	2.47	6.5%	0.70
823	Mezzan Holding	Consumer Staples	770	832	832	765	67	1,770,859	67	8.76%	44.70%	801	832	19.2	2.13	2.5%	0.42
824	Integrated Holding	Industrials	518	500	526	494	32	3,000,844	-18	-3.47%	-1.96%	499	510	31.0	2.01	4.0%	0.77
827	Boursa Kuwait	Financial Services	2,154	2,141	2,180	2,078	102	1,074,693	-9	-0.42%	24.19%	2,125	2,180	26.6	7.95	3.5%	1.37
830	AL GHANIM	Consumer Discretionary	1,121	1,058	1,121	1,047	74	2,529,288	-47	-4.25%	0.19%	1,033	1,069	10.1	3.82	6.6%	0.78

* As of end of week closing

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Business

S Korea president unveils record \$19bn plan to boost chip industry

Yoon announces a 'new semiconductor financial support program worth 17tn won'

SEOUL: South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol on Thursday announced a record \$19-billion-dollar support plan for the country's crucial semiconductor industry.

South Korea is home to the world's top memory chipmakers Samsung Electronics and SK hynix and last year pledged to build the world's largest chip centre using \$456 billion of private investment as it seeks an edge in the global industry. "We have created a comprehensive support program for the semiconductor industry worth 26 trillion Korean won, which encompasses financial, infrastructure, research and development, as well as support for small and medium-sized companies," he said, according to a statement from his office.

The package includes a \$7 billion investment announced earlier this month. Yoon also said Seoul would extend tax benefits for chip investments, in hopes of boosting employment and attracting more talent to the industry. The country is also building a "mega chip cluster" just outside Seoul, which the government claims will be the world's largest semiconductor-making complex and create millions of jobs.

"As you all know, semiconductors are a field of national all-out war," Yoon said. "Winning or losing depends on who makes the state-of-the-art semiconductors with high information processing capabilities first. The state must provide support for semiconductors so that they do not lag behind competitors," he added. With the new package, Yoon said there would be a "new semiconductor financial support program worth 17 trillion won" run through the Korea Development Bank to allow companies to make crucial new investments.

"As companies invest enormous amounts of money in facilities such as new factories and line expansions,

liquidity problems arise," he said. "I believe that these difficulties will be largely resolved through the Korea Development Bank's support program," he added.

The plan will also create a "semiconductor ecosystem fund" worth a trillion won, which will support fabless companies and small and medium enterprises linked to the industry. "Our fabless market share is still in the one percent range, and foundry, which manufactures system semiconductors, is unable to close the gap with leading companies such as TSMC," Yoon said, referring to the Taiwanese chip giant.

Earlier this month, Seoul said it would set up an aid package worth more than \$7 billion to support its chip industry, as part of its drive to boost the semiconductor sector, which is critical to Asia's fourth-largest economy. The moves come as the government looks to invest heavily in six key technologies including chips, displays and batteries, all areas where the country's tech giants are well-established already.

Semiconductors are South Korea's leading export and hit \$11.7 billion in March, their highest level in almost two years, accounting for a fifth of South Korea's total exports, according to trade ministry figures. "Semiconductors are virtually the only industry South Korea can rely on as a source of growth," Cho Dong-keun, an economics professor emeritus at Myongji University, told AFP.

"This announcement is seen as stemming from the necessity to carefully cultivate industries where South Korea has a clear and strategic advantage," he said. Samsung in May 2022 unveiled a massive 450 trillion won five-year investment blueprint aimed at making the country a frontrunner in key sectors from semiconductors to biologics. Securing supplies of advanced chips has become a crucial issue internationally, with



SEOUL: South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol attends the virtual AI Seoul Summit hosted jointly by South Korea and Britain, in Seoul. — AFP

the United States and China locked in a fierce battle for control of the market. "South Korea is supplying 80 percent of the world's memory semiconductors, and has said it is investing 300 trillion won in the Yongin cluster, but there has been a water supply issue with it," Kim Dae-jong, a professor of business administration

at Sejong University in Seoul, told AFP.

"On top of tackling such issues, today's announcement seems to be an effort to support innovative small and medium-sized enterprises to further strengthen their competitiveness against (rivals) like Taiwan." — AFP

News in Brief

Swisscom completes financing of Vodafone Italia purchase

ZURICH: Swisscom said it has completed the financing of its 8 billion-euro (\$8.7 billion) planned purchase of Vodafone Italia after raising 4 billion euros through a bond sale, Switzerland's historic telephone company said Thursday. "Swisscom has now successfully completed the financing of the acquisition at attractive terms and well ahead of the expected closing" in the first quarter of 2025, the company said in a statement. The fixed-rate bonds were placed with investors Wednesday and demand was three times supply, the company said. It had already raised more than 1.14 billion Swiss francs (\$1.3 billion) through a domestic Swiss bond sale earlier in May, it said. — AFP

China's Xiaomi reports sales spike in first quarter

SHANGHAI: Chinese tech and home appliance giant Xiaomi announced on Thursday a major jump in sales for the first quarter, on the back of a smartphone boom. Xiaomi, the world's third-biggest smartphone maker, said its sales in the first quarter reached \$10.4 billion (75.5 billion yuan), up 27 percent from a year ago. The company launched its first electric vehicle in March, entering a cut-throat domestic market with the SU7 sedan that comes equipped with karaoke equipment and a mini-fridge. "As of April 30, 2024, the cumulative locked-in orders for the Xiaomi SU7 Series reached 88,063 vehicles," the company said in its earnings report on Thursday, adding that it had delivered 10,000 cars by mid-May. — AFP

UK power grid operator announces vast investment

LONDON: Britain's power grid operator on Thursday said it would raise \$7 billion (\$9 billion) via a shares sale to help fund vast infrastructure investment and meet increased demand for decarbonized energy. London-listed National Grid, which distributes energy to British homes and businesses and also has operations in the United States, will invest about \$60 billion over the next five years - almost double the prior five-year period. "Today is a defining moment for National Grid as we announce \$60 billion of investment, cementing our position as a leader in the energy transition in the UK and US northeast," said chief executive John Pettigrew in a statement alongside news of sliding annual net profit. — AFP

IMF warns France to cut debt, sees higher deficit

PARIS: The IMF urged France on Thursday to take more measures this year to reduce its debt load, warning that the budget deficit will be sharply higher than forecast in 2027. The IMF said in a statement that France's deficit will reach 5.3 percent of gross domestic product this year, slightly higher than the 5.1 forecast by the government. But the Washington-based institution warned that France's budget shortfall will be "significantly higher" than Paris foresees in 2027 - the IMF forecast 4.5 percent instead of the 2.9 percent expected by French officials. "Further consolidation measures are recommended over the medium term, starting in 2024, to bring debt on a downward trajectory, while making space for targeted growth-enhancing spending," the IMF said at the end of a staff mission to France. — AFP

Yellen urges 'more ambitious' G7 plans for Russian assets

STRESA, Italy: US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen on Thursday urged G7 ministers meeting in Italy to work on "more ambitious options" to use frozen Russian assets to help Ukraine. The ministers and central bankers from the Group of Seven world powers are meeting in Stresa, on the shores of northern Italy's Lake Maggiore, to prepare for a summit of G7 heads of state next month in Puglia.

Separately, she said they would also discuss what she considers to be "over-capacity" of key green technologies such as electric vehicles, batteries and solar panels.

Top of the agenda is a plan to finance crucial aid to Ukraine using the interest generated by the 300 billion euros (\$325 billion) of Russian central bank assets frozen by the G7 and Europe. The European Union earlier this month approved using the profits from the assets it froze to arm Ukraine, hoping to raise up to three billion euros (\$3.3 billion) a year.

In a press conference ahead of the Stresa meeting, Yellen welcomed the plan but added that "we must also continue our collective work on more ambitious options, considering all relevant risks and acting together." She said she wanted "concrete options" to present to G7 leaders meeting from June 13-15.

"Failure to take additional action is not an option - not for Ukraine's future and not for the stability of our own economies and the security of our peoples," she said. The United States has proposed granting Ukraine - which has been fighting a Russian invasion

Australia gives largest coal plant two-year lifeline

SYDNEY: Sun-soaked Australia's lofty renewable energy ambitions were given a harsh reality check on Thursday, as looming electricity shortfalls delayed the long-awaited shutdown of the country's largest coal-fired power plant.

The hulking, heavily polluting Eraring power plant - about a two-hour drive north of Sydney - was slated for closure in 2025 but will be kept ticking over for at least two more years while renewables are ramped up. "The best way to undermine the renewable energy transition is to have the lights go out in 2025. I'm not letting that happen," New South Wales Premier Chris Minns announced Thursday.

His backflip highlighted the chasm between Australia's reality and its goal of having renewables supply 82 percent of electricity by 2030. The move was deeply unpopular with environmentalists.

"Summers in New South Wales are now characterized by unprecedented floods, heatwaves or deadly fires and this extreme weather is exacerbated by extending the life of fossil fuels like coal," the Australian Conservation Foundation said. At the centre of Australia's most recent government budget was a sweeping set of policies pitched at making the country a global "renewable energy superpower".

Turkey central bank keeps key rate unchanged

ISTANBUL: Turkey's central bank on Thursday kept its key interest rate stable for the second month in a row even as the country is struggling with soar-

ing inflation. The bank's monetary policy committee said it had decided to keep the policy rate constant at 50 percent but that it remains highly attentive to inflation risks. Ahead of the March 31 local elections, the central bank hiked its rate 45 percent to 50 percent as the inflation had become a constant headache for President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's government.

Inflation reached 69.8 percent year-on-year in April - up from 68.5 percent in March, according to official data published in early May. The central bank said on Thursday that its monetary policy stance would "be

for more than two years - up to \$50 billion in loans secured by interest on the assets. But the details have not been finalized, including whether the debt would be issued by the US alone or G7 countries as a whole.

"We're looking for general agreement on the concept" in Stresa, with the details hammered out in the coming weeks, Yellen said. She confirmed that "50 billion is a number that's been mentioned as a possible number that could be achieved by this. But there hasn't been a decision on an amount". In addition to the United States and Italy, the G7 includes Britain, Canada, France, Germany and Japan.

Yellen had initially advocated a more radical solution - the confiscation of the Russian assets themselves. But European countries worried about creating a precedent in international law and the risk of serious legal disputes with Moscow. A Treasury source in Italy, which as G7 president this year is hosting the Stresa talks, has said the US proposal is an "interesting way forward" but "any decision must have a solid legal basis". Italian Economy Minister Giancarlo Giorgetti said Rome would be an "honest mediator" in discussions but said the task was "very delicate".

Experts warn that any further G7 action against Russia could lead to similar reprisals against European companies still operating in the country. In April, Moscow sent a thinly veiled warning to Italy in its capacity as G7 chair, taking "temporary" control of the Russian subsidiary of the Italian heating equipment group Ariston in retaliation for what it called "hostile actions" by Washington and its allies.

John Kirton, director of the University of Toronto's G7 Research Group, said that tapping just the interest on Russian assets "would considerably reduce the legal problems". "Legally, it would not be confiscating the 'assets'," he told AFP.

France on Wednesday welcomed the US plan,

Australia has had some success in scaling up renewable energy, and its residents are among the world's most enthusiastic adopters of household solar panels.

In 2022, renewables made up 32 percent of Australia's total electricity generation - compared to coal which contributed 47 percent, according to the latest government data. "Coal is exiting our energy system at a record pace," said Clean Energy Council chief executive Kane Thornton, who believes only renewables can replace the existing regime while avoiding blackouts and power price hikes.

But a slower-than-expected rollout of renewable energy projects has prompted Australia's energy market regulator to warn of likely shortages and blackouts in the coming years. One proposed solution has been to extend the life of coal-fired power stations - some already more than 40 years old.

But industry and a handful of conservative politicians are also calling for Australia to revisit a decades-old ban on nuclear power. Although Australia has 33 percent of the world's uranium deposits, nuclear power generation has been banned since 1998.

Advocates like Jaz Diab, managing director of Global Nuclear Security Partners, believe advances in small-scale reactors and non-water-cooled reactors should prompt a rethink.

"I actually think in Australia the first movers and shakers will be industry with things like small modular reactors," she told AFP, pointing to a possible first use in remote mining sites. "Unfortunately, politicians are grabbing onto it, and making it a political decision as opposed to allowing (Australians) to be engaged in their energy policy."

tightened in case a significant and persistent deterioration in inflation is foreseen." Finance Minister Mehmet Simsek on Wednesday said inflation would start falling down after reaching its peak in May.

"Starting from the summer months, inflation will decline very rapidly," he told Turkish media. The government this month announced a three-year austerity plan aimed at reducing public spending to calm inflation. It said it will limit recruitment and transport spending for public servants, among other measures. — AFP



STRESA, Italy: US Secretary of the Treasury Janet Yellen addresses the audience as she attends a press conference in Stresa on May 23, 2024, on the eve of the G7 finance ministers meeting. — AFP

saying it was hoping the G7 finance ministers would reach a deal this week. "The Americans have made proposals that fall within the framework of international law, and we are going to work on them openly and constructively," Economy Minister Bruno Le Maire said.

Yellen said the Stresa meeting would consider "additional action" against Moscow for its war in Ukraine, including to restrict its access to critical goods that support its military. Meanwhile, the G7 ministers would also discuss concerns that Chinese government support for green technologies is leading to more production capacity than global markets can absorb, driving cheap exports and stifling growth elsewhere. "Overcapacity threatens the viability of firms around the world, including in emerging markets," she said.

She added: "It's critical that we and the growing numbers of countries who have identified this as a concern present a clear and united front." — AFP



MUSWELLBROOK, Australia: This photo taken on December 13, 2023 shows electricity lines near emission funnels for the Bayswater coal-powered thermal power station located near the central New South Wales town of Muswellbrook. — AFP

But Australia's national science agency, the CSIRO, has found the cost of a large-scale nuclear reactor in Australia could exceed US\$10 billion and take 15 years to build. CSIRO's chief energy economist Paul Graham told AFP nuclear was not "economically competitive with renewables".

His agency recently conducted a study which showed solar, wind and batteries would be cheaper and more reliable sources of renewable energy. In many cases, nuclear makes sense for energy-deficient countries that had no domestic renewable options, such as Japan, energy analyst Tim Buckley told AFP. — AFP



By Khaled Al-Abdulhadi

Kuwait University students' team "Asteroid Hunters" achieved a significant scientific milestone by registering two astronomical discoveries in the name of Kuwait. With support from Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS), the team, consisting of Maryam Jamali, Nourah Al-Musaireea and Maraheb Al-Azmi, first spotted these asteroids in Feb 2021. The discoveries will be officially confirmed by the competent authorities in June 2024.

The two new asteroids, located in the main asteroid belt between Mars and Jupiter, are currently being studied to demarcate their orbits and include them in the approved global astronomical catalogues of asteroids. The International Union for Astronomical Research, supported by NASA, will offer students the opportunity to give names to the two discovered asteroids as well as a certificate for each asteroid.

"The discovery of the two asteroids came through the employment of the concept of citizen science, as we used astronomical data provided by observatories to amateurs and began to study and analyze astronomical data using specialized programs for four years," Maryam said. "Although we knew the difficulty of the goal and its length, the team continued to analyze the images and study the data for years, until, praise be to God, we managed to monitor the new celestial bodies," she explained.

Maryam said after the study, they found the two asteroids are located in the main asteroid belt between Mars and Jupiter, and these discoveries were confirmed by the International Astronomical Search Collaboration (IASC). "Our motivation for searching for celestial bodies in the universe stems from our curiosity towards the universe and

through cooperation with the Pan-STARRS observatory, which is interested in scanning the sky and discovering new and faint celestial bodies and obtaining astronomical data. "The team analyzed the data to search for new asteroids according to the standards and characteristics of moving celestial bodies, then wrote

the main asteroid belt, and the team obtained a certificate proving this discovery. "Our association with the foundation continues to be a great motivation for the continuity of the team and the achievement of our goals, including spreading the culture of astronomical exploration and the ability to reach a larger segment

Kuwait University students discover two asteroids in the name of Kuwait

an astronomical report and sent it back to the observatory to be verified by specialists in this field," she said.

Nourah stated that the team's passion and belief in the importance of space was the main motivation for continuing. "The discovery was not a coincidence. Rather, our work continued for four years, during which we

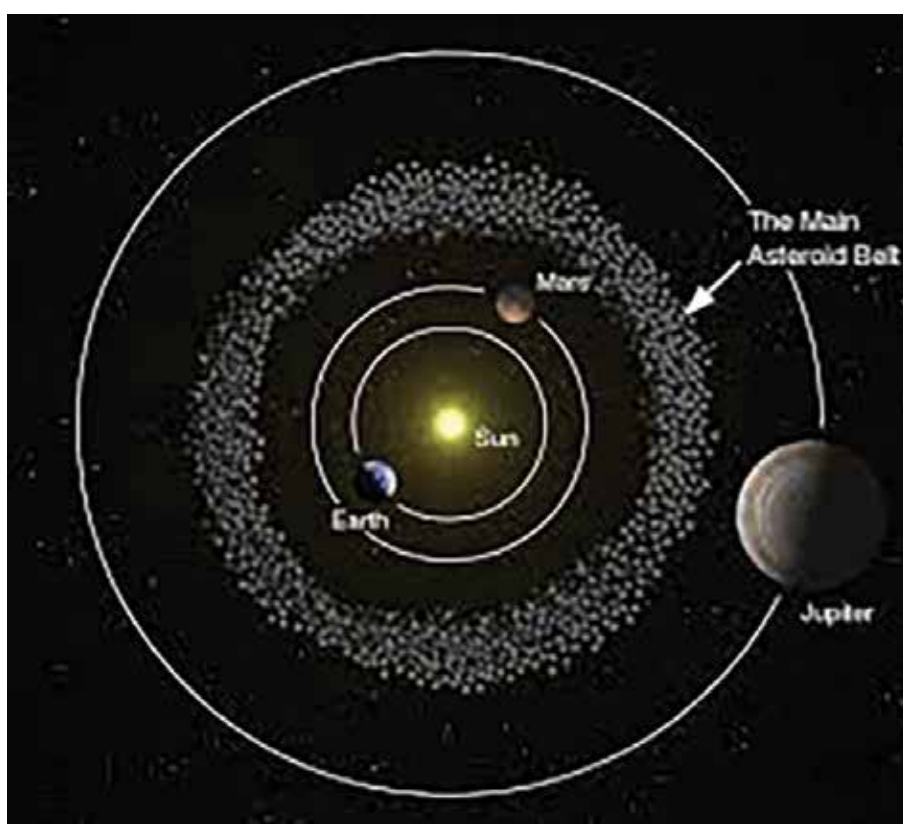
of the public, hobbyists, and those interested in science in general and astronomy in particular," Nourah said.

Regarding her passion towards astronomy, she said: "My interest in astronomy and space began at a young age. I was very interested in astronomy classes, especially the planets lesson, which was my favorite," stressing that her passion for astronomy created interest and encouragement from her parents.

"Observing the dark sky increased my interest along with my father, especially during the peak times of meteors," she said, calling on all students to be encouraged to take serious steps towards science in general and not limiting their knowledge within the given curriculum only. "I also invite them to join the team of Asteroid Hunters and discover new celestial bodies registered in the name of the State of Kuwait," Nourah added.

"The team participated in one of the citizen science programs for amateur astronomers, which specializes in analyzing astronomical images by observing some telescopes belonging to the University of Hawaii (Pan-STARRS) and sending them to the participants to study and analyze their data," Maraheb said. "Our passion for astronomy and space was mainly motivated by the discovery of asteroids and was by direct research by analyzing astronomical images," she added.

Maraheb said KFAS provided them with full support by contributing to the progress of the Asteroid Hunters team and promoting the dissemination of astronomical culture. "We have a lot of interests in various fields, but the most important of which is our interest in astronomy and space since childhood, which continued and developed with time," she said, inviting all students or those who have a passion for astronomy to participate in KFAS' astronomical activities and the team of Asteroid Hunters to promote their concept, as well as to spread and develop the astronomical culture in Kuwait.



our belief in the importance of astronomical discoveries and their pivotal role in understanding the nature of the universe," Maryam told Kuwait Times.

She stressed KFAS was the first supporter of the team. "It is the entity that embraced the interests of our team, grew our skills and provided full and continuous support to the team since its inception," she noted.

Nourah said that the method of discovering asteroids was done

gained many experiences and analyzed a huge amount of astronomical data." She explained that the first step was making five preliminary discoveries according to the standards of the international federation. "Thankfully, two of them were observed and registered as new discoveries that had not been recorded by the IAU Minor Planet Center archive."

She said the two asteroids are located between Mars and Jupiter in



Maryam Jamali

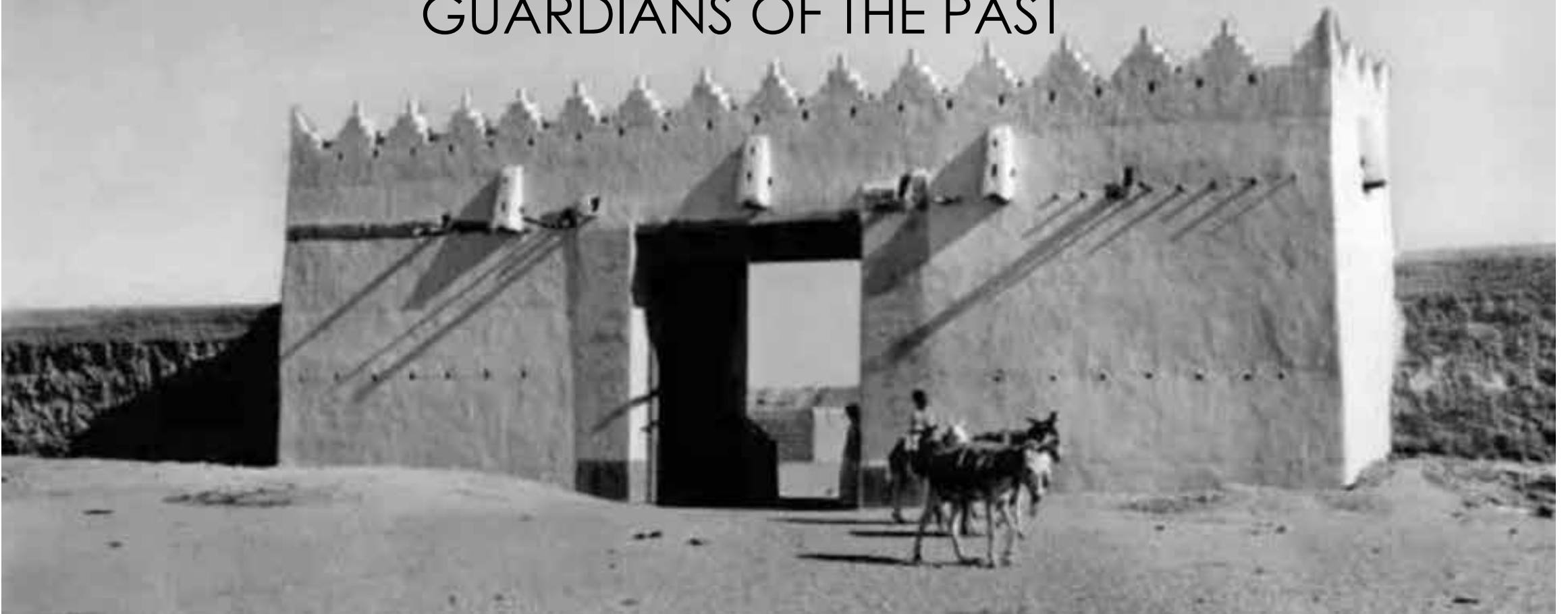


Nourah Al-Musaireea



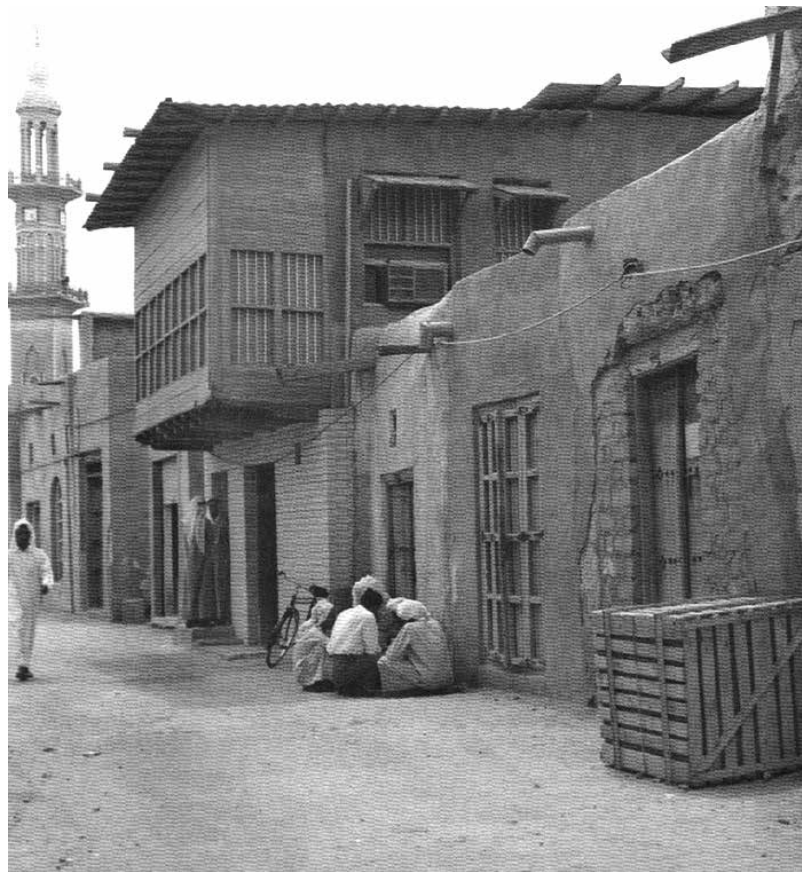
KUWAIT'S HISTORIC WALLS

GUARDIANS OF THE PAST



By Mahmoud Zakaria

When remembering Kuwait, one must always remember the historic walls that once encircled the city. These walls represent significant monuments in Kuwait's history, symbolizing the city's defense against aggressors. Kuwait is known for its three historical walls made of mud, which served as defensive lines:



The First Wall: This wall was constructed during the reign of Sheikh Abdullah bin Sabah, the second ruler of Kuwait (1776–1814), in 1793. It was 750 meters long and surrounded Kuwait City to protect it from external threats.

The Second Wall: Built in 1811, this wall took two months to complete and stretched 2,300 meters. It featured five wooden gates (darwazas) named Al-Badr, Al-Fedagh, Al-Sabaan, Al-Sanger, Al-Abdulrazzaq, Al-Qarwia and Bin Butti. Historical sources indicate that this wall stood for about 70 years until it was destroyed by climatic factors.

The Third Wall: This wall was erected in 1920 during the period of Sheikh Salem Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah (1864–1921), the ninth ruler of Kuwait. It was 6,400 meters long. Construction began



during the holy month of Ramadan in the summer, showcasing the dedication of the Kuwaiti people. Many donated money and construction tools for its completion. This wall included five gates: Darwazat Dasman, Darwazat Al Shaab, Darwazat Al Shamia, Darwazat Al Jahra, and Darwazat Al Maqsab.

With the discovery of oil and subsequent economic and urban development, the wall was removed in 1957. However, the five gates were preserved and remain today as cultural symbols, representing the unity and resilience of the Kuwaiti people in defending and progressing their nation over time.





What's cooking in our kitchens

This weekend, we have a recipe for everyone – a hearty mutton kadai for the seasoned cook (the spice kick will help cool you down as the temperatures rise) and two simpler dishes if you're still finding your way in the kitchen. The mushroom with fried potatoes and the Lebanese sfouf are quick to make and full of flavor. They can also be adapted to your diet if you're vegan.

MUSHROOM WITH FRIED POTATOES



By Sajeev K Peter

Summer is here and the best way to beat the heat is through one's diet. No doubt, fried foods are one of life's greatest indulgences. And if it is mushroom and potatoes laced with bell pepper and garlic, it can easily become the star of your summer dishes. Incredibly tasty and so easy to make, mushroom with fried potatoes is undoubtedly delicious and yummy. This is one of the easiest vegetable recipes and one of my favorite dishes that can go well with bread, roti or rice. Fried mushroom gives the flavor while potato and capsicum add texture to this simple but tasty dish.

Ingredients

- 250g mushrooms
- 500g russet potatoes
- 1 capsicum (bell pepper) red or yellow
- 1 finely sliced onion (large)
- 3 garlic cloves finely chopped
- 20g butter
- 20g vegetable oil
- Black pepper powder as needed
- 1 tsp salt
- Parsley leaves

How to make it

Step 1

Take a medium-size non-stick saucepan and cook the sliced mushrooms in one tablespoon of vegetable or olive oil on medium-high heat for about 5-7 minutes. Add salt as necessary and stir. Remove the mushrooms from the pan and set aside.

Step 2

Peel the potatoes and slice into thin pieces. The most important step is frying the potatoes. To get that golden crust, cook the potatoes properly. Add butter

and saute both the mushroom and potatoes in the same pan on medium-high heat for about 15 minutes, stirring gently every minute as the golden crust forms on the bottom.

Step 3

Once the potatoes are cooked through, add the sliced capsicums. Add the garlic and onion and give a gentle stir. Saute everything together for a minute until the veggies become golden. Now, add chopped parsley leaves to garnish, remove the pan from the oven, and transfer the delicious meal into a large bowl to serve it immediately.



SFOUF



By Sahar Moussa

Sfouf is a traditional Lebanese semolina cake known for its distinctive yellow color, which comes from turmeric. This sweet treat is often made with semolina flour, sugar, and a blend of spices including turmeric and aniseed. It's typically baked in a rectangular or square pan and cut into diamond-shaped pieces. Sfouf is not only visually striking but also rich in flavor, with a dense yet moist texture. Commonly enjoyed during festive occasions and family gatherings, this cake is a beloved part of Lebanese culinary heritage, often served with coffee or tea.

Ingredients

- 2 cups semolina flour
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 ½ cups sugar
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 1 ½ cups milk (or water for a vegan version)
- 1 tablespoon turmeric powder
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon aniseed, ground (optional)
- ¼ cup pine nuts or slivered almonds (for topping)

How to make it

1. Preheat the oven to 175°C. Grease a 9x13-inch baking pan with oil or line it with parchment paper.
2. Combine dry ingredients: In a large mixing bowl, whisk together the semolina flour, all-purpose flour, sugar, turmeric powder,

baking powder and ground aniseed (if using).

3. Add wet ingredients: Pour in the vegetable oil and milk (or water). Mix well until you have a smooth batter.
4. Pour the batter into the prepared baking pan and spread it evenly.
5. Add nuts: Sprinkle the pine nuts or slivered almonds evenly over the top of the batter.
6. Bake in the preheated oven for 30-40 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean and the top is golden brown.
7. Cool and serve: Allow the cake to cool in the pan before cutting it into diamond or square-shaped pieces. Sfouf can be enjoyed warm or at room temperature, making it a versatile dessert for any occasion.



MUTTON KADAI



By Zakir Mansoori

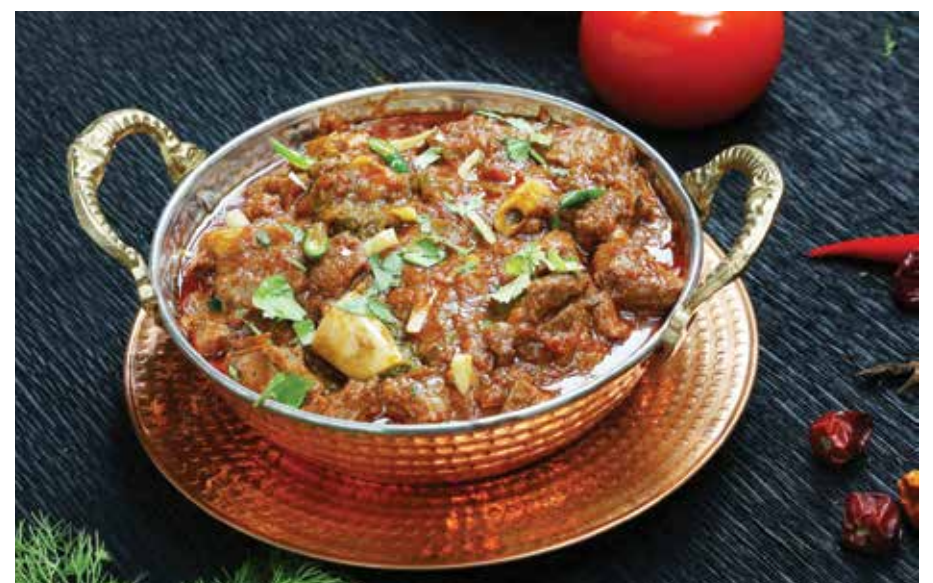
Mutton kadai is a popular and flavorful Indian dish known for its rich, aromatic spices and tender chunks of mutton cooked to perfection. This dish gets its name from the traditional Indian wok, called a "kadai", in which it is typically prepared. The mutton is simmered in a thick, spicy gravy made from tomatoes, onions, ginger, garlic and a blend of freshly ground spices like coriander, cumin, and garam masala. Often garnished with fresh cilantro and green chilies, mutton kadai is best enjoyed with naan or rice, making it a hearty and satisfying meal for any occasion.

Ingredients

- 500 grams mutton (bone-in pieces)
- 2 tablespoons oil
- 2 large onions, finely chopped
- 2 tomatoes, finely chopped
- 1 tablespoon ginger-garlic paste
- 2 green chilies, slit
- 1 teaspoon cumin seeds
- 1 teaspoon coriander seeds
- 1 teaspoon cumin powder
- 1 teaspoon coriander powder
- 1 teaspoon garam masala powder
- 1 teaspoon red chili powder
- ½ teaspoon turmeric powder
- 1 teaspoon kasuri methi (dried fenugreek leaves)
- Salt to taste
- Fresh cilantro leaves for garnish

How to make it

1. **Prepare the mutton**
Wash the mutton pieces thoroughly and drain the excess water.
2. **Dry roast and grind spices**
In a pan, dry roast 1 teaspoon of cumin seeds and 1 teaspoon of coriander seeds until fragrant. Let them cool and then coarsely grind them using a mortar and pestle or a spice grinder. Set aside.
3. **Cook the mutton**
 - Heat 2 tablespoons of oil in a kadai or a deep pan over medium heat.
 - Add the finely chopped onions and sauté until they turn golden brown.
 - Add the ginger-garlic paste and green chilies, and sauté for another 2-3 minutes until the raw smell disappears.



- Add the chopped tomatoes and cook until they turn soft and the oil begins to separate from the masala.
- Add the mutton pieces and mix well. Cook the mutton on high heat for 5-7 minutes until it is browned on all sides.
- 4. **Add spices**
Lower the heat and add the ground cumin and coriander seeds, cumin powder, coriander powder, red chili powder, turmeric powder, and salt. Mix well to coat the mutton pieces with the spices.
- 5. **Simmer the curry**
 - Add enough water to cover the mutton pieces (about 1 to 1.5 cups). Bring the mixture to a boil.
 - Reduce the heat to low, cover the kadai, and let it simmer for 45-60 minutes, or until the mutton is ten-

der and cooked through. Stir occasionally and add more water if needed to prevent the curry from drying out.

6. **Final Touches**
 - Once the mutton is cooked, crush the kasuri methi between your palms and sprinkle it over the curry. Add the garam masala powder and mix well.
 - Simmer for another 5 minutes to allow the flavors to meld together.
7. **Garnish and serve**
 - Garnish with freshly chopped cilantro leaves.
 - Serve hot with naan, roti, or steamed rice.

Enjoy your delicious mutton kadai!

WHAT'S ON IN KUWAIT

Event: World Bee Day
Location: The Scientific Center
Time: 5 pm to 7 pm
Date: May 23 to 25

Event: Qesati: Storytelling with Jassim Al-Saddah
Location: The Promenade
Time: 3 pm
Date: May 25

Event: "Belfast" film screening and discussion
Location: CAP theater
Time: 6:30 pm
Date: May 25

Event: House of Architecture: Museums
Location: ASCC
Time: 10 am to 12 pm
Date: May 25

Event: Mindful Mandala Monday
Location: Art Therapy Studio
Time: 6 pm to 7 pm
Date: May 27

Event: Yadawi Meetup!
Location: Arjan Bedaya
Time: 5 pm to 8 pm
Date: May 29

Sports

Kohli, Bengaluru's IPL hopes melt away as Rajasthan win play-off

Rajasthan face Sunrisers in last play-off on Friday

AHMEDABAD: Virat Kohli suffered more heart-break on Wednesday as Royal Challengers Bengaluru were knocked out of the IPL after a four-wicket loss to Rajasthan Royals in Ahmedabad.

Rajasthan restricted Bengaluru to 172-8, a total they overhauled with six balls to spare in the do-or-die play-off at the world's biggest cricket stadium.

Bengaluru and Kohli extend their wait for a first IPL title. Rajasthan will face Sunrisers Hyderabad in the last play-off on Friday in Chennai to decide Kolkata Knight Riders' opponent in the final on May 26.

Kolkata made their fourth IPL final after they hammered Hyderabad in the first play-off on Tuesday in Ahmedabad's intense heat.

Rajasthan, who won the inaugural edition of the IPL in 2008 under late Australian legend Shane Warne, bounced back from four losses in five matches including a washout.

Bengaluru's dream run ended after they rose from the bottom of the table after eight matches to win six in a row and make the play-offs. "A lot of teams would have had their wheels fallen off after one from eight," Bengaluru skipper Faf du Plessis said.

"But we made sure to give our best and to come back like that - six games in a row - takes a lot of heart," Trent Boult, with figures of 1-16, and Ravichandran Ashwin, 2-19, played pivotal roles in a disciplined bowling attack for Rajasthan, who elected to field first.

Rajasthan stuttered in their chase after Yashvasvi Jaiswal, caught behind off Cameron Green on 45, and skipper Sanju Samson, stumped out for 17, departed in the space of five deliveries.

Riyan Parag, who hit 36, and Shimron Hetmyer, who smashed 26, put on 45 to get their chase back on track before Rovman Powell steered the team home with a six in his unbeaten 16. "We have the momentum now, so the dressing room is confident," said Samson.

43 degrees

Ahmedabad remained hot as temperatures in the afternoon soared above 43 degrees Celsius (109 degrees Fahrenheit) for the third successive day.

There was a sea of Kohli fans who braved the heat and stadium officials said over 85,000 people turned up for the eliminator. Substitutes ran with towels and water bottles all around outside the boundary ropes to keep their players on the field hydrated.

Most of India's northern states have remained under government heatwave alerts since last week. According to local reports, Bollywood actor and IPL team owner Shah Rukh Khan was hospitalized in Ahmedabad due to a heatstroke a day after he celebrated Kolkata's victory at the venue.

Earlier, Du Plessis departed early on 17 after Powell took a stunning forward diving catch running from deep mid-wicket off left-arm quick Boult.



AHMEDABAD: Royal Challengers Bengaluru's Cameron Green (L) stumps out Rajasthan Royals' Dhruv Jurel during the Indian Premier League (IPL) Twenty20 eliminator cricket match between Royal Challengers Bengaluru and Rajasthan Royals at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad. — AFP

Kohli attempted to set the pace in his 24-ball 33 but fell to Yuzvendra Chahal's leg-spin, much to the disappointment of the crowd at the 132,000 capacity stadium. Kohli consolidated his position as the season's leading batsman with 741 runs including a

century and five half tons in 15 matches.

Rajasthan bowlers kept a check on the scoring and took regular wickets including two off successive balls when off-spinner Ashwin sent back Green, for 27, and Glenn Maxwell, for a duck. — AFP



Hanaa Al-Zawawi



Laila Al-Shanawy



Athletes from Tomouh Club.

Special Olympics organizes health screening program

KUWAIT: Special Olympics Kuwait organized on Wednesday the second health screening program for athletes with intellectual disabilities which included conducting a medical examination for about 150 athletes representing schools, institutions and associations concerned with people with intellectual disabilities. It also included athletes from the Tomouh Club, in the presence of representatives from the Special Olympics for the Middle East and North Africa region and a number of volunteers from doctors and specialists from the Kuwait Ministry of Health.

Special Olympics Kuwait Chairman Hanaa Al-Zawawi told on the sidelines of the event that the medical examination is of great importance for athletes with intellectual disabilities, especially since the majority of them cannot express pain but live with it, which causes future setbacks athletically and even health.

Al-Zawawi added that the health screening program includes seven different clinics, including the oral and dental health clinic, eye health, hearing health, mental health, prevention and nutrition clinic, physiotherapy and foot health clinic.

She stressed that the health screening program for athletes is one of the elements of the health program of the Special Olympics, which also includes (Healthy Families Forum), (Healthy Communities) and (Promoting Physical Fitness), in addition to the program (Qualifying specialists in the fields of the health

program, including doctors, nurses and volunteers).

For her part, the National Director of Special Olympics Kuwait, Rehab Boursesli, confirmed that doctors and specialists who examine and follow up athletes with intellectual disabilities are accredited by the regional and international Special Olympics in order to be aware of the health problems facing athletes in order to prepare them to enter participations and championships.

Boursesli added that the health screening was held



Doctors and specialists examine and follow up an athlete with intellectual disabilities.

under the supervision of Special Olympics MENA region in order to review the services provided by Special Olympics Kuwait, keeping pace with the latest developments in the Special Olympics program.

She pointed out that the Ministry of Health, represented by its volunteers, doctors and specialists, along with the Ministry of Information and the Kuwait News Agency (KUNA), "is a real partner in the success of this sporting event, which concerns an important and active group in society."



KATHMANDU: This photograph taken on April 24, 2018 shows Nepali mountaineer Phunjo Lama posing for photos at an Everest base camp in the Mount Everest region of Solukhumbu district in eastern Nepal. — AFP

fastest ascent by a woman by climbing Everest in 39 hours and six minutes. That record was broken in 2021 by Ada Tsang Yin-hung from Hong Kong, who conquered the mountain in 25 hours and 50 minutes. Nepali climber Lhakpa Gelu Sherpa holds the record for the fastest ascent of Everest, reaching the summit in 10 hours and 56 minutes in 2003.

'Inspiration'

Lama is also a guide and helicopter long-line rescuer - a job that entails flying in while dangling from

For her part, the health program officer, the regional office of (Special Olympics) in the Middle East and North Africa, Laila Al-Shanawy told KUNA that for nearly 5 years, in cooperation with Special Olympics Kuwait, the medical program at the Olympics has been seeking to accredit volunteer doctors through training courses for each specialty, where during the period a number of doctors and specialists in seven diverse medical specialties were accredited within the country.



Rehab Boursesli

Al-Shanawy stressed that what distinguishes the State of Kuwait from others is the provision of various services by the participating parties in the event, including the provision of medical devices and the provision of services after the medical examination.

The Special Olympics Health Program is the largest comprehensive health program in the world and aims to remove barriers to providing various health care for people with intellectual disabilities. — KUNA

a rope to help extract injured climbers when the terrain is too dangerous for aircraft to come in close or land. She has climbed some of the highest peaks in the world, including Manaslu and Cho Oyu, both also in the Himalayas.

"She is very courageous and determined... and trained hard for her summit," fellow woman mountaineer Maya Sherpa said. "Her record is an inspiration for other Nepali female climbers." Lama's successful ascent came as a Kenyan climber was confirmed dead on Everest and the search continues for three other missing climbers, one British and two Nepali.

Earlier this month, two Mongolian climbers went missing after reaching Everest's summit and were later found dead. Nepal has issued more than 900 permits for its mountains this year, including 419 for Everest, earning more than \$5 million in royalties.

More than 500 climbers and their guides have already reached the summit of Everest after a rope-fixing team reached the peak last month. This year, China also reopened the Tibetan route to foreigners for the first time since closing it in 2020 because of the pandemic. Nepal is home to eight of the world's 10 highest peaks and welcomes hundreds of adventurers each spring, when temperatures are warm and winds typically calm. — AFP

Toulouse's Ntamack gearing up for 'dream' Cup final

TOULOUSE: France fly-half Romain Ntamack has put the disappointment of missing the World Cup behind him and is focusing on Saturday's "dream" Champions Cup final in London when his Toulouse side come up against Leinster, the giants of Irish rugby. In anyone's book this is a final to savor. In one corner Toulouse, the most successful team in the history of the competition in its several incarnations, having won five times since it began in 1996, when they beat Cardiff in the final.

In the other corner Leinster, the next most successful side with their fourth title coming in 2018, since when they have been runners-up three times. "Playing a final against Leinster, who are the second most successful team in Europe after us, has got everyone drooling," the Toulouse-born Ntamack told AFP.

"It'll be a dream final if we're lucky enough to win at the end." The contest is given added spice in that Leinster have beaten Toulouse thrice in the semi-finals since 2019, including the last two years when the Irish side went on to lose narrowly on both occasions to another French team, La Rochelle. "Leinster haven't done us any favors in recent years," said the 25-year-old stand-off whose father Emile Ntamack captained Toulouse to victory in that inaugural final 28 years ago. "These matches will be on our minds. We're going to analyze them and try to build on everything that didn't work out to put in a better performance this time."

One of the strengths of the Toulouse side is that they have been together a long time, a large number of them, including Ntamack, coming through the academy. This has enabled coach Ugo Mola, and his predecessors, to draft in young talent without a noticeable or lasting drop in performance. This is the generation of Ntamack, Antoine Dupont, Thomas Ramos, Cyril Baille and so on, the names dropping off the tongue like an international Who's Who in a side that has won three of the last four completed Top 14s.

"This generation wants to win everything, all the time," said Ntamack. "We all love this club. Most of us were brought up here and we're going to do everything we can to continue to make it grow. "There's a real osmosis and complicity between the players, both on and off the pitch. Every player wants to make an effort for his team-mate. Everyone's in the mood."

'Really tough'

That 'complicity' has enabled the current squad to develop its own sense of unity and, it would appear, destiny. "The group as a whole hasn't changed much in the last six, seven years. Most of the key players are still here. "Experiencing great moments like Top 14 finals or semi-finals, even if we lose, gives us more experience. We're able to approach these kind of decisive matches with more serenity. And we're able to find resources that we might not have had before."

"It's true that we exude something that makes us confident of our strength but I think we can still do a lot better." For Ntamack on a personal level, Saturday will present a wonderful opportunity to sign off this season on a high after the most devastating low of his career thus far. — AFP



Romain Ntamack

Nepali smashes record for fastest ascent of Everest

KATHMANDU: Nepal's Phunjo Lama smashed the record Thursday for the fastest ascent of Everest by a woman, conquering the world's highest mountain in 14 hours and 31 minutes. Climbers usually take days to reach the top of the 8,849-metre (29,000-foot) mountain, spending nights on its different camps to rest and acclimatize. But Lama, who is in her thirties, shaved more than 11 hours off the previous best that had stood since 2021. It means she has reclaimed her own world record. "She started (from the base camp) at 15:52 on May 22, summited 6:23 am May 23," Khim Lal Gautam, chief of the tourism's department field office at the base camp, told AFP.

Earlier this month, when Lama was still at base camp, she said in a post on Facebook that she was "100 percent sure" she would reach the top of "the Mother Goddess". In 2018, Lama clinched the record for the

Sports

Zain sponsored Amir Cup final ceremony at Jaber Stadium

HH the Amir received a commemorative gift from Bader Al-Kharafi



HH the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives a commemorative gift from Bader Al-Kharafi.



Qadsia players celebrating the win.

KUWAIT: Zain has sponsored the grand ceremony accompanying the thrilling final match of the 62nd edition of the Amir Cup, held under the patronage and presence of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. Qadsia SC were crowned champions of the much-cherished cup after defeating Salmiya SC in the exciting final, where over 19,000 spectators cheered on their teams at Jaber Al Ahmad International Stadium.

During the ceremony, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received a commemorative gift from Zain Vice-Chairman and Group CEO Bader Al-Kharafi.

Zain's support to the grand finale, which was organized by the Kuwait Football Association, included a spectacular musical performance dedicated to HH the Amir, performed by Kuwaiti stars Nabeel Shual and Mutref Al Mutref.

In addition, the ceremony featured draws with valuable prizes for the spectators, including 4 cars and 50 smartphones. The thrilling final saw Qadsia SC winning their 17th Amir Cup title after defeating Salmiya SC 1-0. After the match, club board members, players, and technical staff, along with match officials, had the privilege of meeting HH the Amir, where he presented the cherished cup to Qadsia captain Bader Al Mutawa.



Zain contributed to presenting a musical performance dedicated to HH the Amir.

Zain's support to the Amir Cup competition came under the umbrella of its strategic partnership with the Kuwait Football Association. Zain is the official sponsor of the KFA's competitions throughout the 2022-2026 seasons, including the Kuwait Premier League (Dawri Zain), the Zain First Division League, HH the Amir's Cup, and the KFA Cup (Zain Cup).

Zain believes the private sector has a key role in developing the local sports and youth sectors, and it makes this belief a reality by sponsoring and supporting some of the biggest sports programs in the nation.



Huge crowds attended the thrilling match.

New West Ham boss Lopetegui vows to make 'big noise'

LONDON: West Ham's new manager Julen Lopetegui vowed to make a "big noise" at the London Stadium after the former Real Madrid boss was hired by the Premier League club on Thursday. Lopetegui has agreed a two-year contract with the option of a third season. The 57-year-old Spaniard had been out of work since leaving Wolves on the eve of the just-concluded Premier League season.

Lopetegui will officially begin work with the Hammers on July 1, replacing David Moyes after the Scot's exit at the end of this season. "We came here with the idea and the thought to make a big, big noise," Lopetegui said. "That's why we came here, and we are excited by this challenge. "Of course, we are going to do our best to help the club and the team to achieve the best level and to achieve our aims. "I assure the fans that they are going to be key in all our achievements." West Ham joint-chairman David Sullivan said Lopetegui's appointment would "ensure a strong opportunity to build on the positive progress made in recent seasons". Lopetegui led Sevilla to Europa League glory in 2020, a success that restored his reputation after he was sacked by Real Madrid in 2018.

He had been dismissed by Spain just before the start of the 2018 World Cup after it was announced he would quit to take charge of Real following the tournament. However, the former goalkeeper's brief spell at the Bernabeu was a dismal failure as he lasted



Julen Lopetegui

just 14 matches before being axed after a humiliating 5-1 loss against Barcelona. He moved to Wolves in November 2022 when the Molineux outfit were bottom of the Premier League.

After impressively guiding them away from relegation danger to a 13th-place finish, Lopetegui became frustrated by the club's financial situation and left by mutual consent in August 2023. West Ham technical director Tim Steidten said: "He was a stand-out candidate to become our head coach and I am personally delighted that we have chosen to work together."

Moyes had led West Ham to their first major trophy in 43 years when they won the Europa Conference League in 2023. But the Hammers finished ninth in the Premier League in the 2023/24 season, missing out on European qualification.

Former Manchester United boss Moyes, who had been in charge since 2019, fell out of favour among fans due to his cautious tactics. Lopetegui plans to improve on Moyes' achievements as he looks to make his mark in east London. — AFP

Barca want Lyon revenge in battle for Euro dominance

BARCELONA: When Barcelona take on Lyon in the women's Champions League final on Saturday, the Catalans will be out not only for revenge but also to cement their place as Europe's most dominant force. The Catalan giants have reached the final for the fifth time in six seasons and are aiming to lift the trophy in Bilbao for the third occasion in four years.

Opponents Lyon are the record eight-time champions and defeated Barcelona in 2019 and 2022 finals—they have never lost against the Catalans across four matches. "It's inevitable to think of (revenge) given the two finals we've lost against them," Barcelona midfielder Patri Guijarro told AFP and other media at their Johan Cruyff stadium ahead of the final.

"They are also the best team in Europe, the team that's won the Champions League the most... I think it's an attractive final, a great final, and hopefully it's their third time lucky." Barcelona and Lyon have shared the last eight Champions League trophies between them, and although nobody doubts the Catalans' quality, until they beat the French giants a feeling of unfinished business remains.

"Lyon will still be the best, they have eight Champions Leagues, it's incredible what they've done," acknowledged Guijarro. "Lyon is Lyon, (their record) will never... well, not never—for now we can't change that, hopefully one day, but there's a long way to go." Barcelona first faced Lyon in the quarter-finals back in 2018, losing the first leg 2-1 and the second leg

1-0, outclassed by an opponent that was at the time, at the peak of their power.

'Worst possible way'

They met again in Budapest, Hungary in 2019 as Barcelona became the first Spanish side to reach the final. Dzsener Marozsan opened the scoring for Lyon after five minutes and then Norwegian striker Ada Hegerberg hit a hat-trick before the half-hour mark to leave Barcelona shattered.

Asiat Oshoala netted a late consolation as Barcelona fell to a stinging 4-1 defeat. "Our first final ended in the worst possible way," said Barcelona midfielder Alexia Putellas. "It was very painful in the short term but in the long term I think it was good in some ways, because it showed us where we were as a team in terms of the level we needed to become European champions."

However a run of five consecutive Lyon Champions League triumphs was eventually snapped by Barcelona in 2021, as the Catalans lifted their first by thrashing Chelsea. Playing attractive, attacking football and boasting stars including Putellas and Jenni Hermoso, Barcelona benefitted from thousands of travelling supporters and the club's illustrious name.

On the way to the final the following year Barcelona set two world record attendances for women's football, packing Camp Nou with over 90,000 fans for matches against Real Madrid and Wolfsburg. Many labelled them favourites when they took on Lyon in the 2022 final, which angered the French side, pioneers in the game. "There was women's football before Barcelona, and it was played here for years," said Hegerberg. Fired up, Lyon came out of the blocks rapidly in Turin and took the lead through Amandine Henry's long-range rocket, with Hegerberg and Catarina Macario strikes giving the French side a three-goal lead after 33 minutes. — AFP

Classifieds

Clinics & Hospitals

Clinics

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

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

Hospitals

Sabah Hospital	24812000
Amiri Hospital	22450005
Maternity Hospital	24843100
Mubarak Al-Kabir	25312700
Chest Hospital	24849400
Farwaniya Hospital	24892010
Adan Hospital	23940620

Change of Name

I, DHANRAJ, holder of Indian Passport No. M1847868 having permanent address 3-63-1 Balkudru, Hungarcutta, Udipi District, Karnataka State, India, Pincode 576218, presently residing in Kuwait, hereby declare that henceforth my name will be read as (given name) DHANRAJ NAGESH and (surname) POOJARY.
(#4094, 23/05/2024)

Emergency call 112

Lookman hat-trick fires Atalanta to Europa League

Ends Leverkusen's 51-match unbeaten run to claim first trophy for 61 years



DUBLIN: Atalanta's players celebrate with the trophy on the podium after winning the UEFA Europa League final football match between Atalanta and Bayer Leverkusen at the Dublin Arena stadium. -- AFP

DUBLIN: Ademola Lookman scored a stunning hat-trick as Atalanta ended Bayer Leverkusen's 51-match unbeaten run to win the Europa League final 3-0 on Wednesday and claim their first trophy for 61 years.

Lookman became the first player to score a hat-trick in a European final since 1975 to secure Atalanta's first ever continental trophy.

The side from Bergamo have long lived in the shadow of nearby giants AC and Inter Milan. However, they have enjoyed a golden era under Gian Piero Gasperini, reaching the Champions League on four occasions, and now have silverware to show for it.

"To win it with Atalanta is perhaps one of the football fairytales that rarely gives scope for meritocracy," said Gasperini. "It doesn't always come down to cold hard numbers or super leagues but shows teams without huge budgets can achieve big things." Leverkusen have made a habit of late fightbacks in their remarkable run to winning a first ever Bunde-

sliga title without tasting defeat.

But this time they failed to dig themselves out of a hole created by a slow start. "It's a shame that the time it didn't work out for us was in a final," said Leverkusen midfielder Granit Xhaka. "It's bitter, definitely, we lost a final today but we go on and we'll make up for it on Saturday (in the German Cup final). Atalanta's more purposeful play in the opening stages was rewarded after just 12 minutes. Davide Zappacosta got to the by-line and Lookman caught Exequiel Palacios napping to fire into the top corner at the back post.

The Nigerian has at times endured a nomadic career, bouncing around the lower reaches of the Premier League on loan spells at Fulham and Leicester after being discarded by RB Leipzig.

But Lookman has found a home in Bergamo, where he will now forever be a hero. "In the past few years I've been able to take my game to a new level and show that on a more consistent basis," said Lookman. "I'm

pleased with the progress I've made but this is just the beginning. I hope for more nights like this."

'Hurts for sure'

The 26-year-old's second goal was fit to win any final as he nutmegged Xhaka before curling a powerful shot into the far corner. For the fourth time in seven Europa League knockout matches, Xabi Alonso's men found themselves 2-0 down. Alonso has enjoyed a rapid rise to become one of Europe's hottest coaching properties. The Spaniard has rejected the advances of former clubs Liverpool and Bayern Munich to remain at the BayArena next season.

However, Alonso's decision to start without a recognised striker did not work and he threw on Victor Boniface at half-time to give his side a focal point up front.

The damage, though, was already done as the German champions looked a side drained by their record run across three competitions. "Normally it happens earlier

but it is the first (defeat) in such a big game, it hurts for sure. We have to deal with this pain in a positive way," said Alonso.

"It didn't go as planned. We were not on our best level, so we will learn from today." Atalanta were happy to soak up the Leverkusen pressure after the break and hit on the counter-attack. The final blow was another fabulous finish from Lookman as he skipped past Edmond Tapsoba and this time blasted into the top corner on his weaker left foot.

Atalanta had lost all three of their previous finals under Gasperini, most recently in last week's Coppa Italia defeat to Juventus.

But this time they were not to be denied their shot at history as they were roared across the finishing line by the thousands clad in blue and black that had made the trip from northern Italy to the Irish capital. In doing so they became the first Italian side to win the competition since Parma lifted the UEFA Cup in 1999. — AFP

Doncic, Irving lead Mavs to game one win over Minnesota

WASHINGTON: Luka Doncic and Kyrie Irving combined for 63 points as the Dallas Mavericks won game one of the Western Conference finals with a 108-105 victory at the Minnesota Timberwolves on Wednesday.

Doncic delivered his best when it mattered in the fourth quarter where he made 15 of his 33 points while Irving had set the tone early with 24 of his 30 points coming in the first half. Karly-Anthony Towns and Anthony Edwards, the main points threat for the Timberwolves, were limited by the Dallas defense. Edwards had 19 points and Towns had 16 and together they shot 12 for 36 from the field.

Minnesota took a 102-98 lead with 3:37 left in the fourth after a 24-foot three-pointer from Edwards. Dallas responded with eight unanswered points. P.J. Washington made a three-pointer from the corner and then a step-back jump shot from Doncic made it 106-102. "We had to work really hard to get this one," said Doncic. "I think we're known for losing game ones, so we were trying to make a point. But it's only one and we have three more to go," added the Slovenian, who was quick to praise Irving for his contribution.

"He got us going, without him we probably would be down 20 at half-time. I had to help him in the second half so we switched roles this time," he said with a grin. Irving conceded he had been fired up by the comments from Edwards after the Timberwolves' game seven win over last year's champions, the Denver Nuggets.

Edwards said during a television interview that "I got Kyrie", comments that were noted by the Mavericks star. "I used it as a motivation. When I was sitting at home and I saw that, it was like just a nod of respect. I knew what type of game it was going to be," Irving said.

"But that was also a no-fear mentality and that's why we love him, so I knew they were going to pressure me. "But also we knew they were coming off a gruelling game seven and their legs were biting them a little bit tonight," he added.

Jaden McDaniels top scored for the Timberwolves with 24 points and hit six of nine three-point attempts while Edwards had 11 rebounds and eight assists along with his 19 points. Dallas dominated the battle in the paint 62-38 with Washington and Dereck Lively grabbing seven rebounds each. — AFP

Djokovic celebrates 37th birthday with 1,100th win

GENEVA: Novak Djokovic celebrated his 37th birthday on Wednesday with the 1,100th win of his career as he gears up for his French Open title defence, progressing to the Geneva quarter-finals.

The world number one downed Germany's Yannick Hanfmann 6-3, 6-3 in the second round at the Parc des Eaux-Vives grounds. Djokovic becomes only the third man after Jimmy Connors and Roger Federer to reach the 1,100-win landmark.

Djokovic took a wild card to play in Geneva in a bid to rescue an alarming dip in form ahead of next week's French Open, the second Grand Slam of the year. His record this year is now 13 wins and five defeats, and he has yet to reach a tournament final in 2024.

After beating Hanfmann, the crowd sang "Happy Birthday" to Djokovic as a cake with candles was brought out onto the court. He lifted the cake and showed it off to the crowd, having a nibble before offering some to the ball boys and girls.

"The key was the birthday. My birthday probably

wouldn't be the same if I didn't win the match," the Serb said. "It's nice to be here for the first time in this tournament and to have my family here coming to support as well. I grew up with my aunt and my uncle and my two cousins for most of my life," he said, referring to his relatives who now live in Geneva.

"We don't get a chance to see each other that much lately so it's really nice. I'm getting some really quality time on the court but also off the court. "Thank-you so much for singing the 'Happy Birthday' song. That really touched me so I'm very happy to win on this special day."

Ruud into last-eight

In a match interrupted by rain, Djokovic was 3-0 down in the second set but rallied to close out the contest. Djokovic was striking the ball cleanly and consistently from the baseline and throwing in occasional drop shots.

Djokovic will face either Denis Shapovalov or Tallon Griekspoor in Thursday's quarter-finals. Meanwhile second seed Casper Ruud, who won the Geneva title in 2021 and 2022, booked his spot in the quarter-finals with a 4-6, 6-2, 6-2 win over Austrian qualifier Sebastian Ofner.

It was Ruud's 32nd tour-level win of the season. No player has earned more victories in 2024. The Norwegian world number seven—who was beaten by Djokovic in last year's French Open final—will



GENEVA: Serbia's Novak Djokovic reacts with his birthday cake after winning his ATP 250 Geneva Open tennis tournament single match against Germany's Yannick Hanfmann, in Geneva. — AFP

next face Argentinian fifth seed Sebastian Baez.

The Czech Republic's Tomas Machac will face Alex Michelsen in the last eight after the American knocked out his third-seeded compatriot Taylor Fritz 6-4, 4-6, 7-5. Michelsen, 19, only claimed his first tour-level clay-court win last month.

Thursday's other quarter-final will feature Alexandr Shevchenko against Flavio Cobolli, who knocked out US fourth seed Ben Shelton. — AFP