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## Kuwait, Saudi ink deals after talks

Joint statement praises strength of bilateral relations

### US congratulates Crown Prince on assuming post

WASHINGTON: The United States congratulated HH Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah on being appointed as Crown Prince, wishing Kuwait and its people further progress and development. In a press statement, State Department spokesman Mathew Miller said: "The United States congratulates His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah for his appointment as the new Crown Prince of Kuwait. His Highness Sheikh Sabah has a distinguished background of public service for his country, which includes previously serving as the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister."

"The United States values our strategic partnership with the State of Kuwait. We look forward to deepening our friendship with Kuwait and His Highness Sheikh Sabah as we work toward a peaceful and prosperous Middle East region." HH the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah issued an order on Sunday appointing HH Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled as Crown Prince. — KUNA

KUWAIT: A joint coordination committee linking Kuwait and Saudi Arabia held a new round of talks on Monday, which produced three fresh agreements to keep bilateral relations on an upward trajectory. The talks, presided by Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya and his Saudi counterpart Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al-Saud, delved into bilateral relations and the progress ties have seen across a myriad of fields, said a foreign ministry statement.

Kuwait and Riyadh clinched a memorandum of understanding dealing with mutual recognition of seafarers' certificates, in addition to another pair of similar agreements on environment conservation and diplomatic cooperation, added the statement.

A joint statement released after the talks heaped praise on the "strength" of bilateral ties, citing more room for progress across numerous fields. The political leaders of the Gulf Arab neighbors share a common desire to propel these ties to even greater levels, the statement underlined, saying the two nations routinely draw up fresh plans and strategies to help usher in growth in relations, as "per the instructions" of HH the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah

and Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz.

The committee, which is comprised of smaller groups focusing on matters that run the gamut from politics and security to the economy, was created with the express purpose of bringing that goal to fruition, added the statement after the talks. These goals include more cooperation on counter-terrorism efforts and measures aiming to clamp down on extremism, while recent round of talks yielded substantial progress on plans to establish a rail link between the Gulf Arab states, a marquee endeavor that is expected to see the light of day in the near future, it said.

Kuwait and Riyadh also have other similar plans in the works, including forging a "shared vision" on issues ranging from culture and the media to tourism and social development, in addition to greater healthcare and educational cooperation, according to the statement. The statement gave due credit to the Kuwaiti-Saudi joint coordination committee for its contributions towards keeping relations on an upward trajectory, revealing that the next round of talks is slated for next year in the Saudi capital.

Earlier, HH the Amir Sheikh Mishal received at Bayan Palace Prince Faisal



KUWAIT: HH the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives Saudi Minister of Foreign Affairs Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al-Saud on June 3, 2024. — KUNA

and his accompanying delegation. He conveyed to HH the Amir the greetings of Saudi King Salman and Crown Prince and Prime Minister Prince Mohammad bin Salman, in which they wished him further progress and prosperity to Ku-

wait and his people. HH the Amir expressed his utmost appreciation to the Saudi King and Crown Prince for the heartfelt sentiments, and wished them good health and Saudi Arabia further progress and prosperity. — KUNA



His Highness the Amir  
**Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah**

His Highness the Crown Prince  
**Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah**

**May Allah enlighten your path**

# Crown Prince receives congratulatory messages

## Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya

Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya on Monday congratulated His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah on being appointed as Crown Prince by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. The Foreign Minister wished His Highness the Crown Prince success in his post, which would increase Kuwait's prosperity and development. — KUNA



## Kuwait Governor Sheikh Abdullah Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah

KUWAIT: Governor of Kuwait Capital City Sheikh Abdullah Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah on Sunday congratulated His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah on assuming office. A press release by the governorate said that Sheikh Abdullah Salem Al-Ali sent a congratulatory cable to His Highness the Crown Prince, wishing him good health and success. — KUNA



## Belgian Ambassador Christian Domes

On behalf of His Majesty the King and of the people of Belgium, I wish to extend my deepest and warmest congratulations to His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah on his nomination as Crown Prince, coupled with my best wishes for his good health and happiness. As we celebrate the 60th anniversary of our diplomatic relations with Kuwait, may I take this opportunity to extend my sincere wishes for the continued progress and prosperity of the friendly people of Kuwait, as well as for the cordial relations between our two friendly countries to continue to flourish. We look forward to stronger ties as we work together to meet ongoing challenges and share in the opportunities of the future.



## Social Affairs Minister Dr Amthal Al-Huwailah

KUWAIT: Kuwait Minister of Social Affairs, Family and Childhood Affairs, and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Dr Amthal Al-Huwailah on Sunday congratulated His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, on the new post as Crown Prince. In a press statement, Al-Huwailah said that His Highness the Crown Prince is one of the political and national figures who has high diplomacy and great imprints on a local and foreign level, in addition to his efforts ever since he was Social Affairs

## Justice, Awqaf Minister Dr Mohammad Al-Wasmi

Kuwaiti Minister of Justice, Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Dr Mohammad Al-Wasmi congratulated His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah on winning the trust of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. — KUNA



## Ambassador of Austria Marian Alexander Wrba

Austria congratulates His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah on becoming the new Crown Prince of Kuwait. We extend our best wishes for his success in this significant role. Austria values Kuwait's friendship and looks forward to further enhancing our cooperation. My country acknowledges Kuwait's crucial role as a mediator in the region and her dedication for a peaceful and prosperous Middle East. Kuwait has consistently demonstrated a commitment to peace, international solidarity, and humanitarian aid. We stand together in these efforts. On this special occasion, we wish His Highness and Kuwait enduring peace and prosperity. Personally, I wish His Highness the Crown Prince good health, strength, and success in his new duties.



## Supreme Judicial Council Adel Bouresli

The President and members of the Supreme Judicial Council Adel Bouresli along with all judiciary members welcomed the Amiri decree appointing His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah as Crown Prince of Kuwait, wishing him success and prosperity for the benefit of the nation and its citizens. In a statement Monday, the President and members of the Supreme Judicial Council extended their sincere congratulations to His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah and the people of Kuwait on being named Crown Prince, praying for Allah Almighty's guidance and success in supporting His Highness the Amir and continuing the path of prosperity and progress. — KUNA



Minister until he became Prime Minister. She added that His Highness the Crown Prince's directives when he was Prime Minister had a wide impact in enhancing integrity, combating corruption, giving priority to the interests of citizens, and achieving Kuwait's development vision, while also commending his role during COVID-19 pandemic and its challenges. — KUNA



## Arab Parliament President Adel Al-Asoumi

Arab Parliament President Adel Al-Asoumi congratulated His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah for being nominated as the Crown Prince by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. In a statement on Sunday, Al-Asoumi said that His Highness the Crown Prince has a distinguished and successful record in both diplomatic and governmental realms. Al-Asoumi wished His Highness the Crown Prince success in his new responsibility as well as further progress and prosperity for Kuwait. — KUNA



## Hawally Governor Ali Salem Al-Asfar

KUWAIT: Governor of Hawally Ali Salem Al-Asfar congratulated on Sunday His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah on assuming office. A press release by the governorate said that Ali Al-Asfar sent a congratulatory cable to His Highness the Crown Prince wishing him good health and success. — KUNA



## OPEC Secretary General Haitham Al-Ghais

Secretary General of OPEC Haitham Al-Ghais on Monday congratulated His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah on being appointed as Crown Prince by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. In a statement to KUNA, Al-Ghais also conveyed congratulations from members of OPEC. Al-Ghais expressed wishes of success towards His Highness the Crown Prince, hoping the future would be bright for the Kuwaiti leadership and people. — KUNA



## British Ambassador Belinda Lewis

On behalf of the British government, I would like to congratulate His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah on his appointment as Crown Prince and extend my sincere best wishes to him as he assumes his duties. His Highness has extensive foreign policy and government experience, and the United Kingdom looks forward to working with him to progress shared priorities across a range of fields.



## Gulf Cooperation Council Chief Jasem Al-Budaiwi

RIYADH: The Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Jasem Al-Budaiwi congratulated His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah on his appointment as Crown Prince of Kuwait. In a press statement, Al-Budaiwi extended his highest congratulations and best wishes to His Highness the Crown Prince, hoping for his success in his duties and that Allah Almighty guides his steps. He prayed to Allah to bless Kuwait with security, prosperity, and stability under the wise leadership of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and His Highness the Crown Prince, hoping Kuwait would continue its historic journey as a model of leadership and sustainable development, advancing towards greater progress and enhancing its regional and international standing in various fields. He commended Kuwait's pioneering role in promoting joint Gulf action, including its significant and ongoing efforts towards achieving comprehensive Gulf integration in all areas. — KUNA



## Information Minister Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi

Kuwait Minister of Information and Culture Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi on Sunday congratulated His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah for being nominated as the Crown Prince by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. In a statement to KUNA, Al-Mutairi remarked His Highness the Crown Prince's achievements and his exemplar representation in local, regional, and international spheres. — KUNA



## Ambassador of Republic of Korea Chung Byung-ha

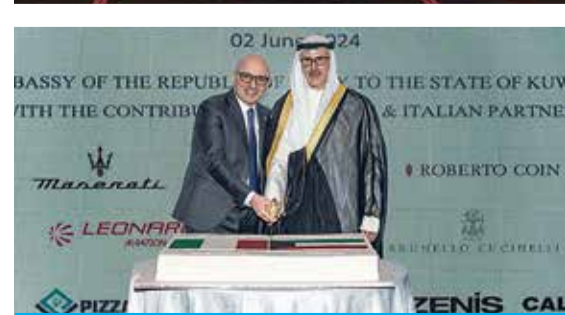
On behalf of the government and the people of the Republic of Korea, I have the honor to extend to His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah my sincere congratulations and best wishes on the occasion of His Highness' appointment as the Crown Prince. His Highness' appointment as Crown Prince signals His Highness the Amir's trust in his powers and capabilities in assuming responsibilities as a Crown Prince in pursuing the successful career of development and prosperity in Kuwait. I am certain that Kuwait will prosper under the wise guidance of His Highness the Crown Prince who has been at the service of the country over the past decades. Once again, I would like to congratulate His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and wish him good health, well-being and greater success in his supreme duties.



## Italian envoy hails Kuwait relations

KUWAIT: The Italian Ambassador to Kuwait, Lorenzo Morini, confirmed Sunday the strong relations between Kuwait and Italy, which lasted for more than 60 years and were based on mutual trust and cooperation in various fields. Morini made the remarks to KUNA during Italy's National Day celebration ceremony held by the Italian Embassy in Kuwait, which was attended by Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Ambassador Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Assistant Foreign Minister for European Affairs Ambassador Sadeq Marafi, and several heads of foreign missions and diplomats.

The Italian Ambassador added that he plans to pursue all interests in the next several months to enhance bilateral cooperation between the two countries, especially in the fields of scientific, academic, and cultural relations, the exchange of students, researchers, and professors, language learning, and the promotion of tourism in his country, as "one of the pillars for building a stronger friendship and better cooperation with Kuwait. Morini points out that Italy has witnessed an evolution in its economy and social system since 1946, placing it as one of the ten most advanced economies in the world. — KUNA



Italian Ambassador to Kuwait, Lorenzo Morini and Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Ambassador Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah cut the cake.

## KFAED, Pakistan ink KD 7.5 million loan funding dam deal

KUWAIT: The Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) and Pakistan on Monday signed a KD 7.5 million (\$24.4 million) loan agreement to fund the Mohmand Hydropower Dam project. According to a KFAED statement, the loan agreement was signed by Malik Muhammad Farooq - Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to Kuwait - whereas Waleed Al-Bahar, Acting Director-General of the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development, signed the loan agreement on behalf of the Fund.

"The project aims to support economic and social development by enhancing national energy generation from the available hydroelectric resources to meet the increasing electricity demand, improve the region's resilience to flooding, provide sustainable water resources for agriculture and drinking water for the region of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province (KPP), and create new job opportunities." The KFAED went on to say that the project consisted of the construction of a hydropower scheme on the Swat River, located in the northeast of Pakistan, about 200 km west of Islamabad.

"It comprises a concrete-faced rockfill dam with a height of about 213 meters and a length of about 718 meters, creating a reservoir with a total length of about 56 km, an area of about 24 km<sup>2</sup>, and a volume of about 1.6 billion m<sup>3</sup>. The scheme will include a powerhouse with four electricity-generating units with a total installed capacity of about 800 MW capable of producing about 2,862 GWh a year." The project would include flood protection, irrigation infrastructure, and an intake for future drinking water facilities.

The project also includes consulting and project man-



Acting Director-General of (KFAED) Waleed Al-Bahar and Pakistan's Ambassador Malik Farooq sign the agreement. — KUNA

agement services. The project is expected to be completed by December 31, 2025. The total cost of the project is estimated at about 322.8 billion Pakistani rupees, equivalent to approximately KD 900.6 million. The first Kuwait fund's loan covers about 0.83 percent of the project costs, in addition to the contribution of the Islamic Development Bank in an amount equivalent to about KD 56.3 million, the OPEC Fund for Development in an amount equivalent to about KD 22.5 million, and the Saudi Fund for Development in an amount equivalent to about KD 75 million, while the Pakistani government will cover the remaining costs or any other increase that may occur in the project costs.

The loan is made for a term of 25 years, including a period of grace of about 5 years, and will be amortized by 40 semi-annual installments, the first of which will be due on the first date on which interest or other charges on the loan shall fall due after the elapse of the grace period. The loan will bear interest at two percent per annum in addition to a charge of 0.5 percent for meeting administrative costs and the expenses of the implementation of the loan agreement. The fund loan is the nineteenth loan provided by the KFAED to Pakistan, as the Fund had previously provided eighteen loans to Pakistan in various sectors, totaling approximately KD 129.788 million. — KUNA

Local

# Cabinet pledges allegiance to Crown Prince

KUWAIT: Kuwait Cabinet has pledged allegiance to His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah. His Highness the Crown Prince took a constitutional oath earlier in the day before the Cabinet in a special meeting held at Seif Palace under the chairmanship of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah nominated, in a decree, His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled as Crown Prince on Saturday.

At the onset of the meeting, His Highness the

Prime Minister delivered a speech in which he expressed, on behalf of the ministers, sincere congratulations to His Highness the Crown Prince on the Amiri decree appointing him for this post. His Highness the Prime Minister recalled the achievements and sacrifices made by His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled for the sake of the homeland. His Highness the Prime Minister said that Kuwait is in a new era, calling on all to keep united and cooperative to make further progress for "our dear homeland."

His Highness the Prime Minister wished His

Highness the Crown Prince every success in his post to serve the dear homeland, under the wise leadership of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. Meanwhile, His Highness the Crown Prince highly thanked and appreciated His Highness the Amir for this confidence. His Highness the Crown Prince also expressed appreciation to His Highness the Prime Minister and the ministers for their congratulations, urging them to do their best in order to achieve the vision of His Highness the Amir and meet Kuwait's aspirations. — KUNA



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah



KUWAIT: His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah receives Saudi Arabia's Foreign Minister Faisal bin Farhan Al-Saud. — KUNA photos



His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah receives the visiting Saudi Minister of Foreign Affairs Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al-Saud and his accompanying delegation.

## Crown Prince, PM receive Saudi FM and delegation

KUWAIT: His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace on Monday Saudi Arabia's Foreign Minister Faisal bin Farhan Al-

Saud and an accompanying delegation on the occasion of an official visit to the country. The Foreign Minister relayed to His Highness the Crown Prince the greetings and congratulations of Saudi Arabia's King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud and Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammad bin Salman Al-Saud on the occasion of his appointment by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

The Saudi sovereigns wished His Highness the Amir and His Highness the Crown Prince good health and the people of Kuwait lasting progress

and prosperity under their wise leadership. His Highness the Crown Prince conveyed his greetings to King Salman and the Crown Prince, wishing them good health and the people of Saudi Arabia further development and prosperity. Senior officials attended the meeting.

Also, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, in the presence of Kuwait's Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya, received the visiting Saudi Minister of Foreign Affairs Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al-Saud and his accompanying delegation. — KUNA

## Ministry accelerating digital transformation

KUWAIT: Kuwait Minister of Social Affairs, Children and Family Affairs, and Minister of State for Youth Affairs, Amthal Al-Huwailah, said that digitizing all the Ministry of Social Affairs' sectors is necessary to offer outstanding services to citizens. Al-Huwailah made the statement during a meeting she held with the Ministry's development and planning sector to discuss the plan of digital transformation, said a statement by the ministry, adding that Acting Undersecretary Dr Khaled Al-Ajmi was present.

The minister stressed the need for accelerating

digital transformation in all sectors, modernizing e-gate, and providing a plan of action in line with a pacific timetable. The move aims to transform all services provided to citizens into smart applications connected directly with the "Sahel" app, in accordance with the country's plan for digital transformation, it noted.

Speaking to KUNA in a statement, the minister also stressed that she is keen on providing support to overcome obstacles through activating the plan for implementing digital transformation, calling for concerted efforts at the Ministry's sectors. Al-Huwailah further urged accelerating the transformation of services and action mechanisms into digitization in the implementation of the directives of the Cabinet Council regarding digital transformation in all states' sectors. — KUNA



Kuwait Minister of Social Affairs, Children and Family Affairs, and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Amthal Al-Huwailah holds meeting with officials. — KUNA

## Amir ratifies decrees transferring authority affiliations

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah ratified decrees transferring the affiliation of a number of authorities to Cabinet ministers. According to Sunday's issue of the official gazette (Kuwait Al-Youm), the affiliation of the Administration of Customs and the Public Authority for Civil Information has been transferred to the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior. As for the affiliation of the Kuwait Port Authority, it has been transferred to the Minister of Public Works. The supervision of the Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources is now under the Minister of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Resources, while the Public Authority for Disability Affairs is to be supervised by the Minister of Social Affairs, Family, and Childhood Affairs. — KUNA

## PM receives deputy and tendering agency board

KUWAIT: His Highness the Prime Minister, Sheikh Ahmad Al-Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, received the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs, Sharida Abdullah Al-Maousherji, on Sunday, who introduced to him the chairman and board of the Central Agency for Public Tenders. His Highness the Prime Minister expressed his sincere congratulations to the agency's chairman and members of the Board of Directors on assuming their new posts and wished them good luck and success, calling on them to exert more efforts to accomplish the tasks entrusted to them for the interest of the dear nation.

He stressed that many important projects are awaiting consideration and approval of relevant tenders, adding that the state has already allocated the required budgets to the ministries and various institutions, which are awaiting their turn before the tendering committee. His Highness the Prime Minister directed the Committee to redouble the effort while adhering to the applicable laws and regulations in order to advance the country and achieve the aspirations of the people, under the directives of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. — KUNA

  
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The Chairman, Members of the Board of Directors,  
 the Executive Management and all employees of  
**National Investments Company**  
 Extend the warmest congratulations and blessings  
 on the naming of His Highness the Emir of the country  
**Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah**  
**To the Crown Prince**  
**Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah**  
 May God protect and guide them in  
 carrying out their responsibilities for  
 the greater good of Kuwait and its people



First Deputy Prime Minister, and Minister of Defense and Interior Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef Saud Al-Sabah meets with his Egyptian counterpart Mahmoud Tawfiq. — KUNA photos

# Kuwait's First Deputy PM lauds security cooperation with Egypt

## Cybersecurity 'cornerstone of national security'

CAIRO: The First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense and Interior, Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef Saud Al-Sabah, commended on Sunday the security collaboration between Egypt and Kuwait's Ministries of Interior. During his first visit to Egypt, Sheikh Fahad discussed with his Egyptian counterpart Mahmoud Tawfiq the most important security issues and means of enhancing ties between the two sides, according to a statement received by Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) following a meeting between the two ministers.

Egypt has recently extradited a defendant to Kuwait, in line with security cooperation between the two sides. The two ministers discussed the latest security issues and common concerns, in addition to cooperation mechanisms and sharing expertise to benefit from training capacities in all security fields, the statement added. They further dealt with obstacles facing citizens and Kuwaiti students studying in Egypt, facilitating all measures as well as disclosing currencies at airports, it stated.

Furthermore, they covered the causes of delaying registering Kuwaiti citizens' property in Egypt, in addition to reaching a deal to set a mechanism with the concerned bodies to regulate and accelerate ending the measures of security agreements, it noted. Meanwhile, the Egyptian minister extolled the meeting and

what had been discussed, referring to security sharing and deep-rooted and historic relations between the two sister countries. The meeting featured Kuwait's Ambassador to Egypt, Ghanim Al-Ghanim, and a high-level delegation accompanying Sheikh Fahad.

### Cyber and Information Security

Meanwhile, Secretary-General Ahmad Abul-Gheit of the League of Arab States (LAS) stated on Monday that cybersecurity has become a fundamental pillar of national security for all states and economic entities. Abul-Gheit made the remark in a speech during the opening session of the 3rd International Conference on Information Security and Cybersecurity, titled "Cyber & Information Security Exhibition & Conference," held under the patronage of Egyptian Prime Minister Mostafa Madbouly and organized by the league's Arab Information and Communication Technologies Organization.

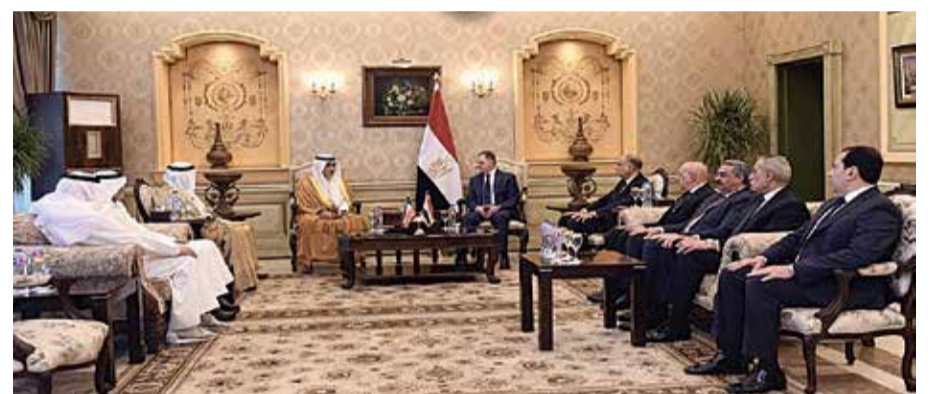
Abul-Gheit said that cyber wars have become a reality and a weapon used by states and non-state actors, including groups with destructive criminal activities, adding that this was highly effective due to the reliance of modern systems on technology and networks, making them vulnerable to ransomware attacks. He pointed out that cybersecurity has

become a concept that goes far beyond the issues of protecting messages, financial transactions, and administrative operations but also includes data security and storage. A lot can be extracted from the available data by analyzing an individual's behavior and the content consumed through social media platforms.

Abul-Gheit noted that social media platforms can have dangerous consequences and impacts when misused, such as spreading false information, calls for violence and hatred, and speeches questioning the integrity of individuals and national institutions, which would give criminal and terrorist organizations exceptional capabilities and skills to carry out cyberattacks and misinformation campaigns.

Abul-Gheit emphasized the need to build new capabilities to strengthen the technological defense line with innovative approaches that are continuously updated to match the nature of emerging threats and called for launching awareness campaigns to alert Arab citizens and various Arab institutions about the importance of data protection from cyber-crime risks.

He noted that the conference would witness the launch of the Arab Strategy for Cybersecurity prepared by the organization and approved by the Council of Arab Ministers for Communication and Information at its recent



meeting in Abu Dhabi. He added that the last Arab summit approved the Saudi initiative to establish an Arab ministerial council for cybersecurity, supported by a permanent technical secretariat based in Riyadh, expressing his hope that it would be launched as soon as possible to undertake its assigned tasks.

On his part, the Secretary-General of the Arab Organization for Communication and Information Technologies, Mohammad bin Omar, stated that the Arab region was witnessing several challenges in the field of cybersecurity, including rapid technological development, a lack of awareness about cyber issues, the development and complexity of

threats, and legal and regulatory challenges.

He noted that with the continued evolution of cyber threats in terms of complexity and frequency, implementing strong security measures was extremely important to protect individuals, companies, and government entities from harmful activities, and he pointed out the importance of proactive and comprehensive cybersecurity strategies to mitigate risks and maintain trust in digital ecosystems. The Arab Cybersecurity Strategy, prepared by the Arab Information Technology Organization, would be launched as a roadmap for countries to develop and improve their national cybersecurity strategies. — KUNA

## Ministry postpones Islamic studies exam over leak

KUWAIT: The official spokesman for the Ministry of Education, Ahmed Al-Wahida, expressed the dissatisfaction and denunciation of all workers in the

educational field for the unfortunate facts that followed the Islamic studies test on Monday, stressing that the postponement of the exam to next Monday aims to ensure equal opportunities and achieve justice among all students in the 12th grade.

Al-Wahida pointed out in a press statement that the Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, Dr Adel Al-Adwani, was present along with a number of officials at the headquarters of the printing press and inspected the mechanism of work to find out what

caused the unfortunate incident.

Al-Wahida stated that the minister immediately directed officials to implement a number of firm decisions, namely postponing the Islamic education exam on Monday, sacked the employees of the printing press, in addition to assigning new members of the printing press to complete their tasks while changing the workflow plan, and taking all necessary precautions for the remaining exams with a new tight mechanism.

The minister also directed officials to quickly

take all necessary legal measures against anyone who seeks to breach the integrity of the educational process and secondary exams, stressing that the ministry will not hesitate to apply penalties to everyone who caused the leak. Al-Wahida pointed out that there is an ongoing investigation in the Ministry of Education under the supervision and direct follow-up of the minister. Al-Wahida called on students to study hard and stay away from everything that distracts them from achieving their goals and ambitions while adhering to the instructions.



Officials sign a memorandum of understanding.

## 'Together Project' launched to protect workers' rights

KUWAIT: Khaled Al-Ajmi, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Kuwaiti Society for Human Rights, announced the launch of the fourth edition of the 'Together Project'. The project is aimed at strengthening the protection of workers' rights in Kuwait. The fourth version of the project will be implemented in direct cooperation with the Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) as a national project that contributes to raising the classification of Kuwait in international indicators.

Al-Ajmi commended the fruitful cooperation with the Public Authority for Manpower to implement the project, which resulted in the signing of a memorandum of understanding to promote human rights concepts in general and employment rights in particular. The four-year project will provide guidance and legal support to workers and address some workers' issues.

It will also offer psychological support, monitor local movements of workers' files, prepare research and studies to evaluate the development of the mechanism for the movement of labor from one employer to another, survey the views of inmates of the Migrant Workers' Shelter Center on the procedures and services provided, and contribute to proposing public policies to improve the quality of services offered to employment through the preparation of research papers.

Awareness-raising campaigns on workers' rights, training programs for law enforcement officials, and skills development for relevant officials and community chiefs on workers' issues will also be launched. A project has already been implemented in various partnerships, under which the Kuwaiti Society for Human Rights has been awarded the European Union's Chaillot Award for the Promotion of Human Rights in the Arab Gulf Region.

## Kuwait welcomes OPEC+ output cut extension

KUWAIT: Kuwait welcomed a decision taken by OPEC and its allies, including Russia, to prolong oil production cuts of up to 1.65 million barrels per day (bpd) into the end of next year, saying the measure aims to support market stability and balance. As per the measure, taken amid OPEC+ ministerial-level talks in Saudi Arabia's capital Riyadh, voluntary cuts of 2.2 million bpd, agreed upon in November of 2023, will be extended until the end of September 2024, according to an OPEC+ statement.

These 2.2 million bpd output slashes will be gradually "reinserted" into total production on a monthly basis until the end of September 2025, added the statement, underscoring that any output increases will depend on "market developments." The statement acknowledged the "total commitment" to output cuts on the part of OPEC+ member states Iraq, Russia, and Kazakhstan, saying it would be instrumental in boosting cooperation within the group. The meeting was attended by representatives of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Iraq, the UAE, Kazakhstan, Algeria, and Oman.

The 37th ministerial meeting of the OPEC+ decided in Riyadh to extend the oil output cuts until the

## Kuwait participates in Japan Energy Summit

TOKYO: The Kuwaiti delegation, headed by Kuwait Business Council Chairman Feras Al-Salem and representatives from the Ministry of Oil, participated in the Japan Energy Summit and Exhibition in Tokyo on Monday. At the conferences, the delegation demonstrated Kuwait oil sector's achievements in reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by transforming to a more efficient energy system and implementing the Zero Flaring initiative and soil remediation projects valued at two billion dollars, Al-Salem said in a statement to Kuwait News Agency (KUNA).

"As part of Kuwait's commitments towards the global community, it intends to further reduce its GHG emissions by increasing the contribution of renewable energy sources through greater involvement in its energy mix, as well as implementing more environmentally friendly practices in its oil and gas sector as part of its 2035 vision," Al-Salem said. "The achievements of the oil sector are a cornerstone to achieving such



Representatives of Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, the UAE, Kazakhstan, Algeria and Oman pose for a group photo. — KUNA

end of 2025. The 12-member oil group and its allies decided to extend the level of overall crude oil production, starting from January 1, 2025, to December 31, 2025, according to a statement adopted by the alliance. This came during the 37th meeting of the group, held in the Saudi capital, with Kuwaiti Minister of Oil Dr Emad Al-Atiqi attending.

The move came in light of OPEC and non-OPEC member states' unwavering commitment to maintaining oil market stability, providing transparency, and guiding markets, according to the statement. They also decided to extend the assessment period by the three independent sources to the end of November

2025, to be used as guidance for 2026 reference production levels, and to reaffirm the mandate of the Joint Ministerial Monitoring Committee (JMCM) to closely review the global oil market conditions, oil production levels, and the level of conformity with the DoC, assisted by the Joint Technical Committee (JTC) and the OPEC Secretariat.

Furthermore, they said that they would hold the OPEC and non-OPEC Ministerial Meeting (ON-OMM) every six months in accordance with the ordinary OPEC scheduled conference. Finally, they decided to hold the 38th OPEC and non-OPEC Ministerial Meeting on December 1, 2024. — KUNA



Kuwaiti Ambassador to Japan Sami Al-Zamanan is pictured with Kuwaiti delegation. — KUNA

GHG emission reduction targets, especially with the flaring rates reaching less than 1 percent and more volumes of associated gas being utilized locally, which are of great economic impact as well," he noted.

The delegation was also received by Kuwaiti Ambassador to Japan Sami Al-Zamanan. The three-day energy event offers an enhanced platform to unveil the latest global innovations and technologies,

bringing more than 4,000 attendees and over 150 companies, according to the organizer. The technical conference brings together leading engineers and technical experts from across the regional and international energy value chain to showcase cutting-edge innovations that will enable Japan and Asia-Pacific to successfully transition to a low-carbon future. — KUNA



Pak ex-PM acquitted of charges of leaking state secrets

Gaza mothers search for milk as malnutrition hits

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## Mexico's Sheinbaum makes history

Former Mexico City mayor becomes country's first female president

**MEXICO CITY:** Claudia Sheinbaum was elected Mexico's first woman president by a landslide, making history in a country plagued by rampant criminal and gender-based violence. Flag-waving supporters sang and danced to mariachi music on Sunday in celebration of the ruling party candidate's victory, in a nation where around 10 women or girls are murdered every day. "I want to thank millions of Mexican women and men who decided to vote for us on this historic day," Sheinbaum told the cheering crowd.

The 61-year-old former Mexico City mayor thanked her main opposition rival Xochitl Galvez, who conceded defeat. Mexico's outgoing leader Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador hailed Sheinbaum's victory as a "historic event," while US President Joe Biden said he looked forward to working with her "in the spirit of partnership and friendship." Sheinbaum, a scientist by training, won around 58-60 percent of votes, according to preliminary official results from the National Electoral Institute, which estimated turnout at 60 percent. That was more than 30 percentage points ahead of Galvez, and some 50 percentage points ahead of the only man running, centrist Jorge Alvarez Maynez.

Maria de los Angeles Gordillo, a 37-year-old mem-

ber of the Tojolabal Indigenous community, said she was moved to tears as she listened to Sheinbaum speak. "I'm here to celebrate this historic moment for our country and especially for women who carry these inequalities on their skin," she said.

Voters had flocked to polling stations across the Latin American nation, despite sporadic violence in areas terrorized by ultra-violent drug cartels. Thousands of troops were deployed to protect voters, following a particularly bloody electoral season that saw more than two dozen aspiring local politicians murdered. "Our society is violent, sexist, misogynistic and Dr Sheinbaum as president will really be able to help change not only the laws but society," said Lol-Kin Castaneda, 48, who waited late into the night to hear the winner speak.

"Mexico can't stand any more violence," she added. Women going to the polls had cheered the prospect of their favored candidate breaking the highest political glass ceiling. "A female president will be a transformation for this country, and we hope that she does more for women," said Clemencia Hernandez, a 55-year-old cleaner in Mexico City. "Many women are subjugated by their partners. They're not allowed to leave home to work," she said. Daniela Perez, 30, said that having a

woman president would be "something historic," even though neither of the two main candidates was "totally feminist" in her view.

Nearly 100 million people were registered to vote in the world's most populous Spanish-speaking country, home to 129 million people. Sheinbaum owes much of her popularity to outgoing president Lopez Obrador, a fellow leftist and mentor who has an approval rating of more than 60 percent but is only allowed to serve one term. In another win for the ruling party, its candidate Clara Brugada was elected mayor of Mexico City, one of the country's most important political jobs, preliminary results showed.

In a nation where politics, crime and corruption are closely entangled, drug cartels went to extreme lengths to ensure that their preferred candidates win. Hours before polls opened, a local candidate was murdered in a violent western state, authorities said, joining at least 25 other political hopefuls killed this election season. In the central Mexican state of Puebla, two people died after unknown persons attacked polling stations to steal papers, a local government security source told AFP. Voting was suspended in two municipalities in the southern state of Chiapas because of violence. —AFP



MEXICO CITY: Claudia Sheinbaum celebrates following the results of the general election in Mexico City, on June 3, 2024. — AFP

## Staggering 642m voted in India's 6-week-long polls

**NEW DELHI:** India's election commission said Monday a staggering 642 million people voted in just-concluded six-week-long polls, a day ahead of the results which Prime Minister Narendra Modi is widely expected to win. Nearly all observers believe Modi's appeals to Hindu nationalist sentiment will give him a third term in power, a decade after he first took office. Exit polls show 73-year-old Modi is well on track to triumph, with the premier saying he was confident that "the people of India have voted in record numbers" to re-elect his government.

Modi's opponents have been hamstrung by infigh-

ting and what they say are politically motivated criminal cases aimed at hobbling challengers to the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). But chief election commissioner Rajiv Kumar on Monday praised the complex logistical operation of the election, saying that the "voter is the real winner". While total numbers of voters were up, turnout appeared to be slightly reduced from the last general elections.

Based on the commission's figure of an electorate of 968 million, 66.3 percent of eligible voters turned out so far, down roughly one percentage point on the 2019 vote, when turnout hit 67.4 percent.

Final voter turnout data will only be released after re-polling in two stations in West Bengal state on Monday. "We have created a world record of 642 million Indian voters, it is a historic moment for all of us," Kumar told reporters, adding that nearly half of those - 312 million - were women. Kumar said that "voters chose action over apathy, belief over cynicism and in some cases, the ballot over the bullet", the commission said.

### 'Incredible power of voters'

"It shows the incredible power of voters of India," Kumar added, saying that there had been "no major incidents of violence". Voting in the seventh and final staggered round ended on Saturday, and counting and results are due on Tuesday. "People should know about the strength of Indian democracy", he added. On Sunday, Arvind Kejriwal, chief minister of the capital Delhi and a key leader in an alliance formed to compete against Modi, returned to prison.

Kejriwal, 55, was detained in March over a long-running corruption probe, but was later released and allowed to campaign as long as he returned to jail once voting ended. "When power becomes dictatorship, then jail becomes a responsibility," Kejriwal said before surrendering himself, vowing to continue "fighting" from behind bars. Modi's political opponents and international rights groups have long sounded the alarm about threats to India's democracy. US think tank Freedom House said this year the

BJP had "increasingly used government institutions to target political opponents".

Analysts have partly blamed the drop in voter turnout on hotter-than-average temperatures heading into the Indian summer. Tens of millions of people queued outside ballot stations during successive heatwaves across northern India that brought temperatures in excess of 45 degrees Celsius (113 degrees Fahrenheit). At least 33 polling staff died from heatstroke on Saturday in Uttar Pradesh state alone, where temperatures hit 46.9C (116.4F), according to state election officials. "We learnt from this election that polling should end earlier," Kumar said. "We should not have done it in so much heat". India uses electronic voting machines that allow for faster counting of ballots. "We have a robust counting process in place," Kumar said.

Counting will begin at 8:00 am in voting centers in each state, with the data fed into computers. Results are expected to be ready within hours. The polls were also a gigantic logistical exercise.—AFP



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His Highness Sheikh

**Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah**  
on the occasion of his  
appointment Crown Prince

We pray to Allah Almighty to  
keep HH in good  
health to continue the  
march of giving



## International

# Pakistan's Imran Khan acquitted of charges of leaking state secrets

## Khan to remain jailed due to another conviction

ISLAMABAD: A high court in Pakistan overturned jailed former Prime Minister Imran Khan's conviction on charges of leaking state secrets, his lawyer and his party said on Monday, but Khan will remain in prison for now due to a conviction in another case.

Khan, 71, had been sentenced to 10 years in prison by a lower court on charges of making public a classified cable sent to Islamabad by Pakistan's ambassador in Washington in 2022. He has been in jail since August last year. He had challenged the conviction in Islamabad High Court, which said in an order on Monday that, an "instant appeal is allowed", adding Imran Khan was acquitted of the charges.

Shah Mehmood Qureshi, Khan's foreign minister during his tenure from 2018-2022, was also acquitted of the charges, in what is a major victory for the jailed leader. "Thank God, the sentence is overturned," a spokesman for legal affairs from Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party, Naeem Panjutha, said in a post on the X social media platform shortly after the Islamabad High Court announced its decision.

Khan has said the classified cable was proof of a conspiracy by the Pakistan military

and US government to topple his government in 2022 after he visited Moscow just before Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Washington and Pakistan's military deny that accusation.

The state secrets case was one of four in which Khan was convicted just ahead of Pakistan's national election in February. In two other of those cases the sentences have since been suspended while he appeals. But despite Monday's acquittal, Khan, a former cricket star, will remain in prison serving a seven-year sentence over another case relating to his marriage to his third wife, Bushra Khan, also known as Bushra Bibi, which contravened Islamic traditions.

A ruling on the couple's appeal against the sentence was postponed last week and the proceedings transferred to another court after a judge recused himself following an accusation of bias made by Bibi's former husband, according to Khan's lawyers. "We will celebrate this victory," another one of his lawyers, Ali Zafar, said in a TV interview, adding that the other cases faced by Khan would result in acquittals too.

**'Huge victory'**  
"It's a huge political and legal victo-

ry," journalist and political analyst Mazhar Abbas told Reuters, but cautioned that it would be premature to say that Khan would be released anytime soon. Khan is also named as an accused in several other cases, including charges of inciting violence against the state.

He has been at odds with the country's powerful military, accusing it of targeting him and his party. The military denies this and has called for Khan and his supporters to be tried for attacking state installations during violent protests against Khan's initial arrest last year.

Khan and his party, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, was banned from contesting the February election, but candidates backed by the jailed leader still won the most seats. They did not have the numbers to form a government, which was instead led by an alliance of his rivals led by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

The government, which says Khan broke clauses of the state secrets law by revealing contents of a secret diplomatic cable, said prosecutors were awaiting the detailed decision before deciding if they would appeal against the acquittal in the Supreme Court.



LAHORE: Former Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan speaks with Reuters during an interview, in Lahore, Pakistan on March 17, 2023. — Reuters

"It is a fact that a national security document was used for political purposes," government spokesman for legal issues Aqeel Malik said in a press conference after the decision, adding that the government would not compromise on national security. — Reuters

## UK gives date for first Rwanda deportation flights

LONDON: Britain intends to begin deporting asylum seekers to Rwanda on July 24, a government lawyer said on Monday, although the hotly contested scheme is dependent on Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's Conservative Party winning the upcoming election. Sending asylum seekers who have arrived in Britain without permission to Rwanda is one of Sunak's flagship policies, but legal and parliamentary obstacles have meant it has never got off the ground.

Sunak has said the deportation flights will not leave before the July 4 election but has promised if he wins they would begin soon after. The opposition Labour Party, leading by about 20 points in opinion polls, has pledged to scrap the plan if elected. In documents submitted to the London High Court as part of a challenge to the policy by charity Asylum Aid, government lawyers said the intention was "to effect removals with a flight to Rwanda on 23 July 2024 (and not before)."

However, government lawyer Edward Brown later told the court that an "operational update" from the Home Office (interior ministry) said the first flight would in fact leave on July 24. The scheme - first drawn up by one of Sunak's predecessors, Boris Johnson, in 2022 - aims to deter asylum seekers making the dangerous journey across the Channel in small boats from France.

Last November, the UK Supreme Court declared the policy unlawful, prompting Sunak to sign a new treaty with the East African country and to pass new legislation to override this. Asylum Aid's lawyer Charlotte Kilroy said the date earmarked for the flight was "news to us". The judge, Martin Chamberlain, remarked: "This is all going to be subject to the outcome of the general election, but we obviously cannot make any predictions about that." The numbers of asylum seekers crossing the Channel has risen to record numbers this year, with more than 10,000 people arriving so far, after numbers fell by a third in 2023. — Reuters

## Germany counts flooding losses amid heated climate debate

FRANKFURT: The German government said on Monday that deadly flooding in the nation's south served as a warning to keep up the fight against climate change, hours after an official advisory council said the state had fallen behind its greenhouse gas targets. Over the weekend, a firefighter died while trying to rescue trapped residents, and several thousand people were forced to leave their homes due to heavy rains. Two more people were found dead on Monday, local authorities said.

Chancellor Olaf Scholz said during a visit to affected areas on Monday that federal emergency services and the military were being deployed. "We must not neglect the task of halting man-made climate change. This is another reminder that must be taken away from this disaster," he said.

Economy and climate minister Robert Habeck, during a visit of affected regions on Sunday, also noted that climate change was causing severe weather events. However, a panel of government climate advisors said on Monday that Germany is likely to miss its own 2030 greenhouse gas targets, contradicting Habeck's projections in March and calling for new measures.

Germany's Climate Protection Act will require the government to take corrective measures for the 2030 target if the expert panel confirms its findings next year.

Amid first signs of the flooding's economic impact, German utility EnBW said its hydroelectric plants along the Neckar river and its tributaries were either running at reduced capacity or were out of operation, particularly small stations. — Reuters

## In blow to PM, Brexit champion Farage to stand in UK election

LONDON: Nigel Farage, who helped champion Britain's departure from the European Union, said on Monday he would stand as a candidate in next month's election and will lead the right-wing Reform Party in a major blow to Prime Minister Rishi Sunak. The surprise U-turn by Farage, now a TV host, will boost his movement's profile and challenge Sunak's Conservatives for the support of right-leaning voters at a time when the governing party is already badly trailing the Labour Party in the polls.

Farage, 60, had previously said he would not stand in the July 4 vote in order to help Donald Trump fight the US election later this year. But Farage said he changed his mind because he felt guilty not standing up for people who had become disillusioned with politics and had always backed him. "We are going to be the voice of opposition, and I tell you what, I have done it before, I'll do it again, I'll surprise everybody," Farage told a news conference, saying it was a fait accompli that Labour would win but that he wanted to position Reform as its main opponent.

He said he would lead a "political revolt" in Britain because "nothing in this country works anymore", citing problems with public services such as healthcare and roads. Although Farage has stood unsuccessfully for parliament seven times he is still one of the most influential British politicians of his generation, putting pressure on a succession of prime ministers to take tougher

positions on the EU and on tackling immigration.

### Selling Brexit

Shunned by the British political establishment and backed by Eurosceptic financiers, Farage helped sell Brexit to millions of voters in England and Wales who felt ignored by the main Conservative and Labour parties. Although he was educated at an expensive school and worked as a commodities trader, he has cultivated an image of an anti-establishment figure. He is routinely pictured with a cigarette in one hand and a pint of beer in the other.

Farage, who has survived testicular cancer and a plane crash, will also take over as leader of Reform, replacing Richard Tice, who said before Farage took the stage the party wanted a way to "turn on the rocket boosters" to the election campaign.

Divisive and charismatic, Farage has previously made comments that his political opponents have called racist. Farage appeared in front of a poster during the Brexit campaign showing lines of migrants under the slogan "Breaking Point" and last month said Muslims did not share British values.

At the last general election in 2019, Farage's party decided not to contest seats held by the Conservatives, then led by Boris Johnson, to avoid splitting the pro-Brexit vote.

Polls suggest the opposition Labour Party is on course for victory this time, with the Conservatives staring at one of the worst results in their history. Support for Reform runs at about 10 percent nationally, giving the party the third highest vote share, polls show. But under Britain's winner-takes-all system, the party had not been expected to win any seats.

A poll earlier this year forecast the Conservatives would win Clacton with Reform coming third.



LONDON: Honorary President of the Reform UK party Nigel Farage looks on during a press conference in London, Britain, June 3, 2024. — Reuters

One betting company said Farage had a 40 percent chance of winning the seat after his announcement.

Under pressure, Sunak has already tried to win over voters tempted by Reform with policies such as tax cuts for pensioners, the reintroduction of national service and his plan to send illegal asylum seekers to Rwanda. Asked on Monday if he was worried about Farage entering the contest, Sunak said a vote for Reform would help Labour. — Reuters

## Alert level raised after volcano erupts in Philippines

MANILA: The alert level for a Philippine volcano was raised Monday after an "explosive eruption" sent a plume of ash, gas and rocks five kilometers (three miles) into the sky, the volcanology agency said.

Mount Kanlaon on the central island of Negros erupted for six minutes shortly before 7:00 pm (1100 GMT), prompting warnings for nearby residents to wear facemasks due the threat of volcanic gases and falling ash.

"When it erupted we heard a thunder-like sound," Ethan Asentista-Khoo, 35, told AFP from his home in Pula village, about six kilometers from the volcano. "There was like a fire on the mouth of the volcano, which lasted around one to two minutes. I didn't see any lava or rocks coming out."

The Philippines is located in the seismically active Pacific "Ring of Fire" that hosts more than half of the world's volcanoes. Kanlaon is one of 24 active volcanoes in the archipelago nation.

"An explosive eruption ... produced a voluminous and incandescent plume that rapidly rose to 5,000 meters above the vent," the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology said, raising the alert level from one to two on a scale of zero to five. It also observed "probable short" avalanches of volcanic ash, rock and gases, known as pyroclastic density currents, on Kanlaon's slopes.

Joe Alingasa, a rescue official in San Carlos municipality, said they planned to evacuate about 500 families from homes nearest the volcano "as soon as possible". "We have deployed a team for the initial evacuation of our residents," Alingasa told AFP. "We also took face masks because the residents reported a strong smell of sulfur in the area."

The most powerful volcanic explosion in the Philippines in recent years was the 1991 eruption of Pinatubo, about 100 kilometers from Manila, which killed more than 800 people. — AFP



LA CASTELLANA: This handout photo shows Mount Kanlaon volcano spewing a large plume of ash during an eruption on June 3, 2024. — AFP

## International

# Doubts grow over Gaza truce plan as battles rage

## Military hits over 50 targets; Death toll mounts

GAZA: Doubts were growing on Monday about a plan for a Gaza ceasefire and hostage release deal outlined by US President Joe Biden, as heavy fighting raged for a third day since his White House address. Biden on Friday presented what he labeled a Zionist three-phase plan that would end the bloody conflict, free all hostages and lead to the reconstruction of the devastated Palestinian territory without Hamas in power.

However, Netanyahu's office quickly stressed that Zionist entity would push on with the war sparked by the October 7 attack until all of its "goals are achieved" including the destruction of Hamas's military and governing capabilities. Zionist media have questioned to what extent Biden's speech and some crucial details were coordinated with Netanyahu's team, including how long any truce would hold and how many captives would be freed when.

Hamas on Friday said it viewed Biden's outline "positively", but since has made no official comment on the stalled negotiations, while mediators Qatar, Egypt and the United States have not announced any new round of talks. Government spokesman David Mencer on Monday quoted Netanyahu as saying that the outline Biden presented was only "partial" and that under the plan fighting would only stop temporarily "for the purpose of returning the hostages".

White House National Security Council spokesman John Kirby had said Sunday that "we have every expectation that if Hamas agrees to the proposal... (Zionist entity) would say yes". And US Secretary of State Antony Blinken "commended" Zionists on the plan in a phone call with war cabinet member Benny Gantz and Defense Minister Yoav Gallant, the State Department said. But for now, the bombardment and ground combat showed no sign of easing in the Gaza war soon to enter its ninth month that has devastated the coastal territory of 2.4 million people.

## Gaza mothers struggle to find milk as aid halted

DEIR EL-BALAH: Amira Al-Taweel scoured pharmacies in northern Gaza for milk to feed her child, but could not find a single bottle to satisfy his hunger. "Youssef needs treatment and milk, but there's none available in Gaza," the 33-year-old mother told AFP at Al-Aqsa Martyrs hospital in central Gaza where her son was admitted suffering from malnutrition.

## Gaza tailors take in clothes as people go hungry

RAFAH: Palestinian tailor Anwar Abu Keresh used to take out the clothes of his Gaza customers but after eight months of the Zionist military campaign in the territory and the hunger crisis it has caused, he now has to tighten them to fit people's thinning bodies.

The UN says over a million people face "catastrophic" levels of hunger in Gaza and has said there is famine in parts of the enclave. Aid supplies into the territory have plummeted since the entity began military operations in Rafah this month. "We are now tightening clothes to small sizes due to the lack of food, the lack of water, and there is nothing for people to eat. People are living on canned food," said Abu Keresh in a video obtained by Reuters.

"No one should tighten their clothes. People's clothes would have remained the same," he added. Abu Keresh was sewing as a mother and her children stood nearby waiting for him to finish taking in their clothes. "I was above 90 kg. I used to loosen my clothes but now I have to tighten my clothes," said the woman, who identified herself as Um Alaa Abu Sameha. "It is not just us that lost weight, even my granddaughter got affected by the war, she lost weight. I brought her clothes, I'm getting her shorts tightened for her to be able to wear them," she said.

In Deir al-Balah in central Gaza people showed photographs from before the war to compare how they looked after months of war — with nearly all people displaced from their homes — to their healthier selves before October. Um Arshad al-Sursock showed a picture of her five-year-old son Mohammed. "Now as you can see he has lost a lot of weight. He only has two sets of clothes left," she said. "I exchange this for that and when I see that they are becoming loose I have to take them to the tailor to tighten them," she said.

## Iranian adviser killed in Zionist Syria strike: Media

BEIRUT: Iranian media said an adviser was killed in an early Monday Zionist strike on Syria's northern city of Aleppo, which a war monitor said killed 16 members of pro-Iran groups. "During last night's attack by the Zionist regime on Aleppo, Saeed Abyar, one of the IRGC advisers in Syria, was martyred," said Iran's Tasnim news agency, referring to the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps.

Earlier the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said: "The death toll of the (Zionist) strike on a factory in Hayyan in western Aleppo province has risen to 16 pro-Iran group members, including Syrian and foreign fighters."

The Britain-based Observatory, which relies on a network of sources inside Syria, initially reported 12 dead. It said pro-Iran groups comprising local and

On Monday the military said that over the past day its forces had struck "over 50 targets in the Gaza Strip". Gaza hospitals reported at least 19 people killed in overnight strikes. And Netanyahu stressed in a video message that "we have gone to great lengths to bring them (hostages) back, but during this effort we have kept the war's objectives in mind, mainly the elimination of Hamas. "We insist on completing both tasks. This is part of the plan," he said.

### Heavy fighting

The Gaza war was sparked by October 7 attack. Retaliatory bombardment and ground offensive have killed at least 36,479 people in Gaza, mostly civilians, the Hamas-run territory's health ministry said on Sunday. Some 55 percent of all structures in the Gaza Strip have been destroyed, damaged or possibly damaged since the war erupted, according to the United Nations satellite analysis agency.

Heavy fighting has raged especially in Gaza's far-southern Rafah area near the Egyptian border, where most civilians have now been displaced once more, according to UN agencies. Air strikes and artillery shelling were reported in Rafah, mainly in the Tal Al-Sultan neighborhood, as well as in Gaza City in the territory's north, witnesses told AFP. The military said troops were carrying out "targeted operations in the Rafah area", where they had "located terror infrastructure and large quantities of weapons".

Gaza's European hospital said 10 people were killed and several wounded in a Zionist airstrike on a house near the main southern city of Khan Yunis. And six people were reported killed in a strike on a family home in the central Bureij refugee camp, according to the Al-Aqsa Martyrs hospital. Gaza civil defense spokesman Mahmud Bassal said in Jabalia that his teams had "retrieved more than 360 martyrs" in recent weeks and that "there are still families under the rubble".

"I feed him, but no milk as it's not available. I feed him wheat (flour) which makes him bloated," she said, as Youssef lay on a narrow bed, his frail body receiving desperately needed medication through intravenous tubes in his feet. The Hamas government media office said that at least 32 people, many of them children, have died of malnutrition in Gaza since the Zionist war on Gaza. But aid agencies warn that the situation is even worse when it comes to children.

On Saturday, the World Health Organization said that more than four in five children had gone a whole day without eating at least once in 72 hours. "Children are starving," WHO spokeswoman Margaret Harris said in a statement. The rise in malnutrition among Gaza's children is largely a result of humanitarian aid that enters the Palestinian territory not reaching its intended destination, aid agencies said.



DEIR AL-BALAH: Palestinian tailor Anwar Abu Keresh alters clothes to fit people's thinning bodies due to food scarcity on May 30, 2024. — Reuters

Rafah, on the border with Egypt, had been the last place in Gaza not entered in force by Zionist troops and more than a million people had taken shelter there after being forced from their homes by the war. Most of them have now fled, many to the beach area of Al-Mawasi outside Rafah where they live in tents or shacks, others to the ruins of their former homes.

### No one happy

In Khan Younis, not far from Rafah, Ikram al-Ham was sheltering in a tent in the rubble with her family. Clothes hung from the smashed remains of a roof. "This house has many memories. I gave birth to five children in it. I brought them up with my heart and my blood," she said, describing its destroyed remains as having become "a cave of fear".

"I look at other people's homes and the rubble and I think 'when will Palestine return, or even Gaza'," she said. She picked through the rubble, inspecting the family's broken old fridge that once contained food for children who now go hungry. At night, with no electric light, the ruins are frightening "I always used to find the children playing here and they used to be happy. Now I don't see anyone happy," she said. — Reuters

foreign fighters have considerable influence in government-controlled Hayyan.

The Zionist entity has carried out hundreds of strikes on its northern neighbor since the outbreak of Syria's civil war, mainly targeting army positions and Iran-backed fighters including from Lebanon's Hezbollah group. The strikes increased after the Zionist entity's war on Gaza began last October.

But the Observatory said they slowed after a deadly April 1 strike on the Iranian consulate in Damascus, blamed on the Zionist entity, that sent regional tensions skyrocketing and triggered Iran's first-ever direct attack on the entity.

A Syrian defense ministry statement said that "after midnight ... the (Zionist) enemy launched an air attack from the southeast of Aleppo, targeting some positions" near the city. It reported "martyrs" and "some material damage". While the entity rarely comments on individual strikes in Syria, it has repeatedly said it will not allow arch-enemy Iran to expand its presence there.

According to the Observatory, Zionist strikes on Wednesday in western and central Syria killed a girl and six fighters working with Hezbollah, including three Syrians. — AFP



GAZA: This combination of pictures shows (from top left to bottom right) the moments before and after Zionist airstrike targeted a residential building in the city of Bureij, in the central Gaza Strip. — AFP

### Post-war scenarios

Netanyahu - a hawkish veteran leading a fragile hard-right coalition government - is under intense domestic pressure from multiple sides. Relatives and supporters of hostages have staged mass protests demanding that he strike a truce deal - but the premier's far-right coalition allies are threatening to bring down the government if he does. According to Biden, Zionist three-stage offer would begin with a six-week phase that would see Zionist forces withdraw from all populated areas of Gaza and an initial hostage-prisoner exchange. Both sides would then negotiate for a lasting ceasefire, with the truce to continue as long as talks are ongoing, Biden said.

### Doctors demand aid

Since mid-January the UN humanitarian agency OCHA has screened more than 93,400 children under five in Gaza for malnutrition, including 7,280 who were found to be acutely malnourished. Malnutrition is particularly prevalent in northern Gaza, which received little aid in the early months of the war.

Only in recent weeks has much of the food aid been diverted through new crossings after aid agencies warned of imminent famine. The Zionist military said on Sunday that a total of 1,858 trucks of aid were inspected and sent into Gaza this week through its Karam Abu Salem crossing, and the Beit Hanoun (Erez West) crossings, including 764 from Egypt.

At Al-Aqsa Martyrs hospital, mothers were concerned about their malnourished children. After

adding it was "time for this war to end".

Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich and National Security Minister Itamar Ben Gvir, leaders of extreme-right parties, have warned they would leave the government if it endorsed the truce proposal. Gallant, who has criticized Netanyahu over the lack of a post-war plan for Gaza, said Sunday that Zionist entity was "assessing a governing alternative" to Hamas to rule the territory after the war ends. UN and other aid agencies have warned for months of the looming risk of famine in the besieged territory. At a hospital in Deir Al-Balah, 33-year-old Amira Al-Taweel told AFP that her frail son, suffering from malnutrition, "needs treatment and milk, but there's none available in Gaza". — AFP

Youssef and another baby boy, Saif, were admitted, their mothers sat next to them, worrying about how long they could survive on the food the hospital provides. "We depend on the aid that comes here and is given to the children," said Noha Al-Khaldi, mother of Saif, whose skin was stretched over protruding bones. "All night long he suffers ... He was supposed to have an operation, but it was postponed."

Hazem Mostafa, a pediatrician at the hospital, blamed the closure of the Rafah crossing in the south for the worsening situation. The crossing is the main conduit for aid into Gaza from neighboring Egypt, but Zionist forces seized control of it on May 7. Since then, no aid has entered the territory through the crossing, and no sick or wounded patients have been able to leave for treatment in Egypt. — AFP

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TUESDAY, JUNE 4, 2024

# New airports, aircraft: Wealthy Gulf braces for aviation boom

Billions of dollars being poured into aviation around wealthy region



DUBAI: Emirates Airline planes are seen at Dubai International Airport in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. — Reuters

## Emirates boss says Boeing needs strong CEO to end crisis

DUBAI: The head of Dubai airline Emirates urged Boeing to pick an engineering and business heavyweight to lead a deep overhaul of the US aerospace giant and said the task of ending the planemaker's recent confidence crisis "must get done".

"Is it fixable and salvageable? Yes, it is. Will it get things back to where it needs to? It must. And you'll only do that with very strong leadership, who are fixated on doing the right thing," Emirates Airline President Tim Clark told reporters on the sidelines of a major airlines summit.

Turning round the manufacturer after a series of safety and industrial problems, to the point where it can meet existing and new demand smoothly, may take five years, he said. Emirates is the world's largest buyer of long-haul jets to feed its Gulf hub.

Boeing is looking for a new CEO after announcing that Dave Calhoun would step down by the end of the year following back-to-back crises exacerbated by the blowout of a loose door plug on an Alaska Airlines 737 MAX 9 jet in January. Clark, who has been one of Boeing's severest critics during the crisis, told Reuters he had never met Calhoun, who was appointed CEO in January 2020 following a pair of 737 MAX crashes in 2018 and 2019 that killed nearly 350 people.

Boeing had no immediate comment on his remarks. In December, Boeing named Stephanie Pope to the newly created position of group-wide chief operating officer in a move seen at the time as positioning her as a leading contender to take over from Calhoun at some point in the next few years.

Asked what he would like to see in a new Boeing CEO, Clark said: "I think that people who have got a really broad aerospace engineering capability, who are good business managers as well, are the people that you need to bring back and sort this one out. Whether Stephanie Pope is going to be able to step up and do that (as well as) anybody, time will tell".

He added: "But we need airplanes, we cannot face constant delays. We've got a business to run and if we're having to foot the bill for refurbishing all these (existing) airplanes it should be put at Boeing's door." Emirates, the largest operator of the 777 family, is carrying out what it calls the largest cabin refurbishment on existing planes as it awaits the first delivery of the Boeing 777X, delayed by at least five years from 2020.

Clark said Boeing could not yet give a precise date for the plane's first delivery. It has said it will be in 2025. Clark said he planned to meet Pope in her capacity as Boeing's recently appointed planemaker chief on the sidelines of the annual meeting of the International Air Transport Association being held in Dubai over the next two days.

The unit Pope previously led, Global Services, was Boeing's only profitable division in the first nine months of 2023. In March, in the wake of the blowout incident, it announced Calhoun's earlier-than-expected departure and named Pope as head of its Commercial Airplanes division, replacing Stan Deal who was fired as part of the same shake-up.

Analysts say Pope continues to be cited in some quarters as a contender for the CEO role alongside several outside contenders including Spirit AeroSystems CEO Pat Shanahan. — Reuters

DUBAI: With major new airports emerging from the desert and aircraft orders rolling in, the resource-rich Gulf is raising its stake in an industry forecast to boom in the decades ahead. As the International Air Transport Association's AGM takes place this week in Dubai - two years after it was held in Qatar - billions of dollars are being poured into aviation around the wealthy region.

And with good reason: according to the global industry body, Middle East passenger traffic will double in the next 20 years, climbing to 530 million passengers by 2043. Global figures will see a similar rise.

Dubai, which is already home to the world's busiest airport by international traffic, has started work on an even larger airport which authorities say will handle up to 260 million passengers annually, which would be the biggest in the world. A short drive away, the United Arab Emirates' capital Abu Dhabi opened a new terminal in November, while gas-rich Qatar has also been expanding Doha's Hamad International Airport.

Neighboring Saudi Arabia, which is pouring its oil wealth into projects that will help it weather the clean energy transition, is also making a major play. Along with announcing a new air hub in Riyadh with

capacity for 120 million passengers a year, Saudi Arabia has also unveiled Riyadh Air, a new airline with 39 Boeing jets on order.

Meanwhile, Jeddah-based Saudia Group, which runs the Saudia and flyadeal carriers, announced a bumper deal for 105 Airbus aircraft last month. Emirates, Dubai's state-owned carrier, with its large fleet of long-range, wide-body aircraft, epitomizes the Gulf's "hub and spoke" model in which a globe-spanning range of long-haul destinations are linked by connecting flights through Dubai.

The Gulf "is a unique region due to its geography. In an eight-hour flight, we can reach 80 percent of the world's population", explained Stan Deal, then head of Boeing's commercial aircraft division, late last year.

### 'A ton of growth'

While Asia is expected to drive the rise in global passenger traffic, the Gulf expects to benefit, lying just a short hop from the growing markets of South Asia. "They're very well positioned to capture the Indian traffic and connect the subcontinent," said Nina Lind, an aviation specialist at management consultancy McKinsey. "There's also a lot of incoming travel growth from Indonesia," she said, refer-

ring to pilgrims heading to Saudi Arabia's holy sites from the world's biggest majority-Muslim country. "There's a ton of growth."

According to Airbus, traffic between the Middle East and Asia is expected to increase three-fold by 2042, and more than double between the Middle East and Europe.

IATA vice-president Kamil Alawadhi said Middle East airports are currently on "par with the demand, maybe lagging a bit... So you'll see a very calculated business plan for either the expansion or building of new airports". "I don't think we're going to ever have an overcapacity for the next, I don't know, 40 years or so in this particular region," he added.

Geoffrey Weston, head of consultancy Bain and Company's airlines, logistics and transportation sector, said the Gulf airlines, which also include Qatar Airways and Etihad, had the advantage of strong brands and close links to Asia. "They do have the hedge of having spent, now, two decades building their brands and getting closer to their Asian and Indian subcontinent clients," he said.

The airlines have "also been dipping into" markets in East Africa, West Africa and Southern Africa, he said. — AFP

## Resurgent airlines soar towards passenger and revenue records

DUBAI: Airlines will fly almost five billion passengers in 2024 and revenues will near \$1 trillion, both record highs, trade body IATA said on Monday as the industry roars back after the pandemic. The International Air Transport Association also said it expected the world's airlines to post \$30 billion in net earnings this year, up from its previous estimate of \$25.7 billion.

However, total expenses are expected to hit a record high this year, climbing 9.4 percent to \$936 billion, IATA announced at its annual general meeting in Dubai. Fossil fuel-burning airlines are also under pressure to contribute to the fight against climate change and make progress towards a pledge to reach "net zero" carbon emissions by 2050. This year's expected \$30 billion profit "is a great achievement considering the recent deep pandemic losses", IATA director general Willie Walsh told the body's annual general meeting in Dubai.

"Without a doubt, aviation is vital to the ambitions and prosperity of individuals and economies. Strengthening airline profitability and growing financial resilience is important," he added. The COVID-19 pandem-

## Turkish inflation exceeds 75% but peak in sight

ISTANBUL: Turkish inflation jumped above 75 percent in May, official data showed Monday, but officials expect consumer prices to have finally peaked in a cost-of-living crisis that has dogged President Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

Turkey has been battling soaring consumer prices that prompted Erdogan to drop his opposition to interest-rate hikes to combat inflation. The central bank began to raise its key rate in June 2023, gradually tak-



DUBAI: IATA Director General Willie Walsh speaks during an interview on June 2, 2024. — Reuters

ic plunged the aviation industry into crisis, grounding fleets and costing thousands of jobs. IATA put the losses at \$183 billion between 2020 and 2022. But despite the expected bounce-back to record passengers and revenues of \$996 billion this year, some clouds remain. As well as the record expenses, the return on invested capital is estimated at 5.7 percent in 2024, about 3.4 percentage points below the average cost of capital.

The net profit margin is just 3.1 percent, amounting to about \$6 per passenger - a slight improvement on 2023, which is estimated at \$27.4 billion net profit with a 3.0 percent margin. "Earning just \$6.14 per passenger

ing it from 8.5 percent to 50 percent.

Last month, central bank governor Fatih Karahan raised the year-end inflation forecast to 38 percent, up from a previous estimate of 36 percent. But Karahan also said inflation would begin to slow in June after reaching a peak in May. "The hardest part is over," Finance Minister Mehmet Simsek wrote Monday on X. "The permanent drop in inflation will begin in June," he added. "The transition period in the fight against inflation has been completed and we are entering the process of disinflation."

Inflation will "very likely" fall under 50 percent by the end of the third quarter, Simsek predicted.

The staggering rise of consumer prices and the collapse of the Turkish lira are deemed responsible for the severe electoral setback inflicted on Erdogan's AKP party in March municipal elections.

is an indication of just how thin our profits are - barely enough for a coffee in many parts of the world," Walsh said. Airlines are facing a sharp rise in costs due to shortages of parts and labor as well as challenges related to climate change, including flooded runways and forest fires. In April Dubai's airport, the world's busiest for international passengers, was closed by severe flooding that left standing water on the runway and forced the cancellation of more than 2,000 flights.

The extreme rainfall in the desert United Arab Emirates was likely exacerbated by manmade global warming, according to an international grouping of scientists that examines extreme weather events.

Air transport currently accounts for less than three percent of global CO2 emissions, but is often in the firing line because it serves a minority of the world's population. Production of sustainable aviation fuel (SAF), taken from renewable sources, will triple this year to 1.9 billion liters, or 1.5 million tons, IATA said on Sunday. But SAF will account for just 0.53 percent of the industry's fuel needs in 2024, the body added.

It is expected to provide 65 percent of aviation's "net zero" mitigation by 2050, with the balance expected to come from greater efficiencies, new technologies and carbon offsets.

After Doha in 2022, Istanbul in 2023 and Dubai this year, IATA's 2025 AGM will be held in New Delhi - the centre of an aviation boom, including record-breaking aircraft orders by Indian carriers. — AFP

Turkey's national statistics office said Monday that annual inflation reached 75.45 percent in May after accelerating to 69.8 percent in April. It added that consumer prices had risen by 3.7 percent on a monthly basis between April and May, in line with central bank forecasts.

A group of independent economists, ENAG, said consumer prices actually increased by 120.7 percent in May year-on-year and by 5.7 percent on a monthly basis. Liam Peach, senior emerging markets economist at London-based research group Capital Economics, said the May rise was stronger than expected and "slightly disappointing". "It had looked like price pressures were easing in recent months, but the 3.4 percent month-on-month increase in May was higher than in both March and April," Peach said in a note, predicting that "bumpy disinflation lies ahead". — AFP







TUESDAY, JUNE 4, 2024

## No-Makeup Makeup

# NO-MAKEUP MAKEUP IN KUWAIT: A PERSONALIZED BEAUTY GUIDE

In Kuwait, where tradition meets modernity, the no-makeup makeup look has emerged as a beloved beauty trend, cherished for its ability to celebrate individuality while adhering to the subtleties of cultural elegance. This look, adaptable to all skin types, tones, ages, and personal preferences, offers a way to enhance natural beauty in the most understated yet refined manner. Let's explore how to tailor this globally embraced trend to fit the unique environmental and cultural context of Kuwait.

### Customizing for skin types in Kuwait's climate

**Oily skin management:** Given Kuwait's hot climate, those with oily skin might struggle with excess shine. A mattifying primer can combat this, paired with oil-free, non-comedogenic products to maintain a fresh look throughout the day.

**Nourishing dry skin:** The arid weather necessitates extra hydration. Starting with a rich moisturizer and a hydrating primer is essential, followed by cream-based makeup products to lock in moisture and avoid the flakiness often exacerbated by Kuwait's dry air. Balancing combination skin: Tackle the dual challenge posed by Kuwait's climate by using a mattifying primer on oily areas and hydrating products on dry patches to achieve a harmonious, natural complexion.

**Caring for sensitive skin:** Opt for hypoallergenic and fragrance-free products to minimize irritation, a common concern



in areas with fluctuating environmental conditions like Kuwait.

### Age-Defying Beauty in Kuwait

**Mature skin glow:** Embrace light-reflective, hydrating foundations or BB creams to minimize the appearance of fine lines, with a preference for cream blushes and highlighters that offer a radiant, youthful glow without settling into lines.

**Highlighting unique features:** Kuwait's rich cultural tapestry is reflected in its diverse beauty standards. Whether celebrating freckles, distinct facial struc-

tures, or the soft curves of the cheeks, the no-makeup makeup look emphasizes enhancing these features with subtle, natural touches.

### Adapting to All Skin Tones

**Vibrancy for deeper tones:** Products with rich pigments are essential for enhancing the natural beauty of deeper skin tones, ensuring a radiant, healthy glow that complements Kuwait's sunny environment.

**Sheer elegance for lighter tones:** Lighter skin tones can benefit from sheer, buildable products that add a subtle

warmth, perfect for achieving a radiant look in the soft light of the Gulf.

### The essence of no-makeup makeup in Kuwait

Adopting the no-makeup makeup look in Kuwait means navigating a path that respects both personal and cultural beauty ideals. It's a celebration of natural, understated elegance that aligns with Kuwaiti values of modesty and sophistication. This beauty trend not only enhances individual features but also pays homage to the environmental and cultural contexts that shape beauty standards

in Kuwait. The no-makeup makeup look in Kuwait stands as a testament to the timeless beauty of natural enhancement. It encourages an embrace of individual uniqueness while offering a versatile beauty approach tailored to the needs of Kuwaiti women. This trend reaffirms the power of makeup as a tool for self-expression and cultural identity, promoting a beauty ethos that is inclusive, diverse, and unmistakably Kuwaiti. Get more inspiration by visiting our website <https://dashebeauty.com> or follow up on our beauty blog.--Dashe Beauty Kuwait

## LUXURY IN THE ARENA

### LVMH's historic €150m investment in the Olympics

By Dr Esraa Al-Shatti

The economic benefits of hosting the Olympics and major sporting events are well understood, so how does luxury interact with sporting events? One of the leading examples bringing focus to this issue today is the significant investment LVMH has committed to the upcoming 2024 Olympics: A jaw-dropping 150 million euros. This figure is already impressive, even for Bernard Arnault, one of the wealthiest people in the world.



This is a strategic plan, with the expectation that the amount will double, if not triple, under Arnault's business acumen. LVMH investing 150 million euros in the 2024 Olympics is practically unheard of for the conglomerate. Historically, LVMH has entered sponsorship activities at the brand level with Hublot for the 2022 World Cup, for example. However, this is its first corporate-wide agreement at this scale. Such sponsorship is bound to further strengthen and enhance the visibility and prestige of the LVMH brand globally, in perfect accord with strategic objectives.

Since the Olympics would have an estimated global viewership of over 4 billion, LVMH could capitalize on such visibility. More exposure would be critical for strengthening its luxury brand image further and on a platform where practically all people of high social standing would be watching.

The sponsorship deal brings about tax benefits since expenses for such a purpose are deducted from the tax base. This financial aspect adds another layer to its strategic advantage as an investment. So, whereas LVMH in the past has been a great investor in several sectors and brands, this 150 million-euro networking deal for the 2024 Olympics becomes the first of its kind in terms of this scale and scope inside the group. This not only shows the crossing roads of luxury and sports but displays the strategic foresight characteristic of LVMH to be at the top amidst the global groups of luxury.



These handout photo shows a computer-generated image of an aerial view of the Champs-Elysees district transformed by the "Re-enchanting the Champs-Elysees" urban project in Paris.



Mayor of Paris Anne Hidalgo (center) and French Chef Guillaume Gomez (third right) speak with people taking part in a giant open-air picnic on the Champs-Elysees avenue.

## 'Come back': Champs-Elysees wants to win over Parisians

The Champs-Elysees, the iconic avenue sweeping through central Paris dotted with cafes and shops, connects the Place de la Concorde in the east with the Arc de Triomphe in the west in a single, breathtakingly straight line.

But one thing seems to be missing amid the throngs of tourists — Parisians themselves. A true Parisian is rare on the Champs-Elysees, and as one local said, that is not really surprising. "There's no place for us — no garden, nowhere to sit," Xavier LeBrun, 35, told AFP as he watched tourists stream past on the almost two-kilometer (1.2-mile) avenue during his cigarette break.

The Champs-Elysees is "where Parisians cross to get from one place to another, and that's it", he said. A top tourist attraction, locals have gradually abandoned the Champs-Elysees over concerns that it is too noisy, dirty and expensive, with luxury brands replacing smaller, independent shops. But that could change if a committee, eager to make the Champs-Elysees attractive to Parisians again, can make its voice heard.

### 'Everyone was fleeing'

After five years of work the "Champs-Elysees Committee", endowed with a budget of five million euros (\$5.4 million), last week listed 150 proposals including adding green spaces, reducing pollution, and organizing cultural events to "revive" the famed avenue.

The starting point for the Champs-Elysees Committee, an association of business and culture representatives, was the "alarming" realization that the world-famous street was "no

longer loved, no longer likeable, deserted by Parisians, and feared by foreigners", reads the committee's report. "Everyone was fleeing," they wrote.

A giant open-air picnic held on the avenue at the weekend was an example of how the committee plans to address the issue. "It's a way of telling Parisians: Come back to the Champs-Elysees," committee chairman Marc-Antoine Jamet said. With stores and historic cinemas closing along the avenue due to rising rents and falling sales, "innovation is an absolute necessity", he said.

The 1,800-page plan seeks to reverse the decline while balancing the needs of locals and tourists. The committee estimates the cost will be 250 million euros, but Jamet said the additional

tax revenue generated by the changes would be enough to finance all or some of the project. "These are not costs but investments."

A self-proclaimed Paris "superfan" who has visited from Pakistan 22 times, 33-year-old Jawwad Channa said he always visits the Champs-Elysees, this time bringing along four friends looking forward to hitting the stores. "It's very crowded, but the shopping is amazing," said his friend Ali Syed, 32.

Shopping will remain a mainstay, but central to the committee's plan is adapting the avenue to global warming and reducing its carbon footprint by a third over 50 years, with plans to reduce traffic by increasing pedestrian space and doubling bike lanes.

### 'Revamp the neighborhood'

The committee also aims to lower the avenue's average temperature by one to seven degrees Celsius, creating a "climate sanctuary" during the city's increasingly common heatwaves. Proposals include planting 160 trees, installing seating and fountains, and transforming 20 hectares (49 acres) of unkempt gardens into a "true Parisian park". Symphony concerts, a "quality" Christmas market and flower stalls are also part of a push for "year-round" cultural offerings to "revamp the neighborhood".

Sunday's picnic, at which thousands turned out on the "world's largest tablecloth", came after an event last year when France's brainiest bookworms battled it out in a mass spelling test at 1,779 desks set out along the avenue.

With France's presidential palace and National Assembly nearby, security remains a concern, though the proposal includes plans to increase the police presence and establish a 24-hour "health and safety" watch. "We are going to discuss this with all partners," said Paris's deputy mayor Emmanuel Gregoire, adding that discussions would first take place with the police.

"The idea is Paris's mayor could announce a broad outline in the second half of 2024," Gregoire said. Gabin Contentin, 21, said big changes were needed for him and other locals to be lured back. But if all goes well, he predicted, the Champs-Elysees can "once again be the most beautiful avenue in the world". — AFP



This computer-generated handout image shows what the Champs-Elysees district would look like when transformed by the project.-AFP photos



A Sudanese man works in the kitchen at "Kush Children's Village".



An employee fries luqaimat at the dessert shop.



## Egypt's Sudanese refugees using rich cuisine to build new lives

**S**udanese entrepreneur Julie Samir's dream of opening a restaurant has finally come true, but it's a bittersweet achievement after she fled to Egypt from her war-torn homeland of Sudan. Now, Samir has one aim for her menu: winning over the palate of Egyptians with a taste of Sudan's complex culinary traditions, born from a rich history at the crossroads of the Middle East and Africa.

"I'm targeting the Egyptian consumer, I want them to get to know Sudanese culture," the 42-year-old told AFP from her sun-lit eatery in eastern Cairo, the scent of simmering aromatics wafting

Today, on the lawns of one of Cairo's upscale sporting clubs, Samir's restaurant 'Kush Children's Village' serves up a fusion menu. "The name was my father's idea, inspired by the Bible," she said, explaining the reference to Kush, the ancient kingdom that straddled modern-day Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia.

### Tough competition

"We serve all three cuisines," she said proudly, but insisted the restaurant is still distinctly Sudanese. "Everyone who works here is from Sudan, all of us came here fleeing the war," she said, explaining how the team found each other through solidarity networks on social media.

In the kitchen, 46-year-old chef Fadi Moufid fussed over pots and pans stewing a number of the restaurant's wide array of dishes. The former caterer's signature is agashe — skewered meat, chicken or fish seasoned with a spicy peanut dry rub then barbequed low and slow on glowing embers.

"Egyptians don't like their food as spicy as we do, so we try to tone it down so they can really appreciate it," Moufid told AFP over a bowl of zigni, a beef stew marinated in Ethiopian spices and served with injera, a spongy flatbread. But cracking the Egyptian culinary scene is no easy feat.

"Competition wasn't as big in Sudan between food businesses, but here it's huge," Moufid says, pointing particularly to "large Syrian restaurants" founded by diaspora entrepreneurs who also fled their war-torn homeland in recent years.

Standing out can be difficult, but Moufid and Samir are slowly drawing in Egyptian palates. "I liked the taste of the spices and how tender the meat is," one of their Egyptian guests, Khaled Abdelrahman, told AFP. "It has a different feel to it," he said.

In the suburb of Sheikh Zayed, west of Cairo, Sudanese confectioner Qusay Biram's dessert shop, "Jeeb Maak" — Arabic for "Bring Along" — sells deep-

fried dough balls called 'luqaimat'. They are similar to Egyptian 'zalabia', but still shock the Egyptians who step into the sweet-smelling store.

### 'Longing for Sudan'

"They're taken by surprise because we put more salt in the dough than they're used to," one of his employees,

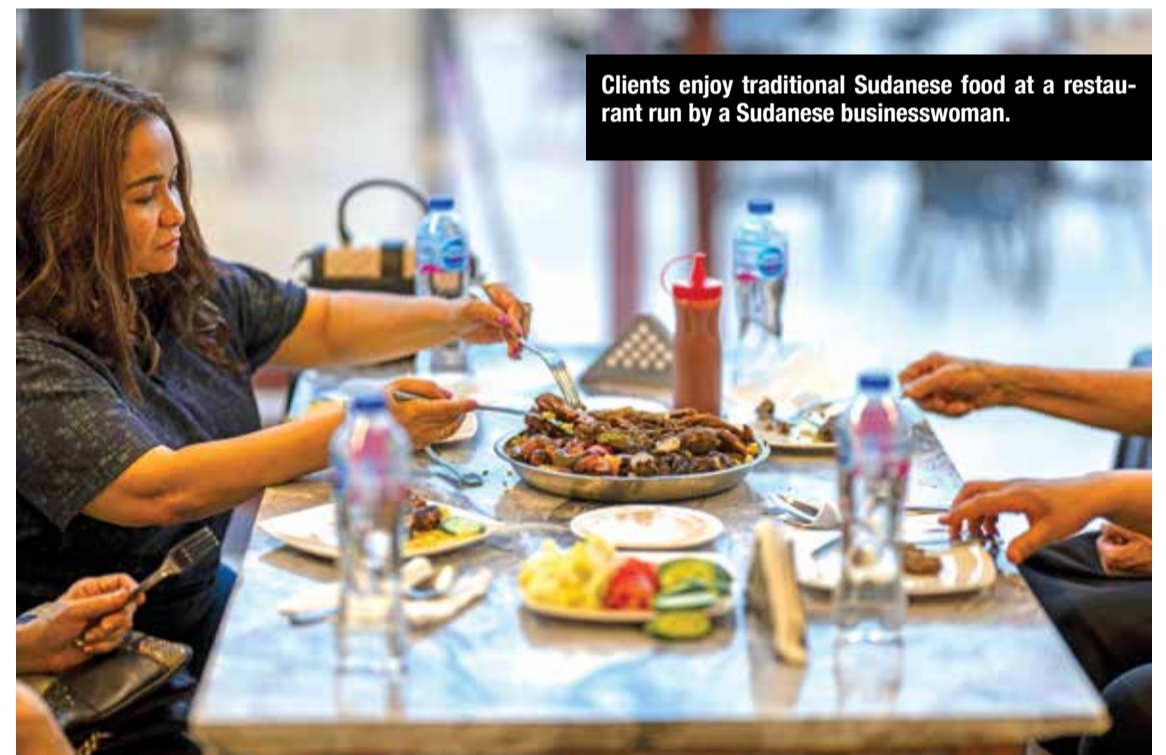
In a little over a year, already impoverished Sudan has been torn apart. The war has killed tens of thousands of people, pushed close to nine million from their homes and brought the country to the brink of famine. "Even if things calm down, there won't be many business opportunities," he said, resolute in his plan to "see this experience in Egypt through".



Clients are served a dish of rice and meat at the restaurant.

out of the kitchen. Across the sprawling megalopolis of Cairo — home to over 20 million people — many Sudanese refugees have opened businesses, bringing a taste of home and hoping to make a name for themselves.

Samir and her two children have been in the Egyptian capital for over a year, since making the 2,000-kilometer (around 1,200-mile) journey from their home in Khartoum. Along with half a million other Sudanese, they fled the war between Sudan's regular army and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces to neighboring Egypt — and got to work rebuilding a life.



Clients enjoy traditional Sudanese food at a restaurant run by a Sudanese businesswoman.

Ziad Abdelhalim, told AFP. "It brings out a different taste to the sweetness," he said while serving customers a steaming cup of traditional cardamom-spiced milk tea — also novel to most Egyptians.

The business model is clearly working, with 'Jeeb Maak' now boasting three branches across Cairo. But Biram says it hardly makes up for what he left behind. At 29, the entrepreneur believes he will likely never return to Sudan and that the businesses he "closed because of the war" back home are gone forever.

Samir, who said her family was stalked by paramilitary fighters when fleeing Sudan, had planned to spend only a month in Egypt. "But the war's not ending," she said, resigned to finding ways to remind herself of the homeland she longs for. "I want to hire a henna artist in the restaurant, I know Egyptians love that," she said with a laugh. — AFP



The chef adds the final touches to a dish before serving it to customers.



An employee submerges sweets in white chocolate at a dessert shop owned by a Sudanese businesswoman in Sheikh Zayed, west of Cairo.



A Sudanese chef prepares traditional food at the restaurant.—AFP photos



## WADI AL-RAYAN RESERVE: ECO-TOURISM IN THE SERENE DESERT



**W**adi Al-Rayan Reserve — in Faiyum Governorate, Egypt — is one of the most attractive natural reserves with integrated eco-tourism, rich in waterfalls and a calm desert climate. The reserve, which is 150 kilometers from Cairo, is an attractive outlet for visitors who love hiking in the desert and a destination for those looking for an atmosphere of relaxation away from the city hustle.

Horse and camel riding, skiing, safaris, in addition to camping, stargazing, bird watching, and many water sports are some of the activities to enjoy at the reserve. The reserve has several areas: the charming waterfalls area, which boasts a large fish population and is considered one of the areas for practicing various marine sports, as well as (Oyun Al-Rayyan) area, which consists of moving sand dunes and three natural sulfur springs, in addition to several types of desert plants.

Wadi Al-Rayan also consist of Jabal Al-Rayyan area, which has various types of migratory and resident birds, in addition to important marine monuments and fossils, as well as lakes. In a statement to KUNA, the official spokesman of Faiyum Governorate, Dr Mohammad Al-Tuni, said that Wadi Al-Rayan was an area of national, regional and international importance. He added that it was an attractive area for eco-tourism. It includes the whale valley (Wadi Al-Hitan), which is more than 40,000,000 years old.

In 2005, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) chose it as a natural heritage area. It is also a reserve for rare animals, there are about five spe-

cies of wild animals, 16 species of reptiles and more than 100 species of resident and migratory birds, in addition to marine fossils, he said. In 1989, Wadi Al-Rayan was declared as a natural reserve to protect biological, natural, and geological resources, he added, explaining that it includes tourism and investment projects aimed at sustainable tourism development such as a

projects in the last ten years and is expected to bring about qualitative development in this region, he stressed.

“Safe Haven” aims to provide a shelter for animals that are rescued from wars or due to confiscation through illegal trade, and to support resilience and adaptation to climate change through the resettlement of wild animals that have become threat-



(Safe Haven for Wildlife) project.

The “Safe Haven” project is the first cooperation between the Egyptian Ministry of Environment, the Faiyum Governorate, the Princess Alia Foundation (PAF) in Jordan, and the Austrian Four Paws International Foundation, with a value estimated of more than \$21,000,000, Tuni said. The project is considered an important shift in the field of eco-tourism and one of the largest sustainable tourism development

ened with extinction, with the aim of protecting them and creating an eco-system that enables them to co-exist in a safe and protected manner. It will contribute to enhancing economic and tourism development opportunities, as it is a tourist attraction for Egypt that comes within the framework of the state’s vision to achieve sustainable development. — KUNA

## Meet Neo Px: The **super plant** that attacks air pollution

It may look like an innocent green plant, but its name evokes something far closer to a robot or interstellar rocket. Neo Px is a bioengineered plant capable of purifying indoor air at an unprecedented scale, the first in a potentially long line of such super-powered organisms. “It’s the equivalent of up to 30 regular houseplants in terms of air purification,” said Lionel Mora, co-founder of startup Neoplants. “It will not only capture, but also remove and recycle, some of the most harmful pol-

lutants you can find indoors.” first products in the United States in April. The United States was a particularly promising first market, since many Americans already widely use air purifiers. “We do our best to send as many plants as possible every week, but it’s not enough to meet demand for now,” said Mora.

### Wildfires

Americans have a keen appreciation for cleaner air given all the recent “problems associated with wildfires,”

ucts, furniture and walls. “These chemicals are associated with a range of adverse health effects, including cancer,” especially for the young, the elderly and people who are already vulnerable, said Tracey Woodruff, a professor of reproductive sciences at the University of California, San Francisco.

“They can bring respiratory related effects or reproductive health effects ... like adverse pregnancy outcomes, preterm birth, miscarriages, as well as neurological disorders like Parkinson’s,” she said. Neo Px does not itself absorb the chemicals. The plant is sold at a starting price of \$120 with packets of powder that contain a microbiome, essentially a bacterial strain. “This bacteria colonizes the plant’s roots, soil and leaves,” said Torbey, the company’s chief technology officer, at its research lab in Saint-Ouen, France, just outside Paris.

### Bacteria powder

The bacteria “absorbs the VOCs to grow and reproduce. The plant is there to create this ecosystem for the bacteria. So we have a symbiotic system between plants and bacteria,” he said. In the future, Neoplants plans to produce genetically modified plants whose metabolism will directly do the work of air purification. And in the longer term, it hopes to tackle problems linked to global warming. “We could increase the capacity of trees to capture CO2,” Torbey said. Or “develop seeds that are more resistant to drought,” added Mora.

Their vision, coupled with the team’s scientific expertise, led Google product manager Vincent Nallatamby to invest in the startup from the outset. He now owns his own bacteria-boostered pothos plant, which sits unnoticed in his San Francisco living room, already well-stocked with houseplants of all sizes. “It’s more my wife who takes care of them, except this one. This one’s me!” he joked, pointing to his Neo Px. “I’m often seduced by technological objects and I want to bring them home,” he said. “This was one of the first times I had no trouble convincing my wife.” — AFP

which have become a “bigger and bigger” problem in the country, Mora said. “One of the pollutants that comes from combustion is benzene, which we’re targeting,” he added. Indoor air can be two to five times more polluted than outdoor air, according to the US Environmental Protection Agency, mainly due to volatile organic compounds, or VOCs. VOCs are gaseous pollutants that can accumulate indoors and negatively impact air quality and health.

Opening windows won’t help much because the VOC pollution can come from solvents, glues and paints, and therefore could lurk in cleaning prod-



Lionel Mora, co-founder of French startup Neoplants, inspects a Marble Queen Pothos plant inside the greenhouse where they grow the plants at their facility in Lodi, California, on May 1, 2024. — AFP photos

Five years ago, the entrepreneur met Patrick Torbey, a genome editing researcher, who dreamed of creating living organisms “with functions.” “There were plants around us, and we thought that the most powerful function we could add to them was to purify the air,” said Mora, during a tour of a rented greenhouse in Lodi, California, two hours from San Francisco.

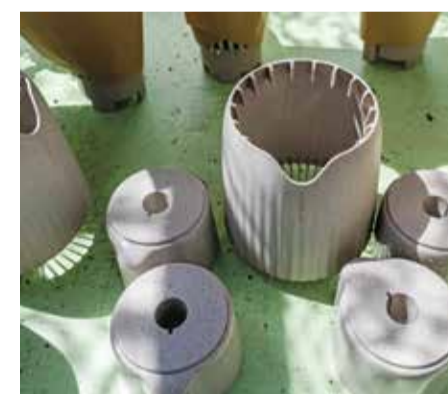
Protected from the elements, several thousand modified pothos plants, green speckled with white, awaited their turn to be potted, packed and shipped. The French startup began selling its



Workers pack Marble Queen Pothos plants for delivery.



Lionel Mora mixes a packet of Power Drops with water before pouring it into a Marble Queen Pothos plant.



A Neoplants shell and water reservoirs, made from biodegradable PLA-natural fiber, are seen at their facility.



Neoplants Head of Product Hector de Wazieres transports packages of Neo Px bioengineered plants ready to be shipped.

## Sports

# Namibia defeat Oman in T20 WCup

## Low-scoring thriller was decided by a super over

**BRIDGETOWN:** Namibia scored a nerve-shredding victory over Oman in their T20 World Cup Group B clash in Barbados on Sunday after a low-scoring thriller was decided by a super over. David Wiese was the hero for Namibia, contributing 13 runs in the Africans' super over total of 21 before then restricting Oman to 10 runs with the ball in hand to seal a crucial win at Kensington Oval.

The match had gone to a decisive extra over after a tense duel saw both teams finish with 109 runs from their allotted 20 overs. Oman had looked to be heading for defeat after a superb four-wicket bowling display from Ruben Trimpelmann saw them all out for 109 off 19.4 overs.

But Oman's bowlers responded with a disciplined performance to contain Namibia's bats, with Mehran Khan conjuring a superb spell to leave the match on a knife edge. Khan finished with figures of three wickets for seven runs off three overs.

The veteran Oman bowler took two wickets in the final over to frustrate Namibia, who had needed just five runs from the over to clinch victory. But Khan was bizarrely overlooked for the super over bowling duties by Oman, with Bilal Khan handed the ball instead.

That move backfired spectacularly, though, with Wiese blasting a four off the first ball and then crushing a full toss for six off Khan's second delivery. Wiese took three more runs off the next two balls before Namibia skipper Gerhard

Erasmus hit back-to-back fours to set Oman a daunting victory target of 22 off their super over.

Wiese took over the bowling duties for Namibia and after conceding just two runs from his first two deliveries, took the wicket of Naseem Khushi. Two more singles left Oman needing 18 from the last delivery to win, meaning Wiese could allow Zeeshan Maqsood to blast a six knowing victory was assured.

"I definitely aged a couple of years tonight," the 39-year-old Wiese said. "And I don't have a lot of years left in me. It was an emotionally draining evening." Wiese said he had been confident of steering Namibia to victory with bat and ball in the super over.

"It helped that I had a feel of the game and knew if I get a few hits out in the Super Over ... then with the ball, felt like taking the ball and executing. "The pitch was difficult and didn't play the way we thought. But we adapted well."

Oman captain Aqib Ilyas was left lamenting an agonizing near-miss - but defended the decision to opt for Bilal as the super over bowler over the in-form Khan. "I think Bilal is one of the best bowlers you can have at this level," Aqib said. "But there are days where you plan and it doesn't execute.

"He was clear, we were clear, but maybe the ball was wet and he couldn't execute." Earlier, Trimpelmann had given Namibia a dream start with two wickets from the first two deliveries of the match, part of a four-wicket performance.



**BRIDGETOWN:** Namibia's Jan Frylinck (R) hits 4 during the ICC men's Twenty20 World Cup 2024 group B cricket match between Namibia and Oman at Kensington Oval, in Bridgetown. — AFP

Wiese also impressed in the regulation 20 overs with 3-28 off 3.4 overs.

Namibia made hard work of the run chase,

however, with Jan Frylinck (45) and Niko Davin (24) top scoring as the southern Africans came up just short of their victory target. — AFP



**FORT WORTH:** First place all around winner Simone Biles celebrates after the 2024 Xfinity US Gymnastics Championships at Dickies Arena on June 02, 2024 in Fort Worth, Texas. — AFP

## Biles wins record ninth national championship

**TEXAS:** Simone Biles won a record-extending ninth all-around title at the US championships in Fort Worth, Texas on Sunday as the four-time Olympic gold medalist continues to impress in the run-up to the Paris Games.

After soaring into the lead on Friday, Biles picked up right where she left off on the final night of the competition, shaking off a misstep at the beginning of her balance beam routine to finish with a solid performance.

Her high-flying floor routine earned a 15.10 from the judges and an emotional response from her mother in the stands as the 27-year-old added to her lead. Biles fell backwards while attempting to land a difficult vault in the third rotation but closed the night with a solid outing on the uneven bars to seize the title with a wire-to-wire victory. She also swept the titles for the individual events.

"Today it was just about getting out here, getting comfortable and confident in my gymnastics and hopefully going to Olympic trials and taking that next step towards Paris," Biles said. "I couldn't be more proud of how I'm doing at this time of the year and gaining confidence in front of a crowd."

Biles finished with 119,750 points ahead of Skye Blakely, who was 5,900 behind. Kayla DiCello was third, 8,950 back of the winner. Tokyo all-around champion Sunisa Lee finished fourth with 110,650 points.

Biles missed much of the Tokyo Games due to the "twisties" - a mental block where gymnasts are disoriented in midair - and then stepped away from competition for two years but looked sharper and more resilient than ever this weekend.

"I'm a little bit older so I know exactly how to reboot, collect myself and move on to the next event even if I feel like something wasn't how it was supposed to go," she said. "I know exactly how to switch my mindset and keep going. "It's years of therapy ... as well as having good team mates."

Not in action at the championships was Shilese Jones, who is considered the most likely gymnast after Biles to make the five-member Paris team. She withdrew ahead of the competition to rest a sore shoulder to ensure she is at full strength for the Olympic trials later this month in Minneapolis, where the squad will be named. "It's feeling a little bit better today than it has this whole week," Jones told NBC Sports. — Reuters

## Dupont guides France to Sevens glory

**MADRID:** French rugby star Antoine Dupont, one of the home pin-ups for the Paris Olympics, helped France to a 19-5 victory over Argentina in the grand final of the Rugby Sevens Series in Madrid on Sunday.

Dupont, who captains the France 15-a-side team and starred as his club Toulouse won last week's Champions Cup, played the second-half of the final and was instrumental as the French won their first ever Series.

"It's a good group, a good team. I'm very proud of them," said France skipper Paulin Riva. "We have a good, big defence. "Antoine is the best player in the world, we think! When he's on the pitch we have a lot of confidence."

France coach Jerome Daret said the result was "very important for us before the Olympics". "The next tournament in Paris will be another story! "Our aim for Paris is to make a lot of things on the pitch... and give pleasure to the fans." Daret added: "It's not finished, we have a big target.

"We know in Paris it's a home advantage to be in front of our fans and families." France, who lost 26-12 to top-ranked Los Pumas in pool play, looked the better composed team throughout the 20-minute final at Atletico Madrid's Civitas Metropolitano Stadium.

The French, ranked fifth, thought they'd opened the scoring through Jean-Pascal Barraque, but his knee was grazed the touchline just before he crossed the tryline. Instead it was Argentina's Luciano Gonzalez who was first on the scoresheet, the forward producing two powerful hand-offs on Stephen Perez-Edo-Martin and Jefferson-Lee Joseph for a fine individual try.

But France roared back in collective style from a full 100 metres, Joseph linking well to gift Perez-Edo-Martin, who first played rugby as a student at the French lycee in Madrid, a straight run-in to the line. A Riva conversion handed France a 7-5 half-time lead over Los Pumas, who beat defending two-time Olympic champions Fiji in the semi-final, leaving the South Sea Islanders now 22 Sevens tourna-



**MADRID:** France players celebrate their victory after the HSBC World Rugby Sevens men's final match between France and Argentina at the Metropolitano stadium in Madrid. — AFP

ments without a win.

Dupont came on for the second period and made an immediate effect, Rodrigo Isgro yellow carded for a deliberate knock-on of the France scrum-half's midfield pass. Tomas Elizalde was on hand to cut down Joseph with a brilliant tackle.

But in a game of strong defences, Argentina struggled to clear their lines and Gonzalez was dragged into touch by Rayan Rabbadj and Riva. From the resulting attacking line-out, for which Dupont acted as hooker, the ball was worked wide and Joseph crossed for France's second try, converted by Barraque.

Dupont then won a turnover penalty. The ball was went wide, was recycled and who other than Dupont was on hand to draw Elizalde and Isgro and produce a perfectly-timed one-handed pass back inside to Riva, who touched down to make it 19-5.

Isgro received a late red card for an ille-

gal tackle and Riva booted the ball high into the stands as Les Bleus celebrated the victory in what is a perfect tonic going into the Paris Olympics, with the men's competition starting on July 24.

Dupont was crowned men's Rookie of the Year after the final, despite having played just three tournaments. "I was honestly a bit worried before my first tournament so I worked very hard," Dupont said. "There was a good team spirit so it was easy to join in. The Olympics on home soil at the Stade de France, Dupont added, "will be a huge tournament."

"But we'll try to get that trophy in July." Australia, Olympic champions when rugby sevens made its Games debut in Rio in 2016, won the women's competition, beating France 26-7 in the final. Maddison Levi, who scored an impressive hat-trick of tries, said: "We started getting a roll-on when we had more possession. "Our defence is what is winning us games." — AFP

## Astros attempt to tame Cardinals in series opener

**HOUSTON:** In a fitting twist given their recent lack of production with runners in scoring position, the Houston Astros' lone hit in that situation during a three-game set with the visiting Minnesota Twins failed to yield a run.

After finishing a combined 0-for-7 with runners in scoring position on Friday and Saturday, the Astros went 1-for-6 in the series finale, a 4-3 loss on Sunday in a rubber match. Houston, which will open a three-game interleague series with the visiting St. Louis Cardinals on Monday, received a two-out single from Alex Bregman with Jose Abreu on second in the seventh inning on Sunday, a ball hit to left field that prevented Abreu from scoring the go-ahead run.

Yordan Alvarez followed with a fly-out to left, leaving the bases loaded before the Astros dropped to 5-13 in one-run games this season. Houston scored all nine of its runs in the series on homers. "You like to see homers," Astros manager Joe Espada said. "This is a team that is known for slugging and driving the ball out of the ballpark and hitting balls hard. We also are good at getting those insurance runs in, and right now, the last couple games it has

been tough for us to do that."

Right-hander Justin Verlander (3-2, 3.26 ERA) will start the series opener for the Astros on Monday. He has allowed one earned run in each of his past two starts, most recently scattering three hits across seven innings while settling for a no-decision against the host Seattle Mariners on Wednesday.

Verlander is 3-1 with a 4.32 ERA in four career starts against the Cardinals, but he hasn't faced them since June 19, 2012, when he was a member of the Detroit Tigers. Right-hander Kyle Gibson (4-2, 3.60) has the starting assignment for St. Louis.

In his latest outing, Gibson gave up just one run and two hits in six innings to record a win against the Cincinnati Reds on Tuesday. He hasn't taken a loss over his past eight starts, going 3-0 with a 2.54 ERA during that span.

Gibson is 4-3 with a 2.64 ERA - his lowest ERA against any team that he has faced at least 10 times - in 14 career starts against the Astros, including a 2-3 record and a 2.53 ERA in eight starts in Houston.

The Cardinals improved to 13-5 since ending a season-long seven-game losing streak thanks to a



**HOUSTON:** Houston Astros third baseman Alex Bregman (2) hits a double against the Minnesota Twins during the third inning at Minute Maid Park. — Reuters

5-4 win in 10 innings over the Philadelphia Phillies on Sunday. St. Louis slugged two home runs and has hit 24 homers since May 12, the most in the National League during that span.

"We're starting to swing it," said Cardinals second baseman Nolan Gorman, who clubbed his 11th home

run of the year in the first inning on Sunday. "Early on, we weren't hitting, and that's it. Now everyone is clicking, and I think there's a lot more that we have to prove. We're definitely a really good ball club. It's a good clubhouse, and we're ready to keep competing." — Reuters



## Alcaraz books Tsitsipas rematch

### Swiatek races into French Open quarters



PARIS: Spain's Carlos Alcaraz Garfia plays a backhand return to Canada's Felix Auger-Aliassime. — AFP photos

PARIS: Poland's Iga Swiatek plays a forehand return.

PARIS: Carlos Alcaraz produced his best display of the tournament to line up a quarter-final rematch with Stefanos Tsitsipas at the French Open, while Iga Swiatek ramped up her bid for a third successive Roland Garros title with a 40-minute blitz on Sunday.

Alcaraz says he feels much more like himself in Paris after an injury-hit build-up saw him sidelined by a sore forearm for almost a month. His 6-3, 6-3, 6-1 win over Canadian 21st seed Felix Auger-Aliassime suggested he is rounding into top form, sending an ominous signal to his rivals as he made the last eight for the third year in succession.

The Spaniard pumped 34 winners past Auger-Aliassime as the persistent rain which heavily disrupted the first week of the tournament finally relented, allowing matches on the two main courts to go ahead without the need for their retractable roofs.

"I'm really happy with my performance. I think I played a really high level of tennis," said Alcaraz, beaten by eventual champion Novak Djokovic in the semi-finals last year. "The most important thing is to believe in myself. It doesn't matter that I don't have too many matches on my back and that I didn't come with a lot of rhythm."

"My game is getting better and better," he added. "My confidence is getting higher. Every practice that I'm doing or every day that I'm here in Roland Garros, I'm feeling better and better." Alcaraz moves

on to play Tsitsipas after the 2021 Roland Garros runner-up fended off Italy's Matteo Arnaldi 3-6, 7-6 (7/4), 6-2, 6-2, the turning point coming in the second set when he saved four set points.

"It was one of the craziest comebacks I've had," said ninth seed Tsitsipas. "That game when I broke (down 5-3 in the second set) was the biggest pleasure I've experienced in tennis for a long time." Alcaraz boasts a 5-0 career head-to-head record over Tsitsipas with three wins on clay, including a straight-sets victory in the French Open quarter-finals a year ago. "He has said in the past he likes playing against me, so I hope he gets to like it a little bit less this time," said Tsitsipas. Second seed Jannik Sinner dropped his first set of the tournament but recovered to end French interest in the men's draw, putting out Corentin Moutet 2-6, 6-3, 6-2, 6-1 in the night match.

Australian Open champion Sinner stumbled out of the gate and lost the first five games against an inspired Moutet, who was trying to reach a first Grand Slam quarter-final at the age of 25. But Sinner, who has lost only two matches this year and will replace Djokovic as world number one if he reaches the final,

steaded himself to nullify the threat of the 79th-ranked Moutet. "It was very tough for me. I think he played very, very well in the first set, so I had to adjust a little bit," said Sinner. He is through to a seventh Grand Slam quarter-final, the most by an Italian man in the Open era.

Sinner next faces Grigor Dimitrov, who defeated Hubert Hurkacz in straight sets to complete a set of Grand Slam quarter-finals. The Bulgarian has reached the last four of the other three majors but never made it to a final.

#### Swiatek in a hurry

Earlier in the day, women's world number one Swiatek demolished Russia's Anastasia Potapova 6-0, 6-0, conceding only 10 points in the shortest completed match of her career. "I was really focused and in the zone. I wasn't looking at the score so I continued working on my game," said Swiatek.

"It went pretty quickly... pretty weird." The Pole's brisk victory came on the same Court Philippe Chatrier where Djokovic had completed his third round win at 3:07 a.m., the latest finish to a French Open match after more than four hours and five sets. Swiatek, who saved a match point against Naomi Osaka in the second round, is a red-hot favourite to lift the Coupe Suzanne

Lenegren and become only the fourth woman to win four Roland Garros titles in the Open era. She next plays Wimbledon champion Marketa Vondrousova, the fifth seed who ended the run of Serbian qualifier Olga Danilovic in straight sets. US Open champion Coco Gauff made light work of Elisabetta Cocciaretto, sweeping past the world number 51 from Italy 6-1, 6-2.

Cocciaretto had taken down two seeds to reach the last 16 of a major for the first time but was no match for third seed Gauff, the 2022 French Open runner-up. The American advances to a quarter-final with three-time Grand Slam finalist Ons Jabeur, who beat Denmark's Clara Tauson 6-4, 6-4. — AFP

## Kuwait racer bags first place in World Motosurf



Fares Ramadan (centre)

KUWAIT: Kuwaiti racer Fares Ramadan from the Kuwait Marine Sports Club team achieved first place on Sunday in the Rookie Stock category in the second round of the World Motosurf Championship held in Poland.

Director of the water bike game at the Marine Sports Club, Ibrahim Ramadan, told KUNA Sunday that contestant Fares Ramadan achieved

first place in all the qualifiers that preceded the race in a tournament that witnessed the competition of 96 players representing 19 countries.

He pointed out that this achievement by racer Fares Ramadan comes as a culmination of the efforts made in the race and the pre-race preparations and psychological and physical preparation for the championship. — KUNA

## World Athletics launches new championship

PARIS: World Athletics on Monday launched a new three-day global championship starting in 2026 in Budapest to attempt to ensure track and field has a global audience in the years between world championships.

The World Athletics Ultimate Championship will take place every two years, with the first on September 11 to 13, 2026. Gold medallists are set to receive \$150,000 (138,000 euros) each from an overall prize fund of \$10 million, the largest ever prize pot in the history of the sport.

The event will be held every two years—in other words, in the years between outdoor world championships which are also biennial, with the next taking place in Tokyo

## Oilers oust Stars to reach first NHL Stanley Cup Final

EDMONTON: Connor McDavid scored one goal and set up another as the Edmonton Oilers reached the Stanley Cup Final for the first time since 2006 by defeating Dallas 2-1 on Sunday in the NHL playoffs.

Edmonton captain McDavid, considered by many the NHL's top player, will play for his first crown after a series-clinching performance by the Oilers, with goaltender Stuart Skinner making 34

saves. The Oilers won the best-of-seven Western Conference final 4-2 and will face the Florida Panthers in the best-of-seven Stanley Cup Final, which begins on Saturday. No Canadian club has captured the NHL crown since the 1993 Montreal Canadiens. Edmonton has not won the Stanley Cup since hoisting the trophy five times in seven seasons from 1984 to 1990. NHL legend Wayne Gretzky led the Oilers to four of those titles.

The Oilers have not reached the Stanley Cup Final since 2006, when they lost to Carolina in seven games. Florida, which lost to Vegas in last year's Stanley Cup Final and to Colorado in the 1996 final, has never won an NHL crown.

Dallas outshot Edmonton 35-10 but couldn't outscore the hosts. McDavid opened the scoring 4:17 into the game with a spectacular power

play goal, skating around two defenders from the left side and flicking a backhand shot past Dallas goaltender Jake Oettinger for his fifth tally of the playoffs. Zach Hyman netted his 14th goal of the playoffs on a power play goal with 4:18 remaining in the first period, taking a pass from McDavid and zipping a quick shot past Oettinger for a 2-0 Oilers edge. Edmonton denied Dallas on two extra-man chances in the first period, staying on top despite a 12-3 Stars edge in shots over the first 20 minutes that grew to 21-8 after a scoreless second period. Mason Marchment pulled Dallas within 2-1 with 10:42 remaining, tucking in the puck after a pass from Tyler Seguin from behind the goal, but the Stars never managed an equalizer, even after removing Oettinger for an extra attacker in the dying minutes. — AFP

title of the ultimate champion," Coe said.

"We want it to look different, we want it to feel different, we want it to be showtime, we want it to be focused on attracting new audiences." World Athletics have chosen to return to Budapest, which hosted the 2023 World Championships in front of near-capacity crowds for the evening sessions. They were "arguably our most successful world championships", Coe said.

While the venue for the 2028 Ultimate Championship has not been decided, the Briton said it was possible Budapest could be chosen again. "It is possible these could come back to Budapest in '28 but we are a global sport... fundamentally we want to make sure we go to places where we're not just chasing the dollar but we know we will go to organising committees that... have the ability and competence to deliver a world-class championships.

"If you don't, you are badly serving the athletes. There is no point increasing prize money for athletes if they are competing in front of empty stadiums." — AFP