

Gaza martyrs top 40,000

Ceasefire talks resume in Doha • Abbas meets Erdogan, vows to go to Gaza



(Left) Palestinians mourn a child killed in Zionist bombardment at Nasser Hospital in Khan Yunis in the southern Gaza Strip on Aug 14, 2024. (Right) Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan greets Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas as he arrives to deliver a speech at the Grand National Assembly of Turkey in Ankara on Aug 15, 2024. — AFP photos

DOHA/ANKARA/GAZA: The United States hailed a "promising start" to Gaza ceasefire talks Thursday, as pressure mounted for a deal to halt the spread of a war that has killed 40,000. The conflict has devastated Gaza, displaced nearly all of its population at least once and triggered a towering humanitarian crisis. Talks involving CIA director William Burns opened in the Qatari capital Doha, US National Security Council spokesman John Kirby said.

It was not immediately clear if Hamas had sent any delegates to the meeting, which the Zionist entity planned to attend. "Today is a promising start," Kirby told reporters in Washington, adding: "There remains a lot of work to do." The talks were expected to continue on Friday, he said. "We need to see the hostages released, relief for Palestinian civilians in Gaza, security for (the Zionist entity) and lower tensions in the region, and we need to see those things as soon as possible," he added.

So far, there has been only one, weeklong truce in November, when Gaza fighters released 105

NEWS IN BRIEF

Indian FM to visit Kuwait

NEW DELHI: India on Thursday announced that External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar will pay a visit to Kuwait to cement the bilateral relationship. A statement by the Indian external affairs ministry said Jaishankar will pay an official visit to Kuwait on Aug 18 to meet Kuwait Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya and the leadership of the state. "The external affairs minister's visit will enable both sides to review various aspects of our bilateral relations including political, trade, investment, energy, security, cultural, consular and people-to-people contacts, as well as exchange views on regional and international issues of mutual interest," the statement noted. — KUNA

Captive killed in 'revenge' attack

GAZA: Palestinian group Hamas said Thursday that a fighter in Gaza who shot dead a Zionist captive acted "in revenge" after hearing his children had died in a Zionist attack. The group said in a statement that its investigation into the Zionist man's death in captivity had found that "a conscript assigned to guard (the captive) acted against orders in revenge, after receiving news of the martyrdom of his two children in one of the enemy's massacres". A photograph released by Hamas showed a dead man covered in a bloodstained white shroud. The statement described his death as an "unfortunate incident". "Your brutality has become an imminent danger to your prisoners," Hamas added. — AFP

'Historic' deal to cut drug prices

WASHINGTON: Joe Biden shared a key economic victory with Democratic presidential nominee Kamala Harris on Thursday, after securing a cut on drug prices that could resonate with US voters worried about the cost of living. The 81-year-old president and 59-year-old vice president announced the deal as they prepared to make their first joint trip since Biden's seismic decision to drop out of the presidential election less than a month ago. The "historic" agreement with drugmakers will reduce the price of 10 key medicines for seniors, for conditions including diabetes, heart failure and blood clots, they said in joint statements released by the White House. — AFP



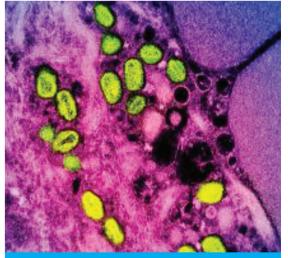
Mpox global health emergency, Kuwait monitoring situation

GENEVA: The World Health Organization on Wednesday declared the mpox surge in Africa a global public health emergency, sounding its highest possible alarm over the worsening situation. Worried by the rise in cases in the Democratic Republic of Congo and the spread to nearby countries, the WHO hastily convened a meeting of experts to study the outbreak.

"Today, the emergency committee met and advised me that in its view, the situation constitutes a public health emergency of international concern. I have accepted that advice," WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus told a press conference. A PHE-IC is the highest level of alarm under the International Health Regulations, which are legally binding on 196 countries. "The detection and rapid spread of a new clade of mpox in eastern DRC, its detection in neighboring countries that had not previously reported mpox, and the potential for further spread within Africa and beyond is very worrying," said Tedros. "It's clear that a coordinated international response is essential to stop these outbreaks and save lives. "This is something that should concern us all." Sweden on Thursday announced the first case outside Africa of the more dangerous variant of mpox.

Kuwait's ministry of health said on Thursday that it was following up on the spread of the new mpox variant in several African countries. In a statement, the ministry affirmed that it was working with regional and international partners to monitor the situation and prepare viable responses, revealing that Kuwait's Center for Disease Control (CDC) was coordinating with several national entities in this regard.

The ministry indicated that a polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test could verify infection, noting that treatment includes supportive care medicine that decreases symptoms or antibiotics for some cases. **Continued on Page 6**



This undated image shows a colorized transmission electron micrograph of mpox particles (green) found within an infected cell (pink and purple) cultured in the laboratory. — AFP

Warm welcome for returning pearl divers

By Khaled Al-Abdulhadi

KUWAIT: Around 150 young divers returned from the 33rd annual pearl diving trip on Thursday. Relatives and officials welcomed them with the "Qaffal" ceremony, hosted by Kuwait Sea Sports Club. The event celebrated Kuwait's seafaring heritage with displays of traditional ships, attire, tools and artwork related to pearl diving.

The ceremony included the return of diving ships, the lowering of Kuwait's flag and a focus on preserving cultural heritage. Club President Maj Gen Fahad Al-Fahad highlighted the importance of connecting the younger generation with Kuwait's history and thanked HH the Amir, the divers and their families for their contributions. **(See Page 3)**



KUWAIT: Returning pearl divers are welcomed during the Al-Qaffal ceremony at Kuwait Sea Sports Club in Salmiya on Aug 15, 2024.

Columbia president resigns months after campus Gaza demos

NEW YORK: The president of New York's Columbia University resigned on Wednesday, just weeks before the start of the new school year, citing the toll taken by a "period of turmoil" after she faced scrutiny for her handling of demonstrations over the Zionist-Hamas war. British-American economist Minouche Shafik is the fourth president of an Ivy League university to step down in the wake of the bitter divisions and anti-war protests that swept campuses nationwide.

The protests that roiled Columbia and other schools culminated in US Congress grilling higher education leaders about accusations of "anti-Semitism" and whether enough was being done to keep Jewish students safe. Shafik, who last year became the first woman to lead Columbia, said in a letter to the university's community that she felt her tenure had "made progress in a number of important areas" but noted it was also "a period of turmoil where it has been difficult to overcome divergent views across our community".

"This period has taken a considerable toll on my family, as it has for others in our community," she said. "Over the summer, I have been able to reflect and have decided that my moving on at this point would best enable Columbia to traverse the challenges ahead." She said her resignation was effective immediately, and announced she was taking a role with the UK Foreign Secretary to lead a review of the government's approach to international development.

With the fall semester starting in just three weeks, Columbia's board of trustees named Katrina Armstrong, the dean of the medical school, as interim president. Columbia was an epicenter of the campus



Minouche Shafik

anti-war protest movement that spanned the United States and ignited heated debate about Washington's support for Israel's bombardment of Gaza. Pro-Palestinian protesters set up encampments on Columbia's campus in April while Shafik testified at a House committee investigating "anti-Semitism". **Continued on Page 6**



Local

IICO lays the foundation stone for educational projects for orphans

Charity launches Al-Lahib Educational Village in Indonesia

In my view

No room for complacency in age of Artificial Intelligence



By Yousef Alkhadhari

e are currently living through the eve of what is likely the most monumental shift human civilization has ever seen. Many are unaware of what is on the horizon, and many would simply like to stay in denial. In the coming years, many will realize that the world they have been taught to grow up in will soon be a distant memory, due to technological tidal waves which will most likely redefine everything it means to be human. Over the past two years, the world has become increasingly familiar with the term "AI", standing for artificial intelligence.

ChatGPT users in early 2023 were blown away by the ability of a computer to converse with them much in the same way a human would A user can go to ChatGPT and simply talk about their day, they can also however ask it to write a tale in the form of a Shakespearean sonnet about a battle set in Ancient China, while incorporating elements of Greek mythology and Roman poetry, and marvel at the work being produced exactly as requested within a matter of seconds.

If that second one sounded perhaps a bit random, that was the point — these systems are capable of responding to even the most absurdly random prompts in ways that are utterly stunning. It is a testament to humanity's ability to adapt that we now look upon these things as completely normal.

The dangerous situation we now find ourselves in is that many seem to think this is where AI stops, as just a tool that can quickly write an interesting poem for you or help you with your homework, I'm sorry to disappoint, but this could not be further from the truth. Systems like OpenAI's ChatGPT, or Google's Gemini, are the result of years of incredibly complex research that has been conducted in AI labs with most people barely noticing.

A technique to which the success of practically all useful modern AI systems can be attributed, known as deep learning, led to breakthroughs in humanity's ability to create truly intelligent systems that did not need our instructions to solve issues. I would rather not bore you with too many technical details, but this method of programming completely reshaped the landscape of artificial intelligence, leading to the revolution we are now living through.

We are currently the dominant species on this planet. This is not due to our strength or speed, rather it is a result of our intelligence. Our ancestors battled other species of humans such as the Neanderthals, who were by far our superior in terms of strength, but we came out victorious because our intelligence allowed us to cooperate in



International Islamic Charitable Organization launches a project to provide educational materials and opportunities. — KUNA photos

comes. He stated

that the vision in this

context is consis-

tent with the fourth

goal of the United

Nations Sustainable

Development Goals,

which focuses on

ensuring quality and

comprehensive edu-

cation for all, stress-

ing that the authority

KUWAIT: The International Islamic Charitable Organization (IICO) has laid the foundation stone for five educational, rehabilitation, and service projects for orphans in Sheikh Ali Saleh Al-Lahib Educational Village in Banten, Indonesia, in cooperation with the Indonesian-Kuwaiti Association. Deputy Director General for Corporate Communications at the organization Ibrahim Al-Badr said in a press statement on Thursday that the village will serve 1,150 male and female students.

There will be a dormitory for male and female students, a center for memorizing the Holy Quran, and another for vocational training that includes a computer lab and two workshops for mechanics and carpentry, with a total cost of more than one million dollars. Al-Badr added that the village aims to improve the lives of orphans and provide educational opportunities that enable them to achieve a better future.

IICO is launching this project from its strategic vision that aims to provide quality educational opportunities with high-quality out-



eties that are aspiring to grow. He continued, "By naming this village after the late Saleh Al-Lahib, we remember with pride and reverence one of the great men in the State of Kuwait," pointing to the proceeds of his endowment that supports the construction of mosques, schools, orphanages, and vocational training centers in various parts of the world.

For his part, the general supervisor of the Indonesian-Kuwaiti Charitable Society, Engineer Ahmed Al-Holi, said that Al-Lahib Educational Village is added to a number of qualitative Kuwaiti charitable villages and projects in Indonesia, most notably the Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Charitable Village. Al-Lahib village is located on an area of 3,173 square meters of endowment land and aims to provide educational, moral, and professional care for 1,150 male and female orphan students.

The village includes a school consisting of 12 classrooms in addition to a 12-room residence to provide a stimulating environment for them to succeed. There are also a computer lab, two mechanical and carpentry workshops, and a vocational training center to qualify them for the labor market. The village also includes a residence for 225 female students consisting of nine rooms to provide a safe and comfortable environment for them to study and a Ouran memorization center that includes nine classrooms and a multi-purpose hall. — KUNA



believes that edu-**Ibrahim Al-Badr** cation is one of the basic needs for soci-

large groups the way no other animal has ever been able to.

We've all watched or read stories about aliens coming across our planet. Sometimes they admire us and elevate us to explore the entire universe with them; other times they show great disdain for our species and punish us for our hubris. What I find interesting about the world today, considering what is fast approaching, is that very few stop to think, what will the world look like when a new species, vastly smarter than me or anyone I know, predicted by former Google X Chief Business Officer Mo Gawdat to be a billion times smarter than all of humanity combined by 2037, arrives on this planet?

In 1997, the then world champion chess player Gary Kasparov played against Deep Blue, a computer system designed by American technology company IBM, specifically to play chess. At this point, computer systems hadn't yet beaten the top chess player, and it was generally thought at the time that it could not be done, as human intuition would always give us a slight edge. However, it was at this pivotal moment that the chess world looked on in amazement as Deep Blue won the game, and since then, it has become evident that no human will ever again beat the best chess playing machine.

The game of Go is thought to be amongst the most complex humans have ever played. In 2015, the computer system AlphaGo made shockwaves by defeating the then European Go champion, the first time in the history of the game that a top human player had lost to a machine. The win itself was shocking enough, but even more interesting, is the fact that merely 6 months later, the system went on to defeat Lee Sedol, the world champion Go player. The system had in 6 months gone from never beating a human, to defeating the world champion.

AlphaGo even demonstrated incredible problem solving abilities and foresight, with its now infamous, move 37. Move 37 was a move made by AlphaGo in the second game against Lee, and it serves as a good illustrator of what we as humanity are heading into. The move was so unorthodox, Lee the world champion had to ask for a recess to even comprehend why the system would make such a seemingly disastrous blunder. Experts watching the game were convinced this was a critical mistake. Yet demonstrating its strategic brilliance, AlphaGo had actually used the move to creatively disrupt Lee's pattern of play, and ultimately win the game.

We are creating intelligences which have already proven capable of outthinking even the most intelligent of our species. We must begin to confront what this means. If we have risen to the top of the hierarchy of this planet due to our intelligence, what happens when a more intelligent species exists? It seems clear to me that whatever it wishes to do, it will be able to do, so let us all hope that it has humanity's best interests in mind.

It seems clear that this is the most pressing challenge of our time, and by even reading this article, you have a better idea of what's coming than most. As we speak, incredible amounts of money are being poured into rapid AI advancement, at the same that a dedicated group of computer scientists and engineers across the planet are working out how we can safely enter this new future, and give rise to machines that benefit human civilization, rather than destroy it.

You may at this point be wondering what the best course of action would be for you personally, given the frankly almost inconceivable changes in the world. The truth of the matter is no one really knows what to tell you, as technological progress, especially in this area, is extremely difficult to forecast. I can't give you a specific year for when certain things will happen, although I'm confident that what I've mentioned will be in the spotlight for practically all of us by the end of the decade. For now, simply do your best.

If I can ask a small favor, try to engage more in these discussions and make those around you aware of them. Please feel free to focus on whatever it is you seek to achieve in your life, but keep in mind that change is the only constant, and the world can change in an astoundingly short time. I have hope that we as humanity can guide this future in a direction that results in more prosperity and joy for us all, but we must not be complacent. Let us all do the best we can, for our very future as a species is at stake.

KUWAIT: Indian Ambassador Dr Adarsh Swaika addresses Indians on the occasion of India's 78th Independence Day on August 15, 2024.

Kuwait sends relief planeload to Sudan

KUWAIT: The second relief plane took off on Thursday as part of the Kuwaiti humanitarian air bridge heading to Port Sudan International Airport, carrying 27 tons of food and medical supplies and an ambulance, organized by the Kuwait Society for Relief (KSR). Chairman Dr Ibrahim Al-Saleh told KUNA prior to takeoff that this initiative comes as part of a campaign to provide aid to the Sudanese people, launched by the KSR in cooperation with eight Kuwaiti charitable societies and in line with directives of Kuwait's leadership to alleviate the urgent humanitarian needs resulting from the floods that hit northern Sudan, in conjunction with the ongoing internal conflicts.

Meanwhile, Kuwait's first new air bridge plane carrying 10 tons of relief aid arrived in Sudan on Wednesday to help those affected by the war and floods in that country. Head of delegation of Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) Faisal Al-Jarallah told KUNA that the new air bridge of aid planes includes tens, health equipment, and insecticides for Sudan, under the directives of Kuwait's leadership to help Sudanese who are in distress.

He affirmed the continuation of additional aid planes in the next period for those affected by the war as part of Kuwait's support for brothers in Sudan. The plane was received in the presence of Kuwait's Embassy staff in Port Sudan and KRCS officials. Meanwhile, acting head of Sudan Red Crescent Society Hassan



Kuwait Society for Relief's second relief plane. — KUNA photos



Abu Bakr expressed appreciation to Kuwait for this support, which shows continued cooperation between the two societies. He not-



ed that the Sudanese society would supervise distributing humanitarian aid in Nile and the Northern States in the first phase. — KUNA



Local

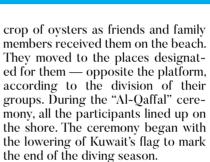
Pearl diving trip winds up

Large crowds attend 'Qaffal' ceremony to welcome returning divers





Kuwait's seafaring heritage materials, attire, ship-making tools, musical instruments and pearl diving equipment are displayed during the event.



The Club's president, Major General Fahad Al-Fahad, stated that the purpose of the diving trip is not only to collect oysters and search for pearls. "It emphasizes the importance of preserving heritage and strengthening the connection of the present generation with the heritage of this dear country and its past, as well as drawing lessons and meanings from the sacrifices of parents and grandparents from the first generation," he said. He thanked His Highness the Amir and praised the efforts of the divers, their families, and the Club's Maritime Heritage Committee.



Personification of Kuwait's philanthropic

Pharaonic Nisarriya attracts wildlife lovers

KUWAIT: In northern and western Kuwait, specifically between the rocky heights of Jal Al-Zour in the desert of Kazma and the cracks of Al-Shaqaya, lives the largest owl in the Middle East — the Pharaonic Nisarriya, which has become a well-known landmark there. This owl attracts wildlife lovers, as photographers are keen to document it and monitor its settlement and reproduction, whether in Kuwait, the Arabian Gulf, or the Middle East.

Deputy Director General for Technical Affairs at the Environment Public Authority (EPA), Dr Abdullah Al-Zaidan, told KUNA on Thursday that he documented the presence of the owl in different areas in the country. It is found in abundance in the Sabah Al-Ahmad Reserve, Jal Al-Zour, and



Pharaonic Nisarriya is pictured at the Jahra Reserve, which was rehabilitated by the Scientific Center.



Al-Shaqaya, as well as in demilitarized zones west of Kuwait and other areas.

Al-Zaidan added that the cracks in these areas are a safe haven for this owl and a natural habitat for it, where it reproduces away from human activities, noting that its habitat is mostly in an open, barren area with rocky outcrops, plains, valleys, and slopes. He pointed out that it is also found in Africa and the Middle East, including Saudi Arabia, the Emirates, Oman, Iraq and Iran.

Regarding its name (Pharaonic Nisarriya), he explained that this is due to its large size, which is similar to the size of eagles and vultures, as its length is between 46 and 50 centimeters. It is also distinguished by its yellow-orange eyes, two short tufts of feathers on its ears, and a face like a cat. He stated that it is usually monogamous. He stated that this owl is a nocturnal bird that hunts at night and until dusk in an area of about five square kilometers and feeds on small creatures, including mammals, birds, snakes, lizards, beetles, and scorpions. It hunts its prey in complete silence and does not make any sound from its flight even when approaching the prey due to the nature of its special feathers.

The Pharaonic Nisarriya does not face any threats, but its natural habi-



Egyptian eagle owl. — KUNA photos

ed the 33rd "Qaffal" and heritage

season events for divers. The event

was hosted by the Kuwait Sea Club under the sponsorship of the Amir

His Highness Sheikh Mishal Al-Ah-

mad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. Around 150

young men participated in the event,

including Nawakhada (captains) and

the divers. The event also featured a display of Kuwait's seafaring heritage

materials, including a display of ships,

attire, ship-making tools, musical in-

struments and pearl diving equipment

that are commonly associated with

Arab Gulf diving. There was also a

display of artwork related to pearl

turn of the diving ships to the Club's

coast, and after the arrival of the

ships successively, the Nawakha-

da and divers disembarked from the

ships carrying their tools and their

The ceremony began with the re-

diving made by local artists.



tats are disappearing due to urbanization, so it is listed as a species of least concern on the International Union for Conservation of Nature's Red List. Regarding the local efforts to preserve it, he explained that there is joint cooperation between the concerned parties in this regard, as nature reserves such as the Sabah Al-Ahmad Reserve, under the supervision of the Volunteer Work Center and the Reserves Management Team and the patronage of Sheikha Amthal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, contributed to monitoring and documenting the owl and preserving its natural habitat.

He added that these efforts include cooperation between the Public Au-



Young Pharaoh eagle owl

thority for the Environment and the Scientific Center, which include programs to rehabilitate wild creatures and release them in their natural habitats, including this type of owl. He stressed the importance of preserving the bird as it contributes to maintaining the ecological balance as it feeds on rodents and limits their spread. — KUNA

legacy: Dr Al-Sumait

KUWAIT: If philanthropy could be embodied in a person, the late Dr Abdurrahman Al-Sumait would surely be befitting, as his legacy within the field is unsurpassed by any individual in recent history. Born October 15, 1947, in Kuwait, Al-Sumait always had the woes and troubles of the needy worldwide on his mind, and during his life, he dedicated himself to ease the suffering of people and promote welfare to all, especially to those residing on the African continent.

Al-Sumait's academic career saw him first graduate from Baghdad's College of Medicine in 1972, which was followed by a diploma in tropical diseases from the University of Liverpool

in 1974, and in 1978, he specialized in internal medicine and digestive diseases while studying at McGill University in Canada. Al-Sumait worked in a hospital in Montreal, Canada, as well as the King's College hospital in London, before becoming a gastroenterologist in Al-Sabah hospital in Kuwait in 1980-83.



Dr Abdurrahman Al-Sumait

In 1981, Al-Sumait

visited Malawi — a trip that changed his life — due to the devastating situation in this particular African country, which led him to establish the Malawi Muslims committee in cooperation with several charitable teams. He knew very well that the task was daunting; therefore, he established the Africa Muslim Committee, which was then changed to the Direct Aid organization.

Al-Sumait left medicine and embarked on a long, illustrious journey to help the poor in Africa and elevate the situation of the needy there. He made it his mission to make the Direct Aid organization a force to be reckoned with in terms of actually helping people and supervising relief aid efforts himself, which led to the betterment of millions of lives in Africa, providing education, infrastructure, facilities, mosques, and tens of thousands of drinkable water wells throughout the vast continent.

The Direct Aid organization also helped train and prepare around 4,000 teachers to spread the true notions of Islam in addition to sponsoring thousands upon thousands of orphans. Later in life, Al-Sumait earned several awards, including a medal from the GCC leaders for charitable efforts in 1986, the King Faisal award for the service of Islam in 1996, the Order of the Two Niles from Sudan in 1999, and many others.

In honor of Al-Sumait's lifelong efforts, the late Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah announced during the third Arab-African Summit held in Kuwait in 2013 the annual Al-Sumait Prize for the development in Africa. The one-million-dollar prize honors individuals or institutions who have made significant advances in food security, health, and education in Africa through their work or research. Despite living most of his life in strenuous situations, Al-Sumait felt pride in what he did for the less fortunate. On August 15, 2013, Dr Abdurrahman Al-Sumait passed away, leaving behind a legacy to be remembered by millions worldwide. — KUNA



Egyptian eagle owl is distinguished by its yellow-orange eyes.



Female Pharaoh eagle owl in the nest.







THE LEADING INDEPENDENT DAILY IN THE ARABIAN GULF **ESTABLISHED 1961**

Founder and Publisher YOUSUF S. AL-ALYAN

Editor-in-Chief ABD AL-RAHMAN AL-ALYAN

EDITORIAL : 24833199-24833358-24833432 ADVERTISING : 24833199 Extn. 359 : 24833199 Extn. 361 CIRCULATION ACCOUNTS : 24833199 Extn. 125 P.O.Box 1301 Safat,13014 Kuwait. Email: info@kuwaittimes.com Website: www.kuwaittimes.com



KUWAIT: Boats are pictured along the Arabian **Gulf Road**.

Meteorological dept predicts more heat

KUWAIT: Kuwait's Meteorological Department said the country's weather during the weekend will be very hot during the day and hot to warm at night. Director of the Department Abdulaziz Al-Qarawi told KUNA that the country is affected by an extension of the Indian seasonal depression accompanied by a very hot and relatively humid air mass on the coastal areas.

Al-Qarawi explained that the weather during the day will be very hot with variable winds between 10 and 28 kilometers per hour. The expected maximum temperatures will be between 48 and 50 degrees Celsius, and the sea will be light-to-moderate with waves between 1 and 3 feet. Al-Qarawi said that the weather on Saturday will be very hot and relatively humid in coastal areas. with northwesterly to variable winds between 12 and 35 km/h

NBK calls to ensure 'URL legitimacy and website matching' when shopping online

Within its ongoing efforts to promote 'Let's Be Aware' awareness campaign

financial literacy and inclusion among all sectors of society, National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) continues promoting the "Let's Be Aware" banking awareness campaign introduced by the Central Bank of Kuwait, in cooperation with Kuwaiti banks and Kuwait Banking Association (KBA). NBK intensifies awareness by sharing educational content including video clips, text messages, and tips across its social media platforms and other digital channels, as well as reposting CBK's communications, aiming to raise awareness among all people and familiarize them with the various fraud schemes and required precautions.

In this context, the bank called to check website URL to ensure using the legitimate website when shopping or making any banking transactions online to avoid falling victim to fraud. NBK also stressed on never clicking any links from unknown sources, whether via e-mail or social media platforms, which

AFCENT band delights Bayt Abdullah kids

By Passant Hisham

KUWAIT: In hope of bringing joy to the children and easing their suffering at Bayt Abdullah Hospital, the US Embassy has partnered with the Air Forces Central Band (AFCENT) for a special musical performance. US Ambassador to Kuwait, Karen Hideko Sasahara, said, "This performance provides the children with a chance to temporarily escape their challenges and experience something uplifting. Every child deserves a bit of joy, and we hope this event brings that to them tonight.'

Regarding US-Kuwait relations, Ambassador Sasahara noted that her role extends beyond just diplomacy and policy. She said, "I am here as a guest in Kuwait. I want to be a good guest and learn about the country." She expressed her eagerness to see, hear, and meet people to understand what's happening locally. "Being here tonight is both a privilege and an honor, and it's a new part of Kuwait that I am witnessing," the ambassador added.

She highlighted that the relationship between the United States and Kuwait spans many decades. While some may view it as merely a result of the liberation 34 years ago, she noted that the bond is much deeper. "Our ties go beyond that," she said, pointing out that five generations of Kuwaiti students have studied in the US. She further explained that the connection includes cultural, financial, and commercial aspects.

"Kuwaitis who have spent time in the United States often bring valuable experiences back with them. I believe Kuwait has shown its commitment to the United States, and I feel we also have a commitment to uphold towards Kuwait," she said. Dr Tala Al-Dabbous, CEO and Director of Clinical Services at Catch and Bayt Abdullah, expressed her happiness with the presence of the American "AFCENT" musical group at Bayt Abdullah Hospital. "Our top priority is to entertain our children, just as any parent seeks happiness for their kids. These children are like our own," she said. At KACCH and BACCH Catch, she affirmed their preference for using the term 'children' over 'patient.' "Today, the 'AFCENT' team is here to bring joy and

KUWAIT: Reflecting its active role in promoting may redirect the user to clone websites, as scammers make clone web pages that look exactly like well-known shopping websites, so, it is necessary to check the URL before entering any credentials or banking information. With the ever-growing fraud threats using various techniques, NBK is keen to protect customers and increase their awareness of how to steer clear of these threats by following the tips provided across its digital channels.

The bank also affirms that it will never ask customers for personal information via e-mail, SMS or phone calls, warning them of responding to such messages representing fraud attempts to obtain their banking information to steal their money or information. NBK employs its strong customer communication capabilities as well as all its digital channels, which are the most popular among all Kuwaiti banks, to support the Central Bank's endeavors to protect customers and the national economy.

It is worth mentioning that NBK is a key support-



er and partner in all CBK's campaigns and initiatives aiming to increase financial and banking awareness among different segments of society. As a leading financial institution in Kuwait, NBK frequently organizes various activities to raise awareness on all topics related to the banking sector, as well as various training courses for its employees to enhance their experience in the areas of combating fraud and financial crime.



US Ambassador Karen Hideko Sasahara takes a picture with Bayt Abdullah children, families and staff.



Bayt Abdullah children and families enjoying the musical performance

help these kids feel like they're living a normal life. Bayt Abdullah was designed to bring all essential services and support into one place," Dabbous added.

Chip Cothran, AFCENT Band Manager, noted that the band serves as musical ambassadors of the United States, travelling across the region and connecting with diverse audiences through the universal language of music. He described their recent performance at Bayt Abdullah Children's Hospice as a privilege, highlighting the joy it brought to the children, their families, and the staff. "It was an honor to have the opportunity to put a smile on their faces, rhythm in their feet, and joy in their hearts! We look forward to the next time we get to perform in Kuwait City," he said.



The expected maximum temperature will range between 48 and 51 degrees Celsius, and the sea will be light to moderate in waves, between 2 and 5 feet. He pointed out that the weather on Saturday night will be hot and relatively humid, especially in coastal areas, with variable winds between 10 and 30 km/h. - KUNA

AFCENT band poses for a picture during the event's performance.



Scan & Subscribe KD 20 a year



For Individuals Only

Scan Now





Tel: 24833199 Ext: 220



'India Utsav' at LuLu Hypermarket a kaleidoscope of culture, heritage

KUWAIT: As India celebrated its 78th Independence Day, LuLu Hypermarket transformed into a tri-colored symphony of all-things-Indian during the week-long 'India Utsav' promotion. Held from August 14 - 20, the cultural and shopping extravaganza was a true celebration of the Indian spirit, showcasing the country's diversity and its unique blend of tradition and innovation. The festivities kicked off with a grand inauguration ceremony on August 14 at the Al-Rai outlet, as Indian Ambassador to Kuwait Adarsh Swaika along with LuLu Kuwait's top management, revealed the wonders of the fest amidst the melodies of a traditional Indian music band.

The 'India Science Expo & Monuments Expo' for students was a showstopper that displayed the creativity of young minds in exhibiting India's inspiring scientific advancements and architectural marvels. Winners of the expo were rewarded with exciting prizes, while all participants took home consolation prizes. The 'Future India' wall was another thought-provoking display.

As customers ventured through the hypermarket, they discovered a treasure trove of exclusive offers and discounts on products, ranging from fragrant Indian spices, groceries, meat & fish, fruits and vegetables to health and beauty, households, and fashion. The 'Indian Ethnic Fashion and Food - Couples Show' was a visual feast, bringing out the elegance of Indian attire, and the diversity of its cuisines. Selfie enthusiasts were able to snap memories against vibrant backdrops of traditional monuments and displays, while cultural programs performed by Indian school students filled the air with music and dance that kept everyone entertained.

Enticing aromas wafted from special food stalls and free sampling counters, tempting taste buds with authentic Indian flavors. LuLu Hypermarket also unveiled an array of new Indian products, catering to the diverse preferences of its customers. LuLu Hypermarket's 'India Utsav' celebration was a cultural spectacle that will be remembered and cherished by shoppers, a true celebration of India's diversity, spirit and splendor.



Internations Established used Times The The Times The Times of Times of The Times of The Times of Time



Protests sweep India over rape and murder of doctor

Bangladesh may seek extradition of Hasina as cases mount: Advisor $_{Page 6}$

RAFAH, Palestinian Territories: Palestinians mourn after identifying corpses of relatives killed in overnight Zionist bombardment on the southern Gaza Strip at Al-Najjar hospital in Rafah. - AFP

40,000 and counting: Gazans lose tens of thousands in war

'It is very difficult to say goodbye, because the martyrs are buried very quickly'

GAZA STRIP: With Gaza largely in ruins after more than 10 months of war, the Hamas-run territory's health Omar said she lost everything "in a fraction of a sec-

Page 7

ministry has struggled to count the death toll, which on Thursday surpassed 40,000. The Zionist entity has repeatedly questioned the credibility of the daily figures put out by the ministry and US President Joe Biden did so too in the early stages of the war. But several United Nations agencies that operate in Gaza have said the figures are credible and they are frequently cited by international organizations.

Two AFP correspondents witnessed health facilities enter deaths in the ministry's database. Gaza health officials first identify bodies by visual recognition from a relative or friend, or by recovering personal items. The deceased's details, including name, gender, birth date and ID number, are then entered in the health ministry's digital database. Umm Omar told AFP she did not understand "how the months have gone by" since her husband, Ibrahim Al-Shanbari, was killed in a Zionist

ond", but there was little time to bury him properly, grieve or process the loss of the "kind" man that he was.

There was no funeral procession or "any of the usual mourning (rituals) because it's wartime", Umm Omar added. "It was very difficult to say goodbye... because the martyrs were buried very quickly," she said, with fighting raging across the besieged territory. To help Ella, "I ended up pretending" her father was still alive, said Umm Omar.

Still, according to her, others had it worse, "those who have lost an entire family, those who have not been able to say goodbye, or those who find their children in pieces". With more than 1.5 percent of Gaza's 2.4 million population killed during the war, many people have lost loved ones. If bodies are unrecognizable or unclaimed, staff record the death under a number, noting all available information.

mark, are collected and photographed.

Gaza's health ministry has outlined its procedures for compiling the death toll. In public hospitals under the direct supervision of the territory's Hamas government, the "personal information and identity number" of every Palestinian killed during the war are entered in the hospital's database as soon as they are pronounced dead. The data is then sent to the ministry's central registry on a daily basis.

For deaths in private hospitals and clinics, information is recorded on a form that must be sent to the ministry within 24 hours to be included in the central registry, a ministry statement said. The ministry's "information centre" then verifies the entries to "ensure they do not contain any duplicates or mistakes", before saving them in the database, the statement added. Gaza residents are also encouraged by Palestinian

the ministry's verifications.

The ministry is staffed with civil servants that answer to the West Bank-based Palestinian Authority as well as to the Hamas government in Gaza. An investigation conducted by Airwars, an NGO focused on the impact of war on civilians, analyzed the data entries for 3,000 of the dead and found "a high correlation" between the ministry's data and what Palestinian civilians reported online, with 75 percent of publicly reported names also appearing on the ministry's list. The study found that the ministry's figures had become "less accurate" as the war dragged on, a development it attributed to the heavy damage to health infrastructure resulting from the war. For instance, at southern Gaza's Nasser Hospital, one of the few still at least partly functioning, only 50 out of 400 computers still work, its director Atef Al-Hout said. — AFP

Ukraine, Russia claim advances in Kursk region

KYIV: Ukraine on Thursday claimed fresh advances in its cross-border offensive into Russia, where it said it had seized over a thousand square kilometers, the biggest attack by a foreign army on Russian soil since World War II. Russia said it had recaptured a first village from Ukrainian forces in the Kursk region and announced it was sending "additional forces" to the neighboring Belgorod region.

Ukraine said it now controlled dozens of settlements and Sudzha, a town eight kilometers (five miles) from the border. "We have taken control of 1,150 square kilometers of territory and 82 settlements," said top military commander Oleksandr Syrsky. Syrsky's troops launched the offensive on August 6, breaking months of setbacks for the Ukrainian army that has been battling a Russian invasion for over two years.

The top general also told President Volodymyr Zelensky his army had set up an administrative office "to maintain law and order and meet the priority needs of the population in the controlled territories".

Zelensky announced "the completion of the liberation of the town of Sudzha from the Russian military"

At an Orthodox church in the centre of Sumy, the regional hub across the border from Kursk, dozens of mourners gathered Thursday to pay their final respects to six Ukrainian servicemen killed since Kyiv launched its offensive. Tearful family members of the victims received a steady stream of friends and relatives wearing black and clutching wreaths as the priest intoned a



SUMY, Ukraine: Relatives, friends and fellow soldiers mourn over a coffin during the funeral of six Ukrainian servicemen in Sumy, northeastern Ukraine, on August 15, 2024. — AFP

funeral mass and incense hung in the air. "It is hard to say goodbye to them, because we want them to live forever, to live among us as honored sons of their homeland," the priest told mourners.

"Our task is to pray for our heroic fighters and their families." Pallbearers lifted the coffins one by one for burial as a choir sang hymns in harmony. Air raid sirens echoed over Sumy as the service ended.

In Kursk, AFP reporters saw around 500 evacuees from border areas queuing for food and clothes being distributed by the Russian Red Cross. Russia says over 120,000 people have left or been evacuated.

The assault took Russian troops by surprise and triggered the evacuation of tens of thousands. The fighting killed at least 12 civilians and wounded 121 others according to Russian authorities, who have not released a toll since Monday. Moscow scrambled reinforcement and announced the recapture of a first village in the Kursk region on Thursday. The ministry said the army had "completed destruction of the enemy and restored control of the settlement of Krupets."

The Russian army also announced measures to prevent attacks on neighboring regions, particularly Belgorod. The Russian army has prepared "concrete actions" to defend the Belgorod region from Ukrainian attacks, minister Andrei Belousov said at a meeting with officials including Belgorod region governor Vyacheslav Gladkov. They include "the allocation of additional forces."

Both Kursk and Belgorod regions have seen small incursions since Russian President Vladimir Putin launched his invasion of Ukraine. — AFP



By filing the final list of debts according to the procedures with the bankruptcy department on 8-8-2024.

To see the list of debts, please scan the QR Code.



Any creditor whose name is not included in the list may file a grievance in accordance with Article 111 of Law 71 of 2020.



Tel. No.: 69994837 - WhatsApp No.: 69994837



International

6

Bangladesh may seek extradition of Hasina as cases mount: Advisor

Yunus invites UN investigators to probe 'atrocities' • Mob beats ex-PM's supporters

DHAKA: As cases rise against her, including murder accusations, Bangladesh will decide whether to ask India to extradite former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, who resigned and fled to New Delhi last week, the country's de-facto foreign minister Mohammad Touhid Hossain said on Thursday. Hossain said in an interview he did not want to speculate, but noted that Hasina was facing "so many cases". If the country's home and law ministries decided, "we have to ask for her...return to Bangladesh", he said.

"That creates an embarrassing situation for the Indian government," he said, adding India "knows this and I am sure they will take care of it". He did not elaborate. India's foreign ministry did not immediately respond to a request seeking comment.

Hasina fled the country for India on Aug 5 after a violent uprising against her led to nearly 300 people getting killed, including many students. She has been named in two murder cases already, along with senior members of her cabinet. Ataur Rahman, deputy director of the investigation cell of International Crimes Tribunal, a domestic court, said it had launched a third case - an investigation against ten people, including Hasina, for murder, torture and genocide during the period of the protests. Mobs vowing to guard Bangladesh's student-led revolution roamed the site of a planned rally for ousted premier Sheikh Hasina on Thursday, beating up some of her suspected supporters with bamboo rods and pipes.

The interim government replacing her, led by Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus, has invited UN investigators to probe the violent "atrocities" that accompanied her ouster, which saw hundreds killed by security forces. Thursday is the anniversary of the 1975 assassination during a military coup of Hasina's father, independence hero Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, a date her government had declared a national holiday. A United Nations team will travel to Bangladesh to investigate "atrocities" committed during the unrest that toppled premier Sheikh Hasina last week, the country's interim government said in a statement Thursday. "The United Nations is sending a UN fact-finding team next week to probe atrocities committed during the Student Revolution in July and early this month," the statement said. It added that the move had been discussed between UN human rights chief Volker Turk and interim Bangladeshi leader Muhammad Yunus during a phone call late Wednesday. The statement said the fact-finding mission would be tasked with investigating "widespread human rights abuses".

At least three of Hasina's former ministers and advisers have already been arrested in Bangladesh. In her only statement since her ouster, Hasina has demanded a probe into the killings and vandalism during the protests. She has not commented on the charges against her.

Hossain, a retired diplomat, is the adviser on foreign affairs in the interim government led by Nobel laureate Mohammed Yunus, which was sworn in last week after Hasina's ouster. The council of advisers includes other retired officials, lawyers, student leaders of the protests and some opposition politicians.

In his first interview to international media since taking over, Hossain said Yunus is "very unhappy about the way the statements are coming from India, from the former prime minister" and he conveyed this to the Indian envoy in a meeting on Wednesday. Hossain also asked India, and other countries, to take in more Rohingya refugees from Myanmar, as Bangladesh was not in a position to accept any more.

Hossain said other countries need to put pressure on the Arakan Army rebel group in Myanmar to "ensure this does not happen", referring to attacks on Ro-hingyas in their native Rakhine state.

Huge rallies around Bangladesh marked the occasion in previous years but those glad to see Hasina toppled were eager to ensure supporters of her Awami League party did not have a chance to regroup. "Fugitive and dictator Sheikh Hasina has ordered her goons and militia forces to come to the site so they can produce a counter-revolu-

US wants 'tangible results' at Sudan ceasefire talks

GENEVA: The US special envoy for Sudan on Thursday said he wanted "tangible results" from talks on ending the devastating war in the country despite the Sudanese government staying away. War has raged since April 2023 between the Sudanese army under the country's de facto ruler Abdel Fattah Al-Burhan and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF), led by his former deputy Mohamed Hamdan Daglo. The RSF delegation is taking part in the US-brokered talks on securing a ceasefire which began at an undisclosed location in Switzerland on Wednesday.

ed States again urged Sudan's army to join the talks, which are taking place behind closed doors and could last up to 10 days.

Sudan again made its opposition clear on Thursday. "It is the nature of Sudanese people to reject threats and intimidation," Finance Minister Gibril Ibrahim wrote on X. "Their government, of the same ilk, will not accept mediation imposed by force, and will not be a party to negotiations aimed at legalizing the criminal militia's occupation of civilian facilities and preserving its place in the political and security scene in the future," he said. The talks are co-hosted by Saudi Arabia and Switzerland, with the African Union, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates and the United Nations acting as a steering group. The Sudanese army has repeatedly accused the UAE of backing the RSF — allegations the UAE denies.

Previous talks in the Saudi city

Modi renews push for common civil code for India

NEW DELHI: Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Thursday he wanted to press ahead with a national common civil code of law, a proposal bitterly opposed by Muslim activists as an attack on their faith. India's 1.4 billion people are subject to a common criminal law but rules vary on personal matters such as marriage, divorce and inheritance. The proposed civil code would standardize laws across all religious communities but has been bitterly opposed by Muslim activists and liberals as an attack on the largest religious minority.

However, the Hindu nationalist leader said during an annual Independence Day address that the different laws divided the nation. "Those laws that divide the country on the basis of religion, that become reason for inequality, should have no place in a modern society," Modi said. "That is why I say: the times demand that there is a secular civil code in the country." Modi won a third successive term in office in June but was forced into a coalition government after a shock election setback for his Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) left him without an outright majority for the first time in a decade. The BJP's Hindu nationalist rhetoric has



DHAKA: Protesters surround a suspected sympathizer of ousted ex-premier Sheikh Hasina, near the

house of her father Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, in Dhaka on August 15, 2024. - AFP

NEW DELHI: India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi inspects the guard of honor to mark the country's Independence Day, at the Red Fort in New Delhi on August 15, 2024. — AFP

left India's Muslim population of more than 220 million increasingly anxious about their future. "The civil code, under which we live, is actually a kind of communal civil code, a

"Crimes against women should be quickly investigated; monstrous behavior against women should be severely and quickly punished," he said. Modi also called for calm in code of discrimination," Modi said, calling for debate on the issue. "Everyone should come debate on the issue of his former ally Sheikh Hasina, who quit as prime former ally Sheikh Hasina, who quit as prime minister last week following a student-led uprising and fled to India. "Whatever happens in Bangladesh is a matter of concern. I hope that the situation there will become normal soon,' he said, raising concerns over attacks on Bangladesh's Hindu minority in the immediate aftermath of Hasina's departure. "India always wants that our neighboring countries tread the path of peace and tranquility... we will remain well-wishers of the development journey of Bangladesh." — AFP

However, the Sudanese armed forces (SAF) are unhappy with the format arranged by Washington and are not participating. US special envoy for Sudan Tom Perriello said on X that the second day of the talks was under way. "We continue our relentless work with international partners to save lives and ensure we achieve tangible results," he said.

At the end of the first day, the Unit-

Jeddah came to nothing. The talks in Switzerland aim to agree a ceasefire, improve humanitarian access and set up enforcement mechanisms. The brutal conflict has triggered one of the world's worst humanitarian crises. More than half of the population faces acute hunger, while fighting has forced one in five people to flee their homes and tens of thousands have died. — AFP

out with their opinion", he told the thousands of students, soldiers and foreign dignitaries in the audience. Modi spoke at New Delhi's imposing 17th-century Red Fort to mark India's independence from Britain, an annual tradition since India's first prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, took office. He also called for swift punishment after the horrific rape and murder of a 31-year-old doctor in a hospital in Kolkata last week, a killing that has triggered widespread demonstrations and a strike by fellow doctors.

Gaza martyrs top 40,000...

Continued from Page 1

captives seized in the Oct 7 attack in exchange for 240 Palestinian prisoners held in Zionist jails. A Hamas official said the Islamist movement would demand the implementation of the plan that Biden said would start with an initial six-week "complete ceasefire", the release of hostages and a "surge" in humanitarian aid as the warring sides negotiate "a permanent end to hostilities".

The latest diplomatic push comes as the health ministry in Hamas-run Gaza said the death toll in the besieged Palestinian territory had surpassed 40,000 - which UN human rights chief Volker Turk called a "grim milestone". "Most of the dead are women and children. This unimaginable situation is overwhelmingly due to recurring failures by the (Zionist Occupation) Forces to comply with the rules of war," he added. The Gaza ministry said the tally included 40 deaths in the previous 24 hours.

Mediation efforts have repeatedly stalled since the weeklong truce in November. One of the Palestinians freed at that time was among two people killed in a Zionist air strike in the occupied West Bank on Thursday, Palestinian sources said. Hamas officials, some analysts and critics in the Zionist entity have said Zionist Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has sought to prolong the war for political gain.

Zionist media this week quoted Defense Minister Yoav Gallant as privately telling a parliamentary committee that a hostage release deal "is stalling... in part because of (the Zionist entity)". Netanyahu's office accused Gallant of adopting an "anti-(Zionist) narrative" and said Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar is "the only obstacle to a hostage deal". US news website Axios, citing US officials, said former president Donald Trump, who is seeking re-election, spoke with Netanyahu on Wednesday and discussed the Gaza hostage and ceasefire deal.

The latest mediation push follows the July 31 killing of Hamas political leader and truce negotiator Ismail Haniyeh during a visit to Tehran. His killing sent fears of a wider conflagration soaring. Iran and its regional allies blamed the Zionist entity and vowed retaliation. Western leaders have urged Tehran to avoid hitting the Zionist entity over Haniyeh's killing, which came hours after a Zionist strike in Beirut killed Hezbollah's military commander.

Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas told a special session of the Turkish parliament on Thursday that he would travel to Gaza. "I have decided to go to Gaza with other brothers from the Palestinian leadership," Abbas said to applause from Turkish lawmakers. Abbas is based in Ramallah in the West Bank, and Gaza Strip is controlled by Hamas.

Nobody is allowed to enter the enclave, apart from a handful of humanitarian workers. Abbas has not been to Gaza since Hamas took power in 2007. "I will do that," Abbas said in remarks translated into Turkish from Arabic. "Even if this would cost my life. "Our life is not more worthy than the life of a child," he added.

He was wearing a white scarf decorated by Turkish and Palestinian flags, as were many of the deputies listening to his speech, and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. Abbas, who added a visit to Turkey after meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Moscow, said the Palestinian people would stand tall despite the Zionist strikes.

"Gaza is ours as a whole. We don't accept any solution that would divide our territories," he told the parliament. "There cannot be a Palestinian state without Gaza. Our people will not surrender," he promised. Abbas, who heads the Fatah Palestinian movement, a rival to Hamas, met Erdogan on Tuesday. Erdogan was present in parliament during the keynote address.

From the Turkish parliament floor, Abbas also commemorated Haniyeh and said prayers. A picture of the slain leader framed by red carnations was seated in one of the front chairs in the parliament as Abbas was delivering a speech. Haniyeh was a frequent visitor to Turkey and had close ties with Erdogan, who deemed Hamas as a liberation movement. Erdogan has been a fierce critic of the Zionist entity's conduct in the war, dubbing Netanyahu "the butcher of Gaza". Abbas commended Erdogan's "courageous" stance and criticized the international community's "silence to the massacres carried out by (the Zionist entity)".

Fallout from the conflict has drawn in Iran-aligned groups from Lebanon, Yemen, Iraq and Syria. More than 370 Hezbollah members have been killed in 10 months of near daily cross-border fire with Zionist forces, according to an AFP tally, more than the Iran-backed movement lost in the 2006 war with the Zionist entity. On the Zionist side, 48 have been killed, including in the annexed Golan Heights, according to military figures. - Agencies

Mpox global health emergency, Kuwait...

Continued from Page 1

The ministry said that preventative measures include washing hands with water, soap and disinfectants, avoiding promiscuity and direct contact with individuals with apparent mpox symptoms.

An mpox outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo has killed 548 people since the start of the year, with all provinces affected by the virus, its health minister said on Thursday in a statement. "According to the latest epidemiological report, our country has recorded 15,664 potential cases and 548 deaths since the beginning of the year," Health Minister Samuel-Roger Kamba said in a video message.

The UN health agency's decision comes the day after the African Union's health watchdog declared its own public health emergency over the growing outbreak. Tedros said cases and deaths reported so far this year in DR Congo had already exceeded last year's total. "The emergence last year and rapid spread of clade 1b in DRC, which appears to be spreading mainly through sexual networks, and its detection in countries neighboring DRC is especially concerning," he said, citing Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda.

Dimie Ogoina, who chaired the emergency committee, said the 15 members present unanimously thought the mpox upsurge was an extraordinary event. He said many members feared the known situation in Africa was "actually the tip of the iceberg", because without more robust surveillance, "we don't have the full picture". Maria Van Kerkhove, the WHO's epidemic and pandemic

Columbia president resigns months...

Continued from Page 1

Protesters - many who were themselves Jewish said anti-Zionist views were being conflated with anti-Semitism and that individual allegations of hate incidents were being used to distract from calls for a ceasefire. Columbia called in New York police to forcibly evict students occupying a building at the end of April, and canceled its main commencement ceremony in May.

Last month, Columbia removed three administrators from their roles over text messages exchanged preparedness and prevention director, insisted: "We can stop transmission of mpox with a concerted effort."

But she said experts needed a "much better understanding of the epidemiology" and the transmission patterns, which would help make sure the limited number of vaccines could be deployed to best effect. Two vaccines for mpox are recommended by WHO immunization experts.

Formerly called monkeypox, the virus was first discovered in humans in 1970 in what is now the DRC. Mpox is an infectious disease caused by a virus transmitted to humans by infected animals but can also be passed from human to human through close physical contact. The disease causes fever, muscular aches and large boil-like skin lesions.

It is the second PHEIC in succession on mpox - albeit one focused on a different, and more deadly, strain of the virus. In May 2022, mpox infections surged worldwide, due to the clade 2b subclade. The WHO declared a public health emergency which lasted from July 2022 to May 2023. The outbreak, which has now largely subsided, caused some 140 deaths out of around 90,000 cases. The clade 1b subclade, which has been surging in the DRC since September 2023, causes more severe disease than clade 2b, with a higher fatality rate.

A PHEIC has only been declared seven times previously since 2009 - over H1N1 swine flu, poliovirus, Ebola, Zika virus, Ebola again, COVID-19 and mpox. Marion Koopmans, director of the Pandemic and Disaster Management Centre at Erasmus University Rotterdam, said a PHEIC declaration raises the alert globally. But "the same priorities remain: Investing in diagnostic capacity, public health response, treatment support and vaccination", she said, warning that this would be a challenge as the DRC and its neighbors are lacking resources. - Agencies

during a panel discussion about Jewish life on campus. Shafik's Ivy League counterparts Elizabeth Magill of the University of Pennsylvania and Claudine Gay of Harvard also resigned following their own Congressional hearings.

Martha Pollock, who did not appear before lawmakers, left Cornell University in July after controversy over disciplinary action against pro-Palestinian protesters. Shafik said she found herself, students and colleagues subject to distressing "threats and abuse". "We must do all we can to resist the forces of polarization in our community," she wrote. US House Speaker Mike Johnson had earlier sharply criticized the pro-Palestinian protests as "terrorism", and in a statement on Wednesday welcomed Shafik's resignation. - AFP

International

Protests sweep India over rape and murder of doctor

Hundreds of thousands of women march through in Indian cities, demand justice

KOLKATA: Holding candles, hundreds of thousands of women marched through the night in cities across India, to protest the brutal rape and murder of a young female doctor in a hospital that has fueled anger over a lack of safety for women despite tough new laws. A 31-year-old trainee doctor was raped and murdered inside the medical college in Kolkata where she worked on Friday, triggering nationwide protests among doctors and drawing parallels to the notorious gang rape and murder of a 23-year-old student on a moving bus in New Delhi in 2012.

"We have come here to demand justice because even I have a daughter. I am scared to send her anywhere...I am scared to send my daughter to study,' said Rinky Ghosh, who took part in a protest in Kolkata. "So I am here today because something ... must be done, this injustice must stop.'

The doctor had retired to sleep on a piece of carpet in a seminar room in the R G Kar Medical College after a marathon 36-hour shift, given the lack of any dorms or resting rooms for doctors in the premises, her colleagues told Reuters. She was found dead on Friday. Police said she had been raped and murdered and a police volunteer was subsequently arrested in connection with the crime.

Many government hospitals in cities across India suspended all services except emergency departments earlier this week, as junior doctors sat outside in protest, demanding justice. The victim was found bleeding from her eyes and mouth, with injuries to her legs, stomach, ankles, her right hand and finger, a doctor's inquest report Aug 9 and accessed by Reuters said.

In protests called "Reclaim the Night", women marched across several Indian cities from midnight on Wednesday, on the eve of the country's 78th Independence Day, to protest against the lack of safety for women in India, especially at night. "As a society, we have to think about the atrocities being committed against our mothers, daughters and sisters. There is outrage against this in the country. I can feel this outrage," Prime Minister Narendra Modi said in an Independence Day address to the nation on Thursday.

The 2012 Delhi rape case was seen as a turning point in attitudes towards women's safety in Indian society. It triggered huge protests and was the catalyst for rapid change in laws tackling crimes against women. These included fast-track courts for swifter convictions in such cases, but protesters say a decade on, the situation for women has not improved.

"This horrific incident has once again reminded us that women disproportionately bear the weight of ensuring their own safety," Bollywood actor Alia Bhatt said in a post on her Instagram page, which has more than 85 million followers. Doctors in India's crowded and often squalid government hospitals have long complained of being overworked and underpaid, and say not enough is done to curb violence leveled at them by people angered over the medical care on offer.

Crimes against women in India rose 4 percent in 2022 from the previous year, data from the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), released late last year, showed. — Reuters



VARANASI: Medical students shout slogans and hold posters as they protest the rape and murder of a young medic from Kolkata, in Varanasi on August 15, 2024. — AFP

NEWS IN BRIEF

Vietnam's top leader to visit China

BEIJING: Vietnam's top leader, To Lam, will make an official visit to China from Sunday until August 20, Vietnamese government and Chinese state media said, cementing close ties between the Communist-run neighbors. On his first foreign trip since his appointment this month as general secretary of Vietnam's ruling Communist Party, Lam is expected to meet Chinese President Xi Jinping and other officials. Despite their economic and trade links, the two nations occasionally clash over boundaries in the energy-rich South China Sea, a key waterway claimed by Beijing almost in its entirety, despite overlapping claims by several nations. Lam's visit follows an invitation from Xi and his wife, Vietnam's government said in a statement on Thursday that confirmed an earlier Reuters report on the visit. - Reuters

Pheu Thai party picks Paetongtarn as PM candidate

BANGKOK: Thailand's Pheu Thai party has chosen 37-year-old Paetongtarn Shinawatra, the daughter of billionaire ex-PM Thaksin Shinawatra, as its candidate for prime minister, it announced on Thursday, a day after a court dismissed the incumbent premier in an ethics case. "We decide to nominate Paetongtarn Shinawatra," party secretary general Sorawong Thienthong told a press conference in Bangkok.

Lawmakers will vote Friday in parliament — where Pheu Thai heads a governing coalition — on whether to approve Paetongtarn as prime minister. "We are confident that the party and coalition parties will lead our country in helping with Thailand's economic crisis," Paetongtarn said after the announcement. On Wednesday Thailand's Constitutional Court sacked premier Srettha Thavisin after ruling he had breached regulations by appointing a cabinet minister with a criminal conviction, plunging the kingdom into fresh political uncertainty. Pheu

Thai — the electoral vehicle of onetime Manchester City owner Thaksin — is the largest member of a governing coalition of 11 parties that includes royalist and pro-military outfits who were once its bitter rivals.

Srettha is the party's third prime minister to be kicked out by the Constitutional Court, and is leaving office after less than a year. Thai politics has endured two decades of chronic instability marked by coups, street protests and court orders - much of it fuelled by the long-running battle by the military and pro-royalist establishment against progressive parties linked to their bete noire Thaksin.

The tycoon ex-premier returned to Thailand last August from 15 years in self-exile on the same day Srettha took power in an alliance with pro-military parties previously staunchly opposed to Thaksin and his followers. The timing seemed to suggest a truce in the long-standing feud as both sides sought to see off the threat posed by the newer Move Forward Party (MFP), which won the popular vote in last year's election. It was later blocked from forming a government. Paetongtarn was chosen ahead of Pheu Thai stalwart Chaikasem Nitisiri, 75. The move showed "Pheu Thai's strategy to stand by the youth movement" that has Thailand,



conference with coalition party leaders in Bangkok on August 15, 2024. — AFP

political analyst Yuttaporn Issarachai to endorse its then-leader Pita Limjaold AFP. But he said it would be difficult to "move on from the conservative and military influence" that has dominated Thai politics for decades.

roenrat as prime minister, and the pai ty was forced into opposition. The top court last week dissolved the MFP and banned Pita and its main officials from politics for 10 years. Srettha, meanwhile, was dismissed over the appointment of Pichit Chuenban, a former lawyer associated with Thaksin. Pichit, sentenced to six months in jail in 2008 for a graft-related offence, quit the cabinet after the case was filed in a bid to save Srettha, but the court pressed ahead with the case. — AFP

Friday, August 16, 2024

Navalny's wife rejects finding

LONDON: The wife of late Russian dissident Alexei Navalny said on Thursday that investigators had concluded his death in an Arctic prison colony in February was caused by a combination of diseases - a finding she rejected as preposterous. Yulia Navalnaya said she would demand a criminal investigation of her husband's death, which she considers to be murder, and that Navalny's team would continue to conduct its own investigation. Navalny, 47, died suddenly on Feb 16. The Kremlin has rejected his supporters' accusation that President Vladimir Putin had him murdered. His death certificate said he died of natural causes.

Northeastern Taiwan rattled by quake

TAIPEI: A 5.7 magnitude earthquake struck off Taiwan's northeastern county of Yilan on Thursday, the island's central weather administration said, with no immediate reports of damage. The quake shook buildings in the capital, Taipei. The quake had a depth of 9 km, the weather administration said, and was just off its northeastern shore. Subway services in Taipei continued at a lower speed immediately after the quake, authorities said. Taiwan lies near the junction of two tectonic plates and is prone to earthquakes. - Reuters

Vietnam jails prominent activist

HANOI: A Vietnamese court sentenced prominent activist Nguyen Chi Tuyen to five years in prison after finding him guilty of anti-state activities in a one-day trial on Thursday, two of his lawyers said. Tuyen, 50, had participated in environmental and anti-China protests, voiced support for other jailed activists, and wrote about Vietnam's socio-political issues on his social media accounts. The conviction is the latest in what rights groups say is the government's wide-ranging attempt to silence voices critical of the ruling Vietnamese Communist Party, which maintains tight media censorship and tolerates little dissent. — Reuters

Typhoon Ampil approaches Tokyo

TOKYO: Typhoon Ampil bore down on Tokyo on Thursday, prompting airlines to cancel hundreds of flights and railways to suspend part of their operations in the peak summer travel season. The typhoon, categorized as "strong" by the Japan Meteorological Agency (JMA), was about 690 km (430 miles) off Japan's Pacific coast at 9 am (0000 GMT on Thursday), heading towards Tokyo and surrounding regions. The agency has two higher categories - "very strong" and "violent". Ampil was blowing winds of 35 meters per second (78 mph), with maximum gust of 50 meters per second (112 mph), according to the JMA. "With this typhoon approaching, we urge the public to be highly vigilant against storms, high waves and heavy rains,' a JMA official told a news conference. - Reuters

The case against Srettha was brought by 40 former senators appointed by the military junta that ousted an elected Pheu Thai government in a 2014 coup. The senate also played a crucial role in blocking the MFP after last year's elections. Senators alarmed by MFP's pledges to reform lese-majeste laws and break up powerful business monopolies refused

Pakistan army arrests 3 more ex-officers in ISI graft case

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's military said on Thursday it had arrested three more retired officers following the arrest of former spy chief Faiz Hameed, who faces a court martial on charges of corruption and misuse of power. The arrests were in connection with the proceedings against Hameed, who formerly led premier spy agency Inter-services Intelligence (ISI), for "actions prejudicial to military discipline", the military said. In a statement, it added that the military continued to investigate some retired officers and their accomplices for "fomenting instability at the behest of, and in collusion with, vested political interests". Political parties and critics often accuse that the spy agency interferes in politics and government. Hameed, a general, served as the ISI chief from 2019 to 2021 during the tenure of former Prime Minister Imran Khan, who is now in jail.

Khan has said he did not want to relieve Hameed of his role at the spy agency after he was transferred elsewhere by his army chief, Qamar Javed Bajwa. Khan's aides and political analysts say the tussle over Hameed contributed to a fallout between him and Bajwa, leading to his ouster in a parliamentary confidence vote early in 2022. Pakistan's military, which has directly ruled the nation of 240 million for more than 30 years in its 77-year independent history, plays an outsized role in making or breaking governments. Hameed's court-martial comes after the military said it completed an inquiry ordered by the Supreme Court into a complaint by a real estate developer.

It accused the former ISI chief of having misused his office to illegally occupy his housing scheme on the outskirts of Islamabad. In addition, the military cited "multiple instances of violation of the Pakistan Army Act" following Hameed's retirement that it said had also been established against him. — Reuters

Sri Lanka president faces 38 tough challengers in polls

COLOMBO: Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe faces 38 challengers in polls next month, the election commission said after nominations closed Thursday, with former ally Sajith Premadasa leading the pack. It will be the first vote since Wickremesinghe took over two years ago, after protesters furious at an unprecedented financial crisis toppled strongman president Gotabaya Rajapaksa, and the economy remains at the forefront.

"I have increased production... But it's not over yet. Life can be hard for some people. We have to stabilize the economy," Wickremesinghe told reporters after submitting his nomination.

"So what we are saying is, let's go ahead and finish this job." Wickremesinghe, 75, faces a daunting challenge from Premadasa, a 57-year-old career politician and the parliamentary leader of the opposition, as well as leftist leader Anura Kumara Dissanayaka, 55, whose National People's Power (NPP) coalition is popular among the young.

The South Asian Buddhist-majority island nation will vote on Sept 21. Premadasa vowed to tackle corruption. "Right now, 22 million people of our country are suffering from incompetence, ineptitude, mass-scale corruption, and looting of the public treasury," he said.

What started as a three-way battle became more complicated last week when the influential Rajapaksa family withdrew their support for Wickremesinghe in favor of one of their own — Namal Rajapaksa. The 38-year-old is a member of parliament and son of Mahinda Rajapaksa, a former president and prime minister, and the brother of Gotabaya Rajapaksa.

Wickremesinghe has shed his right-wing United National Party (UNP) and presented himself as an independent candidate hoping for broader support. A record 39 candidates have entered the fray, two more than in 2019, but none are women, Election Commission chairman R.M.A.L. Rathnayake said.

Many are viewed as proxies of key parties who



COLOMBO: Sri Lanka's President and United National Party presidential candidate Ranil Wickremesing he (centre) leaves the Election Commission office in Colombo on August 15, 2024. — AFP

use the airtime allocated to them on national radio to campaign. They include two Buddhist monks, one calling for the legalization of cannabis and a ban on birth control. "Please ensure you are within the law," Rathnayake said in a televised address, warning candidates to follow election rules.

"Don't influence public officers to any illegal activity to help your campaigns." Election law violations are common in Sri Lanka but prosecutions are rare. More than 17 million are eligible to cast a ballot and results are expected within a day of voting. The new president must then be sworn in within two weeks.

The previous presidential polls in November 2019 were won by Gotabaya Rajapaksa, a former army colonel described as a "terminator" by his family. He was forced out in 2022 after months of protests over his mishandling of the economy. Six-time prime minister Wickremesinghe was in political oblivion at that time as the lone lawmaker from his party in the 225-member parliament.

But, as politicians with more clout turned down requests to steer the country out of its worst economic meltdown, Wickremesinghe volunteered. Since taking over, Wickremesinghe has negotiated a \$2.9 billion bailout loan from the IMF, doubled personal taxes, frozen state employment, and cut energy subsidies. Despite the unpopular moves, he has managed to restore supplies of essentials, eliminate electricity blackouts and reopen the South Asian island nation for tourism. — AFP

Kuwait Established 1961 Times

FRIDAY, AUGUST 16, 2024

US industrial production contracts sharply in July

Weekly jobless claims at one-month low; retail sales surge in July

WASHINGTON: US industrial production fell sharply in July, the Federal Reserve said Thursday, pointing to a larger-than-expected impact from Hurricane Beryl. The news is likely to add to calls for the Fed to cut its key lending rate from a two-decade high next month, as its long-running campaign against inflation continues to percolate through to the broader economy.

Total industrial output contracted by 0.6 percent in July from a month earlier, when it rose by a revised figure of 0.3 percent, the US central bank said in a statement. This was sharply below market expectations of a 0.1 percent increase, according to Briefing. com. The Fed said industrial production had been held down by the early "July shutdowns concentrated in the petrochemical and related industries due to Hurricane Beryl," which came ashore in Texas.

Meanwhile, the number of Americans filing new applications for unemployment benefits dropped to a one month-low last week, suggesting an orderly labor market slowdown remained in place, and dashing financial market hopes that the Federal Reserve could cut interest rates by 50 basis points next month.

The manufacturing sector experienced a 0.3 percent decline due to a plunge of almost eight percent in the index for motor vehicles and parts. Excluding this component, the manufacturing index actually increased by 0.3 percent, the Fed said. Meanwhile, the mining index was unchanged, and the utilities index slumped by 3.7 percent. "Normally, manufacturing snaps back after a disaster related temporary shutdown," economists at High Frequency Economics (HFE) wrote in a note to clients on Thursday. "So the results are not as bad as they look."

The economy's resilience was reinforced by other data on Thursday showing retail sales increased by the most in nearly 1-1/2 years in July. Investors have been on edge after a jump in the unemployment rate to a near three-year high of 4.3 percent in July sparked fears that the economy was either in recession or nearing a downturn, concerns not shared by most economists. "Fed officials need not worry themselves to death about the outlook because the downside risks to the economy are fading fast with fewer job layoffs and robust consumer spending," said Christopher Rupkey, chief economist at FWD-BONDS. "The economy is not going off the rails."

Initial claims for state unemployment benefits dropped 7,000 to a seasonally adjusted 227,000 for the week ended Aug. 10, the Labor Department said. Economists polled by Reuters had forecast 235,000 claims for the latest week. The second straight weekly decline erased the increase in late July, which had boosted claims to an 11-month high. Claims had risen last month, blamed on temporary motor vehicle plant shutdowns and disruptions caused by Hurricane Beryl in Texas. Layoffs remain low by historic standards.

The labor market is slowing as businesses scale back on hiring, failing to keep up with an immigration-induced surge in labor supply. The US central bank's 525 basis points worth of rate hikes in 2022 and 2023 are curbing demand.

Financial markets lowered the odds of a half-percentage-point rate reduction at the Fed's Sept. 17-18 policy meeting to 27.5 percent from 41.5 percent before the data, according to CME Group's FedWatch tool. They saw a 72.5 percent chance of a 25-basis-point rate cut, up from 58.5 percent earlier.

The Fed has maintained its benchmark overnight interest rate in the current 5.25 percent-5.50 percent range for a year. The dollar rose against a basket of currencies on the data, while Treasury prices fell.

The number of people receiving benefits after an initial week of aid, a proxy for hiring, fell 7,000 to a seasonally adjusted 1.864 million during the week ending Aug. 3, the claims report showed. The so-called continued claims are near levels last seen in late 2021, indicating that more people are experiencing longer bouts of unemployment.

A separate report from the Commerce Depart-



BUSINESS

ROSEMEAD, US: People shop at a grocery store on August 14, 2024 in Rosemead, California. — AFP

ment's Census Bureau showed retail sales jumped 1.0 percent in July, the largest increase since January 2023, after a downwardly revised 0.2 percent drop in June. Economists had forecast retail sales, which are mostly goods and are not adjusted for inflation, advancing 0.3 percent after previously being reported as unchanged in June. Retail sales increased 2.7 percent year-on-year in July. Consumers are maintaining spending by bargain hunting and trading down to lower-priced substitutes. Receipts at motor vehicle and parts dealers rebounded 3.6 percent, reversing a 3.4 percent drop in June that was blamed on a cyberattack. Online store sales gained 0.2 percent after jumping 2.2 percent in June. Sales at gasoline stations edged up 0.1 percent. Building material and garden equipment store sales increased 0.9 percent.

Sales at food services and drinking places, the only services component in the report, rose 0.3 percent after edging up 0.1 percent in June. Economists view dining out as a key indicator of household finances. Furniture store sales advanced 0.5 percent. Receipts at electronics and appliance outlets vaulted 1.6 percent. But consumers spent less at clothing retailers as well as sporting goods, hobby, musical instrument and book stores. — Agencies

Growth rebounds in welcome news for Japan's next PM



Shares soar in mpox vaccine maker Bavarian Nordic

TOKYO: Japan's economy has rebounded, government data showed Thursday, in welcome news for its next prime minister following Fumio Kishida's decision to quit. The 0.8-percent expansion in the second quarter came after the world number four economy slumped by 0.6 percent in the first three months of the year.

The rise, supported by increased activity and increased capital and public investment, beat market expectations that output would grow 0.6 percent. Hiroyuki Ueno, chief strategist at SuMi Trust, pointed to improving consumer sentiment thanks to higher wages and a recovery in auto production after several scandals.

Toyota subsidiary Daihatsu in particular halted production for months from late 2023 after admitting it had engaged in safety test irregularities for years. Moody's economist Stefan Angrick cautioned that it would be "premature to conclude that Japan's economy is out of the woods."

"(The) headwinds facing the economy are substantial. Exports are struggling, and household finances are stretched," he said. On Wednesday Kishida said he would step down next month after almost three years in office after dropping out of the race to retain the leadership of his party.

His poll ratings sagged badly because of price rises that have eaten into Japanese incomes and a slew of scandals. The yen also fell sharply and the economy struggled to gain traction despite major stimulus efforts including tax cuts.

KAWASAKI, Japan: Cars are seen parked at Kawasaki Port in Kawasaki of Kanagawa Prefecture, south of Tokyo on August 15, 2024. — AFP

Kishida could in theory have governed until 2025 but analysts said he threw in the towel after losing support within the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), which has ruled Japan almost without a break for decades. Possible successors include digital minister Taro Kono and economic security minister Sanae Takaichi, who would be Japan's first female premier and who is popular with the right wing of the party. Other names floated in local media are Shigeru Ishiba, former party number two, and Shinjiro Koizumi, former environment minister and son of ex-premier Junichiro Koizumi. Kishida, 67, never went to the site officially as prime minister, but visits by predecessors including Shinzo Abe angered China, South Korea and other countries that suffered under Japanese wartime occupation. Kishida won plaudits abroad while in office, siding decisively with Ukraine after Russia's invasion. With US encouragement, Kishida firmed up Japanese defense policy to counter China, hiking spending and moving to acquire "counterstrike" weapons. His leadership has been "nothing short of historic", US President Joe Biden, who hosted Kishida at the White House in April, said in a statement. — AFP **COPENHAGEN:** Shares in Danish drugmaker Bavarian Nordic, which manufactures a vaccine targeting mpox, soared Thursday after the World Health Organization (WHO) declared an mpox surge in Africa a global public health emergency.

Worried by the rise in cases in the Democratic Republic of Congo and the spread to nearby countries, the WHO hastily convened a meeting of experts to study the outbreak and on Wednesday said the "situation constitutes a public health emergency of international concern." Bavarian Nordic, whose vaccine has been licensed for preventing mpox since 2019, saw its shares rise more than eight percent on the Copenhagen Stock Exchange by midday on Thursday.

This built on a share price climb of 12 percent on Wednesday. On Tuesday, the African Union's health agency Africa CDC announced that over 200,000 doses of the Danish drugmaker's vaccine were to be deployed in Africa, following an agreement with the European Union (EU) and Bavarian Nordic.

A total of 38,465 cases of the disease, formerly known as monkeypox, have been reported in 16 African countries since January 2022, with 1,456 deaths. There has been a 160 percent increase in cases this year compared to the previous year, according to data published last week by the health agency.

Bavarian Nordic mainly supplies it's mpox vaccine — called Jynneos in the United States and Imvanex in the European Union — to governments and international organizations, but began marketing it on the US market in April. — AFP

Slowing global jet fuel demand adds to oil market concerns

NEW YORK: Global jet fuel demand is poised to soften as a slowdown in consumer spending hits travel budgets, a shift that could weigh on oil prices in the months ahead. Global oil demand has not met expectations in the first half of 2024 due to weaker-than-forecast consumption in the U.S. and China, the top two oil markets. Jet fuel makes up about 7 percent of global oil demand and was widely expected to be a pillar of growth this year as travel continued to rebound from the pandemic.

Global jet fuel demand averaged about 7.49 million barrels-per-day (bpd) this year through July, a nearly 500,000-bpd increase over the same period last year, according to Goldman Sachs data.

Demand will need to rise faster in the months ahead to meet the bank's growth forecast of 600,000 bpd for the year. That looks less likely, with Goldman Sachs estimates signaling demand growth from August through October at only around 400,000 bpd. Major US airline operators and travel companies in recent days echoed worries that consumer spending is slowing as disposable incomes have shrunk, which should weigh on leisure travel. US consumer spending growth averaged just 0.3 percent in the three months through June, the slowest increase in over a year. "We see limited scope for further gains for (US) jet fuel, traditionally the most macro-driven product category, as a cooling economy weighs on demand for air travel," the International Energy Agency (IEA) said on Tuesday. Jet fuel demand in the US dropped sharply from a post-pandemic high of 1.95 million bpd in the week ended Aug 2, to just 1.6 million bpd last week, the EIA reported on Wednesday.

Weaker economic activity could also worsen a slowdown in global trade, which would cut air freight demand, Bank of America analysts said. They noted that global trade has been experiencing a slowdown over the past few years as demand in the US and Europe has shifted to services from goods.



ARLINGTON, US: An American Airlines jet takes off from Ronald Reagan International Airport in Arlington. — AFP

This week, the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries cut its 2024 oil demand forecast for the first time since it was issued in July 2023, while the IEA trimmed its 2025 estimate. Both cited weaker-than-expected economic growth in China and elsewhere among the reasons for the downgrade. A global tech outage that grounded scores of flights for a few days in July has also impacted jet fuel demand. It was likely the reason that US jet fuel consumption fell by about 10,000 bpd year-over-year in July, the IEA said.

"In sum, macro conditions for transportation fuels are deteriorating pretty quickly," Bank of America analysts said. "With this background in mind, we believe that the broader demand trends for jet fuel remain soft," they said.

Some longer-term factors, such as changes in consumer behavior and improved technology, are also hitting consumption. Improved efficiency and mileage in newer aircraft means airlines are carrying more passengers over longer distances while burning less fuel, Rystad analyst Wei Ran Gan said.

The average fuel economy of US commercial carriers rose to 65.5 seat miles per gallon in 2023, from 64.9 in 2019. Seat mile is an aviation industry term used to measure airline capacity. A post-pandemic shift in consumer preferences for shorter domestic flights over international destinations has also hurt demand, Bank of America analysts said. Meanwhile, years of trade wars between the US and China have cut air traffic between the countries to a quarter of what it was five years ago, Goldman Sachs analysts said. — Reuters



Business

UK growth slows slightly in Q2

Zero growth in June as wet weather hit retail sales

Norway central bank to keep rates on hold

ARENDAL, Norway: Norway's central bank will keep interest rates at a 16-year high for "some time" to combat inflation, its governor said on Thursday, after the central bank kept the cost of borrowing unchanged at its monetary policy meeting. Norway held interest rates at 4.50 percent, where it has been since December, as unanimously expected by analysts in a Reuters poll, but made changes to the language used to describe the outlook. The central bank said its monetary policy must now balance above-target inflation, exacerbated by a falling currency, with a cooling economy that now sees low overall growth.

"Our assessment is that the policy rate will likely remain at today's level for some time ahead, but we will come back in September with a new forecast for the interest rate," Norges Bank Governor Ida Wolden Bache told Reuters. The central bank's comments differed from its monetary policy statement in June, where it said rates would stay on hold until the end of 2024.

Thursday's statement, released along with the rate decision, made no mention of when the central bank may begin cutting interest rates. Instead, it pointed to "uncertainty about future economic developments", and concerns over how currency movements would impact inflation. A weaker crown currency makes imports more expensive while a stronger one can help dampen inflation. The Norwegian crown initially weakened after the rate decision but later pared losses to trade largely flat at 11.76 against the euro by 1045 GMT. Economists said the change in language gave policymakers greater flexibility on the timing of a potential rate cut.

"In our view, the wording suggests that Norges Bank could be open to cutting rates in December if the data supports it, while emphasizing that (the crown) remains of great importance," brokers DNB Markets wrote in a note to clients. "We (maintain) our call for a first cut in March but acknowledge that if the favorable development in inflation continues, there is a clear possibility that Norges Bank could cut in December," DNB said. — Reuters **LONDON:** Britain's economy grew 0.6 percent in the April-June period, a slight slowdown compared with the first three months of the year, official data showed on Thursday. The country's economy is growing after it exited a mild recession at the end of last year, helped by inflation falling back from four-decade highs.

Gross domestic product had expanded by 0.7 percent in the first quarter of 2024, the Office for National Statistics said in a statement. The data covers the period just prior to Britain's general election in early July, which resulted in the centre-left Labour party winning power on a promise to grow the country's economy by a sizable amount.

"The new government is under no illusion as to the scale of the challenge we have inherited after more than a decade of low economic growth and a £22 billion (\$28 billion) black hole in the public finances," finance minister Rachel Reeves said Thursday in reaction to the latest gross domestic product figures.

"That is why we have made economic growth our national mission and we are taking the tough decisions now to fix the foundations, so we can rebuild Britain and make every part of the country better off."

The GDP data revealed also that the economy recorded zero growth in June, or end of the second quarter, owing "to a weak month for health, retailing and wholesaling, offset by widespread growth in manufacturing", noted Liz McKeown at the statistics office. She added that growth across the quarter "was led by the service sector, where scientific research, the IT industry and legal services all did well".

While the Consumer Prices Index rose back above the Bank of England's target in July to 2.2 percent, according to official data Wednesday, it is way down on the elevated levels seen in the months following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. As such, the central bank is expected to keep on cutting interest rates in the coming months, according to analysts. Separate data this week showed Britain's unemployment rate dropping to 4.2 percent and wage growth down to the lowest level in nearly two years. Prime Minister Keir Starm-

Walmart lifts earnings outlook as revenues rise

NEW YORK: The US retail giant Walmart reported a rise in revenues on Thursday on increased e-commerce and advertising sales, and raised its outlook for the year.

Given its vast size and presence across the United States, Walmart's earnings are closely scrutinized for signs of the broader health of US consumers.



er's Labour government has said that it plans to boost sa the economy thanks to mass house-building and by d doubling onshore wind energy by 2030.

At the same time, Reeves has warned that the country's public finances face an extra £22-billion hole inherited from the previous Conservative administration that is likely to result in tax rises when she delivers her maiden budget later this year. Gross domestic product grew 0.6 percent in the second quarter of 2024 after a 0.7 percent expansion in the first quarter which was the fastest in more than two years, the Office for National Statistics said.

But in June alone monthly output growth slowed to zero from 0.4 percent in May, as heavy rain hurt retail

Its strong sales in the US for the second quarter of the year suggest that consumers, still contending with a post-pandemic rise in the cost of many household items, are choosing to shop at Walmart over more expensive grocery stores. "So far we aren't experiencing a weaker consumer overall," Walmart chief executive Doug McMillon said during an earnings call before markets opened.

"Customers from all income levels are looking for value, and we have it," he added.

Walmart's revenues rose 4.8 percent to \$169.3 billion in the second quarter from the same period a year earlier, it said in a statement. Profits fell 43 percent, largely explained by an unusual rise in the share price of several Walmart-backed companies during

sales and a doctor's strike contributed to a 1.5 percent drop in healthcare activity.

Sterling edged up marginally after the data, which did little to shift financial markets' expectations that the BoE will cut rates once or twice more this year. Uncertainty in the run-up to July 4's election - which saw the Labour Party win a large majority after 14 years in opposition - might also have weighed on growth in June, said Thomas Pugh, economist at accountancy firm RSM UK. "Overall, the UK economy has shown a solid performance in the first half of the year, but we need to see signs of rising incomes and confidence feeding through into actual spending and investment to drive growth over the next year," he said. — Agencies

the same period last year. Operating income rose 8.5 percent — a sign its core business is doing well.

The results beat analyst estimates, causing it to raise its outlook for the year. Shares surged close to seven percent in premarket trading. "We are not seeing signs of customer fraying," Walmart said in a statement Wednesday. "Customers continue to be choiceful & discerning," it continued, adding that every part of its business had grown.

Walmart's said its global e-commerce sales grew 21 percent in the second quarter, "led by store fulfilled pickup & delivery and marketplace." Meanwhile, its global advertising business grew 30 percent, fueled by a 30 percent rise in its Walmart Connect business in the US. — AFP





(965) 22 675 140
Al-Safat Tower, Hawalli, Beirut St.
alsafatinvest.com



شركة الصفاة للإستشمارة AL SAFAT INVESTMENT COMPANY

WEEK ENDED ON 15 AUGUST 2024

research@alsafatinvest.comalsafatinvestment

n al-safat-investment-company

	Ticker	Sector		Price Movement & Performance					formance					Valuation Multiples *				
No.			Open Price	Close Price	Week High	Week Low	Range	Volume	WTD Change	WTD %	YTD %	Support Level	Resistance Level	P/E	P/B	Yield	Beta	
101	National Bank of Kuwait	Banking	868	887	888	860	28	22,025,249	18	2.07%	4.18%	885	895	13.2	1.69	3.8%	1.04	
102	Gulf Bank	Banking	301	306	309	299	10	75,726,267	7	2.34%	14.34%	303	310	18.1	1.42	3.8%	1.29	
104	Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait	Banking	301	288	302	287	15	15,307,199	-11	-3.68%	29.79%	279	292	15.0	1.18	3.0%	0.96	
106	Kuwait International Bank	Banking	181	182	184	177	7	48,941,076	2	1.11%	24.97%	180	186	14.3	0.66	2.7%	1.06	
107	Burgan Bank	Banking	180	184	185	180	5	6,293,833	5	2.79%	12.33%	176	185	17.1	0.66	3.1%	1.32	
108	Kuwait Finance House	Banking	725	716	728	708	20	60,196,342	-4	-0.56%	7.50%	715	725	20.0	2.07	2.7%	1.13	
109	Boubyan Bank	Banking	581	588	589	579	10	8,053,864	4	0.68%	3.88%	585	593	29.8	2.42	1.3%	1.14	
201	Kuwait Investment	Financial Services	159	157	163	154	9	2,893,428	0	0.00%	23.62%	154	160	7.4	0.74	6.2%	1.98	
204	National Investments	Financial Services	241	236	245	226	19	7,901,068	-1	-0.42%	-1.26%	232	237	25.9	0.95	6.4%	2.02	
205	Kuwait Projects	Financial Services	102	100	103	99	4	35,241,738	-1.2	-1.19%	-5.14%	99.5	103	NM	0.57	0.0%	0.93	
212	Arzan Financial Group	Financial Services	173	168	174	166	8	23,339,626	-4	-2.33%	-16.80%	162	172	20.1	0.97	1.1%	1.25	
222	Aayan Leasing and Investment	Financial Services	147	151	153	147	6	20,942,843	5	3.42%	-13.22%	146	151	8.2	0.99	5.1%	1.61	
252	Al Imtiaz Investment	Financial Services	46.9	44.6	47.5	44.5	3	8,292,681	-2.2	-4.70%	-21.06%	43.6	44.8	NM	0.31	0.0%	1.34	
401	Kuwait Real Estate	Real Estate	230	239	245	230	15	24,021,572	9	3.91%	23.58%	237	246	20.3	1.50	1.6%	1.14	
404	Salhia Real Estate	Real Estate	427	424	428	412	16	5,228,942	1	0.24%	3.78%	424	434	17.5	1.38	3.4%	0.57	
413	Mabanee	Real Estate	838	848	859	838	21	3,763,840	10	1.19%	6.63%	838	856	18.1	1.88	1.5%	0.92	
418	The Commercial Real Estate	Real Estate	144	149	150	142	8	12,791,866	5	3.47%	49.00%	148	150	16.5	0.89	2.7%	0.68	
501	National Industries	Financial Services	221	222	224	217	7	15,443,697	2	0.91%	14.26%	217	226	12.5	0.99	2.2%	1.59	
505	Gulf Cable	Industrials	1,705	1,740	1,790	1,680	110	1,612,931	40	2.35%	32.82%	1,652	1,750	18.8	1.36	3.8%	1.06	
506	HEISCO	Industrials	894	918	920	870	50	2,366,031	25	2.80%	11.95%	907	925	19.7	2.23	3.4%	0.90	
514	Boubyan Petrochemical	Basic Materials	581	589	596	580	16	5,248,728	7	1.20%	0.68%	580	604	17.9	1.20	10.1%	0.90	
603	Agility	Industrials	265	254	267	253	14	22,472,187	-11	-4.15%	-50.10%	253	260	7.7	0.71	7.6%	1.56	
605	Zain	Telecommunications	454	453	454	440	14	5,910,864	0	0.00%	-10.65%	450	459	10.6	1.71	7.7%	0.55	
623	Human Soft Holding	Industrials	2,581	2,537	2,597	2,459	138	846,680	-39	-1.51%	-21.63%	2,500	2,550	8.1	3.31	13.2%	0.62	
642	ALAFCO	Industrials	221	226	227	221	6	1,213,062	1	0.44%	25.56%	222	227	NM	1.00	0.0%	1.15	
654	JAZEERA	Consumer Discretionary	917	868	917	853	64	3,885,892	-35	-3.88%	-37.51%	850	880	73.2	6.79	3.3%	1.35	
813	GFH Financial Group	Financial Services	97	98.0	100.3	96	4.2	46,730,589	1.7	1.77%	28.44%	96.5	99	10.3	1.20	5.1%	1.33	
821	Warba Bank	Banking	185	193	193	185	8	103,592,073	8	4.32%	9.99%	192	196	26.0	1.03	1.5%	1.05	
822	Kuwait Telecommunications	Telecommunications	521	528	532	517	15	3,879,078	8	1.54%	-6.22%	523	530	15.7	2.32	6.7%	0.73	
823	Mezzan Holding	Consumer Staples	937	900	950	881	69	1,280,421	-25	-2.70%	56.52%	878	949	20.5	2.53	2.2%	0.44	
824	Integrated Holding	Industrials	521	521	538	520	18	3,517,242	3	0.58%	2.16%	520	535	29.1	2.06	3.8%	0.76	
827	Boursa Kuwait	Financial Services	2,000	2,000	2,016	1,981	35	694,646	0	0.00%	16.01%	1,971	2,005	24.0	6.84	3.7%	1.35	
830	AL GHANIM	Consumer Discretionary	1,040	1,101	1,111	1,040	71	3,130,702	46	4.36%	4.26%	1,069	1,123	10.1	3.52	6.5%	0.80	
831	Beyout Investment	Financial Services	504	495	505	480	25	3,130,578	-8	-1.59%	#VALUE!	495	501	19.3	2.87	0.0%	NULL	
* As of	end of week closing																	

* As of end of week closing





China's home-price slump deepens to new 9-year low despite stimulus

New support policies fail to stabilize prices in struggling property sector

BEIJING: China's new home prices fell at their Shanghai and Xian - reported a rise in new home fastest pace in nine years in July, as a slew of support policies failed to stabilize prices and restore confidence in the struggling property sector. The prolonged housing market slump has weighed heavily on the world's second-largest economy and its consumers, with analysts saying Beijing's 5 percent GDP target for 2024 may be too ambitious even as other economic gauges have steadied. New home prices fell 4.9 percent from a year

earlier - the sharpest drop since June 2015 and deeper than a 4.5 percent slide in June, Reuters calculations based on National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) data showed. Earlier, Reuters also reported prices fell 5.0 percent, which was due to an automated rounding off of figures. "It is increasingly looking like the property market will continue to need more policy support to establish a bottom," analysts at ING said in a note.

Beijing has been intensifying efforts to support the sector, which at its peak accounted for a quarter of the economy, including reducing mortgage rates and lowering home buying costs.

Policies play a certain role in lifting the market, but the external downturn has limited the effects of these policies, said Song Hongwei, research director of Tongce Research Institute, a real estate research company. In monthly terms, new home prices were down for the 13th straight month, falling 0.7 percent, and matching the pace of decline in June.

Among 70 cities surveyed by NBS, only two -

prices in monthly terms, and only Shanghai registered a price rise in the resale home market. Some property developers are resorting to unusual promotions to help clear the large numbers of unsold homes across the country. China Merchants Shekou Industrial Zone Holdings' Nanjing branch is offering apartment buyers a gift package worth 200,000 yuan (\$27,950) that includes 100 hours of total flight time toward a pilot's license and 5 percent of ownership rights to a jet, The Beijing News reported on Wednesday. A salesperson at the project told the news outlet buyers could opt for 200,000 yuan in cash if they preferred.

In late July, China's top decision-making body, the politburo, reiterated the country's commitment to supporting the completion of unfinished projects and turning unsold apartments into affordable housing. In separate data on Thursday, property sales by floor area in January-July fell 18.6 percent from a year earlier, compared with a 19.0 percent slump in January-June.

A quarterly survey released last week by China's central bank showed that 23.2 percent of residents believed that house prices would fall in the third quarter, a record high since data became available in 2013. Analysts say the real estate market needs targeted and strong support policies. "We continue to expect more housing easing measures in coming months, including more relaxation of home purchase restrictions in top-tier cities and further reduction in mortgage interest rates, among oth-



QINGZHOU, China: An employee works on a motor at a factory producing tractors in Qingzhou, in China's eastern Shandong Province on August 15, 2024. — AFP

ers," Goldman Sachs said in a research note. "However, considering persistent property

weakness related to lower-tier cities and pri-

months," he said. A first US rate cut, expected next month, might be too late to rescue the economy, he added. Investors' global growth expectations have fallen to eight-month lows.

A weak US employment report and a shock BOJ rate hike drove the global stock market selloff as volatility linked and trend-following hedge funds headed for the exits and anxious investors herded into government bonds. The BOJ hike wrecked billions of dollars worth of previously profitable trades where speculators had borrowed yen cheaply to buy higher-return assets like US tech stocks.

About 70 percent of that carry trade has now been unwound, JP Morgan estimates. But money flows tied to yen-related positions are tough to measure and Amundi's Pradhan said the possibility of further unwinding is making people quite risk averse. UBS European equity strategy head Gerry Fowler said hedge fund selling was likely over but slower moving mainstream investment managers often take fourto-six weeks to adjust their portfolios. Those fund managers could be the next to sell, said Edmond de Rothschild Investment Partners multi-asset portfolio manager Marie de Leyssac, but would do so based on economic data. While she doesn't see a savage slowdown as likely, she wasn't buying stocks

vate developers, such easing measures will only lead to an 'L-shaped' recovery in the sector in coming years." — Reuters

Pakistan's Internet firewall could cost economy \$300m

KARACHI: Pakistan's economy could lose up to \$300 million due to Internet disruptions caused by imposition of a national firewall, the Pakistan Software Houses Association (P@SHA) said in a press release on Thursday. Islamabad is implementing an Internet firewall to monitor and regulate content and social media platforms, according local media reports. The government denies the use of the firewall for censorship.

Ali Ihsan, senior vice chairman of P@SHA, said the imposition of the firewall has already caused prolonged Internet disconnections and erratic VPN performance, threatening a "complete meltdown of business operations". "These disruptions are not mere inconveniences; but, a direct, tangible and aggressive assault on the industry's viability - inflicting an estimated and devastating financial losses estimated to reach \$300 million, which can further increase exponentially," he said in the statement. Pakistan's telecommunication authority and Pakistan's Minister of State for Information Technology Shaza Fatima Khawaja did not immediately respond. Earlier this month, Khawaja told local media that the government did not plan to use firewalls as a form of censorship. Pakistan has already blocked access to social media platform X since the February elections in which jailed former prime minister Imran Khan won the most seats despite a crackdown and ban on his party. The government has said the blocking was to stop anti state activities and a failure by X to adhere to local Pakistani laws. Rights activists say the blocking of X is designed to stifle critical voices and democratic accountability in the country. In its statement, P@SHA said that the government's lack of transparency around the firewall had "ignited a firestorm of distrust" among Internet users and Pakistan's global IT clients who fear their proprietary data and priva-cy will be compromised. — Reuters

Summer shock not over yet as investors brace for more turmoil

LONDON: Big investors are bracing for this summer's stock market rout to run into the autumn, fearing a broader wave of selling will follow the turmoil sparked by US recession concerns and the Bank of Japan wrong-footing currency speculators. The sudden reversal of crowded equity and foreign exchange trades that generated vicious feedback loops of price drops, volatility and hedge fund selling has eased, with world stocks almost 2 percent higher so far this week. But asset managers overseeing hundreds of billions of dollars of investments said they were more likely to carry on selling stocks than buy back in, with signs of weakness in the US jobs market and global consumer trends lowering the bar for market aftershocks.

The buy-the-dip mentality, where investors typically respond to selloffs by making recovery bets, has been replaced by fear. "It's not simply now a large financial market accident, which maybe we could describe last week as. It's broader than that, said Mahmood Pradhan, a former IMF deputy director and head of global macro at the research arm of Amundi, Europe's largest fund manager. He expects investors, who according to Bank of America have already cut equity positions and shifted increasingly into cash, to remain cautious. Michael Kelly, head of multi-asset at PineBridge Investments, which oversees around \$170 billion of client funds, is among those to have reduced his funds' stock market positions and he may pull back further.

NEW YORK: Traders work on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) on August 14, 2024. — AFP

next week's annual Jackson Hole central bank conference and artificial intelligence giant Nvidia's Aug 28 earnings report are other market risk events.

'Volatility makes it hard to increase exposure even if you think it fundamentally makes sense," Pictet Asset Management senior multi-asset strategist Arun Sai said. Money managers' risk mandates tend to prevent them from buying equities when prices are fluctuating widely. The measure of expected volatility on Wall Street's S&P 500 and its European equivalent hit multi-year highs last week before easing but a related index continues to send warning signals. The, another options market gauge that rises when traders expect the VIX itself to be turbulent, is trading above the 100 mark, suggesting the market's wild ride is not yet over. "Until you see the VVIX get below 100 you should have it on your radar. It is the key metric at this point," Citi's head of equity trading strategy Stuart Kaiser said. — Reuters

Weary Argentines have mixed feelings as inflation eases

BUENOS AIRES: Argentines, feeling the pinch of the world's highest annual inflation rates, are feeling both hopeful and weary as monthly price increases dip to their lowest in over two years amid tough austerity measures under President Javier Milei. Inflation in July came in at 4 percent, Argentina's INDEC statistics agency reported on Wednesday, the lowest since the start of 2022. In the 12 months through July, however, inflation topped 263 percent - making it still the highest recorded in the world.

The South American country is trying to emerge from a severe economic crisis which ushered libertarian outsider Milei into power late last year as voters opted for a radical new approach to restore stability. Milei's sharp cost-cutting campaign has helped bolster the state's embattled finances, allowed the central bank to rebuild reserves, and tamped down inflation - though it has taken a heavy toll on economic activity. Poverty levels have also risen. "I am tired, but this is something different to what we have seen before, that's for sure," said Miguel Jamui, a 69-year-old retired worker, who is hopeful Milei's mav-

erick approach will start to yield results. Milei's policies have helped bring down monthly inflation from over 25 percent in December to now 4 percent in July, though the country has slid into recession and subsidy cuts have pushed up prices of certain services and goods. Many Argentines still feel their purchasing power is dwindling despite inflation slowing, with poverty affecting half the population and over seven million children living in poverty, according to a study released this week by UNICEF. — Reuters

"It's going to be very, very volatile in the next two

Political turmoil threatens Thailand's struggling economy

BANGKOK: The political turmoil unleashed by the dismissal of Thai Prime Minister Srettha Thavisin is likely to deal another blow to the already struggling economy, where millions of people drowning in debt have been waiting for long-delayed cash handouts.

Southeast Asia's second largest economy grew 1.5 percent in the first quarter of 2024 compared to a year earlier, slowing from the prior quarter's 1.7 percent expansion and lagging regional peers.

The tourism-dependent country of 66 million people has struggled to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, and major growth engines, including an automobiles sector that is the largest in the region, are still spluttering. Tim Leelahaphan, senior economist at Standard Chartered Bank, said the political upheaval had cast doubts about the passage of the 3.75 trillion baht (\$107 billion) national budget for fiscal 2025, as well as the 500 billion baht nationwide cash handout that was a flagship Srettha policy.

"Political uncertainty and an unclear political outlook could have adverse implications for fiscal policy," he said. The caretaker deputy finance minister said on Thursday the budget would not be delayed.

Srettha's ouster by the constitutional court on Wednesday came a fortnight after his government opened registrations for a scheme to give away 10,000 baht to 50 million Thais, a key election promise of his Pheu Thai party. Over 16 million people had applied to receive the "digital wallet" handout on the day registrations opened, crashing the system but signaling huge demand for the controversial scheme among ordinary Thais hurting from the slowing

China tech giant Alibaba's profit shrinks 29%

BEIJING: Chinese e-commerce giant Alibaba reported a 29 percent fall in quarterly profit on Thursday as it battles sluggish consumption during an economic slowdown. Net income attributable to shareholders came in at 24.3 billion yuan (\$3.3 billion) in the quarter ending instead preferring put options, which insure against equity losses by paying out when markets fall.

Pension funds would also further sell equity exposure and move into fixed income, Goldman Sachs strategist Scott Rubner said in a note, adding that the second half of September has been the worst period of the year for Wall Street since 1950.

Russell Investments chief US investment strategist Paul Eitelman said another weak U.S. jobs report would have the potential to spark fresh volatility.

Federal Reserve chair Jerome Powell's speech at



SAMUT PRAKAN, Thailand: A general view of the Bhumibol bridge (left) over the Chao Phraya river and a under-construction high-rise building (right) in the backdrop of Bangkok's skyline. - AFP

economy and high levels of personal debt.

Household debt stood at 16.4 trillion baht, or 90.8 percent of GDP, at the end of March, among the highest in Asia. The central bank, which had bickered with Srettha's administration over the scale of the handout, left its key interest rate unchanged at a more than decade-high of 2.50 percent for a fourth straight meeting in June. It is expected to hold the rate again when it meets on Aug. 21.

June 30, Alibaba said in a corporate filing, down from 34.3 billion yuan in the same period in 2023. Alibaba runs some of China's most popular e-commerce apps and its performance is widely considered an indicator of broader economic trends. China released another series of disappointing indicators on Thursday, despite recent government measures to boost growth.

Alibaba's revenue for the first quarter was 243.2 billion yuan, up four percent from the previous year.

But revenue from core shopping platforms Taobao and Tmall was down one percent, which Alibaba said was "primarily due to the increase in investments in user experience". "In this quarter, we continue to invest for

Ballooning household debt has also hit the car industry. Thailand is home to the factories of Toyota Motor and Honda Motor, and overall production in the sector has dropped for 11 straight months into June as local sales slumped. Exports of car and car parts also dropped 0.4 percent in the first half of 2024 from a year earlier, with main markets Malaysia and Vietnam down nearly 30 percent on the year, commerce ministry data showed. --- Reuters

growth in our core businesses while reducing losses in other business units through operating efficiency," chief financial officer Toby Xu said in the filing.

Alibaba made \$5.8 billion of share repurchases in the first quarter, part of an effort to reassure investors amid narrowing profits. Its results contrasted starkly with rival shopping app operator JD.com, which announced a whopping 92.1 percent increase in profit for the past quarter.

Thursday's results come at a time when Alibaba is increasingly being challenged by Pinduoduo, another shopping app whose parent company owns internationally popular budget shopping app Temu. — AFP



Mee kender

FRIDAY, AUGUST 16, 2024

Turning into consing

Fouzeyah Allami's bold artistry in special effects makeup



By Faten Omar



ith an innate talent for creativity and an eye for detail. Fouzeyah Allami transformed her passion into a profession where her face became her canvas. Allami, a 21-year-old professional special effects makeup artist, started her journey in 2012. At the age of nine, she started making wounds on her body using tissues, glue and items in the house to scare her brothers, until one day she bought professional makeup for it.







Kuwait Times: What inspired you to be a special effects makeup artist? Fouzeyah Allami: I've loved drawing and creating artwork since the first grade. I often participated in art exhibitions and won first place. Art has been my passion since I was born, and I grew up in an artistic family, where every member specializes in something creative. My family, especially my mother, has been a significant source of inspiration. Over time, as I explored different forms of art, I discovered that special effects makeup is closest to my heart. I see my face as a blank canvas where I can express my emotions.



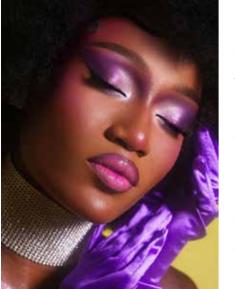


Allami: Once, I had to cosplay as Maleficent and spent hours making my face green with dramatic eyeshadow. I forgot I had a bridal makeup client in an hour. When she arrived, I was still in my Maleficent makeup, but she loved it! She was so happy with her bridal makeup - and mine too!

KT: How do you handle tight deadlines

Allami: Special effects makeup helps create the visual appearance of characters, making them more believable to the audience. It can transform actors, making them appear older, younger or more glamorous.

KT: Are there any particular Kuwaiti films, shows, or events that you would love to work on? Allami: I'm currently working as the head makeup artist at The Museum Co, which is my dream job. I get to do fantasy makeup for my favorite fictional characters for The Museum shows and cosplayers.



KT: What inspired you to pursue a career in special effects makeup artistry, especially in Kuwait?

Allami: I realized how rare this field is in Kuwait, and how difficult it is to find professionals in this area. That's why I'm doing my best to excel by taking on challenges, taking risks and being bold. This is what sets me apart.

KT: You were part of many plays and projects in Kuwait. Which project are you most proud of, and why?

Allami: The play Aladdin is very special to me because I had to transform the actor from a normal, innocent appearance to very evil features. I'm proud of how I was able to change him into a different person in less than an hour.

KT: Can you walk us through a typical day on set for a special effects makeup artist?

Allami: Typically, I start my day with coffee and then head to the makeup room to prepare the set. I begin by sanitizing everything, from products to brushes. Then, I start with soft glam makeup before moving on to the more complicated effects.



KT: What are some of the most challenging effects you've had to create? Allami: One of the most challenging looks I created was when I turned my face into a cake. It took me six months to find the perfect materials to achieve this look. I needed to recreate whipped cream that wouldn't melt during shooting, and after much research, I discovered that bathroom silicone could work. I had to work quickly with it because it dries fast.

KT: How do you stay updated with the latest trends and techniques in special effects makeup? Allami: TikTok, for sure!

KT: How do you ensure the safety and comfort of actors when applying complex effects makeup? Allami: I ensure their safety and comfort by engaging them in conversation during the process, keeping them busy and relaxed.

KT: Can you share any memorable or funny moments from your work in the industry?

and high-pressure situations on set? Allami: A year ago, I used to panic when I had six clients in a day. Now, I can do six clients in three hours because I believe in myself and don't let pressure affect me.



KT: What advice would you give to aspiring special effects makeup artists? Allami: Be different. Be bold.

KT: What role do you think special effects makeup plays in enhancing storytelling in Kuwaiti cinema and theater?

KT: What are your future goals or projects you're excited about? Allami: I've been working on my beauty line, and I'm excited to launch it.







Friday, August 16, 2024









The serve charm of Braider



Visual storytelling: Young Kuwaiti photographers capture the hidden beauty of Kuwait



By Mohamed AlDakheel

n an effort to showcase the often-overlooked beauty of Kuwait, Bnaider book offers a fresh perspective on the local landscape

through a carefully curated collection of photographs. Abdulaziz AlEssa, 19, and Lulu AlAbdulmoghni, 20, aimed to fill a gap in visual representation with a focus on the serene elegance of Bnaider - an area known for its tranquil beauty but seldom captured in print.

AlEssa told Kuwait Times that his mission was to show Kuwait's beauty as its people experience it. "Something we felt was missing when compared to the pictorial richness available similar books from other countries," he said. This sentiment fueled their dedication to the project, driving them to spend five years gathering and selecting images that not only depict the landscape but also tell the story of the community residing within it. The process involved more than just photography. AlEssa and AlAbdulmoghni immersed themselves in the community, engaging with locals and exploring the nuances of daily life in Bnaider. Each image in Bnaider book is the result of this deep engagement, chosen not only for its aesthetic value but for its ability to convey a sense of place and moment.







(From left) Abdulaziz AlEssa, Minister of Information Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi and Lulu AlAbduloghni with their book.

er mission: Documenting and preserving the visual beauty of the area. "In a world that's constantly changing and moving at a rapid pace, the chalet has always remained the same. We hope it always stays that way and that this book serves as a lasting piece of inspiration for future generations to keep the

SNAIDE

Reflecting on the selection process, AlAbdulmoghni said: "We didn't just want to fill the book with pictures; we wanted to fill it with narratives that resonate with anyone who looks at them, whether they're from Kuwait or not. Bnaider book is not merely a coffee table book; it's a story."

The book also addresses a broad-

Bnaider spirit thriving," AlAbdulmoghni said. This aspect of documentation is crucial to ensure that the essence and beauty of Bnaider endure amidst the inevitable changes of the world.

Community response to Bnaider book has been overwhelmingly positive. Residents of the affluent area appreciate the thoughtful representation and the recognition of their everyday surroundings as worthy of artistic attention. The book has sparked conversations about the importance of local culture and has encouraged others to take a closer look at their own environments.

As Bnaider book continues to circulate, both creators are hopeful about its impact. They believe that this project will inspire other Kuwaiti photographers and storytellers to undertake similar endeavors, each adding their unique voice to the collective narrative of Kuwait's diverse regions.

The launch of Bnaider book is not just a culmination of years of hard work but the beginning of a new chapter in the appreciation of Kuwait's natural and cultural landscapes. It stands as a celebration of beauty found in everyday settings, encouraging everyone to explore and appreciate the subtleties of their environments.

This visual journey highlights Bnaider's unique charm and serves as a reminder of the power of photography to capture and preserve the world around us, because every captured frame is a safeguard against time - a precious keepsake that turns fleeting moments into eternal memories.





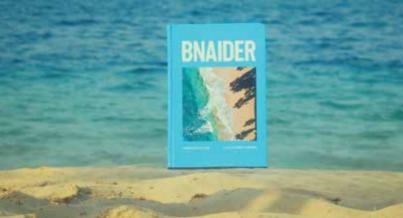














Weekender

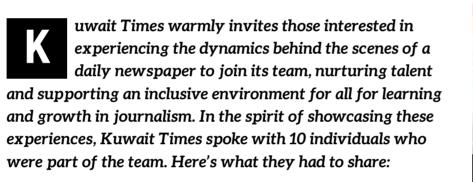
FROM CLASSROOM TO NEWSROOM

10 aspiring journalists reflect on positive experiences of interning at Kuwait Times



By Ghadeer Ghloum

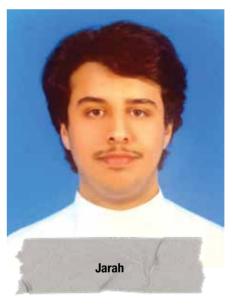
Ghanima reflected fondly on her time at Kuwait Times, highlighting the excitement of each day and the valuable lessons learned. She particularly emphasized her growth in managing pressure and time constraints, crucial skills sharpened under the guidance of Nebal Snan, editor at Kuwait Times, during editing sessions. Ghanima also overcame initial nervousness about public interviews with support from fellow interns and mentors, which ultimately boosted her confidence in front of the camera.





Ahmed highlighted Kuwait Times' inclusive culture, an expectation he held for a newspaper of its stature given its wealth of knowledge. He found it engaging to interact with diverse viewpoints, appreciating the immersive and welcoming environment as an intern. Ahmed felt valued by the staff, noting the newspaper notable diversity not only in backgrounds but also in perspectives. He described the atmosphere as relaxed and open-minded, where his time was an enlightening introduction to the intricacies of reporting. Ahmed also expressed a profound sense of pride seeing his work published in a newspaper that reaches across the country, highlighting the gratification of contributing to public discourse and receiving recognition for his efforts.





Aaron expressed gratitude for the opportunity to intern at Kuwait Times, noting how it enhanced his confidence and provided invaluable networking opportunities. He appreciated gaining insights into the intricate workings of a media organization, an experience that solidified his pursuit of a career in journalism.



Ali shared his challenge of navigating confidentiality policies while gathering information for articles, a hurdle he overcame with guidance from colleagues on crafting effective questions and leveraging obtained information.



Nafisa recommended aspiring interns to reach out directly to current team members via social media or email, recounting how she secured her internship through such proactive engagement with Passant Hisham, a reporter tagged in Kuwait Times' Instagram posts. Her advice underscored the friendly and supportive atmosphere among the staff.



Mohsina shared her deepened appreciation for responsible journalism during her internship, where she immersed herself in rigorous fact-checking and research processes. Her experience underlined the importance of integrity and accuracy in media, crucial for promoting trust with the audience.



Munirah detailed her learning journey at Kuwait Times, where she absorbed media ethics and professionalism through insightful conversations with seasoned journalists. She also stressed on the impact of editorial guidelines and reading her colleagues' work, which deepened her understanding of journalistic nuances.

Jarah found his internship inspiring, offering valuable insights into Kuwait's media landscape and the process behind news production.



Rashid described his time at Kuwait Times as both enjoyable and enriching, appreciating the hands-on experience of writing articles and columns under the supportive guidance of the team.



Last but certainly not least, whose journey from curious intern to dedicated team member at Kuwait Times encapsulates the enriching experiences shared by all, is Passant. Now a full-time reporter at Kuwait Times, she recalled her initial curiosity and subsequent deep dive into the complexities of journalism. She appreciated the nurturing environment that encouraged learning at her own pace, noting the ongoing support from colleagues as she transitioned into a more committed role within the organization.





Event: Intuitive abstract painting Location: Art Space - The Scientific Center Date: August 16, 2024

Event: Cartoon World workshop Location: Al-Tijaria Tower - 2nd floor Date: August 16-17, 2024

Event: Thai cooking class Location: Cooking Club in Messila Date: August 17, 2024

Event: Lighting and shadows in portrait photography Location: AAB World Academy Date: August 17, 2024

Event: Resin workshop Location: Mall 55 Date: August 17, 2024

Event: Kids Club Art Location: Q8 Popup Studio Date: August 17, 2024

Event: Early morning paddle Location: Argan Bida'a Resort Date: August 17, 2024



Sports

14

Vas wins 'chaotic' stage as Vollering crashes in women's Tour de France

Outclassed Tashkent team fades out of women's Tour debut

AMNEVILLE: Hungary's Blanka Vas won the fifth stage of the women's Tour de France on Thursday with Dutch teammate Demi Vollering losing the race lead after being caught up in a big crash. Poland's Katarzyna Niewiadoma finished second to take the leader's yellow jersey from defending champion Vollering who dropped to ninth overall. A pile-up with six kilometres to go in-volving 10 riders including Vollering decimated the peloton in the run to Amneville in northeastern France. The Team SD Worx leader now trails 1min 19sec behind her main rival Niewiadoma who had started the stage 34 seconds behind Vollering.

Shocked, suffering back pain and cuts to her left thigh, the Dutch star took more than a minute to remount to finish the stage. The fall split the peloton and in a four-way sprint, Vas dominated Niewiadoma, German Liane Lippert and American Olympic champion Kristen Faulkner.

"The last kilometres were really chaotic. Overall, this start to the Tour has been really nervous so it was important to be well placed at the front to avoid incidents," said Niewiadoma. "I'm really very happy to take the jersey, it feels exceptional." She added: "Now 1min 19sec in the mountains is not much, especially considering the profile of the last stage. Of course, I feel good and I'm confident but I also know that Demi is an incredibly strong champion." On Friday, the sixth stage covers 159km with a climb up the the Cote des Fins less than 15km from the line which could prove decisive. The Tour finishes on Sunday with one of cycling's most challenging climbs up Alpe d'Huez.

Meanwhile, Yanina Kuskova rode Thursday's fifth stage of the women's Tour de France as the sole survivor of a team that had thought twice about even being there. Tashkent City Women Professional Cycling Team, from the second-tier Continental Tour, has struggled on its debut in the women's Tour de France.

Barely halfway through the race's fourth stage on Wednesday, six of its seven riders had already quit. "Our budget is perhaps 100 times smaller than any other Continental team," said sporting director Gleb Groysman. 'We hesitated to come."

The team is made up exclusively of women from Uzbekistan and was set up to help the country qualify riders for the 2024 Paris Olympic Games. On Monday's first stage from Rotterdam, Tashkent lost four of its seven riders, unable to keep up with the pace of the peloton even on completely flat terrain. Mohinabonu Elmurodova, Madina Kakhkĥorova, Ekaterina Knebeleva and Asal Rizaeva all failed to reach the finish line in The Hague.

On Wednesday, Nafosat Kozieva chose not to start the hilly stage from Valkenburg to Liege. Then Margarita Misyurina retired just before the halfway. Kuskova survived Thursday's fifth stage, finishing in a large group that crossed the line 4 minutes and 58 seconds behind the winner. The 22-year-old sits in the middle of the overall classification, in 76th place, 15 minutes 9 seconds behind leader Katarzyna Niewiadoma. "The girls cried every day," Groysman, a Russian-American, told AFP. Of the seven riders, four are in the under-23 category.

The team travelled with just two replacement bikes and a few wheels. "Most of our riders are students and they only earn 200 to 300 euros (\$220-\$330) a month from cycling," said Groysman.

'Not a cycling country'

The Tashkent team was set up in 2022, at the instigation of the government. It achieved its Olympic goal with one rider in the men's time-trial and two in the women's road race. One of those women, 44-year-old Olga Zabelinskaya, did not enter the Tour, the other was Kuskova.

Uzbekistan sprinter Djamolidine Abdoujaparov won the points classification in the men's Tour de France three times between 1991 and 1994. Yet it "is

Olympics for being overweight.

Phogat, who has won three Commonwealth Games gold medals, was due to face Sarah Hildebrandt of the United States for the gold medal in Paris but was 100 grams (3.5 ounces) over the 50kg limit at the weigh-in for the final. She had made the weight before all her earlier bouts.

The Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) filed an appeal with global governing body United World Wrestling (UWW) to reconsider the decision. Phogat asked CAS to award her a shared silver medal.

On Thursday, CAS said the matter which was



AMNEVILLE: Team SD Worx - Protime's Hungarian rider Blanka Vas celebrates on the podium after winning the 5th stage. — AFP

absolutely not a cycling country", said Groysman, who puts the number of female riders at less than 100. The team qualified under this season's International Cycling Union (UCI) rules, which required race organiser Amaury Sport Organisation (ASO) to invite last year's top two Continental Tour teams. - AFP

examined by retired Australian judge Dr Annabelle Bennett as sole arbitrator, "has been dismissed". "Consequently, the UWW decision is confirmed," the statement added.

Hildebrandt took gold in the final against Cuba's Yusneylis Guzman Lopez, who was reprieved after losing her semi-final to Phogat. World bronze medallist Phogat, 29, was in the public eye for months last year as part of a long-running protest against the then-chief of Indian wrestling when he was embroiled in a sexual harassment scandal. Following her disqualification from the Paris Olympics final, Phogat announced her retirement from wrestling. - AFP

England women bid to end Rugby WCup drought

TWICKENHAM: England Women's head coach John Mitchell has insisted the expectations surrounding his squad are as nothing compared to the "internal pressure" driving the team ahead of next year's Rugby World Cup. The Red Roses have

been standard setters in preparation, payment and squad devel-opment as the women's John Mitchell



game has become increasingly professional, with England winning a record 30 consecutive Tests from 2019-2022.

But that remarkable run ended with the bitter disappointment of an agonizing 34-31 loss in Auckland to arch-rivals New Zealand in the Covid-delayed World Cup final of two years ago. Next year's World Cup, however, takes place in England, with officials at the Rugby Football Union, the national governing body, determined

CAS rejects India's wrestler Phogat's **Olympic** appeal

LAUSANNE: Indian wrestler Vinesh Phogat on Thursday lost her appeal to the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) after her disqualification from the women's 50kg final at the Paris

Robertson demands 'redemption' from **All Blacks pack**

AUCKLAND: Head coach Scott Robertson on Thursday handed his All Blacks forwards a chance for "redemption" after revamping his backline but leaving the pack nearly untouched for the second Rugby Championship Test against Argentina.

Robertson announced four starting changes for Saturday's match in Auckland, following last weekend's shock 38-30 loss to the Pumas in Wellington, with ex-captain Sam Cane also included on the bench. Three of the changes are in the outside backs, with Robertson making just one switch among the forwards as Tamaiti Williams replaced



to break new ground by having their 82,000 capacity Twickenham headquarters in southwest London sell-out for the final.

But just reaching the showpiece match is unlikely to be enough to satisfy England or their supporters given the Red Roses have lost the last two World Cup finals to New Zealand's Black Ferns. England begin their 2024/25 season with Tests at home to France and New Zealand next month before travelling to Canada for the top tier of the WXV women's tournament, where they take on the hosts and the United States before facing the Black Ferns again.

Their upcoming schedule means that four of England's next five matches will see them playing three of their major World Cup rivals, with France first up in Gloucester on September 7. Then, before the World Cup, there is the Six Nations, with England — the dominant force in European women's rugby union — bidding for a seventh straight title after Mitchell's first campaign in charge earlier this year yielded a third consecutive Grand Slam.

The 60-year-old New Zealander is now confronting a problem similar to the one he faced when in charge of his native men's All Blacks some two decades ago, namely of how best to stress-test a team that rarely gets put under pressure between World Cups.

'Unfairness'

The Red Roses' bid for World Cup glory fell at the final hurdle three years ago when, at 14-0 up in the showpiece match and seemingly in complete command, wing Lydia Thompson was sent off for a high tackle on Black Ferns star Portia Woodman.

Mitchell said England were trying to create as much "unfairness" in training as possible to leave them better prepared should they find themselves in a similar situation next year. "You look at the last World Cup where there was a red card, and you saw red cards in our last (Six Nations) competition," Mitchell told reporters at Twickenham on Wednesday.

"So there's all those things that you've got to factor in and you've got to rehearse for, and between players and staff we co-create a lot of these situations so that when it comes to, I guess, it happening, we've probably got a better chance of dealing with it."

Mitchell, also a former defence coach with the England and Japan men's teams, added: "We don't really need to worry about the pressure on the outside because we've got enough on the inside to be able to keep us motivated and continue to challenge ourselves.

England have won just two Women's Rugby World Cup titles, the last in 2014, with Mitchell saying of the challenge ahead: "How do we get done what we haven't got done for 11 years? How can we just squeeze a little bit more out of each other?" — AFP neck-injury victim Ethan de Groot.

"I think every All Black forward pack, after a result like that, it's a chance for a bit of redemption. And, you know, they've owned it," Robertson told reporters. Prolific try-scorer Will Jordan replaces Sevu Reece on the right wing in his first Test start since last year's World Cup, having undergone shoulder surgery.

Caleb Clarke takes over on the left wing from Auckland Blues teammate Mark Tele'a. Experienced Blues centre Rieko Ioane is being recalled in place of Anton Lienert-Brown. Until de Groot's injury, Robertson was planning to field the same starting forwards who were outplayed by the more committed Pumas pack last week.

"Look, we learned a lot last weekend, we all did. They've got to go and put it into action. That's been our focus." Cane is recalled to the bench despite the 32-year-old flanker's plan to retire from international rugby at the end of this year to take up a Japanese club contract with Suntory Sungoliath.

The 95-Test veteran's last All Blacks appearance was as skipper in the World Cup final last October, when he was shown a red card for a high tackle in the 12-11 loss to South Africa in Paris. Robertson said he wanted Cane to provide a sense of calm late in the game, something he felt

Scheffler shows off gold as McIlroy tries to flip script

WASHINGTON: Scottie Scheffler was showing off his Olympic gold medal on Wednesday and preparing to chase a first PGA Tour playoff title, while Rory McIlroy hopes to "flip the script" on a heartbreaking year in the next few weeks.

Top-ranked Scheffler, whose seven wins this year also include the Masters, and McIlroy launch their FedEx Cup playoff bids in the St. Jude Championship on Thursday in Memphis. "It's been nice to be able to get some wins for some good play. The Olympics were a lot of fun," Scheffler said. "It's great to be back home and ready for the playoffs.

Scheffler, who also became a father this year, is competing for PGA Player of the Year honors with Xander Schauffele, the British Open and PGA Championship winner. Asked to select between Schauffele's two majors and Scheffler's season, McIlroy backed Scheffler.

"Scottie's. I think winning the Masters, an Olympic gold medal, winning whatever it is, six times, it's pretty hard to top that," McIlroy said. "He always seems to find a way to hit the shots or hole the putts. I've described Scottie as relentless and this is just another example of that.

"He has had an incredible couple of years. It was sort of like once he won that first one, it's just like

WELLINGTON: Argentina's Marcos Kremer (C) fights for the ball during the Rugby Championship match be-tween New Zealand and Argentina at Sky Stadium in Wellington. – AFP

was lacking in Wellington when the All Blacks squandered an early lead. Argentina have made three changes to their starting side, including the return of skipper Julian Montoya, who missed the first Test with a rib injury.

Montoya reclaims the captaincy from flanker Pablo Matera and demotes hooker Ignacio Ruiz to the bench, meaning there is no room in the squad for 39-year-old Agustin Creevy, who scored a decisive late try last week as a replacement.

Montoya said he vowed not to let Creevy down. "Of course 'Gus (Creevy) is an inspiration and he helped me throughout my career so I'm going to be grateful for that forever," Montoya said.

"I have the opportunity to bring fresh legs and give everything for the team."

Glasgow prop Lucio Sordoni replaces Eduardo Bello while Perpignan No.8 forward Joaquin Oviedo is promoted from the bench, pushing Marcos Kremer to lock and Franco Molina to the bench.

the floodgates have opened and he's found a next gear and a next level." Scheffler, 28, was Player of the Year the past two seasons and this year has won at Bay Hill, the Players, the Masters, the Heritage and Memorial and Travelers titles plus Olympic gold.

Taking a playoff crown in two weeks at East Lake in Atlanta would cap an incredible campaign. "I don't really think about exclamation point or anything like that, but definitely want to win the FedEx Cup,' Scheffler said. "I didn't have my best stuff at East Lake the last couple years."

Scheffler brought his gold medal with him and will keep it with him through the Tour Championship. "I brought it for a deal this morning, and I promptly put it back in my backpack," Scheffler said. "I was definitely surprised at how many people want to see the medal. I feel like there's a lot of stuff in golf where they'll say congratulations, but I think a lot of people get a lot of joy from seeing the medal."

Golden joy

He can do more with a gold medal than with a Masters green jacket. "With the green jacket it's pretty strict, when you're out representing the club,' Scheffler said. "With the Olympic medal, you can wear it, take pictures, do whatever you want.'

McIlroy, the only three-time winner of the FedEx Cup, hopes the playoffs can bring a bright finish after his near misses. The four-time major champion missed two short putts in the final three holes as he finished an agonizing one shot behind winner Bryson DeChambeau at this year's US Open.

McIlroy last lifted a major title in 2014, although he has won the FedEx Cup three times since. "Overall reasonably happy with the way I've played this year," McIl-

New Zealand (15-1)

Beauden Barrett; Will Jordan, Rieko Ioane, Jordie Barrett, Caleb Clarke; Damian McKenzie, TJ Perenara; Ardie Savea (captain), Dalton Papali'i, Ethan Blackadder; Sam Darry, Tupou Vaa'i; Tyrel Lomax, Codie Taylor, Tamaiti Williams.

Replacements: Asafo Aumua, Ofa Tu'ungafasi, Fletcher Newell, Josh Lord, Sam Cane, Cortez Ratima, Anton Lienert-Brown, Mark Tele'a

Argentina (15-1)

Juan Mallia; Matias Moroni, Lucio Cinti, Santiago Chocobares, Mateo Carreras; Santiago Carreras, Gonzalo Bertranou; Joaquin Oviedo, Juan Martin Gonzalez, Pablo Matera; Pedro Rubiolo, Marcos Kremer; Lucio Sordoni, Julian Montoya (captain), Thomas Gallo.

Replacements: Ignacio Ruiz, Mayco Vivas, Joel Sclavi, Tomas Lavanini, Franco Molina, Lautaro Bazan Velez, Tomas Albornoz, Bautista Delguy. - AFP



GUYANCOURT: Ireland's Rory McIlroy competes in round 4 of the men's golf individual stroke play of the Paris 2024 Olympic Games. — AFP

roy, who finished tied-fifth at the Paris Olympics, said.

"I've got three tournaments coming up to try to turn a pretty good year into a very good year. "When the bulk of the season has come and gone and you've got this opportunity of three weeks to really, I guess, flip the script a little bit or change the narrative and what that season means, I think that's a motivating factor." — AFP

Kuwait 🚵 Times

Sports

Starlet Yamal offers Barca hope ahead of daunting Liga challenge

Three arrested, fourth wanted after teen star Yamal's father stabbed

BARCELONA: Teenage star Lamine Yamal is carrying the weight of expectations as Hansi Flick's Barcelona face the unenviable challenge of dethroning a fearsome Real Madrid side as Spanish champions this season.

The German coach replaced club legend Xavi Hernandez at the helm and welcomed new arrival Dani Olmo last week, but last season's La Liga winners Madrid signed superstar French striker Kylian Mbappe earlier this summer. The forward joins Vinicius Junior, Jude Bellingham and other star names to ensure Barcelona begin the season as firm underdogs to Los Blancos.

The Catalan giants won nothing last season and surrendered their Spanish crown in a deeply disappointing campaign, but 17-year-old Yamal's emergence shows there is light at the end of the tunnel. Along with Olympic gold medal-winning centre-back Pau Cubarsi, financially-hampered Barcelona will rely on their young stars to try and compete with the might of Carlo Ancelotti's Champions League winners.

Many believe Barcelona need a left winger and a deep-lying midfielder to put themselves in a position to fight for silverware but the club's economic struggles make those dreams unlikely after Olmo's arrival.

Flick's side beat Madrid in pre-season during a tour of the United States but were brought crashing down to earth on Monday by Monaco, who enjoyed a 3-0 win in the traditional Joan Gamper Trophy curtain-raiser at Barcelona's Olympic Stadium in their final friendly.

"We didn't play with our normal speed or normal combinations, we lost a lot of balls," said Flick after the chastening defeat. "But in the end,

Mbappe bolsters stellar Real Madrid's La Liga title defence

BARCELONA: Even if Kylian Mbappe had not completed his long-awaited move to Real Madrid this summer they would still be widely tipped to retain La Liga. So with the French superstar joining the likes of Vinicius Junior and Jude Bellingham, Madrid seem almost certain to continue dominating Spanish football ahead of rivals Barcelona and Atletico Madrid.

Mbappe made his Real Madrid debut on Wednesday and started as he means to go on, scoring and lifting the UEFA Super Cup in a 2-0 win over Atalanta. The big question for coach Carlo Ancelotti is how to fit Mbappe into his plans, although if any coach can manage to keep his stars happy it is the Italian, viewed as the best man-manager in the game.

England international Bellingham may drop back into the midfield role he occupied at Borussia Dortmund after being a key part of the attack for Madrid last season, particularly in the first half of the campaign. Brahim Diaz, Arda Guler and others will also be looking to make an impact when they get their chances, with Ancelotti showing last season he was happy to rotate in La Liga. "This problem has ruined my holidays," joked Ancelotti on Tuesday about his selection dilemma.

it is pre-season. I know the team can play much better than today.

"We have five days more now and will prepare them well for the next match against Valencia (Barca's La Liga opener)." The German coach is hoping to transform the club's pressing game but with pivotal striker Robert Lewandowski soon turning 36, there are doubts over whether he can achieve it.

Flick is further set back by injuries to midfielders Pedri, Gavi and Frenkie de Jong, as well as centre-back Ronald Araujo, which mean he starts the season with depleted ranks.

Return home

Barcelona are planning to return to their renovated Camp Nou stadium midway through the season if building works stay on track which will be a welcome boost for demoralised fans. Although a club of Barcelona's size is always aiming to compete for silverware, expectations seem lower than usual in Catalonia.

Gone are the days where stellar names like Lionel Messi, Luis Suarez and Neymar gave Barcelona the most fearsome attacking line in world football. Instead it was youngster Yamal who fans cheered for against Monaco, with Barcelona supporters' biggest roar of the night reserved for the moment the winger jogged down the touchline to warm up.

Yamal, who made his Barca debut at 15, was a vital figure in Spain's Euro 2024 triumph this season and has taken to elite football like a duck to water. No challenge has appeared too daunting thus far for Barcelona academy starlet Yamal, leading to inevitable comparisons with Messi.

With Sergi Roberto departing after 14 years

games — last year those who played less still brought a lot to the team." Mbappe, 25, has been Madrid's dream signing for years but finally completed his switch to the Santiago Bernabeu this summer after his Paris Saint-Germain deal came to an end.

With over 80,000 fans attending his presentation in July, Madrid supporters have already forgiven his decisions not to join in previous years and are eagerly awaiting their first sight of him at the new-look Bernabeu. Madrid start their title defence at Real Mallorca on Sunday before their first home match, against Real Valladolid on August 25.

Replacing Kroos

One negative for Los Blancos is Toni Kroos' departure in midfield. The German retired from football after Euro 2024 having spent a decade pulling the strings in Madrid's midfield. Talented Turkish teenager Guler could get more minutes in that position, while Eduardo Camavinga will also hope for more game time after he returns from a knee ligament sprain.

However if Bellingham drops out of the attack to accommodate Mbappe, as he did against Atalanta, then he can become Madrid's leader in the centre of the pitch. The midfielder might form an athletic trio with Fede Valverde and Aurelien Tchouameni, offering both steel and poise behind the dynamos ahead of them. While Los Blancos are consolidating their position of power, aiming for a third title in four years and a record-extending 37th, their traditional rivals Barcelona and Atletico are scrambling to rebuild in different ways. The Catalans sacked coach Xavi and replaced him with Hansi Flick in May, while Atletico have

in the first-team squad, Marc-Andre ter Stegen takes the armband as Barcelona captain. "I hope the fans are with us all year because many good things are ahead of us," said the goalkeeper after the Monaco defeat.

"Let's hope (that) was an accident... it's a good warning, and let's hope that in a few days we'll be better." If Barcelona are to be able to compete with Madrid this season, that needs to be the case.

Meanwhile, three people have been arrested and a fourth is wanted after a knife attack on the father of young Spanish football star Lamine Yamal in Catalonia, local police told AFP Thursday.

The attack took place at 1910 GMT on Wednesday in a car park in the Catalan town of Mataro, around 30 kilometres from Barcelona, in the Rocafonda neighborhood where Lamine Yamal is from, said a spokesman for the Mossos d'Esquadra, the Catalan regional police force.

Yamal's father Mounir Nasraoui was stabbed several times the police said, and is being treated at the Can Ruti hospital, who could not be reached by AFP for comment. Spanish newspaper La Vanguardia reported late Wednesday that Nasraoui was in a serious but stable condition, citing sources close to the victim.

Catalan police said the three people arrested are being questioned at Mataro police station, while a fourth individual is being actively sought. Investigators must also interview the victim 'as soon as possible', as well as witnesses, to uncover the circumstances of the attack, said the police.

La Vanguardia said the incident occurred after an argument in the street with some men who had approached him while he was walking his dog and



made various sales and signings this summer. Diego Simeone's side have brought in Julian Alvarez, Robin Le Normand and Alexander Sorloth after a disappointing fourth-place finish last season and it may take the Rojiblancos some time to click.

Barcelona's hopes are pinned on 17-year-old Lamine Yamal and despite his heroics for Spain in their Euro 2024 triumph, helping his side keep pace with Mbappe and Co is a lot to ask. Catalan minnows Girona finished third last season and for much of the season were Madrid's closest challengers, but are rebuilding themselves after losing Artem Dovbyk and Savinho in the summer market.



BARCELONA: (FILES) Barcelona's Spanish forward #19 Lamine Yamal prepares to kick the ball during the 59th Joan Gamper Trophy football match. — AFP

later returned to assault him. Yamal made his Barcelona debut aged 15 in April 2023 and burst into the limelight last season, becoming a key player for the Catalan giants. — AFP

PSG keep low profile while preparing for life without Mbappe

PARIS: Paris Saint-Germain are beginning a new era following the departure of Kylian Mbappe and the reigning French champions have so far kept a low profile as they prepare for life without the superstar forward.

Mbappe moved to Real Madrid when his contract expired in June, ending a prolific seven-year association with the Qatar-owned club in which he struck a remarkable 256 goals to become their all-time top scorer.

The France captain therefore leaves an enormous void, so big that PSG appear to have decided there is no one player who could possibly fill it adequately. Coach Luis Enrique takes his team to Normandy to face Le Havre on Friday on the opening night of the new Ligue 1 campaign without any glitzy new signing having arrived to directly replace Mbappe. PSG have nevertheless spent money in Europe's summer transfer window, and they may still move for a top-class striker before the deadline at the end of the month. Napoli's Victor Osimhen, who previously starred in Ligue 1 for Lille, has been linked with a move to the French capital, although it is unclear whether he would fit in with Luis Enrique's preferred style of football.

"The problem doesn't exist, because we have many

Man Utd kick off Premier League season

MANCHESTER: Manchester United kick-off the 2024/25 Premier League season at home to Fulham on Friday before Manchester City begin the defence of their title at free-spending Chelsea on Sunday. New Liverpool manager Arne Slot will be under the spotlight on Saturday with a trip to newly-promoted Ipswich for his first competitive game since succeeding Jurgen Klopp. AFP Sports looks at what to expect from the opening weekend of the new season:

Ten Hag needs fast start

Manchester United's shock FA Cup final win over Manchester City back in May went a long way to keeping Erik ten Hag in charge at Old Trafford. The Dutchman has been backed by United's new football operations hierarchy, led by British billionaire Jim Ratcliffe, and was handed a contract extension to 2026. Leny Yoro, Joshua Zirkzee, Matthijs De Ligt and Noussair Mazraoui have arrived to strengthen Ten Hag's squad for around £150 million (\$192 million). But after finishing eighth last season — United's worst ever Premier League finish — Ten Hag needs a fast start to the new campaign to dispell doubts he is the man to lead the club forward. Fulham won at Old Trafford for the first time in 20 years in February. Any repeat on Friday will have United fans fearing another season to forget.

Ipswich plan Slot shock

Arne Slot faces a tricky start to his Premier League career when Liverpool travel to an Ipswich side back in the top-flight after a 22-year absence and buoyant after successive promotions. Liverpool are yet to make a single signing in the transfer window but have been rampant in pre-season with eye-catching wins over Arsenal, United and Sevilla.

Victory at Portman Road would bring some relief to Liverpool fans still coming to terms with the end of Klopp's iconic reign. The Reds could then build some momentum with a comfortable run of fixtures to come before the October international break.

But Ipswich defender Axel Tuanzebe is confi-

It means Basque sides Real Sociedad and Athletic Bilbao sense the chance to break back into the top four, while Villarreal, Valencia and Real Betis have their own European aspirations. — AFP

dent of maintaining Ipswich's proud home record over the past two seasons. "We're going to empty the tank and give everything we've got," Tuanzebe told the BBC. "They're just humans" he added. "It is just 11 v 11 on the pitch. Not many teams win at Portman Road and we intend to keep it that way."

Chelsea chaos v City continuity

New Chelsea manager Enzo Maresca has a baptism of fire against his former club. Maresca was part of Pep Guardiola's coaching staff at City before leading Leicester to promotion from the Championship last season.

The Italian inherits a chaotic situation at Stamford Bridge with a first team squad now boasting over 50 players and question marks over the future of most of them. Chelsea's issues were exposed in a torrid pre-season, that included a 4-2 defeat to City in the USA. — AFP For now, though, PSG's efforts in the transfer market have been focused elsewhere, with an estimated 125 million euros (\$132.2m) invested on three players.

Nineteen-year-old Portuguese midfield prodigy Joao Neves, who appeared for his country at Euro 2024, has arrived from Benfica for 59.9 million euros, a fee which could rise by 10 million euros when bonuses are factored in. The defence has been strengthened with the recruitment of Ecuador centre-back Willian Pacho, 22, from Eintracht Frankfurt for up to 45 million euros.

PSG's first summer signing was the Russian goalkeeper Matvey Safonov, 25, from Krasnodar in his homeland for a reported 20 million euros. He will provide competition for first-choice custodian Gianluigi Donnarumma.

Meanwhile, Mbappe apart, the Parisians have kept hold of the spine of their team from last season and have also incorporated teenage Brazilian midfielder Gabriel Moscardo after signing him from Corinthians in January but allowing him to stay there on loan for six more months. — AFP



Clinics & Hospitals

1				
	Kaizen center Rawda Adaliya Khaldiya	nics 25716707 22517733 22517144 24848075	Qibla Ayoun Al-Qibla Mirqab Sharq Salmiya	22459381 22451082 22456536 22465401 25746401
	Kaifan Shamiya Shuwaikh Abdullah Salem Nuzha Industrial Shuwaikh Qadsiya Dasmah Bneid Al-Gar Shaab	24849807 24848913 24814507 22549134 22526804 24814764 22515088 22532265 22531908 22518752	Hosp Sabah Hospital Amiri Hospital Maternity Hospital Mubarak Al-Kabir Chest Hospital Farwaniya Hospital Adan Hospital Ibn Sina Hospital	itals 24812000 22450005 24843100 25312700 24849400 24892010 23940620 24840300

Change of Name

I have changed my old name from **Mohmad Ubed Abdul Saddique** to new name Kagzi Mohammed Ubed Abdul Saddique & I will be known as new name which please note. SD: Kagzi Mohammed Ubed Abdul Saddique, ADD: C-30, Ihsan Park, Block No. 272/B, near Kasturi Hotel, Isroli, VRC- Bardoli, PO-Bardoli, Dist - Surat, Gujarat - 394601.

(6153#, 15/08/2024)

I have changed my old name from **Abdul Saddique Abdul Aziz** to new name Kagzi Abdul Saddique Abdul Aziz & I will be known as new name which please note. SD: Kagzi Abdul Saddique Abdul Aziz, ADD: C-30, Ihsan Park, Block No. 272/B, near Kasturi Hotel, Isroli, VRC- Bardoli, PO-Bardoli, Dist -Surat, Gujarat - 394601.

(6152#, 15/08/2024)

I Qaid Joher Holder of Indian Passport No. Z3201458 having permanent address 24/1, Ibrahimpura Bakhal, Dada Bhai Noroji Marg, Kharakunwa, Ujjain M.P. India Pin 456006, Residing in Kuwait at present, hereby declare that henceforth my name will be Read as Under: Qaid Joher Adenwala.

(5650#, 14/08/2024)





Sport Vinez

FRIDAY, AUGUST 16, 2024

Mbappe strikes on debut as Madrid beat Atalanta in UEFA Super Cup

French superstar has waited for years to play for his dream club



WARSAW: Kylian Mbappe enjoyed a "great night" as he struck on his Real Madrid debut to help his new side claim a record sixth UEFA Super Cup with a 2-0 win over Atalanta on Wednesday in Warsaw. The superstar French forward has waited years to play for his dream club and after finally signing for Los Blancos this summer at the end of his Paris Saint-Germain deal, celebrated his first appearance with a goal.

Fede Valverde broke the deadlock from close range for the Champions League holders in the 59th minute after the Italian Europa League winners held their own in the first half. Madrid began to rack up the chances and Mbappe rifled home in the 68th minute after Jude Bellingham spotted his dart into space in the box to seal the victory.

"It was a great night, I've been waiting for this moment for a long time, to play with this shirt, with this badge, for these fans," Mbappe told Movistar, speaking in fluent Spanish. Madrid's triumph ensured coach Carlo Ancelotti equalled former Los Blancos coach Miguel Munoz on a joint-record 14

t titles won at the helm of the club.

The Italian's first task this season is designing a system that can get the best out of his array of attacking stars. Mbappe began through the middle of Madrid's forward line, flanked by Vinicius Junior on the left and Rodrygo Goes on the right, in the first look at how he might fit into Ancelotti's plans this season.

As a result England international Bellingham played as part of the midfield trio rather than in the advanced position he began last season in to such devastating goalscoring effect. "(Mbappe) has the quality to score a lot of goals," Ancelotti told Movistar.

"What we have to look for is balance in the team — today we didn't have that balance." Mbappe's only chance in a tight first half arrived in the 15th minute but his shot from the middle of the box was well blocked by Isak Hien.

Gian Piero Gasperini's Atalanta, appearing in their first Super Cup after stunning Bayer Leverkusen in the Europa League final last season, came close to taking the lead when Eder Militao headed Marten de Roon's cross ahead his own bar. Bellingham was booked for a late challenge on Atalanta goalkeeper Juan Musso on a foray forward from midfield after taking a heavy touch to control a clever ball from Vinicius. Rodrygo clipped the top of Atalanta's crossbar just before the break after being teed up by Vinicius. Madrid stopper Thibaut Courtois, who missed most of last season injured, produced a stunning one-handed save to tip over a Mario Pasalic header at the start of the second half.

Mbappe movement

Madrid broke the deadlock before the hour mark through Valverde, tapping home from close range while Atalanta's defence worried about Mbappe, who was moving with more freedom. Bellingham, increasingly influential, fed Vinicius, who cut the ball across goal for the Uruguayan midfielder to tap home.

Valverde, wearing the number eight shirt vacated by Toni Kroos who retired this summer, said he was "tremendously proud". "It's motivating to inherit the number of a player I admire a lot, I dedicate the goal to him and to my wife," said Valverde. Vinicius should have doubled Madrid's lead when sent through on goal but Musso tipped over his effort. Swedish defender Hien blocked from Bellingham as Madrid sought a second and then Musso thwarted the former Borussia Dortmund man.

Mbappe eventually delivered it with a lethal finish after Bellingham, named player of the match, kept an attack alive and spotted the Frenchman's clever movement. The 25-year-old striker was given an ovation by Madrid's fans after Ancelotti brought him off in the 83rd minute, likely the first of many.

Mbappe said that he expected to improve in the weeks ahead, with Madrid's La Liga campaign starting on Saturday against Real Mallorca. "I am sure we will get better and me first of all — but today is a positive step," added the striker. Rodrygo said Ancelotti had told the forwards to shift their positions frequently, something evident in the second half. "The coach asked us to go changing positions a lot, or staying apart," the Brazilian told Movistar. "They were man marking, so we had to move and that's what happened during the game." — AFP

Sinner, Swiatek survive challenges over qualifiers

CINCINNATI: Cincinnati Masters top seeds Jannik Sinner and Iga Swiatek both secured opening triumphs Wednesday over qualifiers, with Swiatek forced to escape an attempted second-round ambush by France's Varvara Gracheva.

WTA world number one Swiatek needed six match points and more than two hours to escape with a 6-0, 6-7 (8/10), 6-2 victory to start the last major event prior to the US Open. ATP number one Sinner fought off eight break points as the top seed began the Cincinnati Open with a 6-4, 7-5 triumph over US qualifier Alex Michelsen.

Swiatek ran away with the opening set in 22 minutes but could not close out when leading 5-2 in the second. The 62nd-ranked Gracheva saved five match points and converted on her own fifth set point to take the match into a third set. Swiatek regained her poise to finally pull out the unexpectedly tight win to reach the third round. "It was not easy to finish in the second set," Swiatek said. "She started playing with freedom, with nothing to lose.

"I backed down a bit and she used her chances. I'm happy I got more proactive in the third set and played more intense." Swiatek said she kept her self-belief. "I knew I had the game to win it — I did have five match points," she said. "It was my fault that I didn't close it out, but that happens. "I was able to play the third like I did at the start of the match. I don't want any regrets. I'm only looking forward. I'm in a peaceful place and I'm playing without expectations." Italy's Sinner, who turns 23 on Friday, has never been past the third round at the American Midwest venue but is hoping to improve on that showing this week.

Victory in just under two hours marked the 25th on hardcourt this season for Sinner, who was the first man into the third round. The top seed has not lost before the quarter-final stage of any event since Masters 1000 Shanghai last October. Teenaged opponent Michelsen went down with 42 unforced errors, his winner count of 14 exactly half of Sinner's total. "It was a tough match," Sinner said. "I needed to start feeling the conditions and getting used to them.

"I'm very happy to be into the next round. I've struggled here in past years. But today I stayed positive and that helped in the win." Sinner, who missed the Paris Olympics with tonsillitis and went out last week in the Montreal quarter-finals, said he was not at his best. "I'm not yet at 100%, but the main goal is the US Open," he said. "I have one week (after Cincinnati) to prepare in the best possible way. "The matches I can play here will help at the Open."

Sinner next plays Australian Jordan Thompson, a 6-2, 6-4 winner over Sebastian Baez.

Medvedev eliminated

Former world number one Daniil Medvedev was ousted in his second-round m tch, the fourth seed falling to 22-year-old Czech Jiri Lehecka 7-6 (7/2), 6-4. Medvedev also fell in the first round last week at Montreal. Ninth seed Stefano Tsitsipas played for the first time since splitting last week with his father



MASON: Iga Swiatek of Poland serves during her match against Varvara Gracheva of France during Day 4 of the Cincinnati Open at the Lindner Family Tennis Center. — AFP

as coach, with the Greek turning the tables in dramatic fashion to reach the second round 4-6, 6-4, 6-3 over Jan-Lennard Struff.

Norwegian seventh seed Casper Ruud will next face Felix Auger-Aliassime after his 6-3, 6-1 win over US qualifier Aleksandar Kovacevic. Monday's Montreal champion, Australian Alexei Popyrin, lost his opening match to France's Gael Monfils 7-5, 6-3.

Dane Holger Rune beat Matteo Berrettini 2-6, 6-1,

6-4, ending the Italian's 10-match win streak that included clay titles in Gstaad and Kitzbuehel. Briton Jack Draper worked for more than two and a half hours to stop Spain's Jaume Munar 7-5, 3-6, 7-6 (7/5).

Paula Badosa joined boyfriend Tsitsipas in the second round after defeating Cincinnati local Peyton Stearns 6-2, 7-5. Washington winner Badosa next plays 13th seed Anna Kalinskaya, a 1-6, 6-2, 6-3 comeback winner against Katerina Siniakova. — AFP