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Zionists kill dozens in Gaza

Blinken ends visit without truce breakthrough • Zionists kill top Fatah fighter in Lebanon

Amir invited to attend FII forum



KUWAIT: HH the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received on Wednesday an invitation from Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman Al-Saud to attend the Future Investment Initiative forum 2024 in Riyadh in October. The invitation was handed to HH the Amir by Saudi Ambassador to Kuwait Prince Sultan bin Saad Al-Saud. — KUNA

GAZA: Zionist airstrikes across Gaza killed at least 50 Palestinians in the past 24 hours, Palestinian health officials said on Wednesday, after US Secretary of State Antony Blinken ended his latest visit to the region with a truce deal still elusive. As last-ditch diplomacy continued to halt the 10-month-old war between the Zionist entity and Hamas, the Zionist military said jets hit around 30 targets throughout the Gaza Strip including tunnels, launch sites and an observation post.

It said troops killed dozens of armed fighters and seized weapons including explosives, grenades and automatic rifles. Later in the day, the Zionist military struck a school and a nearby house in Gaza City, killing at least three people and wounding 15, the territory's civil emergency service said.

In the town of Bani Suhaila near Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip, a Zionist airstrike killed seven Palestinians at a tent encampment for displaced people, medics said. The military issued new evacuation orders in the heavily overcrowded area of Deir Al-Balah, in central Gaza, where hundreds of thousands of Palestinians displaced by the fighting have sought shelter. The orders were soon followed by tank fire with at least one person killed and several wounded by machine gun fire, medics and residents said.

Meanwhile, the Zionist entity killed a senior fighter from Fatah's armed wing Wednesday in a strike on Lebanon, leading to accusations from the Palestinian movement that the Zionist entity is trying to "ignite a regional war". Fatah, the Palestinian movement based



GAZA: A Palestinian child injured in a Zionist strike reacts as she is carried to Nasser Medical Complex in Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip on Aug 21, 2024. — AFP

in the Zionist-occupied West Bank, said Khalil Maqdash was killed in a strike near the southern Lebanese city of Sidon.

The Zionist military said it targeted the brother of Mounir Maqdash, who heads the Lebanese branch of Fatah's armed wing. It accused them both

of "directing attacks and smuggling weapons" to the West Bank and collaborating with Iran's Revolutionary Guards. In response, the slain militant's Fatah movement, which is headed by Palestinian President

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Ship attacked off Yemen

DUBAI: Three projectiles hit a merchant vessel off Yemen's rebel-held port city of Hodeida on Wednesday, causing a fire onboard and leaving the ship without engine power, a British maritime security agency said. The Greek-flagged Sounion initially exchanged fire with two small vessels, one with three to five people onboard while the second carried around 10, the United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations (UKMTO) said. — AFP

28 killed in Iran bus crash

TEHRAN: At least 28 Pakistani pilgrims traveling to Iraq for the Arbaceen commemoration were killed as their bus crashed in central Iran, state media reported early Wednesday. "A bus carrying 51 Pakistani pilgrims overturned and caught fire in front of Dehshir-Taft checkpoint in the central province of Yazd on Tuesday night," Iranian state television reported. — AFP

3.29m visit Japan in July

TOKYO: Japan welcomed 3.29 million foreign tourists in July, official data showed Wednesday, its second straight monthly record as it turns to tourism for economic growth. The 3.29 million visitors represented a 41.9 percent increase from a year ago, according to Japan National Tourism Organization (JNTO). It was also a 10.1 percent rise compared with July 2019. — AFP

Iran executes fortuneteller

TEHRAN: Authorities in central Iran executed a male fortuneteller for raping and sexually assaulting his clients, the judiciary said on Wednesday. "A fortuneteller, who assaulted women and girls was executed in Yazd prison," said Hossein Tahmasebi, chief justice of the central province, according to the Iranian judiciary's Mizan Online website. — AFP

'Yes she can': Obama says US ready for Harris

CHICAGO: Barack Obama told fellow Democrats in Chicago Tuesday that "the torch has been passed" to Kamala Harris and that the United States was ready for her to become president. Former president Obama, who was greeted with rapturous applause and cheers at the packed arena hosting the party's nominating convention, said Vice President Harris would fight for Americans, and called her November poll rival Donald Trump "dangerous". "Kamala Harris is ready for the job. This is a person who has spent her life

fighting for people who need a voice," he said. Obama called Harris "someone who sees you and hears you and will get up every single day and fight for you". "Yes she can," Obama said of Harris, prompting the boisterous crowd to repeatedly chant the phrase, recalling Obama's own "Yes we can" campaign slogan.

Before his stardust performance, his wife and former US first lady Michelle Obama told convention goers "something magically wonderful is in the air". "It's the contagious power of hope," she said, calling Harris "my girl" and saying that hope — another rallying cry of her husband's successful 2008 campaign — "is making a comeback".

His turn amped up the already buoyant mood in Chicago where President Joe Biden delivered his own emotional

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CHICAGO: Former US First Lady Michelle Obama introduces Former US President Barack Obama on the second day of the Democratic National Convention on Aug 20, 2024. — AFP

Australia OKs world's 'largest' solar power hub

SYDNEY: Australia approved on Wednesday plans for a massive solar and battery farm that would export energy to Singapore, a project billed as the "largest solar precinct in the world". Authorities announced environmental approvals for SunCable's US\$24 billion project in Australia's remote north that is slated to power three million homes.

The project, which will include an array of panels, batteries and, eventually, a cable linking Australia with Singapore, is backed by tech billionaire and green activist Mike Cannon-Brookes. "It will be the largest solar precinct in the world — and heralds Australia as the world leader in green energy," said Environment Minister Tanya Plibersek. It is hoped that energy production will begin in 2030, providing four gigawatts of energy for domestic use.

Two more gigawatts would be sent to Singapore via undersea cable, supplying about 15 percent of the city-state's needs. SunCable Australia's managing director Cameron Garnsworthy said the approval was "a landmark moment in the project's journey". Numerous approval processes and other hurdles remain despite Wednesday's green light.

The project depends on signoffs from Singapore's

Australia solar and battery farm



energy market authority, Indonesia's government and Australian Indigenous communities. Singapore's energy market authority said in a statement it was in "discussions with Sun Cable on its proposal for electricity imports into Singapore" but did not provide further details. Garnsworthy said: "SunCable will now focus its efforts on the next stage of planning to advance the project towards a final investment decision targeted by 2027."

Countries around the world are racing to bring major solar projects online to ease the transition away from polluting fossil fuels.

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Switzerland eyes cashless future with instant payments

GENEVA: Switzerland's new instant payment system will bolster the future of cashless payments in the country, the Swiss central bank said Wednesday after the scheme went live. The Swiss National Bank said around 60 financial institutions were now able to receive and process instant payments, covering more than 95 percent of Swiss retail payment transactions, following Tuesday's market launch.

"By end-2026 at the latest, all financial institutions active in retail payment transactions will be reachable," the SNB said in a statement. The central bank said the first institutions had already launched retail offerings enabling customers to send instant payments, with further banks to follow in the coming months. "Instant payments allow private individuals and companies to perform account-to-account transactions with immediate execution and final settlement in seconds," around the clock, the SNB said.

"This market launch represents a further important milestone and reflects the collective

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Local

Cabinet activates governors' role in the implementation of development policy

Ministers review recent decision to refer ex-officials, staff to Public Prosecution

KUWAIT: The Kuwait Cabinet approved a draft bill to amend some articles of Act 81 (2014) on governors' affairs with a view to activate the governors' supervisory powers in the implementation of the state policy and the development plan. The amendments aim to promote the government services across the country and highlight the civilized aspect of Kuwait, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Sharida Abdullah Al-Maousherji said after the weekly Cabinet meeting.

The meeting, held at Bayan Palace on Tuesday under the chairmanship of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, heard a presentation by First Deputy Prime Minister, Defense and Interior Minister Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef Saud Al-Sabah on the sovereign instructions regarding enhancement of governors' participation in national development. The Cabinet tasked the ministers with coordination with governors and meeting their demands related to improvement of services for citizens and residents, Al-Maousherji noted.

The Cabinet members welcomed the return of Deputy Prime Minister and Oil Minister Dr Emad Mohammad Al-Atiqi safely to the country after a health problem he underwent abroad. They wished Dr Al-Atiqi everlasting wellbeing to continue contributing to the welfare of the country and the people. Minister of Information and Culture Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi offered a presentation on the agenda of the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL) for the celebration marking the selection of Kuwait as Capital of Arab Culture 2025.

The events on the agenda highlight Kuwait's trailblazing role in culture and the joint Arab ef-

orts to promote cultural movement, Al-Mutairi told the Cabinet. The meeting also heard a presentation by Minister of Social Affairs, Labor, Family and Childhood Affairs, and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Dr Amthal Hadi Al-Huwailah about the preparations for Kuwait hosting of the 26th Arabian Gulf Cup (Khaleeji 26) between December 21, 2024, and January 3, 2025.

Al-Huwailah, the chairperson of the higher organizing committee of the championship, and leaders of the Public Authority for Sport, elaborated on the efforts made by the higher organizing committee and the affiliate committees to set the stage for the highly important regional sports event. Minister of Health Dr Ahmad Abdulwahab Al-Awadhi updated the Cabinet on the outbreak of mpox (monkeypox) in some parts of the world and the preventive measures made by his Ministry to protect the citizens and residents from this viral disease.

The Ministry of Health detected no case of mpox infection, he affirmed, noting that the necessary medical supplies were secured and competent work teams were put on alert. The Cabinet appreciated the efforts exerted by officials and staffers of the Ministry of Health to protect the public. Minister of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy, and Minister of State for Housing Affairs Dr Mahmoud Abdulaziz Bushehri updated the meeting on the state of affairs in power plants across the country, including the current production capacity and the future projects.

The Cabinet reviewed the recent decision by Nazaha (Kuwait Anti-Corruption Authority) to refer a number of former officials and staffers to the Public



His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah presides over the Cabinet meeting. — KUNA

Prosecution under the charge of usurpation of state funds, and tampering with wealth statements in contravention of Act 2 (2016), the founding act of Nazaha. The Cabinet reaffirmed to continue the combat against corruption, protect the state funds and apply the rule of law on everybody without exception. The

Cabinet approved the minutes of the higher committee on verification of nationality of Kuwait, including the nationality withdrawals from some persons who had been illegally naturalized in contravention to the provisions of Act 15 (1959) and the subsequent amendments. — KUNA

Official affirms adherence to medical ethics

KUWAIT: Ministry of Health official Dr Abdullah Al-Sanad said that the ethics of practicing medical professions have been acquired and adopted throughout history, adding that this issue is still one of the most important one globally - becoming a priority after it has undergone fundamental changes during the past decades due to technological advances as well as epidemiological and social transformations.

Dr Al-Sanad pointed out what must be committed and possessed by health professionals to properly serve society, as well as boost the profession and the institution, stressing that the rules and ethics of the medical profession are binding on all health professionals. He stressed that the work and performance of health systems cannot achieve their goal and purpose to the fullest except by adhering to the ethics of health professions, pointing to the frameworks that govern the health practitioners.

Dr Al-Sanad also pointed out that success within the work environment requires many skills, perhaps the most important of which are effective communication skills that have a major role in the success of the operations. He believed that effective communication is very important and the cornerstone of the success of the medical care process and goes beyond the mere exchange of information between the patient and the health practitioner.

Al-Sanad said that the quality of the relationship between the health practitioner and the patient remains the most important link in the health care chain and is essential to reach the correct diagnosis, adhere to the treatment plan, give the patient confidence and reassurance, and alleviate the patient's burdens and pain. He pointed out that many studies have confirmed that the success of the patient's treatment is greatly affected by effective communication, and this leads to better treatment results.

Kuwait gears towards a new season: Center

KUWAIT: Kuwait is on schedule for a new start of the seasons with the entry of the Suhail season on August 24, which extends for 52 days, the Ojeiri Scientific Center said on Tuesday. The Center added in a statement to the Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) that Suhail is one of the first seasons of the solar year among the Arab world, indicating that during this season the temperature of the sun decreases.

He pointed out that the Suhail season is characterized by the appearance of some leafy plants in addition to the length of the shade and dew in the morning, as the water and air cool slightly and the sun tends towards the south after being almost vertical in summer. He mentioned that during Suhail, the angle of incidence of the sun rays decreases, the day begins to shorten gradually, and the sun begins to tilt towards the south.

He continued that in the first star, the hot summer season ends; in the second star, the temperatures reduce and the autumn season begins. Thirdly, it is expected to rain. The Center reported that Suhail's star can be seen in the sky of Kuwait starting from September 4, where a group of Kuwaiti astronomers documented seeing it at dawn at this time of year, while the length of the day decreases and the night increases, pointing out that during this season shrimp and fish increase. — KUNA

NZ delegation visits Abdullah Al-Salem University

KUWAIT: The Chairman of the Constituent Board of Directors of Abdullah Al-Salem University, Prof. Moudhi Abdulaziz Al-Hamoud, received a delegation from the University of Otago, New Zealand, and the Director of the International Relations Office, Jason Cochran, and the Director of Regional Marketing, Victoria McEniery.

The visit aimed to identify Abdullah Al-Salem University as a newly established Kuwaiti public university, in addition to opening direct channels of communication to enhance the joint cultural and academic relations between Abdullah Al-Salem University and the University of Otago and to discuss ways of joint academic and research cooperation to create joint opportunities that serve the two institutions and the two countries. The meeting was attended by the Director of the Cultural Relations and Missions Department, Mohamed Najm Mal Allah, at the President's Office at the Khalidiya campus.

In turn, Prof. Al-Humoud welcomed the visiting

delegation, praising the good bilateral relations between Kuwait and New Zealand, which include academic student cooperation with Kuwaiti students in various disciplines, stressing the keenness of Abdullah Al-Salem University to build international academic relations and to enhance the university's role academically. She expressed her aspiration to exchange experiences and cultures between the two universities.

The meeting included a discussion of partnership frameworks and the exchange of academic experiences, in addition to discussing the proposal for student and faculty exchanges in the interest of both parties and strengthening youth capabilities, with the aim of exporting a generation aware and familiar with cultures and scientific research from different countries.

In conclusion, the chairman of the founding board of directors of the university, Prof. Dr. Al-Hamoud, presented a souvenir to the visiting delegation, thanking them for the visit. The University of Otago was founded in New Zealand in 1869. It has earned an excellent international reputation for its research and teaching.

The university is ranked among the top universities in the world by QS World Rankings and has more than 200 undergraduate and postgraduate study options covering areas such as health sciences, business, science, and the humanities.



University of Otago's delegation receives a souvenir.



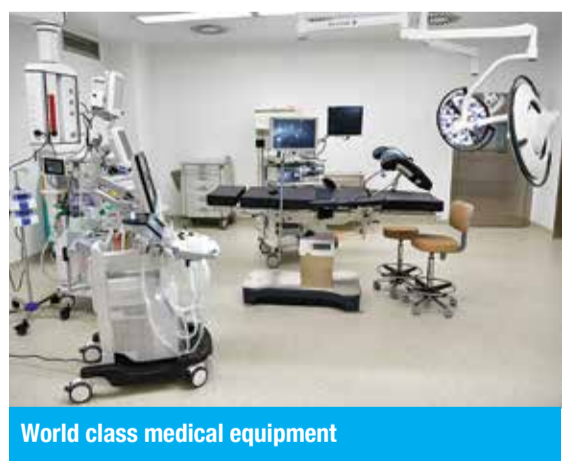
Minister of Health Dr Ahmad Al-Awadhi listens to an explanation of the unit's components. — KUNA photos



Minister of Health Dr Ahmad Al-Awadhi is pictured during the inspection tour.



Minister of Health inspects a microscope in one of the unit's facilities.



World class medical equipment

Minister inaugurates fertility and assisted reproduction unit

KUWAIT: Minister of Health Dr Ahmad Al-Awadhi said that the opening of the fertility and assisted reproduction unit at Farwaniya Hospital is a "qualitative" achievement and an affirmation of the Ministry's continued commitment to providing exceptional healthcare services in Kuwait. This came in a press statement by Minister Al-Awadhi following the opening of the unit on Wednesday, which is the third in Kuwait after the fertility and assisted reproduction unit at the Maternity Hospital and Jahra Hospital.

He said that this unit is an addition to the health system and a qualitative leap in the services provided, as it will contribute to reducing waiting periods and includes the best consultants and specialists to provide services according to international standards. For her part, Head of the Obstetrics and Gynecology Departments Council and Head of the Obstetrics Department at Farwaniya Hospital Dr Amal Khader said that the opening of the unit is the result of the hard work of the Ministry's employees.

Khader added that the unit provides medical consultations for cases of delayed childbearing, in addition to conducting the necessary examinations to determine the causes of the delay and treat it using modern technologies such as IVF and in vitro fertilization techniques according to modern and approved scientific and international protocols.

The unit also provides treatment for male infertility cases in cooperation with urology consul-

tants, specializing in male infertility and helping to conceive a genetically healthy child in the event of genetic diseases through IVF techniques and genetic screening tests. The unit includes six medical consultation rooms equipped with the latest devices for fertility and urology doctors — men and genetic doctors — two rooms for artificial insemination, two rooms for collecting semen, and an embryoculture laboratory equipped with the latest medical devices.

The unit also includes several laboratories equipped with the latest medical devices, namely a laboratory for analyzing and preparing semen, another for microscopic injection, and a genetic screening laboratory, in addition to two operating rooms fully equipped with the latest medical devices, an egg retrieval device, a surgical microscope for treating male infertility cases, and two anesthesia rooms. — KUNA

Local

Kuwait importers worry over new customs regulations, extra costs

New rule requires all importers to load goods on pallets

By Faten Omar

KUWAIT: Recently, several companies and importers received an official document with new regulation from Department of Customs requiring all importers to load goods on pallets in a secure and accessible manner for inspection, avoiding any stacking that could hinder the process, outlining that non-compliance with these regulations can result in a fine of KD 400 and, in cases of repeated violations, the customs clearance license will be suspended and employees will be barred from customs activities.

Speaking with Kuwait Times, Ahmad Saad, one of the importers, said that the new regulations added new costs to his shipments. It was concise notice since they do not palletize any of the 80+ countries, including neighboring countries. "One of the suppliers answered when he was informed of the new regulation that my orders are based on ground loading; 2,600 cases. This will be 24 pallets (100x120cm) of 70 boxes in a 40ft container. This means that a maximum of 1,680 cases will fit in, which is a significant difference. The options were either to book a second container within 2 weeks, or they will have to dispose of the remaining cases at my expense since they do not have enough space in their warehouse," he explained.

Saad revealed that suppliers inform importers that the cost of pallets or anything associated with the same will be on them, adding "On average, it will increase the cost of goods by around five percent, in addition to another 15 percent increase due to double container booking for the same quantity that used to fit in one container, making it a total 20 percent increase, which will eventually be handed over to the end consumers."

Explaining that to load by pallet, there are additional costs of the pallet, forklift lift cost, fumigation, and operation which must be included separately

from the goods price. In the long run, this will lead to having cheaper and less quality items replacing the better ones as businesses will require competing for their sustainability.

"Containers take about two to three months to arrive from the American continent. Even containers shipped from Turkey and Europe nowadays take about three months (instead of a month previously) as they need to go around the African continent to avoid being targeted by the Houthis. That is why the shipment costs have gone through the roof from being \$1,000 per container to around \$6,000," Saad revealed, calling authorities to revise this rule for the sake of the consumers, and public, and as a measure to control the inflation.

Meanwhile, one of the importers, who preferred to remain anonymous, revealed that around 350 (not palletized) containers arrived in Kuwait. "Each container can fit around 20 pallets, which would be 7,000 pallets a day, or more than 2.5 million pallets a year. Where and how are they going to store such volume? Kuwait already hosts the world's largest tire graveyard. Are we going to witness hosting the world's largest wooden pallet graveyard within the next few years as well?," he asked.

He gave an example "Imagine that I import cooking oil from Europe. A 20-foot container would contain 1,000 cases of cooking oil, flat load (not palletized). Each case carries 6 bottles. A shipping company would charge KD 850 per container. This means KD 850/1,000 cases = 0.850 fils per case of just shipment cost. Per bottle, it would be 0.850/6 = almost 141 fils. With the new rule, each 20ft container only carries 10 pallets, and each pallet can only carry 64 cases of cooking oil. So now, the same container can only carry 10 pallets x 64 = 640 cases. The container cost is the same, KD 850. Each pallet costs about KD 4. Thus, 10 x KD 4 = KD 40 for pallets. Now, the shipment/transportation cost of each case



of cooking oil would be (KD 850 + KD 40)/640 cases = KD 1.390. Per bottle, it would be KD 1.390/6 = 231 fils. That is an increase of over 60 percent (from 141 fils), 90 fils increase, per bottle".

He pointed out that Kuwait is an importing-based country with more than 95 percent of the commodities being imported and with the current inflation; this policy is like adding fuel to the fire, adding that no other GCC countries have implemented such an ineffective rule. As for the customs, this measure is considered part of the safety and security protocols

in Customs Regulation No 95 of 2017.

According to economic expert Mohammed Ramadan, the new procedure might initially increase costs due to the unpreparedness of the labor force, which could lead to higher expenses, but once the workforce is trained, the procedure will become easy and smooth. "The law was introduced to address evident deficiencies and to enhance the overall quality of customs services. Importers must comply with these regulations as they serve the best interests of the country," he noted.

KFH students explore Kuwait Times and Kuwait News

By Ghadeer Ghloom

KUWAIT: Kuwait Times and Kuwait News hosted students from Kuwait Finance House Summer Program to explore behind the scenes and learn about the field of journalism. The KFH students toured various departments and met the Kuwait Times team, starting with the studio where videos for Kuwait Times' social media pages are filmed. They then moved to the editorial department, where they learned about the processes involved in news gathering, writing, editing and translating.

Next, the students visited Kuwait Times' archives, one of the most fascinating and exciting areas due to its collection of historical editions published by Kuwait Times. This visit allowed the students to delve into the past and explore the 63-year history of Kuwait Times. They not only saw historical news but also observed how the newspaper has evolved over time, including the different language supplements published in the past, besides looking for events that happened on the days they were born.

Finally, the students explored the printing press to see how the newspaper is printed and took a commemorative group photo with the Kuwait Times team. They then visited the warehouse, which captivated them with its artistic elements and details.



KFH Summer Program students pose for a group photo with Kuwait Times and Kuwait News team.



FM receives credentials of new Pakistan envoy

KUWAIT: Kuwait's Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya on Wednesday received the credentials of the new Ambassador of Pakistan to Kuwait, Zaher Iqbal. During the meeting, Al-Yahya wished the new ambassador success in his tasks and further boosting ties between the two nations. — KUNA



Deputy FM, Somali envoy discuss ties

KUWAIT: Kuwait's Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, received on Wednesday, the Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Somalia to Kuwait, Dr Abdullah Muhammad Sheikh Abdullah, where they discussed bilateral relations and ways to consolidate them in all fields. — KUNA



PIFSS denies newspapers and social media reports

KUWAIT: The Public Institution for Social Security (PIFSS) denied what was circulated in one of the local newspapers and social media regarding some amendments to the social insurance law.

The institution said on its official account on the social networking site (X) on Wednesday that the retirement age is still 50 years for women and 55 years for men and that the number of years of service required to qualify for a pension is 15 years. One of the local newspapers had published an article about fundamental amendments to social insurance and pension.

The most prominent of which is raising the retirement age of men to 60 years instead of 55 and the retirement age of women to 55 years. — KUNA



Kuwait's trade surplus with Japan down 11.1%

TOKYO: Kuwait's trade surplus with Japan narrowed 11.1 percent from a year earlier to JPY 57.9 billion (\$375 million) in July, down for the first time in three months due to slowing exports, government data showed on Wednesday. However, Kuwait stayed in black ink with Japan for 16 years and six months, as exports still offset imports in value, the Finance Ministry said in a preliminary report.

Overall Kuwaiti exports to Japan fell 5.1 percent year-on-year to JPY 82.3 billion (\$542 million), for the first decline in three months. Imports from Japan grew 13.0 percent to JPY 24.4 billion (\$156 million), up for the third month in a row. The Middle East's trade surplus with Japan widened 7.4 percent to JPY 733.9 billion (\$5.0 billion) last month, with Japan-bound exports from the region rising 11.8 percent from a year earlier.

Crude oil, refined products, liquefied natural gas (LNG), and other natural resources, which accounted



for 94.3 percent of the region's total exports to Japan, increased 10.8 percent. The region's overall imports from Japan jumped 22.1 percent on demand for automobiles, machinery, and steel. Japan's global trade balance returned to deficit in July with JPY 621.8 billion (\$4.3 billion), as the weaker yen contributed to increasing the value of its imports.

Exports grew 10.3 percent, buoyed by shipments of semiconductors and related equipment and automobiles. Imports soared 16.6 percent as pharmaceutical products, communication devices, and crude oil inflated costs amid the yen's depreciation against the dollar. Both exports and imports marked the largest amount for the month of July since comparable data became available in 1979. China remained Japan's biggest trade partner, followed by the US. The trade data are measured on a customs-cleared basis before adjustment for seasonal factors. — KUNA

Kuwait and UAE's Fujairah sign gravel-exporting MoU



Officials from Kuwait's Ministry of Public Works and Fujairah Natural Resources Corporation sign a Memorandum of Understanding. — KUNA photos



ABU DHABI: Kuwait's Ministry of Public Works and the Fujairah Natural Resources Corporation signed on Wednesday a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to export standard specification gravel from the UAE to Kuwait. Post MoU-signing with Fujairah Corporation Director Ali Qasem, the Kuwaiti Ministry's acting undersecretary Eid Al-Rashidi told KUNA that the agreement would help both sides to exchange expertise within the gravel manufacturing and transportation process, adding that it came within Kuwait's plan to improve construction material used to build roads and other infrastructures.

He extended gratitude to the Kuwaiti government and the officials at Emirate of Al-Fujairah for their cooperation and the signing of this important document. The signing of the MoU was attended by officials from the Ministry of Public Works, the Fujairah Natural Resources Corporation, and the General Consul of Kuwait in Dubai and the Northern Emirates Ambassador Ali Al-Thaidhi. — KUNA



Arab nations discuss ways to tackle natural disasters

CAIRO: The League of Arab States underscored on Wednesday the importance of international and regional cooperation and the exchange of knowledge to effectively combat natural disasters. League assistant secretary general for economic affairs, Ambassador Ali Al-Malki, addressed the second ministerial congregation, saying that Arab countries are facing a plethora of natural disasters, including drought, desertification, sand storms, floods, forest fires, hurricanes, earthquakes, landslides, climate change, as well as manmade disasters.

Curbing such catastrophes should be a top-most priority, stated Al-Malki, to limit both economic and human losses. He called the situation in the Gaza Strip the catastrophe of the century, saying that the Zionist occupation has committed vile aggressions on Palestinian people, subjecting them to a series of horrific war crimes, genocide, and crimes against humanity. In this regard, he affirmed the league's unwavering stance on the



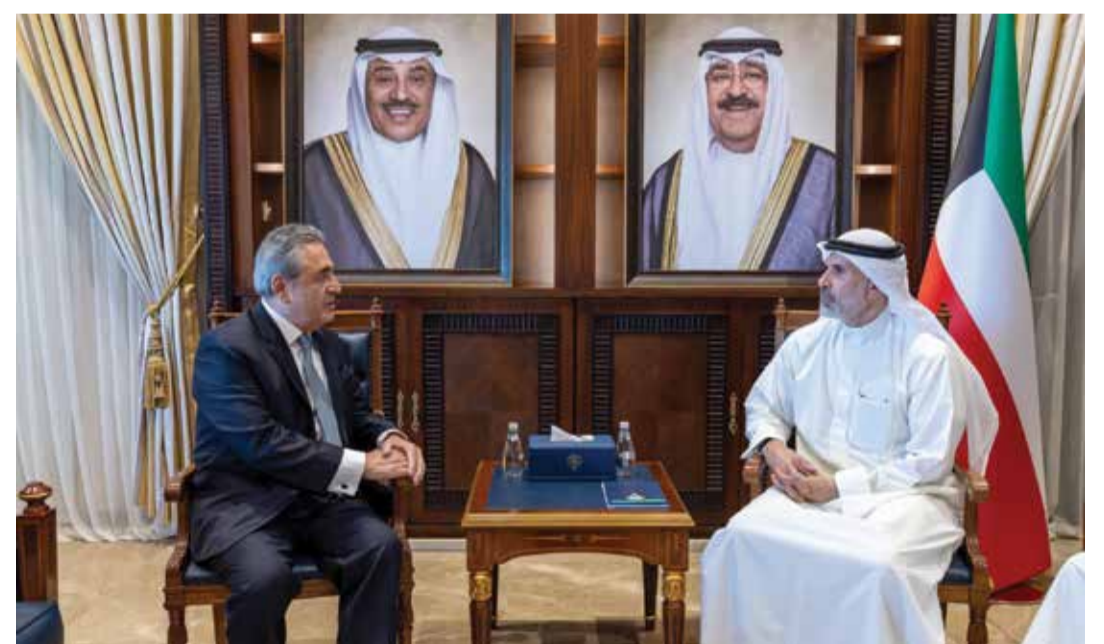
Arab ministers hold a meeting in Cairo. — KUNA

Palestinian issue, as it has been an Arab focal case with repetitive demands of lifting the siege, allowing in humanitarian aid, and warning against forced eviction of Palestinians.

While the Arab bloc has been politically committed to combating disasters, more mechanisms of implementation are still needed, especially in light

of recent achievements, he added. Al-Malki spoke of the bloc's efforts in building regional and international partnerships and contributing to boosting cooperation in the field, saying that efforts have culminated in the 2030 Arab strategy. The ministerial meeting aims to examine developments, present Arab contributions and discuss projects. — KUNA

Deputy FM receives Peru ambassador



KUWAIT: Deputy Foreign Minister Ambassador Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah on Wednesday received Peru Ambassador to Kuwait Carlos Manuel Alfredo Velasco Mendiola, on the occasion of the end of his tenure. — KUNA

KUNA Chief and Dutch Charge d'Affaires discuss media cooperation

KUWAIT: Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) Director-General Dr Fatima Al-Salem and Charge d'Affaires of the Netherlands Embassy to Kuwait, Caroline Rietveld on Wednesday discussed ways to enhance media cooperation. During a meeting between the two sides, media cooperation and topics of common interest were touched on. Dr Al-Salem stressed the importance of enhancing media cooperation between the two sides and the need to conclude agreements between KUNA and Dutch media outlets in the field of exchanging news and professional expertise. She also pointed out the importance of cultural openness between peoples. In turn, Ri-



etveld stressed the depth of relations between her country and Kuwait, which are witnessing continuous development in various fields at all levels, hailing the Kuwaiti culture. — KUNA



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'Abuse every day':
Indian female medics
speak out



KHAN YUNIS: Displaced Palestinians leave an area in east Khan Yunis towards the west, after the Zionist army issued an evacuation order for parts of the city, on August 8, 2024. — AFP

Death 'the only certainty' for Gazans: UN official

Gazans criticize the Zionist entity's unclear evacuation orders, say are tired of moving families

JERUSALEM: In war-ravaged Gaza, death appears to be the "only certainty" for 2.4 million Palestinians with no way to escape the Zionist entity's relentless bombardment, a UN official said Tuesday, recounting the growing desperation across the territory. "It does feel like people are waiting for death. Death seems to be the only certainty in this situation," Louise Wateridge, a spokeswoman for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, also known as UNRWA, told AFP from Gaza.

For the past two weeks, Wateridge has been in the Gaza Strip, witnessing the humanitarian crisis, fear of death and spread of disease as the war rages on. "Nowhere in the Gaza Strip is safe, absolutely nowhere is safe. It's absolutely devastating," Wateridge said from the Nuseirat area of central Gaza — a regular target of the Zionist entity's aerial assaults.

Since October, Zionist forces have pounded the besieged territory from the air, land and sea, reducing much of it to rubble. Now in its eleventh month, the war has

created an acute humanitarian crisis, with hundreds of thousands of people, most of whom have been displaced several times, running out of basic food and clean drinking water. "We are facing unprecedented challenges when it comes to the spread of disease, when it comes to hygiene. Part of this is because of the (Zionist) imposed siege on the Gaza Strip," Wateridge said.

Rats, mice, scorpions

Tens of thousands of people have taken refuge in schools across the Gaza Strip, an increasingly regular target of Zionist missiles. The Zionist military says these schools have been used as command-and-control centers by Hamas, a charge the Hamas denies. "Even a school is not anymore a safe place," said Wateridge. "It feels like you're never more than a few blocks away from the front line now." Tired of reacting to the Zionist military's "continuous" evacuation orders, more and more Gazans are reluctant to keep moving from place to place, Wateridge said. "They feel like they're being chased around in circles ... It's quite a

lot to move in terms of the heat, young children, elderly, disabled," she said.

Many Gazans AFP interviewed say they no longer want to move their families, their tents and the few belongings they are still left with. They have criticized what they describe as a lack of clarity in Zionist evacuation orders — including maps dropped from planes — and communications challenges given Gaza's lack of regular internet access, electricity and telecommunications coverage. Those who are still moving say that wherever they go "there are rats, there are mice, there are scorpions, there are cockroaches," Wateridge said, adding that insects "spread disease from shelter to shelter." Last week the Gaza health ministry said the territory had recorded its first polio case in 25 years.

Wateridge said that the UN was waiting for the entity's green light to go from tent to tent and vaccinate children to prevent polio from spreading. Though talks have been deadlocked for months, Wateridge said Gazans "always hope for a ceasefire" and "keep a close eye on the negotiations". — AFP

He said the survivors rescued had been in shock: "There were truly apocalyptic scenes where everyone was searching and hoping to find the people who at that moment, were not present or just missing." All the survivors treated in hospital have been discharged, he confirmed.

Anarchic sea conditions

Experts have been at a loss to explain how a large luxury vessel, presumed to have top-class fittings and safety features, could have sunk within minutes, as recounted by witnesses. The speed with which the yacht sank, and the fact that other boats around it were unaffected, was extraordinary. Some key questions remain, including whether the keel, which provides a counterbalance to the towering mast, was down when the storm hit.

Italian authorities have opened an investigation into what happened and are interviewing all the survivors, including captain James Cutfield, a 51-year-old New Zealander, according to Italian media. Matthew Schanck, from the Maritime Search and Rescue Council, told AFP what happened was a "pretty unprecedented", describing it as a "black swan event" — something that is unlikely, but has a big impact.

UK meteorologist Peter Inness described a waterspout as a "narrow column of rotating air below a thunderstorm that occurs over water". Like tornadoes, they suck up air in a rotating motion. Many are fairly inconsequential, but some can pack winds of more than 100 kilometers (62 miles) per hour, said Inness. Jean-Marie Dumon, a former naval officer now with the GICAN, the French maritime industry association, added that conditions with winds of 100kph or more can "create completely anarchic sea conditions which can cause capsizing". — Agencies

Major Ukraine drone attack targets Moscow

MOSCOW: Ukraine attacked Moscow on Wednesday with at least 11 drones that were shot down by air defenses in what Russian officials called one of the biggest drone strikes on the capital since the war in Ukraine began in February 2022. The war, largely a grinding artillery and drone battle across the fields, forests and villages of eastern Ukraine, escalated on August 6 when Ukraine sent thousands of soldiers over the border into Russia's western Kursk region.

Russia's defense ministry said its air defenses destroyed a total of 45 drones over Russian territory, including 11 over the Moscow region, 23 over the border region of Bryansk, six over the Belgorod region, three over the Kaluga region and two over the Kursk region. Some of the drones were shot down over the city of Podolsk, Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin said.

"This is one of the largest attempts to attack Moscow using drones ever," Sobyanin said on the Telegram messaging app in the early hours of Wednesday. "The

layered defense of Moscow that was created made it possible to successfully repel all the attacks from the enemy UAVs."

Along Moscow's boulevards, the cafes, restaurants and shops of the capital — which has been carefully insulated from the war — were crowded with little sign of concern, while President Vladimir Putin met Chinese premier Li Qiang in the Kremlin. Two Russian citizens who spoke to Reuters on condition of anonymity said the foiled drone attack simply showed how well defended Moscow now was, and that Ukraine was "playing with fire" by attacking Russia both in Kursk and in Moscow.

Russia meanwhile is advancing in eastern Ukraine, where it controls about 18 percent of the territory, and battling to repel Ukraine's incursion into the Kursk region, the biggest foreign attack on Russian territory since World War Two. In Kursk, Russian war bloggers said intense battles were ongoing along the front in the region where Ukraine has carved out at least 450 square kilometers (175 square miles) of Russian territory. — Reuters

4 bodies retrieved from Mike Lynch's sunken yacht

PORTICELLO, Italy: Divers searching for six missing people following the sinking of a superyacht off Sicily have found four bodies, a source close to the search told AFP Wednesday. The discovery brings the confirmed death toll from the disaster off the Italian island to five, after the body of a man believed to be the yacht's chef was recovered hours after the sinking on Monday.

UK tech tycoon Mike Lynch and his teenage daughter Hannah are among the six people missing. The bodies of British tech entrepreneur Mike Lynch and his daughter Hannah were among those found Wednesday, the Daily Telegraph newspaper reported. No further details or confirmation were available at the time of publication.

The 56-metre (185 feet) British-flagged "Bayesian" had been anchored some 700 meters off Porticello when it was struck by a waterspout — akin to a mini-tornado — during a pre-dawn storm. It sank within minutes. Fifteen people were rescued, including Lynch's wife and a woman with a one-year-old baby. But the tech entrepreneur and his daughter, his lawyer Christopher Morvillo and his wife Neda, and Jonathan Bloomer, the chair of Morgan Stanley International, and his wife Judy, were all reported missing. Shortly before the news emerged of the bodies found, an AFP reporter saw more than half a dozen boats leave the port of Porticello all within minutes of each other.

Some of them later returned with body

bags then carried by emergency service workers into a tent on the quay. Firefighters had earlier said that searching the yacht, which is largely intact and resting on the seabed some 50 meters down, was a "long and complex" operation. Despite eyewitness testimonies that the 75-metre mast had snapped, reports on Wednesday suggested that it too survived the incident. The victims are believed to be trapped in cabins, which have proved extremely hard to get to, with divers only able to stay in the vessel for 8-10 minutes before having to re-surface.

Five minutes

The passengers were guests of Lynch — an entrepreneur sometimes referred to as Britain's Bill Gates — to celebrate his acquittal in a massive US fraud case. The 59-year-old was acquitted on all charges in a San Francisco court in June after he was accused of an \$11 billion fraud linked to the sale of his software firm Autonomy to Hewlett-Packard. Among the survivors was Charlotte Golunski, board director of a company founded by Lynch, who has described how she briefly lost hold of her one-year-old daughter before grabbing her again. Both were plucked to safety.

Fabio Genco, a member of the Palermo Emergency Medical Services who was among the team that treated the child, described the "apocalyptic" situation he found on arriving at the scene.

"The word that the mother and all the injured kept repeating was 'darkness', the darkness that they experienced during the shipwreck," he told the BBC's Newsnight program. "They spoke of about five minutes, maybe from three to five minutes, from the moment the boat was lifted, raised by the waves of the sea, until it sank."

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International

RFK Jr weighs joining forces with Trump

Trump praises RFK Jr for being 'brilliant'; Kennedy's running mate says worried Harris would win

WASHINGTON: Independent US presidential candidate Robert F Kennedy Jr is considering ending his campaign to join forces with Republican rival Donald Trump, Kennedy's running mate said in an interview posted online on Tuesday. The vice presidential candidate, Nicole Shanahan, said that as independents she and Kennedy ran the risk of drawing support from would-be Trump voters and clearing the way for Democrats Kamala Harris and Tim Walz to win the November election. "Or we walk away right now and join forces with Donald Trump," she told Los Angeles media company Impact Theory. Asked when they would make a decision, she did not say.

Trump told CNN on Tuesday he would "certainly be open" to Kennedy playing a role in his administration if the independent candidate drops out of the

race and endorses him. "I like him, and I respect him," Trump told the network in an interview after a campaign stop in Michigan. "He's a brilliant guy. He's a very smart guy. I've known him for a very long time," Trump was quoted as saying by CNN. "I didn't know he was thinking about getting out, but if he is thinking about getting out, certainly I'd be open to it." In a statement on X on Tuesday, Kennedy wrote: "As always, I am willing to talk with leaders of any political party to further the goals I have served for 40 years in my career and in this campaign."

Kennedy, the son of the late Democratic politician Robert F Kennedy, is an environmental advocate who has spread misinformation on vaccines and whose family has denounced his campaign. He initially sought to challenge US President

Joe Biden for the Democratic nomination but switched to run as an independent. Biden later dropped out and endorsed Harris, who will accept the nomination at the party's convention this week.

Kennedy, 70, faces an uphill battle qualifying for the presidential ballot in many states, but he could siphon enough votes away in the tight race between Harris and Trump to have an outsized impact. Kennedy's support stood at 4 percent in an Ipsos poll taken this month. Trump has sought Kennedy's support, a phone call leaked in July showed. Shanahan in the interview released on Tuesday said Trump had taken an interest in their healthcare policies, making it worth exploring "a unity party." Kennedy's team has never been in talks with Harris, she added. — Reuters



GRAND RAPIDS: Independent presidential candidate Robert F Kennedy Jr poses with supporters in this file photo. — AFP

Anti-Trump Republicans take center stage at Democratic Convention

CHICAGO: Democrats were leaning on Republican voices to persuade conservative voters to abandon Donald Trump. Stephanie Grisham, Trump's former White House press secretary and former Trump voter Kyle Sweetser were all speaking from the convention stage in Chicago's United Center arena. Grisham described her journey from a Trump "true believer" to the first senior White House staffer to resign after the January 6, 2021, attack by Trump supporters on the US Capitol.

"I saw him when the cameras were off," she said. "Trump mocks his supporters; he called them 'basement dwellers' on a hospital visit one time when people were dying in the ICU. He was mad that the cameras were not watching him. He has no empathy, no morals, and no fidelity to the truth."

Ana Navarro, Republican political strategist and former national Hispanic co-chair for John McCain's 2008 presidential bid, and John Giles, the Republican mayor of Mesa, Arizona, have also had things to say about Trump.

"(Trump and his supporters) refuse to accept legitimate elections when they lose and call for violence to stay in power like Maduro is doing right now in Venezuela," said Nicaraguan-American Navarro, long-time critic of Trump. "They attack the free press, they call them the enemy of the people like Ortega does in Nicaragua, they put their unqualified."

Navarro and Grisham said they planned to vote for Kamala Harris in the November election.

While there were no Democratic speakers at the Republican National Convention last month, this is not the first time Republicans have popped up at a Democratic National Convention. John Kasich, the former Republican governor of Ohio, and Colin Powell, former secretary of state under the administration of President George W Bush from 2001 to 2005, made appearances at the DNC in 2020 and both pleaded for unity between political parties and questioned Trump's suitability for leadership. — Agencies

Kamala Harris' husband woos Chicago

CHICAGO: He met Kamala Harris on a blind date, and on Tuesday her husband Doug Emhoff tried to convince Americans to love her too after an equally whirlwind introduction. The first "Second Gentleman" in US history wooed the Democratic National Convention in Chicago with a speech that highlighted the human side of the party's presidential nominee.

Delegates chanted "Doug" as the 59-year-old — who gave up his high-flying legal career to support Harris as vice president — regaled them with the tale of how they met and how she then became the stepmother to his kids. "I love you and I'm so proud of how you're stepping up for all of us," Emhoff said. And he said their personal history showed she was ready to be the country's first female commander-in-chief — which would make him its first ever First Gentleman.

"Kamala Harris was exactly the right person for me at an important time in my life. At this moment in this nation's history she is exactly the right president." Harris posted a picture of herself on Air Force Two, watching him speak while she returned from a rally in Milwaukee. "Love you Dougie," she wrote.

'Heyyyy, it's Doug'

The Harris campaign regards Emhoff as something of a secret weapon, a ready-made speaker who can familiarize Americans with the vice president after her rapid rise following Joe Biden's withdrawal from the White House race. He has taken a very visible role as cheerleader-in-chief for his 59-year-old wife ever since Biden first picked her as his running mate back in 2020.

More recently, the father-of-two has been her attack dog against Donald Trump as the Republican former president unleashes personal and racially tinged insults at the Democrat. But his speech in Chicago focused on the personal as much as the political. As the crowd waved "Doug" signs, Emhoff told the story of how he and Harris were set up on a blind date by one of his legal clients.

The day after, Emhoff called Harris early in the morning, got her answerphone and "just started



CHICAGO: Second gentleman Doug Emhoff departs after speaking on stage during the second day of the Democratic National Convention at the United Center on August 20, 2024. — AFP

rambling. 'Heyyyy, it's Doug ... I was trying to grab the words out of the air and just put them back in my mouth.' Harris, however, thought the message was "adorable", saved it, and they married the following year. Now she plays the message to him every anniversary, he said. "This Thursday will be our 10th wedding anniversary ... that same night I'll be hearing my wife, Kamala Harris accept your nomination for President of the United States."

'Momala'

Their marriage made Kamala Harris a stepmother to Emhoff's then-teenage children Cole and Ella — who both dubbed her "Momala". Cole Emhoff introduced him on stage, after narrating a video showing snapshots from Emhoff's life and gently ribbing his dad. His son said their "blended family wasn't used to politics," but when Harris became first a California senator and then vice president, they all stepped up. "It felt like Doug was a bit out of place on Capitol Hill, I thought 'what is my goofy

dad doing here?'

But he embraced it." Emhoff himself has admitted that it didn't all come easily, especially when he took a leave of absence from his entertainment law job, which was earning him around \$1 million a year. Biden helped him at the time, saying to him "I know this must have been tough."

Since then, Kamala has called Emhoff her rock as Harris blazed a trail as the first female, Black and South Asian vice president in US history. He too set a milestone, becoming the first ever Jewish spouse of a US president or vice president. Under the Biden administration, Emhoff took on an increasingly high-profile role, giving speeches calling out anti-Semitism after the October 7 Hamas attack on the Zionist entity.

He also performed ceremonial duties including leading the US delegation at the closing of the 2024 Paris Olympics. But for one person at least, Emhoff doesn't take the back seat. "My mother is the only person in the whole world who thinks Kamala is the lucky one for marrying me," he quipped. — AFP

Zionists kill dozens in Gaza...

Continued from Page 1

Mahmoud Abbas and rivals the Gaza Strip's Islamist rulers Hamas, accused the Zionist entity of bidding to trigger a wider regional war.

Maqdash's killing marks the first such attack on a senior Fatah member in more than 10 months of cross-border clashes between the Zionist entity and Lebanon's Hezbollah movement following the Gaza war. The "assassination of a Fatah official is further proof that (the Zionist entity) wants to ignite a full-scale war in the region," Tawfiq Tirawi, a member of Fatah's central committee, told AFP in Ramallah.

The Gaza conflict churned on as Blinken wound up his ninth troubleshooting visit to the Middle East since the Gaza war erupted last October with still no sign that deep differences between the sides over how to end the war could be reconciled. Blinken's talks with leaders of ceasefire mediators Egypt and Qatar, as well as in the Zi-

onist entity, focused on the fate of tiny, crowded Gaza, where the Zionist entity's military campaign has killed more than 40,000 people since October according to Palestinian health authorities, and of the remaining captives being held there.

For displaced people left exposed in Deir Al-Balah, the lack of progress towards a ceasefire compounded the misery as they searched for space away from the fighting. "Where will we go? Where will we go?" said Aburakan, 55, a displaced person from Gaza City in the territory's north who has had to change refuge five times since October.

"We feel they are closing in. I live a few hundred meters from the threatened areas, and I have been searching since the early morning in vain for a space in western Deir Al-Balah, Khan Younis, or Nuseirat," he told Reuters via a chat app. "Unfortunately, we may die before we see an end to this war. All ceasefire talk is a lie."

Palestinian and United Nations officials say most of the 2.3 million population have become internally displaced by the Zionist entity's ongoing ground operations and bombardment that have also flattened swathes of built-up areas across the enclave. — Agencies

electricity from solar and wind on such a scale. "Australia has some of the best solar and wind resources of any country and, as a result, is installing solar and wind at one of the fastest rates of any country in the world on a per capita basis," he told AFP.

This momentum must continue, Baldwin said, particularly if Australia is to meet its net zero targets by 2050. "Australia has, over the last five years, invested heavily in solar and wind, but it needs to double and triple that investment in order to reach its climate trajectory towards a net zero future by 2050." He said Australia will need about 100 gigawatts of solar and wind capacity by the 2030s. The SunCable project will only provide four gigawatts of that need.

Climate Council chief executive Amanda McKenzie said the new solar hub was a bold step in making Australia a "clean energy powerhouse" and that such projects were essential in "delivering affordable energy and slashing climate pollution". "With the closure of coal-fired power stations on the horizon, Australia needs to accelerate the roll-out of solar and storage at every level — rooftops, large-scale projects and everything in between," she said. The project would also be a significant step for Cannon-Brookes, who once described the project as "insane" before becoming an enthusiastic investor. — AFP

'Yes she can': Obama says US...

Continued from Page 1

speech late Monday less than a month after ending his reelection bid. "They shared with us how they felt, and we were able to resonate with them," said Mae Beale who wore a hat in the colors of Maryland, her home state. "They were so real... I could identify with everything they were saying."

In deeply personal remarks shifting the focus onto Harris's qualities, her husband, Second Gentleman Doug Emhoff, told the convention "she is ready". "She brings both joy and toughness to this task," he said to cheers. "At this moment in our nation's history, she is exactly the right president."

With the party united and Harris polling strongly, Democrats are making clear they believe they can defeat Trump. The Republican nominee had seemed set to regain power in November's election until Biden upended the race by dropping out and endorsing his vice president. Comparisons are already being made by Democratic faithful to Obama's historic 2008 campaign, where a tidal wave of enthusiasm carried him to the White House.

Bullish delegates symbolically nominated Harris as their candidate in a boisterous roll call, following a paper exercise to confirm her as their standard bearer earlier this month. "Thank you... see you in two days, Chicago," she said to delegates via video link from her event in Milwaukee. Harris, who was received rapturously in America's third largest city at her debut appearance before Biden

Switzerland eyes cashless future...

Continued from Page 1

stakeholder commitment to the future of cashless payments in Switzerland." The SNB said the scheme offered significant advantages due to shorter settlement chains, with funds received being immediately available.

The central bank anticipates that instant payments "are likely to become established in Switzerland in the medium term, and form the basis for further innovation in payment transactions". The SNB's latest Payment Methods Survey of Companies in

Switzerland, published in February, found that "cash acceptance continues to be high", and said there was "a broad desire among the population for cash to continue to be available as a payment method".

While mobile payment app acceptance has risen by 19 percentage points since 2021 to 59 percent, the survey found that more than 90 percent of companies doing face-to-face business accepted cash. The Swiss franc is the legal tender of Switzerland, Liechtenstein and the Italian enclave of Campione d'Italia. Unusually, Swiss banknotes have a vertical orientation. They are printed in the four national languages: German, French, Italian and Romansch. The 10-centimes coins minted in 1879 are the oldest coins still in circulation, according to Guinness World Records. — AFP

Australia OKs world's 'largest'...

Continued from Page 1

China leads the way and is building almost twice as much wind and solar capacity as every other country combined. It brought the 3.5 gigawatt Midong solar farm online this year, its largest facility so far.

In contrast, Australia remains one of the world's leading exporters of coal and gas, despite being ravaged by the effects of climate change from intense heat to floods and bushfires. And, although Australians are among the world's most enthusiastic adopters of household solar panels, a string of governments have been hesitant to embrace renewables.

Renewables made up 32 percent of Australia's total electricity generation in 2022 compared to coal, which contributed 47 percent, according to the latest government data. Plibersek hailed the project as a way of meeting Australia's projected energy shortfall and creating "14,300 new jobs in northern Australia".

Ken Baldwin, director of the Energy Change Institute at the Australian National University, said the project was a "world first" for exporting renewable

International

Sudan battles cholera epidemic

Clean water, medicine inaccessible across country as Sudanese struggle to contain disease



KASSALA: Patients suffering from cholera receive treatment at a rural isolation center in Wad Al-Hulaywah in Kassala state in eastern Sudan, on August 17, 2024. — AFP photos



A sanitation worker sprays disinfectant, part of a campaign by Sudan's Health Ministry to combat the spread of disease.

KASSALA, Sudan: Lying on a hospital bed, Aisha Mohammed said she is "suffering" from cholera symptoms, an increasingly common ailment in Sudan where a prolonged war has ravaged the healthcare system. Cholera, caused by contaminated water or food, had been common in Sudan particularly during the rainy season even before war broke out in April 2023 between rival generals.

But more than 16 months of fighting have forced most hospitals out of service, leaving the country of 48 million people struggling to control the sometimes deadly but treatable disease. In the southeastern Sudanese town of Wad Al-Hulaywah, 40-year-old Mohammed receives intravenous medicine to ease her crippling symptoms. "I'm suffering from acute diarrhea," she whispered.

Sudanese authorities and the United Nations have reported a surge in cholera cases amid several weeks of torrential rains that have battered parts of Sudan and displaced thousands. Rains and floods have contributed to a resurgence of the largely waterborne

disease, which can cause severe dehydration and lead to death within hours if not treated.

The health ministry on Monday declared an epidemic, later reporting 556 cholera cases including 27 deaths, most in Kassala state where Wad Al-Hulaywah is located. Nearby Gedaref state has also been hit particularly hard, the ministry said. The World Health Organization said Sudan has had at least 11,327 cholera cases, 316 of them deadly, since June 2023. Sudan's Health Minister Haitham Ibrahim said "climatic conditions and water contamination" were behind the epidemic. In Wad Al-Hulaywah alone, "we've counted 150 cases so far, among them seven dead" since late July, local health official Adam Ali told AFP.

'Polluted water'

Before the start of the war between Sudan's army and paramilitary forces, the UN had said that about 40 percent of Sudanese did not have access to clean water. Conditions have since worsened. "Our problem is drinking water," said Ali.

Most residents of Wad Al-Hulaywah "drink water directly from the river - polluted water", he said. During the rainy season, large amounts of silt are washed into the Setit river, which begins in neighboring Ethiopia, increasing pollution levels, the health official added.

Near the local hospital, workers spray insecticide to fight the proliferation of flies, which Ali said was a symptom of poor sanitation. Dam construction in 2015 on the Setit river had displaced "entire villages", he said, and their inhabitants "dug makeshift latrines, which attract flies because they are not maintained". Access to clean water has been hampered across the country, in areas under either the army or the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces, both vying for control of Sudan.

'I will have no one'

The paramilitaries have laid siege to entire areas, preventing the entry of fuel needed to pump clean water, while bureaucratic hurdles and fighting have

blocked aid operations, putting key water stations out of service. The war has killed tens of thousands of people, displaced more than 10 million and shuttered more than 70 percent of Sudan's healthcare facilities, according to the UN.

The rival forces have both been accused of war crimes, including targeting civilians and looting or obstructing humanitarian aid. With Sudan facing what the UN has called "one of the worst humanitarian crises in recent memory" and aid groups unable to help, many feel they have to fend for themselves.

Sitting outside a hospital in Kassala, 49-year-old Hassan Al-Junaid said he has been displaced by the war, and now "we are living in very bad conditions, which caused my sister to get cholera." "I am the only one with her, but I can't go with her inside because she has been placed in quarantine," he said. "So, I'm staying here, worried for her and afraid that I might be infected myself," added Junaid. "If that happens, I will have no one to buy me the medicine I would need." — AFP

'Abuse every day': Indian female medics speak out

BENGALURU, India: Saving lives was the childhood dream for 28-year-old Indian doctor Radhika, but after the brutal rape and murder of a colleague her own safety has increasingly become a top concern. Earlier this month, at the government-run hospital where Radhika works in the eastern city of Kolkata, the battered and bloodied body of a 31-year-old woman doctor was found, sparking outrage.

One man has been detained, but the attack has focused anger on the lack of measures for female doctors to work without fear, and triggered protests and medical strikes. "I was on night duty just two days before this incident," Radhika said at Kolkata's R G Kar Medical College and Hospital. "What she did is what any of us do - resting whenever, wherever we can".

The murdered doctor - who has not been formally named but is being called "Abhaya", or "fearless" by protesters - was found in the teaching hospital's seminar hall, suggesting she had gone there for a break during a long shift. Radhika, whose name has been changed for fear of repercussions at her work, said conditions such as long working hours - with barely any time to eat or rest - were not unusual. "This could have been any of us, and this still can be any of us," she added.

Attacks all too common

Tens of thousands of ordinary Indians have joined protests, channeling anger not only at the chronic issue of

violence against women, but also at the failure to provide secure working conditions for them. According to the philanthropic organization Dasra, women make up nearly 30 percent of doctors in India and 80 percent of nursing staff.

Attacks on female medics are all too common. India's Supreme Court on Tuesday ordered a national task force to examine how to bolster security for healthcare workers, saying the brutality of the killing had "shocked the conscience of the nation". "The lack of institutional safety norms at medical establishments, against both violence and sexual violence against medical professionals, is a matter of serious concern," the court order read.

It highlighted a lack of CCTV cameras and a failure to screen visitors to hospitals for weapons. Medical superintendent Indira Kabade, who works at KC General Hospital in the southern city of Bengaluru, said she worries her staff can get home safely. "We never know if anyone is following them from the hospital," said Kabade, adding she and many female colleagues want "airport-like security", including police posted inside the campus.

"Despite us working non-stop to save lives, there is a need to rethink safety at workplace," Kabade said. The gruesome nature of the doctor's killing has invoked comparisons with the horrific 2012 gang rape and murder of a young woman on a Delhi bus. Nearly 90 rapes a day were reported in 2022 in the country of 1.4 billion people.



NEW DELHI: A medical professional holding a placard shouts slogans during a protest against the rape and murder of a doctor on August 21, 2024. — AFP

Foul toilets

Exhausted doctors sleep where they can, snatching rest on a chair or the floor. "They are just completely tired and their bodies cannot push anymore," Radhika said. There are restrooms for doctors - but men and women must share, and some have no lock.

She described one moment of terror when two men barged into the room as she rested. "I was really scared," she said. Foul sanitation - including often one toilet for male and female medics - illustrate a failure by the authorities to provide basic infrastructure.

The situation was particularly worrying when the women were menstruating, Radhika said. In the Himalayan territory of Kashmir, Doctor Rubene Bhat said some medics would rather use washrooms in

houses neighboring the hospital. "It's that bad," she said.

'Abuse every day'

One female doctor in Thiruvananthapuram, a city in the southern state of Kerala, said she and her colleagues faced abuse every day, from verbal insults to physical molestation. "There is no end to it," she said. Female doctors have been encouraged to participate in self-defense classes organized by the medical association. "Doctors are called gods or angels by some people," the Kerala-based doctor said.

"So we think we are immune to crimes. And when such a crime happens at a place which we consider the safest place, we are all afraid". But while questions remain over her safety, Radhika is certain of her future. "I will fight and continue to be in the healthcare service", she said. — AFP

Students blinded in protests hang hopes on 'new Bangladesh'

DHAKA: Bangladeshi student Omar Faruq believes the future of his country is bright but all he can see is darkness, after police trying to crush a student-led revolution blinded him with rubber pellets. More than 450 people were killed - many by police fire - in the weeks of protests leading up to the ouster of ex-premier Sheikh Hasina, who fled to India on August 5 ending her 15-year autocratic rule.

But dozens of protesters were also robbed of their vision - some in one eye, others entirely - by the plastic or rubber grapeshot pellets police fired from shotguns. Bangladeshi security forces are accused of having resorted to excessive force to quell the protests. "I was bombarded with pellets all over ... my nose, eyes, everywhere - from close range," said 20-year-old Faruq.

He had hitchhiked 200 kilometers (125 miles) from the northern city of Bogura to attend the protests in the capital Dhaka. Now he is getting treatment at the National Institute of Ophthalmology and Hospital (NIOH), the country's biggest specialized eye cen-



DHAKA: Omar Faruq (center) who lost his sight as he was wounded by shotgun pellets during the student-led uprising, sits on a bed at a hospital in Dhaka on August 20, 2024. — AFP photos

ter. Its records show nearly 600 people have lost at least some vision from shotgun pellets fired during the weeks of civil unrest against Hasina. Among those, 20 have been blinded completely.

Hundreds of others with pellet injuries in their eyes are undergoing treatment in smaller hospitals across Dhaka, according to local media reports. "We were doing up to 10 surgeries at a time," said Mohammad Abdul Qadir, NIOH's acting director. "We have never



Mohammad Abdul Alim (left) who lost his sight partially at the protests rests in bed as a medical professional looks at an X-ray.

seen such a situation before."

'Disproportionate force'

Rights groups discourage the use of pellets for crowd control against unarmed protesters, calling the cluster clouds of shots indiscriminate. US-based Physicians for Human Rights has called their use "inherently inaccurate", and potentially "lethal to humans at close range". The United Nations last week said there

Schools, Internet shut near Mumbai as fresh protests intensify

MUMBAI: Internet services were cut off and schools were closed for a second straight day in a town near India's financial capital Mumbai on Wednesday, as protests over the alleged sexual abuse of two, four-year old girls intensified, media said. The protests in Badlapur, about 50 kilometers (31 miles) from Mumbai, come amid nationwide demonstrations over the rape and murder of 31-year-old doctor in the eastern city of Kolkata.

A janitor was arrested for allegedly sexually abusing the students in a school in Badlapur on the weekend, media reported. Calls and messages to police officials in Badlapur from Reuters were not answered on Tuesday. Angry protesters blocked railway tracks for hours on Tuesday, demanding justice for the children, echoing similar protests across the country by doctors and women's groups.

Authorities ordered schools to remain shut, and Internet services were suspended for a second day to quell any gatherings or protests, news channel ABP reported. State Chief Minister Eknath Shinde said the case would be tried in a fast-track court. Shinde said on Wednesday that the protests were politically motivated.

Maharashtra, India's richest state, has state elections scheduled later this year, and Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party faces a tough fight from a joint opposition coalition. Opposition parties in the state have called for a state-wide strike on August 24. Congress lawmaker Varsha Gaikwad said during a protest in Mumbai on Wednesday. — Reuters

were "strong indications" Bangladeshi security forces used "unnecessary and disproportionate force", with a team expected to visit Dhaka to investigate.

Those in the NIOH hospital, where ward after ward is filled with protesters with impaired vision, say they are witnesses to the violence. Mohammad Abdul Alim, 34, lay writhing in pain in his bed at the hospital, several pellets still lodged in his body. His left eye was swollen and bloodshot.

"Sometimes I wish I could just cut off the left side of my face," said Alim, visibly anguished. "I can't even properly see how much rice there is on my plate when I eat." An X-ray image of Alim's skull seen by AFP bore testimony to his agony - dozens of pellets lodged all over. Alim said the police gave him and his fellow protesters 20 seconds to disperse before raining them with pellets. He said scores of people "immediately collapsed" after the shots.

In another ward at NIOH, Nazrul Islam stroked the hair of his younger brother Rahmatullah Sardar Shabbir, trying to comfort him. Doctors had managed to extricate two of the three pellets that pierced the 26-year-old's left eye on August 4 - but failed to restore his vision. "I cannot see anything with my left eye," said Shabbir, a law student. But Shabbir - and almost everyone else at NIOH who have lost their vision to pellets fired at them while participating in the protests - said they had no regrets. "It is a sacrifice for my country," he said, a Bangladeshi flag unfurled above his bed. "We have created a new Bangladesh." — AFP

THURSDAY, AUGUST 22, 2024

China targets dairy imports in latest barb in EU trade dispute

Probe will cover subsidies on cheese, curd and some milk and cream

BEIJING: Beijing on Wednesday launched a probe into EU subsidies of some dairy products imported into China, the day after the bloc said it planned to impose five-year import duties of up to 36 percent on Chinese electric vehicles (EVs).

The investigation, which marks the latest barb in a trade standoff between the two, will cover a range of items including fresh cheese and curd, blue cheese, and some milk and cream, Beijing's commerce ministry said. "The Ministry of Commerce has decided to initiate an anti-subsidy investigation on imported relevant dairy products originating in the European Union from August 21, 2024," the ministry said in a statement on its website.

Officials said they had received an application from the Dairy Association of China for an anti-subsidy probe into European products on July 29, and held consultations with the European Union on August 14.

Beijing said the investigation would cover EU subsidy schemes implemented in the year up to the end of March 2024, and damages to China's domestic industry between the start of 2020 and the end of March this year. The probe takes aim at major pillars of the bloc's setup including the common agricultural policy as well as national subsidy plans in Ireland, Austria, Belgium, Italy, Croatia, Finland, Romania and the Czech Republic. It will last one year but may be extended for up to six months "under special circumstances", the ministry said. The EU exported 1.68 billion euros (\$1.87 billion) of dairy products to China last year, according to figures from the European Commission's Director-

ate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development, which cited Eurostat.

The EU Chamber of Commerce in China said the investigation "should not be considered a surprise" in the wake of the bloc's own imposition of import tariffs on Chinese EVs. "Regrettably, the use of trade defense instruments by one government is increasingly being responded to seemingly in kind by the recipient government," the chamber said in a statement. It said it "will be monitoring the ongoing investigation and hopes that it will be conducted fairly and transparently", adding that it expected its affected member firms to cooperate.

The news comes a day after the European Commission said it planned to impose five-year import duties on Chinese EVs, unless Beijing can offer an alternative solution to a damaging trade row over state subsidies. Brussels last month hit EVs imported from China with hefty provisional tariffs — on top of current duties of 10 percent — after an anti-subsidy probe found they were unfairly undermining European rivals. China said this month it had filed an appeal with the World Trade Organization (WTO) over the tariffs, saying the EU's decision "lacks a factual and legal basis".

Its foreign ministry has kept up a steady drumbeat of opposition to the measures, on Wednesday slamming them as a "typical protectionist and politically driven act".

"It ignores objective facts, disregards (WTO) rules, goes against the historical trend, (and) damages the EU's green transformation process and global efforts to address climate change," foreign



BEIJING: Cheese imported from Europe is displayed at a supermarket in Beijing on August 21, 2024. — AFP

ministry spokeswoman Mao Ning said. She added that the EU "will only harm itself" with the imposition of tariffs. Brussels has sought to tread carefully as it tries to defend Europe's crucial auto industry

and pivot towards green growth while averting a showdown with Beijing. But it has launched further investigations into Chinese subsidies for a range of transport and green energy firms. — AFP

In Spain's kitchen, sunflower oil dethrones olive oil

MADRID: Sunflower oil has dethroned olive oil as king of the kitchen in Spain, the world's largest olive oil producer, as rising prices force consumers to switch to cheaper options. Spaniards bought 107 million liters (28.3 million gallons) of all types of olive oil in the first half of 2024 compared to 179 million liters of sunflower oil, according to Spain's biggest olive oil bottling association, Anierac.

Until this year, olive oil has been the most popular cooking oil in Spanish households, accounting for 62 percent of sales by volume in 2023 while sunflower oil represented almost 34 percent, according to the Ministry of Agriculture. "It is clear that olive oil consumption is falling in Spain," said Primitivo Fernandez, spokesman for Anierac. "There are households that used to buy only olive oil and for the first time are now buying sunflower oil and olive oil," he said.

Olive oil sales by volume fell 18 percent from the first half of 2023, Anier-

ac said. Sunflower oil sales increased by 25 percent in volume last year, according to official data. A bottle of sunflower oil cost an average of 1.86 euros (\$2.07) a liter last year, while pricier olive oil types cost upwards of 6 euros a liter, 50 percent more than in 2022, official data showed. Spain usually supplies around 40 percent of the world's olive oil, but heatwaves in the spring and a prolonged drought reduced olive harvests over the past two years, doubling olive oil prices to record levels.

That has pushed the staple of the Mediterranean diet beyond the reach of poor households in Spain, which are switching to cheaper sunflower oil, according to a Ministry of Agriculture report on food consumption trends in 2023.

At the end of last year, olive oil was mainly consumed in middle and upper-middle class households, the report said. One-liter bottles of extra-virgin olive oil were selling for as



MADRID: Olive oil bottles of various brands and prices displayed in a supermarket in Madrid. — AFP

much as 14.5 euros (\$15.77) in some supermarkets last year, putting them in the category of products retailers fit with security tags. In June, the Spanish government cut the value added tax on olive oil to make it more affordable even as prices have

eased a little this year. Spain's largest supermarket chain Mercadona has cut the price of olive oil by 25 percent this year and this week is offering 1 liter bottles below 7 euros to woo back customers, a company source said. — Reuters

Saudi to host global summit on AI in Sept

RIYADH: The Saudi Data and Artificial Intelligence Authority (SDAIA) announced on Wednesday that it will organize the third edition of the Global AI Summit from Sept 10 to 12, with the participation of more than 300 speakers and specialists from 100 countries.

The Saudi Press Agency (SPA) reported that the summit will discuss, during 120 dialogue sessions, topics most notably innovation and industry in the field of AI, turning points to shape a better future for AI and artificial intelligence at the local and global levels, the integration of the relationship between human intelligence and AI, the ethics of AI intelligence, and the impact of it on the growth of smart cities.

SPA said that the summit is scheduled to witness the signing of a number of local and international agreements and memoranda of understanding, and the launch of international initiatives in the name of the Kingdom that serve countries around the world in the field of data technologies and artificial intelligence. It added that the summit will witness the attendance of government representatives, heads of international organizations, bodies, and technology companies, and an elite group of data and artificial intelligence scientists to enrich the summit with what revolves around the developments of AI and its impact on the future of humanity. In addition to achieving optimal benefit from these technologies in all sectors.

The third edition of the Global AI Summit comes after the first edition in 2020 and the second in 2022, which contributed to positive results, the outputs of which were reflected in the launch of international projects and initiatives including the establishment of an international center for artificial intelligence research and ethics. — KUNA



LONDON: Pedestrians walk in the winter sunshine down Oxford Street in central London. — AFP

UK borrowing rises, narrowing budget options

LONDON: UK government borrowing jumped by far more than expected in July, official figures showed Wednesday, stoking fresh anxiety for the new Labour government ahead of its first budget in just over two months.

Finance minister Rachel Reeves has already warned of "difficult decisions" over whether to cut spending or hike taxes on October 30, and the latest numbers will do little to ease those concerns. Public sector net borrowing reached £3.1 billion (\$4 billion) last month, the highest July figure since 2021 and well above expectations, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) said. The finances suffered from "a rise in central government

spending" as "the cost of public services and benefits continued to rise," said Jessica Barnaby, the ONS deputy director for public sector finances.

Since early April — the start of the UK tax year — the country has borrowed almost £5 billion more than projected by the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) watchdog. Public debt — which has neared 100 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) for several months, primarily due to support dating back to the pandemic and energy crisis — stood at 99.4 percent of GDP in late July. Chief Secretary to the Treasury Darren Jones said the figures were "yet more proof of the dire inheritance left to us by the previous government". "We are taking the tough decisions that are needed to fix the foundations of our economy, modernize our public services and rebuild Britain," he added.

Dennis Tatarov, senior economist at KPMG UK, said the higher borrowing "leaves little headroom" ahead of the budget. "An expected slowing in GDP growth ahead could limit revenues in the second half of the year," he cautioned. — AFP

Boeing suspends 777X flight tests after part failure

NEW YORK: Boeing has suspended flight testing of its new 777X wide-body jet after identifying the failure of a part connecting the engine to the body of the aircraft, the latest in a long line of quality control issues for the troubled US aerospace giant. "During scheduled maintenance, we identified a component that did not perform as designed," the US aerospace giant told AFP in a statement.

"Our team is replacing the part and capturing any learnings from the component and will resume flight testing when ready," it added, confirming an earlier report by specialist website The Air Current.

Boeing has been beset in recent years with concerns about safety and quality control, with a near-catastrophic incident on an Alaska Airlines Boeing 737 MAX in January bringing renewed pressure on the company. Boeing's new chief executive Kelly Ortberg, 64, took over earlier this month on a pledge to restore trust in the embattled manufacturer, and announced he would be based in Seattle to be close to the firm's commercial airplane programs.

Boeing's 777X widebody program, unveiled in November 2013, is the latest addition to its popular 777 family. The new twin-aisle aircraft is destined to be the world's largest twin-engine jet in operation. More than 500 777X aircraft have already been ordered, but have yet to enter commercial service.

The part that brought about the suspension of flight testing is custom to the 777-9 model, and connects the engine to the aircraft structure, Boeing said.

The other 777-9s used for testing are all currently being inspected following the incident, it added. Boeing's new aircraft will be available in three models: the 777-8, the 777-9 and the 777-8 cargo.

The aircraft's entry into service was originally scheduled for 2020, but due to problems during the certification process it has now been delayed to 2025. Although the 777X has still not received the go-ahead from the US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Boeing did cross an important milestone in July this year. Following a large number of test flights, it obtained permission to start testing the 777-9 with FAA representatives on board.

Boeing named aerospace veteran Kelly Ortberg as its next CEO on the same day it reported a \$1.4 billion loss for the second quarter of the year, with profits hurt by poor performance in its commercial division. But since then, the company has enjoyed some rare positive news, with new plane orders picking up in July. Boeing said it had booked 72 orders — including 57 for its flagship 737 MAX aircraft — in the wake of the Farnborough International Airshow in the United Kingdom.

And a few days later, Boeing announced that El Al had finalized orders for up to 31 737 MAX aircraft, marking the largest purchase of airplanes in the Israeli flag carrier's 76-year history. — AFP

Business

NBK unveils payment verification service on its Mobile Banking App

Bank first provider of service in Kuwait, offering quick and secure OTP-less verification

KUWAIT: In keeping with its constant dedication to providing cutting-edge services to its customers, National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) announced introducing a new service that allows customers to confirm payment transactions online through the NBK Mobile Banking App, making itself as the first provider of this service in Kuwait.

The bank mentioned that the new service provides a hassle-free, quick, and secure way to make online payments, explaining that with NBK Secure Shopping service, customers can now confirm all online payments directly and easily through the NBK Mobile Banking App without the need to enter OTP.

The service is available for the holders of NBK Debit Cards (Only on international spends), NBK Foreign Currency Prepaid Card, and NBK Multi-Currency Prepaid Card. To avail it, customers need to enable NBK Push Notifications. After enabling NBK Push Notifications, customer can initiate purchases through the NBK Mobile Banking App, as he will receive a push notification to click to be redirected to the App to confirm the payment in easy steps. If Push Notifications service is not enabled, customer



Bader Al-Janah

We always seek to provide our customers with premier, highly secure products and services

will need to enter the App and follow the steps to confirm the payment. Commenting on unveiling the new service, Bader Al-Janah, Head of Card Products, Consumer Banking Group at National Bank of Kuwait said: "At NBK, we are committed to offering all new services to our customers, as we always strive to provide premier, highly secure and cutting-edge products and services that suit their needs and different lifestyles."

"NBK continues to strengthen its digital excellence through the services provided on its Mobile Banking App, which customers largely rely on for their banking transactions. This aligns with our unwavering dedication to providing a market-leading digital banking experience that not only meets customers' needs, but also exceeds their expectations," he remarked. Through the NBK Mobile Banking App, NBK aims to offer customers a secure platform to conveniently manage their finances at any given moment. This service facilitates a wide range of banking activities, including opening new accounts, monitoring transactions on accounts and credit cards, accessing accumulated NBK Miles and NBK Rewards Program points, settling credit card dues, making payments for electronic bills, locating the nearest NBK Branches, ATMs, and CDMs across Kuwait, updating personal information, and many other services. Customers can easily download the NBK Mobile Banking App, which is currently available on various platforms including the App Store, Google Play, and Huawei AppGallery.



Big Tech opposes California bill to regulate AI

SAN FRANCISCO: California legislators are set to vote on a bill as soon as this week that would broadly regulate how artificial intelligence is developed and deployed in California even as a number of tech giants have voiced broad opposition. Here is background on the bill, known as SB 1047, and why it has faced backlash from Silicon Valley technologists and some lawmakers:

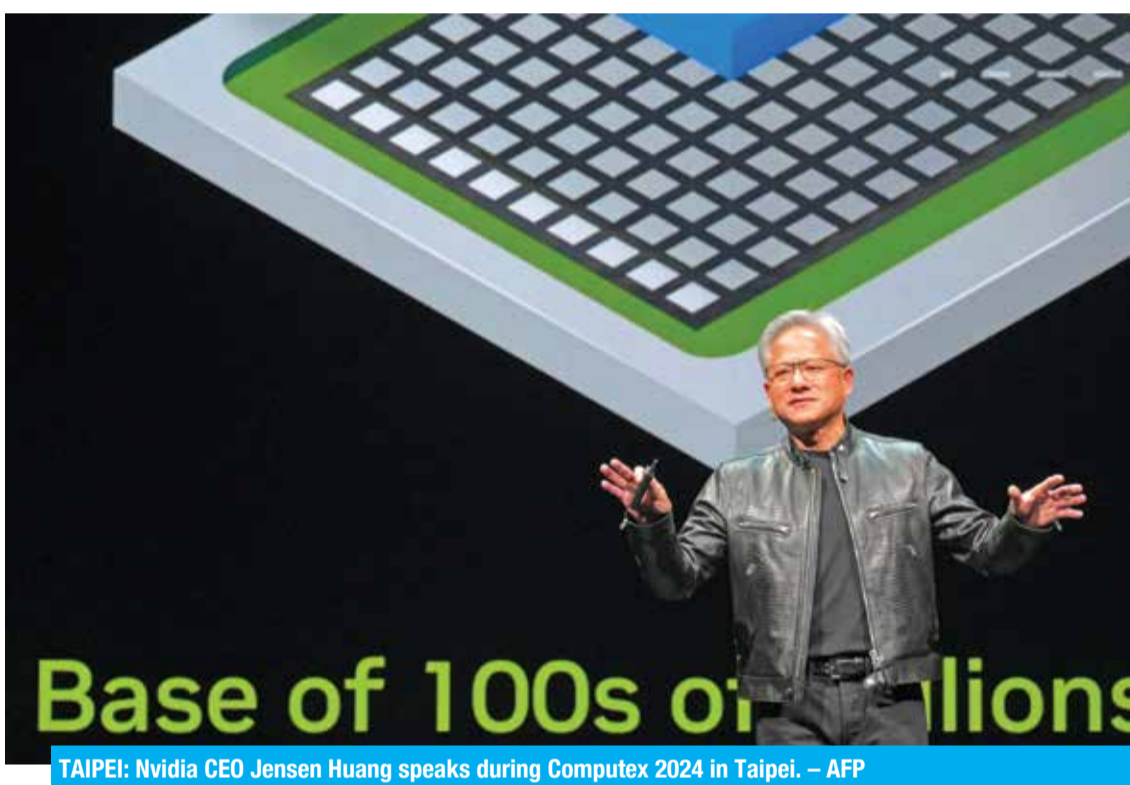
What does the bill do?

Advanced by State Senator Scott Wiener, a Democrat, the proposal would mandate safety testing for many of the most advanced AI models that cost more than \$100 million to develop or those that require a defined amount of computing power. Developers of AI software operating in the state would also need to outline methods for turning off the AI models if they go awry, effectively a kill switch. The bill would also give the state attorney general the power to sue if developers are not compliant, particularly in the event of an ongoing threat, such as the AI taking over government systems like the power grid. As well, the bill would require developers to hire third-party auditors to assess their safety practices and provide additional protections to whistleblowers speaking out against AI abuses.

What have lawmakers said?

SB 1047 has already passed the state Senate by a 32-1 vote. Last week it passed the state Assembly appropriations committee, setting up a vote by the full Assembly. If it passes by the end of the legislative session on Aug 31, it would advance to Governor Gavin Newsom to sign or veto by Sept 30. Wiener, who represents San Francisco, home to OpenAI and many of the startups developing the powerful software, has said legislation is necessary to protect the public before advances in AI become either unwieldy or uncontrollable.

However, a group of California Congressional Democrats oppose the bill, including San Francisco's Nancy Pelosi; Ro Khanna, whose congressional district encompasses much of Silicon Valley; and Zoe Lofgren, from San Jose. Pelosi this week called SB 1047 ill-informed and said it may cause more harm than good. In an



TAIPEI: Nvidia CEO Jensen Huang speaks during Computex 2024 in Taipei. — AFP

open letter last week, the Democrats said the bill could drive developers from the state and threaten so-called open-source AI models, which rely on code that is free-ly available for anyone to use or modify.

What do tech leaders say?

Tech companies developing AI - which can respond to prompts with fully formed text, images or audio as well as run repetitive tasks with minimal intervention - have called for stronger guardrails for AI's deployment. They have cited risks that the software could one day evade human intervention and cause cyberattacks, among other concerns. But they also largely balked at SB 1047. Wiener revised the bill to appease tech companies, relying in part on input from AI startup Anthropic - backed by Amazon and Alphabet. Among other changes, he eliminated the creation of a government AI oversight committee.

Wiener also took out criminal penalties for perjury, though civil suits may still be brought. Alphabet's Google and Meta have expressed concerns in letters to Wiener. Meta said the bill threatens to

make the state unfavorable to AI development and deployment. The Facebook parent's chief scientist, Yann LeCun, in a July X post called the bill potentially harmful to research efforts.

OpenAI, whose ChatGPT is credited with accelerating the frenzy over AI since its broad release in late 2022, has said AI should be regulated by the federal government and that SB 1047 creates an uncertain legal environment. Of particular concern is the potential for the bill to apply to open-source AI models. Many technologists believe open-source models are important for creating less risky AI applications more quickly, but Meta and others have fretted that they could be held responsible for policing open-source models if the bill passes. Wiener has said he supports open-source models and one of the recent amendments to the bill raised the standard for which open-sourced models are covered under its provisions. The bill also has its backers in the technology sector. Geoffrey Hinton, widely credited as a "godfather of AI," former OpenAI employee Daniel Kokotajlo and researcher Yoshua Bengio have said they support the bill. — Reuters

Target raises 2024 profit forecast

SAN FRANCISCO: Target raised its full-year profit forecast on Wednesday and reported its first increase in quarterly comparable sales in over a year, driven by price cuts that attracted more shoppers to its stores. Shares of the Minneapolis-based retailer rose 11 percent in premarket trading, after the chain said it expects 2024 profit in the range of \$9.00 to \$9.70 per share, up from its prior range of \$8.60 to \$9.60. Second-quarter comparable sales, or sales from online and stores open at least 12 months, rose 2 percent in the quarter ended Aug. 3, the first rise in over a year. Analysts on average estimated a 1.15 percent rise in comparable sales, according to LSEG.

Target said traffic drove all its gains in comparable sales as price cuts on thousands of items proved to be a powerful lure for shoppers who have been dealing with a rapid rise in grocery prices and interest rates. This summer, the Minneapolis-based chain reduced prices on over 5,000 popular items, including bread, soda, paper towels, and pet food. In February, it introduced a new private-label basics line called dealworthy, with most of the 400 items priced under \$10. Additionally, it expanded its Good & Gather and Favorite Day brands by adding 125 new food products.

Target's Chief Executive Officer, Brian Cornell, said shoppers responded to this "newness" and the price cuts. Apparel sales were also a bright point, rising 3 percent, reversing several quarters of sales declines, led by private-label All In Motion and Wild Fable lines.

Target's report and bigger rival Walmart's raising of its annual sales and profit forecasts last week are a sign that US consumer spending is strong ahead of the Federal Reserve's expected rate cuts in September. US retail sales also rose more than expected in July, allaying fears that the US economy was heading towards a recession following signs of a weakening job market. Rising prices of food and items for immediate consumption since the pandemic have led Americans to prioritize spending on groceries and everyday essentials, while cutting back on purchases like apparel, electronics, and home goods. This shift has posed a challenge for Target, which relies on discretionary products for more than 60 percent of its annual sales.

However, in the second quarter, the company reported gains across all six of its merchandising categories, including home decor, furnishings, and clothing. "We see an incredibly resilient consumer in the face of high inflation and some of the other challenges they've been facing to manage their household budgets," Cornell said on a media call.

Target retained its full-year comparable sales forecast of flat to 2 percent rise, but cautioned that the growth will be skewed to the lower half of the range. Analysts polled by LSEG were expecting a 0.36 percent rise. Target reported second-quarter earnings on both a net and adjusted basis of \$2.57 per share. Analysts on an average were expecting \$2.18 per share.

Its quarterly gross margin rate was 28.9 percent, up from 27 percent last year, in part due to a better grip on inventories and higher revenue at its advertising unit, Roundel. — Reuters



LOS ANGELES: The Target logo is displayed at a Target store on August 20, 2024 in Los Angeles, California. — AFP



A man arranges sacks of potatoes at a local market in Lahore. — AFP

Pakistan making good progress with IMF: Minister

KARACHI: Pakistan is making good progress with the International Monetary Fund and hopes to get board approval in September for a new \$7 billion loan program, Pakistan's Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb said on Wednesday. Pakistan and the IMF reached an agreement on the 37-month loan program in July. The IMF said the program was subject to approval from its executive board and obtaining "timely confirmation of necessary financing assurances from Pakistan's development and bilateral partners".

"We are making good progress with IMF for Board approval in September," said Aurangzeb in text message to Reuters. Pakistan is in talks with Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and China to meet gross financing needs under the IMF program. Aurangzeb said in July following a trip to China to seek energy sector debt reprofiling. Rollovers or disbursements on loans from Pakistan's long-time allies, in addition to financing from the IMF, have helped Pakistan meet its external financing needs in the past.

The IMF did not immediately respond to a Reuters request for comment on Pakistan's external financing needs and the executive board's meeting on Pakistan's loan program. During an analyst briefing following the central bank's decision in July to cut rates by 100 bps, the central bank chief said he expected rollovers of \$16.3 billion in the fiscal year to June 2025 - more than half of Pakistan's \$26.2 billion external financing requirement. — Reuters

Canada faces massive rail shutdown

OTTAWA: Canada's freight rail network is expected to shut down on Thursday if the country's two largest railroad operators fail to reach labor deals with their more than 9,000 workers. Canadian National Railway (CN) has threatened to lock out staff while the Teamsters union has given strike notice to Canadian Pacific Kansas City (CPKC). It would mark the first time the country has faced simultaneous work stoppages at the two companies, which in the past have negotiated labor deals in alternate years. If ongoing talks fail to reach agreements, business groups and farmers have warned of costly disruptions to the Canadian economy.

CN and CPKC, with tracks from the Atlantic to the Pacific coasts and south into the United States, carry an estimated Can\$1 billion (US\$730 million) worth of goods daily, including grains and potash, cars and petroleum products, and timber. US rail companies and overseas shippers have already stopped accepting some goods destined for Canada in anticipation of a disruption. Canada's Labour Minister Steven MacKinnon urged the two sides to "do the hard work necessary to reach agreements at the bargaining table and prevent a full work stoppage."

Their failures, he added in a statement, "will be borne by all Canadians." CN has said, "No meaningful progress has occurred" over months of talks and "the parties remain very far apart." The company has sought to force the temporary relocation of workers to fill staff shortages in parts of Canada, which the union rejected. The dispute with CPKC centers on safety issues related to rest periods for train crews. — AFP

Business

'Rotten-tail kids': China's rising youth jobless rate breeds new working class

Young graduates forced to accept low-paying jobs in weak economy

BEIJING: Rising unemployment in China is pushing millions of college graduates into a tough bargain, with some forced to accept low-paying work or even subsist on their parents' pensions, a plight that has created a new working class of "rotten-tail kids". The phrase has become a social media buzzword this year, drawing parallels to the catchword "rotten-tail buildings" for the tens of millions of unfinished homes that have plagued China's economy since 2021.

A record number of college graduates this year are hunting for jobs in a labor market depressed by COVID-19-induced disruptions as well as regulatory crack-downs on the country's finance, tech and education sectors.

The jobless rate for the roughly 100 million Chinese youth aged 16-24 crept above 20 percent for the first time in April last year. When it hit an all-time high of 21.3 percent in June 2023, officials abruptly suspended the data series to reassess how numbers were compiled.

One year on, youth unemployment remains a headache, with the reconfigured jobless rate spiking to a 2024 high of 17.1 percent in July, as 11.79 million college students graduated this summer in an economy still weighed down by its real estate crisis. President

Xi Jinping has repeatedly stressed that finding jobs for young people remains a top priority. The government has called for more channels for the youth to access potential employers, such as job fairs, and has rolled out supportive business policies to help boost hiring.

"For many Chinese college graduates, better job prospects, upward social mobility, a sunnier life outlook - all things once promised by a college degree - have increasingly become elusive," said Yun Zhou, assistant professor of sociology, University of Michigan. Some jobless young people have returned to their hometown to be "full-time children", relying on their parents' retirement pensions and savings.

Even those with post-graduate degrees haven't been spared. After spending years climbing China's ultra-competitive academic ladder, "rotten-tail kids" are discovering that their qualifications are failing to secure them jobs in a bleak economy. Their options are limited. Either they cut their expectations for top-paying jobs or find any job to make ends meet. Some have also turned to crime.

Zephyr Cao obtained a master's degree from the prestigious China Foreign Affairs University in Beijing last year. Now 27, and back in his home province of Hebei, Cao has stopped seeking full-time work after

lower-than-expected wages made him question the value of his education.

"If I worked for three or four years after my undergraduate studies, my salary would probably be similar to what I get now with a master's degree," Cao said. Cao said he was considering pursuing a PhD in hopes his prospects would improve in a few years. Amada Chen, a recent graduate from Hubei University of Chinese Medicine, quit her sales job at a state-owned enterprise last week after just one month.

She blamed her decision on the toxic work culture and her boss's unrealistic expectations. For the first 15 days of her probation, she was also getting just 60 yuan (\$8.40) a day despite having to work 12 hours daily.

"I cried every day for a week," she said. Chen had wanted to become a quality inspector or a researcher, jobs she thought would match her skills as a traditional Chinese medicine major.

But over 130 job application letters later, she was offered mostly sales or e-commerce related positions. Chen said she was reconsidering her career path altogether and might turn to modeling.

Joblessness among college graduates is not without precedent. In 1999, China dramatically expand-



HUAI'AN, China: This photo taken on June 2, 2024 shows people attending a job fair in Huai'an, in eastern China's Jiangsu province. — AFP

ed the enrolment capacity of universities in a bid to produce a better educated workforce to drive its fast-growing economy. But the supply of graduates had kept exceeding jobs, with authorities expressing concern in 2007 over job availability, an issue that receded but never fully faded as more youth armed with degrees entered the market. — Reuters

News in Brief

South African inflation drops

JOHANNESBURG: Inflation in South Africa fell to its lowest level in three years in July, official data showed Wednesday. Annual consumer price inflation reached 4.6 percent last month, down from 5.1 percent in June, national statistics agency StatsSA said in a statement. "After holding steady for ten months in the 5-6 percent range, annual consumer price inflation slowed to... the lowest in three years since July 2021," StatsSA said. South Africa's economy is battling high unemployment, poverty and sluggish growth. The country's jobless rate rose to a near record of 33.5 percent in the second quarter of 2024, StatsSA said earlier this month. — AFP

Xiaomi posts solid sales growth

BEIJING: Chinese smartphone and household tech giant Xiaomi on Wednesday announced solid revenue growth for the second quarter of the year, despite sluggish consumption in the world's second-largest economy. The brand's presence is strongly felt in China, with its wide range of products spanning mobiles, tablets, smartwatches, headphones, scooters and, recently, electric vehicles. The world's third-largest smartphone maker, Xiaomi reported revenue of 88.9 billion yuan (\$12.5 billion) in the second quarter, an increase of 32 percent year-on-year, according to a statement to the Hong Kong Stock Exchange. — AFP

Mexico could boost GDP by \$391bn

MEXICO CITY: Mexico could boost its annual economic activity by more than 25 percent, or \$390.5 billion, if women participated in the labor force at the same rate as men, a report estimated on Tuesday. Key to bringing women into the workforce is improving access to childcare, the report by US think tank the Milken Institute showed. According to World Bank data cited by the report, 45.6 percent of working-age Mexican women have jobs, while the figure is 77.5 percent for men. Raising female employment levels equal to those in the US would tack on \$132 billion to Mexico's economy, according to data compiled by the institute. — Reuters

Argentina posts \$1.58bn trade surplus

BUENOS AIRES: Argentina posted a trade surplus of \$1.575 billion in July, after registering \$7.221 billion in exports and \$5.646 billion in imports in the month, the government's statistics office announced on Tuesday. The latest surplus marks the eighth-consecutive positive monthly figure, landing slightly below the \$1.6 billion forecast in a poll. — Reuters

Copper giant Codelco invests in EVs

EL TENIENTE MINE, Chile: Chilean copper giant Codelco, under growing pressure from global clients demanding sustainable mining credentials, is trying to give itself a green makeover by investing in electric buses, cactus nurseries and recycling metal materials and tools. The state firm - the world's largest producer of the red metal, which is battling to rev up production and turn around a slide in output - has focused the drive on its flagship El Teniente mine, 75 km (47 miles) south of the capital Santiago and the world's largest underground copper mine. — Reuters

Indonesia may shut Suralaya plant

JAKARTA: Indonesia may shut down a portion of a coal-fired power plant near Jakarta to reduce air pollution affecting the city, a senior minister said on Wednesday. The country is looking at closing 2 gigawatts (GW) of power capacity at the 4 GW Suralaya coal-fired power complex in Indonesia's Banten province that is owned by state utility PT Perusahaan Listrik Negara (PLN), Luhut Pandjaitan, Coordinating Minister of Maritime Affairs and Investment, who oversees some commodity policies, said a solar power conference. — Reuters

China's record hydro, solar cut coal power during heatwave

LONDON: China's electricity consumption smashed the previous record in July as a prolonged heatwave settled over major load centers, especially in the Yangtze Delta, driving an enormous increase in air-conditioning and refrigeration. Unprecedented load was met by record output from hydro and solar, ensuring coal-fired generation fell slightly compared with the same period a year earlier, showcasing the rapid transformation of the system.

Total generation increased to a record 883 billion kilowatt-hours (kWh) in July from 846 billion kWh in the same month in 2023 and 806 billion kWh in 2022, according to the National Bureau of Statistics. Much of the increase was down to a long period of exceptionally hot weather in eastern regions, especially province-level areas lying on the lower reaches of the Yangtze, including Shanghai, Zhejiang, Jiangsu and Anhui.

Daily temperatures at Nanjing in the Yangtze Delta averaged 30.4 °C compared with 28.7 °C a year earlier and about 2.5 °C above the long-term seasonal norm. Nanjing temperatures have been above normal in 42 of 50 days since the start of July, pushing air-conditioning and refrigeration demand to a record.

The delta is home to 237 million people, 17 percent of the country's total population, and accounts for 24 percent of national economic output, making it the largest load centre. As a result, regional heatwaves can drive peak consumption across the entire national transmission network and draw in power from provinces to the west and south. Several cities and provinces in the delta called for conservation during the heatwave to lower electricity demand. But overall the transmission system coped because record consumption was more than matched by huge increases in hydro and solar generation in other parts of China.

Nationwide hydro generation increased by 45 billion kWh compared with the same month a year earlier while output from solar farms was up by 10 billion kWh with a smaller increase from wind farms of 5 billion kWh. The result was that thermal generation, almost all from coal, declined by 25 billion kWh compared with July 2023, despite record electricity demand.

Unprecedented amounts of hydro power were transmitted from dams on the middle and upper

Fed minutes to show depth of rate cut debate

WASHINGTON: While the focus is now on September for the start of Federal Reserve interest rate cuts, at least some US central bankers were keen to get the debate about it rolling at last month's policy meeting. Roughly how many were in that camp and how unified the remaining policymakers were in seeing the Fed's Sept 17-18 meeting as a preferred starting point for reducing borrowing costs should become clear when the minutes of the July 30-31 meeting are released on Wednesday.

The central bank's policy-setting Federal Open Market Committee ended that meeting by leaving its benchmark overnight borrowing rate in the 5.25 percent-5.50 percent range where it has been since July 2023, but officials agreed to a number of key policy statement changes that opened the door to a rate cut at their gathering next month.

That expectation was further solidified by Fed Chair Jerome Powell's remarks in his post-meeting press conference, when he said: "If we were to see inflation moving down ... more or less in line with expectations, growth remains reasonably strong, and the labor market remains consistent with current conditions, then I think a rate cut could be on the table at the September meeting." Two days after the meeting, the Labor Department reported a sharp slowdown in payrolls growth in July, with the unemployment rate rising to a post-pandemic high of 4.3 percent.

In addition to unleashing a bout of financial market volatility that briefly reflected a small chance of the Fed rushing to cut rates prior to its next scheduled meeting, the indication of job market softening brought forth a number of Fed officials themselves to indicate they would be ready to consider rate cuts come September. "The balance of risks has shifted, so the debate about potentially cutting rates in September is an appropriate one to have," Minneapolis Fed President Neel Kashkari said in an interview with the Wall Street Journal that was emblematic of the shift among policymakers. Until now Kashkari had emphasized the importance of ensuring inflation returns to the Fed's 2 percent target, even if that meant leaving rates where they are until near the end of this year.

Officials last month agreed to several key changes to their policy statement, softening the description of inflation and saying the risks to employment were now on a par with those of rising prices - neutral language that sets the stage for rates to fall after more than two years of tightening credit. But Powell, speaking in his post-meeting press conference, also said some officials "examined the possibility" of the case for cutting rates right then. Still, he said, "overwhelmingly, the sense of the Committee was not at this meeting but as soon as the next meeting, depending on how the data come in." Just how that discussion is reflected in the minutes on Wednesday is key and could be a guide to the scope and pace of what now appears to be an imminent shift to policy easing. Interest rate futures markets reflect a 100 percent probability of a rate cut next month - with the only difference of opinion around the size: A quarter of a percentage point or half a percentage point. The probability currently favors the smaller cut. — Reuters

Canadian banks' credit quality back in focus

TORONTO: Canada's big six banks will probably set aside a total of C\$4.5 billion in loan loss provisions in the third quarter, analysts predicted, up nearly 27 percent from a year ago, as insolvencies rise and lenders prepare for credit card and other delinquencies in a challenging economy.

The banks, which control a big chunk of the country's banking market share, could feel the brunt of elevated borrowing costs, slowing employment and possibility of a recession weighing on consumer and business sentiment. "Third-quarter results are likely to reflect a challenged Canadian economy, with banks expected to report sluggish loan growth, while credit costs creep higher," BofA Securities analyst Ebrahim Poonawala said. Overall, the TSX banking index's 8.3 percent growth so far this year has underperformed the broader TSX index's 10 percent gain.

The benefits of Bank of Canada's two rate cuts this year on deposit costs and interest expense are unlikely to be fully reflected in the third quarter, but with mortgage renewals around the corner, three upcoming rate cuts could help ease pressure on credit in the

summer peak but it remained very high. Thermal producers still accounted for 65 percent of all generation in July down from 71 percent in 2023 and 73 percent a decade ago. Thermal generation may be declining relative to other sources of electricity but it has still grown in absolute terms over the last decade because total demand has increased so fast. Thermal generation amounted to 454 billion kWh in July, down slightly from a record 471 billion kWh in last year's drought, but up by a third from 340 billion kWh in 2014.

Most of China's best sites for run-of-river dams have been developed, limiting further gains in hydro output, though there is increasing interest in pumped storage. The government plans further deployment of solar and wind to boost renewable generation and there are rapidly increasing amounts of small-scale rooftop solar which will cut net load on the transmission network.

Nuclear remains a small part of the system, accounting for 5 percent of generation in 2023, though the government has approved a big reactor building program which will boost it significantly by the end of the decade. However, further reductions in coal combustion depend on major improvements in efficiency among generators and users to reduce coal-firing and slow load growth to allow renewables to play an even bigger role. — Reuters

second half of the year.

"With the Bank of Canada being more aggressive than anticipated on rate cuts, we are more concerned about the near-term outlook... there will need to be much stronger-than-anticipated earnings to fuel support for the banks," Jefferies analyst John Aiken said.

Eyes will be on TD Bank on Thursday, the first bank to report third-quarter results as investors await details of the US Department of Justice's investigation into deficiencies in its anti-money laundering program. TD, which has made a big push into the US over the years through acquisitions, has said it would grow in the region organically through building new branches after its proposal to buy First Horizon failed and the probe has led to a pause in its expansion plan. Bank of Montreal is also expected to show a rise in loan loss provisions due to a potential loss on a loan to US solar company SunPower.

"The overhang related to its credit performance, sluggish loan growth and US exposure in general will likely persist until after the November US election and the Fed begins to shift towards a rate cutting cycle," National Bank analyst Gabriel Dechaine said. "Patience is required," he noted. Loan loss provisions are expected to rise at five of the six banks between 28.4 percent and 45 percent, while CIBC is forecast to see a reversal of its loan loss provision, according to LSEG data. — Reuters



LIANYUNGANG, China: An aerial view shows solar panels at the fishing-solar complementary photovoltaic power generation base in Lianyungang, in eastern China's Jiangsu province on July 31, 2024. — AFP

reaches of the Yangtze eastwards to the delta. Hydro generation surged to a record 166 billion kWh in July from 121 billion kWh in the same month a year earlier, easily passing the previous seasonal record of 146 billion in 2022 and 2020. After the drought lasting from the middle of 2022 to the end of 2023, plentiful monsoon rains enabled generators to make full use of newly commissioned cascade dams on the Yangtze system for the first time.

Even now, enormous volumes of water are still impounded behind dams and in seasonal reservoirs for flood control, which is likely to sustain hydro generation at record seasonal levels through August and into September.

Electric reliability during the summer peak was also guaranteed by unprecedented deployment of solar farms and record generation from solar power. Solar generation surged to a record 36 billion kWh in July from 26 billion kWh in the same month in 2023 and 21 billion kWh in 2022.

Solar generation has been driven by a huge increase in installed capacity, which has more than doubled since the end of 2021. The figures do not include increasing amounts of self-generation by residential and commercial users from rooftop solar panels.

Extra generation from hydro and solar reduced the system's reliance on fossil fuels during the

THURSDAY, AUGUST 22, 2024



Kenyan rap duo Wadagliz members, Allan "Manazz" Mojo (right) and Tony "Kantel" Otieno pose during an interview at their music studio in Nairobi. - AFP photos

'FALL WITH IT': THE PARTY ANTHEM RALLYING KENYAN PROTESTERS

"We knew it was a banger," drawled rapper Allan "Manazz" Mojo, one-half of young Kenyan rap duo Wadagliz whose viral song has become the unlikely beat of anti-government demonstrations that have shaken the East African country. With its upbeat rhythm and catchy chorus, "Anguka Nayo"—literally "fall with it" in Swahili, but better understood by Kenyans as "roll with it"—does not sound like a protest rallying cry. But when youth-led anti-government rallies broke out across the country in June, the tune written by the 22-year-olds was suddenly everywhere accompanied by the pair's online dance challenge.

Weeks later, sunglasses firmly in place even in the gloom of their studio, Mojo and Tony "Kantel" Otieno are reveling in their newfound success, which has seen them hit more than five million

views on YouTube. "People are relating in their own way. (For) some it is a party song, some it is protests," Mojo told AFP. Both Otieno and Mojo grew up in the lower-income Nairobi neighborhood of Eastleigh. They attended school together where they paid more attention to writing lyrics than their studies. Otieno said with a smile, his silver teeth glinting.

Afterwards, the two struggled to make ends meet, selling clothes as a side-hustle to their musical ambitions—typical of many in Kenya where despite President William Ruto's promises, youth unemployment remains high and poorly paid informal work dominates. Such issues fanned the protests that were initially sparked by proposed tax hikes, and which turned deadly as disenchanted and furious young Gen-Z Kenyans marched.

But Wadagliz said "Anguka Nayo"

was written about a year ago, sampling the 2018 Kenyan party tune "Kufa Juu", as part of the Arbantone genre that blends the established with the new. "It is not a protest (song), it's a club banger," explained Otieno, his rings sparkling as he toyed with his diamond-encrusted belt. Still, stray onto TikTok and the track is the background to nearly half a million posts, many filmed during the recent rallies.

'Good energy'

At protests in central Nairobi earlier this month, young Kenyans faced off against police as "Anguka Nayo" blasted through portable speakers. The small crowd broke out in frenetic dancing until they were scattered by tear gas. The freewheeling tune just provided "good energy", according to demonstrator Wanjiru Stephens, 29. "It was a mo-

ment of joy, to actually enjoy the song," she told AFP, especially with the online dance challenge gathering pace. "It's all due to TikTok. That's what made the song blow up," producer Samuel Michaka, 22, told AFP.

Wadagliz and their team came up with the moves—outstretched hands as people slowly lower their bodies—in their Eastleigh studio. "That's how the song was embedded into the protests," he said. Despite emphasizing it was not a protest song at all, Michaka acknowledged the timing had caught the public mood. "Let's just say 'Anguka Nayo' was a perfect match," he said. "Anguka Nayo" is every day, anytime, anywhere, it doesn't matter. Just fall with it."

'Song fits perfectly'

From George Ramogi's song mourning politician Tom Mboya's death to Eric

Wainaina's early 2000s anti-corruption anthem, music has consistently played a role in modern Kenyan history. But Arbantone songs like "Anguka Nayo" were something different, said Nerima Wako-Ojiwa, of Nairobi-based civic-tech group Siasa Place, which has monitored online protest chatter.

She said the use of social media—mostly TikTok and Facebook—had allowed new voices, like Wadagliz, to flourish. "Anguka Nayo" is not even like a patriotic song," she told AFP. "But the fact that it's being connected to the protests is so interesting, it's like it's developing a whole new kind of culture." "That song, that phrase, fits perfectly with what's going on," said Wako-Ojiwa. — AFP



Michael Ellenberg, Theresa Kang, Minha Kim, Lee Minho, Soo Hugh and Lindsey Springer attend the Apple TV+'s "Pachinko" Season 2 Photo Call at The Whitby Hotel in New York City. — AFP photos

'PACHINKO' UPS THE STAKES AND CHARACTER COUNT FOR SEASON TWO

Critically acclaimed TV series "Pachinko" returns for a second season with a much bigger cast and higher stakes for some of its protagonists, the show's creators said ahead of the new episodes' debut this week. Based on Min Jin Lee's best-selling novel of the same name, the show's multi-generational story is told in three languages; Korean, Japanese and English, and Season Two

"We added so many more characters in Season Two because that's how families grow." With World War Two aggravating the already strained circumstances of central character Sunja, who is played by Kim Min-ha, and her family, Sunja gets back in contact with her former lover Hansu (Lee Min-ho), a businessman with criminal connections. In a parallel storyline, Sunja's grandson Solomon (Jin Ha) tries to climb his way back to the top in late 1980's Tokyo, while the now elderly Sunja (Yun Yuh-jung) is energized by a new friendship.

"With Solomon's storyline in the present day, the stakes feel more dire for him," Hugh said. For Kim, expressing the growing maturity of young Sunja, now a mother-of-two was a challenge. "I have never been a mother before, so it took quite a long time for me to figure out how to be like a mother," said Kim, 28, who drew inspiration from the women in her own family. Lee, one of South Korea's biggest stars, said Hansu, a character "who is always looking forward, never back" also felt different from the first season. "It felt like taking on a new character," said the 37-year-old actor. "Pachinko" came to me at a time when I needed new energy and provided me with new perspectives and ideas. It's very meaningful work for me," he added. The first episode of Season Two is out on Apple TV+ on Friday, with new episodes released weekly. — Reuters



Lee Minho, Minha Kim and Jin Ha attend the Apple TV+'s "Pachinko" Season 2 Photo Call at The Whitby Hotel in New York City.

opens in Osaka, Japan, in 1945. "We always said the heartbeat has to be the same, no matter what, but I think the biggest difference is just how much bigger the world has become for our characters," writer and executive producer Soo Hugh told Reuters.

New 'Call of Duty' and 'Borderlands 4' games announced at leading show

The release dates for new episodes of the "Call of Duty" and "Borderlands" video games were announced Tuesday at the opening of the Gamescom showcase. The announcements set the scene for the leading international video game show that opens to the public in Cologne on Thursday for four days and is expected to draw more than 350,000 visitors. The launch of the Borderlands 4 game in 2025 was one of the surprises of the opening night show. The games producers promised that players would "blast their way through hordes of enemies" in the latest version of the game that was adapted for cinema this year.

"Call of Duty: Black Ops 6" will be released on October 25. The latest in the series is set in the 1990s with a security team on a mission to target a senator and gain access to a top-secret site in Washington. "Deadpool" film maker Tim Miller announced that his new "Secret Level" series based on several video games would be released on Amazon Prime in December.



Visitors play the 'Marvel Rivals' game during the media day at the Gamescom.

"It is our love letter to games," he said. Another industry veteran Peter Molyneux said his latest project would be "Masters of Albion". Molyneux made Populous in 1989 and Black and White in 2001 but has been more low-key in recent years with several projects cancelled. Swedish firm Machinegames

said that "Indiana Jones and the Great Circle" will be released on December 9. First announced for Xbox, the game will also come out on Playstation 5 next year, the company said. — AFP



Cosplayers of the 'Winner Winner Chicken Dinner' game pose at their booth during the media day at the Gamescom video games trade fair in Cologne, western Germany.



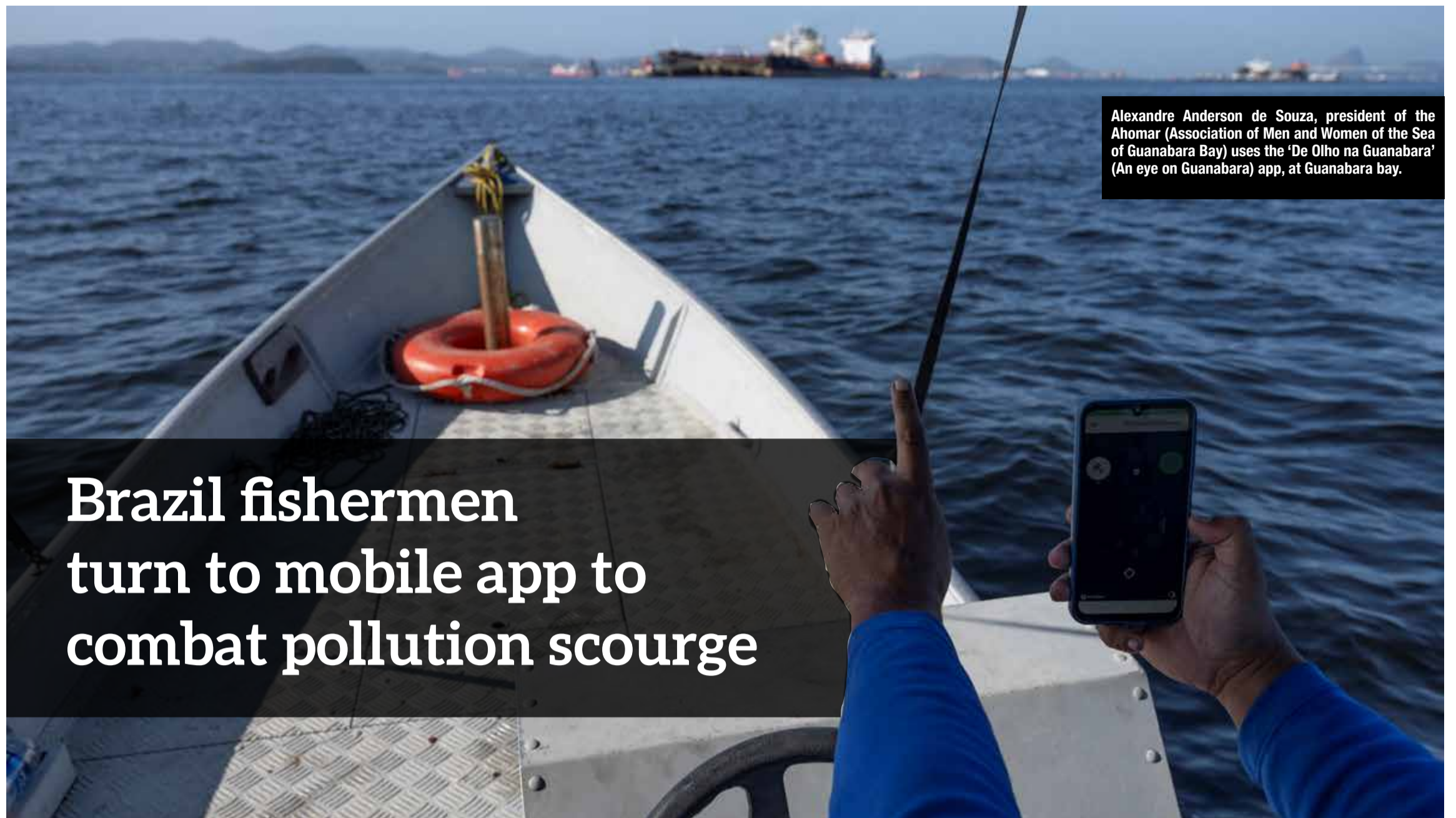
Visitors stand at the booth of the video game 'Indiana Jones and the Great Circle' during the media day at the Gamescom.



A cosplayer attends the media day at the Gamescom.



Visitors walk at the 'Dragon Ball - Sparking! Zero' game at the Bandai Namco Entertainment booth during the media day at the Gamescom — AFP photos



Alexandre Anderson de Souza, president of the Ahomar (Association of Men and Women of the Sea of Guanabara Bay) uses the 'De Olho na Guanabara' (An eye on Guanabara) app, at Guanabara bay.

Brazil fishermen turn to mobile app to combat pollution scourge

Brazilian activist and fisherman Alexandre Anderson uses one hand to steer his boat, and the other to film an oil stain spreading over Rio de Janeiro's Guanabara Bay. He will upload the video to an app developed to expose environmental damage in the iconic bay crucial for tourism and the fishing industry, but plagued by spills of oil, chemicals and untreated wastewater. Guanabara Bay, a natural port of about 400 square kilometers (154 square miles), battles pollution

encounters several illegal spills, he says. Within three weeks of the app launching on July 26, 20 complaints were posted on the web, and more than 100 others are under analysis, according to administrators.

'Practically' no more sea bass or hake

"The inspection agencies always claimed they don't have the tools to deal with complaints," said Paulo Barone, who belongs to another local fishermen's association. But with this new app, he said, the authorities "can no longer deny or ignore" the complaints. For 350.org's Brazil coordinator Luiz Afonso Rosario, artisanal fishermen have been on the "front lines" for too long.



A fuel slick floats in the San Lorenzo canal at Guanabara bay in Niteroi, Brazil.

not only from visiting vessels and oil rig accidents, but also from old ships abandoned in its waters and runoff from cities. Frustrated with what they see as a lack of official response, the bay's fishermen decided to take matters into their own hands, and with the backing of non-governmental organization 350.org, had an app developed for them.

"We used to take pictures with our cell phone or a camera," but without exact geolocation data, it was of little use, Anderson — president of the bay's Ahomar fishermen's association — told AFP as he filmed a steady stream of wastewater being dumped from a ship. The app, however, "gives me the precise" data with which to file a complaint, anonymously. The information is verified by a moderator and published on a dedicated website, after which it is reported to authorities such as the country's Ibama environmental regulator or Brazil's navy, which patrols the bay.

Every time he monitors the dark waters for just a few hours, Anderson



View of a floating dyke in front of the fishing community of Porto Velho, at Guanabara bay.

"Oil and gas companies, in addition to polluting the waters that are a source of food, income and leisure for thousands of families, aggravate the climate crisis... by providing fossil fuels that are the main cause of global warming," he said. Fishermen were particularly hard hit by a spill in 2000 that saw 1.3 million liters of oil dumped into the bay from a Petrobras refinery.

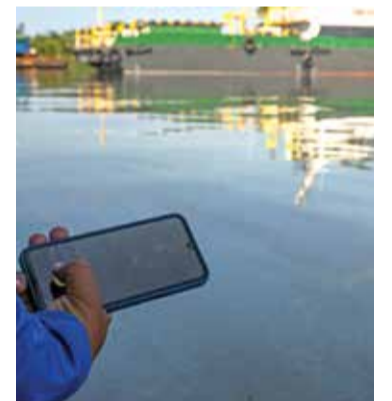
"That ended the fishing. You practically don't find any sea bass (or) hake anymore," said Roberto Marques Resende, who still fishes in the region. For some, the battle is about more than even subsistence. Anderson, who has been standing up to the petrochemical industry for years, says he has been the target of threats and attacks for years and hopes that the app will help ensure that "those responsible are really punished." "Only then will we solve these problems," he said. — AFP



A ship is towed at Guanabara bay in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.



A cargo is loaded onto a ship at Guanabara bay.



Alexandre Anderson de Souza, president of the Ahomar uses the 'De Olho na Guanabara' (An eye on Guanabara) app, at Guanabara bay.



Partial view of a ship at Guanabara bay.



View of fuel slick partially covering the San Lorenzo canal.



Alexandre Anderson de Souza, president of the Ahomar organization pushes his boat at a beach of Paqueta island.



Partial view of a boat in the San Lorenzo canal at Guanabara bay.

Lifestyle



Children watch as actors Shaikh Aleemuddin Abdul Rasheed aka Aleem Tahir (left) and Roma Momin (second left) perform while shooting for a movie in Malegaon.



Director Shaikh Muqeemuddin Abdul Rasheed aka Muqeem Meena Nagri (second right) applies makeup on actor Shaikh Aleemuddin Abdul Rasheed aka Aleem Tahir (left) before his performance as they shoot a movie in Malegaon.

India's homemade superhero star strikes Bollywood fame



Director Shaikh Muqeemuddin Abdul Rasheed aka Muqeem Meena Nagri (not pictured) prepares voodoo props while shooting a movie in Malegaon.



Actor-director Raju Sunny poses in front of movie posters at an old single screen theatre in Malegaon.



Camera operator and ticket assistant Sunil Govinda Suryavanshi waits for people to purchase tickets at an old single screen movie theatre in Malegaon. - AFP photos

Half a day's drive from India's entertainment capital Mumbai, many in the struggling textile city of Malegaon escape the thrum of dawn-till-dusk industrial weaving looms by daydreaming about Bollywood stars. Among them is amateur filmmaker Shaikh Nasir who, after decades of dedication to creating homemade movies, is celebrating having his own story turned into a film that will be shown internationally on the big screen. "The cinema is, and always has been, our escape from everyday lives and our daily struggles," 50-year-old Nasir said.

Video parlors remain popular in the industrial city, where factory workers and daily wage laborers pack small dark rooms to watch Bollywood classics on large TV screens, with tickets far cheaper than a real cinema. For them, Nasir is already a star. As a young struggling wedding videographer and self-described "unemployed cinema buff" in the mid-2000s, Nasir took action. "I decided to make a movie with cheap rented cameras, innovative production hacks and a crew of equally enthusiastic film fanatics," he told AFP.

He poured in his savings and raised cash from friends to fund a series of Bollywood and Hollywood spoofs. Most famous was "Malegaon Ka Superman", or "Malegaon's Superman", in which a caped superhero fights cancer-causing tobacco to save the day.

'Unlikely dream factory'

To make the hero fly, creative special effects included dragging the actor on roller skates, or strapping him to a plank attached to an out-of-sight hand-



Amateur filmmaker Shaikh Nasir (right) speaks with actor-directors Raju Sunny (center) and Asif Albela Janiya at an old single screen movie theatre in Malegaon.

cart, speeding down bumpy streets. A more ambitious scene sees the actor carried on the heads of friends concealed under a dyed sheet — a makeshift green screen. For camera rigs, bicycles provided tracking shots and cattle carts became improvised cranes. The film — in Hindi and local dialects — made Nasir wildly popular at home.

That success spawned a slew of low-budget films in Malegaon that some Indian media dubbed "Mollywood". "The response to our work was unbelievable," Nasir said. In 2008, the award-winning documentary "Supermen of Malegaon" brought their uplifting story to international attention. Now Nasir and his old crew are readying for the big-budget Bollywood treatment —

not to remake the movie, but a film inspired by the director's determination.

The Hindi-language "Superboys of Malegaon", which will premiere next month at the Toronto International Film Festival, tells the tale of how Nasir's "no-budget, community-sourced movies turned his hometown into an unlikely dream factory". Nasir worked with the production team, but in the movie version of his life, he is played by actor Adarsh Gourav, who featured in the Oscar-nominated film "The White Tiger".

'This is passion'

It was not all plain sailing. In the face of rampant video piracy around 2014, profits from making a film tum-

bled. Nasir made ends meet running a local hotel. But production was reinvigorated as viewing habits shifted. The rise of readily available mobile Internet meant people began streaming content on their phones. Some of Nasir's old crew now make a profit churning out online comedy shows. One of them is Mukeem Arshad, 42. He runs two YouTube comedy channels that he says give him a steady income.

Now, around a dozen crews of amateur writers, directors and actors produce multiple features for dedicated online followers each month. One of the most successful YouTube channels in the city has nearly 34 million followers. The advent of the internet has also helped shift social attitudes. When Nasir began filming, society frowned on women taking part in film production. But Roma Momin, who has acted in hundreds of productions, says women are increasingly getting more opportunities.

"Things have become much easier, especially for women who didn't have the avenues to express or showcase their talent, because of the internet," she said. "But I still dream of graduating to the bigger stage, hopefully Bollywood," she added. Aleem Tahir, 52, an actor in one of Nasir's earlier movies, is one of the rare few from Malegaon who has had that Bollywood break as a writing assistant. "This is passion, this is love," Tahir said, pausing after a take for a local production. "And this is just the start for us." — AFP

Jennifer Lopez files to divorce Ben Affleck

Jennifer Lopez has filed for divorce from Ben Affleck, US media reported Tuesday, two years after the Hollywood power couple officially gave love a second chance by tying the knot. The pair, who were nicknamed "Bennifer" when they first dated in the frenzied tabloid celebrity days of the early 2000s, had rekindled their relationship almost two decades later. But Lopez on Tuesday filed divorce papers at a Los Angeles court, Hollywood trade outlet Variety and celebrity gossip website TMZ said.

A representative for Lopez declined to comment. Affleck's publicist did not immediately respond to an AFP request for comment. It was the fourth marriage for pop singer-turned-actress Lopez, 55, and the second for Oscar-winning movie star and director Affleck, 52. The pair first met in 2002 on the set of the widely panned movie "Gigli." They became a media sensation as they started dating and announced their engagement. But they postponed their planned 2003 nuptials, and announced their relationship was over in early 2004.

"Bennifer" set the internet alight again in 2021 when photos of them together again began circulating. "It's a beautiful love story that we got a second chance," Lopez said in an interview around that time. Lopez and Affleck announced their engagement in April 2022, and the A-list lovebirds wed in Las Vegas in July. They made it official again the following month in a lavish

ceremony at the "Good Will Hunting" star's 87-acre (35-hectare) estate in the southeastern US state of Georgia. Among the Hollywood types in attendance at the three-day affair were long-time Affleck pal Matt Damon and director Kevin Smith. The couple reportedly bought a \$60 million home together in Los Angeles last year.

But rumors of marital troubles emerged in the entertainment press and on social media earlier this year. Fans noted that Lopez celebrated her 55th birthday without her husband last month, and TMZ said they had sold their joint home, with Affleck moving into a luxury bachelor pad. People magazine said relations became strained because of their different approaches to celebrity. "She likes to open her heart to her fans and to the world," the magazine quoted an unnamed source saying.

"He is more introspective and private. This has been difficult day-to-day." Divorce papers listed the couple's date of separation as April 26, 2024, according to TMZ, which said the pair are no longer on speaking terms. Lopez was previously married to actor Ojani Noa, dancer Cris Judd and singer Marc Anthony, with whom she shares twins Max and Emme. Affleck was married to actress Jennifer Garner and they are the parents of Violet, Seraphina, and Samuel. — AFP



US actress Jennifer Lopez and actor Ben Affleck arrive for a special screening of "Marry Me" at the Directors Guild of America (DGA) in Los Angeles, February 8, 2022. - AFP

Delon's dog saved from euthanasia, Bardot Foundation says

Alain Delon's pet dog Loubo will not be put down and buried with the film star as he wanted, the Brigitte Bardot Foundation said Tuesday following an outcry from animal rights activists. Delon, who died Sunday aged 88, had said he wanted the Belgian malinois to be humanely killed and buried with him. But the foundation named after former film idol Bardot quoted Delon's family as saying the wish would not be carried out.

"Do not worry about Loubo," the foundation said in a post on the X social media platform. "Many of you have sent us messages concerning the fate of Loubo," it added. "He has his home and his family," the family of Alain Delon have confirmed to us and they will take care of him. Loubo will of course not be euthanized." Delon announced in 2018 that he wanted to be buried with the dog.

"He is my end of life dog. A Belgian shepherd who I love like a child," Delon told the Paris Match magazine. "If I die before him I will ask the vet to let us go together. He will inject him so that he dies in my arms. I would rather that than knowing that he would let himself die on my grave with so much suffering." Loubo was among the names given when the family announced Delon's death on Sunday.

"Alain Fabien, Anouchka, Anthony, as well as Loubo, are deeply saddened to announce the passing of their father," the actor's children said in a statement. Two of Delon's sons posted on social media on Tuesday for the first time since the death. Anthony Delon posted three photos of his father in his younger days with the message "RIP Papa". Delon's youngest son, Alain-Fabien, put up pictures of wreaths left outside Delon's home at Douchy in central France where he died. — AFP



French bishop Jean-Michel di Falco arrives at the screening of the movie "Un Prophete" directed by Jacques Audiard in competition at the 62nd Cannes Film Festival on May 16, 2009. — AFP photos

Screen legend Delon's funeral set for Saturday: Priest

Cinema legend Alain Delon, who died at 88, will be buried on Saturday, a Catholic priest who is to officiate at the service told AFP. Jean-Michel Di Falco, a former bishop in the southeastern city of Gap, said he had been asked by the actor to hold the funeral service. He gave no place or time for the ceremony, but French news channels CNews and BFMTV said it would take place at 5:00 pm (1500 GMT) in Douchy-Montcorbon, a village in central France where Delon had a property surrounded by high walls and where he spent his final years.

Delon had said he did not want a national memorial event, but rather a burial near his dogs on his property in Douchy. Such a burial on private property requires special permission from local authorities, which has now been granted by the prefect of the Loiret region, a source familiar with the application process told AFP. France has been paying homage to Delon, one of the country's biggest stars, who was also shadowed by controversy. He was one of the last living legends of a golden era for French cinema in the 1960s. While he had legions of fans around the world, his personal life and political opinions divided opinion.

Delon's relationship with women caused controversy. His sons accused him of domestic violence, which Delon denied while admitting slapping women during quarrels. Delon also drew

criticism for supporting Jean-Marie Le Pen, co-founder of the far-right National Front, who was in favor of the death penalty and spoke against same-sex relationships. Feminists were also appalled by the lifetime achievement award the Cannes Film Festival gave him in 2019. He lived his later years largely as a recluse, though his personal life kept him in the headlines.



French actor Alain Delon poses during a photocall before being awarded with an Honorary Palme d'Or at the 72nd edition of the Cannes Film Festival in Cannes, southern France, on May 19, 2019.

In 2023, his three children filed a complaint against his live-in assistant Hiromi Rollin, accusing her of harassment and threatening behavior. The siblings went on to wage a public battle in the media and the courts, arguing over his health, which worsened after a stroke in 2019. — AFP

Sports

Shoriful double leaves Pakistan 81-3 in rain-hit first Bangladesh Test

Bangladesh cricket board names new chief after Hasina-ally quits

RAWALPINDI: Bangladesh left-arm paceman Shoriful Islam took two wickets in four balls to leave Pakistan struggling at 81-3 on a rain-hit opening day of the first Test in Rawalpindi on Wednesday. The 23-year-old spearhead removed the home team's skipper Shan Masood for six and then star batter Babar Azam for a two-ball duck before Pakistan launched their recovery on a greenish pitch.

Saim Ayub was unbeaten on 42 and Saud Shakeel on 28 at the break, having added a fighting 65 in their fourth-wicket stand. Bangladesh skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto took no time in sending Pakistan in to bat after winning the toss and caught Pakistan napping at 16-3.

It was Shoriful's new-ball partner Hasan Mahmud who gave the visitors the first breakthrough when Abdullah Shafique was smartly caught at gully by Zakir Hasan for two in the fourth over. Shoriful then had Masood caught behind off a sharp delivery, with Bangladesh successfully reviewing a not out decision by South African umpire Adrian Holdstock.

Masood argued the decision by television umpire Martin Gough of England with the on-field officials as Bangladesh fielders celebrated the dismissal, refusing to accept he nicked the ball. Babar nicked a leg-side delivery in Shoriful's next over and was caught by wicketkeeper Liton Das for his first home-ground duck in 14 Tests. No play was possible be-

fore lunch, with 230 minutes of action lost because some wet outfield patches left by overnight rain were deemed dangerous.

Pakistan entered the Test with four fast bowlers in an all-pace attack with no frontline spinner, while Bangladesh included three pacers and two spinners. The two-match series is part of the nine-team World Test championship, with Pakistan currently sixth in the standings and Bangladesh eighth.

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) named ex-skipper Faruque Ahmed Wednesday as president after the resignation of Nazmul Hassan, a close ally of ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina. Cricket and politics go hand-in-hand in Bangladesh, and the sport has been hit by the turmoil that has wracked the country.

Nazmul, who also served as sports minister during Hasina's 15-year autocratic rule, wrote to the BCB to resign, board chief executive officer Nizam Uddin Chowdhury told AFP. "His wish was granted," he said. More than 450 people were killed during a month of student-led protests against Hasina's rule, before she quit as prime minister on August 5 and fled the country.

Chowdhury said Faruque was elected by the board's directors and "took charge immediately". Nazmul had been BCB president since 2012, serving multiple terms, with his last tenure scheduled to



RAWALPINDI: Bangladesh's Shoriful Islam (2R) successfully appeals for the wicket of Pakistan's Shan Masood (2L) during the first day of the first Test cricket match between Pakistan and Bangladesh. — AFP

end in 2025. New president Faruque briefly captained Bangladesh in the 1994 ICC Trophy in Kenya and played seven one-day internationals. He retired

from the national team after the World Cup in 1999. He also held the position of national chief selector between 2005 and 2014. — AFP

Woakes strikes twice as Sri Lanka slump against England

MANCHESTER: Chris Woakes struck twice as Sri Lanka collapsed to 80-5 at lunch on the opening day of the first Test against England at Old Trafford on Wednesday. That actually represented something of a considerable recovery for Sri Lanka, who were 6-3, having lost three wickets for no runs in 10 balls soon after captain Dhananjaya de Silva won the toss.

It was a dream start for stand-in England skipper Ollie Pope, leading his country for the first time after Ben Stokes was ruled out with a torn hamstring. Woakes, now established as England's senior bowler after the retirement of James Anderson, had interval figures of 2-17 in seven overs.

De Silva was 28 not out at lunch, the top score in the innings so far, after Kusal Mendis had briefly stunched the flow of wickets with an attractive 24. Sri Lanka came into their first Test in England in eight years on the back of just a solitary warm-up game — a defeat by the second-string England Lions — and it was soon clear some of their batsmen



MANCHESTER: Sri Lanka's captain Dhananjaya de Silva reacts after being hit in the foot by the ball on day one of the first Test cricket match between England and Sri Lanka at Old Trafford. — AFP

could have done with more time in the middle.

Their collapse started in the sixth over when Dimuth Karunaratne top-edged a hook off fast bowler Gus Atkinson to wicketkeeper Jamie Smith. Woakes then took two wickets in the next over, with Nishan Madushka, the other opening batsman, driving loosely at an outswinger and edging to Joe Root at

wearing black armbands in Thorpe's memory for the duration of the Test.

It will be the first time the side have publicly honored Thorpe, who later became an England assistant coach, since his death sent shockwaves throughout the world of cricket. For Pope, who has followed in Thorpe's footsteps at both Surrey and England, and will be captaining his country for the first time in the absence of the injured Ben Stokes, it promises to be a particularly poignant occasion.

"We'll have our black armbands on throughout the course of the game and there'll be a tribute to him before the game," he said during a pre-match press conference on Tuesday. "It's hurt a lot of people in that changing room. He was a great man. I probably had two or three years playing with him as a batting coach and, as a person, I really admired him."

The 26-year-old Pope added: "I always remember him saying one thing to me which was, 'Never let the runs you're scoring define you as a person'. When you're young, in a bit of a rut, that was exactly what I needed to hear."

first slip as he fell for four.

Five balls later, worse followed for Sri Lanka when Angelo Mathews was plumb lbw to Woakes playing no shot to a delivery that nipped back off the pitch. The experienced Mathews reviewed but replays upheld Australian umpire Paul Reiffel's decision and Sri Lanka were 6-3, with Woakes having then taken 2-2 in four overs under increasingly gloomy skies.

Matthew Potts, recalled in place of Stokes, then saw his first over cost 11 runs as Sri Lanka briefly broke the shackles with Mendis slashing successive fours. Mendis later drilled the paceman through the covers for another boundary before he was undone by express fast bowler Mark Wood, the batsman gloving a superb 93 mph (150 km/h) delivery that reared up from a good length to second slip. Sri Lanka's plight was compounded shortly before lunch when Dinesh Chandimal, who had fought hard for his 17, was lbw to a ball from off-spinner Shoaib Bashir that hardly bounced.

Before play started there was a minute's applause in honour of Graham Thorpe, the former England international and assistant coach, with both teams, as well as the match officials, wearing black armbands in his honor. Widely regarded as the outstanding England batsman of his generation, Thorpe died aged 55 earlier this month after taking his own life when hit by a train. — AFP



Graham Thorpe

"It shows for me what a people's person he was. He was loved in the changing room. He's such a sad loss to everyone, to the country, his family and the boys as well. He's missed and we'll honor him this week." — AFP

never wanted to be myself in mountaineering."

Instead, he would take his camera out to the mountains during school holidays. But two years ago, he put his camera down to pursue mountaineering, and has since broken records. In August 2022, Sherpa scaled his first of the 14 peaks, reaching the top of the world's eighth highest Mount Manaslu (8,163 metres) at the age of 16, the first teenager to do so.

The last mountain he scaled was Kanchenjunga in June, again making a record for the youngest to climb the world's third-highest mountain. "I have learned so many things about nature, the human body, human psychology", he said. "Everything in the world I learnt from the mountain."

'Inspire newcomers'

When not in the mountains, the student runs on the treadmill every day and avoids junk food. "Physically and mentally, you should be very fit for big mountain climbing," his father Tashi Sherpa said, adding he had been helping him prepare for the challenge for years. "He will inspire newcomers," he added. Nepali guides — usually ethnic Sherpas from the valleys around Everest — are considered the backbone of the climbing industry in the Himalayas. They carry the majority of equipment and food, fix ropes and repair ladders.

Long in the shadows of their paying foreign customers — it costs more than \$45,000 to climb Everest — Nepali mountaineers are slowly being recognized in their own right. The teenager envisions a future where climbing is recognized as a demanding, athletic pursuit for Nepali climbers as well.

"My focus will be to make mountaineering a professional sport," he said. His hero is Tenzing Norgay Sherpa, the first person to climb the world's highest mountain Everest along with New Zealander Edmund Hillary. Sherpa considers his idol as big to climbing as Lionel Messi or Cristiano Ronaldo are to football. — AFP

Pope hails Thorpe ahead of Old Trafford tribute

MANCHESTER: Stand-in Test captain Ollie Pope said Graham Thorpe was a "great man" as English cricket prepared to honor the stylish run-scorer before Wednesday's start of the first Test against Sri Lanka at Old Trafford.

Thorpe, widely regarded as the outstanding England batsman of his generation, died aged 55 earlier this month after being hit by a train, with his wife Amanda confirming he had taken his own life having suffered from depression for several years.

Before the first of a three-match series gets underway, the giant screens at Old Trafford will show a series of videos recalling Thorpe's career. There will also be a minute's applause, with England

Record-breaking Nepali teen eyes 8,000-metre peak

KATHMANDU: At just 18 years old, Nepali mountaineer Nima Rinji Sherpa is on the brink of a remarkable achievement. With 13 of the world's highest peaks already behind him, he is now one summit away from becoming the youngest person to conquer all 14 mountains towering above 8,000 metres (26,247 feet).

Sherpa, who already holds multiple records from his ascents of dozens of peaks, said he is on a mission to "inspire a new generation and redefine mountaineering". His final challenge, Shishapangma in Tibet, awaits him next month — if China issues a permit.

Summitting all 14 "eight-thousanders" is considered the epitome of mountaineering aspirations. Italian climber Reinhold Messner first completed the feat in 1986, and only around 40 climbers have successfully followed in his footsteps. Many other elite climbers have died in the pursuit. All of the mountains are in the Himalayas and neighboring Karakoram range, which span Nepal, China, India and Pakistan. Reaching each summit requires entering the thin air of the "death zone", where there is not enough oxygen to sustain life for long.

"When I am in the mountains, I may die anytime," Sherpa said. "You need to realize how important your life is." The young man says the mountains have taught him to stay calm. "Mentally, I have convinced myself... when I see an avalanche, bad weather, an accident in the mountains I am not in a hurry, I don't get nervous," he added. "I have convinced myself: this is normal in the mountains. I think this has helped me a lot."



KATHMANDU: In this photograph taken on August 5, 2024 mountaineer Nima Rinji Sherpa, speaks during an interview with AFP in Kathmandu. — AFP

'Real value of life'

Hailing from the Sherpa ethnic group, renowned for its mountaineering prowess, the teenage climber is no stranger to the treacherous terrain. His uncle, Mingma Gyabu 'David' Sherpa, currently holds the record of the youngest person to climb all 14 peaks. He achieved it in 2019, at the age of 30.

His father, Tashi Sherpa, grew up in the remote Sankhuwasabha district, herding yaks before joining mountaineering as a teenager with his siblings. The entrepreneurial brothers now lead the biggest mountain expedition company in Nepal, Seven Summit Treks, and its sister company, 14 Peaks Expedition. "I come from a privileged family," the teen climber said. "But going to the mountains has taught me what hardship is, and the real value of life."

Raised in the bustling capital Kathmandu, Sherpa initially preferred to play football. He was also more interested in filming and photography than following his father's footsteps. "My whole family is from mountaineering. I have always been near mountaineering and expeditions," he said. "But I

Women's 2024 T20 WCup moved from Bangladesh to UAE

DUBAI: The 2024 Women's T20 World Cup scheduled for October has been moved out of Bangladesh and will instead take place in the United Arab Emirates, the International Cricket Council announced on Tuesday.

The decision to change the venue follows unrest in Bangladesh that led to the overthrow of prime minister Sheikh Hasina, who was forced to flee the country at the start of the month after 15 years of iron-fisted rule. More than 450 people were killed in the weeks of protests leading up to her August 5 ouster, most by police fire. Nobel Peace Prize winner Muhammad Yunus has since taken over as interim leader.

"It is a shame not to be hosting the Women's T20 World Cup in Bangladesh as we know the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) would have staged a memorable event," ICC chief executive Geoff Allardice said in a statement.

"I would like to thank the team at the BCB for exploring all avenues to try and enable the event to be hosted in Bangladesh, but travel advisories from the governments of a number of the participating teams meant that wasn't feasible.

"However, they will retain hosting rights. We look forward to taking an ICC global event to Bangladesh in the near future." The 10-team tournament will be staged October 3-20 across two venues in the UAE, Dubai and Sharjah.

Australia have won six of the eight previous editions, including each of the last three. The UAE stepped in to host the men's T20 World Cup in 2021, along with Oman, after the COVID-19 pandemic forced it to be relocated from India. — AFP

China's Sun returning to pool after ban

BEIJING: Chinese swimmer Sun Yang will return to the pool at a major domestic meet next week following the expiry of his four-year ban for doping, state media reported. Sun, China's first Olympic gold medalist in men's swimming, will represent his home Zhejiang province at the National Summer Swimming Championships which start on Sunday in Hefei.

Wang Wei, director of the Zhejiang Provincial Swimming Sports Management Center, said the 32-year-old will compete in the 400 metres freestyle, the event he won at the 2012 London Olympics, according to Xinhua news agency.

The triple Olympic champion was banned from competition for four years and three months for a dope test violation in 2018 in which he and members of his entourage smashed vials containing blood samples. The ban, reduced from eight years on appeal, expired on May 28. While suspended, Sun missed national trials for the Paris Olympics where China's swim team were under intense scrutiny over the country's doping record. The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) confirmed reports in April that 23 of the nation's swimmers tested positive for trimetazidine, a heart medication banned under the WADA code, in the lead up to the Tokyo Games.

WADA accepted the findings of a Chinese investigation that the test results were due to contamination from a hotel kitchen the team were staying at. Sun served a three-month suspension in 2014 for taking trimetazidine, which he said was to treat a heart condition. The meet in Hefei is second only to China's National Swimming Championships in terms of competitive level and prestige, said Xinhua. Though Sun is cleared for competition he may have little chance of swimming for China again.

Chinese athletes who receive doping suspensions longer than a year are banned from national teams, according to the country's anti-doping rules. China won 12 medals from the pool in Paris, including two golds. Pan Zhanle claimed the men's 100 freestyle title in a world record time, while China won the men's 4x100 medley relay gold, ending the United States' unbeaten record in the event. — Reuters

Sports

Reborn Granit Xhaka vows to keep record-breaking Leverkusen on top

We still have the hunger to be where we were last season: Xhaka

DONAUESCHINGEN: Bayer Leverkusen talisman Granit Xhaka has called on his teammates to challenge for the Bundesliga title again ahead of the new campaign after last season's surprise triumph. Eyebrows were raised when Xhaka arrived from Premier League runners-up Arsenal at the start of last term, with Leverkusen coming off a fifth-placed finish and with rookie coach Xabi Alonso preparing for his first full season as a first-team head coach.

But a club who had never previously won the Bundesliga did so undefeated — something no German side, not even Bayern Munich, had ever done — adding the German Cup and losing just one of 53 matches in all competitions.

Speaking with AFP at the club's pre-season training camp in the picturesque village of Donaueschingen, where Euro 2024 winners Spain were based, Xhaka said last season was just the beginning. "We know people are hoping to beat us, they will try and they will do everything," he said.

"But we still have the hunger to be where we were last season." After the best 18 months of his career, the 31-year-old said criticism during his time at Arsenal spurred him on. Xhaka joined Arsenal from Borussia Moenchengladbach in 2016.

He played 297 times for the Gunners but often came under fire from fans, sometimes for being too emotional on the pitch. Switzerland captain since 2018, Xhaka was made Arsenal skipper a year later, but had the armband stripped from him after a month for an outburst against fans who cheered when he was subbed off.

While much of the criticism can be chalked up to frustrations from a success-starved fanbase, he said it has been instrumental in his rebirth at Leverkusen. "I'm a fan of criticism, because criticism makes you stronger. This is what I believe," he told AFP.

"I don't drop my head, but I look at what they are criticizing, and maybe I need to do something more, or change some things. "I believe every player needs to go through criticism... You need to be strong in your head, and to believe and trust yourself that you can still do it.

"Ten years ago, I was a totally different type of player, much more emotional. Today, I'm less emotional. I believe that experience makes you (who you are)." When Leverkusen played a pre-season friendly in north London in August, Xhaka returned as something the club treasures deeply: An 'invincible'. Like Arsenal in their unbeaten Premier League



DONAUESCHINGEN: Bayer Leverkusen's Swiss midfielder Granit Xhaka speaks during an interview with AFP. — AFP

campaign in 2003-04, Leverkusen finished the Bundesliga with 90 points last season, playing four fewer matches. Xhaka said he "never thought about" emulating Arsenal's invincibles despite "seven beautiful years" at the club, adding: "I had the feeling or the belief that this only happens once in football.

"It was 2004 with Arsenal and then 20 years later, I'm part of it in Germany. (It) makes you feel special, makes you proud — and of course very happy."

'See the music'

Xhaka may not be Leverkusen's captain but he has quickly become their on-field leader and Alonso's voice on the field. Leverkusen are one of five German teams in this season's Champions League. Xhaka said he would guide the club's younger players, many of whom are yet to play in the competition.

"Maybe they're nervous. You can go to them, talk to them and explain it to them, but this feeling, you need to feel it. "You need to see the music, the atmosphere (and) what it is in these games." Xhaka will be 35 years old when his Leverkusen contract ends in four years.

With one eye on the future, Xhaka started his FA coaching badges while at Arsenal and is also an assistant coach at fifth-tier Union Nettetal. "The traineeship) helped me a lot, because a coach maybe thinks more far ahead than a player (does)."

At Leverkusen, Xhaka said "the most important thing is that the coach trusts me, believes in me and (the influence) I can have on the team during the game. "We lose, we win together. And if I can try and help the coach on the pitch, I will do it for sure." — AFP

Man City's Foden wins PFA Player of the Year award

LONDON: Manchester City forward Phil Foden won the Professional Footballers' Association Player of the Year award on Tuesday. Foden played a key role in City winning an unprecedented fourth consecutive Premier League title last term. The 24-year-old scored 19 times and delivered eight assists for Pep Guardiola's team as they pipped Arsenal to the title on the last day of the season. "To win this award is something very special and it is one that I am very proud of and grateful for. To be recognized this way by your fellow professionals means everything and I would like to thank everyone who voted for me," Foden said.

"I also want to pay special thanks to Pep, the City coaches and all my teammates as they help me to try and get better every single day." Foden has already set his sights on a fifth successive Premier League crown after City started their title defence with a 2-0 win at Chelsea on Sunday. "Last season was another very special one for everyone at the Club but now all our focus is concentrated on trying to achieve more success this term," he said. Foden also won the 2023-24 Premier League player of the season award and was named the Football Writers' Association footballer of the year.

City director of Football Txiki Begiristain added: "Everyone here is so thrilled to see Phil win this award. To have your fellow professionals recognize you in such a way is very special. "Phil embodies everything we stand for at Manchester City. He is a supremely talented player but is someone who always



MANCHESTER: Manchester City's English midfielder Phil Foden poses with Men's PFA Player of the Year award. — AFP

strives to seek to improve. "He is a very humble guy who is hugely popular throughout the Club. We are all very proud of him." Foden's City team-mates Erling Haaland, who won the award last year, and Rodri, as well as Chelsea's Cole Palmer, Arsenal's Martin Odegaard and Aston Villa's Ollie Watkins were also on the Player of the Year shortlist. Chelsea forward Palmer was named the men's PFA young player of the year. Foden and Palmer's awards made it the first time that both the senior and young player trophies went to English players since 2009-10, when Wayne Rooney and James Milner took home the silverware.

England international Palmer was second only to Haaland in the Premier League scoring charts with 22 goals in a breakthrough campaign after leaving Guardiola's team to move to Stamford Bridge. City enjoyed a clean-sweep of the main awards at the Manchester ceremony as Khadija Shaw was voted the women's Player of the Year. — AFP

Roglic powers into Vuelta lead with stage four win

MADRID: Primoz Roglic proved he has fully recovered from his Tour de France-ending crash with stage four victory in the Vuelta a Espana on Tuesday. The three-time Vuelta winner triumphed atop the daunting closing climb to Pico Villuerca to stake his claim for a record-equaling fourth success in one of cycling's three Grand Tours. The Slovenia veteran, ably supported by his Red Bull-Hansgrohe teammates, reeled in a two-man breakaway up the gruelling 14.6km long ascent with a gradient of 16 percent over the final 5km. Roglic was rewarded for his endeavor by taking over the race leader's red jersey.

He leads the UAE team's Joao Almeida by eight seconds in the general classification. In a desperate scramble for the line Lennert Van Eetvelt had his arm raised in victory only for Roglic to pip him to the post, with Almeida in third. "I always say, you never know when is the last (victory) so I just enjoy it," said the day's winner who was forced out of last month's Tour de France before the 13th stage. "It's life, eh. It doesn't



NAVEZUELAS: New overall ranking leader Team Borra's Primoz Roglic celebrates on the podium wearing the red jersey, after winning the stage 4 of La Vuelta a Espana cycling tour. — AFP

go all the way up, we have challenges. I'm just happy today with how the team worked and that I could finish it off at the end," he added.

Plenty of title contenders were left scattered down the mountainside in their wake as Roglic made a clear statement of intent about his chances of adding to his Vuelta wins in 2019, 2020 and 2021 to equal Roberto Heras as the race's most successful rider. The race was entering Spain for the first time after three days in Portugal with this 170.5km ride from Plasencia to Pico Villuerca in the Extremadura region. — AFP

Players allege double standards after Sinner escapes doping ban

NEW YORK: Denis Shapovalov was among players who called out what they said were double standards in the sport after world number one Jannik Sinner was cleared of wrongdoing despite failing two drug tests this year.

The International Tennis Integrity Agency (ITIA) said on Tuesday an independent tribunal had cleared Sinner to continue competing, and former top 10 player Shapovalov was among those quick to suggest the Italian received preferential treatment. "Can't imagine what every other player that got banned for contaminated substances is feeling right now," the Canadian wrote on social media.

"Different rules for different players." Sinner's representatives told Reuters they would not respond to opinions on social media. "Jannik has been found innocent following a rigorous process and a detailed review by an independent panel," his team added.

"The reasons are explained in the independent panel's publicly available decision. It is not for us to answer comments made on social media." The Italian's coach, Darren Cahill, told ESPN they wanted to move on from the episode. "We're not looking for any sorrow or anything because we are quite thankful there is no ban attached," he said. "He would never, ever intentionally do anything and he's in a situation which is incredibly unfortunate."

Sinner tested positive for clostebol at Indian Wells in March with low quantities of the banned substance found in his system again after another test days later but the 23-year-old successfully challenged automatic provisional suspensions.

He is now free to compete at the Aug. 26-Sept. 8 US Open, the final Grand Slam of the year. Sinner, who lost in the Indian Wells semi-finals, was stripped of 400 ranking points and \$325,000 in prize money.

The Australian Open champion, who maintains his innocence, said the substance entered his system after receiving massages from his physiotherapist, who had used a spray containing clostebol for his own finger wound.

'Makes no sense'

The ITIA, an independent body established in 2021 by the governing bodies of the sport, said it had consulted experts who concluded Sinner's explanation was credible and therefore it did not oppose his appeals to lift the provisional suspensions.

Former doubles British number one Tara Moore, who was sidelined for 19 months for failing a drug test before being cleared last year, took to social media to point out the contrast between how her case and Sinner's had been handled.

"I guess only the top players' images matter," Moore wrote. "I guess only the independent tribunal's opinion on the top players is taken as sound and right. Yet, they question them in my case. Just makes no sense." — Reuters

Chelsea sign Joao Felix as Gallagher leaves for Atletico

LONDON: Chelsea on Wednesday confirmed the signing of Portugal forward Joao Felix on a permanent transfer from Atletico Madrid, shortly after England midfielder Conor Gallagher completed a move in the opposite direction. Joao Felix, aged 24, has signed a seven-year contract at Stamford Bridge as he returns to the club where he made 20 appearances on loan in the 2022/23 season. No transfer fee was revealed for the former Benfica star, who made two appearances for Portugal at Euro 2024, but UK press reports earlier stated Chelsea had agreed to pay £40 million (\$51 million) to Atletico.

"I loved my time here before and I told my friends and family that I'd love to return to the Premier League one day," the player told Chelsea's official website. "To do that with Chelsea is a great feeling and I'm excited to be back." Joao Felix joined Atletico in 2019 and made 131 appearances for Diego Simeone's side, although he spent last season on loan at Barcelona. Earlier, Gallagher completed his permanent transfer after an intended move to the Spanish side collapsed last week when Chelsea were unable to agree a deal for Atletico striker Samu Omorodion.

Gallagher had trained alone since returning to Chelsea last week after being pictured in Spain ahead of his proposed £33 million transfer. Last season Gallagher played 50 games for Chelsea, regularly wearing the captain's armband in the absence of Reece James.

The 24-year-old won the 2019 Europa League with Chelsea and leaves the London side after 95 appearances and 10 goals. Meanwhile, Sterling, Chilwell not training with Chelsea first team, Maresca says Aug 21 (Reuters) - England internationals Raheem Sterling and Ben Chilwell are training apart from Chelsea's first team, manager Enzo Maresca said on Wednesday as British media reports linked them with moves away from the Premier League club.

Sterling and Chilwell, who missed Sunday's 2-0 Premier League loss to champions Manchester City, may struggle to get playing time if they choose to remain at Chelsea, Maresca said. "In this moment, they are training apart." Maresca told reporters ahead of Thursday's Europa Conference League playoff tie against Swiss side Servette. "We have a big squad, for me it's impossible to give everyone minutes. So if they're looking for minutes, probably it is better to leave."

Maresca said Sterling, who has played 59 league games for Chelsea since joining in 2022, was not the kind of winger he wanted. "I'm not saying he's not a good player, but I prefer different kinds of wingers," the Italian said. "I spoke with Raheem before Manchester City, I said that he is going to struggle to get minutes with us. With (Chilwell), I said he is a lovely guy but with his position, he's going to struggle with us. It's not brutal, it's honest."

"It's not a comfortable situation... I think it is good to know that if you want to stay, you will struggle to get minutes... but in a few days or weeks it can be a better situation because you move and you join a club where you will get more minutes," he added. — AFP

Classifieds

Clinics & Hospitals

Clinics

Kaizen center	25716707
Rawda	22517733
Adaliya	22517144
Khaldiya	24848075
Kaifan	24849807
Shamiya	24848913
Shuwaikh	24814507
Abdullah Salem	22549134
Nuzha	22526804
Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764
Qadsiya	22515088
Dasmah	22532265
Bneid Al-Gar	22531908
Shaab	22518752

Qibla	22459381
Ayoun Al-Qibla	22451082
Mirqab	22456536
Sharq	22465401
Salmiya	25746401

Hospitals

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

Change of Name

I, Saravanan Sowrirajan (Indian Passport No. T8767155), father of Kirthi Sanjit, holder of Indian Passport No. Y6406807 issued at Embassy of India, Kuwait. We are permanent resident of Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India and presently residing in Kuwait. I hereby declare that my son's given name as Kirthi Sanjit and surname as Saravanan. **(6156#, 22/08/2024)**

all purposes. I will henceforth be known in the name Ismail Amar and I also undertake to carry out this name change in all my documents. **(6155#, 22/08/2024)**

I, Kutbuddin Ahmed Ali Tapiya has changed my son's name Abizer, holder of Passport No. W0777519 to hereby change his name to Abizer (as given name) Tapiya (as surname) for all purposes. He will henceforth be known in the name Abizer Tapiya and I also undertake to carry out this name change in all my documents. **(5913#, 22/08/2024)**

I, Ismail, holder of Indian Passport No. T2410920, do hereby change my name to Ismail (as given name) Amar (as surname) for

Automated enquiry about the Civil ID card is 1889988

Guardians erupt for six runs in 12th to win marathon over host Yankees

Jarren Duran's four hits power Red Sox to win over Astros



NEW YORK: Trent Grisham #12 of the New York Yankees is tagged out at home trying to score on Austin Wells #28 double in the eighth inning against the Cleveland Guardians at Yankee Stadium. — AFP

NEW YORK: Pinch hitter Lane Thomas hit a tiebreaking double to start a six-run 12th inning for the Cleveland Guardians, who earned a marathon 9-5 victory over the host New York Yankees on Tuesday night. Thomas helped the Guardians avoid a fourth straight loss and win for the sixth time in 16 games on a night when they drew 14 walks, stranded 20 and went 7-for-24 with runners in scoring position.

Jose Ramirez padded the lead with an RBI single, David Fry blew it open with a bases-clearing triple, and Jhonkensy Noel capped the big inning with an RBI infield single. Tim Herrin (5-0) stranded two in the 11th before Cleveland's big frame. Aaron Judge and Juan Soto hit back-to-back first-inning homers for the Yankees. Judge added a two-run double off Scott Barlow in the bottom of the 12th before Alex Verdugo made the final out of the 4-hour, 5-minute marathon. Tim Mayza (0-2) took the loss.

Red Sox 6, Astros 5

Jarren Duran capped a four-hit effort with a two-out, tiebreaking solo home run in the eighth inning, carrying visiting Boston over Houston. Duran hit his 17th homer, scored three runs, drove in two runs and drew a walk. Red Sox starter Nick Pivetta gave up five runs on six hits and three walks over five innings. Four relievers shut out the Astros over the final four frames, capped by closer Kenley Jansen, who recorded his 24th save with a perfect ninth. The Astros matched a three-spot by Boston in the top of the first with three runs in the bottom of that frame, capped with a two-run homer from Jon Singleton. Yainer Diaz homered for a second consecutive game.

Braves 3, Phillies 1

Marcell Ozuna led off the sixth inning with a tiebreaking home run, lifting Atlanta over visiting Philadelphia in the opener of

a three-game series. Atlanta has won five of seven against Philadelphia this year. Atlanta starter Reynaldo Lopez returned from spending three weeks on the injured list and threw five innings. The right-hander, who had been sidelined due to a forearm injury, allowed one run on five hits and one walk with a season-high 10 strikeouts. Wheeler (12-6) pitched six innings and allowed two runs on six hits with eight strikeouts and no walks. He was shooting for his 100th career win.

Rockies 3, Nationals 1

Austin Gomber tossed seven strong innings and visiting Colorado opened a three-game series against Washington. Brenton Doyle, Ryan McMahon and Ezequiel Tovar each had two hits for Colorado, which has won three of its last four games. Gomber (4-8) allowed one run on three hits with two walks and five strikeouts. CJ Abrams homered for Washington, which was outlived 10-5 and lost for the fifth time in its last six games.

Diamondbacks 3, Marlins 1

Corbin Carroll homered, scored twice and made a sliding catch in right field that likely saved two runs as Arizona defeated host Miami. Lourdes Gurriel Jr. also went deep for the Diamondbacks, who will try for a three-game sweep on Wednesday. Arizona starter Eduardo Rodriguez (2-0) allowed six hits and one run in 5 1/3 innings. Marlins starter Edward Cabrera (2-5) gave up four hits, three walks and three runs in six innings. He fanned three.

Blue Jays 10, Reds 3

George Springer hit two of Toronto's five home runs as the home team routed Cincinnati. Leo Jimenez, Alejandro Kirk and Spencer Horwitz also went deep to help the Blue Jays gain a split of the first two games of the three-game series. Toronto right-hander

Jose Berrios (12-9) pitched seven innings and allowed two runs, six hits and two walks while striking out seven. Reds righty Carson Spiers (4-5) was tagged for all 10 runs (nine earned), 13 hits and two walks in 4 1/3 innings. Cincinnati catcher Luke Maile took the mound in the seventh and eighth innings and retired all six batters he faced.

Orioles 9, Mets 5

Dean Kremer tossed six solid innings and Baltimore held on for the win over host New York in the middle game of a three-game interleague series. Former Mets catcher James McCann went 1-for-3 with a homer and three RBIs for the Orioles. Anthony Santander hit a two-run homer in the first and Eloy Jimenez added an RBI double in the fifth as Baltimore improved to 9-9 this month. Kremer (6-9) allowed one run on two hits and three walks while striking out seven. Cionel Perez threw a perfect seventh before the Mets scored four times in the eighth against Burch Smith, who gave up an RBI double to Brandon Nimmo and a three-run homer to J.D. Martinez.

Cubs 3, Tigers 1

Cody Bellinger ripped a two-run double and Javier Assad allowed one run over 5 2/3 innings, fueling host Chicago to a win over Detroit. Dansby Swanson added a solo homer to help the Cubs record their third win in four games and spoil the return of Javier Baez to Wrigley Field. Baez, who went 0-for-4 with four strikeouts, spent parts of his first eight major league seasons with Chicago. Spencer Torkelson totaled four hits and Dillon Dingler had an RBI single in the second inning for the Tigers, who lost for just the second time in their last eight games.

Pirates 4, Rangers 0

Mitch Keller threw seven-plus shutout innings to help Pittsburgh to a win against

Texas in the second game of their three-game series in Arlington, Texas. Keller (11-7) allowed three hits, struck out nine and didn't walk a batter. Oneil Cruz had two hits and an RBI and Bryan De La Cruz had two RBIs for the Pirates, who had lost two in a row. Texas starter Cody Bradford (4-1) allowed three runs and five hits in seven innings. The left-hander matched his career high with eight strikeouts and didn't walk a batter.

Angels 9, Royals 5

Zach Neto's tiebreaking homer in the sixth inning led Los Angeles to a victory in Kansas City, ending the Royals' five-game winning streak. Neto led off the sixth with his team-leading 19th homer, snapping a 2-2 tie. Logan O'Hoppe and Anthony Rendon added run-scoring singles in the inning for a 5-2 lead. The Angels collected eight hits and four walks against four Royals relievers. Highlighted by Bobby Witt Jr.'s RBI double and Vinnie Pasquantino's two-run single, Kansas City chased Angels starter Tyler Anderson with four straight hits opening the seventh inning. Witt finished with three hits and Pasquantino had three RBIs.

Brewers 3, Cardinals 2

Frankie Montas blanked St. Louis on one hit in seven innings as visiting Milwaukee won to extend its winning streak to six games. Montas (6-8) struck out three batters and walked one as the Brewers improved to 7-1 against the Cardinals this season. Brewers closer Devin Williams escaped a bases-loaded jam in the ninth inning to earn his fifth save, while William Contreras went 3-for-4 with an RBI and Sal Frelick drove in one run and scored another. Matt Carpenter hit a two-run homer for the Cardinals, who lost for the seventh time in eight games. St. Louis starting pitcher Erick Fedde (8-7) allowed two runs on six hits in 5 2/3 innings.

Rays 1, A's 0

Shane Baz scattered three hits over 7 2/3 shutout innings and Jose Siri homered to lead Tampa Bay over host Oakland. It was the first win since July 3, 2022, for Baz (1-2), who missed the entire 2023 season after undergoing Tommy John surgery in September 2022. He walked three and struck out four in a game that lasted just 1 hour, 54 minutes. Edwin Uceta retired all four batters he faced in relief of Baz to pick up the first save of his career. Joey Estes (5-6) was the hard-luck loser, allowing just one run on three hits over 7 2/3 innings.

Dodgers 6, Mariners 3

Pinch hitter Jason Heyward hit a tiebreaking three-run homer with two outs in the eighth inning as Los Angeles rallied to beat visiting Seattle. Gavin Lux and Max Muncy also went deep for the National League West-leading Dodgers, who won their third consecutive game. Joe Kelly (1-0) got the victory and Daniel Hudson worked the ninth for his 10th save. Starter Walker Buehler threw 82 pitches, giving up three runs on seven hits with three walks and one strikeout. Jorge Polanco drove in all three runs for the Mariners, who dropped to 1-7 on their nine-game trip that concludes Wednesday. Right-hander Bryce Miller allowed two runs on five hits, with two walks and five strikeouts, on 92 pitches.

Giants 4, White Sox 1

Robbie Ray delivered a quality start. Heliot Ramos drove in two runs and San Francisco beat visiting Chicago for the second day in a row. Ray (3-2) yielded one run and three hits over a season-high 6 2/3 innings, striking out nine without issuing a walk. Ryan Walker got his second save of the year by striking out the side in the ninth. White Sox starter Davis Martin (0-2) was pulled one out into the fifth, charged with three runs (two earned) on four hits. — Reuters

Duplantis, Tebogo headline Lausanne Diamond League

LAUSANNE: Armand Duplantis and Letsile Tebogo headline a raft of Olympic champions who will descend on Lausanne for the first Diamond League meeting since the end of the Paris Games. Some 18 current Olympic or world champions will be present in the Swiss city for Thursday's meet, coming just 12 days after the last of the track and field action at the Stade de France.

Duplantis defended his gold in France's national stadium and improved his own world record to 6.25 metres. In Lausanne, the Swede will take part in a City Event held on an

esplanade bordering Lac Leman — better known in English as Lake Geneva — on Wednesday, 24 hours before the main fare at the Stade Olympique de la Pontaise. Duplantis will be up against American Sam Kendrick, the silver medallist in Paris, and also Renaud Lavillenie, the 2012 Olympic champion and former world record holder who failed to qualify for what would have been his home Games.

"It's the only pole vault event next to a lake," Duplantis said. "I love to have it scenic, fun, more like a show. It suits us well. I jumped 6.10m in Lausanne last time and have felt well rested since Paris. "I think there are still some good jumps in my legs," said the US-born Swede, who left Paris the day after the event for a "much-needed vacation with my girlfriend to chill as much as I could".

Tebogo v Kerley

Botswana's Tebogo will race the 200m on Thursday, the event he won in Paris when he outstripped a Covid-hit Noah Lyles. The American, a three-time world cham-

pion in the distance and the 100m winner in the French capital, has called time on his season. Tebogo will be up against Fred Kerley, the triple world champion (100m and relay) and 100m bronze medallist in Paris, and his US teammate Erriyon Knighton.

The 21-year-old Botswanan raced to victory in an African record of 19.46sec, a time that took him to fifth on the all-time list. He also became the first African to win the Olympic 200m metres. The men's 800m race in this 11th stage of the Diamond League circuit also promises to be a thriller.

Four men in the Olympic final dipped under the 1min 42sec mark for the first time ever. And four of the top five finishers from the Games will run in Lausanne: Olympic champion Emmanuel Wanyonyi of Kenya, the third fastest man in history, Olympic silver medallist and world champion Marco Arop of Canada, and the fourth and fifth-placed finishers in Paris, American Bryce Hoppel and Spain's Mohamed Attaoui. — AFP



SAINT-DENIS: (FILES) Gold medallist Botswana's Letsile Tebogo celebrates with the Gold medal after the victory ceremony for the men's 200m athletics event during the Paris 2024 Olympic Games. — AFP