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# Gaza ceasefire hopes fade

Zionist bombardment, battles rock Gaza • 3 killed in West Bank strike

NEWS IN BRIEF



**Huge diamond found in Botswana**

**GABORONE:** A massive 2,492-carat diamond — the second largest in the world — has been discovered in Botswana, the Canadian mining company that found the stone announced Thursday. In terms of carats, the stone is second only to the 3,016-carat Cullinan Diamond discovered in South Africa in 1905. — AFP



**Romania detains Tate brothers**

**BUCHAREST:** Romanian prosecutors on Wednesday detained controversial influencer Andrew Tate after raiding his home in a new investigation involving minors. One of the world's best-known influencers known for misogynist and sometimes violent maxims, Tate, 37, and his brother Tristan, 36, are being held "for 24 hours" for questioning by the office for organized crime. — AFP

**Smugglers disguise meth as melons**

**LOS ANGELES:** Smugglers disguised \$5 million worth of methamphetamine as watermelons and tried to truck them across the border from Mexico, US border agents said. More than 2,000 kg of the addictive drug were wrapped in paper packages painted to look like the juicy fruit and hidden amongst other cargo. Border agents pulled over the produce-laden tractor-trailer at Otay Mesa in California on Friday and discovered more than 1,200 watermelons were actually bundles of the synthetic drug wrapped in colored paper. — AFP



**GAZA:** Hopes were dwindling Thursday for a ceasefire in the Gaza Strip, where fighting raged despite US pressure on the Zionist entity and Palestinian group Hamas to reach an agreement. After more than 10 months of war, officials from the United States and mediators Egypt and Qatar had been set to meet in Cairo for a new round of negotiations this week, but confirmation was still pending.

The war has devastated Gaza, displaced nearly all its population at least once and triggered a humanitarian crisis in the besieged Palestinian territory. Diplomatic efforts have intensified to try to avert a wider war following the high-profile killings of two Iranian-backed fighters that sparked threats of reprisals from Tehran and its allies, which blamed the Zionist entity.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken on Wednesday headed home from his latest tour of the Middle East, aimed at finalizing a ceasefire, without a breakthrough. In a phone call later, President Joe Biden pushed Zionist Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to accept a deal, stressing "the urgency of bringing the ceasefire and hostage release deal to closure", the White House said.

It added that Biden also reassured Netanyahu of the efforts of the United States — the Zionist entity's main ally and weapons supplier — to support it

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**TULKAREM:** An elderly man stands with a Palestinian flag before Zionist army armoured vehicles at the entrance of the Tulkarem camp for Palestinian refugees in the occupied West Bank during a raid on Aug 22, 2024. - AFP

## Minister vows legal action over Jabriya building collapse

**KUWAIT:** Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Sharida Al-Maousherji vowed that those responsible for the collapse of a building in Jabriya would be held accountable. "We are waiting for the final report about the incident," he told reporters on Wednesday evening. He expressed appreciation over efforts made by different ministries and competent bodies, which dealt seriously with the incident despite the difficult conditions and hot weather. Maousherji added that a team worked on removing the rubble to

make sure that there were no victims or injuries.

Meanwhile, the ministry of interior said its team, along with Kuwait Fire Force (KFF), dealt with the collapse. The incident took place due to negligence from the contractor responsible for the demolition, the ministry's security media and public relations department said in a statement. It added that the contractor fled the site after the incident. Concerned bodies are searching for those responsible for the collapse to refer them to competent bodies and take legal actions against them, it added.

Acting Chief of KFF Maj Gen Khaled Abdullah told KUNA in a statement that a force rushed to the site of the collapse as soon as they received a report about it. The force finished a 3-hour search operation and there were no injuries, he added. Earlier in the day, the KFF had announced that a six-storey building collapsed in Jabriya while being demolished. — KUNA



**KUWAIT:** Rescuers work at a collapsed building in Jabriya on Aug 21, 2024. — KUNA

## Vote for 'joy': Walz, Oprah laud Harris

**CHICAGO:** Tim Walz introduced himself to millions of Americans on a star-studded night at the Democratic National Convention Wednesday, as he accepted the nomination to be Kamala Harris' White House running mate. In a whirlwind quarter-hour address, Walz raced through the story of his middle-class upbringing in small town Nebraska, where he worked on the family farm, and described his experience

teaching students who inspired him to go into politics.

"They saw in me what I had hoped to instill in them: A commitment to the common good, an understanding that we're all in this together, and the belief that a single person can make a real difference for their neighbors," he said as the crowd chanted "Coach Walz!" The gloves came off as the 60-year-old Minnesota governor turned his fire on Republican nominee Donald Trump, accusing him of spending "all day insulting people and blaming others".

But Walz devoted much of his speech at the United Center in Chicago to making the case for Harris. "From her day as a prosecutor, as a district

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**CHICAGO:** Minnesota Governor and Democratic vice presidential candidate Tim Walz stands onstage with his family at the Democratic National Convention on Aug 21, 2024. — AFP

## Modi urges peace ahead of historic visit to Ukraine

**WARSAW:** Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday said no conflict could be resolved on a battlefield as he spoke in Poland on the eve of his historic trip to war-torn Ukraine. Modi is expected to use his landmark visit, the first from a premier of India to Kyiv, to campaign for a "peaceful" solution to the grinding conflict that started with Russia's attack on Ukraine.

The Indian government has avoided explicit condemnations of Russia's invasion, instead urging both sides to settle their differences through dialogue. "It is India's strong belief that no problem can be resolved on a battlefield," Modi said in Poland, a staunch ally of neighboring Ukraine and a key transit point for leaders boarding trains to Kyiv. Modi added his country supported "dialogue and diplomacy for restoration of peace and stability as soon as possible" and denounced "the loss of innocent lives in any conflict".

Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk welcomed Modi and his delegation at the seat of government, with flags of both countries hoisted outside the building and their anthems played by the military band. "History has taught our nations the importance

Continued on Page 6



**WARSAW:** Polish President Andrzej Duda speaks with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi at Belweder Palace on Aug 22, 2024. — AFP



# Cancer care packages offer gesture of comfort, support

## Second Chance charity assists isolated cancer patients

By Faten Omar

**KUWAIT:** Having cancer is a difficult experience, and the journey can be even more challenging when there are no families or friends around for support. The absence of loved ones can leave patients feeling isolated and vulnerable, making the emotional and psychological burdens of the illness even heavier. Lynn Whyte, the founder of the Second Chance charity, recognized the emotional toll of isolation during such a challenging time, so she launched a campaign "Cancer Care Packages" to provide gifts to these patients as a gesture of comfort and support.

"The initiative aims to bring a sense of care to those who have no one. Being a patient myself at Kuwait Cancer Centre, I have seen so many people alone without family support. The struggle is real. I

thought that to brighten their day and let them know we are thinking of them, we could offer them a pretty bag full of items they both need, which would make them smile," Whyte told Kuwait Times.

Whyte urged people to donate items such as socks, lightweight gloves (cotton preferably), makeup bags, face moisturizer, cooling eye mask, lip balm, multi-vitamin powder drinks, sleep mask, head scarf, turban, small packet of dates, small jar of good quality honey, sanitary wear, puzzle books, coloring books, coloring pencils, herbal teas (especially ginger), spa or massage vouchers, wheat bag or hot water bottle, and any gift in addition to the care package.

She explained that the items have been carefully selected as they are some of the priority needs of the chemo patients, adding "Each side effect of the chemo gives a

different indication — for example, cold feet, hence the need for socks. A lot of expat women are extremely uncomfortable due to a multitude of nasty side effects but unable to afford what they consider small luxuries. We hope to provide them with ginger tea to prevent sickness, turbans for hair loss, puzzle books to keep them entertained during chemo sessions, and so on."

Whyte's efforts through the Second Chance charity exemplify the profound impact that compassion and community can have on those facing immense challenges, particularly when they have no one to lean on. Through her campaign, Whyte aims to provide emotional support to isolated cancer patients and serves as a powerful reminder that even small acts of kindness can bring comfort, hope, and a sense of belonging to those who need it most.



Lynn Whyte at Kuwait Cancer Centre, receiving chemo treatment.



Group photo of NBK interns at Kuwait Times.



Students visit the editorial department.



Kuwait News content creator Ahmad Hadi interviewing the students.

## NBK student interns visit Kuwait Times and Kuwait News

By Passant Hisham

**KUWAIT:** A group of trainees from the 'NBK Aspire' summer program concluded their internship with a visit to Kuwait Times and Kuwait News offices on Thursday. The day was marked by a celebratory ceremony where the students received certificates of completion, recognizing their hard work and dedication throughout the program. Starting their tour with the editorial department, the trainees learned about Kuwait Times' commitment to credible journalism through its reliance on trusted sources and respected local and international news agencies, including KUNA, AFP, and Reuters.

There, they were given a copy of Kuwait Times' inaugural issue from 1961. As

they flipped through the four pages of this vintage paper, the students had the opportunity to see the evolution of print media, tracing its journey from its humble beginnings to its current, modern form. In the archives room, they explored Kuwait's rich history displayed on the shelves and stumbled upon note-worthy news stories from the days they were born.

At the warehouse, they enjoyed playing arcade games, darts, and explored Kuwait Times' vintage collectibles. Their visit also included a stop at the printing press, where they witnessed the traditional process of newspaper production, from inking the plates to folding and distributing the final product. To remember their visit, students received an instantly printed special edition, a keepsake to take home.



NBK employees play arcade games at Kuwait Times warehouse.

At the end of the day, in the studio, some interns were filmed sharing their experiences with the NBK Aspire program and their time at Kuwait Times. They shared how much they enjoyed and valued both experiences, reflecting on their fulfilling summer journey.



Students explore the archives room.



NBK intern students receive certificates of completion for their internship program at NBK.



Students receive instantly printed special edition of their visit to Kuwait Times.

## Behind closed doors: Confronting the unseen crisis of mental health

By Mohamed AlDakheel

**KUWAIT:** As the sun sets over the Arabian Gulf, casting long shadows across Kuwait, another kind of darkness lingers — a stigma so pervasive that it stifles the voices of those crying out for help. Here, mental health remains cloaked in secrecy, where admitting one's struggles can seem like a bigger burden than bearing them silently. This silent crisis affects countless Kuwaitis, yet the cultural norms of pride and privacy prevent open discussions about mental well-being. The consequence is a society where mental health issues are either hidden or ignored, leaving those affected to navigate their pain without the support or understanding that could lead to healing.

In the wake of a global pandemic, awareness of mental health in Kuwait has seen a promising rise, especially among the younger generation, who are spearheading a shift in attitudes towards mental health care, contrasting significantly with the hesitancy often exhibited by their parents and grandparents. "Mental health in Kuwait is currently in a better position, especially after COVID-19,"

Dr Ibrahim Al-Obaid, an esteemed local psychiatrist noted.

"People have started realizing the importance of maintaining a healthy mind, reflecting a global awakening to the importance of psychological well-being. However, substantial challenges remain. Parents typically show reluctance about psychiatric visits, but their children are increasingly advocating for professional intervention. Usually parents are more reluctant about their kids visiting psychiatrists, but their kids now are pushing them to do so," Dr Ibrahim added.

While traditional remedies sometimes suffice, there are instances where psychiatric intervention is necessary, potentially involving verbal counseling or medication. A significant hurdle in seeking mental health services is the fear associated with medical records. "Each patient will have a file that includes details on their condition — a file which will be added to the hospital's system and must be shown to the Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of Interior if needed," Dr Ibrahim explained. This requirement often deters individuals from seeking help, fearing potential repercussions on their employment prospects or social lives.



"From the outset, Kuwaiti culture has traditionally seen mental health struggles and feelings of sadness as signs of weakness," Dr Ibrahim stated. This black-and-white perception ignores the spectrum of mental health, where many suffer in silence in the vast gray area between wellness and severe psychological disorders. Addressing the shortage of mental health professionals is another critical issue. With only 12 clinics for a population of around 4

million, many psychiatrists' schedules are booked months or even over a year in advance. This stark ratio highlights the dire need for more accessible mental health services across the country.

Dr Ibrahim and his colleagues have pioneered creative approaches to enhance mental health awareness. They have utilized "telepsychology," enabling individuals in isolation during the pandemic to engage in therapeutic conversations via phone, feeling less like

a formal session and more like a casual chat. Additionally, Dr Ibrahim has set up booths at popular venues like The Avenues mall, where he and his team listen to passersby's concerns, offering advice without explicitly revealing the psychiatric nature of the interaction.

Dr Ibrahim emphasizes the need for open discussions about mental health: "We simply need to start a conversation about it — it's okay to not be okay." This simple, yet powerful message underscores the evolving dialogue on mental health in Kuwait — a dialogue that, despite progress, still faces significant cultural and systemic barriers. As Kuwait continues to navigate these challenges, the journey towards a more understanding and supportive society remains ongoing.

The resilience and innovative approaches of younger generation and medical professionals like Dr Ibrahim suggest a hopeful trajectory towards destigmatizing mental health and fostering a culture that truly supports all aspects of well-being. It is through collective effort and continued advocacy that we can hope to break the chains of stigma, paving the way for a healthier, more inclusive future. Dr Ibrahim and his peers deserve immense praise for their tireless contributions to this cause, serving as beacons of hope and change in a landscape often resistant to it. Together, we can transform the silent crisis into a loud revolution of healing and acceptance.

Local

# Shaddadiya project to help drive wheel of industrial development

## Ahmadi governor visits to Shaddadiya Industrial Area project site

KUWAIT: Ahmadi governor Sheikh Humoud Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah stressed on Thursday the need to overcome all obstacles facing the Shaddadiya Industrial City project and work on finding effective solutions to speed up the pace of work and complete the project. This came in a statement by the Ahmadi governor during his visit to the Shaddadiya Industrial Area project site to follow up on the progress of work in the presence of a number of officials from the Ministry of Public Works, the Ministry of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy, the Public Authority for Industry, and the Public Authority for Roads and Land Transport.

Sheikh Humoud Al-Sabah said that Shaddadiya Industrial City is a vital project within the New Kuwait 2035 vision, which enjoys great interest and direct follow-up from the political leadership, noting that the high directives were clear and precise on many occasions in setting priorities, unifying efforts, and harnessing energies according to a specific work plan and timetable for all development projects in the country. He appreciated the role of the existing government agencies, their cooperation, and their keenness to overcome all obstacles facing the industrial edifice that supports the Kuwaiti economy in the implementation of the

vision New Kuwait 2035, expressing his hope for its opening soon.

For his part, the Acting Director General of the Public Authority for Industry, Shamlan Al-Jahedli, announced in a press statement that the percentage of completion achieved has exceeded 95 percent, adding that the project is scheduled to see the light in the last quarter of this year. Al-Jahedli expects the project to be delivered after extending the electricity supply in cooperation with the Ministry of Electricity and Renewable Energy and linking some main roads to the project in cooperation with the Ministry of Public Works during the current fiscal year.

The Shaddadiya project is one of the first integrated industrial cities in Kuwait, equipped with the latest technologies on an area estimated at more than 5 square kilometers, including about 1,036 industrial plots. The project contributes to providing the necessary infrastructure to prepare the business environment in Kuwait, which helps in driving the wheel of industrial development and increasing the contribution of non-oil manufacturing industries to the gross domestic product and creating productive and suitable job opportunities for the national workforce. — KUNA



Ahmadi Governor Sheikh Humoud Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah speaks during the visit. — KUNA



## Evolution of education: Technology vs tradition

By Abdullah Sabih

KUWAIT: Education is a field that keeps changing to adapt to the circumstances of its time. The COVID-19 pandemic brought in its wake one such drastic change, where educational institutions shifted to a more digital approach. This allowed students and teachers alike to utilize these tools to fit their preferences. However, after the lockdown many schools continued to incorporate technology into their curriculum which had people wondering whether educational institutions should stick to the traditional methods or adapt to the newly introduced technological ones.

As the name suggests, traditional education refers to long established customs or traditions that society has used in schools. Classes are typically held in physical classrooms where a teacher uses limited multimedia resources to convey information to the students, who need the teacher's permission to ask questions. This teacher-centered approach clashes with the technological and modern system, which embraces more of a student-centered approach.

While traditional education methods emphasize discipline, deep knowledge and human connection, technology-driven approaches prioritize flexibility, engagement and access to vast resources. The rapid integration of technology into education has revolutionized the way students learn. With the advent of digital tools such as LMS and various e-learning platforms, personalized learning tailored to the student's abilities has been one of the prominent features of this system along with flexibility.

This system offers resources beyond the confines of a physical classroom. However, the absence of face-to-face interaction may hinder the development of social skills in students that are needed for overall growth. Yousuf Khan, a student in Kuwait, prefers the technological approach to education. He believes that not only does it provide students with more ways to learn, it changes how they think and solve problems in the real world.

"People might say it's harder for some students to catch up with technological education but that's not true because it provides way more accessibility for every kind of learning: auditory, visual and whatnot." However, he is mindful of the downgrade of this system. "Emotions such as the love between a teacher and a student might be removed from the future, but from a logical perspective it's still the superior model," he said.

Laiba Sabih is another student who used to study in Kuwait. She, on the other hand, feels more inclined to choose the traditional methods. "Being physically present in a classroom surrounded by peers and a teacher creates an interactive environment and instills in the students the values of discipline and focus." She thinks that with modern technology, students find it difficult to concentrate on their schoolwork.

"Free access to the internet while studying online distracts students and puts them in a long, endless void of procrastination," she said. But should we embrace these advancements in modern education or continue to use the traditional methods that have been passed on to us for decades? Laiba says that neither can we ignore the benefits of technological advancements nor can we completely abandon the old ways. "Both of these methods can be efficiently used by creating a balance between them to cater to the needs of the students."

## FM and French envoy discuss bilateral ties



KUWAIT: Kuwait's Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya met Thursday with the French Ambassador to Kuwait Claire Le Flecher. During the meeting, both sides touched on the bilateral ties between the two friendly countries. — KUNA

## Ministry kicks off health awareness campaign

KUWAIT: Kuwait's Ministry of Health said on Thursday that its annual campaign to spread awareness on chronic conditions began as part of its sustainable development program to combat disease and illness. Speaking to the press, Director of Health Performance Department at the Ministry Dr Abeer Al-Baho revealed that chronic conditions were on the rise,

pointing out that bad habits such as smoking was on the increase with 42.6 percent of males and 2.9 percent for females.

Physical inactivity was up to 39 percent and obesity up 34.7 percent amongst adults over 19 years old, she added. On obesity in particular, she added that extreme obesity was prevalent among teenagers and adults around the world due to bad eating habits, lack of exercise, and other causes, saying that obesity might strike children in families in a percentage of around 25 to 30. The solution, Dr Al-Baho said, would be through seeking better habits and professional medical help in chronic cases, stressing that the main cause of chronic diseases could be avoided with smart choices and better health management. — KUNA



Ministry of Health holds annual campaign to spread awareness on chronic conditions. — KUNA

## Kuwaiti Play 'Looking for Scheherazade' captivates Edinburgh audience

EDINBURGH: The Edinburgh International Festival is known for showcasing a diverse range of performances, and this year, the spotlight is on a captivating Kuwaiti production, "Looking for Scheherazade." Directed by Hamad Al-Jenaie and penned by Fawaz Al-Adwani, this play, featuring Iraqi actor Rasoul Saghir, delves into the timeless allure of Arabian Nights through a fresh and introspective lens.

"Looking for Scheherazade" follows the journey of Dr. Rafan Akeem, a fictional archaeologist whose life's work has been devoted to unraveling the mysteries of the legendary Scheherazade. Set against the backdrop of his London office, Dr. Akeem's quest takes him through a labyrinth of past experiences and personal reflections. As he ages and his time grows short, he uncovers a narrative rich with drama, romance, and power struggles. Rasoul Saghir, acclaimed for his emotive performances, takes on the role of Dr. Akeem, bringing depth and authenticity to a character whose passion for the fabled Scheherazade mirrors his own dedication to his craft. "I couldn't have imagined someone else playing him more than Rasoul Saghir," Al-Adwani remarked. "His portrayal of Dr. Akeem is both powerful and nuanced."

The play is not just a retelling of the classic stories but a profound exploration of themes such as loyalty, family bonds, and the migrant experience. Al-Jenaie, who began his directorial journey in 2019 with a production of "Hamlet," sees this play as a personal and artistic milestone. "Looking for Scheherazade entered my life last September," he said. "It is fascinating to narrate this story from our perspective, reimagining Scheherazade as a real character."

The Edinburgh International Festival, renowned for its opera, dance, and music performances, provides a prestigious platform for this Kuwaiti production. "Being a part of this festival is both a blessing and a new experience," Al-Jenaie noted. "It bridges East and West, offering a unique opportunity to share our cultural narratives with a global audience."

The play's one-hour monologue is a testament to the richness of Arabic storytelling, offering insights into the human condition through the lens of ancient myths and contemporary struggles. "Looking for Scheherazade" will also be performed in Kuwait, bringing its compelling narrative back to its roots. As the festival continues, "Looking for Scheherazade" stands out not only for its artistic merit but also for its role in fostering cross-cultural dialogue and appreciation.



KUWAIT: Women buy items at Friday Market. Control teams and inspectors seized more than 720 pieces of highly counterfeit luxury goods of famous international brands at the Friday Market. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

## Over 720 counterfeit luxury goods seized at Friday Market

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Commerce and Industry announced on Thursday that commercial control teams and inspectors seized more than 720 pieces of highly counterfeit luxury goods of famous international brands at the Friday Market. Director of the Commercial Control Sector at the Ministry, Faisal Al-Ansari, told KUNA that the control teams conducted an inspection tour of the Friday market in the

Al-Rai area and seized a large number of counterfeit women's bags, hats, wallets, and shoes bearing international brands.

Al-Ansari explained that the violators were referred to the Commercial Prosecution after completing the legal procedures and imposing legal penalties against them, stressing that the control teams are working at full capacity in all markets across the country to deter such practices. He said that authorities will not hesitate to take legal measures against violators. He stressed the need to control the markets and monitor their commitment to laws, decisions, and circulars issued by them so as to avoid fraudulent practices and deception of consumers, calling on consumers to report their complaints through the government application (Sahel). — KUNA

## Local

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companies approved  
for school canteens

KUWAIT: The Public Authority for Food and Nutrition announced the approval of 26 supplying and investing companies out of 50 that submitted applications regarding the school canteens in cooperation with the Department at the Ministry of Education. Deputy Director General of the Community Nutrition Affairs Sector, Dr Shaima Al-Asfour, told Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) on Thursday that the period for receiving applications was extended from mid-April until July.

For her part, the nutritionist and head of the canteen development program team at the Authority Nawal Al-Jazzaf confirmed in a similar statement that the approved food items are in line with the school canteen regulations approved by the Fatwa and Legislation Department. Al-Jazzaf added that the regulations are based on two parts: the first is related to the companies and school canteens' compliance with health requirements, and the second focuses on the nutritional aspect, which includes a set of specifications such as the packaging card and the validity of food items.

She explained that the food items were approved according to the standards of the school nutrition, as they contain all the necessary nutrients fortified with vitamins and minerals and are low in sugar and salt. She stated that with the start of the current academic year, the school cafeteria team, in cooperation with the monitoring and inspection sector, will begin to follow up on the implementation of school administrations, whether in public or private education, of the school cafeteria regulations. — KUNA

Kuwait's fourth  
aid-loaded plane  
departs to Sudan

KUWAIT: Kuwait's fourth plane carrying 10 tons of relief aid, donated by the Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS), departed to Sudan on Thursday to help those affected by the war and floods. The Director General of the KRCS, Abdulrahman Al-Aoun, told KUNA that this trip represents part of several operations to transport relief supplies to the brotherly Sudanese people, explaining that this shipment consists of relief and food supplies provided by the Association.

Al-Aoun added that the operation of these planes loaded with humanitarian aid comes in implementation of the directives of His High-

Police arrest drug suspects, seize  
narcotics, guns and ammunition  
Driver detained for smuggling a number of people into Kuwait

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Interior (MoI) announced that the law enforcers seized 15 kg of varied types of drugs, 60,000 psychotropic pills, and 70,000 capsules ready to be packed. The seizures also include 350 bottles of wine, three unlicensed guns, and ammunition, as well as some funds at the hands of 25 persons accused in 16 different cases, the Ministry said in a news statement. The move is part of the continued campaigns of the MoI, aiming to thwart any attempts to bring narcotics to the country.

Those accused and the seized items were referred to competent bodies to take legal action against

them, it added, stressing continued security efforts to monitor any attempts of those trying to trade in narcotics to protect society. The ministry appealed to all to cooperate with security men and inform them about any negative phenomena through its emergency number (112) or the hotline of the General Directorate for Drug Control (1884141).

## Smugglers nabbed

In another development, the Criminal Security Sector, represented by the General Directorate of Criminal Investigation (Capital Governorate), arrested a driver

(Egyptian) of a truck transporting goods on charges of smuggling a number of people into the country through a border in exchange for money. The detectives received information about the suspect, and after verifying its authenticity, a squad from the Jaber Al-Ahmad Investigation Office was able to arrest the suspects.

Upon interrogation, the defendants admitted that they entered the country by a cargo truck in exchange for a sum of money. After conducting the necessary investigations and intensifying searches, the driver was arrested. The defendants have been referred to the competent authority for necessary legal measures.

Kuwait's inflation  
rises by 3 percent

KUWAIT: Consumer price index inflation rose three percent year-on-year in July, data from the Central Statistical Administration (CSA) showed. The CSA said in a statement to KUNA that the inflation rate in Kuwait rose 0.15 percent in July on a monthly basis compared to June. It attributed the rise in inflation on an annual basis to the increase in prices of major groups affecting the movement of the indices, especially clothing, food, education and clothing.

It explained that the index of the first group (food and beverages) rose in July by 5.89 percent compared to the same month in 2023, while the price index of the second group (cigarettes and tobacco) rose slightly by 0.15 percent on an annual basis. It stated that the index of the third group (clothing) rose by 5.63 percent, while the prices of the (housing services) group rose by 0.91 percent, and the inflation rate in the fifth group (home furnishings) rose by 3.79 percent.

The statistics agency reported that the price index of the sixth group (health) rose by 4.07 percent, while the prices of the transportation group rose by 0.49 percent last July compared to the same month in 2023. The statistics agency indicated that the prices of the eighth group (communications) rose by 2.45 percent on an annual basis, and the inflation rate in the ninth group



KUWAIT: People have lunch at a restaurant in Kuwait City. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

(entertainment and culture) rose by 2.35 percent.

The prices of the tenth group (education) rose by 0.96 percent. It pointed out that the prices of the restaurants and hotels group rose by 2.52 percent,

while the prices of the 'various goods and services' rose by 4.86 percent. The inflation rate in Kuwait, excluding the food and beverage group, rose by 2.35 percent on an annual basis last July. — KUNA



ness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and as an embodiment of the Kuwaiti people's solidarity with their brothers in Sudan. He also expressed his deep appreciation to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Embassy of Kuwait in Sudan, and the Kuwaiti Air Force for their efforts in coordinating and following up on the delivery of relief aid to those who deserve it. — KUNA



The fourth plane carrying tons of relief aid heads to Sudan to help those affected by the war and floods.

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.

## Weekend forecasted

Meanwhile, the weather during the weekend will be generally hot and humid during the day and hot-to-hot and humid at night with a chance of light fog, the Meteorological Department said Director of the Department Abdulaziz Al-Qarawi. The weather maps indicate that the country will be affected by an extension of the Indian seasonal depression accompanied by a hot and humid air mass with light-to-moderate northwesterly to southeasterly winds.

Al-Qarawi explained that the weather on Friday will be hot and humid, with variable winds, moderate in speed, between 8 and 30 km/h, and the expected maximum temperature will be between 45 and 47 degrees. Some scattered clouds will appear, and the sea will be light-to-moderate with waves between 1 and 3 feet. On Saturday, Al-Qarawi said that there will also be hot and humid weather, especially in coastal areas, with variable winds between 8 and 32 km/h, and the expected maximum temperature will be between 45 and 48 degrees Celsius. The sea will be light to moderate, with waves between 1 and 3 feet. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Motorists drive on the highway during a heatwave in Kuwait City. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat



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Mpox presents hard-to-weigh risks

## Trump speaks behind bulletproof glass at rally

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KHAN YUNIS: A Palestinian woman plays with her baby in one of the cells of the Asdaa Central Prison which has become a shelter for displaced people in Khan Yunis on August 14, 2024. — AFP photos

# Gaza faces uphill battle against polio

UN details plans for vaccination drive • Zionist entity says 'international' effort in works

GAZA: The Gaza Strip's first recorded polio case in 25 years has health workers and aid agencies grappling with the steep obstacles to conducting mass vaccination in the war-torn Palestinian territory. Ten months of relentless air strikes by the Zionist entity, restrictions of aid entering the besieged territory and hot summer temperatures all threaten the viability of a life-saving inoculation drive.

Equipment to support the extensive campaign — which UN agencies say could start on August 31 — has already arrived in the Zionist entity. A UNICEF official says the equipment could be allowed into Gaza as soon as Sunday. The Zionist government didn't specifically mention the campaign when asked by AFP about polio in Gaza.

The Palestinian health ministry in the occupied West Bank said last week that tests in Jordan had confirmed polio in an unvaccinated 10-month-old baby from central Gaza. According to the United Nations, Gaza had not registered a case for 25 years, although type 2 poliovirus was detected in samples collected from the territory's wastewater in June. Poliovirus is highly infectious, and most often spread through sewage and contaminated water — an increasingly common problem in Gaza as the Zionist war, which killed thousands of people in an alleged attempt at dismantling Palestinian group Hamas, drags on.

The disease mainly affects children under the age of five. It can cause deformities and paralysis, and is potentially fatal. UN bodies the World Health Organization (WHO) and children's agency UNICEF say they have detailed plans to vaccinate 640,000 children across Gaza.

But a major challenge remains the Zionist entity's devastating military campaign, which began after Hamas attacked the entity's south in October 2023. "It's extremely difficult to undertake a vaccination campaign of this scale and volume under a sky full of air



DEIR EL-BALAH: A young Palestinian boy walks barefoot near stagnant wastewater in this file photo.

strikes," said Juliette Touma, director of communications for the UN agency for Palestinian refugees, UNRWA.

### Once eradicated

Under the UN plan, 2,700 health workers in 708 teams would take part, with the WHO overseeing the effort, said Richard Peepker, the agency's representative in the Palestinian territories. UNICEF would ensure the cold supply chain as vaccines are brought into and distributed across Gaza, spokesman Jonathan Crickx said.

Cold chain components including refrigerators arrived Wednesday at the Zionist entity's main international airport. Some 1.6 million doses of the oral vaccine would follow, and are expected

to enter Gaza on Sunday via the Kerem Shalom crossing, Crickx said.

The UN agencies plan to administer two doses each for about 95 percent of children under 10 in Gaza, according to Crickx. Surplus doses would cover expected losses to heat or other causes. While the Zionist entity has repeatedly dismissed claims it was blocking aid into Gaza, relief workers have long complained of the many obstacles they face in getting supplies into the territory, which has suffered severe shortages of everything from fuel and medical equipment to food. And once in Gaza, fighting, widespread devastation and crumbling infrastructure all complicate delivery and safe access.

Touma, who worked on polio re-

sponse during wars in Iraq and Syria, said that "the return of polio to a place where it's been eradicated says quite a lot." The entity's military campaign since October 7 has killed at least 40,223 people in Gaza, according to the territory's health ministry. It does not give details of civilian and militant deaths, but the UN human rights office says most of the dead are women and children.

### 'Safe environment'

Gaza's health care system has been decimated, with "only 16 out of 36 hospitals ... still functioning, and only partially," Crickx said. Out of those, only 11 facilities are capable of maintaining the cold chain, he added. The vaccines would first be kept at a UN storage space in central Gaza, and then distributed to public and private health facilities as well as UNRWA shelters "hopefully by refrigerated trucks if we can find some, otherwise by cold boxes" filled with ice packs, Crickx said.

Many Gazans now live in makeshift camps or UNRWA schools, making them hard to reach, said Moussa Abed, director of primary health care at the Gaza health ministry. Nearly all of the territory's 2.4 million people have been displaced at least once during the war.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has called for two seven-day breaks in the war to administer doses. Abed said that "without a safe environment for the vaccination campaign, we will not be able to reach 95 percent of the children under the age of 10, which is the goal of this campaign."

Contacted by AFP, a Zionist defense ministry body overseeing civilian affairs in the Palestinian territories, COGAT, did not directly mention the planned UN campaign, but said that "on the issue of polio, a joint effort will be made together with the international community". A COGAT spokesman promised "full cooperation". — AFP

## Indian state plans law for Muslim marriage, divorce

GUWAHATI, India: Indian authorities in Assam state have introduced a bill that would require Muslims to register their marriages and divorces, with the chief minister claiming the measure will help stop child marriage. The bill is seen as a state-level step towards the government's proposed common civil code of law, which is bitterly opposed by Muslim activists as an attack on their faith.

India's 1.4 billion people are subject to a common criminal law, but personal matters such as marriage, divorce and inheritance are governed by varying rules based on the traditions of different communities and faiths.

In Assam, it is already mandatory for other religions to register marriages with civil authorities. Assam's state government, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), said the bill would be tabled during the next state assembly. "Our basic intention is to stop child marriages," Himanta Biswa Sarma, chief minister of the northeastern state, told reporters Wednesday.

Sarma said the Assam Compulsory Registration of Muslim Marriages and Divorces Bill would not restrict religious rituals, but only ensure marriages and divorces were registered. The bill will "provide safeguards and benefits ... especially to women and prevent the menace of child marriages," he said. — AFP

## Oil tanker 'poses environmental risk' after Red Sea attack

DUBAI/ATHENS: A Greek-flagged oil tanker carrying 150,000 tonnes of crude that was evacuated by its crew after being attacked in the Red Sea now poses an environmental hazard, the EU's Red Sea naval mission "Aspides" said on Thursday. Sounion was targeted on Wednesday by multiple projectiles off Yemen's port city of Hodeidah, where the Iran-aligned Houthis have been attacking ships in solidarity with Palestinians in the war between the Zionist entity and Hamas. "Carrying 150,000 tonnes of crude oil, the MV SOUNION now represents a navigational and environmental hazard," Aspides said in a post on social media platform X.

The Houthis, who control Yemen's most populous regions, have yet to officially claim responsibility for the attack. The Sounion was the third vessel operated by Athens-based Delta Tankers to be attacked

in the Red Sea this month. The attack caused a fire onboard, which was extinguished by the crew, Delta Tankers said in a statement.

The United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations (UKMTO) agency reported on Wednesday that the attack led to the loss of engine power. The vessel was now anchored between Yemen and Eritrea, a maritime security source told Reuters on Thursday. Delta Tankers said it is working on a plan to move Sounion to a safer destination for further checks and repairs.

The EU Red Sea naval mission said it responded to a request from the captain of the Sounion and dispatched a ship to rescue the crew to Djibouti, the Aspides said. "While approaching the area, the EU-NAVFOR ASPIDES ship destroyed an Unmanned Surface Vessel (USV) that posed an imminent threat to the ship and the crew," Aspides added. The Greek shipping ministry said the vessel was sailing from Iraq to Agioi Theodoroi in Greece with a crew of two Russians and 23 Filipinos.

In dozens of attacks in the Red Sea since November, the Houthis have sunk two vessels and seized another, killed at least three sailors and upended global trade by forcing ship owners to avoid the popular

Suez Canal trade shortcut. The Houthis' leader Abdul Malik al-Houthi said on Thursday "from this week's operations targeting ships violating blockade on vessels heading to the Zionist entity, a ship was adrift due to waves after it malfunctioned because of strikes", without specifying the name of the ship.

In another incident on Thursday, a vessel reported an explosion close to it that caused minor damage after an encounter with an uncrewed vessel 57 nautical miles south of Yemen's port of Aden, the UKMTO said. The vessel and its crew were safe and it was proceeding to its next port of call.

Greek Shipping Minister Christos Stylianidis condemned on Wednesday the attack on the Sounion, saying it was "a flagrant violation of international law and a serious threat to the safety of international shipping".

Houthi attacks have drawn US and British retaliatory strikes. British ambassador to Yemen Abda Sharif called the Houthi attacks "illegal and reckless". "Another Houthi attack threatens Yemen's coastline, fishing industry and environmental catastrophe. Thankfully, the crew have been rescued, but MV Sounion, carrying 150,000 tonnes of oil, is now stranded," she added in a post on X. — Reuters

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## International

# Trump speaks behind bulletproof glass at rally

Republican candidate warns supporters of losing savings, World War III if 'comrade Kamala' wins

## Key Indian hospital ends strike as Kolkata protests turn political

**NEW DELHI:** Doctors at a top Indian government hospital ended Thursday an 11-day strike in protest against the rape and murder of a doctor, but furious demonstrations continued in Kolkata. The discovery of the 31-year-old doctor's bloodied body at a state-run hospital in the eastern city of Kolkata on August 9 has stoked nationwide anger at the chronic issue of violence against women.

Doctors' associations from government-run hospitals in many cities across India launched strikes that cut non-essential services. 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.

An average of nearly 90 rapes a day were reported in 2022 in the country of 1.4 billion people. Armed police on Thursday guarded the walls of the R G Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata, where the doctor, whom protesters have given the nickname "Abhaya", meaning "fearless", was murdered.

### 'Shocked the conscience'

Protests in Kolkata have spiraled into political rallies, with police scuffling with demonstrators from the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) angry at the state government. The Hindu-nationalist BJP is the party of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, but are an opposition party in West Bengal state.

But medics at the leading state hospital in the capital New Delhi said Thursday they would return to full duties, hours after an appeal by the Supreme Court to do so. India's Supreme Court ordered on Tuesday 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 top court appealed on Thursday for doctors to return to work. "We are resuming duties following the Supreme Court's appeal and assurances," the Resident Doctors Association at New Delhi's All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) said in a statement.

Doctors said they had ended their strike "in the interest of the nation and the spirit of public service". They also urged the authorities to "adhere to the directives" of the Supreme Court, adding that their protests would continue after duty hours "until justice is served". — AFP

## After protests, Indonesia cancels discussions to change election rules

**JAKARTA:** Indonesian lawmakers cancelled a controversial session where they planned to discuss changing election rules, a parliament official announced Thursday, after thousands rallied in the capital over a move seen to help the outgoing president build a political dynasty. Parliament was preparing to reverse a constitutional court ruling upholding candidate age requirements, which made President Joko Widodo's youngest

**ASHEBORO, United States:** Donald Trump held his first outdoor campaign event on Wednesday since an assassination attempt, lobbing insults at his surging Democratic opponent Kamala Harris from behind bulletproof glass at a rally in the battleground state of North Carolina. Trump, 78, speaking against a backdrop of vintage warplanes at an aviation museum, called Harris the "most radical left person" ever to run for the White House and claimed that millions of jobs will "vanish overnight" if she wins in November. "Your life savings will be totally wiped out," the Republican candidate told the crowd, one of a number of apocalyptic scenarios he painted during his speech.

"All over the world, our adversaries knew that America was not to be trifled with when I was your commander in chief," Trump said. "If comrade Kamala wins this November, World War III is virtually guaranteed to happen."

With Harris drawing enthusiastic crowds since replacing Joe Biden at the top of the Democratic ticket, the event in Asheboro was a chance for Trump to reclaim his long time dominance in staging spectacular rallies. It was his first big outdoor event since being lightly wounded in an attempted assassination at a similarly open site in Butler, Pennsylvania, a month ago.

That attack left one rally participant dead before the 20-year-old gunman was killed by a Secret Service sniper. The Secret Service recommended that Trump stick to more easily controllable indoor venues such as sports arenas. He has since held about a dozen indoor events.

The Secret Service does not comment publicly on security operations and did not respond to requests for comment on Wednesday's preparations. A bulletproof screen could be seen around the podium where Trump and his vice presidential pick, J D

## Deadly Indian blast blamed on chemical leak

**HYDERABAD/NEW DELHI:** An explosion at a pharmaceutical factory in southern India on Wednesday, which killed at least 17 people and injured 36, was due to a chemical solvent leak, according to an internal government report accessed by Reuters on Thursday. The blast came around noon at the privately-held Escientia Advanced Sciences in Andhra Pradesh, where nearly 400 employees make intermediate chemicals and active ingredients for export to the United States and other Western countries.

son ineligible for upcoming regional polls.

With thousands of protesters clamoring outside parliament, lawmakers initially delayed Thursday's session. The demonstrations swelled as the day progressed, with students and office workers joining, despite water cannon and police in riot gear.

The parliament later announced the proposed changes would be dropped for this election period, in an apparent U-turn. "It was officially decided that the revision of the Regional Election Law could not proceed. This means that the revision today was cancelled," Sufmi Dasco Ahmad, deputy speaker of the House of Representatives, told reporters after clashes between protesters and police. The protesters lit tires on fire and set off firecrackers while chanting slogans against Widodo, more popularly known as Jokowi. A handful of demonstrators dismantled a section of the



ASHEBORO: Donald Trump speaks behind bulletproof glass during a campaign rally at the North Carolina Aviation Museum & Hall of Fame on August 21, 2024. — AFP

Vance, addressed the crowd in Asheboro.

At one point during his speech, Trump left the stage and entered the crowd to check on an attendee who was suffering a medical issue. Crowds are an integral part of Trump's political brand, with the right-wing billionaire seeking to portray himself as an outsider and man of the people.

The chemical solvent, which was being used in the eight-stage process of manufacturing a pharmaceutical ingredient for export, leaked from the first floor to the floor below. "The explosion happened due to the heavy solvent vapor cloud at the power panel area in the ground floor," the inquiry report said.

Workers had been trying to plug a chemical leak when an explosion ripped through the unit, Srinivasa Rao Korada, chief financial officer of the Escientia Group, said on Thursday. "Workers had noticed that leak, they were attending to it, and had almost plugged the leak when this happened," he said, adding it was not clear what triggered the leak.

Local police filed an initial formal report against the company following a complaint from a local government official saying a lack of precautionary measures could have led to the blast. The incident, one of the worst industrial accidents in recent years in

concrete and metal fence surrounding parliament and tried to enter the complex, but police dispersed them with water cannon and tear gas, an AFP journalist saw.

"I came here because my country is on the verge of destruction. These lawmakers have scammed the people," 64-year-old protester Muhammad Saleh Zakaria told AFP. Late on Thursday, some protesters were still starting fires in front of parliament and attempting to batter their way through its fence.

The uproar comes months after Widodo's eldest son Gibran Rakabuming Raka, 36, was elected as Indonesia's youngest vice president, stoking nepotism accusations. Protests were also reported in Yogyakarta, Makassar, Bandung and Semarang. Jokowi's office tried to calm the unrest. "The government hopes that there will be no disinformation or slander that could trigger chaos and violence," palace

Even as president, he kept up a steady schedule of election-style rallies, often filling sports arenas with at least 10,000 people. He had counted on these demonstrations of strength as a key weapon in his plan to make the 81-year-old Biden, whose own public events were generally low-key and relatively small-scale affairs, look ineffectual. — AFP

India, came a year after a fire at a pharmaceuticals factory in the same Anakapalli district of the state, which killed two people and injured five.

The company is collaborating with authorities to investigate the reason for the leak, Korada said, adding that smoke and fire had prevented it from investigating immediately. Officials said they were scanning closed-circuit television footage and questioning the injured to decide if human error was responsible. The distilled solvent which leaked was identified as Methylene Tertiary Butyl Ether or MTBE, a flammable liquid used as an additive in unleaded gasoline to achieve more efficient burning, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says on its website. An inquiry will be held into the accident, said the state's chief minister, Chandrababu Naidu, adding: "We also hope this will be the last such incident." — Reuters

spokesman Hasan Nasbi told reporters. Jokowi's youngest son, 29-year-old Kaesang Pangarep, has been tipped for an influential post in November's regional contest. The president's allies have been trying to find a way around the current minimum age of 30 for candidates by making it applicable by the time of inauguration. Kaesang turns 30 in December.

Experts said Indonesians were becoming disillusioned with Jokowi and his attempts to retain political influence. "People are angry at the on-going manipulation of our democratic system," said Ika Idris, a Jakarta-based political expert at Monash University's data and democracy research hub. "There is a clear desire to ... extend power." Jokowi is also accused of helping to install his replacement, defense chief Prabowo Subianto, who takes office in October. — AFP

## Gaza ceasefire hopes fade...

Continued from Page 1

against threats from Iran and its proxies. Blinken on Thursday spoke with the Qatari Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani after the two were unable to meet during the US top diplomat's brief stop in Doha earlier this week.

They discussed the latest push towards a truce and "affirmed that no party in the region should take actions to undermine efforts to reach a deal", the State Department said. A main sticking point remains Hamas' long-standing demand for a "complete" Zionist withdrawal from Gaza. Netanyahu, whose hard-right coalition relies on the support of members opposed to a truce, said the Zionist entity insists on keeping forces on the Palestinian territory's border with Egypt.

The Zionist entity "securing the southern border" of Gaza was crucial for achieving the war's objectives, his office said late Wednesday, rejecting as "incorrect" media reports that "Netanyahu has agreed that (the Zionist entity) will withdraw from the Philadelphia Corridor". Government spokesman David Mencer later called the Gaza-Egypt border strip, which the Zionist entity says militants use to smuggle weapons, a " Hamas lifeline".

During his regional tour, Blinken said Netanyahu had accepted a US "bridging proposal" for a truce that "is very clear on the schedule and the locations" of the Zionist withdrawal. Without mentioning Philadelphia directly, Blinken also said that Washington "does not accept any long-term occupation of Gaza by (the Zionist entity)".

Zionist newspaper Yedioth Ahronoth, citing "officials knowledgeable about the negotiations", reported that "the Americans understood the mistake" Blinken had made in his remarks about Netanyahu accepting the proposal. The daily said "the chances for a deal are slim" but attempts were being made to organize talks in Cairo on Friday and

Saturday, with US Middle East envoy Brett McGurk already sent there.

Hamas on Sunday said the US proposal "responds to Netanyahu's conditions" and accused him of "obstructing an agreement". Some analysts and critics in the Zionist entity have also accused Netanyahu of prolonging the war. In its statement, Hamas cited Netanyahu's "insistence on continuing to occupy" the Philadelphia Corridor as well as the Netzarim junction, which sits at a strategic point between northern and southern Gaza.

Witnesses on Thursday reported clashes between Zionist forces and Palestinian fighters in Netzarim. Mahmud Bassal, spokesman for the Gaza civil defense agency, said "five bodies were pulled from under the rubble" of a house in Khan Yunis, southern Gaza's main city, hit by Zionist bombardment on Thursday. "The bombing never stops," said 32-year-old Tahani Abu Sherbi, a mother of four, in central Gaza. Although the Zionist entity has issued an evacuation order for the area, "we decided not to move despite the danger," she told AFP. "We are tired of displacement."

Witnesses said they saw heavy Zionist shelling in Khan Yunis and air strikes in southern and central Gaza, while the military said Zionist troops intensified operations around Khan Yunis and Deir al-Balah further north. Civil defense rescuers said that a Zionist strike Wednesday killed at least three people in a school-turned-shelter in Gaza City, which the military said was used by militants. The United Nations says the Zionist entity has struck at least 23 schools sheltering displaced people in Gaza since July 4.

The Zionist military campaign has killed 40,265 Palestinians in Gaza, according to the territory's health ministry, mostly women and children. The Palestinian health ministry in the occupied West Bank said three people were killed in Zionist strikes on a refugee camp Thursday. A spokesman for the Ramallah-based ministry said in a statement that the three were killed "during an occupation strike on a house" in the Tulkarem camp in the northern West Bank. The United Nations said that in August, Zionist air strikes in the West Bank killed an average of one Palestinian per day. — AFP

## Vote for 'joy': Walz, Oprah...

Continued from Page 1

attorney, as an attorney general, as a United States senator and then our vice president, she's fought on the side of the American people," he said. "She's taken on the predators and fraudsters. She's taken down the transnational gangs... She has never hesitated to reach across that aisle if it meant improving your lives, and she's always done it with energy, with passion and with joy."

The relatively unknown state-level official brings a Midwestern everyman vibe to Harris' surging campaign against Trump that was central to his speech. Introduced by Minnesota first lady Gwen Walz, the former National Guard soldier was cheered boisterously as he took to the stage for the biggest speech of his political career, ahead of Harris' big night Thursday.

In a moment that brought the audience to its feet, former students marched onstage to introduce Walz — a football coach in his teaching days — after a musical

## Modi urges peace ahead of historic...

Continued from Page 1

of respecting the rules, respecting borders, territorial integrity," Tusk said as he spoke to reporters alongside the Indian leader.

Tusk also added that Modi "reaffirmed his willingness to commit himself personally to a peaceful, just, quick end to the war". After the talks, Modi laid a wreath at a war memorial in central Warsaw and held talks with Polish President Andrzej Duda on "boosting commercial and cultural linkages" between the countries, he said on X (former Twitter). The Indian leader is expected to leave the Polish capital for Ukraine later Thursday.

Modi has trodden a delicate balance between maintaining India's historically warm ties with Russia while courting closer security partnerships with Western na-

interlude by Grammy Award-winning musician John Legend. A surprise appearance by Oprah Winfrey and a rousing rendition of "Higher Ground" by Stevie Wonder made for a glitzy night, alongside turns from comic actors Mindy Kaling and Keenan Thompson.

In an electrifying address to the US political party convention, Winfrey said: "We are so fired up we can't wait to leave here and do something. And what we're going to do is elect Kamala Harris as the next president of the United States. And let us choose joy!" "Let us choose common sense over nonsense," said the 70-year-old television personality to applause from the thousands of attendees at the United Center in Chicago — home of her globally acclaimed morning talk show.

Walz's main job was to tee up Harris' speech and the climax of a convention that has defied predictions of disunity or even chaos in the wake of President Joe Biden's decision to drop his reelection bid on July 21. "No matter who you are, Kamala Harris is going to stand up and fight for your freedom to live the life that you want to lead, because that's what we want for ourselves and it's what we want for our neighbors," he said. — AFP

tions as a bulwark against regional rival China. "As a friend and partner, we hope for an early return of peace and stability in the region," Modi said in a statement published Wednesday before his departure for Poland. In Kyiv, Modi will hold talks with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and "share perspectives on peaceful resolution of the ongoing Ukraine conflict," the statement added.

On Wednesday, Modi commemorated an Indian maharaja who sheltered Polish children during World War II, laying flowers at the marble lotus-crowned monument erected in Warsaw in honour of the maharaja. In a little-known story linking the two nations, the maharaja hosted Polish children in what is now Gujarat — Modi's home state where he was chief minister before launching his national political career.

The Indian leader announced a youth exchange program named after the maharaja, under which 20 Polish young people would be invited to India each year. "We are finally starting to have the right level of political and diplomatic relations," Polish deputy foreign minister Wladyslaw Teofil Bartoszewski said about Modi's visit, first in 45 years by an Indian prime minister. — AFP

## International

# Mpox presents hard-to-weigh risks

Experts say difficult to predict how dangerous disease could be as more cases detected outside Africa

**BANGKOK/PARIS:** Thailand on Thursday confirmed its first known case of a new, deadlier strain of mpox in a European patient who had travelled to the kingdom from Africa. The patient landed in Bangkok on August 14 and was sent to hospital with mpox symptoms.

The Department of Disease Control said laboratory tests on the 66-year-old confirmed he was infected with mpox Clade 1b.

The disease, caused by a virus transmitted by infected animals but passed from human to human through close physical contact, causes fever, muscular aches and large boil-like skin lesions.

Thongchai Keeratihattayakorn, head of the Thai Department of Disease Control, said that mpox was much less likely to spread rapidly than COVID-19 because of the close contact needed to catch it.

As fears mount globally about mpox, apparently simple questions such as the danger it poses and differences between variants do not have clear and simple answers. The World Health Organization in July declared an international health emergency over the spread of mpox, which first appeared in humans around 1970 in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

For decades, the illness long known as "monkeypox" was restricted to a handful of African countries, with estimates of its mortality rate ranging from one to 10 percent of people infected. That uncertainty grew from 2022, when mpox spread elsewhere in the world, especially to Western countries.

Cases in these newly-infected states had very low mortality of around 0.2 percent. Such differences likely stem from several variables. First, someone living in the US or Europe is much more likely to receive swift, appropriate medical treatment than patients in most African nations.

The danger mpox presents "strongly depends on the quality of basic care," said Antoine Gessain,

a virologist specializing in the disease. The mortality rate measured in the current outbreak — around 3.6 percent — would therefore likely be much lower were it not mostly limited to the DRC.

## Child malnutrition

Other factors weighing on the mortality rate include those that make some patients more vulnerable than others. The vast majority of the deaths recorded in the DRC — over 500 out of more than 15,000 mpox cases — have been children, many of whom are affected by malnutrition in the country. By contrast, in the DRC's 2022-23 epidemic, the very small number of people who died — around 200 out of 100,000 cases — were mostly adults whose immune system was already weakened by HIV infection.

Different mortality outcomes can also be explained by the way a disease is spread. In 2022-23, most transmission was via sex between homosexual or bisexual men. A further factor adding complexity is the clade, or family, to which the specific virus causing an mpox outbreak belongs. Scientists are struggling to determine the differences between clades when it comes to health risks and transmission.

## Tricky comparisons

The 2022-23 mpox epidemic was caused by Clade 2 mpox, which is mostly present in western Africa, but also found in South Africa. DRC's deadly current outbreak stems from Clade 1 mpox, mostly found in the continent's central areas. But a distinct second epidemic hitting mostly adults in the same country is linked to variant 1b, a derivative of Clade 1 that has only appeared recently.

Confusion in the media has led some outlets to call variant 1b more dangerous than previously-existing mpox varieties. "There are rather big claims in the popular media for which evidence is limited, both



**PESHAWAR:** A worker cleans the floor of an isolation ward prepared for mpox patients at the Police and Services hospital in Peshawar on August 20, 2024. — AFP

about severity and about transmissibility of the new sublineage 1b," Dutch virologist Marion Koopmans told the UK-based Science Media Centre. "What we do know is that Clade 1 is associated with more severe disease than Clade 2," she added. In the past, Clade 1 outbreaks have been associated with higher mortality rates than Clade 2.

But researchers call for caution before drawing conclusions, even with apparently clear-cut fig-

ures. The urgency of establishing the facts about mpox variants is all the greater as Clade 1 was detected in Sweden in mid-July — for the first time outside Africa. "It's very difficult to compare" between different clades "given that the context and the type of at-risk population are so important," virologist Gessain said. "How can you compare children suffering from malnutrition and HIV-positive adults?" he asked. — AFP

## Floods swamp turmoil-stricken Bangladesh

**DHAKA:** Floods triggered by torrential rains have swamped a swath of low-lying Bangladesh, disaster officials said Thursday, adding to the new government's challenges after weeks of political turmoil.

At least five people have died and hundreds of thousands are stranded in the floods in at least eight districts in southern and eastern areas. "Around 2.9 million people have been affected and more than 70,000 people have been taken to shelters," Mohammad Nazmul Abedin, senior official in the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, told AFP.

Long-time premier Sheikh Hasina quit as prime minister this month and fled to India after weeks of deadly student-led protests, ending her 15-year autocratic rule. The South Asian nation of 170 million people, crisscrossed by hundreds of rivers, has seen frequent floods in recent decades. It is among the countries most vulnerable to disasters and climate change, according to the Global Climate Risk Index.

Three of those who died drowned in floodwaters in the southeastern region of Cox's Bazar, chief administrative officer of Ramu district Rasedul Islam said. The annual monsoon rains cause widespread destruction every year, but climate change is shifting weather patterns and increasing the number of extreme weather events.

The army and the navy have been deployed, with speedboats and helicopters rescuing those stranded by the swollen rivers. Much of the country is made up of deltas where the Himalayan rivers the Ganges and the Brahmaputra wind towards the sea after coursing through India.

## 'Heaviest rains'

Neighboring India's foreign ministry rejected accusations it was to blame for the floods, denying it had deliberately released water from an upstream dam. It said the catchment area had experienced the "heaviest rains of this year over the last few days",



**FENI, Bangladesh:** A woman and her child wade through flood waters on August 22, 2024. — AFP

and that the flow of water downstream was due to "automatic releases".

Asif Mahmud, a key leader of the student protests that ousted Hasina, and now the sports minister in the interim cabinet, had accused India of not only hosting Hasina, but of "creating a flood" by deliberately releasing water from dams. India said that was "factually not correct". "Floods on the common rivers between India and Bangladesh are a shared problem inflicting sufferings to people on both sides, and requires close mutual cooperation towards resolving them," New Delhi's foreign ministry said in a statement.

Hasina's rule saw widespread human rights abuses, including the mass detention and extrajudicial killings of her political opponents. But Indian Prime

Minister Narendra Modi's Hindu-nationalist government preferred Hasina over her rivals from the Bangladesh Nationalist Party, which it saw as closer to conservative Islamist groups.

Modi has offered his support to the new Bangladeshi leader Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus, who is heading the caretaker administration. A United Nations team arrived in Dhaka on Thursday to assess whether to investigate alleged human rights violations committed during the protests, when more than 450 people were killed — many by police fire.

The UN rights office had said in a preliminary report last week that there were "strong indications, warranting further independent investigation, that the security forces used unnecessary and disproportionate force" during the protests. — AFP

## South Koreans confused after air raid drill

**SEOUL:** South Korea held a nationwide drill on Thursday that sowed confusion in the capital as traffic was brought to a standstill and thousands of civilians practiced emergency evacuations. The exercise, linked to the ongoing joint military drills between the United States and South Korea known as Ulchi Freedom Shield, is designed to simulate a war or national emergency. Similar drills happen every year.

In downtown Seoul, an air raid siren blared, followed by loudspeaker announcements urging people to seek shelter. Thousands of pedestrians and government employees cleared from streets and offices, while traffic stopped in some areas, causing confusion and frustration. "I got stuck in traffic. I didn't even realize there was a drill, and I didn't think it was important," said Kim So-hyeong who was driving through central Seoul. "I feel like there was a lack of information about the drill. My GPS kept giving me different directions and made me go in circles, so I felt stuck," she added.

Park Jun-ho, who works at a startup in Seoul's upscale Gangnam district, said he heard the siren from his office but did not participate. "Nobody in our office went out," said Park. "I don't even think people in our company would know where to go."

The broad indifference to annual civil defense training stems from the fact that the South has been technically at war with the North since the 1950s, said Park Hyo-sun, a professor at Cheongju University, so there is little sense of urgency to the situation. "The training itself is to teach the public what to do when a war happens, which we technically are in," said Park. "But people forget that we are at war, and the level of alertness is very low." — AFP



**LABREA:** Aerial view of an area of Amazon rainforest deforested by illegal fire in Brazil on August 20, 2024.

## Brazil 'struggles to breathe' as Amazon burns

**PORTO VELHO, Brazil:** Residents of Porto Velho in the Brazilian Amazon have barely seen sunlight in days as a thick cloud of smoke from forest fires envelops their city. "We are struggling to breathe," said 30-year-old teacher Tayane Moraes, one of some 460,000 people who live in the city near the border with Bolivia.

On Tuesday, the concentration of cancer-causing microparticles known as PM2.5 reached 56.5

micrograms per cubic meter of air in Porto Velho — 11 times more than the limit recommended by the World Health Organization and the worst of Brazil's big cities.

Inhaling PM2.5 has been found to increase the risk of lung cancer, heart disease, stroke, diabetes and a range of other health problems. On August 14, the level was a "dangerous" 246.4 micrograms per cubic meter, according to the IQAir monitoring company.

It can be difficult to escape the smoke, even at home. "It's terrible, yesterday I woke up at midnight and my eyes were tingling because of this smoke entering my house," 62-year-old retiree Carlos Fernandes told AFP. The government of Rondonia state believes illegal fires, often started by farmers clearing land, are one cause of the disaster and has launched an online campaign calling on the population to report them.



**PORTO VELHO:** Heavy smoke from fires in the Amazon rainforest covers the Rondon-Roosevelt bridge over the Madeira river on Porto Velho, northern Brazil, on August 21, 2024. — AFP photos

## Historic drought

According to data collected by satellites of Brazil's INPE Space Research Institute, Rondonia has just had its worst month of July for forest fires in 19 years with 1,618 confirmed outbreaks. So far in August, there have been 2,114. The Amazon as a whole has recorded more than 42,000 forest fires from January 1 to August 19, according to the INPE, the worst number in nearly two decades. That number was 87 percent higher than in the same period of 2023. The Amazon suffered a historic drought between June and November last year.

INPE's satellite images show a plume of smoke crossing Brazil from north to south, also passing through neighbors Bolivia and Paraguay. State authorities insist much of the smoke enveloping Porto Velho, its capital, comes from fires in Bolivia, to the west, and the neighboring state of Amazonas, to the north. "Because we are in the center of the conti-

ment, the smoke stays longer here," Cae Aires of the CENSIPAM Amazon protection center said in a video published on the Instagram account of Rondonia governor Marcos Rocha.

In the same video, infectious disease specialist Antonieta Ferreira reported "an increase in asthma attacks, as well as cases of pneumonia or sinusitis" among patients at a children's hospital. "It's complicated with all this smoke, especially for those who have breathing problems," sighed Beatriz Graca, a 35-year-old homemaker in Porto Velho.

Forest fires have increased even as deforestation — which helps reduce global warming by absorbing carbon dioxide — is on the wane. President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva has pledged to put a stop to illegal deforestation of the Amazon by 2030. The practice had dramatically worsened under his far-right predecessor Jair Bolsonaro. — AFP

FRIDAY, AUGUST 23, 2024

# In Kenya, drought-weary farmers reap rewards of early warnings

## Meteorological data, text messages tip off farmers

**KILIFI COUNTY, Kenya:** When farmer Teresa Kahindi harvested nearly two tons of maize two years ago amid a severe drought, her neighbors in the Kenyan coastal county of Kilifi accused her of witchcraft.

Many of her fellow farmers had not produced even a single sack, weighing about 90 kg, of the staple, during the fifth consecutive season of almost no rain in eastern Kenya, where arid conditions can devastate harvests. "They said I was a witch," said Kahindi, 53, while strolling through her fields of black-eyed peas, mung beans, cassava, finger millet and sunflowers. "But it's not true. We can't farm like we used to do. Now we must rely on climate forecasts."

Kahindi's drought-defying harvest was thanks to a sophisticated early-warning system that includes cutting-edge meteorological data, radio and text alerts and on-the-ground teams that ensure communities can take pre-emptive action to avoid crop losses. In March 2022, a month before the rainy season was due to begin, Kahindi was advised to adapt her plans at a seminar for farmers run by county officials.

She prepared her plots with manure to enhance water retention, covered the soil with dry grass mulching to reduce evaporation and planted drought-tolerant maize seeds, which require less water and mature faster than other varieties. "Knowledge can transform farming," says Kahindi.

Kenya's early warning system, funded by the government and a patchwork of international agencies, may offer a template for countries to meet the United Nation's 2022 goal to protect "all people on Earth" by 2027 through early warning systems. The UN launched the Early Warnings

for All Action Plan for Africa in Kenya's capital of Nairobi last year in an effort to accelerate a slow rollout in other parts of the continent.

"In terms of early warning, Kenya stands out as a big brother for East Africa," said Zablon Shilenje, the World Meteorological Organization's coordinator for Africa.

As extreme weather events increase due to manmade climate change, the Kenyan model allows farmers to switch agricultural techniques or the crops they cultivate to adapt to predicted conditions, such as intense droughts or heavy floods. Between 2020 and 2022, the Horn of Africa suffered its worst drought in at least 70 years, exacerbated by the climate phenomenon La Niña. Some 23 million people required humanitarian aid at a cost of more than \$1.8 billion.

More people will be exposed to drought as the region's population is set to double to 400 million by 2055. Food security experts say Kenya's early warning system has mitigated the impact of disasters — in turn minimizing the likelihood of famine in one of the world's most food insecure regions.

Between 2010 and 2011, when repeated droughts struck the East African nation, 2.8 million Kenyans were left "severely hungry." Thanks to early warnings, a million fewer people suffered during similar droughts in 2016 and 2017, even as the US government halved its spending on food aid, according to a report by the US Agency for International Development, or USAID.

A study of FEWS NET data by US researchers found 92 percent of early warnings in Kenya were accurate, aided by better monitoring of socioeconomic factors, such as food prices and violent con-



This handout picture released by the FAO shows farmer Amina Guyo harvesting cowpeas and cowpeas leaves to prepare the main meal of the day at her piece of land next to her house in Uran ward, Moyale, Kenya. — AFP

flict. While Kenya's early warning system is now highly accurate at predicting natural disasters, critics say decision-makers don't always act on time or with enough financial support.

In Kenya's southern county of Kajiado, home to the pastoralist Indigenous Maasai, drought warnings may not be understood, due to illiteracy rates, or sometimes are not even delivered when there are gaps in government or humanitarian resources. "I

need help, I would accept training," said Ole Mwato, a 46-year-old Maasai who lost 20 cows and 80 goats in the 2020-2022 droughts.

"It's a lot of pain to lose the animals. There was no grass, no water. That's why they died." For now, Kahindi is leading by example, encouraging local farmers to adapt their methods to future weather in order to maximize yields. "We must work together to beat famine," she said. — Reuters

## Lebanon CB chief says 'striving' to prevent grey-listing

**BEIRUT:** Lebanon's acting central bank governor said on Thursday that his institution was still striving to prevent being placed on a "grey list" of countries under special scrutiny by a financial crime watchdog. Being added to the Financial Action Task Force's grey list would be another major blow to a country in financial tailspin since 2019, with depositors still locked out of most of their pre-crisis savings and many foreign corresponding banks shunning Lebanon's financial system. Reuters first reported in May 2023 that Lebanon had received a preliminary evaluation warranting grey-listing, with gaps in several categories including its anti-money laundering measures, transparency on beneficial ownership of firms and legal assistance in asset freezing and confiscation.

After the initial assessment, Lebanon



BEIRUT: Acting governor of Lebanon's Central Bank Wassim Mansouri, gives a press conference at the bank's headquarters in Beirut. — AFP

was granted a year to address those gaps before a final ruling that is set to be announced at the FATF's plenary in October of this year. "The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) will issue a decision this coming fall and we are still working hard to prevent Lebanon from being placed on the grey list," acting central bank governor Wissam Mansouri said, addressing a meeting of the Union of Arab Banks in Beirut.

## Saudi opens largest logistics investment in Jeddah Port

**JEDDAH:** Saudi Arabia inaugurated on Wednesday the largest logistics investment by global shipping company Maersk in Jeddah Islamic Port with a total investment value of 1.3 billion riyals (about \$345 million) in the presence of a number of leaders of the logistics and maritime sector in the Kingdom.

The Saudi Press Agency quoted Saudi Minister of Transport and Logistics Saleh Al-Jasser as saying at the inauguration ceremony of the logistics area, which was attended by Deputy Amir of Makkah Region Prince Saud bin Mishal, that the area is one of eight logistics areas in the port that were launched with investments from the private sector.

Al-Jasser added that the new logistics area in Jeddah Islamic Port will operate using renewable energy generated from solar panels by 70 percent to support

economic activity in the kingdom by providing highly efficient logistics services to support trade and export movement to foreign markets and enhance supply chains and logistics services.

Al-Jasser explained that the methodology of the Authority and the transport and logistics services system in developing logistics areas in Saudi ports in partnership with the private sector and major national and international companies. Specialized to raise efficiency and enhance operational capabilities in the Kingdom's ports and consolidate its leading and prominent role on the international maritime map. He stated that the Saudi logistics sector and ports have become remarkably attractive to international companies and foreign and local capital for investment and the establishment of logistics zones, which contributes to supporting economic growth, transfer-

Mansouri said Lebanon had received low scores on measures to confiscate illicit wealth or address money laundering, and that the country needed to develop an action plan to address the remaining gaps. In 2023, a diplomatic source and a financial source familiar with the matter said that the central bank's special investigations commission was lobbying FATF member states in a bid to change the score. Being put on the FATF grey list could disrupt a country's capital flows, according to the International Monetary Fund, with banks cutting ties to customers in high-risk countries to reduce compliance costs. Such a listing also risks reputational damage, credit ratings adjustments, trouble obtaining global finance and higher transaction costs.

In Lebanon's case, the listing would represent an indictment of the financial system at a painful time. The country has been slow to make progress on key reforms requested by the IMF in April 2022 as prerequisites for a deal with the fund. The economy has slowed further after more than 10 months of hostilities between armed group Hezbollah and the Israeli military in parallel with the Gaza war. — Reuters

ring knowledge and enhancing the Kingdom's position as a global logistics center.

He pointed out that foreign investment flows in this sector during the past four years exceeded 10 billion riyals (about \$2.7 billion). The agency quoted the Chairman of the General Authority for Ports, Omar Hariri, as saying in a similar speech that the new logistics zone is an extension of the multiple strategic partnerships that the Authority has concluded with major international and national companies. It also includes a center for implementing e-commerce with high-density storage designs and pioneering mechanical solutions and an internal women's academy that provides training programs dedicated to women. He explained that the zone operates on solar energy generated from solar panels on the roofs. Distributed over 65 thousand square meters according to an advanced warehouse management system that applies modern technologies and digital solutions to manage inventory to ensure the safety and security of the area and its workers, in addition to the safety of goods. — KUNA

the company's family owners on a solution.

Sources familiar with the talks told Reuters that the government is planning to temporarily take a majority stake in the yard. The company says it booked orders worth 11 billion euros (\$12.3 billion) in recent months, including from US entertainment group Disney. But the shipbuilder, whose customers pay for the bulk of their luxury liners only upon delivery, has a financing gap of almost 2.8 billion euros due to the delayed effects of a lull in demand during the pandemic. Speaking later to journalists at the shipyard, Scholz said if the government took a stake in Meyer Werft, it would not be forever, adding that the government was "not a shipbuilder" but was interested in a successful future in private hands.

A statement from the owners said work

was being done at full speed on the reorganization of the company but did not go into detail on what government support might look like. "The solution that has now been found is not easy for the family, but we have always said that the interests of the company take precedence over those of the family," said CEO Bernard Meyer. The federal government and state government in Lower Saxony want to contribute 400 million euros in equity, secure bank loans with guarantees, and temporarily take over at least 80 percent of the shipyard, the sources said. Part of the deal includes a right of first refusal for the Meyer family in the event of a state exit in future years, they added. Scholz did not comment on the details of the plan but said any solution would need approvals from parliament and the European Commission. — Reuters

## British tech tycoon 'beat the odds' till yacht tragedy

**LONDON:** Once dubbed Britain's "Bill Gates", tech entrepreneur Mike Lynch, whose body has been recovered from his sunken superyacht off Sicily, had only recently been cleared of fraud charges in the US. The 59-year-old businessman was acquitted in June by a San Francisco court after a decade-long legal battle with US firm Hewlett-Packard, but the allegations tarnished his image as a UK tech success story.

Since returning home, Lynch — an advisor to two British prime ministers — had criticized the government for allowing his extradition to the US in the first place. "I am looking forward to returning to the UK and getting back to what I love most: my family and innovating in my field," he said following his acquittal. But in a tragic twist, he would perish on the Mediterranean celebrating his victory on a cruise with his family and the friends who had helped him through the ordeal.

Born to working-class Irish parents in Essex, east of London, in 1965, the academically bright Lynch won a scholarship to a private school. He went on to study natural sciences at Cambridge University, where he got a doctorate. Lynch had described the fraud trial in the United States as a life-altering moment for him in an interview with the Times newspaper last month.

"It's bizarre, but now you have a second life. The question is, what do you want to do with it?" he said. Lynch and his family were aboard his luxury yacht Bayesian near Palermo with friends and colleagues when it was struck by a sudden storm in the early hours of Monday. His wife, Angela Bacares, was among the 15 people rescued, but his daughter Hannah, 18, was still missing. Italian rescuers have now recovered five bodies, and her fate remains unconfirmed.

Lynch and his wife, who also had an older daughter aged 21, had a combined fortune of £500 million (\$648 million) according to the latest Sunday Times "Rich List". He owed much of that wealth to his software firm Autonomy, which he founded in 1996 in Cambridge and turned into a leading British tech company. Autonomy's search software was informed by Bayesian learning frameworks, inspiring the name of the ill-fated yacht. Lynch sold Autonomy to HP for \$11 billion in 2011 in a mega-deal which raised eyebrows at the time.

Just one year later, HP reported a write-down of \$8.8 billion — including more than \$5 billion it attributed to alleged inflated data from Autonomy — plunging Lynch into the fraud case he spent over a decade fighting.

US prosecutors accused him of taking part in a massive scheme as Autonomy's chief executive to deceive HP by pumping the value of the company. Lynch was extradited last year and spent a year under house arrest before being cleared. He could have faced two decades in jail, an ordeal the entrepreneur said he would not have survived due to various medical conditions.



Mike Lynch

Lynch — who made around \$815 million from the Autonomy sale — always denied the fraud charges, accusing HP of making him a scapegoat for its own failings. A dog lover, he owned two dachshunds and four sheepdogs, and had homes in both London and Suffolk where he had a farm.

He was honored by Queen Elizabeth II in 2006 with an Order of the British Empire (OBE) for his services to enterprise and appointed to the board of the BBC the same year.

After the Autonomy sale, he founded venture capital firm Invoke Capital, which was an early investor in cyber security firm Darktrace. However, despite the US acquittal this year, the legal saga was not over for Lynch. In 2022, London's High Court ruled in a civil fraud case that HP had been duped and had overpaid for Autonomy. The court has yet to rule on the billions of dollars in damages claimed by the US group. David Yelland, a reputation management advisor who described Lynch as a client and friend, said in an X post it was "devastating" to think he had lost his life just as he had begun to rebuild it. "His entire life is one of beating the odds in the most extraordinary of situations," Yelland added. — AFP

## Germany's Scholz vows to keep luxury shipbuilder afloat

**PAPPENBURG, Germany:** The German government is working on a deal to secure the future of Meyer Werft, a 229-year-old shipyard and one of the world's largest cruise ship builders, Chancellor Olaf Scholz assured workers during a visit to the company on Thursday. "We all want to secure the continued existence of the shipyard - and with it everything that depends on it," Scholz said at a meeting of the works council, adding that his government was working with banks and



Business

# US jobs data point to weaker than expected market as growth cools

## Job growth in world's biggest economy lowered by around 68,000 per month

WASHINGTON: The US jobs market was probably cooler than expected in the year through March, Labor Department data showed Wednesday, signaling weaker but still-positive growth. US employers were estimated to have added 818,000 fewer jobs than initially reported for the 12-month period, meaning job growth in the world's biggest economy was lowered by around 68,000 per month.

While this marks a significant decline, it was less dramatic than the loss of up to one million predicted by some economists, and could be revised further.

"You're looking at something that is significantly cooler than previously but still positive and still relatively robust," said EY chief economist Gregory Daco. "The nuance there is very important," he added, telling AFP the data "does not point to a weak labor market." The revisions also do not account for unauthorized immigrants who have contributed strongly to employment growth in recent years, noted Nationwide chief economist Kathy Bostjancic. These initial benchmark revisions are done annually, with the final numbers due in early 2025.

But Wednesday's figures drew heightened scrutiny ahead of November's presidential election — given voters' concerns about the economy — and expectations that the Federal Reserve would make its first post-pandemic interest rate cuts starting September.

ber. Daco also cautioned that this does not mean a larger, 50 basis point rate cut by the central bank is a done deal — unless the government's payrolls report for August shows further weakness or inflation slows more quickly. July hiring data that undershot expectations, alongside an uptick in the unemployment rate, triggered alarm earlier this month and sent stock markets into a panic over recession fears. Markets have rebounded since, on further reports that reassured traders of the economy's health.

"This doesn't challenge the idea we're still in an expansion, but it does signal we should expect monthly job growth to be more muted and put extra pressure on the Fed to cut rates," said Navy Federal Credit Union corporate economist Robert Frick. The US economy has "created a boatload of jobs" even with the revisions, added Ryan Sweet of Oxford Economics. Job growth appears strong, he added, although not sufficient to keep up with growth in the working age population. This is less threatening than if the market was weakening due to layoffs. All eyes are on Fed Chair Jerome Powell this week as he speaks at the annual gathering of central bankers and economists in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. Daco said this is a chance for Powell to regain control of the policy narrative, including by laying out where policymakers believe the economy is heading and what the pace of rate easing will be. — AFP



SAN GABRIEL, US: A cyclist rides past a "Now Hiring" sign posted on a business storefront in San Gabriel, California on August 21, 2024. — AFP

## Fed steaming toward rate cut in September

WASHINGTON: The Federal Reserve appears to be very much on track for an interest rate cut in September after a "vast majority" of officials said such an action was likely, according to the minutes of the US central bank's July 30-31 meeting. The minutes, which were released on Wednesday, even showed some policymakers would have been willing to reduce borrowing costs at last month's gathering. The policy-setting Federal Open Market Committee left its benchmark interest rate unchanged in the 5.25 percent-5.50 percent range on July 31, but opened the door to a cut at the Sept. 17-18 meeting. Financial markets have been expecting the September meeting to kick off the Fed's policy easing, with as much as a full percentage point

worth of rate cuts expected by the end of this year.

At the July meeting, most policymakers thought that "if the data continued to come in about as expected, it would likely be appropriate to ease policy at the next meeting," the minutes said. They also noted "many" Fed officials viewed the stance of rates to be restrictive and "a few participants" contended that amid an ongoing cooling in inflationary pressures, no change in rates would mean that monetary policy would increase the drag on economic activity.

While all Fed officials were on board with keeping rates steady in July, the minutes revealed that "several" policymakers said progress in lowering inflation amid a rise in joblessness "had provided a plausible case" for a quarter-percentage-point cut in July, "or that they could have supported such a decision" had it been on the table. The minutes also showed that a dwindling camp of policymakers feared a premature easing in monetary policy could restart inflation.

Jamie Cox, managing partner at Harris Financial Group, said "the Fed minutes removed all doubt about a September rate cut." He added that "the Fed's communication strategy is to make its meetings less of a market-moving event, and they are following the script to the letter." With the Fed letting the data determine what happens with rates, central bank watchers are already contemplating the future scope of cuts and whether aggressive action is needed at the onset of the easing cycle. "It may not be too heavy a lift for (Fed) Chair (Jerome) Powell to move the Committee now to a baseline of three 25-basis-point cuts in a row" through the end of the year, analysts at Evercore ISI said. They added that there's a "reasonably low bar" for half-percentage-point cuts, but that would likely require a "more pronounced weakening" in the job market relative to the softness seen in hiring data in July.

The case for cutting rates rests on the ebbing of price pressures back to the central bank's 2 percent target and increased anxiety about the state of the job market in the wake of recent data showing a rise in the unemployment rate. The speed of the jump in the jobless rate, which bottomed at 3.4 percent early last year and has since climbed to 4.3 percent as of last month, has added urgency to the debate over rate cuts and

has prompted some analysts to say that a half-percentage-point reduction in borrowing costs should be considered next month.

The minutes noted that officials see the job market as having largely returned to where it was before the COVID-19 pandemic started, and described the job market as "strong but not overheated."

Markets showed little reaction to the release of the minutes, with stocks rising modestly to end the day higher and bond yields falling. Fed funds futures showed the probability of a quarter-percentage-point cut at the September meeting falling slightly from Tuesday and the odds of a half-percentage-point reduction edging higher. Powell largely tipped off the likely outlook after the July policy meeting when he said "if we do get the data that we hope we get, then a reduction in our policy rate could be on the table at the September meeting." The Fed's concerns about the job market may be underpinned by the Labor Department's estimate on Wednesday that 818,000 fewer payroll jobs existed in March than previously reported. — Reuters

| No. | Ticker                       | Sector                 | Price Movement & Performance |             |           |          |       |            |            |        |         |               | Valuation Multiples * |      |      |       |      |
|-----|------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|-------------|-----------|----------|-------|------------|------------|--------|---------|---------------|-----------------------|------|------|-------|------|
|     |                              |                        | Open Price                   | Close Price | Week High | Week Low | Range | Volume     | WTD Change | WTD %  | YTD %   | Support Level | Resistance Level      | P/E  | P/B  | Yield | Beta |
| 101 | National Bank of Kuwait      | Banking                | 887                          | 882         | 890       | 871      | 19    | 12,766,453 | -5         | -0.56% | 3.59%   | 879           | 885                   | 13.2 | 1.68 | 3.9%  | 1.05 |
| 102 | Gulf Bank                    | Banking                | 307                          | 318         | 319       | 307      | 12    | 58,612,382 | 12         | 3.92%  | 18.83%  | 316           | 321                   | 19.0 | 1.50 | 3.6%  | 1.28 |
| 104 | Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait       | Banking                | 290                          | 291         | 296       | 290      | 6     | 14,645,095 | 3          | 1.04%  | 31.14%  | 279           | 292                   | 15.2 | 1.19 | 2.9%  | 0.96 |
| 106 | Kuwait International Bank    | Banking                | 182                          | 186         | 187       | 180      | 7     | 41,820,321 | 4          | 2.20%  | 27.72%  | 180           | 186                   | 14.7 | 0.68 | 2.6%  | 1.06 |
| 107 | Burgan Bank                  | Banking                | 185                          | 186         | 187       | 183      | 4     | 3,479,775  | 2          | 1.09%  | 13.55%  | 185           | 191                   | 17.3 | 0.67 | 3.1%  | 1.33 |
| 108 | Kuwait Finance House         | Banking                | 718                          | 719         | 721       | 715      | 6     | 34,507,568 | 3          | 0.42%  | 7.95%   | 715           | 725                   | 20.0 | 2.07 | 2.7%  | 1.13 |
| 109 | Boubyan Bank                 | Banking                | 588                          | 590         | 593       | 586      | 7     | 5,503,961  | 2          | 0.34%  | 4.23%   | 585           | 593                   | 29.9 | 2.43 | 1.3%  | 1.14 |
| 201 | Kuwait Investment            | Financial Services     | 157                          | 170         | 170       | 156      | 14    | 3,018,259  | 13         | 8.28%  | 33.86%  | 168           | 178                   | 10.0 | 0.75 | 6.2%  | 1.98 |
| 204 | National Investments         | Financial Services     | 237                          | 253         | 260       | 235      | 25    | 16,772,249 | 17         | 7.20%  | 5.86%   | 248           | 257                   | 35.0 | 1.08 | 6.0%  | 2.01 |
| 205 | Kuwait Projects              | Financial Services     | 100                          | 101         | 103       | 100      | 3     | 71,386,953 | 1.4        | 1.41%  | -3.81%  | 101           | 104                   | NM   | 0.57 | 0.0%  | 0.93 |
| 212 | Arzan Financial Group        | Financial Services     | 169                          | 168         | 178       | 166      | 12    | 38,089,277 | 0          | 0.00%  | -16.80% | 162           | 172                   | 20.0 | 0.96 | 1.1%  | 1.24 |
| 222 | Aayan Leasing and Investment | Financial Services     | 153                          | 159         | 161       | 152      | 9     | 28,764,509 | 8          | 5.30%  | -8.62%  | 158           | 163                   | 8.8  | 1.07 | 4.7%  | 1.60 |
| 252 | Al Imtiaz Investment         | Financial Services     | 46                           | 45.9        | 46.9      | 44.6     | 2.3   | 5,125,715  | 1.3        | 2.91%  | -18.76% | 44.8          | 46                    | NM   | 0.33 | 0.0%  | 1.33 |
| 401 | Kuwait Real Estate           | Real Estate            | 238                          | 235         | 238       | 228      | 10    | 41,380,213 | -4         | -1.67% | 21.51%  | 229           | 237                   | 17.1 | 1.53 | 1.6%  | 1.16 |
| 404 | Salhia Real Estate           | Real Estate            | 427                          | 434         | 434       | 419      | 15    | 4,520,093  | 10         | 2.36%  | 6.22%   | 424           | 434                   | 17.7 | 1.39 | 3.3%  | 0.57 |
| 413 | Mabaneer                     | Real Estate            | 851                          | 863         | 869       | 848      | 21    | 2,617,560  | 15         | 1.77%  | 8.51%   | 856           | 869                   | 18.1 | 1.88 | 1.5%  | 0.92 |
| 418 | The Commercial Real Estate   | Real Estate            | 149                          | 154         | 160       | 149      | 11    | 32,088,429 | 5          | 3.36%  | 54.00%  | 150           | 156                   | 15.3 | 0.93 | 2.6%  | 0.67 |
| 501 | National Industries          | Financial Services     | 222                          | 224         | 226       | 221      | 5     | 10,172,065 | 2          | 0.90%  | 15.29%  | 217           | 226                   | 12.8 | 1.02 | 2.1%  | 1.59 |
| 505 | Gulf Cable                   | Industrials            | 1,755                        | 1,805       | 1,850     | 1,700    | 150   | 1,643,476  | 65         | 3.74%  | 37.79%  | 1,730         | 1,810                 | 19.3 | 1.48 | 3.6%  | 1.06 |
| 506 | HEISCO                       | Industrials            | 920                          | 912         | 920       | 901      | 19    | 2,927,929  | -6         | -0.65% | 11.22%  | 907           | 925                   | 20.3 | 2.30 | 3.3%  | 0.89 |
| 514 | Boubyan Petrochemical        | Basic Materials        | 590                          | 628         | 632       | 587      | 45    | 7,111,260  | 39         | 6.62%  | 7.35%   | 604           | 633                   | 18.5 | 1.25 | 9.8%  | 0.90 |
| 603 | Agility                      | Industrials            | 256                          | 261         | 264       | 253      | 11    | 24,710,716 | 7          | 2.76%  | -48.72% | 260           | 268                   | 8.4  | 0.76 | 7.7%  | 1.57 |
| 605 | Zain                         | Telecommunications     | 453                          | 458         | 458       | 450      | 8     | 6,738,678  | 5          | 1.10%  | -9.66%  | 450           | 459                   | 10.7 | 1.72 | 7.7%  | 0.55 |
| 623 | Human Soft Holding           | Industrials            | 2,543                        | 2,626       | 2,633     | 2,538    | 95    | 596,691    | 89         | 3.51%  | -18.88% | 2,583         | 2,628                 | 8.4  | 3.45 | 12.7% | 0.61 |
| 642 | ALAFCO                       | Industrials            | 227                          | 233         | 233       | 226      | 7     | 1,829,581  | 7          | 3.10%  | 29.44%  | 227           | 236                   | 14.1 | 0.93 | 0.0%  | 1.16 |
| 654 | JAZEERA                      | Consumer Discretionary | 877                          | 885         | 898       | 869      | 29    | 2,520,501  | 17         | 1.96%  | -36.29% | 880           | 915                   | 74.9 | 6.95 | 3.2%  | 1.34 |
| 813 | GFH Financial Group          | Financial Services     | 98.3                         | 102         | 105       | 98.3     | 6.7   | 84,645,416 | 4          | 4.08%  | 33.68%  | 102           | 104                   | 10.6 | 1.23 | 5.0%  | 1.33 |
| 821 | Warba Bank                   | Banking                | 195                          | 195         | 196       | 189      | 7     | 50,167,301 | 2          | 1.04%  | 11.13%  | 192           | 196                   | 27.0 | 1.07 | 1.4%  | 1.06 |
| 822 | Kuwait Telecommunications    | Telecommunications     | 527                          | 524         | 533       | 522      | 11    | 3,252,692  | -4         | -0.76% | -6.93%  | 523           | 530                   | 15.7 | 2.32 | 6.7%  | 0.73 |
| 823 | Mezzan Holding               | Consumer Staples       | 910                          | 930         | 947       | 888      | 59    | 1,497,108  | 30         | 3.33%  | 61.74%  | 879           | 949                   | 20.3 | 2.51 | 2.2%  | 0.45 |
| 824 | Integrated Holding           | Industrials            | 523                          | 552         | 552       | 521      | 31    | 3,250,295  | 31         | 5.95%  | 8.24%   | 546           | 555                   | 27.3 | 2.24 | 3.7%  | 0.75 |
| 827 | Boursa Kuwait                | Financial Services     | 2,001                        | 2,020       | 2,020     | 1,977    | 43    | 789,665    | 20         | 1.00%  | 17.17%  | 2,005         | 2,035                 | 24.1 | 6.86 | 3.7%  | 1.35 |
| 830 | AL GHANIM                    | Consumer Discretionary | 1,114                        | 1,199       | 1,200     | 1,102    | 98    | 8,321,380  | 98         | 8.90%  | 13.54%  | 1,175         | 1,220                 | 10.8 | 3.79 | 6.0%  | 0.82 |
| 831 | Beyout Investment            | Financial Services     | 488                          | 490         | 494       | 484      | 10    | 792,064    | -5         | -1.01% | #VALUE! | 488           | 495                   | 19.1 | 2.84 | 0.0%  | NULL |

\* As of end of week closing

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## Business

# Over 9,000 workers locked out at Canadian railways after talks fail

## Stoppage could hit Canadian economy, cross-border trade with US

**TORONTO:** Canada's top two railroads locked out more than 9,000 unionized workers, triggering an unprecedented rail stoppage that could cause billions of dollars worth of economic damage and roil North American supply chains.

The companies - Canadian National Railway (CN) and Canadian Pacific Kansas City (CPKC) - and the Teamsters union blamed each other for the work stoppage after multiple rounds of contract talks failed to yield a new agreement. "Throughout this process, CN and CPKC have shown themselves willing to compromise rail safety and tear families apart to earn an extra buck," Teamsters Canada Rail Conference (TCRC) president Paul Boucher said, adding that the parties were continuing the talks.

The two railroads said in separate statements that they bargained in good faith and had made multiple offers with better pay and working conditions. "Despite our best efforts, it is clear that a negotiated outcome with the TCRC is not within reach," CPKC said in a statement on Thursday. The company on Thursday reiterated its demand for a binding arbitration to resolve the disputes. The Canadian government has so far asked the railroads and the union to work together and reach an agreement, choosing not to use its power to refer the dispute to binding arbitration.

As that deadline neared, business groups and industries sounded alarm over the possible stoppage that they say would raise costs and lead to 'devastating consequences.'

Ratings agency Moody's said on Wednesday that the rail stoppage could cost over C\$341 million per

day. Canada is the world's second-largest country by area and relies heavily on rail transport, which hauls around C\$380 billion (\$277 billion) worth of goods annually. The stoppage is set to cripple shipments of grain, potash and coal while also slowing the transport of petroleum products, chemicals and autos. Businesses in the US are set to be impacted as well, as the two economies are highly integrated, though the companies have said rail networks south of the border would continue to operate. Rail transport accounted for 14 percent of total bilateral trade of \$382.4 billion between the countries for the first half of the year, according to the US Department of Transportation.

CN and CPKC's coast-to-coast rail networks in Canada connect south of the border and serve as important supply chain links to trade corridors and ports across North America.

The union and the two companies have been in talks for months after the previous contract expired last year but have differed on provisions such as relocation, rest periods and scheduling. "The main obstacles to reaching an agreement remain the companies' demands, not union proposals," Teamsters said on Thursday. In its latest offer, CN said it improved wages and aligned working hours with federally mandated rest provisions, which it claimed would see employees work fewer days in a month. The union did not respond after it presented the offer, the company said.

The union has opposed CN's "forced relocation scheme", which could see workers ordered to move across the country.

CPKC said its offer for Train and Engine division



VAUGHAN, Canada: The CN North rail yard is shown on August 22, 2024 in Vaughan, Canada. — AFP

employees included competitive wage hikes and increased shift differentials. Teamsters said on Thursday it had put forward multiple offers, none of which were seriously considered by either company. Analysts say profits at both railroads will take a hit from

the strike. "Our rough calculations show that each day under a strike/lockout will negatively impact CN's profit per share by about C\$0.04 and CP's by ~C\$0.02," Desjardins analyst Benoit Poirier wrote in a note earlier this week. — Reuters

## India overtakes China to become Russia's top oil buyer

**NEW DELHI:** India overtook China as the world's biggest importer of Russian oil in July as Chinese refiners bought less because of lower profit margins from producing fuels, a comparison of import data showed. Russian crude made up a record 44 percent of India's overall imports last month, rising to a record 2.07 million barrels per day (bpd), 4.2 percent higher than in June and 12 percent more than a year ago, data on Indian shipments from trade and industry sources showed.

That surpassed China's July oil imports from Russia of 1.76 million bpd via pipelines and shipments, based on Chinese customs data. Indian refiners have been gorging on Russian oil sold at discounts after Western nations imposed sanctions against Moscow and curtailed their energy purchases in response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

"India's requirement for Russian oil is going to go up as long as there are no further tightening of sanctions," an Indian refining source said. India's trade with Russia has increased since Russia began its war against Ukraine in February 2022 mainly because of oil and fertilizer imports, a move helping to keep a lid on global prices and controlling inflation. India's rising purchases are changing the flow of Russian ESPO Blend crude from traditional Chinese buyers to South Asia. ESPO imports to India jumped in July to 188,000 bpd as larger Suezmax vessels were used, according to the data.

Refiners in northeast China are typically the biggest ESPO buyers because of their close proximity, but their demand has fallen because of tepid fuel demand. Iraq continued to be the second-largest oil supplier to India last month, followed by Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. — Reuters

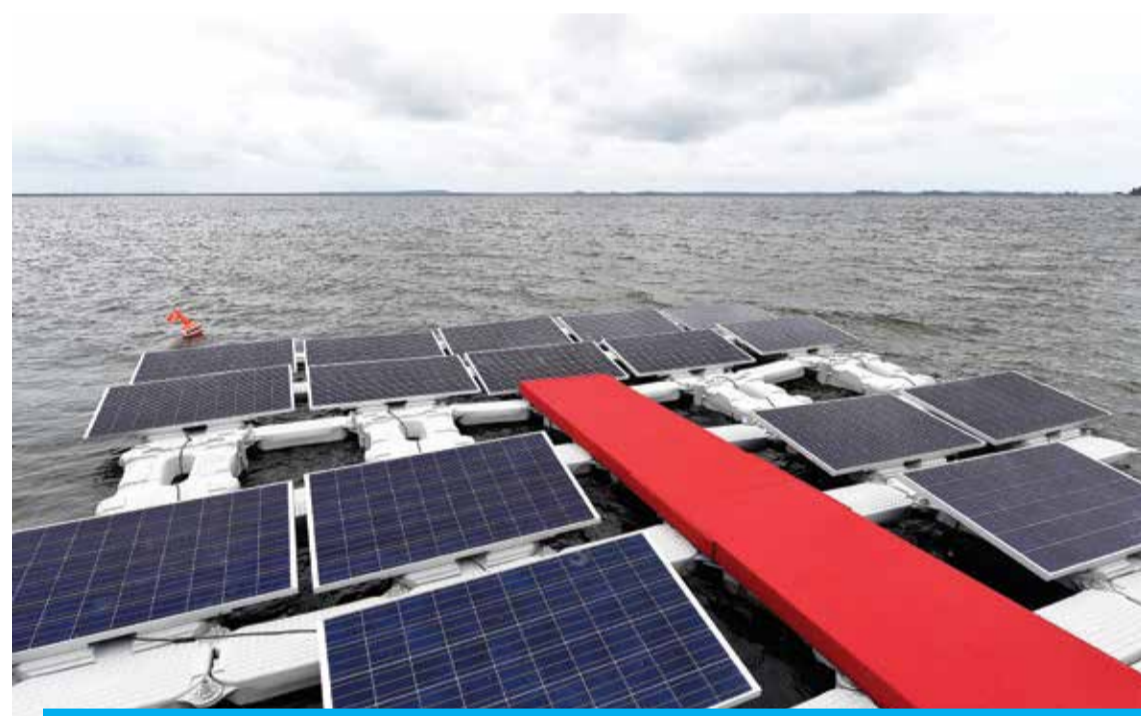
## Brazil's power grid caps threaten renewable projects

**SAO PAULO:** Wind and solar energy producers in Brazil have warned they are reconsidering future investments there after the national grid operator repeatedly capped how much energy they could deliver in the past year, which squeezed their profits. Brazil has made big strides encouraging companies to invest in wind, solar and other renewable power generation sources, offering generous financing and subsidies. But all the electricity they generate has taxed the grid. More than a dozen executives and industry representatives said renewable energy investments were less viable under the National Electric System Operator's (ONS) current "curtailments" policy, which temporarily caps how much power ONS accepts from wind and solar plants.

The pressure has been most acute in northeast Brazil, a hot spot for renewable energy investment. There are bottlenecks in transmission lines carrying electricity to Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro and elsewhere in the more populous southeast region. ONS has managed the grid more cautiously since August 2023, when a power outage in the northeast spread over most of the country. That has meant more curtailments when electricity generation exceeds consumption or there is a lack of transmission capacity.

ONS has said curtailments were not excessive, and were necessary for safety. The operator said its data shows only 3 percent of electricity generated was lost to curtailments last month. Volt Robotics, a power sector consultancy, analyzed ONS numbers. The Brazilian Wind Energy Association, ABEEolica, estimated the sector had lost some 700 million reais (\$128 million) in the past year. The Brazilian Solar Association, Absolar, estimated a loss of 50 million reais in the four months through July.

"Renewable energy for the country is going to waste," said Eduardo Sattamini, chief executive officer of Engie Brasil Energia, which has been affected. The Serra do Mel II B complex in the northeast state of Rio Grande do Norte, owned



PRESIDENTE FIGUEIREDO, Brazil: Floating solar photovoltaic panels in the municipality of Presidente Figueiredo, Brazil. — AFP

by Equatorial Energia, was hit hardest among wind generators, they found. Between January and early August, 58 percent of power generated was rejected by the grid.

Equatorial's renewables unit Echoenergia said in a statement the curtailments had hurt its operations and translated into higher risk pricing by investors, which could cut new investments. "This is not an environment for decision-making about new projects," the company said. Chinese generator SPIC's Banabuiu complex in coastal Ceara state was the worst hit among solar generators. Volt Robotics said, losing 50 percent of electricity generated between January and early August. Adriana Waltrick, chief executive of SPIC Brasil, said it was critical to resolve the grid challenges, which "could increase future energy costs and impact the competitiveness of the renewable energy sector in Brazil."

Losses can be compounded because generators often must buy electricity at market rates to

honor contracts with distributors and consumers. Voltalia, a renewable energy producer with nearly two thirds of its capacity in Brazil, expects curtailments to shave some 40 million euros (\$44.48 million) from its earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortization this year.

CPFL Energia, a power company controlled by China's State Grid, also highlighted the issue in second quarter results, flagging losses of 21 million reais. Some companies have sought compensation in court for the losses incurred by ONS failures. Those legal battles could take years. Offering some relief, the federal government has held auctions for private companies to build transmission lines, but many of those projects are years away from completion.

Christiano Vieira, director of operations at ONS, said more electricity from the northeast will begin flowing into the national grid in September, when a new transmission line will start operating, which may help reduce curtailments. — Reuters

## Eurozone business activity gets boost from Olympics: PMI

**LONDON:** Eurozone business activity showed surprising strength in August despite firms raising prices, a survey showed, potentially weakening expectations for two more rate cuts from the European Central Bank this year. However there were signs the upswing may be temporary, with readings flattered by a sharp rise in French services activity due to the Olympic Games. German business activity contracted for a second consecutive month and by more than expected.

"The rise in the flash PMIs for August is not as good as it looks as it was largely due to a boost from the Paris Olympics and the survey still points to GDP growth slowing in Q3," said Franziska Palm at Capital Economics. "With price pressures still rising, the ECB will remain cautious."

HCOB's preliminary composite Purchasing Managers' Index, compiled by S&P Global, bounced to 51.2 this month from July's 50.2, moving away from the 50 mark separating growth from contraction.

That confounded expectations in a Reuters poll for a dip to 50.1 and beat even the most optimistic prediction for 50.8. The rebound in activity came even as firms in the 20-country currency union raised prices at a faster pace. The composite output prices index climbed to 52.9 from 52.1.

An unexpected rise in July eurozone inflation, a resilient labor market and steady economic activity could make ECB policymakers hesitant to ease policy much further.

Having reduced the deposit rate in June, poli-



FRANKFURT: A man walks past a giant euro logo at the visitor centre of the European Central Bank (ECB) headquarters in Frankfurt am Main. — AFP

cymakers paused in July although a Reuters poll published last week suggested there would be two additional cuts this year. The PMI for Germany suggested Europe's largest economy - which contracted by 0.1 percent in the second quarter - fared no better going into the second half of the year. In France overall growth received support from a pick-up in business due to the Olympics as a sharp upswing in the country's services sector offset ongoing weakness in manufacturing.

In Britain, outside the European Union, business activity accelerated and cost pressures eased to their weakest in over three years, signaling steady growth momentum going into the second half of 2024. A PMI covering the euro zone services industry soared to 53.3 this month from 51.9, beating a poll prediction for no change. While some of that activity was driven by services firms reducing backlogs of work, overall demand improved. The new business index rose to a three-month high of 51.3 from 50.8. — Reuters

## Disney, Reliance unlikely to sell cricket rights

**NEW DELHI:** Disney and Reliance have offered some concessions to secure an India antitrust approval for their \$8.5 billion media merger, but are unwilling to sell any cricket broadcast rights, the biggest prize in the deal, two sources familiar with matter said. Reuters reported earlier this week that the Competition Commission of India (CCI) sent a warning notice to the companies expressing concern that their merged entity will have a tight grip on most cricket rights for TV and streaming in India, and can hurt advertisers.

In their response, the companies have offered to go easy on advertising rate hikes and not increase them unreasonably, the sources said. Reliance-Disney are aiming to create India's biggest entertainment player which will compete with Sony, Netflix and Amazon with 120 TV channels and two streaming services, but cricket, which has a fanatical following in the country, is the crown jewel.

Many antitrust experts had said that one way to clear the antitrust hurdle was to sell some cricket rights, be it for some tournaments or broadcast medium like TV, but Disney and Reliance have made a new private submission to the CCI in which they have said they are unwilling to do so, said the two sources, who declined to be named as the process is confidential.

The submissions are being reported for the first time, Reliance, Disney and the CCI did not immediately respond to Reuters queries. The

companies have told the CCI they were willing to commit they are not going to increase advertisement prices for cricket matches in any unreasonable way, said the sources.

The first source, however, added the companies have not committed to imposing any price caps or freeze on increasing ad rates for a particular period. Antitrust experts foresee that to seal the deal the companies need to provide structural changes to their arrangement or so-called behavioral remedies, or both, which can include selling some broadcast rights and capping ad rates.

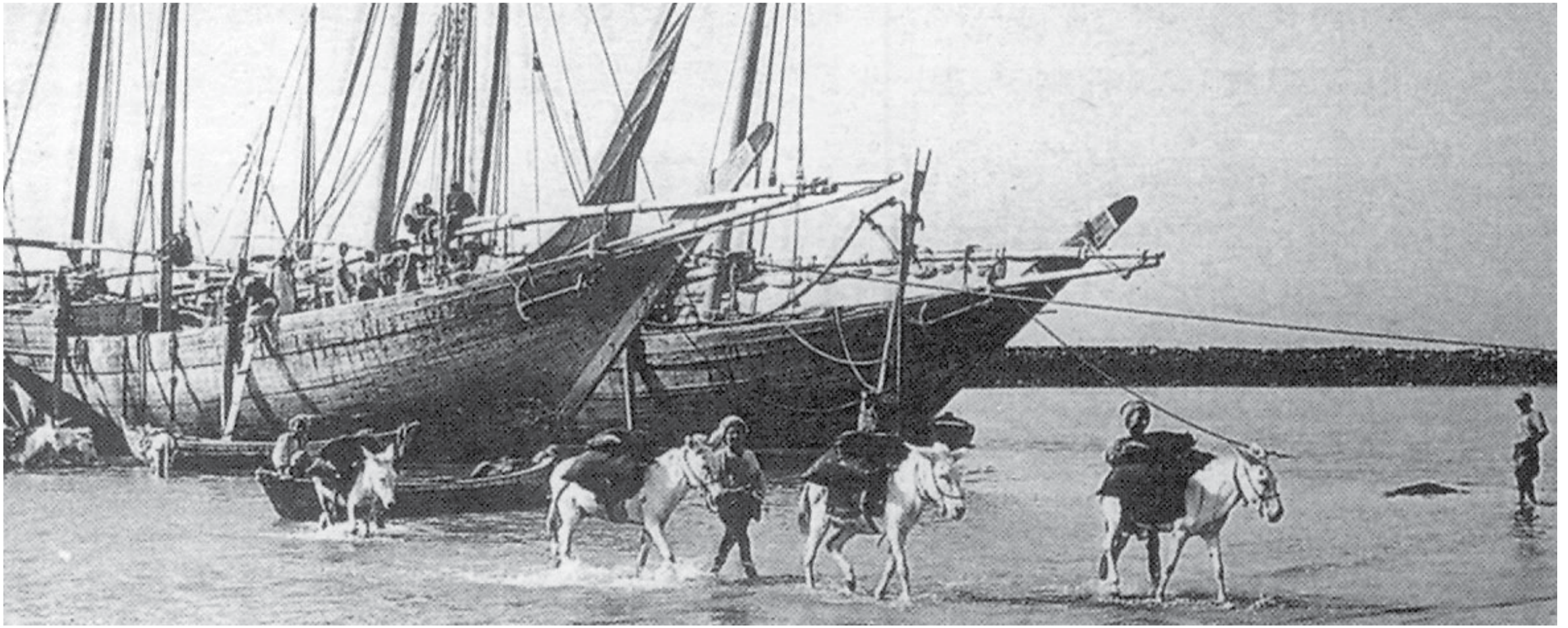
The companies believe cricket rights in the country crazy for the sport, and on which they've spent roughly \$9.5 billion, are too lucrative to part with and are key to the deal, said the first source. The CCI is likely to review the submissions and see if the new concessions are enough to assuage antitrust concerns, or a broader investigation is needed. Over the years, both companies offered free viewing of matches to attract users to some of their streaming platforms in the hope they will buy subscriptions to watch more content.

Jefferies has said the Disney-Reliance entity will have a 40 percent share of the advertising market in TV and streaming segments. The CCI earlier privately asked Reliance and Disney around 100 questions related to the merger. The companies have already told the watchdog they are willing to sell fewer than 10 television channels to assuage concerns about market power and win an early approval.

Cricket rights are central to the Disney-Reliance merger. Over the years, both companies offered free viewing of matches to attract users to some of their streaming platforms in the hope they will buy subscriptions to watch more content. One lawyer said if there were no cricket rights, "the deal is dead". — Reuters

# Weekender

FRIDAY, AUGUST 23 2024



## OLDEN KUWAIT'S INDUSTRIOUS SPIRIT

By Marwan Hafez

**K**uwait's traditional industries were once the cornerstone of its economy and culture, long before the discovery of oil transformed the nation. To understand the importance of these time-honored practices, Kuwait Times interviewed Jamal Alali, a heritage researcher dedicated to preserving and sharing Kuwait's rich past.



Heritage researcher Jamal Alali

### Shipbuilding: A Maritime Legacy

According to Alali, traditional shipbuilding was central to Kuwait's economic life. The boom, a large wooden ship, was crucial for both trade and fishing, valued for its strength and ability to handle open waters. Other types of ships, such as the sambuk, shoue, shalboot and baghlah, each had specific functions, from fishing to transporting goods, reflecting the diverse maritime needs of the time.



### Crafting with Palm Leaves

Another craft that Alali brought to light is the use of palm leaves in everyday crafts. Skilled artisans crafted items like fans from these leaves, showcasing the ingenuity and resourcefulness of Kuwaitis who made the most of available materials.



### Lives of Traditional Craftsmen

Alali also emphasized the important roles of various craftsmen. Blacksmiths created tools and parts for ships, carpenters made furniture, water carriers ensured homes had water, and cobblers crafted shoes. While many of these trades have faded, they were once essential to daily life.

changes, making traditional methods less central to Kuwait's economy. Additionally, evolving social and economic conditions led to new opportunities, reducing the demand for some of these traditional trades.

### Preserving the Past

Despite their decline, these traditional industries were fundamental to Kuwait's early prosperity and cultural identity. As a heritage researcher and artist, Alali aims to reflect Kuwait's old heritage and shed light on how these practices shaped Kuwait's history, to help us appreciate the country's journey from its traditional roots to its modern status.

### Why Traditional Industries Declined

According to Alali, several factors contributed to the decline of these traditional industries. Technological advances and the discovery of oil brought significant



### Building Homes with Mud

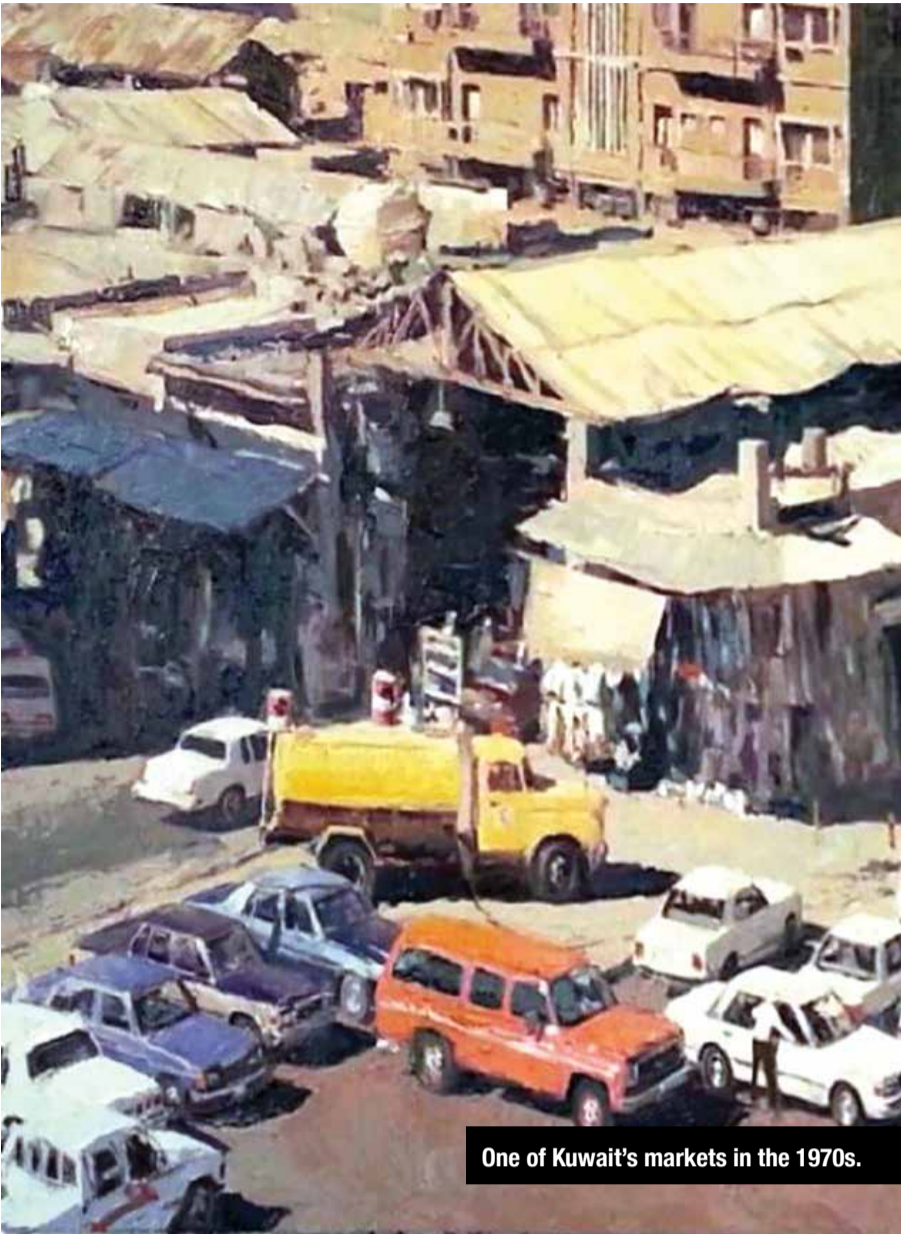
Alali highlighted how traditional Kuwaiti homes were built using mud - a material that was both readily available and easy to work with. This technique was not just practical but also an integral part of the architectural heritage that defined Kuwait's early communities.



### Pearl Diving

Alali noted that pearl diving was the most important tradition in the past as it was a vital source of income for its people. The Arabian Gulf's rich marine environment provided an abundance of natural pearls, highly valued for their beauty and rarity. The pearls collected were traded locally and exported to international markets, contributing significantly to Kuwait's economy. The wealth generated from the pearl trade supported many aspects of Kuwaiti life, from building infrastructure to financing daily necessities.





One of Kuwait's markets in the 1970s.



Abdullah Al-Salem Street leading to the market.

# THREE YEARS IN KUWAIT: MEMORIES OF A SOVIET DOCTOR

By Mahmoud Zakaria

Dr Victor Trupenkov (1924–1995) was a renowned Russian physician and orthopedic surgeon. From March 1970 to March 1973, Professor Trupenkov served as an advisor for the treatment of wounds, trauma and fractures in several hospitals under the ministry of health in Kuwait. He made significant contributions to the

Abdullah and Ahmed Al-Qattami.

In addition to being a skilled doctor and a well-educated individual, Dr Trupenkov was highly respected among the people of Kuwait, including the desert-dwelling tribes. His reputation and deep interest in the Kuwaiti society allowed him to move freely between different regions and visit remote areas, gaining an intimate understanding of the lives and

study of Kuwait's history, economy and culture during his time in the country.

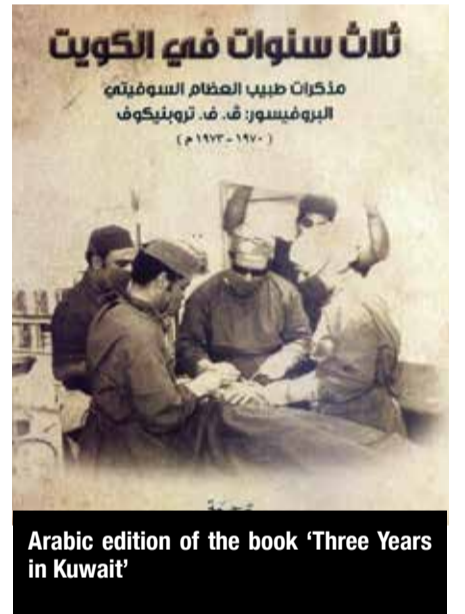
Trupenkov wrote about Kuwait at the beginning of its economic boom, which started in 1952 due to the continued development of oil extraction. He described how the compact houses and the city's protective wall, built in the 1920s to guard against raids by nomadic tribes, were removed as Kuwait transformed into a modern city with elegant multi-storey buildings equipped with electricity, telephones, televisions, air conditioning and fresh water.

He also recounted how Kuwaiti citizens, during the spring, would head to the mainland with their families for recreation, rather than going to the sea. Cars would crawl like ants across the desert to the northeast, where each family would choose a spot to erect tents and lay down carpets. The men would gather to chat and exchange news, while the women, in separate tents, prepared food, cooking rice and mutton. Meanwhile, children would play, sometimes getting lost amid the scattered tents and cars.

In the autumn of 1972, Dr Trupenkov was invited to a remote area with some friends to observe Kuwaitis practicing falconry. He found the process of breeding and training these swift birds fascinating. Hunters would dig a deep hole, about half a meter deep and construct a roof of tree branches and sand, leaving some holes for observation. The falconer would sit in the



Russian edition of the book 'Three Years in Kuwait'



Arabic edition of the book 'Three Years in Kuwait'



Victor Trupenkov

development of the medical profession in the country and treated several members of Kuwait's ruling family, including Sheikh Ali Sabah Al-Sabah Al-Sabah, the son of the then Amir of Kuwait. He also treated prominent Kuwaiti businessmen, such as brothers

living conditions of the desert tribes.

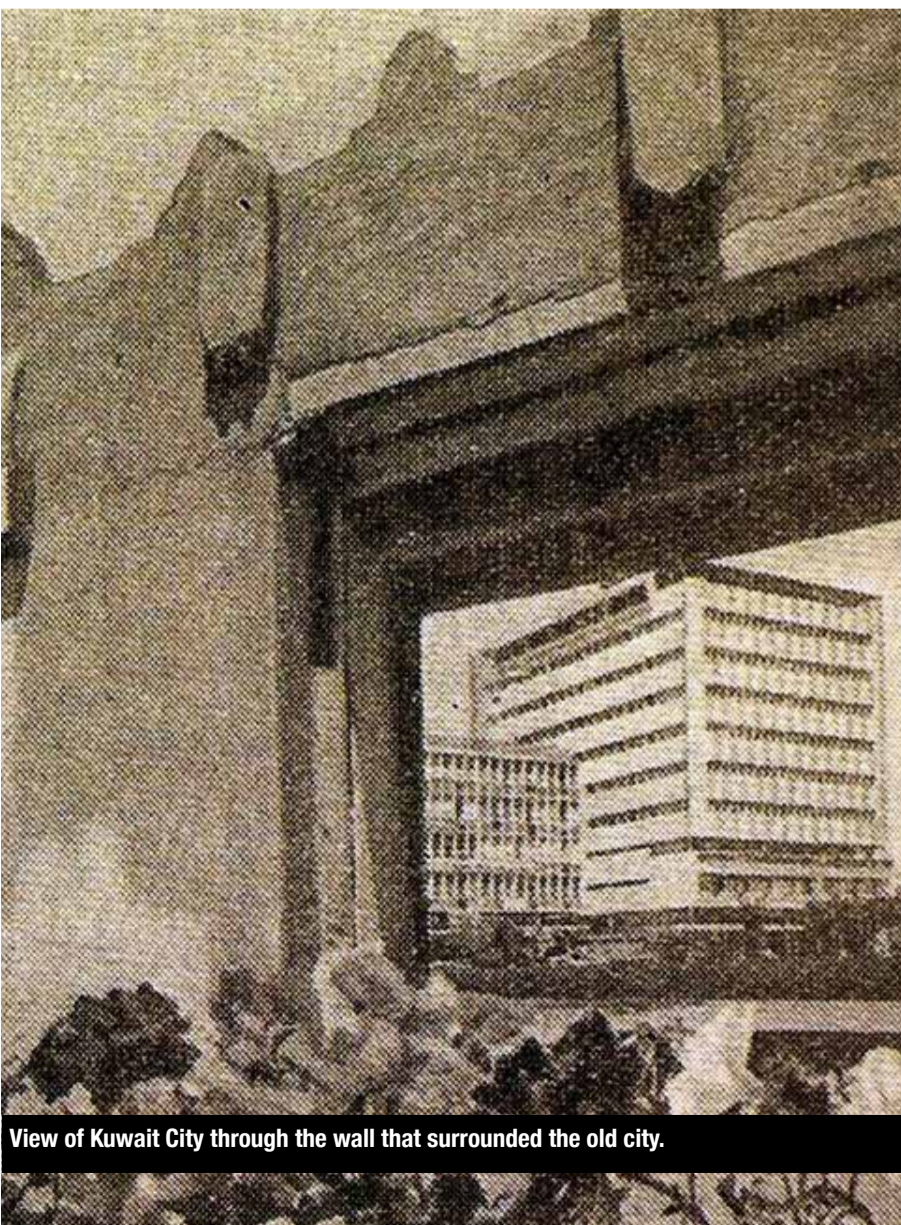
In 1975, two years after returning to Russia, Trupenkov published a book titled "Three Years in Kuwait" through the House of Oriental Studies, part of the Academy of Sciences of the Soviet Union. The book provides a detailed

hideout, holding a long string tied to a pigeon. When the falcon attacked the pigeon, it would be captured as the falconer quickly grabbed its legs and threw a cloth over it.

Despite the prosperity and development of Kuwaiti society, Trupenkov noted the people's deep affection for their traditional songs and dances. Kuwaiti artists produced exceptional modern works, with Mahmoud Al-Kuwaiti, a popular singer and composer, creating songs with a strong national character. In the realm of fine arts, many Kuwaiti artists received awards and certifi-

cates of appreciation for their participation in international exhibitions, such as those in Canada and Japan, particularly in the field of children's drawings.

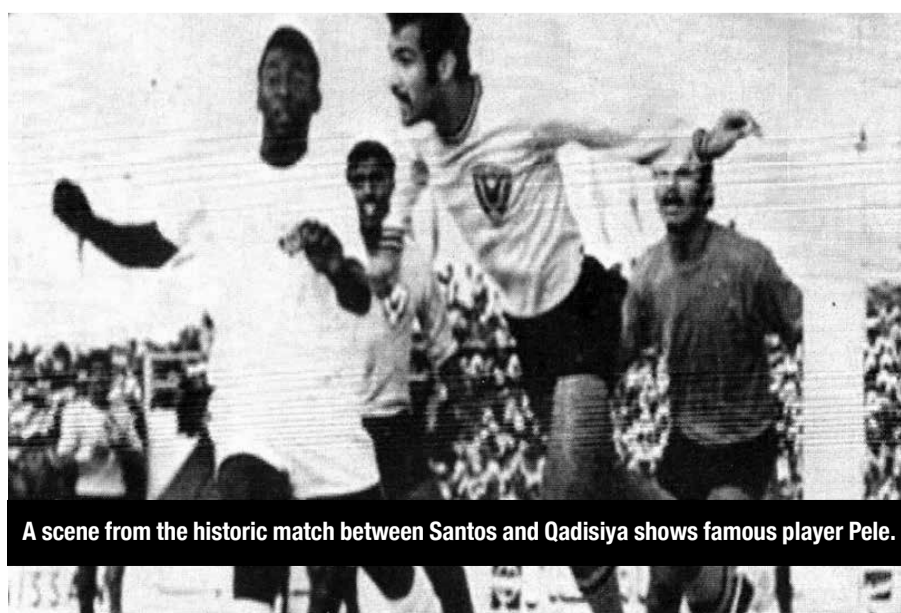
Dr Trupenkov left Kuwait at the end of February 1973, after a farewell ceremony attended by leaders of the ministry of health and many of his friends. He returned home with mixed emotions — happy to be going back to his homeland but saddened to leave behind the relationships he had built in Kuwait.



View of Kuwait City through the wall that surrounded the old city.



Victor Trupenkov at work.



A scene from the historic match between Santos and Qadisiya shows famous player Pele.



A falconer.



# Kuwaiti artist Etaf

Redefining music with

a fusion of cultures and stories



By Sahar Moussa

**E**taf is a talented Kuwaiti singer-songwriter with Palestinian and Lebanese heritage, recognized for her unique style as a multi-instrumentalist. After moving to the UK to pursue a master's and PhD in law, she discovered her true passion in music and is now fully dedicated to her musical career. Etaf sings and raps in both Arabic and English, crafting songs that defy traditional structure and lean more toward storytelling. Blending various influences to create her own genre, Etaf's journey from law to music reflects her deep love for the craft and her innovative approach to songwriting, as told to Kuwait Times.

**Kuwait Times: When did you start writing songs, and which instruments do you play?**

**Etaf:** I'm a multi-instrumentalist. I play the oud, guitar, piano and other random instruments. I started professionally writing songs and releasing them two years ago. Initially, I was just a composer for other lyricists and singers. I would create the music and melody for their songs. I then transitioned into writing my own songs and performing them on stages across the UK.



**KT: Is there one incident in your life that had a significant impact on you and your music?**

**Etaf:** I can't point to one specific incident that had a significant impact on me and my music. It's more that we live under systems of oppression that are harmful and impact us all in different ways. When I write my music, I find myself expressing the frustration of these systems. I articulate the narratives and social norms that are frustrating and challenge the reality we live in. Everything is political - even my love songs are political to me.

**KT: How would you describe your music, and how have your cultural roots influenced it?**

**Etaf:** I sing and rap in Arabic and English, and I'm creating my own genre with my current producer, Eve Singleton. Imagine melancholic Arabic vocals with East London fast street beats, harmonies, live instrumentation like bass guitar, piano and a darbuka. That's the vibe in 'Small Details', my latest song. I don't tend to follow traditional structures in my songs; they're more like storytelling. I have a story to tell, and I like to tell it in my own way.

**KT: Have you written any songs specifically for Palestine? If so, why, and how has the Palestinian cause impacted your music?**

**Etaf:** I wrote a song called 'Taboot' for my grandmother, who was born in Gaza. When I visited Kuwait just after the genocide, I met with my grandmother, Etaf, and felt her pain and grief. The song is about her pain as well as my own pain from seeing my people suffer. I recorded the song in Kuwait at Hessa Alhumaidi's studio (The Sununu Project), co-produced and mastered by Mohammad Alowaisi, whom my friend and colleague, social media strategist Ghadeer Ali (Founder of @Waha.KW), introduced me to. I performed 'Taboot' live across London, and I love how my audience and I end it by singing 'Free Palestine' together.

**KT: Your song 'Small Details' speaks about women's struggles in the Arab world. Can you tell us more about the inspiration behind it?**

**Etaf:** What I really care about in my practice is change, impact and empowerment in the community. 'Small Details' is about the patriarchy and oppressive systems in general, and their impact on us. The 'small details' of how we are oppressed - they're only 'small' in the sense that they often go unnoticed, but they're significant and harmful. I articulate what female oppression looks



“

I performed 'Taboot' live across London, and I love how my audience and I ended it by singing 'Free Palestine' together

”

like in practice and how much control there is over our movements, bodies, gender expression, visibility and so on. This song criticizes the reality we live in and aims to empower my people and the community, telling them that we can and should continue to resist through love, hope and pleasure.

**KT: Have you faced any specific challenges as an Arab and Palestinian artist in the UK music scene, and how have you overcome them?**

**Etaf:** The music industry in general is tough to break into, and opportunities are extremely competitive. However, the more intersectional it is, the harder

it gets. White privilege and white supremacy are real and have impacted me and my music journey. As an Arab AFAB (Assigned Female at Birth), I feel like I have to work incredibly hard to receive the global recognition I want and deserve. Being an independent Arabic AFAB artist means I have to fight to secure performing opportunities at international festivals and radio shows, or to have my music featured in global magazines without having to pay (because it's unethical to pay).



## WHAT'S ON IN KUWAIT

**Event: Back to School Carnival**  
Location: ISK School Mahboula  
Date: August 23-24, 2024

**Event: Decoupage Workshop**  
Location: Al-Tijaria Tower  
Date: August 23, 2024

**Event: Early Morning Paddle**  
Location: Argan Al-Bidaa Hotel and Resort  
Date: August 24, 2024

**Event: Dollmaking**  
Location: Baan Sports Academy, Awtad Tower  
Date: August 24, 2024

**Event: Open Art Day for Cat Lovers**  
Location: Noire Art Studio  
Date: August 24, 2024

**Event: Shark Feeding**  
Location: ASCC  
Date: August 24, 2024

**Event: Trend Expo for Women**  
Location: Al-Durra Hall  
at Hilton Resort Mangaf  
Date: August 24-25, 2024

## Sports

# De Silva, Rathnayake star in Sri Lanka revival against England

## Before play started there was a minute's applause in honor of Graham Thorpe

**MANCHESTER:** Dhananjaya de Silva and debutant fast bowler Milan Rathnayake both made fine fifties as Sri Lanka recovered from a dramatic top-order collapse on Wednesday's opening day of the first Test against England at Old Trafford.

Sri Lanka were in dire straits at 6-3 after skipper De Silva won the toss, losing their first three wickets for no runs in 10 balls. Yet they recovered to 236 all out, De Silva top-scoring with 74 and tailender Rathnayake, with only his third first-class fifty, close behind in making 72.

The pair checked England's progress during an eighth-wicket partnership of 63, with no other Sri Lanka batsman making more than Kusal Mendis' 24. "The captain wanted me to stay in there and support him," number 9 Rathnayake, speaking via a translator, told reporters after stumps. "That's what I did and when he got out, then I played my natural game."

Chris Woakes struck twice in an over on his way to 3-32 in 11 overs. De Silva's impressive innings ended when he turned a quicker ball from off-spinner Shoaib Bashir straight to Dan Lawrence at leg slip, with the 20-year-old taking 3-55 in 23 overs.

### 'Good day' for England

Ben Duckett and Lawrence, recalled in place of the injured Zak Crawley, guided England to 22-0 before bad light ended play for the day at 5:52 pm (1652 GMT). "I think it's a good day," Woakes, now the leader of England's attack following James Anderson's retirement, told Sky Sports.

"When you bowl on day one on a Test surface like that, to be batting at the end of the day I think you're really happy." It would have been nice to bowl them out earlier than what they got, but with the bad light we

couldn't bring our quick guys on to mop up the tail."

Sri Lanka's initial collapse ensured a dream start for stand-in England captain Ollie Pope, leading his country for the first time after Ben Stokes was ruled out with a torn hamstring. The tourists came into their first Test in England in eight years on the back of just a solitary warm-up fixture — a defeat by the second-string England Lions — and it was soon clear some of their batsmen could have done with more time in the middle.

### Stunning slump

Sri Lanka's collapse began 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 opener, driving loosely at an outswinger and edging to Joe Root at first slip as he fell for four.

Five balls later, Angelo Mathews was lbw for a duck playing no shot to a Woakes delivery that nipped back off the pitch. Mendis, by contrast, could do little else than glove a superb 93 mph (150 km/h) delivery from express quick Mark Wood that reared up from short of a length to second slip.

De Silva, however, pulled Atkinson for a commanding four and completed an impressively quick fifty off just 56 balls. He was reprieved on 65, when Smith missed a tough stumping chance off Bashir, but was out soon afterwards to leave Sri Lanka 176-8.

Nevertheless the 28-year-old Rathnayake, undaunted by the loss of his skipper, went to a 96-ball fifty in style when the left-handed batsman launched Bashir for a straight six that also took Sri Lanka past 200. Bashir though had his revenge



**MANCHESTER:** Sri Lanka's Vishwa Fernando (L) is run out by England's Jamie Smith (R) on day one of the first Test cricket match between England and Sri Lanka at Old Trafford cricket ground in Manchester, north-west England. — AFP

when Rathnayake drove him to Woakes at mid-on.

Before play started there was a minute's applause in honour of Graham Thorpe, the former England batsman and assistant coach, with both teams, as well as the match officials, wearing

black armbands in his honour.

Thorpe died aged 55 earlier this month after being hit by a train. His wife Amanda confirmed he had taken his own life having suffered from depression for several years. — AFP

## England to host Zimbabwe in 2025

**LONDON:** After a gap of more than two decades, England will play a men's Test match against Zimbabwe next year, the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) announced Thursday.

The one-off match, England's first against Zimbabwe since 2003, will take place at Trent Bridge in Nottingham starting on May 22. "To be welcoming Zimbabwe back for a men's Test Match will be a historic moment, more than 20 years since their last visit," said ECB chief executive Richard Gould after the international fixtures for England's 2025 home season were published.

"Test cricket is so beloved in this country, and we know that we have an important role to play in supporting developing Test cricketing nations so that this format of the game thrives long into the future."

The Zimbabwe match will be followed by five Tests against India starting at Headingley, Leeds, on June 20. The fifth Test against India, scheduled to end on August 4, is the last Test England will play before they bid to regain the Ashes in a 2025/26 series in Australia.

The ECB also announced Lord's will stage its first women's Test in 2026 when England face India. That match will take place 50 years since the late Rachael Heyhoe Flint first led out an England women's team at the London ground, the headquarters of Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC).

"I played 15 Tests for England during my career but none of those were at Lord's," said England women's great Claire Taylor, the chair of MCC's cricket committee. "So I'm delighted at this news and most importantly for the players who'll make history playing in this fixture in 2026."

"Young girls playing up and down the country can now aspire to play Test match cricket at the Home of Cricket. It is a clear demonstration that cricket is a game for all." But the 2025 season will see the England women's side go without a home Test for the second successive year.

Both West Indies' men's and women's sides will visit for white-ball series between May and June, with three Twenty20 internationals and three one-day internationals for each series. England men's white-ball sides will host South Africa in September, before travelling to Ireland at the end of the month.

England men's Tests in the 2025 season (all 1000 GMT starts):

May 22-25: England v Zimbabwe, Trent Bridge, Nottingham

### England v India series

Jun 20-24: 1st Test, Headingley, Leeds  
Jul 2-6: 2nd Test, Edgbaston, Birmingham  
Jul 10-14: 3rd Test, Lord's, London  
Jul 23-27: 4th Test, Old Trafford, Manchester  
Jul 31-Aug 4: 5th Test, The Oval, London. — AFP

## Kenyan Paralympian Wawira finds 'courage' in powerlifting

**NAIROBI:** In a claustrophobic dimly-lit room in a Nairobi stadium, the diminutive Kenyan Paralympian Hellen Wawira Kariuki barely breaks a sweat as she powerlifts nearly double her weight, her coach urging her on.

"Sixty kilos is still warming up," grinned the 32-year-old, who qualified for the Paris Games that open next week in the para-powerlifting under 41-kilo category. "The sport has helped me to have courage which I did not have before," Wawira told AFP.

The Kenyan athlete, who has spina bifida, a congenital malformation of the spine, finished fifth at the Tokyo Paralympics in 2021. And this time around, she said: "I hope to win any medal because anything can happen."

## NBK unveils first prepaid cash back card for parents, youths

**KUWAIT:** In keeping with its pioneering efforts in providing customers from all segments with an exceptional banking experience that meets their needs and expectations, National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) has unveiled the revamped NBK UEFA Champions League Platinum Mastercard Prepaid Card, which is the first-of-its-kind to feature the "Double Earning" concept in Kuwait, through exclusive benefits and rewards to customers.

The revamped card is available to all family members with starting age as small as 7 years old, and is the first prepaid cash back card of its kind in Kuwait available for and offering its benefits to both parents and youngsters.

Cardholder earns 3 points for every KD 1 spent locally as well as internationally and 3 points for every KD 1 loaded into the card. Earned points can be redeemed with cash back direct to the card, or with e-vouchers/gift cards redeemable at more than 185 merchants locally and globally in

## Indonesia's first Paralympic archers take aim at gold

**SURAKARTA:** Five Indonesian archers who have lost an arm or a leg train together under the bright Central Javan sun, drawing their bows and closing one eye to shoot at targets as they prepare for the Paralympics in Paris this month.

The "magnificent five" are the first archers to ever qualify for the Paralympics from Southeast Asia's biggest country, and they are now training their sights on medals. "It is history. Simply amazing," Ken Swagumilang, who had his leg amputated due to bone cancer and qualified for the compound men's standing competition, told AFP in Surakarta city.

The group of archers are aiming to carve out their own legacy with family and government support. The five men and women — in both standing and wheelchair categories — will compete in the recurve and compound archery brackets. "It's not just one or two athletes, it's five, imagine. It's the first time, and five athletes will compete," said Ken. The 2022 Asian Para Games bronze medalist, who now stands on a prosthetic leg, sees a Paralympic semi-final as his realistic ambition, but dreams bigger.

"Who doesn't want to win a gold medal?" he said. Years of hard work have strengthened their bodies to draw the bow and shoot arrows with high levels of

accuracy. And their optimism has risen after bagging two golds at the Para-Archery World Ranking Event in the Czech Republic in June and two archery bronzes at the 2022 Asian Para Games.

all shopping categories related to the youth and youngsters segment such as PlayStation, Xbox, etc.

Youngsters would have a seamless redemption process through a dedicated web portal using their own credentials without the need for parents to view their earned points balance or to redeem. They also would have unlimited free visits to more than 25 lounges while travelling with their parents, as well as exclusive offers from Mastercard.

The card is issued instantly through NBK Mobile Banking App and can be added immediately to any digital wallet such as Apple Pay, Samsung Wallet, or Google Pay. "Our goal is to help the next generation develop strong financial literacy skills in a way that is easy and beneficial. By the rewarding cash back offered by NBK UEFA Champions League Platinum Mastercard Prepaid Card, we aim to incentivize smart spending and savings from an early age," Anwar Al Ballam Senior Products Manager, Consumer Banking Group at National Bank of Kuwait, com-



Anwar Al Ballam



mented on unveiling the revamped card.

"Launching Kuwait's first cashback card for parents and youngsters aligns with our constant efforts to promote financial literacy and to be always closer to our customers from all segments, by offering innovative products packed with unmatched benefits and rewards," he remarked.

NBK provides an array of prepaid cards which offer numerous benefits, while helping customers spend their money confidently and conveniently, making sure they never go over their budget.

accuracy. And their optimism has risen after bagging two golds at the Para-Archery World Ranking Event in the Czech Republic in June and two archery bronzes at the 2022 Asian Para Games.

### Teeth targets

Kholidin, one of the gold medalists in June, is the only Indonesian Paralympic archer who can't draw the bow by the arm after his right limb was amputated following a fall from a coconut tree in 2017. He will compete in the recurve men's standing event, using his teeth to draw his bow.

"I tried using the foreteeth, but it made me unable to eat. It was extremely painful for 3 days. Then I tried using my side teeth until they were bleeding," he said. Kholidin now comfortably draws 40 pounds of bowstring using his molars, a weight equal to about 4.8 gallons of water. "Me and my para archer friends... we want to show that we can do better and make achievements," he said. Kholidin says better government backing has boosted the performances of the para-archers. "They are supporting us more and making us enjoy participating in tournaments abroad more. We have participated in many tryouts. To Thailand, Dubai, Australia, China," said the 46-year-old.

### 'Let's fight!'

The Indonesian National Paralympic Committee (NPC) says it is not targeting any medals from the games in Paris. But its archers say they don't just want to make up the numbers at the Paralympics.

"My target is a gold medal," said Kholidin. As the games approach, some of the archers travelled to Europe early to adapt to the weather, with some saying the cool-

that feeling is not entirely shared by her coach of seven years, David Waore.

"They only have to concentrate on sport," he told AFP, whereas he and Wawira needed "side hustles" to survive financially. But despite the obstacles, he said he is convinced that Wawira can win a medal when her event takes place on September 4 in Paris. "She will do it, I know," he said, before exhorting her in a patter of Swahili, "twende, twende" (come on, come on), as she benched 80 kilos.

### 'Strong and powerful'

Lifting double her own body weight has helped Wawira feel "strong and powerful". Through her journey, she said she hopes to change the way disability in the East African country is viewed, where "society does not really accept us".

"Living with a disability in Kenya is not easy," said Wawira, who uses a wheelchair. And although she is currently focused on her medal-winning ambitions, she has one eye on the future too. "My dream is to create a foundation after I retire. A foundation to nurture young talents who live with disabilities in



**SURAKARTA:** Muhammad Fadli Imammuddin, an Indonesian para cyclist who qualified for the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games, posing for a photo. — AFP

er climbs would be challenging compared to their normal tropical training temperatures.

"In Indonesia, we get used to training in 30 degrees Celsius, 27 in the morning maybe. And in the afternoon, like at 12 or 13 pm, it's probably 34, 35 degrees," said Ken. Teodora Audi Atudia was a high school student when she lost sense of her lower body after a car accident damaged nerves in her spine.

She started archery to train her arms, but it has now brought her to the biggest global event for athletes with disabilities. She will now fulfil a dream, competing in the compound women's wheelchair category in Paris. "I just want to say to people out there who have not fought yet, there is something better ahead," said Audi. "So, let's fight!" — AFP



**NAIROBI:** Kenyan para-powerlifter, Hellen Wawira Kariuki (32) is assisted by her coach, David Waore (R) during a workout session. — AFP

Kenya so that they can support themselves." Perhaps, she said, one day, "there may be someone who admires me and aspires to do what I do". — AFP

Sports

# Bayer Leverkusen eye repeat after 'magic' title triumph

## 'There are no rules saying we can't do any of this'

**DONAUESCHINGEN:** Bayer Leverkusen are vowing to achieve great things again this season after an unprecedented unbeaten league and cup double last campaign. Leverkusen kick off the 2024-25 Bundesliga campaign at local rivals Borussia Moenchengladbach on Friday.

Xabi Alonso's side have been tipped by many to become the first side other than Bayern Munich to win back-to-back German top-flight titles since Jurgen Klopp's Borussia Dortmund in 2012. While Bayern have spent big and Dortmund and RB Leipzig have had impressive summers, Leverkusen forward Nathan Tella backed his side for another incredible season.

"There are no rules saying we can't do any of this. It's just down to us and how we apply ourselves in the season." Speaking with AFP at Leverkusen's pre-season training camp in the Black Forest village of Donaueschingen, Tella said: "There's no reason why we can't defend the title".

"We've seen Bayern do it for so many years. Why can't we do something similar to that? "There's no limit to what we can achieve. Last year, no-one believed in us and at the end of the season we were undefeated champions.

"Being a part of this team, anything is possible." Tella's bullish statements are a far cry from even a season ago, when the club was still derided as 'Nev-er-ku-sen' for failing to win a league title despite five second-place finishes.

### 'Our own magic'

Leverkusen's 2024-25 season started in now familiar fashion. In Saturday's Super Cup against last year's runners-up Stuttgart, striker Patrik Schick scored an 88th-minute equalizer before Leverkusen won on penalties.

Much of Leverkusen's success last season, including their run to the Europa League final, was set

up by late goals from a side who did not know they were beaten. Leverkusen's summer training base was at the same venue from where launched Spain's triumphant Euro 2024 campaign just a month earlier.

Asked if Leverkusen could benefit from a bit of La Roja's magic this season, Tella said his side did not need any external assistance. "No, we have our own magic to be fair. Last season, it was him," Tella said, pointing at Leverkusen's midfield maestro Florian Wirtz.

Despite attention from some of Europe's biggest clubs, Leverkusen held onto Wirtz this summer, as well as the remainder of their squad. Perhaps most importantly, coach Alonso has committed to stay on for at least another season despite interest from several of his former clubs including European giants Liverpool, Real Madrid and Bayern.

Xhaka told AFP success motivated Alonso's decision to stay. "He wants to prove that we can do it again. This was something for the players, that he believes in this team, trusts that this team can do the same thing this year as well.

### 'Evolve and improve'

Financial advantages aside, Bayern's long dominance of the Bundesliga has been underpinned by a constant desire to get better, even when the club is already at the top. Despite a barnstorming campaign where the club broke through for their first Bundesliga title, Leverkusen were not resting on their laurels.

Alonso, a serial winner during his playing career, set the tone in pre-season training, saying last year's incredible level "probably wouldn't be enough" this season. "We have many fundamentals," the coach said. "We need to add something, update it, incorporate other elements. We have to evolve and improve."

Leverkusen midfielder Granit Xhaka, who like Tella arrived in Leverkusen from England before last season, was Alonso's voice on the pitch, playing more



**LEVERKUSEN:** Bayer Leverkusen's Spanish head coach Xabi Alonso celebrates with the trophy after winning the penalty shoot-out of the German Supercup football match between Bayer 04 Leverkusen and VfB Stuttgart in Leverkusen. — AFP

minutes than any other outfield player last season.

"I agree with the coach because if there's one guy who knows, it's him. If you want to improve year after year, you have to improve year by year," Xhaka told AFP. "You need to not just look at the good things, but the bad things as well."

Tella arrived in Leverkusen after a 17-goal season as Burnley were promoted to the Premier League. He scored seven and assisted six as Leverkusen pur-

sued a remarkable treble, the London-born winger winning a Nigeria call-up in the process. Tella said the club had set their sights on improvement.

"It's something we want to aspire to. The coach said we're not at that level yet. That means we have something to work towards to improve. "The standards we set last year were so high, almost unbelievable. We want to get close to it again, if not beat those standards." — AFP



Leon MacDonald

## All Blacks assistant coach Leon MacDonald quits

**WELLINGTON:** All Blacks head coach Scott Robertson said Thursday that assistant coach Leon MacDonald left his staff on the eve of their Rugby Championship Tests in South Africa due to a clash of coaching styles. Robertson and MacDonald mutually agreed to part ways after discussions about their working approach, New Zealand Rugby said.

"Leon and I have been having some honest conversations with each other for a little while now. As coaches, we have differing views and both agreed it wasn't working," Robertson said in a statement. MacDonald left after just five games under Robertson, who took charge of the All Blacks this year following erratic results under predecessor Ian Foster.

Robertson told reporters in Auckland that the differences quickly become obvious to both parties. "Over the period of time since we started coaching together, we just feel like it hasn't quite clicked," Robertson added. "We haven't lined up where we need to on the rugby side of it." The All Blacks boss said the pair differed on their "philosophy on rugby", but refused to divulge details of the split. "There was no intent to get to the point where we are now, but we just believe for both of us, as for the All Blacks group, is to make the call now.

"We never thought it would get to this point - but it has," Robertson said he discussed the matter with the players after the decision was made. New Zealand's tour of South Africa will be the first time the teams have met since the Springboks beat the All Blacks 12-11 in last year's World Cup final, Foster's final game in charge. — AFP

## South Africa's daredevil autosport of spinning stokes passions

**SOWETO:** Tyres screech across an empty parking lot in Soweto as 40-year-old Nalo Jivhuho sends her black BMW skidding and spinning in a cloud of white smoke and fumes. As soon as she slips into the hotseat, the human resources developer becomes "Dankie Darlie", impassioned enthusiast of South Africa's increasingly popular daredevil motorsport of spinning.

In a tank top and braids, Jivhuho uses her tattooed left arm to spin the steering wheel as she forces the car into high-speed skids and stunts like the circular manoeuvre called a doughnut. "If you are able to make a tyre pop, then you are pretty special," says Jivhuho, mother of an admiring teenage son. "When you hear a pop, you are going to hear the crowd go wild." This adrenaline-pumping sport was born in Johannesburg's sprawling Soweto township in the 1980s, when South Africa was still under the race-based apartheid system. "It used to be seen as a gangster sport associated with people going into the white areas to steal these shaped



**JOHANNESBURG:** A member of "Team Dullie" hangs out of their car as they drift during a round of spinning at Wheelz n Smoke Arena in the south of Johannesburg. — AFP

cars, come to Soweto and spin them," says Jivhuho. The underground image changed when spinning was recognized as an official sport 10 years ago; today it has fans and performers across southern Africa and big brand sponsors. At its most extreme levels, the passenger or even driver will climb out of the spinning car, hanging from the window or roof in stunts that thrill the crowds.

### Fumes and fans

A few hours before Jivhuho's training session, her four cars are checked over at her home by an all-male group of mechanics. "She can kill you for these cars," jokes one of them, Nqobile Tshabalala. Jivhuho says: "Maintaining these spin cars is a lot but I have a great support system from my family and my team. Without them, 'Dankie Darlie' would not exist."

She wants to make one thing clear: she is not "one of the boys". "Spinning is a way of me expressing myself, expressing my femininity," she says. "I inspire other females and that's a big thing because there aren't a lot of us females in the spinning industry in South Africa." Young women are also among the drivers at a weekend show at the Wheelz n Smoke arena southeast of Johannesburg. The atmosphere is festive as hundreds of spectators, some with coolers and shisha pipes, cheer on spinning crews who have come from across the country to show off their skills. — AFP

## Germany goalkeeper Neuer retires from international duty

**MUNICH:** Germany goalkeeper Manuel Neuer, a 2014 World Cup winner, announced his retirement from international football on Wednesday at the age of 38. Bayern Munich veteran Neuer played 124 matches for Germany, captaining his country 61 times. His final appearance came in the quarter-final loss to eventual champions Spain at Euro 2024.

Neuer wrote on social media that although he was tempted to play until the 2026 World Cup, he was "convinced that now is the right time to take this step". He shone at the 2014 World Cup in Brazil and was named as the tournament's best goalkeeper as Germany won the trophy for the fourth time.

Known as the archetypal 'sweeper-keeper' of the modern era, Neuer revolutionized the position, often venturing far from his penalty box to snuff out attacks while possessing skills with his feet usually reserved for outfield players.

Neuer revealed he had made the announcement after discussions with his family, as well as a comprehensive conversation with Germany coach Julian Nagelsmann on Wednesday morning. He said he planned to "concentrate fully" on playing for Bayern, with whom he has won two Champions Leagues and 11 Bundesliga titles.

This season's Champions League final will take place at Munich's Allianz Arena. Neuer broke his leg in a skiing accident in December 2022 and only returned to the Germany squad just ahead of Euro 2024 on home soil, reclaiming his role as first choice.

He was criticised before Euro 2024 after a series of mistakes at club and international level, but impressed at the tournament. "It was a great time which shaped me and of which I am very proud," he said.

"Winning the World Cup title in 2014 and the special atmosphere during the European Championship at home this year are highlights for which I am extremely grateful. "It was an honor for me to be captain of our national team until 2023. I loved wearing the Germany jersey."

From 2010 until 2016, Neuer and Germany made it to the final four of every major tournament. After disappointing group-stage exits at the 2018 and 2022 World Cups and a last-16 elimination by England at Euro 2020, Germany won their first knockout match in eight years at Euro 2024. — 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, MAHAMMAD UMER**, holder of Indian Passport No. U0189191 having permanent address Nayuduvaripalli Etamaripuram Rajampet Tq, YSR District Pin:516128, Andhra Pradesh India residing in Kuwait at present, hereby declare that henceforth my name will be read as (given name) MOHAMMAD UMAR. (6156#, 23/08/2024)

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

**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)

## Cards' slam in 10th stuns Brewers

Dodgers newcomer Jack Flaherty wins again, sinks Mariners



ST LOUIS, MISSOURI : Masyn Winn #0 of the St. Louis Cardinals takes the throw for an out on Willy Adames #27 of the Milwaukee Brewers stealing second base in the sixth inning at Busch Stadium. — AFP

ST LOUIS: Nolan Arenado hit a walk-off grand slam in the 10th inning to lift the St. Louis Cardinals past the visiting Milwaukee Brewers 10-6 on Wednesday. Luken Baker hit a two-run homer, Tommy Pham drove in two runs and Masyn Winn went 3-for-6 with an RBI for the Cardinals. St. Louis starting pitcher Kyle Gibson allowed two runs on seven hits in 5 1/3 innings. He struck out five and walked two. Joey Ortiz drove in three runs and Jackson Chourio went 4-for-5 with two RBIs and a run for the Brewers, who saw their six-game winning streak end.

### Yankees 8, Guardians 1

Aaron Judge hit two home runs, Juan Soto homered and drove in five runs and host New York cruised past Cleveland. Judge upped his major-league-leading homer total to 47 by hitting a two-run drive in the third off Cleveland rookie starter Joey Cantillo (0-3) and a solo shot in the seventh off Eli Morgan to give the Yankees an 8-0 lead. Nestor Cortes (7-10) allowed three hits in seven scoreless innings to win consecutive starts for the first time since May 17-22. The left-hander struck out four and walked none in

his second straight scoreless outing. Cantillo allowed seven runs on six hits in four innings in his fourth career start. The left-hander struck out five and walked three. Noel slugged a homer in the eighth off Tim Mayza, but the Guardians fell to 6-11 since Aug. 2.

### Reds 11, Blue Jays 7

Visiting Cincinnati scored five runs in the fifth inning as it overcame a six-run deficit to defeat Toronto in the finale of a three-game series. Cincinnati's Elly De La Cruz stole third base in the fifth, his 60th theft of the season, hit his 22nd homer in the eighth and finished with three RBIs. He is the fifth player since 1901 to have 60 steals and 20 homers in a season. Spencer Steer stroked a two-run homer for the Reds. Noelvi Marte and Jonathan India added solo shots. Cincinnati right-hander Nick Martinez yielded six runs on six hits with three walks and three strikeouts in 4 1/3 innings. Ernie Clement hit a three-run homer, Spencer Horwitz hit a two-run blast and George Springer had a solo shot for Toronto. Yariel Rodriguez allowed five runs on six hits and two walks in 4 1/3 innings. He finished with six strikeouts.

### Dodgers 8, Mariners 4

Jack Flaherty won for the third time in four starts since being acquired at the trade deadline as Los Angeles defeated visiting Seattle to complete a three-game sweep. Max Muncy's three-run double capped the Dodgers' five-run fifth inning. Flaherty (10-5) allowed two runs, one earned, on five hits in 5 2/3 innings. Mariners starter Logan Gilbert (7-10) lasted just 4 2/3 innings, giving up eight runs, six earned, on seven hits. Mitch Haniger had a pinch-hit homer for Seattle.

### Mets 4, Orioles 3

Jesse Winker led off the ninth inning with a pinch-hit, walk-off homer for New York, which beat visiting Baltimore in the rubber game of a three-game interleague series. Winker, who had just two extra-base hits in 51 at-bats since being acquired from the Washington Nationals on July 28, homered to left on a 3-2 pitch for the Mets' second walk-off homer of the series against Seranthony Dominguez (3-4). Francisco Alvarez's solo shot off Dominguez gave New York a 4-3 win Monday night. Austin

Slater hit a two-run homer while Adley Rutschman added a sacrifice fly for the Orioles, who entered Wednesday in first place in the American League East, a half-game ahead of the New York Yankees. Colton Cowser and Gunnar Henderson had Baltimore's other hits.

### Diamondbacks 10, Marlins 8

Pinch hitter Lourdes Gurriel Jr. hit a go-ahead, three-run double to center, leading Arizona past host Miami. Gurriel went 2-for-2 with four RBIs. Arizona swept the three-game series, and its potent offense helped struggling Diamondbacks starter Jordan Montgomery escape with a no-decision after allowing six runs on 10 hits and one walk in 5 2/3 innings. His ERA increased to 6.44. Former Marlins reliever Dylan Floro (5-3) earned the win, and Justin Martinez got his fifth save. Miami got a two-run homer from Jake Burger, who has 25 home runs this season, including 10 to go with 15 RBIs in August. Andrew Nardi (3-2) took the loss. He surrendered two runs in one-third of an inning in the Diamondbacks' big seventh inning. — Reuters

## Korda eyes 'dream' British Open win at St Andrews

ST ANDREWS: Nelly Korda said on Wednesday that winning a Women's British Open at St Andrews would be a "dream come true". The final major of the year is being staged on the Old Course at the Scottish venue for only the third time and first since 2013.

Victory for Korda, the 26-year-old daughter of former Australian Open tennis champion Petr Korda, would cap off a memorable 2024 after she won the season's first major, the Chevron Championship. That success in April was part of a superb run of six tournament wins in seven starts but a triumph at St Andrews, the venue for many a memorable men's British Open, would rate highly even in Korda's illustrious career.

"There's so much rich history out here — it's been really exciting," said Korda during a pre-tournament press conference. "Coming down 18, the views there are spectacular. It's going to be such an amazing week."

"It would obviously be a dream come true to have my name etched into the history." The American added: "But, at the end of the day, I'm just going to focus that one shot at a time and not think of Sunday. I'm just going to think of my first tee shot on Thursday."

Korda is one of several contenders who could win on the renowned coastal course. New Zealand's Lydia Ko has arrived in Scotland on the back of her recent Olympic gold medal in Paris, with Japan's Ayaka Furue looking to follow up her Evian Championship success.

Amy Yang, the Women's PGA Championship winner and world number three Ko Jin-young feature among a strong South Korean contingent and Lilia Vu of the United States is back to defend her title. British hopes largely rest with 2018 champion Georgia Hall and last year's runner-up and world number 10 Charley Hull.

Meanwhile, former champion Catriona Matthew has confirmed this will be her last Women's Open. The 54-year-old Scot first appeared in the tournament in 1993 and won the title in 2009. "It just felt that being in St Andrews in Scotland, the home of golf, what better place to play my last one," said Matthew. "I've realized that at 55 (next year), I'm not going to be as competitive as I want to be, so everything comes to an end." — AFP



GUYANCOURT: US' Nelly Korda and France's Celine Boutier walk with their caddies during round 4 of the women's golf individual stroke play of the Paris 2024 Olympic Games. — AFP

## Pole vault king Duplantis resumes winning ways

LAUSANNE: Armand Duplantis picked up from where he left off at his world record-setting, gold medal-winning showing at the Paris Olympics by dominating the men's pole vault at the Lausanne Diamond League meet on Wednesday.

The meeting is the first on World Athletics' elite circuit since the end of the Paris Games. Duplantis defended his Olympic gold in the Stade de France in some style, improving his own world record to 6.25 metres.

In Lausanne, the Swede took part in a City Event held on an esplanade bordering Lac Lemman - better known in English as Lake Geneva - 24 hours before the main fare at the Stade Olympique de la Pontaise. The runway was raised off the tiled walkway, with thousands of fans packed in just metres away, the bar and landing mat placed under a circular tarpaulin, big screens allowing yet more passers-by a view of events.

It was once again Duplantis streets ahead of the competition, winning with a best vault of 6.15 metres. "I'm really happy about it. I had a really good time. It was really nice to step out on the track," Duplantis said. "I don't want to say that I was worried, but it's always a bit of a question mark, I guess, the next meet after something like the Olympics, mentally. "The past two weeks, it's been hard to wake up. Not in a mental way, not in that way, but very tired mentally, just exhausted, even this morning."

Duplantis said the difference between Olympic gold at the Stade de France and winning a City Event was miles apart, but bizarrely comparable. "My last competition, it was like 75,000 people watching me," he said.

"But you get such a cool connection with the crowd when they're so close to you, it's just more of this personal type of feeling," Duplantis added: "It's just a really cool thing. It's a really amazing thing and I just love these kind of events. "It really is a great thing for our sport and a great thing for pole vaulting."



LAUSANNE: Sweden's Armand Duplantis competes in the men's pole vault city event part of the "Athletissima" Diamond League athletics meeting in Lausanne. — AFP

### Perfect conditions needed

Only the US-born Swede and American Sam Kendrick, the silver medallist in Paris, managed to pass at 5.92m, the next four all seeing their evening's work come to a halt at 5.82. The bar was raised to 6.00m. Kendrick failing at his first attempt, but Duplantis sailing clear.

The American won 2019 world gold ahead of Duplantis, since when the Swede has dominated the discipline in a manner rarely seen in track and field. Two more failures at the 6m-barrier left just Duplantis in competition, as is so often the case.

The bar went up to 6.15m, to rapturous applause from the crowd massed around the runway. He clipped the bar with his knee on his first attempt, plunging to the mat in disappointment. With six minutes between each vault the allowed time limit, Duplantis took to the runway for his second effort as the wind picked up to complicate matters.

And he stumbled in the run-up, not managing to plant the pole. As he tumbled onto the mat, Duplantis was quick to sit up and flash a thumbs-up. Duplantis went over on his third attempt, setting a new meet record and celebrating like the true competitor he is, ripping his shirt free of his shorts and screaming aloud in triumph. "I felt like after the 6m jump I knew that I had something higher in me," he said. — AFP