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3 GCC ministers hold strategic dialogues with Russia, India

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MoI, MoD defend house evictions

Amir accepts Ateeqi's resignation, names Fassam acting oil minister

Amir receives new judicial officials



KUWAIT: HH the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace on Monday the President of Kuwait's Supreme Judicial Council and the head of the Court of Cassation Dr Adel Bouresli, where he presented Counselor Saleh Rasheed Al-Ragdan, who was sworn in as Vice President of the Court of Cas-

sation. Counselor Mohammad Al-Rifae was sworn in as President of the Court of Appeal. HH the Amir also received Deputy President of the High Court Counselor Khaled Al-Othman on assuming his duties. Minister of Justice and Awqaf Dr Mohammad Al-Wasmi and senior state officials attended the meeting. — KUNA

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: The interior and defense ministries defended on Monday the withdrawal of hundreds of houses leased to mostly stateless people known as bedoons, saying the action was in line with rules and regulations. The two ministries last week withdrew just under 700 houses that were leased on long-term basis to mostly bedoons serving as mili-

itary personnel in the two ministries. It added that a team from the two ministries inspected the houses and found that a number of tenants had sub-leased those houses in a clear violation of the rules. It said a number of other violations were cited. This prompted the ministry to withdraw the houses in order to give them to others on the waiting list. About 400 of the houses, known as "popular houses", a term referred to low-budget homes, are in Sulabiya, and



Noura Al-Fassam



Dr Emad Al-Ateeqi

The two ministries however said in a statement Monday that the action was based on rules and regulations and because of violations committed by the tenants. The statement said that such houses, normally leased for nominal rents, are withdrawn when the Kuwaiti beneficiary gets a government house and when the military service of the non-Kuwaiti tenant ends.

the rest are in Taima, a suburb of Jahra. Meanwhile, HH the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah issued a decree on Sunday accepting the resignation of Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Oil Dr Emad Al-Ateeqi. Finance Minister and Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment Noura Al-Fassam has been appointed as acting oil minister, replacing Ateeqi, the Amiri Diwan added in a statement.

UN rights chief calls to challenge Zionist impunity

GENEVA: The UN human rights chief said on Monday that ending the nearly year-long war in Gaza is a priority and he asked countries to act on what he called the Zionist entity's "blatant disregard" for international law in the occupied Palestinian territories. Nearly 41,000 Palestinians have been killed in Gaza since the Zionist entity unleashed a military campaign on Oct 7, 2023. The conflict has also fueled a surge in violence in the Zionist-occupied West Bank.



Volker Turk

"Ending that war and averting a full-blown regional conflict is an absolute and urgent priority," the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Turk said in a speech at the start of the five-week UN Human Rights Council session in Geneva. "States must not — cannot — accept blatant disregard for international law, including binding decisions of the (UN) Security Council and orders of the International Court of Justice, neither in this nor any other situation."

He cited an opinion released by the UN top court in July that called the Zionist entity's

Continued on Page 6

New Gaza school year begins with all classes shut

CAIRO: The new school year in the Palestinian territories officially began on Monday, with all schools in Gaza shut after 11 months of war and no sign of a ceasefire. As fighting continued, the Zionist entity announced new orders to residents of the north Gaza Strip to leave their homes, in response to rockets fired into the Zionist entity.

Umm Zaki's son Moataz, 15, was supposed to begin 10th grade. Instead he woke up in their tent in Deir al-Balah in central Gaza and was sent to

fetch a container of water from more than a kilometer away. "Usually, such a day would be a day of celebration, seeing the children in the new uniform, going to school, and dreaming of becoming doctors and engineers. Today all we hope is that the war ends before we lose any of them," the mother of five told Reuters by text message.

The Palestinian Education Ministry said all Gaza schools were shut and 90 percent of them had been destroyed or damaged in the Zionist assault on the territory. The UN Palestinian aid agency UNRWA, which runs around half of Gaza's schools, has turned as many of them as it can into emergency shelters housing thousands of displaced families. "The longer the children stay out of school the more difficult it is for them

Continued on Page 6



GAZA: A girl draws on a blackboard in a classroom sheltering people displaced by conflict at a school run by the UNRWA in Deir el-Balah in the central Gaza Strip on Sept 9, 2024. — AFP

Hundreds in West Bank mourn slain US-Turkish activist

NABLUS: Hundreds of mourners gathered Monday in Nablus, in the occupied West Bank, to pay respects to a US-Turkish activist killed while protesting against Zionist settlements in a nearby town. The body of the slain 26-year-old, Aysenur Ezgi Eygi, was wrapped in a Palestinian flag, with her head covered by a keffiyeh, a traditional scarf symbolizing the Palestinian struggle against the Zionist entity.

Palestinian security forces carried her body through the streets of Nablus, accompanied by the sound of Palestinian bagpipes, before a wreath was placed over her remains. The memorial, which began at Nablus' Rafidia hospital, drew large crowds. The UN rights office said Zionist forces killed Eygi with a "shot in the head". The mayor of Beita and the Palestinian news agency Wafa also reported that she was killed by Zionist soldiers.

Continued on Page 6



NABLUS: Palestinians pray by the body of slain Turkish-American activist Aysenur Ezgi Eygi during a funeral procession in the occupied West Bank on Sept 9, 2024. — AFP



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Local

Zain employees learn about digitization and impact of emerging technologies

Staff joined insightful Digital Transformation Program, facilitated by KFAS



Zain is keen to invest in its human capital.

KUWAIT: Zain employees recently participated in the insightful Digital Transformation Program organized by the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS). The program aimed to deepen their knowledge of digitization and introduce them to the impact of emerging technologies like artificial intelligence in reshaping industries and transforming work environments.

This step falls under the umbrella of Zain's Purpose and Human Resources strategy that aims to empower and invest in its human capital. The company continuously focuses on enhancing the capabilities and talents of its national workforce in various fields to achieve sustainable growth and enrich their

career journeys, especially in topics related to technologies that are central to its operations.

The program provided a great opportunity for Zain employees from non-technical departments to learn about digitization and digital transformation, understanding how these concepts have had significant impact in major industries worldwide in recent years, opening entirely new opportunities for growth and expansion, and evolving the day-to-day operations of businesses and organizations.

The program covered several topics related to digital transformation, including the concepts of digitization and the digital economy, and how they drive growth and establish new business models.



The training program

The participants were also introduced to emerging technologies that continue to bring massive changes to business environments, such as generative AI, the Internet of Things (IoT), fintech, big data, virtual and augmented reality (VR & AR), machine learning (ML), robotics, and more.

Additionally, the program addressed key aspects of the digital transformation process, such as vision development, strategy formulation and execution, cultivating an empowering work culture, building tech skillsets, investing in the tech infrastructure, leveraging data, optimizing work processes, and translating strategic vision into actionable plans. It also covered analyzing market

requirements and understanding the challenges organizations face.

The training program featured a combination of lectures, interactive activities, theoretical and practical concepts, and self-reflection sessions to enhance interpersonal skills. Various training methods were employed to maximize the impact of the program, which was facilitated by certified trainers and specialists from KFAS. Zain is committed to playing a strategic role in attracting aspiring local talents to the private sector, bolstering the presence of the national workforce in the job market, especially in STEAM fields and digital capacities that have become a priority in today's markets.

GCC officials tackle environmental issues

DOHA: The 44th GCC environmental meeting for undersecretaries kicked off on Monday in the Qatari capital, Doha, with Kuwait's participation. In his speech, Qatari Undersecretary of the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Abdulaziz Al-Mahmoud said that based on previous preparatory meetings, the results encourage continued efforts to attain environmental visions.

He praised GCC's efforts to unify positions within upcoming international events, including multilateral environmental agreements, especially the fifth session of the intergovernmental negotiating committee to establish a legally binding international treaty on plastic pollution and the 29th session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP29).

He congratulated Saudi Arabia for hosting the 16th Conference of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the largest of its kind and the first in the Middle East region, stressing readiness to contribute to the technical preparations for the conference, which will inevitably reflect on the interests of GCC countries and the Arab region in general.

The Kuwaiti delegation participating in the meet-



Officials take a group photo after the 44th Meeting of the undersecretaries in GCC. — KUNA

ing is headed by Acting Director General of the Environment Public Authority, Samira Al-Kandari. Al-Kandari, stressed on Monday the importance of the 44th meeting. Al-Kandari told KUNA that "such meetings contribute to advancing joint Gulf action and supporting its good path towards integration and solidarity among our countries, in addition to reviewing the achievements and results achieved in the Gulf environmental field.

She pointed out that the meeting discussed the

strategic plan of the Committee of Ministers Responsible for Environmental Affairs, the efforts of the Ozone working groups, the Gulf Environmental Portal, and the agreement to preserve wildlife and its natural habitats in the GCC countries, in addition to discussing the establishment of a unified Gulf center for environmental and climate studies and preparing a Gulf environmental index. Al-Kandari expressed her appreciation to the General Secretary of the Gulf Cooperation Council. — KUNA

Workshop prepares guide for the elderly

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Health announced the launch of a workshop to prepare the "National Guide for Elderly-Friendly Cities" in cooperation between the Elderly Services Department and the Healthy Cities Office at the Ministry. This is aimed at setting national standards for cities that take into account the needs of the elderly and contribute to improving their quality of life.

Director of the Elderly Services Department at the Ministry, Dr Fatima Bin Dhafari, stressed in a press statement on Monday the importance of the workshop in enhancing Kuwait's role as a country that takes into account the needs of the elderly and provides a suitable environment for them by improving services and infrastructure in line with international standards.

Bin Dhafari pointed out that the workshop comes within the Ministry's ongoing efforts to improve the welfare of the elderly. She explained that current challenges and policies will be discussed and available opportunities will be identified to provide better services for the elderly, with concrete recommendations that can be implemented within the framework of national standards.

For her part, Director of the Healthy Cities Office, Dr Amal Al-Yahya, stated in a similar statement that the National Guide for Senior Friendly Cities will address eight main axes, including outdoor spaces, buildings, transportation, housing, community participation, respect, and social integration, in addition to civic participation, employment, communications, information, community support, and health services. She said that these axes are in line with global trends and the organization of work in healthy cities and are also part of community initiatives to improve health and quality of life, noting that work on this initiative will be in Kuwaiti healthy cities.

The workshop is witnessing wide participation from government agencies and institutions, most notably the Ministries of Public Works, Interior, Social Affairs, Education, and Information, in addition to the Food and Nutrition Authority, the Environment Public Authority, the Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources, the Public Authority for the Disabled, the Kuwait Municipality, the Public Institution for Social Security, the Public Institution for Housing Welfare, and Kuwait University (represented by the College of Public Health), in addition to the Public Transport Company and the Good Son Charity. — KUNA



Moudhi Barjas Al-Soor school



Smart screens in science laboratories in public schools. — KUNA photos

Smart schools: Quest for excellence and quality education

KUWAIT: Combining technology and education in the form of smart schools is an intriguing concept, which led Kuwait, over a decade ago, to kickstart its venture in this field with three schools packed with top-notch educational smart tools and gadgets. In line with the Kuwait Vision 2035 and after a century of launching systematic education, the country is eager to proliferate the smart school project to 19 educational facilities.

Speaking on the issue, head of projects at the Ministry of Education Eng Mohammad Al-Enezi told KUNA that the ministry had carried out, in cooperation with the Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW), the construction of the 19 smart schools. He revealed that the facilities not only had technological tools to aid in the education process, but the schools also took advantage of solar panels to generate their surplus needed electricity.

He noted that each classroom had a smartboard consisting of a huge touchscreen with all the applications and programs used in the education process.



Smart school rooftop solar panels to reduce pressure on electricity.

Smart schools also use digital tools and panels to spread public service announcements (PSAs) for students and teachers alike, as well as showcasing the number of classes and other useful functions, he added. Al-Enezi affirmed that such schools also utilized advanced security measures and intercoms linking the front gate, administration, and classrooms in addition to other technological tools such as key-cards and thumbprint identifications.

Smart schools also use multiple high-definition se-

curity cameras to monitor and ensure the safety of staff and students, he added, pointing out that the facilities had much to offer in terms of the sound system, air conditioning, automatic irrigation of plants, and elevators. Previously, the Ministry of Education had announced the opening of smart schools in several areas, including Jaber Al-Ahmad, Sabah Al-Ahmad, Al-Wafra, Sabah Al-Nasser, West Abdullah Al-Mubarak, and Saad Al-Abdullah. The schools will be receiving students for the 2024-25 school year. — KUNA

Kuwait nominated to head human rights committee

CAIRO: The Council of the League of Arab States, at the level of permanent delegates, nominated Kuwait to chair the Arab Permanent Committee on Human Rights for a second two-year term. This came after the 162nd session of the Arab League Council on Monday, headed by Yemen and with the participation of Kuwait. The Council approved, in a decision issued after its session, the renewal of the Permanent Representative of Kuwait to the Arab League, Ambassador Talal Al-Mutairi, as Chairman of the Permanent Committee on Human Rights.

This step comes in recognition by the Arab League Council of the distinguished role played by Kuwait during its presidency of the Permanent Committee on Human Rights between 2022 and 2024, as well as the tremendous efforts made by Ambassador Talal Al-Mutairi throughout his presidency of the committee. The Permanent Arab Committee for Human Rights was formed under the umbrella of the League of Arab States in 1968, and its primary mission is to follow up on the human rights file in member states. — KUNA

Crown Prince receives senior officials, dignitaries

KUWAIT: His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaleel Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace on Monday the President of Kuwait's Supreme Judicial Council and the head of the Court of Cassation Judge Dr Adel Bouresli and the Court of Cassation Vice President Counselor Saleh Rasheed Al-Ragdan.

His Highness also received President of the Court of Appeal Mohammad Al-Refai and Deputy President of the High Court, Counselor Khaled Al-Othman on assuming the duties of their new posts.

Minister of Justice and Minister of Endowments and Islamic Affairs Dr Mohammad Al-Wasmi, and senior state officials also attended the meeting. — KUNA



Senior officials take a group photo after GCC-Russia Joint Ministerial Meeting in Riyadh.

GCC, Russia address escalating Mideast tensions, strategic ties

Region on the brink of a major crisis, Russia warns

RIYADH: Amid the escalating tensions in the Middle East, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov warned that the region was on the brink of a major crisis. His remarks came during the GCC-Russia Joint Ministerial Meeting for Strategic Dialogue on Monday in Riyadh, chaired by Qatari Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani. Qatar is the Gulf bloc's current chair. Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya is heading Kuwait's delegation at the venue.

The Qatari Prime Minister affirmed his country's rejection of any demographic or territorial changes in Gaza and praised the ongoing cooperation between the GCC and Russia, emphasizing that such dialogues were critical. He noted the importance of aligning positions on various issues and advancing strategic cooperation as agreed upon during the 6th GCC-Russia ministerial meeting.

For his part, Lavrov highlighted the urgent need for action in Gaza and criticized the international community for failing to stop the violence, which has led to a worsening political and military situation across the region, from the Lebanon-Zionist border to the Red Sea.



The GCC-Russia Joint Ministerial Meeting for Strategic Dialogue in Riyadh. — KUNA photos

Lavrov emphasized that the current level of violence against Palestinians was unprecedented, surpassing any seen in past Arab-Zionist conflicts, and stressed Russia's commitment to working with all parties to prevent further escalation, urging

for a peaceful resolution to the crisis.

On his part, GCC Secretary General Jassem Al-Budaiwi condemned Zionist occupation's continued aggression in Gaza, calling for an immediate ceasefire and highlighting the need for unrestricted

humanitarian aid to the Palestinians. He expressed deep concern over the international community's inability to secure a comprehensive and lasting solution to the conflict, urging for a two-state solution and Palestine's full UN membership.

On the Russia-Ukraine conflict, the GCC reaffirmed its support for a political resolution through negotiations and dialogue, and Al-Budaiwi emphasized the importance of ending hostilities, facilitating the export of essential goods, and ensuring global food security. Al-Budaiwi stressed the importance of cooperating with Russia, given the historical strategic bilateral ties, affirming that efforts were underway to accelerate the implementation of the joint action plan (2023-2027), which was agreed upon at the previous ministerial meeting in Moscow in July 2023.

He expressed concern over security in the Red Sea, calling for de-escalation to ensure safe maritime navigation and protect global trade. The meeting also focused on other key regional issues like the efforts of Saudi Arabia and Oman to facilitate peace in Yemen, urging the Houthi rebels to engage constructively with UN-led peace efforts to alleviate the suffering of the Yemeni people. The GCC-Russia strategic dialogue, first held in 2011, continues to serve as a critical platform for addressing mutual concerns, with both sides committed to advancing their joint action plan and fostering greater cooperation across various sectors. — KUNA

GCC-India strategic dialogue kicks off

RIYADH: The first GCC-India Ministerial Meeting for Strategic Dialogue was held in Riyadh on Monday. Indian Minister of External Affairs Subrahmanyam Jaishankar affirmed in his speech that the Gulf-Indian ties are deep-rooted in various fields, making progress on creating new partnerships in multiple areas. In the course of time, these ties developed and grew in different sectors such as technology, defense, culture, and others, Jaishankar added, pointing out that there are nine million Indians working in the GCC, contributing to the region's economic development.

On the situation in Gaza, the Indian top diplomat said it was of the foremost concern, deeming "painful" the continuing death of innocent civilians and expressing hope for an immediate ceasefire. On his part, GCC Secretary General Jassem Al-Budaiwi emphasized that the first GCC-India meeting aimed to strengthen and develop bilateral relations based on shared interests to establish stability and prosperity in the region.

Economic cooperation is as well a key factor, as the trade exchange between GCC countries and India reached \$174 billion in 2022, which shows great strategic cooperation between the two sides, he added. He underscored that these investments work to ensure mutual success and opportunities for both sides, reaffirming the need to achieve great economic benefits as well as opportunities for joint investments in different fields such as renewable energy, contributing to preserve the environment, and achieving sustainability. Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya headed Kuwait's delegations participating in the Ministerial Meeting.

Meanwhile, India and Abu Dhabi signed five agreements on Monday to cement relations in

the nuclear, energy, and food sectors on the sidelines of talks between Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi Sheikh Khaled bin Mohammad bin Zayed Al-Nahyan and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The Ministry of External Affairs said in a statement that the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, who arrived in New Delhi on Monday an official visit, held bilateral discussions with Modi.

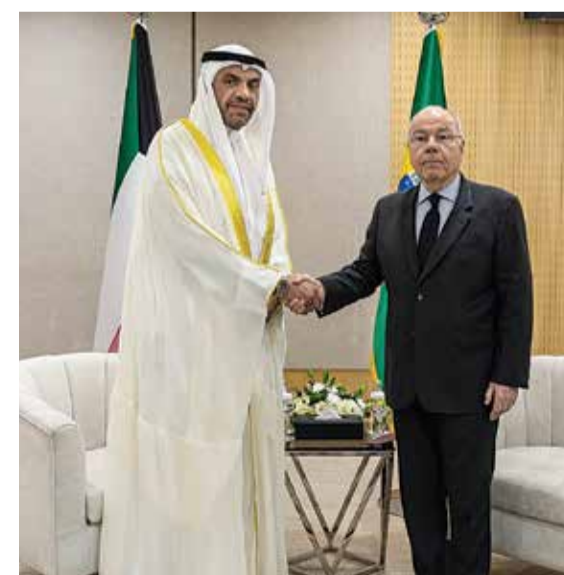
"The two leaders expressed satisfaction over the substantial progress achieved in recent years in the India-UAE Comprehensive Strategic Partnership and discussed opportunities to further widen and deepen the partnership in all areas of bilateral cooperation," the statement said. They expected that the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement and the Bilateral Investment Treaty would provide further push to strong economic and commercial partnerships between the two nations. "They also underscored the need to explore new areas of untapped potential, particularly in nuclear energy, critical minerals, green hydrogen, artificial intelligence, and cutting-edge technologies," the statement added.

The five MoUs are on nuclear cooperation between Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited and Emirates Nuclear Energy Corporation, an agreement for long-term LNG supply between Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC) and Indian Oil Corporation Limited, a MoU between ADNOC and India Strategic Petroleum Reserve Limited (ISPRL), a production concession agreement for Abu Dhabi Onshore Block 1 between Urja Bharat and ADNOC, and an MoU between the government of Gujarat and Abu Dhabi Developmental Holding Company PJSC on food park development in India.

The nuclear cooperation agreement will "enhance co-operation in the operation and maintenance of nuclear power plants, sourcing of nuclear goods and services from India, exploring mutual investment opportunities, and capacity building," the statement said. As part of the agreement for long-term supply of one million metric tons per year of LNG, it would be supplied by ADNOC. — KUNA



RIYADH: Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya meets India's Minister of State for External Affairs Dr Subrahmanyam Jaishankar (left) and Brazil's Minister of Foreign Affairs Mauro Vieira (right). — KUNA photos



Kuwait FM meets counterparts from India and Brazil

RIYADH: Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya met on Monday with India's Minister of State for External Affairs Dr Subrahmanyam Jaishankar and Brazil's Minister of Foreign Affairs Mauro Vieira. The meetings were held on the

sidelines of the 161st Ministerial Council meeting of the Cooperation Council held at the headquarters of the General Secretariat of the cooperation council in Riyadh.

During the meetings, they discussed ways to strengthen bilateral cooperation, regional and international developments including the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Gaza, and ways to support international initiatives that provide regional security and stability. Also, Kuwait minister met with Brazil's Minister of Foreign Affairs Mauro Vieira. They discussed ways to enhance relations, regional and international developments. — KUNA

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In my view

Challenges and
political stabilityBy Dr Khalid A Al-Saleh
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Most of our Arab countries are going through political instability. Instability may take several forms, including popular violence, political assassinations, revolutions, change in governments, or ousting them, and usually instability shakes the confidence in the establishment's framework. This leads to uncertainty in economic policies, and this uncertainty pushes many governments to adopt short-term economic policies with the aim of gaining approval and keeping their posts.

The downward trend pushes them to a negative situation and a drop in investments, a drop in productivity, and in turn, the destruction of productive energies, the disappearance of development, and scientific research. The strong negative influence of political instability on economic performance may lead to lack of growth, inflation and unemployment, social dissatisfaction and violence. These push countries into a closed circle and stagnation. This is the situation in some Arab countries right now.

Several reasons might create political instability. Some studies linked the reduction of individual's income, civil unrest, and lack of education and employment as some of the causes of instability. Many Arab countries are suffering from political instability; some of them have even become failed states. Some countries in the region are contributing to political instability in the Arab world.

There is no doubt that history and geography are the common factors many countries use to measure their relations with the Arab world. We actually need to find a modern way to relate with our neighbors, rather than historical grudges. We need to strengthen our economic might. Arab Gulf countries do not have political instability, so there is a need for us to put up a strategy that will help other Arab countries because the circle is getting wider and may reach us one day if there are no realistic approach and proper solutions. The Arab world is becoming one nation, and when one Arab nation is badly affected, we will all be affected in one way or another.



Some of the participants were honored after the event. – KUNA photos



Chairman of the Kuwaiti Union of Charitable Societies and Foundations Saad Al-Otaibi



Minister of Social Affairs, Family and Childhood Affairs, Dr Amthah Al-Huwailah



Representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to Kuwait, Nisreen Rabiaan

Kuwait, leaders hailed
for humanitarian works

KUWAIT: Minister of Social Affairs, Family, and Childhood Affairs Dr Amthah Al-Huwailah said on Monday that Kuwait, with its governmental and civil charitable institutions, has been applauded and honored for supporting charitable and humanitarian work, occupying a leading position on the map of humanitarian work. This came in a speech she delivered on the sidelines of the celebration of the tenth anniversary of the United Nations naming Kuwait the 'Humanitarian Center' and His Highness the late Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah the 'Humanitarian Leader'.

Al-Huwailah added that Kuwait deservedly became a center for humanitarian work worldwide, thanks to the directives of the political leadership, which played the greatest role in developing charitable and humanitarian work and extending a helping hand and relief to needy peoples in various parts of the world without discrimination or distinction. She added that the celebration of the tenth anniversary of naming Kuwait as a 'Humanitarian Center' reflects the depth of belief in the values of solidarity.

She stated that the naming comes in recognition and appreciation of the unlimited assistance

provided by Kuwait, its leadership, government, and people in order to alleviate the suffering of those affected by disasters and conflicts and as an extension of its ongoing approach under the leadership of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. She stressed that charitable work has become a civilized behavior passed down through generations and preserved by the wise leadership, becoming a constant element and an integral part of Kuwait's foreign and domestic policy.

The ministers also affirmed the Ministry of Social Affairs' commitment to continuing the humanitarian approach to enhance Kuwait's role in supporting global humanitarian efforts in cooperation with Kuwaiti charitable organizations and institutions, which represent a pioneering model in charitable and humanitarian work. She expressed her appreciation for the efforts of charitable societies and foundations in delivering aid to those who deserve it in various parts of the world.

For his part, Chairman of the Union of Kuwaiti Charitable Societies and Foundations Saad Al-Otaibi expressed his appreciation for the efforts made by

the Ministry in providing support and assistance to Kuwaiti charitable work, especially the procedures for obtaining licenses or practicing various charitable works and coordination with official bodies in the country. Al-Otaibi pointed to the role of state institutions in implementing the Kuwaiti air bridge to relieve disaster and crisis victims and continuing Kuwait's pioneering role in humanitarian work.

UNHCR Representative to Kuwait Nisreen Rabiaan confirmed in a similar statement to KUNA that naming Kuwait a "Humanitarian Center" comes as a reward for its various humanitarian and charitable efforts, including holding international conferences and providing urgent humanitarian donations. Rabiaan said that "Kuwait, ten years after receiving the international title, continues to provide more support to the world's needy in the most difficult and tragic circumstances." She stressed the keenness of the High Commissioner to enhance cooperation with official bodies, Kuwaiti charitable organizations, and individuals in order to provide support, facilitate field visits, and quickly deliver various relief materials to those who deserve them. – KUNA

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Informatics Award
launches 9th edition of
'Humanitarian Kuwait'

KUWAIT: The Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah Informatics Award launched its ninth edition on Monday titled "Humanitarian Kuwait" on social media platforms targeting all social segments. Award chief of board of trustees Sheikh Aida Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah told KUNA that the award was launched with this name in commemoration of the 10th year anniversary since the United Nations named Kuwait and its then leader, late Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, humanitarian center leader.

Sheikha Aida congratulated His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah on the 10-year anniversary. She indicated that this award sets out to highlight Kuwait's humanitarian work and recalled that the fifth edition of the award held the same name in an effort to spread awareness on Kuwaiti achievements in humanitarian work. She also spoke of the Award founder, the late Sheikh Salem Al-Ali, and his directives and generosity that have contributed to the award's fast development and expansion since 2001, as well as reinforcing its regional and international standings. — KUNA



Sheikha Aida Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah



KUWAIT: Kuwait's Dr Khadijah Ghadhanfari has been nominated for membership in the Irish Surgical Training Group (ISTG). She becomes the first representative for International Surgical Fellowship Program (ISFP) under the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI).

Al-Safa Charitable
Society inaugurates
projects in Kyrgyzstan

BISHKEK: Al-Safa Charitable Society on Monday inaugurated the first of its kind charitable projects in its "Partners in Charity 16" trip to Kyrgyzstan with two water networks serving the villages of Aq Bashat and Kun To. Chairman of the Society's Board of Directors Mohammad Al-Shaya told KUNA that "the opening of two water networks in two villages was made possible through the generosity of the donors. He added that the two networks serve four neighboring villages with more than 4,000 beneficiaries who have been waiting for such projects for more than 30 years, indicating that the villagers own small gardens that they use for agriculture.

He praised Kuwait's humanitarian role in extending a helping hand to many countries through large charitable projects targeting the poor, needy, widows, and orphans, and its role in assisting Kuwaiti charitable societies inside and outside Kuwait. The trip to Kyrgyzstan started on Sunday in the capital Bishkek, where some charitable projects, including hospitals, schools, water networks, and orphanages, were launched with the participation of several governmental and private entities. It will continue until September 16. — KUNA



Trump, Harris battle for black voters in must-win Georgia

Bangladesh seeks extradition of ex-PM Hasina from India



MASYAF: Syrians inspect the damage at the site of overnight Zionist strikes on the outskirts of Masyaf in Syria's central Hama province on September 9, 2024. — AFP

Zionist strikes on Syria kill 18

Attack on research center 'one of the most violent' in Syria in years: War monitor

BEIRUT: Syria's health minister said Monday that overnight Zionist strikes killed 18 people in central Hama province, updating earlier figures, while a war monitor gave a higher death toll for the raids on military sites. The Zionist military, which has carried out hundreds of strikes in Syria since its civil war started in 2011, declined to comment on the latest reported attack.

"The number of martyrs of the brutal Zionist aggression reached 18 martyrs and 37 wounded," Syria's Health Minister Hassan al-Ghabash told AFP. This was "one of the most violent (Zionist) attacks" in Syria in years, the head of the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights war monitor, Rami Abdel Rahman, told AFP.

Earlier, official news agency SANA, citing a medical source, said the num-

ber of dead "in the (Zionist) aggression on a number of sites on the outskirts of Masyaf" was "16 martyrs and 36 wounded, including six critically", SANA citing a military source reported that at "around 11:20 pm (2020 GMT) on Sunday, the (Zionist) enemy carried out an air attack" from the direction of northwest Lebanon "targeting a number of military sites in the central region". Air defenses "shot down some" of the missiles, SANA reported.

Missiles and drones

The Observatory war monitor reported "intense (Zionist) strikes" overnight, providing an updated toll of 26 dead including "five civilians, four soldiers and intelligence personnel and 14 Syrians working

with pro-Iran groups". Three more bodies were unidentified, it added.

Zionist strikes on Syria since 2011 have mainly targeted army positions and Iran-backed fighters including from Lebanon's Hezbollah group. Zionist authorities rarely comment on individual strikes in Syria, but have repeatedly said they will not allow arch-enemy Iran to expand its presence in the country.

The Britain-based Observatory, which relies on a network of sources inside Syria, had earlier said the strikes targeted sites "where pro-Iran groups and weapons development experts are stationed". The Observatory said "(Zionist) strikes... targeted the scientific research area in Masyaf" in Hama province and other sites, destroying "buildings and military centers". Obser-

vatory chief Rahman said Iranian experts "developing arms including precision missiles and drones" worked in the scientific research center that was hit.

Charred cars, craters

Charred cars were visible on both sides of the road, with nearby trees still burning, observed an AFP correspondent present at the scene as part of a media tour organized by authorities. The raids also blew five large craters in the main road to Masyaf, the correspondent said.

Iranian foreign ministry spokesman Nasser Kanani told a media briefing: "We strongly condemn this criminal attack by the Zionist regime on Syrian soil." Syria's foreign ministry condemned the raids, accusing the Zionist entity of trying to "pro-

voke a further escalation in the region".

Zionist raids on Syria surged after Hamas's October 7 attack on the entity, then eased somewhat after an April 1 strike blamed on the entity hit the Iranian consular building in Damascus. Syria has sought to stay out of the Zionist war in Gaza, whose fallout has raised fears of a broader regional war.

In late August, several pro-Iranian fighters were killed in Syria's central Homs region in strikes attributed to the entity, the Observatory had said. Days later, the Zionist military said it killed an unspecified number of fighters belonging to the Hamas ally Islamic Jihad in a strike in Syria near the Lebanese border. Zionist raids on Syria have also sought to cut off Hezbollah supply routes to Lebanon. — AFP

What to watch for at the Harris-Trump presidential debate

WASHINGTON: Democrat Kamala Harris and Republican Donald Trump will battle each other on Tuesday in their first televised debate, a high-stakes clash that could give the winner an advantage in the final sprint to Election Day. For Harris, the square-off in Philadelphia is an opportunity to lay out her priorities and show her mettle against a rival who has belittled her intelligence and subjected her to racist and sexist attacks.

Trump will get a chance to try and blunt some of Harris' momentum in a race that has tightened considerably since she became the Democratic nominee in July. Most opinion polls show Harris to be slightly ahead nationally and in the majority of battleground states, but Trump remains well within striking distance to win the November 5 election. Here's what to watch for in the pivotal televised event:

Change candidates

In an election that features a former president facing the current vice president, both candidates are somewhat paradoxically portraying themselves as "change" candidates who will upset the status quo. Harris is seeking to take credit for the achievements of the Biden administration without being weighed down by its missteps, while also suggesting her presidency would mark a fresh start for the country.

Despite four years in the White House from 2017-2021, Trump has again styled himself as an insurgent pushing back against the institutions of Washington. But he also has played up his experience on the world stage as compared to Harris, pledging for instance that he could bring to an end the conflicts in Ukraine and Gaza and protect the country from a nuclear-armed North Korea or Iran.

Opportunities

The debate is Harris' chance to establish her own political identity for millions of Americans who tune in to watch. Harris is not as well known as the Democratic presidential candidates who



Kamala Harris (left) and Donald Trump will face off in their first televised debate Tuesday. — AFP

most recently preceded her, which could be a huge asset in an election where voters repeatedly said they were weary of a Biden-Trump rematch. Progressives also will be looking to see if Harris differs from Biden on key issues such as the conflict in Gaza and if she would be willing to put greater pressure on the Zionist government to reach a ceasefire agreement.

Harris, a former California attorney general, will have a platform to show her prosecutorial skills. She could try and hold Trump accountable for his conduct after the 2020 election, including allegations that he incited a mob of followers to attack the US Capitol on January 6, 2021, in a last-ditch bid to remain in power. Her courtroom experience may also enable her to rebut Trump's falsehoods in real time in a more effective way than Biden was able to during their June debate.

For Trump, the debate affords him his best chance yet to assert that Harris isn't ready to run the country and that he's the better choice for the job. Trump likely will attack Harris over the Biden administration's border-security policies, which failed to stop a record number of migrants from crossing into the US before being tightened earlier this year, as well as high consumer prices that Trump argues has made it harder for middle-class families to make ends meet. He could continue to try to pin her to the chaotic US exit from Afghanistan in 2021, raising questions about whether a candidate whose campaign has relied on "joy" and "vibes" is prepared to become commander-in-chief. — Reuters

Jordanians to vote amid woes over economy, Gaza war

AMMAN: Jordanians will head to the polls on Tuesday to vote for a new parliament amid widespread frustrations over a lagging economy and the ongoing war in Gaza. Just two days ahead of the vote, in a rare surge of violence, a Jordanian killed three Zionist guards at the border crossing between Jordan and the occupied West Bank.

The elections, which take place every four years, are the first to be held under a law passed in January 2022 that increased the overall number of seats in the house, reserved a higher number for women and lowered the minimum age for candidates. Those running include representatives of major Jordanian tribes, centrists and pro-government candidates, but also independents, leftists and those belonging to the Islamic Action Front (IAF), the political arm of the Muslim Brotherhood and the largest opposition party.

In a busy market in central Amman, where campaign posters were on display, locals expressed mixed opinions about participating in the elections. "Elections are important and vital. They are our opportunity to make our voices heard and choose who represents us in parliament, even though deep down we doubt there will be significant change," said 65-year-old retiree Issa Ahmed.

'Crises and endless wars'

He is one of the more than 5.1 million people registered to vote in the country of 11.5 million, according to the election commission. "Our country, unfortunately, is surrounded by a series of crises and endless wars," he told AFP.

The Zionist deadly military offensive in the Gaza Strip since October 7 has angered many Jordanian voters, about half of whom are of Palestinian origin. "What is happening in Gaza, from daily killing, destruction and tragedies broadcast daily on television, makes us feel pain, helplessness, humiliation and degradation, and makes us forget the elections and everything that is happening around us," said Omar Mohammed, a 43-year-old civil

servant. "I feel bitterness. I am not sure yet if I will vote in these elections," he added.

Jordan said on Sunday that one of its citizens, Maher Diab Al-Jazi, was the truck driver who shot three Zionist security guards at the King Hussein Bridge leading into the West Bank, also known as the Allenby Bridge crossing. The Jordanian interior ministry, citing a preliminary investigation, said he acted alone. The war in Gaza, and growing unrest in the West Bank, has taken center stage for some candidates running in Jordan's election.

"The Gaza war and the Palestinian cause occupy a major place in the Jordanian elections, as all eyes and minds are on Gaza and Palestine and the massacres taking place there against the Palestinian people," Saleh Armouti, a former MP and current candidate for the IAF, told AFP. "The elections... should not be delayed and they serve the Palestinian cause and the region, but I also fear that there will be some abstention from voting due to these events," he added. Despite the presence of the usual white tents associated with election campaigns — where coffee, the popular Jordanian dish mansaf, and the cheesy dessert kunafa are served — fewer people are present compared to previous years.

Tourism slump

The protracted war in Gaza has also significantly affected tourism in Jordan, a sector that contributes approximately 14 percent to the country's gross domestic product. It has led to a decline in revenues in a country where public debt is approaching \$50 billion and unemployment reached 21 percent in the first quarter of this year.

The economy is heavily reliant on foreign assistance, particularly from the United States and the International Monetary Fund. Oraib Rantawi, an analyst and the head of the Amman-based Al Quds Center for Political Studies, believes that a sector of Jordanian society "thinks that what is happening in Gaza is more important to follow, and therefore has paid less attention to the elections and might abstain from participating". He predicts that political groups that have been vocal on Gaza will benefit from their position, like the Islamists, "but not to a degree that raises concerns as some parties fear". "The improvement in these forces' status and parliamentary representation will be modest," he told AFP. — AFP

International

Bangladesh seeks extradition of ex-PM Hasina from India

War crimes tribunal set up by Hasina in 2010 accuses her of carrying out 'massacres'

DHAKA: Bangladesh's war crimes tribunal is to seek the extradition of ousted leader Sheikh Hasina from neighboring India, its chief prosecutor has said, accusing her of carrying out "massacres". Weeks of student-led demonstrations in Bangladesh escalated into mass protests last month, with Hasina quitting as prime minister and fleeing by helicopter to old ally India on August 5, ending her iron-fisted 15-year rule. "As the main perpetrator has fled the country, we will start the legal procedure to bring her back," Mohammad Tajul Islam, chief prosecutor of Bangladesh's International Crimes Tribunal (ICT), told reporters on Sunday.

The ICT was set up by Hasina in 2010 to probe atrocities during the 1971 independence war from Pakistan. Hasina's government was accused of widespread human rights abuses, including the mass detention and extrajudicial killing of her political opponents. "Bangladesh has a criminal extradition treaty with India which was signed in 2013, while Sheikh Hasina's government was in power," Islam added. "As she has been made the main accused of the massacres in Bangladesh, we will try to legally bring her back to Bangladesh to face trial".

Hasina, 76, has not been seen in public since fleeing Bangladesh, and her last official whereabouts is

a military airbase near India's capital New Delhi. Her presence in India has infuriated Bangladesh. Dhaka has revoked her diplomatic passport, and the countries have a bilateral extradition treaty which would permit her return to face criminal trial. A clause in the treaty, however, says extradition might be refused if the offence is of a "political character".

Interim leader Muhammad Yunus, a Nobel Peace Prize winner who took over after the uprising, last week said Hasina should "keep quiet" while exiled in India until she is brought home for trial. "If India wants to keep her until the time Bangladesh wants her back, the condition would be that she has to keep quiet," Yunus, 84, told the Press Trust of India news agency.

His government has been under public pressure to demand her extradition and trial over the hundreds of demonstrators killed during the weeks of unrest that ultimately toppled her. More than 600 people were killed in the weeks leading up to Hasina's ouster, according to a preliminary United Nations report, suggesting the toll was "likely an underestimate". Bangladesh last month opened an investigation led by a retired high court judge into hundreds of enforced disappearances by security forces during Hasina's rule. — AFP



DHAKA: A student shouts slogans as demonstrators wave Bangladesh's national flag during a rally marking one month since the ousting of the country's former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on September 5, 2024. — AFP

RSF paramilitaries kill 31 in Sudanese city of Sennar, activists say

DUBAI/CAIRO: At least 31 people have been killed and 100 wounded since the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces renewed an assault on the city of Sennar in southeastern Sudan on Sunday, a legal activist group said. Several parts of the city including the main market have been targeted by RSF artillery fire, said Emergency Lawyers, which has monitored civilian deaths and other humanitarian violations.

Sennar is one of the few remaining cities in the state of the same name which is not yet controlled by the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), who have been fighting the regular army for more than 16 months.

Residents on Monday told AFP there had been renewed gunfire but whether there were more victims could not be immediately determined. More than 16 months of war between rival Sudanese generals has already killed tens of thousands of people and triggered what the United Nations calls the world's worst internal displacement crisis.

The killings came after Sudan's foreign ministry, which is loyal to the army, rejected on Saturday a call by independent UN experts for an "impartial force with a mandate to safeguard civilians" to be deployed "without delay".

The Sudanese Emergency Lawyers' group, which documents atrocities committed during the war, reported 31 civilians killed and 100 wounded in an attack on a market. An earlier toll on Sunday evening from the Sudan Doctors Network, which blamed the RSF, said 21 people died and around 70 others were wounded at the market. Elsewhere in Sennar, Emergency Lawyers reported that strikes by the Sudanese Armed Forces killed four people including children, leaving a total of 35 people dead in the state by

both warring sides in "artillery fire and blind strikes."

New unrest was also reported in El-Fasher city, which the RSF have besieged for months in the vast western Darfur region. Darfur governor Mini Minawi said on social media platform X that the paramilitaries had "attacked" El-Fasher including with drones.

RSF has controlled Sinja, the Sennar state capital, since early July. The state connects central Sudan to the army-controlled southeast where hundreds of thousands of people have sought refuge. In August, a paramilitary attack in Sennar's Jalgini village killed at least 80 people, a local hospital source said at the time.

'Expand the embargo'

Independent experts appointed by the UN Human Rights Council said on Friday that their fact-finding mission had uncovered "harrowing" violations by both sides, "which may amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity". They called for "an independent and impartial force" to be deployed as soon as possible to protect Sudanese civilians — a proposal ruled out by the Burhan-aligned government in a statement issued late on Saturday. "The Sudanese government rejects in their entirety the recommendations of the UN mission," the foreign ministry said. "The protection of civilians remains an absolute priority for the Sudanese government," the statement added.

Human Rights Watch on Monday warned that the "warring parties responsible for widespread war crimes and other atrocities ... have newly acquired foreign-made weapons and military equipment". "The United Nations Security Council should renew and expand the arms embargo and its restrictions on the Darfur region to all of Sudan and hold violators to account," the New York-based rights group said ahead of a meeting of the council's Sudan committee on Wednesday. Visiting Sudan on Sunday, World Health Organization chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said: "The scale of the emergency is shocking, as is the insufficient action being taken to curtail the conflict and respond to the suffering it is causing." — Agencies

At least 59 dead after fuel tanker explodes in Nigeria

LAGOS: A fuel tanker exploded after colliding with a truck carrying passengers and cattle in northern Nigeria, killing at least 59 people, a rescue agency said on Monday. Photographs released by the Niger State Emergency Management Agency or SEMA showed workers burying more than a dozen blackened and charred bodies of victims from Sunday's early morning incident.

Images showed burned-out shells of the vehicles, one still billowing with smoke and flames after the incident in Niger's Agaie local government district. Ibrahim Hussein, spokesman for the Niger SEMA, told AFP the number of fatalities had risen to 59 on Monday from an initial toll of 52, when more victims were discovered in the wreckage and one of the injured died.

On Sunday, most of the victims were given a mass burial. "It is possible that more dead bodies could be discovered," Hussein said in a text message. The explosion happened after a petrol tanker loaded with PMS (fuel) collided with a trailer truck loaded with travelers and cattle, according to SEMA. Two other vehicles, a crane and a pickup truck, were also involved, it added, while more than 50 cattle were burnt alive.

Niger State Governor Mohammed Umaru Bago expressed sadness over the "colossal" loss, urging local residents to remain calm. President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's office said that the president had "directed relevant federal agencies in transportation and road infrastructure to redouble their efforts and work with state governments to enhance the safety and security of travelers and residents".

Fuel tanker explosions are common in Africa's most populous nation, where roads can be poorly



AGAIE, Nigeria: Flames and smoke billow from a fuel tanker after it exploded on September 8, 2024 in this frame grab from official video footage. — AFP

maintained, and residents often look to siphon off fuel following accidents. According to the Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC), more than 5,000 people died in road accidents in Nigeria in 2023, compared to nearly 6,500 the previous year.

But according to the World Health Organization, the figures do not take into account accidents not reported to the authorities. It estimates annual road accident deaths in Nigeria to be nearly 40,000, in a report published last year.

Fires and theft

Deadly fires and explosions also happen in the fuel and oil infrastructure in Nigeria, one of the continent's largest crude producers where petroleum theft is a major issue. Accidents involving tankers are frequent in the country, with the FRSC recording 1,531, causing 535 deaths, in 2020.

Two years ago, around 110 people died when an illegal oil refinery exploded in southern Nigeria. Nigeria recently has faced serious fuel shortages after the National Petroleum Company Ltd (NNPCL) said it was struggling with debts to suppliers. A sudden increase in fuel prices by NNPCL last week has added to the financial burden for Nigerians already coping with a cost-of-living crisis. — AFP

UN rights chief calls to challenge...

Continued from Page 1

occupation illegal and Turk said this situation must be "comprehensively addressed". Turk's comments were given in a broad speech marking the mid-way point of his four-year term as UN rights chief where he described massive challenges around the world and a crisis of political leadership. The session will also debate crises in Sudan, Afghanistan and Ukraine.

"It seems to me we are at a fork in the road. We can either continue on our current path — a treacherous 'new normal' — and sleepwalk into a dystopian future," he said in a speech met with applause from diplomats. He denounced the increased use of the death penalty and "alarming regressions" on gender equality, in reference to new morality laws in Afghanistan. In Western countries like Britain, Germany and the United States, politicians risk spurring violence by scapegoating migrants and minorities during election periods, he said.

Currently, he warned, the world appears comfortable with the "crossing of innumerable red lines, or readiness to toe right up to them". Turk said that during a record year for elections globally, such votes matter. "With some elections already having taken place, and others still to come this year, I urge

all voters to keep in mind the issues that matter most to them — be it a home, education for their children, their health or job, justice, their family and loved ones, the environment, to be free from violence, tackling corruption, being heard," he said.

"These are all human rights issues," he said. "I urge voters to ask themselves which of the political platforms or candidates will work for the human rights of everyone." The world's new normal, he said, "cannot be endless, vicious military escalation and increasingly horrifying, technologically advanced methods of warfare, control, and repression". He warned against a "free-for-all spread of disinformation, smothering facts and the ability to make free and informed choices".

Turk also slammed "heated rhetoric and simplistic fixes, erasing context, nuance, and empathy. Paving the way for hate speech and the dire consequences that inevitably follow". "I urge all voters to be vigilant. Be wary of the shrill voices, the 'strongman' types that throw glitter in our eyes, offering illusory solutions that deny reality," he said. "Know that when one group is singled out as a scapegoat for society's ills, one day your own might be next."

Turk, a former lawyer from Austria, also used the speech to defend his record, after criticism from some that his policy of engaging China over alleged abuses has been too soft. "I believe in engagement, frank exchanges and keeping dialogue open, even more so in the face of fierce disagreement," he said. — Agencies

be honored for the martyr to be buried here".

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Monday said Ankara would do everything possible to ensure "that Aysenur Ezgi's death does not go unpunished". "We will continue our fight against (the Zionist entity) at the highest level by taking it to the (International) Court of Justice," he added. Erdogan also urged the Organization of Islamic Cooperation to convene an emergency summit to discuss the war in Gaza and Zionist attacks on Jerusalem.

Speaking after a cabinet meeting in Ankara, Erdogan said the Zionist entity was targeting the Al-Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem as part of its "expansionist" drive. Jerusalem and the mosque was Ankara's "red line", he added. "It is unthinkable for the OIC, whose duty is to take care of the Jerusalem cause, to remain indifferent to these attacks. It is urgent that the organization convenes at the leadership level without losing more time," Erdogan said. — Agencies

Robotic leg with 'artificial muscles' can jump nimbly

PARIS: Researchers said on Monday they had designed the first robotic leg with "artificial muscles" — oil-filled bags allowing machines to move more like humans — that can jump nimbly across a range of surfaces. The small, disembodied robot leg was shown hopping over grass, sand and rocks in a video released alongside a new study in Nature Communications.

The researchers hope the technology can be used in the future to create humanoid robots to help out with "boring labor" around the house, study co-author Robert Katzschmann told AFP. Conventional humanoid robots are built with motors and rigid metal joints similar to those used on factory construction lines, the robotics professor at Switzerland's ETH Zurich university explained.

New Gaza school year begins with...

Continued from Page 1

to catch up on their lost learning and the more prone they are to becoming a lost generation, falling prey to exploitation including child marriage, child labor, and recruitment into armed groups," UNRWA Director of Communications Juliette Touma told Reuters.

In addition to the 625,000 Gazans already registered for school who would be missing classes, another 58,000 six-year-olds should have registered to start first grade this year, the education ministry said. Last month, UNRWA launched a back-to-learning program in 45 of its shelters, with teachers setting up games, drama, arts, music and sports activities to help with children's mental health. Nearly all of Gaza's 2.3 million people have been forced from their homes at least once, and some have had to flee as many as 10 times. In the latest evacuation order, the Zionist entity told residents of an area in the northern Gaza Strip they must leave their homes.

As well as being extremely expensive, such hulking robots could be dangerous if they were to enter people's homes. If one was to "fall on you, it is going to be quite painful", Katzschmann said. A future robot helper needs to be able to not just carry heavy things but "also give someone a hug or shake hands", he added.

The Swiss-led team of researchers was inspired by the 600 muscles in the human body to create something that can walk and jump in a more fluid, agile manner. To do this, they used "artificial muscles", also known as electrohydraulic actuators. These soft actuators, which resemble freezer bags, are filled with oil and have electrodes attached. The way the liquid contracts and expands allows the technology to more closely mimic animal muscles.

The electrostatic system also means that when the robot knee is in a bent position, such as a person would have when squatting, the system uses less electricity than traditional motors, the study said. The leg can handle rough terrain more nimbly than its rigid predecessors, according to the researchers. It was able to jump nearly 13 cm, which is 40 percent of its height, the study said. — AFP

The United Nations urged Palestinians in the northern Gaza Strip to attend medical facilities to get children under the age of 10 years old vaccinated against polio. Limited pauses in fighting have been held to allow the vaccination campaign, which aims to reach 640,000 children in Gaza after the territory's first polio case in around 25 years.

UN officials said the campaign in the southern and central Gaza Strip had so far reached more than half of the children there needing the drops. A second round of vaccination will be required four weeks after the first. Later on Monday, Touma said 450,000 of the children targeted with the campaign were vaccinated. "Tuesday is the hardest part when we roll out the campaign in the north. Hopefully, that will work so we complete the first stage of the campaign. The second and final stage is planned for the end of the month when we have to do all of this all over again," said Touma.

Health officials said on Monday two separate Zionist airstrikes had killed seven people in central Gaza, while another strike killed one man in Khan Younis further south. The armed wings of Hamas and the Islamic Jihad said they fought against Zionist forces in several areas across the Gaza Strip with anti-tank rockets and mortar fire. — Reuters

Hundreds in West Bank mourn slain...

Continued from Page 1

The Zionist army acknowledged it had opened fire in the Beita area and said it was "looking into reports that a foreign national was killed as a result of shots fired". The United Nations said Eygi had been taking part in a "peaceful anti-settlement protest" in Beita, scene of weekly demonstrations. Turkey condemned her death, while the United States called it "tragic" and pressed its ally the Zionist entity to investigate.

The commemoration was postponed from Sunday, due to a dispute between the United States and Turkey over "details such as the burial location and the route her body would take", said Mahmud Al-Aloul, a senior Fatah official. Aloul said that "Palestine would

International

Trump, Harris battle for black voters in must-win Georgia

Harris' late entry sparked enthusiasm, erased Trump's lead in battleground state

VALDOSTA: Vivian Childs, a staunch supporter of Donald Trump, schooled a roomful of Republicans on how to win over black voters in the battleground state of Georgia. Focus on Trump's economic policies, on illegal immigration and inflation, the black Baptist minister told the gathered group of volunteers and campaign staff at the former president's newly opened office in the rural city of Valdosta last month.

Tell voters what Trump has done for them and that he will bring the change America needs, she exhorted. "We are the party of hope," she said. "We are the party of truth." There was a mood of urgency at the office, a grand building with white pillars and porches. By Trump's own admission, Georgia has become a must-win state, one he thought he had locked up until Kamala Harris became his Democratic rival in July. Her late entry ignited a burst of popular enthusiasm, and opinion polls in Georgia show the candidates neck and neck, a huge turnaround from early July when polls showed Trump leading Democratic President Joe Biden by as many as six percentage points.

In particular, an intense battle is being waged for the black voters who make up a third of the state's population, the biggest proportion of black voters in any of the seven battleground states that will decide the November 5 presidential election. Trump's attempt to pull in more black support, however, is complicated by their traditional loyalty to the Democratic Party, his past racist remarks and a history of Republican-backed voting restrictions that activists say make it harder for black residents to vote. Republicans deny they are trying to suppress the vote.

Childs, part of the national "black Americans for Trump" coalition of advocates, conceded the nomination of Harris initially changed the race in Georgia. "There was a lot of excitement, absolutely," she said. "She's black and a woman." She insisted that excitement was fading. "We have got to stop dividing our country based on how we look," she added. "I'm telling people to talk to black people the same way they talk to white people: look at President Trump's resume, his policies, what he's done for all Americans."

Reuters spoke to three dozen campaign officials, party chairs, local activist groups and allies working on behalf of Trump and Harris to get a sense of each candidate's operation in the closely fought state that Trump lost to Biden by fewer than 12,000 votes in the 2020 election. A senior Trump campaign official, who requested anonymity to discuss confidential matters, said the team saw particular promise in attracting young black men who he said have become disaffected with Democrats over high prices and see greater

economic opportunities under the former president.

Pigs, peaches and politics

In churches and county fairs, on doorsteps and social media, and across the airwaves, both campaigns are courting black people, a voting bloc that has traditionally leaned heavily Democratic but where Trump has been making gains, according to opinion polls. "It has gotten really intense in Georgia," said Essence Johnson, a black woman who chairs the Democratic Party in Cobb County, a sprawling region outside of Atlanta. Cobb County illustrates the demographic changes that have transformed Georgia from a reliably Republican state into a battleground. Once a predominately white, Republican county, it's now 30 percent black, 14 percent Hispanic and 6 percent Asian, an area that helped Biden win Georgia in 2020.

Johnson, the Cobb County Democratic chair, said Harris' entry in the race had shifted things dramatically. "It's a reflection in the mirror for a lot of us," she said of Harris. A black men's forum held just before Biden ended his reelection bid on July 21 drew 14 attendees, she said, but 125 people showed up for another held just after Harris entered the race. Sixty people marked a good crowd at county party meetings when Biden was the candidate; 235 people attended once Harris became the nominee.

Before Biden dropped out, Trump's campaign was so confident of victory in Georgia that it had spent less than \$3 million on ad buys. Since Harris' emergence, the campaign and an affiliated group responded by sinking more than \$30 million into advertising in the state, outpacing the Harris campaign through the month of August. Both sides have committed to spending more than \$37 million each in Georgia through Election Day, according to AdImpact, a firm that tracks political advertising.

Janiyah Thomas, black media director at the Trump campaign, said the former president had a proven track record of creating opportunities for the black community. "To every black American struggling to make ends meet, our message is clear: vote for the candidate who has consistently delivered on promises," she added.

In August and September 2019, while Trump was president, the black unemployment rate reached a new low of 5.3 percent. Under Biden, the rate fell even lower, to 4.8 percent, in 2023. Harris is running ads focused on proposals to lower drug prices, taxing large corporations and the ultra-wealthy to pay for housing, and tax breaks for working parents. Harris' campaign said it had been reaching out to black



SAVANNAH: Members of the audience dance as they wait for Democratic presidential nominee, US Vice President Kamala Harris at a campaign rally on August 29, 2024 in Savannah, Georgia. — AFP

voters across Georgia "since day one." "Vice President Harris is fighting to lower costs for our families, protect our freedoms and make sure everyone in Georgia can not just get by, but get ahead," added Porsha White, the campaign's state director.

'God help our souls'

Trump took about 11 percent of the black vote in Georgia in the 2020 election, according to exit polls. If he were to pull in any higher share in November, he could win the state, said Andra Gillespie, a political science professor at Emory University. A poll conducted for CNN during the last week of August showed Harris with a one-percentage-point lead in the state, 48 percent-47 percent, with Trump getting 10 percent of the black vote.

A Trump victory in Georgia would relieve pressure for him to win all three of the midwestern battleground states, Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin. But he risks alienating some voters with his inflammatory comments about Harris, a woman of black and South Asian heritage. Trump has questioned the vice president's racial identity. "God help our souls if

Trump wins the election," said Demetrius Hall Sr, 62, a black voter in Savannah who decried Trump's racist rhetoric and said he was voting for Harris.

Trump's ally Childs brushed off those remarks in an interview after the Valdosta volunteer meeting, citing his economic policies that she said reduced black unemployment, his help for historically black colleges and universities, and his clampdown on illegal immigration as reasons to support him. Asked how she responds to voters who claim Trump is racist, Childs said: "I say, 'Based on what?'"

At a recent service kicked off with an hour of boisterous gospel songs, Hardin told his black congregation that America is heading towards socialism, that children are being indoctrinated in schools and the country "is full of terrorists." He said it was important to vote for people who "shake things up." Afterwards, in his private office, Hardin said he doesn't tell people to vote for Trump, but that Trump is on the right side of the issues such as individual liberty, school choice and economic empowerment. "Do not worship the idol of skin color," he said he tells his flock. — Reuters

EU says has 'credible information' Iran sent missiles to Russia

BRUSSELS: The European Union said Monday its allies had shared "credible" intelligence Iran had supplied Russia with ballistic missiles, a claim rejected by Tehran but not explicitly denied by the Kremlin. US media outlets reported last week that Washington believed Iran had transferred the weapons to Russia for use in Ukraine, citing anonymous sources. "We are aware of the credible information provided by allies on the delivery of Iranian ballistic missiles to Russia," EU spokesman Peter Stano said. "We are looking further into it with our member states and if confirmed, this delivery would represent a substantive material escalation in Iran's support for Russia's illegal war of aggression against Ukraine."

Stano added that "the EU leaders' unanimous position has always been clear. The European Union will respond swiftly and in coordination with international partners, including with new and significant restrictive measures against Iran". Iran's foreign ministry vehemently rejected the accusations. The West has been warning Tehran against sending Russia missiles for months, and the EU has already repeatedly hit Iran with sanctions for supplying drones to Moscow for the war in Ukraine.

'Severe' response

"We strongly reject the claims on Iran's role in exporting arms to one side of the war," Iranian foreign ministry spokesman Nasser Kanani said during a weekly press conference. The Kremlin did not issue a denial on Monday when asked specifically about the Wall Street Journal report that Iran had sent missiles.

"We have seen this report, it is not every time that this kind of information is true," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said. "Iran is our important partner, we are developing our trade and economic relations, we are developing our cooperation and dialogue in all possible areas, including the most sensitive areas." The United States has said any deliveries would invoke a "severe" response and damage Tehran's efforts to improve relations with the West following the election of reformist Masoud Pezeshkian as president.

Faced with punishing Western sanctions, Moscow has turned to Iran and North Korea for weapons supplies to keep its war machine going in Ukraine. Ukraine says it has been attacked with Iranian-designed Shahed drones on an almost daily basis from Russia, and has found fragments of North Korean missiles on its territory. The reported delivery of missiles to Russia comes as the Kremlin has once again stepped up its bombing campaign against Ukraine's key infrastructure ahead of winter. — AFP

Venezuelan opposition appears cornered as Maduro digs in

CARACAS: Venezuela's battered opposition is running out of options for challenging President Nicolas Maduro's claim to have won reelection. Opposition presidential candidate Edmundo Gonzalez Urrutia fled in exile to Spain over the weekend. The popular leader he stood in for at the polls, Maria Corina Machado, is in hiding. Other opposition figures have been arrested and Maduro is firmly in charge of the oil-rich nation — showing no sign of yielding.

Maduro's disputed win in the July 28 election is challenged not just by the opposition or historic geopolitical rivals such as the United States, but also by leftist allies of Venezuela such as Brazil and Colombia. The latter have come up empty-handed in their efforts to help find a peaceful solution to the crisis.

Inside the country, chatter abounds about what the opposition calls a stolen election — but people make their criticisms in whispers: no one wants to join the more than 2,400 people who have been arrested since the vote, including children, with some even accused of "terrorism."

Maduro would be sworn in for a third term on January 10, and in the next four months, anything can happen. But for now, Venezuela looks like this: Maduro and other heirs of the late iconic socialist leader Hugo Chavez are closing ranks, the opposition is trying to somehow reorganize itself and the outside world is assessing how to confront a Maduro whom international sanctions

and pressure have long failed to shake.

'Sweeping away everything'

The National Electoral Council, loyal to Maduro, proclaimed him the winner of the election with 52 percent of the votes. That means another six-year term in power for the former bus driver hand-picked by Chavez to succeed him. The opposition published copies of voting records from polling stations, saying the data proves the claim of a Maduro win is bogus and that Gonzalez Urrutia won by a landslide. That act of publishing the results online has triggered a probe by the government and charges that the opposition engaged in conspiracy, usurping functions and sabotage. The government has meanwhile not released detailed voting records to back up its claim of victory — it says it cannot, because the election tally system was hacked.

Maduro insists he won and at least in public rules out any kind of negotiation with the opposition. "It is clear that the government is not seeking to yield, and to the contrary it is digging in," said Antulio Rosales, a political scientist and professor at York University in Canada. "It is a strategy of domination, of sweeping away everything," said Giulio Cellini, head of the LOG political consultancy. The goal, he said, is "to keep Maduro in place no matter what the cost is, because the cost of giving up power is even greater." After Venezuela's last election, in 2018, Maduro also claimed victory amid widespread



MADRID: A supporter holds a sign reading 'current Venezuela's President Nicolas Maduro murderer of Venezuela', upon the arrival of Venezuelan opposition leader Edmundo Gonzalez Urrutia in Madrid on September 8, 2024. — AFP

accusations of fraud. With the support of the military and other institutions, he managed to cling to power despite international sanctions. Maduro has led the oil-rich but cash-poor country since 2013. His tenure, amid sanctions and domestic economic mismanagement, has seen GDP drop 80 percent in a decade, prompting more than seven million of the country's 30 million citizens to flee.

Gonzalez Urrutia, a 75-year-old, little-known former diplomat — until now — said last week that he was not considering going into exile, as he has now done. But for many Venezuelans, his flight came as no surprise. He was under tremendous pressure, not just from a legal standpoint — he defied three summonses to appear in court — but also due to a rain of dai-

ly insults from Maduro, who called him "filthy," a coward and even a Nazi.

Machado, the very popular leader of the opposition who was barred by Maduro-loyal courts from running for president, is now living in hiding. Many Venezuelans are now wondering if she too will flee into exile. Protests erupted right after the Maduro win was announced and in clashes with security forces 27 people died and nearly 200 were hurt.

Experts say it is unlikely that the United States will react as firmly as Donald Trump did after Maduro's disputed win in 2018. Then, the US administration said it no longer considered Maduro to be president and recognized opposition leader Juan Guaido instead. — AFP

Thousands defy roadblocks in rally for Imran Khan

ISLAMABAD: Thousands of supporters of Pakistan's former prime minister Imran Khan gathered in Islamabad on Sunday despite authorities' attempts to block the protesters' main routes into the capital, AFP journalists noted. The demonstration, led by Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party, is the largest in Islamabad since the retired international cricketer was jailed last year on several charges, some of them still before the courts.

The rally's size and popularity ensure (PTI's) mobilization capabilities remain intact despite relentless attempts to curb it," said Michael Kugelman, Pakistan specialist at the Wilson Center, a US-based think tank. Protesters on Sunday cleared containers used by Pakistani authorities to block major roads into Islamabad ahead of the demonstration. "They closed the city with containers. But despite this, thousands are here. They cannot stop this motivation and emotions the people have right now," Humayun Mohmand, a PTI senator, told AFP.



ISLAMABAD: Activists of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party of former country's prime minister Imran Khan, take part in a public rally on the outskirts of Islamabad on September 8, 2024. — AFP

In jail since August 2023, Khan insists along with his party that the charges against him are designed to prevent him from returning to office. Backed by the military, which wields enormous influence, he rose to power in 2018 by standing against widespread corruption embedded in the country's revolving door of dynastic politics. But he was ousted in 2022 after falling out with the military establishment.

That furthered a sense of helplessness and frustration

among many Pakistanis who want the generals to stay out of politics in a country that has been ruled by the military on and off for much of its history, and where a civilian prime minister has never served a full term. Khan's first arrest, on corruption charges in May 2023, sparked nationwide demonstrations by supporters expressing anger at the army. In response, the army orchestrated a massive crackdown on the PTI. — AFP

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2024

Awe and trepidation as AI comes for smartphones

Google Pixel 9 evokes fascination tinged with concern

SANTA CRUZ, US: Matthew Day was keen to find out if an artificial intelligence-packed Google Pixel 9 smartphone could tell him a great local fishing spot. California Assembly woman Gail Pellerin had it whip up a playful picture of her dog in front of the state capitol building.

Igor Gaspar launched into a discussion with the Pixel regarding causes of inflation.

Fascination tinged with concern was a common reaction as people in Santa Cruz dabbled with a Pixel 9 and its capabilities, including the ability to "add" oneself to pictures and having a whip-smart digital assistant at one's command. AFP visited the coastal California city to ask passersby to test out the features on the phone, as Google and Apple increasingly integrate AI into their products, in what they say is becoming a transformative time for the devices central to modern life.

"I asked it a question and it gave me a quick answer," Day said as he checked out the Pixel 9.

"That's a lot better than the phone I have right now, I'll tell you that much." "(There are) definitely some incredible tools that people would have available to them to do creative things, and gather information," Pellerin said after putting a Pixel through its paces. Yet worries also mounted.

"But I'm also concerned about nefarious uses of it, and we need to have those guardrails and regulations so it doesn't cause havoc in any industries or communities or whatever," she added. Pellerin is backing state legislation aimed at thwarting AI being used for misinformation and deepfakes.

Along with her concerns was admiration, though,



SANTA CRUZ, US: Leilani H Gilpin, Computer Science Professor at UC Santa Cruz, holds up the new Pixel 9 phone by Google in Santa Cruz, California, on Sept 6, 2024. — AFP photos

for benefits of AI features such as an "Add Me" tool that lets people take a photo of family or friends, then add themselves in as though they were part of the group from the outset. "I could see myself, as these tools become available, utilizing them more and more," she said of AI on smartphones. "It's scary. It's going to only increase the desperation that comes if we had to live without them."

University of California, Santa Cruz, computer science professor Leilani Gilpin questioned the need to put AI in people's pockets and wondered



Gail Pellerin, California State Assembly member from the 28th district, looks at the new Pixel 9 phone by Google in Santa Cruz, California.

whether confident sounding smartphone replies will mask moments when the software is "hallucinating" — making up inaccurate information. "Different language models hallucinate different information," Gilpin said. "So, the same thing is going to happen for people using this," she added, hefting the smartphone. "Whether it's for trivia or for generating images or other things, there'll be some made up information, and that's just a way that the models work." Gilpin liked the idea of engaging with AI conversationally while out walking, but felt spoken exchanges

lacked a sense of talking with a real person.

"I work on a lot of these technologies, so I feel like it's a couple of bells and whistles on things I've seen before," Gilpin said.

"I don't think it's going to be super revolutionary," Gilpin and others also found the smartphone AI to be verbose, diving deeply into topics when short replies would suffice. Meanwhile Gaspar and some friends created a group photo using the Pixel "Add Me" feature, with that capability alone prompting one of them to offer to swap phones.

"It was a really impressive feature," 23-year-old Gaspar said. "But, with the information war we have I think a lot of people could be kind of scared by the futuristic aspect of things — like you can add me to a picture in a way that's real." Seeing powerful AI tools on new smartphones "raises eyebrows" for Gaspar, who said having it packed into iPhones could spoil his taste for Apple products unless he feels in complete control of the technology.

"I wouldn't feel comfortable with having something that's so advanced that we aren't even sure of how it works on our phones," Gaspar said. "I do love Apple products, but if there's going to be this shift towards artificial intelligence without a choice of the consumer, I would step away from that."

In some ways, companies are already trying to avoid negative fallout from infusing AI into their products. Google appeared to be taking steps to avoid controversy, with its Gemini AI powered digital assistant on the Pixel declining to talk about elections or politics, and the image generation tool telling users it would not depict real people. — AFP



KUWAIT: The Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry officials hold talks with the Indian economic delegation at the KCCI office on Monday. — KUNA

Kuwait-India non-oil trade exceeded \$2bn in 2022, says KCCI

KUWAIT: The Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) on Monday reiterated the depth of the historic economic relationship between Kuwait and India, adding that the volume of non-oil trade between the two countries exceeded \$2 billion in 2022.

The KCCI received a visiting Indian economic delegation and hosted a meeting at its headquarters on Monday. The delegation, headed by the Executive Vice President of the Federation of Indian Export Organizations (FIEO) Israr Ahmed and accompanied by Indian Ambassador Dr Adarsh Swaika, comprised representatives of 30 Indian companies

operating in the field of food and agriculture. Representatives of Kuwaiti companies and the Public Authority for Food and Nutrition in Kuwait were also present at the reception.

The KCCI stated that the relationship between the two countries is more than a partnership in trade and business, but rather a bond of friendship that has grown over generations. It underscored the need to explore new opportunities to deepen this friendship and consolidate relations further. It explained that the meeting is the result of KCCI's keenness on food security and the need to involve Kuwaiti companies in all sectors, especially the small and medium industries by encouraging them and providing them appropriate investment opportunities that contribute to achieving and strengthening the food security system in Kuwait.

In a statement, Ahmed expressed his gratitude to the Chamber for organizing the meeting that focused on the food and agricultural sector which constituted one of the most prominent Indian ex-

ports. He emphasized that Kuwait is an important trading partner of India and that "the hard work with his country's government to provide the appropriate environment for establishing and encouraging effective businesses and partnerships" contributed to the growth of trade exchanges between the two countries by about 7 percent during 2023.

The Indian Ambassador expressed happiness with the presence of his country's delegation in Kuwait, which reflected the interest of both sides in strengthening existing relations, adding that the leaderships of the two countries encourage further strengthening of the bilateral relations. The Ambassador extended an invitation to the Kuwaiti side to visit India and learn about the available investment opportunities. An exhibition of Indian products was opened at the KCCI building which will last for two days. The exhibition seeks to introduce many Indian products and provide an opportunity to explore and establish partnerships between the two sides, especially in the food and agricultural sector. — KUNA

First step for Europe's hyperloop vehicles with test launch

VEENDAM, Netherlands: The dream of hurtling between European cities at speeds of more than 700 kilometers per hour moved a step closer Monday with the first successful vehicle tests at the European Hyperloop Centre. Hovering inside a sleek 420-metre (1,377-foot) white tunnel, a dark and light grey striped pod levitates at the order from the mission control centre, before powering away using magnetic propulsion and with no one aboard.

For the moment, the speed is relatively slow at 30 kilometers (18.6 miles) per hour but operators hope to reach 100 kph (62 mph) by the end of the year as they race towards rolling out a system by 2030.

"We will be ready to transport passengers in a vehicle like that by 2030," Roel van de Pas, commercial director of Dutch firm Hardt Hyperloop, told AFP in an interview. Amsterdam to Berlin in 90 minutes or Milan in two hours — the technology has the potential to revolutionize travel in Europe, believes Van de Pas. SpaceX and Tesla founder Elon Musk brought hyperloop into popular culture with a 2013 paper proposing a "fifth mode of transport" linking San Francisco and Los Angeles.

But several attempts to roll out the technolo-

gy have failed, including by British tycoon Richard Branson, and critics say "hype" is the pertinent part of the name "hyperloop". Not so, says Van de Pas. "It's really going to change the relationship that we have within Europe. It's really going to integrate the continent," believes the 39-year-old.

Monday's test launch took place in front of 300 guests, including Prince Constantijn of the Netherlands, watching on a big screen with the mission control comms piped in. The next stage is to test under full vacuum conditions — nearly all the air is sucked out of the tunnel to reduce air resistance — and gradually increase the speeds. The European Hyperloop Centre is the world's only facility to feature a "lane switch", a tunnel branching off from the main track. It allows scientists to test rapid course changes — vital for creating a network.

Hardt Hyperloop hopes to start testing the lane switch soon with vehicles and eventually build a bigger centre to enable the pod to reach the dizzying speeds possible. The eventual aim is to replace short-haul European flights and long drives across the continent, with ticket costs probably comparable to a low-cost airline, said Van de Pas. A successful roll-out of a dense hyperloop network would also provide a substantial environmental boost as well.

A hyperloop system uses around one 10th of the energy of aviation and one third of a railway, as well as being completely noise free as it's enclosed within the tunnel. The tunnels could be placed alongside existing motorways, and the European Hyperloop



VEENDAM, Netherlands: A view shows the end of a Y-shaped 420-metre (1,377-foot) white tunnel at the European Hyperloop Center (EHC) in Veendam, on Sept 7, 2024. — AFP

Centre has already experimented with blending into the environment, painting one part of its tunnel to make it look like a forest. One concern often raised is the passenger experience. Screaming through a narrow tunnel at the speed of sound may not be everyone's idea of a comfortable ride. Transport blogger Alon Levy famously described Musk's initial proposal as a "barf ride".

But Van de Pas promised a smooth journey. The vehicles, which will eventually carry 50 or so pas-

sengers, will have the same sort of vibration and comfort levels as modern trains, he said.

China already has a test facility enabling speeds up to 700 kph but Van de Pas welcomes the global competition. "We need good competitors and we are all pursuing the same mission. We want to make travelling these long distances a zero-emission effort," he told AFP. "We look at what our competitors are doing and they look at us and together we are building an industry." — AFP

Draghi: Europe needs 'unprecedented' investment surge

BRUSSELS: Europe must massively ramp up investment including through joint borrowing as part of a "new industrial strategy" to keep pace with the United States and avoid dependence on China, a keenly awaited report warned Monday. EU chief Ursula von der Leyen last year asked Mario Draghi, a former Italian premier and European Central Bank chief, to report back on how the 27-country bloc can increase competitiveness amid rising global insecurity and economic challenges.

His report calls for additional yearly investment of at least 750-800 billion euros (\$830-\$885 billion), amounting to almost five percent of the EU's gross domestic product. Draghi acknowledged this would be "unprecedented", representing a bigger boost than the post-World War II Marshall Plan to rebuild Europe, arguing that it was justified by an "existential challenge" facing the bloc.

"For the first time since the Cold War, we must genuinely fear for our self-preservation, and the reason for a unified response has never been so compelling," Draghi told a press conference in Brussels to present his report. Draghi's blueprint for "radical change," based around some 170 proposals, emphasizes the need to close an "innovation gap" with both the United States and China.

It advocates "massive" investment to fund Europe's priorities — from bolstering its defence industry to meeting ambitious decarbonization targets — while avoiding a reliance on Chinese clean tech, through targeted support for parts of the sector. It noted the EU's weakness in the emerging technologies that will drive future growth, with only four European companies among the world's top 50 tech firms. "Europe must become a place where innovation flourishes," Draghi said, saying the bloc was "punching under our power". "We lack focus on key priorities. We don't combine our resources to generate scale. And we do not coordinate the policies that matter." — AFP

Business

Spain's PM meets Xi, pushes 'fair trade order' on China trip

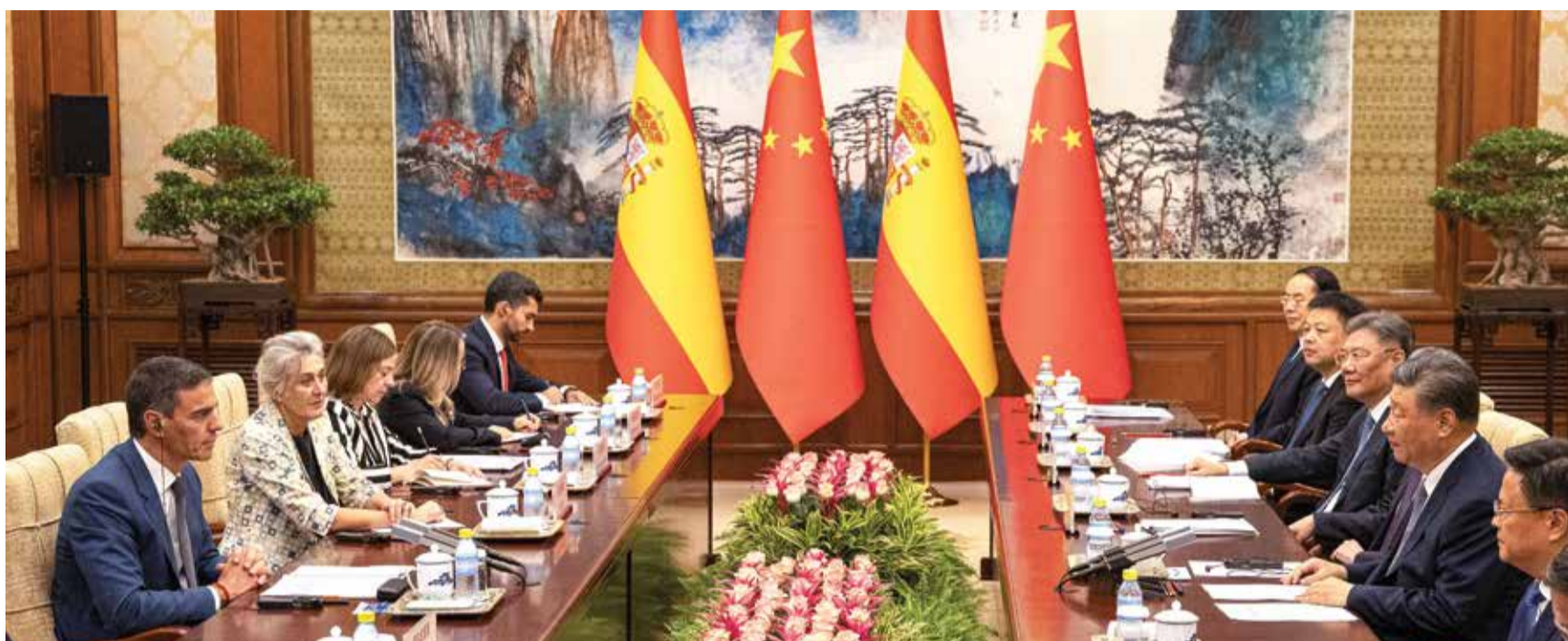
Xi calls to 'jointly promote AI, digital economy and new energy'

BEIJING: Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez called on Monday for a "fair trade order" during a visit to China where he met leader Xi Jinping and aimed to boost ties despite a tariff standoff between Beijing and the European Union. Xi called on the two sides to "jointly promote development in AI, the digital economy, new energy, and other high-tech fields", according to state broadcaster CCTV. "I hope Spain will continue to provide a just, fair, secure, non-discriminatory business environment for Chinese companies investing and operating in Spain," he said. Sanchez wrote on social media platform X after his meeting with Xi that there were many challenges, including "the climate emergency, threats to international peace and stability, and the fight against poverty and inequality".

"We must work together to resolve differences through negotiation, in a spirit of dialogue and collaboration, and within multilateral frameworks," he said. Sanchez earlier met counterpart Premier Li Qiang at Beijing's ornate Great Hall of the People, telling him Spain "wishes to continue strengthening its relations with China". "We want to build bridges to defend together a fair trade order," he said in a post on X.

This, he said, "allows our economies to grow and benefits our industries and citizens". Sanchez's trip will take him to Shanghai on Tuesday and Wednesday, where he will meet local officials and businesses as well as inaugurate a new Cervantes Institute cultural centre. Sanchez hailed "strong ties" between China and Spain at a forum in Beijing on Monday.

"Even on those issues where our positions do not fully coincide, we maintain a constructive willingness to engage in dialogue and cooperation," he said in a video of his remarks shared on his social media. Sanchez also met the Spain-China Business Advisory Council on Monday as part of efforts to "deepen trade and investment relations". The Spanish premier also met Xi during his last visit to China in March 2023 and took part in the



BEIJING: Spain's Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez (left) and China's President Xi Jinping (second right) meet at the Diaoyutai State Guesthouse in Beijing on Sept 9, 2024. — AFP

Boao Forum for Asia — similar to the World Economic Forum held in Davos — in China's Hainan province.

His arrival in Beijing came shortly after Venezuelan opposition figure Edmundo Gonzalez Urrutia — who insists he, not strongman Nicolas Maduro, is the country's legitimate president-elect — fled into exile in Spain. Sanchez described Gonzalez Urrutia as "a hero who Spain will not abandon" while speaking at a socialist party meeting on Saturday. Beijing enjoys close ties

with Maduro's government. Sanchez's visit also comes against the backdrop of mounting trade tensions between the European Union and China.

The European Commission, which oversees the bloc's trade policy, announced last month that it planned to impose five-year import duties of up to 36 percent on electric vehicles imported from China. Beijing also launched a probe last month into EU subsidies for some dairy products imported into China. China

also launched an anti-dumping investigation into pork imports from the bloc in June in response to an application submitted by a local trade grouping on behalf of domestic producers.

The Iberian nation is the EU's largest exporter of pork products to China, selling more than 560,000 tons to the world's second-largest economy last year at a total value of 1.2 billion euros (\$1.3 billion), according to industry body Interporc. — AFP

China consumer prices edge up to six-month high

BEIJING: Chinese consumer inflation ticked up slightly in August to a six-month high, official data showed Monday, but the reading missed expectations and did little to soothe worries about sluggish spending in the world's number two economy.

Leaders in Beijing have been seeking to boost domestic activity as property sector woes and trade frictions weigh on confidence. The consumer price index (CPI) — a key measure of inflation — rose 0.6 percent year-on-year in August, up slightly from 0.5 percent in July, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) said.

The figure was the highest since February but came in slightly lower than the 0.7 percent forecast in a Bloomberg survey of economists. "Despite a weather-related surge in vegetable prices, a fall in energy prices and core inflation meant CPI only rose a touch," said Gabriel Ng, Assistant Economist at Capital Economics, in a note Monday. While many major Western

economies have been grappling with the threat of high inflation, China has instead been seeking to avert another dip into deflation.

At the end of 2023, the country sank into deflation for four months, with the sharpest contraction in consumer prices in 14 years in January. "Deflation remains a major risk for China's economy," said Zhang Zhiwei, President and Chief Economist at Pinpoint Asset Management, in a note Monday.

"The fiscal policy stance needs to become more proactive in order to prevent the deflationary expectations from being entrenched," added Zhang. The NBS also announced Monday that factory-gate prices slid 1.8 percent year-on-year, extending a deflationary run that has lasted since late 2022.

Chinese officials have ramped up support measures for the private sector recently in a bid to stimulate activity and spur on household consumption. However, they have refused to unveil the bazooka-like stimulus seen during the global financial crisis and which many have called for.

Beijing has said it wants annual economic growth this year of around five percent. But that is considered ambitious by many experts as a property sector crisis and high youth unemployment continue to complicate efforts to achieve a full post-pandemic recovery. — AFP

Workers at several US tech companies back Kamala Harris

NEW YORK: Workers at many of the largest US tech companies overwhelmingly back Democratic presidential candidate Kamala Harris, according to donation data, even as some of the most powerful tech billionaires have thrown their support to Republican rival Donald Trump. Workers at Alphabet, Amazon and Microsoft are donating millions of dollars to the Harris campaign, significantly more than employees who are opting to send money to former President Trump's camp, according to the data compiled by political watchdog OpenSecrets. The data includes donations made by company employees, owners, and workers' and owners' immediate family members.

However, tech billionaires like Tesla Chief Executive Elon Musk and venture capital firm Andreessen Horowitz co-founders Marc Andreessen and Ben Horowitz are rallying behind Trump, citing the former president's stances on the economy, taxes and big business.

The Nov 5 presidential election has riven Silicon Valley, once a bastion of democratic and liberal support. Venture capitalist Reid Hoffman from Greylock and entrepreneur Mark Cuban are pledging support for Harris' White House bid, with hopes of seeing more abortion rights for workers and pro-tech policies. But in recent years several other tech leaders have bristled at Democratic President Joe Biden's business policies, including a broad attack on mergers and acquisitions and clamping down on data privacy. Companies themselves cannot directly donate to federal campaigns, including presidential ones, according to campaign finance laws. Corporations often donate to congressional and state-level campaigns through political action committees, which are funded by employee donations and limited on how much candidates can receive.

"Many businesses serve customers on both sides of the political aisle, and they don't want to alienate customers by making contributions that support just one party or one candidate in a partisan race," said Michael Beckel, research director at campaign finance reform nonprofit Issue One. While corporations are blocked from sending money directly to presidential candidates, their employees aren't, and tech employees are overwhelmingly giving to Harris.

Employees at Alphabet and its subsidiaries, which includes Google, and their family members have donated \$2.16 million so far to Harris' campaign, nearly 40 times as much as Trump has received, according to OpenSecrets. Amazon and Microsoft employees and family members donated \$1 million and \$1.1 million, respectively. Trump's campaign pulled in \$116,000 from Amazon workers and \$88,000 from Microsoft workers, as well as their family members. — Reuters



TOKYO: An electronic quotation board displays stock prices of Nikkei 225 on the Tokyo Stock Exchange in Tokyo on Sept 9, 2024. — AFP

Japan's PM hopefuls vow more spending to support economy

TOKYO: Japan will likely see another stimulus package under a new prime minister, with several candidates running in the ruling party's leadership race pledging fresh spending measures to boost growth and cushion the blow to households from rising inflation. In announcing his intention to run in the race to replace incumbent Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshimasa Hayashi said on Monday he would prefer boosting spending, rather than cutting taxes, if the economy requires another stimulus package.

Another candidate and minister in charge of economic security, Sanae Takaichi, also called for more fiscal spending to strengthen the economy. "Strategic deployment of fiscal spending will increase jobs, household income, and improve consumer sentiment. It will also increase tax revenues without raising the tax rate and help build a strong economy," Takaichi told a press conference on Monday to announce her intention to run in the leadership election.

The remarks followed those by leading candidate, Shinjiro Koizumi, on Friday that he would "immediately" work on a new economic package to aid small firms and low-income households hit by rising living costs. "I'll aim to beef up the underlying strength of the Japanese economy so that growth can be attained even in an era where inflation and higher interest rates co-exist," Koizumi said.

The winner of the Liberal Democratic Party's (LDP) leadership race, scheduled on Sept. 27, will become next prime minister due to the party's control of parliament. Kishida announced last month that he would step down as LDP chief in September, effectively ending a three-year term as leader of the world's fourth-largest economy. Kishida's successor is likely to dissolve parliament next month after being chosen as prime minister in an extraordinary parliament session, and call a snap election, analysts say. Ruling party lawmakers traditionally make pledges of big spending packages to lure voters when elections near, a trend that led to a ballooning public debt which, at twice the size of Japan's economy, is the biggest among advanced nations.

The candidates have offered few clues on their views on monetary policy. Hayashi declined to comment, when asked about market expectations that the Bank of Japan (BOJ) is likely to raise interest rates further. Koizumi did not directly comment on monetary policy, but said he would "basically carry over" the economic policies of Kishida's administration. An outlier was Takaichi, who said inflation was still too weak when stripping away the effect of one-off factors like fuel and raw material in a sign of her preference for the BOJ to maintain ultra-loose monetary policy. — Reuters



SHENYANG, China: People shop for fish at a market in Shenyang, in northeastern China's Liaoning province on Sept 9, 2024. — AFP

Chinese car sales fall for fifth straight month

BEIJING: Passenger vehicle sales in China fell in August for the fifth straight month, industry data showed on Monday, though sales of all-electric and plug-in hybrid models rose, helped by subsidies for drivers trading in more polluting vehicles. Sales fell 1.1 percent from the same month a year earlier to 1.92 million vehicles, data from the China Passenger Car Association (CPCA) showed. That compared with a 3.1 percent decline in July. New energy vehicle (NEV) sales, however, jumped 43.2 percent to account for a record 53.5 percent of total car sales, as local EV champion BYD set a sales record and US rival Tesla had its best month of 2024.

Car exports increased 24 percent after a 20 percent rise in July. The numbers reflected waning consumer confidence, with first-time car purchases lagging behind trade-ins, the association said last week. Drivers are eligible for a cash subsidy

of as much as 20,000 yuan (\$2,823) when trading in petrol-powered cars to buy NEVs, while those trading in petrol-powered cars for smaller-engine alternatives are entitled to up to 15,000 yuan. In line with a downshift in consumer spending, local EV majors Nio and Xpeng HK launched lower-priced brands earlier this year.

"Over 80 percent of the applicants for trade-in subsidies opted to buy NEVs," CPCA secretary general Cui Dongshu said. Despite the recent declines, car sales were up 1.6 percent in the first eight months of 2024, CPCA data showed. Anticipating a sustained tailwind from government incentives on especially NEV sales, Cui said he expected sales for the full year to remain in positive territory.

NEV sales are projected to be close to 50 percent of domestic car sales this year, before crossing that milestone in 2025, Cui added. Rising EV and plug-in hybrid sales have barely helped with challenges at dealerships that are battling price falls. More than half of dealerships suffered a loss in January-June, with the ratio up 7.3 percentage points from a year prior, data from the China Automobile Dealers Association showed. Money-losing China Grand Automotive Services, the second-largest dealership, was delisted from the Shanghai bourse in August after its stock traded below par value for 20 consecutive days. — Reuters



SAVANNAH: Democratic presidential candidate, US Vice President Kamala Harris, and her running mate, Minnesota Governor Tim Walz, disembark from their campaign bus on Aug 28, 2024. — AFP

Business

Lebanon's ex-CB chief Salameh to remain detained amid probe

Embattled former banker faces charges including embezzlement of public funds

BEIRUT: A judge ordered Lebanon's former central bank chief Riad Salameh to remain in detention amid a probe into alleged financial crimes committed during his tenure, including embezzlement of public funds, three judicial sources said. Investigative judge Bilal Halawi took the decision after questioning Salameh for the first time since he was taken into custody last week on charges that state media said included embezzlement, forgery and illicit enrichment.

Halawi set another hearing for Thursday, one of the sources said. Salameh's media office has said he would not comment publicly on the case, in line with the law. It said in a statement he had cooperated in the past with more than 20 criminal probes in Beirut and Mount Lebanon, and was cooperating with the investigation after his detention.

Salameh has denied previous corruption charges. If the prosecution continues, it would mark a rare case of a serving or retired senior Lebanese official facing accountability in a system which critics say has long shielded the elite. A group of protesters shouted "Thief!" as a convoy they believed was transporting Salameh entered the justice ministry building. Some of them struck one of the vehicles with their hands.

Salameh was long feted as a financial wizard in Lebanon but left office with his reputation shredded by corruption charges at home and abroad

and the catastrophic collapse of Lebanon's financial system in 2019. Judicial sources told Reuters last week Salameh was suspected of accruing more than \$110 million via financial crimes involving Optimum Invest, a Lebanese firm that offers income brokerage services. Optimum Invest has said it was assisting the judicial authorities in their investigation and providing them with all requested information, and that its dealings with the central bank were conducted in full compliance with the law.

The Lebanese authorities have not published the charges. The charges brought against Salameh last week are separate from previous charges of financial crimes linked to Forry Associates, a company controlled by his brother, Raja. The brothers - who deny any wrongdoing - were accused of using Forry to divert \$330 million in public funds through commissions. Several European countries including France and Germany have been investigating whether tens of millions of dollars of the funds allegedly embezzled from the central bank were laundered in Europe.

Last year, French and German authorities issued warrants for his arrest. The Munich prosecutor's office said in June that German authorities have cancelled their arrest warrant for technical reasons but were continuing their probe and keeping Salameh's assets frozen. — Reuters



BEIRUT: Protesters try to block a security forces convoy entering the Palace of Justice in Beirut where Lebanon's former Central Bank chief Riad Salameh is set to attend a questioning hearing on Sept 9, 2024. — AFP

NEWS IN BRIEF

Carrefour to return to India

PARIS: French retail giant Carrefour announced Monday that it will return to India by June 2025 in a franchise partnership with Dubai firm Apparel Group, a decade after leaving the country. Carrefour pulled out of the Indian market in 2014, closing five wholesale stores after only a four-year presence in the country. The supermarket group did not say how many stores may open in India. With its population of more than 1.4 billion, "India is a strategic market pulled by economic growth, urbanization and the growing purchasing power of consumers", Carrefour said in a statement. — AFP

Ukraine currency liberalization

KIEV: Ukraine's central bank on Monday announced the next stage of currency liberalization, saying the measures would support the country's defense capability and Ukrainian businesses. The central bank introduced its largest wartime currency liberalization measures in May, aiming to ease restrictions on businesses after Russia's 2022 full-scale invasion prompted the imposition of tough restrictions. The new measures listed on the bank's website included allowing state-owned companies to purchase foreign currency and transfer it to non-residents to buy quotas to offset carbon dioxide emissions from aviation. — Reuters

German minimum wage hike

BERLIN: Germany should raise its minimum wage to over 15 euros (\$16.59) per hour from 2026, Labour Minister Hubertus Heil told a government-appointed minimum wage commission in a letter seen by Reuters on Monday. Heil called on the commission - a body made up of employers and trade union representatives - to implement the requirements of the EU minimum wage directive, which sets it at at least 60 percent of the average wage for full-time employees. According to current calculations by the German Trade Union Confederation DGB, this would be 15.27 euros per hour in 2025. — Reuters

Hostmore not to buy TGI Fridays

LONDON: Shares of Hostmore plunged more than 70 percent on Monday as the British restaurant operator dropped plans to buy TGI Fridays after it was removed as the manager of TGIF Funding, which owns the right to collect royalties from the pub chain franchise. "The predictable and highly cash-generative royalty stream of TGI Fridays was the primary attractive feature for the Group in pursuing the acquisition," Hostmore said. Hostmore, which operates pub chain TGI Fridays in the UK via its unit Thursdays (UK), said the sale of its corporate stores is expected to be completed in September, albeit at a lower value than the loans held by Thursdays. — Reuters

China Renaissance shares fall

HONG KONG: Shares in Hong Kong-listed investment bank China Renaissance plummeted on Monday as the company resumed trading after a 17-month hiatus linked to the disappearance of chairman Bao Fan. Billionaire Bao went missing last year and the firm then announced that he was "cooperating" in an official investigation, sparking fears of a renewed crackdown on China's finance sector. The bank published its annual results for 2022 and 2023 last week, as well as results for the first half of this year, reversing its trading suspension on the Hong Kong stock exchange. — AFP

Burgan Bank announces winners of Kanz Account monthly draw

KUWAIT: Burgan Bank announced Monday the names of the Kanz account monthly draw winners, who will each take home a KD 2,000 cash-prize. All Kanz customers who maintain a minimum balance of KD 200 for at least one week before the draw date, are included in the draw, and their chances of winning increase with higher deposits.

The 20 lucky winners are:

- Mariem Abdulrazak Alradi
- Hussain Abd Alemam Sulaiman
- Moiz Ali Tatiwala
- Ibrahim Eissa Alyaqoub
- Leena Mohammad Alnahhas
- Hasan Ali Hussain
- Hala Zaghloul
- Abdullah Alhashemi
- Farah Mohammad Aldhefeeri
- Nurassiah Bt Slamet
- Ammar Hussain Ghuloum
- Sheikh Fahad Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah
- Nayef Sulaiban Alharbi
- Mohsen Saud Aldosari
- Karl James Pope
- Jaafar Jassim Naseeb
- Rajaa Hajji Behbehani
- Mohammad Ali Alqenaei
- Marziyeh Hassan Raeisi

Kalyan Jewellers rewards winners of giveaway campaign

KUWAIT: Kalyan Jewellers, one of the most trusted and leading jewellery brands, has successfully concluded its '50 Days, 25 Winners, 25 Gold Bars' giveaway campaign. Over the course of 50 days, the jewelry brand has rewarded 50 lucky customers with a 10 gm gold bar each, making this a memorable and joyous celebration for patrons in the region.

This one-of-its-kind campaign was designed to enhance the shopping experience of Kalyan Jewellers' customers, providing them with an exciting opportunity

مبروك للرابحين في حساب كَنْز
Congratulations to the winners of the Kanz Account
September Monthly Draw سحِب شهر سبتمبر
KD 2,000
#KanzBurgan | 1804080

MARIEM ABDULRAZAK ALRADI	AMMAR HUSSAIN GHULOUM	عمر حسين غلوم	مريم عبدالرزاق الراضي
HUSSAIN ABD ALEMAM SULAIMAN	SHEIKH FAHAD JABER ALAHMAD ALSABAH	الشيخ فهد جابر الاحمد الصباح	حسين عبدالامام سليمان
MOIZ ALI TATIWALA	NAYEF SULAIBAN ALHARBI	نايف صليبان الحرابي	معر علي تاتوولا
IBRAHIM EISSA ALYAQOUB	MOHSEN SAUD ALDOSARI	محسن سعود الدوسري	ابراهيم عيسى اليعقوب
LEENA MOHAMMAD ALNAHHAS	KARL JAMES POPE	كارل جيمس بوبي	لينا محمد النحاس
HASAN ALI HUSSAIN	JAAFAR JASSIM NASEEB	جعفر جاسم نصيب	حسن علي حسين
HALA ZAGHLOUL	RAJAA HAJJI BEHBEHANI	رنا حجي بهبهاني	هاله زغلول
ABDULLAH ALHASHEMI	MOHAMMAD ALI ALQENAEI	محمد علي القناعي	عبدالله الهاشمي
FARAH MOHAMMAD ALDHEFEERI	MARZIYEH HASSAN RAEISI	مرزيه حسن راعي	فرح محمد الظفيري
NURASSIAH BT SLAMET	MUSTAFA KOTHARI	مصطفى كوثاري	نوراسياه بت سلامت

• Mustufa Kothari
In addition to the monthly draw of Kanz account, Burgan Bank also offers a semi-annual KD 500,000 prize and a mega annual prize of KD 1,500,000.

Kanz Account is accessible to any individual and can be opened in Kuwaiti dinar or in major currencies (USD, Euro, GDP) with a minimum KD 200 requirement for account opening.



nity to win a valuable gold bar every day. Customers who made gold and diamond jewelry purchases of KD 50 and above were eligible to participate in this pro-

motional activity. All the winners were selected at their stores through a raffle draw conducted in the presence of Kuwaiti government officials.

Speaking on the success of the campaign, Ramesh Kalyanaraman, Executive Director - Kalyan Jewellers, said, "We are delighted with the overwhelming response to our '50 Days, 25 Winners, 25 Gold Bars' giveaway campaign. At Kalyan Jewellers, we have been committed to enhancing the shopping experience of patrons with unique offers and exceptional service. The response garnered by this initiative is a testament to our efforts in ensuring that patrons garner maximum benefits on their jewelry purchases from Kalyan Jewellers."

The winners' names have been announced on the brand's official social media pages. Kalyan Jewellers extends its heartfelt congratulations to all the winners and expresses gratitude to all its patrons for their continued support.

ECB to deliver fresh rate cut as inflation cools

FRANKFURT: The European Central Bank is expected to cut interest rates again this week as inflation drifts back down towards its two-percent target, but policymakers will likely stay tight-lipped on future moves. The ECB began raising rates sharply in mid-2022 to throttle surging consumer prices but has begun to ease the pressure as inflation rates have fallen.

The Frankfurt-based central bank, which sets monetary policy for the 20 countries that use the euro, made its first cut in June, reducing the key deposit rate to 3.75 percent from a record high of four percent. After taking a breather at its July meeting, the ECB's governing council is expected to make another quarter-point cut on Thursday, providing further relief for households and businesses.

It will only be the ECB's second rate reduction since 2019. "A cut is fully priced in by the market and there seems to be a broad consensus among (governing council) members," analysts at bank HSBC said in a note. Policymakers' confidence in moving ahead with cuts has been bolstered by signs that inflation,

which has been bumpy over the past year, is now on a more sustained downward trajectory. Eurozone inflation fell to its lowest level in more than three years in August, according to official data.

Consumer price rises slowed to 2.2 percent compared to the same month last year, down from 2.6 percent in July, leaving the figure just a whisker off the ECB's target. Inflation rates had peaked at 10.6 percent in October 2022 after Russia's invasion of Ukraine and post-pandemic supply chain woes sent food and energy costs soaring.

A lackluster performance in some parts of the eurozone has also fuelled calls for more cuts to take pressure off the single currency area. While signs in the first half of the year were positive, recent indicators have pointed to a deteriorating outlook. The eurozone's largest economy, Germany, shrank unexpectedly in the second quarter, adding to indications that a hoped-for rebound will fail to materialize this year.

Meanwhile, wage growth, a key area of concern for the ECB, slowed markedly in the second quarter, easing fears that high labor costs could spark a resurgence in inflation. Rate-setters will also be armed with updates to the central bank's own inflation and growth forecasts to help guide their decision. The US Federal Reserve looks poised to start cutting rates at its meeting next week, following recent weak data and a bout of market turmoil. This will boost confidence among ECB policymakers about forging ahead with their own cuts.

Bank of France governor Francois Vil-



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

eroy de Galhau, a member of the ECB's governing council, has been among those calling for a cut at this week's meeting. "If we waited until we were actually at two percent to lower rates, we would be acting too late," said the central bank chief in an interview with French media last month.

With Thursday's reduction a near certainty, investors will be closely watching ECB president Christine Lagarde's post-meeting press conference for clues about the path ahead. But analysts say the ECB is unlikely to let much slip about its next moves. "We do not think that the ECB will provide clear guidance for the future, but remain da-

ta-dependent," HSBC said. The central bank has in recent times insisted it will not foreshadow its future moves, and will rely solely on incoming data. Policymakers have reason to be cautious, with signs that inflation in some areas remains stubborn. Closely-watched core inflation, which strips out volatile energy and food prices, remained elevated at 2.8 percent in August, while services sector inflation accelerated.

Nevertheless, ING bank said it expected the ECB to push ahead with further cuts later in the year in response to the "weakening economic prospects of the eurozone". — AFP

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2024

Kendrick Lamar to headline 2025 Super Bowl halftime show



US rapper Kendrick Lamar performs during the 2023 Governors Ball Music Festival at Flushing Meadows Corona Park in New York City. - AFP

Grammy-winning rapper Kendrick Lamar will headline next year's Super Bowl half-time show in New Orleans, the artist confirmed in a statement on Sunday. "Rap music is still the most impactful genre to date. And I'll be there to remind the world why," Lamar said in a statement on social media. "They got the right one." Next year's Super Bowl will take place at

the Caesars Superdome in New Orleans on February 9.

The National Football League showpiece is the biggest annual event on the US sporting calendar, with the half-time concert traditionally one of the highlights of the spectacle. A list of past Super Bowl half-time performers reads like a Who's Who of the music world, including the likes of the Rolling Stones, Prince, Bruce Springsteen,

Madonna, U2, Paul McCartney, Michael Jackson, Rihanna, Lady Gaga and Beyonce. Rap and hip hop have also been well-represented, with Lamar featuring alongside the likes of Snoop Dogg, Dr. Dre, Eminem and 50 Cent in a memorable performance at the 2022 Super Bowl in Los Angeles.

"Few artists have impacted music and culture as profoundly as Kendrick Lamar," the NFL's head of music Seth

Dudowsky said in a statement. "Time and time again, Kendrick has proven his unique ability to craft moments that resonate, redefine and ultimately shake the very foundation of hip-hop," he said. "We're excited to collaborate with Kendrick, (entertainment company) Roc Nation, and Apple Music to deliver another unforgettable halftime show." — AFP

Vatican thriller 'Conclave' drums up Oscars buzz in Toronto

How do Catholic cardinals choose a new pope? What happens in their closed-door meetings? That is the premise of Vatican thriller "Conclave," starring Ralph Fiennes and Stanley Tucci, which screened at the Toronto film festival on Sunday. The fictionalized account of high-stakes Holy See horse-trading, based on a Robert Harris novel, imagines how the death of a pope sends the church's various factions into battle for its future. Fiennes, Tucci and John Lithgow lead a powerhouse cast that is generating serious Oscars buzz, as is director Edward Berger, whose "All Quiet on the Western Front" won four Academy Awards last year.



Edward Berger (left) and Isabella Rossellini of 'Conclave' pose in the Getty Images Portrait Studio Presented by IMDb and IMDb-Pro during the Toronto International Film Festival at InterContinental Toronto Centre in Toronto, Ontario. — AFP

Fiennes plays Cardinal Lawrence, who is tasked with organizing the so-called conclave, the ultra-secret assembly of cardinals that elects a pontiff. Tucci and Lithgow play two of the men vying to ascend the papal throne. "No sane man would want the papacy," says Cardinal Bellini (Tucci), a liberal who nevertheless wants the job, in the hopes of thwarting

the conservatives who he believes would take the church backwards socially.

Twists and turns abound as the ho-liest of men reveal their sins and misdeeds in the film, which had its world premiere about a week ago at Telluride, another of the industry's key fall festivals. A pulsating score from Oscar-winning composer Volker Bertelmann (for "All Quiet on the Western Front") propels the film's taut pace, building to an unexpected conclusion.

Fiennes, 61, is a two-time Oscar nominee for "Schindler's List" and "The English Patient," but never a winner. Pundits are already suggesting this could be the film that brings him an Academy Award — he figures on every expert's short list for an Oscar nod for best actor on awards prediction website Gold Derby.

'No film looks like this'

Meanwhile "The Wild Robot," the latest from DreamWorks Animation, which had its world premiere Sunday in Canada's biggest city, is also sure to be in the awards conversation. Oscar winner Lupita Nyong'o stars as intelligent robot Roz, who is marooned on an uninhabited island when a typhoon upends a cargo ship. In order to survive, she must befriend the menagerie of woodland animals perplexed by her arrival. She takes a particular shine to gosling Brightbill, who must learn how to fly in order to migrate with the rest of his flock.

"Sometimes to survive, we must become more than we were programmed to be," says Roz, who overwrites some of her own code as she draws closer to her unexpected new friends. The A-list cast working under director Chris Sanders ("Lilo & Stitch") also includes Pedro Pascal, Mark Hamill, Catherine O'Hara and Stephanie Hsu. The film, based on a popular book of the same name by Peter Brown, features amusing animal side-kicks, but far less dialogue than usual in an animated movie, instead relying on a score from Kris Bowers.

The lush forest landscape, with crashing waves at the shore, is animated in a way that looks almost painted. "It's a fable, it's also an amazing story, and we broke the mold visually—no film looks like this," Sanders told AFP on the red carpet. — AFP



(From left to right) Jenna Ortega, Catherine O'Hara, Michael Keaton, Winona Ryder, Justin Theroux, Monica Bellucci and Tim Burton attend the "Beetlejuice Beetlejuice" New York photo call at JW Marriott Essex House in New York City. — AFP

New 'Beetlejuice' creeps its way to top of North America box office

It was 36 years in the coming, but Warner Bros.' new comedy horror "Beetlejuice Beetlejuice" scored a sensational opening this weekend, earning an estimated \$110 million in North American theaters, analysts said. Tim Burton's original "Beetlejuice" had a slow start - it took in a mere \$8 million at its 1988 opening - but "this time, audiences knew what to expect and it's a mainstream smash," said David A. Gross of Franchise Entertainment Research. The new film again stars Michael Keaton in the grimly hilarious title role and includes two other veterans of the campy original, Winona Ryder and Catherine O'Hara.

New to the cast are Jenna Ortega (whose role as TV's creepy "Wednesday" made her a natural for the role),

Justin Theroux, Monica Bellucci and Willem Dafoe. Longtime box-office leader "Deadpool & Wolverine," the Disney and Marvel superhero comedy, was a very distant second, with \$7.2 million in ticket sales for the Friday-through-Sunday period, industry watcher Exhibitor Relations said. Overall, the Ryan Reynolds/Hugh Jackman film hasn't done badly, however, taking in close to \$1.3 billion domestically and abroad in its seven weeks out.

In third, up one spot from last weekend, was biopic "Reagan" from Show-Biz Direct and MJM Entertainment, at \$5.2 million. Dennis Quaid stars in a sympathetic look at the life of the 40th US president. In fourth place, down two spots, was sci-fi horror film "Alien: Romulus," from Disney-owned 20th

Century Studios, at \$3.9 million. Caillee Spaeny and David Jonsson play space colonists who encounter deadly xenomorphs in an abandoned space station. The weekend's fifth spot went to Sony romance drama "It Ends With Us," at \$3.8 million. Blake Lively stars and co-produced the film, whose accumulated foreign and domestic ticket sales now surpass \$300 million.

Rounding out the top 10 were:

- "The Forge" (\$2.9 million)
- "Twisters" (\$2.3 million)
- "Blink Twice" (\$2.1 million)
- "Despicable Me 4" (\$1.8 million)
- "The Front Room" (\$1.7 million).

— AFP



Anita Lee, Chief Programming Officer, TIFF, Min-ho Woo, Hyun Bin and Lee Dong-wook attend the premiere of "Harbin" during the 2024 Toronto International Film Festival at Roy Thomson Hall in Toronto, Ontario. - AFP photos



Olivia Chow, Mayor of Toronto speaks onstage at the premiere of "Harbin" during the 2024 Toronto International Film Festival.



Hyun Bin attends the premiere of "Harbin" during the 2024 Toronto International Film Festival.

'Harbin' brings out fans of Korean stars in Toronto



Lee Dong-wook (right) attends the premiere of "Harbin" during the 2024 Toronto International Film Festival.

Scores of movie fans waited for hours outside the Toronto premier of "Harbin" on Sunday, hoping to catch a glimpse of Lee Dong-wook and Hyun Bin, the Korean stars paired for the first time in this historical drama. Their patience was rewarded with red carpet appearances by both actors, who are identified with the surge in popularity of Korean culture around the world. "It is my first time here, and I am so thank-

ful and so happy to see my fans here," Lee said. It is also the first TIFF screening of a movie featuring the actor, who is perhaps best known for his breakout drama hit "My Girl".

"Harbin" is about the small but courageous resistance army which fought to free Korea from Japanese oppressive rule in the early 20th century. The struggle brings the freedom fighters to the city of Harbin in China's frozen

northeast, where they carry out a plan to assassinate Japan's first prime minister. "Harbin" is directed by Woo Min-ho, whose credits include "The Man Standing Next," South Korea's entry for Best International Feature Film at the 2021 Academy Awards.

Outside the Toronto screening, a 26-year-old fan named Angelah said she grew up watching K-dramas and being influenced by Korean films,

K-pop, and Korean culture. For her, seeing the actors at TIFF made her realize how far-reaching these cultural influences have become. "Seeing them both go from the screen to an in-person event here in Toronto is especially thrilling for me. Art truly is boundless, breaking barriers and creating ties between people, no matter where they're from," she said. — AFP



(From left) Naravit "Pond" Lertratkosum, Phuwin Tangsakyuen, Nattawat "Fourth" Jirochitkul and Norawit "Gemini" Titicharoenrak attend the Tommy Hilfiger fashion show.



Members of Wu-Tang Clan pose on the runway for the Tommy Hilfiger fashion show.



Tommy Hilfiger walks the runway for the Tommy Hilfiger fashion show during the September 2024 New York Fashion Week in New York City. — AFP photos

Wu-Tang Clan perform at New York Fashion Week's Tommy Hilfiger show



Members of the US hip-hop group Wu-Tang Clan lit up New York Fashion Week on Sunday, closing the Tommy Hilfiger show with an electrifying performance aboard a ferry. As the show drew to a close, Ghostface Killah, Method Man and Raekwon leapt up from the audience benches to perform one of the group's best-known songs, C.R.E.A.M. The show was held aboard one of New York's bright orange ferries that usually shuttle passengers between Manhattan and Staten Island, where the Wu-Tang Clan formed in the early 1990s.

The American designer chose the setting to revisit "the nautical and maritime inspirations that have defined our signature look since 1985", it said in its Spring 2025 collection note. Models paraded down the catwalk in a show of casual, sporty outfits featuring sailor stripes and regatta jackets, with Olympic champions 200m sprinter Gabby



Ryoka Fujisawa, Motoki Ohmori and Hiloito Wakai of the band Mrs. Green attend the Tommy Hilfiger fashion show.

Thomas and gymnast Sunisa Lee among the audience. The Tommy Hilfiger brand, soon to celebrate its 40th anniversary, has long been associated with a preppy style, but was frequently worn by hip-hop artists in the 1990s and 2000s.

Questlove, drummer of hip-hop group the Roots, also performed on Sunday, DJing for the Tommy Hilfiger show. The "John F. Kennedy" ship

which hosted the show was moored in Manhattan on Sunday. After 60 years in service, it was bought from the city by two comedians from the cult American TV show "Saturday Night Live", Colin Jost and Pete Davidson, also from Staten Island, who turned it into an entertainment space. — AFP



NEW YORK FASHION WEEK

Lifestyle



TALES OF YVES SAINT LAURENT: THE PIED PIPER OF THE FASHION INDUSTRY

In 2008, the world lost the genius visionary Yves Saint Laurent, who revolutionized and transformed feminine fashion, freeing women from prejudices and stereotypes. He aimed to find the equivalent of men's suits for women. A lover of aesthetics in all its forms, including fine arts and literature, Yves had one of the largest and most valuable private book collections in the world.

He also enjoyed his mother's magazines, such as Jardin des Modes, Paris Match, and Vogue, from which he would cut out photographs of models to make his own collection of paper dolls. He would paint and glue on dresses he designed and made himself.

From making paper dolls to Dior and YSL

Yves was born on August 1, 1936, and died on June 1, 2008, after a battle with brain cancer. At 17, Yves Saint Laurent participated in the annual competition of the International Wool Secretariat, a crucial contest in the world of fashion that became the first step in his career. The jury included prestigious couturiers like Hubert de Givenchy and Christian Dior.

His father asked some of his contacts to help him meet Michel de Brunhoff, editor-in-chief of Vogue, whom Yves admired. De Brunhoff was very influential in Saint Laurent's career; he encouraged him to continue designing and then to move to Paris to advance his career in the fashion industry. Once he had finished school, Yves moved to Paris in 1954 to study at the Chambre Syndicale de la Couture. Michel de Brunhoff introduced him to Christian Dior, who was so impressed by his sketches that he hired him immediately as a "Modelist" and later appointed him as his assistant.

Saint Laurent's impact Dior's Haute Couture

Given the demands of his work, Yves Saint Laurent decided to quit his schooling in 1955 to dedicate his full

attention to his career at Maison Dior. In 1957, when Christian Dior died of a heart attack, Yves Saint Laurent was named artistic director of the firm at Dior's expressed wishes before his death.

The meeting with Pierre Bergé, who later became his business partner and lifelong companion, happened at Dior's funeral. They didn't meet each other until sometime later when they were introduced at a dinner party by Marie-Louise Bousquet of Harper's Bazaar, who thought they should meet.

hibition are some of the iconic designs that define the unique Yves Saint Laurent style. These groundbreaking creations caused a sensation in the fashion industry, quickly gaining popularity among modern women.

Polynésie Design inspired by Dior

While many of these designs were inspired by menswear, Yves Saint Laurent's intention was not to make women look like men. Rather, he aimed

to enhance their feminine allure, empowering women to express their own styles. His aesthetic blends sleekness and elegance, offering a fresh interpretation of femininity.

The next evolution in style by Saint Laurent at Dior consisted of lightening and shortening the dresses of Monsieur Dior. He eliminated corsets, using lighter fabrics to free the female body and allow enhanced movement. International fashion critics nicknamed him "Little Prince," as he was considered the heir to all of Dior's teachings. Vogue USA wrote, "A sensation is racing through Paris, something new for the city and for France: the growing influence of youth."

In the same year, 1963, the dance star Zizi Jeanmaire asked Yves Saint Laurent to design the famous central costume of the show "Champagne Rosé," for which he made a striking creation in rooster, pheasant, and ostrich feathers dyed in different shades of pink and fuchsia.

Retirement and conclusion

In 1999, the Gucci Group acquired Yves Saint Laurent, leading to the designer's retirement, which he an-



Bergé was instantly fascinated by the young man and became Yves Saint Laurent's lover and business associate for the rest of his life.

1966 first tuxedo

Yves Saint Laurent designed the first women's tuxedo. Though not well received by reviewers or purchasers, the tuxedo jacket gained praise from his first ready-to-wear boutique's customers a few weeks later on rue Tournon.

Yves Saint Laurent's greatest designs that still inspire artists

In 1958, Yves Saint Laurent, already at the reins of Dior, moved away from the wasp waist and tight tube skirt, which restricted women's movement, and introduced his creation of the trapeze dress, which granted more flexibility and freedom to move. On ex-

hibition are some of the iconic designs that define the unique Yves Saint Laurent style. These groundbreaking creations caused a sensation in the fashion industry, quickly gaining popularity among modern women.

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1968 safari jacket

Saint Laurent revolutionized women's design by redefining his style with



Royals and celebrities from the entertainment industry began to seek him out to dress them. In 1959, the aristocratic Farah Diba married the Shah of Iran and became Empress of what was once known as Persia, wearing a Dior gown designed by Saint Laurent.

Yves' Role in the popular comedy 'The Pink Panther'

Yves Saint Laurent accepted an invitation to design the costumes for the beautiful Italian actress Claudia Cardinale and the beautiful French actress Capucine for their respective roles in the well-known comedy "The Pink Panther." The film was directed by the American director Blake Edwards, and the English actor Peter Sellers also starred in the film as the famous Inspector Clouseau.

ounced at a press conference. His final retrospective parade was held at the Centre Pompidou. American designer Tom Ford then took over the ready-to-wear business. Yves Saint Laurent bid farewell to the fashion world in 2002.

Yves Saint Laurent passed away in Paris in 2008, leaving a significant void in the world of high fashion. Pierre Bergé, Yves Saint Laurent's life and career companion, died in 2017. He was the entrepreneurial mind behind the creative genius, helping Yves revolutionize women's apparel. Get more inspiration by visiting our website <https://dashebeauty.com> or follow up on our beauty blog. — Dashe Beauty Kuwait



Sports

Ton-up Nissanka leads Sri Lanka to victory over England in third Test

Victory gave Sri Lanka just a fourth Test win in England

LONDON: Pathum Nissanka's superb unbeaten century guided Sri Lanka to an eight-wicket win over England in the third Test at The Oval on Monday. Sri Lanka, set a target of 219, reached that total for the loss of two wickets before lunch on the fourth day, with Nissanka 127 not out and Angelo Mathews 32 not out in an unbroken stand of 111.

Victory gave Sri Lanka just a fourth Test win in England and first since a 100-run success at Headingley back in 2014. England, however, took the three-match series 2-1 following wins at Old Trafford (five wickets) and Lord's (190 runs).

Sri Lanka resumed on 94-1, already well-placed to end a run of seven straight Test defeats by England. Nissanka, recalled at Lord's, was 53 not out—his second fifty of the match following a first-innings 64—and the recalled Kusal Mendis unbeaten on 30.

Mendis, however, had added just nine runs to his score when he hooked a Gus Atkinson bouncer to fine leg where Shoaib Bashir, doing well to sight the ball on a gloomy morning, held an excellent low catch diving to his left. Sri Lanka were now 108-2 as Mathews, who made a brilliant 160 in their Headingley success a decade ago, walked in to bat. England captain Ollie Pope, with Sri Lanka making good progress against the quicks at 137-2, brought on off-spinner Bashir.

Bashir, however, promptly conced-

ed 10 runs in an over, Nissanka pulling a dragged down ball to square leg and Mathews sweeping another four. And when Chris Woakes too carelessly dropped short, the diminutive Nissanka, out of the Test side for two years, cut him for four to go to 95. Nissanka's punched three off Atkinson through point saw the 26-year-old complete an excellent 107-ball hundred including 11 fours.

Double six

And having reached the landmark, Nissanka hooked fast bowler Olly Stone for two sixes. Nissanka ended the match by cutting Bashir for four, having already topped his previous highest Test score of 103 against the West Indies at North Sound in 2021.

Defeat for England, who whitewashed the West Indies 3-0 earlier in the season, ended their hopes of a first home campaign clean sweep since 2004, when Michael Vaughan oversaw seven successive wins. England squandered several strong positions, including collapsing from 261-3 to 325 all out in their first innings despite 154 from Pope—his first century since stepping in for the injured Ben Stokes as skipper at the start of this series.

They also allowed Sri Lanka to recover from 93-5 to 263 in reply, with Pope deploying an all-spin attack after tea on a gloomy second day. England led by 62 runs on first innings. But their



LONDON: England's Ollie Pope (6L) holds aloft the trophy with England's Josh Hull during the winners' presentation on day four of the third cricket test match between England and Sri Lanka at The Oval cricket ground in London on September 9, 2024. — AFP

top-order then batted as if they had double that lead second time around, with England collapsing spectacularly to 82-7 before being dismissed for 156 in

just 34 overs. Lahiru Kumara took 4-21 and left-arm swing bowler Vishwa Fernando 3-40 including the prize scalp of Joe Root for just 12. Only wicketkeeper

Jamie Smith's counter-attacking 67, off 50 balls including 10 fours and a six, ensured Sri Lanka were chasing more than 200 for victory. — AFP

Roglic wins 'crazy' record-equalling fourth Vuelta

MADRID: Primož Roglic won the Vuelta a Espana for a record-equalling fourth time on Sunday, the perfect pick-me-up after crashing out of the Tour de France. The Slovenian wrapped up his fifth-career Grand Tour when he finished second in the closing time-trial on the streets of Madrid won by Stefan Kung.

"It's crazy - already four. I just want to enjoy it" he said before hugging his wife Lora and children. Ben O'Connor finished runner-up overall with Spain's Enric Mas completing the podium. With the sun setting on the streets of the Spanish capital Roglic, 34, drew level with Spaniard Roberto Heras for number of wins in the season's third and closing Grand Tour.

Roglic finished the race 2min 36sec up on O'Connor, with Mas (Movistar) third at 3:13. After 81 hours, 49 minutes and 18 seconds in the saddle an exhausted but happy Roglic said: "This is nice! The more you go to an end, you just want to finish it off."

"There's a lot of sacrificing, not only by me, but also my family, everyone around me. We all live for it. I just feel happy I can do it. I really appreciate all the support from the people around me." Roglic, riding for Red Bull-Bora-hansgrohe team, had to fight



LOGRONO: Team Bora's Primož Roglic celebrates crossing first the finish line during the stage 19 of the Vuelta a Espana. — AFP

for the red jersey after a gruelling race that began three weeks ago in Portugal and featured some of the toughest climbs the sport has to offer.

He won stage four to take the overall lead but then O'Connor (Decathlon AG2R La Mondiale team) burst to the top of the general classification by almost five minutes. Roglic slowly chipped away at the Australian's massive cushion with a bunch of strong mountain place finishes.

He reclaimed the leader's red jersey after his third win on stage 19. This Vuelta triumph went a long way to making up for the disappointment of his Tour de

France-ending crash before stage 13. His success completed Slovenia's domination of the 2024 Grand Tours, with his countryman Tadej Pogacar winning the Giro d'Italia and Tour de France. "Incredible" observed Roglic of his country's success.

'Big celebration'

While he may not have won, O'Connor was jubilant over his breakthrough first ever Grand Tour podium. "I wasn't expecting this, I expected to be good but not second overall. This calls for a pretty big celebration!" said the 28-year-old Aussie, who wore the red jersey for 13 stages.

Kung took the final day honors for his first Grand Tour stage win at the last throw of the dice in his 12th appearance in either the Giro, Tour or Vuelta. "It's been a long time in the making" the Swiss time trial expert said.

"It's always nice if you win with more than half a minute," added Kung, who completed the 24km 21st stage 31sec faster than Roglic. "It shows that you were the best, there was no coincidence." One of the big names in the peloton who failed to make it to Madrid was Wout Van Aert.

The Belgian star claimed three Vuelta stages to occupy the top of the points (green) and mountain classifications only to suffer a heavy fall which not only ended his race but also his season. With Van Aert's race cut short, the mountains and green jersey competitions, went to two Australians - Jay Vine (UAE Team Emirates) and Kaden Groves (Alpecin Deceuninck). — AFP

Tyreek Hill sparks Dolphins comeback, Cowboys rout Browns

MIAMI: Tyreek Hill helped the Miami Dolphins to a 20-17 victory over the Jacksonville Jaguars just hours after being arrested by police as comebacks dominated on a wild first full day of the NFL season on Sunday.

Dolphins receiver Hill was at the center of off-field controversy early Sunday after being arrested by traffic cops near the Hard Rock Stadium in Miami as he drove to the game. The 30-year-old speedster was filmed lying face down on the road as police officers handcuffed him for what was later described as a minor traffic violation before being released without charge. Miami police later said one of the officers involved in the stop had been placed on leave.

Hill shrugged off the incident, though, to help the Dolphins recover from a 14-0 second-quarter deficit, with Miami sealing victory thanks to Jason Sanders' 52-yard field goal on the final play of the game.

The star of the show though was Hill, who electrified the Miami crowd with a sensational 80-yard third-quarter touchdown that put the Dolphins within three points at 17-14.

The receiver then cheekily alluded to his arrest by pretending to be handcuffed by teammate Jaylen Waddle in his touchdown celebration before Miami went on to close out victory. "I was able to calm down a little bit because I know I had a job to do," Hill said of his pre-game drama. "I've got a family to feed, I've got to be a leader of this team."

In other games on Sunday, Dak Prescott celebrated agreeing to terms on a lucrative new contract extension by leading the Dallas Cowboys to a 33-17 rout of the Cleveland Browns. Prescott has reportedly agreed a four-year contract deal worth a reported \$240 million to make him the highest-paid player in NFL history. The 31-year-old finished with 179 passing yards and a touchdown in a comprehensive defeat of a disappointing Browns team that saw quarterback Deshaun Watson sacked six times. Elsewhere, there was a double-digit fightback in Buffalo as Josh Allen led the Bills to a 34-28 win over the Arizona Cardinals at Highmark Stadium.

Bills quarterback Allen rushed for two touchdowns and threw for two more to help Buffalo overturn a 17-3 second quarter deficit. Allen finished with 232 passing yards from 18-of-23 completions in an impressive start to the season for one of the NFL's most talented quarterbacks.

Bears fightback

In Chicago, meanwhile, No.1 draft pick Caleb Williams' NFL career got off to a rocky but victorious start as the Bears defense set up a come-from-behind 24-17 victory over Tennessee. The Titans grabbed a 17-3 half-time lead but the Bears roared back with safety Jonathan Owens — husband of US Olympic gymnastics superstar Simone Biles — scooping up a blocked punt for a touchdown to launch an unanswered 21-point run by Chicago. In Atlanta, Pittsburgh overcame the injury absence of quarterback Russell Wilson to grind out an 18-10 win over the host Falcons, with all Steelers' points coming from six Chris Boswell field goals.

Also on Sunday, C.J. Stroud threw for two touchdowns and 234 yards in a gripping 29-27 victory for the Houston Texans at Indianapolis. The New England Patriots, meanwhile, launched their first season since the departure of legendary coach Bill Belichick with a 16-10 victory at Cincinnati.

Elsewhere, the New Orleans Saints demolished the Carolina Panthers 47-10 while the New York Giants centenary season got off to a dismal start in a 28-6 pounding by the visiting Minnesota Vikings. The Los Angeles Chargers overpowered the visiting Las Vegas Raiders 22-10 while Seattle held off Denver 26-20.

In Florida, the Tampa Bay Buccaneers pummeled Washington 37-20 with quarterback Baker Mayfield throwing for four touchdowns and 289 yards. In the first overtime game of the campaign, David Montgomery's 1-yard touchdown run 4:41 into the extra session gave the host Detroit Lions a 26-20 triumph over the Los Angeles Rams. — AFP

Pant returns to India Test squad

NEW DELHI: Rishabh Pant was on Sunday named in India's squad for the upcoming first Test against Bangladesh, his return to the five-day international format after a horrific car crash in December 2022.

The 26-year-old wicketkeeper-batsman has impressed since his return to elite cricket last year and has kept up form across formats including in the team's T20 World Cup triumph in June. He will be among a 16-member squad, led by Rohit Sharma, for a two-Test series against the visiting Bangladesh team starting September 19 in Chennai.

Virat Kohli also returns to the Test team after he missed the five matches against England at home due to the birth of his second child. Pant had termed his comeback to the game "nothing short of a miracle" after the crash, when his Mercedes rammed into a barrier, flipped and caught fire near New Delhi.

Left with a damaged ligament in his right knee, a hurt wrist and ankle, and abrasions to his back, Pant fought back after an intensive rehabilitation programme to lead Delhi Capitals in the Indian Premier League this year.

Dhruv Jurel remains the second gloveman in the team, while senior batsman KL Rahul returns after he went out injured following the first England Test at home early this year. Fast bowler Mohammed Shami remains out recovering from injury, with the pace attack led by Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammed Siraj.

Left-arm seamer Yash Dayal has received his maiden Test call-up, while up and coming Akash Deep retains his place. The spin department includes Ravichandran Ashwin, Ravindra Jadeja, Kuldeep Yadav and Axar Patel.

The two teams will play the second Test in Kanpur beginning September 27. The Tests will be followed by three T20 internationals. India's squad for the 1st Test of the Bangladesh Test series: Rohit Sharma (capt), Yashasvi Jaiswal, Shubman Gill, Virat Kohli, KL Rahul, Sarfaraz Khan, Rishabh Pant (wk), Dhruv Jurel (wk), Ravichandran Ashwin, Ravindra Jadeja, Axar Patel, Kuldeep Yadav, Mohammed Siraj, Akash Deep, Jasprit Bumrah, Yash Dayal. — AFP



CASTRES: Castres' French lock Guillaume Ducat grabs the ball in a line out next to Racing 92's French flanker Cameron Woki (L) during the French Top 14 rugby union match between Castres Olympique and Racing 92. — AFP

Toulouse hold off spirited Top 14 debutants Vannes

PARIS: Toulouse opened the defence of their French title by holding off a second-half rally from debutants Vannes to win 43-18 in Brittany on Sunday night. It took Toulouse four minutes to breach the defences of the Top 14 debutants from the ancient walled Breton port, when fullback Thomas Ramos touched down and then converted, briefly silencing the capacity crowd.

As the Celtic bagpipes resumed their melody, Vannes, the first Breton club in the Top 14, huffed and puffed energetically only to fumble a series of chances close to the Toulouse line. Maxime Lafage kicked two penalties for the hosts, but Ramos boot-ed three for the visitors. Alexandre Roumat added a second Toulouse try after half an hour. Ramos converted and landed a penalty to start the second half to put Toulouse 20 points ahead. Vannes, showing champions hands nearer the Toulouse line, ruffled the shippers in the last 35 minutes.

Veteran England prop Mako Vunipola barged over for the Breton club's first top-flight try after 54 min-

utes. Lafage converted. Toulouse replied when Theo Ntamack sliced through the home defence to touch down and Ramos converted to restore the 20-point edge. Christiaan van der Merwe then stretched over to touch down for an unconverted Vannes try. Toulouse crushed the fightback. Pita Akhi found a gap in the home defence to scoot over with five minutes left and American prop David Ainuu earned the visitors an attacking bonus point when he scored their fifth try as time expired.

Ramos missed the last two conversions. It was the first of two visits by European Champions to Brittany this season. The continent's champion football club, Real Madrid, will make their first competitive trip to the region when they play at Champions League debutants Brest in the final round of the competition's league phase in January.

In Sunday's early game, La Rochelle took just enough of their chances to beat visiting Toulon 19-15. Off the field on Sunday, Racing 92 said goodbye to one international captain, Siya Kolisi the day after another, Owen Farrell made his debut for the club as they lost their Top 14 opener. "Siya Kolisi and Racing 92 have reached an agreement to end the contract," a club statement read. Kolisi arrived in France last year to much fanfare after the second of his World Cup wins with the Springboks. But the 33-year-old only turned out for Racing 18 times last season, scoring one try. — AFP

Sports

Ronaldo strikes late to seal Portugal win over Scotland

Victory over Scotland could mean some awkward silences at next family gathering

LISBON: Cristiano Ronaldo's late strike sealed Portugal's 2-1 win over Scotland as the 901st goal of the striker's extraordinary career completed a stirring fightback in Sunday's Nations League clash. Ronaldo had reached 900 career goals with his 131st international strike in Thursday's victory over Croatia.

The 39-year-old showed no signs of being satiated by that incredible milestone as he came off the bench to lift Portugal to their second successive win in Nations League Group A1. The Estadio da Luz in Lisbon rose in unison to chant the relentless Al-Nassr forward's name after he struck with two minutes to play.

On his 30th birthday, Manchester United midfielder Bruno Fernandes fired Portugal's second half equalizer after his former Old Trafford team-mate Scott McTominay gave Scotland a surprise early lead. For Portugal boss Roberto Martinez, victory over Scotland could mean some awkward silences at his next family gathering.

Martinez met his wife Beth while playing for Scottish club Motherwell in 2001 and joked before the match he would be delighted to upset his father-in-law by beating Scotland. He did exactly that, leaving Scotland still waiting for their first win over Portugal.

Beaten 3-2 by Poland at Hampden Park on Thursday, Scotland have won just once in 14 matches, a barren sequence that included their lacklustre failure to make it out of the group stage at Euro 2024. Steve Clarke's men have lost six of their nine matches in 2024, with their only victory coming in a friendly against Gibraltar in June.

"When you bring quality players from the bench

like Roberto can do you always know there's a risk," Clarke said. "I'm really disappointed for my players because I think they deserved to get something from the game. "But with the amount of balls that go into the box, you know one of them can go in the back of the net and that's what happened to us."

Ronaldo late show

Scotland took a shock lead in the seventh minute when Kenny McLean's superb cross picked out McTominay, who made a perfectly-timed run to plant his stooping header past Diogo Costa from six yards.

McTominay, who recently moved from United to Napoli, has 10 goals in his last 12 competitive appearances for Scotland. Rafael Leao threatened an immediate equalizer with a driving run but his shot rippled into the side-netting.

Leao went even closer as he cut in from the left flank for a fierce drive that Angus Gunn pushed away at full stretch. Antonio Silva wasted a chance created by Leao as he headed over from the AC Milan forward's dinked cross.

As the Portugal pressure mounted, Gunn made a fine save after Diogo Jota connected with Fernandes's incisive pass. It was no surprise to see Ronaldo sent on for the second half and Portugal were immediately improved by his presence.

Taking aim from long-range in the 53rd minute, Fernandes's 25-yard blast should have been routine for Gunn but his weak attempted save allowed the ball to squirm into the net. Ronaldo's audacious backheel gave Joao Felix a sight of goal, only for Gunn to make amends for his earlier error with an excellent stop.



LISBON: Portugal's forward #7 Cristiano Ronaldo (C) scores a goal during the UEFA Nations League football match, group A, between Portugal and Scotland. — AFP

Gunn saved again from Felix's diving header before Ronaldo turned the rebound against the post. In the next attack, Ronaldo's glancing header hit the post and was clawed off the line by Gunn before Felix could convert.

Portugal's late surge finally produced the winner in the 88th minute. Nuno Mendes whipped a cross into the six-yard box, where Ronaldo was lurking to deliver the knockout blow with a typically predatory tap-in. — AFP

Morgan bids farewell in final match

SAN DIEGO: US soccer icon Alex Morgan bade an emotional farewell to football on Sunday as she played the final game of her glittering career before heading into retirement. The 35-year-old striker announced her decision to hang up her boots on Thursday after revealing she was pregnant with her second child.

She played the first 13 minutes of the San Diego Wave's 4-1 National Women's Soccer League loss to the visiting North Carolina Courage. "What a ride it has been," Morgan told the cheering crowd after the match. "I want to thank my teammates who have constantly challenged me every day and made me better."

"There have been so many incredible moments in my career but this last moment I share on the field with you I will cherish forever. So from the bottom of my heart, thank you," Morgan, who wiped away tears after speaking, thanked her family for support and sacrifice and told her fans: "You pushed me to be my best self every day."

"You pushed me to be the best soccer player, the best mom, the best person I could be just showing up every day and supporting me, encouraging me, challenging me, criticizing me at times. "I just thank you so much."

The two-time World Cup-winner led San Diego's players onto the field at the Snapdragon Stadium and posed for photos with family and friends before lining up at center-forward. Fans held up posters with messages of gratitude such as "Thank You Alex", while other fans and loved ones wore T-shirts with the slogan "SAND13GOAT", referencing her club and shirt number.

The fairytale farewell didn't quite follow the script, with Morgan seeing her 10th-minute penalty saved just seconds before San Diego equalized through Kennedy Wesley. That goal was the cue for Morgan to be substituted in the 13th minute — reflecting her jersey number.



SAN DIEGO: Alex Morgan #13 of San Diego Wave FC waves to fans after the game against North Carolina Courage at Snapdragon Stadium. — AFP

She blew kisses to all corners of the ground and hugged each of her teammates before leaving the field to repeated chants of "Alex Morgan."

'So many people' helped

Speaking before the game to broadcaster CBS, Morgan said she had managed to keep her emotions in check. "I'm feeling really good, no tears, yet," she said. "I've been smiling a lot these last few days, because just keeping in the retirement and the pregnancy for so long was just really difficult not to share with people and everything is so much better together."

Morgan was one of the world's best-known women's players during her career, part of a golden generation of American women who blazed a trail for the sport. She starred in the 2015 and 2019 US Women's World Cup winning teams, and became known for her work off the field as she pushed for equality in women's and men's sports.

their skill and in the end we got a very good result, very well deserved. We are proud of our work today." The rain-soaked match was a sell-out played before 26,265 fans at the Stade de Geneve, where the pitch remains in poor condition. The grass has been plagued by fungus, the holes covered with green paint. Denmark lead the 2024-25 UEFA Nations League A Group 4 with six points after beating Serbia 2-0 in Copenhagen earlier Sunday.

Quick-fire start

In their first match since beating England 2-1 in the Euro 2024 final in July, Spain opened their Nations League title defence on Thursday with a frustrating goalless draw against Serbia in Belgrade. Meanwhile, Switzerland had a disastrous night in Copenhagen, losing 2-0 to Denmark, with both captain Granit Xhaka and defender Nico Elvedi sent off.

Xhaka has a record 131 caps for his country and Switzerland manager Murat Yakin said the team missed the midfielder's influence and experience against Spain. "We really started being courageous and aggressive — and we were punished for that," he said.

"We came back into the game, created chances, hit the bar. There should have been a penalty and then we risked everything in the last 20 minutes and we did not have luck on our side in the decisive moments of the game."

Joselu got Spain off to a flying start, heading in Lamine Yamal's cross at the far post. Swiss goalkeeper Gregor Kobel made a diving stop but after a VAR check, the ball was deemed to have crossed the line.

Spain doubled their lead in the 13th minute. Yamal sent Nico Williams bursting through and though his shot was saved by Kobel, Ruiz blasted in the rebound. Spain's last man Le Normand



GENEVA: Spain's forward Yereimi Pino tries to control the ball during the UEFA Nations League football match between Switzerland and Spain. — AFP

was sent off in the 20th minute for bundling over Brel Embolo outside the box. Amdouni rattled the crossbar with the free kick.

Swiss caught out

Switzerland struck shortly before the break. A corner from livewire Ruben Vargas was flicked on by Embolo, and Benfica striker Amdouni swept the ball in to set the Swiss fans rattling their cowbells in delight.

Spain kept the hosts at bay for most of the second half before putting the result beyond doubt. Striker Torres, on for Barcelona team-mate Yamal, crossed from the byline for Ruiz who tapped in past the flat-footed Kobel. Torres then surged through the middle on the breakaway before passing the ball beyond Kobel. — AFP

French boat chucked out in America's Cup qualifying

BARCELONA: French boat Orient Express became the first America's Cup challenger eliminated from the Louis Vuitton Cup as they lost their last race in the round-robin phase to Ineos Britannia on Monday. The defeat meant Orient Express finished the double round robin with one win in eight races against other challengers.

The result ensured Swiss entry Alinghi Red Bull, which had won two races ahead of their encounter with Italians Prada Luna Rossa later on Monday, will finish in the top four and qualify for the semi-finals. The regatta was scheduled to end Sunday, but racing was postponed because of "unstable" weather conditions.

That potentially helped the French, who had come off their foils and plunged nose first into the water in morning practice, suffering unspecified structural problems. After emergency repairs they just made it to Sunday's start line, before racing was cancelled. On Monday, even after overnight work on the boat, they trailed throughout.

In patchy wind conditions off Barcelona, Orient Express, skippered by Quentin Delapierre, fell behind early and dropped steadily further back over the six legs to finish one minute, 11 seconds behind the British entry. "Feeling real disappointment," said French helmsman Kevin Peponnet. "All the shore team pushed really hard to win this race today to continue our journey. We are very disappointed because we could not."

'Tough little race'

Victory put Britannia level at the top of the table with Luna Rossa in the battle for top-seeding in the four boat semi-finals. "Tough little race in a light breeze," said British skipper Ben Ainslie. "The guys did well to get the boat round the course."

Orient Express and fellow strugglers Alinghi are the two boats in the fleet who did not compete in the last America's Cup regatta in New Zealand in 2021.

Despite having the smallest budget of the six teams, Les Bleus beat Alinghi in their first race. After that, the French suffered one setback after another as they learned to sail a hydrofoil boat. "Just looking forward to coming back stronger to win this Cup one day," said Delapierre.

"Putting together this team only one year before and being able to compete against those experienced teams: unbelievable effort." No French boat has made the semi-finals in the Louis Vuitton Cup since Ville de Paris in 1992.

The double round robin phase ends with the third race Monday, when American Magic face defending champions Emirates New Zealand. The result does not count to the Challenger standings and will not alter the New York boat's third seeding. Victory for the Kiwis could give them a psychologically-important first place in the broader Louis Vuitton Cup standings, which include all the races between the six boats.

The semi-finals are scheduled to start on September 14. In each, the first boat to five points advances to the first-to-seven challenger final, scheduled to begin on September 26. — AFP



BARCELONA: Protesters hold a flag during a demonstration against the America's Cup sailing race at Somorrostro beach of Barcelona. — AFP

Ten-man Spain sink Switzerland in 4-1 romp

GENEVA: Spain grabbed their first win since lifting the Euro 2024 title by comprehensively beating Switzerland 4-1 in the Nations League in Geneva on Sunday, despite going down to 10 men. Joselu scored a fourth-minute header and Fabian Ruiz struck Spain's second in the 13th, before defender Robin Le Normand was sent off seven minutes later.

Zeki Amdouni pulled one back for Switzerland in the 41st minute to give the hosts hope. However, Paris Saint-Germain midfielder Ruiz struck again in the 77th minute before substitute Ferran Torres delivered the coup de grace three minutes later.

"This team managed to win a historic match," Spain manager Luis de la Fuente said afterwards. "I am very proud of my players. The players are proud to represent our country. They are young players with a lot of qualities, with a lot of values and it helps us to improve and evolve."

"I am very happy for all the players, especially Joselu. I am very fond of him. "He is a player that I appreciate a lot. He always works very hard to help the team to improve. He had a great match and he did what we asked him to do with 11 players and with 10."

Former Newcastle and Alaves striker Joselu, now playing at Al-Gharafa in Qatar, was impressed with the way Spain handled the match. "Today's game shows the level we are at," he told reporters. "We played a great game against a great team."

"The team showed their determination, showed

Paris Paralympics closes with a party after 'historic summer'

Over 4,400 athletes from 168 Paralympic delegations partied despite persistent rain



PARIS: This photograph shows fireworks on the roof of the Stade de France at the end of the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games closing ceremony, in Saint-Denis, on the outskirts of Paris. — AFP

PARIS: The Paralympics closed on Sunday with a giant music-fuelled party as chief Paris 2024 organizer Tony Estanguet said the Games and the Olympics had created a "historic summer". The Paralympic flame and cauldron were extinguished before a concert featuring the best of French electronic music capped off proceedings at a packed Stade de France.

More than 4,400 athletes from 168 Paralympic delegations partied despite persistent rain. Estanguet said the closing ceremony marked the end of six weeks of Olympic and Paralympic fervor in the City of Light.

The former Olympic gold medal-winning canoeist said that period would remain "etched in people's memories". "This summer, France had a date with history, and the country showed up," he said. "This summer when people talked to each other, this summer when France was happy," said Estanguet, referring to how France had been left deeply divided by snap elections just weeks before the Olympics

opened. The next Paralympics will take place in Los Angeles in 2028. In the official handover, Paris mayor Anne Hidalgo passed the Paralympic flag to International Paralympic Committee president Andrew Parsons, who gave it to Los Angeles mayor Karen Bass.

Broadway star Ali Stoker then sang the American national anthem before a film was shown of a band performing on a Californian beach as skateboarders and wheelchair athletes performed tricks. Despite initial fears about ticket sales, the Paralympics took place in mainly full stadiums, benefiting from the feelgood factor from the highly successful Olympics which ended on August 11.

Parsons said the Paris Paralympics had shown that "change starts with sport". The level of the sport in Paris, the organization and the gender parity of the competitors had set a "benchmark" for future Paralympics, he said.

The hour-long electronic concert was kicked off by composer Victor Le Masne as LED bracelets

worn by the crowd and athletes on the field lit up the stadium. The 24-artist show with highlights including French synthesizer legend Jean-Michel Jarre, Cassius, Busy P and Kungs was rounded off in style by DJ Martin Solveig, who finished his set with 2010 hit "Hello" and then Daft Punk's "One More Time".

China dominance

China finished top of the medals table in Paris, as they have at every Paralympics since Athens in 2004. They had 94 golds, followed by Britain with 49 and the USA with 36. Ukraine's athletes overcame the formidable obstacles posed by their country's war with Russia to finish in seventh place with 22 golds and host nation France were eighth with 19 golds. In amputee track athletes Hunter Woodhall and 19-year-old Ezra Frech, the USA have found charismatic faces who are sure to play a prominent role in the buildup to LA2028.

On the final day of competition, Switzerland won

both Paralympic wheelchair marathons while the Netherlands secured back-to-back women's wheelchair basketball titles, denying the USA. Early in the morning, Catherine Debrunner propelled her racing wheelchair through the streets of Paris to win the women's marathon.

The 29-year-old Swiss athlete added to the four gold medals she has already won on the track at these Games, ranging from the 400 metres to the 5,000m. Marcel Hug, 38, made up for a disappointing Games on the track by dominating the men's wheelchair marathon, finishing three minutes and 40 seconds ahead of Hua Jin of China.

The Netherlands scored a convincing 63-49 win against the USA to retain the women's wheelchair basketball title they won at Tokyo 2020. The Americans must wait until 2028 on home soil before trying to win a title that their men secured for a third Games in a row on Saturday. The USA women's last title came at the 2016 Rio Games. — AFP

Figure skating player Sama to participate in Bangkok

KUWAIT: Kuwait Winter Games Club announced that Kuwaiti figure skating team player Sama Jarrah will participate in the Grand Prix for juniors in Thailand, which kicks off in Bangkok next Wednesday. The event is organized by the International Figure Skating Federation. Director of the Kuwaiti figure skating team Salem Al-Ajmi told KUNA on Monday before the delegation's departure that the club was keen to include the player in this international event as it is considered one of the most important championships in this age group.

Al-Ajmi added that Jarrah trained hard recently under the supervision of the figure skating team coach Yulia Martysheva in preparation for this important event, which is one of the important rounds of the award, praising the player's commitment and efforts to provide the best level in the championship. He explained that involving Kuwaiti players at a young age in such major tournaments against their counterparts from countries with a long history in the game would raise their technical level, in addition to collecting important points to qualify for the upcoming Winter Olympics scheduled in Milan (Cortina 2026), especially since the player is young and has a great future ahead of her.

He appreciated the great support provided by the club's board of directors, led by Fahid Al-Ajmi, for the game, which enabled it to achieve good results in regional, continental and international tournaments, indicating that the club pays attention to all age groups in the game of figure skating and other winter games. — KUNA

Sinner defeats Fritz to win US Open title

NEW YORK: Jannik Sinner won his second Grand Slam title of 2024 on Sunday when he swept aside Taylor Fritz in the US Open final, shattering American hopes of a first male champion at the majors in 21 years.

World number one Sinner, who won his maiden Slam at the Australian Open in January, became the first Italian man to triumph in New York with a 6-3, 6-4, 7-5 victory. For 23-year-old Sinner, it was a 55th match win of the season and sixth title.

After his 21-year-old rival Carlos Alcaraz pocketed the French Open and Wimbledon titles to take his majors collection to four, the two men have cemented their places as the powerhouses of tennis' new era. "This title means so much," said Sinner who arrived in New York under a cloud after it was revealed he had failed two drug tests but escaped sanction.

"The last period of my career has not been easy but I have my team and family who support me. "I love tennis but off court there is a life also and I want to dedicate this trophy to my aunt because she is not well and I don't know how much longer I will have her in my life. "She was a very important part of my life and still is. It's nice to share this with her." World number 12 Fritz was bidding to be the first American man since Andy Roddick in New York in 2003 to win a major. He was backed by A-list celebrity support amongst the 23,000-strong crowd inside Arthur Ashe Stadium.

Pop queen Taylor Swift watched alongside boyfriend and NFL star Travis Kelce while Oscar-winning actor Matthew McConaughey was hard to miss as he donned a Stars and Stripes headband. "It has been an amazing two weeks. Congratulations to Jannik, he played a great match. He was very impressive and was too good today," said Fritz.



NEW YORK: Italy's Jannik Sinner (R) and USA's Taylor Fritz (L) hold their trophies with Former USA tennis player Andre Agassi (C) after their men's final match. — AFP

'Next time'

"I'm sorry I couldn't get it done but I will keep working and I feel I will get it the next time." Sinner raced to a 2-0 lead in the first set before Fritz settled and levelled for 2-2. The 26-year-old American saved a break point on the back of an exhausting 23-shot rally in the fifth game but soon slipped 4-3 down. Sinner pounced again with a third break to claim the opening set as Fritz fired a backhand long. The two players had only dropped serve a combined 20 times over six rounds each at the tournament before Sunday's final.

That strength shone through in the second set with the first nine games all service holds until the 10th. Sinner then carved out two set points but only

needed one, a deep forehand forcing Fritz into a desperate scramble before he buried his return limply in the net. By that stage of the final, Sinner had committed just nine unforced errors to the 19 of Fritz in an illustration of his control of the court.

Fritz, the first American man in any Grand Slam final since Roddick at Wimbledon in 2009, saw three break points come and go in the first game of the third set. But Sinner served up his fourth double fault of the final to hand Fritz a 4-3 lead. With his back to the wall, the Italian top seed then broke back in the 10th game as Fritz served for the set and held for 6-5. He went to two championship points when a disheartened Fritz ballooned a running forehand and sealed victory when the American netted. — AFP