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# Zionist carnage in 'safe zone' as Gaza martyrs top 41,000

Kuwait condemns massacre • US bombs used in attack • Zionists admit killing US-Turkish activist



**GAZA:** Zionist strikes blasted a huge crater in a designated safe zone in southern Gaza before dawn on Tuesday, setting tents ablaze and burying Palestinian families under sand. The Zionist military used several US-made MK-84 bombs, each weighing 2,000 pounds, in their attack on Al-Mawasi, two independent probes confirmed. Palestinian officials said scores of people had been killed or injured in the strikes, with at least 19 dead bodies brought to hospital and other victims feared lost or buried.

Palestinians in Khan Yunis. In a statement on Tuesday, Kuwait's ministry of foreign affairs said this brutal targeting of defenseless civilians, including women and children, is clear evidence that the Zionist occupation forces are waging an extermination war against the Palestinians in flagrant violation of international and humanitarian laws. Rescuers dug with shovels through the night, searching for bodies and survivors buried where the strike had blasted a crater the size of a small football pitch. Tents in the surrounding area had been incinerated, leaving only metal frames dusted with ghostly ash in a wasteland littered with debris. A car had been completely buried, only its top visible beneath the sand.

The Gaza government media office put the number of fatalities at more than 40. It said that at least 60 others were wounded in the strikes and many remained missing. The Gaza civil emergency service said at least 20 tents caught fire. It estimated 65 dead or wounded including women and children.

In the morning, mourners at a nearby hospital wailed over bodies heaped in white plastic bags or wrapped in blood-stained shrouds. One of Raed Abu Mumar's daughters had been killed. His wife and his other daughter had been buried but were pulled out alive. He carried the surviving baby girl.

The strike hit Al-Mawasi — in Gaza's southern province of Khan Yunis — which was designated a safe zone by the Zionist military early in the war, with tens of thousands of displaced Palestinians seeking refuge there. The Zionist offensive in Gaza has killed at least 41,020 people, mostly women and children.

"I was under the sand as well. I got out and started looking for my daughters and my wife. I saw body parts of the neighbors in my tent - I did not know those were our neighbors' parts

Kuwait strongly condemned the new massacre committed by Zionist occupation forces against innocent displaced

Continued on Page 6

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Temporary residency on Sahel

**KUWAIT:** The interior ministry announced on Tuesday the launch of a new electronic service under the residency services section of the Sahel app for issuing temporary article 20 and 22 residency permits. This service allows sponsors to receive a notification containing the electronic residency sticker, eliminating the need for visits to the residency affairs department to print the sticker. — KUNA

### Power cuts due to maintenance

**KUWAIT:** The Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy announced power cuts in various residential and non-residential areas due to emergency maintenance of power-generating units, aimed at ensuring the stability of the electrical system. The affected areas included Farwan-ya, Jabriya, Jahra, Abdullah Al-Mubarak, Sabah Al-Ahmad, Naseem, Nahda, Andalus, Sulaibikhat, Shuwaikh (residential) and Shamiya.

### UK ends visa waiver for Jordan

**LONDON:** Jordanians will have to apply for a visa to visit the UK again, mere months after they became exempt from the visa requirement. The UK government cited a significant increase in asylum seekers among the reasons behind the decision announced Tuesday as part of changes to immigration rules. The changes take effect on Sept 10, 2024, but Jordanians who already have a valid ETA and confirmed booking made before that date can still enter the UK as long as their arrival date does not exceed Oct 8.

## Environmental disaster feared as tanker burns

**DUBAI:** An abandoned tanker carrying more than one million barrels of crude oil could contaminate vast areas of the Red Sea in a severe, long-term environmental disaster if it breaks up or explodes, experts warn. The Greek-flagged Sounion, struck on August 21 by Yemen's Houthi rebels, was still on fire as recently as Saturday, maritime monitors said.

Threatening an oil spill four times

the size of the 1989 Exxon Valdez disaster off Alaska, a leak or on-board blast could cause almost irreparable damage, said Julien Jreissati, Middle East and North Africa program director at Greenpeace. "Once released, an oil spill of this magnitude could be nearly impossible to contain, spreading contamination across vast areas of seawater and coastlines," Jreissati told AFP. "The long-term impacts on marine biodiversity could be devastating, with oil residues potentially persisting in the environment for years or even decades."

The Houthis have been firing drones and missiles at ships in the vital commercial route since November, saying they are targeting vessels linked

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This picture released on Aug 29, 2024 by Yemen's Houthi rebels shows fireballs and smoke erupting aboard the Greek-owned oil tanker Sounion. — AFP

## SpaceX launches civilians for first private spacewalk

**WASHINGTON:** SpaceX launched its historic Polaris Dawn mission on Tuesday — an audacious orbital expedition that will catapult civilians into a high-radiation region of space and see them attempt the first-ever spacewalk by non-professional astronauts. Led by Shift4 Payments CEO Jared Isaacman, the four-member crew aims to journey farther into the cosmos than any other manned mission in more than half a century, since the end of the Apollo era.

On the mission's first day, they will soar to a peak altitude of 1,400 km before returning into a lower orbit. The highlight of the voyage is slated for as early as Thursday: The first-ever spacewalk by civilians, outfitted in sleek, newly developed SpaceX extravehicular activity (EVA) suits with heads-up displays, helmet cameras and an advanced joint mobility system. SpaceX has scheduled the EVA for 0623 GMT on Thursday, with a backup window on Friday at the same time.

Since the Crew Dragon capsule lacks an airlock,



CAPE CANAVERAL, Florida: A SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket with the Crew Dragon capsule carrying the crew of the Polaris Dawn Mission lifts off from Kennedy Space Center on Sept 10, 2024. — AFP

the entire crew will be exposed to the vacuum of space for the duration of the spacewalk, around 15 minutes, as two venture out, tethered to the spaceship. "I think the world is a more interesting place when you can journey among the stars," Isaacman said in a video message released by SpaceX. "We will develop technologies and test technologies that will help SpaceX ultimately achieve its long-term ambitions of making human life interplanetary."

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## Australia plans age limit to ban children from social media

**SYDNEY:** Australia will ban children from using social media with a minimum age limit as high as 16, the prime minister said Tuesday, vowing to get kids off their devices and "onto the footy fields". Federal legislation to keep children off social media will be introduced this year, Anthony Albanese said, describing the impact of the sites on young people as a "scourge". The minimum age for children to log into sites such as Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok has not been decided but is expected to be between 14 and 16 years, Albanese said.

The prime minister said his own preference would be a block on users aged below 16. Age verification trials are being held over the coming months, the center-left leader said, though analysts said they doubted it was technically possible to enforce an online age limit.

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## Local

# Offshore drilling project represents the beginning of new era of oil, gas

## Kuwait targets four million barrels per day

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait's Ministry of Oil said Tuesday that the offshore drilling project represents the beginning of a new era of oil and gas in Kuwait, as it is in line with the country's plans that aim to increase production to four million barrels of oil per day. This came in a speech by the Director of Public Relations and Media at the Ministry, Sheikha Tamader Khaled Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, during a discussion panel organized by the Ministry entitled 'Offshore Drilling Project'.

The program was attended by senior geophysicists and geologists at the Kuwait Oil Company. Maitham Ibrahim and Sheikha Tamader Al-Sabah praised the efforts made by the Kuwait Oil Company in exploration and production operations, which culminated in the discovery of the Al-Nokhatha field in Kuwaiti territorial waters, adding that it is considered the beginning of a new era for exploring marine resources, as it represents a milestone that paves the way for making Kuwait a pioneer in oil and gas production from territorial waters. This enhances Kuwait's role as a major source of energy at the regional and global levels.

She explained that the project places Kuwait on the map of leading regional producers as a prominent marine operator according to inter-

national standards and will provide opportunities to develop national cadres through international partnerships and training programs, which will enhance the country's ability to compete in this advanced field. In a related context, they reviewed the history of marine exploration in Kuwait, as the first marine exploratory seismic survey was carried out in 1961 by Shell, and in 1962 the first two marine exploratory wells were drilled by the same company.

They discussed the Kuwaiti marine area, estimated at about six thousand square kilometers, where seven exploratory wells were drilled to explore the cretaceous layers, and four wells gave good results, while Well HA-0001 gave expectations of the presence of hydrocarbon materials in a gas layer. They discussed the marine exploration project implemented by the Kuwait Oil Company, where a comprehensive exploratory assessment was conducted, and based on the study, the sites of the six wells were selected.

They mentioned that the Kuwait Oil Company is currently preparing for a high-resolution three-dimensional seismic survey covering the entire Kuwaiti marine area, in addition to studying the best options for early production from the discovered marine wells and then im-



Group photo of panelists.

plementing the appropriate infrastructure, establishing production facilities, and studying the best options for establishing a port for marine

operations with a capacity to serve four marine drilling platforms at the same time. — KUNA



Coupons are distributed to the families in need.



Kuwait Food Bank charity offers families in need to sign up for assistance. — KUNA photos

## Food Bank offers assistance to 2,050 families in country

**KUWAIT:** The Kuwait Food Bank charity said on Tuesday that it offered assistance to 2,050 families in Kuwait in cooperation with the Awqaf (Endowment) Public Foundation. Kuwait Food Bank's Chairman, Meshal Al-Ansari, told KUNA that the assistance offered consisted of two KD 50-coupons, enabling each family to secure its need of food. The database of the bank continues to be updated to cover the needs of most families in Kuwait, he affirmed, revealing that the charity has a competent team able to receive those in need as well as the www.kuwaitfoodbank.org website, which also enables individuals and groups to seek assistance. — KUNA

## KFAED: Beacon of hope, assistance to UN, organizations

**KUWAIT:** The Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) has launched numerous initiatives throughout the past 50 years, granting and loaning millions of dollars to the UN and international organizations, which have contributed to sustainable development in many countries. The first KFAED cooperation occurred in 1974 through a grant to the World Health Organization (WHO), contributing to the River Blindness Control Program in Africa, a campaign that highlighted Kuwait's role as a beacon of hope and assistance.

Over the past five decades, KFAED has provided numerous UN organizations with multiple grants totaling \$400 million, with \$290 million of it going to the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) to enhance health, food, and water security and help refugees. In a statement to KUNA, KFAED's Acting Director General Waleed Al-Bahar said that this reflected Kuwait's foreign policy aimed at providing humanitarian support to people all over the world, especially in Arab countries.

He added that KFAED works in full coordination with Kuwait's Foreign Ministry and is considered one of the most prominent official national entities supporting foreign policy. KFAED has worked with a number of international organizations over the past five decades, among them the UN's Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the UN's Development Program, the Office of the UN's High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the UN's Children's Fund (UNICEF), and especially WHO.

Al-Bahar added that KFAED, through the grants it provided to those organizations, executed a great number of humanitarian projects and initiatives that directly contributed to combating diseases and epidemics. KFAED continuously contributes to supporting the Palestinian cause through its humanitarian aid to the Palestinian people and the grants provided to UNRWA, which amounted to about \$22.5 million and focused on developmental and educational aspects and providing water, food, and health security. — KUNA

## Kuwait army, Boeing discuss cooperation

**KUWAIT:** Kuwaiti Army Deputy Chief of Staff, Air Marshal Sheikh Sabah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, discussed cooperation with Vice President of Business Development, Defense, Space Security Global Services at Boeing Heidi Grant. In a statement, the Chief of General Staff said the meeting tackled means of buttressing such cooperation, especially in aerospace military industries. — KUNA



## KCCC and IAEA discuss radiotherapy techniques

**VIENNA:** Kuwait's Ambassador to Austria and Permanent Representative to the United Nations and International Organizations in Vienna Talal Al-Fassam said Tuesday that a delegation from the Kuwait Cancer Control Center (KCCC) is currently visiting Vienna to meet with technical officials from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and discuss ways to develop and implement radiotherapy techniques.

Ambassador Al-Fassam told KUNA after receiving the visiting Kuwaiti delegation that the meetings are an "important step" towards enhancing cooperation and knowledge exchange between the Kuwait's Ministry of Health and the IAEA in the field of nuclear medicine and radiotherapy with the aim of raising standards of cancer treatment in Kuwait. He added that the meeting with the delegation members included a review of the efforts of the KCCC in promoting the use of three main radiotherapy techniques, which are considered "among the latest medical research findings" and its endeavors to apply these techniques to improve patient treatment outcomes and the quality of healthcare provided to them.

He stressed the importance of enhancing cooperation with specialized international organizations and agencies, based on Kuwait's commitment and



Ambassador of Kuwait to Austria Talal Al-Fassam poses for a group photo with a high-level medical delegation from the Kuwait Cancer Control Center. — KUNA

keenness to provide the best levels of care for cancer patients in the country and to enhance capabilities in combating it. Ambassador Al-Fassam praised the expertise of the members of the Kuwait Cancer Control Center, commending their efforts in raising the level of knowledge in the field of developing medical technologies and their application in Kuwait.

The delegation is scheduled to visit the facilities of the International Atomic Energy Agency in the Seibersdorf area in the Austrian capital, in addition to visiting the Medical University. The Kuwaiti delegation includes the Head of the Radiation Oncology

Department Dr Yasser Hassan; Radiation Oncology Specialist Dr Ahmed Boushehri; from the Nuclear Medicine Department Dr Sarah Murad, and the National Liaison Officer with the International Atomic Energy Agency Dr Nader Al-Awadhi.

The Kuwait Cancer Control Center, which was established in 1968, is a governmental center affiliated with the Ministry of Health and was designated for the purpose of providing care for cancer patients. It employs more than 600 highly qualified employees in the field of oncology and is equipped with the latest medical equipment and services. — KUNA



Attendees pose for a group photo.

## Cultural fusion at 'Hawaiian Day'; IWG kicks off new season

By Passant Hisham

**KUWAIT:** The International Women's Group in Kuwait kicked off the new season with a 'Hawaiian Day' meet and greet, hosting their first event of the year at the Crowne Plaza Hotel on Sunday. In her welcome speech, the new President of the group, Polina Dlamini, spouse of the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Eswatini, South Africa, highlighted the occasion as an opportunity to "embrace the spirit of aloha, which embodies luck, peace, hope, and compassion among us."

Together with the group's new board and members, she expressed her hopes for the year, looking forward to experiencing "different cultures, different traditions, and life-changing adventures," while fos-

tering stronger bonds, harmony, and lasting friendships. She encouraged everyone to explore the Hawaiian beach market set up at the event, take photos at each station to create their first memory of the season, and enjoy the "Hawaiian fun."

Among the invited attendees was the Turkish Ambassador to Kuwait Tuba Nur Sonmez, who extended her heartfelt gratitude for IWG and the volunteers, who "have put all of this effort to bring every sense and feeling of Hawaii." Through the music, flowers decorations, and the vibes, she said, "for a short time we felt that we are in somewhere else." She praised the organization's crucial role in bringing people together from different countries, helping them look deeper and closer at the unique cultures that they present.

As the event highlighted the essence of Hawaii through its popular sports, music, movies, and dances, Kuwaiti board surfer Abdullah Al-Mutawa shared with Kuwait Times how he first discovered his passion for the water sport during a vacation to Hawaii in 2017. "I did it for a day or two, kept at it, and it was really fun. When you find a massive wave, you just go over it. Sometimes you fall, but you get back up, and

it's such a thrill," he said.

Reflecting on his love for surfing and the island's relaxed lifestyle, he added, "With board surfing, all you need is a board and about 30 minutes of learning, and then you're ready to go. No special equipment is needed — just hit the beach and ride the waves."

Hassan Jomah, a musician who performed at the event, shared his excitement about being part of the celebration. "I played three pieces of music, including 'I Fell in Love with You,' and two Spanish songs. It was a great honor to be called for this event," he told Kuwait Times. Though he hasn't visited Hawaii, the event sparked his interest. "Now I'm more interested in visiting, especially with what we saw today. I'm looking forward to going there." He also commented on Hawaiian music, saying, "Their music is nice and simple, which means a lot of people can easily enjoy it. It's not complicated — easy to like and play."

Jomah, who specializes in flamenco guitar, explained how Hawaiian music is often played on the ukulele, "like the guitar, but smaller with four strings." He also shared his passion for blending traditional Kuwaiti music with Spanish, Argentine, and Peruvian styles, and expressed his admiration for Hawaiian folklore.



Some of the attendees.

## Local

# GCC discusses mechanisms to confront ongoing challenges

## Officials seek to enhance Gulf integration

**RIYADH:** The joint ministerial meeting of foreign ministers of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) is critical to coordinating mechanisms to confront ongoing challenges, Kuwait's Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya said Monday. Al-Yahya told KUNA after the conclusion of the 161st session of the GCC Ministerial Council that the periodic meeting is being held in light of the many, precise, and complex regional and international challenges the region is witnessing.

The minister added that discussions focused on enhancing Gulf integration in the political, security, economic, and social fields, based on the directives of GCC leaders, with the goal of advancing cooperation towards achieving more integration that positively reflects on the GCC countries and their people. The ministerial council stressed the need to intensify

efforts to enhance mechanisms of continuous coordination between the GCC countries to confront current challenges, especially in light of the increasing regional tensions and global crises that directly affect the stability and security of the region.

Al-Yahya pointed out that the joint Gulf action is proceeding according to ambitious strategic plans that include strengthening the security system and defense cooperation, in addition to achieving economic integration and supporting sustainable development efforts. Regarding the Palestinian issue, Al-Yahya stated that the meeting discussed in detail the deteriorating humanitarian conditions in the occupied Palestinian territories, especially in the Gaza Strip, which suffers from a severe siege and continuous attacks.

He stressed that the Ministerial Council agreed on

the need to continue coordinating diplomatically in this regard before the next Arab Ministerial Meeting scheduled to be held in Cairo. The minister said that the GCC countries adhere to their firm and principled position in supporting the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people while continuing to support international and regional efforts aimed at achieving a comprehensive and just solution based on UN resolutions and international law.

In another context, the ministerial meeting witnessed a series of important bilateral meetings with the foreign ministers of Russia, India, and Brazil to strengthen strategic relations and develop areas of cooperation in many vital sectors of common interest. Al-Yahya headed Kuwait's delegation in the GCC 161st Ministerial Council meeting at the bloc's headquarters in Riyadh. — KUNA

In my view

## Toxic environment X has developed



By Khaled Al-Abdulhadi

**X**, formerly Twitter, while always bot-ridden, has become even more toxic over the past period. Most notably after Elon Musk bought the social media platform, and it's necessary that when reading a post one keeps that in mind. Nonetheless, while it has become freer, it has also allowed for a barrage of spam-like posts to surge on the surface. Many profiles, either with real names or posting anonymously, have been promoting negative, racist, or hateful remarks. Many take certain remarks or comments out of context, fixating on irrelevant topics, or purposefully igniting heated arguments that take conversationists into a spiral of discrimination, effectively triggering conflicts between people of different nations.

While the importance of social media lies in its freedom and having up-to-date information across the globe in minutes, organized disinformation completely destroys its purpose. This can affect users' perception of some information, which can lead to a complete change in their views, mostly in ways they would not normally think. This is a new form of manufacturing consent not driven by governments but by anyone with some cash and malintent. It is a form of control where if you own the emotions of the people, you own their minds, ideologies, and actions.

Noam Chomsky defined manufacturing consent as mobilizing public opinion regarding an issue in order to get the consent of two main targets: the intellectual policy-making class and the majority of the population who do not pay attention to intricacies. Moreover, many profiles are just copying other trendy posts for the clicks and the revenue they could generate, making X an inviting platform for hostile environments, especially since people usually gravitate towards negative posts.

If a post becomes trendy, it will reach large masses regardless of its factuality. George Orwell exemplified the use of control and manipulating information in order to control people. This is now easily done by creating trendy posts. One can only imagine how readers of all ages can perceive such farcical posts and become emotionally invested in them. This is even more prevalent when videos or photos are released with misleading information and guided headlines that can be compared with Cold War propaganda.

It is even more unfortunate that some news outlets fall victim to these posts because they have not done their due diligence and fact-checked their posts. Recently, an official made a slip of the tongue that went viral, igniting hatred between the two countries. Whether his 'slip of the tongue' was purposeful or not, we cannot assume what anyone thinks without vital evidence, especially when they have no reason to utter hateful remarks. It is important that when reading posts, people keep in mind that some information may be taken out of context. And it is even more important not to overhype news because it is news that should be known, and its purpose is to spread information and not cause a disturbance.



**CAIRO:** Kuwait's Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya met on Tuesday with Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, in charge of the Arab World, Diaspora, Francophonie and African Integration in the Comoros Mohamed Mbae (right). Al-Yahya later met with Tunisian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Migration, and Tunisians Abroad Mohamed Ali Al-Nafti. Both meetings took place on the sidelines of the 162nd regular session of the Arab League in Cairo. During the meetings, both sides discussed bilateral ties, boosting cooperation and latest international and regional developments. — KUNA



## Arab League Council seeks to halt Zionist aggressive policies

**CAIRO:** Kuwait Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya met Tuesday with the Commissioner-General of the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), Philippe Lazzarini, on the sidelines of the 162nd regular session of the Arab League at the ministerial level in Cairo. The two sides touched on the latest developments in the Gaza Strip.

Meanwhile, the 162nd session of the Arab League Council at the level of foreign ministers began on Tuesday at the headquarters of the General Secretariat of the Arab League, under the chairmanship of Yemen and with the attendance of several foreign officials. The Council's agenda featured discussions on ways to stop the ongoing Zionist aggression against Gaza and the West Bank, including the war crimes committed by the occupation forces against Palestinians over the past 11 months, which have resulted in the death, injury, or

disappearance of more than 145,000 Palestinian civilians.

The Council will also consider political, diplomatic, and legal measures to halt Zionist aggressive policies aimed at displacing the Palestinian people from their land, which constitutes a severe violation of international humanitarian law and poses a threat to Arab national security. The Council is expected to call on the International Criminal Court (ICC) to swiftly issue arrest warrants for Zionist leaders, reiterate its continued support for Palestine in obtaining full membership in the United Nations, and focus on monitoring political developments and reviving the Arab Peace Initiative amid persistent violations in occupied Jerusalem.

The meeting will also tackle issues such as Arab water security, the theft of water resources by Zionists, the situation in the occupied Syrian Golan Heights, developments in several Arab



**Kuwait Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya meet with the Commissioner-General of the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) Philippe Lazzarini. — KUNA**

countries — including Libya, Yemen, Sudan, and Somalia — solidarity with Lebanon, the security of navigation and energy supplies in the Arabian Gulf region, and the Ethiopian dam crisis. Additionally, discussions will explore the risks posed by Zionist armament and the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free and weapons-of-mass destruction-free zone in the Middle East.

The ministers will also consider social issues, human rights, economic matters, national security maintenance, and combating terrorism. The Council is set to review reports from

its permanent committees related to administrative, financial, legal affairs, and human rights. The meeting will be attended by several international figures, including Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan, EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Josep Borrell, UN Under-Secretary-General and United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) Commissioner-General Philippe Lazzarini, and UN Coordinator for Humanitarian Affairs and Reconstruction in Gaza Sigrid Kaag. — KUNA

## Ministry of Information, National Cybersecurity Center ink agreement

**KUWAIT:** The Ministry of Information and the National Cybersecurity Center signed on Tuesday a cooperation agreement in the field of cybersecurity, training, and media cooperation. Undersecretary of the Ministry of Information Dr Nasser Muhaisen told Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) on the sidelines of the signing that the agreement comes under the directives of Minister of Information Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi and in implementation of the Ministry's strategy to create a strategic partnership with state institutions.

Muhaisen stressed that this joint cooperation will be reflected in developing the work mecha-

nism, especially in the technical aspect, servers and technical receivers for Kuwait TV studios, which will have an impact on developing the mechanism at the Ministry. He added that through this agreement, the National Cybersecurity Center will provide a set of services to the Ministry of Information, including continuous technical support during different periods of media work as well as periodic inspection of digital devices and servers in radio, television, and news studios.

Muhaisen also explained that these services include providing global regulations and systems for computer systems and digital servers for the Ministry, noting that the Center will also provide training courses and workshops to upgrade national cadres and enhance the culture of cybersecurity for workers in the media. He stated that the Ministry of Information will work in turn to enhance community awareness of cybersecurity through radio and television programs. — KUNA



**Undersecretary of the Ministry of Information Dr Nasser Muhaisen and Head of the National Cyber Security Center. — KUNA photos**

## Expert underlines the importance of physiotherapy

**KUWAIT:** Director of the Department of Physiotherapy Services at the Ministry of Health Abdullah Zaman affirmed on Tuesday that physiotherapy in Kuwait has witnessed a qualitative leap in the health services provided according to the latest international protocols, thanks to the efforts of its founders and members. Zaman said in a statement to Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) on the occasion of the Ministry's celebration of the 'World Physical Therapy Day' which falls on September 8. This year's slogan, 'Physiotherapy and Lower Back Pain,' sheds light on the pains people go through.

He pointed out that lower back pain has become a global problem that requires spreading awareness of the importance of the role of physiotherapy in alleviating pain, adding that physiotherapy is one of the health professions concerned with helping people to regain their health. He added that the celebration comes within the framework of the Ministry and the Department of Physiotherapy Services' keenness to develop the physiotherapy profession and raise its efficiency.



**Participants take a group photo during the celebration marking the World Physical Therapy Day. — KUNA photos**

He praised the dedication and efforts of physiotherapy specialists towards achieving the vision 'New Kuwait 2035'. Zaman pointed out that the Department of Physiotherapy Services is keen to enhance the role of the physiotherapy profession in society and highlight the role of the physiotherapist, which is based on awareness, prevention, and

treatment of these pains.

He explained that the role of the physiotherapist lies in alleviating these pains using different techniques, whether manual therapy or therapeutic devices, in addition to developing a treatment plan based on providing awareness, guidelines, and health advice related to healthy posture, staying



active, and modifying the home and work environments. The physiotherapist determines the therapeutic exercises for each patient after examining him/her and assessing the health condition. This includes flexibility, stretching, and strengthening exercises that work to increase the flexibility and strengthen the back muscles. — KUNA

## Photo of the Day



KUWAIT: A fishing boat sails in the Gulf waters off the coast of Kuwait City as a cargo ship transits in the background on September 8, 2024. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

## Kuwaiti-Egyptian committee meets

CAIRO: Preparatory meetings for the Kuwaiti-Egyptian Joint Higher Committee kicked off on Tuesday. Senior officials are meeting to prepare for the 13th session of the committee at the level of foreign ministers next Thursday. The Kuwaiti delegation was headed by Assistant Foreign Minister for Arab Affairs Ambassador Ahmad Al-Bakr, while the Egyptian side was headed by Assistant Foreign Minister for Arab Affairs Ambassador Mohammad Al-Badri.

In his opening speech at the meeting, Ambassador Al-Bakr expressed his appreciation to Egypt for its invitation to hold the 13th session of the Kuwaiti-Egyptian Joint Higher Committee, hoping that the meeting would be crowned with success and achieve the desired results that would serve the interests of enhancing aspects of bilateral cooperation. He pointed out that Kuwaiti-Egyptian relations are solid and deep-rooted relations that have been characterized for decades by a spirit of cooperation and sincere brotherhood between the two countries, during which the frameworks of joint cooperation have been diversified in various fields and have become a model to be emulated.

Ambassador Al-Bakr said that the meeting comes as a translation of the lofty and wise directives of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, which were expressed in the contents of the joint statement issued following His Highness' visit to Egypt in early May. He added that the visit emphasized the importance of holding this committee in particular, which contributes to advancing efforts to enhance joint cooperation in a number of political, economic, cultural, and other areas of joint cooperation.

Ambassador Al-Bakr stated that the meeting is a continuation of the 12th session of the committee, which was held in Kuwait in December 2018, to address any obstacles standing in the way of developing this cooperation in various fields and to develop mechanisms capable of developing joint cooperation and providing an appropriate climate to achieve the desired benefit for both sides. He praised the achievements of the Kuwaiti-Egyptian Joint Higher Committee over the past meetings, considering it a high model for bilateral work. — KUNA

## Kuwait charity launches Mosque and Quran Center in Kyrgyzstan



Al-Safa Charity and Humanitarian Society's officials inaugurate water network. — KUNA photos

BISHKEK: Kuwait's Al-Safa Charity and Humanitarian Society on Tuesday opened a Mosque and Quran Center in a town located in Kara-Balta, northern Kyrgyzstan, as part of its 16th charity campaign in the eastern central Asian country. Secretary of Al-Safa Charity Abdullah Al-Shaynee told KUNA that Al-Safa had opened the 144 square meters mosque with a capacity to hold 200 worshippers, adding that a 35-square meters Quran Center was also established including classrooms.

The educational classrooms within the center would be able to host 12 students, serving in the town with the population of 900 people. He revealed that a water network was recently inaugurated in a town in Chuy region at an area of 2,500 square meters - benefiting 1,800 individuals. Another similar network is also opened in the region of Osh, he added. Al-Safa Charity campaign was launched on Sunday in Kyrgyzstan and would continue until September 13. — KUNA



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Senior officials take a group photo after the factory inauguration ceremony. — KUNA

## First fiber optics cable factory opens in Mina Abdullah

KUWAIT: Undersecretary of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry Ziad Al-Najem (representing Minister of Commerce Khalifa Al-Ajeel) on Monday inaugurated the Taihan Kuwait factory, the first Kuwaiti factory in the Mina Abdullah Industrial Area for manufacturing fiber optic cables, which are the backbone of modern communications systems and information transfer via communications networks and the Internet.

Al-Najem said in a press statement following the inauguration ceremony that this type of factory is considered one of the qualitative factories in the country, especially since the state is currently working on changing copper cables to optical ones due to their great communication capacity and speed in transferring information in a secure manner. He stressed that the Ministry will not hesitate to support and facilitate procedures for such factories to support the vision of 'New Kuwait 2035' that aims to transform Kuwait into a regional and commercial center that attracts investment.

In his speech during the ceremony, Acting Chairman of the Communications and Information Technology Regulatory Authority Abdullah Al-Ajmi said that "establishing the factory is a pivotal step in developing the telecommunications sector in Kuwait," stressing that it is in line with the country's national development plan and its policy of encouraging value-added industrial investments.

Al-Ajmi added that "the factory will work to meet the growing needs of customers, ensuring that communities are provided with the necessary tools to suc-

ceed in the digital age and contribute to diversifying sources of income and providing job opportunities for workers, in addition to transferring technology and attracting sustainable foreign investments. Chairman of the Board of Directors of Taihan Kuwait, Atallah Al-Mutairi, stressed in a similar speech the importance of fiber optic cables as they are the backbone of modern communication systems, pointing out their tremendous ability to transmit data at great speeds, long distances, and large capacity.

Al-Mutairi added that the factory area is 5,000 square meters. In turn, the Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to the country, Park Tsung-sook, stressed the strength of the relations between his country and Kuwait, pointing out the contribution of some Korean companies to the Kuwaiti economic development through their work on major projects such as the Al-Zour refinery. He said that "the fiber optic cable factory will have the ability to expand into international markets, and the fiber optics will connect Kuwait to the high-speed Internet, which will contribute to supporting the vision of 'New Kuwait 2035'.

The CEO of the parent company (Taihan Cable & Solution Korea), Song Joon Min, explained in a similar speech that the establishment of Taihan Kuwait came with the aim of producing fiber optic cables locally, which were completely imported. Song Joon Min said that the company will contribute to enhancing the information and communications industry in the country, noting that after three years of preparation, the company is now ready to operate.

He added that Taihan Kuwait will produce fiber optic cables of the highest quality, create new jobs, and plan to expand to neighboring GCC countries, which will contribute to the development of the industry in Kuwait. Song stressed that the company will do its utmost best in sharing technology and in providing human and material resources to enhance the company's competitiveness in the global market. — KUNA



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RAMENSKOYE: A man looks at a damaged residential building following a drone attack in Ramenskoye in the Moscow region on September 10, 2024. — AFP

# Ukraine targets Moscow in biggest drone attack yet

## One woman dead, buildings set on fire in overnight attack involving 144 drones

MOSCOW: Ukraine targeted the Russian capital on Tuesday in its biggest drone attack so far, killing at least one and wrecking dozens of homes in the Moscow region and forcing around 50 flights to be diverted from airports around Moscow. Russia, the world's biggest nuclear power, said it had destroyed at least 20 Ukrainian attack drones as they swarmed over the Moscow region, which has a population of more than 21 million, and 124 more over eight other regions.

At least one person was killed near Moscow, Russian authorities said. Three of Moscow's four airports were closed for more than six hours and almost 50 flights were diverted. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters that the drone attack was another reminder of the real nature of Ukraine's political leadership, which he said was made up of Russia's enemies. "There is no way that night time strikes on residential neighborhoods can be associated with military action," said Peskov. "The Kyiv regime continues to demonstrate its nature. They are our enemies and we must continue the special military operation to protect ourselves from such actions," he

said, using the expression Moscow uses to describe its war in Ukraine.

Kyiv said Russia, which sent tens of thousands of troops into Ukraine in February 2022, had attacked it overnight with 46 drones, of which 38 were destroyed. The drone attacks on Russia damaged at high-rise apartment buildings in the Ramenskoye district of the Moscow region, setting flats on fire, residents told Reuters.

A 46-year-old woman was killed and three people were wounded in Ramenskoye, Moscow regional governor Andrei Vorobyov said. Residents said they awoke to blasts and fire. "I looked at the window and saw a ball of fire," Alexander Li, a resident of the district told Reuters. "The window got blown out by the shockwave."

Georgy, a resident who declined to give his surname, said he heard a drone buzzing outside his building in the early hours. "I drew back the curtain and it hit the building right before my eyes. I saw it all," he said. "I took my family and we ran outside." The Ramenskoye district, some 50 km (31 miles) southeast of the Kremlin, has a population of around a quarter of a million people, according to official data.

More than 70 drones were also downed over Russia's Bryansk region and tens more over other regions, Russia's defense ministry said. There was no damage or casualties reported there. As Russia advances in eastern Ukraine, Kyiv has taken the war to Russia with a cross-border attack into Russia's western Kursk region that began on August 6 and by carrying out increasingly large drone attacks deep into Russian territory.

### Drone war

The war has largely been a grinding artillery and drone war along the 1,000 km (620 mile) heavily fortified front line in southern and eastern Ukraine involving hundreds of thousands of soldiers. Moscow and Kyiv have both sought to buy and develop new drones, deploy them in innovative ways, and seek new ways to destroy them — from using shotguns to advanced electronic jamming systems.

Both sides have turned cheap commercial drones into deadly weapons while ramping up their own production and assembly to attack targets including tanks and energy infrastructure such as refineries and airfields. Russian President Vladimir Putin, who has sought to insulate Moscow from the grinding

rigors of the war, has called Ukrainian drone attacks that target civilian infrastructure such as nuclear power plants "terrorism" and has vowed a response.

Moscow and other big Russian cities have largely been insulated from the war. Russia itself has hit Ukraine with thousands of missiles and drones in the last two-and-a-half years, killing thousands of civilians, wrecking much of the country's energy system and damaging commercial and residential properties across the country.

Ukraine says it has a right to strike back deep into Russia, though Kyiv's Western backers have said they do not want a direct confrontation between Russia and the US-led NATO military alliance. There was no immediate comment from Ukraine about Tuesday's attacks. Both sides deny targeting civilians.

Tuesday's attack follows drone attacks Ukraine launched in early September chiefly targeting Russia's energy and power facilities. Authorities in the Tula region, which neighbors the Moscow region to its north, said drone wreckage had fallen onto a fuel and energy facility but that the "technological process" of the facility was not affected. — Reuters



TEL AVIV: A woman defaces a picture of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu with paint during anti-government protests. — AFP

## Relative blames Zionist military for Gaza captive death

JERUSALEM: Gil Dickmann's worst nightmare came true when he was told his cousin Carmel Gat, who had survived 11 months in Hamas captivity, had been killed in a tunnel in Gaza just before Zionist forces arrived. "She was so close to hugging her father," Dickmann, 32, told Reuters outside the Knesset, where he was lobbying lawmakers to push for a deal to secure the hostages' release. "We failed as a country, we failed as a community." Gat's body and those of five fellow hostages were recovered by Zionist troops on September 1, triggering an outpouring of grief and mass protests among Zionists demanding a hostage deal.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has repeatedly said increased military pressure would ultimately bring the hostages home. An autopsy revealed that Gat and the other five hostages had been shot in the back of the head at close range, less than 48 hours before Zionist forces recovered the bodies in a tunnel under Gaza.

"Military pressure kills the hostages," said Dickmann. "We know that for a fact." Hamas has said in separate statements that the Zionist entity is responsible for killing the hostages, or that Netanyahu is responsible for killing them by obstructing a ceasefire agreement. Esther Buchshtav, whose son Yagev was killed in captivity earlier this year, said on Monday at a meeting in the entity's parliament that a military investigation found her son had been executed by Hamas when soldiers came close to where he was being held.

Dickmann has become one of the most recognizable faces in the movement to push for a hostage deal. He has appeared often on Zionist nightly news shows and clips have circulated widely on social media showing him in screaming matches with Zionist lawmakers and giving passionate speeches at the Knesset.

Last month, he went to the entity's southern border along with a group of hostage families who ran towards the border in an effort to gather sympathy for their cause. The high volume of protesters who demonstrated after Gat's death, Dickmann said, showed that the Zionist government is disconnected from the will of the people. "The (Zionist) people want life," Dickmann said. "We fight for the lives of the hostages. We don't fight for revenge." — Reuters

## Polio vaccination starts in north Gaza despite obstacles

GAZA/GENEVA: A campaign to vaccinate a final 200,000 children in north Gaza against polio began on Tuesday although health and aid officials said the operation was complicated by access restrictions, evacuation orders and shortages of fuel. The campaign in north Gaza, the part of the territory hardest hit by the Zionist entity's 11-month military offensive in the territory, follows the vaccination of more than 446,000 Palestinian children in central and south Gaza earlier this month.

Medical staff had started administering vaccines in the north despite a dire need for fuel, among other challenges, said Dr Moussa Abed of the primary care unit in Gaza's health ministry. Vaccination centers are in areas that are militarily very active, difficult to reach and isolated if things go wrong, said Sam Rose, a deputy director of the UN agency for Palestinian refugees, UNRWA. "There are some nerves, but we'll have to make it work," he told Reuters by text message.

On Monday, the Zionist entity stopped a convoy that included vehicles and fuel for the vaccination campaign as well as a World Health Organization team trying to get to Gaza's Al Shifa hospital and the mission had to be aborted, the WHO's Tarik Jasarevic told reporters in a briefing. The entity also issued an evacuation order in north Gaza, the first in more than two weeks, that included areas that are part of humanitarian pause zones agreed upon for the polio vaccinations, according to UN update on Monday.

"The centralization of services in the south makes it extremely difficult for us to get fuel, to get access to



GAZA: Palestinian medics administer polio vaccines to children at the Daraj neighborhood clinic in Gaza City on September 10, 2024. — AFP

vaccinations, and to all other logistics," Mahmoud Shalabi of Medical Aid for Palestinians, a UK-based charity, told Reuters via a spokesperson, adding there was no fuel available for mobile vaccination teams.

### 'Dangers of the road'

Hossam Medhat Saleh, a Palestinian father, said he had to walk with his three children to reach a vaccination clinic because there was no transportation available. "The dangers of the road are big — as you can see, the destruction, the streets and infrastructure, in

addition to the missiles and cannons (shelling) which continue," he told Reuters, standing on a dusty street surrounded by smashed cars and buildings.

The campaign to vaccinate some 640,000 children in Gaza under 10 years of age began on September 1, following confirmation by the WHO last month that a baby had been partially paralyzed by the type 2 polio virus, the first such case in the territory in 25 years. The campaign in north Gaza aims to conclude a first vaccination round, with a second set to commence after a month. — Reuters

## International

# US, EU countries pile fresh sanctions on Iran, Russia

## US accuses Iran of sending ballistic missiles to Russia; Iran says allegation 'ugly propaganda'

**LONDON:** Russia has received ballistic missiles from Iran and will likely use them in Ukraine within weeks, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said on Tuesday, warning that cooperation between Moscow and Tehran threatens wider European security. At a news conference in London ahead of a visit to Kyiv he and Britain's Foreign Secretary David Lammy will make, Blinken said Washington had privately warned Iran that providing ballistic missiles to Russia would be "a dramatic escalation" and said new sanctions would be imposed later on Tuesday.

"Russia has now received shipments with these ballistic missiles, and will likely use them within weeks in Ukraine, against Ukraine," Blinken said, citing intelligence that he said has been shared with US allies and partners around the world. The US later identified nine Russian-flagged vessels it said were involved in the delivery of weapons from Iran to Russia, designating them as "blocked property" under Washington's sanctions regime, according to the Treasury Department's website. It also imposed additional measures on previously sanctioned airline Iran Air, the department said in a statement.

Blinken said Iran has trained dozens of Russian military personnel to use its Fath-360 close-range ballistic missile system, which has a maximum range of 75 miles (121 km). Russian defense ministry representatives are believed to have signed a contract in December with Iranian officials for the Fath-360 and another Iranian ballistic missile system, Reuters reported last month.

Iran has previously supplied Shahed drones used by Russia in Ukraine but has denied that it is supplying Russia with ballistic missiles. Foreign Ministry spokesperson Nasser Kanaani on Tuesday said on X that Iran views the reports as "ugly propaganda" to conceal Western military support to the Zionist entity. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov declined to confirm the reports but told reporters Russia was cooperating with Iran including on "the most sensitive" areas.

After two and a half years of war, Ukrainian forces

now find themselves stretched, fending off a steady Russian advance in Ukraine's east. Last month Kyiv sent troops into Russia on their first large-scale cross-border incursion. The Iranian missiles can be used on closer targets, allowing Russia to use more of its own arsenal for targets that are further from the front line in Ukraine, Blinken said.

"This development and the growing cooperation between Russia and Iran threatens European security and demonstrates how Iran's destabilizing influence reaches far beyond the Middle East," Russia, which previously signed up to United Nations restrictions on Iran, was also sharing technology sought by Tehran, he added. "This is a two-way street, including on nuclear issues as well as some space information," Blinken said.

### More sanctions

Iran is already one of the most heavily sanctioned countries in the world, and some experts have questioned the benefit of adding more economic penalties that can hurt the middle class more than the country's leaders. The Treasury and the State Department imposed sanctions on 10 individuals and nine entities based in Iran and Russia, the Treasury said.

The sanctions freeze any US assets held by those targeted, denying them access, and generally bars Americans from dealing with them. France, Germany and Britain also issued a joint statement condemning Iran and Russia for what they called an escalation, and pledging to impose sanctions on Iran Air and cancel air services agreements with Iran.

Britain said Tuesday it has started terminating "all direct air services between the UK and Iran" as part of new sanctions on Tehran for supplying Russia with missiles to use in Ukraine. London said it was acting alongside international partners to "cancel its bilateral air services arrangements with Iran", which would "restrict Iran Air's ability to fly in to the UK". Britain had announced seven new sanctions designations under its Iran sanctions regime

and three under its Russia regime. Ukraine welcomed further sanctions on Iran over the missiles. Presidential chief of staff Andriy Yermak reiterated that Kyiv was seeking Washington's permission to use US-supplied weapons deeper inside Russia.

The Biden administration earlier this year relaxed a policy that barred Ukraine from using US-supplied weapons in attacks on targets inside Russia, but officials said those arms were only to be used to hit back against Russian forces attacking or preparing to attack across the border. "We also need authorization



**LVIV:** Ukrainian rescuers work at the site of a missile attack in Lviv on September 4, 2024. — AFP

and three under its Russia regime. Ukraine welcomed further sanctions on Iran over the missiles. Presidential chief of staff Andriy Yermak reiterated that Kyiv was seeking Washington's permission to use US-supplied weapons deeper inside Russia.

The Biden administration earlier this year relaxed a policy that barred Ukraine from using US-supplied weapons in attacks on targets inside Russia, but officials said those arms were only to be used to hit back against Russian forces attacking or preparing to attack across the border. "We also need authorization

to use Western weapons against military targets on Russian territory, the provision of longer-range missiles, and the enhancement of our air defense systems," Yermak said on X.

Blinken said he would use his visit to Ukraine on Wednesday to hear directly from Ukraine's leadership what their current needs and objectives are and what the US can do to help them. Blinken and Lammy will visit together in a bid to show united Western support for Kyiv. Blinken will also visit Poland on Thursday, the State Department said. — Agencies

## Princess Kate, royal family praised for cancer video

**LONDON:** A slick video by Catherine, Princess of Wales announcing that her chemotherapy has finished marks a dramatic shift in communications for the British royal family, media and commentators said Tuesday. Kate, as she is widely known, posted the three-minute footage on social media on Tuesday, some six months after she dramatically revealed in another video that she was being treated for the condition.

But the intimate portrait of the 42-year-old princess, her husband Prince William and their young children was notable for its departure from the stiff formality of traditional royal public relations. "It's groundbreaking, an absolute first, a tectonic shift in how the royal family controls its image," said PR consultant Mark Borkowski. "Kate's journey is profound and deeply personal, but they've learned that emotion can be controlled — and weaponized — in small, potent doses. "By doing this through a polished film, they maintain dignity and control while still appearing relatable."

The Times likened the video, shot by filmmaker Will Warr in the Norfolk countryside of eastern England where the family has a home, to a Hollywood trailer for the Instagram generation. The daily assessed it was "the most intimate portrayal of royal family since (Queen Elizabeth II) invited a fly-on-the-wall documentary crew into her home in 1969". "In 40 years of covering the Royal Family I have nev-

er seen anything like Catherine's video. It's a first for the royals," veteran photographer Arthur Edwards wrote in The Sun tabloid.

### Taking control

Newspapers sought to decode the meaning behind the soft-focus scenes of the young family seeking solace in nature and enjoying each other's company. Many saw in it a clear sign that the princess, who will be queen when William succeeds his father King Charles III, was carefully attempting to control the narrative of her illness. "She's the one in the driving seat," said The Times, while Jennie Bond, a former BBC royal correspondent, said she was "putting down her marker" for the future. "This is how she wants to communicate with people," she told Sky News. "With this she has shown she wants to be straight with people, she wants to be direct, she wants the message to be quite simple."

The largely positive public response to the video comes after criticism of Kensington Palace, the couple's private office, and its handling of communications about Kate's illness this year. Speculation ran riot, especially online, after Kate — one of the world's most photographed women — was not seen in public for months following abdominal surgery in January.

An attempt to silence the rumors failed in March, when a family portrait, issued by the palace, was found to have been digitally altered, fueling the chatter. Kate's announcement that she was being treated for an undisclosed form of cancer followed soon afterwards, prompting widespread public sympathy and support. Borkowski said the latest video, and Kate's commentary accompanying it, showed the royal family was now "on the



**NORFOLK:** Britain's Catherine, Princess of Wales, is seen smiling with Britain's Prince William, Prince of Wales, and their children Britain's Prince George of Wales, Britain's Princess Charlotte of Wales and Britain's Prince Louis of Wales in this handout released on September 9, 2024. — AFP

front foot". "They lost control of the cancer narrative by staying silent," he added. "It shows they learnt from earlier mistakes," he added.

Like other senior royals, William and Kate have a strong social media presence, which is seen as essential to maintain the British royal family's relevance and appeal. Since the late queen's death, Charles has faced vocal protests from republicans who want an elected head of state instead of a hereditary monarch, and a decline in support among younger people.

Royal author Robert Jobson, who has recently published a new biography on Kate, told reporters in London that accountability and transparency was "very important" for the taxpayer-funded royals. But he said Kate's full return to public duties could still take time as she seeks to fully recover. According to The Sun, William, on a visit to Wales on Tuesday, told well-wishers that the end of Kate's chemotherapy was "good news" but added: "There is still a long way to go." — AFP

## Zionist carnage in 'safe zone'...

Continued from Page 1

until I saw my family in one piece. These are the (Zionist) targets. Look at them," he said, gesturing to the baby girl in his arms. "We were in humanitarian areas that were supposed to be safe."

Residents and medics said the camp was struck by five or six missiles or bombs. "We saw women cut in pieces, children cut in pieces and martyrs. There are still people missing. People are looking for them and they still have not found them yet," survivor Ola Al-Shaer told Reuters at the site. "Our teams are still moving out martyrs and wounded from the targeted area. It looks like a new (Zionist) massacre," a Gaza civil emergency official said. Civil defense spokesman Mahmud Basal said people sheltering in the camp in the dunes along the Mediterranean coast had not been warned of the strike. The strike left behind "three deep craters", he said, adding: "There are entire families who disappeared under the sand."

Hamas said claims its fighters were present at the scene of the strike were "a blatant lie". UN en-

voy Tor Wennesland condemned the strike, saying international humanitarian law "must be upheld at all times", while stressing "civilians must never be used as human shields".

Meanwhile, the Zionist military said on Tuesday it was highly likely its forces accidentally shot dead a US-Turkish activist during a protest in the occupied West Bank last week. Aysenur Ezgi Eygi, 26, was killed on Friday in the West Bank town of Beita, the site of weekly demonstrations against Zionist settlements.

In a statement on Eygi's death, the Zionist military said an inquiry had "found that it is highly likely that she was hit indirectly and unintentionally by (Zionist) fire". It added that the fire "was not aimed at her, but aimed at the key instigator of the riot". The United Nations rights office had earlier said Zionist forces killed Eygi with a "shot in the head".

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken on Tuesday said he will press the Zionist entity to make "fundamental changes" in its operations in the occupied West Bank. After an initially measured response to Friday's death of Eygi pending a fact-finding exercise, Blinken said the United States would raise her death at senior levels with its key ally. The investigation, and eyewitness accounts, make clear "that her killing was both unprovoked and unjustified", Blinken told reporters on a visit to London. — Agencies

young kids vulnerable to the harms of social media and the time for relying on tech companies to enforce age limits," he said. But it is not clear that the technology exists to reliably enforce such bans, said the University of Melbourne's associate professor in computing and information technology, Toby Murray. "We already know that present age verification methods are unreliable, too easy to circumvent, or risk user privacy," he said. Analysts warned that an age limit may not in any case help troubled children.

It "threatens to create serious harm by excluding young people from meaningful, healthy participation in the digital world," said Daniel Angus, who leads the digital media research centre at Queensland University of Technology. "There is logic in establishing boundaries that limit young people's access," said Samantha Schulz, senior sociologist of education at the University of Adelaide. — AFP

## Australia plans age limit to ban...

Continued from Page 1

"I want to see kids off their devices and onto the footy fields and the swimming pools and the tennis courts," Albanese said. "We want them to have real experiences with real people because we know that social media is causing social harm," he told national broadcaster ABC. "This is a scourge. We know that there is mental health consequences for what many of the young people have had to deal with," he said. Australia's conservative opposition leader Peter Dutton said he would support an age limit. "Every day of delay leaves

## Environmental disaster feared...

Continued from Page 1

to the Zionist entity, the US and Britain in a show of solidarity with Palestinians over the Zionist war in Gaza. The Sounion, carrying 150,000 tons of crude oil, lost engine power and caught fire after the initial strike, forcing the evacuation of its 25 crew members by a French frigate serving with the European Union's Aspides force, which is patrolling the area.

The Houthis then returned and detonated charges on the ship's deck, setting off new fires. It is anchored west of the rebel-held port city of Hodeida, midway between Yemen and Eritrea. An attempt by private companies to tow away the burning ship was abandoned because it was "not safe" to proceed, Aspides, which was guarding the tug boats involved, said last week.

"Given that the vessel is a large, heavily laden oil tanker, now immobilized and on fire, the situation is

extremely hazardous and unpredictable," Jreissati said. "The potential for a major environmental disaster is significant as the vessel could break apart or explode at any time." The 10-month Houthi campaign against shipping has killed at least four sailors and sunk two ships, including the Rubymar, which went down in March carrying thousands of tons of fertilizer.

The Sounion, however, poses the gravest danger yet. "This situation is an environmental catastrophe slowly unfolding in front of our eyes," said Wim Zwijnenburg of Dutch peace-building group PAX. The Joint Maritime Information Center, run by an international naval coalition, on Saturday said daily surveillance flights had reported "several" fires on deck but no visible cargo oil slick.

A salvage and firefighting operation was expected to start this week. "Minor oil slicks were detected in some satellite images, likely linked with burned oil after the explosions or from the engine," added Zwijnenburg. But "there has been no indication of a crude oil spill from the cargo that the ship is carrying". — AFP

## SpaceX launches civilians for first...

Continued from Page 1

The capsule blasted off atop a Falcon 9 rocket from the Kennedy Space Center in Florida early Tuesday. Applause broke out across the mission control center as it separated successfully from the main engine and the first glimpses of Earth came into view. SpaceX founder and CEO Elon Musk joined in the celebrations, a photo reposted by him on X showed.

At its upper altitudes, the capsule will enter the Van Allen radiation belt, a region teeming with high-energy charged particles that can pose health risks to humans over extended periods. While the crew will orbit nearly three times higher than the International Space Station, they won't surpass the record-setting distance of 248,000 miles achieved by the

Apollo 13 crew in 1970. The Apollo 13 astronauts reached that distance as they slingshot around the Moon after an explosion forced an emergency return to Earth.

Isaacman has remained tight-lipped on his total investment in the project, though reports suggest he paid around \$200 million for the SpaceX Inspiration4 mission in Sept 2021, the first all-civilian orbital mission. Rounding out the team are mission pilot Scott Poteet, a retired US Air Force lieutenant colonel; mission specialist Sarah Gillis, a lead space operations engineer at SpaceX; and mission specialist and medical officer Anna Menon, also a lead space operations engineer at SpaceX.

The quartet underwent more than two years of training in preparation for the landmark mission, logging hundreds of hours on simulators as well as skydiving, centrifuge training, scuba diving and summiting an Ecuadoran volcano. Polaris Dawn is the first of three missions under the Polaris program, a collaboration between Isaacman and SpaceX. — AFP

## International

# India's Manipur orders Internet blackout after ethnic clashes

## At least 11 people killed as hostilities reignite between Hindu, Christian communities

**NEW DELHI:** India's strife-torn northeastern state of Manipur ordered an Internet blackout on Tuesday, after imposing a curfew following days of deadly ethnic violence and clashes between protesters and police. Manipur has been rocked by periodic clashes for more than a year between the predominantly Hindu Meitei majority and the mainly Christian Kuki community, dividing the state into ethnic enclaves.

At least 11 people were killed last week as hostilities between the two communities erupted again after months of relative calm. A notice from the state's home ministry ordered all Internet and mobile data services in the state to be shut off for five days in order to bring the latest unrest under control. "Some anti-social elements might use social media extensively for transmission of images, hate speech and hate video messages inciting the passions of the public," the notice said. "It has become necessary to take adequate measures to maintain law and order in public interest, by stopping the spread of disinformation and false rumors."

Internet services were shut down for months in Manipur last year during the first outbreak of violence, which displaced around 60,000 people from their homes according to government figures. Thousands of the state's residents are still unable to return home owing to ongoing tensions.

### 'Significant escalation'

Hundreds of Meitei people in the state capital Imphal defied a curfew imposed earlier Tuesday to demand security forces take action against Kuki insurgent groups, whom they blame for the latest spate of attacks. Indian TV broadcasters showed the police firing tear gas in an effort to disperse the rally.

Student-led protests on Monday turned violent after the crowd threw stones and plastic bottles at security forces, police said in a statement. Protesters in another district snatched arms from police and fired at them, the statement added. "One police personnel was hit on the left thigh by a live round and another police personnel was hit in the face by an unknown projectile," it said.

The protests were motivated by a series of insurgent attacks using "improvised" projectile weapons and drone attacks that killed 11 people last week, in what police called a "significant escalation" of violence. Long-standing tensions between the Meitei and Kuki communities revolve around competition for land and public jobs. Rights activists have accused local leaders of exacerbating ethnic divisions for political gain. Manipur is ruled by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party. — AFP



**IMPHAL:** Protesters gather as security personnel block their way along a street during a curfew in Imphal on September 10, 2024. — AFP

## Six Pakistan MPs held by court over new protest law

**ISLAMABAD:** Six Pakistan MPs from jailed former prime minister Imran Khan's party were among more than 30 people remanded in custody on Tuesday under a new law restricting protests. It comes after thousands of supporters of Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party gathered in the capital Islamabad on Sunday for a rally that was broken up with tear gas.

The party has faced a sweeping crackdown since former cricket star Khan was jailed in August last year on a series of charges that he says are politically motivated and designed to keep him from power. The MPs appeared at an anti-terrorism court in Islamabad where a judge remanded them in custody for eight days, an AFP journalist witnessed. They are accused of violating the Peaceful Assembly and Public Order Act 2024 — passed just last week — according to a charge sheet seen by AFP in court. In total 34 people were named on the charge sheet as having been remanded in custody.

PTI leader and senior lawyer Muhammad Shoaib Shaheen, who appeared in court alongside the MPs, faced a police complaint about an "attack on officials", "armed riots" and "illegal assembly" after

Sunday's rally and was also remanded in custody. "I was picked up from my office around 7:30 pm," he said at the court. "These small obstacles won't hold us back. We are the soldiers of Imran Khan, and we stand with him," he said.

Several of the group were rounded up by police as they left the National Assembly building in the capital on Monday night, PTI's media team said. Go-har Ali Khan, PTI chairman in Imran Khan's absence, was also taken away by police but later released, he told reporters. "These are not the offences where you should charge people with terrorism legislation," he told the media.

### New protest law

Thousands of Khan supporters turned out for Sunday's rally, the largest in the capital since February elections when rival parties formed a coalition to keep PTI from power, despite the party winning the most seats. It was the first demonstration since the government passed a new law regulating public gatherings, which it said would allow for peaceful assembly subject to reasonable restrictions.

Political, religious and civil rights groups frequently stage sit-ins and protests in Pakistan that can see cities shut down for days. However, rights groups say the law is a curb on freedom of expression and is part of a continued crackdown on peaceful protests. City authorities gave permission for the demonstration to go ahead but it continued beyond the stipulated time and authorities used tear gas to disperse crowds. Authorities had earlier warned of



**ISLAMABAD:** Tehreek-e-Insaf party leader Muhammad Shoaib Shaheen, shows a victory sign as he and other MPs appear before an anti-terrorism court on September 10, 2024. — AFP

legal action "for violation of the permission".

Imran Khan rose to power in 2018 with the help of the military, analysts say, but was ousted in 2022 after reportedly falling out with the generals. A United Nations panel of experts found this month that his detention "had no legal basis and appears to have been intended to disqualify him from running for political office". Several convictions against him have been overturned by the courts. Several members of the PTI's social media and press team were rounded up last month and accused of "anti-state propaganda". — AFP

## Deepfake porn crisis batters S Korea schools

**SEOUL:** After South Korean authorities uncovered a sprawling network of AI deepfake porn Telegram chatrooms targeting schools and universities, teenage activist Bang Seo-yoon began collecting testimony of abuse from victims. Many of the cases she documented followed the same pattern: schoolboys steal innocuous selfies from private Instagram accounts and create explicit images to share in the chat rooms, specifically to humiliate female classmates — or even teachers.

Super-wired South Korea, with the world's fastest average Internet speeds, has long battled sexual cyber violence, but experts say a toxic combination of Telegram, AI tech, and lax laws has supercharged the issue — and it is tearing through the country's schools. "It's not just the harm caused by the deepfake itself, but the spread of those videos among acquaintances that is even more humiliating and painful," Bang, 18, told AFP. She has received thousands of reports from devastated victims since authorities in August found the first such Telegram chatrooms, typically set up within a school or university to prey on female students and staff. Most perpetrators are teens, police say.

Deepfake prevalence is increasing exponentially globally, industry data shows, up 500 percent on year in 2023, cybersecurity startup Security Hero estimates, with 99 percent of victims women — typically famous singers and actresses. But while celebrities have powerful backers to protect them — the K-pop agency behind girl group NewJeans recently took legal action against deepfake porn — many ordinary victims are struggling to get justice, activists say.

### 'Live in fear'

Prosecution rates are woeeful: between 2021 and July this year, 793 deepfake crimes were reported but only 16 people were arrested and prosecuted, according to police data obtained by a lawmaker. After news of the chat rooms spread, complaints surged, with 118 cases reported in just five days in late August, and seven people arrested amid a police crackdown.

But six out of seven alleged perpetrators were teenagers, police say, which complicates prosecutions as South Korean courts rarely issue arrest warrants for minors. The chatrooms, multiple of which AFP attempted to join before being removed by moderators, have lewd names such as "the lonely" and rules requiring members to post photos of women they wish to see "punished".

Victims find themselves "sexually insulted and mocked by their classmates in online spaces", Kang Myeong-suk, head of victim support at the Women's Human Rights Institute of Korea told AFP. "But the perpetrators often face no consequences," she said, adding that victims now "live in fear of where their manipulated images might be distributed by those around them". "Some online comments say the victims should 'get over it' as these deepfake images are not even real," Kang said. "But just because manipulated images aren't real doesn't mean the pain the victims endure is any less genuine."

### Victim blaming

While overall crime rates in South Korea are generally low, the country has long suffered from an epidemic of spy-cam crimes, which led to major protests in 2018 inspired by the global #MeToo movement, eventually forcing lawmakers to strengthen laws. Even so "the penalties issued are often trivial, like fines or probation, which are disproportionate to the gravity of the offenses", professor Yoon Kim Ji-young told AFP. There have also been Telegram porn scandals before, most notably in 2020 when a group blackmailing women and girls to make sexual content for paid chatrooms was uncovered. The ringleader was jailed. But things have not improved.

President Yoon Suk Yeol's dismissive views on feminism — which he has blamed for the country's low birthrate — have signaled to men it is "okay to be hostile or discriminatory towards women", Yoon Kim said. South Korean police blame low prosecution rates on Telegram, which is famed for its reluctance to cooperate with authorities. Its founder was recently arrested in France for failing to curb illegal content on the app. — AFP

## Islamic scholar Tariq Ramadan convicted of rape

**GENEVA:** Islamic scholar Tariq Ramadan, who has been convicted of rape by a Geneva appeals court and sentenced to prison, will contest the verdict before Switzerland's highest court, his lawyers said on Tuesday. After being acquitted last year, a Geneva appeals court said Tuesday it had found the 62-year-old former Oxford University professor "guilty of rape and sexual coercion" of a woman in a Geneva hotel 16 years ago. It sentenced him to three years in prison, two of them suspended, marking the first guilty verdict against Ramadan, who faces a string of rape allegations in Switzerland and France.

A charismatic yet controversial figure in European Islam, he has always maintained his innocence, and his lawyers immediately announced that he would take the case to Switzerland's highest court. "It will be up to the Federal Court to rule on this case, to uphold justice and recognize this man's innocence," Yael Hayat and Guerric Canonica said in a statement to AFP.

Lawyers for the plaintiff in the case — a Muslim convert identified only as "Brigitte" — said they were relieved "the truth had finally triumphed", insisting they were not worried about the new appeal. "Our client is of course relieved, considering what she has had to endure for the truth to come out," the woman's lawyers Veronique Fontana and Robert Assael told AFP.

Their client had testified before the court that he subjected her to rape and other violent sex acts in a Geneva hotel room during the night of October 28, 2008. The lawyer representing Brigitte said she was repeatedly raped and subjected to "torture and barbarism". Ramadan said Brigitte invited herself up to his room. He let her kiss him, he said, before quickly ending the encounter. He said he was the victim of a "trap". — AFP



**Tariq Ramadan**



**HANOI:** A man standing on Long Bien Bridge looks down at houses partially submerged in floodwaters in Hanoi on September 10, 2024, after typhoon Yagi hit Vietnam. — AFP

## Vietnam evacuates 59,000 as flood toll climbs to 127

**HANOI:** Tens of thousands of people were forced to flee their homes on Tuesday as massive floods inundated northern Vietnam in the wake of Typhoon Yagi, and the death toll climbed to 127. Yagi struck Saturday bringing winds at speeds of more than 149 kilometers (92 miles) per hour and a deluge of rain that has caused flooding not seen in decades, according to locals.

More than 59,000 people have been forced to evacuate their homes in Yen Bai province, local authorities said Tuesday, after the floodwaters engulfed almost 18,000 homes. Floodwaters in Hanoi have reached levels not seen since 2008, state media reported, citing a senior local official, and forecasters have warned more is expected in the city's historic center.

Phan Thi Tuyet, 50, who lives close to the swollen and fast-moving Red River which runs through the capital, said she had never experienced such high water. "I have lost everything, all gone," she told AFP, clutching her two dogs as she was evacuated by boat, along with other residents whose homes were flooded. "I had to come to higher ground to save our lives. We could not bring any of the furniture with us. Everything is under water now."

Typhoons in the region are forming closer to the coast, intensifying more rapidly, and staying over land longer due to climate change, according to a study published in July. Yagi downed bridges, tore roofs off buildings, damaged factories and trig-

gered widespread flooding and landslides, leaving 64 people still missing.

Hanoi authorities said more than 25,000 trees in the city had been uprooted in the storm. Huge trunks blocked key roads in the city center, creating large traffic jams. The north of the country — densely populated and a major manufacturing hub for global tech firms including Samsung — was badly hit, with floodwaters in the city of Yen Bai at record levels, meteorologists said.

Authorities have issued flood and landslide warnings for 401 communes across 18 northern provinces. One-storey homes in parts of Thai Nguyen and Yen Bai cities were almost completely submerged in the early hours of Tuesday, with residents waiting on the roofs for help. Rescuers were trying to reach residential areas to retrieve old people and children. On social media, relatives of those stuck in floodwater posted desperate pleas for help and supplies in the early hours of the morning. Crops including bananas, guavas and corn — which are usually sold in nearby markets — were all flooded.

### Bridge collapsed

As well as the dead and missing, flooding and landslides have also injured at least 752 people, officials at the ministry of agriculture said Tuesday. Authorities stopped heavy vehicles crossing a major bridge over the Red River in central Hanoi on Tuesday and suspended a train line across Long Bien bridge as the water level rose. The action followed the dramatic collapse of a bridge higher up the river in northern Phu Tho province on Monday. Pictures showed half of the 375-metre Phong Chau bridge gone. Five people who were crossing the bridge at the time have been rescued, but eight others were still missing Tuesday, authorities said. — AFP

## Business

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2024

# Apple's iPhone 16 faces challenge from Huawei's \$2,800 tri-fold phone

## AI features on iPhones still in test mode; Apple shares fall 1%



BEIJING: Visitors take a look at Huawei Mate XT, a new triple-folding phone, at a Huawei store in Beijing on Sept 10, 2024. — AFP photos



CUPERTINO: Apple CEO Tim Cook inspects the new iPhone 16 during an Apple special event at Apple headquarters on Sept 9, 2024 in Cupertino, California.

BEIJING: Apple's new iPhone 16 failed to excite investors with long-expected AI features still in test mode even as an industry-first tri-fold phone from Huawei raised the stakes in a battle to dominate the global smartphone market. Apple's shares fell 1 percent in premarket trading on Tuesday a day after the US tech giant unveiled its new iPhones that sport hardware-level integration for applications based on artificial intelligence but with limited changes to the external design.

The phones will use AI features dubbed Apple Intelligence to improve the company's voice assistant Siri as well as enhance the camera. These AI features will arrive on iPhones in beta next month. The company did not say when it would

move beyond test. "With lots of words like "later this year" and "early next year", the core Apple message for iPhone 16 was: Next year will be better," Needham analyst Laura Martin said in a note.

On Tuesday, Huawei showed off its new Mate XT, which users can fold three ways. The device has already received more than 4 million pre-orders, for which no deposit is required, according to the company's website. It boasts an AI assistant with text summary, translation and editing functions, as well as AI-booster image editing functions such as trimming unwanted parts of photos.

But with a price tag that starts at \$2,800 - more than twice the starting price of the comparable iPhone 16 Pro

Max - and limited production, the tri-fold phone is likely to become more of a symbol of Huawei's tech prowess than a major sales driver, analysts said. "Production constraints and the high price point mean the new phone will likely not have a huge impact in terms of shipments," said Will Wong, senior researcher at consultancy IDC.

"But it's telling the consumers that it's still the tech leader and the potential challenge it brings to Apple may be far beyond just market share." Both the Mate XT and iPhone 16 go on sale on Sept 20.

### Apple's AI challenge

Huawei's launch, which follows a series of successful smartphone de-

butts, underscores the company's ability to navigate US sanctions and solidifies its position against Apple in China, where some consumers criticized the new iPhone 16 for its lack of AI features in the country. Apple has yet to announce an AI partner in China to power the 16s and Apple Intelligence, the company's AI software, will only be available in Chinese languages next year.

"What's the point of buying it if you can't use AI?" wrote one user on Weibo, China's X-like platform. Another commented: "Without AI as the biggest selling point, it should be half price." While Apple for years enjoyed strong demand in China, where new iPhone

launches once sparked a frenzy, its sales have dwindled and the company's ranking in the world's second-largest economy has now dropped from third to sixth place. Huawei made a comeback to the high-end smartphone segment last year with the release of a device powered by a domestically made chip, defying US sanctions that have cut off its access to the global chipset supply chain. The launch of the Mate 60 Pro surprised analysts and US officials. Huawei already has two-way foldable phones in its lineup, and its strong sales in China helped it overtake Samsung Electronics this year as the biggest vendor of such phones globally. — Reuters

## EU scores 'big win' in court against Apple, Google

BRUSSELS: The EU's top court on Tuesday delivered two major victories in the bloc's battle to rein in tech giants by ruling against Apple and Google in separate legal sagas with billions of euros at play.

The decisions give a boost to the bloc's outgoing competition chief, Margrethe Vestager, who had suffered a series of setbacks in EU courts against her decisions. Concluding a long-running legal battle, the European Court of Justice ruled that the iPhone maker must pay 13 billion euros (\$14.3 billion) in back-taxes to Ireland.

"The Court of Justice gives final judgment in the matter and confirms the European Commission's 2016 decision: Ireland granted Apple unlawful aid which Ireland is required to recover," the court said in a statement. Minutes later, the court also upheld a 2.4-billion-euro fine against Google, one of a string of high-profile EU competition cases targeting the tech giant.

Apple will take up to a \$10 billion earnings hit following a ruling that it must pay 13 billion euros (\$14.3 billion) in back-taxes to Ireland, an Apple securities filing said Tuesday. Apple "expects to record a one-time income tax charge ... of up to approximately \$10 billion," in its fiscal fourth quarter following Tuesday's ruling by the EU's European Court of Justice, the company said.

The court dismissed an appeal by Google and its parent company Alphabet against the fine, slapped on the search engine in 2017 for abusing its dominant position by favoring its own comparison shopping

service. Vestager hailed the rulings as a "big win for European citizens and for tax justice" and warned that the EU would "continue to push" and "go after" abuses of dominance. Apple and Google said they were "disappointed" by the decisions.

Ireland, which is home to Apple's EU headquarters and had challenged Brussels' position, said it would "respect" the court's findings. One of the most bitter legal battles between the European Commission and big tech, the Apple case dates back to 2016 when the EU's executive arm claimed Ireland allowed the iPhone maker to avoid billions of euros in taxes. By the commission's calculations, Dublin allowed Apple to pay a tax rate of one percent of its European profits in 2003 which then dropped to 0.005 percent by 2014.

It was one of several investigations over the previous decade into sweetheart tax arrangements between major companies and several EU countries. But Apple on Tuesday said there was no "special deal". "We always pay all the taxes we owe wherever we operate," the company said in a statement.

"The European Commission is trying to retroactively change the rules and ignore that, as required by international tax law, our income was already subject to taxes in the US," it added. The ruling is a blow for Apple as the iPhone maker had gained the upper hand in the Ireland case in 2020, when the EU's General Court annulled the order for it to pay the taxes owed.

Following an appeal by Brussels, the legal adviser of the higher European Court of Justice in November recommended scrapping the 2020 decision, saying it was peppered with legal errors. The top court, which could have sent the case back to the lower court, decided to rule that Apple should pay the back-taxes. The conclusion to the case spelled relief for Brussels, which has faced difficulties defending its tax enforcement moves in recent years, with previous cases lost against Amazon and Starbucks.



BRUSSELS: European Commission Vice-President Margrethe Vestager gives a press conference at in Brussels on Sept 10, 2024. — AFP

Vestager admitted she was "positively surprised" by the decision but warned "there is still an occurrence of massive profit shifting into low tax territories". She will be replaced later this year when the new European Commission takes office, and advised her successor to "make this one of many necessary priorities".

The EU fine against Google was one of several record penalties imposed for violating EU competition rules, totalling around eight billion euros between 2017 and 2019. "We are disappointed with the decision of the court," Google said. "We made changes back in 2017 to comply with the European Commission's decision." Google faces yet another test next week when the top EU court will decide on the smallest of those fines, worth around 1.49 billion euros. Legal headaches for Google are mounting across the Atlantic as well. A trial began on Monday in the United States where the government accuses Google of dominating online advertising and stifling competition. — AFP

## Volkswagen scraps decades-old job guarantees

FRANKFURT: Volkswagen said on Tuesday it was scrapping a range of labor agreements including a guarantee of jobs until 2029 at six German plants, raising the prospect of redundancies from next year that worker representatives have vowed to resist. Europe's top carmaker is cancelling the decades-old employment guarantees as part of a cost-cutting drive that has triggered a showdown with workers as Volkswagen struggles to compete against cheaper Asian rivals.

Volkswagen's move follows a threat that it could shut plants on German soil for the first time in its 87-year history, which sent shockwaves through the global autos sector and prompted high-level German government concern. "We must enable Volkswagen AG to reduce costs in Germany to a competitive level in order to invest in new technologies and new products with our own resources," the company's Labor Director Gunnar Kilian said in a statement.

In a bid to counteract uncertainty around labor agreements, Kilian said Volkswagen was offering to bring forward wage negotiations. Such talks were due to start in mid- to late October, with strikes possible from the end of November, but the works council has called for the talks to start this month.

The head of the company's works council has promised fierce resistance against lay-offs and factory closures, blaming management for Volkswagen's ills. The IG Metall union had previously said it could consider moving to a four-day week as an alternative to closures - replicating an earlier cost-cutting drive in the 1990s. Volkswagen's troubles come at a time of economic uncertainty, with weak growth, higher energy prices and questions over trade ties with the lucrative Chinese market testing Germany's model for consensual industrial relations. If the two parties do not reach an agreement by next June, labor agreements in place prior to 1994 will come into force - which, in what works council chief Daniela Cavallo described in a statement for workers as a "crazy-sounding consequence" - will result in a pay rise for staff at the six plants. Additional pay components in the labor agreement before 1994 included a Christmas bonus, additional holiday pay, and higher bonuses for overtime, according to an article published in the works council's internal newspaper. However, layoffs for operational reasons would also be possible for the first time in decades. "A negotiated compromise is actually needed. Otherwise, VW will be able to push ahead with forced redundancies from summer 2025, but at the same time would immediately face enormous cost increases for all those who remain," the works council said in its article. — Reuters

## Brent crude falls below \$70 per barrel

LONDON: The main international oil contract, Brent crude, fell below \$70 per barrel on Tuesday for the first time since December 2021 amid concerns about slowing economic growth depressing fuel demand.

Brent crude slumped 3.7 percent in afternoon trading to \$69.15 per barrel while the main US contract, West Texas Intermediate (WTI), tumbled 4.1 percent to \$65.90.

Meanwhile, global stock markets diverged Tuesday as traders assessed the outlook for interest rates in the United States and Europe and awaited the US presidential debate. Wall Street's main indices opened modestly after rallying on Monday following a plunge late last week. Monday's strong gains on Wall Street followed

a slump Friday after disappointing US jobs data rekindled fears the Federal Reserve had waited too long to begin cutting interest rates and the economy could fall into recession.

Investors were also looking ahead to US inflation data due Wednesday. "Tomorrow's US inflation figures could be the next key test of investor sentiment," noted AJ Bell investment director Russ Mould.

The Federal Reserve is widely expected to cut US interest rates at next week's meeting but debate surrounds whether it will be by 25 or 50 basis points, with some arguing that going for the bigger option could suggest decision-makers are worried. "Financial markets have shifted their focus from bringing down inflation to shoring up economic growth," said Saira Malik, chief investment officer at asset manager Nuveen.

"Market volatility has climbed amid downside surprises in macroeconomic data - especially labor market indicators." Official data in Britain on Tuesday showed wages grew at the slowest



DUBAI: This picture taken on December 10, 2023 shows the OPEC pavilion at the United Nations climate summit in Dubai. — AFP

pace in two years, indicating that the Bank of England could next week decide against cutting interest rates for a second meeting in a row.

The pound firmed against the dollar and euro on the data, while London's FTSE 100 stock index - featuring numerous multina-

tionals earning in the US currency - dropped. In the eurozone, Paris edged higher and Frankfurt slid in afternoon deals. The European Central Bank holds a monetary policy meeting on Thursday and is widely expected to deliver another interest rate cut. — AFP



## Business

# Chinese exports grow solidly but slowing imports dim trade outlook

## Beijing proposes talks with EU to resolve EV tariff dispute

BEIJING: China's exports grew at their fastest pace in nearly 1-1/2 years in August, suggesting manufacturers are rushing out orders ahead of tariffs expected from a growing number of trade partners, while imports disappointed amid weak domestic demand. The mixed trade data highlights the challenge facing Beijing as policymakers try to bolster overall growth without becoming too reliant on exports, especially given the tightening of consumers' purse strings.

China's economy has failed to fire over the past year amid a prolonged property sector downturn, and a survey last week showed exports in the dollars and factory gate prices at their worst in 14 months, pointing to producers slashing prices to find buyers. Outbound shipments from the world's second-largest economy grew 8.7 percent year-on-year in value last month, the quickest since March 2023, customs data showed on Tuesday, beating a forecast 6.5 percent increase in a Reuters poll of economists and a 7 percent rise in July.

But imports increased by just 0.5 percent, missing expectations for a 2 percent boost and down from the 7.2 percent growth a month prior. "The strong export performance and trade surplus are favorable to economic growth in the third quarter and whole year," said Zhou Maohua, a macroeconomic researcher at China Everbright Bank.

"However, the global economic and geopolitical environment is complicated and China's exports face a lot of headwinds." Economists have warned that Beijing risks undershooting its growth target if it becomes too reliant on exports, following a series of lackluster data, raising pressure on policymakers for more stimulus to revive China's economy. "The continued strong run of exports may actually delay near-term policy support, and we continue to expect bolder measures to be released in Q4," Nomura analysts said in a note.

Outbound shipments to the European Union grew 13.4 percent in August year-on-year, which represented the biggest increase out of China's major export markets, followed by an 8.8 percent lift in sales to the Southeast Asian economies. Chinese exports to the US rose by just an annual 4.9 percent last month but imports grew 12.2 percent over the same period, the most of any major import market.

Mounting trade barriers are emerging as another significant obstacle, threatening China's price-driven export momentum. China's trade surplus with the United States widened to \$33.81 billion in August from \$30.84 billion in July. Washington has repeatedly highlighted the surplus as evidence of the one-sided trade favoring the Chinese economy. Brussels' trade policy has turned more protective too, and Beijing's efforts to negotiate with the EU to ease tariffs on Chinese electric vehicles (EVs) have made little headway. Last month Canada announced a 100 percent tariff on Chinese EVs, along with a 25 percent tariff on Chinese steel and aluminum.

As China attempts to direct more exports towards Southeast Asia and South Asia, it is also facing pushback there. India is planning to raise tariffs on Chinese steel, Indonesia is eyeing heavy duties on textile imports, and Malaysia opened anti-dumping investigations into plastic imports from China and Indonesia. Still, some analysts expect outbound shipments to ride out the storm, given the relative inexpensiveness of China's yuan and the relative ease with which exporters can re-route their wares to avoid tariffs.

Meanwhile, China has renewed its offer for talks with the European Commission to address economic and trade frictions to try to ease impending punitive tariffs on China-made electric vehicles. During a meeting with the European Commission's director general for trade on Monday, Vice Commerce Minister Li Fei said China was willing to engage in



SUQIAN, China: Employees work at a factory producing water dispensers for pets in Suqian, in eastern China's Jiangsu province on Sept 10, 2024. — AFP

dialogue and consultations, his ministry said in a statement. The meeting took place just a day before Reuters reported that the EU was expected to lower its proposed final tariffs on Tesla and slightly reduce rates for other Chinese electric vehicles.

The ministry emphasized that the issue of countervailing subsidies for Chinese electric vehicles was "complex" and presented significant challenges for reaching an agreement.

"China is willing to continue to work closely with the European side to reach a solution that meets the common interests of both sides and is in line with WTO rules, so as to promote the healthy and stable development of China-EU economic and trade relations," the ministry statement said on Tuesday. China's renewed negotiation efforts come as it seeks to overturn proposed duties on its electric vehicles. — Reuters

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Egypt inflation soars to 26.2%

CAIRO: Egypt's annual urban consumer price inflation rate unexpectedly accelerated to 26.2 percent in August from 25.7 percent in July, data from statistics agency CAPMAS showed on Tuesday. Month-on-month, prices jumped by 2.1 percent, speeding up from a 0.4 percent rise in July. Food prices climbed by 1.8 percent in August after having eased by 0.3 percent in July and were 29.0 percent higher than a year ago. A poll of 19 analysts had expected August urban inflation to ease to a median of 25.1 percent. Sara Saada of CI Capital was one of the few analysts who had predicted inflation would accelerate. — Reuters

### German industrial value creation

BERLIN: Around 20 percent of industrial value creation in Germany is under threat, according to a study published by the business association BDI on Tuesday. Germany is under more pressure as a business location than ever before in what should be a wake-up call for urgent reforms and investments, BDI said. Additional investment of 1.4 trillion euros (\$1.55 trillion) is needed by 2030, according to the BDI study with Boston Consulting Group and the German Economic Institute IW. The study - conducted in collaboration with more than 30 companies and associations - shows that the main problems of Germany as a business location are high energy prices, labour shortages, too much bureaucracy, a lack of investment and high taxes. — Reuters

### US plans talks with Yunus on economy

WASHINGTON: The United States is set to launch economic talks this week with Bangladesh's interim government, including its leader, Muhammad Yunus, the Financial Times reported on Tuesday. The government led by the Nobel Peace laureate was sworn in last month with the aim of holding elections in the South Asian nation after the ouster of prime minister Sheikh Hasina following deadly protests against quotas for government jobs. "The United States is optimistic that, by implementing needed reforms, Bangladesh can address its economic vulnerabilities and build a foundation for continued growth and increased prosperity," Brent Neiman, assistant US Treasury secretary for international finance, told the newspaper. — Reuters

### Xi eyes green energy tie with Norway

BEIJING: China is willing to work with Norway to promote "friendly" cooperation including on green energy, President Xi Jinping told visiting Norwegian Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Støre in Beijing on Monday. Xi highlighted environmental protection, energy transition, shipping, agricultural and fishery products and electric vehicles as areas where the two countries could expand cooperation, according to Chinese state broadcaster CCTV. Regarding the Ukraine crisis, Xi told Støre that he hoped all parties would work to create "favorable" conditions for a political resolution through dialogue, CCTV reported. "At present, the world's unprecedented changes are accelerating, testing whether the international community can make the right choice. China will continue to follow the path of peaceful development," Xi said according to CCTV. — Reuters



The buyer-seller meet on food and agricultural products.

## Trade promotion events reflect solid Kuwait-India ties

KUWAIT: Embassy of India, Kuwait hosted a series of trade promotion events from Sept 8 to 10 reflecting the increasing cooperation in the field of food security between India and Kuwait. A buyer-seller meet (BSM) in the food and beverages (F&B) sector, in collaboration with the Trade Promotion Council of India (TPCI), was held on Sept 8 at the Grand Majestic Hotel in Kuwait. The event saw the participation of a delegation of 10 prominent Indian F&B companies, each showcasing a diverse range of products, according to a press release issued by the Indian Embassy.

In another collaborative effort, the embassy, working with the Federation of Indian Export Orga-

nizations (FIEO) and the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce & Industry (KCCI), organized a buyer-seller meet focusing on food and agricultural products on Sept 9-10 at the KCCI exhibition hall. The event saw delegation of 30 leading Indian companies showcasing an extensive array of food and agricultural products. Indian Ambassador Dr Adarsh Swaika inaugurated both events at the Hotel Grand Majestic and the KCCI Exhibition Hall. The inaugural event was attended by Assistant Director General of KCCI Emad Al-Zaid, Director General of Public Authority for Food and Nutrition (PAFN) Dr Reem Al-Fulaij, representatives from Public Authority of Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR) and commercial banks. The visiting delegations engaged in productive B2B meetings with leading Kuwaiti importers, supermarkets and manufacturing industries from the F&B sector based in Kuwait. Indian Business Professionals Council (IBPC) in collaboration with the embassy also organized a business networking session on Sept 9 at Hotel Crowne Plaza, Kuwait.

India is a global leader in the production of spices, milk, and pulses, and the second largest producer of Tea, Sugarcane, wheat, fruits and vegetables. India's top exports globally include rice, sugar, fresh vegetables, marine products & seafoods, fresh fruits, spices, buffalo meat and more. India's total exports to Kuwait crossed \$2.0 billion in FY 2023-24, while food & agriculture exports amounted to approximately \$350 million with top food exports being basmati rice, coffee (unroasted), frozen shrimps & prawns, sugar, boneless meat, cashew nuts, onions, etc. India's food processing industry is also one of the largest in the world, estimated to reach \$1,274 billion in 2027 from \$866 billion in 2022. The industry is primarily export oriented with commodities such as processed fruits and vegetables, ready-to-eat (RTE) and ready-to-cook (RTC), mozzarella cheese, processed marine products, edible oils, beverages, and dairy products. There are more than 20 operational mega food parks, 371 cold chain projects, and 68 agro-processing clusters. India's FDI in this sector in 2023-24 is estimated to be \$608 million, the release added.



Dr Adarsh Swaika speaks during the event at the KCCI Exhibition Hall.

## Spain's Sanchez urges negotiated solution to China-EU dispute

SHANGHAI: Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez called for "a negotiated solution" at the World Trade Organization (WTO) to end a stand-off between Beijing and the European Union.

Sanchez's visit to China has seen him meet top officials including President Xi Jinping and call for "dialogue and cooperation" with the world's second largest economy. The trip comes against the backdrop of mounting trade tensions between the European Union and China, primarily over Beijing's subsidies for its electric vehicles sector. Speaking at the inauguration of the Spain-China Business Forum in economic powerhouse city Shanghai, Sanchez called for a "European Union and a China open to the world, beyond geopolitical and economic tensions".

"That's why we are betting on honest dialogue to solve existing tensions, that result in large part from the imposition of tariffs on Chinese electric vehicles," he added. "And what do we propose from Spain? A solution negotiated and agreed in the WTO framework, that contributes to developing balanced and fair and avoids commercial escalation that benefits no-one," Sanchez said.

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. The following day, Beijing said it would launch a probe into EU sub-



SHANGHAI: Spain's Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez (C) talks with attendees after the inauguration of China's second Cervantes Institute in Shanghai on Sept 10, 2024. — AFP

dies of some dairy products exported to China.

In June China launched an anti-dumping investigation into pork imports from the bloc 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. In China's capital Monday, Sanchez called for Madrid and Beijing to defend what he called a "fair trade order". "We must work together to resolve differences through negotiation, in a spirit of dialogue and collaboration, and within multilateral frameworks," he wrote on social media after meeting President Xi. — AFP

## Business

# UK's Starmer vows 'partnership' with unions but warns on pay

## Plans to cut energy benefits for pensioners ignite tensions

**BRIGHTON, UK:** Prime Minister Keir Starmer on Tuesday pledged to reset industrial relations strained by widespread strike action, as he became the first UK leader to address the annual meeting of Britain's trade unions in 15 years. The speech, however, came among early tensions between the young government and major unions over plans to cut energy benefits for millions of pensioners.

Starmer's Labour party billed the speech as a powerful symbol that the centre-left party is back in government after nearly a decade and a half of Conservative rule. "Partnership is a more difficult way of doing politics," Starmer said, seeking to draw a line under years of strike action and tensions between unions and the previous administration.

Labour has historically been allied with trade union organizations, which contribute a substantial amount to the party's income. The Trade Union Congress (TUC), the umbrella body of 48 member unions comprising more than 5.5 million working people, helped found Labour in the early 20th century. Gordon Brown was the last premier to deliver a speech to its conference in 2009. "It's time to turn the page — busi-

ness and unions, the private and public sector united by common cause, to rebuild our public services and grow our economy in a new way," Starmer, 62, told TUC delegates in the seaside resort of Brighton. He warned, however, that decisions on pay would be shaped by "tough decisions" needed to protect the public finances — repeating his mantra that the Conservatives left Labour with a dire economic inheritance when they vacated office following a landslide election defeat in early July.

"No one in this room wants to hear such a gloomy forecast, I get that," said Starmer, adding though that he would not "risk" Labour's "mandate for economic stability, under any circumstances".

Labour came to power pledging to end the waves of strikes over pay and conditions that blighted the country in sectors from the railways to hospitals in the last few years of Tory rule.

It has already announced above-inflation pay rises for public sector workers such as teachers and doctors and struck a pay deal with train drivers to pave the way for renationalizing the railways. Labour has also laid out proposals to legally ban practices such as "fire and re-



**BRIGHTON, UK:** Britain's Prime Minister Keir Starmer delivers a speech on stage during the Trade Union Congress (TUC) on the third day of the union's annual conference in Brighton on Sept 10, 2024. — AFP

hire" — where employers let workers go in order to rehire them on contracts with inferior terms — and to ban zero-hours contracts, which leave workers without a minimum number of hours to be worked.

That has prompted concern among some business leaders while Starmer said his government would also scrap legislation introduced by the Conservatives that set higher thresholds for strike action.

The TUC has welcomed the pay deals as a "crucial first step" but tensions are already emerging between some major unions and the new government. "It's good to have a Labour government," Rail, Maritime and Transport (RMT) union general secretary Mick Lynch told AFP. "But they need to be ambitious and they need to be bold and they need to be radical."

The disagreements are in part caused by finance minister Rachel Reeves' promise of imposing "iron discipline" over public finances to claw back what she says is a £22-billion (\$28.8-billion) black hole inherited from the Tories. "They've got a problem because they've given themselves these fiscal rules," said Lynch. "It will make it very difficult for them to deliver what they've promised and also what the country needs."

Lynch was among union leaders to call on Starmer to reverse his government's decision to scrap winter fuel benefits for 10 million elderly people. He has described it as a "historic mistake", while Unite boss Sharon Graham accused Labour of opting to "pick the pocket of pensioners" while leaving the richest "totally untouched". — AFP

## Strike hits key Samsung plant in India

**SRIPERUMBUDUR, India:** Samsung Electronics' production at a plant in southern India was disrupted for a second day by hundreds of employees striking for higher wages on Tuesday, as top executives sought to resolve a rare episode of labor unrest. South Korea-based Samsung, India's biggest consumer electronics company, counts the country as a key growth market, competing with the likes of LG Electronics to make everything from televisions and refrigerators to smartphones.

The strike-hit plant in Sriperumbudur, the smaller of Samsung's two Indian factories, employs around 1,800 people and makes electronic products rather than smartphones. But it still contributes 20 percent to 30 percent of Samsung's annual \$12 billion revenue in India, said two sources with direct knowledge of the matter, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Posters saying "Indefinite Strike" went up outside the factory near the city of Chennai, where hundreds of workers in company uniforms set up tents to shade themselves from the heat. "We are striking for the second day," said union leader E. Muthukumar.

About half of the factory's daily production was affected when many workers stayed away on Monday, and the protesters continue to press their demands for higher wages, better hours and company recognition for the union. Shares in Samsung closed 1.9 percent lower in Seoul, versus the benchmark KOSPI's percent fall. Samsung's Southwest Asia CEO, JB Park, and some other senior executives are visiting the factory to find a resolution, people with direct knowledge of the situation said. Park oversees the India market for Samsung from Gurugram, near New Delhi.

Samsung did not respond to a request for comment. Tamil Nadu labor secretary Veera Raghava Rao told Reuters that negotiations between workers and management are ongoing, but there is no indication yet when the matter will be resolved. A spokesperson for Samsung India said on Monday that it actively engaged with workers "to address any grievances they may have and comply with all laws and regulations".

Around 800 workers signed a register outside the factory to record their protest. The strike comes ahead of India's festive season when consumers buy gifts or items for personal use, lured by discounts offered by manufacturers. "A strike at this point puts a spanner in Samsung's production ramp-up ahead of the all-important festive season sales beginning October," said Prabhu Ram, a vice president at Cybermedia Research.

In South Korea, the 36,500 members of Samsung Electronics' biggest worker union who have been demanding higher wages and benefits, held a strike for several days in July and August.

In late July, however, Samsung said the action did not disrupt production there. In India, its workers are demanding equal remuneration for those with the same length of experience, according to at least half a dozen employees who spoke on condition of anonymity. "If they (Samsung) had given us a living wage and treated us with respect, we wouldn't have thought of joining a union," said one worker outside the factory, who declined to be named fearing reprisal from the company. Their concerns were backed by some Indian political leaders who attended Tuesday's protest. One poster outside the factory exhorted state labor officials not to support management, advising instead: "Discuss and solve demands from the labor union with union officials." — Reuters

## China coal mining threatens climate goals, says study

**BANGKOK:** China's planned expansion of coal mining threatens the country's climate goals and risks vastly increasing its methane emissions, a study warned on Tuesday.

The warning comes as research shows concentrations of the powerful greenhouse gas are rising at an accelerating pace. China is the world's top emitter of greenhouse gases and remains heavily reliant on coal despite installing renewable energy capacity at record speed.

It aims to peak its planet-warming emissions by 2030 and reach net zero three decades later. However, it produced a record 4.7 billion tons of coal last year, 50 percent of global output, and more is on the way, said NGO Global Energy Monitor (GEM). In all, China has 1.2 billion more tons a year of capacity in development, including new sites and expansions of existing mines, said GEM.

That accounts for more than half the global pipeline. "If materialized, and without robust mitigation measures, this massive expansion will significantly increase methane emissions," GEM warned.

Carbon dioxide is the primary greenhouse gas produced by human activity, followed by methane which comes mainly from agriculture, energy production and organic waste in landfills. While it breaks down faster than carbon dioxide, methane is also more potent. It is also "rising faster in relative terms than any major greenhouse gas and is now 2.6-fold higher than in pre-industrial times", an international group of researchers said in a separate study published in Environmental Research Letters on Tuesday.

Coal production is a major source of methane,

## Wall Street worries Harris tax plan would hurt corporate profits

**NEW YORK:** Wall Street is anticipating a hit to corporate earnings and the stock market if Democratic presidential candidate Kamala Harris wins in November and enacts promised tax increases. Tax policy has emerged as a key focus for investors ahead of the Nov 5 election. Republican candidate and former President Donald Trump and Harris, who debate on Tuesday night, are in a statistical dead heat. Wealth advisers say they have been fielding questions from investors about how to prepare for potential changes.

"Tax policy is a huge, huge concern for investors," said chief investment officer Yung-Yu Ma of BMO U.S. Wealth Management, which is hearing questions from clients across the country about potential tax hikes. "Tax policy is something that is front and center in this election." For Wall Street, the greatest attention is on corporate earnings and capital gains taxes. Trump cut the corporate tax rate to 21 percent from 35 percent during his presidency and last week said he favors cutting it to 15 percent for companies that make their products in the US.

Harris, meanwhile, last month outlined plans to raise the corporate tax rate to 28 percent from 21 percent, to ensure "big corporations pay their fair share," as they are "often paying a lower tax rate than our teachers and our nurses and our firefighters." Goldman Sachs analysts said in a note last week that at Harris' 28 percent rate, earnings of S&P 500 companies would take a 5 percent hit while Trump's proposed cut would boost them about 4 percent.

Ma said that higher taxes would mean lower corporate profits and lower stock valuations. "Essentially, what you have is the likelihood of a significant pullback in the stock market due to higher taxes," said Ma. The winner will still need congressional approval for tax law changes. Trump's campaign said Harris' tax plan includes a large tax hike and would add to the national debt. It did not comment on how Trump's plan would impact the deficit.



**SHENMU, China:** Two miners walk past a shearer (right) while underground in the Hongliulin coal mine during a media tour organized by Chinese telecoms giant Huawei, near Shenmu in China's northern Shaanxi province on April 25, 2023. — AFP

which seeps from mines through vents, open pits and cracks in the ground. More than 150 countries have signed up to a Global Methane Pledge to cut methane emissions by 30 percent from 2020 levels by 2030.

China, India and Russia have declined to sign. Calculating methane emissions is complicated, with satellites increasingly being used to monitor hard-to-detect leaks from space. The International Energy Agency estimated methane emissions from China's coal mines at around 20 million tons in 2023.

But GEM said the real figure could be significantly higher, based on its analysis of nationwide coal mine

activity data. It puts the figure closer to 35 million tons and warned that could rise by another 10 million tons if all China's projected coal production materializes. GEM's calculations use data such as coal type and mine depth and an emissions factor that varies according to the mine type.

Where production data is unavailable, the estimates rely on capacity figures, explained the report's co-author Dorothy Mei, "which can result in higher estimated emissions". The methodology does not factor in mitigation measures because of a lack of data, she told AFP. — AFP



**NEW YORK:** Traders work on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange. — AFP

The Harris campaign did not immediately respond to requests for comment. In a memo reviewed by Reuters, Brian Nelson, the Harris campaign's senior policy advisor, said Trump's proposal would give "massive tax windfalls" to "billionaires and big corporations."

Another investor concern is that Harris' higher capital gains tax, which is levied on profits from selling an asset held for more than a year, will eat into clients' net gains. The Democrat last week proposed raising the capital gains rate for people earning above \$1 million to 28 percent, lower than President Joe Biden's plan of 39.6 percent. Trump has not announced any plans to change it from a maximum 20 percent. "In terms of revenue for the government, capital gains tax hikes have typically under-delivered," said Brian Gardner, chief Washington policy strategist at investment bank Stifel. "But it would be a broad negative for the market. How much is tough to say."

Morgan Stanley said in a note last week that the correlation between capital gains taxes and stock market performance is statistically insignificant, but the tax debate could drive volatility in equity markets in the near term. If capital gains taxes go up a lot, investors are likely to more aggressively use tax-minimizing trading strategies, said a wealth management executive at a large bank who declined to be named. — Reuters

## Malaysia's palm oil stocks hit six-month high

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Malaysia's stocks of palm oil jumped in August to their highest in six months, as monthly production reached a nine-year high amid a slowdown in exports, the industry regulator said on Tuesday. The rise in stocks in Malaysia, the world's second-largest producer of palm oil after neighboring Indonesia, could weigh on benchmark futures already hovering near their lowest in seven months. Malaysia's palm oil stocks at the end of August rose 7.34 percent from the previous month to 1.88 million metric tons, the highest level since February, the Malaysian Palm Oil Board (MPOB) said.

Crude palm oil production gained 2.87 percent in August from July to 1.89 million tons, the highest since October, data from the industry regulator showed on Tuesday. Production for the month was the highest since 2015. Palm oil exports in the month fell 9.74 percent to 1.53 million tons, the MPOB said.

A Reuters survey had forecast inventories at 1.86 million tons, with output seen at 1.89 million tons and exports at 1.5 million tons. The MPOB data is neutral for palm oil, as the stock levels have increased within the anticipated range and are lower than those of the previous year, said Anilkumar Bagani, the research head of Mumbai-based Sunvin Group.

Production in September is also likely to stay on the higher side, but there is no sign yet of an uptick in demand from key markets such as India and China, which could squeeze prices, said a Mumbai-based trader. Exports of Malaysian palm oil products for September 1 to 10 fell 5.2 percent to 412,771 tons, independent inspection company AmSpec Agri Malaysia said on Tuesday.

The market is closely monitoring Indonesia's biodiesel policy and potential changes in its duty structure, which will determine price movements in coming months, the trader said. Indonesia plans to lower export levy rates of the tropical oil to boost competitiveness against rival vegetable oils and raise farmers' income. — Reuters

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2024

## HUNGRY TIMES FOR ISTANBUL'S STREET FOOD SELLERS



A street vendor sells corn as he waits for customers in the Eminonu district of Istanbul. — AFP photos



A street vendor sells corn as he waits for customers.



Street vendors sell corn and traditional Turkish backeray "Simit" as people pass by their stands in the Eminonu district.



Street vendors sell fish and bread as people wait in the Eminonu district.



Street vendors sell traditional Ottoman sweet "Lokma".



A street vendor sells corn as he waits for customers.



A street vendor prepares pickle and pickle juices.

The enticing smell of grilled corn and chestnuts wafted from Hakan Deniz's red and gold food cart near a mosque in Istanbul's old city. But local customers are hard to come by these days. With Turkey mired in sky-high inflation, Istanbul's ubiquitous street vendors, who have been part of the cityscape since the Ottoman Empire, are worried about their future. "Our tomorrows are uncertain," said Deniz, 18, after pushing his cart past the Rustem Pasha mosque. "I have lost almost half of my customers because of inflation," Deniz said as he weighed and handed a bag of chestnuts to an American tourist. He wondered aloud if vendors like him would "still exist in the future". Inflation rose across the world after the Covid pandemic and soared further after Russia invaded Ukraine in 2022, but it has been particularly bad in Turkey. Officially, it rocketed to 85 percent in October 2022 before slowing and rising again to reach 75 percent in May this year. Inflation has since fallen, with data on Tuesday showing it at 52 percent in August.

### 'Ottoman tradition'

The streets of Istanbul, a metropolis of 16 million people, would not be the same without its street vendors. At night, mobile stalls with bright neon signs form constellations of light along the picturesque city's streets. They fill the air with an array of smells - from stuffed mussels to simit, rings of delicious sesame-encrusted bread. The merchants enjoy a "positive image" in general, said Osman Sirkeci, a researcher at the Izmir University of Economics. Some, such as sellers of the sweet toffee paste known as macun, are seen as heirs of an "Ottoman tradition", Sirkeci said.

Their ranks grew after the COVID pandemic, with one million people becoming street vendors, the researcher said. Turkey now counts seven million street vendors, working legally or illegally, he said. Inflation, however, has hit professions already known for low wages and small margins very hard. "The expenses of mobile merchants are much lower than those of traditional shops because they don't have rent or electricity bills to pay," Sirkeci said.

But they have other high costs such as raw materials that they get from intermediaries who pass on the cost of inflation, instead of buying them directly from producers. "The price of sesame has skyrocketed. Same for flour. Everything is too expensive," said Nuri Geyik, a 54-year-old simit seller. He used to sell his bread for one lira a piece a few years ago. "Now I'm forced to sell them for 15 lira," he said. Mithat Atilgan sells fruits and vegetables that are grown in Bursa, a region around 150 kilometers (90 miles) south of Istanbul. "The cost of transport has also

increased," Atilgan said. "Sales are bad," he added, noting that Turkish customers cannot keep up with the price increases. "Only the rich can buy my fruits today," said Atilgan, who sells figs from his cart.

### 'I'm ashamed'

Mustafa Demir wondered for how much longer his usual Turkish customers would buy his jars of pickles. "I'm ashamed of selling the jars for 40 liras to my loyal customers," he said, recalling how he used to sell them for 15 cents. Deniz said his customers were mostly Turkish in the past. "It's not the case anymore. Now 70 percent are tourists," Deniz admitted. While Sirkeci, the researcher, believes that street vendors will survive, Deniz is not so sure. "This job will disappear," he said. "Look at the sellers of boza (a fermented cereal drink). There are almost none of them left in Istanbul." — AFP



"Simit" in the Eminonu district of Istanbul.

## Princess Kate's wedding dress designer takes over at Givenchy

British fashion designer Sarah Burton, who famously created Princess Catherine's wedding dress, is the new creative director of Givenchy, the luxury French house said Monday. Burton, 50, who was creative director at Alexander McQueen for more than a decade after its founder's suicide, has designed clothes for a host of global stars including actor Cate Blanchett and singer Lady Gaga.

Givenchy, a subsidiary of the French LVMH luxury powerhouse, specializes in high-end fashion, perfume and accessories. Burton said making Kate Middleton's dress for her wedding to Prince William in 2011 was "the experience of a lifetime". She was also included in US magazine Time's list of the "World's 100 Most Influential People" in 2012. Burton left Alexander McQueen last year, sparking speculation in the fashion world as to what her next move might be.

Burton said in a statement Monday that she was "enthusiastic" about her new job, and would bring her own vision and "convictions" to Givenchy where she will be in charge of all women's and men's collections. Her first show is scheduled for March of next year, Givenchy said. The creative director job had been vacant since January after the departure of American Matthew William who wanted to focus on his own streetwear brand. — AFP



Designer Sarah Burton

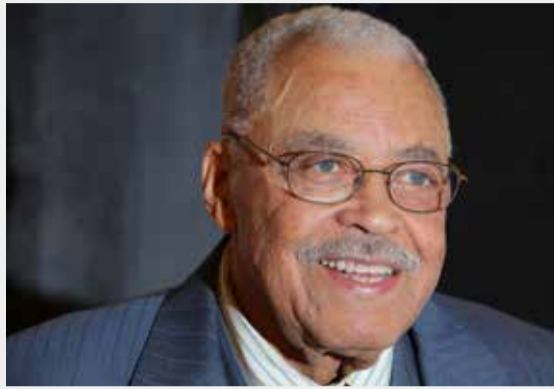
# James Earl Jones, voice of Darth Vader, dies aged 93

**J**ames Earl Jones, a versatile and award-winning American stage and screen actor who used his booming deep voice to bring the iconic "Star Wars" villain Darth Vader to life, has died, his representatives said Monday. He was 93 years old.

From the works of Shakespeare and August Wilson, to his indelible voiceovers in the blockbuster space saga and as Mufasa in the Disney classic "The Lion King," Jones earned fans with his ability to play both the everyman and the otherworldly.

He won three Tony awards including a lifetime award, two Emmys and a Grammy, as well as an honorary Oscar, also for lifetime achievement. In 1971, he became only the second Black man nominated for an Academy Award for best actor, after Sidney Poitier.

All of these accolades were hard-won, as Jones, who was born in segregated Mississippi on January 17, 1931, had to overcome a childhood stutter that often led him to barely speak at all. "Stuttering is painful. In Sunday school, I'd try to read my lessons and the chil-



Actor James Earl Jones attends the "The Gin Game" Broadway opening night after party at Sardi's on October 14, 2015 in New York City.

"He created, with very little dialogue, one of the greatest villains that ever lived," "Star Wars" creator George Lucas said in 2015 at a ceremony honoring Jones in New York.

## Broadway

From Mississippi, Jones moved to Michigan at age five, where he was raised by his maternal grandparents. Initially, he studied to become a doctor, and though he shifted his major to drama, and graduated from the University of Michigan, he didn't initially think about an acting career. "Even when I began acting studies, I thought about being a soldier," Jones told PBS public television in 1998.

"And the idea of being an actor didn't occur to me until after my service was almost finished." After university, Jones served in the US Army and then moved to New York to try his luck in acting, working as a janitor at night to make ends meet.

He made his Broadway debut in 1958 in "Sunrise at Campobello" at the Cort Theatre - which in 2022 was renamed the James Earl Jones Theatre.

He tackled many iconic Shakespeare characters on the stage, including Othello and King Lear, but also performed in several Wilson plays, chronicling the black experience in America.

"On stage, Jones was commanding, powerful. He embodied the elegance and dignity of African American men," said director Kenny Leon. But the silver screen eventually came calling.

## Admirals and kings

Jones' film debut came in 1964 as Lieutenant Zogg in Stanley Kubrick's Cold War satire "Dr Strangelove."

Military roles would crop up throughout his career,



Kennedy Center honoree actor James Earl Jones (right) speaks with actor Sidney Poitier December 7, 2002 after the Kennedy Center Honors Gala at the US State Department in Washington, DC. — AFP photos

notably Admiral Greer in three films about Tom Clancy's beloved character Jack Ryan ("The Hunt for Red October," "Patriot Games," "Clear and Present Danger"). As for kings, he has played a few - King Jaffe Joffer in the Eddie Murphy comedy "Coming to America" (1988) and Mufasa, Simba's father, in "The Lion King" (1994).

His first major award came in 1969, a Tony for best actor in a play for "The Great White Hope," in which he portrayed troubled but gifted boxer Jack Jefferson - based on the real-life Jack Johnson, the first Black world heavyweight champion. Jones revived the role in a film adaptation of the play - earning his sole Oscar nomination and a Golden Globe award for the performance. In 2011, he won an honorary Academy Award.

Even into his 80s, Jones was a force on Broadway, starring opposite Angela Lansbury in "The Best Man" in a 2012 revival - earning another Tony nomination in the process - and with Cicely Tyson in "The Gin Game" in 2015. And for years, he greeted viewers of the cable news network CNN with the simple phrase: "This is CNN."

## 'Darker voice'

But his most famous role was ultimately the one for which he never appeared on screen.

Lucas eventually chose between Jones and film legend Orson Welles for the role.

"George thought he wanted a - pardon the expression - darker voice. So he hires a guy born in Mississippi, raised in Michigan, who stutters and that's the voice and that's me," Jones told the American Film Institute in 2009.

Jones initially did not want to be credited for the film, as he felt his voiceovers were simply part of the movie's special effects, but eventually conceded, and went on to voice the character in multiple films, television series and video games.

In his 90s, he stepped back from the role. But he signed over the rights to his voice recordings to a start-up that is working with Lucasfilm to preserve and recreate it for future projects using artificial intelligence. The technology was used in the Disney+ mini-series "Obi-Wan Kenobi" in 2022, according to Vanity Fair. Jones' second wife Cecilia died in 2016. They had one son. — AFP



A Darth Vader helmet and mask from the film "The Empire Strikes Back" on display at the Profiles in History auction house on August 28, 2019 in Calabasas, California ahead of "The Icons and Legends of Hollywood Auction" on September 25 and 26.

dren behind me were falling on the floor with laughter," Jones told the Daily Mail in 2010.

Reciting his own poetry, at the prodding of an English teacher, helped him to gain control of his voice, which would later be used to strike fear among millions in "Star Wars" as Darth Vader.

Jones did not physically portray the character - David Prowse wore Vader's black cape and imposing face mask, while Jones offered the voice, oozing the evil power of the Dark Side.

"I am your father," Vader tells Luke Skywalker, portrayed by Mark Hamill, in a pivotal fight scene in "The Empire Strikes Back" - a twist etched in cinema history.

## Beyoncé's 'Cowboy Carter' snubbed by Country Music awards

**B**eyoncé did not receive a Country Music Association awards nomination when the nods for the 58th edition were announced Monday, even though her "Cowboy Carter" album proved a cultural phenomenon upon release this year.

The absence of "Cowboy Carter" among the slate of nominees was conspicuous: "Texas Hold 'Em," her sprawling album's first single, soared to the top of the charts, including the country list, and the album was widely considered a smash.

Beyoncé's "Cowboy Carter" is a full-throated ode to her southern US roots, a rollicking revue that also deals a vital history lesson on the black lineage of country music. Nashville's gatekeepers have long tried to promote a rigid view of country music that's overwhelmingly white and male - "Cowboy Carter" skewered that notion.

She leads listeners through coun-

try's evolution from African American spirituals and fiddle tunes to its pioneering women. The awards ceremony will be held on November 20.

Morgan Wallen, the controversial country-pop singer who has found enormous streaming success, received the most nominations with seven, including for the coveted "Entertainer of the Year" title. Chris Stapleton and Cody Johnson received five nominations each.

Lainey Wilson notched four, as did Post Malone, who segued into country this year from his warbling rock-rap. His single "I Had Some Help" features Wallen, and its nominations ushered that artist to the front of the pack.

Beyoncé is no stranger to CMA controversy: she notably received racist comments after performing what was then her most country song to date, "Daddy Lessons," at the 2016 CMA awards.

A Texan raised by a mother from Louisiana and a father from Alabama,



Beyoncé accepts the Innovator Award from Stevie Wonder onstage during the 2024 iHeartRadio Music Awards at Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles, California on April 01, 2024. — AFP

Beyoncé tackled the perceived "controversy" over her country turn this year on the track "American Requiem."

"They used to say I spoke, 'Too country' / Then the rejection came, said I wasn't, 'Country enough' / Said I wouldn't saddle up, but if that ain't country, tell me, what is?" Beyoncé sings on the track, whose musical allu-

sions include Buffalo Springfield's classic "For What It's Worth."

"Cowboy Carter" was far more than country: it included technical mastery of a blend of styles including various country subsets as well as rap, dance, soul, funk, rock and gospel. — AFP

## ALFONSO CUARON TAKES ON TV WITH 'DISCLAIMER'

**D**irector Alfonso Cuarón is taking on prestige television with "Disclaimer," a seven-part psychological thriller starring fellow Oscar winners Cate Blanchett and Kevin Kline, but he said Monday the end result is still a film - a very long one.

It is not the first time that the Mexican filmmaker has worked on the small screen - he co-created the short-lived series "Believe," which aired on NBC a decade ago.

But "Disclaimer" - which was screened at the Toronto film festival on Monday after a world premiere in Venice - is his first major TV project since he scooped up Academy Awards for directing "Gravity" and "Roma."

The limited series, the first project in Cuarón's multi-year deal with Apple TV+, stars Blanchett as Catherine Ravenscroft, a journalist whose life is upended when she receives a novel that seemingly recounts the intimate details of her darkest secret.

That buried indiscretion involved the dead son of Stephen Brigstocke (Kline), a widower with a mean streak who is clearly bent on revenge.

Rounding out the cast are a trio of Oscar nominees - Sacha Baron Cohen as Catherine's husband Robert, Lesley Manville as Stephen's wife Nancy, and Kodi Smit-McPhee as Catherine and Robert's son Nicholas.

Australian actress Leila George plays a younger version of Catherine.

On the red carpet, the 62-year-old Cuarón said while



Alfonso Cuarón attends the premiere of "Disclaimer" during the 2024 Toronto International Film Festival.

he has the utmost respect for those who work primarily in television, his process in making "Disclaimer" was not all that different from how he approaches feature films.

"The idea was to make a movie that ended up lasting for five and a half hours, and cut it in seven chapters. In reality, it's a movie," he said.

His adaptation of the 2015 thriller of the same name by Renee Knight - which will stream on Apple TV+ from October 11 - jumps back and forth in time to reveal the sordid corners of the characters' intersecting lives.

But, as journalist Christiane Amanpour warns in a cameo at the start, "beware of narrative and form."

"Not everything you see is necessarily true," Blanchett said in a Q&A after the Toronto screening.

"The interesting thing, I think, for all of us playing this



(From left) Alfonso Cuarón, Leila George, Kevin Kline, and Cate Blanchett speak onstage during the premiere of "Disclaimer" during the 2024 Toronto International Film Festival at Royal Alexandra Theatre on September 09, 2024 in Toronto, Ontario. — AFP photos

is that we were playing a version of reality."

## 'Meticulous'

Cuarón said that Knight had sent him the galleys for her novel before it was printed.

"I immediately saw a film, but at the time, I could not find how to make it work as a conventional-length film," he said at the Q&A session.

"And it wasn't until later that this idea (of a limited series) came up and I have to say, the process of writing the script was very quick." The director said the casting process was a "dialogue" between Blanchett and himself, who signed on after reading the first three episodes.

"I read it and I threw it across the room," she told the Toronto audience.

## 'RIP DAD': HOLLYWOOD MOURNS JAMES EARL JONES, VOICE OF DARTH VADER

**S**tars of the screen are mourning the death of James Earl Jones, the voice of "Star Wars" villain Darth Vader, on Monday at the age of 93.

Jones, who also voiced King Mufasa in Disney's animated feature "The Lion King," had a prolific and varied career.

Over six decades he worked with some of the greatest figures in cinema and theater, including Stanley Kubrick in his 1964 Cold War satire "Dr Strangelove."

He also had roles in the Arnold Schwarzenegger film "Conan The Barbarian" and the 1989 Kevin Costner movie "Field of Dreams." But it was for his role as one of cinema's most famous villains that he became most widely known.

While Darth Vader's immense physicality was the result of the towering British actor David Prowse, the sinister voice that appeared to emanate from inside the reconstructed man-in-a-mask was that of Jones.

And it was Jones who gave the "Star Wars" franchise some of its most memorable lines, including when he reveals to Luke Skywalker - played by a young Mark Hamill - "I am your father." Hamill took to social media on Monday to share news of Jones' death, writing simply: "#RIP dad" with a broken heart emoji.

"Rustin" star Coleman Domingo wrote on social media that Jones was "a master of our craft." "We stand on your shoulders. Rest now. You gave us your best."

Lydia Cornell, whose 1982 debut "Bloodtide," was opposite Jones, said: "Oh no!! I can't believe it!! I thought he was going to live forever."

"Adored working with him. Such a generous spirit, and so humble. Taught me the power of stillness and using my voice."

"Selma" Director Ava DuVernay posted images of Jones, accompanied by a heartfelt message.

"Thank you for showing us ourselves. Our complicated selves, our dignified selves, our smiles, our pain. A job well done. A gift beautifully shared. Bless you as you journey on." Alongside a clip of Jones' 1974 film, "Claudine," she urged fans to seek it out if they have never seen it.

"Mr. Jones crying in a scene of this film is one of the most exquisite cinematic images of a black man I've ever seen. Don't miss it. He gave us so much," she wrote.

"The Help" star Octavia Spencer posted a black and white photograph of Jones, alongside a tribute that nodded to his indelible role in "Star Wars." "Legendary doesn't even begin to describe his iconic roles and impact on cinema forever," she wrote. "His voice and talent will be remembered always. Sending love to his family, friends and countless fans in all the galaxies, far, far away." — AFP



James Earl Jones



US designer Tory Burch acknowledges attendees during her runway show during New York Fashion Week in the Brooklyn borough of New York on September 9, 2024. — AFP photos



Models walk the runway for Tory Burch during New York Fashion Week in New York.

# Tory Burch evokes sport – but not sportswear – at New York Fashion Week

NEW YORK FASHION WEEK



British-US editor-in-chief of Vogue Anna Wintour attends the Tory Burch runway show.

American designer Tory Burch unveiled a collection imbued with the spirit of sport - but without venturing into sportswear - at New York Fashion Week on Monday.

Freedom and movement were reflected in loose-fitting wool pants and wrap dresses, while power shone through in the assembly of different pieces, fabrics and cuts on the models marching down the catwalk.

"It's more about the spirit and the essence of sport," Burch, whose shows have become a staple of New York Fashion Week, told AFP of the Spring/Summer 2025 collection. That means it's about "movement, about freedom, precision" as a starting point, she explained, adding: "The word 'synchronicity' was something I thought about."

Burch, who this year celebrated the 20th anniversary of her eponymous fashion house, said: "I wanted to be careful with not having too many different prints, but I wanted it to come across some textures and the fabrics and the color well."

Among the standouts was an ensemble of ultra-light suede pants with a rope belt and a skin-tight sweater patterned in red and white. A transparent white jersey shirt with ruffles and overly long sleeves was paired with its formal counterpart, brown wool pants.

Once again, the Pennsylvania native broke from the style that made her famous, a combination of preppy New England with a touch of the bohemian. A regular at New York's iconic venues, Burch chose the top floor of the former Domino sugar factory in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, with its breathtaking view over Manhattan, for her show. Along with Vogue editor-in-chief Anna Wintour, the show was attended by actresses Michelle Williams, Elizabeth Olsen and Kirsten Stewart.

"I want to have a dialogue, but I want to keep evolving and taking it in new directions," the designer said, adding: "I think it's important to have some continuity." — AFP



## Sports

# Bodycam footage shows police dragging Dolphins star Tyreek Hill from car

## Police department will continue to update public on the outcome of the process

MIAMI: Police bodycam footage of a traffic stop involving Miami Dolphins receiver Tyreek Hill released on Monday shows officers forcibly removing the NFL star from his car before handcuffing him. A day after the Miami police launched an internal affairs investigation and placed one of the officers involved in the incident on leave, authorities released more than 105 minutes of bodycam footage depicting a chaotic scene that escalates quickly.

At one point, Hill is heard saying: "I'll tell you like this — your job is to serve and protect, right. You're doing a horrible job of protecting right now. I'm just being a black man, that's it," Hill adds. "I'm just being black in America."

Hill, 30, was detained as he drove to Sunday's home game between the Dolphins and the Jacksonville Jaguars at the Hard Rock Stadium. He was released shortly afterwards and given two traffic citations before later starring in Miami's win over Jacksonville.

The police union representing officers involved in the incident accused Hill earlier Monday of being "uncooperative" and claimed the Dolphins receiver had "initiated" the confrontation. "In our

commitment to transparency and maintaining public trust, we are releasing the body-worn camera footage related to the recent incident involving Tyreek Hill," Miami-Dade Police Department director Stephanie Daniels said in a statement on Monday.

"The department is committed to conducting a thorough, objective investigation into this matter, and we will continue to update the public on the outcome of that process," Daniels added. The bodycam footage shows the traffic stop escalating rapidly when Hill rolls his car window up after being asked to keep it down.

"I am going to get you out of the car. As a matter of fact, get out of the car," an officer tells Hill, while another officer threatens to break the car's window. After opening the car door, an officer reaches in and roughly grabs Hill by the back of the head and neck before he is swiftly bundled face down on the pavement and handcuffed. One officer is seen placing a knee on Hill's back and telling him to "stop crying."

**"Maddening and heartbreaking"**  
"When we tell you to do something,



Tyreek Hill

you do it, you understand?" the officer tells Hill. "Not when you want, but when we tell you. You're a little fucking confused." When Hill's Miami team-mate

Calais Campbell arrives on the scene, he is also handcuffed. Campbell was later released.

The Dolphins condemned the actions

of police in a statement late Monday, describing officers' conduct as "overly aggressive and violent." "It is both maddening and heartbreaking to watch the very people we trust to protect our community use such unnecessary force and hostility towards these players," the Dolphins said.

"It is also a reminder that not every situation like this ends in peace, as we are grateful this one did. 'What if I wasn't Tyreek Hill?' is a question that will carry with resounding impact." In a statement earlier Monday, the South Florida Police Benevolent Association defended the officers involved in the traffic stop, claiming he had been detained for reasons of "officer safety."

"Upon being stopped, Mr. Hill was not immediately cooperative with the officers on scene who, pursuant to policy and for their immediate safety, placed Mr. Hill in handcuffs," union president Steadman Stahl said. "While we are confident in the actions that led to the stop of the Mr. Hill as with any investigation, we will wait for all the facts to come out, along with any explanation Mr. Hill may have for his actions that initiated this unfortunate incident." — AFP

## Backup RB, 49ers dump Jets, ruin Rodgers' return

SANTA CLARA: Jordan Mason rushed for a career-best 147 yards and scored a touchdown to help the San Francisco 49ers beat the New York Jets 32-19 and spoil Aaron Rodgers' return on Monday night at Santa Clara, Calif.

Deebo Samuel also rushed for a touchdown and Jake Moody matched a franchise record with six field goals to fuel the 49ers in the season opener for both teams. Rodgers, 40, was back on the field two days shy of the one-year anniversary of the season-ending torn left Achilles tendon he sustained in last year's season opener.

Rodgers completed 13 of 21 passes for 167 yards, one touchdown and one interception. His night ended with a fourth-down incompletion with 7:22 remaining in the game. Allen Lazard caught two touchdown passes and Breece Hall rushed for a score for New York.

Mason filled in for injured star Christian McCaffrey (calf, Achilles). The third-year pro, an undrafted free agent from Georgia Tech, carried the ball 28 times. His previous high was 11 against the Tampa Bay Buccaneers during the 2022 season, and his previous top yardage total was 69 against the Dallas Cowboys last year.

Rodgers was injured on the fourth snap of last year's opener against the Buffalo Bills. Earlier this week, he indicated he likely would have a reaction for cameras after the fourth snap on Monday. However, New York went three-and-out on its first possession and trouble occurred on the first snap of the Jets' next possession. Rodgers completed a backhanded pass to Hall before San Francisco stand-out Fred Warner knocked the ball out of Hall's hands and Maliek Collins recovered for the 49ers at the New York 32-yard line.

The turnover set up Moody's 46-yard field goal with 10:58 left in the opening quarter. Rodgers then guided the Jets on a crisp 12-play, 70-yard drive that took 7:07. Hall capped the drive with a 3-yard run to give New York a 7-3 lead with 3:51 left in the period.

Moody booted a 51-yard field goal to pull the 49ers within one 56 seconds into the second quarter. San Francisco moved ahead on Samuel's 2-yard run with 6:54 left in the first half. Moody kicked a 31-yard field goal with four seconds remaining in the half, and the 49ers led 16-7 at the break.

San Francisco piled on with an 11-play, 70-yard drive to start the second half that took 7:18 off the clock. Mason scored from the 5 to push the lead to 16. Moody made a 53-yard field goal that caromed off the left upright before going through to make it 26-7 with 3:28 left in the third period.

Rodgers tossed a 36-yard touchdown pass to Lazard with 1:39 left in the third quarter. Hall's two-point conversion run failed, leaving the Jets down 26-13. Moody connected from 23 and 42 yards in the fourth quarter. Ray Wersching (1983), Jeff Wilkins (1996) and Robbie Gould (2017) also made six in a game for the 49ers. Packers backup quarterback Tyrod Taylor threw a 3-yard TD pass to Lazard in the final minute. — Reuters

## Ugandan athlete Rebecca's attacker dies in hospital

NAIROBI: The man who attacked Ugandan runner Rebecca Cheptegei has died from injuries sustained when he poured petrol over the Olympic athlete, the Kenyan hospital treating him said Tuesday. Police said that Dickson Ndiema Marangach assaulted Cheptegei in her home in western Kenya on September 1. The mother-of-two sustained 80 percent burns and died last week.

In the course of the attack Marangach also incurred 30 percent burns and was being treated in the intensive care unit at the Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital (MTRH) in the Rift Valley city of Eldoret. "It's true we lost Dickson Ndiema last night at about 8:00 pm," an official at the hospital's communications department told AFP, requesting anonymity as they were not authorized to speak to the press.

His family had been informed, the official said, adding that a "comprehensive statement" would be released later. The attack on the 33-year-old Cheptegei has been greeted with sorrow and anger as yet another horrific example of gender-based violence in the East African country.

At least two other athletes have lost their lives at the hands of their partners since 2021. Cheptegei is due to be buried on September 14 near her family home in eastern Uganda, according to the country's Olympic Committee. The attack, which local media said was witnessed by Cheptegei's daughters, came just weeks after she made her Olympic debut in the women's marathon at the Paris Games, where she finished 44th. Police said Marangach snuck into her home in Endebeess, near the border with Uganda, while she was at church with her children.

## Afghanistan-N Zealand Test second day called off after 'huge mess'

GREATER NOIDA: Ground staff used electric fans in a desperate bid to dry the pitch in the Test between Afghanistan and New Zealand Tuesday, but play was called off for a second straight day with one official calling it "a huge mess". The one-off Test at Afghanistan's adopted home near India's capital New Delhi was supposed to start on Monday, but the toss is yet to take place because of rain and the poor condition of the Greater Noida ground.

On Tuesday, groundsmen covered areas of the pitch in anticipation of more rain, while others waved electric fans over the worst wet patches. Ground staff dug up one wet outfield area in the midwicket region, refilling it with dry soil and laying fresh turf.

Umpires carried out repeated inspections and finally called off play in the mid-afternoon. The venue, hosting its first Test, has only basic drainage and has been criticized for its facilities dubbed "ill-equipped" by The Times of India newspaper.

Despite sunshine on Monday and Tuesday the outfield remained soaked after days of preceding monsoon rain. The teams stayed in their hotels on Tuesday morning but New Zealand, who were unable to complete any of their training sessions ahead of the Test, later put up nets on the ground and players went through their drills.

Afghanistan has hosted several Twenty20 and one-day internationals at Greater Noida since 2017.

of Sport said on Tuesday.

The AIS has linked up with its equivalents in each state as well as more than 40 sports and Paralympics Australia to put together the "Future Green and Gold" programme, which will identify talent and put the athletes on elite pathways.

"This is an incredibly exciting opportunity for people that could lead to representing Australia on the world stage," said Annette Eastwood of the AIS. "We are looking for a wide range of skillsets so I encourage all eligible Australians with Olympic or Paralympic dreams to come and give it a go."



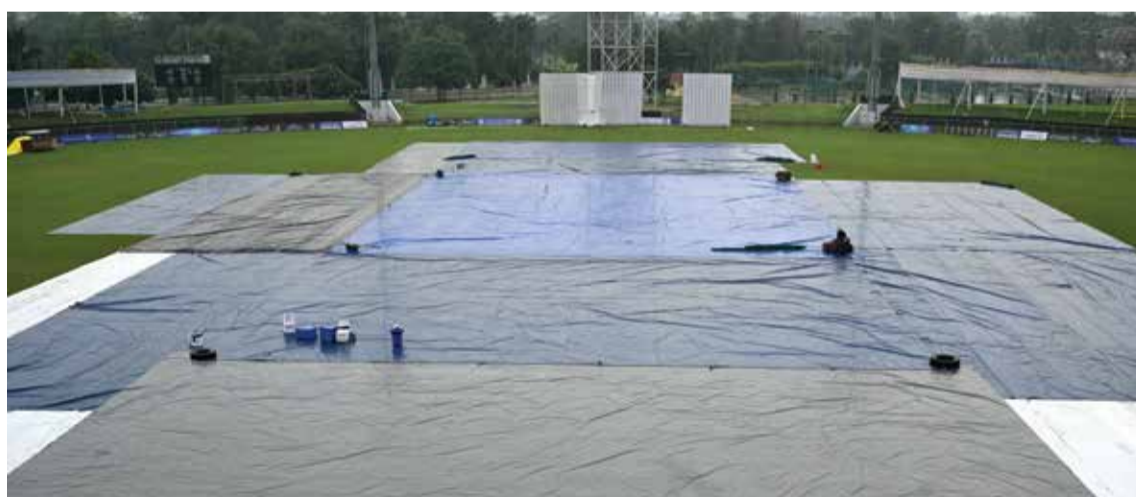
NAIROBI: Njeri Migwi, founder on 'Usikimye', (Swahili for 'do not be silent'), an organization that fights gender-based violence, poses for a portrait in the Kenyan capital, Nairobi. — AFP

Her father, Joseph Cheptegei, told reporters the dispute with Marangach had been over the property where she lived with her sister and daughters. He told Kenyan media last week that Marangach had bought five litres of petrol then hid out in a chicken coop before the attack.

"He poured the petrol and lit her on fire. When she called her sister to help, he threatened her with a machete and she ran away." The police said the couple had "constantly had family wrangles". Violence against women is widespread in Kenya, which saw 725 femicide cases in 2022 alone, according to the latest UN figures.

A 2023 report by Kenya's National Bureau of Statistics found 34 percent of women had experienced physical violence since the age of 15. Cheptegei's death follows that of record-breaking Kenyan runner Agnes Tirop in 2021 and Kenyan-born Bahrain athlete Damaris Mutua the following year.

In both cases, their ex-partners were implicated in their deaths. Tirop's estranged partner, who denies murdering her, is on trial. — AFP



GREATER NOIDA: Groundsmen cover the field as it starts to rain on the eve of one-off Test cricket match between Afghanistan and New Zealand. — AFP

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has offered Afghanistan venues to train and host matches outside their troubled nation, including in the northern Indian cities of Lucknow and Dehradun.

Afghanistan Cricket Board (ACB) officials have been cautious about criticism, fearing it could spoil relations with the BCCI, but said they were disappointed. "This is a huge mess. We are never coming back here," an ACB official was quoted as saying by Indian media.

But after the second day's play was scrapped, Afghanistan officials spoke officially to reporters. "Everyone, including the ground authorities, have worked hard," Menhajuddin Naz, the ACB interna-

## Springboks rest Feinberg-Mngomezulu for Argentina match

JOHANNESBURG: Springboks fly-half Sacha Feinberg-Mngomezulu, who has starred in his first Test season, is among seven players rested for a Rugby Championship match on September 21 in Argentina. Fellow backs Damian de Allende, Cheslin Kolbe and Willie le Roux, and forwards Bongani Mbonambi, Frans Malherbe and Pieter-Steph du Toit are also given a break by coach Rassie Erasmus.

They are all set to rejoin the squad when the Boks return home for the final Test in the Rugby Championship against Argentina in Nelspruit on September 28. Lock forward Eben Etzebeth is included in the squad putting him in line to equal Victor Matfield's record of 127 caps for the Springboks in Santiago del Estero.

Seeking only a second Rugby Championship title in 12 attempts, leaders South Africa will clinch the title if they win at the Estadio Unico. South Africa beat New Zealand 18-12 last Saturday to reach 18 points from four matches. Argentina, who scored nine tries in a 67-27 thrashing of Australia, have eight.

Defending champions New Zealand (seven points) and Australia (four) cannot overtake the Springboks with two rounds remaining. Feinberg-Mngomezulu debuted off the bench against Wales in London last June and is the only Springbok to play in all eight Tests this year.

He is the leading scorer for the world champions, kicking 14 conversions and eight penalties for 52 points, 11 more than fellow playmaker Handre Pollard. Pollard and Manie Libbok, who has featured in only two Tests this season, will be the fly-half options for Erasmus in Argentina. — AFP

## Australia launches talent search for 2032 Brisbane Games

SYDNEY: Australia will launch its biggest ever talent search next month to unearth the athletes who will compete on home soil at the 2032 Brisbane Olympics and Paralympics, the Australian Institute

Australians aged 13 to 23 will be targeted for the 2032 Olympic team, while anyone over 13 will be considered for the Paralympic programme. No previous sporting experience is required and athletes looking to transition from non-Olympic or Paralympic sports will be encouraged to apply.

Australia finished third on the medals table with 13 gold medals when the country first hosted the Olympics in Melbourne in 1956, and fourth with 16 titles when Sydney hosted the Games in 2000.

The country is coming off its most successful ever Summer Games in Paris in July and August, where

Australia athletes won 18 golds and 53 total medals. The Australian Olympic Committee welcomed the launch of the "Future Green and Gold" campaign.

"The success of the home team is vital to the success of any home Games," AOC chief executive Matt Carroll said in a news release. "Many Olympians began their athletic journey in different sports, before finding and excelling in their Olympic passion. 'Fresh off the success of our team in Paris, many young Australians will be inspired to have a go at Olympic sports to chase their own Brisbane Olympic dream.'" — Reuters





LYON: Belgium's forward #17 Charles De Ketelaere (L) and France's defender #04 Dayot Upamecano (C) fight for the ball during the UEFA Nations League, League A - Group 2 first leg football match between France and Belgium at the Parc Olympique Lyonnais in Lyon. — AFP

## Italy win in Nations League, Haaland on target for Norway

### France beat Belgium with Kolo Muani and Dembele goals

PARIS: Italy kept up their perfect start to the UEFA Nations League on Monday, while France got the better of Belgium and Erling Haaland struck a late winner for Norway against Austria.

The Italians built on an impressive win away in France at the weekend as they beat Zionist entity 2-1 in a game played on neutral territory in Budapest due to the security situation in the Middle East. Goals in each half from Davide Frattesi and Moise Kean were enough for Italy to win in a subdued atmosphere at the Bozsik Arena, home of Honved.

Luciano Spalletti's team have reacted well to their disastrous European Championship title defence, which ended at the last-16 stage, and deserved their second win in a matter of days. Frattesi followed his goal in the 3-1 win in France by chesting

home Federico Dimarco's pinpoint cross in the 38th minute to open the scoring.

Fiorentina striker Kean made it 2-0 just after the hour mark with his first Italy goal in almost exactly three years, before Mohamed Abu Fani pulled one back at the end for Zionist entity. Italy are top of Nations League Group A2 with the maximum six points, while France and Belgium are level on three points apiece.

France beat Belgium 2-0 in Lyon, with Randal Kolo Muani and Ousmane Dembele getting the goals as the home side won despite captain Kylian Mbappe being left out of the starting line-up. The game was a repeat of the Euro 2024 last-16 tie which France won 1-0 in Duesseldorf thanks to a late own goal.

This time, Les Bleus went ahead just before the half-hour mark, Kolo Muani

applying the finish after Dembele's mishit shot was pushed out by Belgian goalkeeper Koen Casteels. A Belgian side captained by Kevin De Bruyne could not find an equalizer and France scored again on 57 minutes thanks to a fine individual effort by Dembele. The Paris Saint-Germain winger skipped inside from the right wing before blasting a shot into the net on his left foot.

#### Sesko hat-trick, Wales win

In Group B3, Norway beat Austria 2-1 in Oslo as Manchester City star Haaland fired in the winner 10 minutes from time. Felix Myhre gave Norway an early lead only for Marcel Sabitzer of Borussia Dortmund to equalize for Austria before the break.

However, Haaland — who drew a blank in Norway's 0-0 draw in Kazakhstan on

Friday — showed trademark strength inside the box to hold off his marker and fire in the winner, with the goal given after a long VAR check for a possible offside.

In the same group, RB Leipzig's Benjamin Sesko bagged a hat-trick as Slovenia beat Kazakhstan 3-0 in Ljubljana. In Group B4, Wales followed their goalless draw against Turkey by beating Montenegro 2-1 away for their first win under new coach Craig Bellamy.

They got off to a terrific start, with Kieffer Moore and Harry Wilson both scoring inside the first three minutes. Driton Camaj then pulled one back for the hosts. Turkey beat Iceland 3-1 in Izmir, a game in which Kerem Akturkoglu of Benfica hit a hat-trick. There were also wins on Monday for Romania and Kosovo respectively in League C. — AFP

### Saudi fight back to beat China in WCup qualifying

DALIAN: China face a struggle to qualify for the 2026 World Cup as they followed their 7-0 drubbing in Japan last week with a 2-1 defeat against 10-man Saudi Arabia on Tuesday.

China went ahead in the 14th minute in Dalian through an Ali Lajami own goal but failed to take advantage of Saudi midfielder Mohamed Kanno being red-carded a few minutes later. Hassan Kadish equalized with a header from a corner before half-time and repeated the feat in the last minute of the 90 to spark wild celebrations from the visitors.

China fought hard against a side ranked almost 30 places above them in FIFA's world rankings and had a goal disallowed, but they remain rooted to the bottom of Group C. After Lajami deflected a corner into his own net off his shoulder, the 29-year-old Kanno needlessly kicked out at China's Jiang Shenglong after the referee had blown for a foul.

Having initially missed the incident, VAR prompted the referee to take another look and the Saudi player was sent off. China, who had registered just one shot in their match with Japan, struggled to carve out chances despite their numerical advantage.

They paid the price when the Saudis, managed by former Manchester City and Italy coach Roberto Mancini, equalized through Kadish. As the rain poured down in the second half at the Suoyuwan Football Stadium, China began to exert pressure on a tiring Saudi defence.

Wang Shangyuan thought he had put China back ahead after bundling the ball home from a corner, only for the goal to be disallowed for offside. At the other end, winger Salem Al-Dawsari went through on goal but his shot cannoned off the crossbar.

Both sides went in search of a winner in the closing stages, but it was Kadish who popped up unmarked again from a corner to power a header past China's goalkeeper Wang Dalei. China are bottom of the six-team Group C after two defeats, with only the top two guaranteed a place at the 2026 World Cup. — AFP



LONDON: Kuwait's national powerboat team participates in the powerboat world championship held in the United Kingdom. — KUNA photos

### Kuwait powerboat racing team secures third in UK tourney

LONDON: Kuwait's national powerboat team won third place in the powerboat world championship organized by Union Internationale Motonautique (UIM), held in Plymouth, United Kingdom, across two categories. In B 300 horsepower category, the Kuwaiti team, led by world champion Bader Al-Dousari and his assistant, Mohammed Al-Essayie, secured third place. Khaled Karam

and Adel Al-Sharida also achieved third place in the P 150 horsepower category, with their teammates Nasser Al-Khadhra and Mishaal Al-Misbah finishing fifth in the final round of the championship. Head of the Kuwaiti delegation, Ali Al-Shamali expressed his pride in the team's accomplishments in a statement to KUNA.

He highlighted that the team competed in the category B with the boat "Raheeb 17," powered by a 300-horsepower engine, piloted by 2023 world champion Bader Al-Dousari and Mohammed Al-Essayie. The team earned two silver medals on the first and second days of the event, ultimately securing third place overall. Al-Shamali explained that the team's chance of retaining the world champion title was impacted by an accident

in the second round of the championship, which took place in Belgium in June.

Despite this setback, the team's performance in the first round in Spain, where they secured two silver medals in April, helped them accumulate enough points to achieve the bronze overall. In category B single-engine with 150 horsepower, Kuwait's "Raheeb 171," led by champions Khaled Karam and Adel Al-Sharida, took second and fourth place in the Spanish round of the competition in April. They won first place in Belgium, and in the final round in Plymouth, they secured third and fourth places, resulting in an overall third-place finish and the bronze medal. The third boat, competing for the first time, finished fifth overall in category B with 150 horsepower, by Al-Khadhra and Al-Misbah. — KUNA