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WITH TODAY'S ISSUE

# BLOODBATH IN LEBANON

356 martyred, including 24 children, in Zionist strikes on Hezbollah strongholds

## Crown Prince meets world leaders



NEW YORK: Representative of HH the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, met Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan (left), Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi (center) and Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammad Al-Sudani (right) on the sidelines of the 79th session of the UN General Assembly. HH the Crown Prince discussed ways of strengthening bilateral relations as well as regional and international developments with the leaders. — KUNA photos (See Page 3)

BEIRUT: Zionist air strikes killed at least 356 people, including 24 children, in Lebanon on Monday, the Lebanese government said, in the deadliest cross-border escalation since the Gaza war erupted. Arab states sharply condemned the Zionist entity over the sharpest escalation in nearly a year of Zionist-Hezbollah hostilities.

The Zionist entity said it hit about 1,300 Hezbollah sites in southern and eastern Lebanon in 24 hours, including a "targeted strike" in Beirut. A source close to Hezbollah said the strike in the Lebanese capital targeted Ali Karake, the group's third in command. State media reported new raids in eastern Lebanon, while Hezbollah said it targeted five sites in the Zionist entity. In the coastal city of Haifa, Zionists were seen running for cover when air raid sirens sounded.

The strikes by the "(Zionist) enemy" in southern Lebanon and the Bekaa and Baalbek in the east "killed 356 people, including 24 children and 42 women, and injured 1,246", said the health ministry. Health Minister Firass Abiad said "thousands of

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### NEWS IN BRIEF

#### Ministry denies taxation plan

KUWAIT: The ministry of finance on Monday categorically denied reports of a plan to impose taxes on wages, commodities or tickets, in addition to non-basic services and entertainment. "The ministry categorically denies what is being circulated of a plan to impose taxes," it said in a statement.

#### Driving license service on Sahel

KUWAIT: The interior ministry announced that the service of obtaining a driving license for private drivers has been added to the Sahel application for government services from Monday.

#### Bahrain to free more prisoners

MANAMA: Bahrain's interior ministry on Monday announced sentencing changes for hundreds of inmates in the state. Authorities gave the green light for "replacement of custodial sentences with an alternative sentence," for 340 inmates, the ministry said, with 99 further prisoners allowed more lenient arrangements in custody under Bahrain's "open prison program". — AFP

#### Morocco floods kill 10

RABAT: Ten people died in Morocco at the weekend when floodwaters swept away a bus in the country's south, authorities said. Initially, the authorities said heavy rainstorms in Tata province late Friday had claimed two lives and left 14 people missing. But since then, the bodies of eight others have been found and another 13 were rescued. Seven people are still missing. — AFP

#### India records clade 1b mpox case

NEW DELHI: India said on Monday that an mpox case involving a man in the southern state of Kerala was from the fast-spreading clade 1b variety, marking South Asia's first recorded case from the new strain. The patient is a 38-year-old man who had travelled from the UAE and had been admitted to the government medical college hospital in the district, Kerala authorities said last week. — Reuters

## Biden, MBZ hold talks on Lebanon, Gaza

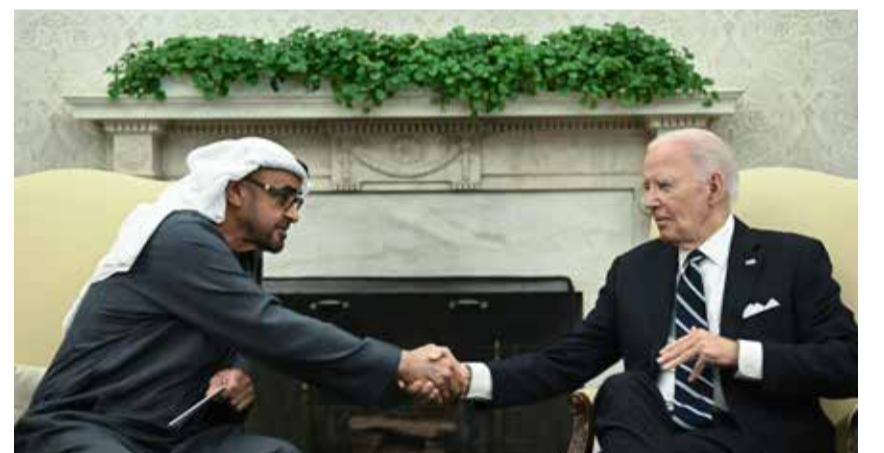
WASHINGTON: US President Joe Biden welcomed the president of the United Arab Emirates to the White House on Monday, saying the two leaders would discuss ways to de-escalate tensions between the Zionist entity and Lebanon, and efforts to secure a ceasefire in Gaza. Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris will meet separately with UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, the

first in what is expected to be a series of foreign leader gatherings during the week of the United Nations General Assembly.

Biden, speaking at the start of his meeting with the UAE leader, said Lebanon and Gaza would feature prominently in their discussions, along with talks on artificial intelligence. Before their meeting, Biden said he had been briefed on latest developments between the Zionist entity and Lebanon, adding, "I continue to be in contact with our counterparts and we're working to de-escalate in a way that allows people to return home safely."

Biden hailed relations with the UAE, describing it as a "nation of

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WASHINGTON: US President Joe Biden meets UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan in the Oval Office of the White House on Sept 23, 2024. — AFP

## As wars rage, UN critics say body is failing its mission

UNITED NATIONS: As wars rage worldwide, with civilian casualties a daily occurrence, critics of the United Nations say the body is failing at its most basic job, while experts warn the organization is being scapegoated for things that are beyond its control. Maintaining peace and international security is one of the UN's central missions, but its record has been badly tarnished as bloodshed intensifies in conflicts across the world, including in Gaza, Ukraine and Sudan.

The UN's detractors point to those brutal conflicts, among others, as evidence that the global organization — hosting its centerpiece gathering of world leaders in New York this week — has failed in its mission. The UN's chief, however, has a different view. "It's obvious that we are not having peace

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## Pezeshkian slams Zionists, seeks talks with West

NEW YORK: Iran's new president on Monday accused the Zionist entity of seeking regional war, as he attempted to cast Tehran as restrained and appealed to the West for talks on flashpoint issues. President Masoud Pezeshkian, inaugurated in late July as a reformist within the cleric-run state, was visiting the United Nations as Zionists step up strikes

in Lebanon on the Iranian-backed militia Hezbollah, following a wave of explosions on handheld communication devices.

"We know more than anyone else that if a larger war were to erupt in the Middle East, it will not benefit anyone throughout the world. It is (the Zionist entity) that seeks to create this wider conflict," Pezeshkian told a roundtable with journalists in New York. Pezeshkian — whose hardline predecessor died in a helicopter crash — took office with calls for a better relationship with the West. But tensions immediately soared as the visiting political chief of Hamas was assassinated in an operation in Tehran widely attributed to the Zionist entity.

Pezeshkian alluded to appeals from the West for

Iran not to retaliate so as not to jeopardize US efforts for a ceasefire in the Gaza war. "We tried to not respond. They kept telling us we are within reach of peace, perhaps in a week or so," he said. "But we never reached that elusive peace. Every day (the Zionist entity) is committing more atrocities and killing more and more people — old, young, men, women, children, hospitals, other facilities," he said.

He did not reply directly when asked if Iran would now respond more directly. "We always keep hearing, well, Hezbollah fired a rocket. If Hezbollah didn't even do that minimum, who would defend them?" he said. "Curiously enough, we keep being labeled as the perpetrator of insecurity.

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GAZA: Palestinians check the bodies of children killed after a Zionist air strike hit a school sheltering displaced people in the central Gaza Strip, at a hospital morgue in Deir el-Balah on Sept 23, 2024. — AFP



## Local

# Zain celebrates next generation of Kuwait's tech leaders; Award for Creativity presented

## Company supports CODED Academy's 4th 'Kuwait Codes' program

KUWAIT: For the third year running, Zain joined the graduation ceremony held to celebrate the students who successfully participated in the Kuwait Codes program in strategic collaboration with CODED Academy. This initiative, considered the best of its kind nationwide, continues to write new success stories as it empowers thousands of aspiring young coders, preparing them to be the next generation of Kuwait's tech leaders.

The closing ceremony featured a special exhibition where students showcased the projects they worked on throughout the season. Afterwards, the company presented the 'Zain Award for Creativity' in recognition of student excellence. The ceremony also witnessed the recognition of all the students who successfully enrolled in the fourth season.

Many of Zain's corporate sustainability initiatives center around youth and education development. As digital capacities are gaining accelerating significance in the future of education and the economy, the company has put the development of programming and other digital competencies at the forefront of its priorities. Zain's continued support to Kuwait Codes falls under the umbrella of this strategy. Through a wide range of programs and initiatives, Zain commits to upskilling local talents with the skills required by today's markets, like coding, cybersecurity, AI, digital transformation applications, and more. 'Kuwait Codes' has at its core the development of many of these skillsets.

During the fourth season, Zain hosted at its head-

quarters in Shuwaikh a special event for the program's participants, where students formed two teams to answer exciting questions and join engaging activities. The gathering aimed at developing the students' creative and critical thinking skills while also fostering a teamwork spirit. These interpersonal skillsets are as important as the technical and digital skills that are the main focus of Kuwait Codes.

Kuwait Codes is the top initiative of its kind in Kuwait, and it continues its mission to create a technically advanced generation by offering the opportunity for high school students from private and public schools to learn and develop programming skills in several main streams. These streams include website design, Python programming, video game development, and smart-phone app development using Flutter. This year, AI and cybersecurity were also added as main streams due to their significant roles in emerging technologies.

Zain is proud to be one of the main strategic partners of CODED throughout the years, a partnership that has contributed to empowering thousands of young programmers and developers in the local market. The company continues to renew this support to contribute to fostering the digital leaders of Kuwait's tomorrow. As a leading digital service provider, Zain always seeks to reach new levels of excellence with its customers through offering the best innovative services, meeting their needs and aspirations, as well as supporting programs and initiatives that embrace tech innovation and aim at developing it.



Recognizing the winner of the Zain Award for Creativity.

## World Forum to enhance global cooperation

TOKYO: Kuwait's participation in the World Forum on Sustainable Transport 2024 is a great opportunity to keep an eye on the opportunities, challenges and solutions to achieve sustainable transport goals, said Kuwaiti Ambassador to China Jassim Al-Najem on Monday. The ambassador said that the Minister of Public Works, Dr Noura Al-Mashaan, will head Kuwait's delegation to the forum, noting that participation in such forums provides a great opportunity to communicate with international experts and enhance global cooperation.

Sustainable transportation is an essential part and a vital component of achieving the United Nations 2030 Goals for Sustainable Development, he added. The forum, which will be held on Wednesday, Sept 25th, will witness workshops and dialogue sessions on enhancing cooperation in governance, emergency response, and building international logistics supply chains, in addition to enhancing development projects supported by artificial intelligence in the transportation sector, enhancing the development of new energy and accelerating the transition. — KUNA

## Coordination meeting aims to synchronize Gulf efforts

NEW YORK: Gulf Cooperation Council Secretary General, Jassem Al-Budaiwi, stated that the coordination meeting between Gulf Foreign Ministers aims to synchronize efforts on regional and international issues. The General Secretariat, in a statement, mentioned that the meeting was held on the sidelines of UNGA 79th session at the Qatari permanent delegation to UN headquarters in New York.

Al-Budaiwi added that the meeting included exchanging perspectives on strategic relations and dialogue between member states and global coalitions and discussed regional and international developments. Gulf bloc countries play a vital role in UN, as the latter became largely reliant on Gulf efforts and initiatives, stated Al-Budaiwi, adding that this makes Gulf countries a main partner for cooperation and strategic partnerships. Member states are working continuously to expand international relations, achieve common interests, and guarantee international peace and security, he affirmed. — KUNA



## Kuwait Direct Aid organizes medical camp in Yemen

ADEN: The Kuwaiti Direct Aid Society on Monday concluded a medical camp, in which 500 cataract and intraocular lens operations were performed in a number of districts of Hadhramaut Governorate in Yemen. In a statement to KUNA, regional director for the Direct Aid office in Yemen, Ali Bteit said that the camp - set up at the Roaya Eye and Retina Center - also conducted examinations for more than 4,200 cases, provided free treatment and glasses to about 1,500 people, and distributed the necessary awareness brochures about eye diseases and cholera; which is widespread in several Yemeni governorates. The Director General of medical camps at the Yemeni Ministry of Health, Muhammad Tareeq, praised in a press statement the Direct Aid camp. — KUNA



Minister of Information Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi during his meeting with Kuwait Airways chairman Abdulmohsen Al-Fagaan. — KUNA

## Minister underlines Kuwait Airways' role in bolstering tourism

KUWAIT: The national carrier Kuwait Airways has an important role in promoting tourism with-

in the country, which is embarking on a plan to bolster tourism in the near future, Minister of Information and Culture Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi said on Monday. This affirmation came during the meeting between Al-Mutairi—also Minister of State for Youth Affairs—and Kuwait Airways chairman Abdulmohsen Al-Fagaan. In a statement by the Airways, Al-Fagaan commended the cooperation and support from the Ministry of Information, which provided assistance to Kuwait Airways within the country and abroad.

He indicated that the meeting with Minister Al-Mutairi touched on cooperation between the Ministry and Kuwait Airways in upcoming events namely the 26th Gulf Cup in Kuwait next December and also Kuwait's participation in the upcoming Expo 2025 Osaka from April 13 until October 13. He also indicated that discussions focused on promoting the (51 Kuwait) application and featuring it in-flight on Kuwait Airways. Al-Fagaan added that the two sides agreed on forming a team to establish a mechanism for future projects. — KUNA



## NBK-Egypt signs protocol to provide equipment for Baheya Hospital

KUWAIT: NBK-Egypt signed a cooperation protocol for the fourth time with Baheya Foundation for Early Detection and Treatment of Breast Cancer, to provide equipment for the new Baheya Hospital's Branch in Sheikh Zayed City, in continuation of the bank's ongoing support extended to the Foundation since 2018. The agreement was signed by Walid El-Seyoufi, Deputy Managing Director at NBK - Egypt, and Dr Jaylan Ahmed, CEO of Baheya Foundation, in the presence of Karim Kamal, Head of Support Functions, Sustainability and Sustainable Finance at NBK-E, and Noran Abdul-Rahman, Head of CSR Unit, along with members of the executive management from both sides.

On this occasion, Walid El-Seyoufi said: "We always seek to strengthen our leading role in social responsibility as one of our pillars to achieve sustainable development, by maximizing our contributions to support and develop the health system all over Egypt. This aligns with Egypt Vision 2030 which incorporates in its goals improving the quality of healthcare services provided to citizens."

"NBK-Egypt aims to support the State's endeavors to achieve the goals of Egypt's Strategic Vision 2030, which includes improving healthcare services by supporting the infrastructure of healthcare sector institutions and providing quality medical services to all sectors of society," El-Seyoufi mentioned. "NBK-Egypt has a long record of humanitarian and social initiatives, as it always seeks to foster a culture of community service and enhance social responsibility awareness, an approach that the bank has always



followed and promoted," he added.

He noted that the bank has long-standing solid relationships with many institutions operating in Egypt across all sectors, whether in the government or private sector, with which it cooperates to improve the efficiency of these sectors, including the healthcare sector, which helps build a strong, healthy and productive society. For her part, Dr Jaylan Ahmed, CEO of Baheya Hospital, expressed her appreciation for the great support provided by NBK-Egypt to provide equipment for the new Baheya Hospital, which benefits all sectors of society, hoping to continue cooperation with a leading and prestigious brand like NBK to provide high-quality medical care services to citizens.

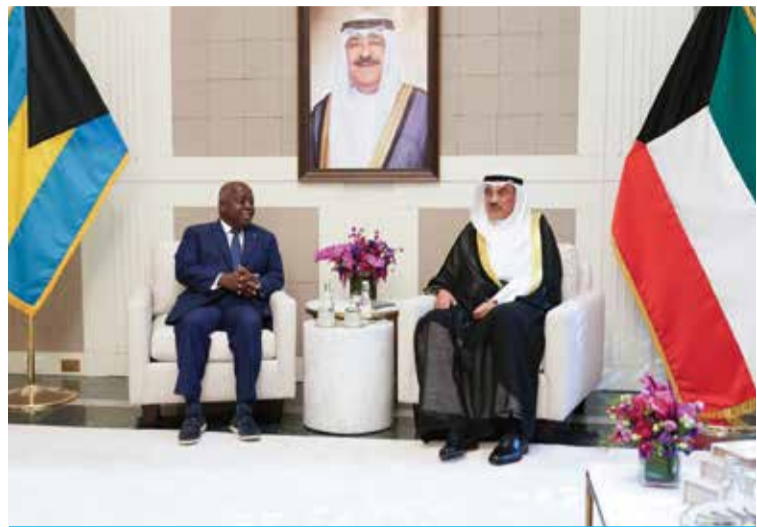
Similarly, NBK-Egypt is always keen to organize various events to support the healthcare sector, in-

cluding blood donation drives, awareness workshops for disease prevention, distribution of medical products, in addition to partnerships and protocols with many institutions and healthcare centers to provide them with advanced equipment. NBK-Egypt currently has a network of 53 branches with strategic locations across the different governorates and cities of Egypt including Cairo, Giza, Alexandria, Delta, Red Sea, Port Said, Upper Egypt, and the industrial areas in the 6th of October and the 10th of Ramadan Cities.

The bank is also privileged to be among the banks providing Islamic banking products, in addition to conventional products, through its dedicated Islamic banking branches. It also has a large network of ATMs across key locations of the country to service the bank's customers around the clock and all week round.

# Kuwait urges Int'l community to recommit to principles of peace

## Global challenges require fair geographical representation at UN: Crown Prince



Representative of His Highness the Amir, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets with President Edward Davis, Prime Minister of Bahamas. — AFP photos



NEW YORK: His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah speaks during 'Summit of the Future' on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly at the United Nations Headquarters in New York.



Representative of His Highness the Amir, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah receives President Kyriakos Mitsotakis, Prime Minister of Greece, at the headquarters of the Permanent Mission of Kuwait in New York City.



Representative of His Highness the Amir, His Highness the Crown Prince receives Nepalese Prime Minister. During the meeting, they discussed joint relations between Kuwait and Nepal and ways to develop them to serve the interests of the two friendly countries.



Representative of His Highness the Amir, His Highness the Crown Prince receives Kenyan President on sidelines of Future Summit in New York.



Representative of His Highness the Amir, His Highness the Crown Prince receives President of the Swiss Confederation on the sidelines of Future Summit in New York.

**KUWAIT:** Representative of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, has called the international community to recommit themselves to the principles of international peace and security and the provisions of the international laws and conventions, and to deal with each other on equal terms and do away with double standards.

His Highness the Crown Prince made his remarks during a speech at the Summit of the Future at the UN Headquarters in New York. "The ongoing genocide in Palestine, which claimed more than 41,000 lives so far, mainly women and children, is a stark reminder of the inability of the UN Security Council to halt the aggression. This is a regrettable, stark example of suing double standards in the implementation of international law, which should have no room in our future; otherwise, the world order could degenerate into jungle law," he cautioned.

The Zionist occupation forces have been destroying hospitals, schools, residential areas, and refugee camps since the start of the aggression. The death toll from the ongoing occupation aggression on the Gaza Strip since October 7th has risen to 41,431 Palestinians and wounded, 95,818.



Representative of His Highness the Amir, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets with President of Ghana Nana Akufo-Addo, on sidelines of Summit of the Future at UN Headquarters in New York.



Representative of HH the Amir, HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets President of the International Olympic Committee Thomas Bach on the sidelines of the Future Summit at the United Nations headquarters in New York City. The meeting discussed means of cooperation and strengthening ties, in addition to supporting and developing the Kuwait Olympic Committee in all fields.

### Fair UN representation

His Highness The Crown Prince shared the UN Secretary-General's view that it was impossible to build a future for our grandchildren through a system built for our ancestors. "We are required to take care of the future of the young generation and work to introduce substantive changes to the world economic governance system, including the financial safety networks and the international customs co-

operation; overhauling the multinational development banks; and addressing the sovereign debt problem," he argued.

Regarding the second chapter of the Pact for the Future on "International Peace and Security," His Highness the Crown Prince called on all state parties to recommit themselves to the principles of international peace and security. On the fifth chapter of the pact, "Transforming Global Governance," His Highness the Crown

Prince urged the international community to step up the efforts to reform the international order in ways that could reflect the current reality and challenges and lead to a more effective, more inclusive, and more transparent UN Security Council.

"Since its independence in 1961, Kuwait has been keen on promoting development in the developing and least developed countries through the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development," he said,

noting that KFAED offered up to 1,073 grants and soft loans to 105 countries. His Highness the Crown Prince added that Kuwait has made tangible successes in the implementation of the national development plan and Kuwait Vision 2035 and the realization of the goals set forth in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including those related to the eradication of poverty and hunger and the provision of quality education for all. — KUNA

## Kuwait-South Korea bond strengthened by common goals

By Faten Omar

**KUWAIT:** South Korea imports around 100 million barrels of oil annually from Kuwait, making it the second-largest importer of Kuwaiti crude. The bilateral trade between the two countries has reached \$10 billion. Jinhang Nah, Counselor of Economic and Commercial Affairs at the Korean Embassy, announced during a discussion with local media that Kuwait's first fiber optic cable factory will begin production by the end of the month, highlighting the collaboration between Korea and Kuwait in various sectors; including construction, clean energy, medical services, transportation, and technological advancements.

He pointed out that Korean companies have been involved in developing Kuwait's infrastructure since the early 1970s, when major projects like the Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Bridge, the Clean Fuels Project, and the Al-Zour Refinery were built with the help of Korean firms, noting that currently, 16 Korean companies are actively participating in various developmental projects in Kuwait. There are ongoing negotiations for new agreements.

For his part, Byoung Gwan Lee, Deputy Chief of Mission and Minister Counselor at the Korean Embassy, stated that Kuwait is a key global center for humanitarian aid, a status highlighted by former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, who recognized its leadership in this area, saying "Ten years ago, Kuwait was praised for its significant



Local media with the Korean Embassy's team.

role in providing aid to various countries. This recognition has instilled pride in many Kuwaitis, who take immense pride in their country's humanitarian efforts. Korea also shares this admiration for Kuwait's contributions, especially given the current efforts of Korea, as a member of the UN Security Council, to foster peace in the Middle East. Korea's commitment to resolving conflicts, such as the Gaza tragedy, aligns with Kuwait's ongoing humanitarian mission."

He added "The two Ks, Kuwait and Korea share a similar historical experience, both having rebuilt their nations following periods of conflict. This shared sense of resilience has fostered mutual respect between the two countries. Korea

values Kuwait's dedication to international aid. The bond between the two countries is strengthened by their shared experiences and common goals, including a focus on peace and development in the region."

Meanwhile, Jinkuk Lee, Second Secretary at the Embassy, revealed that each year, around 100 Kuwaitis are learning the Korean language, adding "This growing interest reflects the expanding appeal of Korean culture in Kuwait, which initially focused on Korean dramas and films but has now broadened to include Korean food, music (especially K-pop), and traditions. This cultural expansion has driven the popularity of learning Korean, leading to the establish-

ment of formal language courses and private institutions."

In October last year, the King Sejong Institute, a major global language learning institute supported by the South Korean government, was opened in Kuwait to meet the rising demand for Korean language education. In less than a year, about 200 students have registered for these courses in the Language Center at Kuwait University in collaboration with King Sejong Institute. He highlighted the increasing enthusiasm for the popularity of Korean food that has grown too, with several Korean-style restaurants, reflecting the cultural influence.

Regarding tourism, he said that the field has witnessed a rise, indicating that before the COVID-19 pandemic, about 3,500 Kuwaitis visited Korea annually. However, the numbers have increased to over 4,000 post-pandemic. He explained "In the first half of this year alone, more than 2,000 Kuwaitis visited Korea, driven by the global popularity of K-pop and K-culture. It is expected to reach over 4,000 Kuwaiti tourists by the end of 2024."

He revealed that the growing demand has also led to discussions about establishing a direct flight route between Kuwait and Korea, which could significantly boost tourism in the coming years, adding "This year will reach 4,000 Kuwaitis, but it is expected to be 5,000 next year growing to be 10,000 in five years if we manage to have direct flights." Concerning the visa requirements for Kuwaitis, he noted that Kuwaitis are exempted from the visa, as for other nationalities, the visa process takes about three days to a week, explaining that "Applicants earning KD 400 and more are eligible for applying for the visa at the embassy, while other nationalities are eligible for K-ETA (Korea Electronic Travel Authorization)."

# Embassies congratulate Kuwait Times

## Palestine Ambassador Rami Tahboub

On behalf of the Palestinian community in Kuwait, I would like to express my deepest congratulations to Kuwait Times family on its 63rd anniversary. Kuwait Times has been a unique media tool with its confidence, subjectivity and credibility. Proudly speaking, Kuwait Times support to the Palestinian people and Palestinian cause has been always significant throughout the past 63 years up to the moment. Kuwait Times' highly respected journalists and staff embrace very strong and professional skills. I wish Kuwait Times a very happy anniversary.



## Canada Ambassador Aliya Mawani

On behalf of the Canadian Embassy in Kuwait, it is my pleasure to offer warmest congratulations to the dedicated and professional Kuwait Times family as you mark the organization's 63rd anniversary. Over many years, the Kuwait Times has established itself as a leading and trusted source of news, and we appreciate your commitment to both innovation and accuracy as the media landscape evolves – locally and globally. For a country like Canada which prioritizes diversity, inclusion, and youth engagement in our diplomatic efforts, the Kuwait Times is notable for its commitment to raising awareness on a wide range of issues and experiences, and for nurturing the next generation of journalists – not only as part of the Kuwait Times team – but through its highly sought-after internship program, and partnerships with organizations like ours on the Young Ambassador Program to explore the relationship between media, diplomacy and advocacy on key issues facing our world today. We thank the Kuwait Times leadership and team for years of excellent collaboration and look forward to it continuing long into the future. Congratulations!



## Poland Charge d'Affaires Anna Marta Godoj-Ciszkowska

It is with great pride and admiration that I extend my heartfelt congratulations to Kuwait Times on the occasion of its 63rd anniversary. For over six decades, Kuwait Times has stood as an example of journalism, providing the people of Kuwait and the whole community with reliable news, insightful commentary, and balanced reporting. Kuwait Times has consistently upheld the highest standards of journalistic integrity, offering a platform for diverse perspectives, and enhanced Kuwait's role on the global stage. May your publication continue to flourish, contributing to the progress and unity of Kuwait and beyond.



## Oman Ambassador Dr Saleh Bin Amer Al Kharousi

I am pleased to extend my heartfelt congratulations to Kuwait Times on the occasion of the 63rd anniversary, praising with pride the remarkable success it has achieved both at level of its professional performance and its credibility in dealing with various local, regional and international issues. Kuwait Times represents the voice of truth that has been loud in defense of issues that we all believe in, especially being the first Kuwaiti daily English newspaper to be published in the region.



## UK Ambassador Belinda Lewis

As the first English-language daily publication in the Arabian Gulf, the Kuwait Times has long played an invaluable role in informing the public, including the British expatriate community here, of the latest local, regional and broader international developments. I greatly enjoyed my visit to the Kuwait Times' impressive headquarters last week, during which I had the pleasure of meeting many staff dedicated to producing high-quality, informative and engaging content. This newspaper has reported on a number of landmark moments in the shared history of the UK and Kuwait, including this year's celebrations of 125 years of official diplomatic relations, and I hope it will continue to do so for many years to come.



## European Union Envoy Anne Koistinen

On behalf of the European Union Delegation to Kuwait, I would like to extend my warmest congratulations to Kuwait Times newspaper on its 63rd anniversary. We appreciate the excellent collaboration with Kuwait Times since the opening of the EU Delegation more than five years ago. The European Union firmly believes in the importance of free, independent and pluralistic media, inside Europe and around the world. Therefore, the EU Delegation in Kuwait values the work of independent media in delivering accurate news in a timely fashion. This plays an important role in shaping public debate on many issues that are relevant to the people. We wish Kuwait Times success for many years to come.



## Nigeria Charge d'Affaires Murtala Jimoh

On behalf of the Embassy of Nigeria in Kuwait, I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to the management and staff of Kuwait Times on its special 63rd anniversary of the establishment of the frontline news outlet. In the last six decades, Kuwait Times has proved to be one of the leading English-language media outlets in the country, and the region with reliable, reputable, and respected news.



## Belgium Ambassador Christian Doms

I extend my heartfelt congratulations to Kuwait Times' Editor-in-Chief, all the journalists and staff members as they mark 63 years of outstanding achievement. I express my appreciation to the distinguished coverage of the paper and its commitment to maintain the journalistic ethics and deliver its mission in Kuwait.



## Malawi Ambassador Younos Abdul Karim

On behalf of the Embassy of the Republic of Malawi to Kuwait, I would like to express my sincere and heartfelt congratulations to Kuwait Times on its 63rd anniversary. Being the first English-language newspaper in the Gulf region, and the oldest active newspaper in Kuwait, Kuwait Times has over the years proved to be a leading and reliable English-language media outlet with high-quality and reliable news. Through the paper's in-depth reporting and analysis on local, regional, international and business news, Kuwait Times has distinguished itself as a great vehicle of dissemination of precise, reliable, and accurate information. We thank Kuwait Times team for our long-lasting friendship and cooperation, and wish it a lot of success and prosperity for many years ahead! Congratulations and best wishes.



## Republic of Korea Ambassador Chong-Suk Parky

On behalf of the Embassy of the Republic of Korea, I am pleased to convey my sincere congratulations on the 63rd anniversary of the esteemed Kuwait Times. Our Embassy is proud to continue to our collaboration with the newspaper which plays a brilliant role in Kuwaiti media sector with its timely and trustworthy information. On this commemorative occasion, I wish the Kuwait Times continued prosperity and greater success in the years to come.



## Russia Ambassador Vladimir Zheltov

Congratulations to the reputable Kuwait Times newspaper on its anniversary. We consider you to be one of the most respected Kuwaiti media outlets. You have a large audience, including the foreign diplomatic corps. We wish you every success as Kuwait Times continues to be a source of trustworthy information.



## Netherlands Ambassador Laurens Westhoff

On the occasion of the 63rd anniversary of Kuwait Times, the first English daily newspaper in the Gulf region, I extend my congratulations to its editorial team, journalists and staff. For over six decades, Kuwait Times has been an example of reliable journalism, fostering understanding and informed dialogue within Kuwait and beyond. The newspaper's multicultural approach highlights its role as a bridge between different expatriate groups and local society. I wish Kuwait Times continued success in its mission to inform and engage readers for many more years to come.



## India Ambassador Dr Adarsh Swaika

I would like to express my sincere congratulations to the Kuwait Times on its 63rd anniversary. Such milestones underscore the necessity to maintain highest professional standards of impartial reporting based on facts. As India and Kuwait deepen their cooperation across various fields, the role of media outlets like Kuwait Times in highlighting the strong bilateral ties and fostering mutual understanding becomes all the more significant. Wishing the entire team of Kuwait Times continued success and excellence!



## Lesotho Charge d'Affaires Mammako Mary Mohale-Learat

On behalf of the Embassy of the Kingdom of Lesotho, I extend my heartfelt congratulations to Kuwait Times on its 63rd anniversary. For over six decades, Kuwait Times has been a pillar of responsible journalism – delivering news and fostering understanding in Kuwait and beyond. Your commitment to excellence in reporting and dedication to truth have made you an invaluable resource to the community. We look forward to witnessing many more years of your success and contribution to the media landscape.



## Italy Ambassador Lorenzo Morini

On the occasion of the 63rd anniversary of Kuwait Times, I extend my heartfelt congratulations and appreciation to the esteemed Kuwait Times newspaper for its remarkable contributions to journalism in Kuwait. Over the years, Kuwait Times has supported the Italian Embassy's commercial and cultural initiatives with extensive coverage, always providing detailed and highly professional information to Kuwaiti public. Kuwait Times' support played a central role in strengthening bilateral cooperation between Kuwait and Italy and we look forward to continuing this fruitful relationship and to celebrating many more milestones together.



## Germany Chargé d'Affaires Peter Sauer

Happy anniversary as Kuwait Times marks 63 years of professional journalism. It is a proud achievement over a very long period of time. I know what I am talking about, as I am also 63 years old. The Kuwait Times is a must-read for us at the German Embassy and an important daily source of information.



## Hungary Ambassador Andras Szabo

On behalf of the Embassy of Hungary in Kuwait, I would like to express my sincere congratulations to Kuwait Times on the occasion of the 63rd anniversary. During these years, Kuwait Times proved to be one of the best English-language media platforms – providing important and reliable local, regional and international news. We thank your team for their friendship and cooperation, and wishing you success for many years ahead.



## Azerbaijan Ambassador Emil Karimo

On behalf of the Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan to Kuwait, I wish Kuwait Times a happy anniversary on the occasion of its 63 years of journalism and success.



## Sudan Ambassador Awadal-Karim Al-Rayah Balla

On the occasion of the 63rd anniversary of the newspaper, I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to the leading administration and the editing staff and journalists of Kuwait Times, which constitutes a significant milestone in the development of journalism, not only in Kuwait but in the Arab World as well. Kuwait Times has been playing a pivotal role in shaping the awareness of the public opinion and presenting a positive image from all perspectives. I am sure that Kuwait Times will continue to be dedicated and distinguished in performing the constructive mission this noble nation deserves.



## Egypt Ambassador Osama Shaltout

As Kuwait Times celebrates its 63rd anniversary, I would gladly take this opportunity to express my strongest appreciation for this esteemed publication. For over six decades, the Kuwait Times has been more than just a newspaper; it has been a vital thread in the development of the foreign language publications in the Arab world by providing reliable news and diverse perspectives. The Kuwait Times has consistently delivered clarity and insight. Its commitment to journalistic integrity has contributed positively in every aspect. I am confident that the Kuwait Times will continue to evolve and adapt to the changing media landscape, while remaining a trusted source of information. Here's to 63 years of remarkable achievements and to many more years of illuminating its path ahead.





Long wait for justice in India's backlogged courts

## 'Respect all citizens', French PM tells new minority government

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SIDON: A family sits with their belongings in the back of a truck as they wait in a traffic jam in the southern Lebanese city of Sidon on September 23, 2024. — AFP photos

# Zionist strikes send Lebanon into panic

## Schools closed as thousands flee homes from bombings that killed more than 350

**SIDON:** Health workers in southern Lebanon scrambled to treat hundreds of people wounded on Monday, as families rushed to flee the deadliest Zionist strikes in nearly a year of cross-border clashes. "Wounded people are pouring in non-stop ... I don't know how many have been wounded because the injured are lining the street outside the hospital," said an employee of the Tebnin hospital in southern Lebanon, requesting anonymity citing security concerns.

The Zionist entity said its air strikes on southern and eastern Lebanon had targeted hundreds of Hezbollah sites, and it warned of more to come. Lebanon's health ministry said the strikes had killed more than 350 people including 21 children, the highest single-day toll since Hezbollah and the Zionist entity began trading fire when the Gaza war erupted on October 7.

At a hospital near the southern city of Nabatiyeh, less than 15 kilometers (nine miles) from the southern Lebanese border, doctor Jamal Badran described "a disaster and a massacre". "They struck near my house," he told AFP by telephone. "I had just returned from the hospital, where there are many dead and wounded. "They bombed us while we were recovering wounded people" from a strike site, he added.

In the southern city of Sidon, an AFP correspon-

dent saw traffic jams on the main highway to Beirut, as families fled the strikes in cars and vans. Some of the areas hit on Monday had largely been spared from the near-daily cross-border fire. The Zionist entity said earlier this month its focus was shifting northwards towards Lebanon. Monday's strikes came after Hezbollah communications devices exploded last week in an attack blamed on the entity, and after a strike on south Beirut killed a top Hezbollah commander and dozens more people.

### 'Sudden escalation'

Lebanese journalist Nazir Reda was trying to reach his hometown of Babbliyah, some 25 kilometers from the border, to pull his family, including his baby boy, away from the violence. "No one expected such a completely sudden escalation to reach even villages that were safe, like Babbliyah, and that had not been bombed in previous wars," he said while stuck in bumper-to-bumper traffic as he drove from Beirut.

He said he had left his children in the village because their school was supposed to reopen in a few days' time, and he thought they would be safer than in Beirut's southern suburbs, where he usually lives. "I had to rush south again and take the children to Beirut," he told AFP, adding that the family would stay with friends in a Christian-majority neighborhood in Beirut.

"Everyone is heading (to Beirut) with their children and their belongings — it's the first time we see such panic since 2006," when the Zionist entity went to war in Lebanon. Bilal Kachmar, a disaster management official in the southern coastal city of Tyre, said roads were packed with people driving away from their towns and villages. Hundreds rushed to a school-turned-shelter in Tyre, with many others waiting on the streets with their belongings to see what would happen next, Kachmar told AFP.

### Texts and calls

Lebanon's education ministry said all educational institutions would shut for two days. In Nabatiyeh, teacher Adra Kanso said strikes hit "close to residential areas and a complex of schools" that had not yet opened for the new academic year.

In Beirut, several parents said their children's schools and kindergartens had contacted them, to ask them to pick up their kids. Lebanon's official National News Agency said people were receiving phone messages from the Zionist entity on their landlines, warning them to evacuate, with even Information Minister Ziad Makary's office receiving a call.

Other people reported receiving mobile phone text messages with similar warnings from an unidentified sender. The reports came after the Zionist



BEIRUT: A Lebanese man checks a message received on his mobile phone in Beirut on September 23, 2024, calling people to evacuate the areas where Hezbollah "hides its weapons".

military told people in Lebanon to move away from Hezbollah targets and vowed to carry out more strikes, in the first such warning to people in Lebanon since the war in Gaza erupted. — AFP



GAZA: Maher Zino, 39, helps his daughter study in their tent at a makeshift camp in al-Zawayda in the central Gaza Strip on September 15, 2024. — AFP photos



KHAN YUNIS: Palestinian paramedic Maha Wafi, 43, speaks on the phone while walking past an ambulance vehicle in Khan Yunis.

## Bereaved and destitute: Gazans speak of loss a year after October 7

**GAZA:** In a year of war waged by the Zionist entity in Gaza, the people of Gaza have lost nearly everything: their loved ones, their homes, their careers and their dreams. AFP spoke to a student, a paramedic and a former civil servant in Gaza, to hear how the conflict has destroyed their lives.

### The student stopped in his tracks

Fares Al-Farra, 19, was as brilliant at school as he was ambitious. Two months before October 7 last year, he graduated with top marks and enrolled in Gaza's University College of Applied Sciences to study artificial intelligence and data science. "I had many ambitions and goals, and I was always confident that one day I would achieve them," he said.

Days after Hamas' attack on the Zionist entity, the Zionist military bombed part of the university. Farra and his family fled their home in the southern city of Khan Yunis as it became a battleground, forcing them to shelter for months in a makeshift camp.

They returned home when Zionist troops with-

drew from the area, only for it to then be bombed, demolishing the walls, breaking Farra's arm and killing his close friend Abu Hassan. "He always took care of me," Farra said of his friend, who experienced with him forced displacement. "He was a good person." The hardship of war has chipped away at Farra's optimism and his hopes for an education. "It feels like all paths are closed," he said. He fears his dreams will no longer be a priority once the war ends. "There will be more basic needs" to fulfil, he said. Still, he said he longs for an end to the conflict, and that he can "achieve (his) dreams and goals".

### Paramedic and mother

Maha Wafi, 43, said she "really, really loves" her job as a paramedic in Khan Yunis, because she finds meaning in being able to help others. "We go to the people to tell them: 'we hear you'," she said. She also loved her life with Anis, her husband of 24 years, their five children and their beautiful house.

But the war forced her family to flee their home and seek shelter in a camp, just as the flow of wounded and sick increased due to the relentless bombardment, piling pressure on Gaza's poorly equipped medical workers. Then, in early December, Wafi's husband was arrested. She has not seen him since.

She worries for her partner, but she must face the hardships of war alone. She takes care of their five

children while continuing to work as a paramedic. "You're living in a tent ... you have to bring water, fetch gas, light a fire and deal with the hardships of everything," she said. "All of this is psychological pressure on a working woman," Wafi said, sitting by her ambulance, before scrubbing blood from its floor.

During the war, she has seen people killed and maimed. She narrowly escaped death when a strike hit a vehicle right next to her ambulance. All she longs for now, she said, is for her husband to be released, and for life to go back to the way it was before the war. "I don't want anything more than how it was before October 7," she said.

### The civil servant turned beggar

Until October 7, Maher Zino, 39, lived a life of "beautiful routine" as a government employee earning what he described as a decent wage. Together with his wife Fatima, they were raising their three children in Gaza City. A year on, they have been displaced "so many times that it's hard for me to count", he said from his shelter in an olive grove in central Gaza. Moving from Gaza City to Khan Yunis in the south, to Rafah by the Egyptian border, and then back to central Gaza, the family had to start from scratch each time. "Set up a tent, build a bathroom, buy basic furniture, and find clothes because you've left everything behind," he said. — AFP

## Russia, Ukraine cross swords in sea dispute court battle

**THE HAGUE:** Bitter enemies Russia and Ukraine clashed at the world's oldest arbitration court on Monday over a long-running case about access to coastal waters around the annexed Crimea peninsula. Far from the battlefields of eastern Ukraine and Kursk, diplomats fired legal broadsides at each other in the rarefied Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) housed in the Peace Palace in The Hague.

Anton Korynevych, Ukraine's main representative, accused Russia of thinking it was above international law and could "play by its own rules." "Ukraine is here to prove Russia's many violations of the laws of the sea and to demonstrate that Russia is not free to rewrite the laws of the sea," added Korynevych.

He said the Kerch Bridge Moscow had built to connect Crimea to the Russian mainland impeded international shipping, which he said was also hampered by excessive Russian checks. "Russia now views the Kerch Strait, the Sea of Azov, and perhaps even parts of the Black Sea as its proprietary waters," Korynevych told the court. "Russia wants these waters to be viewed as part of its 21st century empire."

Responding for Russia, Gennady Kuzmin said Kyiv's case was "completely groundless and hopeless." After the annexation of Crimea, the seas in dispute were internal waters and therefore fell outside the scope of international shipping laws, said Kuzmin. He said the Kerch Bridge was built to relieve what he termed a Ukrainian "blockage" of Crimea and denied it inhibited shipping. "All of Ukraine's claims are baseless, fall outside of the scope of your jurisdiction, and should be dismissed in their entirety," said Kuzmin.

The case dates all the way back to September 2016, when Kyiv dragged Moscow to the PCA to "vindicate its rights as the coastal state". Ukraine asked the court to order Russia to "cease its internationally wrongful actions in the relevant waters." Russia launched an objection in 2019, claiming the court lacked jurisdiction. — AFP

## International

# Sri Lanka's leader says no magic solution to crisis

## Dissanayaka takes oath at televised ceremony, to form interim government until new parliament elected

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka's first leftist president was sworn in to office Monday and vowed to restore public faith in politics, but said he had no magic solution to the hardships suffered following an unprecedented economic crisis.

Self-avowed Marxist Anura Kumara Dissanayaka of the People's Liberation Front (JVP) took his oath at the colonial-era Presidential Secretariat in Colombo after trouncing his nearest rivals in Saturday's vote. The previously fringe politician, whose party led two failed uprisings that left tens of thousands dead, saw a surge of support after the 2022 economic meltdown immiserated millions of ordinary Sri Lankans.

Dissanayaka, the bearded 55-year-old son of a laborer, was sworn in by chief justice Jayantha Jayasuriya in a televised ceremony attended by diplomats, lawmakers, Buddhist and other clergy and the military. "I am not a conjuror, I am not a magician, I am a common citizen," he said after taking his oath. "I have strengths and limitations, things I know and things I don't ... my responsibility is to be part of a collective effort to end this crisis."

A small crowd of JVP supporters gathered outside the secretariat, waving pictures of Dissanayaka and the national flag. "We hope something good will happen," construction worker Thilina Hansaka told AFP. "I don't think much of anything can be done overnight, or even in five years. Let's give him a chance and see what he is capable of doing."

Dissanayaka succeeds Ranil Wickremesinghe, who took office at the peak of the financial crisis following the government's first foreign debt default and months of punishing food, fuel and medicine shortages. Wickremesinghe, 75, imposed steep tax hikes and other austerity measures under the terms of an International Monetary Fund (IMF) bailout. His policies ended the shortages and returned the economy to growth but left millions struggling to make ends meet.

Prime Minister Dinesh Gunawardena resigned shortly before the ceremony, clearing the way for Dissanayaka to appoint his own cabinet. Dissanayaka's party has said he wants to have an interim administration until a fresh parliament is elected. The JVP has only three lawmakers in the 225-member legislature.

He has softened some policies since his rise to popularity, saying he believes in an open economy and is not totally opposed to privatization. He has vowed to press ahead with the IMF rescue package but modify its terms in order to deliver tax cuts. Colombo's stock exchange recovered early jitters in its first day of trade since the vote to finish 1.5 percent higher.

### 'Work with other nations'

Addressing concerns about the JVP's historical anti-West and anti-India stance, Dissanayaka said he wanted international support to rebuild the economy. "Regardless of the power divisions in the world, we intend to work with other nations to benefit our country," he said, as Colombo-based diplomats watched from the balcony of the presi-



COLOMBO: Sri Lanka's new President Anura Kumara Dissanayaka attends his swearing-in ceremony. — AFP

dential office.

India and China — Sri Lanka's biggest neighbor and largest bilateral creditor respectively — are competing for influence in the island nation, strategically situated on global east-west sea routes. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi said he looked

forward to working closely with Dissanayaka to "strengthen our multifaceted cooperation for the benefit of our people and the entire region". Chinese President Xi Jinping said he hoped to work with the new president "to continue our traditional friendship (and) enhance mutual political trust". — AFP

## 'Respect all citizens', French PM tells new minority government

PARIS: French Prime Minister Michel Barnier on Monday urged his cabinet to "show respect for all our fellow citizens" as his freshly-appointed government went to work, backed by only a minority in parliament. A long wait for the new French government — 11 weeks after a snap election called by President Emmanuel Macron — ended Saturday when the new team was announced, marking a clear shift to the right. In the July vote a bloc of leftist parties, the New Popular Front (NPF) came first, but failed to persuade Macron that they could form a government with any staying power.

Instead, the president turned to veteran conservative Barnier to head up the new government which has the support of Macron allies, some conservatives and centrists in the National Assembly, but no majority — which makes it vulnerable to being toppled in a no-confidence motion. Its critics say that the government lacks legitimacy, failing to reflect the election outcome. Barnier urged his ministers to "show respect for all our fellow citizens and all political parties and listen to everybody". At a breakfast gathering Monday, he also asked his team to be "beyond reproach and modest" as they take up their portfolios, an official from the prime minister's office told AFP. The 39 ministers should "act first and talk second" to the media or the public, he said. "No bluster, please." Participants were tight-lipped about the afternoon's first full cabinet meeting with Presi-



PARIS: French President Emmanuel Macron (left) and French Prime Minister Michel Barnier (right) meet with members of the new government at the Elysee Palace, in Paris, on September 23, 2024. — AFP

dent Macron that lasted less than half an hour.

The Elysee Palace encounter went "very well", newly-installed Justice Minister Didier Migaud said. On Sunday evening, Barnier had called for "the greatest possible cohesion" within the government, and for a willingness to find "compromise". The leftist opposition has already said they will bring a no-confidence motion in parliament at an early opportunity, while the far-right National Rally (RN) has also blasted the cabinet lineup. Barnier on Monday countered that his picks made up a "republican, progressive and pro-European" administration.

Left-wing criticism has homed in on the new interior minister, Bruno Retailleau, a social conservative and defender of law-and-order, who has in the past opposed same-sex marriage and the inclusion of the right to abortion in the French constitution.

sem, said Sunday the group was in a "new phase, namely an open reckoning" with the Zionist entity and was ready for "all military possibilities".

He spoke after Hezbollah said it fired rockets at military sites near Haifa and later launched "dozens of rockets" at two Zionist bases "in response to the (Zionist) enemy's attacks on the south and the Bekaa". The attack came after a Zionist strike on southern Beirut Friday killed its elite Radwan Force commander, Ibrahim Aqil, and coordinated communications device blasts that Hezbollah blamed on the Zionist entity killed 39 people and wounded almost 3,000 on Tuesday and Wednesday.

Lebanese Prime Minister Najib Mikati urged the United Nations and world powers to deter what he called the Zionist entity's "plan that aims to destroy Lebanese villages and towns". US President Joe Biden, whose country is the Zionist entity's main ally and weapons supplier, said his country was "working to de-escalate in a way that allows people to return home safely".

The Pentagon said it was sending a small number of additional US military personnel to the Middle East after thousands were deployed earlier alongside warships, fighter jets and air defense systems. UN chief Antonio Guterres was "gravely alarmed" by civilian casualties in Lebanon his spokesman said. The United Nations peacekeeping force in south Lebanon warned "any further escalation of this dangerous situation could have far-reaching and devastating consequences".

Iran's newly elected president, Masoud Pezeshkian, accused the Zionist entity of seeking "to create this wider conflict". The Zionist entity's military offensive has killed at least 41,455 people in Gaza, most of them civilians. — Agencies

security chops at a time when the administration is under increasing pressure to contain strife in the Middle East.

The talks at the White House are also expected to include discussions on the Gulf state's involvement in the Sudan conflict and its plans for artificial intelligence, an ambitious effort also drawing interest from US geopolitical rival China. The UAE, expected to be a key contributor to the Gaza Strip's post-war reconstruction after the Zionist-Hamas war, also has close ties with Russia and refused to condemn the 2022 invasion of Ukraine.

Presidential advisor Anwar Gargash said the Emiratis, who want to reorient their economy away from oil and towards new technologies such as AI, were thinking "economy first, prosperity first" in their "strategic relationship" with the United States. Gargash said last week that the UAE's ties with the United States were "our most important strategic relationship," even as "sometimes people like to talk about some tensions in the relationship". — Agencies

## As wars rage, UN critics say body is...

Continued from Page 1

and security in the world, and it's obvious that it's not because of the UN as an institution that that doesn't happen," UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres told AFP. "It's because of member states."

The Security Council, the UN body charged with securing and enforcing peace, is largely paralyzed on the issues of Gaza and Ukraine because of the vetoes wielded by Washington and Moscow. The deep divisions between the council's permanent members — Britain, France, China, Russia and the United States — mean that its "legitimacy and relevance" are eroded, complained Slovenia's UN ambassador Samuel Zbogar, the rotating president of the body. He also condemned the "poisonous mood" in the council, blaming Washington and Moscow for it.

The fractious situation at the UN Security Council is, however, nothing new. "The UN has never been able to stop conflicts involving the major powers," said Richard Gowan of the International Crisis Group, accusing countries with dominant militaries of hiding behind the UN. "It's ultimately better to have the US and Russia arguing over Syria in the Security Council rather than fighting a hot war in Syria."

Oona Hathaway, a professor of international law at Yale University, defended the Security Council, saying many of the institution's successes were inherently invisible. "What you don't see is the wars that don't happen," she said, calling for the rest of the UN's 193 members to do their

bit for peace through the General Assembly. Though that body's resolutions are non-binding, Hathaway said that the assembly is more powerful than it perceives itself and that it could, for example, create a tribunal to hold Russia accountable for its Ukraine war.

Academics have stressed the importance of the UN's peacekeeping operations, with 70,000 "blue helmets" deployed worldwide for the protection of civilians. The lofty aims of the missions have not spared them from bitter opposition, however. In Mali, for instance, the peacekeeping force was forced out by the ruling junta in 2023, who said the force had failed. "There's a lot of hate of the UN but this is actually the best multilateral system that we have," said Gissou Nia of the US-based Atlantic Council think tank. No other organization could be built today in the UN's image, given a global geopolitical situation that is riven with deep divides, she said.

Jean-Marie Guehenno, the former head of UN peacekeeping, insisted that the institution was irreplaceable, and that while "the UN is in a rough patch, it would not be in our interest to shut up shop." "So (countries) whine, they say the UN is useless — but at the same time they acknowledge it's still a useful forum, and a bellwether. A bellwether that has been trampled, insulted, and left in bad shape — but with the hope of a better future," he said.

Guterres insists the UN's humanitarian role is "more important than ever" and that the organization's agencies have "been rescuing people in dramatic circumstances". While some observers would like to see the UN seize the initiative diplomatically more often, Guterres acknowledges that "the secretary-general of the United Nations has very limited power". "No power and no money," he concluded. — AFP

Americans to have a dialogue and negotiations. We have never approved of Russian aggression against Ukrainian territory," Pezeshkian said, again denying the missile shipments. Ukraine, which enjoys sympathy from much of the Iranian public, has threatened to sever relations with Tehran over the missiles issue. Western powers have hit Iran with a new round of sanctions, including targeting air agreements, with Secretary of State Antony Blinken saying the missiles contradict Pezeshkian's calls for better relations.

Pezeshkian also made a new appeal Monday for the restoration of a 2015 nuclear deal which was scrapped by former US president Donald Trump. President Joe Biden took office saying he would restore the agreement but talks failed, due in part to disagreement over the extent of sanctions relief. Any high-level US diplomacy with Pezeshkian is highly unlikely ahead of the US presidential election in November, with Iran toxic in US politics and Tehran unwilling to make concessions before knowing the next administration's policies. — AFP

## BLOODBATH IN LEBANON...

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families" had been displaced. "We sleep and wake up to bombardment... that's what our life has become," said Wafaa Ismail, 60, a housewife from the southern village of Zawtar.

World powers implored the Zionist entity and Hezbollah to pull back from the brink of all-out war, with the focus of violence shifting sharply from the Zionist entity's southern front with Gaza to its northern border with Lebanon. Egypt — a key mediator in the Gaza conflict — urged the UN Security Council to intervene following the Zionist entity's "dangerous escalation", while Iraq appealed for an urgent meeting of Arab states on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York.

Zionist army chief Herzli Halevi said the strikes hit combat infrastructure Hezbollah had been building for two decades. Zionist Defense Minister Yoav Gallant called Monday "a significant peak" in the operation. Zionist Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the Zionist entity was acting to change the "security balance" in the north by preempting threats.

Explosions near the ancient city of Baalbek in eastern Lebanon sent smoke billowing into the sky. Hezbollah, a powerful political and military force in Lebanon, has exchanged near-daily fire with the Zionist entity in support for its Palestinian ally Hamas. Its deputy chief, Naim Qas-

## Biden, MBZ hold talks on Lebanon...

Continued from Page 1

trailblazers, always looking to the future, always making big bets" and saying it was about to become a "major defense partner" of the United States. Sheikh Mohamed said his country had an "unwavering commitment" to working with the United States and deepening the strategic partnership between the allies.

Harris also plans to discuss efforts to secure a Gaza ceasefire and hostage deal in her separate meeting with the UAE leader, the first ever visit by a UAE president to the White House, the White House official said. The meeting will give Harris, the Democratic nominee for the Nov 5 presidential election, an opportunity to demonstrate national

## International

# Rescuers comb riverbanks after Japan floods kill 7

## 7 others remain missing in disaster which hit area still recovering from major earthquake

**WAJIMA:** Rescuers combed the debris-strewn banks of a river in central Japan on Monday, searching for drowning victims after homes were swept away in flooding and landslides that claimed at least seven lives. The river on the Noto Peninsula — an area still reeling from a devastating earthquake in January — overflowed at the weekend, becoming a muddy torrent that inundated roads and a remote hamlet.

After the skies finally cleared, police and firefighters from across Japan were joined by residents and the father of a 14-year-old girl who is one of seven missing people. The number of deaths reached seven, with one severely injured and 11 mildly injured as of Monday afternoon, Ishikawa prefecture said on their website.

Rain pounded the region from Saturday, with more than 540 millimeters (21 inches) recorded in the city of Wajima over 72 hours — the heaviest continuous rain since comparative data became available. The flooding disaster hit the area as it was making a fragile recovery from a magnitude-7.5 quake on New Year's Day, which toppled buildings, triggered tsunami waves and sparked a major fire.

Floodwaters inundated emergency housing built for those who had lost their homes in the January 1 earthquake, which killed at least 374 people, according to the Ishikawa regional government. "I have to start over, through another cold winter," 76-year-old former sushi chef Shoichi Miyakoshi, whose wife was killed in a 2007 earthquake, told AFP.

On Monday afternoon, 3,600 households still had no power after the rain, according to the Hokuriku Electric Power Company. More than 100 areas in the region were isolated, with roads blocked due to landslides.

### 'I want to hug her'

In Wajima, one of the cities worst affected by the recent earthquake, dirty puddles and piles of branches covered the streets. Widespread evacuation orders were in place over the weekend but several residents returned to clear the mud.

Takaya Kiso, the father of the missing 14-year-old, told TV Asahi and other local media that he hopes she will be found soon, as "I want to hug her". His daughter "was asleep so she wasn't aware of the situation. She woke up because of my phone call. When she looked outside, it was like a sea, with floodwater covering roads," he said in Wajima. But when Kiso rushed back from work, the house was gone, the reports said.

Akemi Yamashita, a 54-year-old Wajima resident, told AFP she had been driving on Saturday when "within only 30 minutes or so, water gushed into the street and quickly rose to half the height of my car". "I was talking to other residents of Wajima yesterday, and they said, 'It's so heartbreaking to live in this city'. I got teary when I heard that," she said, describing the earthquake and floods as "like something from a movie". "I can't help thinking the Noto region might be cursed or something." Scientists say human-driven climate



**WAJIMA:** Rescue personnel search for missing people in debris washed away from flooding along the Tsukada river on September 23, 2024. — AFP

change is intensifying the risk posed by heavy rains because a warmer atmosphere holds more water. The areas under the emergency warning saw "heavy rain

of unprecedented levels", a weather agency forecast had warned on Saturday, advising people to "secure your safety immediately". — AFP



**UKHIA, Bangladesh:** Rohingya refugee Bibi Faiza sits with her husband and child. — AFP photos



This aerial photo taken on September 12, 2024 shows the Kutupalong refugee camp in Ukhiya.

## Rohingya refugees detail worsening violence in Myanmar

**COX'S BAZAR, Bangladesh:** Rohingya refugee Syed fled Myanmar for a second time last month, after he was forced to fight alongside the military that drove his family out of their homeland years earlier. Syed, whose name has been changed to protect him from reprisals, is one of thousands of young men from the stateless and persecuted Muslim minority rounded up to wage a war not of their own making.

Their conscription into the ranks of junta-run Myanmar's military has prompted revenge attacks against civilians and pushed thousands more into Bangladesh, already host to around a million Rohingya refugees. "The people there are suffering a lot. I saw that with my own eyes," Syed told AFP, soon after his escape and return to the squalid Bangladeshi relief camp he has called home for the past seven years. "Some are starving, they are dying of hunger," the 23-year-old added. "Everyone else is busy trying to save their own lives."

Syed said he was conscripted by a Rohingya armed group operating in the camps in June and sent to fight against the Arakan Army, a rebel group waging war against Myanmar's junta to carve out its own autonomous homeland. He and other Rohingya recruits were put to work as porters, digging ditches and fetching water for Myanmar troops as they banded against advancing rebel troops. "They didn't

give us any training," he said. "The military stay in the police stations, they don't go out."

Sent on patrol to a Muslim village, Syed was able to give his captors the slip and cross back over into Bangladesh. He is one of around 14,000 Rohingya to have made the crossing in recent months as the fighting near the border has escalated, according to figures given by the UN refugee agency to the Bangladeshi government.

### Dead bodies 'everywhere'

Experts say that at least 2,000 Rohingya have been forcibly recruited from refugee camps in Bangladesh this year, along with many more Rohingya living in Myanmar who were also conscripted. Those pressed into service in Bangladesh say they were forced to do so by armed groups, apparently in return for concessions by Myanmar's junta that could allow them to return to their homelands.

Both the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army and the Rohingya Solidarity Organisation, the two armed groups operating in the camps, have denied conscripting refugees. "We had never forcefully recruited anyone for us or others," senior RSO leader Ko Ko Linn told AFP.

The UN Human Rights Office said it had information that the Myanmar military and the Arakan Army had both committed serious abuses against the Rohingya during the conflict. Other rights groups say that the press-ganging of Rohingya into service alongside Myanmar troops has fueled retaliatory attacks by the Arakan Army.

In the worst documented instance, watchdog Fortify Rights said last month that the rebel group had killed more than 100 Rohingya men, women and children in a drone and mortar bombardment on the

a snail's pace", expressing their "anguish" at some cases taking as long as 65 years. Nearly 3,000 cases nationwide have been pending for at least half a century.

### 'Justice denied'

Sonia, against many expectations, eventually got justice. In her case, part of a wider rape and blackmail trial, 18 men were charged. But only a handful were initially in detention. Defense lawyers demanded the trial restart each time another arrest was made.

As the years wore on, trial lawyers came and went. Evidence was trawled over again and again. Virendra Singh Rathore, who was at least the tenth public prosecutor to have handled the case, said it was "traumatic" for survivors. "They would ask us, why we are bothering them, and, why the accused were not being punished," he said.

On August 20, a court in Ajmer sentenced six men to life imprisonment, ending a complex case that had seen years of twists and turns, several convictions and subsequent acquittals. Rathore said the lives of the survivors would have been very different had justice been swifter. "Others, who have had to endure such crimes, would have had the courage to come forward," he said. "For the common man, justice delayed is basically justice denied — or completely absent."

### 'Overburdened'

The justice ministry has ordered hugely back-

border. The Arakan Army has repeatedly denied responsibility for the attack and accusations of targeting Rohingya civilians in general.

But many of the thousands of new refugees crossing into Bangladesh accuse the group of killings. Mohammad Johar, 22, told AFP that his brother-in-law was killed in a drone attack he blamed on the Arakan Army while the pair were fleeing the border town of Maungdaw earlier this month. "Dead bodies were lying everywhere, dead bodies were on the banks of the river," he said. "The Arakan Army is more powerful there. The Myanmar military can't keep up with the Arakan Army. And they both bomb each other, but it's the Muslims who are dying."

### 'Beyond our capacity'

Bangladesh has struggled for years to accommodate its immense population of refugees, most of whom arrived after a 2017 military crackdown in Myanmar which is the subject of an ongoing UN genocide investigation. Still reeling from the sudden overthrow of its previous government by a student-led revolution last month, Bangladesh says the new arrivals are not welcome.

"We are sorry to say this, but it's beyond our capacity to give shelter to anyone else," interim foreign minister Touhid Hossain said this month. But after deadly attacks on some of the estimated 600,000 Rohingya still living in Myanmar, the new arrivals said they had no choice but to seek safety across the border.

"After seeing dead bodies, we were scared that more attacks were coming," 20-year-old Bibi Faiza told AFP after crossing the border with her young daughter. "I don't hear gunshots any more, and there is peace here." — AFP

logged courts to prioritize the "speedy trial of specific cases of heinous nature", but their caseloads are overwhelming. At least 44 million cases are pending across the country of 1.4 billion people.

That judicial jam could take decades — if not centuries — to clear at current speeds, even without a continuing pileup of fresh cases. Procedures are bogged down in rigid rules rooted in the British colonial era. There has been little investment in digital systems to streamline and organize hearings, while a meagre ratio of judges — just 21 per million of population in India — means procedures are notoriously slow.

New Delhi-based lawyer Mishika Singh, who founded the Neev Foundation to improve legal access for the city's poor, warns those seeking justice in an "overburdened" system to be ready to wait. "We tell them very clearly that even to get an interim order, it can easily take a year to two years," she said. "For the final decision to come, it can take three to four years, easily."

### 'Never-ending saga'

Neelam Krishnamoorthy's two children, aged 13 and 17, were among the 59 killed in a blaze in a Delhi cinema in 1997. After an epic legal fight, cinema owners Sushil and Gopal Ansari were sentenced in 2007 for negligence to two years in jail. But that was challenged on appeal, and reduced to a fine. Another case of tampering with evidence saw them sen-

## Amazon forest lost an area the size of Germany and France

**RIO DE JANEIRO:** The world's biggest rainforest, the Amazon, has lost an area about the size of Germany and France combined to deforestation in four decades, a study showed Monday. The South American jungle, spanning nine countries, is seen as crucial to the fight against climate change due to its ability to absorb planet-warming carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.

Deforestation, mainly for mining and agricultural purposes, has led to the loss of 12.5 percent of the Amazon's plant cover from 1985 to 2023, according to RAISG, a collective of researchers and NGOs. This amounts to 88 million hectares (880,000 square kilometers, 339,773 square miles) of forest cover lost across Brazil, Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, Venezuela, Guyana, Suriname and French Guiana.

RAISG experts reported an "accelerated transformation" of the Amazon, with an "alarming increase" in the use of land previously occupied by forest for mining, crops, or livestock. "A large number of ecosystems have disappeared to give way to immense expanses of pastures, soybean fields or other monocultures, or have been transformed into craters for gold mining," they said.

"With the loss of the forest, we emit more carbon into the atmosphere and this disrupts an entire ecosystem that regulates the climate and the hydrological cycle, clearly affecting temperatures," Sandra Rio Caceres, from the Institute of the Common Good — a Peruvian association that took part in the study — told AFP. She said she believes the loss of vegetation in the Amazon is directly linked to severe drought and wildfires affecting several South American countries.

The World Weather Attribution network of scientists said Sunday that climate change was increasing the risk and severity of fires in the Amazon and Pantanal wetlands which are releasing "massive amounts" of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. "Never-ending heat has combined with low rainfall to turn these precious ecosystems into highly flammable tinderboxes," said Clair Barnes, a researcher from Imperial College London. "As long as the world burns fossil fuels, the risk of devastating wildfires will continue to increase in the Amazon and Pantanal," she added. — AFP

## Long wait for justice in India's backlogged courts

**NEW DELHI:** Sonia waited 32 years to see her rapists convicted, a glacially slow legal process all too common in India where half a million cases have been pending for longer than two decades. The violence inflicted on her was horrific and the trauma was compounded by years of painful stop-start trials, beginning in 1992 and ending only last month with six men jailed for life.

"My heart is full of pain," said Sonia, 52, who as a young woman, was bound, gagged and raped in her home city of Ajmer in the northern state of Rajasthan. "I could not do anything," said Sonia, whose name has been changed to protect her identity. "This should not happen to any girl."

In the world's most populous nation, a staggering 533,000 cases have been languishing in court for between 20 and 30 years, according to justice ministry figures. More than three-quarters of them are criminal cases.

Last year, the Supreme Court warned victims may become "disillusioned when the legal process moves at



**GHAZIABAD:** A man drafts a legal document as he sits under an umbrella outside the court in Ghaziabad. — AFP

tenced to seven years in 2021, but a court in July set the pair free due to their age.

Today, 27 years since her children died, Krishnamoorthy is fighting an appeal case demanding they serve jail time. "When I went to the court initially, I thought it was what I saw in films: you go to court, you have four or five hearings and justice is delivered," she said. "I was in for a rude shock. This is a never-ending saga." Krishnamoorthy accused the judicial system of only acting swiftly when a case captured public attention. "They intervene if there is a public outrage," she said. "Don't other victims of crime like us need justice?" — AFP

# Business

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2024

## Boursa Kuwait, UN SSE to hold workshop on sustainability disclosure standards

Workshop being held in collaboration with IFRS and the World Bank's IFC on Tuesday

**KUWAIT:** Boursa Kuwait and the United Nations Sustainable Stock Exchanges (UN SSE) initiative will organize a workshop on the latest sustainability disclosure standards for market participants and interested parties on Tuesday (September 24, 2024), in collaboration with the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) Foundation and the World Bank's International Finance Corporation (IFC).

The workshop, which is conducted virtually by SSE Academy Head Tiffany Grabski and SSE Senior Specialist Lois Guthrie as well as Jarlath Molloy and Tim Kasim from the IFRS Foundation, allows applicants to participate in a CPD-Certified training workshop on the latest sustainability disclosure standards by the International Financial Reporting Standards, allowing them to ask questions and interact with the top experts on the topic.

The International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) Foundation launched IFRS S1, "General Requirements for Sustainability-related Financial Information" and IFRS S2 "Climate-related Disclosures" in June 2023, ushering in a new era of corporate sustainability-related disclosure to capital markets worldwide. These standards, developed by the International Sustainability Standards Board (ISSB), provide a global baseline for sustainability disclosures, providing companies with clear guidelines for globally consistent disclosure of sustainability-related financial information.

Boursa Kuwait's Head of Markets Noura Al-Abdulkareem hailed the workshop, saying "Boursa Kuwait is committed to enhancing the awareness of participants in the Kuwaiti capital market, ensuring they stay informed about the latest trends, standards, and practices in the global investment community, particularly in ESG reporting and sustainability. As investors increasingly call for more comprehensive climate-related disclosures, companies are integrating climate risks into their regular sustainability reporting, fueled by a heightened awareness of the significant impact of climate risks and opportunities on financial markets. I would like to extend my gratitude to the IFRS Foundation, the UN Sustainable Stock Exchanges initiative, and the World Bank's International Finance Corporation for their valuable insights and look forward to continuing our collaboration in the future."

SSE Academy Head Tiffany Grabski added that sustainability is no longer an option, but a necessity, saying: "At SSE Academy, we firmly believe that integrating sustainability into business practices is no longer optional—it's an imperative for long-term success. Our goal is to empower companies to take a proactive role in this transformation by equipping them with the tools, knowledge, and strategies necessary to lead by example. By embedding sustainable development into the core of their strategies and operations, businesses can drive positive change, mitigate risks, and seize opportunities that

contribute not only to their own growth but also to the well-being of future generations."

She added, "Boursa Kuwait has shown exemplary leadership in advancing sustainability within the financial sector. Their commitment to integrating environmental, social, and governance (ESG) principles into their operations sets a powerful precedent for other exchanges in the region. By prioritizing sustainability, Boursa Kuwait is not only enhancing market resilience but fostering a more inclusive and responsible investment environment as well."

The initiative forms part of Boursa Kuwait's efforts to create a lasting meaningful impact on the community where it operates as part of its Corporate Sustainability strategy and ongoing efforts to equip all market participants with an in-depth understanding of the functioning of capital markets and various tools and techniques required to make informed investment decisions and effectively meet investors' needs. It is also in line with Goal 4 – Quality Education – and Goal 17 – Partnership for the Goals – of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Boursa Kuwait's Corporate Sustainability strategy stipulates ensuring initiatives apply and fall in line with the company's corporate social responsibility (CSR), industry best practice standards and investor expectations, creating strong and sustainable partnerships that ultimately achieve success and allow Boursa Kuwait to leverage the capabilities and



Noura Al-Abdulkareem



Tiffany Grabski

strengths of other companies or organizations that have experience in different fields, and integrating sustainability efforts with the company culture, in order to achieve longevity and an ongoing impact that is carried on and instilled in the day-to-day operations of the stock exchange.

As part of the strategy, Boursa Kuwait has launched many initiatives in partnership with local and international organizations, focusing on support for nongovernmental organizations and charity programs, financial literacy and capital market awareness, the empowerment of women, and environmental protection.

## Eurozone business activity slumps after Olympics boost

**LONDON:** Eurozone business activity contracted sharply and unexpectedly this month as the bloc's dominant services industry flatlined while a downturn in manufacturing accelerated, a survey showed on Monday. The downturn appeared broad-based with Germany, Europe's largest economy, seeing its decline deepen while France – the currency union's second biggest – returned to contraction following August's Olympics boost.

That fuelled bets of more policy easing by the European Central Bank and the euro fell sharply, on track for its biggest daily fall against the dollar in more than three months. ICOP's preliminary composite euro zone Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI), compiled by S&P Global, sank to 48.9 this month from August's 51.0, below the 50 mark that separates growth from contraction for the first time since February.

A Reuters poll predicted a modest decline to 50.5. "As the Olympic flame was extinguished, so was euro zone optimism. The August uptick in the PMI was met by a sharp decline in September. This further fuels growth concerns in the bloc as inflation worries fade," said Bert Colijn, an economist at ING. Overall demand fell at the fastest rate in eight months. The new business index plunged to 47.2 from 49.1. A services PMI sank to 50.5 from 52.9, below all expectations in the Reuters poll which had predicted a more modest decline to 52.1. Euro zone government bond yields tumbled on the data, with yields on German debt falling the most.

Germany's economy contracted 0.1 percent in the second quarter and Monday's survey suggested it had extended its downturn in the third. A recession is normally defined as two consecutive quarters of contraction. "A technical recession seems to be baked in," said Cyrus de la Rubia, chief economist at Hamburg Commercial Bank, forecasting Germany's economy would shrink by 0.2 percent this quarter.

The drop came despite firms increasing charges at a



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

shallower rate. Services inflation eased and the output prices index came in at 52.0 versus August's 53.7, its lowest reading since April 2021. "The one positive development is that price pressures are easing. This will be reassuring for the ECB and perhaps raises the chance that policymakers will cut the deposit rate again in October," said Andrew Kenningham at Capital Economics.

On Sept 12 the ECB cut interest rates again and signaled a "declining path" for borrowing costs in the months ahead as inflation slows and economic growth in the euro zone falters. The ECB should keep cutting interest rates gradually, its chief economist said last week, but may need to speed up cuts

if the economy faltered. Central banks around the world are easing monetary policy. China's central bank supplied cash to its banking system for the first time in months on Monday while the US Federal Reserve kicked off an anticipated series of rate cuts last week with a larger-than-usual 50 basis point reduction. Meanwhile, in Britain – outside the European Union – businesses also reported a slowdown in growth this month, potentially encouraging the Bank of England to consider cutting interest rates again. A PMI covering euro zone manufacturing, which has been sub-50 for over two years and was forecast at 45.6, dropped to 44.8 from 45.8. An output index fell to 44.5 from 45.8. — Reuters

## CBK bonds and related Tawarruq

**KUWAIT:** The Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) announced the most recent issues of CBK bonds and related Tawarruq at a total value of KD 240 million for three months with a rate of return at 4.125 percent.

## German govt, auto industry hold crisis talks

**FRANKFURT:** The German government Monday hosted crisis talks to support the country's beleaguered auto industry, with Volkswagen reportedly calling for subsidies to boost slumping electric car demand. Germany's flagship auto industry is battling challenges on several fronts, from high manufacturing costs to a troubled transition to electric cars and weakening demand in key market China.

Among the hardest hit has been Volkswagen, Europe's biggest carmaker, which announced earlier this month that it urgently needed to cut costs, and was considering the closure of German plants for the first time in its 87-year history. Ahead of the talks, which were reportedly due to start on Monday afternoon, Volkswagen CEO Oliver Blume said it was a chance to push through rapid help for the industry.

"We have major challenges... Perhaps the biggest in the country at the moment," he told news channel NTV. German Economy Minister Robert Habeck is hosting the talks online, with participants including top carmakers, the VDA auto industry association, major suppliers and trade unions.

Among suggestions put forward include re-introducing subsidies for electric vehicles, which were phased out last year, leading to large falls in EV sales. The Spiegel news outlet reported that VW was calling for a government subsidy of 4,000 euros (\$4,450) for the purchase of a pure electric car if the manufacturer also offered a discount of 2,000 euros.

Blume said that "entire package" was needed, from subsidies to tax breaks and the price of charging for electric vehicles. "It is important to exchange ideas, to examine which levers can be used in the short, medium and long term and then to make bold decisions."

Another pressing matter was "CO2 regulations in Europe," Ola Kallenius, CEO of luxury carmaker Mercedes-Benz, told the Handelsblatt financial daily. Last week European carmakers appealed to the EU for "urgent" assistance to cope with stricter emissions regulations coming into effect in 2025 at a time of slumping electric vehicle sales. Concrete measures are unlikely to be announced directly after the talks, with decisions likely to be made later by Chancellor Olaf Scholz's whole government.

As well as VW, Germany's other leading manufacturers face major problems.

In recent weeks, both Mercedes and BMW lowered their outlooks for the year in part due to weak sales in China. After investing heavily in the world's number two economy in recent decades, German manufacturers have seen their market share shrink due to fierce competition from Chinese rivals, who have shifted more quickly to electric vehicles. Higher costs in Germany, in particular due to rising energy prices, have added to their problems. — AFP

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## Business

# InvestGB partners with Avaloq to elevate digital wealth and investment management

KUWAIT: As part of its continuous efforts to enhance and innovate its client experience, Gulf Capital Investment Company, "InvestGB", the fully-owned investment arm of Gulf Bank, has formed a strategic partnership with Avaloq, a global leader in private banking and wealth management technology.

Avaloq is a premium provider of front-to-back software and services for over 170 financial institutions around the world. Avaloq's clients include private banks, wealth managers and investment managers, as well as retail banks. Avaloq develops software that can be deployed flexibly through cloud-based software as a service (SaaS) or on-premises and offers Banking Operations outsourcing through its business process as a service (BPaaS) model. Avaloq is a subsidiary of NEC Corporation, a global leader in the integration of IT and network technologies.

This partnership marks a significant upgrade in InvestGB's digital wealth and investment management capabilities, providing clients with a more streamlined and sophisticated service. InvestGB will adopt Avaloq's advanced cloud platform, which is anticipated to revolutionize its core wealth management systems. The Avaloq platform will unify all of InvestGB's systems and data into a single infrastructure, enhancing service for both InvestGB's and Gulf Bank's clients. It provides benefits such as intuitive portfolio visualization, increased transparency with advanced self-service features, and the



Hani Al-Awadhi

latest security measures, making investments more efficient and secure.

Additionally, the platform will enable InvestGB to streamline its operations with specialized modules for investment consulting, fund management, and portfolio management, thereby increasing efficiency.

## Hani Al-Awadhi:

Our strategic partnership with Avaloq aligns perfectly with our commitment to innovation and our mission to deliver long-term value to our clients.

## Akash Anand:

We are excited to partner with InvestGB as our first client in Kuwait.



cy. Avaloq's solutions, especially RM Workplace, will integrate client data into a unified view, automate tasks such as portfolio rebalancing and investment proposals, and allow relationship managers to concentrate on personalized client interactions.

Furthermore, InvestGB's regulatory and compliance checks, including robust Know Your Client (KYC) processes, will be fully integrated into the platform, reinforcing the company's risk management framework.

Hani Al-Awadhi, Chief Executive Officer at InvestGB, commented: "Our strategic partnership with Avaloq aligns perfectly with our commitment

to innovation and our mission to deliver long-term value to our clients. By leveraging Avaloq's advanced technology, we are enhancing our digital transformation in wealth management, fostering growth through innovation, and positioning ourselves to address the evolving needs of our high-net-worth and corporate clients."

Akash Anand, Regional Director and Head of Middle East and Africa at Avaloq, remarked: "We are excited to partner with InvestGB as our first client in Kuwait. With Avaloq's expertise, we are dedicated to delivering exceptional value in wealth management. We look forward to supporting InvestGB in transforming the investment and wealth management sector in the region."

InvestGB is a Kuwaiti closed joint-stock company with a capital of KD 10 million. It provides a wide range of services in wealth and asset management, investment, and advisory services for high-net-worth individuals and institutional investors. The company is committed to preserving, growing, and diversifying its clients' wealth while maintaining the highest ethical standards, supported by a team of experienced investment and asset management professionals.

## China to deepen BRI bond with Sri Lanka under new leader: Xi

BEIJING: Chinese President Xi Jinping on Monday said he hoped to broaden cooperation with Sri Lanka under his Belt and Road infrastructure initiative (BRI) as he congratulated the island nation's new leader Anura Kumara Dissanayaka. Dissanayaka, a self-avowed Marxist, took his oath at the Presidential Secretariat in Colombo on Monday, vowing to restore public faith in politics.

The country is emerging from a years-long economic collapse blamed partly on struggling high-debt Chinese mega-projects coordinated through the BRI, the massive infrastructure project that is a central pillar of Xi's bid to expand his country's clout overseas. "I attach great importance to the development of China-Sri Lanka relations and am willing to work with Mr. President to continue our traditional friendship (and) enhance mutual political trust," Xi said in a message to Dissanayaka, according to state broadcaster CCTV.

Xi said he hoped bilateral cooperation under his flagship BRI would "bear more fruit", CCTV added.

He said Beijing would "promote the steady progress of sincere mutual assistance between China and Sri Lanka as well as our age-old strategic cooperative partnership, and create more benefits for the peoples of both countries". Western critics accuse China of using the BRI to enmesh developing nations in unsustainable debt to exert diplomatic leverage over them or even seize their assets.

But a chorus of leaders — as well as research by leading global think tanks like London's Chatham



COLOMBO: Sri Lanka's president-elect Anura Kumara Dissanayaka (center), gestures as he leaves the Election Commission office in Colombo on Sept 22, 2024. — AFP

House — have refuted the "debt trap" theory. In December 2017, unable to repay a huge Chinese loan, Sri Lanka handed its Hambantota port in the south of the island to a Beijing company on a 99-year lease for \$1.2 billion.

And the country defaulted on its foreign borrowings in 2022 during a crisis that caused months of food, fuel and medicine shortages. China is the nation's largest bilateral creditor, its loans accounting

for \$4.66 billion of the \$10.58 billion that Sri Lanka has borrowed from other countries.

Last year, the International Monetary Fund — the international lender of last resort — approved a \$2.9 billion bailout loan for Sri Lanka. Beijing also agreed to restructure its loans to the country.

And this month, Sri Lanka secured a deal with international bondholders to finalize a prolonged debt restructuring. — AFP

## Wall Street edges higher with focus on Fed speakers

NEW YORK: Wall Street's main indexes inched higher in choppy trading on Monday as investors focused on comments from Federal Reserve policymakers and factory activity data, following the central bank's decision to commence monetary policy easing. The Fed's pivotal move on monetary policy in the previous week propped up the main indexes for monthly gains, bucking a historical trend where September has been a weak month for equities on average.

Having rallied for much of the year, the S&P 500 is a whisker away from an all-time high and the blue-chip Dow hit another intraday record high. The Dow Jones Industrial Average rose 8.63 points, or 0.01 percent, to 42,068.84, the S&P 500 gained 11.07 points, or 0.19 percent, to 5,713.62 and the Nasdaq Composite gained 46.64 points, or 0.27 percent, to 17,995.97. Eight out of the 11 S&P 500 sectors traded higher, with energy stocks leading gains with a 1.4 percent rise, while healthcare stocks declined 0.3 percent.

Among rate-sensitive growth stocks, Tesla jumped 3.6 percent, Meta rose 1.2 percent, while Apple lost 0.5 percent. The Russell 2000 index, tracking small caps, gained 0.2 percent. Comments from a number of policymakers were the main focus on the day as investors scoured for clues on why the central bank kicked off its easing cycle with an outsized 50 basis points cut. Atlanta Fed President and voting member Raphael Bostic said inflation and unemployment were nearing normal rates, suggesting an openness to a quick pace of upcoming cuts, while a report showed Minneapolis Fed President Neel Kashkari was eying around a further 50 bps reduction in rates by year-end.

Trader bets, as per the CME Group's FedWatch tool, initially favored a larger Fed move at its upcoming November meeting, after Governor Christopher Waller on Friday flagged that upcoming inflation data could undershoot the Fed's 2 percent target. However, the bets now appear to be a coin toss, with markets expecting a total of 74.3 bps reduction by year-end as per LSEG data.

"The market is anticipating a lot more than the Fed is going to provide and for that reason, the market's going to be volatile," said Phil Bianco, chief executive officer of Ladenburg Thalmann Asset Management. "It's a little bit of a pause considering the exuberance of last week. There's nothing economic right now that's spooking the market other than the Fed going a little further than anyone expected." On the data front, a preliminary survey showed September manufacturing and services activity stood at 47 and 55.4 respectively, compared with estimates of 48.5 and 55.2.

But the spotlight will be on Friday's personal consumption expenditure figure for the month of August — the Fed's preferred inflation gauge. Among top movers, Intel rose 2.3 percent after a report showed Apollo offered to make an investment of as much as \$5 billion in the chipmaker.

General Motors slipped 3.2 percent after Bernstein downgraded the carmaker's stock to "market perform" from "outperform".

Advancing issues outnumbered decliners by a 1.86-to-1 ratio on the NYSE and by a 1.01-to-1 ratio on the Nasdaq. The S&P 500 posted 43 new 52-week highs and one new low, while the Nasdaq Composite recorded 50 new highs and 43 new lows. — Reuters



BEIJING: Guests check out the concept cars from a Chinese carmaker on display at the Auto China exhibition in Beijing in this file photo. — AFP

## US may bar Chinese, Russian tech from connected vehicles

NEW YORK: The US Commerce Department moved on Monday to ban the sale of connected vehicles incorporating Chinese and Russian technology, citing national security risks.

The proposed rule is part of President Joe Biden's hardening approach to the world's second-biggest economy and comes after an announcement in February of a probe into security risks posed by Chinese tech in cars. Electronics are increasingly integrated into modern cars, which can connect to personal devices, other vehicles, US infrastructure and their manufacturers — including electric and self-driving cars.

The rule unveiled Monday by the Department of Commerce covers the software and hardware that connect vehicles to the outside world. "Malicious access to these systems could allow adversaries to access and collect our most sensitive data and remotely manipulate cars on American roads," the department's Bureau of Industry and Security said in a statement announcing the measures, raising the terrifying prospect

of hackers taking control of vehicles while they are being driven.

The government did not specify which manufacturers or models are likely to be impacted by the rule, which will be open for public comment for 30 days. Responding to reports of the ban ahead of its announcement, China warned the United States on Monday against taking "discriminatory actions" against its firms. "China opposes the US' broadening of the concept of national security and the discriminatory actions taken against Chinese companies and products," foreign ministry spokesman Lin Jian said when asked about the reports.

The American Automotive Policy Council (AAPC), which represents the three industry giants General Motors, Ford and Stellantis, did not immediately respond when contacted by AFP.

The Biden administration announced this month a 100-percent duty on Chinese electric vehicles and other tariff hikes worth billions of dollars. Both moves also triggered fiery responses from Beijing. There are no Chinese-brand vehicles on sale in the United States today. There is also the question of vehicles assembled in the United States but using Chinese parts. A preliminary US study showed there was "minimal Chinese and Russian software" in homegrown supply chains, an official told reporters on condition of anonymity. — AFP

## India's Russian oil imports slip 18% in Aug from July

NEW DELHI: India's monthly oil imports from Russia fell by 18.3 percent to about 1.7 million barrels per day (bpd) in August from the previous month due to lower crude processing by some refiners, tanker data obtained from trade sources showed. In contrast, China stepped up purchases of Russian oil last month, reclaiming the spot of Moscow's top oil client after India became the biggest buyer for the first time in July.

The share of Russian oil in India's August imports declined to about 36 percent after rising for five straight months, the data showed. In July, Russian oil accounted for about 44 percent of India's oil imports. Despite the decline, Russia remained the top oil supplier to India in August, followed by Iraq and Saudi Arabia, the data showed.

Overall, India, the world's third-biggest oil importer and consumer, imported 4.7 million bpd of oil in August, down by about 1 percent from July, the data showed. India's imports of Saudi Arabian oil last month declined to the lowest since July 2023 to about 498,200 bpd, the data shows.

India's Chennai Petroleum has shut some units at its 210,000 bpd southern India refinery while Bharat Petroleum Corp reduced crude processing at its Bina refinery in central India to carry out maintenance work at some units. Indian refiners have been avid buyers of Russian oil sold at discounts since Western nations imposed sanctions against Moscow and curtailed their energy purchases in response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Indian refiners also received about 138,000 bpd of Canadian oil last month and 254,000 bpd of US crude, the data showed. Due to a decline in intake of Russian oil, the share of OPEC nations in India's overall purchases rose to a four-month high in August, driven by higher purchases of Iraqi oil.

However, the share of OPEC oil in India's imports in the first five months of the fiscal year starting in April has slipped to an all-time low. The share of Middle Eastern oil in India's August crude imports rose to 44.6 percent from 40.3 percent in July. During April-August, the region's share declined to about 44 percent from about 46 percent a year ago. — Reuters

# KIB reveals financing offer on latest Cadillac vehicles in partnership with Alghanim Motors

In line with bank's ongoing commitment to upholding its main slogan 'Bank for Life'

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait International Bank (KIB) has announced an exclusive financing offer on the latest Cadillac models. The offer includes profit-free Musawama financing with a five-year repayment period, a five-year or 100,000 km warranty, and free maintenance for five years or 100,000 km, subject to the terms and conditions of the offer.

This initiative reflects the Bank's commitment to meeting the needs and aspirations of its customers and complements KIB's efforts to provide top-level financing offers that ensure customer comfort and well-being. It also underscores KIB's continuous effort to enhance its partnership with the local Cadillac dealer, Alghanim Motors Company.

On the occasion of launching this special offer, Head of the Central Sales Unit - Retail at KIB, Abdulaziz Al-Shammari, said: "We take pride

in continuing to offer our customers the most competitive car financing deals while strengthening our positive partnerships with local dealers, particularly Alghanim Motors. We are confident that this offer, tailored for car enthusiasts who appreciate unique specifications, will appeal to a broad range of both KIB customers and non-customers alike."

He also highlighted the significant role the Bank plays in this sector and the notable success achieved through such offers, characterized by



Abdulaziz Al-Shammari

competitive rates and coverage of a wide variety of modern vehicles.

It is worth noting that KIB offers its customers a more efficient and flexible shopping experience by enabling them to request and track financing easily and comfortably. The Bank provides flexible financing ranging from KD 300 to KD 25,000, payable over three to 60 months, without the need for salary transfer. This makes KIB the ideal choice for a wide range of customers and non-customers, both citizens and residents alike. Under its main slogan, "Bank for Life," KIB continues its diligent efforts to develop its diverse banking and financing services and products. These efforts ensure the availability of the best solutions, facilities, and offers that meet the various requirements and needs of its customers, especially when it comes to fulfilling their desire to acquire the latest car models, particularly Cadillac vehicles.



## Big rate cut was 'appropriate' first step: Fed

**WASHINGTON:** The US Federal Reserve's decision to cut interest rates by half a percentage-point was "an appropriate and necessary first step," given progress on reducing inflation, a senior bank official said Monday. The central bank surprised some analysts by choosing a more aggressive rate cut last Wednesday, as the Fed looked to support the cooling US labor market after making progress toward the bank's long-term inflation target of two percent.

Among the policymakers who supported the Fed's 11-to-1 vote in favor of cutting its key lending rate by 50 basis points was Raphael Bostic, the president of the Atlanta Fed. "Commencing the process of reducing the policy rate is an appropriate and necessary first step in recalibrating monetary policy in light of evolving economic conditions," Bostic told the European Economics & Financial Centre in London on Monday, speaking from Atlanta.

"In my judgment, we have made sufficient progress on inflation, and the labor market has exhibited enough cooling, that the time has come to shift the direction of monetary policy," added Bostic, one of 12 voting members on the Fed's 19-person rate-setting committee. The US central bank has a dual mandate to act independently of Congress in tackling both inflation and employment.

Bostic said he backed a larger cut because "progress on inflation and the cooling of the labor market have emerged much more quickly than I imagined at the beginning of the summer."

He added that the Fed's decision leaves it in a good position, regardless of whether inflation continues to ease toward the bank's two percent target. "In my view, the 50-basis-point adjustment at the meeting last week positions us well should the risks to our mandates turn out to be less balanced than I am thinking," he said, adding that policy remained "restrictive."

"If my optimism about inflation is unsatisfied, then the Committee can slow or even halt the pace of further reductions," he said. On the other hand, if the labor markets turn out to be less healthy than they appear at this moment, "the half percentage-point reduction puts us in a better position to adjust than a more modest cut would have," he added. — AFP

## WTO to examine China complaint over US subsidies

**GENEVA:** The World Trade Organization agreed Monday to establish an expert panel to examine US subsidies for electric vehicles after Beijing accused Washington of unfair competition.

The United States slammed China's complaint, insisting the country was seeking "to distract from its own non-market policies and practices that undermine a fair, competitive, and mutually beneficial trading system". The world's second-largest economy initially brought the case to the WTO in March, charging that the US Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) "formulates discriminatory subsidy policies for new energy vehicles", referencing a classification that includes electric cars and hybrids.

In 2022, the United States announced a massive aid program to support companies in the energy transition sector and electric cars manufactured on American soil. The United States has insisted that the act was a tool to address the climate crisis and "invest in US economic competitiveness". It was also meant to counter Beijing's subsidies for electric vehicles and the wider green industry within China, which has poured vast state funds into domestic firms as well as research and development.

China has denied that its industrial policies are unfair and has repeatedly threatened retaliation to safeguard its companies. It says the IRA "distorts fair competition, seriously disrupts global new energy vehicle industrial and supply chains, and violates WTO rules".

Washington blocked an initial request for a WTO panel in the case in July, but a second request was granted Monday during a meeting of the organization's Dispute Settlement Board, according to a Geneva-based trade official. Under WTO regulations, parties in a dispute can block a first request for an arbitration panel, but if the parties make a second request, it is all but guaranteed to go through. — AFP

## Reeves says 'no return to austerity' in upbeat economic message

**LIVERPOOL:** British finance minister Rachel Reeves ruled out a return to economic austerity on Monday, trying to brighten the gloomy tone her party had adopted since its landslide election victory in July. Labour had repeatedly told Britons that the outgoing Conservatives, who imposed a radical program of cutbacks after the 2008 financial crisis, had left a yawning gap in public finances, hinting at spending cuts ahead.

Instead, speaking to the party's annual conference, Reeves painted a picture - long on hope but short on detail - of a Britain richer from investment in manufacturing and services, where work paid a decent wage and new generations could thrive. But she gave no timeframe for when Britain could see the kind of growth and new jobs she described, and again said she would have to take more tough decisions like her much-criticized one to cut winter fuel payments for pensioners.

Reeves told a packed conference hall in the northern English city of Liverpool: "There will be no return to austerity. Conservative austerity was a destructive choice for our public services - and for investment and growth too." "We must deal with the Tory (Conservative) legacy and that means tough decisions. But we won't let that dim our ambition for Britain."

She justified the cut in fuel payments by listing what she said were the failings of the previous government, including a 22 billion pound (\$29 billion) hole in the public finances. "I know that not everyone in this hall or in the country will agree with every decision that I make. I will not duck those decisions: not for political expediency, not for personal advantage," she said, adding that such decisions would help better balance the books to offer fiscal stability.

"So believe me when I say: My optimism for Britain burns brighter than ever. My ambition knows no limits because I can see the prize on offer, if we make the



LONDON: Britain's Chancellor of the Exchequer Rachel Reeves making a statement on government finances in the House of Commons in London on July 29, 2024. — AFP

right choices now," she added, announcing the launch of free breakfast clubs for primary school children.

Her more optimistic message seemed to be aimed at improving the mood at a time when the government has been under pressure to explain why ministers accepted donations for clothes. A survey last week indicating consumer confidence had plunged has led to accusations that Reeves and Prime Minister Keir Starmer are actually damaging the economy with an overly gloomy view.

Business largely welcomed her words and the focus on forming a long-term industrial strategy. "It is a vital piece in the jigsaw of future economic growth," said Stephen Phipson, chief executive of Make UK which supports manufacturing. But Danny Sriskandarajah, chief executive of the New Economics Foundation think tank, said Reeves offered little about how government will rewire an unfair economic system. Reeves spent much of

her speech lambasting the former Conservative government for leaving its successor such a mess, highlighting the uncoded budget of former Prime Minister Liz Truss which triggered market panic two years ago to the day.

She said not returning to austerity meant that, despite some tough decisions, there would be growth in overall public spending under Labour.

In a sign of the challenges ahead, English National Health Service nurses voted on Monday to reject a government pay award for 2024/25. With government debt at the highest level in decades, Reeves said she would try to claw back money by appointing a COVID corruption commissioner to investigate more than 650 million pounds of pandemic contracts, some of which she described as being awarded to friends and donors of the Conservative Party. "We want that money back," she said to applause. — Reuters



SKELLEFTEÅ, Sweden: Shoes and clothing of workers are seen at the entrance to the prefabricated section at the Northvolt factory in Skelleftea, north of Sweden. — AFP

## Swedish battery maker Northvolt to slash 1,600 jobs

**STOCKHOLM:** Sweden's beleaguered electric car battery maker Northvolt said Monday it would cut a quarter of its staff in the country, as it struggles with strained finances and a slowdown in demand.

The loss of 1,600 jobs in Sweden comes as electric car sales slump in Europe and the continent lags far behind China in battery production. "While overall momentum for electrification remains strong, we need to make sure that we take the right actions at the right time in response to headwinds in the automotive market, and wider industrial climate," Northvolt CEO Peter Carlsson said in a statement. He added that Northvolt needed to "focus all energy and investments into our core business."

Northvolt, which warned on September 9 that cuts were coming, said that following "initial steps" of a strategic review it estimated that proposed cost-saving measures would result in about 1,000 redundancies at its primary Skelleftea plant—where an expansion project would be suspended. The company had intended to expand the capacity of the facility to provide an annual output of 30 GWh, but will now focus on ramping up to 16 GWh.

In July, it said it hoped to reach an annual production of over one GWh this year—still far from the facility's capacity. One GWh is enough to equip 20,000 average sized cars. "Success in the ramp-up of production at Northvolt E1 is critical for delivering to our customers and enabling sustainable business operations," Carlsson said in a statement.

Another 400 positions would be cut in the city of Vasteras and 200 in the Swedish capital Stockholm. "The rescoping of operations is critical to ensure a sustainable operation and cost base," Northvolt said. It added that "to achieve this a workforce reduction of approximately 20 percent at a global level, and 25 percent in Sweden is required."

The company employs 6,500 people, according to its website. Northvolt has been seen as a cornerstone of European attempts to catch up with China and the United States in the production of battery cells, a crucial component of lower-emission cars. Europe accounts for just three percent of global battery cell production, but has set its sights on 25 percent of the market by the end of the decade. — AFP

## UniCredit ups stake to 21% in Commerzbank

**MILAN:** Italian lender UniCredit said on Monday it has increased its stake in Commerzbank to around 21 percent, fuelling speculation that it could seek a takeover of its German rival. The move makes UniCredit effectively the largest shareholder of Commerzbank ahead of the German state, which has shown no interest in allowing Germany's second-largest bank to be bought.

UniCredit, which surprised markets 10 days ago by revealing a nine-percent stake in Commerzbank, said on Monday it had taken another 11.5 percent through financial instruments. Italy's second biggest bank added that it has requested European Central Bank permission to raise its stake to 29.9 percent, just short of the 30 percent threshold that would require it to make a public offer for the entire bank.

The bank said in a statement that it had "full flexibility and optionality to either retain its shareholding, sell its participation... or increase the stake further". It would depend on the talks with Commerzbank, its management and supervisory boards, as well as with its wider stakeholders in Germany, it said. Contacted by AFP, Commerzbank declined to comment.

Last week, UniCredit boss Andrea Orcel ruled out a hostile takeover bid for Commerzbank, telling Italy's Il Messaggero daily that such a move "would be an aggressive act". The German government said on Friday it had decided not to sell off any more of its Commerzbank shares "for the time being".

It added that the bank was "stable and profitable" and that its "strategy is geared towards independence". "The federal government will share this until further notice by maintaining its shareholding," the government's finance agency said.

Berlin bailed out Commerzbank with billions of euros in 2009 after the global financial crisis pushed it to the brink of collapse. Commerzbank has bounced back strongly since then, posting its best annual net profit for 15 years in 2023.

It is aiming for even better results in 2024 despite expectations of lower interest rates.

Before UniCredit took a stake in the German lender, Berlin had announced that it was looking to sell down its 16.5-percent stake in Commerzbank, citing the bank's improved economic situation. UniCredit, which already owns Germany's HypoVereinsbank, acquired half of its initial nine-percent stake in Commerzbank from the German government and the rest on the open market. — AFP



Snapshots from the "Feykom Tarab? Sukkar Zeyada!" concert.

## Burgan Bank concludes its sponsorship of musical concert

# 'Feykom Tarab? Sukkar Zeyada!'

After five consecutive nights, Burgan Bank announced concluding its sponsorship of the multi-sensory musical extravaganza, "Feykom Tarab? Sukkar Zeyada!" in partnership with Free Jabriya Productions. The show, held at The Arena Kuwait, saw an impressive turnout of over 23,000 Miami Band fans of various ages. Burgan's partnership with Free Jabriya comes as part of the Bank's comprehensive social responsibility program and dedicated efforts to develop Kuwait's arts and entertainment sector by

supporting the domestic industry's many aspiring and pioneering talents.

As part of Burgan's sponsorship of the hit show, the Bank offered its private banking clients and Youth account customers limited invitations to attend "Feykom Tarab? Sukkar Zeyada!" and enjoy this unique experience.

Building on the massive success of the show's first volume, "Feykom Tarab? A Night with Miami", Free Jabriya went bigger with the second volume, "Feykom Tarab? Sukkar Zeyada!", which incorporated newer audio-visual technologies, more intricate costume and stage designs, and diverse performative scenes. This was accompanied by a new set of tracks delivered by the all-time crowd favorite, Miami Band. At the heart of this notable mega production's success are the dedicated efforts of creative youths who remain determined to leave a mark on Kuwait's live entertainment industry, as well as the continued support of the different sponsors.

Commenting on the show's outstanding success, Hessa Hussain Al-Najadah, Senior Manager – Corporate and CSR Communications at Burgan Bank, said: "Supporting Kuwait's arts and entertainment sector as well as its youthful national talents is an integral part of Burgan Bank's comprehensive social responsibility strategy. We are very proud of the amazing success that Miami Band achieved with their latest and biggest edition of 'Feykom Tarab? Sukkar Zeyada!', whereby the songs as well as choreographed and visual performances ignited the crowd's enthusiasm and engagement. We applaud the efforts of the Free Jabriya team and the national talents who were pivotal to the show's remarkable success."

"The success of this show wouldn't have been complete without our customers whose aspira-



Ali Al-Nusif



Hessa Hussain Al-Najadah

tions and needs remain to be our single most important driver. That's why we were delighted to invite our esteemed clients and Youth customers to join us in enjoying this unique show," Al-Najadah added.

On his part, Ali Al-Nusif, Executive Producer and Co-Founder – Free Jabriya Productions, said: "We are honored to have the continued trust of Burgan Bank, whose support is a key enabler for all of us to express our creative visions without limitations. Under the umbrella of our renewed partnership, we were able to utilize everyone's full artistic potential and set a new benchmark for premium live entertainment production in Kuwait. We look forward to extending our partnership with Burgan Bank and producing more memorable shows together."

It serves to note that Burgan Bank's social responsibility program remains one of the most robust in the Kuwaiti banking industry, with numerous year-long sponsorships, events, and engaging community activities.





A worker sorts Inirida flowers (*Schoenocephalum teretifolium*) before packing them for export in the town of Inirida, department of Guainía, Colombia. — AFP photos



Workers sort Inirida flowers before packing them for export.



Close-up of Inirida flowers on the outskirts of the town of Inirida.

# Colombia's Inirida flower: From 'weed' to emblem for UN meeting



A worker sorts Inirida flowers before packing them for export.



A worker sorts Inirida flowers before packing them for export.



Martha Toledo sprays flowers of Inirida before exporting them.



Rubén Dario Carianil checks Inirida flowers on the outskirts of the town of Inirida.

When Ruben Dario Carianil began cultivating the unusual, pointy Inirida flower in the Colombian Amazon ten years ago, his relatives made fun of him for growing "weeds."

Today, the 63-year-old Carianil, of the Curripako tribe, grows tons of the curious blooms on a plot outside Inirida - the jungle city of 30,000 people from which the flower took its name.

Carianil exports Inirida cuttings to the United States, Europe and Asia, and soon even more foreigners will be introduced to the rare blossom as the emblem of a UN biodiversity conference to be held in Cali from October 21 to November 1.

"I'm very happy," Carianil told AFP of his success, which he sees as helping, not harming, the environment. "For us, Nature, the forest, is life. We Indigenous people respect it and we live in harmony with Nature without damaging it."

Inirida flowers once grew abundantly in the wild in the region. Over-picking led to a dramatic reduction and the government in 1989 prohibited harvesting. The ban remained in place until 2005, when the door was opened for Inirida's commercial cultivation as long as wild populations remained untouched. So far, only Carianil's farm has managed to grow, and get a licence to market, the red flowers with their hard, spiky, finger-like petals. He was helped in the domestication process by biologist Mateo Fernandez.

At first, Carianil's blooms sold at the local airport, then in the Colombian capital Bogota some 700 kilometers (about 430 miles) away, then further afield. In 2022, the first box of Inirida blooms was delivered to China from Colombia, one of the world's top flower growers and exporters.

## 'Eternal flowers'

Carianil runs the business with his wife Martha Toledo and their children.



A worker sorts Inirida flowers before packing them for export.



A worker sorts Inirida flowers before packing them for export.

On a plot of some 20 hectares (49 acres), the Inirida crops share space with a variety of native shrubs and even a patch of undisturbed forest.

From the air, the farm looks very different from the flower plantations abundant in Colombia's Andean regions with their rows upon rows of monoculture, often in plastic greenhouses. Fertilizers and pesticides are banned on Carianil's farm, and only Indigenous farming methods used.

"When you buy a flower from Inirida, you take a piece of the jungle home with you," said Toledo.

They call the enterprise "Liwi: Eternal flowers" as the buds retain their shape years after being cut, even when dried. It is this longevity that inspired the choice of the Inirida as the logo for the 16th meeting of the Conference of Parties (COP16) of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

"This is a flower that never dies, its petals never fall apart. We hope that the COP16 in Colombia can help the world to make peace with Nature, so that we can sustain and maintain life on the planet forever," says Environment Minister Susana Muhamad.

The flower is native to Colombia's eastern Guainía department, of which Inirida is the capital, and a part of the neighboring Venezuelan Amazon. — AFP



View of seeds of Inirida flowers on the outskirts of the town of Inirida.

## India's one-horned rhino numbers charging ahead, govt says

India's one-horned Asian rhino population has almost tripled in the past four decades thanks to conservation and anti-poaching efforts, according to government figures.

Data released on Sunday - World Rhino Day - said the number of the animals, known for their single horn and thick, armour-like skin, had surged from 1,500 four decades ago to more than 4,000 now. There were just 600 left in India in the 1960s. "This conservation success story is the result of relentless efforts by the forest department and local communities," a government statement said.

An adult Indian rhino, the largest of the three Asian species, can weigh up to 2,800 kilograms (6,170 pounds) and live for about 50 years. They are found in grasslands, swamps and riverine forests in India's east and neighboring Nepal.

Kaziranga conservation park in Assam state in India's remote northeast is home to an estimated 80 percent of the world's one-horned rhinos. The International Union for Conservation of Nature categorizes the Indian rhino as "vulnerable".

Rhino species face a precarious future globally, with populations dwindling drastically from 500,000 in the early 20th century to around 28,000 today, according to the International Rhino Foundation. "The greater one-horned rhino in India has made a remarkable comeback," the government statement said.

Despite the success of conservation efforts, rhinos remain threatened by poaching, with their horns used in traditional medicine and prized particularly in China and Vietnam. — AFP



One-horned rhinos graze at Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary in the southern banks of the Brahmaputra in Morigaon district of India's Assam state on December 6, 2022. — AFP

Lifestyle

# Asia's oldest operating trams see slow death in India



Passengers commute in a tram along a street in Kolkata.--AFP photos



A conductor (second right) collects tickets as passengers commute in a tram along a street in Kolkata.

The dingy bell of a tram rattling through the streets of the Indian city of Kolkata is all it takes for Deep Das to have the "happiest moment" of his day. "There were times when there were frequent buses... but I still waited for the trams," the 18-year-old student said. But while their fans hail the slow-moving transport system as the "glory" of the megacity and an integral part of how historic Kolkata grew, the 151-year-old network is under threat.

A lackadaisical attitude to maintaining the tram system has contributed to its slow decay. Das is among a group of enthusiasts called the Calcutta Tram Users' Association (CTUA) fighting to protect the trams. CTUA leader and retired biochemist Debashish Bhattacharyya argues that city authorities risk losing a cheap transport solution with green credentials. "The investment you require is minimum," Bhattacharyya said, accusing politicians of ignoring the potential "economic success" of the trams.

"The life of the trams is 50 to 80 years, in contrast to five to 10 years for buses — and their operational running cost is minimum." The trams evoke the soul of the city for many, he said. "This is the only city in India with tramways," he said. "If this is removed, then this glory — of not only the city, of the country — will be lost," he warned.

### 'Brave the odds'

Introduced in the sprawling eastern city in 1873 during the early days of the imperial British Raj, trams in Kolkata were initially horse-drawn, then steam-driven. Electric-powered trams took to the streets in 1900. The tram now rumbles on



A conductor holds a bunch of tickets, as passengers commute in a tram in Kolkata.

the serpentine roads in the city, weaving its way through snarled traffic jams of vintage yellow taxis, trucks, buses, cars and, at times, cattle.

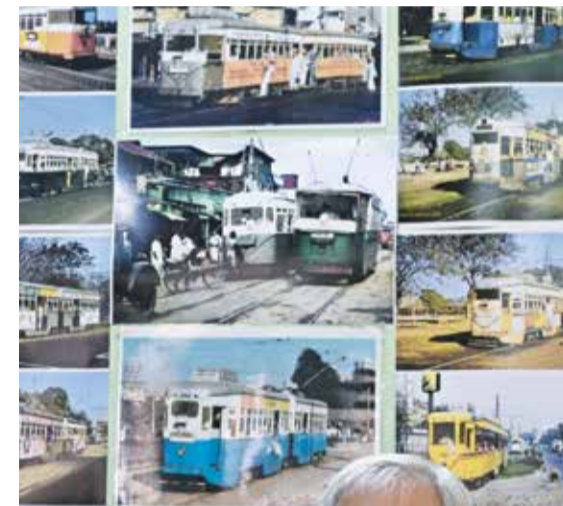
Sometimes tram infrastructure acts as poles for clotheslines, with laundry flapping in the breeze. The single-storey trams — painted in uniform stripes of bright blue and white, with a sunshine-yellow top — trundle along at around 20 kilometers (12 miles) per hour, at best, when they're not stuck in traffic. The state's West Bengal Transport Corporation argues its trams are cheap, safe, produce no noxious fumes and are economical, fitting five times more passengers than a bus, calling them part of the city's "glorious past, present and our future". "Although it is true that their numbers have drastically come down... the Kolkata tram has managed to brave the odds", it argues.

### 'City's old identity'

Rides are affordable at seven rupees (\$0.08), less than a cup of tea on the street and cheaper than the bus. But since they now run on irregular schedules, many commuters would rather pay more to be on time. While the tram has fixed tracks, India's freestyle obedience to traffic rules means anybody and everybody can overtake it.

So the tram has to give way, and the space to maneuver on the streets is zero. But for many passengers, it is a trip down memory lane. Teacher Ram Singh, 54, said a ride reminded him of his childhood, when the trams were a core part of the city's public transport system. "We used to ride trams, and get off after one or two stops, then we would get on the tram from the other side and get off from that too," he said laughing. "That way, we would get our tram rides — and also not have to pay for tickets". The trams now only function on two lines in the city, compared to a once-extensive network with scores of routes. At one site, dozens of railcars stand derelict with rust swallowing their colors, some dating back to the 1940s. "Cities should develop, but along with it, history should also be preserved", Singh said, calling the trams the "city's old identity".

Das's group holds community meetings, puts up posters and tries to address the challenges the trams face. But his role also requires him to monitor breakdowns and electricity issues — something that reminds him starkly that the life of the trams may be coming to an end. Undeterred, he vows to fight for their future as far as he can. "I love my trams more than I love myself," said Das. "I will do whatever is possible." —AFP



Debashish Bhattacharyya, president of Calcutta Tram Users' Association (CTUA) speaks during an interview with AFP at his office in Kolkata.



(From left) Actress Catherine O'Hara, US actor Willem Dafoe, US actor Michael Keaton, Italian actress Monica Bellucci, US director Tim Burton, US actress Winona Ryder, US actress Jenna Ortega, US actor Justin Theroux and British actor Arthur Conti attend the red carpet of the opening film "Beetlejuice Beetlejuice" presented out of competition during the 81st International Venice Film Festival at Venice Lido.

## AUDIENCES SUMMON 'BEETLEJUICE' TO TOP OF NORTH AMERICA BOX OFFICE FOR THIRD WEEK



US actor Jenna Ortega poses on the red carpet upon arrival to attend the UK premiere of the film "Beetlejuice Beetlejuice".

"Beetlejuice Beetlejuice," the dark comedy about a ghoulish spirit summoned when his name is called three times, has landed its third week at the top of the North American box office, industry watchers said Sunday.

The long-awaited Tim Burton follow-up to the popular 1988 original took in \$26.0 million in the Friday-through-Sunday period, industry watcher Exhibitor Relations estimated.

Michael Keaton again incarnates the creepily hilarious title character, in a cast including "Beetlejuice" veterans Winona Ryder and Catherine O'Hara, plus newcomers Jenna Ortega, Justin Theroux, Monica Bellucci and Willem Dafoe.

Not far behind, animated action film "Transformers One," the latest installment in the franchise based on the 1980s toy line, earned \$25.0 million in its debut weekend.

Its all-star cast of voice actors, including Chris Hemsworth, Brian Tyree Henry and Scarlett Johansson, take audiences on a journey



US director Tim Burton poses on the red carpet upon arrival to attend the UK premiere of the film "Beetlejuice Beetlejuice", in central London.

through the Autobots' origins. Third place went to "Speak No Evil," a new psychological horror film from Blumhouse and Universal Pictures, which took in \$5.9 million.

In fourth at \$4.5 million was horror-thriller "Never Let Go," starring Halle Berry as a mother protecting her two sons, all of whom must remain tethered via rope to a house in the woods to keep safe from the evil that lurks outside.

And in fifth, down two spots from the prior week, was superhero comedy "Deadpool & Wolverine," at \$3.9 million.

### Rounding out the top 10 were:

- "The Substance" (\$3.1 million)
- "Am I Racist?" (\$2.5 million)
- "Reagan" (\$1.8 million)
- "Jung Kook: I Am Still" (\$1.4 million)
- "Alien: Romulus" (\$1.3 million)—AFP

## Unknown Mozart string trio discovered in Germany

A previously unknown piece of music composed by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart when he was probably in his early teens has been uncovered at a library in Germany, researchers said Thursday. The piece dates to the mid- to late-1760s and consists of seven miniature movements for a string trio lasting around 12 minutes, the Leipzig Municipal Libraries said in a statement.

Born in 1756, Mozart was a child prodigy and began composing at a very early age under his father's guidance. Researchers discovered the work at the city's music library while compiling the latest edition of the so-called Koechel catalogue, the definitive archive of Mozart's musical works.

The newly discovered manuscript was not penned by Mozart himself but is believed to be a copy made in around 1780, the researchers said. The piece was performed by a string trio at the unveiling of the new Koechel catalogue in the Austrian city of Salzburg on Thursday.

It will receive its German premiere at the Leipzig Opera on Saturday. The piece is referred to as "Ganz kleine Nachtmusik" in the new Koechel catalogue, according to the Leipzig libraries.

The manuscript consists of dark brown ink on medium-white handmade paper and the parts are individually bound, they said. The Koechel catalogue describes the piece as "preserved in a single source, in which the attribution of the author suggests that the work was written before Mozart's first trip to Italy", according to the municipal libraries.

The young Mozart had been known to researchers up until now "mainly as a composer of piano music, arias and symphonies", Ulrich Leisinger of the International Mozarteum Foundation in Salzburg said in a statement. A list by Mozart's father had alerted academics to the existence of "many other chamber music compositions" by the young artist, which were all thought to have been lost until the emergence of the string trio, Leisinger said. "Since the inspiration for this apparently came from Mozart's sister, it is tempting to imagine that she kept the work as a memento of her brother," Leisinger said. —AFP



A picture taken on November 15, 2019 shows a portrait of Austrian composer Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart at the age of 13, dated from 1770 and attributed to Italian painter Giambettino Cignaroli at the Christies auction house in Paris.—AFP

## Sports

# Alcaraz shoots down Federer comparisons after Laver Cup win

## Injured Rybakina skips Beijing, Wuhan but eyes return before WTA Finals

BERLIN: Carlos Alcaraz shot down comparisons with 20-time Grand Slam winner Roger Federer moments after his victory over Taylor Fritz won the Laver Cup for Team Europe on Sunday. The 21-year-old Spaniard, playing in the tournament for the first time, beat American Taylor Fritz 6-2, 7-5 to win the tournament in Berlin.

Team Europe had lost the past two events and needed a come-from-behind victory from local player Alexander Zverev against Frances Tiafoe, 6-7(5/7), 7-5, 10-5, to send the tournament to the final match between Alcaraz and Fritz.

After his win, the four-time Grand Slam winner was compared to peak Federer, but Alcaraz said such a comparison was "impossible". "I'm too far away from that level," he said. "I hope I'll reach it one day, but it's really impossible."

Alcaraz, who won the French Open and Wimbledon this season, had not played the event before. "It's great. We can feel proud, all of us. I'm really happy. All of us did a pretty good job over the days. It's been a top one," the Spaniard added. "We almost lost, but Sasha (Zverev) came with some really good tennis and gave me a chance to win the Laver Cup."

The world number three won Sunday's opening match, a doubles clash alongside Casper Ruud, 6-2, 7-6 (8/6), to help put his side on course to lift the Laver Cup for the fifth time. Alcaraz said he found it more difficult to watch matches with his Team Europe colleagues than to actually take to the court,

saying "the nerves were killing us".

"It's really difficult to watch the matches from outside. I was trying to stay away a bit, watching on TV in the locker-room, trying to support from there. "The nerves were there."

Former Wimbledon champion Elena Rybakina said she has pulled out of tournaments in Beijing and Wuhan due to a back issue but is aiming to return to action before the WTA Tour's season finale in Riyadh in November. The world number four enjoyed plenty of success in the first half of 2024, winning titles in Brisbane, Abu Dhabi and Stuttgart, but missed several tournaments due to illness and injury thereafter.

After reaching the Wimbledon semi-finals she withdrew from the Paris Olympics due to bronchitis and pulled out of the US Open in August due to a lower back injury after winning her opening match. "Due to an ongoing back injury, I regretfully have to withdraw from the upcoming Asian tournaments," Rybakina said in a statement.

"While I've been working hard on my recovery, my medical team and I have decided it's best to prioritize my health at this time." The 25-year-old, who split from her long-time coach Stefano Vukov just days before the US Open, is third in the WTA race to the Nov. 2-9 Finals. "This has been a challenging year and I am grateful for the support from the tournament organizers and all of my fans," the Kazakh player added. "My team and I will work on getting me back on the court before the season finale." — Agencies



BERLIN: Greece's Stefanos Tsitsipas (2L), Spain's Carlos Alcaraz (3L), Germany's Alexander Zverev (4R) and other players of Team Europe celebrate with the trophy during the awarding ceremony at the end of the 2024 Laver Cup tennis tournament in Berlin. — AFP



DALLAS: Cameron Smith of Australia (2nd from R) and The Ripper GC team, Lucas Herbert (R), Marc Leishman (2nd from L) and Matt Jones (L) raise the LIV Golf Team trophy at the stage presentation during the individual team stroke-play finals on day three of the LIV Golf Team Championship Dallas at Maridoe Golf Club. — AFP

## Ripper squad captures LIV Golf Team crown

WASHINGTON: Cam Smith's Ripper won the LIV Golf Team Championship on Sunday, the all-Australian squad defeating Dustin Johnson's all-American 4Aces and Iron Heads by three strokes. Smith, the 2022 British Open champion, birdied three of the last six holes to fire a four-under par 68 at Maridoe Golf Club in suburban Dallas.

That gave Ripper a team total of 11-under par 277 with 4Aces and Kevin Na's Iron Heads sharing second on 280 and Legion XIII, playing without captain Jon Rahm, fourth on 282. The Aussies denied 4Aces a second team title in three seasons and doomed a worst-to-first bid for Iron Heads, who finished last in the LIV season team standings.

Justin Herbert birdied four of his last five holes to shoot 69 for Ripper with Marc Leishman and Matt Jones both on 70. "It's so good ... not only great golfers but they're better people and I think that's what being a Ripper is all about," Smith said shortly after his teammates doused him in champagne on the 18th green. "To have those guys out there today to lean on, there was something telling me that we were going to be all right."

The stroke-play final saw the scores of all four players counting to the team total after a shotgun

start. Ripper, 4Aces and Iron Heads were tied for the lead at 8-under as the captains final group, which began at the first hole, reached the 16th tee.

Jones birdied the par-5 second to lift Ripper one ahead at 9-under while Na made bogey at 16 and Scott Vincent closed with a birdie at the third to keep the Iron Heads one afloat. Harold Varner III closed with a long birdie putt at the first to lift 4Aces level with Ripper but Herbert answered on the same hole moments later with an eight-foot birdie to put Ripper back on top at 10-under.

Smith birdied the par-5 17th to give the Aussies a two-stroke lead and when Johnson found the water off the 18th tee, the outcome was all-but settled, Smith finishing off the triumph with a par minutes later. Johnson, the 2016 US Open and 2020 Masters champion, closed with a bogey to shoot 69. The 40-year-old Johnson, who won a LIV individual title at Las Vegas in February, shared his team's low score with birdie-free Patrick Reed, the 2018 Masters winner.

Iron Heads, the 13th and last seeds, ousted defending champion Crushers in a Saturday semi-final. They were led by Na and Japan's Jinichiro Kozuma on 69. Legion XIII, usually led by season individual LIV champion Rahm, was without the two-time major winner from Spain after he withdrew Saturday with flu symptoms. Saudi-backed LIV's third campaign closes with merger negotiations ongoing between the PGA Tour and the Saudi Public Investment Fund (PIF). LIV has announced four events to start the 2025 season, including Riyadh and Adelaide in February plus Hong Kong and Singapore in March. — AFP



MAINEVILLE: Caddie Paul Cormack (left) and Lydia Ko of New Zealand pose with the trophy after the final round of the Kroger Queen City Championship. — AFP

swing at the 13th, where Ko's superb second shot left her an eight-footer for birdie as Jeeno missed the green on the way to a bogey.

Ko got up and down for birdie at the 15th and punctuated the win with a birdie at the par-five 18th. Jeeno carded a two-under par 70, but her pursuit of a fourth LPGA title - her first in an individual stroke play event since 2022 - was further doomed by bogeys at the 15th and 17th.

Her 18-under par total of 270 gave her solo second ahead of South Korean Ryu Hae-ran, who carded a five-under 67 for 271.

Former teen phenom Ko's victory was her third LPGA title of 2024. She also won the Tournament of Champions to start the year. Her 22 titles are seven more than any other active LPGA player and the 27-year-old said her resurgent season has her re-considering her career goals. — AFP

## Jayasuriya grabs five as S Lanka win first New Zealand Test

GALLE: Prabath Jayasuriya took five wickets to steer Sri Lanka to a 63-run victory Monday against New Zealand on the final morning of the first Test in Galle. Set a target of 275 to win, the Black Caps were bowled out for 211 less than 15 minutes after play resumed, with Rachin Ravindra top-scoring on 92.

"When you come to Galle, all that you need to do is to stick to the basics," said man-of-the-match Jayasuriya. "The wicket provides plenty of assistance and you just need to bowl with discipline. Your consistency is the key and there was a lot of help from the rest of the spinners as well."

Ravindra had finished on Sunday waging a lone battle on a sharply turning pitch in Galle, where the tourists had lost all four of their previous Test encounters. His knock was the highest score by a New Zealander at the ground, eclipsing Ross Taylor's 89 in 2019.

But the slender path to victory he had opened was snapped shut when Jayasuriya trapped him lbw while trying to defend on the back foot. The decision was upheld despite Ravindra's review, and he departed having added just one run to his overnight total.

Jayasuriya, who took nine wickets across the match and finished the second innings five for 68, brought the match to an end when he bowled rookie pacer William O'Rourke for a duck. "Disappointed we didn't get enough lead in the first innings," New Zealand skipper Tim Southee said. "We had the game in the hand, but we threw it away."

### 'Sensational' O'Rourke lauded

O'Rourke, 23, had impressed for New Zealand

with eight wickets, including his second five-wicket haul from just three Test appearances in the first innings. "William O'Rourke has been brilliant for us," Southee said. "For him to come here and do what he did was absolutely amazing. He's never played in conditions like these... when there is not much for pace bowling. His effort was sensational."

New Zealand had cause for cheer after fighting on for a fifth day during their first Test in six months on a pitch where they have always strug-



GALLE: Sri Lanka's Prabath Jayasuriya (L) gestures with the ball after taking a five-wicket haul during the fifth day of the first Test cricket match between Sri Lanka and New Zealand. — AFP

gled. Their scheduled warm-up against Afghanistan earlier in September was washed out without a ball being bowled.

Left-arm spinner Ajaz Patel claimed 6-90 in Sri Lanka's second innings, the best figures by a New Zealand bowler in Sri Lanka since Daniel Vettori's 6-64 in Colombo in 1998. Tom Latham, Kane Williamson, and Daryl Mitchell all contributed with half-centuries in the first innings. The second and final match of the series will be held at the same venue from Thursday. — AFP

## Brewers erase 8-run deficit, stun D-backs

MILWAUKEE: Jake Bauers delivered a go-ahead RBI single in the bottom of the eighth as the host Milwaukee Brewers overcame an eight-run deficit to earn a stunning 10-9 win against the Arizona Diamondbacks on Sunday afternoon. Milwaukee trailed 8-0 after Arizona struck for a seven-run third that featured back-to-back homers by Josh Bell, who hit a two-run blast, and Eugenio Suarez and a two-run single from Jake McCarthy. But the Brewers slowly came all the way back, completing the shocking rally with a four-run eighth. With two outs, Garrett Mitchell hit an RBI single to left before Rhys Hoskins brought home two more runs with a base hit to tie the score at 9. Willy Adames followed with a double before Bauers provided Milwaukee with its first lead of the contest. Ketel Marte, Josh Bell and Eugenio Suarez homered for the Diamondbacks, who fell into a tie with the New York Mets for the final two National League wild-card spots with both teams two games ahead of the Atlanta Braves.

### Padres 4, White Sox 2

A three-run rally in the bottom of the eighth inning lifted San Diego over visiting Chicago, moving the winners within a victory of a National League playoff spot and the losers into a tie for history of the worst kind. The White Sox (36-120) equaled the 1962 New York Mets' single-season loss total, the worst in modern MLB history. One loss in the final six games will evict the Mets from the record books. Jeremiah Estrada (6-2) pitched a clean eighth inning for the win as the Padres improved to 90-66, marking its first 90-win season since 2010 and the fifth in franchise history. San Diego moved three games ahead of the Diamondbacks and Mets for the NL's top wild-card spot and trails the Los Angeles Dodgers by three games for the lead in the NL West.

### Mets 2, Phillies 1

Brandon Nimmo homered leading off the sixth



MILWAUKEE: Joey Ortiz #3 of the Milwaukee Brewers scores during the sixth inning against the Arizona Diamondbacks at American Family Field in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. — AFP

inning, and surging New York once again prevented visiting Philadelphia from clinching the National League East title in the finale of a four-game series. Edwin Diaz earned his first six-out save since Aug. 4, 2022, for the Mets, who are 18-5 in their past 23 games. Phillies starter Zack Wheeler took the hard-luck loss after giving up two runs on seven hits and one walk while striking out eight over seven-plus innings.

### Dodgers 6, Rockies 5

Shohei Ohtani tied the score with a home run to lead off the ninth inning and Mookie Betts followed with a game-ending blast as Los Angeles rallied past visiting Colorado. Ohtani, the favorite to become the first primary designated hitter to win an MVP award, had four hits with two stolen bases. His home run gave him 53 on the season to go along with 55 steals. Teoscar Hernandez and Enrique Hernandez also hit home runs for the Dodgers. Brendan Rodgers and Nolan Jones each drove in two runs for the Rockies, who need three wins in their last six games to avoid a second consecutive 100-loss season. Rockies right-hander Antonio Senzatele gave up one run and five hits over five innings in his second start since returning from Tommy John surgery. — Reuters

## Surging Ko claims LPGA Queen City crown in style

LOS ANGELES: Lydia Ko continued her late-season surge on Sunday, firing a sensational nine-under par 63 to win the US LPGA Queen City Championship by five strokes on the heels of her Olympic and British Open triumphs.

New Zealand's Ko started the day two shots behind Thailand's Athaya "Jeeno" Thitikul, but she seized control with an eagle at the 11th and powered to victory with a 23-under par total of 265. She had seven birdies and no bogeys at TPC River's Bend near Cincinnati, Ohio, where Jeeno started strong with a birdie and an eagle on the front nine but just couldn't keep pace coming in.

"It has been pretty surreal," Ko said of the last two months, which saw her complete her collection of Olympic medals — and secure her place in the LPGA Hall of Fame — with her Olympic triumph in Paris. She followed that with her first major title in eight years at the Women's British Open at St. Andrews.

"After having three weeks off (I was) not entirely sure what it was going to be like," she said. "To have a round like this to cap off a win is pretty special." Ko drained a 15-foot birdie putt at the 10th to pull level with Jeeno, and made another 15-footer for eagle at the 11th to take a two-shot lead as the Thai player was unable to capitalize on the par-five.

Jeeno pulled back a stroke with a long birdie at the par-three 12th, but there was another two-shot

Sports

# Marseille stun Lyon with Rowe's 95th minute winner after early red card

'In this squad, when someone is in difficulty, we don't abandon him'

**LYON:** Marseille came from behind to beat Lyon 3-2 away from home after being reduced to 10 men early in the match on Sunday courtesy of a 95th-minute winner by Jonathan Rowe. The result sent Rober-to De Zerbi's resurgent side second in Ligue 1, level on 13 points with Paris Saint-Germain but with an inferior goal difference.

Ex-Marseille defender Duje Caleta-Car opened the scoring for Lyon in a chaotic 'Olympico' derby, marked by late goals and an early red card. Pol Lirola levelled for Marseille, before Ulisses Garcia sent them ahead with under 10 minutes remaining. Rayan Cherki looked to have claimed a point for Lyon in the third minute of added time only for Rowe to pile drive a winner for Marseille from the edge of the box two minutes later. The match lived up to its feisty billing as one of France's most intense rivalries with Marseille's Leonardo Balerdi picking up a yellow card inside 30 seconds for a heavy challenge on Corentin Tolisso. The Marseille captain then got his marching orders inside five minutes for a second bookable offence when he hauled down Alexandre Lacazette. "He made a mistake and he knows it," said De Zerbi. "But we dedicate this victory to him and he remains our captain. "In this squad, when someone is in difficulty, we don't abandon him." A man to the good, Lyon dominated but failed to translate this onto the scoresheet.

First-half controversy then continued when deep in added time, Lyon were awarded a penalty for handball after a lengthy VAR review. Lacazette's effort from 12 yards was repelled by Geronimo Rulli and the Lyon captain, under intense pressure from the following-in defence, could only blaze the re-

bound well over the crossbar.

Caleta-Car powered in a 53-minute header following excellent work by Clinton Mata to win the ball and put in a pinpoint cross on the right flank. But Marseille, despite having subbed off attackers Amine Harit and Elye Wahi, hit back through substitute defender Lirola in the 69th minute when he calmly lifted a one-on-one finish over Lucas Perri.

The shock turnaround continued in the 82nd minute when another replacement defender in Garcia strode onto Lirola's cross and bounced a first-time finish over the goalkeeper and into the far corner.

The drama was not finished, however, as Cherki bundled in a cross at the near post to seemingly ensure Pierre Sage's side would share the spoils. Rowe then stole the show for Marseille as he drove forward from the left wing, beat two defenders and thrashed the ball across Perri and inside the far post.

### Monaco keep pace

Monaco saw off a battling Le Havre 3-1 to preserve their unbeaten record. The Principality side backed up their impressive midweek victory in the Champions League against Barcelona by winning their fourth game in five league outings this term.

Strikes in quick succession midway through the second half by Eliesse Ben Seghir and Poular Balogun ensured Monaco claimed all three points, after Le Havre's Daler Kuzyaev had cancelled out Jordan Teze's early opener.

"I'm very pleased with the win, even if it wasn't the best game of the season," said Monaco coach Adi Huetter. Dutch right-back Teze gave the home side the lead inside 10 minutes, before Kuzyaev got



**DECINES-CHARPIEU:** Marseille's English forward #10 Mason Greenwood (L) fights for the ball with Lyon's French midfielder #07 Jordan Veretout during the French L1 football match between Olympique Lyonnais (OL) and Olympique de Marseille at The Groupama Stadium in Decines-Charpieu, central-eastern France. — AFP

the equaliser with an outside-of-the-foot finish that crept into the far corner.

Rested after his exploits midweek, rising star Ben Seghir restored Monaco's lead with a moment of individual inspiration in the 66th minute. Receiving the

ball 25 yards from goal, he advanced on the packed defence and shaped the ball beyond the goalkeeper with his right foot from 25 yards. Balogun wrapped up the points four minutes later when he swept home from George Ilenikhena's pass. — AFP

## Gabbia ends AC Milan's derby pain with late winner

**MILAN:** Matteo Gabbia fired AC Milan to a stunning late derby win over Inter Milan on Sunday with a bullet header which earned his team a 2-1 win and local bragging rights, while Roma thumped Udinese 3-0 as fans protested the shock sacking of Daniele De Rossi. Defender Gabbia rose highest to thump home Tijjani Reijnders' free-kick in the 89th minute and give Milan a Serie A win which pulls them out of a miserable early season slump.

Paulo Fonseca's side join Inter on eight points in seventh place thanks to Gabbia's late winner, which came after Federico Dimarco had levelled Christian Pulisic's brilliant 10th-minute individual effort just before the half-hour mark. "They played with a lot of courage today and I think we deserved to win. I can't remember another team that have created so many problems for Inter like we did today," said Fonseca to DAZN.

Milan's win snapped Inter's run of consecutive derby victories at six and stopped their rivals from taking top spot in Serie A on goal difference ahead of surprise early league leaders Torino. They will have renewed belief after a difficult start to the campaign, with the pressure relieved on new coach Fonseca whose team were worthy winners. "They were the better team tonight, we didn't play as a team and that's not something you can usually say about us," said Inzaghi.

### Milan end derby hoodoo

Milan were booed off the field after being thumped by Liverpool on Tuesday but fans were fully back on their side after a strong display as the nominal away side at a pulsating San Siro. They deserved to win after creating the best chances to win the match in the second half and were nearly denied the three points by a fine performance from Inter goalkeeper Yann Sommer.

The Swiss pulled off a sensational save to stop Rafael Leao heading Milan ahead seconds after the restart before diving low to keep out Reijnders 20 minutes later. Leao again cursed his luck in the 75th minute when at the end of a rapid counter-attack Sommer kept out



**MILAN:** Inter Milan's French forward #09 Marcus Thuram (C) fights for the ball with AC Milan's English defender #23 Fikayo Tomori and AC Milan's French defender #19 Theo Hernandez during the Italian Serie A football match between Inter and AC Milan. — AFP

his close range finish, and seconds later Tammy Abraham flashed a great chance just wide.

But Gabbia sparked a wild party among the Milan fans who could finally celebrate ending their derby hoodoo in the most dramatic fashion. "It was pretty difficult when things weren't going well, but this win will really help push us forward," said Milan youth product Gabbia to DAZN.

### Roma protests

Goals from Artem Dovbyk, Paulo Dybala and Tommaso Baldanzi gave Roma their first win of the season against Udinese who had been surprise leaders before this weekend but drop down to third, a point behind Torino. But the match was a sideshow due to the vociferous protests at De Rossi's dismissal on Wednesday which will continue unless new coach Ivan Juric can ensure continue with the sort of dis-

riod in which the visitors had sat back to protect a 2-1 lead earned before Leandro Trossard was sent off for a second bookable offence.

Pep Guardiola's unbeaten team, aiming for a fifth straight title, are top of the table on 13 points, two clear of Arsenal, who have also not lost yet this season. The Gunners, runners-up for the past two seasons, did their best to disrupt and slow City, who totally dominated possession in the second half.

City forward Bernardo Silva accused Mikel Arteta's side of "time-wasting" while Stones was also critical of the visitors' approach. "You can call it clever or dirty, whichever way you want to put it, but they break up the game which upsets the rhythm," he told the BBC.

When Switzerland international Akanji was asked if Arsenal had mastered the game's "dark arts, he re-

plied: "Yes, I don't think there are many better than them at it. "But in the end we always won the title and I don't think it's going to be different this year.

"Always when we play against them, that's what they're looking for—going hard in the duels, defence, 11 players in their own box and then go on set-pieces and try to score a goal. "It worked for them so if they're happy with the one point. We're not, we tried to get more but that's what they're happy with.

"At the end of the day we're still top of the league. We haven't lost a game yet." City were quickly in front, with Erling Haaland scoring his 100th goal for the club in his 105th appearance. Arsenal hit back with a superb equalizer from Riccardo Calafiori on his full debut, although it was not without controversy with Kyle Walker caught out of position moments after being summoned to speak to the referee. — AFP

## New Socceroos coach confident he can rescue WCup campaign

**SYDNEY:** Former Crystal Palace defender Tony Popovic insisted Monday there was plenty of time to rescue Australia's faltering World Cup qualifying campaign after he was appointed the Socceroos' new coach. The 51-year-old takes over from Graham Arnold who quit on Friday after overseeing a shock 1-0 home defeat to Bahrain, and then a scoreless draw with Indonesia. The losses left Australia's World Cup qualification hanging in the balance, with a must-win home game against winless China on October 10 before a tough away clash in Japan.

"They need to finish in the top two of their six-team group to guarantee their spot at the 2026 World Cup in North America or potentially face another round of qualifying. "This campaign hasn't started the best, but I know there's enough time, there's enough games," Popovic said after signing a two-year deal.

"You know, we should be aiming for top spot to go through automatically." Australia have qualified for the last five World Cups, making the round of 16 at Qatar in 2022. They were on fire earlier this year in the second stage of Asian qualifying with six straight victories without conceding a goal. But they were a shadow of their former selves against Bahrain and Indonesia. Popovic, who has been out of work since leaving Melbourne Victory following their A-League grand final loss in May, said "that's football".

"Results can sometimes mask when something is good ... look at the history of what's been done, a group of players that did remarkable things over there (in Qatar)," he said. "I understand the responsibility that's required and the expectation of everyone." Football Australia chief James Johnson called Popovic "the best possible candidate". "Tony's proven leadership and strategic football acumen combined with his deep understanding of Australian football, our players, and what it means to be a Socceroo, makes him the ideal choice to lead our national team moving forward," he said. "His international experience, particularly across Asia, both as a player and a coach, further strengthens his ability to navigate the global football landscape and drive success for Australia on the world stage." — AFP



**SYDNEY:** Tony Popovic, the newly-appointed head coach for Australia's national football team, poses with a scarf after a press conference in Sydney. — AFP

## Akanji sends defiant title message after Arsenal battle

**MANCHESTER:** Manchester City defender Manuel Akanji says Arsenal have become masters of the "dark arts" but is bullish over his team's Premier League title chances after a gripping 2-2 draw at the Etihad Stadium.

The champions needed a John Stones equalizer deep into stoppage time to level against the 10-man Gunners in a full-blooded contest on Sunday. That brought relief for City after a frustrating second pe-

# Classifieds

### Clinics & Hospitals

#### Clinics

|                |          |
|----------------|----------|
| Kaizen center  | 25716707 |
| Rawda          | 22517733 |
| Adaliya        | 22517144 |
| Khaldiya       | 24848075 |
| Kaifan         | 24849807 |
| Shamiya        | 24848913 |
| Shuwaikh       | 24814507 |
| Abdullah Salem | 22549134 |
| Nuzha          | 22526804 |

|                     |          |
|---------------------|----------|
| Industrial Shuwaikh | 24814764 |
| Qadsiya             | 22515088 |
| Dasmah              | 22532265 |
| Bneid Al-Gar        | 22531908 |
| Shaab               | 22518752 |
| Qibla               | 22459381 |
| Ayoun Al-Qibla      | 22451082 |
| Mirqab              | 22456536 |
| Sharq               | 22465401 |
| Salmiya             | 25746401 |

#### Hospitals

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

### Change of Name

**I, Fakhruddin,** holder of Passport No. Z3200987 do hereby change my name to Fakhruddin Ali Mohammed (as given name) Sultan (as surname) for all purposes. I will henceforth be known in the name Fakhruddin Ali Mohammed Sultan and I also undertake to carry out this name change all my documents. (# 6170 24/09/2024)

**I, Murtuza S/o Asgar Ali,** holder of Indian Passport No. T0703760 (issued at Kuwait on 19/11/2018) resident of House No. 26/30, Kotawala Bagh, Ratlam, Madhya Pradesh, 457001, India has changed my name from Murtuza to Murtuza Kangsawala in all my dealings and documents, I will be known by name of MuRtuza (given name) and Kangsawala (surname). (# 6168 23/09/2024)

## Barca rout Villarreal 5-1 as Atletico draw at Rayo

Barca goalkeeper Ter Stegen to undergo knee operation



VILA-REAL: Barcelona's Spanish midfielder #08 Pedri fights for the ball with Villarreal's Spanish forward #21 Yeremi Pino during the Spanish league football match between Villarreal CF and FC Barcelona at La Ceramica stadium in Vila-real. — AFP

**BARCELONA:** Robert Lewandowski and Raphinha struck twice each as La Liga leaders Barcelona romped to a 5-1 win at Villarreal on Sunday but were left fearing a "huge" knee injury to goalkeeper Marc-Andre ter Stegen.

Ter Stegen will have surgery on a ruptured knee tendon, the Catalan club said Monday, with the club's captain potentially sidelined for the rest of the season. The 32-year-old German international was stretchered off after falling awkwardly during his team's 5-1 victory over Villarreal on Sunday. "Ter Stegen) has a complete rupture in the patella tendon in his right knee," said Barcelona in a statement.

"I think it will be a huge injury, when he laid down on the field... you can see it directly," Barcelona coach Hansi Flick told DAZN. Lewandowski netted Barcelona's first two goals and later missed a penalty in a thoroughly entertaining battle on Spain's east coast at Villarreal's Estadio de la Ceramica.

Atletico Madrid, fourth, were held to a 1-1 draw at city rivals Rayo Vallecano as Conor Gallagher netted his second goal for the Rojiblancos.

Ayoze Perez pulled his team back into the game shortly before half-time and the previously unbeaten hosts had two goals disallowed, with Pablo Torre and Raphinha's strikes cementing Barcelona's victory. After second-placed Real Madrid thrashed Espanyol 4-1 on Saturday the Catalans were able to restore a four-point lead on the champions.

"It's very important for us that we played a game away from home, we scored five goals and in the end we have three points," said Lewandowski.

"In the end it doesn't matter how, as long as we win that's perfect."

Flick gave Eric Garcia another start in defensive midfield despite his early red card against Monaco in the Champions League midweek defeat. The German coach also started reserve team players Gerard Martin and Sergi Dominguez, as well as playmaker Torre in place of the injured Dani Olmo.

Teenage star Lamine Yamal hit the post early on before Lewandowski slotted home in the 20th minute after Torre slipped him in. Villarreal goalkeeper Diego Conde did well to keep out a bundled effort from the Polish striker but Lewandowski pounced after 35 minutes for his second.

Conde saved Garcia's header well but the former Bayern Munich hitman converted the rebound with an acrobatic finish from close range. It was his sixth La Liga goal of the season, taking him two clear of Real Madrid's Kylian Mbappe in Spain's golden boot race.

### 'Special person'

Villarreal were frequently threatening on the counter and Perez gave them a lifeline after the electric Nicolas Pepe set him up. Ter Stegen thwarted Pepe with a sensational save one-on-one before half-time but the German Barca captain was soon stricken as he fell badly after catching a corner before the break and was replaced by Inaki Pena.

Pepe finished brilliantly early in the second half but his effort was disallowed for a marginal offside call, and Yeremy Pino hit the bar with a header as

Marcelino Garcia Toral's side drove Barcelona back. Torre extended Barca's lead with a deflected strike from the edge of the box, a killer blow given Villarreal's momentum.

Lewandowski hit the post from the spot after Eric Bailly scythed down Yamal and Villarreal's Thierno Barry had a goal ruled out for offside. Raphinha ended any hopes of a home comeback, first with a deflected shot and then finishing after a superb Yamal pass left him with just Conde to beat.

"(Ter Stegen) is a very special and important person in the dressing room, this victory is 100 percent for him," Raphinha told DAZN. Real Madrid goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois wrote Ter Stegen a message on social media platform X.

"It hurt me a lot to see you leave the pitch like that," wrote the Belgian stopper. "I hope you can recover soon and we see you again in goal." In a Madrid derby clash Diego Simeone's unbeaten Atletico could not find a way past Rayo Vallecano.

Rayo's Isi Palazon slammed home from close range after 35 minutes and the goal was eventually given after initially being ruled offside. However Gallagher finished neatly from the edge of the box early in the second half when Alexander Sorloth fed the England international.

"(At half-time Simeone) told us we all had to run, these days anyone who is not running here cannot play," Atletico captain Koke told Movistar. "We had chances to get the winner but it wasn't to be." Athletic Bilbao overtook Atletico to move into third with a 3-1 win against Celta Vigo. — AFP

## Friedkin Group reach deal to buy Everton

**LIVERPOOL:** Everton announced on Monday that the US-based Friedkin Group has reached an agreement to buy Farhad Moshiri's majority stake in the struggling Premier League club. The deal is subject to regulatory approval from the Premier League, the Football Association and the Financial Conduct Authority.

The group, led by American billionaire Dan Friedkin, had entered a period of exclusivity to negotiate a possible purchase in June, before Everton announced the following month that no deal would be struck between the parties.

American investment firm 777 Partners were unable to complete a deal earlier this year. John Textor, who has a 45 percent share in Crystal Palace, had appeared to be in the frame, but Everton's statement on Monday confirmed an agreement had been reached with Friedkin.

"Blue Heaven Holdings and the Friedkin Group confirm that they have reached agreement over the terms of the sale of Blue Heaven Holdings' majority stake in Everton Football Club," the club said. A spokesman for The Friedkin Group said: "We are pleased to have reached an agreement to become custodians of this iconic football club."

"We are focused on securing the necessary approvals to complete the transaction. We look forward to providing stability to the club, and sharing our vision for its future, including the completion of the new Everton Stadium at Bramley-Moore Dock." The club are putting the finishing touches to a new stadium and are preparing to leave Goodison Park, which has been the club's home since 1892. Friedkin, who also owns Serie A side Roma, has a net worth of \$7.6 billion, according to Forbes.

Sean Dyche's side are second from bottom of the Premier League after four defeats in their opening five matches. Everton extended their 70-year stay in the English top flight last season despite being docked a total of eight points for breaching Premier League financial rules.

British-Iranian businessman Moshiri first bought a 49.9 percent stake in Everton in 2016, before increasing his holding to 94.1 percent in 2022. The Liverpool-based club posted losses of just under \$400 million (\$534 million) for the four years between 2019 and 2023. — AFP

## Tomoooh Sports Club bags 6 gold, one silver and bronze

**CAIRO:** The delegation of Tomoooh Sports Club for the Special Needs returned from Cairo following its participation in the 5th International Heliopolis championship during which they won 6 gold, one silver and one bronze.

The delegation was received by the club's board of directors upon arrival at Kuwait International Airport, representatives from Public Authority for Sport and their families. Head of the delegation Fahad Al-Sahly told KUNA that the achievement reflects the level of care and support the special needs are enjoying in Kuwait and lauded their performance and their commitment during the championship.

Player Mohammad Al-Mashmoom who won two gold and one silver medals said he was happy



Al Tomoooh Sports Club delegation.

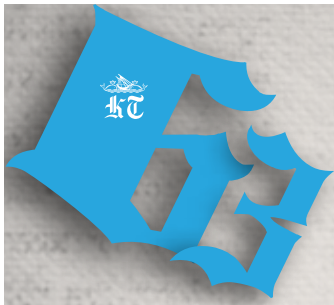
with the achievement that was the result of hard work by the players and concerned departments.

Coach Bilal Al-Hamami lauded the players' performance and their enthusiasm and their control of first places of athletics as well as table tennis in

which they won gold and silver.

Al-Mashmoom, Al-Mutawaa and Al-Otaibi won gold medals in the 100 meters race while Al-Otaibi and Al-Mashmoom won gold in the 200 meters while Al-Mutawaa won bronze. — KUNA





# Kuwait Times

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## A journey of trust, renewal and vision

By Abdullah Boftain  
Deputy Editor-in-Chief

In September 2020, four years ago, I took another step in my 20-year journey in the media industry. At that time, what occupied my mind the most was: Will I be able to meet the expectations of those who placed their trust and love in me?



Questions flooded my mind back then...How will we breathe new life into the halls of Kuwait's most prestigious printed newspaper? How do

we rejuvenate the first English newspaper in Kuwait and the Gulf? Bringing life back means the need for young blood and creative minds. Where do we start in renewing this energy?

Who would be willing to join us in this upcoming challenge?

How can we transform cold, traditional office cubicles into warm, comfortable, quiet, attractive and inspiring spaces that encourage creatives to excel in their work? After years of abandonment, will we be able to turn our old offices and printing presses on Press Street into a destination for young people, creatives, ambassadors and readers?

Between heritage and modernity, between history and renewal, how can we merge Kuwait News, the young Arabic online newspaper, with Kuwait Times, the classic English printed paper, under one umbrella?

Young talents need resources, but the cur-

rent resources are limited. Yet with a clear plan and the blessed efforts of everyone, these limited resources can expand, diversify and grow. We will enter more homes, broader circles and more beautiful minds. We will be a bridge between citizens and residents of this country and a link between two generations. We will create harmony in our content to satisfy our long-standing audience and bring joy to our new and evolving friends.

The goal became clear, the vision was formulated and the plan was set. Four years have passed — I don't know how, with their ups and downs, successes and challenges, on our path toward comprehensive restructuring and revitalization. We worked as a team. We tore down walls and built an environment for the future. We held onto our values, bid farewell to colleagues, and welcomed others with open hearts.

We opened our doors to students and interns, our archives to researchers and enthusiasts, and our arms to talents and creatives. We planned, designed, met and welcomed. We experimented and learned. We connected, communicated, engaged and evolved. We thought, diversified and continued to enjoy every moment of this exciting, long journey of change.

Today, we celebrate the 63rd anniversary of our esteemed newspaper — a rich history and a bright future with a clear vision and a constellation of brilliant minds and wonderful talents. A deep thank you to everyone who has been with us along the way — supporting, advising, loving and trusting. A heartfelt thank you for your love and engagement over the years of this journey.

Our hearts are open before our minds to hear from you. Don't hold back; your words mean a lot to us.



Kuwait Times -- standing tall since 1961.— Photo by Jana Alnaqeeb

# The legacy of Yousuf Al-Alyan: Pioneer of Kuwait's independent press

By Hussain Sana

**Y**ousuf Al-Alyan, the founder of Kuwait Times, was a trailblazer in the Gulf's journalism landscape. His life, marked by dedication, resilience and an unwavering commitment to independence, is recounted by his son, Dr Ziad Al-Alyan, Deputy Editor-in-Chief of Kuwait Times. He provides an intimate look into Yousuf Al-Alyan's journey, contributions to journalism and the values that shaped his illustrious career.



## Early life and education

Yousuf Al-Alyan's father, Saleh Al-Alyan, sent him to study in Britain in the 1940s. He graduated from the prestigious London School of Economics (LSE) with both a bachelor's and a master's degree, becoming fluent in seven languages, including French and Urdu. Upon his return, Yousuf's linguistic skills led him to a role as a translator for the Saudi royal family.

His work impressed the Saudi government, and he was appointed as the charge d'affaires in France, a role equivalent to an ambassador today. In the late 1950s, Yousuf decided to marry a French woman, a decision not permitted for someone in his official position without Saudi approval. Choosing love over his post, he returned to Kuwait in 1959.

## Founding of Kuwait Times

In 1961, the then Amir of Kuwait, Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, sought to establish local journalism. Yousuf Al-Alyan was encouraged to start an English newspaper, while Abdulaziz Al-Massaeed was tasked with founding an Arabic one. As a result, Al-Alyan launched Kuwait Times, the first daily newspaper in the Gulf, predating Al-Rai Al-Aam by a few weeks. Al-Alyan's paper served as a vital source of news,



HH Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and Yousuf Al-Alyan on the return flight from the Gulf Cup in Doha.

information and guidance, making Kuwait Times a respected institution across the region. The Kuwaiti government saw Al-Alyan and other press leaders as informal advisors, and he often accompanied the Amir on international trips, serving alongside influential figures like Hamad Al-Mutawa, Al-Massaeed and others.

## Challenges and resilience during the invasion

The Iraqi invasion in 1990 marked one of the most challeng-



Deputy Editor-in-Chief of Kuwait Times Dr Ziad Al-Alyan with content creator Hussain Sana.

ing periods for Al-Alyan and Kuwait Times. Yousuf Al-Alyan chose to remain in Kuwait while his family was abroad. The newspaper's office was ransacked and destroyed. Despite the losses, he quickly rebuilt and played a key role in publishing Al-Fajr Al-Jadeed (The New Dawn), the first Arabic newspaper issued after Kuwait's liberation, symbolizing the nation's resilience and freedom. Although some competitors criticized the necessity of Al-Fajr Al-Jadeed post-liberation, Al-Alyan decided not to fight back, avoiding confrontation and preferring to let the paper's historical significance stand on its own.

## Building the journalistic community

Al-Alyan was instrumental in establishing the Kuwait Journalists Association, serving as its president for several years before stepping down to make way for younger talent. He was a mentor to many in the industry, embodying a role as the "father figure" of Kuwaiti journalism. Known for his calm demeanor, Al-Alyan was frequently called upon to mediate disputes, always prioritizing dialogue and understanding over conflict.

Moreover, since the '80s, Al-Alyan's spouse Badrya Darwish managed the day-to-day business of Kuwait Times, gaining international acknowledgment over the years during her active participation in the foreign press in the UK.

## Business ventures and philosophy

In addition to his journalistic endeavors, Al-Alyan ventured into business. He established the Al Alyan Trading Company (ALTC) in the 1970s, which became a distributor for various goods, including the iconic Quaker Oats, which still supplies 80 percent of the local "harees" (a type of pudding) today. He also founded a travel agency, though journalism remained his primary passion. Despite his success, Al-Alyan remained humble, maintaining a simple lifestyle. He stayed active, and even on the day he passed away, he drove himself to work.



Meeting of editors-in-chief of Kuwaiti newspapers.



This photo was taken in Sin El Fil in Lebanon in 1950 at a luncheon.

### The man behind the legacy

Described as modest and compassionate, Yousuf Al-Alyan had a unique approach to life. He treated everyone equally, whether they were senior journalists or the tea boy at the office, a trait that drew admiration from those who knew him. His dedication to fairness and equality was evident even in how he managed his business. Despite experiencing instances of theft and fraud, he chose forgiveness over retribution, a quality that often frustrated his family but spoke volumes about his character.

His love for travel was well known, and he was almost always on the move, accompanying Amirs and fulfilling his role as a representative of Kuwait's press. He loved London as a city and enjoyed walking for hours. This constant traveling did not diminish his responsibilities; instead, it highlighted his dedication to being at the forefront of every major development concerning Kuwait.

### The decline of quality journalism

Al-Alyan often spoke about the declining standards in journalism, lamenting the shift from the responsible, respectful reporting of his era to a more aggressive, less principled form. He believed in constructive criticism, a practice that focused on contributing positively to society rather than tearing it down.

### A vision for independent journalism

Yousuf Al-Alyan remained committed to the independence of Kuwait Times, rejecting any financial or political support that could compromise its integrity. This stance allowed him to maintain an unbiased voice, which garnered respect from the highest levels of leadership. He often refused offers to work directly with the government, preferring to serve as an independent advisor.

### The transition to the digital era

Before his passing in 2007, Al-Alyan was aware of the changes the Internet would bring to journalism. He understood that the future of media would differ greatly from its past, predicting that revenue from traditional advertisements and printing would decline. However, he remained optimistic



President of Indonesia gestures toward Editor-in-Chief of Sawt Al-Khaleej magazine Baqer Khuraibet and Kuwait Times Editor-in-Chief Yousuf Al-Alyan.

about Kuwait Times continuing its mission, adapting to the changing landscape while maintaining its core values.

### Continuing the legacy

After Al-Alyan's passing, his son Abd Al-Rahman Al-Alyan took over as Editor-in-Chief, while Dr Ziad's and Abd Al-Rahman's mother Badriya Darwish continued to manage the operations of the paper. Together, they ensured that Kuwait Times evolved to meet the demands of modern journalism. Abdullah Boftain then took over the expansion of Kuwait

Times and Kuwait News, expanding into digital media.

### Conclusion

Yousuf Al-Alyan's legacy as a pioneer of independent journalism is undeniable. Kuwait Times stands as a testament to his vision, resilience and unwavering belief in the power of the press as a tool for societal growth. His impact continues to resonate through Kuwait's media landscape, serving as a beacon for the next generation of journalists committed to upholding the principles of quality, integrity and independence.

# Kuwait Times and Kuwait News: Synergizing legacy, modernity



By Chidi Emmanuel

Over the past 63 years, Kuwait Times has evolved remarkably, later synergizing with its sister company, Kuwait News, to create a formidable media hub. This collaboration has enabled both entities to combine their strengths, delivering comprehensive and accurate reports on local, regional and international events.



"Kuwait Times and Kuwait News share the same vision and mission," stated Kuwait Times Deputy Editor-in-Chief and Kuwait News Editor-in-Chief Abdullah Boftain. "We have developed a working strategy that enhances efficiency and productivity for both media companies. By leveraging cross-selling, we've expanded our coverage to reach a broader audience, including younger generations, Kuwaitis and expatriates."

He further emphasized that this partnership has led to the formation of an integrated modern media group that attracts talented bilingual creatives, journalists and media personalities. The result is a dynamic platform capable of producing high-quality content across multiple formats.

In their efforts to unify the two media companies, Boftain explained how they combine different perspectives, sources and facts to create exceptional podcasts, videos and news reports. "We meticulously verify the accuracy of statistics, names and other details to present comprehensive, accurate and balanced reports," he said. This attention to detail ensures that their audience receives reliable information.

## Innovation through artificial intelligence

One of the most groundbreaking initiatives from this collaboration was the introduction of Fedha, an AI-generated news presenter by Kuwait News. Fedha, depicted as a woman with light-colored hair wearing a black jacket and white T-shirt, made her debut in Arabic last year, garnering global attention. "I am Fedha, the first presenter in Kuwait who works with artificial intelligence at Kuwait News. What kind of news do you prefer? Let's hear your opinions," she announced, captivating audiences worldwide.

"We were experimenting with various trends and decided to launch a virtual news presenter using artificial intelligence. Fedha made her debut on the Kuwait News X account. Her introduction wasn't just a showcase of our technological prowess; it elevated Kuwait's presence on the global stage. Major media outlets like CNN and BBC reported on her debut, providing Kuwait with a significant amount of free publicity and marketing," Boftain elaborated.

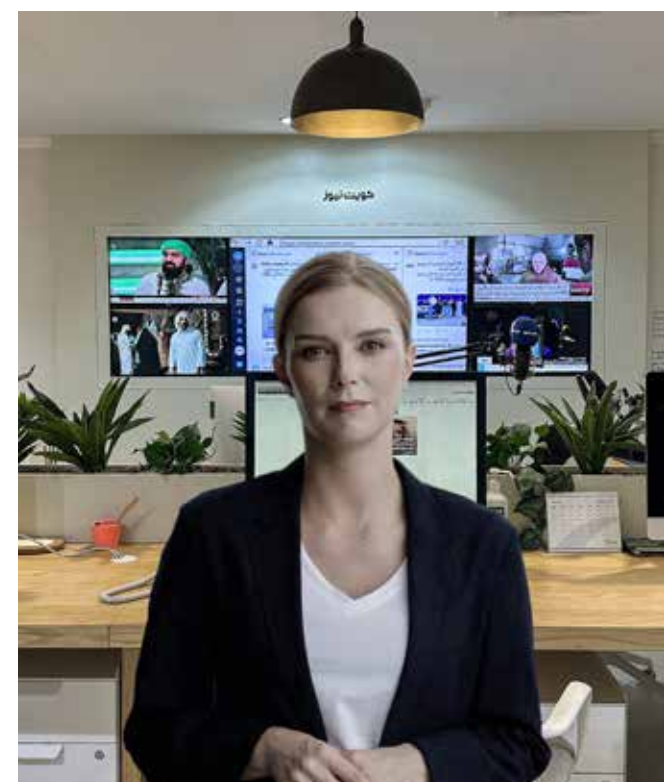
## Formation of a media conglomerate

Founded by Yousuf Saleh Al-Alyan in 1961, Kuwait Times has grown into a trusted source for in-depth reports on local events, business news and analyses of regional and international issues. It also offers entertainment, sports news and features. In 2024, Kuwait Times further expanded its reach by launching the Kuwait Times archive, a dedicated platform that provides access to historical content from its bound archives.

Established in 2006 as one of Kuwait's first electronic newspapers, Kuwait News has developed into an integrated digital news service. Licensed by the ministry of information, it offers the latest developments on its official website and verified accounts on social networking sites such as X, Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn and Telegram.

The combination of Kuwait Times and Kuwait News has resulted in the emergence of a powerful media conglomerate. This merger allows them to reach a wider audience, capitalize

on cross-promotion opportunities, and ultimately achieve increased profitability and growth. Together, Kuwait Times and Kuwait News have created a modern media powerhouse that continues to lead the way in delivering accurate, balanced and comprehensive news to the people of Kuwait and beyond.



'Fedha', a virtual news presenter generated using artificial intelligence by Kuwait News.

# Kuwait Times: A window into our past, present and future

By Yousef Abu Ghazaleh

Sixty-three years ago yesterday, no English-speaking resident of Kuwait had easy, consistent access to local and global news. Sixty-three years ago today, they did.

That simple fact meant more than just providing thousands and eventually millions with up-to-date journalism. It meant that for the first time in the Gulf, society was exposed to outside cultures on a daily basis. This significance was even acknowledged by HH Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, who wrote in our first-ever printed edition:

"On the occasion of publishing the first edition of 'Kuwait Times', I am pleased to congratulate the proprietor on this successful step and wish him continued success. Undoubtedly, publishing a newspaper in the English language in Kuwait is a happy incident, as it makes it possible for non-Arabs to know the truth about the thorough development, which is now at its climax in Kuwait and to understand our just cause as well as the problems of the Arabs in general."

We did bear witness to much development both within Kuwait as well as in the world around us. For every major event, Kuwait Times was there.

That is to say, Kuwait Times is literally part of the fab-



ric of modern Kuwaiti history. For 63 years we have grown alongside Kuwait. We have shared its joys and sorrows. Have looked across the globe to continue the age-old traditions of storytelling, and have thus been thrust into the hearts of those fortunate enough to call Kuwait home.

Kuwait Times was there when Kuwait was vetoed UN admission in 1961, when it finally achieved it in 1963. It was there when the world watched men walk on the Moon, when Kuwaitis spotted UFOs in the skies, when Palestinians declared independence, when our lands were liberated; and it remains while Kuwait pushes ahead to a brighter future.

Today, Kuwait Times celebrates its 63rd year. It comes at a time where Kuwait finds itself pushing forward on all fronts, while existing in a world of turbulence and instability. Like throughout history, we choose to do our journalistic duty. Just as it was important in 1961, we highlight the struggle of our Palestinian, Lebanese, Sudanese and other Arab brethren.

We also continue to bring attention to Kuwaitis, new to the scene or affecting change for years, who are helping to continue earning Kuwait the title 'Pearl of the Arabian Gulf'.

Tomorrow, we pledge to do the same. As we have done for 63 years, we will continue to do our duty and shine a light on the problems and hopes from Kuwait and around the world. In the years to come, Kuwait Times will continue to exercise our blessed right of free speech and provide Kuwait with objective, up-to-date reporting.

From our archives to our studio, we will strive for even higher levels of quality in every sense of the word. For that was the founding principle of the Kuwait Times 63 years ago, and it remains our central principle to this day and beyond.



## A journey of dedication and change

By Antonio Coelho

As Kuwait Times celebrates its 63rd anniversary, I proudly reflect on my journey as part of this incredible team since 1990.

Looking back over the years, I can confidently say that the journey has been worth every mile. Together with my colleagues, we have witnessed and adapted to countless changes, from manual processes to the latest advancements in printing technologies. Working with many managing editors, from Clement Mercenas to Shakir Reshamwala, we have always strived to fulfill one motto: To provide our readers with the latest news.

In this evolving digital world, we had to grow and adapt to the changing scenarios. Every managing editor brought fresh plans, strategies and a unique style, always aiming for genuine reporting. Each one of them aspired to make Kuwait Times not only the most readable newspaper in Kuwait but throughout the entire Gulf region, and they succeeded.



Joining Kuwait Times three decades ago has meant being part of a legacy of journalistic excellence. Over the years, I have witnessed and contributed to the evolution of the media landscape in Kuwait and beyond, shaping the news and information that have engaged our readers.

My journey with Kuwait Times has been marked by numerous contributions over the years. I have reported on many events in Kuwait, especially those concerning expatriates, and provided insightful commentary that has resonated with our readership. I've also adapted to the changing dynamics of journalism while maintaining the accuracy and integrity that Kuwait Times is known for, serving as a benchmark for others in the media industry.

Throughout these years, Kuwait Times has been a pillar of strength for all its staff. I have had the privilege of working alongside some of the best managing editors, learning and growing with them.

As Kuwait Times celebrates this remarkable 63-year journey, I extend my heartfelt gratitude for being part of this extraordinary newspaper, which has enriched not only me but also my colleagues, who have played a crucial role in shaping the media landscape in Kuwait.

Here's to celebrating a legacy of journalistic excellence and looking forward to many more years of continued success. I congratulate the editor-in-chief, deputy edi-



Kuwait Times staff at work in the newsroom. — Photo by Jana Alnaqeeb

tors-in-chief, managing editor, editors and the entire staff on this auspicious day, and I take pride in being part of this establishment for 34 years.

# A page from the past

Memories of Kuwait Times' Malayalam, Urdu and Tagalog sections still evoke nostalgia

By Sajeev K Peter

Former Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's state visit to Kuwait in May 1981 marked a watershed moment in the history of Kuwait Times as the paper published a two-page Malayalam manuscript supplement along with its main English edition to commemorate the historic visit.



Former Kuwait Times Executive Editor K P Mohanan had reached out to veteran Indian journalist late V K Madhavankutty, who was part of the prime ministerial entourage, to explore the possibility of a special Malayalam supplement that could be brought from India for Kuwait Times on the occasion. Madhavankutty agreed and brought a two-page special supplement with him, featuring Gandhi's momentous Kuwait trip — handwritten in Malayalam.

As Kuwait Times celebrates its anniversary today, the timeline of 63 years of its evolution and growth will not be complete without a mention of the Malayalam and Urdu sections which were part of its onward journey for 27 years. A weekly Filipino Panorama section was also published along with the main edition for over 18 years, catering to the large Filipino community in the country.

"The overwhelming acceptance of the special supplement by the Malayali community in Kuwait during Indira Gandhi's visit prompted the management to think about launching a vernacular section in Malayalam alongside the main newspaper," Mohanan told the Kuwait Times over the telephone from India. Setting a benchmark, Kuwait Times Founder and Publisher late Yousuf Al-Alyan gave the green signal to launch a two-page Malayalam section along with the main newspaper on September 1, 1982.

## Unprecedented initiative

"It was unprecedented in the region as it was a first for the Middle East and a historic initiative in Kuwait's media world. As far as I know, a Malayalam broadsheet newspaper was being printed at that time outside India only in Singapore," Mohanan said. Late V K Sathyanathan was the manuscript writer for the Malayalam section. Within two years, the transition from manuscript format to computer typefaces took place with the deployment of German typefaces and printing technology.

Kuwait Times had to suspend publication in the aftermath of the Iraqi invasion in 1990. After the liberation in 1992, the Malayalam section resumed publication along with the main newspaper. "Many people who began



The first handwritten edition of Kuwait Times' Malayalam supplement hit the newsstands on September 1, 1982.



The front pages of the Kuwait Times (right) and its Malayalam section on Nov 1, 1984 featuring the assassination of Indira Gandhi.

writing in Kuwait Times Malayalam section later became noted writers and published their own books," recalls Malayil Moosa Koya, who was the chief of the Malayalam section from 1983 till 2009.

For many expats, memories of the Malayalam and Urdu sections in the Kuwait Times still evoke nostalgia. "As soon as it commenced publication, the Malayalam section became a source of inspiration and excitement for thousands Malayali expats in Kuwait. In fact, it promoted a cultural awakening among Kuwait's Malayalis by creating an environment for people like us to gather and interact," said Sam Painumoodu, a Malay-



The front page of Kuwait Times' Urdu supplement on July 31, 1993, the inaugural issue.



alam writer who started subscribing to the newspaper in the early '80s.

## Another milestone

Kuwait Times set another milestone on July 31, 1993 with the launch of the Urdu section. Late veteran journalist Masudullah Khan, who was the Executive Editor at Kuwait Times, played a critical role in molding the section with the support of Said Safdar. Later, Mohammed Omar joined the Urdu section, succeeding Safdar as its head, and continued to lead it until the section was closed in 2009.

Although Filipino Panorama started in the late 1990s, Kuwait Times senior reporter



Front page of Filipino Panorama

Ben Garcia re-introduced a refurbished version of it in January 2004. The Panorama, a curious blend of Tagalog and English, influenced and inspired the Filipino community in Kuwait with local Filipino stories, current affairs from the Philippines, local sport events and embassy updates.

"Most of the Asian expats in Kuwait had difficulty following English language properly, whereas tens of thousands of people can speak and read Urdu in Kuwait. Most importantly, the Urdu and Malayalam sections were the only sources of local news for them," Omar said, recalling how Urdu-speaking expats cherished the Urdu pages in Kuwait Times.

Both Urdu and Malayalam sections soon became popular literal mouthpieces for Urdu-speaking and Malayali communities in Kuwait. In view of the growing demand, the management decided to increase the number of pages from two to four each. Building community interfaces, both sections contained reports of happenings in the communities as the sections mirrored the sociocultural ethos of their motherlands. They extensively covered local news reports and even provided spaces for aspiring expat writers to contribute to columns in the newspaper.

"The Malayali community overwhelmingly embraced Kuwait Times' Malayalam section because it acted as a sociocultural bridge between India and Kuwait. Above all, hundreds of Malayali cultural groups relied on the Malayalam section to publish reports of their events," Moosa Koya added.

Late Wajid Ishaq, Farrukh Kamal, Emad, Naeem, Shabana and Khaled Amin among others worked for the Urdu section in various capacities, while Charlie Benjamin, Sudhakaran, A M Hassan, Lalitha, Daisy and Sabu worked in the Malayalam section.

Recalling one of the most shocking and impactful news reports the Malayalam section covered, Mohanan said, "The reportage of Indira Gandhi's assassination on October 31, 1984 was an epoch-making one for the Malayalam section. Kuwait Times brought out special supplements both in English and Malayalam on November 1, 1984 with the enormous support of Indian companies and organizations," he recalled.

However, on Aug 18, 2009, Kuwait Times closed its Malayalam and Urdu sections, bringing down the curtain on an impactful era in the history of the newspaper. In 2017, Kuwait Times also decided to discontinue Filipino Panorama.

# Documenting a livestreamed genocide

By Ahmad Jabr

I still remember the moment when the Gaza Baptist Hospital massacre happened during the early days of the Gaza genocide. As the reports and footage started to circulate on social media, we realized that this was not like any other moment we've ever experienced in our normally hectic job. It was the first time a massacre of this magnitude occurred during a genocide, livestreamed for the first time in history too. And we have a responsibility to document it.



When reporting news on social media, you're always under pressure to post the news accurately as it's happening. But when you're covering the genocide of your own people in real time - something you've never dealt with before or even imagined you'd ever deal with, no experience can ever prepare you for a moment like that.

Actually, instead of 'imagined', perhaps I should say 'hoped' because when it comes to the Zionists, no crime is unimaginable. As a Palestinian, witnessing the genocide of my people live with complete inaction from the international community has been an extremely difficult experience. But being in charge of Kuwait Times social media increases the responsibility of reporting the actual facts as they are happening. Not only is this important for our integrity as journalists and human beings, but providing live updates on the ongoing genocide in English becomes extremely important to challenge the one-sided, pro-Zionist narrative that the Western media has always promoted.



People walk past the rubble of destroyed buildings along a street in Khan Yunis in the southern Gaza Strip on July 8, 2024. — AFP

And the longer the genocide lasted, the more people in the West and around the world started becoming more educated about the Palestinian cause. Facing a new reality where the public opinion was starting to shift more in favor of Palestine has heightened our sense of responsibility to show the facts even more. It also gives us extra motivation that in the midst of all the despair, we can at least be a voice that helps achieve that change towards realizing the ultimate goal of liberating Palestine.

But telling the truth in itself wasn't always easy. One of the main challenges we've faced reporting the Gaza genocide was navigating through censorship and strict rules placed by social media giants. The guidelines placed by Meta on Instagram in specific presented an added challenge as we try to avoid shadowbans, having our posts removed or even getting our account suspended while reporting the news, similar to what happened to many journalists inside and outside of Gaza.

If there is one silver lining from this experience, it would be seeing the positive feedback from you, the readers, which has been a great motivator for us throughout the past year. It also serves as a constant reminder of our great responsibility as journalists during one of the darkest points in history. Furthermore, it is an affirmation that standing on the right of history is oftentimes the more difficult choice, but it's one that we at Kuwait Times always strive to take.

We hope that by the time we celebrate our next anniversary, Palestine will be free.



Kuwait Times - giving voice to the voiceless. - Photo by Jana Alnaqeeb

Advertisement for Volvo XC60, featuring the text 'The smart XC60, intelligent design at every turn.' and '2024 development award with New Award award Every'.

Advertisement for Super Mario Bros. game, featuring the text '13 Nintendo Switch off with new Mario and Super Mario game'.

## More than 500 killed as Zionists hit Gaza hospital

Mideast 'on brink of abyss' • 2,000 US troops on alert • Biden to visit Zionist entity

News article snippet with a photo of a person in a hospital bed and various headlines including 'Boycotts hit book fair over Zionist support' and 'Colombia lashes'.

# Celebrating your trust in us



Iranian-American comedian Maz Jobrani



Kuwait Times Deputy Editor-in-Chief Dr Ziad Al-Alyan with Palestinian-American comedian Mo Amer.



Kuwait Times Deputy Editor-in-Chief Abdullah Bofain with Miami band members.

By Ghadeer Ghloom

In celebration of its 63rd anniversary, Kuwait Times presents a special album that highlights some of the notable recent visits from people who have graced us with their presence, each in their own way. This album reflects Kuwait Times' connection with its audience and expresses gratitude to all its readers for their trust and loyalty, which have been instrumental to our growth and success over the last 63 years. We recognize that audience engagement fuels our team's passion for delivering quality journalism and connecting with readers.



This anniversary not only marks a moment of celebration but also reaffirms our commitment to welcoming even more guests from our readership. We aim to engage with you personally and develop deeper relationships that enrich our understanding of the community we serve. At Kuwait Times, we take immense pride in sharing our enthusiasm for journalism with our visitors, who provide us with wonderful experiences and memories that we cherish. Each exchange serves as a reminder of the power of connection and the importance of collaboration within our vibrant community.



German Ambassador Hans-Christian Freiherr von Reibnitz

As we celebrate this occasion, we look forward to more memorable encounters that inspire us to continue our mission. Thank you for being an integral part of our work. Although this album includes only a limited number of the people who visited us, Kuwait Times is sharing it to celebrate our connection with you, our esteemed readers and visitors!



Indonesian Ambassador Lena Maryana



Indian Ambassador Dr Adarsh Swaika



Lesotho Ambassador Boomo Sofonia





Ahmed Kouta, a Palestinian-Canadian nurse who served in Gaza.



Italian chef Marco Fiorot tries on the Kuwaiti traditional dress.



Spanish Ambassador Miguel Maro Aguilar



British Ambassador Belinda Lewis



Canadian Ambassador Aliya Mawani



Azeri Ambassador Emil Karimov



Peruvian Ambassador Carlos Velasco Mendiola

# Kuwait Times makes the news

## Kuwait Times is a preferred source of local updates for international news outlets

By Nebal Snan

For over 63 years, Kuwait Times has been the world's window into Kuwait — through its happiest and darkest days. Being the oldest, all-inclusive English-language record of Kuwait's history has positioned Kuwait Times, since its establishment, as a source of local updates and commentary for international news organizations. Kuwait Times staff and articles often served to inform international reports centered around Kuwait, from coverage of big milestones and devastating events to mundane non-news and orientalist columns. As we celebrate 63 years since our first edition, we look back at some of these moments.



### Kuwait elects first women MPs

All eyes were on Kuwait during the May 2009 National



Jazeera as part of their coverage for the election results. "Everyone is ecstatic, especially among liberal or women's empowerment groups," she told Al Jazeera. "Kuwaiti women are quite liberated and empowered already, but having four female voices in parliament means that issues that are important to Kuwaiti women might get a better hearing."

### Deadly Jahra wedding fire

Anyone living in Kuwait in 2009 likely remembers the devastating fire that killed more than 40 women and children during a wedding celebration held in a tent in Jahra. A woman, the first wife of the bridegroom, confessed to setting the tent on fire. Kuwait Times carried the news on its front page for two days in a row, providing updates from our sources in the interior ministry.

Our reporting, along with that of Al-Qabas and KUNA, made it to the BBC. In an article titled "Ex-wife blamed for Kuwait inferno" published on August 17, 2009, the BBC dubs the fire "the worst civilian disaster in Kuwait's modern history". The piece quotes a Kuwait Times source, who said "the bride escaped uninjured, but her mother and sister were killed." The perpetrator was executed in 2017.

### Domestic worker falls on camera

"Oh crazy, come here," a woman says casually in Arabic, holding a camera to film her domestic worker who is dangling outside the window of her seventh-floor apartment. The Ethiopian worker eventually falls, but survives — all while being filmed on camera. The disturbing video went viral on social media and sparked a debate on domestic worker rights, and why the woman chose to film her worker, instead of helping her.

The story was so shocking that it made Kuwait Times' front page on April 1, 2017, and the Washington Post took notice. On April 5, the Post published an article titled "A maid begged for help before falling from a window in Kuwait. Her boss made a video instead," which quoted Kuwait Times reporting.

### DSLRs banned, or were they?

A Kuwait Times article interviewing photographers about their reaction to an alleged ban on DSLR cameras in 2010 stirred controversy across the world. The article titled "Multi ministry camera ban frustrates artists" claimed that three ministries banned the cameras "in public, on the streets and in malls", except for journalism purposes. According to a blog post by Syrian photographer Omar Al-Bahra, Kuwait TV had also run a news report on the ban. The story, published in late November of that year, was picked up by prestigious news outlets, such as The Guardian, LA Times and BBC program Click, as well as specialized photography websites and forums. The news was met with heavy criticism, to say the least.



But a few days after its publication, the Kuwait Times editorial team issued a retraction after verifying that the ban has in fact never been enforced. "The newspaper regrets failing to verify the information. The article wrongly stated that a ban on DSLR cameras was implemented by the Ministries of Information, Social Affairs and Finance. This information is false. In a follow up investigation, it was proved that no such ban has been issued. We regret this error and deeply apologize for any inconvenience caused."

### Poetry still alive

Mentions of Kuwait Times in the foreign press go as far back as the 1970s. A special report published in the New



York Times in 1978 which explores how "Arabians preserve traditions in face of oil boom" highlighted poetry published in Kuwait Times as evidence that the literary art played a "considerable" role in Kuwaiti society. The writer's logic was faulty, given that most poetry published in Kuwait Times was submitted in English by foreign expats, not Arabs. The student referenced in the piece was also not Kuwaiti, but Armenian.

"When the Emir of Kuwait, Sheik Sabah Al-Sabah Al-Sabah, died a while back, numbers of (his) subjects affirmed their loyalty to the ruling family by honoring him with odes. Among the compositions published in the English-language Kuwait Times was one by a Kuwaiti student of Armenian ancestry, (Vahe) Shaghzoian," said the NY Times.

**Historic success**  
Four women elected • Islamists battered • Shites almost double strength • 'Crisis MPs' re-elected

**from the editor's desk**  
Kuwait Times congratulates Kuwaiti women on their historic success

Assembly election, when Aseel Al-Awadhi, Rola Dashti, Salwa Al-Jassar and Maasouma Al-Mubarak made history as the first women to represent Kuwaitis in parliament. Kuwaiti women were vying for a National Assembly seat for the third time after they won the right to vote in 2005. Kuwait Times' managing editor at the time Jamie Etheridge, spoke with Al

# 63 years of truth and social media innovation

By Sahar Moussa

As I reflect on Kuwait Times' incredible 63-year journey, I feel a deep sense of pride and honor to be part of this evolving institution. For decades, Kuwait Times has held the prestigious title of being the number one English newspaper in Kuwait, catering to both expats and Kuwaitis who find comfort in English-language news. However, the leap Kuwait Times has taken in recent years has been nothing short of extraordinary — becoming the top English social media platform in Kuwait within approximately five years.



It's incredible to witness how quickly Kuwait Times adapted to meet the needs of a new era, especially reaching Generation Z, a group known for their digital fluency and their desire for creative content. By studying their preferences, as well as the needs of expats and Kuwaitis alike, we transformed our social media presence into more than just a news outlet — we became a reliable source of truth, a platform that resonates with the community.

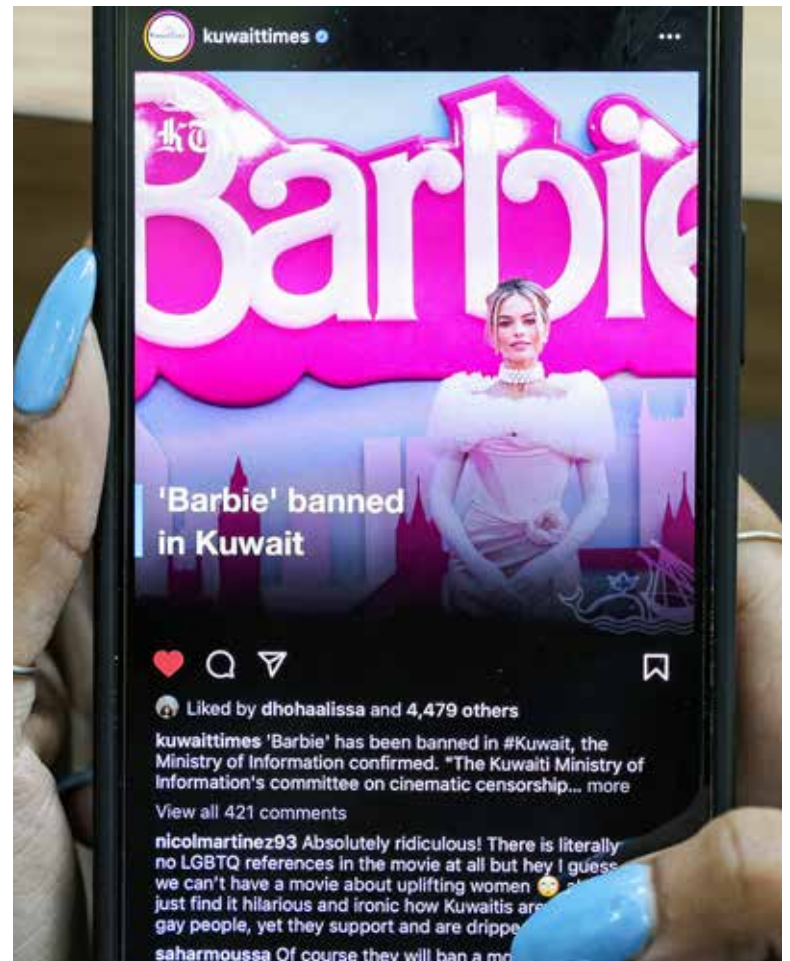
In my opinion, change is inevitable; it's the fundamental core of the universe. Nothing stays the same, and that's what makes this journey so ex-

citig. At Kuwait Times, we've not only embraced change but have also thrived on it. We've harnessed the power of technology and social media to reach more people, to spread awareness and ensure that our content remains relevant, timely and truthful.

I'm particularly proud of how our social media platforms have become trusted sources for delivering facts, especially during critical moments, such as the recent events in Gaza. In a world where misinformation and fake news spread like wildfire, we've taken on the responsibility of being a beacon of truth, using our platform to fight injustice and amplify the voices that need to be heard.

As a journalist and content creator at Kuwait Times, I am grateful for the opportunity to play a part in this mission. It's not just about news — it's about being a tool for change, a voice for the voiceless and a platform that stands for justice. The work Kuwait Times' social media platforms to shed light on the situation in Palestine, and ensuring that the truth about what happened — and continues to happen — in Gaza is known, fills me with immense pride. Media, at its best, is a force for good, and I'm so thankful to be part of a team that values integrity, truth and justice.

On this special anniversary, I'm so grateful to Kuwait Times for allowing me to fight injustice in my own way, giving me a space to create videos, supporting my vision and being part of this collective journey toward progress. Here's to 63 years of excellence — and to many more years of truth, justice and evolution.



A woman views a post published by Kuwait Times on its official Instagram account. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat



# From type to tech

## Evolution of Kuwait Times' publishing process from manual printing to digital innovation



GTO printer used for commercial printing.



Islam Al-Sharaa explaining to students about the printing process back in the '80s.



Phototypesetting machine that was used in the '80s.

By Faten Omar

Established in 1961, Kuwait Times was the first daily English newspaper in the Arabian Gulf, marking a significant milestone in regional journalism. Over the decades, its printing process has undergone substantial evolution. IT Director Islam Al-Sharaa, who has worked for Kuwait Times since 1983, shared insights into this transformation.



In the newspaper's early days, traditional intertype and manual printing methods were used, reflecting the technological limitations of the time. "Everything was manual back then. We used 'Intertype', where we typed the letters manually, using liquid lead ink. This would then be printed on plain paper. Pictures and headlines were added separately," Sharaa explained. He described how a special director worked with page makers to assemble the pages. "The linotype process involved printing and manually gluing photos and headlines to the pages to finalize them," he added.

Kuwait Times later adopted the phototypesetting machine, which projected light through a film to create text on photographic paper or film. These images were then developed and manually arranged into pages. Page makers would cut and paste images, headlines and text onto layout boards. The complete page was photographed to create a negative, which was then used to expose light-sensitive aluminum printing plates. These plates were mounted on printing presses, with ink transferred from the plate to a rubber blanket and finally onto the paper.

As technology advanced, color pages were introduced in the mid-1980s. This process involved reflecting the pictures in different colors four times manually to capture the true color. A few years later, a special scanner was installed to sort the colors automatically, reducing the process to about an hour and a half per page. A significant turning point occurred in 1992 when Kuwait Times underwent a radical transformation, becoming the first Gulf newspaper to transition completely online. The newspaper modernized its equipment and printing technology, and in collaboration with the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training, it launched its first website. This marked a shift from manual printing to faster, more efficient digital technology, offering higher-quality prints at increased speeds.

"This allowed for the digital layout of newspaper pages, eliminating the need for physical paste-ups. Technology further streamlined the process by sending digital layouts directly to printing plates, enhancing speed and accuracy. While some traditional printing

methods remained, the shift to digital prepress reduced errors and improved turnaround times," Sharaa explained.

He noted the entire process has since become much faster. Today, pages can be created on a computer and sent directly to the printing press for plate creation. Sharaa emphasized that this technological evolution made the printing process easier, smoother and more flexible. Now, they can halt printing for any corrections or news updates,

whereas, in the past, it was difficult to stop the printing process due to the labor-intensive manual adjustments required.

"The printing process is easier now, but the evolution has eliminated many roles. Now, everything relies on machines instead of manual work. Today, Kuwait Times leverages cutting-edge technology to meet the demands of the digital age, delivering fast, updated news," he concluded.



The current newspaper printing press. – Photos by Jana Alnaqeeb and Yasser Al-Zayyat

# The nightly symphony of the press

By Zainab Dashti

Every evening at 8 pm, the rhythmic hum of the Kuwait Times printing press fills the air. This sound is more than just the start of another printing session; it's a nightly symphony that marks the beginning of a journey to create tomorrow's news. As the clock ticks closer to midnight, the hardworking team that keeps the press alive is in full swing, ensuring every page is perfect.



Inside the bustling press, large recyclable paper rolls are carefully loaded onto each of the machine's towers. Each tower has a special task, printing one section of the newspaper, which consists of four pages. The rolls glide into position, setting the stage for the next step.

Next comes the ink setting. The workers open cans of four different colors of ink — cyan, magenta, yellow and black. They pour each color into the towers, whose vibrant hues will soon bring stories and photos to life.

One of the most important steps involves preparing the aluminium plates. These shiny sheets are printed with the layout of each page. The plates are then carefully inserted into each tower of the printing press.

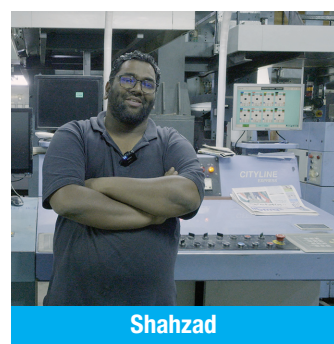
Once everything is set, an operator starts printing



The printing team.



Al-Watheq Darwish, printing manager for the past 14 years at Kuwait Times.



Shahzad



Yaseen



Mustansir has spent 32 years at Kuwait Times.



Raed has also spent 32 years at Kuwait Times.



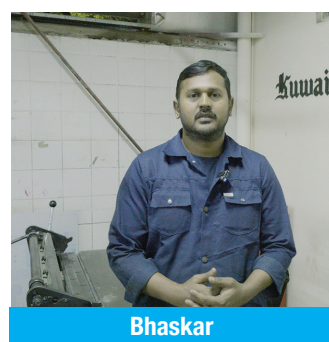
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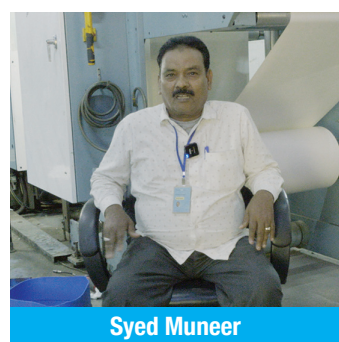
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Bhaskar



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Ali

from the control panel. With a press of a button, the machine roars to life, pulling sheets of paper through the ink and over the plates. As each section of the paper is printed, it's sent to the folder, where the pages are gathered, folded and cut, creating a complete newspaper ready to be delivered.

In the printing press, there's more than just machines at work. Meet Printing Manager Al-Watheq Darwish and his team. "The pressure is on these people. What they do in the daytime is critical, so that we won't face any problems at night," he explained. His team's duties range from setting up rollers and ink to cleaning, maintaining and operating the press.

For them, every night is a race against time. "The difficult thing about newspapers is that you have to deliver them on the same day. You can't postpone the job till the next day — you have to be in top

shape all the time," Darwish said.

Raed and Mustansir, the oldest members of the team, have spent 32 years dedicated to this craft. They've seen the printing process evolve over the decades, from using blocks to films, and now to the modern system. "Before, there were 17 people in the plate setting section. Now, only one person handles the entire job," Mustansir recalled.

And amidst all this, a family of cats lounges around the machine. These felines have made the printing press their home, cared for by the staff. As the night wears on, the press falls silent, and the newspapers are neatly stacked, ready to be distributed. For Al-Watheq, Raed, Mustansir and the rest of the team, another night's work is complete. They'll be back tomorrow, ensuring that the stories continue to be told, one printed page at a time.

# Enduring connections

## Longtime readers share their love for Kuwait Times

By Passant Hisham

Carrying stacks of newspapers under his arms, an Arab paperboy would park his motorcycle and make his way through the office buildings daily, calling out to see if anyone needed that day's publication. In the mid-1970s in Kuwait, this was how Renny Mathews, who once worked in one of those buildings, remembered getting his news, often asking the boy, "Please leave the Kuwait Times paper here."



Now delivered to his doorstep, the 69-year-old Indian man continues his daily habit of reading Kuwait Times, making him the earliest subscriber we were able to interview. Mathews was particularly fond of the articles written by Yousuf Al-Alyan, the founder of Kuwait Times, who passed away in 2007.

### A visionary leader

"Whenever this man wrote something, he studied it very well; he never wrote anything that he didn't truly believe in," Mathews said, describing Al-Alyan as a "visionary person with a very prominent personality." After Al-Alyan's passing, Mathews felt that his legacy endured as the newspaper maintained its edge. "I don't know how tough it is, but I think they've got the right

**أَنَّ لِلَّهِ وَأَنَّ لِلْإِسْلَامِ وَأَنَّ لِلْجَمْعِيَّةِ**

**YOUSUF S ALYAN**

**FAREWELL TO OUR DEAR EDITOR-IN-CHIEF**

Kuwait Times Publisher and Editor-in-Chief Yousuf Saleh Alyan passed away yesterday morning. He was 75. A pioneer in the field of Kuwait's journalism, Alyan founded the first daily newspaper in the Arab Gulf region in 1961.

Among only a handful of Kuwaitis who traveled to Europe in the first half of the twentieth century, Yousuf Alyan studied economics in London and obtained a degree in 1955 before returning to his native land. He worked as an envoy to France for the Saudi Arabian government, appointed during the reign of King Saud. He spoke several languages including Arabic, English, French, Italian and Persian.

On September 24, 1961, Alyan launched the first daily newspaper and the first English language newspaper in the Arab Gulf. He was one of the founding members of the Kuwait Journalists Association (KJA) and served as its honorary chairman. He served five terms as chairman of the KJA, in 1978-79, 1980-81, 1982-83, 1984-85 and 1990-92. Throughout his lifetime, Alyan, born on Sept 12, 1932, traveled widely and met many key business and political figures. He was also honored by several world heads of state.

Soft spoken and serious, Alyan had lived to see the dramatic changes brought about by the advent of oil wealth in Kuwait. Alyan saw a free press as a fundamental necessity for a functioning democracy and hailed Kuwait's long tradition of free speech and freedom for its citizenry. Alyan was also Editor-in-Chief of Al-Fajr Al-Jadid newspaper between 1991 and 1992, published after the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait.

Kuwait's Information Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah told KUNA that, "Kuwait has lost one of its patriotic sons who contributed to the building of Kuwait's journalism and the establishment of KJA."

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Obituary for Yousuf Al-Alyan, founder of Kuwait Times, published on the day of his passing in 2007.

people running the paper after him," he said. Having witnessed the paper evolve over the past 50 years, Mathews shared why he remains loyal to Kuwait Times: "There's extensive reporting with a lot of coverage, especially on the international front. The quality of both the reporting and the paper itself has improved."

Even at his respected age, Mathews isn't the oldest known reader of Kuwait Times. Five years ago, the paper welcomed an older subscriber: 76-year-old Kuwaiti Murtada Amoumen. As a former English teacher, Amoumen uses the paper to stay connected to his beloved English language. "I read so I don't forget what I learned and taught to the younger generations," he said.

While he finds the topics covered by Kuwait Times "interesting", his main reason for reading is his passion for the language of journalism, which he describes as "the language of intellectuals" and believes is expertly mastered in the paper. Amoumen makes it a point to never miss an issue; even when traveling, he asks his housekeeper to save all the editions for him until he returns.

### Junior Times

Thomas Filip, 60, from Kerala in India, has known Kuwait Times since childhood, as it was the only newspaper available in his family's mother tongue, Malayalam. "It was quite appreciable that someone made the effort to publish in our own language."



Murtada Amoumen, 76-year-old reader of Kuwait Times.





Kuwait Times reader Asif Saddique



Saddique catches up on the news with Kuwait Times at breakfast time.

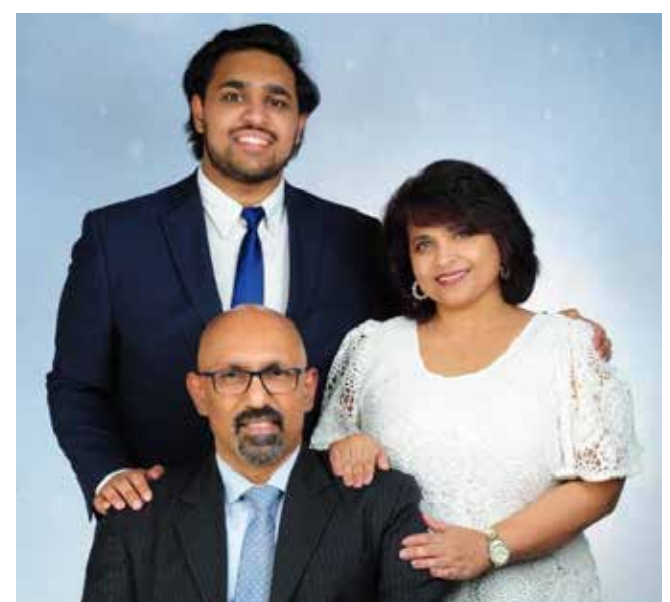


A column by Muna AlFuzai from 2009.

His wife, Sherine Thomas, 50, born and raised in Kuwait, also developed a deep attachment to the newspaper from a young age, strongly linked to memories of her father. "My dad was very particular about improving our handwriting and making sure we stayed informed. He would have us read and rewrite the important news of the day, then test what we remembered later."

When Kuwait Times republished some of its old editions for an anniversary, Sherine made sure to keep them all. "I saved them as memories to take with us when we leave Kuwait," she said.

Around the same age as Sherine, Cibhu Alex Chacko, 49, also Indian, was introduced to the paper by his parents. He fondly recalled the "Junior Times" entertainment section that Kuwait Times used to publish. "My brothers and I used to fight over the puzzle games." As an adult, he has read Kuwait Times for over 24 years, either in the morning before work or in the evening before bed. This habit has been passed on to his children, as he noted, "Around 4 or 5 am when the newspaper arrives, my daughters read the key events and present them as highlights at their school assembly."



Kuwait Times reader Thomas Filip with his wife Sherine and their son.



Kuwait Times reader Cibhu Alex Chacko

**Documenting history**

Reading the newspaper has also been a daily ritual for Ambrose Gilbert Regu, 63, since 2007. "I made it a practice to read the newspaper with my cup of coffee or tea, which gives me a more relaxing feeling than reading on social media or an e-book." As a senior executive at a company in Kuwait, his favorite section is the business segment, keeping him informed on the latest financial news from companies and banks.

In addition to keeping up with current news, Regu sees Kuwait Times as a documentation of history, especially regarding events he hasn't experienced firsthand. He appreciates how the paper shares stories each year to commemorate the anniversary of the invasion, which he only heard about from his Indian friends living in Kuwait at that time. Regu mentioned that all his family members are avid readers of Kuwait Times too.

Asif Saddique, a Pakistani reader who subscribed to Kuwait Times from 2006 to 2007 after moving to Kuwait from the US in 2004, values the newspaper's credibility and authenticity, noting that it never shares "fake news". Raja Ramalingam, an Indian reader who arrived in Kuwait in 2011, shares similar sentiments, appreciating the newspaper's timely publications and its commitment to giving equal attention to both local and international news.

He particularly praised Kuwait Times for its balanced



and neutral approach to news coverage, which he believes contrasts sharply with the often-biased reporting found in other newspapers. As employees come and go, both of them fondly recalled their favorite columnist, whom they eagerly anticipated each week — Muna AlFuzai, who wrote for Kuwait Times for many years.



Kuwait Times reader Ambrose Gilbert Regu with his family.

# What happened in issue no. 12345?

## From politics to pop culture: The milestones and moments

By Shakir Reshamwala

For 63 years, Kuwait Times has chronicled events both monumental and mundane. Each past issue, whether preserved in leather-bound, yellowing newsprint or stored digitally in the cloud, carries its unique story. Issue no. 12345, published on July 16, 2003, is no exception. This quirky milestone fell on a balmy midsummer Wednesday, featuring a historic moment on its front page.



The headline story highlighted the formation of a new Cabinet, marking the first time in Kuwait's political history that the roles of prime minister and crown prince were separated. This was no ordinary government formation; it included two future Amirs — HH Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, who was sworn in as premier, and HH Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, then the interior minister. It also featured three future prime ministers: HH Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah (then defense minister), HH Sheikh Mohammad Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah (then foreign minister) and HH Sheikh Ahmad Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah (then communications minister).

Regionally, the Middle East remained volatile, with Iraq dominating the headlines in the aftermath of the Second Gulf War and the ouster of Saddam Hussein, just under two years after the 9/11 attacks. Meanwhile, the Zionist-Palestinian conflict persisted, although infighting among Palestinian leaders seemed to momentarily subside in this issue.

Several familiar faces from today's political landscape also appeared in issue no. 12345. Palestinian Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas (now president) and Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva were featured, having outlasted their then-contemporaries like George W Bush, Tony Blair, Silvio Berlusconi and Kofi Annan. Even Mikhail Gorbachev made an appearance, promoting his book in Germany — a stark contrast to his former status as the powerful leader of the Soviet Union.

The technology section took readers back to 2003 when Nokia phones were all the rage. The latest model was the Nokia 3100, though signs of change were already on the horizon as the company experienced a dip in profits. In entertainment, Arnold Schwarzenegger attended the premiere of "Terminator 3" and Sean "Diddy" Combs, now embroiled in controversy and imprisoned, had just launched a new album. On the sports front, Tiger Woods remained the world's no. 1 golfer, seemingly oblivious to the personal challenges that would later emerge.



Issue no. 12345 of Kuwait Times is a fascinating snapshot of a world both familiar and distant, reflecting pivotal moments in Kuwait's history and beyond.

Issue no. 12345 of Kuwait Times is a fascinating snapshot of a world both familiar and distant, reflecting pivotal moments in Kuwait's history and beyond.



'Terminator 3: Rise of the Machines' star Arnold Schwarzenegger gives the thumbs up at the Euroscreen premiere of the film at the Potsdamer Platz in Berlin on Monday. —AP photo

