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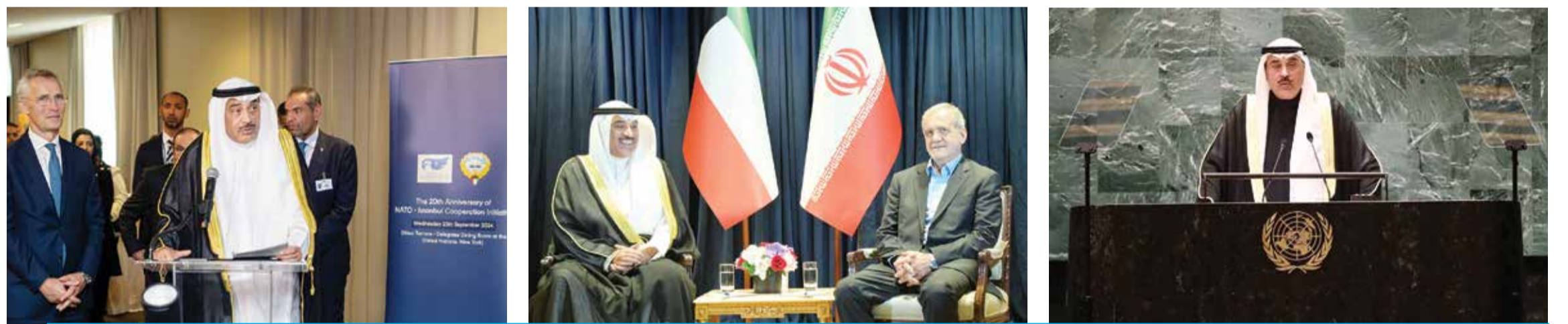


16 Sterling nets first Arsenal goal in romp, Liverpool crush West Ham



No peace without independent state of Palestine: Crown Prince

Amir's representative meets US and Iran presidents, hails NATO ties



NEW YORK: (Left) 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 speaks alongside NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg. (Center) HH Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian. HH the Crown Prince speaks during the 79th Session of the UN General Assembly at the UN headquarters on Sept 26, 2024. — KUNA photos

NEW YORK: There will be no peace in the region without the establishment of an independent state of Palestine with East Jerusalem as its capital, 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, said in his address during the 79th Session of the UN General Assembly on Thursday.

HH the Crown Prince condemned in his speech the "continuous (Zionist) aggression" against Palestinian civilians in Gaza and the West Bank, in addition to the occupation's attacks on Lebanon and its attempts to drag the region into war. "We cannot objectively seek a bright future for our people without holding accountable those who violate the

UN Charter, principles of international law and the international humanitarian law," he said.

Under the patronage and attendance of HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled, a ceremony to commemorate the 20th anniversary of signing the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI) was held in New York late Wednesday. In a speech during the event, held on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly's 79th session, HH Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled affirmed Kuwait's continuous efforts to strengthen its strategic partnership with NATO, especially since it was the first country to join the initiative in 2004.

He added that Kuwait is the headquarters of the first-of-its-kind NATO-ICI Regional Center,

launched in 2017, which hosts many events and training courses. Kuwait is exerting great efforts to enhance political and security dialogue with ICI countries, with the aim of achieving stability in the region, he said. NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg underlined Kuwait's significant role in developing partnership between the alliance and ICI countries.

HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah earlier met US President Joe Biden at a reception honoring heads of delegations taking part in the UNGA, held at the American Museum of Natural History. HH Sheikh Sabah conveyed greetings from HH the Amir to Biden, reiterating during the occasion the historic stance of the US towards Kuwait and its people. The meeting

between the two reflected the strong and historic nature of relations linking Kuwait and the United States. HH the Amir's Representative wished President Biden and the American people more progress and development during the meeting.

HH Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled also received Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian at his residence in New York. HH the Crown Prince conveyed greetings of HH the Amir to Pezeshkian. The two discussed during the meeting relations between Kuwait and Iran, and means of backing and enhancing them to serve the two countries and their nations' interests, in addition to the latest developments in regional and international arenas. — KUNA

NEWS IN BRIEF



Sahel app launches in English

KUWAIT: The English version of the Sahel app launched on Thursday. The new English interface for the app has become a pressing need for Kuwait's large non-Arabic speaking community, as more government services are becoming available on the app.

Algeria slaps visas on Moroccans

ALGIERS: Algeria said Thursday it was imposing visa requirements on Moroccans, accusing its North African rival of criminal activity in its territory, including "Zionist espionage" and "drug and human trafficking". A statement charged that Morocco had "engaged in various actions that threaten Algeria's stability". — AFP

Talks discuss fast-tracking Mubarak Port

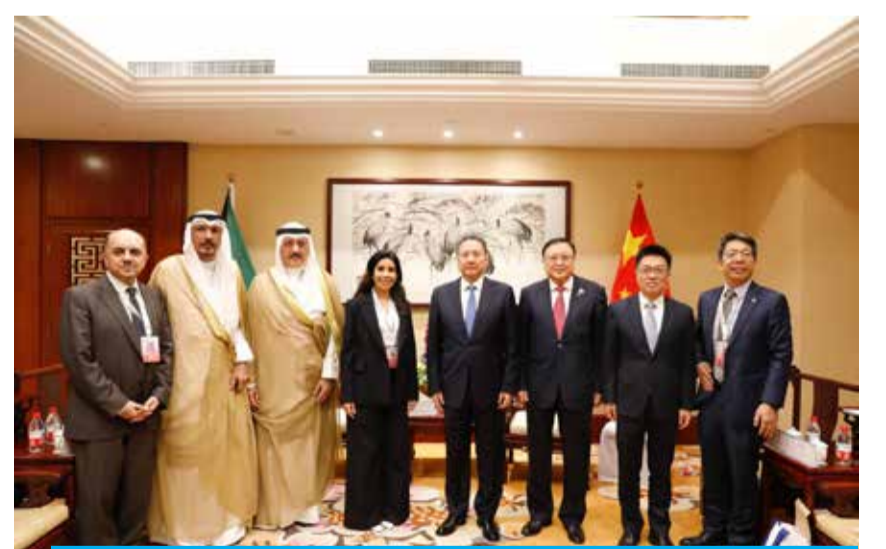
BEIJING: Kuwaiti Minister of Public Works Dr Noura Al-Mashaan and her high-level delegation held talks in Beijing Thursday with China's Minister of Transport Li Xiaopeng, focusing on boosting bilateral cooperation, especially in accelerating the completion of the Mubarak Al-Kabeer Port project. According to a statement from the ministry of public works, the meeting — also attended by Director of International Cooperation at China's Ministry of Transport Cen Yanqing — high-

lighted the longstanding strategic ties between Kuwait and China.

Mashaan conveyed Kuwait's leadership's determination to expedite major development agreements with China, which are expected to greatly contribute to the nation's growth. Central to these agreements is the Mubarak Al-Kabeer Port, with seven cooperative deals in place, all aimed at accelerating completion, she explained. Mashaan underlined China's renowned expertise in construction, port management and operations, stressing the importance of completing the project in a timely manner.

Expressing her satisfaction with the talks, Mashaan noted the positive momentum in strengthening economic relations between the two nations. As part of the visit, the Kuwaiti

Continued on Page 6



BEIJING: Minister of Public Works Dr Noura Al-Mashaan and the Kuwaiti delegation meet Chinese Minister of Public Transport Li Xiaopeng. — KUNA

Zionists reject Lebanon truce, get \$9bn US aid

BEIRUT: The Zionist entity flatly rejected on Thursday a push led by key backer the United States for a 21-day ceasefire in Lebanon, vowing to keep fighting Hezbollah militants "until victory". Zionist bombing of Iran-backed Hezbollah strongholds around Lebanon has killed hundreds of people this week, while the militant group has retaliated with rocket barrages.

Zionist Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office issued a statement earlier saying he had "not even re-

sponded" to the truce proposal, and that he had ordered the military "to continue the fighting with full force". The United States, France and other allies called for a 21-day halt, after President Joe Biden and his French counterpart, Emmanuel Macron, met on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York.

The situation in Lebanon has become "intolerable" and "is in nobody's interest, neither of the people of (the Zionist entity) nor of the people of Lebanon," their joint statement said. Despite the diplomatic efforts, violence raged on the ground. The Zionist defense ministry announced that it had secured a new \$8.7-billion aid package from the United States to support the country's ongoing military

Continued on Page 6



SAKSAKIYEH, Lebanon: A man sifts through the rubble of a building in an area targeted overnight by Zionist airstrikes in this town on Sept 26, 2024. — AFP



Local

NBK warns against impersonation scams

Bank advises customers to follow the tips shared across its digital channels

KUWAIT: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) continues promoting the "Let's Be Aware" campaign introduced by the Central Bank of Kuwait, in cooperation with local banks and Kuwait Banking Association (KBA), which aims to enhance financial literacy and awareness among customers from all sectors. NBK intensifies awareness by sharing educational material including video clips, text messages, and tips across its social media platforms and other digital channels, as well as reposting CBK's communications. This aims to raise awareness among all people and familiarize them with different fraud schemes and the required precautions to steer clear of banking scams.

NBK calls to verify individual and corporate identities before sharing sensitive information or making transactions involving personal or banking information.

This is particularly crucial in view of the rapidly evolving fraud schemes using AI and advanced technology. One of the most common schemes used by scammers is to impersonate bank employees by calling from apparently local numbers to trick victims into thinking the call is from the bank to obtain banking information. In this context, the bank affirms that it will never ask customers for personal information through phone calls, warning them of responding to these calls which are scams to obtain their banking information to steal their money or information.

The bank also advises customers to follow the tips shared on all its digital channels, including being careful when dealing with links, and saving any sensitive information like debit/credit card number on the phone, writing down the PIN on the card or sharing it with any other person, which also applies

to OTP. It also advises customers to log out of online or mobile banking once transactions are completed. NBK employs its strong customer communication capabilities as well as all its digital channels, which are the most popular among all Kuwaiti banks, to support the Central Bank's endeavors to protect customers and the national economy.

It is worth mentioning that NBK is a key supporter and partner in all CBK's campaigns and initiatives aiming to increase financial and banking awareness among different segments of society. As a leading financial institution in Kuwait, NBK frequently organizes various activities to raise awareness on all topics related to the banking sector, as well as various training courses for its employees to enhance their experience in the areas of combating fraud and financial crime. The



"Let's Be Aware" campaign is the largest across the GCC region focusing on raising banking and financial awareness among banks' customers. The campaign covers a variety of crucial topics including: anti-fraud tips, raising awareness on high-risk investments, maximizing benefit from banking services, promoting savings and investment culture, as well as other related topics.

Expatriates, petrol prices and scrapping naturalization rights

In my view



Nejouad Al-Yagout

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For a couple of months, there has been talk that Kuwait is going to pass a decree to raise petrol prices for expatriates. The lawmakers have stipulated that Kuwaitis will not be affected by this. Of course, ensuring that Kuwaitis are privileged, while foreigners are demeaned, means that we continue to go down a self-destructive path of doom. And this decree is not only a testament to that, but perhaps the most bizarre of them all (maybe apart from the one where foreigners can't own pickup trucks).

One wonders: In what country on our entire planet is the price of petrol cheaper for locals? When the parliament was dissolved earlier this year, one hoped that this would mean that our country would find ways to become more inclusive and egalitarian. After all, it was parliamentarians who hurled racist and xenophobic rhetoric and mocked expatriates. Who imagined that these voices would be found even outside the walls of our parliament?

Of course, in all countries of the world, locals have more benefits than foreigners when it comes to healthcare, pension packages and even job prospects. But charging a foreigner more for services is unheard of. How are they going to go about this if it is put into practice? Will they have segregated pumps for foreigners or civil ID checks at payment points? Will locals protest these hikes in prices or turn a blind eye yet again because it is not affecting them and they feel entitled?

If petrol prices weren't enough, there is now a draft law looking into scrapping a foreign woman's right to citizenship if she marries a Kuwaiti. First, they sought to extend the period in which a foreign woman could obtain citizenship; now they are insisting that marrying a Kuwaiti man does not necessarily entail the right to citizenship.

There was also a woman on a popular Instagram account who said that she wished that foreign women divorced or widowed from Kuwaiti men would be stripped of their Kuwaiti nationality. The fact that a local woman is allowed to express racism on a public forum, on a news channel on social media to boot, reflects the collective mentality of our society, a society that seems to applaud any decree in which expats are insulted.

Kuwait prides itself on Islamic culture, but widows are supposed to be protected in Islam, so this remark by a local woman is not only going against universal humanitarian values but religious values as well. And our treatment of foreigners also goes against religious values when travelers are supposed to be welcomed and treated with respect. This means, if Kuwait wants to practice what it preaches, then every foreigner should be treated with dignity. Instead, we do our best to find ways to make the lives of foreigners miserable and ostracize the "other".

Yes, we currently live under a privileged welfare state, but destiny can change. Will people then feel sorry for us or recall our arrogance and say we deserve it? Why can't we be grateful for all the beautiful human beings from across the world who have helped us build our country and who continue to help us? They came here for a better life, but we are making their lives miserable by making them feel inferior to us. Thinking that we are superior because of the color of our passports or because we have oil is a delusion that is leading us astray.

Our attachment to privilege and materialism is slowly destroying us. May we awaken so that we stop hurting ourselves and others further. And may we focus on infrastructure and education and tourism and the inclusion of minorities instead of spending (nay, wasting) all our time on insulting foreigners while pumping our egos. Enough!



Chinese Ambassador Zhang Jianwei (left) and Minister of Finance in Kuwait Noura Al-Fassam (right) celebrate by cutting the cake at the event.



Chinese ambassador showcasing Chinese cars.



Dancers perform during the event.

Minister: China is Kuwait's largest trading partner

By Passant Hisham

KUWAIT: Kuwait's Minister of Finance and Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment, Noura Al-Fassam, described China as "Kuwait's largest trading partner," highlighting strong bilateral relationship between the two countries which has flourished over the past 53 years. In her speech at the celebration hosted by the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Kuwait on Wednesday, marking the 75th anniversary of the founding of the republic, Minister Al-Fassam emphasized that the strategic partnership and close cooperation between the two countries have been further strengthened by the Belt and Road Initiative and other joint agreements.

She expressed her anticipation of working closely with the Chinese side in the near future to complete numerous projects, particularly the launch of the "Mubarak Al-Kabeer Port" and "Shagaya Renewable Energy" projects, which will contribute to achieving the state's development vision. The Chinese Ambassador to Kuwait, Zhang Jianwei, discussed the outcomes of the recent visit by a delegation from the Communist Party of China (CPC) to Kuwait, which was led by the Deputy Minister of the International Liaison Department of the CPC Central Committee, Li Mingxiang.

Kuwait supports global vision of zero tolerance for corruption

BEIJING: Kuwait has expressed its support for the global vision of zero tolerance for corruption, stressing the importance of cross-border cooperation to combat it. This came during a speech delivered Tuesday by Vice President of Kuwait Anti-Corruption Authority (Nazaha) Counselor Nawaf Al-Muhammal during his participation in the Fifth Plenary Meeting of the Global Operational Network of Anti-Corruption Law Enforcement (Globe Network), extending from September 24 to 27 in Beijing.

In a statement acquired by KUNA, Al-Muhammal affirmed Kuwait's commitment to boosting international cooperation in the field of fighting corruption, noting that Kuwait believes in the importance of increasing international efforts and joint work between countries. Al-Muhammal pledged that the authority would work hard to fulfill its international obligations, including the commitment to implement the UN Convention against Corruption and close cooperation with regional and international organizations, especially the Globe Network.

He expressed Kuwait's interest in joining the membership of the Steering Committee, whose elections will be held at this meeting to select new members, starting from the president and his dep-



Vice President of Nazaha Counselor Nawaf Al-Muhammal



He added, "As you know, the Communist Party of China is the ruling party, and this was its first visit. The Chinese delegation briefed Kuwaiti officials on the latest developments in China, particularly in economic growth, and suggested enhancing cooperation between the two countries in the future." When asked if an executive plan had been established to implement major projects, the ambassador explained that both sides are "eager to strengthen cooperation and execute the agreements made between their countries' leaders." He added, "from Kuwait's side, a ministerial committee, chaired by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and including officials from relevant ministries, has been formed."

Meanwhile, the Chinese side has sent several delegations to consult with their Kuwaiti counterparts and conducted a field visit to Mubarak Al-Kabeer Port. The discussions, he said, covered renewable energy projects with both teams having reached significant progress toward achieving these initiatives. The ambassador emphasized that the Chinese side is "highly

committed to driving these projects forward."

He further noted that a Kuwaiti delegation, led by the Minister of Public Works, is currently participating in the Global Sustainable Transport Forum. The delegation also conducted a field visit to Tianjin Port and will visit Shanghai Port tomorrow, where they met with China's Minister of Transport. He concluded by saying, "Notable progress has been made in accelerating the development of Mubarak Al-Kabeer Port."

Pointing to other growing aspects of the relationship between the two countries, Zhang discussed the thriving people-to-people exchanges, which are characterized by increasing collaboration among youth, students, and media institutions from both nations. He highlighted the success of several Chinese cultural performance groups in Kuwait and the growing interest in the Chinese language, as well as expressing his delight at the increasing number of Kuwaitis visiting China for tourism, business, education, and shopping.

Kuwait's Central Bank issues stability report

KUWAIT: In line with its efforts to enhance transparency, disclosure, and provide reliable information and statistics related to the Kuwaiti financial and banking sector, the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) has issued its Financial Stability Report for the year 2023. Governor of the Central Bank of Kuwait Basel Al-Haroon said in a statement that the report the bank has been issuing for twelve years covers the most important developments related to the financial and banking system in Kuwait during the year 2023.

The year was underscored by the continued tightening in monetary policy adopted by numerous central banks globally in order to combat the unprecedented rise in inflation rates, he said, adding that this coincided with failures in the banking sector that led to the collapse of multiple banks in the US and Europe, while geopolitical tensions continued to rise both regionally and globally. The report includes analysis of local and global economic developments, a glimpse of the local financial system, and developments in the Kuwaiti banking sector in terms of market, credit, liquidity, and operational risks, he added.

It also includes a review of banking profitability and solvency, in addition to the developments in the payment and settlement system infrastructure, the CBK's governor noted. Included in the report are several boxes touching on emerging issues, such as CBK's efforts to curb banking sector liquidity risk and counter digital financial fraud.

Also included is a summary of CBK's macro-prudential framework and utilization of these tools to bolster financial and monetary stability, in addition to CBK's updated instructions to regulate the electronic payment of funds, updated and promulgated in May of 2023, he said. The governor concluded his statement by noting that concerned parties and those interested may access the full Financial Stability Report through the Central Bank of Kuwait's website. — KUNA



ty to the international observers, in view of its prominent role in the work of this network since its founding. Nazaha has been an active and effective member since joining the Globe Network in 2021, as it participated in the discussions to launch the network's charter, membership in thematic teams, and attend sessions.

He commended Globe Network's role as an invaluable platform for fostering cooperation between anti-corruption authorities worldwide, extending gratitude to the network's role in investing in some Kuwaiti younger talents through chairing workshops and moderation of thematic working group sessions, as well as through the network's first mentorship program, "Empowering Women in Justice/for Justice: A Mentorship Program for Women Professionals in Anti-Corruption Law Enforcement and the Judiciary."

Today's meeting witnessed a wide attendance of representatives of member states and regional and international organizations to discuss the latest developments in the network, review ongoing projects, and update work mechanisms, with a focus on the progress made in achieving the network's strategic goals. — KUNA

Kuwait banking sector earns KD 1.5 billion

KUWAIT: The annual Financial Report released by the Central Bank of Kuwait on Thursday disclosed that the banks shareholders dividends grew by 25 percent on annual basis reaching KD 1.5 billion (\$5.9 billion) in the end of the year 2023. The continuous profit earning in the sector was affected with high interests improvement of the assets quality, while the allocations

declined by 15 percent, as compared to the year 2022. The banking sector assets grew by 3.1 percent in the end of 2023, reaching KD 110.4 billion (\$364 billion).

The sector profitability was affected with hike of the noticeable net interest margin amounting to 2.7 percent, while interest free profits rose accounting 32 percent of the whole sector, buoyed by the increase in investments earnings, by 126 percent. The earnings; improvement over the past year reflected on the profitability indexes and financial efficiency. The average asset proceeds rose by 1.5 percent and that of the equity by 11.1 percent, also in contrast to 2022. The fi-

nancial sector maintained its bullish financial solvency, where capital adequacy climbed by 19.9 percent, due to the banks' profits and rose of capital of some.

The loans portfolio grew by 2.6 percent reaching KD 69.2 billion (\$228.3 billion), buoyed by growth of the funding granted to mega companies. Meanwhile, the local currency maintained the lion's share in the portfolio 64.2 percent. Non-performing loans maintained the level at 1.4 percent in 2023, maintaining the level of the two previous years, while coverage of these loans continued to rise, hitting 312 percent in the end of the year. — KUNA

Amir's Representative, world leaders hold talks



NEW YORK: 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, receives Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan on the sidelines of the 79th session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York. — KUNA



Representative of His Highness the Amir, His Highness the Crown Prince, received on Wednesday Kosovo Prime Minister Albin Kurti. The meeting was held on the sidelines of the 79th session of the United Nations General Assembly, currently being held in New York.



Representative of His Highness the Amir, His Highness the Crown Prince, holds talks with Abdel Fattah Al-Burhan, Chairman of the Transitional Council of Sudan, on the sidelines of the 79th session of the United Nations General Assembly.

Crown Prince attends ICI ceremony

Kuwait-ICI: 20 years of cooperation for security, stability

NEW YORK: Under the patronage and attendance of HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, a ceremony to commemorate the 20th anniversary of signing the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI) was held in New York late Wednesday. In a speech during the event, held on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly's 79th session, HH Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled affirmed Kuwait's continuous efforts to strengthen its strategic partnership with the NATO, especially since it was the first country to join the initiative in 2004.

He added that Kuwait is the headquarters of the first-of-its-kind NATO-ICI Regional Center, launched in 2017, which hosts many events and training courses. Kuwait is exerting great efforts to enhance political and security dialogue with ICI countries, with the aim of achieving stability in the region, he said. NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg underlined Kuwait's significant role in developing partnership between the alliance and ICI countries.

Over the past two decades, since Kuwait joined the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI) launched by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the Gulf state and the organization have been keen to strengthen cooperation in many fields with the aim of solidifying the foundations of security and stability in the region. Since Kuwait joined the ICI in December 2004 as the first Gulf country, many steps have been taken to strengthen ties, the most important of which was the opening of the headquarters of the NATO Regional Center and the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative in Kuwait on January 23, 2017.

This made the center the first country outside the Euro-Atlantic region to host a regional center for NATO. This center is the first of its kind in the Arabian Gulf region and a training headquarters through which representatives of NATO members carry out specialized training and advisory tasks in all technical fields for government agencies in Kuwait and the GCC countries who are members of the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative.

Since joining the initiative, Kuwait has contributed to various activities organized by NATO until it became a key partner in the initiative, hosting the (NATO and the Gulf States Confronting Common Challenges through the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative) conference in December 2006 and joining the Partners Program for Individual Cooperation, which was held and adopted in 2014.

In November 2018, Kuwait and NATO member



NEW YORK: HH the Crown Prince attends Istanbul Cooperation Initiative anniversary celebration. — KUNA



states took another important step to strengthen bilateral relations, as Kuwait opened its first diplomatic mission with NATO in the Belgian capital, Brussels. It also hosted, in mid-December 2019, events celebrating the 15th anniversary of the launch of the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative.

The past twenty years have witnessed many visits between senior Kuwaiti officials and NATO to enhance joint cooperation in several areas, the most important of which are energy, maritime security, cyber defense, disaster management, and combating terrorism, in addition to coordinating common posi-

tions on regional and global issues.

The Istanbul Cooperation Initiative was launched during the Summit of Heads of State and Governments held in the Turkish capital, Ankara, in June 2004, with the aim of contributing to enhancing security and stability, especially in the Middle East, through a presentation of practical cooperation between the countries of the region and NATO countries in various security fields. The initiative is based on several principles that are based on the concept of partnership and the mutual interests of NATO and the countries of the region and take into account their diversity and special needs.

In addition, it constitutes a separate path in the field of internationally recognized cooperation initiatives, with consideration of the completion of the process of other international initiatives, especially the G8 and the European Union and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

The Istanbul Cooperation Initiative relies on the principle of comprehensiveness, so it remains open to all interested countries in the Middle East region that are committed to the goals and content of the

initiative, especially combating terrorism and preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction. The initiative has a list of activities covering six different areas, and the joining countries can choose from among them what suits them. The first of these areas relates to defense reform and preparing its budget, while the second one deals with military cooperation and training, and the third deals with cooperation in the field of combating terrorism.

Meanwhile, the fourth area deals with cooperation against the spread of weapons of mass destruction and their carriers, while the fifth deals with cooperation in ensuring border security, and the sixth within the framework of developing civil emergency plans, including participation in training and rehabilitation courses and exercises on rescue operations in disaster situations. The Istanbul Cooperation Initiative was preceded by a series of high-level consultations conducted by NATO Secretary-General Ambassador Minuto Rizzo during May, September, and December of 2004 with the countries of the GCC, where those countries first showed interest in this initiative. — KUNA



Assistant Foreign Minister for Human Rights Affairs Ambassador Sheikh Jawaher Ibrahim Al-Duaij Al-Sabah during a consultation session with a number of ambassadors of European Union countries to the country. — KUNA photos

KRCS assists displaced Lebanese

BEIRUT: Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) has pursued its urgent humanitarian campaign to relieve families who have been displaced due to the ongoing Zionist attacks on various regions of the country. The KRCS campaign, carried out in coordination with the Lebanese Red Cross, has continued for the third day in a row on Thursday, delivering relief supplies to the relocated people who have taken shelter in schools and other facilities, said Yousef Boutros, the Red Cross relief coordinator in a statement to KUNA. The campaign targeted locations of high density presence of the displaced in Beirut, Mount Lebanon, Zahle in eastern Lebanon and Akkar in the north, Boutros said. The relocated were handed food, hygiene materials, blankets and mattresses, totally sufficient for up to 10,000 families.

Meanwhile, Assistant Foreign Minister for Human Rights Affairs Ambassador Sheikh Jawaher Ibrahim Al-Duaij Al-Sabah on Thursday affirmed Kuwait's support for the Palestinian cause in the shadow of the brutal and inhuman annihilation of



Assistant Foreign Minister for Human Rights Affairs Ambassador Sheikh Jawaher Ibrahim Al-Duaij Al-Sabah

the Gaza Strip. This brutal offensive is a flagrant and grave breach of the international law for human rights and the international humane law, said Sheikh Jawaher in a statement to KUNA. She was speaking after holding consultations with the European Union states' ambassadors — organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The situation in Gaza warrants a serious stand by

the EU states and the international community, amid forecast expansion of the conflict and the violence, she said, alluding in this regard to the events in Lebanon. Sheikh Jawaher said the session with the envoys was an opportunity to discuss various issues related to human rights, coordination at this level, and prior topics addressed during the 57th session of the UN Human Rights Council (meeting in Geneva from September 9 until October 11).

She lauded the European support for the statement addressed by the State of Kuwait on the World Humanitarian Day (in August). Moreover, she indicated Kuwait's pledge during a forum held on the margins of the UNHRC session to help in facilitating access to clean water, setting up sewage systems for impoverished communities, and promoting human rights worldwide.

Escalation in Lebanon

Meanwhile, foreign ministers of the Gulf Cooperation Council member states and US Secretary of State Antony Blinken have discussed the ongoing war on the Gaza Strip and the military escalation in Lebanon. GCC Secretary-General Jassem Al-Budaiwi said, in a press statement on Wednesday, the ministerial meeting was held in New York on the sidelines of the 79th session of the United Nations General Assembly.

"The meeting comes at a delicate time to discuss the threats facing the region and the world and the importance of dialogue and coordination between the two sides to support regional and international stability and security," Al-Budaiwi clarified. He pointed out that the conferees underlined the necessity of cooperation and joint action to confront the challenges facing the region and the world. The meeting reviewed several issues affecting the stability of the region, such as the war in Gaza and the security challenges in the Red Sea. The ministers renewed their call for all parties to exercise restraint and resort to dialogue to resolve disputes, he stated.

Al-Budaiwi affirmed the GCC's support for Lebanon's sovereignty and stability, expressing his concern over the recent violations that threaten to escalate the situation in the region. The meeting also mulled boosting cooperation between the GCC and the United States, particularly in air defense, cybersecurity, and economy, he unveiled. He added that there are plans for joint meetings and workshops in the future to enhance this partnership. The GCC chief reiterated the GCC countries' commitment to strengthening their relations with the United States, stressing that the GCC-US partnership is based on strong historical relations and common interests. — KUNA



WARMUN: Empowering youth for global change



Retaj Khaled Elbasiouny



Yehia Abdelhady



Raef Rafik



Ali Jaraq



Maryam Abu Al Jubain

By Ghadeer Ghloom

KUWAIT: With the support of Kuwait Times, World Ambassadors for Resolutions Model United Nations (WARMUN) held its inaugural event at the Gulf University for Science and Technology (GUST) to encourage and inspire youth to take part in addressing global challenges. WARMUN functioned as a platform for young leaders to develop critical thinking skills for shaping a better future.

During the event, Ghada Eltahir, the UN Secretary-General's representative and Resident Coordinator to Kuwait, expressed her pride in the commitment of Kuwait's youth, stating, "It is my greatest pleasure to stand before you today... celebrating the actions of Kuwait's youth making a positive change in the world." She highlighted: "The UN is here to support you, the youth, in taking the lead to

create a better future."

WARMUN's agenda covered multiple global issues as the Security Council addressed "Stabilizing the Sudanese Conflict" and the General Assembly discussed "The Effects of the Digital World on Youth," thus, tackling both international and domestic challenges. Delegates also touched upon diverse topics, including "Combating Arms Trafficking in the Black Market" in DISEC and "Securing Space Sustainability" in the UNOOSA committee, which allowed them to propose actionable solutions. In addition to the inclusion of domestic issues such as "Kuwait's Visa Issues" in Majlis Al-Ummah emphasized the vital connection between global diplomacy and local concerns.

On his part, Secretary-General Hamza Ahmed Hagagy highlighted

the role of Model United Nations in youth development. Hagagy said that it empowers young people to critically engage with global issues and fosters skills in diplomacy and collaboration. Fellow Secretary-General Yazid Hany Ramadan reinforced this message as he emphasized on perseverance in pursuing one's dreams.

Retaj Khaled Elbasiouny, Deputy Secretary General, expressed gratitude to her team: "Hamza and Yazid are like my younger brothers," she said. She also thanked team members like Ali Jaraq, Nourhan Sayed, Yahya Arafa, and several chairs and executives, including Yehia Abdelhady and Raef Rafik for their great efforts: "We transformed from three individuals on a Google Meet to standing on this stage today with a full team. Never give up on your dreams, no matter how long the journey takes."

Moreover, Maryam Abu Jubain, spoke passionately about the situation in Palestine, prompting meaningful discussions among delegates about human rights and justice.

The team thanked Kuwait Times, MUNKuwait, Sustainable Living KW, the Canadian Embassy in Kuwait, GUST, alongside, Fredz Chicks, Guaco, Cookiessaray, Reach Burgers, Flavour House, Linda's Bakery, and Bill's Lemonade, for their strong support to WARMUN, which improved event's experience. Eltahir ended the event, advising: "Enjoy every moment of this journey. It is an opportunity to learn, forge lifelong friendships, and contribute to shaping the world for the better." The core team—Hamza, Yazid, Retaj, and others—was praised for their tireless efforts, concluding the event with a shared sense of optimism for the future.



Farewell gathering in honor of Cuba envoy and his spouse

KUWAIT: The International Friends Group hosted a heartfelt farewell gathering at Christian's House in honor of the Ambassador of Cuba and his spouse Nivia. Esteemed guests and fellow diplomats came together for an afternoon filled with companionship and cultural exchange, enjoying a sumptuous selection of traditional local and international cuisine that created a warm and inviting atmosphere. As a gesture of appreciation and remembrance, the group presented thoughtful gifts to Nivia, symbolizing goodwill and reinforcing the bonds of friendship among all attendees. This gathering not only celebrated culinary delights but also underscored the importance of cultural understanding in today's interconnected world.



Kuwait takes part in Construct Iraq exhibition

ERBIL: Kuwait's Public Authority for Industry is taking part in the Construction International Exhibition 'Construct Iraq' in Erbil, Iraq alongside 400 other participants. Authority Deputy Director General, Dr Sanad Al-Ajmi, told KUNA that this is a great opportunity to promote Kuwaiti products, and encourage deal signings. The Authority's pavilion is home to a number of local businesses, including Sadeem Doors, Ahlia Chemicals and International Industrial Projects. — KUNA



Conference to discuss 'smoking lesions and conflict of interest'

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: A press conference was held by the Kuwait Society for Smoking and Cancer Prevention (KSSCP), attended by Chairman Dr Khalid Ahmad Al-Saleh and Board Member

Dr Hussa Al-Shaheen, to discuss the upcoming International Conference on Smoking Lesions and Conflict of Interest. The event, scheduled for Oct 27-28 under the patronage of Health Minister Dr Ahmad Al-Awadhi, will focus on tobacco economics and its impact on public health.

Dr Saleh highlighted that tobacco economics play a significant role in promoting smoking, particularly among vulnerable groups like children, posing a threat to future generations. He mentioned that the World Health Organization (WHO) has conducted workshops emphasizing the need to address the economic aspects of tobacco to reduce demand and consumption. Kuwait is among the first countries to adopt this international strategy against smoking. In 2022, 5.8 million tons

of tobacco were produced globally, according to data from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Additionally, WHO statistics show that 1.25 billion people smoke worldwide, with over 7 million deaths caused by direct smoking and 1.3 million by passive smoking.

Dr Shaheen noted that the conference will feature renowned scientists from the Gulf, Arab and international communities who specialize in tobacco economics. The program will cover topics such as protecting public health from the tobacco industry and efforts by governments and non-profits to combat smoking. There will also be sessions highlighting successful anti-smoking initiatives in GCC countries, focusing on awareness, psychological and medical support.

MoH develops systems to protect public from radiation hazards

KUWAIT: Head of the Radiation Nature Department at the Ministry of Health, Dr Mishari Al-Nuaimi, has stressed the importance of fruitful technical cooperation between the Ministry and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), especially on ways to contain and safely dispose of radioactive medical waste. This came in a statement by Dr Al-Nuaimi to Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) on the occasion of a visit by a delegation from the Kuwaiti Ministry of Defense headed by Director of the Department of Defense against Weapons of Mass Destruction Brigadier General Hamed Al-Shammari to the central warehouse for radioactive waste affiliated with the Ministry of Health.

Al-Nuaimi explained that the visit aims to learn about the experiences gained from the technical cooperation project between the Ministry and the IAEA and enhance joint cooperation and exchange of expertise in this regard. He pointed out that the Ministry of Health has witnessed a significant expansion in facilities over the past decade and an increase

in the use of radioactive materials to diagnose and treat diseases, especially cancer, which led to an increase in the quantities of radioactive waste and the remains of unused and expired radioactive medicines.

He stressed that this waste poses a danger to humans and the environment unless it is contained, stored, and disposed of in a safe manner, adding that the Ministry, realizing the importance of this waste, took the initiative to develop systems and legislation to manage it in line with the National Waste Management Strategy in Kuwait and the Environmental Protection Laws (24/2014) in accordance with the highest international standards and best practices to protect workers and the public from radiation hazards.

He pointed out the Ministry's keenness to develop the infrastructure dedicated to managing radioactive waste, including allocating a central warehouse for medical radioactive waste designed according to approved technical and technological standards to ensure the safety of radioactive materials. He pointed out that the (Defense) delegation was briefed during the visit on the mechanism of managing radioactive waste, starting from sorting and transportation to storage, where the waste is stored until 10 times its half-life has passed, after which it is disposed of by returning it to the country of origin or sending it to the competent authorities for treatment or recycling. — KUNA



KUWAIT: A delegation from the Ministry of Defense headed by Director of the Department of Defense against Weapons of Mass Destruction Brigadier General Hamed Al-Shammari visits the central warehouse for radioactive waste.



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Sudan's army launches push to retake Khartoum

New York mayor charged with accepting bribes from Turkey

Page 6

Page 7



SAKSAKIYEH: Buildings destroyed by Zionist airstrikes are seen in the Lebanese town of Saksakiyeh on September 26, 2024. — AFP

Traumatized Lebanese fear new war

Opinions divided on whether Hezbollah should respond to recent deadly Zionist attacks

BEIRUT: Lebanese businessman Anis Rubeiz has lived through crisis after crisis in his country but now sees no hope. An all-out invasion by the Zionist entity appears closer than ever after the it killed more than 500 people in Lebanon this week. "Everything is collapsing around us," said Rubeiz, 55, in Beirut's Christian-majority Ashrafieh district, criticizing what he said were attempts to drag Lebanon into a war it could do without. The Zionist entity and Hezbollah have been trading near-daily fire since Hamas attacked the Zionist entity on October 7. But the situation spiraled dramatically since last week, with hundreds dead in Zionist air strikes on Monday alone, the deadliest day since Lebanon's 1975-90 civil war.

Lebanon, crushed by a five-year economic collapse and paralyzed by a longstanding political deadlock, "can't handle" a war, said Rubeiz, who owns a real estate company. "People are tired mentally ... I don't see (hope) on the horizon ... or even a ray of light." In Beirut, the streets were relatively calm, after schools and universities closed, with some education facilities turned into makeshift shelters for the tens of thousands who have fled for their lives.

But people are apprehensive, and everyone is talking about the risk of disaster. Many have vivid memories of 2006 when the Zionist entity and Hezbollah last went to war, or the civil war before that. "I'm basically ready in case war erupts — I packed my bag with my children's identity papers and passports and clothes, and put them next to the door," said Abir Khater, 43, outside a shopping center. The store manager and mother of three said

she moved her family from their home near Beirut's southern suburbs, which has seen several Zionist strikes since Friday, to Bhamdoun in the mountains outside the capital.

'Afraid'

"I'm afraid just one missile will hit by mistake. Nobody knows what could happen to us," she said. Her children are still traumatized after a catastrophic explosion at Beirut's port in 2020, and the sectarian violence that has occasionally erupted in her area, she said. During the 2006 war, "I wasn't married ... but now I'm really afraid for my children", she said. That month-long conflict killed around 1,200 people in Lebanon, mostly civilians, and 160 in the Zionist entity, mostly soldiers. It left enormous damage including to roads and other infrastructure.

Opinions on Hezbollah's actions have been divided since October when the Iran-backed group began its cross-border attacks on the Zionist entity in support of Palestinian group Hamas. In Ashrafieh's Sassine Square, where an enormous Lebanese flag flies overhead, Mohammed Khalil was sitting on a bench, worrying about how to find a job and provide for his family. "I need to rebuild my life," said the 33-year-old, who fled with his wife and three children from their village in the southern district of Nabatiyeh this week. With so many other people also leaving, it took them two days to reach Beirut, a trip that would normally take a couple of hours at most. "I have children. They need to go to school, I'm thinking of their future ... but I hit a dead end," said

Khalil, who has previously worked manual jobs.

'Rebuild'

He said Hezbollah should respond after "what has happened to the people from the south", adding defiantly that "our side will win" in any case. Everything is in "sacrifice for the resistance", he added, referring to Hezbollah. A deep political crisis has left Lebanon without a president for almost two years, with Hezbollah allies and their opponents deadlocked, unable to reach a consensus.

The Shiite Muslim movement wields huge influence in Lebanon, while detractors accuse it of being a state within a state and of making unilateral decisions that mean the difference between war and peace. Nina Rufayel, a teacher in her 50s, expressed solidarity with Lebanese from the south, but said she was worried about further escalation. "I'm fearful for tomorrow. Who will rebuild ... feed us, teach" our children, she asked. "I'm not just afraid of whether war will break out or not, I'm afraid the whole country will be wiped off the map," she said.

Ghada Hatoum, who was walking in Beirut's Hamra shopping district, said "Hezbollah is not a state that can take the decision between war and peace — it is a parallel entity to the state". "It has shown its people (supporters) ... that it took the wrong decision," she said, referring to its move to begin attacking the Zionist entity. "Nobody is ready for war or has built a shelter. Are our lives that cheap? Are weapons worth more than lives?" she said, adding: "If I don't have a shelter to hide in, why drag me into war?" — AFP

More than 22,000 flee to Syria from Lebanon: Sources

DAMASCUS: More than 22,000 people have crossed from Lebanon into Syria this week via two border crossings, Syrian security sources said Thursday, as the Zionist entity pounded Lebanon in a fresh cross-border escalation. "More than 6,000 Lebanese and around 15,000 Syrians" have entered Syria through the Jdeidet Yabus border, also known in Lebanon as Masnaa crossing, said one security source requesting anonymity as they were not authorized to speak to the media. A second security source reported "around 1,000 Lebanese and some 500 Syrians have passed" through another crossing.

More than 774,000 Syrian refugees are registered with the United Nations in Lebanon, but the tiny country says it hosts some two million of them — the world's highest ratio of refugees per capita. Having fled more than a decade of war at home since 2011, some Syrians have now been among the victims of the latest Zionist strikes on Lebanon. Lebanon's health ministry said Thursday that 19 Syrians were among 20 people killed in an overnight Zionist strike in Yunin in the Bekaa valley, after the Zionist military said it hit Hezbollah targets in eastern Lebanon. — AFP



KHAN YUNIS: People stand next to a truck carrying 88 bodies, which entered the Gaza Strip from the Zionist entity the day before on September 26, 2024.



A man reacts as others gather to watch the burial of some of the 88 bodies in a mass grave. — AFP photos

Gaza health ministry buries unidentifiable Palestinian bodies

GAZA: The Gaza health ministry on Thursday said it holds the Zionist occupation fully responsible for the "inhumane" treatment of the bodies of Palestinians in a decomposing state on Wednesday. The Zionist entity had deposited the bodies of 88 people in a container without information on their identity. The ministry refused to bury the bodies Wednesday until the Zionist entity provided information on their identities. It said the Zionist act

was a breach of the dead's dignity and their families' right to know the fate of their loved ones. A day later, health authorities accepted the bodies, after they were kept in the container overnight but criticized the Zionist forces for "digging up and stealing" them from graves and keeping them in "immoral and illegal conditions".

The Zionist entity has regularly taken dead bodies out of Gaza to determine whether they are hostages seized during Hamas's October 7 attack. The Zionist army rejected the ministry's accusation, saying its policy was to treat the bodies of the deceased "with dignity and respect". "The hostage identification process, conducted at a secure and alternative location, ensures optimal professional conditions and respect for the deceased," the army statement said. "Bodies determined not be those of

hostages are returned with dignity and respect."

An AFP photographer saw a crowd gathered around the bodies on Thursday as they were unloaded from a truck, wrapped in blue tarp. Hisham Mhanna, spokesperson for the International Committee of the Red Cross, said it was not involved in the transfer of 88 bodies to Khan Yunis in southern Gaza because they did not have proper documentation. "The Red Cross declined to participate in the reception of the bodies because it did not comply with the applicable protocols. There are no data, lists, or evidence identifying these bodies, and we have no information about them whatsoever," Mhanna said. "We emphasize the right of all families to receive information about their relatives and loved ones and to carry out burial ceremonies in a manner that respects human dignity." — Agencies

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International

Sudan's army launches push to retake Khartoum

Burhan supports efforts to stop Sudan war as long as they end RSF occupation

DUBAI: Sudan's army launched artillery and air strikes in Sudan's capital on Thursday in its biggest operation to regain ground there since early in its 17-month war with the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), witnesses and military sources said. The push by the army, which lost control of most of the capital at the start of the conflict, came ahead of an address by its commander, General Abdel Fattah Al-Burhan, at the United Nations General Assembly in New York. In his address, Burhan said that he supported efforts to stop the devastating war in his country as long as they brought an end to the "occupation" of territory by the RSF. The army leader also accused states in the region of providing funding, weapons and mercenaries to the RSF, though he did not name any country.

In Sudan, witnesses reported heavy bombardments and clashes as army troops tried to cross bridges across the Nile connecting the three adjoining cities that make up the greater capital, Khartoum, Omdurman and Bahri. "The army is carrying out heavy artillery strikes and air strikes on Halfaya and Shambat," Ahmed Abdalla, a 48-year-old resident told Reuters by phone, referring to areas of Bahri close to the river. "The sounds of explosions are very loud."

46 people, including children, drown during Hindu festival in India

PATNA, India: At least 46 people, including 37 children, have drowned while celebrating a Hindu festival in eastern India, a local government official told AFP on Thursday. The victims drowned in separate incidents in Bihar state while ritually bathing in rivers and ponds swollen by recent

Video footage showed black smoke rising above the capital and the booms of the battle could be heard in the background. Army sources said their forces had crossed bridges in Khartoum and Bahri. The RSF told Reuters it had thwarted the army's attempt to cross two bridges to Khartoum. Reuters could not independently confirm the accounts. Though the army retook some ground in Omdurman early this year, it depends mostly on artillery and airstrikes and has been unable to dislodge nimble RSF ground forces embedded in other parts of the capital.

Darfur fears

The RSF has also continued to make advances in other parts of Sudan in recent months in a conflict that has caused a vast humanitarian crisis, displacing more than 10 million people and driving parts of the country to extreme hunger or famine. Diplomatic efforts by the United States and other powers have faltered, with the army refusing to attend talks last month in Switzerland. This month the battle for control of Al-Fashir, the capital of North Darfur state in the west of Sudan, has also intensified as the RSF has tried to advance from positions surrounding the city against the army and allied former rebel groups.

flooding, an official from the Bihar Disaster Management Department told AFP. "People ignored dangerous water levels in rivers as well as ponds while bathing to celebrate this festival," said the official, who requested anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to the media.

The drownings occurred from Tuesday across 15 districts of Bihar state as devotees marked the Jitiya Parv Hindu festival, observed by mothers for the well-being of their children. Authorities were still working to recover three other bodies, the official said. Jitiya Parv runs over several days and is also observed in neighboring Uttar Pradesh and Jharkhand states,

Al-Fashir is the last army holdout across the Darfur region, where the UN and rights groups say the RSF and allies have led ethnically-targeted attacks and the humanitarian situation is particularly critical. The RSF has denied being behind the violence. The UN human rights office said on Thursday it had documented summary executions, sexual and gender-based violence, and abductions of women and young men in Al-Fashir, in addition to rising civilian casualties. "From bitter past experience, if Al-Fashir falls, there is a high risk of ethnically targeted violations and abuses, including summary executions and sexual violence, by the RSF and allied militia," UN Human Rights Chief Volker Turk said.

The UN Security Council and secretary-general have also demanded an end to the siege of Al-Fashir, home to more than 1.8 million residents and displaced people. The war began when tensions between the RSF and the army, who had been jostling for position ahead of an internationally-backed transition to civilian rule, erupted into open conflict. The army and the RSF had previously shared power after staging a coup in 2021, two years after veteran autocrat Omar al-Bashir was toppled in a popular uprising. — Reuters



NEW YORK: Abdel Fattah Al-Burhan Abdelrahman Al-Burhan speaks during the United Nations General Assembly on September 26, 2024. — AFP

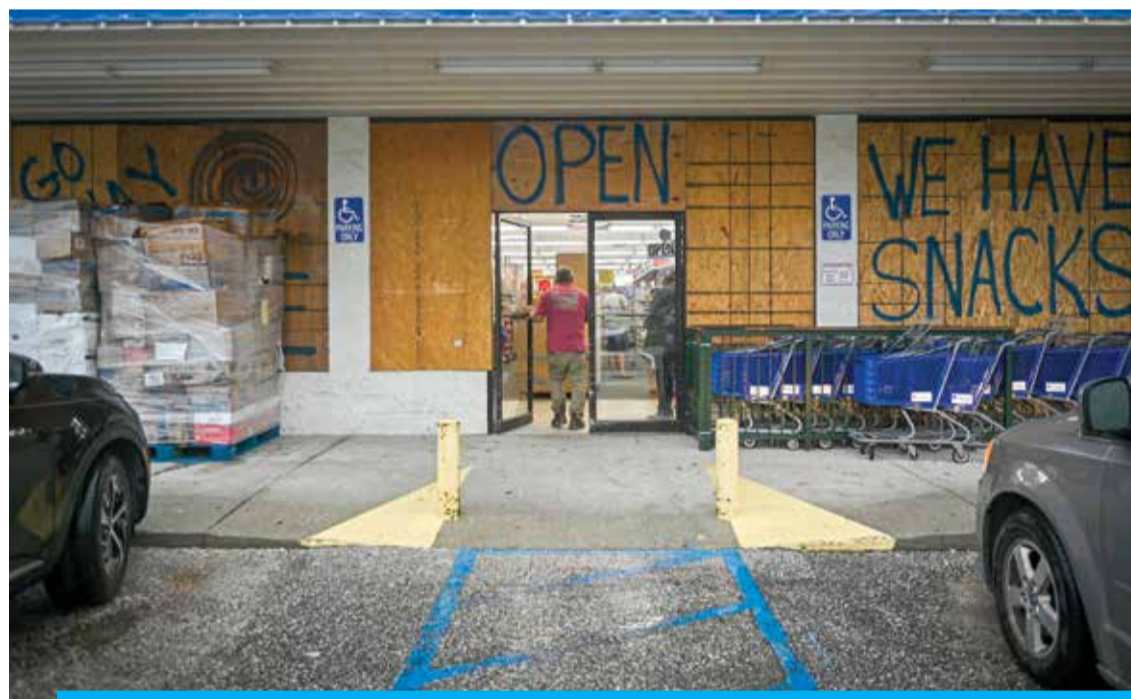
Florida braces for 'unsurvivable' hurricane Helene

TALLAHASSEE: Parts of Florida were expected to face "unsurvivable" conditions when Hurricane Helene hits later Thursday, the US weather service said, warning that howling wind will drive destructive waves and storm surge as high as 20 feet (six meters) onto the low-lying coast. Residents fled ahead of the incoming hurricane amid mass evacuation orders. The fast-moving storm was a Category 2 mid-morning Thursday, the National Hurricane Center (NHC) in Miami said, packing wind speeds of 105 miles (169 kilometers) an hour as it churns over the warm waters of the Gulf of Mexico.

The NHC said Helene — which it described as one of the largest Gulf hurricanes in recent decades — is expected to make landfall at or near Florida's Big Bend coast in the evening local time and could develop into a Category 3 or 4. Tampa and Tallahassee airports have already closed, and Florida Governor Ron DeSantis urged residents to rush preparations ahead of the "nasty" storm. It's a "very dangerous hurricane," NHC director Mike Brennan said. "We're expecting to see a storm surge inundation of 15 to 20 feet (4.5-6 meters) above ground level," he said. "That's up to the top of a second story building. Again, a really unsurvivable scenario is going to play out here in this portion of the Florida coastline." "In addition to that storm surge, you're going to have destructive wave action on top of that, that can destroy houses, move cars, and that water level is going to rise very quickly," he said. "Winds are going to penetrate well inland."

The NHC warned of up to 20 inches (51 cm) of rain in isolated spots, and potentially life-threatening flooding as well as "numerous" landslides across the southern Appalachians further inland. Several states are in the potential path. Georgia's capital Atlanta, a metropolis of some five million people, is forecast to experience tropical storm-force winds and as much as 12 inches (30.5 cm) of rainfall, which authorities warn could bring flash flooding.

Most of Georgia, which like Florida is under a state of emergency, was placed on flood watch, while Ten-



STEINHATCHEE: A person walks into a store boarded up with wood as preparations are made for the arrival of Hurricane Helene, in Steinhatchee, Florida, on September 25, 2024. — AFP

nessee — more than 300 miles (482 km) from the Gulf Coast, is bracing for tropical storm conditions statewide. The White House said President Joe Biden's administration "stands ready to provide further assistance to Florida, and other states in the path of the storm." DeSantis mobilized the National Guard and positioned thousands of personnel to prepare for possible search and rescue operations and power restoration.

Sandbags, boarded windows

The hurricane warning encompasses a 250 mile (202 km) stretch of coastline from Tampa Bay to Panama City, on the Florida panhandle. A direct impact was likely in the Tallahassee region, where coastal communities already looked like ghost towns by Wednesday afternoon. In Crawfordville, potentially in the storm's direct path, wheelchair-bound residents of the Eden Springs Nursing and Rehab Center were evacuated by bus.

Other locals loaded up on gas and supplies, filling sandbags and boarding up homes and businesses. "I

cedes the hub's manager Konstantinos Iaveris, a road safety instructor and former rally driver. The control center's main fixture is a large videowall flicking real-time shots of key junctions in the capital. Connected to over 200 cameras and some 550 sensors citywide, the hub operates some 2,000 traffic lights across the greater Athens area. Since it was introduced in July 2004, just before the Athens Olympics, the hub has been invaluable in addressing bottlenecks and other emergencies.

An upcoming upgrade will see more advanced cameras and "smart" sensor-equipped traffic lights that can adjust to traffic flows, Iaveris said. But what the city urgently needs, he stressed, is a single traffic body with authority over the entire region — a reform which greater Athens governor Nikos Hardalias, elected last year, is actively lobbying for. "We need time, the will is there," Iaveris said, adding that improving traffic is one of the new administration's top goals. At present, each municipality in the Athens region develops its own traffic plan, which often simply shifts congestion to adjacent areas, Iaveris said.

According to EU data agency Eurostat, the Greek capital is among the bloc's top five regions in number of vehicles per 1,000 inhabitants. For over four decades, Athens has employed a simple seasonal traffic control system known as 'daktlylios' (ring). Cars can only enter the inner city on odd or even-numbered workdays, depending on the last digit of their license plate. It was first introduced in 1979, mainly to combat smog. Over time, and thanks to the introduction of unleaded gas, the brown haze that once hung over the city has diminished. But Athenian families skirted the rules by buying at least two cars, ballooning the fleet of cars on the city's streets.

and in parts of Nepal's southern plains.

The state government has announced compensation of 400,000 rupees (\$4,784) for the families of each of the deceased, the statement said. Last year local media reported 22 people drowned during a 24-hour period in Bihar, most while marking the same festival. Deadly incidents are common at places of worship during major religious festivals in India, the biggest of which prompt millions of devotees to make pilgrimages to holy sites. At least 116 people were crushed to death in July at an overcrowded Hindu religious gathering in Uttar Pradesh state, the worst such tragedy in more than a decade. — Agencies

Trudeau on thin ice after surviving vote of confidence

OTTAWA: Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau easily survived a vote of confidence on Wednesday after his main political rival failed to muster enough support to end nine years of Liberal Party rule. Trudeau, whose popularity has slumped amid unhappiness over rising prices and a housing crisis, became more politically vulnerable this month when the smaller New Democratic Party tore up a 2022 deal to keep him in power until an election scheduled for end-October 2025. "Today was a good day for the country because I don't think Canadians want an election," said Karina Gould, the senior Liberal in charge of government business in the House.

Despite surviving the vote, other challenges loom for Trudeau with the main opposition Conservatives vowing to try again to topple the government as early as Tuesday. Following a heated debate that saw members of Parliament trade insults and slam their fists on desks, they voted 211 to 120 against the Conservative motion to unseat the Liberals. Far ahead in public opinion polls, Tory leader Pierre Poilievre has been itching for a snap election since the leftist New Democratic Party (NDP) earlier this month tore up a coalition agreement with the Liberals, leaving the Trudeau administration vulnerable to being toppled.

A combative Poilievre railed against Trudeau for what he said was a failure to address soaring costs of living, a housing crisis and crime, while doubling the national debt. The promise of Canada, "after nine years of Liberal government, is broken," he said during a Commons debate on Tuesday. But other opposition parties, whose support is needed to bring down the Liberals, have pushed back against his right-wing agenda. After the vote, Liberal House leader Karina Gould accused the Tories of "playing games." "We are going to get back to work and do the hard work of governing this country," she added.

Try, try again

Immediately following the no-confidence vote, the NDP again sided with the Liberals to pass legislation on capital gains taxes, averting another political crisis. Poilievre vowed to keep trying, with the next opportunity to bring down the government to be presented next week. If that fails, he will have a few more chances before the end of the year. The separatist Bloc Quebecois has also demanded concessions from the ruling Liberals for its continued support in parliament beyond the end of October.

During an appearance in New York on the "Late Show with Stephen Colbert" TV program on Monday evening, Trudeau acknowledged that Canadians are facing "a really tough time." "People are hurting. People are having trouble paying for groceries, paying for rent, filling up the tank," and "are looking at change," he said. The deal with the New Democratic Party to prop up the Liberals would have kept his government in office until late 2025. But the NDP, seeing its alignment with the Liberals hurting its own popularity, exited the pact early.

Provocative, adept at catchphrases and a champion of an anti-establishment discourse, the populist Poilievre has continued to gain ground in recent months. According to an Angus Reid poll, the Conservatives are well ahead of the Liberals, with 43 percent of voting intention against 21 percent for the ruling party. The NDP is at 19 percent. With legislation pending on NDP priorities including a national dental plan, and because Canada rarely goes to the polls during its harsh winters, political analysts suggested an election will not likely be triggered until at least spring 2025. University of Ottawa professor Genevieve Teller told AFP: "Anything is possible. It could come before Christmas." A weakened Trudeau administration under constant threat "will find it more difficult to govern" in the interim, she added. — Agencies



Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau

Outdated rules, limited metro collide for Athens gridlock

ATHENS: Straining to squeeze his taxi between two hulking trucks blocking an Athens street, 66-year-old cabbie Damianos says he's never seen traffic congestion in the Greek capital this bad. "It's unbearable," groans the veteran who has been behind the wheel the past 14 years. A mishmash of local traffic plans combined with a burgeoning fleet of cars have worsened the gridlock. Now the city is counting on new technologies, expanded public transport and eventually a single traffic authority to bring some relief — but improvement will not come fast.

During rush hour, queues several kilometers long form on Kifissos and Attiki Odos, the main motorways into the capital of 3.8 million — and inner streets are not much better off. An April survey by pollsters Opinion Poll showed that Athenians consider congestion and parking the second gravest concern in the capital, behind cleanliness. The daily grind is monitored by an agency tucked away on a tiny Athens street, barely wide enough for a van. The capital's traffic control hub manages circulation across 66 municipalities.

'Significant problem'

Congestion in Athens is a "significant problem", con-

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2024

Saudi Arabia to drop \$100 crude target to win back market share

OPEC+ committed to raise production on Dec 1



ROSEMEAD: Vehicles pass an ExxonMobil gas station in Rosemead, California. California said it was suing oil giant ExxonMobil over a "decades-long campaign of deception" about plastics recycling that has worsened a global pollution crisis. In a lengthy lawsuit filed in San Francisco, the state's attorney general said the company had used "slick marketing" to deceive consumers into believing single-use plastics could and would be recycled. — AFP

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia is preparing to abandon its unofficial \$100 a barrel oil price target as it gets ready to raise output to win back market share, even if it means lower prices, the Financial Times reported on Thursday. The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), which is de facto led by Riyadh, has been cutting oil output to support prices along with allies including Russia, who are together known as OPEC+. However, prices are down nearly 5 percent so far this year, amid increasing supply from other producers, especially the United States, as well as weak demand growth in China.

Earlier this month, OPEC+ agreed to delay a planned oil output increase for October and No-

vember after crude prices hit their lowest in nine months, saying it could further pause or reverse the hikes if needed. The FT, citing people familiar with Saudi thinking, reported that Saudi Arabia is committed to the group raising production as planned on Dec 1, even if that means a longer period of low oil prices. Global crude benchmark Brent LCO1 was down about 1.7 percent to \$72.25 at 1031 GMT following the FT report.

The Saudi government's communications office did not immediately return a request for comment. The market share of OPEC+, formed in late 2016, has slipped to all-time lows after output cuts since 2022 and supply increases by the US and other producers, according to the International Energy

Agency. OPEC+ oil output is equal to 48 percent of world supply, according to Reuters calculations based on IEA figures. Saudi Arabia's crude output is below 10 percent of the world market, while US oil output has risen to 20 percent of world supply.

Saudi Arabia has decided that it will not continue to cede market share and believes it has enough funding options, including foreign reserves and debt, to withstand a period of lower prices, the FT said. The kingdom, the world's top oil exporter, has shouldered a large share of OPEC+ output cuts, reducing its own output by about 2 million barrels per day (bpd) since late 2022. OPEC+ members are currently cutting output by a total of 5.86 million bpd, equivalent to about 5.7 percent of global oil demand.

Saudi Arabia has in the past increased production to defend its market share and in 2020 engaged in a price war with Russia. Both flooded world markets with oil after Moscow refused to support OPEC's decision to make deeper output cuts to deal with the fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic. Riyadh in 2014 blocked calls by some OPEC members to make output cuts to halt a slide in oil prices, setting the stage for a battle for market share between OPEC and non-OPEC producers amid a boom in US shale production. OPEC and Saudi Arabia have repeatedly said they do not target a certain oil price and make decisions based on market fundamentals and in the interest of balancing supply and demand. — Reuters

Lebanon's economy to be weighed down by Gaza war: EBRD

LONDON: The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development said Thursday that it expected Lebanon's economy to decline further in 2024 because of geopolitical turmoil. Lebanon's economy will contract by one percent in 2024, the EBRD predicted, heavily revising down its estimation made in May that the struggling economy would grow slightly. The Zionist entity's war in Gaza has already impacted neighboring countries economic growth and fighting is now heightening in Lebanon.

"Any escalation will certainly weigh down on growth," Beata Javorcik, the EBRD's chief economist told AFP. The country, already facing difficult economic conditions and sky-high inflation, has lost more than 40 percent of its GDP since 2018, the bank said in a report. It added that "political impasse and stagnant progress on critical reforms continued to hold back recovery." Meanwhile in the midst of Russia's war on Ukraine, the Russian economy grew 4.7 percent in the first half of 2024, as the price of the country's oil exports offset the impact of Western sanctions.

"The price of Russia's oil exports is estimated to



BEIRUT: Smoke billows from the site of a Zionist airstrike that targeted Beirut's southern suburbs on September 26, 2024. — AFP

have increased by more than 10 percent year on year and trade with non-sanctioning economies has been strong", the bank said, pointing to China as a key driver of the country's economic growth. The EBRD expects the 2024 full year growth to be 3.6 percent,

said in a statement it would issue an "immediate disbursement" of around \$1 billion. The three-year loan program "will require sound policies and reforms" to support Pakistan's ongoing efforts to strengthen its economy "and create conditions for a stronger, more inclusive, and resilient growth", it added.

Pakistan in July agreed to the deal—its 24th IMF payout since 1958 - in exchange for unpopular reforms, including cutting back on power subsidies and widening its chronically low tax base. Speaking on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly in New York on Wednesday, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said the deal came through thanks to the "tremendous support" of Saudi Arabia, China and the UAE.

"In the final phase (of negotiations), the IMF's conditions were related to China. The way the Chinese government supported and strengthened us during this time is something I am truly grateful for," he told reporters shortly before the deal was announced. Last month, Aurangzeb had said Pakistan was ne-

revising upwards its estimation made in May by 1.1 percent. However, Javorcik told AFP that "next year there will be a significant slowdown" in the country's growth as there are signs that the Russian economy is "overheating". — Reuters

gotiating a \$12 billion loan reprofiling from bilateral lenders. The amount comprised \$5 billion from Saudi Arabia, \$4 billion from China and \$3 billion from the UAE for a three- to five-year period. Reacting to the news, Pakistan's stock exchange briefly reached a new record high before losing ground in later trade.

Kaiser Bengali, a Pakistani economist, told AFP: "This deal will help us pay back our immediate debts, but nothing more than that. "The only economic reforms that we are required to implement are more taxes. There is no progress on reducing government expenditures." At the end of 2023, Pakistan—long locked in a cycle of overlapping political and economic crises—had amassed a total debt of more than \$250 billion, or 74 percent of GDP, according to the IMF. About 40 percent of its debt is owed to external creditors in foreign currencies. Its biggest single foreign creditor is China and Chinese commercial banks, at just under \$30 billion, followed by the World Bank at more than \$20 billion, according to the report. — AFP

Meta unveils 'Orion' glasses to one day rival smartphone

MENLO PARK: Meta chief Mark Zuckerberg on Wednesday gave a peek at augmented reality eyewear he touted as the most advanced glasses in the world. The bulky, black-framed prototype called "Orion" was able to overlay holographic images on a wearer's field of vision, and is ultimately intended to rival the smartphone. "The right way to look at Orion is as a time machine," Zuckerberg said as he opened Meta's annual gathering of software developers at the tech titan's home campus in Silicon Valley. "These glasses exist; they are awesome, and they are a glimpse of a future that is going to be pretty exciting," he said.

People have been slow to embrace headgear like Apple's pricey Vision Pro or even the more affordable Meta Quest models to explore augmented or virtual reality. Meta is confident it can win them over by packing technology beefed up with artificial intelligence into stylish Ray-Ban glasses that can do things like answer questions about what you are looking at or act as a translator for conversations. Orion, which is being tested internally at Meta, pushes the technology further to let wearers overlay digital content on their view of the world. Zuckerberg has stated that he hopes to create an augmented reality device that would break Apple and Google's hold on delivering apps and products to consumers through the smartphone. — AFP



CALIFORNIA: Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg speaks about Meta's new 'Orion' augmented reality glasses at Meta Connect, Meta's annual event on its latest software and hardware innovations, in Menlo Park, California. — AFP

Pakistan braces for 'transitional pain' as IMF approves loan

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan said Thursday it would have to go through "transitional pain" after the International Monetary Fund agreed to a new relief package of \$7 billion to bolster its faltering economy. Although the South Asian nation's economy has stabilized since it came close to defaulting last summer, it is dependent on IMF bailouts and loans from friendly countries to service its huge debt, which swallows up half of its annual revenues.

"There will be transitional pain, but if we are to make it the last program, then we have to carry out structural reforms," Minister of Finance Muhammad Aurangzeb told local broadcaster Geo News. The IMF

Business

Markets fear ECB's cautious path risks tipping inflation below target

Deteriorating economic outlook boosts Oct rate cut bets

BERLIN: If traders are right, the European Central Bank is now at risk of pushing inflation below its 2 percent target by cutting interest rates too slowly...

than the ECB for a while. Traders now see more than a 50 percent chance of an October rate cut, which policymakers had reckoned was unlikely following this month's meeting.

Investors reckon the risk of below-target inflation is rising globally. While they saw inflation between 2 percent-3 percent as the more likely outcome in the United States and the euro zone at end-2025...

chases and a controversial experiment with negative interest rates.

The swaps point to average inflation of 1.7 percent over the next year. And a key market gauge of longer-term inflation expectations, which dropped to a two-year low earlier in September, remains just a touch above 2 percent.

Income boost?

While acknowledging domestic demand will be weaker than previously expected, the ECB reckons goods disinflation has run its course and expects rising real incomes to support consumption and drive growth.

Nomura economists note that, rather than accumulating more cash, savers have upped their asset holdings, making them less likely to spend.

The ECB has been battling to rein in inflation, which was running in double digits less than two years ago. But price pressures have eased following aggressive rate hikes, prompting the bank to kick off an easing cycle in June.

Data this week showing euro zone business activity unexpectedly contracted in September vindicated markets, which have expected swifter disinflation



FRANKFURT: A man walks past a giant Euro logo at the visitor centre of the European Central Bank (ECB) headquarters, ahead of an ECB press conference on the Euro-zone's monetary policy, in Frankfurt am Main, western Germany. - AFP

Growth worries

A key part of the discrepancy is oil prices, which dropped to their lowest in nearly three years below \$69 earlier in September.

German economy to shrink again in 2024

BERLIN: Germany's economy is expected to shrink slightly in 2024, leading economic institutes said on Thursday, as the traditional manufacturing powerhouse continues to stagnate.

For 2026, they predicted the German economy to expand by 1.3 percent. Germany, traditionally a driver of European growth, was the only major advanced economy to shrink in 2023 as it battled high inflation, an industrial slowdown and cooling export demand.

has slowly come down in 2024, a hoped-for recovery has failed to materialize between a continued industrial slow-down and weak demand in key market China.

The factors weighing on the economy "will only gradually disappear", DIW's head of forecasting Geraldine Dany-Knedlik said at a press conference.

Decarbonization and demographic factors as well as

stronger competition from China were "dampening the long-term growth prospects", Dany-Knedlik said. "The effects were being felt particularly in Germany's key manufacturing industry, which was hard hit by the increase in energy costs following the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022.

This is particularly true in the case of Germany's flagship auto industry, which has struggled to keep up with upstart Chinese manufacturers in the field of electric vehicles. The rise of Chinese competition and the loss of market share in China have precipitated a sense of crisis among German carmakers.

Advertisement for Al Safat Investment Company featuring the Kuwait Boursa Weekly Report for the week ended on 26 September 2024. Includes a detailed table with columns for No., Ticker, Sector, and Price Movement & Performance (Open Price, Close Price, Week High, Week Low, Range, Volume, WTD Change, WTD %, YTD %, Support Level, Resistance Level). Also includes Valuation Multiples (P/E, P/B, Yield, Beta) for each stock.

Business

China stimulus-led stock rally pulls Asia and Europe higher

Oil down 2% on report Saudi Arabia preparing to increase output

SINGAPORE: European equities clung to the coattails of surging Asian stocks on Thursday, driven by news of aggressive economic stimulus from China and a fall in oil prices on a report Saudi Arabia is preparing to dump its unofficial crude price target of \$100 a barrel. Europe's Stoxx 600 jumped 1 percent, closing in on August's all-time high, while Chinese onshore bluechips and Hong Kong's Hang Seng Index, HSI were both up more than 4 percent. An index of mainland Chinese property stocks rose 15 percent.

Driving the optimism was an official readout from a meeting of China's politburo that said China would deploy "necessary fiscal spending" to meet this year's economic growth target of roughly 5 percent, acknowledging new problems and raising market expecta-

tions for fresh stimulus on top of measures announced this week. "Chinese stimulus measures increasingly look like a comprehensive package. Earlier this week there were rate cuts and macro prudential measures, now they are talking about adding a fiscal stimulus which every economist was saying was the missing link," said Yvan Marnet, senior economist and strategist at Kleinwort Hambros.

Reuters reported separately that China plans to issue special sovereign bonds worth about 2 trillion yuan (\$284 billion) this year primarily to stimulate consumption. Also in the mix, Brent and US crude futures were each down more than 2 percent LCOc1, CLc1 after the Financial Times reported Saudi Arabia is preparing to abandon its unofficial price target of \$100 a barrel for crude

as it prepares to increase output.

European energy stocks, down nearly 3 percent, were the only sector deep in the red. Elsewhere the combined impact of the stories lifted everything from tech stocks in Europe and Asia. S&P futures ESf1 were up 0.75 percent and Nasdaq futures NQc1 were up 1.34 percent, given an extra boost by an out of hours surge by Micron Technology after it forecast higher than expected revenue due to AI demand for chips, also a factor in Korean gains.

Elsewhere, Europe's banking drama continued, and Commerzbank's CEO designate said the lender will hold a first round of talks with UniCredit on Friday as the Italian bank presses for a possible tie-up. Commerzbank shares rose to their highest since 2011 and were last up 5.5 percent. UniCredit rallied 4 percent.

Rates outlook

Central banks were in focus too, and the Swiss National Bank cut rates by 25 basis points on Thursday, choosing not to go for a larger 50-bp move that markets had seen as a possibility. It was the SNB's third such move this year. There was a knee-jerk strengthening in the Swiss franc against the dollar and euro, but the move did not hold and it was last at 0.9448 to the common European currency.

Elsewhere, policy doves at the European Central Bank are preparing to fight for an interest rate cut next month after a string of weaker-than-expected economic data, a move likely to meet resistance from their more conservative peers, seven sources told Reuters. Markets see roughly a 50 percent chance of a move. "I think the bar is quite high for the ECB to cut in October, the message from (President Christine) Lagarde was

that 'we'd rather wait until December', and so we'd need to see a very negative surprise on inflation," said Marnet.

French inflation data is due on Friday, with more European numbers due next week. Investors were also awaiting a raft of speeches from Federal Reserve policymakers including Chair Jerome Powell that may provide more clues on the US rate outlook ahead of Friday's release of the core personal consumption expenditures (PCE) price index - the Fed's preferred measure of inflation.

Markets are now pricing in a roughly 62 percent chance of a 50-bp cut at the Fed's November policy meeting and see a total of 77 bps worth of cuts by the end of the year. In currencies, the Australian and New Zealand dollars drew additional support from the latest news out of China, with the Aussie gaining 0.5% to \$0.6861. — Reuters

Burgan Bank receives prestigious Brandon Hall Gold Award of Excellence

KUWAIT: Following last year's commendation, Burgan Bank announced receiving the prestigious Brandon Hall Group Human Capital Management (HCM) Gold Award of Excellence in the "Learning and Development" area under the "Best Use of Social/Collaborative Learning" category. With entrants participating from different countries around the world, Burgan Bank's latest accolade testifies to its world-class human resource (HR) practices and its market-leading human capital development strategy, which centers on innovation and fosters a culture of continuous learning.

"We are honored to be recognized for the second consecutive year by the esteemed Brandon Hall Group for our unwavering efforts to adopt the latest learning and development technologies and engage our employees in a culture of collaborative growth," said Naqeeb Amin, General Manager - Human Resources and Development for the Group at Burgan Bank. "Building a robust learning and development program is a mandate for success in a market that is advancing at supersonic speed. At Burgan Bank, we take pride in offering our employees state-of-the-art learning tools that enhance their personal and professional growth experience and enable them to seamlessly weave development into their demanding careers." Upon the review and evaluation of an impartial panel of veteran, independent senior industry experts, Brandon Hall Group analysts, and executives, Burgan Bank earned the "Learning and Development - Best Use of Social/Collaborative Learning" Gold Award in recognition of its innovative methodology for reinforcing cooperation and the exchange of knowledge across the organization.

The judgment criteria included the alignment of the Bank's learning and development program to its overall business needs and environment, in addition to program design that adopts integrated adoption methods. Furthermore, entries were judged for the overall user experience and its effectiveness in achieving the desired outcomes.

The prestigious accolade sheds light on the Bank's adoption of various tools and digital channels including the blog series about Burgan Bank's ethics and codes of conduct, the Burgan podcast, the Bank's LinkedIn-affiliated digital learning platform, knowledge exchange sessions, mentoring and coaching programs, and short learning clips. These learning and development initiatives focus on unconventional social learning methods that are tailored to the dynamic and ever-evolving industry, ingraining effective and bite-sized learning into the Burgan professional experience and reinforcing the cross-functional team spirit.

In addition to the diverse learning channels and tools, Burgan Bank also utilizes AI-powered, data-driven insights about employees' growth trajectories, areas of expertise, preferences, and skills to tailor a personalized, self-paced learning and development plan that encourages autonomy and ownership. Besides individual development, the insights, analytics capacity, and adaptive technology enable team leaders to spot skill gaps and new opportunities for collaboration among the Bank's different departments.

As a winner of the 32nd annual HCM Excellence Awards, Burgan Bank is invited to attend the HCM Excellence Conference and Awards Gala on January 28-30, 2025, in Florida, USA where it will be honored on stage among a cohort of leading global businesses at the forefront of innovative, forward-looking human capital management. On its mission to remain a top employer of choice, Great Place to Work® certified Burgan Bank continues to lead with innovation to attract and retain Kuwait's top talents and future leaders. In line with its committed human capital development strategy, Burgan Bank offers its staff numerous learning and development programs that address their different needs and varying aspirations.

These programs include the Bank's flagship development plan, Ro'ya, as well as others such as Entelaqah, Retail Banking Academy, Investment and Wealth Management Academy, and Burgan Lab Academy. Moreover, the Bank remains committed to championing women's empowerment and development through various initiatives under the "Empower Her" umbrella, such as the Lean In Circle, the Female Summer Internship Program, and the Empower Her Seminar.



Naqeeb Amin

Hong Kong New World Development replaces CEO Adrian Cheng

HONG KONG: Hong Kong property behemoth New World Development announced Thursday that its chief executive officer Adrian Cheng has been replaced, as the firm reported an annual loss of over US\$2.5 billion. The move has shaken up the sprawling business empire run by Hong Kong's third-richest family at a time when the Chinese finance hub has been hit by a prolonged slump in the housing market. "Dr Cheng Chi-Kong, Adrian has tendered his resignation as the chief executive officer of the Company to devote more time on public services and other personal commitments," the company said in a filing to Hong Kong stock exchange published around 4:45 pm.

It added that he would be replaced with immediate effect by its chief operating officer Ma Siu-cheung, a former Hong Kong development minister also known as Eric Ma. "(Ma) will no longer serve as the chief operating officer of the Company," it said. Share trading in New World Development in Hong Kong will resume when markets open Friday, ending a day-long trading suspension which also affected the retail unit New World Department Store China. On Thursday, the firm also announced losses attributable to shareholders totaling HK\$19.68 billion (US\$2.5 billion) in the year ending June 30, 2024 - which will mark New World's first annual loss in two decades.

In that period, core operating profit fell 18 percent to HK\$6.9 billion. Cheng, 44, is a grandson of late billionaire Cheng Yu-tung and was once considered the heir apparent in the sprawling



HONG KONG: People walk past the headquarters of New World Development at New World Tower in Hong Kong on September 26, 2024. — AFP

business empire which spans property, jewelry, department stores and logistics. The Cheng clan is valued at US\$22.1 billion by Forbes magazine. Cheng joined the board of New World Development in 2007 as its executive director and was appointed its CEO in 2020, when the company's revenues slumped by nearly a quarter mid-year to mid-year. He launched the "K11" brand which aimed to mix culture, art and retail, and was credited as the driving force behind two high-end malls in Hong Kong.

Cheng will take on the role of a non-executive vice-chairman of New World, the company said Thursday. The property arm is the largest unit of New World, controlling HK\$470.2 billion in assets by the end of 2023. New World's shares have fallen by about a third since the turn of the year as Hong Kong suffers the longest property market downturn since the SARS outbreak in 2003. The city has lost at least HK\$2.1 trillion since 2019, according to a Bloomberg Intelligence analysis in June. — AFP



'LuLu World Food' a celebration of global foods and cuisines

KUWAIT: LuLu Hypermarket, Kuwait's leading retailer, announced the launch of its highly anticipated 'LuLu World Food' promotion at all its outlets in the country. From 25 September to 8 October shoppers can embark on a culinary journey around the globe, exploring a diverse range of international flavors, as well as shop for global food products at unbelievable competitive prices.

The grand opening ceremony at the LuLu Hypermarket Al Rai outlet on 25 September kicked off the festivities with a star-studded event. Renowned South Indian actress Anarkali Marikar and Kuwaiti Arabic Chef Lina Jbeili graced the occasion and added a touch of celebrity excitement to the opening ceremony, which was attended by LuLu Kuwait's top management and representatives of event sponsors.

During the promotion period, shoppers can indulge in a world of culinary delights as the hypermarket offers incredible deals and discounts on an extensive array of food categories, including a wide variety of fresh meat cuts and fresh seafood with 'Meet A Meat' and 'Go Fish' sections. From fresh produce and groceries to even home appliances and kitchen essentials, there is something to satisfy every taste bud and cooking need.

The promotion is also packed with exciting contests and competitions for all ages and tastes. Aspiring chefs can showcase their skills in the 'Wow the Master Chef' competition, while young culinary enthusiasts can participate in the 'Cake Decoration Contests for Kids' and 'Junior Chef' contests. All participants will receive consolation prizes, and winners will be rewarded with exciting rewards.

The two-week long 'LuLu World Food' is transforming LuLu Hypermarket outlets into a showcase for food products and cuisines from around the world. Visitors have the opportunity to explore dedicated sections featuring culinary delights from various countries, including Indian, Mexican, Korean, Italian, Spanish, Arabic, and Continental

cuisines. The specially curated 'Global Foodie' section offers an even more diverse international culinary experience.

Customers can indulge in a delectable selection of freshly baked goods at the 'Best Bake' section, and a variety of savory and sweet snacks served at the 'Snack Time' section. Additionally, 'Desi Dhaba' and 'Naadan Thattukada' let the customers discover North and South Indian flavors. Also during the promotion period, shoppers will have the chance to witness a host of record-breaking 'longest' and 'biggest' food items, including 'Longest Shawarma', 'Biggest Burger', 'Biggest Pizza', 'Biryani Dhamaka', 'Longest Sandwich', 'Longest Cakes', and setting several other new culinary records.

The 'LuLu World Food' promotion is made possible by the support of esteemed sponsors like Alwazan, Bayara, Afa, Betty Crocker, Kitco, IFFCO, Noor, London Dairy, Tiffany Biscuits, Americana, Seara, Lurpak, Puck, Kraft, ETI, Maggi, Nestle, Sadia, Lamb Weston, McCain, President, Altayeb, Panasonic, Kenwood, and Philip. With a wide range of delicious foods, exciting contests, and incredible offers, there is something for everyone to enjoy at the LuLu World Food festival.



FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2024

Weekender

Voices of resilience

Exhibition pays tribute to 'Women in Times of War in Palestine'



By Ghadeer Ghloom

The Intisar Foundation organized an exhibition themed "Women in Times of War in Palestine" at the Contemporary Art Platform (CAP), under the patronage of Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya and attendance of Deputy Foreign Minister Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, featuring more than 100 artists from 20 countries.



Sheikha Jawaher Al-Sabah

Sheikha Intisar emphasized the importance of mental health and sustainable peace, as well as Kuwait's leadership in human rights, peace and women's issues. She recalled the collaboration with Kuwait Red Crescent Society in 2017 aimed at raising awareness about the suffering of Arab women and children affected by war, which inspired the event at CAP. The exhibition showcased artists conveying powerful messages through art.

Sheikha Intisar highlighted the lack of attention given to women's mental health, noting that they are often the most affected by trauma in conflict situations. "Women frequently prioritize their families' needs over their own, making them more vulnerable to psychological issues resulting from war," she stated.

This recognition of women's unique struggles led to the establishment of the Intisar Foundation, which incorporates drama therapy as a key component of its mental health initiatives. This approach blends psychology with theatrical techniques, allowing women to express themselves and connect with their emotions in a supportive environment. Sheikha Intisar noted how drama therapy has proven effective for trauma recovery, fostering a sense of community among participants and facilitating



Artwork reflecting children's suffering in Gaza. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



A display with the word Gaza written on it.



Deputy Foreign Minister Sheikh Jarrah Al-Sabah tours the exhibition.



healing through shared experiences.

Sheikha Jawaher elaborated on the need for protective mechanisms for women in wartime, emphasizing that their narratives often reveal distinct and profound suffering. Women face challenges such as displacement, loss, and caregiving responsibilities amidst conflict. "The worst situation of all is when a woman needs to give birth during war," Sheikha Jawaher highlighted.

The discussions concluded with a call to action for implementing existing agreements aimed at women's protection and rights, such as the Women, Peace and Security resolution. Participants stressed the importance of translating these agreements into tangible support and advocacy efforts to make a meaningful difference in the lives of women affected by war.



Gallery Manager at CAP Ofelia Vardanyan



Visitors look at artworks of the exhibition "Women in Times of War in Palestine" at the Contemporary Art Platform (CAP).



Crew of The Tempest (2022)



Crew of Hamlet (2019)

All the World's a Stage

Shakespearean plays experience resurgence in Kuwait with local talent and enthusiasm

By **Essa Haitham**

Shakespearean plays are experiencing a resurgence in popularity in Kuwait. Many of the plays performed are timeless classics, including significant works such as A Midsummer Night's Dream, The Tempest, Hamlet and most recently, Macbeth. This latest production of Macbeth was brought to life by Alison Shan Price MBE and Kuwaiti director Hamad Al-Jenaie, and even included the esteemed actress Dame Judi Dench.

All these iconic plays were performed by talented local actors. The One World Actors Centre, associated with Act Media Kuwait, was established in 2022 by Jenaie to promote Shakespearean theatre in the country. One of the most groundbreaking performances was delivered by Yousef Al-Nasser in Hamlet, where his delivery of the famous line "To be or not to be" went viral across Kuwait.

Dr Shahd Al-Shammri, Associate Professor of Literature and Creative Writing, who teaches Shakespeare, drama and poetry, stated: "Kuwaiti director Hamad Al-Jenaie is the leading expert today on adapting William Shakespeare's plays. It is necessary to keep adapting Shakespeare, making his plays contemporary, and moving beyond Western understandings."

She further added: "In Kuwait, there is still so much to be learned from reading or watching Shakespearean plays. The themes are always universal; we all experience love, betrayal, friendship and other human emotions that change throughout our lives. I urge everyone to watch or read a Shakespearean play. I would start with Macbeth, Hamlet or Othello. Most people love Romeo and Juliet for its love story, but there's more to Shakespeare than that."

Ahmed Abdullah, an avid fan of Shakespearean plays, expressed his appreciation for the growing number of performances in Kuwait. However, he also shared that more Shakespearean



Dr Shahd Al-Shammri

plays need to be staged. He noted that he had attended productions of Hamlet, A Midsummer Night's Dream and Macbeth performed in Arabic by LOYAC students in Kuwait, and found them captivating. He believes more such performances could spark a love for Shakespeare's originals.

Shaimaa Ahmed, a crew member for one of the Shakespearean plays, shared her journey, saying, "I am majoring in English literature, with a particular interest in theatre — a crucial element in literary studies, especially Shakespeare's works. To immerse myself in theatre, I decided to participate in Hamad Al-Jenaie's adaptation of Macbeth, titled McBeath. I joined the production as an ensemble member, initially believing this role might not offer

the full theatrical experience. However, I quickly realized the value of my position, as it allowed me to attend nearly every rehearsal and observe the intricate process of bringing Shakespeare to life."

She added: "Although I did not play a major role, this involvement gave me a unique perspective on the dedication and creativity of the actors, which was profoundly inspiring. Additionally, I gained valuable experience in the technical aspects of theatre, such as scene transitions, lighting and sound."

This production was Shaimaa's first experience in a large-scale performance. "I felt anxious and shy, but participating in this Shakespeare play proved to be a pivotal moment in my academic and personal journey. It challenged me, pushed me out of my comfort zone, and ultimately became an experience I am proud of, enhancing both my understanding of theatre and my appreciation for the art form," she said.

On April 19, 2024, a full English production of Macbeth took place at the Yarmouk Cultural Center, featuring local actors such as Nader Abdullah as Macbeth, Louise Durnin as Lady Macbeth, and Brian McLaughlin as Banquo. This historic event welcomed over 700 audience members on opening night.

Many attendees claimed that this show sparked a newfound admiration for the original plays of William Shakespeare. In the past, Shakespearean plays were performed in Arabic rather



Crew of Macbeth (2024)

than the original English, but now even British schools in Kuwait have adapted famous plays like Romeo and Juliet and Macbeth.

Despite some viewing Macbeth as a "cursed" play due to superstitions, many admire its tragic story about a king who loses his sanity and betrays those closest to him. One standout production

that captured the community's attention was the 2019 staging of Hamlet, starring Yousef Al-Nasser in the lead role. This production was so successful that it inspired many people to read the original play, and it became clear that these famous works of Shakespeare would eventually take center stage in Kuwait.

Support needed to discover Kuwait's athletic talent

By **Zainab Abbas**

Kuwaitis are considered some of the most talented people when it comes to sports. Kuwait Times spoke to an Olympic athlete who agreed that Kuwaiti athletes have made the country proud by representing it on the international stage and sharing its culture with others. However, the lack of prioritization for sports talent can limit their potential. Greater support is needed from sports clubs and the ministry of education to discover and nurture new talent among the youth.

In an interview with Kuwait Times, Mohammed Mustafa, a retired athlete, shared his thoughts.



Hiker Mahmoud Ramadhan conquers Mount Everest step by step.



"What role do you think sports clubs or the ministry of youth affairs could play in discovering and supporting young athletic talent in Kuwait?" he asked. "I believe they should identify young talent from schools by organizing annual tournaments, sponsored and managed by professional coaches and trainers from official sports clubs in Kuwait. Additionally, special care should be given to students who are selected from these tournaments to represent Kuwait on the national team across various sports. This way, they can represent Kuwait in international competitions worldwide."

Hussain Mohammed, a young athlete involved in basketball and CrossFit, noted: "What do you think is the key factor in discovering talented athletes in our community? I feel like many athletes remain undiscovered because people think sports are a waste of time and don't take them seriously. However, since I started playing sports at a young age, I've noticed that many people with incredible talent don't get enough recognition. I believe coaches should encourage and support athletes who show great potential in excelling in their sport. The community also needs to take sports more seriously to offer broader support."

International taekwondo athlete Ibrahim Aqeel shared his approach to discovering talent. "When I used to scout for talent, I would take a notebook from the club and visit schools. I discovered many talented students this way, inviting them to train at the club for about a month or two. It was through this process that I identified the most skilled taekwondo players. Back in the day, there weren't as many academies as there are now."

Mahmoud Ramadhan, a hiker and coach, emphasized that Kuwait offers a wide variety of local and private sports clubs, creating an encouraging environment for both beginners and professional athletes to work on their fitness. "Additionally, the ministry of youth affairs is facilitating the establishment of more sports clubs across Kuwait to encourage people to make fitness a part of their daily routines. Talented athletes can be discovered through the increasing number of local and regional tournaments and competitions, which are held more frequently in Kuwait and the surrounding region, especially during the winter season," he pointed out.



Mohammed Mustafa: Racing with determination, finishing with pride



Ibrahim Aqeel: Rising to greatness, one powerful kick at a time



Fun make-ahead lunchbox ideas

By Nebal Snan

Schools are back in full swing, and so is the ever-challenging task of packing lunchboxes for kids to take to school. Between balancing nutrition and flavor and making the meals look visually appealing, packing your kids' lunch can easily become overwhelming. Each day brings its own challenges: catering to your kids' whims, especially if they're picky eaters, accommodating dietary restrictions, and trying to keep the food interesting enough for them to actually eat it. The morning rush adds to the chaos, turning what should be a simple task into a source of stress. But we're here to help! With a little planning, lunchbox prep won't be something you worry about every morning. We've rounded up some snacks that you can prepare ahead of time, making packing lunchboxes on busy mornings a breeze. The recipes are versatile enough to keep even the pickiest of eaters excited about lunchtime.

Mediterranean savory muffins

Brighten up your child's lunchbox with these delicious savory muffins! Packed with flavor from feta cheese, sun-dried tomatoes, and fresh spinach, these muffins are tasty and nutritious. They also offer a delightful twist to the usual sandwich routine, providing kids with a tasty and satisfying meal. These muffins can be prepared in advance, so you can bake a batch over the weekend and have a delicious option ready for busy school mornings. They can be enjoyed warm or at room temperature, meaning your little ones will love them no matter when they eat.



Ingredients (makes 12 muffins)

- 1 ½ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 cup milk
- 2 large eggs
- ¼ cup olive oil
- ½ cup crumbled feta cheese
- ½ cup chopped sun-dried tomatoes (oil-packed, drained if necessary)
- ¼ cup black olives, sliced (optional)
- ¼ cup chopped fresh spinach or kale (optional)
- Fresh herbs for garnish (like parsley or basil)

Instructions:

1. Preheat your oven to 375°F (190°C). Grease a muffin tin or line it with paper liners.
2. Mix dry ingredients: In a large bowl, whisk together the flour, baking powder, salt, oregano, and garlic powder until well combined.
3. Combine wet ingredients: In another bowl, whisk together the milk, eggs, and olive oil until smooth.
4. Put the wet and dry ingredients together: Pour the wet ingredients into the dry ingredients and stir gently until just combined. Avoid overmixing.
5. Add fillings: Fold in the feta cheese, sun-dried tomatoes, olives, and spinach (if using) until evenly distributed.
6. Bake: Spoon the batter into the prepared muffin tin, filling each cup about two-thirds full. Bake for 20-25 minutes, or until the muffins are golden brown and a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.
7. Allow the muffins to cool in the tin for a few minutes before transferring them to a wire rack. Garnish with fresh herbs if desired.

Antipasto skewers

Looking for a creative lunch idea that your kids will actually want to eat? These school-friendly antipasto skewers are just the ticket! They're colorful, packed with flavor, and super simple to put together. Plus, they give you the chance to mix and match all sorts of ingredients, making



them perfect for picky eaters. They're also a fantastic way to introduce kids to new flavors and textures in a fun, bite-sized format. They can be prepped in advance, allowing for a quick grab-and-go option for busy mornings. These skewers aren't just great for school lunches; they're also awesome for picnics or after-school snacks.

Ingredients:

- Five 6-inch wooden or plastic skewers
- 15-20 cubes of mozzarella or cheddar
- 10-15 slices of salami or turkey
- 10 cherry tomatoes, 1 cucumber (sliced), or half a bell pepper cut into chunks
- 10 pitted black or green olives or five small pickles
- Balsamic vinaigrette or Italian dressing (in a small container for dipping)

Instructions:

1. Prepare ingredients: Cube the cheese and cut the meat into bite-sized pieces. Slice the vegetables as needed.
 2. Assemble skewers: Take a skewer and start adding ingredients. For example, you can start with the cheese, then meat, cherry tomato, cucumber, and olive. Repeat until the skewer is filled, leaving a little space at the end for easy handling. Aim for 3-4 pieces of each ingredient per skewer for variety. Place the skewers in a lunchbox, and include a small container of balsamic vinaigrette or Italian dressing for dipping.
- Storage: These skewers can be made the night before and stored in the fridge, making for a quick and convenient lunch option.
- Customization: Feel free to swap out any ingredients based on your child's preferences or dietary restrictions.
- Presentation: For a fun twist, let your kids help assemble the skewers. It's a great way to get them involved in lunch prep!



Onigiri (Japanese rice balls)

Onigiri, or Japanese rice balls, are a nutritious lunch option that kids will want on repeat, especially if they're anime fans. These handheld balls are not only fun to eat but also versatile, allowing you to customize them with a variety of fillings to suit your kid's taste. You can also shape onigiri into different shapes using molds or wrap them in colorful nori, which is sure to put a smile on your child's face come lunchtime. And if you make them ahead of time, they can be lifesavers on those busy school mornings.

Ingredients: (Makes four balls)

- 2 cups sushi rice or short-grain rice
- 2 1/2 cups water (for cooking the rice)
- 1-2 tbsp cooked vegetables (like spinach, avocados or carrots)
- 1 tablespoon rice vinegar
- Salt to taste
- 2 sheets of seaweed (cut into strips or squares)
- Sesame seeds for garnish

Instructions:

1. Cook the Rice:
 - Rinse the rice under cold water until the water runs clear. Drain well.
 - In a pot, combine the rinsed rice and water. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat to low, cover, and simmer for about 15 minutes or until the water is absorbed. Remove from heat and let it sit, covered, for 10 minutes.
 2. Season the Rice:
 - Mix the rice vinegar and salt into the cooked rice while it's still warm. This adds flavor and helps the rice stick together.
 3. Shape the Onigiri:
 - Wet your hands with water (to prevent sticking) and take a handful of rice (about 1/4 cup).
 - Flatten it slightly in your palm and add about 1 tablespoon of filling in the center.
 - Carefully mold the rice around the filling to form a triangle or ball shape. Press gently to ensure it holds together.
 - Wrap the onigiri with a strip of nori for added flavor and easy handling.
- Storage: Onigiri can be made the night before and stored in the refrigerator. They're best enjoyed the next day but can be eaten cold or at room temperature.
- Customization: Get creative with fillings! You can use anything from cooked chicken to avocado. Use onigiri molds if you want to create different shapes or designs.
- Dipping Sauce: Pack a small container of soy sauce for dipping, if desired.

Egg Bites

Say hello to your new lunchbox hero: Egg bites! Egg bites are packed with protein, ensuring your kids will feel satisfied until they get home after a long school day. With options to add cheese, veggies, or even bits of beef or turkey bacon, they can pack a lot of nutrients and give your kids energy for both learning and play. They're best made in advance and you can keep them in the refrigerator for up to five days.

Ingredients: (makes 12 muffin-sized egg bites)

- 6 large eggs
- ½ cup milk (or heavy cream for a richer texture)
- 1 cup shredded cheese (cheddar, mozzarella, or your choice)
- ½ cup diced vegetables (bell peppers, spinach, onions, or mushrooms)
- ¼ cup cooked and crumbled beef or turkey bacon or sausage (optional)
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Optional: fresh herbs (like chives or parsley) for added flavor

Instructions:

1. Preheat your oven to 350°F (175°C). Grease a muffin tin or use silicone muffin cups.
2. Prepare the egg mixture: In a large mixing bowl, whisk together the eggs and milk until well combined. Season with salt and pepper.
3. Fold in the fillings: Stir in the shredded cheese, diced vegetables, and any optional ingredients like cooked beef or turkey bacon or herbs.
4. Bake: Pour the egg mixture into the prepared muffin tin, filling each cup about two-thirds full. Bake for 20-25 minutes, or until the egg bites are puffed and set. A toothpick inserted in the center should come out clean.
5. Allow the egg bites to cool slightly before removing them from the muffin tin. Serve warm or let them cool completely and store in the refrigerator for up to five days.

WHAT'S ON IN KUWAIT

Event: Guided Art Program Workshop
Location: Art Space - The Scientific Center
Date: September 26-27, 2024

Event: Comfest Popup
Location: Kuwait International Fairground
Date: September 26-28, 2024

Event: Cook Korea
Location: Madang Korean Cultural Center
Date: September 26-28, 2024

Event: The Garden of Earthly Delights - Water-colors Experience
Location: Laduree at The Avenues
Date: September 27, 2024

Event: Pottery Painting
Location: Mall 55
Date: September 28, 2024

Event: Saturday Kids Club Art - Q8
Location: Popup Studio
Date: September 28, 2024

Event: International Translation Day
Location: Kuwait National Library
Date: September 30, 2024

Sports

First Japanese baseball player who forged path for Ohtani 60 years ago

Murakami: Ohtani 'model' baseball player and perfect ambassador for Japan

YOKOHAMA: Shohei Ohtani has made Major League Baseball history but it was Masanori Murakami who laid the groundwork 60 years ago when he became the first Japanese player in MLB.

Los Angeles Dodgers superstar Ohtani last week became the first player ever to hit 50 home runs and steal 50 bases in a single season to add to his growing list of achievements.

The 30-year-old is a baseball great in the making and hugely popular both at home in Japan and in the United States. All that may not have been possible without compatriot Murakami, who in September 1964 made his debut for the San Francisco Giants and had to defy abuse from opposing fans, with World War II still fresh in people's minds.

Now 80 and with a twinkle in his eye, Murakami says Ohtani is a "model" baseball player and the perfect ambassador for Japan. "Lots of American people want to come to Japan to visit," he told AFP at an exhibition of his baseball memorabilia in Yokohama.

"Ohtani is worth as much to Japanese-American friendship as thousands of everyday people. I think everyone in the world loves him. "Who doesn't love him? Only opposing teams' batters."

Not since the legendary Babe Ruth

100 years ago has there been a player capable of pitching and hitting on a regular basis like Ohtani, although he is concentrating only on batting in his first season with the Dodgers. Ohtani joined the team from the Los Angeles Angels last year on a 10-year deal worth \$700 million, the richest contract in American sports history.

Post-war pride

Things were very different when Murakami joined the Giants from Japan's Nankai Hawks as a "baseball exchange student" in the 1960s.

The move was only supposed to last a few months but he ended up staying longer and made his major league debut against the New York Mets at a packed Shea Stadium later that year.

Murakami says he spoke no English when he arrived in the United States and carried a dictionary with him everywhere he went. "Today's generation are very familiar with the US but in my day we just thought of it as a far-away place," he said. "I suddenly found myself in a place that I knew nothing about."

Murakami says he had to put up with slurs from rival fans but he was seen as a hero by Japanese-Americans, two decades after the end of World War II. He



YOKOHAMA: This photo taken on September 21, 2024 shows Masanori Murakami, the first Japanese player to play in Major League Baseball (MLB) in the US, talking about some of the memorabilia on display, before an interview with AFP in Yokohama. —AFP

recalls an elderly Japanese-American man coming up to him and shaking his hand after a game where Murakami had thrown a rosin bag in the air after arguing with the umpire.

"The man said that when the war started, the Americans took property from

Japanese people in San Francisco and put them into camps," said Murakami.

"Even after the war ended, they weren't able to say no to American people—they were too scared. "They were happy that I could do that on the baseball field, 20 years after the war ended."

Forgotten man

Murakami wanted to stay with the Giants in San Francisco but returned to Japan in 1966 after a dispute over which team owned his contract. The row led to a new rule that prevented Japanese players from moving to the US—one which lasted until pitcher Hideo Nomo found a loophole that allowed him to join the Dodgers in 1995.

Nomo's success opened the floodgates for Japanese players in MLB. Murakami says his own contribution has been largely forgotten in his home country.

"Everyone in Japan thinks that Nomo was the first," he said. "One of the worst tendencies Japan has is not telling its baseball history. In the US, they tell their history. "I went before Nomo was even born," he added. Murakami is not bitter however, and he is captivated by Ohtani's exploits with the Dodgers this season. He believes Ohtani's success is down to more than just his ability on the baseball diamond.

"Ohtani has a translator but he gets on very well with the other players—they're always laughing and joking together," Murakami said. "Some Japanese players who've gone to the US aren't able to do that. They hit a home run and there's no emotional reaction. "Ohtani is part of the group." — AFP

Record-breaking Springbok Etzebeth seeks another trophy

MBOMBELA: Eben Etzebeth will seek to write another chapter in an already storied career when he takes the field for the Springboks in their Rugby Championship title decider against Argentina at Mbombela Stadium on Saturday.

The towering forward will become South Africa's most-capped rugby Test player as he makes his 128th appearance, overtaking fellow lock Victor Matfield, who retired in 2015. The 32-year-old will hope to finish his record-breaking day by holding aloft the Rugby Championship trophy, which South Africa will secure unless Argentina can win with a bonus point and prevent the Springboks from earning a point.

Etzebeth has already been in two Rugby World Cup-winning teams—in 2019 in Japan and 2023 in France—and part of a victorious team against the visiting British and Irish Lions in 2021. He was a member of a team which won a shortened Rugby Championship in 2019, but South Africa has yet to come out on top in a full six-match programme since the southern hemisphere championship was expanded to four teams with the inclusion of Argentina from 2012.

Springbok coach Rassie Erasmus said the team wanted to make Saturday's match "a special day" for Etzebeth. "If we can win the title and finish the competition off with a victory it would be a massive occasion for the team and Eben as an individual," said Erasmus.

Matfield led a chorus of praise for the 2.03-metre, 122-kilogram giant. He highlighted Etzebeth's "athleticism and physicality" and his leadership qualities. "I really believe he's the right-hand man of (captain) Siya (Kolisi)," said Matfield in a SuperSport TV discussion. "In the huddles, especially when they are under pressure, he's the guy talking—not just talking, but leading from the front."

'Rock of the pack'

Former Springboks coach Nick Mallett said Etzebeth combined the best qualities of Matfield and Bakkies Botha, the other lock in a highly-acclaimed pairing who anchored the Springbok scrum when South Africa won the 2007 World Cup in France. "He's got Victor's athleticism, really good ball skills and a feel for the game. He's got speed and he's got (Botha's) physicality in the ball carries and in the areas of the line-outs. "He's a nightmare to play against because of his defensive abilities. He's been the rock of the pack ever since he got in."

Etzebeth first attracted attention when he starred for the University of Cape Town in a televised Varsity Cup final in 2011. He played for the national under-20 team the same year. Barely a year later, aged 20, he made his debut for South Africa against England in June 2012.

Etzebeth grew up in the tough northern suburbs of Cape Town. His father, Harry, was a wrestler and his uncle, Clifffe, was a Springbok wrestler and a renowned "hard man" prop forward for Western Province in the 1970s and early 1980s.

Although he is now one of the most imposing figures in international rugby, he played as a three-quarter for most of his school career before a growth spurt of 20 centimetres when he was 16 led to a place in the pack. Now he is firmly established as one of world rugby's biggest stars in every sense of the word.

He has played a key role for the Springboks in a season in which he and newcomer Ruan Nortje have had a heavy workload in the absence of several leading locks, including World Cup winners Lood de Jager, Franco Mostert, Jean Kleyn and RG Snyman. — AFP

Under-fire Bangladesh ex-skipper Shakib announces retirement

KANPUR: Bangladesh ex-captain Shakib Al Hasan, facing prosecution for his relationship with the country's former leader, said Thursday he would soon retire from international cricket but hoped to play at least one more match back home first.

Shakib is facing murder charges along with dozens of other members of ex-premier Sheikh Hasina's party who have been accused of culpability in a deadly police crackdown on protesters. The 37-year-old, who briefly served as a lawmaker under Hasina this year, has not returned to Bangladesh since the toppling of her government last month in a student-led revolution.

Shakib said that next year's Champions Trophy in Pakistan would be his last international outing. But he added that he wanted to return home for a slated two-Test series against South Africa, and had asked the Bangladesh Cricket Board if he could come back.

"It's my desire, I have said this to BCB and the selectors," Shakib told reporters ahead of Friday's second Test against India in Kanpur. "They agreed with me, that they are trying to organise everything if possible, so that I can go back to Bangladesh, play those two Test matches in Mirpur and

finish my Test career there."

He added: "If that doesn't happen maybe this is my last one." The South Africa tour due to start on October 21 is still under a cloud, with the Proteas assessing whether Bangladesh is safe enough after last month's revolution. Shakib told reporters ahead of Friday's second Test against India in Kanpur that he did not "want to talk much" about the criminal proceedings against him.

"You all know what type of case it is, and where I was and what I was doing at that time," he said. Shakib was playing in a domestic Twenty20 cricket competition in Canada during the unrest that ousted Hasina. He said he hoped to return home to play the swan song of his Test career against South Africa if the series went ahead.

"I am a citizen of Bangladesh, so I shouldn't have any problem going back to Bangladesh," he said. "My concern is my safety and security in Bangladesh. My close friends and family members are concerned. I hope things are getting better."

'Right time for me'

Shakib said he had already called time on his T20 career following the



Shakib Al Hasan

World Cup in June. "I played my last match during my last game of the World Cup. We have discussed this with selectors and board," he said. "This is the right time for me to move on and BCB will look into some new players."

Shakib said that he would play his final 50-over matches at the Champions Trophy, which will be hosted by Pakistan in February. "I have eight games to go in ODIs and the Champions Trophy will be last," he said. Shakib was the driving force of the Bangladesh team's rise to become

serious international contenders, enthralling fans through both star turns and scandals.

He remains the only player to have topped the International Cricket Council all-rounder rankings in all three formats simultaneously. Shakib played a key role in his team's historic Test series sweep in Pakistan earlier this month, and went to England to play county cricket for Surrey before heading to India. He has represented Bangladesh in 70 Tests, 247 ODIs and 129 T20 matches since his international debut in 2006. — AFP



TOKYO: Taylor Fritz of the US hits a return to France's Arthur Fils during their men's singles match at the Japan Open tennis tournament in Tokyo on September 26, 2024. — AFP

Fritz loses on day of shocks at Japan Open

TOKYO: US Open finalist Taylor Fritz crashed out of the Japan Open in the first round on Thursday and Frances Tiafoe and Stefanos Tsitsipas joined him on a day of shocks in Tokyo. Top seed Fritz, who this month became the first American man to reach a Grand Slam final since 2009, was bundled out 6-4, 3-6, 6-3 by France's Arthur Fils.

It came just hours after number seven seed Tiafoe, who lost to Fritz in the US Open semi-finals, was eliminated with a 7-5, 6-3 loss to fellow American Brandon Nakashima. Greece's Tsitsipas, the number four seed, went out with a 4-6, 6-1, 6-2 defeat to American qualifier Alex Michelsen.

World number seven Fritz won the Japan Open title in 2022 but met his match in the energetic 20-year-old Fils. Fritz needed a medical time-out to deal with a back issue during the second set. He could not recover as world number 24 Fils closed out the match in just over two hours to set up a second-round match with Italy's Matteo Berrettini.

Fritz played at the Laver Cup in Berlin after the US Open and said his schedule had been "a lot lately". "I obviously would have liked more time to prepare but that being said, I actually feel like I played a pretty good match and a pretty good level," he said.

"Some things I wish I could have done better but, all in all, I don't think I played bad by any means. It was mostly too good from Arthur." Tsitsipas's woes deepened after losing to world number 49 Michelsen.

The Greek world number 12 took the first set but had no answer to his 49th-ranked opponent for the rest of the match, losing in 1hr 48min. A two-time Grand Slam finalist, Tsitsipas was bundled out in the first round at the US Open last month after ending his long-time coaching collaboration with his father, Apostolos.

Tsitsipas said after losing to Australian Thanasi Kokkinakis at the final Grand Slam of the year that he was "nothing compared to the player I was before" and spoke of "long-term burnout". The former world number three has slipped out of the top 10 and has won just two titles in two seasons.

Defending Japan Open champion Ben Shelton went through with a 3-6, 6-1, 6-4 win over fellow American Reilly Opelka. Number eight seed Shelton, who will play Argentina's Mariano Navone in the second round, said "this is a part of the year where I play very, very well". — AFP

Stokes on track for Pakistan tour

LONDON: England captain Ben Stokes is "on track" to feature in the Test series in Pakistan after undergoing scans on his hamstring injury on Wednesday. Stokes was sidelined for England's recent Test series against Sri Lanka due to the hamstring tear he suffered playing for Northern Superchargers in The Hundred on August 11.

Ollie Pope stood in as Test captain as England won the Sri Lanka series 2-1. But Stokes is likely to resume his role as skipper against Pakistan after the 33-year-old all-rounder's positive scan results. England fly out to Pakistan next week for a three-match Test tour that gets under way in Multan on October 7.

"England Men's Test captain Ben Stokes today underwent planned scans on the hamstring injury that ruled him out of the Test series against Sri Lanka," the England and Wales Cricket Board said on Wednesday. "The results of the scans were positive and confirmed that his recovery, since sustaining the injury six-and-a-half weeks ago, remains on track to participate in the upcoming Test series against Pakistan." Even if he is ready to lead England in Pakistan, there will be doubts about Stokes' ability to bowl in the early part of the tour.

Speaking to Sky Sports on Tuesday, Stokes was asked if he was likely to be able to bowl in the first Test and said: "I think that's you getting ahead of yourself. Obviously I've been six-and-a-half weeks now of just walking and doing stuff in the gym. "There's a lot more than just my hamstring that I need to get back firing and working up again in terms of bowling." — AFP



Ben Stokes

Sports

Los Angeles FC double dream alive after US Open Cup win

Victory was sweet for French veteran Giroud

LOS ANGELES: Olivier Giroud was on target as Los Angeles FC kept their dream of a rare domestic double alive after defeating Sporting Kansas City 3-1 to win the US Open Cup final on Wednesday.

Extra-time goals from Mexican defender Omar Campos and Kei Kamara sealed victory for LAFC, who are also on course to reach this season's MLS Cup playoffs. The game had gone to extra-time after former France striker Giroud's opener was cancelled out by Kansas City's Erik Thommy.

The victory was sweet for French veteran Giroud, who had also scored in LAFC's 3-1 Leagues Cup final defeat to Columbus Crew last month. "I came here, as I said, to win trophies and to play that kind of final," the 37-year-old said. "I was really sad and disappointed for the team regarding the Leagues Cup.

"We've been in a difficult run these last weeks, but we stuck together, and we really wanted to win this trophy for the fans, for the club... It does matter for me, for the boys, and I'm so happy to score in this final and to help the team." Giroud, France's international record goalscorer, fired Los Angeles ahead after 53 minutes, calmly tucking away a low finish from Mateusz Bogusz on the right.

LAFC's raucous BMO Stadium erupted in celebrations, but the revelry was short-lived as seven minutes later Kansas City equalized. Midfielder Tommy burst into space and beat France's 2018

World Cup-winning goalkeeper Hugo Lloris at the near post with a shot that took a slight deflection as it flew into the net.

Tommy's strike was enough to send the final to extra-time, although LAFC squandered a golden chance to re-take the lead when Bogusz somehow missed from close range with only Sporting goalkeeper Tim Melia to beat.

LAFC found another gear in extra-time, however, and took the lead in the 102nd minute courtesy of Campos' individual goal. The Mexican defender jinked in from the left and shot low into the bottom corner before being mobbed by teammates.

With the clock running down, it was LAFC's 40-year-old veteran Kamara who made the game safe, emphatically heading home a Denis Bouanga cross in the 109th minute. Los Angeles, who are currently in fourth place in Major League Soccer's Western Conference standings and poised for a place in the playoffs, are bidding to become only the third team since MLS was launched in 1996 to complete the domestic league and cup double.

Los Angeles Galaxy were the last team to achieve the feat in 2005, joining D.C. United and Chicago Fire as the only teams to win both competitions in the same season. The US Open Cup is the oldest national football competition in the United States, having first been held in the 1913-1914 season. — AFP



LOS ANGELES: LAFC players, staff and their family members celebrate with the championship trophy after defeating Sporting Kansas City, 3-1, in extra time during US Open Cup Championship match between Sporting Kansas City and Los Angeles Football Club at BMO Stadium. — AFP

Man Utd held at home by Twente to start Europa League

PARIS: Manchester United stuttered to a 1-1 draw at home to FC Twente in their opening Europa League game on Wednesday as Christian Eriksen scored but then made an error that led to the equalizer. The Danish international put United ahead with a powerful first-half strike on a soaking wet night at Old Trafford before Sam Lammers equalized for Twente on 68 minutes after Eriksen was caught in possession.

"We wanted more in the end, far from good enough. They looked like they wanted it more - that can't be right," Eriksen told TNT Sports. "I think everyone is looking at themselves, everyone is a professional footballer, they know what to do, what can't happen. We don't lose but it feels like a loss."

United manager Erik ten Hag selected a strong side to take on Twente, a club where the Dutchman came through the youth ranks and had three spells as a player before moving into coaching with the Eredivisie side.

Marcus Rashford returned to the line-up after coming off the bench in Saturday's 0-0 draw at Crystal Palace, with Harry Maguire replacing Matthijs de Ligt in defence and Manuel Ugarte taking the place of Kobbie Mainoo.

United had an early let-off when Lammers dragged narrowly wide after slack play by Diogo Dalot, before Twente goalkeeper Lars Unerstall pulled off a brilliant save to stop Mees Hilgers from turning into his own net.

He was well beaten though by Eriksen's thunderbolt after the ball broke to the midfielder inside the Twente area. Andre Onana turned Sem Steijn's low free-kick around the post near the hour, but Twente drew level when former Rangers forward Lammers dispossessed Eriksen after Bart van Rooij's marauding run into the United half, galloping clear to fire home.

Unerstall tipped Joshua Zirkzee's stinging effort over the crossbar and Bruno Fernandes went close, with Unerstall producing a magnificent reflex save in stoppage time to keep out a Maguire header deflected by Gijs Besseling.

Bagnaia plots 'tough' bid to close MotoGP lead in Indonesia

LOMBOK: Francesco Bagnaia said Thursday he plans to challenge MotoGP championship leader Jorge Martin with an aggressive strategy at this weekend's Indonesia Grand Prix as he tries to chip away at the Spaniard's 24-point lead.

Defending champion Bagnaia will be gunning for a repeat performance at the Mandalika International Circuit after winning the race last year to storm further ahead of his Pramac rival in the title race. But the roles have been reversed this year with Martin racing ahead after Ducati's Bagnaia crashed out at



MANCHESTER: Manchester United's Moroccan defender #03 Noussair Mazraoui (R) vies for the ball with FC Twente's Dutch forward #07 Mitchell Van Bergen during the UEFA Europa League stage football match between Manchester United and FC Twente at Old Trafford stadium. — AFP

'Didn't finish it off'

United ultimately had to settle for an underwhelming point to start the new-look, 36-team league phase that mirrors the format of the revamped Champions League. "It's the first game, it's very important you get a win," said Ten Hag. "We kept them alive, 1-0 up, controlling the game you have to be consistent and keep going. In the second half we dropped the level, gave the goal away."

"We didn't finish it off, we had to go for the second goal and so they stay alive and we get punished with a mistake from ourselves." "We can't give a goal away like this," he added. Porto, the 2003 and 2011 winners of the second-tier European competition, lost 3-2 away to Norwegian champions Bodo/Glimt, who played most of the second half with 10 men.

Emilia-Romagna last weekend. "I think I still need to approach in an aggressive way this part of the season, then after these two races I will maybe change my strategy. But at the moment I have to push a lot," he told reporters. "I will approach like always, pushing, trying to be competitive and trying to win races. I am now 24 points behind so they are not a lot, but they are also not a few."

Martin was looking to put Emilia-Romagna behind him after he was pipped by Enea Bastianini on the final lap, failing to capitalize more on Bagnaia's dreadful end to the weekend. "The more pressure I have, the more difficult things become. I try to be more focused on riding, on my feelings," Martin said.

"If I start thinking too much, then I start making mistakes." Bastianini's second GP win of the season, and seventh of his career, at Misano Adriatico last weekend allowed Bagnaia's Ducati teammate to move to within 59 points of Martin in third. — AFP

Ruben van Bommel, the son of former Netherlands international Mark, scored twice for AZ Alkmaar in a 3-2 victory over Swedish side Elfsborg, with ex-Tottenham forward Troy Parrott netting the winner from the spot.

Mauro Icardi's last-gasp goal sealed a 3-1 win for Galatasaray over PAOK in Istanbul, while Nice were left to rue a missed penalty in their 1-1 draw against Real Sociedad. Ander Barrenetxea gave La Real the lead before Pablo Rosario equalized on the stroke of half-time, but Evann Guessand saw his second-half spot-kick saved for the hosts.

Slavia Prague won 2-0 away to Bulgaria's Ludogorets, while Danish champions Midtjylland drew 1-1 with Hoffenheim and Anderlecht overcame Hungarian side Ferencvaros 2-1. Boulaye Dia scored twice in Lazio's 3-0 win over Dynamo Kyiv in Hamburg as both teams had a player sent off. — AFP



JAKARTA: (L to R) Gresini Racing MotoGP's Spanish rider Marc Marquez, Ducati Lenovo Team's Italian rider Francesco Bagnaia, Prima Pramac Racing's Spanish rider Jorge Martin and Ducati Lenovo Team's Italian rider Enea Bastianini attend a press conference before the 2024 MotoGP race at Pertamina Mandalika International Circuit, in Mandalika. — AFP

Derby rejuvenates AC Milan as Serie A's title race stalls

MILAN: AC Milan go into Friday night's clash with Lecce with a spring in their step and the Serie A summit in their sights after kick-starting their season with victory in the Milan derby. Paulo Fonseca's side open the weekend's action at the San Siro in front of fans ready to hail the heroes of a last-gasp win over Inter Milan which snapped a painful six-match losing streak against their local rivals.

Milan were deserved winners over Inter and the manner of Sunday's victory has got supporters back on side after a wave of criticism threatened to derail their season before the end of September. Fonseca's position as coach had even been called into question ahead of the derby but the Portuguese's job is secure with a tough Champions League fixture at Bayer Leverkusen coming up after Lecce.

Tuesday's clash in Germany will be key for Fonseca after his team were given a footballing lesson on their patch by Liverpool earlier this month, a 3-1 thumping which made derby victory an even bigger relief.

"We have to keep improving... winning today doesn't make us the best team around, and we weren't the worst team before playing today," said Fonseca on Sunday night. "We need to keep ourselves on an even keel, that's what I want from my team right now."

A win over Lecce will put Milan provisionally top of the pile on goal difference ahead of Torino, who host Lazio on Sunday after being knocked out of the Italian Cup by Empoli midweek. Friday's opposition should be easy meat for Milan, as Lecce make the long trip north a point above the relegation zone after a horrendous week.

Luca Gotti's team threw away a two-goal lead against Parma last weekend by conceding a brace of stoppage-time strikes and followed that up by being dumped out of the Cup by second-tier Sassuolo. And Fonseca looks likely to start with the same starting XI as in the derby, with Tammy Abraham leading the line and Alvaro Morata nestling in behind him, alongside Rafael Leao and in-form Christian Pulisic.

Champions Inter are at Udinese on Saturday afternoon without injured midfielder star Nicolò Barella, whose thigh injury suffered during the derby is also likely to keep him out of Tuesday's visit of Red Star Belgrade.

Napoli face Monza on Saturday night as a four-team battle for early season supremacy heats up, with Antonio Conte's team, Inter, Milan and Juve — at Genoa — all as yet failing to strike out on their own. Bologna host Atalanta on Saturday as the two big stories of last season try to get their new campaigns back on track. — AFP

Classifieds

Change of Name

I, Fatema holder of Passport No. M4641789 do hereby change my name to Fatema Taher (as given name) Baghly (as surname) for all purposes. I will henceforth be known in the name Fatema Taher Baghly and I also undertake to carry out this name change in all my documents. (#6175 27/09/2024)

I, Mabel Malcolm Fernandes, holder of Passport No. R8131312 do hereby change my name

to Malcolm Fernandes for all purposes. I will henceforth be known in the name Malcolm Fernandes and I also undertake to carry out this name change in all my documents. (#6169 26/09/2024)

I, Mahamadali Saudagar Sardar, holder of Indian Passport No. Y3681670, having permanent address Hill Mist Residency, Plot No. 82, Mantri Chandak Vihar, Flat No. 6 Hotgi road, Solapur-413003,

Maharashtra, India residing in Kuwait at present, hereby declare that henceforth my name will be read as (given name) Sardar Ali Mohammed Ali and (surname) Saudagar. (#6174 26/09/2024)

I, Gurbhej Singh (surname Sidhu), holder of Indian Passport No. X3277300, having permanent address Pandori, Sidhwan, VPO Pandori, D.T. Tarntaran, Pin - 143401 Punjab, India, residing in Kuwait at present, hereby declare

that henceforth my name will be read as (given name) Gurbhej Singh and (surname) Sajjan. (#6172 26/09/2024)

I, Tasneem, holder of Indian Passport No. M6103113, having permanent address of Dungarpur, Rajasthan, India, residing in Kuwait at present, I hereby declare that henceforth my name will be read as (given name) Tasneem and (surname) Tekriwala. (# 6173 26/09/2024)

I, Abbas Ali, Father Moiz Hussain, Caste Bohra, resident of house number 44, KH Bohra Gali, Near Bohra Masjid, Tehsil Jeeran, District Neemuch, Madhya Pradesh, Pin code-458336. That earlier I was known as Abbas Ali Bohra S/o Moiz Hussain Bohra and currently I have changed my name to Abbas Ali S/o Moiz Hussain and now I will be known and recognized as Abbas Ali S/o Moiz Hussein. (# 6171 25/09/2024)

Raheem Sterling nets first Arsenal goal in League Cup

Liverpool reach last 16 with 5-1 win against troubled West Ham



LONDON: Arsenal's English midfielder #53 Ethan Nwaneri scores the team's third goal during the English League Cup third round football match between Arsenal and Bolton Wanderers' at the Emirates Stadium, in London. — AFP

LONDON: Raheem Sterling scored his first Arsenal goal and Jack Porter became the club's youngest ever starter in a 5-1 rout of Bolton in the League Cup on Wednesday, while Liverpool reached the last 16 with a 5-1 win against troubled West Ham.

Sterling marked his maiden Arsenal start following his transfer deadline day move from Chelsea with a second-half strike in the third-round tie at the Emirates Stadium. The 29-year-old will hope his goal marks the start of a career revival after a disappointing two-year spell at Chelsea.

"He was great. He's started to show glimpses of what he can do. Physically, he needs to get to the level we require, but it was a massive step today," Gunners boss Mikel Arteta said. Arteta had made seven changes from Sunday's stormy 2-2 draw at Premier League champions Manchester City, including giving goalkeeper Porter his record-breaking debut in place of the injured David Raya.

Aged 16 years and 72 days old, Porter was the youngest player ever to start for Arsenal, surpass-

ing the previous record holder Cesc Fabregas, who was 16 years and 177 days when he played against Rotherham in 2003. Porter was Arsenal's second youngest ever player overall after Ethan Nwaneri, who was 15 years and 181 days, when he made his debut in 2022.

"Jack has been training with us since pre-season. He reacted really well and was really composed. What an experience," Arteta said. Arsenal will travel to Championship side Preston in the last 16, with the tie of the fourth round pitting Tottenham against Manchester City.

Liverpool's bid to retain the trophy will continue at Brighton, while Manchester United face Leicester. AFC Wimbledon or Newcastle, whose tie was rearranged due to flooding at the League Two side's stadium, will host Chelsea.

Declan Rice put Arsenal ahead after 16 minutes with a clinical finish from the edge of the area for his first goal this season. Nwaneri, 17, doubled Arsenal's lead in the 37th minute with his first goal for

the club and struck again from 12 yards four minutes after half-time.

Porter had to pick the ball out of the net in the 53rd minute when Aaron Collins jinked around him and slotted home. Sterling netted in the 64th minute, tapping in after Saka's cross was spilled by Bolton keeper Luke Southwood, and Kai Havertz grabbed the fifth from close range in the 78th minute.

West Ham in turmoil

At Anfield, Diogo Jota and Cody Gakpo scored twice as Liverpool's understudies demolished West Ham to increase the scrutiny on Julen Lopetegui. Under pressure after winning only one of his first five league games since replacing David Moyes, Lopetegui made eight changes from the 3-0 defeat against Chelsea last weekend. That loss had made Lopetegui the first West Ham manager to suffer three consecutive defeats at home to start a season.

The Hammers took a surprise lead in the 21st minute as Kostas Tsimikas's miscued clearance deflected

in off Liverpool defender Jarell Quansah for a farcical own goal. And Jota equalised four minutes later, the Portugal forward out-jumping West Ham keeper Lukasz Fabianski to nod in Federico Chiesa's volley.

Jota struck again in the 49th minute as he exchanged passes with Curtis Jones and drilled past Fabianski. Mohamed Salah came off the bench to score in the 74th minute with a simple finish after Alexis Mac Allister's shot was pushed into his path.

West Ham were in disarray and Edson Alvarez was sent off in the 76th minute for a second booking after chopping down Salah. Capping another torrid day for Lopetegui, Gakpo smashed home from 18 yards in the 90th minute and then guided a deflected effort beyond Fabianski moments later.

"We don't deserve this score because we did a lot of good things. They scored an offside goal. I'm sorry for our fans," Lopetegui said. Liverpool boss Arne Slot added: "Since I've been here it's never been easy, although sometimes the result looks different." — AFP



CAN Heido organizes Padel tournament

KUWAIT: Director of Heido, the sports arm of Cancer Aware Nation, (CAN) Abdullah Khalid Al-Saleh said the campaign in cooperation with the women's CAN Heido organized a Padel tournament with six teams participating earlier in the week. The teams were Razan & Fatima, SN, Noura & Wajid, Hessa & Tamara, Doube SH and Muchachas, the teams were divided into two groups three teams each and ended with the team of Razan & Fatima winning.

Abdullah Al-Saleh said CAN launched this activity to coincide with many activities in its new season aiming at raising the rate of health awareness about cancer diseases and seeking to achieve its awareness goals of reducing the rate of various cancer diseases and encouraging early detection.

CAN also launched the "lose.. you win" for women, while focusing on following a healthy lifestyle by relying on two important elements: Practicing physical activities and eat healthy, due to the high rates of obesity in Kuwait, specially that there a link with higher rates of breast cancer in overweight women.

The program is broadcast daily on instagram (@can_campaign) until the end of breast cancer campaign during the month of October.

Lewandowski helps Liga leaders Barca past Getafe

BARCELONA: Robert Lewandowski continued his fine form and earned La Liga leaders Barcelona a 1-0 win over Getafe on Wednesday. The Polish forward struck from close range in the first half to maintain Barca's 100 percent record in the league so far this season with their seventh victory.

Barcelona dominated despite not being able to add to their lead and restored a four-point advantage on Real Madrid, who beat Alaves on Tuesday.

"You can't always win by a lot of goals," defender Jules Kounde told Movistar. "I think the important thing is we made a lot of chances again and took the three points... Getafe is always a tough team to handle." Coach Hansi Flick started Inaki Pena in goal for the stricken Marc-Andre ter Stegen, out for months with a severe knee injury, and brought Marc Casado and Alejandro Balde back into the side.

The reserve goalkeeper, who conceded 32 times in 17 matches across all competitions last season, heard his name chanted supportively by fans behind his goal and saved an early header from Carles Perez.

By contrast his opposite number David Soria's weak touch on Kounde's cross led to Barcelona's opener on 19 minutes, the ball falling perfectly for Lewandowski to finish from close range. The 36-year-old striker has seven goals in La Liga this season and leads the scoring charts, seemingly rejuvenated under Flick after struggling at times last season.

"For me he's the best number nine of the last 10 years," Flick, who also coached him at Bayern Munich, told reporters. "His job is in front of the goal, in the box, and he's doing that great." Teen starlet Lamine Yamal might have doubled the lead moments later when Raphinha played him in, but he nudged inches past the post.

Soria made a good save from Raphinha, who col-



BARCELONA: Barcelona's Polish forward #09 Robert Lewandowski fights for the ball with Getafe's Togolese defender #02 Djene Dakonam during the Spanish league football match between FC Barcelona and Getafe CF at the Estadi Olimpic Lluis Companys in Barcelona. — AFP

lected the August player of the month award before kick-off, and soon sent another effort skidding wide.

Yamal almost bent home a delicious curling strike from distance before the hour, but Soria tipped it over the crossbar. The Getafe goalkeeper also palmed a dangerous Raphinha free-kick around the post as Barcelona pushed for a second to put the match to bed.

Spain's Euro 2024 hero Yamal clipped the top of the crossbar with a vicious effort from distance, as Barca started to grumble about Getafe's persistent heavy challenges.

Raphinha missed a golden chance in the final stages, heading wide after a clever dart into the box but Barcelona were not punished for their profligacy.

Getafe, 19th, are still winless and wasted a fine chance of their own at the death when Borja Mayoral

failed to get a shot away when well placed and free inside the box. "We didn't put away our chances... we have to be more decisive in the area," said Getafe midfielder Luis Milla. The Madrid club have found the net on just three occasions so far this season.

"It's clear we have to improve there, I'm sure the team will end up scoring," added Milla. The leaders next travel to face Osasuna on Saturday, before second-placed Real Madrid face rivals Atletico Madrid in a derby clash on Sunday.

Even with various star names out injured, Flick's side have continued to improve since he arrived. "He's a coach who is very sure how he wants to play (and) we're understanding it well," added Kounde.

"The team is enjoying training and we're comfortable in the games. He's a very demanding coach and that's suiting us well." — AFP