

**RIDESAFE**  
RIDE SAFE  
@ridesafe.app

**BOOK YOUR RIDE NOW**

DOWNLOAD THE APP NOW

**3** Kuwait UNGA participation a foreign policy milestone



**7** Debate pits hillbilly energy against 'Minnesota nice'



**11** Spain video game industry seeks its place in the sun



**14** Americans beat Internationals to capture Presidents Cup



## Hezbollah ready for Zionist invasion

Hamas, PFLP leaders killed in Lebanon • Bibi claims nowhere out of Zionist reach

### NEWS IN BRIEF

#### Nod to project visa transfers

**KUWAIT:** Expats working on government projects will be allowed to transfer their residencies from Nov 3 at the end of their contracts and will not be forced to leave the country, according to a decision issued on Monday. The decision however attached five preconditions for workers to benefit from the transfer window. Workers must have stayed in the country for at least one year and their existing contract must have expired. They must submit a letter from their companies to prove that their contracts have expired. They must also obtain the approval of their employers to be able to transfer and finally, they must pay a KD 350 fee.

#### Biometrics deadline ends for citizens

**KUWAIT:** The interior ministry announced an extension of working hours for biometrics centers, including shopping malls, until midnight on Monday, as Sept 30 was the final deadline for completing biometric registration for Kuwaitis. Citizens are urged to comply to avoid disruptions to civil IDs and government or banking transactions. From Oct 1, shopping mall biometrics centers will close, but criminal evidence centers will continue providing services from 8 am to 8 pm. — KUNA

#### Ex-candidate freed, ex-MP 'cleared'

**KUWAIT:** The court of appeals on Monday freed former parliamentary elections candidate Musaed Al-Qraifa on bail and set Oct 21 to issue its verdict. Qraifa was sentenced to four years in jail by the criminal court on charges of criticizing the decisions of HH the Amir and challenging his powers. He has been in jail since May. The court also refrained from issuing any sentence against former MP Hamad Al-Alyan and asked him to pay a KD 2,000 bail to keep good conduct. The court also scrapped a two-year jail term passed against him by the criminal court for challenging HH the Amir's powers. Alyan was set free in May after a brief detention.

#### Ex-football chiefs face charges

**KUWAIT:** The public prosecution referred members of the resigned board of directors of Kuwait Football Association to the criminal court, which set Oct 6 to deliberate the case. The suspects face state security charges related to the events during the 2026 FIFA World Cup qualifier between Kuwait and Iraq. The board members had quit after an inquiry into ticketing and logistical problems that marred the match at the 60,000-capacity Jaber Stadium.

#### Helene kills 100 in US southeast

**VALDOSTA, Georgia:** At least 100 people have been killed after destructive floods ripped through the US southeast, officials said Monday, with the emergency response effort fast becoming a political football in a region that could decide the presidential election. Rescue operations sought to find survivors and deliver supplies across Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee in areas where torrential rains brought by Hurricane Helene caused havoc. — AFP

**BEIRUT/JERUSALEM:** The Zionist entity warned Iran on Monday that nowhere in the Middle East was beyond its reach and hinted at a land invasion of Lebanon after assassinating the leader of the Tehran-backed Hezbollah group, one of its biggest adversaries, in a Beirut suburb last week. "There is nowhere we will not go to protect our people and protect our country," Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said in a three-minute video clip in English that he addressed to the Iranian people.

But in his first public speech since Zionist airstrikes killed Hasan Nasrallah last week, Hezbollah's deputy leader Naim Qassem said his fighters were primed to confront a ground invasion and thwart its aims. "The resistance forces are ready for a ground engagement," he said in an address from an undisclosed location.

Friday's assassination of Nasrallah — the most powerful leader in Tehran's "Axis of Resistance" against Zionist and US interests in the Middle East — was one of the heaviest blows in decades to both Hezbollah and Iran. After two weeks of intensive airstrikes and a string of assassinations of Hezbollah commanders, the Zionist entity, which has been training its troops for a ground invasion, indicated



An image grab taken from Hezbollah's Al-Manar TV shows deputy chief Naim Qassem delivering a speech from an undisclosed location on Sept 30, 2024. — AFP

that a land invasion was an option in Lebanon.

Speaking to troops deployed along the Zionist entity's northern border, Defense Minister Yoav Gallant said the Zionist entity would do whatever it takes to ensure the return of citizens who have fled Hezbollah rockets during nearly a year of border warfare. "We will use all the means that may be required — your forces, other forces, from the air, from the sea, and on land. Good luck," said

## Blinken tells anti-IS meet world 'safer' without Nasrallah

**WASHINGTON:** US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said Monday that the world is safer after the Zionist entity killed Hassan Nasrallah, describing the Hezbollah chief as a "brutal terrorist" while insisting diplomacy was the Middle East's best chance at stability. "The region, the world are safer without him," Blinken, speaking in Washington, said of the deceased leader of the Iran-backed Lebanese militant group.

"Hassan Nasrallah was a brutal terrorist whose many victims included Americans, (Zionists), civilians in Lebanon, civilians in Syria and many others as well. During his leadership of Hezbollah, the group terrorized people across the region and prevented Lebanon

from fully moving forward as a country," he continued during opening remarks at a meeting of countries in the coalition fighting the Islamic State group. Kuwait was represented by Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya.

Despite the recent, dramatic escalation in fighting between the Zionist entity and Hezbollah in Lebanon, the United States still believes diplomacy is the best path forward for the region, Blinken said. "The United States will continue to work with our partners in the region and around the world to advance a diplomatic resolution that provides real security to (the Zionist entity), to Lebanon, and allow citizens on both sides of the border to return to their homes," he said.

"We likewise, will continue working to secure a ceasefire deal in Gaza that brings the hostages home, eases the suffering in Gaza, preserves the possibility of a more lasting, secure peace for the entire region." Diplomacy, he said, remains "the best and only path to achieving greater stability in the Middle East," and Washington is "committed to urgently driving these efforts forward." — AFP

## UAE condemns attack on envoy's home in Sudan

**DUBAI:** The United Arab Emirates reacted with outrage on Monday after the home of its ambassador in war-torn Sudan was attacked and badly damaged. The Gulf state, which has repeatedly denied accusations of involvement in the war, blamed the Sudanese armed forces for the "heinous" attack. Sudan's army denied carrying out the attack, insisting it does not target diplomatic missions.

## Last UK coal power plant shuts, largest steelworks closes

**LONDON:** The UK's last coal-fired power station officially closed its doors on Monday, making Britain the first G7 country to end its reliance on the fossil fuel to produce electricity. The closure of Ratcliffe-on-Soar, a power plant that has dominated the surrounding central England landscape for nearly 60 years, marks a symbolic step in the UK's ambition to decarbonize electricity by 2030, and become carbon neutral by 2050.

"The era of coal might be ending, but a new age of good energy jobs for our country is just beginning," Energy Minister Michael Shanks said in a statement. The owner of the Ratcliffe-on-Soar factory, Uniper said the site will be put into a two-year decommissioning period beginning in October. The 350 Uniper employees and contractors that work at the site, will

involved in the war, blamed the Sudanese armed forces for the "heinous" attack. Sudan's army denied carrying out the attack, insisting it does not target diplomatic missions.

Kuwait condemned the attack, rejecting such violations of international laws and norms. In a statement, the ministry of foreign affairs stressed the importance of respecting the sanctity of diplomatic missions and providing them with full protection, in accordance with the provisions of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations of 1961.



An aerial view of the Ratcliffe-on-Soar coal-fired power station near Nottingham in central England, seen on Sept 19, 2024. — AFP

Gallant, who was briefed by commanders.

"The elimination of Nasrallah is an important step, but it is not the final one. In order to ensure the return of (the Zionist entity's) northern communities, we will employ all of our capabilities, and this includes you." The Washington Post cited an unidentified US official as saying the Zionist entity had already told the US it was planning a ground operation that may start imminently. Asked about the reports, US President Joe Biden, who has so far had little success urging the Zionist entity to rein in its campaigns, called for a ceasefire, telling reporters: "I'm comfortable with them stopping."

Zionist airstrikes in Beirut and elsewhere in Lebanon continued, extending a two-week-old campaign that has eliminated several Hezbollah commanders but also killed about 1,000 civilians and forced one million to flee their homes, according to the Lebanese government. The death toll from a Zionist strike on the southern Lebanese town of Ain Deleb rose to 45, Lebanon's health ministry said on Monday. Rescuers stood on a flattened building. "We are rescuing these people, pulling out the living, the torn apart, and the martyrs," said one, Mazin Al-Khatib.

Continued on Page 6



WASHINGTON: US Secretary of State Antony Blinken meets Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya at the Department of State on Sept 30, 2024. — AFP

principle of the inviolability of diplomatic premises".

The Sudanese army responded that it "condemns and denies the accusation" by the UAE, adding that "it does not target the headquarters of diplomatic missions, United Nations agencies or voluntary organizations and does not turn them into military bases and loot their assets". The Sudanese army accuses the UAE of backing the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces

Continued on Page 6



Continued on Page 6



## Local

# The Golden Mosque symbolizes the deep ties between my two homelands: Turkish envoy

## Turkish Embassy marks 60 years of diplomatic relations



Ambassadors, officials and architecture enthusiasts pose for a group photo in the mosque. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



Japanese Ambassador Morino Yasunari examines the mosque's details alongside with other officials.



Officials attentively listen as the mosque's designer explains the architectural features.



Turkish Ambassador Tuba Nur Sonmez shares information about the mosque alongside with the mosque's designer and other officials.

By Passant Hisham

**KUWAIT:** Turkish Ambassador to Kuwait, Tuba Nur Sonmez, described how the Badriya Nasser Al-Jean Mosque, not only stands as a place of worship but, "a beautiful symbol of the enduring religious and cultural bonds rooted in history between my homeland, Turkey, and my second home, Kuwait." During a tour organized on Sunday by the Turkish Embassy to mark 60 years of diplomatic relations, she highlighted how the mosque, also known as "The Golden Mosque", embodies the deep cultural connections between the two countries, blending Ottoman architectural brilliance and Kuwaiti architectural styles.

Expressing her heartfelt gratitude to the donors, especially Sheikh Miteb Al-Sabah, Sheikh Thamer Al-Sabah, and Sheikhha Hanoof Al-Sabah children of Badriya Nasser Al-Jean, the ambassador said that the mosque serves as a sign of their generosity. Evoking the architectural mastery of the renowned Mimar Sinan, the chief Ottoman architect of the 16th



Mosque's Designer Muhammad Amr

century, Ambassador Tuba added that the craftsmanship behind the mosque exemplifies the close collaboration between Turkish and Kuwaiti teams in creating this architectural masterpiece.

Completing the mosque required almost two



Turkish Ambassador Tuba Nur Sonmez

years, according to its designer, Mohamed Ibrahim Amr. In an interview with Kuwait Times, he highlighted the contribution of a dedicated diverse workforce from Kuwait and Turkey to finishing the project, which was officially inaugurated in 2021.

Amr added that he sourced all materials from Turkey, to achieve a harmonious integration of construction and design elements.

The diverse team behind the project, he said, aimed to blend traditional Ottoman design with Kuwaiti culture and the local environment, as reflected in the earthy colors of the exterior, which suits Kuwait's dusty climate. The mosque also includes a diwaniya, a gathering area common in Kuwaiti culture, allowing the imam to engage with worshippers and teach students the Quran without disturbance.

A standout feature of the mosque, according to Amr, is its impressive large dome design, which consists of 15 smaller domes and four minarets, each reaching a height of 50 meters. This remarkable architecture, as he added, is complemented by the use of special materials, including golden titanium, travertine stone, and stained glass. Amr concluded by mentioning that the main prayer area accommodates around 1,000 male and 400 female worshippers, with the extra space for outdoor gatherings.



Officials take a group photo after the 18th meeting of Undersecretaries of the GCC Ministries of Oil. — KUNA

## Oil undersecretaries meeting kicks off in Qatar

**DOHA:** The 18th meeting of Undersecretaries of the GCC Ministries of Oil kicked off on Monday in Qatar with the participation of Kuwait. In his speech, Director of Energy Policies and International Relations in Qatar Sheikh Mishal Bin Jabr Al-Thani said that the importance of the meeting is as important as the strategy that the energy sector has.

He pointed out that the participation of the undersecretaries reflects the joint commitment to continue teamwork to enhance the energy sector in general and the oil and gas sector in particular, as it represents a main pillar for economic and social growth and stability in the GCC countries that have become providers of energy for the international economy. He mentioned that these meetings come at a very important time for the international economy, which is witnessing several developments, affirming the importance of focusing on coordination and cooperation in facing those challenges of the international energy sector.

He pointed out that cooperation between the GCC countries has always been an example of joint

coordination and effort to confront various challenges, indicating that the meeting comes as an opportunity to exchange ideas and proposals about strengthening this cooperation and anticipating the future to develop the energy sector in line with global changes, especially due to the nature of the topics presented on the meeting's agenda.

After his participation in the meeting, Kuwait Undersecretary of the Oil Ministry and head of the Kuwaiti delegation Sheikh Nimr Fahad Al-Malik Al-Sabah said in a statement to KUNA that it has been agreed to rename the president of the energy team for the upcoming period and agreed to hold coordination meetings with member states ahead of the Gulf-China seminar on climate. He noted that the meeting tackled several topics related to circular carbon economy and transition towards renewable energy instead of displaying carbon neutrality strategies that GCC countries seek to achieve within the framework of international guidelines to reduce carbon emissions.

He stressed that Kuwait played a pivotal role in the meeting by submitting a number of important proposals, as Kuwait was among the countries supporting the development of the petroleum media strategy for the GCC countries, which aims to unify the Gulf media discourse on oil issues and enhance public awareness of the importance of the transition towards clean energy and circular carbon economy. — KUNA

## GCC calls for immediate ceasefire in S Lebanon

**RIYADH:** Secretary-General of the Gulf Cooperation Council Jasssem Al-Budaiwi stressed the urgency of a ceasefire across the southern borders of Lebanon to avoid a larger conflict in the Middle East. In a press release on Sunday, he urged the warring parties to exercise maximum restraint, protect the safety of civilians, and avoid sliding into a regional conflict and expanding the cycle of violence.

Renewing the firm support of the GCC member states for "the brotherly people" of Lebanon, the Secretary-General called for speeding up the presidential elections and carrying out the necessary economic reforms to improve the living conditions of the people. He recalled the GCC ministerial declaration calling for full implementation of the provisions of UN Security Council Resolution 1701 and the Taif Accord regarding respect for the sovereignty and territorial safety of Lebanon. Al-Budaiwi's statement

came in response to fierce attacks by the Zionist occupation forces on south Lebanon and other parts of the country that resulted in thousands of casualties, extensive material damage, and nearly one million displaced people.

Meanwhile, the Arab League expressed solidarity with Lebanon and its people during the current hardship, urging the international community to stand with them against the Zionist aggression targeting civil areas. The league's director, General Ahmad Abul-Gheit, stated that he was following the situation in Lebanon with great concern, condemning the continuous series of Zionist attacks on Lebanon, causing hundreds of deaths and injuries and displacing about a million people.

He stressed that violating the country's sovereignty in that way may lead to the expansion of the conflict, adding that a diplomatic solution is still possible in accordance with Resolution 1701, which the Lebanese government has repeatedly declared its commitment to. Abul-Gheit affirmed that the Lebanese people have suffered a lot in the past years and that they need today more than ever to have the international community stand by them and support them. UNSC Resolution 1701 is a resolution that was intended to resolve the 2006 Lebanon War. — KUNA



SIDON: Lebanese mourners carry bodies during a funeral in the southern city of Sidon on September 30, 2024, for the victims of Zionist airstrike on Ain El Delb. — AFP



# UNGA: Another milestone in Kuwait's foreign policy

## Gulf nation calls for comprehensive UN reform



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, meets UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres. — KUNA photos



His Highness the Crown Prince speaks at the United Nations General Assembly. — KUNA photos



His Highness the Crown Prince meets President of the General Assembly of the United Nations Philémon Yang. — KUNA photos

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait's participation in the UN General Assembly's session and related meetings in New York was yet another milestone in the Gulf's diplomacy as an active player in international affairs. 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's, participation in the UNGA meetings and consultations contributed to further cooperation with international partners.

Kuwait sent messages at the regional and international levels that reflected the aspirations of peoples to overcome regional and global tensions and conflicts, as well as security, stability, sustainable development, and human rights. The Arab Gulf country highlighted its support for international peace and security and its preventive policy as a major pillar of its foreign policy. Kuwait called for comprehensive reforms of UN and international financial institutions in order to address growing challenges and repeated violations of the UN Charter and international law.

His Highness the Crown Prince said the UN, established some 79 years ago, should be modernized, especially the

Security Council (UNSC), which failed to preserve international peace and security. "We are surrounded by danger, and no one is immune from the consequences of this danger; we have no other way but to cooperate and unite towards common objectives," he said. Kuwait called for solidarity among UN members, who should have a serious political will to reform international action, including UNSC, on the basis of democratic decision-making and fair representation of member countries, as well as a better deal with a world that is different than it was in 1945.

It will be illogical to meet the aspirations of people, Kuwait argued, without punishing those who violated the UN Charter, international law, and international humanitarian law. "Justice and equality will not be achieved amidst double standards." Kuwait, reaffirming its respect for countries' sovereignty and non-interference in their affairs, called for resolution of conflicts among countries through dialogue and peaceful means.

It reiterated support for just causes, foremost the Palestinian question, and affirmed that peace in the region would only be achieved through the establish-

ment of the independent Palestinian State on the June 4, 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital in accordance with UN resolutions and Arab peace initiatives. His Highness the Crown Prince, in a speech before the Summit of the Future, highlighted the UNSC's failure to stop the genocide in Palestine, which "reflected the double standards in implementing the international law."

The UN commended Kuwait for its support of UN agencies to achieve their objectives. His Highness the Crown Prince, meanwhile, held a series of meetings with heads of state and government regarding the further promotion of relations and cooperation in political, development, investment, security, diplomatic, and sport domains. At the Gulf level, the State of Kuwait expressed determination to continue the march of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and to continue strategic partnerships with regional and international organizations.

The GCC has proven to be a foundation of stability and prosperity in "our region, and the GCC will always remain a voice of wisdom and moderation and a beacon of constructive dialogue in a region engulfed in challenges and strategic transformations," said His High-



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah presents a speech at the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative. — KUNA photos

ness the Crown Prince. His Highness the Crown Prince's meetings focused on development, economy, and investment, reflecting his desire to see big companies transfer knowledge and expertise to the State of Kuwait.

His meeting with World Bank President Ajay Banga focused on the development of services and consultations and training programs for Kuwaitis. His Highness the

Crown Prince's meeting with Ruth Porat, President and Chief Investment Officer of Alphabet and its subsidiary Google, LLC, touched upon the framework agreement, the data center, and the transfer of knowledge and expertise to Kuwaitis. The State of Kuwait presented its development vision to its partners with the objective of transforming the nation into a trade and commercial hub. - KUNA

## Ministry organizes program to enhance teachers' performance

**KUWAIT:** The Ministry of Education organized on Monday a training program titled 'Using Professional Standards to Improve Teacher Performance in Light of Future Competencies' in cooperation with the Arab Center for Educational Training for the Gulf States (ACOG) affiliated with Qatar, Director of the Development and Advancement Department at the Ministry. Fahad Al-Hayyan praised in a press statement the fruitful cooperation between the Center and the Ministry, stressing the importance of exchanging expertise and continuous coordination to develop educational performance and improve its effectiveness in all member states.

For his part, Head of Program Implementation and Evaluation at the ACOG, Dr. Mohammad Al-Amir, explained that the program aims to familiarize participants with the latest international standards for teacher performance and the qual-



Director of the Development Department at the Ministry of Education is pictured with other officials during the training program 'Using professional standards to improve teacher performance in light of future competencies'. — KUNA

ity of education, expressing his appreciation for Kuwait's hosting of this training program. The program was attended by Director of the ACOG,

Dr Fatima Al-Maadeed, and lecturer Arafat Yassin from the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, in addition to a number of subject supervisors. — KUNA

## Minister, Tajikistan and Azerbaijan ambassadors discuss economic ties

**KUWAIT:** Minister of Finance and Minister of State for Economic and Investment Affairs Noura Al-Fassam held separate meetings with the Ambassador of Tajikistan, Zubaidullah Zubaidov, and the Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Kuwait, Emil Karimov, to discuss ways to enhance economic relations. In a press release on Monday, the Ministry of Finance stated that Minister Al-Fassam and Ambassador Zubaidov discussed the continuation and strengthening of economic and investment cooperation between Kuwait and Tajikistan.

They explored the possibility of holding the fourth session of the joint Kuwaiti-Tajik joint economic, commercial, and scientific committee in the near future, which would help bolster bilateral ties in various fields, and they also addressed plans to amend and sign the protocol on avoiding double taxation between Kuwait and Tajikistan. The meeting also touched on boosting



Minister of Finance Noura Al-Fassam take a photo with Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Kuwait Emil Karimov. — KUNA photos

joint efforts in foreign investment to support the growth and development of both countries.

Proposals were made to organize an economic and trade forum in Kuwait, inviting investment companies and banks to exchange expertise and further develop bilateral relations. Al-Fassam emphasized the importance of the private sector in fostering a favorable investment climate for businesses to explore potential



Minister of Finance Nora Al-Fassam and Ambassador of Tajikistan Zubaidullah Zubaidov. — KUNA photos

trade and investment opportunities.

During her meeting with the Azerbaijani ambassador, discussions centered on strengthening bilateral economic and investment relations, capitalizing on the opportunities available to both countries. They also discussed Kuwait's participation in the 2024 UN Climate Change Conference (COP29), scheduled to take place in Baku in November 2024. — KUNA

## AOU conference to discuss sustainable and smart cities

**KUWAIT:** The Arab Open University (AOU) announced that it will organize a conference on "Smart Management and Innovation for Sustainable Cities" from November 19 to 21 at its headquarters in Kuwait, under the patronage of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. The university's president in the Arab world, Dr. Muhammad Al-Zakri, said in a press statement on Monday that the conference aims to deepen understanding of the basic aspects of smart cities, ensure their compatibility with the United Nations' sustainable development goals, and facilitate cooperative dialogues between all concerned parties.

Al-Zakri added that the conference also aims to encourage strategic transformation and the use of technology in enhancing infrastructure and cooperation between experts, leaders, and the academic sector. He explained that the conference will focus on smart cities and innovation and discuss the integration of sustainable development goals and technological progress while motivating and guiding participants with a deep understanding that enables them to implement smart city projects.

Participants will also discuss the strategic promotion of smart cities and emerging technologies through the brand strategy and interaction. Dr. Al-Zakri stated that the conference will witness a large participation of scientists and experts who specialize in smart city management in addition to decision-makers, government officials, architects, and civil engineers with technology innovators, environmental organizations, educational institutions, investors, financing companies, media, international delegations, and interested members of society. — KUNA



Dr Muhammad Al-Zakri

## Oman Energy Minister honors KOC chairman

**MUSCAT:** Sultanate of Oman Minister of Energy and Minerals Salim Al-Aufi honored on Sunday Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) Chairman Ahmad Al-Eidan for his participation in the International Conference of the American Association of Petroleum Geologists (AAPG), hosted by Omani capital Muscat. Al-Eidan expressed his gratitude to KUNA, stating that this honor reflects the increasing recognition of Kuwait's role in advancing earth sciences both regionally and internationally.

The 'Leadership Award' presented by the AAPG is an international recognition given to individuals who have made distinguished contributions to the field of earth sciences, Al-Eidan added.

He highlighted the importance of the conference, which brings together geologists and geophysicists from around the world, facilitating the exchange of expertise and showcasing the latest studies conducted by specialized companies and universities. Al-Eidan came up with the idea to establish the Gulf Geologists Union and has contributed to connecting the oil and academic sectors. He was the founding president of the Kuwait Geosciences Society and a former president of the Society of Exploration Geophysicists (SEG) in the Middle East. — KUNA





# NBK participates in Al Hamra career fair

## Underscoring bank's belief in nurturing national talent

KUWAIT: In line with its dedication to supporting national talent starting their career, National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) participated in the career fair held at Al Hamra Tower, with the participation of a variety of leading local and international companies and top private sector corporations in Kuwait. NBK's participation in this fair aligns with its strategy focusing on delivering its social responsibilities and supporting development. It also reflects its continuous dedication to supporting and qualifying Kuwaiti fresh graduates for the labor market and familiarizing them with its requirements to help them determine their future career paths.

The fair ran for two days, September 18th and 19th, during which NBK's booth capture many visitors, as Group Human Resources staff showcased the promising career opportunities for male and female national candidates, briefed them on the nature of work in the banking sector, and gave them advice on choosing the right future career and how to join NBK. NBK regards fresh graduates as a key source to attract talent that help implement its change and transformation agenda with their high potentials that need support and guidance. On the other hand, the bank provides a unique training and development environment to upskill those young talents and enable them to build a sustainable professional career.

Commenting on this, Gadeer Al-Kooheji, Head of Talent Acquisition, Group Human Resources at National Bank of Kuwait said: "We always seek to solidify our leadership among private sector institutions in attracting, training, upskilling national talent and qualifying them as future leaders in the banking sector. We also do our utmost endeavors to build effi-



Gadeer Al-Kooheji



cient young national professionals who are able to take on leadership roles in the future and foster a sustainable future for the Kuwaiti economy."

"We aim to boost Kuwaitization by increasing acquisition of national talent, and providing them with professional training programs as per the highest international standards to help develop their skills and expertise for a promising and sustainable career, which aligns with the objectives of New Kuwait Vision 2035, she added.

"NBK believes that sponsoring these fairs helps to provide a meeting point between private sector companies and potential candidates looking for a career, as well as to encourage fresh graduates to navigate their way into the labor market and connect directly with companies and institutions to secure job opportunities," she noted.

NBK stands out as an attractive employer offers equal opportunities and embraces diversity in the workplace. Our recruitment strategy is based on attracting, training and developing the young national cadres through the best-in-class programs to help them build a successful career. This makes NBK the private sector employer of choice for Kuwaiti fresh graduates, while also having the highest national employee retention rate.

It is worth mentioning that NBK annually sponsors many career fairs for the Kuwaiti youth to introduce to them suitable job opportunities that meet their aspirations, reflecting its constant commitment to nurture the young national talent and qualify them for the labor market. It also provides unwavering support to all career fairs that help youth and fresh graduates to find the right job.



## Kuwait crude oil exports to Japan down 18.1%

TOKYO: Kuwait's crude oil exports to Japan fell 18.1 percent in August from a year earlier to 3.84 million barrels, or 124,000 barrels per day (bpd), down for the 11th consecutive month, government data showed Monday. As Japan's third-biggest oil provider, Kuwait supplied 5.5 percent of the Asian nation's total crude imports, compared with 6.0 percent in the same month of last year, the Japanese Natural Resources and Energy Agency said in a preliminary report.

Japan's overall imports of crude oil in August shrank 9.5 percent year-on-year to 2.26 million bpd, down for the ninth month in a row. Shipments from the Middle East accounted for 94.8 percent of the total, up 0.2 percentage points from the year before. The United Arab Emirates (UAE) remained in the top spot, although imports from the country slid 10.9 percent from a year earlier to 1.02 million bpd, followed by Saudi Arabia with 876,000 bpd, down 2.6 percent. The US ranked fourth with 75,000 bpd and Qatar fifth with 72,000 bpd, respectively. Japan is the world's third-biggest oil consumer after China and the US. — KUNA



## Kuwait sends 14th relief plane load to Sudan

KUWAIT: The 14th relief plane of the Kuwaiti airbridge took off Monday to Port Sudan International Airport, carrying ten tons of tents, orga-

nized by the Kuwait Society for Relief (KSR), to shelter displaced people affected by rains, floods, and ongoing conflicts in Sudan. The society's director, General Abdulaziz Al-Obaid, told KUNA that the plane load comes at a time when the internal conflicts and natural disasters have increased in Sudan, including floods that hit many areas, resulting in hundreds of victims and thousands of displaced people.

KSR is working in parallel with the increasing urgent humanitarian needs due to the ongoing conflicts in Sudan to cooperate with official bodies inside and outside Kuwait to deliver various materials to those who need them, stressed Al-Obaid. He praised the efforts made by the official supervising and supporting bodies, headed by the Kuwaiti Ministries of Social Affairs, Defense, Information, and Foreign Affairs, which helped in facilitating the



Kuwait airbridge flights. He appreciated the role of Kuwaiti charitable societies and organizations that are partners in the joint Kuwaiti humanitarian work, including the societies participating in the campaign for Sudan, as well as Kuwaiti people's efforts and charitable social institutions.

For his part, the society's head of relief and projects sector, Mahmoud Al-Misbah, affirmed to KUNA that the current flight comes within the campaign launched by KSR in partnership with eight Kuwaiti charitable societies and institutions to fill the gap in urgent and pressing humanitarian needs in Sudan. Al-Misbah noted that the organizations participating in the campaign include Charitable Organization, Society of the Revival of Islamic Heritage, Namaa Charity, Al-Najat Charity, Al-Nouri Charity, Direct Aid, Patient Aid, and Global Mercy. — KUNA



Scan & Subscribe  
KD 20 a year

For Individuals Only



Scan Now

Kuwait Times  
Established 1961  
The First English Daily in the Arabian Gulf



Tel: 24833199 Ext: 220

## Kuwait film industry faces challenges but has promising future

By Marwan Hafez

KUWAIT: Despite recent advancements in Kuwait's film industry, significant challenges remain, including limited funding and resources compared to more established film markets. However, the passion and dedication of emerging Kuwaiti filmmakers, along with a supportive community, point to a promising future for the country's cinematic landscape. Salem Alhajeri, a Kuwaiti filmmaker, shared his perspectives on the current state and future of cinema in Kuwait. His insights shed light on the specific challenges facing the local film industry and suggest ways to foster its growth and creativity.

"Understanding the market is key to film production," Alhajeri explained. "In small markets like Kuwait, we face resource constraints that impact the scale and quality of our film projects. This contrasts with larger markets where more resources are available." He compared the situation in Kuwait to that of Hollywood, noting, "Hollywood has vast resources and a large audience, which allows them to produce cutting-edge and high-quality films. In contrast, Kuwaiti filmmakers often work with smaller budgets and fewer viewers, which can limit our creative possibilities."

To address these limitations and boost Kuwaiti cinema, Alhajeri proposed international collaboration. "To enhance the Kuwaiti film industry, Gulf cooperation could be a viable option. Partnering with countries with extensive film production experience could help improve film quality and expand markets." He said. "Additionally, using



Salem Alhajeri

languages such as English could be beneficial for reaching a broader global audience."

Alhajeri also touched on the issue of freedom of expression in Kuwait. "The level of freedom for publishing and expression varies greatly across the region. In some places, strict rules can limit creative freedom, which is a major obstacle for innovative filmmaking." Another restricting factor mentioned

by Alhajeri is Kuwait's cultural traditions, which highly affects the country's film content. "Our traditions play a big role in shaping the films we produce. While it's important to honor these traditions, we also need to introduce new ideas and modern storytelling techniques to help our industry grow."

He cited the notable progress seen in Saudi films as an example of how new ideas and improved quality can reflect significant advancement. On a positive note, Alhajeri praised Kuwait's advertising industry for its exceptional creativity. "Our commercial sector meets international standards with its innovative talents. This same level of creativity should be applied to our film production to develop the quality and expand the reach of our movies."

In closing, Alhajeri stressed the need for diversity in Kuwaiti film content, advocating for a broader range of topics beyond family-oriented or traditional themes. "We have the potential to explore various subjects and engage audiences of all ages. By combining traditional elements with innovative ideas, we can create films that are both captivating and impactful."





'Liberals won't let police do their job': Trump charges

## Far-right wins Austria election, boosting European right-wing

Page 6

Page 7



BEIRUT: People gather outside an apartment building hit by a Zionist military airstrike in Beirut's Cola district, September 30, 2024. — AFP

# Lebanon ready to implement UN resolution in exchange of ceasefire: Prime Minister

## 100,000 cross into Syria; Saudi demands respecting Lebanon's sovereignty

BEIRUT: The Lebanese government is ready to fully implement a UN resolution stipulating the complete disarmament of south Lebanon as part of a ceasefire agreement with the Zionist entity, caretaker Prime Minister Najib Mikati said.

Mikati said Lebanon was ready to fully implement UN Security Council Resolution 1701 and deploy the army south of the Litani River, which lies about 30 km (around 20 miles) from Lebanon's southern border.

Mikati also said he and House Speaker Nabih Berri had agreed that electing a new president to end a near two-year vacancy at the top post would only happen after a ceasefire took hold, in comments delivered after the pair met in Beirut.

Zionist military forces have launched a barrage of strikes in two weeks across Lebanon which they say were targeting Hezbollah targets with the goal of "eliminating" several commanders. The possibility that the Zionist military's next move might be to send ground troops and tanks over the border is on many minds.

More than 1,000 Lebanese have been killed and 6,000 wounded in the past two weeks, according to official figures released by the Lebanese

Health Ministry. One million people - a fifth of the population - have fled their homes, the government says.

"We in Lebanon are ready to implement 1701, and immediately upon the implementation of the ceasefire, Lebanon is ready to send the Lebanese army to the area south of the Litani River and to carry out its full duties," in coordination with UN peacemakers, Mikati said. He said parliament would then convene to elect a consensus president.

UNSC 1701 ended the month-long 2006 war between Hezbollah and the Zionist entity and called for a full of withdrawal of Zionist military troops from southern Lebanon and that the Lebanese army and UN peacekeepers be the only armed force south of the Litani River.

### 100,000 people

The ongoing attacks have forced some 100,000 people to flee to Syria from Lebanon due, a figure that has doubled in two days, the United Nations' refugee head said on Monday. "The number of people who have crossed into Syria from Lebanon fleeing Zionist airstrikes - Lebanese and Syr-

ian nationals - has reached 100,000," Filippo Grandi said on X. "The outflow continues," he warned.

He said his UN refugee agency (UNHCR) was "present at four crossing points, alongside local authorities and (the Syrian Red Crescent) to support new arrivals". The mass displacement into war-torn Syria began a week ago, on September 23, the UNHCR told AFP on Saturday.

In the last week, the Zionist military's bombardment has killed more than 700 people in Lebanon, including 14 paramedics over a two-day period, according to Lebanon's health ministry. By Friday, 30,000 people had crossed into Syria, according to the UNHCR. Its representative in Syria, Gonzalo Vargas Llosa, said around 80 percent were Syrian nationals and 20 percent Lebanese.

"Most are women and children, although some males have crossed. About half are children and adolescents," he told reporters. He stressed the fleeing people were "arriving in a country that has been suffering from its own crisis and violence for more than 13 years, as well as from economic collapse". "People fleeing the bombing arrive in Syria

exhausted, traumatized and in desperate need of help."

### 'Great concern'

Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia expressed its "great concern" at the Zionist attacks in Lebanon on Monday, calling for the country's "sovereignty and territorial integrity" to be respected. A foreign ministry statement said: "the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is following with great concern the developments taking place in the Republic of Lebanon." As the country's health ministry said more than a hundred people had been killed in Zionist military strikes on targets across the country on Sunday, Riyadh stressed the need to respect Lebanon's sovereignty.

"The Kingdom calls on the international community to assume its responsibilities towards protecting regional peace and security to spare the region and its people the dangers and tragedies of wars," it added. There have been growing calls internationally for the Zionist entity to stop its aggression as it prepares for a possible ground offensive in Lebanon, amid fears of all-out war in the Middle East. — Reuters



BEIRUT: An image grab taken from Hezbollah's Al-Manar TV shows deputy chief Naim Qassem delivering a speech from an undisclosed location on September 30, 2024. — AFP

## Who is Sheikh Naim Qassem, Hezbollah's deputy leader?

BEIRUT: Hezbollah's deputy secretary general Sheikh Naim Qassem said the group would appoint a new leader at the earliest opportunity to replace Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah and vowed that the movement would continue fighting the Zionist entity.

Qassem's 19-minute, televised address marked the first by a top Hezbollah leader since Nasrallah was killed on Friday in a Zionist airstrike, in a huge blow to the group as it reels from an escalating Zionist military campaign of attacks.

### Who is Qassem?

- Here are some facts about Qassem.
- Qassem is a veteran figure in the group, having served as deputy secretary general since 1991.
  - He was appointed deputy secretary general under Hezbollah's late secretary general, Abbas al-Musawi, who was killed by a Zionist military helicopter attack in 1992, and remained in the role when Nasrallah became leader.
  - His political activism began in the Lebanese Shi'ite Amal Movement, founded in 1974. He left Amal in 1979, in the wake of Iran's Islamic Revolution, which shaped the political thinking of many young Lebanese Shi'ite activists. He took part in meetings that led to the formation of Hezbollah, which was established by Iran's Revolutionary Guards in 1982.
  - He has long been one of the leading spokesmen for Hezbollah, conducting many interviews with foreign media. As cross-border hostilities raged with the Zionist entity during the Gaza war, he told Al-Jazeera in June that Hezbollah's decision was not to widen the war but that it would fight one if it was imposed on it.
  - He has been the general coordinator of Hezbollah's parliamentary election campaigns since the group first contested them in 1992.
  - He was born in 1953 in Beirut's Basta Tahta district and his family originally hail from Kfar Fila, in Lebanon's predominantly Shi'ite south. He is married with six children. — Reuters

## Zionist military bombs push Lebanon migrants out of the shadows

BEIRUT: In the chaos sweeping Lebanon, migrant workers from countries like Ethiopia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Sudan have emerged from the shadows as they flee the Zionist military's aerial bombardment.

The usually quiet parish of Saint Joseph of the Jesuit Brothers in Beirut now echoes with the sounds of children. Exhausted women huddle around a table while others wait for meals, under the constant hum of Zionist military drones.

Every day, more arrive from Lebanon's south, the east and Beirut's southern suburbs. The church, once a daytime shelter for migrants, became an overnight refuge when the Zionist military air strikes began, said Brother Michael Petro of the Jesuit Refugee Service.

Word of mouth spread fast among the displaced. "A family from our church arrived here (and) asked if they could stay. We said 'Yes', and the next morning 30 people arrived, and then (another) 50," said the American Jesuit. "On the first day, we called every shelter in the country. We could not find space, either because they were full or because we were told shelters will not accept migrants."

Some families were eventually accommodated, and the parish now houses 52 migrants. Zionist military bombing of Lebanon has displaced hundreds of thousands of people. In the capital, displaced Lebanese are being housed in schools, shelters or hotels, often in precarious conditions, with some still sleeping on the streets.

"Invisible" Migrants "also need help", said Dea Hage Chahine, a Lebanese activist. "They are just invisible, like third-class" citizens, she said angrily, adding that migrant workers often "don't even have their own passports" or rights.

Kumiri Parara, a 48-year-old Sri Lankan, arrived days ago with her 12-year-old son, fleeing Sidon in the south under the bombs. She has been in Lebanon for 20 years, had been married to a Palestinian before divorcing, and found employment as a domestic worker, like many of her compatriots in the Mediterranean country. Her employers in Sidon also fled, but she has not heard from them.

"No one cared about me," she said softly, dressed in a bright orange tunic. Her compatriot, Malani Somalatha, a 46-year-old cook, lived in south Beirut, a Hezbollah stronghold heavily bombed by the Zionist military, where Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah was killed on Friday. "We left everything and came here," she said, breaking into tears, adding the restaurant where she worked has closed.

Lebanon hosts more than 160,000 migrants, 65 percent of them women, the International Organization for Migration reported last year. There are likely even more, however, as many are undocumented or in legal limbo. Most are in Lebanon under the "kafala" system, a sponsorship process that governs the presence of foreign workers but allows for numerous abuses, rights activists say.

### 'We just want to go home'

Susan Baimba came from Sierra Leone two years ago to work as a housekeeper near Sidon. When the strikes began, she fled to Beirut with her compatriots and slept on the streets before ending up at the Saint Joseph church.

She tried to join other Sierra Leoneans living in apartments in the capital, but "the landlords chased us away. They say, 'Go away, go away. We don't want



BEIRUT: Migrant workers arrive at the Saint Joseph Jesuites Fathers Church, that was turned into a shelter to house families fleeing their homes as a result of Zionist military attacks, in Lebanon's capital Beirut on September 29, 2024. — AFP

problems", said the 37-year-old. "All of us, we just want to go back home because we are tired," she said.

At the Saint Joseph, women and children are housed in a room on the first floor, and men on the second. Malika Joumaa, a 30-year-old Sudanese woman, left war-torn Darfur in 2014. A few days ago, she fled Arnoun in southern Lebanon with her husband and young daughter.

She described a harrowing journey - one and a half days on a motorcycle, a night under a bridge near Beirut, and finally arriving at the Saint Joseph. "I don't understand why war broke out in Sudan, and I don't understand why it broke out here," she said. — AFP



## International

# Far-right wins Austria election, boosting European right-wing surge

## 'We've made Austrian history', provocative leader says

VIENNA: Austrian voters handed a first-ever general election victory to the far-right Freedom Party on Sunday, preliminary results showed, illustrating rising support for hard-right parties in Europe fueled by concern over immigration levels.

The Eurosceptic, Russia-friendly FPÖ held a slim lead in opinion polls for months over Chancellor Karl Nehammer's ruling conservative Austrian People's Party (ÖVP) in a campaign dominated by immigration and worries about the economy.

Led by the 55-year-old Herbert Kickl, the FPÖ won 28.8 percent of the vote, ahead of the ÖVP on 26.3 percent, and the center-left Social Democrats (SPÖ) on 21.1 percent, according to a projection based on nearly all the vote by pollster Foresight for broadcaster ORF, a slightly bigger victory margin than final polls had indicated.

"We've made Austrian history because it's the first time the Freedom Party is Number 1 in a parliamentary election, and you have to think how far we've come," Kickl said after the party's record showing, which came seven decades after its foundation in the 1950s under the leadership of a former Nazi lawmaker.

The party has worked to moderate its image and broaden its appeal, but Kickl remains a provocative and polarizing figure, roundly disliked by the other party leaders, who immediately united in rejecting the notion of forming a coalition with him.

If Kickl cannot persuade another party to ally with him, it could end the FPÖ's hopes of forming a government and open the door to a coalition of more moderate parties. Only the ÖVP has offered any indication it could work with the FPÖ, but it has ruled out doing so with Kickl, who has given no hint he could step aside to let someone else take charge.

Seat projections suggested the ÖVP and SPÖ, which ruled Austria for decades together, could just muster a majority without a third party, which

had long looked unlikely.

Kickl's win was hailed by hard-right parties across Europe, where the far-right has made gains in countries including the Netherlands, France and Germany. That growing support could stoke the risk of divisions inside the European Union over key policy areas like the defense of Ukraine against Russia.

Analysts said irrespective of whether Kickl captured the chancellorship, Austria was now in uncharted territory. "This is, of course, a big moment," said political analyst Thomas Hofer. "This is a turning point in the Second Republic," he added, referring to the postwar history of Austria. Kathrin Stainer-Haemerle, a political science professor at the Carinthia University of Applied Sciences, said if Kickl did manage to become chancellor, Austria's role in the European Union would be "significantly different."

"Kickl has often said that (Hungarian Prime Minister) Viktor Orban is a role model for him and he will stand by him." Kickl, who this year forged an alliance with Orban, opposes providing aid to Ukraine and wants sanctions against Russia withdrawn, arguing they hurt Austria more than Moscow.

### 'Fortress Austria'

On Sunday, Kickl said he was ready to talk with all parties over forming a coalition, and President Alexander Van der Bellen, who oversees the formation of governments, urged parties to find common ground in negotiations in the coming weeks.

Van der Bellen, a former Greens leader, has voiced reservations about the FPÖ because of its criticism of the EU and its failure to condemn Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Late on Sunday, a few dozen anti-FPÖ protesters assembled outside the party's election celebrations, one holding a placard reading "Kickl is a Nazi" as police kept them at bay. The Islam-critical



VIENNA: Herbert Kickl, leader and top candidate of right-wing populist Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ) is celebrated by supporters as he arrives at the party's election event after exit poll numbers were announced at the Stiegl-Ambulanz restaurant in Vienna, Austria on September 29, 2024, during Austria's general election. — AFP

FPÖ wants to stop granting asylum altogether and build a "fortress Austria" preventing migrants from entering. "Some of these people are given everything they want and need, and they take advantage of it," said Marcel Sztrelko, a 44-year-old warehouse worker, who voted FPÖ because of what he said was Austria's failure to integrate refugees.

The party faced fresh controversy about its past at the weekend, when a video published by newspaper Der Standard showed members of the party attending a funeral where a song popular with the Nazi SS was sung. A Jewish student group in Vienna filed a complaint against FPÖ members accusing them of breaching anti-Nazi laws. — Reuters

## French far-right's Le Pen goes on trial over fake EU jobs

PARIS: French far-right leader Marine Le Pen went on trial on Monday on charges of embezzling money from the European Parliament, in a high-profile case that could endanger her presidential ambitions. "We have not broken any rules," the three-time presidential candidate of the far-right National Rally (RN) said before the start of the hearings in Paris, adding she was in a "very calm" mood.

Le Pen and a slew of RN party chiefs face charges they embezzled money from the European Parliament with fake jobs. If convicted, sanctions could include jail but also a decade-long ban from public office which would wreck Le Pen's hopes of succeeding President Emmanuel Macron in 2027 elections.

The hearings risk undermining Le Pen's winning streak after National Rally achieved record scores in European elections, performed strongly in France's early legislative vote and emerged as a kingmaker in Prime Minister Michel Barnier's minority government.

Le Pen, 56, who hopes to claim the French presidency on her fourth try in 2027, has said she intends to appear in court as much as possible. Twenty-five people including Le Pen herself are on trial, which is set to last until November 27.

In the Paris dock are the RN party itself, nine former MEPs including Le Pen and party vice-president Louis Aliot, spokesman Julien Odoul -- one of nine former parliamentary assistants -- and four RN staff.

First flagged in 2015, the alleged fake jobs system at the RN covers contracts for parliamentary assis-



PARIS: French far-right Rassemblement National (RN) Member of Parliament Marine Le Pen (C) arrives at a court house for a trial on suspicion of embezzlement of European public funds, in Paris on September 30, 2024. — AFP

tants between 2004 and 2016. Prosecutors say the assistants in fact worked exclusively for the party outside parliament.

Many were unable to describe their day-to-day work and some never met their supposed MEP boss or set foot in the parliament building. A bodyguard, secretary, Le Pen's chief of staff and a graphic designer were all allegedly hired under false pretenses. The misuse of public funds charges bear maximum penalties including a million-euro (\$1.1 million) fine,

10 years' jail and a 10-year bar from public office.

European Parliament authorities say the legislature was embezzled to the tune of three million euros (\$3.4 million at today's rates). The RN has already paid back one million euros, which it insists is not an admission of guilt. The party has for years called the investigation a form of "persecution" and political abuse of the justice system. "Every time the party or its leaders are attacked, it lets them cast themselves as the victim," said political scientist Nonna Mayer

of Paris's Sciences Po university.

The RN has capitalized on President Emmanuel Macron's unpopularity after he successfully cast the 2017 and 2022 presidential elections as a straight choice between him and the far right. A shock first-place RN result in June European elections prompted Macron to call snap elections, and his gamble led to conservative Barnier's uncomfortable minority coalition. Barnier could be toppled at any moment if the leftwing NFP alliance and the RN join forces in a confidence vote, putting Le Pen in a kingmaker role. Polls show the former protest party also enjoys increasingly committed voter support.

One RN lawmaker told AFP that "when I don't see Marine worried, I'm not worried" ahead of the trial. Historically, "scandals in other parties work in favor of the RN, but scandals at the RN don't benefit other parties," University of Tours political scientist Sylvain Crepon told AFP.

### 'Don't like Europe'

Prosecutors say Le Pen and her father, former party leader Jean-Marie, both signed off on a "centralized system" that picked up pace in 2014. Now aged 96, Le Pen senior will not appear in court for health reasons. Several people have testified about a 2014 meeting that one said discussed a clear "fake jobs" structure.

The RN and its former incarnation the National Front (FN) "don't like Europe. The only thing they like is the European Union's money," said Patrick Maisonneuve, representing the European Parliament as a co-plaintiff. Evidence against the party includes contracts for periods as short as a single day to squeeze every last cent out of their spending allowances. One message from party treasurer Wallerand de Saint-Just warned about the party's disastrous finances, writing "we won't get out of this without making significant savings thanks to the European Parliament". — AFP

## Hezbollah ready for Zionist invasion...

Continued from Page 1

Nasrallah's killing, along with the assassinations and systematic attacks on the group's communications devices, constitute the biggest blow to the movement since Iran created it in 1982 to fight the Zionist entity. Nasrallah built Hezbollah up into Lebanon's most powerful military and political force, with a wide reach across the Middle East. Now it must replace a charismatic, towering leader who was a hero to millions of supporters because he stood up to the Zionist entity -- even though the West branded him a terrorist mastermind.

Qassem said it would "choose a secretary-general for the party at the earliest opportunity ... and fill the leadership and positions on a permanent basis". He said Hezbollah had continued to fire rockets as deep as 150 km into Zionist territory. "What we are doing is the bare minimum ... We know that the battle may be long," he said. "We will win as we won in the liberation of 2006," he added, referring to the last big conflict between the two foes.

The Zionist entity, which has also assassinated leaders of the Palestinian militant group Hamas in the Gaza war, says it will do whatever it takes to return its citizens to evacuated communities on its northern border safely. Hours before Qassem spoke, Hamas said a Zionist airstrike had killed its leader in Lebanon, Fateh Sherif Abu el-Amin, along with his wife, son and daughter in the city of Tyre on Monday.

Another faction, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, said three of its leaders had died in a strike in Beirut's Kola district, the first strike so close to the city center. The strike, the first in the city center in years, sparked panic, with 41-year-old resident Mohammed Al-Hoss saying "the kids were in shock" after his house was damaged. "Our country is in a wretched state. They (the Zionist entity) finished with Gaza and they have come to Lebanon," he said. Another resident, 42-year-old Kahier Bannout, said central Beirut was "supposed to be a safe area -- not a war zone".

Zionist airstrikes pounded areas across the Gaza Strip on Monday killing 12, including a journalist and her

family, medics said. Palestinian health officials said Wafa Al-Udani, who wrote articles about the war in English advocating the Palestinian viewpoint, was killed when a missile struck her house in the central city of Deir Al-Balah, also killing her husband and their two children.

Udani's death raised the number of Palestinian journalists killed in the Zionist offensive since Oct 7 to 174, the Gaza government media office said. In another strike, a Palestinian was killed and several were wounded in Rafah, near the border with Egypt, while in the northern town of Beit Hanoun an airstrike killed one man and injured others, medics said. Later on Monday, a Zionist air strike on a house in Nuseirat, one of Gaza Strip's eight historic refugee camps, killed six people, health officials said.

A UN Satellite Centre assessment issued Monday said "two-thirds of the total structures in the Gaza Strip have sustained damage" in nearly a year of war. The Zionist military offensive has killed at least 41,615 people in Gaza, most of them civilians.

The Zionist attacks on militant targets in Lebanon are part of a conflict also stretching from the Palestinian territories of Gaza and the occupied West Bank to Iranian-backed groups in Yemen and Iraq. The escalation has raised fears that the United States and Iran will be sucked into the conflict. The latest actions indicated the Zionist entity had no plans to slow down its advanced military machine even after eliminating Nasrallah. Netanyahu accused the Iranian government of plunging the Middle East "deeper into war" at the expense of its own people, whom it was bringing "closer to the abyss".

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Nasser Kanaani said Tehran would not let any of the Zionist entity's "criminal acts" go unanswered, referring to the killings of Nasrallah and an Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps deputy commander, Brigadier General Abbas Nilforoushan, who died in the same strikes.

The Zionist entity's closest ally, the United States, has not wavered in its support despite concerns over heavy civilian casualties. And while Arab states have condemned the Zionist entity's actions, none have taken concrete steps to pressure it to rein in its war-torn, angering Beirut residents like Abou Imam. "You are watching as they (the Zionist entity) take over all the Arab countries and take us all," he said. — Agencies

## UAE condemns attack on envoy's...

Continued from Page 1

(RSF), which it has been fighting since April 2023 in a war that has killed tens of thousands of people and ignited a dire humanitarian crisis.

"The one that carries out these heinous and cowardly actions is the terrorist, rebel militia (RSF)... supported in committing all this by countries known to the world," an army statement said. Sudan's for-

eign ministry also denounced what it called "false allegations" by the UAE. According to eyewitnesses in Khartoum, heavy clashes have raged in several parts of the capital for the past four days, in a major flare-up of hostilities.

In June, Sudan's ambassador to the United Nations Al-Harith Idriss al-Harith Mohamed accused Abu Dhabi of giving financial and military support to the RSF, calling it the "main reason behind this protracted war". The UAE has denied allegations of supporting the RSF as "disinformation", saying its efforts are focused exclusively on de-escalation and alleviating Sudan's humanitarian suffering. — Agencies

## Last UK coal power plant shuts...

Continued from Page 1

either be redeployed to other roles within the company or leave the business within three redundancy windows before the end of 2026, Uniper told AFP.

In its place will be a new development -- a "carbon-free technology and energy hub", the company said. It marks the end of Britain's 140-year dependence on coal as it becomes the first in the G7 of rich nations to do away entirely with coal power electricity. Italy plans to do so by next year, France in 2027, Canada in 2030 and Germany in 2038. Japan and the United States have no set dates.

Britain's transition to net zero is changing the country's industrial landscape. Britain's biggest steelworks also ended production on Monday, when the final blast furnace at Port Talbot in Wales closed after more than 100 years of steelmaking, at a cost of almost 3,000 jobs. The closure of the last blast furnace at Port Talbot, once the largest steelworks in Europe, is the culmination of decades of decline in Britain's steel industry, which has struggled to compete with low-cost imports.

Showing the scale of the challenge, India-owned Tata Steel had been losing £1 million a day before it began the process of shutting down its facilities. The Tata Steel-owned site will now be subject to a three to four year-long decar-

bonization plan to build an electric arc furnace which will make steel from scrap, a £1.25 billion (\$1.68 billion) project backed by £500 million of British government funding.

Steelworkers union Community said in a statement that the closure of the final blast furnace was "the end of an era" and called it "an incredibly sad and poignant day". Another company, British Steel, which is Chinese-owned, continues to make virgin steel at its two blast furnaces in Scunthorpe, northern England, but it is also in talks with the government about shifting to cleaner manufacturing.

The government has said it wants to invest £2.5 billion in the steel industry and it will publish a strategy on its plans to boost the sector next Spring. The switch to electric steel-making is expected to cut Britain's carbon emissions by 1.5 percent as Port Talbot's coal-fired plant is the country's biggest single carbon emitter.

"Britain has set an example the rest of the world must follow", said Doug Parr, policy director at Greenpeace UK. "There are further battles to be had to phase out oil and gas, fulfilling the promise by all countries at COP28 to transition away from fossil fuels," he added. The polluting fossil fuel played a vital part in British economic history, powering the Industrial Revolution of the 18th and 19th centuries that made the country a global superpower.

Even into the 1980s, it still represented 70 percent of the country's electricity mix before its share declined in the 1990s as the government began to implement stricter regulations to tackle pollution. In the last decade the fall has been even sharper, slumping to 38 percent in 2013, 5.0 percent in 2018 then just 1.0 percent last year. — Agencies



## International

# 'Liberals won't let police do their job': Trump charges

## Trump urges 'violent' police crackdown as Harris campaigns in Nevada

ERIE: Donald Trump on Sunday used a speech in key swing state Pennsylvania to urge a "violent" police crackdown on crime in the United States, while his White House rival Kamala Harris emphasized the need for immigration reform at a rally in Nevada.

Pennsylvania is considered the most important of the seven toss-up states that will likely decide the November 5 presidential election, but Nevada is also one of the key battlegrounds.

The Republican former president and current candidate, who held a similar rally in swing state Wisconsin on Saturday, reprised his dark, racially charged message about an America crumbling under "invasion" by violent migrants and other criminals.

Recounting isolated -- but widely publicized -- incidents of thieves staging brazen daylight robberies of shops in major cities, Trump got a loud cheer when he said police should become "extraordinarily rough."

Criminals, he said, "have to be taught" and this could be done "if you had one really violent day."

"One rough hour -- and I mean real rough -- the word would get out and it would end immediately," Trump said. "The police aren't allowed to do their job" because "the liberal left won't let them."

Harris, the vice president and Democratic candidate, addressed the "serious problems" of border security at a rally in Las Vegas later in the day, where she reeled off her usual stump speech, emphasizing the economy, health care and the need for immigration reform.

"As president, I will double the resources for the Department of Justice to go after the transnational cartels," Harris said. "We know Donald

Trump won't solve them. When he was president, he did nothing to fix our immigration system," she added, calling for comprehensive reform but without offering details.

As on Saturday in Wisconsin, Trump spent much of his speech painting a picture of a failing United States, inundated by what he said was the "massive number of savage criminal aliens that Kamala Harris has allowed to invade." He claimed "terrorists are pouring into our country" and cited "a big prison in the Congo, in Africa," as the source of "a lot of people" last week.

### Insults

Anti-immigrant sentiment has been at the core of Trump's appeal in economically depressed, majority-white parts of the country ever since his 2016 presidential victory, but the rhetoric is turning ever more extreme as election day nears.

Following record numbers of illegal border crossings earlier in President Joe Biden's administration, a tightening of rules -- to the consternation of immigrant rights and civil liberties groups -- led to a plunge in numbers this year. Crime, including murder, is also in steep decline nationwide, the FBI says.

Trump has long prided himself on his ability to coin insulting nicknames or slurs for his opponents and on Sunday, he repeated one that he aired on Saturday, calling Harris -- a former top California prosecutor and US senator -- "mentally impaired."

"Crooked Joe Biden became mentally impaired. Sad. But lying Kamala Harris, honestly, I believe she was born that way," Trump said to loud laughter from the crowd.



ERIE: Former US President and Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump speaks during a campaign event at the Bayfront Convention Center in Erie, Pennsylvania, September 29, 2024. — AFP

Harris did not address Trump's comments during her rally in Vegas, instead focusing on her usual bread-and-butter issues -- protecting access to abortion services and putting more money in the

pockets of everyday Americans. "When Congress passes a bill to restore reproductive freedom, as president of the United States, I will proudly sign it into law," she told supporters. — AFP

## Nepal surveys flood wreckage as death toll reaches 200

KATHMANDU: Search and rescue teams in Nepal's capital picked through wrecked homes on Monday after waters receded from monsoon floods that killed at least 200 people around the Himalayan republic.

Deadly floods and landslides are common across South Asia during the monsoon season from June to September but experts say climate change is making them worse. Entire neighborhoods in Kathmandu were inundated after the heaviest rains in more than two decades, with the capital temporarily cut off from the rest of Nepal after landslides blocked highways.

"According to the latest figures, 200 have died, 127 are injured and 26 are still missing," home ministry spokesman Rishi Ram Tiwari told AFP. Police said at least 35 of those killed were buried alive when earth from a landslide careened into vehicles on a highway south of Kathmandu.

Bulldozers were being used to clear nearly two dozen sections of major roads leading into Kathmandu that had been blocked by debris. The home ministry said it was working to rescue numerous people who had been stranded on the highways.

Rescuers in knee-high rubber boots were using shovels to clear mud from the worst-hit riverside neighborhoods around Kathmandu, many of them unauthorized slum settlements. The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), a Nepal-based think tank, said the disaster had been made worse by unplanned urban encroachment around the Bagmati River, which flows through the capital.

Nepal's army said more than 4,000 people had been rescued, with helicopters, motorboats and rafts bringing stranded people to safety. Nilkantha Pandey of the humanitarian organization CARE Nepal said many of those affected by the floods needed safe drinking water and temporary housing. "Mostly in-



KATHMANDU: Vendors clear mud from a vegetable market in a flood-affected area following heavy monsoon rains in Kathmandu on September 30, 2024. — AFP

formal settlements have been affected," Pandey said. "It is time to respond and not delay."

### 'An extreme event'

Merchants in Kathmandu said damage to inter-city roads had drastically cut the supply of fresh fruit and vegetables into the capital. "The farmers have their produce ready but with the highways blocked, all of it is stuck," Binay Shrestha, who works at one of the city's main produce markets, told AFP. Nepal's weather bureau said their preliminary data measured record-breaking rain in the 24 hours to Saturday morning.

A monitoring station at Kathmandu airport recorded about 240 millimeters (9.4 inches) of rain, the highest figure since 2002. Climate expert Arun Bhakta Shrestha of ICIMOD told AFP that rainfall

that he aimed to call snap elections for October 27, saying it was "important for the new government to be judged by the people as soon as possible". LDP elders are banking on Ishiba, a self-confessed defense "geek" fond of making model ships and planes, to boost the party's popularity. Its poll ratings fell sharply under outgoing premier Fumio Kishida, hit by a damaging party slush fund scandal and anger over rising prices.

### Defense ties

Ishiba vowed on Friday to restore confidence in the LDP after the scandal and to shore up defense ties among neighbors rattled by recent Chinese actions. He is considering appointing as finance minister Katsunobu Kato, a former chief cabinet secretary who ran in the LDP leadership race, media reports said.

Gen Nakatani, a veteran former defense minister, will return to his old job while Takeshi Iwaya, another former defense minister, will come in as foreign minister, the reports said. Kishida pledged to double defense spending and deepen military cooperation with the United States and other allies in the region rattled by China's rise and an unpredictable North Korea.

Ishiba backs the creation of an "Asian NATO" and has said Japan should respond more strongly to Chinese or Russian breaches of its airspace or waters, as has happened repeatedly in recent weeks. But questions remain over how the government plans to pay for the upgrade and also find enough recruits for the military among Japan's shrinking population.

Taro Saito, senior economist at NLI Research Institute, told AFP that Ishiba has so far focused on how to improve public finances in Japan, which has one of the world's highest debt mountains. "He seems not so interested in policies to boost econom-

should be decreasing by late September with the end of the annual monsoon.

"Rainfall of this kind has to be described as abnormal," he said. "It is an extreme event... I see the possibility of the role of climate change to some extent." But he added that unplanned urban development had also worsened the impact of the disaster.

The summer monsoon from July to September brings South Asia 70-80 percent of its annual rainfall and is vital for agriculture and food production in a region home to around two billion people.

However, monsoon rains also bring widespread death and destruction in the form of floods and landslides. Experts say climate change has worsened their frequency and intensity. More than 300 people have been killed in rain-related disasters in Nepal this year. — AFP



TOKYO: Shigeru Ishiba, the new head of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), takes part in a press conference at the party's headquarters in Tokyo on September 30, 2024. — AFP

ic growth, although what is most important for Japan is low growth rather than fiscal health," Saito said.

Chief cabinet secretary Yoshimasa Hayashi, who is reportedly set to remain under Ishiba, declined to comment on Monday on the fall in stocks but said the government would "make judgements with calm heads".

"We will continue closely watching trends in financial markets at home and abroad with a sense of vigilance and, while cooperating closely with the Bank of Japan, we will do our best in management of the economy and finance," he said. — AFP

## US vice president debate pits hillbilly energy against 'Minnesota nice'

WASHINGTON: US vice presidential candidates JD Vance and Tim Walz will face off Tuesday in a debate that promises to be a feisty battle to win over voters in middle America, who could decide the cliffhanger 2024 election. The Republican Ohio senator and the Democratic Minnesota governor make for a study in contrasts and have already traded a series of bad-tempered insults in the bitter race for the White House.

The combative Vance, 40, shares former president Donald Trump's gift for courting controversy, whether by smearing Democrats as "childless cat ladies," spreading bogus stories about pet-eating migrants or questioning his rival's military record.

Walz, 60, is a folksy Midwestern former teacher and high school football coach who was chosen at lightning speed by Vice President Kamala Harris after his attacks on Vance and Trump as "weird" went viral.

But what the pair have in common is that their bosses are counting on them to reach out to voters in the blue-collar US heartland and help propel them to the Oval Office. The clash should make for good television, even if VP debates themselves rarely move the dial in elections, said Thomas Whalen, an associate professor of social sciences at Boston University.

"High drama -- I think that's what Americans want to see and they very well might get it on Tuesday," Whalen told AFP. "You've barely had a vice presidential debate that's had any appreciable difference," he said.

"But it's that reality television angle. Americans are fascinated by confrontations, and JD Vance and Walz, they are so different -- personality-wise, politically -- it might be just worth your while to take a few moments to check them out." The debate hosted by the CBS network in New York at 9:00 pm Tuesday (0100 GMT Wednesday) could also be the last major televised face-off before the election. Trump has refused to take part in a second debate with Harris, after pundits and polls agreed the Democrat won their first on September 10.

### 'Trap'

A little extra spice could come from the fact that Vance's and Walz's microphones will be live throughout, allowing them to cut in on their rivals. Trump and Harris had their mics muted when it was not their turn to talk. The pressure on Tuesday could be biggest on Vance, the youthful senator whom Trump picked in June in the hope he could reach out to his blue-collar base.

Vance made his name with the 2016 memoir "Hillbilly Elegy," a best-selling account of Rust Belt poverty, and boasted a rags-to-riches life story that included military service in Iraq and a Silicon Valley fortune.

But Walz is sure to attack him over a series of controversies linked to previous comments on women and abortion, including where he criticized "childless cat ladies" in a jab at Harris for not having biological children. Vance can also expect to come under fire for promoting false stories about Haitian migrants eating pet cats and dogs in the town of Springfield, Ohio.

For Walz, it has been a heady ascent since Harris picked him shortly after her own sudden replacement of President Joe Biden as the Democratic presidential nominee. His earthy charm, the famed "Minnesota nice" politeness made famous by the 1996 Coen brothers film "Fargo," has made him a hit with Democrats. So have his progressive politics -- but they will also be a target for Vance as he and Trump seek to paint Walz and Harris as "Marxists." — AFP



JD Vance (left) and Tim Walz

## Japan's next prime minister aims for snap election

TOKYO: Japan's incoming prime minister Shigeru Ishiba said on Monday he aimed to call snap elections for October 27, as equities plunged on a strong yen and fears that tax hikes are on the cards.

Ishiba, who was set to be formally appointed as premier on Tuesday after winning the leadership of the ruling party, supports the Bank of Japan's drive to hike interest rates and has said "there is room" to raise corporate levies.

The leadership contest for the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), which has governed almost uninterrupted for decades, went down to the wire on Friday, with right-winger Sanae Takaichi tipped to win when markets closed.

With Takaichi a fan of former prime minister Shinzo Abe's unorthodox "Abenomics" economic policies of ultra-low interest rates and tax cuts, the prospect of her winning sent stocks higher and the yen lower. Takaichi, an arch nationalist, would also have been the first woman prime minister in a country where men still dominate politics and business.

Ishiba, 67, is a fierce critic of Abe and his last-gasp victory -- on his fifth attempt -- sent the yen soaring to around 142 per dollar from around 146.50. Investors dumped stocks on Monday, with exporters among the worst hit. The Nikkei index closed down 4.8 percent, with Toyota tumbling 7.6 percent and real estate company Mitsui Fudosan off 8.7 percent.

Ishiba confirmed on Monday media reports



TUESDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2024

# Stellantis, Aston Martin shares plunge after profit warnings

European carmakers grapple with rising costs amid weak US, China demand



TURIN: An employee of auto giant Stellantis works at an assembly plant at Mirafiori Stellantis' factory in Turin, on April 10, 2024. — AFP

**LONDON:** European carmaker Stellantis joined on Monday bigger rival Volkswagen and others in warning about the worsening outlook for auto demand and rising costs, wiping billions of euros off the sector's market value. The automakers are struggling with weak demand in China and the United States and a potential trade war between Beijing and the EU as the bloc prepares to finalize import tariffs on Chinese electric vehicles over alleged subsidies. British luxury carmaker Aston Martin also issued a full-year profit warning on Monday, partly blaming falling demand in China, as Mercedes-Benz and BMW also did earlier this month.

Aston Martin's shares plunged as much as 20 percent to their lowest in nearly two years. Shares in Stellantis were down nearly 11 percent, hitting their lowest since December 2022 as investors digested the scale of the world No 4 automaker's problems.

Stellantis shares have lost 38 percent in value this year, making it Europe's worst performing automaker.

The latest warnings follow Volkswagen's announcement late on Friday that it was cutting its 2024 profit outlook for the second time in under three months. Its shares were down a little over 2.8 percent in mid-morning trading on Monday. The German car giants have been reliant on China for around a third of their sales and have been hit by a weaker economy there and fiercer competition from domestic Chinese automakers and a vicious EV price war.

#### Misjudging US cash cow

Falling European demand has not helped either. New car sales in the European Union fell 18.3 percent in August to their lowest in three years with double-digit losses in major markets Germany, France and Italy and sliding electric vehicle sales. Much of Stel-

lant's problems, however, stem from North America. The expensive Jeeps and pickup trucks that Stellantis sells in the lucrative US market have generated virtually all of its profits since the automaker was formed out of the merger of FCA and PSA in 2021 and have made its profit margins the envy of its mainstream peers.

But high inventories and weak sales as Stellantis has somehow misjudged its cash cow market has forced it to both cut production while also offering deep discounts on the vehicles depreciating on dealer lots across America. As a consequence Stellantis has slashed its adjusted profit margin for the year to between 5.5 percent to 7 percent, down from double digit and warn of negative cash flow of between 5 billion euros (\$5.6 billion) and 10 billion euros. Forward 12-month price-earnings ratios, a measure of a company's market value, for the three biggest European carmakers — VW,

Stellantis and Renault, are around 3, much lower than US rivals, GM and Ford, and Toyota — the world's largest carmaker.

Where traditional European automakers' problems intersect is rising competition from Chinese rivals who can develop better, cheaper EVs much faster than Volkswagen, Stellantis or Renault can. They are also struggling to sell the EVs they are making, while investing large sums to develop new, more affordable models. Changing over production lines to new models takes revenue-generating capacity offline, exacerbating cash flow issues for legacy automakers whose plants already have capacity utilization problems that they have failed to address. Falling market share in China and lower car demand in Europe have led Volkswagen to warn of possible plant closures in Germany, putting the company on a collision course with the powerful IG Metall union. — Reuters

## Epic Games accuses Samsung, Google of blocking app rivals

**WASHINGTON:** "Fortnite" video game maker Epic Games on Monday accused Alphabet's Google and Samsung, the world's largest Android phone manufacturer, of conspiring to protect Google's Play store from competition. Epic filed a lawsuit in US federal court in California alleging that a Samsung mobile security feature called Auto Blocker was intended to deter users from downloading apps from sources other than the Play store or Samsung's Galaxy store, which the Korean company chose to put on the back burner.

Samsung and Google are violating US anti-trust law by reducing consumer choice and preventing competition that would make apps less expensive, said US-based Epic, which is backed by China's Tencent. "It's about unfair competition by misleading users into thinking competitors' products are inferior to the company's products themselves," Epic Chief Executive Tim Sweeney told reporters. "Google is pretending to keep the user safe saying you're not allowed to install apps from unknown sources. Well, Google knows what Fortnite is as they have distributed it in the past."

Google did not immediately respond to requests for comment. Samsung said it planned to "vigorously contest Epic Games' baseless claims." "The features integrated into its devices are designed in accordance with Samsung's core principles of security, privacy, and user control, and we remain fully committed to safeguarding users' personal data," Samsung said in the statement, adding that users have choices to disable Auto Blocker at any time. Epic said Samsung's Auto Blocker was designed to blunt the impact of a US verdict that Epic won against Google in December 2023 that is expected to force the company to make apps easier to obtain from other sources.

Epic said it will also raise its competition concerns with regulators in the European Union, which has long scrutinized Google's business practices. Epic had earlier faced off with Google and Apple over their rules of charging up to 30 percent commission on app store payments. After getting banned for nearly four years, it was available again on iPhones in the European Union and worldwide on Google's Android devices last month.

Samsung introduced Auto Blocker on its smartphones in late 2023 as an opt-in feature to protect users from downloading apps that may contain malware. Epic said Samsung made Auto Blocker the default setting in July and intentionally made it difficult to disable or bypass. Cary, North Carolina-based Epic Games sued Google in 2020, claiming it stifled competition through its controls over app distribution and payments. — Reuters

## UK economy grew slower than thought but outlook positive

**LONDON:** Britain's economy grew more slowly than previously thought in the second quarter, but there were positive signs from household finances and business investment that could encourage finance minister Rachel Reeves as she prepares next month's budget. Economic output expanded by 0.5 percent in the April-to-June period, the Office for National Statistics said on Monday.

The reading was slightly weaker than a preliminary estimate for 0.6 percent growth in gross domestic product. Economists polled by Reuters had expected the 0.6 percent rise to be confirmed. The household saving ratio increased to 10.0 percent from 8.9 percent in the first three months of 2024.

Sandra Horsfield, an economist with Investec, said the savings figures as well as growth in wages that is outstripping inflation and a still-strong jobs market meant households were likely to remain confident about future income prospects. "In other words, there is enough fuel in the tank to keep consumer spending moving up even when the boost from above-inflation wage gains eases off," Horsfield said. Gross domestic product per head rose for a second quarter in a row, albeit more slowly than in the first quarter.

Prime Minister Keir Starmer, whose Labour Party won power in July, is seeking to speed up economic growth. Reeves has suggested some taxes will rise in her first budget on October 30. Recent surveys have shown falls in consumer and business sentiment partly due to concerns about the budget. But she has also hinted that she might relax rules on public debt, paving the way for more borrowing which could boost investment and the overall economy. The Bank of England has forecast economic growth will slow to 0.3 percent in the third quarter but it has said the interest rate cut in August and the expectation of more cuts, plus lower inflation, are likely to boost growth later this year.



LONDON: Pedestrians walk past the Bank of England (left), Britain's Central Bank, and the Royal Exchange, in the City of London on August 16, 2024. — AFP

#### Still a post-COVID laggard

The data showed a jump in business investment which rose by 1.4 percent in the second quarter for a third consecutive gain. Overall, Britain's GDP growth over the period was stronger than the euro zone's 0.2 percent expansion. Last week, the OECD said Britain was no longer expected to be the weakest economy among big, rich nations as it raised its forecasts for growth in the country to 1.1 percent in 2024 and 1.2 percent in 2025, up from previous forecasts of 0.4 percent and 1.0 percent.

However, Britain remains one of the slowest countries to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. Its economy was 2.9 percent bigger than in late 2019 with Germany the only G7 country faring worse.

Separate data published on Monday showed British house prices in September rose by the most since November 2022 in annual terms, up 3.2 percent compared with the same month last year.

Figures from the Bank of England showed mortgage approvals in August were the highest in two years. The ONS said economic growth in 2023 as a whole was revised to show a 0.3 percent expansion, slightly stronger than a previous estimate of a 0.1 percent increase. It also said Britain's current account deficit rose sharply to 28.4 billion pounds (\$38.0 billion) in the second quarter, equivalent to 4.0 percent of GDP but lower than expected by economists in the Reuters poll. — Reuters



# China stocks surge in biggest single-day rally since 2008

Record gains come on the back of stimulus measures rolled out by Beijing to boost economy

SHANGHAI/SINGAPORE: Chinese stocks swept to their biggest single-day gains in 16 years on Monday, with domestic A-shares registering their highest ever turnover, as investors scrambled to join a searing rally sparked by Beijing's latest raft of stimulus measures. The CSI300 blue-chip index is now up nearly 30 percent from its February trough, which by some market definitions suggests it is in a bull market, but much of the gains have happened very quickly and over a few sessions since last week.

Many traders, fearing they may miss out of the upsurge ahead of a week-long holiday starting on Tuesday, helped lift the CSI300 index 8.5 percent at the close, taking its five-day gain to over 25 percent — the strongest on record. The broader Shanghai Composite Index meanwhile recorded a total turnover of 1.17 trillion yuan (\$166.84 billion) and surged 8.1 percent.

That took its five-day gains since last Tuesday, when Beijing began rolling out stimulus measures to arrest a slowdown in the broader economy, to 21.4 percent, the strongest since 1996. It was also the best single-day percentage gain for both the CSI and SSE indexes since 2008. Similarly, the smaller Shenzhen index soared 11 percent and recorded a turnover of 1.4 trillion yuan.

The blistering rally in Chinese stocks has come on the back of last week's most aggressive stimulus measures announced by Beijing since the pandemic — ranging from outsized rate cuts to fiscal support — in an attempt to shore up

its ailing economy. Particularly in a boost for stocks, the People's Bank of China's (PBOC) also introduced two fresh tools to shore up the capital market, one of which includes a swap program allowing funds, insurers and brokers easier access to funding in order to buy stocks. That lit a fire under beaten-down Chinese equities that had been languishing near multi-year lows as recently as early this month, as investors fretted over China's growth prospects.

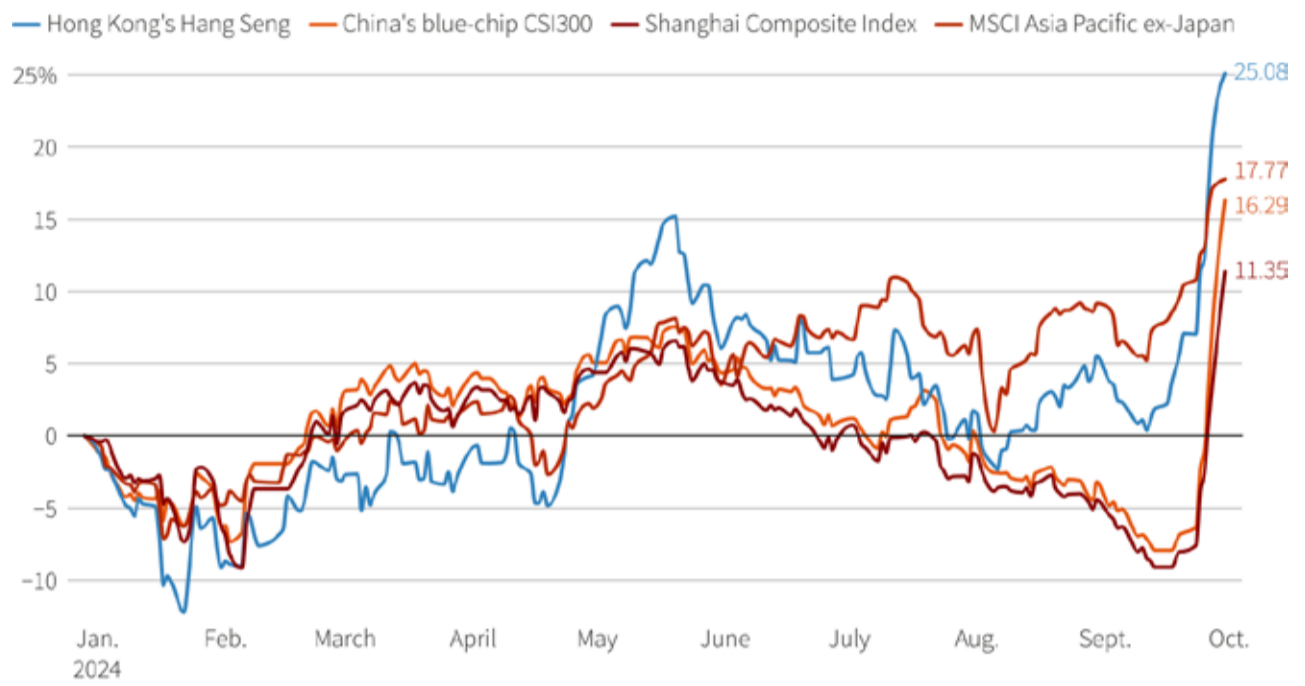
"It's really a big turnaround, the policies are so intensive, we have never seen such clear instruction to stop housing prices declining and support the stock market," said Dickie Wong, executive director of research at Kingston Securities. "Many foreign investors are afraid of missing out, local retail investors are asking me what they should add to, institutional investors are rushing to the market to catch up, and the large inflows have pushed the Hang Seng Index up to 21,000."

Hong Kong's Hang Seng Index, which advanced 2.4 percent on Monday, is now up roughly 24 percent for the year, dethroning Taiwan to become Asia's best performing stock market. Adding to the positive momentum was news on Sunday from China's central bank saying that it would tell banks to lower mortgage rates for existing home loans before October 31, as part of sweeping policies to support the country's beleaguered property market.

Guangzhou city also announced the same day the lifting of all restrictions on home purchases, while Shanghai and Shenzhen eased curbs on buying. That catapulted shares of property companies

## China & Hong Kong stocks make a comeback

Beaten-down stock markets soar after Beijing's slew of stimulus measures



Note: YTD % performance till Sept. 30

Source: LSEG | Reuters | Ankur Banerjee

on Monday, with mainland-listed property stocks advancing 8.2 percent, while the Hang Seng Mainland Properties Index charged 6.4 percent higher.

Investor optimism the latest measures could help revive China's anemic domestic consumption also lifted shares of consum-

er staples up 8.8 percent, its biggest daily percentage gain in 16 years. For the month, the CSI300 index clocked a gain of 21 percent, its best performance since December 2014. The Shanghai Composite Index similarly ended September with a 17 percent increase, its most since April 2015. The

Hang Seng Index had its best month since November 2022 with a 17 percent rise, after delivering its biggest weekly rise since 1998 last week, and fifth largest in the last half-century. Mainland financial markets will be closed October 1-7 for National Day holidays. — Reuters

### NEWS IN BRIEF

#### Sri Lanka records first deflation in 29 years

COLOMBO: Cash-strapped Sri Lanka's economy recorded falling consumer prices for the first time in 29 years, official data showed Monday, with the September inflation figure dipping to negative 0.5 percent. Census and Statistics Department data showed price drops in both food and non-food goods contributing to deflation in September, compared to inflation of 0.5 percent in August. Sri Lanka last recorded deflation in March 1995 with a figure of negative 0.9 percent. The previous price fall to that was in 1985, when inflation was negative 2.1 percent. Inflation peaked at 69.8 percent two years ago at the height of an unprecedented economic crisis in the island nation. Acute shortages of food, fuel and medicines led to months of protests that eventually forced then-president Gotabaya Rajapaksa to temporarily flee the country and resign in July 2022. His successor Ranil Wickremesinghe secured a \$2.9 billion International Monetary Fund bailout and raised taxes and prices to stabilize the economy. Wickremesinghe lost office after a presidential election this month. — AFP

#### Philippines' Marcos opens first EV battery plant

MANILA: President Ferdinand Marcos inaugurated on Monday the first factory for electric vehicle batteries in the Philippines, calling it the "future" of clean energy. The Australian-owned lithium-iron-phosphate factory aims to produce two gigawatt-hours of batteries per year by 2030, powering about 18,000 electric vehicles or nearly half a million home battery systems. "We have worked very hard and tried to do our best to bring this kind of technology to the Philippines with a clear recognition that this is the future," Marcos said in a livestreamed speech. "As the first manufacturing plant in the Philippines for advanced iron phosphate batteries ... (it) sets the stage for the Philippines to become a player in clean energy storage in our part of the world." Located in New Clark city north of Manila, the STB Giga Factory Inc. facility will create 2,500 local jobs and channel five billion pesos (\$89.2 million) into the economy each year, Marcos said. — AFP

#### EU says could continue China EV talks after tariffs

BRUSSELS: The European Commission is willing to continue negotiating with China a potential deal to avert tariffs on Chinese electric vehicles even after such tariffs are imposed, a senior EU official said on Monday. The Commission, which is conducting an anti-subsidy investigation into EVs made in China, has sent its proposal for final tariffs on such vehicles to the EU's 27 members advocating levels that it calculated in September, three sources familiar with the matter said. It has set the vote for Friday. At the same time, it included an additional text called a recital stating that talks so far with China had not resolved the dispute over alleged Chinese subsidies, but that negotiations on a possible compromise could continue even if EU countries agree to the tariff rates. — Reuters

## Broadening gains in US stock market underscore optimism

NEW YORK: More stocks are participating in the S&P 500's latest march to record highs, easing concerns over a rally that has been concentrated in a handful of giant technology names for much of 2024. The S&P 500 is on track to gain 5 percent in the third quarter. This time, however, optimism that the Federal Reserve's rate cuts will boost US growth is pushing investors into shares of regional banks, industrial companies and other beneficiaries of a strong economy and lower rates, in addition to the tech-focused stocks that have already seen massive gains this year. More than 60 percent of S&P 500 components have outperformed the index so far this quarter, compared to around 25 percent in the first half of the year. At the same time, the equal-weight version of the S&P 500 — a proxy for the average index stock — has gained 9 percent in the quarter, outperforming the S&P 500, which is more influenced by the heavily weighted shares of megacaps such as Nvidia and Apple.

The broadening rally is an encouraging sign for stocks, investors said, following concerns that the market could be vulnerable to a reversal if the clus-

ter of tech names propping it up fell out of favor. The "soft-landing" narrative of resilient growth will be tested by employment data at the end of the week and the start of corporate earnings season in October. The second half of the year so far is "almost a mirror image of what the first half was," said Kevin Gordon, senior investment strategist at Charles Schwab. "Even if the megacaps aren't contributing as much, as long as the rest of the market is doing well ... I think that's a healthy development."

The Fed kicked off its first rate cutting cycle in four years earlier this month with a 50-basis point reduction, a move Chairman Jerome Powell said was meant to safeguard a resilient economy. Traders are pricing an even chance of another jumbo-sized reduction when the central bank meets again in November and project over 190 basis points of cuts through the end of 2025, according to LSEG data. Various corners of the stock market are benefiting from expectations of lower rates and steady growth.

The S&P 500's industrial and financials sectors — seen by investors as among the most economically sensitive areas — are up 10.6 percent and about 10 percent, respectively, in the third quarter. Falling rates are also a boon to shares of smaller companies, which disproportionately struggle with elevated borrowing costs. The small-cap focused Russell 2000 is up nearly 9 percent this quarter.

The market's bond proxies — stocks with strong dividends — are also attracting investors seeking divi-

dend income as bond yields fall alongside interest rates. Two such sectors, utilities and consumer staples, have climbed 18 percent and 8 percent, respectively so far this quarter. Mark Hackett, chief of investment research at Nationwide, said the broadening builds on a trend that appeared before the September 17-18 Fed meeting. "We were going to have this greater participation, this leveling of performance among sectors, and then you had the Fed cut more aggressively and that's leading to ... an acceleration of that trend," he said.

### 'Quite healthy'

In all, seven of the S&P 500's 11 sectors are outperforming the index in the third quarter. By comparison, only technology and the communications sector, which includes Google parent Alphabet and Facebook owner Meta Platforms, outperformed the broader index in the first half of the year. The S&P 500 is up more than 20 percent year-to-date, at record-high levels. Meanwhile, the overall influence of the megacaps has moderated. The combined weight in the S&P 500 of the "Magnificent Seven" — Apple, Microsoft, Nvidia, Amazon, Alphabet, Meta and Tesla — has declined to 31 percent from 34 percent in mid-July, according to LSEG Datastream. "I find it to be quite healthy that tech has kind of consolidated," said King Lip, chief strategist at Baker Avenue Wealth Management. "We're not in a bear market for tech by any means. But you've definitely seen some evidence of rotation." — Reuters

## Nikkei tumbles as markets ponder risk of high rates

SYDNEY: The Nikkei dived on Monday amid concerns that Japan's new prime minister favored normalizing interest rates. The Nikkei led the early action with a dive of 4.6 percent as investors anxiously waited for more direction from new Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba, who has been critical of the Bank of Japan's easy policies in the past. However, he sounded more conciliatory over the weekend saying monetary policy "must remain accommodative" given the state of the economy.

"Ishiba has endorsed the BoJ's intention to normalize monetary policy, albeit leaving it uncertain as to the pace and timing," said HSBC economist Jun Takazawa. "If additional stimulus measures are realized, this would also likely buttress the recovering trend in spending, thereby strengthening the BoJ's conviction to raise interest rates at a gradual pace," he added. "All in all, we continue to see a constructive outlook for Japan."

The Japanese yen was also in focus as Ishiba, a former defense minister who last week won the leadership of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party, said he would call a general election for October 27. The yen surged on Friday, and edged out to a one-week high of 141.65



TOKYO: Commuters cross the street in front of Tokyo Station in the center of the capital on September 27, 2024. — AFP

per dollar in the Asian hours, but further moves were limited after Ishiba made his remarks on interest rates. Analysts said that was enough to pause the sharp rise in the yen following Ishiba's victory and that a snap election could weigh on the yen at least over the short term.

"An election basically takes the Bank of Japan out of the equation until December ... a marginal yen negative," said Ray Attrill, National Australia Bank's head of foreign exchange strategy. The dollar was last up 0.17 percent at 142.45 yen. — Reuters

## German inflation drops to 1.6% in September, below expectations

FRANKFURT: German inflation slowed in September to its lowest level since early 2021, official data showed Monday, sliding further below the European Central Bank's two-percent target rate. The annual inflation rate in Europe's biggest economy declined more than expected to 1.6 percent, down from 1.9 percent in August, preliminary data from federal statistics agency Destatis showed. Analysts surveyed by FactSet had predicted a

September inflation rate of 1.7 percent.

This month's reading is the lowest in Germany since February 2021, before consumer prices began their steady rise between the impact of the coronavirus pandemic and Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine. September's drop in inflation was led by energy prices, which fell 7.6 percent from a year earlier, according to the data. The fall in prices for fuel could be traced back to a "cyclical fall in oil prices since the end of August", LBBW analyst Jens-Oliver Niklasch said in a statement.

The German inflation data was well below the target of two percent set by the ECB, mirroring the trend seen in other large western European economies. In France, inflation fell to 1.2 percent in September, down from 1.8 percent in the previous month. Likewise, the inflation rate in Spain sat at 1.5 percent in September, a sharp fall

from 2.3 percent in August. Analysts were divided over the impact of the low inflation readings on the ECB's interest rates decision in October. Consumer prices are still expected to rise faster again towards the end of the year, as the effect of last year's high energy prices dropped out of the calculations. At current levels however the problem of high inflation had been "significantly defused", Niklasch said.

The ECB would consider whether another rate cut "might not be appropriate", following the central bank's move to reduce borrowing costs earlier this month. Another October cut was "not a done deal yet", Franziska Palmes of Capital Economics said, pointing to higher core inflation. The closely watched measure, which excludes volatile food and energy prices, sat at 2.7 percent in Germany in September. — AFP



## Business

# US port labor dispute to threaten vital trade arteries

## Strike to affect bananas, cars, clothes; soaring costs, large backlogs expected

WASHINGTON: Some 45,000 union workers could walk off the job at seaports on the US East and Gulf Coasts on October 1, cutting off vital trade arteries just weeks ahead of the nation's presidential election. A JPMorgan analysis projected that a strike could cost the US economy \$5 billion daily. The strike could hit 36 ports that handle about one-half of US ocean imports. That could affect availability of a range of goods from bananas to clothing to cars shipped via container, while creating weeks-long backlogs at ports. It could also stoke shipping cost increases that may be passed on to voters already frustrated with housing and food inflation, according to logistics experts.

The International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) union representing workers at ports from Maine to Texas and the United States Maritime Alliance employer group appear to have hit an impasse over pay. The current six-year contract expires at midnight on September 30. Longshoremen, also referred to as stevedores, handle cargo from incoming ships. They mostly work on container ships, but also do some work with car carriers and cruise ships. They operate cranes that pluck containers from ships to "lashing," securing cargo containers to prevent them from falling off during transit, and process paperwork.

A strike at all East Coast and Gulf of Mexico ports would be the first for the ILA since 1977. The White House said it is not trying to help broker a deal, as it did last year during West Coast talks, and a Biden administration official has said the president would not use his federal powers to block a strike. A widespread and lengthy strike could cause shortages and cost increases across a broad range of industries.

Ports covered by the contract handled \$37.8 billion worth of vehicle imports during the 12 months ended June 30, 2024, according to S&P Global Market Intelligence. The Port of Baltimore, Maryland, leads the nation in car shipments. Auto parts are also a key import on the East Coast and Gulf of Mexico, with shipments from Europe more difficult to reroute than those from China, logistics experts said. The ports also lead the US in shipments of machinery, fabricated steel and precision instruments, coming in at \$97.4 billion, \$16.2

billion and \$15.7 billion, respectively, S&P Global Market Intelligence data showed.

### Agriculture and pharmaceuticals

About 14 percent of all US waterborne agricultural exports, by volume, would be at risk from a strike. Over a one-week period, the potential value of those exports is estimated at \$318 million, according to the American Farm Bureau Federation. Additionally, 53 percent of US waterborne agricultural imports by volume are vulnerable to a strike, leading to a potential economic impact of over \$1.1 billion per week, the Farm Bureau said.

Three-quarters of the nation's banana imports from countries like Guatemala and Ecuador land at ports on the East and Gulf Coasts, said Jason Miller, interim chair of Michigan State University's department of supply chain management. Separately, the US imports coffee and cocoa in large volumes and exports cotton. A strike also would affect container exports of soybeans, soybean meal and other products and would have a significant impact on chilled or frozen meat and eggs, said Mike Steenhoek, executive director of the Soy Transportation Coalition.

More than a quarter of all US egg and egg product exports and around 70 percent of all poultry meat exports are shipped from ports along the East and Gulf Coasts, according to Customs data and the USA Poultry & Egg Export Council. The affected ports also handle more than 91% of containerized imports and 69 percent of containerized exports of US pharmaceutical products, according to Everstream Analytics. More than one-third of containers departing the US with lifesaving medications leaves from the port in Norfolk, Virginia, while nearly one-third of containerized pharmaceutical imports enter the country through the port in Charleston, South Carolina.

### Holiday goods, cruises

Retailers account for roughly half of all container volumes. Many US retailers already have rushed in shipments of year-end holiday goods. The ports that would be affected by a potential strike bring over half of the nation's knitted and non-knitted apparel, valued at \$32.8 billion combined, as well furniture



HARRIS COUNTY: Shipping containers are seen at the Port of Houston Authority on September 20, 2024 in Harris County, Texas. — AFP

valued at \$23.4 billion, according to S&P Global Market Intelligence.

Though the Gulf Coast ports of Houston and New Orleans are major oil and gas shipment hubs, those commodities would remain largely unaffected by a strike involving more labor-intensive container cargo. The same applies to coal exports from Norfolk, Virginia, experts said. The ILA, however, has pledged to handle military cargo and to work passenger cruise ships during a strike.

### Higher costs, big delays

In broad terms, a strike would raise costs for shipping while also imposing lengthy delays. The top five ports in the negotiating group - New York and New Jersey; Savannah, Georgia; Houston; Norfolk; and Charleston - handled more than

1.5 million 20-foot equivalent units (TEUs) valued at \$83.7 billion in August, according to John McCown, senior fellow at the Center for Maritime Strategy. About two-thirds of that cargo was inbound, while the remainder was outbound, he said. Trade disruptions from a work stoppage would begin immediately, causing supply chain problems, logistics experts warned.

Analysts at Sea-Intelligence, a Copenhagen-based shipping advisory firm, estimated that it could take anywhere from four to six days to clear the backlog from a one-day strike. Maersk, one of the largest providers of ocean transportation and a member of the employer group, warned that a one-week shutdown could require up to six weeks of recovery time, "with significant backlogs and delays compounding with each passing day." — Reuters

## Gulf Bank offers Neo account holders 'The Wild Robot' tickets

KUWAIT: As part of its efforts to reward customers, Gulf Bank, in collaboration with Vox Cinemas, is offering Neo account holders and their children a free opportunity to attend the premiere of the children's movie *The Wild Robot*. The film teaches children valuable skills about wildlife, including how to protect the environment, avoid risks, and communicate with animals.

This initiative is one of many ongoing collaborations with Vox Cinemas, giving Gulf Bank customers across different segments the chance to attend film premieres either for free or at exclusive discounts. The event reflects Gulf Bank's ongoing commitment to offering enjoyable experiences for children and families. Neo account holders will have the chance to attend the premiere of *The Wild Robot* and take part in fun activities, including playing new games and face painting.

As part of its commitment to environmental sustainability and customer satisfaction, Gulf Bank regularly organizes events for different customer groups. The bank places a strong emphasis on teaching the younger generation the value of saving and the importance of protecting the environment. The Neo Account offers parents a simple and secure way to build their children's financial future, while teaching them the importance of saving and financial responsibility from a young age. Available for children up to 14 years old, the account can be opened by parents with no minimum balance or fees at any Gulf Bank branch.

Gulf Bank's rewards program stands out as the most efficient and rewarding in Kuwait, offering customers the ability to redeem points for airline tickets across all airlines and book stays at over 300,000 hotels around the world. Gulf



Children enjoy *The Wild Robot* screening with their parents.

Bank aims to be Kuwait's leading bank, fostering a diverse and inclusive workplace to deliver exceptional customer service while contributing sustainably to the community. Through its extensive branch network and innovative digital services, the bank empowers

customers to conduct banking transactions conveniently and efficiently, ensuring a seamless experience.

In alignment with Kuwait Vision 2035, "New Kuwait," and its commitment to fostering collaborative partnerships, Gulf Bank



KUWAIT: The Neo account mascot interacts with children at Vox Cinemas.

is dedicated to driving robust sustainability initiatives across environmental, social, and governance (ESG) dimensions. The bank is committed to implementing strategically selected and diverse sustainability programs both internally and externally.

## Murdoch-owned REA abandons takeover bid for Rightmove

LONDON: REA Group, the Australian online property business majority-owned by Rupert Murdoch's News Corp empire, on Monday abandoned a takeover pursuit of British peer Rightmove, which rejected a latest proposal worth £6.2 billion (\$8.3 billion). "REA confirms that it does not intend to make ... (a formal) offer for Rightmove," it said in a statement before a Monday deadline to make a firm bid or walk away under UK takeover rules. REA chief executive Owen Wilson said his company had been "disappointed with the limited engagement from Rightmove that impeded our ability to make a firm offer within the timetable available." "They had nothing to lose by engaging with us," he said.

News Corp CEO Robert Thomson welcomed an end to the pursuit. "We applaud REA's financial discipline as it is foolhardy to overpay for an asset, even if it patently had positive potential," he said. "Financial discipline has been at the heart of the transformation of News Corp and our recent successful acquisitions for Dow Jones and HarperCollins reflect that core principle," Thomson added. Rightmove's shares slid seven percent on the withdrawal, making the company the biggest faller on London's FTSE 100 index in afternoon deals.

The announcement came after Rightmove rejected four takeover proposals by REA. The final offer, made public Friday, was up from the previous non-binding bid totaling £6.1 billion. Rightmove earlier Monday said that the latest proposition was "unattractive", undervaluing the British company and its prospects. REA first made public its interest on September 2. The initial takeover proposal was priced at £5.6 billion. There was no official figure given for the second bid. — AFP

## Boeing suppliers fear long-term jobs hit from mechanist strike

WASHINGTON: Boeing's two-week-old strike has forced aerospace supplier Pathfinder Manufacturing to furlough 14 out of the company's 54 employees, and CEO Dave Trader fears he may need to send more home if the stoppage grinds on. Pathfinder runs a project to attract new recruits to the aerospace industry, and trains them alongside skilled workers at its facility yards away from Boeing's Everett jet factory outside Seattle, the largest manufacturing building in the world. Besides the 14 workers, the strike has sent high school students training for aerospace careers at Pathfinder back to their regular classrooms, in a double blow to a sector struggling for skilled labor. "We want to keep them on, so we're trying to help them the best that we can, but at the same time I'm trying to keep this company afloat," said Trader, 60, who has led Pathfinder through most of its 33-year existence.

Some 30,000 machinists downed tools in Boeing's West Coast factories on September 13, halting production of the best-selling 737 MAX and older 767 and 777 wide-body programs. The company's supply chain is now fretting about how to retain thousands of workers set to be furloughed in the coming weeks during the plane maker's first strike in 16 years.

Of nine suppliers contacted by Reuters, five said they had begun placing workers on furlough or holding off on investments. A separate strike at aerospace group Textron highlights

broader labor market pressures in the aerospace industry. Pathfinder is covering the costs of the 14 workers' health care benefits to help retain them when orders rebound. "We want them back and we're trying to give them that carrot to get them back," Trader said. Unlike other CEOs, Trader is also a fundraiser, since Pathfinder combines paid contractual work with a nonprofit "Work Force Development Center" where high school students and adults with disabilities in the Puget Sound area learn high-tech aerospace skills. Boeing recently visited Pathfinder as part of a routine inspection. "Their biggest concern was when we start doing these stand-bys (furloughs), how easily are we going to be able to get people back," Trader said.

### Cash squeeze

Boeing put most white-collar staff on rolling furloughs and said it would freeze most parts orders except on the 787, made in South Carolina. The company and its suppliers are also reeling from a series of crises including a MAX safety grounding after two fatal crashes; a global slump in air travel during the pandemic; and a quality crisis compounded by output curbs placed on Boeing since the blowout of a door plug in January. Experts say Boeing is caught between the pressing need to save cash now and the conflicting need to preserve the ability to raise output and generate cash quickly after the strike. This would mean spending money on parts to keep suppliers' factories humming.

Until recently, Boeing had pledged to take as much inventory from suppliers as possible to keep supply lines "hot" or active. But Boeing's ability to support suppliers is fading. The company's credit rating is hovering at close to

junk status, and its defense arm has been losing as much as it used to make. Boeing CFO Brian West has said the strike would make it harder to stabilize its supply chain. Boeing union officials were not available for comment.

At the opposite end of Boeing's colossal Everett factory complex, New Tech Industries makes specialized tooling, with Boeing accounting for 85 percent of its business. A backlog of orders will keep its machines running into next year, said co-owner Carmen Evans. "But currently, we aren't getting new orders placed, so I may feel that in a few months."

New Tech has struggled to return to full staffing since the pandemic shook manufacturing worldwide and started a drift toward retirement or flexible jobs. The company has put off plans to renew two machines - just the type of investment Boeing will need suppliers to make if it is to chase European rival Airbus, which has vaulted ahead of Boeing to become the world's biggest plane maker, outproducing Boeing two to one. "I'm not going to try to grow things right now until this gets resolved," Evans said.

Some local Boeing suppliers are preparing pitches to serve Airbus, but experts say that will not help them immediately. One European supplier said it takes on average 18 months to get on a new Airbus program even when the partners know each other. Also, Airbus has struggled to boost its output to take advantage of Boeing's stumbles. For hundreds of small suppliers around Puget Sound, the unrest merely reflects a pause in the war for skills. "Having seen some of the other strikes, I've seen what's happened after the strike is over," Trader said. "At the end of the day everyone is going to start hiring like crazy, because they're going to want to ramp up." — Reuters



TUESDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2024

# Ailing New Zealand butterfly collector gives away life's work



A general view of John McArthur's Indonesian butterfly collection at his house in Karori.



A general view of John McArthur's Indonesian butterfly collection at his house in Karori.



James Hu (left) carer of butterfly collector John McArthur (right), opening a drawer with a collection of butterflies.

**A** New Zealand enthusiast spent half a century amassing one of the world's largest private butterfly collections. As death nears, he has handed this life's work of 20,000 specimens to a museum.

Wheelchair-bound and ravaged by multiple sclerosis, 68-year-old John McArthur vividly recalls the first time he saw a butterfly.

that would take him from the Amazon to the Himalayas, the Andes back to his native New Zealand. Over nearly 60 years, he collected more than 20,000 specimens, a kaleidoscope of color and life that he painstakingly pinned into hundreds of boxes that lined the walls of his home. McArthur also remembers the last time he caught a butterfly.

diminutive wonder. Soon enough, that kind of effort would be too much.

By that time, he had already felt a tingling sensation in his spine. Doctors diagnosed multiple sclerosis, an incurable disease of the central nervous system.

"A specialist told me I would probably need a walking stick within 15 years," McArthur remembers. "But six months after the diagnosis, I was in a wheelchair." The disease has now robbed McArthur of the use of his hands and legs, and his speech is.

But his mind remains sharp, recalling specimen names and locations where he found his favorite butterflies.

#### High price

Faced with his own mortality, McArthur resolved to find the thousands of beloved butterfly specimens a new home, somewhere they could find a new life after his death. He ruled out donating to a New Zealand museum: "They just don't have the facilities" he said.

"You need climate control, very rigorous pest control. Accepting a large collection has quite a price tag." Instead, he chose the Natural History Museum in London, paying to ship his collection from Wellington to London this April. "I had mixed emotions -- sad to see it go, but absolutely thrilled that it was going where it would be useful."

His Lepidoptera were merged into the museum's vast collection, which contains about 13.5 million butterflies, housed in 80,000 drawers. Some of McArthur's favorites are now kept alongside specimens studied by Charles Darwin, the 19th-century naturalist who popularized the theory of evolution.

"For a collector, that's quite a big deal. It's

humbling," McArthur added.

#### Deadly viper

The walls of the room that once housed his butterflies have now been torn down and the space converted into a laundry. "I never went in there again once they were gone. It felt like a black hole," he said. All that remains are a handful of butterflies he couldn't bear to part with. They include a box of startlingly colorful specimens from Indonesia, a riot of orange, red, yellow, neon blue and bone white McArthur disliked killing the butterflies -- harming the thing he loved.

"It's never nice" -- and the best method was crushing the thorax where the wings join the body -- "they die instantly". "If I enter Buddhist hell, I'm sure I'll end up with thousands of pins through me," he said. But the New Zealander's eyes light up when discussing some of the mischief his collecting caused.

As a child, he once cut the lining of his mother's gown to make a butterfly net. "I didn't catch anything. The material was too stiff, but she was understanding of my passion." Eventually, he followed in his father's footsteps becoming a diplomat, allowing exploration in several con-

tinents. In the Peruvian rainforest, he had a dangerous brush with a bushmaster viper -- one of the world's most venomous snakes. His greatest find -- a white female Hypochilila -- which lives only in the high Andes also came with trouble.

After netting the rare specimen, he was questioned by Chilean police, who accused him of consorting with smugglers. "They said the person who took me up there was a gun runner. The police let me go, but that was a pretty close call." His carer James Hu, who McArthur met in the 1990s when posted in Shanghai, became an accomplice on hunts.

With a chuckle, Hu recalled how he once nervously kept watch for monks from a Buddhist temple while McArthur scoured a nearby field for Chinese peacock butterflies in the foothills of the Himalayas. If he had his time again, McArthur said he would rather help protect, not collect, butterflies. "I'd be more interested in breeding -- doing whatever it might take to enhance the protection of their habitat." --AFP



John McArthur (right) a collector of butterflies from around the world and carer James Hu pose with a butterfly collection during an interview with AFP at their house in Karori, a suburb of Wellington. —AFP photos

He was 10 years old and it was a shock of yellow and black, a swallowtail butterfly flitting among the zinnia flowers in his mother's New York garden. "I was mesmerized", McArthur says, recounting the first step of a journey

It was during a 2008 visit to the achingly beautiful Cobb Valley, in New Zealand's South Island. He happened across a boulder copper butterfly. Quickly slinging aside his crutches, he dropped to his knees to scoop up the

## Manga Jujutsu Kaisen ends with 100 million copies sold



A general view of the atmosphere during the "Jujutsu Kaisen 0" Los Angeles Preview Screening at AMC The Grove 14 on March 17, 2022 in Los Angeles, California. —AFP

**S**upernatural Japanese manga series Jujutsu Kaisen ended after six-and-a-half years on Monday, with publisher Shueisha saying 100 million copies including digital versions had been sold. The final chapter about the dark adventures of cursed teenager Yuji Itadori appeared in the weekly magazine Shonen Jump published Monday, although the last compendium will come out in December.

Written and illustrated by Gege Akutami, 32, Jujutsu Kaisen also achieved international success and was turned into an animated series, novels, video games and even a stage play.

The anime television series of 47 episodes across two seasons was produced by Japanese animation house MAPPA, one of industry heavyweight Masao Maruyama's three studios. —AFP

## Spanish video game industry seeks its place in the sun

**B**uoyed by a dynamic domestic market and greater global visibility, Spain's video game industry is on the rise with a handful of studios looking to compete with sector giants.

"The sector is currently enjoying good momentum," Jose Maria Moreno, the secretary general of Spanish video games association Aevi which groups over 80 Spanish video game firms, told AFP.

"Spain is in the process of finding its place on the world map" of video game makers, he added.

There are no video game industry heavyweights in the country like France's Ubisoft, Poland's CD Projekt or Electronic Arts of the United States, but there are many independent studios that are "very creative", Moreno said.

And their numbers are growing. There are 790 production studios currently operating in Spain, up from just 330 a decade ago, according to the sector's employers' organization DEV.

Their growth is fueled by a rise in sales of video games to the soaring number of gamers in Spain, currently estimated at around 20 million people.

Sales of games made by Spanish studios jumped to 1.38 billion euros (\$1.54 billion) in 2022 from just 314 million euros in 2013, according to DEV figures.

#### 'Good boost'

"For a long time, Spanish games lacked visibility. But that's changing," said Pedro Gonzalez Calero, a computer engineering professor at Madrid's Complutense University and the organizer of the Guerrilla Game Festival held every year in November in the



Spanish visual artist and creative director of Nomada video game studio, Conrad Roset, watches one of his illustrations for the studio's newest video game "Neva", in Terrassa.

Spanish capital. Several long-established Spanish studios are already internationally renowned, such as The Game Kitchen, whose game action-adventure game "Blasphemous", featuring a sword-wielding silent knight, has sold several million copies.

Other smaller studios or those founded more recently are starting to make a name for themselves, such as Nomada Studio whose game "Gris" has sold three million copies and picked up a prize at the 2019 Game Awards in Los Angeles, considered the "Oscars" of gaming. "Winning this award gave us a good boost. It was a bit unexpected because it was our first game," said Roger Mendoza, who co-founded the studio in 2016 in Barcelona, Spain's second-largest city where about a third of the country's video game studios are based.

Nomada Studios presented its second game called "Neva" at an event in the Mediterranean coastal city earlier this month which Mendoza said will allow the studio to "continue its growth".

Spanish studios can rely on a highly skilled young work force, thanks to extensive training schemes, but the sector remains economically fragile.



People play the Grand Prix Sport video game at the Logitech stand of the Mobile World Congress (MWC), the world's biggest mobile fair, on February 27, 2018 in Barcelona. —AFP photos

#### 'Very competitive'

While the arrival of foreign capital has given Spanish studios more resources to develop their projects, for many studios long-term planning "remains a challenge" due to a lack of financing, said Gonzalez Calero, the computer engineering professor.

Moreno agreed, warning that "the international market is very competitive...to make your mark, you need talent, but you also need a solid financial base."

The Spanish video games sector is also suffering from a "brain drain" as qualified workers move abroad for better paid positions and the lack of a "benchmark" studio, he added.

One in two studios in Spain have annual sales of less than 200,000 euros, according to the sector's employers' organization DEV which is calling for measures to "improve the daily lives" of game creators.

The organization and Spanish video games association Aevi are both calling for a more favorable tax regime along the lines of those in place in Britain and France. —AFP





Models present creations for Rick Owens during the Paris Fashion Week Womenswear Spring/Summer 2024, in Paris.

# Chloe's see-through look may not be for Kamala Harris

Designer Chemena Kamali -- who dressed Kamala Harris for the Democratic Convention in August -- turned heads at Paris Fashion Week with a line of lacy transparent looks the US presidential hopeful may be a little more shy about trying.

The German creator has quickly made her mark at French label Chloe, with pieces from her debut collection in February selling like hotcakes.

Harris wore a prune-brown Chloe trouser suit for the opening night of the Democratic convention in Chicago where she took over from Joe Biden as the party's presidential candidate, having already sported a high-necked green caped gown specially designed by Kamali in May.

For her spring-summer Chloe collection, Kamali threw open the windows to celebrate the brand's highly feminine hippy-chic aesthetic with billowing dresses, lace and sun-bleached flower prints. An admiring "Ahhh!" ran along the front row when her lace corsair pants, tied delicately at the ankle, appeared.



All was light and airy, so light that at times it looked like her Chloe woman was going out in nothing more than lacy lingerie, an impression Kamali fully acknowledged in her notes.

"A feeling of lingerie drifts through the collection," she wrote, "and a sense of the playful in the iconic 70s Chloe bloomers."

"The mood is light, sensual and joyful," she added. There were, however, plenty of more conservative pieces that Harris might easily dream of wearing, particularly as it seemed to tap into the breezy 1970s glamour of her home state of California.

Kamali began her career at Chloe under the influential Phoebe Philo before moving on to work with Anthony Vaccarello at Saint Laurent, who also has a thing for see-through blouses.



PARIS FASHION WEEK



## Lifestyle

"I wanted to capture that longing for summer and the way summer makes you feel... that fantasy moment of the summer months when you reconnect with yourself," said the 42-year-old, who trained at London's Central Saint Martins art school.

### Owens's ageless American gothic

All this talk of summer was happening while Paris was being washed away by a day-long deluge. But the clouds suddenly cleared as if by miracle for the dark angels of Rick Owens, the cult Californian designer with his own post-apocalyptic groove of American gothic.

You may not know his name, but Owens is something of a style giant with an unmistakable look and ideas -- particularly on shoes, bags and shoulders -- that often break through to the street or into the shop windows of bigger, richer brands.

This time Owens marched 200 mostly amateur models -- his fans, friends and fashion students -- around the ravaged architectural grandeur of the Palais de Tokyo's marble garden, while gloomy Valkyries dropped white petals from the roof of the French capital's "anti-museum".

This being his spring-summer collection, the color palette went from black to blacker -- the great Chicano maverick never being one to make concessions to convention. —AFP



HIGHLIGHT WEEK



PARIS FASH

Models present creations by Chloe for the Women Ready-to-wear Spring-Summer 2025 collection as part of the Paris Fashion Week, in Paris.—AFP photos

## Thousands bid farewell to Tokyo zoo pandas before return to China

Thousands of thankful, sobbing fans flocked to a Tokyo zoo to bid an emotional farewell to a pair of beloved pandas before their imminent return to China.

Sporting T-shirts, hats and sun umbrellas featuring the black and white bears, visitors shed tears, took selfies and eagerly waved at Ri Ri and Shin Shin on the panda couple's penultimate day at Tokyo's Ueno Zoological Gardens.

More than 2,000 panda lovers formed long queues outside the zoo Saturday morning, some having spent the whole night there armed with picnic blankets and camping chairs.

Among the most committed was Mayuko Su-

mida, 44, who said she had arrived around 10 pm the previous night, carrying with her panda-shaped key rings.

"I'm overwhelmed," she said after admiring the two for the last time. "They are the best duo that brings comfort and smiles to me." The mammals are immensely popular around the world, and China loans them out as part of a "panda diplomacy" program to foster foreign ties.

The pandas Ri Ri and Shin Shin arrived at Ueno Zoo in 2011 and were due to stay until February 2026, but Japan and China agreed it would be better for the 19-year-olds to return to their home country in light of their declining health. They will



Shin Shin relaxes in her enclosure on the last day of viewing before she and another panda, Ri Ri, are sent back to China. —AFP photos



A woman clutches soft toys while speaking to the media.

be transported back to China on Sunday.

### 'Emotional support' pandas

On Saturday, strict crowd control measures were in place at the zoo to escort fans away after giving them just a few minutes to adore and photograph the pair through the glass.

Ri Ri and Shin Shin were "like the sun to me" and "always gave me emotional support", Machiko Seki, who like other fans wore black to avoid window reflections ruining their pictures, told AFP.

"When I look at their smiles, whatever worries me just goes away... I can't be more grateful for them," the woman in her 50s said, shedding tears.

The pair gave birth in 2017 to cub Xiang Xiang -- the zoo's first baby panda since 1988, who became a massive draw -- as well as twins in 2021.

Many fans cried when Xiang Xiang was returned to China last year, and her departure was broadcast live on local television.

Michiyo Matoba, 61, has been coming to see Xiang Xiang's parents almost every week. "Ri Ri loves climbing trees so I hope he will enjoy those mountains of China as much as he likes, and the glutton Shin Shin will hopefully start eating to her heart's content after regaining her health", she said.

Despite the panda diplomacy, relations between the two countries have soured in recent years fol-



A woman reacts after visiting the panda enclosure on the last day of viewing before they are sent back to China after 13 years, at Tokyo's Ueno Zoo.

lowing Beijing's growing maritime assertiveness.

Politics, Matoba said, doesn't taint her love for the animals. "Just like pandas, I hope Japan and China can be friends," she said.

There are an estimated 1,860 giant pandas left in the wild, mainly in bamboo forests in the mountains of China, according to environmental group WWF. There are about 600 in captivity in panda centres, zoos and wildlife parks around the world. —AFP



Panda fans wait for the gates to open on the last day of viewing before two pandas are sent back to China.

## Country star, actor Kris Kristofferson dies aged 88

US singer-songwriter Kris Kristofferson, a country music legend who notably hit the silver screen opposite Barbra Streisand in "A Star is Born," has died at the age of 88, his family announced Sunday.

No cause of death was given in a statement issued by the family of the artist, a Country Music Hall of Fame honoree and Grammy winner known for writing hits like "Sunday Mornin' Comin' Down" and "Me and Bobby McGee."

Kristofferson performed solo for decades but also formed the supergroup The Highwaymen in the mid-1980s with Johnny Cash, Waylon Jennings and Willie Nelson. In film, the Golden Globe winner was also known for his appearances as Whistler alongside Wesley Snipes in the vampire trilogy "Blade."



Kris Kristofferson performs on the Pyramid Stage at the Glastonbury Festival of Music and Performing Arts on Worthy Farm near the village of Pilton in Somerset, south-west England on June 23, 2017.

"It is with a heavy heart that we share the news our husband/father/grandfather, Kris Kristofferson, passed away peacefully on Saturday, September 28, at home" in Hawaii, the family said in a statement carried on his official Facebook page.

"We're all so blessed for our time with him. Thank you for loving him all these many years, and when you see a rainbow, know he's smiling down at us all."

### Singing and acting

Born on June 22, 1936, in Brownsville, Texas, Kristofferson moved frequently as a child because his father was in the US military. He attended Pomona College in California and went to Oxford as a Rhodes scholar, according to his official website.

He joined the army, but was still pursuing his interest in music and songwriting. He was offered a teaching job at West Point but decided instead to head to Nashville, where he began to submit songs for others to record.

He finally signed his own record deal and put out a first album in 1970. He would earn success both with his own voice and by providing tunes for other hitmakers. Cash took "Sunday Mornin' Comin' Down" to the top of the charts, and Ray Price did the same with "For the Good Times."

"Me and Bobby McGee" became a posthumous hit for Janis Joplin, who once dated Kristofferson.

"You can look at Nashville pre-Kris and post-Kris,



Singers Kris Kristofferson (left) and Barbra Streisand speak onstage during The 53rd Annual Grammy Awards held at Staples Center on February 13, 2011 in Los Angeles, California. —AFP photos

because he changed everything," Bob Dylan is quoted on Kristofferson's website as saying.

Kristofferson sang in a raspy voice about loneliness, hard times and romance. One of his heroes was English poet William Blake. —AFP



## Sports

# Americans beat Internationals to capture 10th Presidents Cup

## 2025 US Ryder Cup captain Bradley delivers the deciding point

MONTREAL: With 2025 US Ryder Cup captain Keegan Bradley delivering the deciding point, the United States won a 10th consecutive Presidents Cup on Sunday, defeating the Internationals 18.5-11.5 at Royal Montreal. Bradley defeated South Korea's Kim Si-woo 1-up to clinch the trophy, which gave the Americans a 13-1-1 lead in the series against the non-European side whose only win came in 1998. "Wow, that was incredible," Bradley said. "Just to play in this tournament and then to win the point, my goodness."

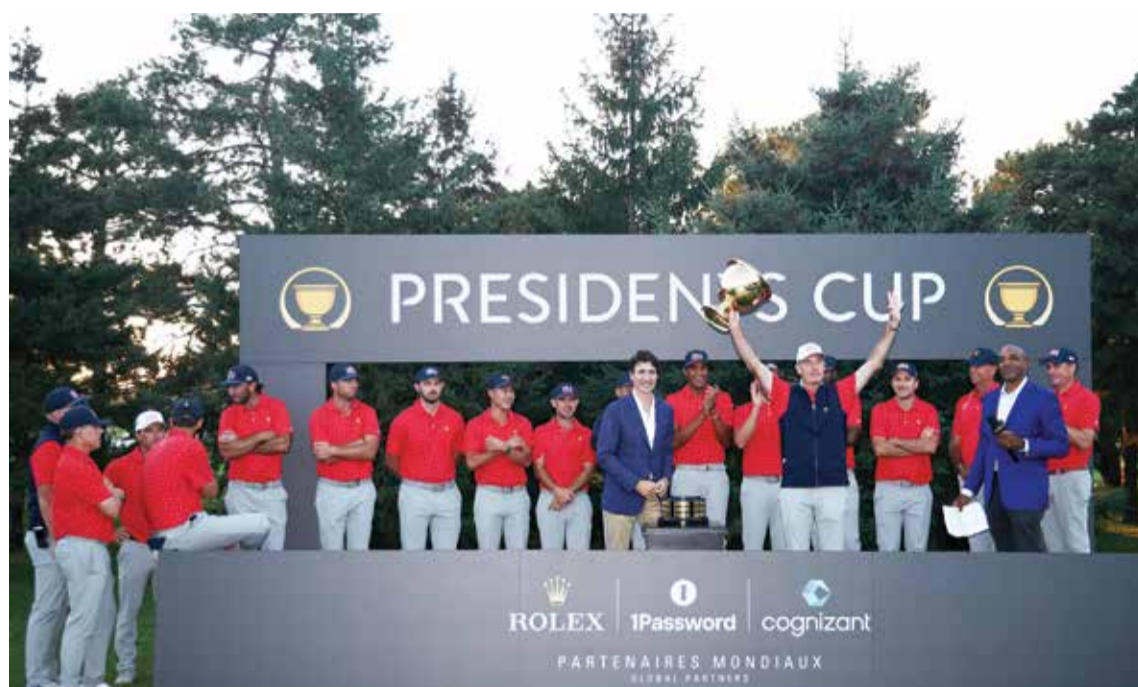
The US team featured 12 of the world's 25 top-ranked players and won fights late in matches to continue their rivalry domination. "These players were amazing," US captain Jim Furyk said. "These guys played their hearts out this week and they played really well on the back nine. We owned the back nine this week. That was the difference." The Internationals took seven lost or tied matches to the 18th hole this week before the Cup was decided. "When you don't get a win it's disappointing but a lot of great things to take away," Internationals captain Mike Weir of Canada said. "We're close. A lot of these matches were so close."

After winning Saturday's foursomes and four-ball sessions each by 3-1, the Americans needed only 4.5 points in 12 singles matches for the trophy. Wins by second-ranked Xander Schauffele, Russell Henley and Patrick Cantlay and a half-point tie from Sam Burns set the stage for Bradley, who last played on a US team at the 2014 Ryder Cup. "Last time I played (in 2014), I was the point to lose the Ryder Cup," Bradley said. "So if this is my last round as a player, I'm happy with that." Bradley, 38, birdied the 14th hole from just inside 12 feet for a 3-up lead over Kim.

But Bradley missed a four-foot par putt to lose 16 and an eight-foot birdie putt to clinch the match and Cup at the par-3 17th, then watched Kim sink a five-footer for birdie to push the match to the 18th hole. Kim dropped his approach to just outside eight feet while Bradley landed 26 feet away. Bradley rolled his putt to the edge of the hole for a concession par, but when Kim missed his birdie putt, the Cup was sealed for the USA. "I learned I can still do this," said Bradley. "It's always hard. That was really uncomfortable there at the end but I'm really proud of how everyone played."

### Schauffele sets tone

Schauffele, this year's British Open and PGA Championship winner, made seven birdies and took the last five front-nine holes in winning 4&3 to finish 4-1 this week. "My goal was just to set the tone, get red up on that board as early as possible, and I was able to do that," Schauffele said. Burns and Tom Kim tied in a match the American never trailed. Kim tied Burns with a 15-foot birdie putt to win 15 but missed another 15-footer to win 18, settling for a half-point. "I struggled with my irons. Didn't hit it great," said Burns, the week's only unbeaten player with three wins and a draw. Henley's four-foot par putt at 16 brought a 3&2 win over South Korean Im Sung-jae, who won only one hole and never led. Japan's seventh-ranked Hideki Matsuyama took an emotional 1-up victory over top-ranked Scottie Scheffler in a match that was never more than 1-up either way. Matsuyama birdied three of the last five holes for the triumph. "Really happy with how I played," Matsuyama said.



MONTREAL: US Team Captain Jim Furyk is presented the Presidents Cup Trophy by Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau on day four of the 2024 Presidents Cup at The Royal Montreal Golf Club on September 29, 2024 in Montreal. — AFP

Canada's Corey Connors beat Tony Finau 5&3 as the tension built. Patrick Cantlay never trailed in putting the Americans on the brink with a 3&1 win over Canada's Taylor Pendrith. Cantlay sank a five-foot birdie putt to win 14 for a 1-up lead,

dropped his approach inches from the cup to win 15 and closed out victory with a nine-foot birdie putt to win 17. "It's great to have the best players in the world on my team," Cantlay said. "Everybody fought hard this week." — AFP



TOULOUSE: Toulouse's French fly-half Thomas Ramos (left) and Bordeaux-Begles' French back row Temo Matiu (center) compete for the ball during the French Top14 rugby union match between Stade Toulousain Rugby (Toulouse) and Union Bordeaux-Begles (UBB) at the Ernest-Wallon stadium in Toulouse. — AFP

## Bordeaux-Begles take revenge, end Toulouse home streak

TOULOUSE: Bordeaux-Begles ended Toulouse's 33-match home unbeaten run with a 16-12 Top 14 victory on Sunday that also brought a measure of revenge for their crushing defeat in last season's league final. Toulouse had not lost at their Stade Ernest-Wallon since they were edged 29-28 by Stade Francais on February 11, 2022. They had won 31 and drawn two at home since then. "Winning here is no mean feat," said Bordeaux-Begles scrum-half Maxime Lucu. "You have to savour it." Opponents often crumble against Toulouse's strength and depth in the late stages of games. On Sunday, Bordeaux-Begles, humiliated 59-3 in their first Top 14 final in Marseille in June, defended with discipline and ferocious determination. "We said a lot of things to each other over the summer after the end of the championship," said Lucu. "We'd set our sights on the Toulouse game as a match of character."

Bordeaux collected a defensive bonus point and dislodged the two-time defending champions from the top of the table. The two teams, and third-place Toulon, all have 14 points from four games. "Everyone thought we were so beautiful, so unbeatable and soaring to the top," said Toulouse coach Ugo Mola. "We've fallen back into line, which will please a lot of people, and I can't hide the fact that it doesn't displease me either."

Toulouse started fast, swinging the ball across the field from an eighth-minute scrum and outflanking the visitors as Thomas Ramos found Blair Kinghorn galloping into space on the wing. Kinghorn then collected a 17th-minute yellow card for a high tackle on former Toulouse teammate Arthur Retiere. Bordeaux-Begles exploited the space to strike back, sending the ball wide where full-back Louis Biele-Biarrey dodged between the last two defenders to score after 21 minutes. Two minutes later Biele-Biarrey set up Maxime Lucu for the go-ahead try. Matthieu Jalibert, who had earlier kicked a penalty, missed both conversions.

That was the last score for almost 50 minutes although only a desperate tackle by Romain Ntamack saved Toulouse as he forced Enzo Reybier's foot against the touchline just as the youngster touched down. Toulouse seemed to be making their power count when Peato Mauvaka touched down after 70 minutes following a driving maul. The score cut the gap to one point but Ramos missed the conversion that would have given Toulouse the lead. Mateo Garcia landed a long-range penalty in the 75th minute to put the visitors four points up. — AFP

## Osaka sets up Gauff 'battle' as Sabalenka marches on

BEIJING: Naomi Osaka is braced for a "battle" after setting up a clash Monday with Coco Gauff in the China Open last 16 while top seed Aryna Sabalenka also marched on. Osaka defeated 60th-ranked American Katie Volynets 6-3, 6-2 and next faces Gauff in a showdown of former US Open champions in Beijing. World number two Sabalenka swatted aside Ashlyn Krueger 6-2, 6-2 for her 14th victory in a row and plays another American in 24th-ranked Madison Keys.

Looking ahead to the Gauff meeting, four-time Grand Slam champion Osaka said: "She's very athletic obviously. For me, my strongest traits are being aggressive and also my serve." "So it's definitely going to be a battle - who wants to take control of the point first? And I think it's going to be me." Former number one Osaka is playing her first tournament under Patrick Mouratoglou, the Frenchman best known for being the long-time former coach of Serena Williams.

The 26-year-old Japanese won four majors from 2018 to 2021 - the US Open and Australian Open, both twice. She is also a former winner in Beijing and has said she feels at home on the hard courts of the Chinese capital. Osaka has struggled for consistency since returning to tennis in January after the birth of her daughter Shai and is ranked 73rd in the world. Her best results after becoming a parent have been two quarter-final appearances. The 2023 New York champion Gauff booked her place in the last 16 with a 7-5, 6-2 victory over Britain's Katie Boulter.

The 20-year-old American Gauff is seeded

## Jasmine downs Li in playoff to win LPGA NW Arkansas crown

LOS ANGELES: Jasmine Suwannapura eagled the second playoff hole to win the LPGA NW Arkansas Championship in Sunday, denying Lucy Li after a spectacular last-round duel. Li, a 21-year-old Californian chasing her first title, had an LPGA record-equaling three eagles in her 11-under par 60 and had the clubhouse lead on 17-under 196. But 31-year-old Thai veteran Jasmine recovered from an errant tee shot to eagle the 72nd hole and force the playoff with a 10-under round of 61.

It would be more than an hour before they returned to the par-five 18th, where Jasmine's eagle putt was an inch short and they settled for matching birdies to start the playoff. Off the tee of 18 again, Jasmine gained the edge when she found the fairway as Li hit into the left rough. Jasmine's second shot raced through the green and spun back and with Li trying to get up and down for birdie the Thai rattled in her eagle putt for the win.

"It's been a long time," said an emotional Jasmine, who claimed a third LPGA title but her first since the 2019 Dow Invitational pairs event. "There was a time

## Leverkusen back main man Wirtz to 'shine' on European stage

BERLIN: Bayer Leverkusen host AC Milan in the Champions League on Tuesday, hoping for a sparkling performance from star midfielder Florian Wirtz. Still just 21, Wirtz will make his home debut in the competition, having missed Leverkusen's most recent Champions League campaign with an ACL injury.

That he will do so against seven-time champions Milan feels appropriate for a player tipped for a



BEIJING: Japan's Naomi Osaka serves to Katie Volynets of the US during their women's singles match at the China Open tennis tournament in Beijing on September 30, 2024. — AFP

fourth. She and Osaka have played four times previously, each winning twice. Their last meeting was in 2022 at San Jose when Gauff prevailed 6-4, 6-4. Current US Open champion Sabalenka was error-prone in winning her opening match in Beijing against Thai qualifier Mananchaya Sawangkaew in straight sets. But the Belarusian was on top form from the start against 68th-ranked Krueger. The 26-year-old feels she is not quite playing the best tennis of her career, but said, "Control over my emotions, that's the key".

that I thought I'm probably not going to win again. But today, everything just fell in the right place at the right time." Li became just the seventh player to post three eagles in an LPGA tour round. The first was a hole-out at the par-four eighth, part of a burst that saw her pick up seven strokes in seven holes. She had birdied the fifth and seventh, then birdied the ninth, 10th and 11th to seize a share of the lead on 12-under. It was all the more unlikely considering she was one-over for the day after three-putt bogeys at the second and fourth.

### Late magic

"I had honestly no clue that this was going to happen," Li said. "I did not think I was in it at all. I mean, after two three-putts in the first four holes I was just like, I don't know. And then some magic came and I shot 60. Even though I didn't win, just this is the greatest thing." She briefly took the solo lead on 14-under with an eagle at 14, where a superb second shot left her a four-foot putt.

She drained a long birdie bomb from off the green at the 15th and had a two-shot lead after her eagle at the 72nd hole. But first-round leader Jasmine was hot on her heels. After three front-nine birdies, she kept the pressure on with birdies at holes 10, 11, 13, 14 and 16. Her chances of joining Li atop the leaderboard appeared to take a hit, however, when her tee shot at 18 sailed right and hit a cart path. But her second shot from sparse rough left her a five-footer for ea-

long career on the European stage.

Leverkusen's squad is deep in quality and Xabi Alonso's coaching is rightly praised, but Wirtz's spark is central to everything the team does. Known primarily for his midfield creativity, he is also a goal threat: Wirtz has four goals in five league games this season. In a team featuring Granit Xhaka, Victor Boniface, Patrik Schick, Alex Grimaldo and Exequiel Palacios, Wirtz is trusted enough to be Leverkusen's designated penalty taker.

Wirtz's talent is undeniable and despite playing a crucial role as Leverkusen broke through for a debut Bundesliga title, he still has a point to prove in European competition. He was muscled out in last year's Europa League final, won 3-0 by Atalanta in Leverkusen's only loss of a 53-game season. Bayern Munich adopted

"Before it felt like if I'm not going to win this match, something bad is going to happen. I'm going to die," she explained. "Nowadays I'm just working hard, I'm trying to improve myself every day. Every time I'm on the court, I'm trying to give my best. If you give your best but you didn't win the match, it's okay." Sabalenka will take some stopping. Fourteen of her 16 titles have come on hard courts and only Iga Swiatek has won more matches on tour this season. Top-ranked Swiatek is not in Beijing because of "personal matters". — AFP



ARKANSAS: Jasmine Suwannapura of Thailand poses with the trophy after the final round of the Walmart NW Arkansas Championship. — AFP

gle and she made it to complete her 61. "Somehow it went straight, right at the pin," she said.

South Korean Kim Sei-young carded a nine-under 63 for solo third on 197. Overnight leader Ashleigh Buhai of South Africa and Thailand's Arpichaya Yubol were both within striking distance on the back nine. But Yubol's challenge faded with a bogey at the easiest hole on the course, 14, where she hit her tee shot into the hazard left of the fairway. She closed with a 66 to share fourth with Japan's Mao Saigo on 199, while Buhai's 69 left her in solo sixth on 200. — AFP

a similar approach in Saturday's 1-1 Bundesliga draw, successfully denting Leverkusen's creativity by heavily marking the star midfielder. When Wirtz can free himself from the heavy attention, he is among the most dangerous players in the game.

In Leverkusen's Champions League opener at Feyenoord — Wirtz's first match in the competition — he scored a first-half double in a dominant 4-0 win. At 1.77-metres tall, Wirtz will never be the most physical player, something Alonso knows from personal experience as a similarly proportioned midfielder. Speaking on Friday, Alonso said the whole team had the responsibility for unleashing "the best Flo." He can't "go it alone," Alonso said, adding "we need the whole team on their best level to allow Flo to shine." — AFP



Sports

# AC Milan, Inter ultras arrested for alleged 'organized crime'

## Mafia mobs suspected of infiltrating ultra groups

MILAN: Hardcore supporters of AC Milan and Inter Milan were arrested on Monday for alleged organized crime offences, Italian police said. In a statement, Italy's finance police said that leading figures among the "ultras" of two of the country's most important football clubs had been arrested for "criminal conspiracy aggravated by mafia methods, extortion, assault and other serious crimes". "The suspects are almost all members of the Milan teams' ultras groups while the crimes relate to revenues made around football," added the finance police. A police source told AFP that 19 people had been arrested in total, including the two heads of the Inter and Milan ultras, Luca Lucci and Renato Bossetti.

Monday's arrests come a few weeks after the reputed heir of a powerful crime family was killed by one of Bossetti's predecessors, Andrea Beretta, who himself has a long criminal record, stabbed to death

Antonio Bellocco during an altercation outside a boxing gym in a Milan suburb early this month. Bellocco's death was a shock because of his reportedly high status within the 'Ndrangheta mafia, which led to Beretta's family being placed under special surveillance by the police over fears of violent reprisals.

It also highlighted suspicions that mafia mobs were infiltrating ultra groups, attracted by the earnings some supporters' organizations allegedly earn through illicit activities ranging from ticket touting to drug dealing. Beretta took a leading role in the Curva Nord section of the San Siro after career criminal Vittorio Boiocchi was shot dead outside his home in October 2022. Italian media widely reported at the time of his murder aged 69 that Boiocchi had bragged in wiretapped conversations about earning 80,000 euros (\$88,000) a month through his position as ultra leader. — AFP



MILAN: AC Milan's fans arrive prior to the Italian Serie A football match between AC Milan and Lecce at San Siro stadium in Milan. — AFP

## Flick excited for De Jong Barca's return against Young Boys

BARCELONA: Barcelona coach Hansi Flick is delighted to have midfielder Frenkie de Jong back available after injury ahead of the Champions League match against Young Boys on Tuesday. The Dutch international will be named in the squad to face the Swiss champions and Flick says he is ready for a brief cameo, having not played since April. De Jong, 27, has been out since then with an ankle injury and missed the European Championship this summer as a result.

"This is super good news to have Frenkie back with us, whether it's for five or 10 minutes, he's very important for us," Flick told a news conference Monday. "Frenkie's attitude is great, he's been involved with the team, he's been willing to help the team, we needed his presence. He's gonna be ready, not to play 45 mins but 20 or 10 and it will do him a lot of good." The Catalan giants have various other players out injured still including Gavi and Ronald Araujo, while Eric Garcia is suspended after a red card in the Champions League opener against Monaco.

Barcelona lost on the road against the Ligue 1 side and have struggled in Europe in recent years. Last season they reached the last eight for the first time in four seasons and the five-time champions



SANT JOAN DESPI: Barcelona's Dutch midfielder #21 Frenkie de Jong (center) takes part in a training session on the eve of the UEFA Champions League football match between Young Boys and FC Barcelona at the Joan Gamper training ground on September 30, 2024. — AFP

have not lifted the trophy since 2015. "We want to win all the games, the team and me as a coach, and I'm very positive we can do that," added Flick. "We

that there are many ways to win football matches. It's a really powerful one and it's given us a lot. So a big compliment to all of them, for sure."

Jover has conjured up deceptive routines to both attack and defend from set-pieces. The German-born 42-year-old's most successful creation sees the opposing goalkeeper put under pressure by a ring of Arsenal players while Gabriel times his run to meet a corner at the far post. "Credit to Nico, I think he does an amazing job. We train a lot on it. You see it every week how important it is. Sometimes set-pieces decide a game. We are glad to have Nico," Arsenal forward Kai Havertz said.

### 'Set-pieces are really important'

In stark contrast to Arsenal's attention to detail in dead-ball situations, Paris Saint-Germain have stubbornly opted against focusing on set-pieces. PSG boss Luis Enrique did not bring in a specialist when he was hired and the club reportedly work on attacking and defending set pieces only occasionally.

That has led to PSG routinely conceding from corners and free-kicks, a weakness that has Jover licking his lips in anticipation of exposing their flaws. The French champions' curious attitude to set-pieces has left them vulnerable, much like Tottenham - serial victims of dead-ball mistakes whose boss Ange Postecoglou is one of the few Premier League managers yet to embrace the trend. Champions Manchester City have benefitted from Guardiola's decision to promote Carlos Vicens from Under-18 coach to set-piece specialist in 2023.

City scored 21 times from set-pieces and conceded just once in their march to a fourth successive Premier League title last term. "Today in modern football, set-pieces are really important," Guardiola said. "We are preparing things in the corners like every team does. Someone had to come with the ideas,

vides the true test of what Scottish side are capable of in the Champions League. Brendan Rodgers' men sit second in the table of the new-look format for Europe's elite competition — behind only Bayern Munich — after thrashing Slovan Bratislava 5-1 on matchday one. That was the first time in 13 attempts that the Hoops had won their Champions League opener. Confidence is high despite facing a huge step up in the calibre of opposition against last season's finalists.

work well, training hard, play good entertaining football and if we need to gain respect of our opponents once again then we'll work hard on that." — AFP



Arsenal's Spanish manager Mikel Arteta

and we are going to do this so all credit to Carlos." Brentford, who employed Jover for three years, were one of the earliest adopters of the set-piece revolution and Chelsea paid £750,000 (\$1 million) to sign their dead-ball coach Bernardo Cueva in May.

Andreas Georgsson recently joined Manchester United with set-piece schemes his primary task, while Austin MacPhee's routines helped Aston Villa reach the Champions League for the first time in 41 years. Liverpool advertised for the position after Peter Krawietz's summer exit, their job application seeking a "tactical specialist" with "the ability to expertly coach both offensive and defensive set-piece strategies". For now, there is no doubt Arsenal are leading the race to capitalize on the marginal gains that can decide a title race or make a European champion. PSG have been warned. — AFP

Saturday's 6-0 demolition of St Johnstone maintained the Scottish champions' 100 percent record in all competitions this season. In eight consecutive wins they have plundered 33 goals. But the signs of something special brewing were apparent even in pre-season as Celtic beat Manchester City 4-3 and Chelsea 4-1 during a tour to the United States. Into the second season of his second spell in charge, former Liverpool boss Rodgers is primed to finally make a mark in Europe with Celtic.

## Scott seeks another chance to win Cup in 2026 at Medinah

MONTREAL: A 10th consecutive loss by the Internationals to the United States in the Presidents Cup has the global golf squad hoping to pull off another "Miracle at Medinah" in 2026. The Americans completed an 18.5-11.5 victory over the non-European side by taking 7.5 points from Sunday's 12 closing singles matches at Royal Montreal. The US team leads the all-time golf match play rivalry 13-1-1. But the Internationals will renew their quest for a first victory since 1998 in two years at Medinah, where Europe made an epic last-day fightback to win the 2012 Ryder Cup. "I feel like there has been an evolution," said Australian Adam Scott, who hasn't won 11 Cup starts. "The result, unfortunately, is the same."

"Hopefully this competition inspires all of us sitting up here to play really hard, go on with our careers the next two years, win big events and come back better prepared and ready to win in Chicago." Scott, a 44-year-old from Adelaide who won the 2013 Masters, said he hopes to be part of that show. "Sure, I think I can play for another couple years," Scott said. "I've come this far. If I can play in a couple more years and contribute a point, then I'd love to be on a winning Presidents Cup team. "I believe there's something happening with this team internally under this shield. I'd love to push along and give it one more shot if I can."

South Koreans Tom Kim and Kim Si-woo said Scott's name is already down for Medinah and the Aussie says they inspire him to keep fighting for an elusive Presidents Cup victory. "I have a lot of fun with these guys. I told them at the start of the week it's them who is motivating me and inspiring me to make this team," Scott said. "The standard of golf is so high, and it's getting harder for me to keep up but it's them that I look to to see what the standard is that I need to compete and be on this team."

The Americans went 8-1 in four-ball pairs matches, accounting for the final point differential in an event where 13 matches went to the 18th hole. "The margin is so close. That's what makes it tough. A couple things go our way and who knows," said Mike Weir, the Internationals captain. Canada's Mackenzie Hughes added: "The results don't do justice to how close these matches were. If we play the last couple holes better in a few matches this thing could swing the other way." Tom Kim said he apologized to US captain Jim Furyk and Xander Schauffele about comments regarding being cursed at by rival players, still without naming who or when. "I didn't mean it to go in such a negative way. If it did I'm sorry," Kim said, calling it, "a little misunderstanding on my part." — AFP

The Glasgow giants have become accustomed to domestic dominance, winning 12 Scottish league titles in 13 years. That has not translated into progress on the continent. Celtic's last run beyond the group stages of the Champions League was back in 2012/13. They have not won a knock-out tie in any European competition outside of qualifiers in 20 years. Even before the beating of Bratislava, Rodgers declared this is the "best prepared" he has felt as a Celtic manager for the demands of the Champions League. — AFP

## Arsenal's set-piece guru ready to prey on PSG weakness

LONDON: Arsenal will deploy a potent weapon who never sets foot on the pitch when they bid to exploit Paris Saint Germain's set-piece vulnerability in Tuesday's Champions League showdown. Mikel Arteta's side have emerged as Europe's preeminent force at corners and free-kicks thanks to their set-piece guru Nicolas Jover. Having worked with Arteta during their time on Pep Guardiola's Manchester City coaching staff, Jover was persuaded to follow his friend to Arsenal in 2021.

Jover's clever schemes have been the unheralded secret of Arsenal's success - until this season when their exquisite execution finally became obvious to overwhelmed opponents. The Gunners have scored 44 goals from set-pieces (excluding penalties) since Jover's arrival, including 25 in the Premier League since the start of last season. That is the most of any side in the English top-flight in that period, with 19 of those goals coming from corners, including Gabriel Magalhaes' crucial header in the 2-2 draw at title rivals Manchester City.

Jover's importance to Arsenal was laid bare when Arteta smothered him in a bear hug on the touchline when another Gabriel header from a corner sealed a vital 1-0 win at Tottenham earlier this season. "In his field, in other fields, as a person, the relationship that we have, that's why I made a decision to bring him to City when I was there and then to Arsenal," Arteta said. "Him and the staff, they have injected belief to the players

## Celtic's Champions League 'dream' faces acid test in Dortmund

DORTMUND: Celtic have started the season in fine form but a trip to Borussia Dortmund on Tuesday pro-

# Classifieds

### Clinics & Hospitals

#### Clinics

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

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

#### Hospitals

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

### Change of Name

I, **Ebsida**, holder of Indian Passport No. Y1280869 having permanent address H. No. 11/412, Karthianikattu (H), Theyyappara, Kodenchery, Kozhikode, Pin-673580 residing in Kuwait at present, hereby declare that henceforth my name will be read as Ebsiba (given name) Eldose (surname). (# 6176 01/10/2024)

I, **Edson**, holder of Indian Passport No. Y1280872 having permanent address H. No. 11/412, Karthianikattu (H), Theyyappara, Kodenchery, Kozhikode, Pin-673580 residing in Kuwait at present, hereby declare that henceforth my name will be read as Edson (given name) Eldose (surname). (# 6176 01/10/2024)



## Correa snatches Atletico spiky derby 1-1 draw against Madrid

Real Betis down Espanyol, Sevilla grab late draw at Athletic Bilbao



MADRID: Real Madrid's Brazilian defender #03 Eder Militao scores his team's first goal during the Spanish league football match between Club Atletico de Madrid and Real Madrid CF at the Metropolitano stadium in Madrid. — AFP

MADRID: Angel Correa's 95th-minute equalizer snatched Atletico Madrid a 1-1 derby draw against Spanish champions Real Madrid on Sunday in La Liga. The Argentine forward had to wait nervously for a VAR review to prove he was onside but he had timed his run to perfection and secured the hosts a point. Real Madrid, without injured star striker Kylian Mbappe, largely kept Atletico at arm's length on a spiky night in the Spanish capital, taking the lead through Eder Militao midway through the second half.

The match was suspended for around 15 minutes soon afterwards when Atletico fans threw objects including lighters at Madrid players, and Rojiblancos midfielder Marcos Llorente was sent off at the death. "I think it was a correct decision from the referee, he had to stop the game... and then it started again, it was correctly done," said Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti. Correa's late strike put Atletico third, while Real Madrid, second, moved three points behind leaders Barcelona after their defeat at Osasuna on Saturday.

"We were very close to winning but this can happen, the opponent is very strong," added Ancelotti. "I always think positively, not negatively, I think that we've gained a point on the leaders."

Despite the disappointment of conceding a late equalizer, Madrid reached 40 consecutive league games without defeat, their last loss coming just over a year ago at Atletico. This time they were largely in the driving seat, with Real Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti opting for veteran midfielder Luka Modric in place of Mbappe. The first half failed to set pulses racing although former Atletico goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois saved well at his near post from Julian Alvarez, who drifted in with intent from the left.

At the other end, Uruguayan midfielder Fede Valverde twice came close, with Jan Oblak first saving a long-range effort before he sent a free-kick whistling past the post. The second half continued in the same vein until Madrid forged their way ahead through defender Militao in the 64th minute. Modric

sent a free-kick out to the left flank and Vinicius Junior's cross drifted all the way through to the back post, where Militao was waiting. The Brazilian hammered home with the aid a deflection off Llorente, which left Oblak with no chance.

### Fan trouble

A few minutes later the match was temporarily suspended by the officials after Atletico fans threw lighters and other objects at Madrid stars, including Courtois. Diego Simeone, Atletico captain Koke and Jose Maria Gimenez went to try and calm the situation by talking to fans behind Madrid's goal. The referee sent the players into the dressing rooms for around 15 minutes before play eventually resumed.

Oblak made a fine save from Vinicius' low drive and Endrick smashed wide as Madrid looked the more likely to score, until Correa's late intervention. The forward darted in behind Antonio Rudiger and bundled home to level deep in second-half injury

time. Llorente's ugly foul on Fran Garcia left Atletico to see out the final moments with 10 men, but they were able to claim their point. Atletico coach Simeone aimed thinly-veiled criticism at Courtois for celebrating Madrid's goal while looking at the supporters behind him.

"You can celebrate a goal but not by looking at the fans, having a go, making gestures like that," Simeone told DAZN. "The fans don't just become angry by themselves, they become angry for a reason." The coach also pointed out Real Madrid fans had thrown lighters at the Belgian goalkeeper in the past when he was an Atletico player. There was more bad news for Real Madrid beyond the equalizer as Courtois appeared to be having some discomfort late in the game. "Courtois had a muscular issue, he'll be looked at tomorrow," said Ancelotti. Elsewhere, Real Betis beat Espanyol 1-0, Sevilla rescued a late draw at Athletic Bilbao and Girona drew 1-1 at Celta Vigo. — AFP

## Marseille lose ground on leaders as Lyon win

PARIS: Marseille passed up the chance to go level on points with leaders Paris Saint-Germain on Sunday after losing at Strasbourg, while Lyon snatched a 2-1 victory at Toulouse thanks to a 95th-minute winner. Under new Italian coach Roberto De Zerbi, Marseille had looked resurgent this season but Diego Moreira's strike for Strasbourg just before the break condemned the visitors to a first defeat of the season.

Strasbourg's first win in 17 outings against Marseille stopped their opponents from joining pace-setters PSG and Monaco on 16 points atop Ligue 1. "I have complete confidence in my players," said De Zerbi. "One of the club's former coaches, Marcello Bielsa, used to say: 'You learn from defeat', and I think we're going to learn a lot tonight, it's going to be a decisive day for our progress."

In the 40th minute, Moreira surged onto a through ball on the left and slotted a calm finish past Marseille goalkeeper Geronimo Rulli to score the first goal of his senior professional career. Marseille had chances to equalize but Djordje Petrovic in the Strasbourg goal was equal to Mason Greenwood as the home side saw out their second win of the campaign. Earlier, Lyon also got their second win of the season courtesy of a Rasmus Nicolaisen own goal and Malick Fofana's stoppage-time winner, after Yann Gboho had sent Toulouse into an early lead. The hosts went in front on 14 minutes when Gboho fired into the top corner after Lyon gave the ball away in their own half.

But Pierre Sage's side were back level two minutes before the half hour when Nicolaisen turned into his own net. The points seemed set to be shared until the



STRASBOURG: Strasbourg's French midfielder #29 Ismael Doukore (left) and Marseille's French midfielder #25 Adrien Rabiot fight for the ball during the French L1 football match between RC Strasbourg and Marseille (OM) at the Stade de la Meinau in Strasbourg. — AFP

ball broke to Fofana in the box and his flashed effort beat the goalkeeper and just crossed the line before defender Gabriel Suazo could block. Reims beat Angers 3-1 on the road to move up to fourth, two points behind resurgent Marseille in third. Goals by Keito Nakamura and Junya Ito inside 25 minutes gave Reims the ideal start and Marshall Munetsi then netted in the 79th minute to seal the three points.

Zinedine Ferhat scored a consolation for the hosts with six minutes remaining, but Angers remain rooted to bottom spot. They are the only team yet to win a match in the league this season. A second-half brace from Ibrahim Sissoko earned a valuable away point for promoted Saint-Etienne against Nantes. Johann Lepenant sent the home team in front on 10 minutes and Sorba Thomas doubled their lead four minutes after the break. Sissoko halved the deficit in the 57th minute and then converted a penalty 10 minutes later to level. — AFP

## Napoli jump to top of Serie A with win over Monza

ROME: Napoli saw off lowly Monza 2-0 at home on Sunday to leapfrog to the top of the table with goals from Matteo Politano and Khvicha Kvaratskhelia. After starting last season as champions and finishing a disappointing 10th place, Napoli have rediscovered their form this campaign, racking up four wins in six outings under coach Antonio Conte. Politano sent the home side ahead in the 22nd minute when he drove in from the right before slotting coolly past the goalkeeper from a tight angle.

Georgian star Kvaratskhelia then settled the match just 11 minutes later when the ball bobbed kindly to him in the box and he emphatically slammed home from a central position. Conte's arrival to the club in the close season is already bearing fruit as Napoli sit top of the table for the first time since June 2023 - when they won the Scudetto. But the former Italy boss dismissed talk of title pretensions, telling DAZN: "I have to look at the reality and that says we are very far from flying high."

"We've got to sweat it out game after game, like we did today where we had to sweat hard to earn those points. "We can let the fans dream, but I have to keep my feet on the ground and realize there are teams ahead of us for many reasons. We are chasing them down and will try to do our best," he added. Napoli have 13 points after six matches, one point more than Juventus in second spot and two ahead of AC Milan, Inter Milan and surprise-packages Torino. Earlier, Torino failed to regain top spot in Serie A, slipping to their first league defeat of the season 3-2 at home to Lazio.

Torino were always off the pace as Lazio took the lead in the eighth minute, former Arsenal midfield-

er Matteo Guendouzi striking from just inside the penalty box. Guendouzi's goal was well set up by in-form on-loan Arsenal defender Nuno Tavares, who has turned into a provider for his teammates. It was his fourth assist of the campaign. The visitors doubled their lead on the hour, Boulaye Dia sweeping the ball home. Torino coach Paolo Vanoli's decision to bring on Che Adams to add some zest to the attack paid off as the Scottish international reduced the deficit seven minutes later for his third goal in three matches. — AFP



Napoli's Georgian forward #77 Khvicha Kvaratskhelia