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Hamas chief Sinwar martyred

In rare Egypt visit, Iran FM calls for regional calm

GCC-EU Summit an opportunity to boost ties: Amir's Representative



Representative of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, addresses the first GCC-EU Summit. — KUNA

BRUSSELS: The Representative of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, addressed the first GCC-EU Summit on Wednesday, affirming that it constitutes a historic opportunity to elevate higher the level of the relations between the GCC and EU countries. The summit, he said, mirrors the mutual sincere and serious desire to boost and expand the cooperation between the two sides and seek, together, a comprehensive joint strategy, based on the

vision of the leaders of GCC states. His Highness the Prime Minister also indicated that this approach, based on mutual understanding, cooperation and respect, aims at strengthening security and stability at the regional and international levels. The Representative of His Highness the Amir, His Highness the Prime Minister, expressed hope that there would be progress in the negotiations of the aspired free trade treaty between the GCC and the EU for the sake of reaching a framework agreement for cooperation

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JERUSALEM: Zionist entity said on Thursday its forces killed Hamas chief Yahya Sinwar in a Gaza operation, dealing a massive blow to the group it has been fighting since the October 7, 2023 attack. "Yahya Sinwar, responsible for the massacre and atrocities of October 7, was eliminated... by IDF (Zionist military) soldiers," Foreign Minister I Katz said in a statement. The military later confirmed that "after a year-long pursuit", soldiers "eliminated Yahya Sinwar, the leader of the Hamas terrorist organization, in an operation in the southern Gaza Strip" on Wednesday.

Hamas has not confirmed his death. Zionists accuse Sinwar of masterminding the October 7 attack, the deadliest in history, and had been hunting him down since the start of the Gaza war. He rose through the ranks of the Palestinian militant group to become first its leader in Gaza, then its overall head after the killing in July of political chief Ismail Haniyeh.

Zionist announcement on Sinwar comes weeks after it assassinated Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah in a massive strike in Lebanon, where its military has been at war since late September. A slew of other militant commanders have also been killed in recent months. Zionist entity said earlier this year that it had killed Mohammed Deif, Hamas's military chief, though the Palestinian

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AI cameras target reckless drivers

KUWAIT: Dangerous driving habits are widespread on Kuwait's roads with speeding and phone use - the most common violations, which in turn demand urgent attention, raising awareness and enforcing laws and regulations to ensure public safety. Accidents



Hamas chief Yahya Sinwar

resulting from others' mistakes or unexpected road incidents occur almost daily, often leading to casualties, injuries, and financial losses, frequently caused by reckless behavior, violations, or carelessness.

In response, the Ministry of Interior (MoI) is making efforts to tackle these challenges through strict traffic laws. With advanced technologies, the government aims to establish a better traf-

fic system and minimize injuries and damages. Statistics from the Ministry of Interior showed that, between January 1 and June 30, 2024, the total number of speeding violations in Kuwait's six governorates exceeded 1.5 million, with 9,472 distracted-driving violations. The report, issued by the Ministry's Traffic Planning and Research Department, revealed that more than

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Commission calls to revoke citizenship of 198 people

By B Izzak

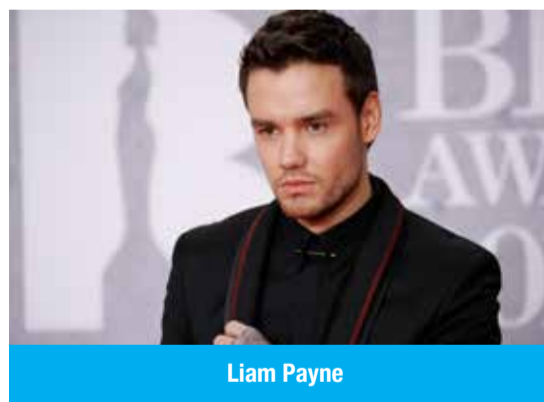
KUWAIT: The Higher Commission for Kuwaiti Nationality decided on Thursday to revoke the citizenship of 198 Kuwaitis, the Interior Ministry announced, but gave no reasons for the action and no details. The decision was taken during a meeting headed by Acting Prime Minister, and Minister of Defense and Interior Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef Al-Sabah. The decision becomes effective only after it is endorsed by the council of ministers, expected to be taken next week. In the past several months, Kuwait has revoked the citizenship of hundreds of citizens.

In another development, the Interior Ministry on Thursday launched a major search campaign in several areas during which 146 people, mostly expats, were arrested, at least 21 of them for living illegally in the country, the Interior Ministry said.

The campaign was launched simultaneously in Khaitan, Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh, Farwaniya, Mahboula and Mutlaa, the Ministry said, in the biggest such campaign so far.

One Direction's Liam Payne falls to death at Argentina hotel

BUENOS AIRES: British singer Liam Payne, a former member of the best-selling boy band One Direction, died on Wednesday aged 31 after plunging from the third floor of a Buenos Aires hotel, police and emergency responders said. It was not immediately clear if the fall was accidental. Payne had spoken publicly about struggles with alcohol, and police said they responded to a report of "an aggressive man who may be under the influence of drugs or alcohol." Minutes after the news of Payne's death broke, distraught fans - most in their 20s and 30s - gathered near the scene in the Argentine capital, where medical teams were at work.



Liam Payne

"The news hit me hard," fan Pilar Bilik, 27, said outside the hotel. "So upsetting to hear the news of @LiamPayne passing. Sending love and condolences to his family & loved ones. RIP my friend," reality star and businesswoman Paris Hilton wrote on social media with a crying emoji. Police said in a statement

that "Liam James Payne, composer and guitarist, former member of the band One Direction, died today after falling from the third floor of a hotel." Alberto Crescenti, head of the Buenos Aires emergency medical service, told local television that there had been "no possibility of resuscitation."

Crescenti said emergency personnel rushed to the Casa Sur hotel in the city's Palermo neighborhood after an emergency call was made at 5:04 pm local time. They arrived seven minutes later and "verified the death of this man, who we later learnt was a singer." Payne appeared to have suffered a fracture at the base of his skull from the fall that Crescenti said was from "about 13 or 14 meters". The UK's foreign office confirmed it was in contact with Argentine authorities "regarding reports of the death of a British man", but declined to identify the man or comment further. Argentine media outlets reported on what they said was an emergency call from a hotel manager reporting a guest "on drugs and destroying the room." — AFP

Free onboard wifi is latest frontline in airline competition

PARIS: Free onboard wifi has become the latest battleground between the world's leading airlines as the once expensive and unreliable service finally delivers quality comparable to being at home. Delta, United, Japan Airlines, Air France and other global carriers have in recent weeks sought to outdo each other with competing announcements about the arrival or extension of onboard connectivity.

And in sharp contrast to the growing practice of charging passengers for services that were once included in the ticket price - such as checking bags or selecting seats - the airlines are mostly promising

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CHICAGO: In this photo illustration, a Starlink web page is shown on a computer in Chicago, Illinois. United Airlines announced that it had reached a deal with Starlink and will soon be providing free Internet for passengers on all of its flights. — AFP



'Evening shift' will reduce traffic congestion, enhance productivity

CSC aims to improve the work environment

KUWAIT: Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs and Acting Chairman of the Civil Service Commission (CSC), Shareeda Al-Maousherji, said that the Cabinet's decision to approve the evening shift project, which was submitted by the CSC, aims to improve the work environment in the government sector for employees who will work in an administrative environment with less pressure.

Al-Maousherji added in a press statement issued by the CSC that implementing the evening shift will positively enhance productivity and facilitate the completion of transactions. He explained that the decision also contributes to in-

tegrating efforts in the government's endeavor to provide an organizational structure that achieves further simplification of procedures in completing transactions and facilitates work procedures.

The decision provides another option for working hours that suits a large segment of employees. He stated that the evening shift project comes after monitoring the proposals and visions of ministries and government agencies and their readiness to implement this system so as to achieve the objectives. He pointed out that implementing the proposal will contribute to reducing traffic congestion during the morning period by reducing the number of employees whose work will be transferred to the eve-

ning period. On the one hand, a number of citizens and residents can now complete their transactions during the evening period instead of the morning.

Al-Maousherji stated that the employee will be given the freedom to choose between morning or evening work according to what suits his/her circumstances and personal preference and in line with the interest of work and the number allocated for this period, indicating that it will also contribute to speedy completion of work with ease. Each government agency will determine the start and end of the evening shift according to the requirements of the public interest, taking into account the social requirements. — KUNA

'My Job' exhibition opens opportunities

KUWAIT: Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research and Acting Minister of Education Dr Nader Al-Jallal stressed on Thursday the importance of the private sector's role in employing Kuwaiti youth and investing their energies and skills in the labor market to enable them to contribute to the development of their country and society. Speaking to reporters after the opening of the third edition of the "My Job" exhibition at Arena Kuwait in 360 Mall, which is sponsored by him, Al-Jallal said that the exhibition allows young graduates to learn about job opportunities in the largest national institutions and companies, praising the important role of the private sector in absorbing these energies.

He called on high school students to visit the exhibition, which is considered one of the largest gatherings for job opportunities locally. The three-day event will help the youths to learn about the needs of the labor market in the coming periods and the required specialization and appropriate job for them. He praised the "distinguished" organization of the exhibition and the support of state institutions and bodies, expressing hope that it would result in accepting the largest number of applicants.

For her part, Acting Deputy Director General for National Manpower Affairs at the Public Authority of Manpower Najat Al-Yousef expressed her happiness with the Authority's supervision of the exhibition, stressing its keenness to support young job seekers in the private sector and the importance of guiding and directing young people in this regard. Al-Yousef called on the private sector to provide more employment opportunities at a time when "the Authority's latest statistics recorded about 7,900 male and female job seekers," indicating the importance of employing young people, developing their skills, and investing in their ideas.

Acting Director General of the Public Authority for Youth Nasser Al-Sheikh expressed at the opening ceremony of the exhibition his keenness and interest in enhancing the capabilities of young people and providing them with opportunities to succeed in life. Al-Sheikh said that the Youth Authority works in partnership with relevant state institutions through its programs and projects to provide young people with the appropriate skills that will help them compete in the labor market. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Centre Français de Recherche de la Péninsule Arabique (CEFREPA) of the Institute of the Arab World (IMA) organizes a conference to discuss French cultural diplomacy.



Arab World Institute builds cultural bridges between France, Arabs

By Khaled Al-Abdullhadi

KUWAIT: Centre Français de Recherche de la Péninsule Arabique (CEFREPA) of the Institute of the Arab World (IMA) held a conference to discuss French cultural diplomacy through the lens of the creation of the IMA in Paris. The conference focused on "States, Power, and Societies in the Arab and Muslim East" and examined different dimensions of power in the modern Arabian Peninsula. This includes the foreign policies of Gulf countries, their approaches to war and peace, diplomacy, changes in foreign relations, and new trends in citizenship.

Dr Makram Abbès, head of the CEFREPA and doctor in Arab philosophy, said that this type of academic research is new. "I aim to cross analyze archives from GCC countries and France to have 'a history in equal parts'," he said. The CEFREPA, founded in 1982 by the Institute of the Arab World, is a regional research center whose main objective is to promote studies on the Arabian Peninsula as a whole including the GCC states and Yemen. Dr Abbès, said the center studies several topics, including archeology, politics, languages and literature, early history and the renewal of religious thought in Islam. He said that this type of academic research is new.

The conference was presented by Melissa Tedafi, Nantes University PhD researcher at the CEFREPA. "In a post-colonial context punctuated by military, political and energy crises, the creation of the Institute of the Arab World (IMA) in Paris in 1974 demonstrated an innovative will, that of a development of diplomatic relations between Arab countries through the third channel of culture," she said.

"The establishment of the IMA was at the intersection of national, regional and international tensions in France's relations with the Arab states. At the crossroads of multilateral policy and diplomacy, the Arab World Institute aims to redraw the links between them," she clarified. The IMA was founded in Paris in 1980 by France with 18 Arab countries to research and disseminate information about the Arab world and its cultural and spiritual values. The Institute was established because of a perceived lack of representation for the Arab world in France and seeks to provide a secular location for the promotion of Arab civilization, art, knowledge, and aesthetics.

"The institute has been a tool for the development of France's Arab policy through cultural diplomacy as a tool for reconciliation — a place for dialogue and informal meetings, a symbol of bilateral cooperation, to promote a positive image of the Arab world in France, support for peace efforts and international cooperation, as well as a strengthening economic and cultural ties," Tedafi explained.



Ministry, KFF conclude workshop on handling hazardous materials

KUWAIT: Defense Ministry's Weapons of Mass Destruction Command concluded on Thursday a workshop on hazardous materials, organized by the Kuwait Fire Force. The workshop aims to develop and sharpen skillsets of participants to deal with hazardous material incidents as well as identify unrecognizable



material and address chemical, biological or radioactive accidents and explosions, the Ministry explained in a press release. — KUNA

Arab officials discuss green policies and environment

JEDDAH: The 35th session of the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for Environmental Affairs kicked off Thursday in Jeddah, co-organized by the Saudi Ministry of Environment, Water, and Agriculture and the Arab League and attended by Acting Director General of Kuwait Environment Public Authority Eng Samira Al-Kandari.

In his opening speech, head of Omani Environment Authority, Dr Abdullah Al-Amri, praised Arab countries' efforts in various environmental fields and international forums, expressing gratitude to the Kingdom for hosting the meeting and to the Arab League and its efforts in promoting joint Arab environmental action. Al-Amri expressed support for the Kingdom's efforts in hosting the 16th session of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (COP16) in the Saudi capital, Riyadh, scheduled to be held next December.

He also stressed support for the efforts and initiatives of Arab countries in combating all forms of environmental pollution, which reflects regional and Arab environmental efforts in international forums. In his speech, Saudi Minister of Environment, Water, and Agriculture and Chairman of the current session Eng. Abdulrahman Al-Fadhli said that the Kingdom adopts a comprehensive vision for environmental systems in accordance with its Saudi Vision 2030.

Al-Fadhli pointed to Saudi Arabia's launch of na-

tional, regional, and international initiatives, most notably the "Green Saudi Arabia" and "Green Middle East" initiatives, in addition to the global initiative to reduce land degradation and preserve terrestrial habitats. For her part, Samira Al-Kandari said that the meeting comes in light of important international environmental developments that have imposed themselves on local and international levels, which confirms the importance of strengthening joint Arab action in the fields of environmental conservation.

She pointed to the importance of adopting green policies that support the shift towards renewable energy and adaptation to climate change, adopting strategies to reduce carbon emissions, in addition to managing natural resources efficiently and enhancing the circular economy to reduce land degradation and combat desertification. She expressed her hope for unifying the Arab position in supporting the United Nations Environment Assembly Resolution No. 514 to end plastic pollution and enhance efforts to achieve sustainable development goals and a circular economy.

Al-Kandari referred to Kuwait's low-carbon strategy, which aims to achieve carbon neutrality in the oil and gas sector by 2050, and to the National Strategy for Integrated Waste Management in Kuwait 2040, stressing support for the (Green Middle East) initiative. Kuwaiti delegation participating include the Director of the Department of Rehabilitation and Follow-up of Environmental Activities Eng Shaima Al-Fadhel and from the International Relations Department at the Public Environment Authority Talal Al-Ali and Mustafa Al-Zuhair. The delegation also included the Charge d'Affaires at the Consulate General of Kuwait in Jeddah, Minister Plenipotentiary Nasser Al-Khaldi, along with Counselor Turki Al-Daihani. — KUNA

Kuwait condemns 'use of starvation' as weapon of war

GENEVA: Kuwaiti representative at the United Nations, Counselor Abdullah Al-Khubaizi, warned of the ramifications of the humanitarian crises in the region on refugees' basic rights, as he also condemned the use of illegal methods of starvation and blockade of aid as war weapons. During the 75th refugee agency meeting in Geneva, Al-Khubaizi called on the international community to take a serious stance and guarantee the rights of war victims.

Al-Khubaizi also stressed the need to face challenges undermining regional and international stability and security, especially as the region undergoes recurring crises, leaving behind an unprecedented number of refugees in blatant disregard of international laws. He further underlined the importance of reforming the Security Council to enhance response to crises and become more efficient and comprehensive, stating that the waning of confidence in the UN's efficiency is hurting its integrity.

Counselor Al-Khubaizi renewed Kuwait's commitment to host countries of refugees and to sharing responsibilities and burdens, saying that Kuwait is keen on extending a helping hand to all those in need. Total Kuwaiti aid to UNHCR alone reached



Kuwaiti representative at the United Nations Counselor Abdullah Al-Khubaizi

\$500 million over the past 10 years, he added. The counselor took the time to reaffirm Kuwait's support for UNHCR's endeavors, aiming to help build a better future for all. The commission's executive committee holds its meetings annually in Geneva to review and approve projects and budgets as well as give counsel on international protection and discuss a slew of issues. — KUNA



GAZA: Displaced Palestinian children queue to receive food rations in Deir Al-Balah in the central Gaza Strip on October 17, 2024. — AFP



BRUSSELS: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's Representative, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah holds talks with President of the European Council Charles Michel and other senior officials.— KUNA photos

EU-GCC leaders urge Iraq to solve pending issues on Kuwait borders

Summit affirms commitment to boosting strategic partnership

BRUSSELS: The EU-GCC summit appealed on Wednesday to Iraq to solve the pending issues with Kuwait regarding maritime borders and others. On maritime borders between Kuwait and Iraq, the final communiqué of the summit said that solving the pending issues between the two sides in line with international law contributes positively to regional co-operation and stability. The communiqué said it sheds light on the importance of Iraq's abidance by Kuwait's sovereign and territorial integrity as well as the respect of bilateral deals and international treaties and the relevant UN resolutions, mainly the 833.

The leaders, during the summit, called for the demarcation of maritime borders between Kuwait and Iraq at 162, stressing the importance of full implementation of the Kuwaiti-Iraqi deal regulating maritime navigation at Khor Abdullah, which was signed in April 2012 and came into effect on December 5, 2013. They reiterated support for the UNSC Resolution 2017 of 2013 that tasked the UN Secretary General Special Envoy and the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) with boosting efforts related to returning all Kuwaitis and third-country nationals back home. The communiqué called on Iraq and the UN to do their best to reach a solution to all these issues.

The EU-GCC summit stressed the commitment to upgrade the



BRUSSELS: His Highness the Amir's Representative, His Highness the Prime Minister receives at his residence in Brussels the Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez, on the sidelines of the EU-GCC summit.

strategic partnership between both sides to higher levels in line with the joint action program. In a final communiqué, the two sides affirmed that this special partnership is based on reciprocal respect and confidence of the peoples of this region and beyond. The partnership will work on boosting security and prosperity regionally and internationally, preventing the eruption of conflicts, and resolving crises through dialogue and coordination.

Trade and investment
EU-GCC states further af-

firmed commitment to enhance trade and investment through making use of opportunities provided. The statement emphasized the proceedings with discussions to reach a free trade deal between the EU and GCC states. The joint discussions, which covered geopolitical developments, regional security, economy, communication, trade, investment, business environment, innovation, developmental cooperation, and humanitarian coordination, have highly enhanced reciprocal understanding and partnership, the communiqué stated.



BRUSSELS: His Highness the Amir's Representative, His Highness the Prime Minister receives the Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis, on the sidelines of the EU-GCC summit.

Saudi to host the summit
The statement noted that the summit will be held every two years and that Saudi Arabia will host it in 2026. The two sides announced that they would explore opportunities in varied fields like financial technology, digital transformation, and health. In addition, they emphasized commitment to bolster collaboration on energy and renewable energy, saying that dialogue between the EU and OPEC is energy security.

On climate change, they said they would work to boost their efforts to create sustainable and varied economies to benefit their nations and con-

tribute to global action in accordance with the Paris agreement. The statement said that the two sides would speed up their cooperation in renewable energy, hydrogen, and technology so as to reduce carbon emissions. Brussels hosted the summit, in which a Kuwaiti delegation was led by His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's Representative, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

New phase of partnership
Meanwhile, President of the European Commission Ursula von der

Leyen and GCC Secretary General Jassem Al-Budaiwi have stressed that the EU-GCC summit is imperative to enhance growth opportunities. In her inaugural speech at the summit, von der Leyen said the EU and GCC have started a new phase of strategic partnership, adding that the security and prosperity of the two regions are integrated and related to each other.

"This is a historic summit, which proves the two sides' visions as strategic partners that cooperate for a common future. No economic growth without security," she affirmed, referring to the Middle East situation and the Russian-Ukrainian war that have greatly affected the two regions. Von der Leyen called for mobilizing diplomatic efforts to halt this perilous escalation in the Middle East. She called for an immediate ceasefire in the Gaza Strip and Lebanon, protecting civilians and diplomats so as to create sustainable security.

Meanwhile, Al-Budaiwi said the summit shows that the two sides are aware of the importance of enhancing political and economic relations between the GCC and EU. This will help the two sides achieve their desired goals and upgrade strategic partnership for wider horizons on different levels. He pointed to the deal signed by the two sides in 1988 and the 2020-2027 joint action program. The summit is held out of strategic partnership and the extension of friendly relations between the two sides, he noted.— KUNA

Kuwait, Japan boost defense cooperation

KUWAIT: The Embassy of Japan hosted a gathering and dinner banquet on Wednesday, October 16, 2024, at the Ambassador's residence, attended by representative of Kuwait's Armed Forces Major General Khaled Al-Sheryaan, Commander of the Kuwait Air Defense Force, a number of former commanders within Kuwait's Armed Forces, Defense Attachés accredited to Kuwait and a number of foreign military officers, which reflects the long-standing Kuwait-Japan ties and further strengthening cooperation in the field of defense.

In his opening remarks, Morino Yasunari, the

Ambassador of Japan to Kuwait offered his deepest condolences for the tragic loss of Captain (Pilot) Mohammed Abdulrasoul, who bravely dedicated himself to serving his country and its people. During his speech, the ambassador commemorated the deep friendship and robust cooperative ties between Japan and Kuwait such as dispatchment of ships of Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force to clear sea mines off the coast of Kuwait and deployment of personnel of Japan's Air Self-Defense Force in Ali Al-Salem Air Base to contribute to humanitarian and reconstruction efforts in Iraq.

He also expressed his deep gratitude for the support and valuable assistance provided by the Kuwaiti armed forces at that time. This occasion allowed participants to share and exchange perspectives of regional and international affairs and to deepen their friendship.



KUWAIT: Acting Director General of the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development Waleed Al-Bahar and Representative of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Kuwait Nisreen Rabiaan sign a grant agreement.— KUNA

KFAED assists Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh

KUWAIT: The Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) signed a grant agreement worth two million dollars with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to support the

Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh on Thursday. In a statement to Kuwait News Agency (KUNA), Acting Director General of the Fund Waleed Al-Bahar said that the Fund's goals are to improve the lives, security and health of the Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh.

These efforts will be done by providing essential building materials to reinforce their homes as well as liquefied petroleum gas for cooking to around 18,000 families for a 12-month period, noting that the agreement will reach around 140,000 individuals, he added. This contribution is the sixth between

the Fund and UNHCR in humanitarian support and the first to support the Rohingya in Bangladesh, adding that the total grants provided to UNHCR since the start in 2016 amount to about \$22 million, Al-Bahar pointed out.

For her part, UNHCR Representative to Kuwait Nisreen Rabiaan said that the Fund is a permanent partner of the Commission through it signing several previous agreements to support refugees in various areas around the world. She thanked Kuwait and the Kuwaiti Fund for their continued support of refugee cases around the world.— KUNA

Kuwaiti society opens center for special needs

ADEN: Kuwait Society for Students Support on Thursday inaugurated Kuwait Center for Special Needs Cases to support 1,500 students of such cases per year in the town of Hadiboh, the central town in the Socotra archipelago. The move is part of "Kuwait on your side" campaign, ongoing since nine years ago.

The society chairman, Abdullah Al-Sabej, said in a statement during the inauguration ceremony that the center features three floors, various classes, including some specially equipped for formative arts and handicrafts. It is situated on a 875 sq-m plot of land, ceded by the landlord for the Kuwaiti association as a tangible gesture to help students of special challenges.— KUNA



Center for people with special needs inaugurated in Socotra Yemen.— KUNA

Kuwait selected as the 'Capital of Arab Culture and Media'

CAIRO: Assistant Undersecretary of the Ministry of Information for the New Media Sector Saad Al-Azmi affirmed on Thursday that selecting Kuwait as the Arab Capital of Culture and Media for 2025 is a culmination of the country's rich legacy and pioneering role in the media scene. This came in a statement made by Al-Azmi to Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) after heading a delegation from the Kuwaiti Ministry of Information in a meeting of the joint committee concerned with developing the final vision for the proposed procedures, activities, and events for the celebration of selecting Kuwait as the Arab Media Capital for 2025, which was organized by the Arab League.

Al-Azmi affirmed that "this selection reflects Kuwait's status as a beacon of culture and enlightenment and a platform that embraces creativity and innovators in the Arab world." The meeting discussed and reviewed the preparatory plans and exchanged views on the events to be held during the year 2025. He explained that the preparations for hosting "Kuwait as the Capital of Arab Culture and Media 2025" are ongoing under the directives of the Minister of Information and Culture and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi, the follow-up of the Undersecretary of the Ministry Dr Nasser Muhaisen, and coordination between the Ministry of Information, the National Council for Culture, Arts, and Letters, and other relevant bodies.

Al-Azmi explained that the higher committee that was formed under the chairmanship of Minister Al-Mutairi has begun work on developing an integrated vision to organize and promote cultural and media events in a manner that is consistent with the importance of this event and the status of Kuwait. For his part, Assistant Undersecretary of the Ministry of Information for the Radio Sector and head of the team preparing the file for 'Kuwait, Capital of Arab Media 2025' Dr. Yousef Al-Surai'a confirmed that the media activities accompanying the celebration will include seminars and media forums aimed at shedding light on Kuwait's pioneering role in the field of Arab media.

Al-Surai'a confirmed that Kuwait is preparing to launch a series of media and cultural activities that will include theatrical and literary festivals, poetry evenings, various artistic performances, and historical exhibitions that reflect the ancient Arab heritage. He pointed to the pioneering role played by Kuwait in the cultural and media fields. — KUNA

Weyay Bank boosts engagement among The Assima Mall visitors

Bank pioneering future of digital banking

KUWAIT: Weyay Bank, Kuwait's first digital bank, sets up an engaging pop-up at The Assima Mall from 13 to 22 October to interact directly with visitors, understand their needs, and provide them with worthwhile digital products that are tailored for their needs. This step comes as part of its commitment to offer customers an elevated digital banking experience, empowering the youth community with innovative financial products within a seamless app interface.

The visitors will have the chance to learn about the exclusive benefits of the SELECT Card, the new digital prepaid card, designed exclusively for Weyay allowance customers as well as about the Bank's extensive range of banking solutions, enabling customers to find the potential fit for their needs. Commenting on the event, Dana Al-Kharafi, Marketing and Engagement Manager at Weyay Bank, said: "Weyay Bank aims to deliver an unparalleled, exceptional experience to all customers and strives to always exceed their expectations.

Our presence at The Assima Mall is an excellent opportunity for students to explore the benefits of the SELECT Card while all visitors can enjoy an entertaining experience through which they get to learn more about the Bank's latest features and offers." SELECT, the name itself is so bound up with what this exclusive community is all about. All Weyay allowance customers are eligible to be part of the SELECT community and get their SELECT Card as soon as the first allowance hits their accounts.

The SELECT community is entitled for exclusive discounts and benefits ranging from the new iPhone offer from stc at the best price in the market, starting from KD 19/monthly, 40 percent cashback on orders from Jahez and Cari apps, 10 percent cashback on Trolley purchases to 5 KD vouchers from Oula Fuel Station every weekend. Throughout the Bank's presence at The Assima Mall, some SELECT partners elaborate on their added value as part of the SELECT experience, giving glimpses of their services like Motery that offers a monthly free car wash, Elate Tea, and GetMojo.

As a fully digital bank, Weyay is committed to its leading role in providing innovative digital financial solutions to all customers. The Bank stands out by providing a



unique banking experience that prioritizes convenience, security, and accessibility. Since its inception in 2021, Weyay Bank has been at the forefront of digital banking innovation, redefining traditional banking norms to provide a hassle-free, 24/7, and a paperless banking experience, tailored specifically for the youth demographic.

The Weyay app is packed with features designed to streamline financial management for users. Its Digital Store allows young users to enjoy their favorite e-cards for gaming, music, and shopping, whether it's iTunes, Steam, Amazon, PlayStation Plus, or more, all are available within the app. Users can also conveniently and directly access stc special promotions and services with best prices. With Saving Pots, users can set personalized savings goals, and those who upgrade to Saving Pot Pro can even earn monthly interests on their savings, enhancing their financial growth.

The Budgeting and Tracking feature makes it easy to monitor expenses with just a few taps, providing a clear view of spending habits. All the details about Weyay Bank's digital products and services are available on www.weyaybank.com or in the Weyay app that can be downloaded from the App Store or Google Play. As Weyay Bank continues to redefine the banking landscape in Kuwait, customers are encouraged to stay tuned for forthcoming initiatives to discover how Weyay Bank is shaping the future of the world of finance.



Olympiad winners hailed, honored

KUWAIT: Acting Assistant Undersecretary for Educational Development and Activities at the Ministry of Education Mariam Al-Enezi said that the achievement of the students in the Gulf Science Olympiad competitions for physics, chemistry and mathematics, which were recently held in Saudi Arabia, reflects their scientific excellence and the Ministry's efforts in preparing them for regional and international competitions.

Al-Enezi received the winning students at the VIP lounge at Kuwait International Airport, where they received 8 medals in various scientific

disciplines. Al-Enezi thanked the students for their efforts and for raising the name of Kuwait in international forums. One of the students, Ali Behbehani (who won the silver medal in chemistry), said that this competition was one of the most prominent experiences he had undergone in the field of chemistry, stressing that it enhanced his skills. Behbehani dedicated this achievement to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and to Kuwait, and to the General Technical Guidance for Science, its trainers and teachers.

Another student, Sarah Al-Humaidi, who won the bronze medal in mathematics, expressed her happiness to participate in the competition, which she described as full of challenges and enthusiasm among students from the GCC countries,

noting that she looks forward to achieving greater achievements in the future. Najat Al-Rifai, who won the bronze medal in physics, expressed her thanks to the Ministry of Education for providing the opportunity to participate in such international competitions, praising the efforts of the mentors and trainers who helped achieve this success.

Also, Jana Al-Jadi (student) talked about her experience in the competition and how it strengthened the bond and brotherhood among students from the GCC countries, expressing her aspiration to participate in future competitions and achieve advanced positions. Dana Al-Ayoubi (who participated in the chemistry team) praised the competition and said it was a motivation for the students, as she hoped to obtain more medals in future participations. — KUNA



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Officials take a group photo after the meeting. — KUNA

GCC forum discusses innovation, developing national talents

DOHA: Assistant Undersecretary for Administrative Development Affairs at the Civil Service Bureau (CSC), Mohammad Al-Ahmad, has stressed the importance of participating in the 22nd meeting of the general directors of public administration institutes in the GCC countries being held in Doha, Qatar. In a statement to KUNA, Al-Ahmad revealed that the 22nd meeting included an "Innovation in Developing Leadership in the Government Sector" forum, attended by the President of the Qatari Civil Service and Government Development Bureau, Abdulaziz Al-Khalifa.

The meeting also discussed Gulf cooperation in

public administration and developing national talent, as well as key practices and innovative projects in the region's institutes of public administration and ways to strengthen knowledge exchange among member states through joint programs that support practical training and innovation. He pointed out that it was agreed that the 23rd meeting of the Committee of Directors General of Public Administration Institutes will be held in Kuwait.

Director of the Training and Career Development Department at the Civil Service and Government Development Bureau (CGB) Institute of Public Administration in Qatar, Maha Al-Marri, confirmed in the opening speech that the meeting is a good opportunity to discuss the latest developments and future strategies. For his part, the Assistant Secretary-General for Economic and Development Affairs at the GCC Secretariat, Khaled Al-Sunaidi, stressed the importance of united efforts in the fields of administrative development and knowledge exchange. — KUNA

MoI arrests suspects

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Interior announced that an intensive security campaign in Khaitan, Farwaniya, Jleeb Al-Shyouchk, Al-Mutlaa, and Mahboula areas resulted in the arrest of many violators, with 1,822 violations issued. The campaign was carried out by the General Directorate of Traffic, the General Directorate of Rescue Police, the

Public Security Sector, the General Directorate of Special Security Forces and the Women's Police. The campaign resulted in the arrest of 146 people, including three suspects wanted for drug-related cases. 17 vehicles and bicycles were also seized. The Ministry said that these campaigns are aimed at arresting outlaws and violators of the residence law so as to maintain security and order, address and prevent crime, as well as combat negative phenomena.—KUNA



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Displaced Palestinians queue to receive food rations in Deir al-Balah in the central Gaza Strip on October 17, 2024. — AFP

345,000 Gazans face catastrophic levels of hunger this winter: UN

Agencies warn of famine across Palestinian territory amid dwindling aid deliveries

ROME: Some 345,000 Gazans face "catastrophic" levels of hunger this winter due to falling aid deliveries, UN agencies said Thursday, warning of the persistent risk of famine across the Palestinian territory.

This is up from the 133,000 people currently categorized as experiencing "catastrophic food insecurity", according to a classification compiled by UN agencies and NGOs. A surge in humanitarian assistance this summer brought some relief to Gazans, the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) report said. But September saw the lowest volume of commercial and humanitarian supplies entering Gaza since March. Consequently, it projected that the number of people experiencing catastrophic food insecurity—IPC

Phase 5 -- between November 2024 and April 2025 would likely reach 345,000: 16 percent of the population.

The recent "sharp decline" in aid "will profoundly limit the ability of families to feed themselves and access essential goods and services in the coming months, unless reversed", the report said. "Commercial supplies are down, there is large-scale displacement, infrastructure is decimated, agriculture has collapsed and people have no money," said Arif Husain, chief economist for the UN's World Food Programme. "All this is reflected in the IPC's projection that the situation will get worse from November onwards."

The United States warned Zionist entity on Tuesday that it could withhold some of its billions of dollars in

military assistance unless it improved aid delivery to the Gaza Strip within 30 days. The head of the UN agency for Palestinian refugees, Philippe Lazzarini, warned on Wednesday of the risk of famine in the territory. Vast areas of the Gaza Strip have been devastated by Zionist entity's relentless assault.

"The risk of famine between November 2024 and April 2025 persists as long as conflict continues, and humanitarian access is restricted," the IPC report said. "The extreme concentration of population in an ever-shrinking area, living in improvised shelters with intermittent access to humanitarian supplies and services, elevates the risk of epidemic outbreaks and deterioration into a catastrophe of unprecedented magnitude."

Intensified Zionist entity attacks and fresh evacuation orders were "already increasing the likelihood of this worst-case scenario occurring", the report added. An estimated 60,000 cases of acute malnutrition among children aged between six months and four years old are expected between November and April. "To curb acute hunger and malnutrition, we must act now," said Beth Bechdol, deputy director-general of the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization.

She said it was necessary to "immediately cease hostilities, restore humanitarian access to deliver critical and essential food aid and agricultural inputs in time for the upcoming winter crop planting season...to allow them to grow food". — AFP

Russia tells Zionists to not even consider attacking Iran N-sites

MOSCOW: Russia is warning Zionist entity to not even consider striking Iranian nuclear facilities, state news agency TASS quoted Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov as saying on Thursday. After Iran's missile attack on Zionist entity on Oct 1, there has been speculation that Zionist entity could strike Iran's nuclear facilities, as it has long threatened to do.

"We have repeatedly warned and continue to warn, to caution (Zionist entity) against even hypothetically considering the possibility of a strike on (Iranian) nuclear facilities and nuclear infrastructure," Ryabkov was quoted by TASS as saying.

"This would be a catastrophic development and a complete negation of all existing principles in the area of ensuring nuclear safety." It was not clear in what form Moscow had conveyed such a message to Zionist entity. Zionist entity and Western countries have long feared that Iran is developing a nuclear bomb under the cover of a civilian nuclear energy program, something Tehran denies.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said in a statement on Tuesday that Zionist entity would listen to the United States, which has also cautioned against striking nuclear facilities in Iran, but would determine its actions according to its own national interest. The statement was attached to a Washington Post article which said Netanyahu had told President Joe Biden's administration that Zionist entity would strike Iranian military targets, not nuclear or oil targets.

Russian state media also quoted Ryabkov as saying that Moscow was in constant contact with Iran, irrespective of the level of tensions in the region. Russia has strengthened ties with the Islamic Republic since the start of its war in Ukraine and is preparing to sign a major partnership agreement with Tehran. — Reuters

India slams Trudeau in Sikh murder row

NEW DELHI: India slammed Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau on Thursday as "cavalier" over his handling of the disastrous diplomatic fallout following the 2023 killing of a Sikh separatist in Canada.

New Delhi held firm its defiant stance towards Ottawa—an approach in sharp contrast to its compliant attitude this week towards the United States, where India is also accused of directing a separate assassination plot. Canada has alleged that India arranged the killing of a Sikh separatist, naturalized Canadian citizen Hardeep Singh Nijjar, murdered in the parking lot of a Sikh temple in Vancouver in June 2023. India has called the allegations "preposterous". But Trudeau, at a parliamentary inquiry on Wednesday, said Canada had "clear... indications that India had violated Canada's sovereignty".

Canada's top envoy to New Delhi, Stewart Wheeler, who India has ordered to leave by Saturday night, has said Ottawa had provided "credible, irrefutable evidence of ties between agents of the Government of India and the murder

of a Canadian citizen". India's foreign ministry spokesman Randhir Jaiswal on Thursday said they had not seen that evidence. "Canada has presented us (India) no evidence whatsoever in support of the serious allegations that it has chosen to level against India and Indian diplomats," he said in a statement. "The responsibility for the damage that this cavalier behavior has caused to India-Canada relations lies with Prime Minister Trudeau alone."

Nijjar—who immigrated to Canada in 1997 and became a citizen in 2015 -- had advocated for a separate Sikh state, known as Khalistan, carved out of India. He had been wanted by Indian authorities for alleged terrorism and conspiracy to commit murder. Four Indian nationals have been arrested in connection with Nijjar's murder. Last year, the Indian government briefly curbed visas for Canadians and this week both countries expelled each other's ambassadors. New Delhi's response to Washington has been very different, with the US State Department on Wednesday saying India had told it that an intelligence operative accused of directing an assassination plot on US soil was no longer in government service.

US prosecutors charged an Indian citizen last November over a foiled attempt in New York to kill an advocate for a separate Sikh homeland. The indictment described an "Indian government employee," who was not publicly

she would have done differently from Biden during his four years in office.

"My presidency will not be a continuation of Joe Biden's presidency," said Harris, 59, who became her party's nominee after the aging Biden dropped out in July. Harris said she would bring "fresh and new ideas" and added: "I represent a new generation of leadership." Biden had said on Tuesday that Harris would "cut her own path" as president. Harris also launched into a blistering attack on Republican former president Trump, 78, for threatening to use the military against internal enemies. "He's the one who tends to demean and belittle and diminish the American people. He's the one who talks about an 'enemy within.'"

Responding on his Truth Social site, Trump said: "Again, congratulations to Bret Baier on a tough but very fair interview, one that clearly showed how totally incompetent Kamala is." Harris's first-ever sit-down with Fox was a gamble as she seeks to break the deadlock in a White House race that remains neck-and-neck



Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau attends the ASEAN-Canada special Summit in Vientiane on October 10, 2024. — AFP

named, as recruiting the hitman and directing the assassination plot remotely, including by arranging the delivery of \$15,000 in cash. India's Hindustan Times, quoting an unnamed US official, said Monday that India not only removed but arrested the employee on "local charges." The State Department did not confirm the arrest. — AFP

with less than three weeks to go. The Democrat faced probing questioning during the interview, with Baier also asking her to respond to Trump campaign advertisements and a clip of the Republican defending his military remarks. Harris repeatedly turned questions back to her election rival Trump. Some of the testiest exchanges came as Baier pushed Harris on the record numbers of illegal immigrants who have crossed the Mexican border under the Biden administration. Numbers have dramatically fallen in recent months. Harris replied by saying that the Biden-Harris administration had proposed a bill for greater border security but that "Donald Trump told (Republicans) to kill it." Harris was also quizzed on gender surgery for prisoners or illegal aliens, a conservative attack angle used in a series of the Trump campaign's recent television ads.

"I will follow the law—and it's a law that Donald Trump actually followed," Harris said, referring to a New York Times report Wednesday that under Trump's presidency, prisons also offered gender-affirming care. Asked when she had first noticed that Biden's mental acuity had "diminished" before he quit the race following a disastrous debate with Trump, Harris again turned the subject back to the Republican. "Bret, Joe Biden is not on the ballot. And Donald Trump is," she said. — AFP

Fiery Harris vows break from Biden in testy Fox interview

WASHINGTON: A combative Kamala Harris pledged a clean break from Joe Biden's presidency Wednesday in an interview with right-wing Fox News aimed at reaching Republican voters wary of Donald Trump. Harris clashed with interviewer Bret Baier on hot-button issues including immigration and gender transition surgery, with the Democratic nominee repeatedly asking "may I finish" when the host talked over her answers. A key moment in the half-hour sit-down came as Harris was being pressed on comments she made last week—that Republicans have seized on—when she said she could not think of anything



A banner reading "Country Over Party" is seen as Kamala Harris speaks at Washington Crossing Historic Park. — AFP

firming care. Asked when she had first noticed that Biden's mental acuity had "diminished" before he quit the race following a disastrous debate with Trump, Harris again turned the subject back to the Republican. "Bret, Joe Biden is not on the ballot. And Donald Trump is," she said. — AFP

International

Zelensky explains 'victory plan' to EU leaders and NATO chiefs

Kyiv under mounting pressure to forge an exit strategy

BRUSSELS: President Volodymyr Zelensky told allies Thursday Ukraine must be in a position of strength before any peace talks with Russia, as he explained his "victory plan" to EU leaders and NATO defense chiefs in Brussels.

More than two and a half years into the war, Kyiv is slowly but steadily losing new territory in its eastern Donbas region and under mounting pressure to forge an exit strategy — which it says must start with ramped-up Western support. "Ukraine is ready for real diplomacy, but for it, we must be strong," Zelensky said as he headed into talks with the EU's 27 leaders. "A forcefully imposed truce instead of fair peace never provided security."

"Russia will resort to diplomacy only when it sees that it cannot achieve anything by force," Zelensky added. "This is the plan. This is exactly what's needed, and we must create the right conditions to end this war." After the EU summit Zelensky was to join defence ministers for the first of two days of talks between NATO's 32 member states, holding a joint press conference with Alliance chief Mark Rutte.

While calling it a "strong signal," the NATO secretary-general cautioned ahead of time he was not endorsing Zelensky's "whole plan" — which calls first and foremost for an immediate invitation to join the US-led alliance, a plea widely seen as unrealistic. Zelensky's plan also rejects any territorial concessions, calls for Western allies to lift restrictions on using donated long-range weapons to target Russian military sites, and suggests deploying a "non-nuclear strategic deterrence package" on Ukrainian territory.

The Ukrainian leader has traveled in recent weeks to Washington, Paris, Berlin, Rome and Lon-

don to defend his plan — unveiled to Ukrainian lawmakers Wednesday — but it has yet to earn backing from Western capitals.

NATO countries have declared Ukraine to be on an "irreversible path" to membership. But the United States and Germany have led opposition to immediate entry, believing it would effectively put the alliance at war with nuclear-armed Russia. Rutte reiterated the Alliance line on Thursday saying only that "Ukraine will be a member of NATO in the future."

Washington's ambassador to NATO, Julianne Smith, was blunter ahead of the Brussels talks, saying: "We are not at the point right now where the alliance is talking about issuing an invitation in the short term." The US position is unlikely to shift whether Donald Trump or Kamala Harris wins the White House on November 5 — though there are fears a second Trump term could upend the support Ukraine receives from NATO's biggest power.

Insiders agree the elephant in the room at the NATO talks will be the contest playing out across the Atlantic, with one diplomat saying the Alliance was in "waiting mode."

But Ukraine's allies are well aware that time is of the essence, with the outlook on the battlefield bleak. Rutte said NATO's focus remained on keeping "massive military aid moving into Ukraine" in order "to make sure that if ever one day Zelensky and his team decide to discuss with Russia how to end this, that he will do this from a position of strength." But despite Ukraine's plea for stepped-up air defence systems — as Russian forces pound its cities and infrastructure — no new announcements were expected from NATO this week.

Some at NATO argue the setbacks inflicted on

visit to Sydney and Canberra will undoubtedly bring pomp, ceremony and plenty of media coverage. Even with the schedule skimmed back because of Charles' cancer diagnosis, there will be extravagant mass gatherings, including an event in front of the Opera House and a sprawling community barbecue. But few expect Charles and Camilla's visit to match the buzz of nation-stopping royal visits past — including Charles and his first wife Diana's trip in 1983.

Today Aussies appear more preoccupied with war in the Middle East, the US election, or another group of British visitors — rock group Oasis — who will tour next year.

"I'm not excited, but I don't begrudge them coming out," said 72-year-old Susanne Lowire. "They don't have much impact over here." "Some people just love it as they love movie stars" said Lowire, likening the royals to musical brothers Liam and Noel Gallagher.

"Are they going to fight again? Do they sound terrible? It's the same with the king and the queen

heavy bombers to hit rebel targets in Yemen.

Iran's top diplomat Abbas Araghchi and Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi warned against the expansion of regional conflict during a rare meeting in Cairo on Thursday. Araghchi is the first Iranian foreign minister to visit Cairo since 2013. The stop is part of his multi-country regional tour after Zionists vowed to strike back following an Iranian missile barrage against Zionist entity on October 1. According to a statement from Sisi's office, the pair discussed "the need to stop regional escalation" and "intensifying efforts towards ceasefires in Gaza and Lebanon".

Iran's official news agency said Sisi and Araghchi "agreed on the need to intensify efforts to end the crimes in Gaza and the aggression against Lebanon, assist the displaced and prevent the expansion of the Zionist regime's warmongering reach," in a reference to Zionist entity. After decades of strained ties, Tehran and Cairo have undertaken a slow rapprochement in recent years, with diplomatic exchanges increasing over the past year since the outbreak of the Gaza war. Egypt has historically played a mediator role between Zionist and Palestinian officials, including Iran-backed Hamas. But its efforts along with fellow mediators Qatar and the United States have failed to secure a ceasefire in the war, which has since spread to Lebanon where Iran arms and finances Hezbollah. Araghchi's diplomatic tour, aiming to contain the wars in Gaza and Lebanon from spreading more widely, has already taken him to Lebanon, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Iraq, Oman and Jordan.

He is expected next to visit Turkey, according to the Iranian foreign ministry. Iran's barrage of around 200 missiles was, it said, in retaliation for the killing of two of Iran's closest allies, Hamas political leader Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran and Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah in Beirut, as well as an Iranian general. Iran's Revolutionary Guards chief Hossein Salami on Thursday warned that Iran will hit Zionist entity "painfully" if it attacks Iranian targets. In a call with United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres on Wednesday, Araghchi said Tehran is ready for a "decisive and regretful" response if attacks. — AFP

He also urged drivers to ensure that children are seated in the back for their safety and maintain safety distance to prevent collisions during sudden stops.

On his part, Assistant Director of the Traffic Awareness Department Lieutenant Colonel Abdullah Bo Hassan told KUNA that the department has intensified traffic safety campaigns across various media outlets, including television, radio, print, and social media platforms, to raise awareness on this issue. The new AI cameras are aimed at enhancing road safety by effectively detecting violations and ensuring compliance with traffic laws, he added.

Lieutenant Colonel Bo Hassan emphasized the importance of raising a strong traffic safety culture among drivers, adhering to traffic rules, wearing seatbelts, and avoiding phone use while driving to safeguard themselves and other road users. Director of the Medical Emergency Department at the Ministry of Health, Dr Ahmad Al-Shatti, stated to KUNA that between January 1 and September 30, ambulance services transported 7,774 accidents. Dr Al-Shatti called on the public to follow traffic regulations, avoid using phones while driving, and stay alert so as to protect lives and property. — KUNA



BRUSSELS: Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky (second left) speaks with (from left) Lithuania's President Gitanas Nausėda, Belgium's PM Alexander De Croo and European Council President Charles Michel in Brussels, on October 17, 2024. — AFP

Russian President Vladimir Putin since the invasion are already sufficient to justify seeking a negotiated outcome — rather than letting the war drag on indefinitely. "There are various ways to define victory or to define defeat," said one NATO official.

On the eve of the NATO meeting, German Chan-

cellor Olaf Scholz called for exploring ways to end the war — potentially including talks with Putin. But according to an alliance diplomat, other voices still fear that anything short of an outright victory for Kyiv would spell "disaster" — ensuring that an emboldened Russia does not stop there. — AFP

coming over," she said. University of Sydney historian Cindy McCreery believes the lack of attention being paid to the royal visit is understandable amid worries about war, climate change and the cost of living. "We live in a complex moment with all the global issues," she said. It is "natural to expect a more varied response to the monarchy".

However, decades-long demographic trends are also shaping perceptions. About 36 percent of Australians still identify as "English", the country's largest ancestry, according to a 2021 census. That figure was 10 points higher when the census first asked that question in 1986. About a third of Australians today were born overseas, and the population is steadily becoming more Italian, Greek, Lebanese, Indian or Chinese. "That impacts how Australians connect or do not connect," McCreery said. "In previous royal visits, people may have had a stronger connection to Britain, but a growing number of people may not necessarily have that immediate connection."

Free onboard wifi is latest frontline...

Continued from Page 1

that their high-speed wifi is free. Fabien Pelous, head of client experience at Air France, said the airline's plan to introduce free wifi in 2025 will be a qualitative jump for clients, admitting that the service up to now "was not satisfactory". "We looked at the state of the market, and there are new players, including Starlink, whose latest technologies offer internet quality which is almost equivalent to being at home," Pelous told AFP.

The first experiments began in 2004 with Boeing and Lufthansa, and since then companies such as ViaSat, Panasonic and Thales have developed products that now equip hundreds of planes. Low-orbit satellite constellations such as Starlink were "a game changer", said Seth Miller, owner of PaxEx, a website that covers business travel. Elon Musk's Starlink already outfits planes of Hawaiian Airlines and US domestic carrier JSX.

GCC-EU Summit an opportunity...

Continued from Page 1

and "acting to find an alternative formula for the sake of investing the abundant potentials of our states and set guidance toward the joint destiny and effective partnership in various sectors."

He re-affirmed the adherence to joint action to face the challenges and bolster the strategic partnership among the GCC and EU states, expressing hope of Kuwait, as chair of the GCC in the end of 2024, to see full coordination "with our European partners regarding all issues of joint concern." The Representative of His Highness the Amir, His Highness the Prime Minister conveyed greetings of His Highness the Amir to the EU and GCC leaders.

"We meet today with hopes that our meeting will contribute to building mutual understanding for setting up our relations in a better form," he began the speech, noting that this relationship is necessary to attain mutual interests in the face of rapid global changes with respect of the climatic change, economic jitters, developments in the energy sectors, cyber wars, geopolitical tension and regional conflicts.

On the relations with Iraq, His Highness the Amir's Representative affirmed that Kuwait had aided the neighboring country to restore its regional status and attain its people's aspirations. He called on Baghdad to take tangible measures to tackle pending files namely the demarcation of the maritime borders beyond the point 162, in line with international laws and charters, resolve the file of the prisoners, the missing and the Kuwaiti

properties including the national archive. His Highness the Prime Minister urged Iraq to adhere to bilateral agreements related to security, technical aspects of the waterway at Khor Abdullah; as the "agreements could enhance the concept of conserving the environment, organizing navigation, combating terrorism, illegal trade in arms, narcotics and smuggling," affirming the necessity to pursue dialogue on the basis of mutual respect and understanding.

Turning to the dangerous escalation in the Middle East, he called for an immediate cessation of the airstrikes carried out by Zionist occupation. He renewed Kuwait's principled stand in support of the Palestinian people and their just cause aimed at establishing the independent state to the June 4, 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital. He applauded the European States' decision earlier this year, recognizing the State of Palestine, and urged other European countries to follow suit. His Highness the Amir's Representative acclaimed Riyadh's establishment of the international coalition to execute the two-state settlement, stressed on the necessity of securing navigation via all vital waterways to preserve security in the region and the whole world.

His Highness affirmed Kuwait's unwavering advocacy of the necessity to resolve issues through peaceful means, adhere to the principles of the international law, protecting the global order from disarray, while rejecting double standards. He called for collective action for backing humanitarian and relief efforts in regions witnessing armed conflicts or stricken with catastrophes, renewed the adherence to joint action in the face of challenges and bolstering the partnership between the GCC and the EU. — KUNA

While classic telecommunication satellites orbit as high as 35,000 kilometers from earth, constellation satellites are at just 600 kilometers altitude, greatly reducing latency and allowing for video streaming. "We will no longer be dependent on the movie choices of airlines, we'll be able to access Amazon Prime or Netflix," said Paul Chiambaretto, professor of marketing strategy at Montpellier Business School. And for the carriers, "not just making it free, but also making sure it's a good solution, is sort of the Holy Grail" in terms of client satisfaction and loyalty, said PaxEx's Miller.

However, "free" may be relative, said Joe Leader, director general of the Airline Passenger Experience Association. Delta, United and Air France are only offering free high-speed wifi to members of their loyalty programs. Signing up costs nothing, but the wifi offer provides new marketing opportunities. "Our friends at Delta (have) publicly stated that for every eight new sign-ups for the Delta SkyMiles program, one of those passengers will get the Delta SkyMiles credit card," Leader said. "Effectively, the addition of eight pieces of data and then one new paying customer that gets really brought into the Delta loyalty program via the credit card more than pays for the wifi for the other seven passengers." — AFP

King Charles heads to Australia as nation shrugs

SYDNEY: On the eve of King Charles III's landmark tour Down Under, many of his antipodean subjects are unaware or uninterested — a sign, experts say, of a more diverse and less Anglo-centric Australia. There is no red-white-and-blue bunting around Sydney Harbour, no posters on the city's streets and aside from cries from ardent monarchists and republicans, little chatter about the first visit of a sitting Australian monarch in 13 years.

"I'd forgotten they were even coming," said 73-year-old Sydneysider Trevor Reeves summing up the mood in Australia's largest city. This six-day royal

Hamas chief Sinwar martyred...

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group has not confirmed it. Deif stood accused of planning, with Sinwar, the October 7 attack. With Hamas massively weakened more than a year into the Gaza war, Sinwar's death, would deal a seismic blow to the organization. In a brief statement, the military said that during "operations in the Gaza Strip, three terrorists were eliminated". A Zionist security official told AFP that the military was conducting a DNA test on a militant's body. In a post on X, Defense Minister Yoav Gallant said the country would "reach every terrorist and eliminate them". US President Joe Biden was briefed aboard Air Force One while heading to Germany and was being kept informed of developments, a US official said Thursday.

Zionist entity has been at war with Hamas since the October 7 attack. Zionist retaliatory campaign in Gaza has killed 42,438 people, the majority civilians, according to data from the health ministry in the Hamas-run territory, which the UN considers reliable. Following the attack, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu vowed to crush Hamas and bring home all 251 hostages seized by militants in their cross-border onslaught. Zionist entity has since expanded the scope of its operations to Lebanon, where Hamas ally Hezbollah opened a front by launching low-intensity cross-border strikes that forced tens of thousands to flee their homes.

Netanyahu has vowed to battle Hezbollah until victory, and Zionists on Thursday launched strikes on the south Lebanese city of Tyre, where the militant group and its allies hold sway. Zionist entity also issued evacuation warnings for civilians in parts of Lebanon's eastern Bekaa Valley, a Hezbollah stronghold. It had earlier struck a Hezbollah target in Syria, according to a war monitor, while Zionist main ally the United States used

AI cameras target reckless drivers...

Continued from Page 1

93 percent of traffic accidents during this period were caused by distracting driving, while 7 percent were due to other factors, totaling 3,100,638 violations recorded in the first half of 2024. Director of Traffic Awareness Department Colonel Fahad Al-Issa told KUNA that one of the main causes of distraction while driving is the use of a phone. He confirmed that in the first half of 2024, there were over 30,000 violations for phone use while driving.

Artificial intelligence (AI) cameras have been installed to monitor seatbelt use and phone use while driving; there are currently 252 of these cameras spread across the six governorates, aimed at checking traffic violations and ensuring the safety of both citizens and residents, Colonel Al-Issa added. He stressed the importance of wearing seatbelts, avoiding speeding, and using phones while driving.

International

Bangladesh court issues arrest warrant for ex-leader Hasina

Awami League leader, 44 others also wanted by court

DHAKA: A Bangladeshi court on Thursday issued an arrest warrant for exiled ex-leader Sheikh Hasina, who fled to India in August after she was toppled from power by a student-led revolution. Prosecutor Mohammad Tajul Islam called it a "remarkable day", while a relative of one of the hundreds who died in the uprising against her autocratic rule said they were "looking forward" to the trial.

Hasina's 15-year rule saw widespread human rights abuses, including the mass detention and extrajudicial killings of her political opponents. "The court has... ordered the arrest of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina, and to produce her in court on November 18," Islam, chief prosecutor of Bangladesh's International Crimes Tribunal (ICT), told reporters.

"Sheikh Hasina was at the helm of those who committed massacres, killings and crimes against humanity in July to August", Islam said. The court also issued an arrest warrant for Obaidul Quader, the fugitive former general secretary of Hasina's Awami League party, as well as 44 others, who were not named. Dozens of Hasina's allies were taken into custody after her regime collapsed, accused of culpability in a police crackdown that killed more than 700 people during the unrest that deposed her.

Former cabinet ministers and other senior members of her Awami League party have been arrested, and her government's appointees were purged from courts and the central bank. Hasina, however, has not been seen in public since fleeing Bangladesh by helicopter.

The 77-year-old's last official whereabouts are a

military airbase near India's capital New Delhi. Her presence in India — her former biggest benefactor — has infuriated the new interim government in Bangladesh. Dhaka has revoked her diplomatic passport, and the countries have a bilateral extradition treaty which would permit her return to face criminal trial.

A clause in the treaty, however, says extradition might be refused if the offence is of a "political character". Among those in court were family members of Sajib Sarkar, a medic killed in July during the protests against Hasina. "We want the government to take the initiative to bring back the former prime minister as soon as possible and hold her accountable," his sister, Sumaiya Sarkar, told AFP. "We are looking forward to a fair trial."

The ICT is a deeply contentious war crimes court Hasina's government set up in 2010 to probe atrocities during the 1971 independence war from Pakistan.

The United Nations and rights groups criticized its procedural shortcomings, and it became widely seen as a means for Hasina to eliminate political opponents. Several cases accusing Hasina of orchestrating the "mass murder" of protesters are being probed by the court. Hasina was replaced by Nobel Peace Prize winner Muhammad Yunus. The 84-year-old microfinance pioneer is leading a temporary administration, to tackle what he has called the "extremely tough" challenge of restoring democratic institutions. Yunus said he had inherited a "completely broken down" system of public administration and justice that needs a comprehensive overhaul to prevent a future return to autocracy. — AFP



DHAKA: Chief Prosecutor of the International Crimes Tribunal (ICT), Advocate Tajul Islam addresses the media in Dhaka on October 17, 2024. — AFP

UK Foreign Secy Lammy to visit China this week

BEIJING: British Foreign Secretary David Lammy will visit China this week, Beijing said Thursday, marking the first by a senior UK official since the election of Prime Minister Keir Starmer in July.

China and Britain are seeking to reset ties frayed in recent years by Beijing's security crackdown in Hong Kong and human rights concerns in regions including its troubled Xinjiang region. Beijing's foreign ministry spokeswoman Mao Ning said that Lammy "will pay an official visit to China from October 18 to 19". The two sides would "have in-depth exchanges on implementing the consensus reached by their leaders" during an August phone call, Mao said at a regular press briefing in Beijing.

"China and the UK are both permanent members of the UN Security Council and major world economies," Mao said. "The long-term stable development of bilateral relations accords with the common interests of both countries," she added.

Beijing hoped to "boost strategic mutual trust and strengthen dialogue and cooperation in all fields", Mao told reporters. "China is willing to work with the UK to uphold our position as partners, maintain openness and cooperation... and push for the sound and steady development of China-UK relations," she said.

In 2015, Britain's then-prime minister David Cameron hailed a "Golden Age" of ties between London and Beijing, but relations have deteriorated significantly in recent years. The UK has criticized Beijing's imposition of sweeping national security legislation in Hong Kong in 2020 following months of pro-democracy protests in the former British colony. London views the move as eroding the city's rights and freedoms, but Beijing counters that it has restored peace and prosperity to the financial hub after its stability was undermined.

Ahead of the trip, Starmer called for the jailed tycoon Jimmy Lai to be freed from prison in Hong Kong, where the pro-democracy campaigner faces trial. Last week, Lai's legal team told reporters in London that they hoped Lammy would put the case "front and centre" during his visit. And a litany of other concerns have also hampered bilateral ties. The two countries have argued over China's treatment of minorities in Xinjiang — where Beijing is accused of detaining around one million Uyghur Muslims — and over human rights in Tibet. — AFP

North Korea says South a 'hostile' state

SEOUL: North Korea said Thursday that its constitution now defines the South as a "hostile" state, the first time Pyongyang has confirmed legal changes called for by leader Kim Jong Un earlier this year. Relations between the two Koreas have deteriorated since Kim in January defined Seoul as his country's "principal enemy" and said the North was no longer interested in reunification.

After months of laying fresh mines and ramping up security on the border, the country this week blew up roads and railways linking it to the South, calling it "an inevitable and legitimate measure", the official Korean Central News Agency said. The move was "taken in keeping with the requirement of the DPRK Constitution, which clearly defines the ROK (South Korea) as a hostile state," KCNA said, the first time the North has mentioned a revision of its basic law.

The country last week held a key meeting of its rubber-stamp parliament, where experts had widely expected the constitution to be revised after Kim's explicit call for it in January. Under a 1991 inter-Korean accord, relations between the North and South had been defined as a "special relationship" rather than state-to-state relations, part of a process aimed at eventual reunification.

South Korea's military on Tuesday released video

footage of North Korean soldiers dynamiting deeply symbolic roads and railways connecting the two Koreas, days after Pyongyang's military had vowed to "permanently" seal the border with the South. North Korea said that sections of the key inter-Korean roads and railways had "been completely blocked through blasting".

The detonations may have been done for domestic propaganda reasons, experts have said, with some pointing out that Pyongyang appeared to have used South Korean military images in its media coverage of the event. Pyongyang's major ally China on Thursday urged a "political settlement process to the peninsula issue" spokeswoman Mao Ning said. Beijing is North Korea's main diplomatic ally and economic backer, and also a major trade partner of the South.

"The ongoing commitment to fortifying the southern border seems to reflect an intention to permanently solidify hostilities with the enemy state," Yang Moo-jin, president of the University of North Korean Studies in Seoul, told AFP. Near the inter-Korean border in Paju, South Korean small business owner You Dong-woo, 76, told AFP he initially thought North Korea's road explosions were "just a show".

"After thinking about it more and seeing them blowing up roads and railroads, I became concerned," he said. "At our age, we don't have much to worry about. But if something like a war breaks out, our children will be the first to come to my mind." Construction worker Moon Byung-soo told AFP he was concerned about the risk of a major escalation, as the North was "talking bluntly about using nuclear weapons on South Korea". — AFP



PAJU, South Korea: A general view shows some of the remaining damaged piers of the Dokgae Bridge, destroyed during the Korean War, at the Imjingak peace park near the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) dividing the two Koreas in Paju on October 17, 2024. — AFP

Nobel winner Han Kang hopes daily life 'won't change much'

SEOUL: Author Han Kang, the first South Korean to win the Nobel Prize for Literature said Thursday that she hoped her daily life would not change too much after her historic honor.

The short story writer and novelist is best known overseas for her Man Booker Prize-winning "The Vegetarian", her first novel translated into English. The 53-year-old, who also became the first Asian woman author to win the Nobel, was chosen "for her intense poetic prose that confronts historical traumas and exposes the fragility of human life", the Swedish Academy said last week. Winning the Nobel was "a joyful and thankful moment, and I quietly celebrated that night," she said at an award event in Seoul.

Han's win has created a sensation in South Korea, with the websites of major bookstores and publishing houses crashing after it was announced, as tens of thousands rushed to order her books. "The past week, filled with so many people



SEOUL: South Korean author Han Kang, who won the 2024 Nobel Prize in Literature, attends the Pony Chung Innovation Award ceremony in Seoul on October 17, 2024. — AFP

sharing in my joy as if it were their own, will be remembered as a special and moving experience for me," she said. As of Wednesday morning, at least 1.06 million copies, including e-books, had been sold since last Thursday's Nobel announcement, with bookshops telling AFP her sales were "unprecedented" and had dramatically boosted sales of South Korean literature as a whole.

The writer said that she hoped she would be able to continue her normal routines, focused on writing.

"I hope and believe that my daily life won't change too much," she said. "I'm someone who connects with the world through the writing I do, and I hope to continue writing and meeting readers through my books, just as I've always done." "I don't drink alcohol. Recently, I've stopped consuming all caffeine, including coffee, for health reasons. I rarely travel anymore, something I once enjoyed. In other words, I'm often asked, 'What do you find fun in life?' Instead, I enjoy walking."

She said she was currently working on finishing a novel she started in the spring, which she hoped would be ready for release next year. "But since I often misjudge the timing of my own writing, I can't give a firm answer on when exactly it will be completed," she added.

She has three more books in mind to write, she said, adding she hoped to devote the next six years of her life - before she turns 60 - to them. "However, just as it has always been, I suspect that as I write these, I'll come up with ideas for more books, and I'll never stop thinking about the books I want to write," she said. "This makes me worry that I might not even be able to die properly, always haunted by the thought of the next three books I want to write." — AFP

News in Brief

India flight from Frankfurt hit with latest fake threat

BENGALURU: The latest in a string of hoax threats made against Indian airlines targeted a flight from Germany, the airline said Thursday, with the plane landing safely in Mumbai. More than a dozen fake bomb threats have been made against flights operated by multiple Indian air services this week, prompting government and civil aviation authorities to warn that "very strict action" will be taken. India's Vistara airline said Thursday that its passenger jet flying from Frankfurt to Mumbai the day before had received a "security threat" on social media, but landed safely at its planned destination. — AFP

Bus accident in Turkey injures 22

ISTANBUL: At least 22 people were injured in western Turkey on Thursday when a tour bus with Japanese tourists onboard overturned on a highway, media reported. One of them was seriously injured as the bus went out of control, the DHA news agency said. It was not immediately clear how many passengers were onboard. The injured were taken to nearby hospitals, the news agency added. Bus travel is a popular mode of transport in Turkey and accidents are fairly common. — AFP

Chad president ousts top security officials

N'DJAMENA, Chad: Chadian President Mahamat Idriss Deby Itno has removed several high-ranking defense and security officials from their posts, days after dismissing the security minister. A presidential decree declared late Wednesday that the director generals of both the police and military police, the chiefs of general staff of the armed forces as well as the commanders of the national nomadic guard had all been "called to other functions". It follows Saturday's announcement on state television that Security Minister Mahamat Charfadine Margui had been replaced by a general, Ali Ahmat Akhabache. — AFP

Body of missing French teenager found after 13-month search

STRASBOURG: The body of a French teenager who went missing 13 months ago has been found after a long police search halfway across the country from where she was last seen, authorities have announced. Police had been searching for the 15-year-old — referred to only as "Lina" in French media — since her mysterious disappearance on September 23 last year. They had amassed thousands of reports, conducted hundreds of interviews and analyzed hundreds of vehicles. — AFP

UK police probe parcel fire after Russian sabotage fears

LONDON: UK anti-terrorism police on Thursday said they were investigating how a parcel burst into flames at a depot earlier this year, after a similar case in Germany blamed on Russia. The incident at a DHL warehouse near Birmingham, central England, happened on July 22. No one was injured in the fire, which was put out by staff and the fire brigade. According to The Guardian newspaper, which first reported the investigation, the parcel had been sent by air. — AFP

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2024

'Staggering' unemployment in Gaza a year after war: UN

Nearly 100% of Gaza population plunged into poverty: ILO



DEIR EL-BALAH, Palestinian Territories: A Palestinian child eats at a makeshift camp for the internally displaced in Deir El-Balah in the central Gaza Strip on October 17, 2024. — AFP

GENEVA: More than a year into Zionist entity's war against Hamas, "nearly 100 percent" of Gaza's population has been plunged into poverty with a ruined economy and "staggering" unemployment, the UN said Thursday.

In the occupied West Bank, where violence has also surged since October 7, the situation "has been equally concerning", the UN's International Labour Organization said. "The impact of the war in the Gaza Strip has taken a toll far beyond loss of life, desperate humanitarian conditions and physical destruction," Ruba Jaradat, ILO's regional director for Arab States, said in a statement.

"It has fundamentally altered the socioeconomic landscape of Gaza," she warned. "The impact will be felt for generations to come." In the Gaza Strip, "nearly 100 percent of the population now lives in poverty", ILO said. It warned that "the significant economic contraction in the West Bank is

estimated to have more than doubled the short-term poverty rate, rising from 12 percent in 2023 to 28 percent by mid-2024". Unemployment in the West Bank surged to nearly 35 percent since last October, "while in Gaza it averaged a staggering 79.7 percent", ILO said.

The agency said the wider economic toll had also been "unprecedented" across the occupied Palestinian territories. The West Bank saw gross domestic product contract by 21.7 percent year-on-year, while GDP in the Gaza Strip nosedived 84.7 percent, it said.

Zionist entity attacks have killed at least 42,409 people, the majority civilians, according to figures from the health ministry in the Hamas-run territory, which the UN considers reliable. These figures also "reflect the shutdown of most economic activities in Gaza due to the destruction of homes and infrastructure, and the recurring displacement

of workers and employers", ILO said. "This has led either to complete termination of work or to a predominance of informal and irregular work."

ILO said Gazans were also grappling with soaring prices, with year-on-year inflation reaching a whopping 248 percent in August. On Wednesday, the United Nations again warned of the risk of a full-blown famine in the besieged territory. The situation is also increasingly dire in the West Bank.

"Zionist entity barriers to movement of persons and goods, coupled with broader trade restrictions and supply chain disruptions, have severely impacted the economy", ILO said. "The closure of the Zionist entity labor market to Palestinian workers has further strained livelihoods," it added. Zionist entity troops or settlers have killed more than 738 Palestinians there in the past year, according to the Ramallah-based health ministry. — AFP

China to almost double support for housing projects

BEIJING: China said Thursday it would boost credit available for unfinished housing projects to more than \$500 billion as it unveiled another round of measures to shore up the sector and try to reignite the economy. The real-estate sector has long accounted for around a quarter of gross domestic product and experienced dazzling growth for two decades but a years-long housing slump has battered growth as authorities eye a target of around five percent for 2024.

At a briefing, housing minister Ni Hong offered fresh help, saying Beijing will "increase the credit scale of white-list projects to four trillion" yuan (\$562 billion) by the end of the year, up from more than two trillion. The "white list" scheme, announced earlier this year, pushes local authorities to recommend housing projects for financial support and work with banks to ensure their completion.

"The urban real-estate financing coordination mechanism should strive to include all eligible real-estate projects in the white-list," Ni said. "An additional one million worn-out homes... will be renovated," he added. "There are many safety hazards and poor living environments in urban villages, and people are eager to renovate." The move, he said, would "be conducive to absorbing the existing stock of commercial housing".

China's leadership last month warned the economy was being plagued by "new problems" as officials unveiled a raft of stimulus in one of the biggest drives to boost growth for years. Among the measures were a string of interest rate cuts, the loosening of restrictions on home-buying and moves to free up cash for banks to lend more.

On Thursday, Beijing said it estimated that "existing mortgage rates will fall by an average of about



HUAIAN, China: This aerial photo shows a general view of a residential housing complex under construction in Huaian, in eastern China's Jiangsu province on October 17, 2024. — AFP

0.5 percentage points" under those cuts. That, central bank deputy governor Tao Ling said, would "save 150 billion yuan in interest expenditure overall, benefitting 50 million families and 150 million residents". A blistering market rally fuelled by hopes of major stimulus has faltered as authorities refrained from providing a specific figure or fleshing out any of the plans.

A number of major cities have also in recent months eased house-buying restrictions — most recently this week in Chengdu, the capital of southwestern province of Sichuan, and the northern port

city of Tianjin. The latest announcement comes as China prepares to release third-quarter growth data Friday, which is forecast to be the slowest this year.

Hong Kong shed one percent and Shanghai a little more than that, having started the day on a strong note, with property stocks — which had rocketed in the wake of the initial round of measures — tumbling. "They're still trying to talk the talk, with more noise about stabilizing the property market," Stephen Innes, Managing Partner at SPI Asset Management, said in a note. — AFP

WB president unveils simplified 'scorecard' to gauge progress

WASHINGTON: The president of the World Bank unveiled a new simplified corporate "scorecard" Thursday to measure its progress, ahead of a gathering of global financial leaders in Washington next week. The Bank's new "yardstick of accountability" has reduced the number of indica-

tors from around 150 to just 22, Ajay Banga told reporters, adding that the simplified set of indicators should make it easier to evaluate progress. "It's much more oriented on output," he said. "It's not about reducing our ambition. It's about sharpening our focus."

Ahead of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund's semi-annual gathering of senior financial policymakers in Washington next week, Banga also took stock of the reforms the development lender has made to become "bigger" and "better" since he took office in June last year. He lauded the World Bank's progress to decrease the average time it takes to get a new project off the ground from 19

months to 16 — halfway toward its goal to reduce it to 12 months. Banga also praised efforts to simplify the Washington-based lender's operations and to spur its different parts to collaborate more effectively on projects. "Obviously, there's more work to do, but I'm encouraged that we're moving in the right direction," he said. — AFP



Ajaypal Banga



Christine Lagarde

ECB slashes rates again as eurozone economy stagnates

FRANKFURT: The European Central Bank cut interest rates for the third time this year on Thursday, pointing out that inflation in the euro zone is now increasingly under control and the economic outlook has worsened. The first back-to-back rate cut in 13 years marks a shift in focus for the euro zone's central bank from bringing down inflation to protecting economic growth, which has lagged far behind that of the United States for two years straight.

"The incoming information on inflation shows that the disinflationary process is well on track," the ECB said. "The inflation outlook is also affected by recent downside surprises in indicators of economic activity." The latest economic data is likely to have tilted the balance within the ECB in favor of a rate cut, with business activity and sentiment surveys as well as the inflation reading for September all coming in slightly lower than expected.

The quarter-point cut lowers the rate that the ECB pays on banks' deposits to 3.25 percent. Money markets are almost fully pricing in three further reductions through next March. The ECB did not provide any indication about future moves in its statement, instead repeating its mantra that decisions will be made "meeting by meeting" based on incoming data.

"The Governing Council...will keep policy rates sufficiently restrictive for as long as necessary," the ECB said. The euro edged up after the decision which had been well flagged by a number of ECB speakers including President Christine Lagarde. Investors will monitor Lagarde's regular news conference from 12:45 GMT for any hint about the future path for rates.

The ECB can finally claim it has all but tamed the worst bout of inflation in at least a generation. Prices grew by just 1.7 percent last month, falling below the bank's 2 percent target for the first time in three years. While inflation may edge above 2 percent by the end of this year, it is expected to hover around that level for the foreseeable future. The ECB noted pay hikes are still supporting "domestic inflation" — that is growth in the price of services and goods that don't rely much on imports — but this too was waning. "Domestic inflation remains high, as wages are still rising at an elevated pace," it said. "At the same time, labor cost pressures are set to continue easing gradually, with profits partially buffering their impact on inflation." — Reuters

Business

Gulf Bank rewards 100 winners with KD 1,000 each in new AlDanah Millionaire Account draw

KUWAIT: As part of its commitment to rewarding customers, Gulf Bank has announced 100 winners in the AlDanah Millionaire Account's latest prize draw, with each winner receiving a KD 1,000 reward. This marks the first time the bank has distributed the quarterly prize of KD 100,000 among 100 winners, rather than awarding the full amount to just one individual.

On this occasion, Bader Al-Ali, Acting General Manager of Consumer Banking at Gulf Bank, congratulated the 100 winners and wished other AlDanah Millionaire Account holders the best of luck in upcoming draws across all categories.

Al-Ali noted that customers who did not win this time will still have numerous opportunities to participate in upcoming draws, leading up to the grand prize of KD 2 million, which will be drawn on January 30, 2025. The final date for deposit and participation



- Bader Al-Ali: Congratulations to the 100 winners, we wish the best of luck to all other customers in the upcoming KD 2 million draw on January 30, 2025.
- The bank is committed to making generous investments to deliver an exceptional banking experience for customers through its advanced digital capabilities.



- Najla Aleisa: The decision to distribute the quarterly prize among 100 winners was made in response to customer feedback.
- We are excited to keep rewarding our customers for saving with the AlDanah Millionaire account and increasing their chances of winning.

continue depositing to increase their chances of winning in the many draws held throughout the year."

Earlier, Gulf Bank revised the AlDanah Millionaire Account draw schedule twice. The first change increased the grand prize from KD 1.5 million to KD 2 million, while the second change involved distributing the quarterly KD 100,000 prize among 100 winners rather than just one. The revised schedule now includes two major millionaire draws annually: the grand prize draw for KD 2 million and the semi-annual draw for KD 1 million. Additionally, there will be 10 winners in the monthly draws, each receiving KD 1,000, and another draw distributing KD 100,000 among 100 winners, with each receiving KD 1,000. The AlDanah account is one of the top savings accounts in Kuwait,

offering regular draws with valuable prizes and numerous benefits for account holders. Each month, 10 winners receive KD 1,000. Additionally, there are two quarterly draws of KD 100,000 each, a semi-annual draw with a prize of KD 1 million, and an annual grand prize draw of KD 2 million.

One of the key features of the AlDanah Account is that it is the only account in Kuwait that transfers your chances of winning from the previous year to the next, as part of the bank's loyalty rewards program. To increase the chances of winning, customers are encouraged to maintain a minimum balance of KD 200 or increase their deposit to continuously enhance their chances of winning in the monthly, quarterly, and annual draws. Gulf Bank aims to be Ku-

wait'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 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.



Official from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry during the draw.

in the draw is November 30, 2024.

He affirmed that the bank will continue to invest generously to provide an exceptional customer experience through its advanced digital capabilities, and by enhancing the skills of its employees – in line with its strategy to establish Gulf Bank as the "Bank of the Future."

Gulf Bank's Chief Marketing Officer, Najla Aleisa, explained, "The bank's decision to distribute the quarterly prize among 100 winners came in response to customer feedback. We are committed to regularly gathering our customers' opinions and suggestions to improve our products and services in line with their needs." She continued, "For more than 25 years, the AlDanah Millionaire account has enabled us to build strong customer relationships and achieve significant milestones, reinforcing our commitment to sustainability and supporting impactful community initiatives and events."

Aleisa concluded, "We are excited to keep rewarding our customers for saving with the AlDanah Millionaire account and encourage everyone to con-



Bader Al-Ali (center) poses for a group photo with Gulf Bank officials.

AlDanah
Power Your Dreams

Kuwait's largest number of draws!

Congratulations to the 100 lucky winners of KD1,000 each.

1. ALI MULA AHMAD ABDULLA ALI
2. AFTAB MURAD GIRI
3. ABD ALHADI JASAM IBRAHEM AL SIRAFE
4. ABDELKHALEQ HASHEM KHUOHEER
5. ABDULAZIZ FAHAD MAATOUQ ALASLAWI
6. ABDULAZIZ HUMOUD AZIZ TURKI
7. ABDULAZIZ SWAYAN RASHED ALAZEMI
8. ABDULLA JASEM MOHAMMED ALHAMAR
9. ABDULMOHSEN ABDULSAMAD TAQI ALSAFFAR
10. ABDULWAHAB MUSAEED ABDULAZIZ ALYASSEEN - MINOR
11. ABEER MOHAMMED ABDULLAH ALRABAH
12. AHLAM SABT ALI MOHAMMED
13. AHMAD FUAD ALI ALBARRAK
14. AHMAD REYAD AHMAD ALSAYEGH
15. AHMED AWAD AL ASOUSEY
16. ALEYAH MOHAMMAD ALI DASHTI
17. ALI ABDULAZIZ ALI SAFFAR - MINOR

18. ALI ABDULGHAFAR MOHAMMED ITSH
19. ALI ADEL MOHAMMED AL MATROOK
20. ALI HASHEM SAYED ALALAWI
21. ALI MALEK RAHEEM DASHTI
22. ALI MOHAMMAD HAMMOUD
23. ALI SAYER SALEM ALSHAMMARI
24. AMAL RASHED ABDULLA ALSHAMALI
25. AMEENAH AHMED ABDULNABI JAFAR
26. ANWAR ABDULHAMID AHMAD HUSSEIN
27. ASIA HUMOUD MARZOUQ ALSHAMMARI
28. AYUB YOUSEF ALI KAMAL
29. AZHAR MOSTAFA ABED ALI ALJADI
30. BABAR MUHAMMAD HANIF
31. BADER GHUNAIM MOTHKER AL OTAIBI
32. BASEL ABDULMAJEED SUWAYED ALNASSAR
33. DALAL ABDULLAH ABDULLATEEF ALRUJAIB
34. DARRA FAWZI ABULRAHMAN ALJODER

35. EL-SAYED MOHAMMED ABED ELRAHMAN ZEINA
36. EMAD DAWOOD JAMAAN ALAWADH
37. FAHAD ABDULLAH FAHAD ALANBEEI
38. FALAH ABDULRASOOL ABDULREDA BEYBEHANI
39. FARES SADEQ HUSSAIN BOSHEHRI
40. FATEMAH ABDULLAH TAQI ASHKANANI
41. FAWZIAH ABDULLA IBRAHIM BUTEEBAN
42. FERAS MAHMOUD ABED ODEH
43. FOTOUH ABDULAZIZ AHMAD ALRAQUM
44. HALA MAAROUF ALHUSSAIN
45. HANADI ABDULLATEEF FARHAN ALDOUKHI
46. HANAN YOUSEF ABDULLA ALHABEED
47. JANA ALI HUSSAIN ALSAFFAR - MINOR
48. JARRAH NASER IBRAHIM ALSABAH
49. JASEM HAYDER ABAS REDHA
50. JESSICA MAHER YAZJI
51. KAID FAKHRUDDIN ABDOULQADER

52. KAIRAV VIJAY KUMAR SHARMA
53. KANEZA AWAD BLOSHI
54. KHALED HUSSAIN ABDALRASOUL AL FAILAKAWI
55. KHALED ABDULNABI AWADH BEHBEHANI
56. KHALED MAHMOUD MOHYI ALDEEN AHMADI
57. KHALED SAAD DAGHMI ALRASHEEDI
58. LAHOOD OBYAN NAHAITER
59. LAILA SALEH ALI ALDOUSARI
60. LAYLA MOHAMMED HUSSAIN ALSHAMKHANI
61. MALEHA ABDULRAZAQ ALWAZZAN
62. MANAL MANSOOR ALI JAMAL
63. MARIAM ABDULWAHAB MOHAMMAD ALQALLAF
64. MARIAM MOHAMMAD SAAD ALHOUSHAH
65. MASOUMAH ALI BASHEER
66. MEJBEL KHALEEL MEFDIH ALNEZI - MINOR
67. MOHAMED ABDULAZIZ THAHER ALMUTAIRI - MINOR
68. MOHAMED SABRY ABDELKADER ABDELMAJDEED

69. MOHAMMAD ABDULLAH ESSA BOUALIYAN
70. MOHAMMAD ABDULRAHMAN AHMAD MOHAMMAD
71. MOHAMMAD ESMAEIL ESMAEILI
72. MOHAMMAD HUSSAIN ALI ASHKANANI
73. MOHAMMAD SAOUD NAMSHAN ALNAMSHAN
74. MOHAMMED AHMAD TALEB TALEB
75. MOHAMMED FADHEL HABIIB ALSARAF
76. MOHAMMED REDHA MOHD MOHAMMED
77. MOHD ABBAS ABOUD FADEL ALROUDHAN
78. MOSAAD AHMAD MOHAMMAD SHAMSALDEEN
79. MUBARAK ABDULLAH FAHAD AL MUTAIRI
80. MUNIR YOUSEF THAKUR
81. NASR SALEM HASSAN ALHEID
82. NOOR MOHAMMED ABDULMUHSIN ALSAAD - MINOR
83. NOUR MERDHI SABAH ALFADGHAM
84. NOURA ABDULLAH FAYEZ ALAJMI
85. OMAR ELDAHE IBRAHIM ALI

86. OSSEILAH MUBARAK SHALHOUB
87. PRATHEESH PADINHARE VEEDU KARTHANAM
88. RABAB MOHD ISMAEIL KAMAL
89. RASHIDABEN MAHBUB MALPURWALA
90. RIMAH OBAID MOHAMMAD ALDHAFERI
91. SAMEH MOHMMED MOHMMED ABO ALMAATI
92. SANIA SHOEIB MOHAMMED MOHAMMED
93. SHAHLA JAMIL DRIS FALAH
94. SUAD SALEH ALI ALKHATEEB
95. TAREQ HILAL HASSAN ALDWAIRHE
96. WAFEEQAH AHMAD HASAN AL SAEED
97. WENDY BEDDISON
98. ZAHRA GABBAR ABBAS
99. ZAINAB ABDULSALAM AREF
100. ZANIB ABEDALI MOHAMMAD ALBLOUSHI

Don't miss your chance to be a multi-millionaire! The closing date for the AlDanah KD2,000,000 draw is 30th November 2024. There's still time to deposit more and increase your chances of winning. Remember the more you save, the greater the opportunity to win with Gulf Bank, Kuwait's most rewarding bank.

*Terms & conditions apply 331214660



View the names of all 100 winners
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NBK Economic Insight

UAE's economic growth remains robust on reforms, investments

Property market strength intact • Inflation contained

KUWAIT: The UAE's economic outlook for 2025 is positive, supported by ongoing infrastructure development plans including to raise oil and gas production capacity, a still-buoyant real estate and construction sector and surging tourism. The rollout of various economic initiatives and strategies over the past three years, including foreign ownership and visa reforms, have transformed the UAE into a major recipient of FDI inflows, ranking first among the MENA countries in 2023 according UNCTAD, while doubling the number of registered companies to more than a million since 2020. Moreover, helped by a growing network of trade agreements, external trade grew by 21 percent in 2021-2023, exceeding the 8.5 percent yearly growth target of the authorities' 2031 "We the UAE" vision.

The non-oil economy is expected to see another year of 4 percent+ growth in 2025. The robust expansion in private credit recorded in 2024 (+6.9 percent y/y in June) and higher investment inflows, which have partly been channeled through the financial and real estate markets – the Dubai equity market was up 8.5 percent in Q1-Q3 2024 while Dubai real estate sales rose 30 percent y/y – are likely to be key drivers of domestic demand in 2025 as well. Looser monetary policy, relatively low inflation and a rising population should also be supportive of consumer activity over the forecast period.

The oil sector is poised to rebound in 2025 (+7.8 percent) after lackluster growth in 2024 (+0.4 percent), as OPEC+ commences unwinding its production cuts from December 2024. Output should reach 3.4 mb/d by end-2025. At the rate that state-owned ADNOC and its partners are ramping up \$30 billion of upstream oil and gas projects (MEED estimates), the UAE is likely to reach its 5 mb/d production capacity target one year early, in 2026. In sum, total GDP growth could accelerate to 5.1 percent in 2025 from an expected 3.3 percent this year. Robust as this is, however, it is still below the 7.2 percent annual average growth rate the government requires to achieve vision 2031 target of a doubling in GDP by 2031.

Property market

Real estate market strength has persisted due to the influx of expatriate workers and foreign investment, given its status as a safe haven for funds. Dubai real estate sales reached AED 375 billion (\$102 billion) in Q1-Q3 2024 (+30 percent y/y), easing from the 62 percent y/y seen in the same period of 2023. A further easing from these exceptional rates is seen

Table 1: Key economic indicators

		2021	2022	2023*	2024*	2025*
Nominal GDP	\$ bn	415	503	514	524	548
Real GDP	% y/y	4.4	7.5	3.6	3.3	5.1
- Oil sector	% y/y	-1.1	8.5	-3.1	0.4	7.8
- Non-oil sector	% y/y	6.5	7.1	6.2	4.3	4.3
Inflation (avg.)	% y/y	-0.1	4.8	1.6	2.2	2.4
Fiscal balance	% of GDP	4.0	10.0	4.5	3.1	1.0
Current acc. balance	% of GDP	11.6	13.0	4.3	4.2	2.9

Source: Official sources, NBK forecasts

Chart 2: Residential real estate prices (% y/y)

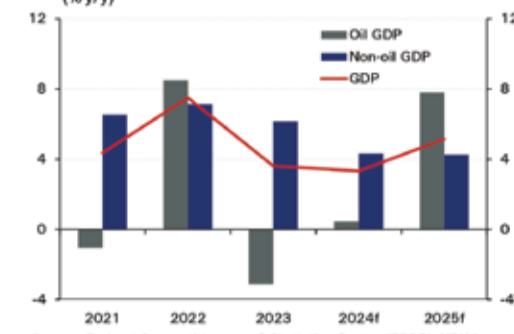


Source: REIDIN, NBK estimates

through 2025, while growth in real estate prices for 2025 should also moderate (currently +20 percent y/y in Dubai; +8 percent in Abu Dhabi Jan-Sep 2024), helped by increased unit supply. However, interest rate cuts should stimulate demand further, especially luxury apartments given their relatively lower valuations and potential for higher returns. Meanwhile, consumer price inflation is expected to edge slightly higher from 2.2 percent (average) this year to 2.4 percent in 2025 – still low against a backdrop of robust economic growth.

We see scope for rising supply to cap growth in housing rents following the strong performance witnessed this year (+6.5 percent y/y Jan-Aug in Dubai), while transportation costs would decline due to lower fuel prices in 2025 given our projection of lower oil prices.

Chart 1: Real GDP (% y/y)



Source: Federal Competitiveness & Statistics Centre (FCSC), NBK forecasts

Fiscal surplus to narrow

The government's fiscal position remains solid compared to some GCC peers, but continued high outlays and lower oil prices over the forecast period will see the surplus narrow from 3.1 percent this year to 1 percent of GDP in 2025. The federal UAE and Dubai budgets earmark higher spending allocations for 2025 (+11.5 percent budget-on-budget to AED 72 billion and +5.8 percent to AED 84 billion, respectively), a sign of intent for the authorities as they proceed with ambitious investment and infrastructure plans. Government debt will continue to fall over the forecast period, from 31 percent of GDP in 2023, according to the IMF, to 27 percent of GDP by end-2025. The moderate government debt level, strong net external asset position (ADIA, Mubadala, DIF, EIA assets at \$1.5 trillion, or 280 percent of GDP), and strong increases in non-oil exports and tourism should preserve the sovereign's high credit rating, recently reaffirmed with a stable outlook by rating agency Fitch at "AA" for Abu Dhabi and "AA-" for the UAE.

Geopolitical tensions

The expansionary stance of the local and federal budgets, upcoming interest rate cuts, large construction projects, and the expected rise in oil production provide a solid foundation for the economic outlook. But key downside risks include a potential escalation in regional conflicts, which could deter investment, or a downturn in the global economy. The latter would translate into lower oil prices and could have a larger impact on the UAE's non-oil activity compared to peers given its more internationally-integrated (and exposed) economy.

US retail sales pick up pace in September

WASHINGTON: Retail sales in the United States accelerated in September, according to government data released Thursday, even as auto and gas station sales remained tepid for the month—a positive sign as the election approaches. Overall sales rose 0.4 percent to \$714.4 billion between August and September, according to Commerce Department data, beating analysts' expectations.

In August, sales edged up just 0.1 percent to \$711.3 billion. Excluding auto and gas station sales, the overall monthly rise would have been even higher at 0.7 percent in September, the report added. While the US central bank had kept interest rates high for a large part of the year—raising the cost of borrowing for households and businesses to tamp down inflation — consumer spending has been more robust than expected.

Households have been drawing down on savings from the COVID-19 pandemic period, and the economy could be given a further boost with the Federal Reserve starting to lower rates more recently. Compared with the same month a year ago, retail sales were up 1.7 percent in September.

Pantheon Macroeconomics noted in a recent report that "with growth in labor income slowing, credit conditions remaining tight and households recently having exhausted their excess savings, we expect growth to slow sharply over the next couple of quarters."

Pantheon analysts added that "Hurricane Helene probably landed too late in the month" to have an impact on the sales figures, "and was too localized to have a major impact on national sales." — AFP

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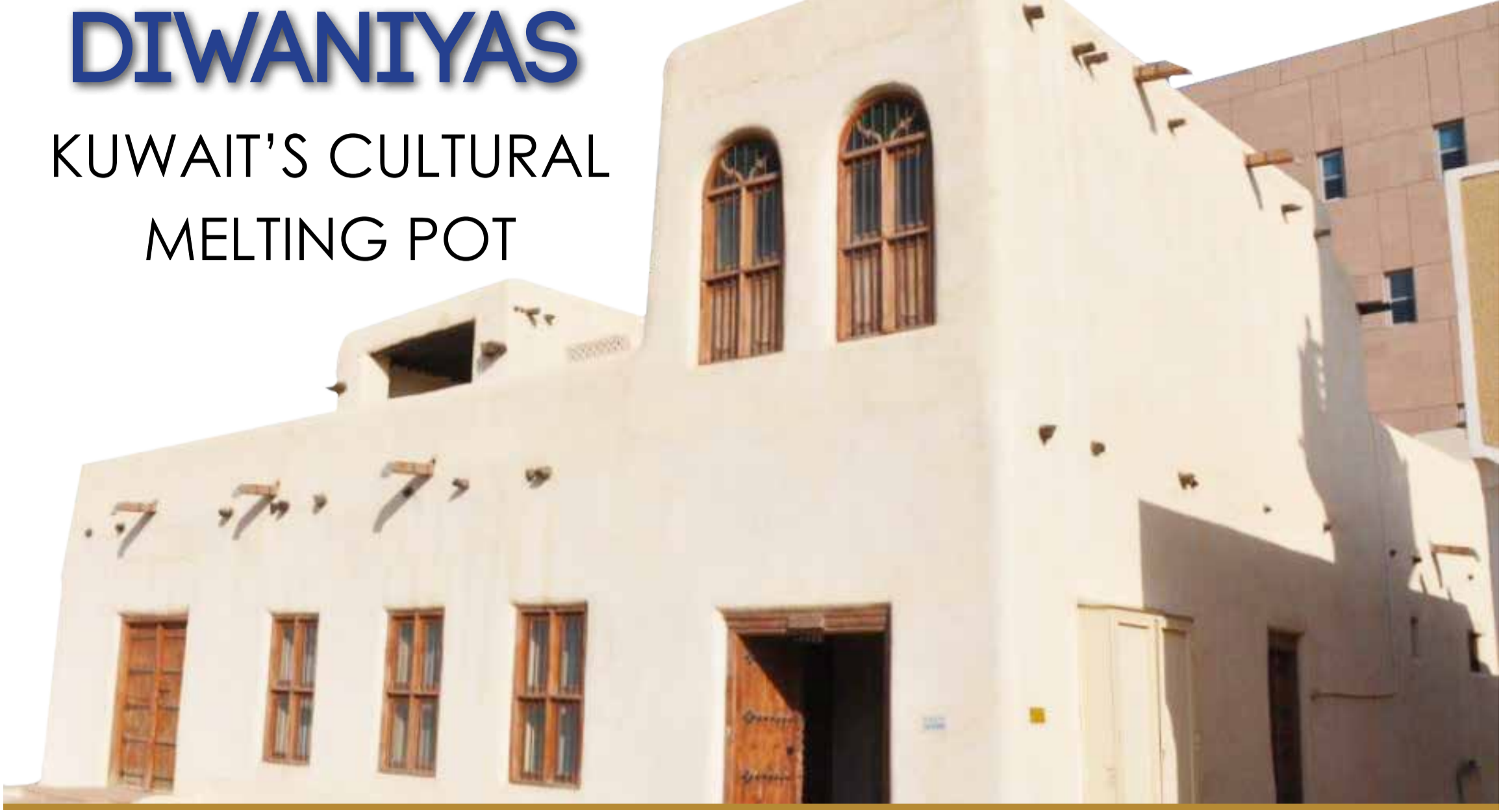


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Weekender

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2024

DIWANIYAS KUWAIT'S CULTURAL MELTING POT



By Ghadeer Ghloum

Among the aspects that have endured and continue to thrive in Gulf heritage, particularly in Kuwait, is the diwaniya. The resilience of the diwaniya has made it a bridge connecting the past and the present, linking the older generation with the youth, strangers with relatives, as well as locals with newcomers in Kuwait. Diwaniyas hold significant importance for Kuwaiti men. To further explore the relationship between Kuwaiti men and the diwaniya, Kuwait Times conducted an interview with Wajdi Al-Misbah, a Kuwaiti man who exemplifies those who open their grand diwaniyas to welcome visitors.



The Ambassador of Qatar and members of Wajdi Al-Misbah's family.

Al-Misbah highlighted how the diwaniya not only fosters cultural identity but also strengthens community ties. "There is no doubt that the diwaniya plays a role in shaping and developing cultural identity and promoting diversity through social interaction among community members — who during their time at the diwaniya exchange ideas and engage in rich discussions. The diwaniya is a fundamental component of every family, contributing to community building through reciprocal visits among Kuwaiti families via their open diwaniyas." He further elaborated: "In the diwaniya, local issues of all kinds — social and political — are discussed in a constructive and positive manner that reflects harmoniously on the community. The diwaniya is a distinctive feature of Kuwaiti society and stands out with its unique social as-

pects compared to other diwaniyas in the region due to the greater freedom available within Kuwaiti society."

Al-Misbah also spoke about the diversity in diwaniyas, and how they serve various functions within Kuwaiti society. "There are different types of diwaniyas: some are more formal and represent the esteemed Kuwaiti families, while others are associated with politicians who discuss current political developments. Additionally, there are informal daily diwaniyas where friends gather to spend leisure time playing traditional games like cards (genjifa), billiards (kirim), or damma. Each diwaniya has a specific purpose that contributes to creating a constructive social or political atmosphere."



Wajdi Al-Misbah (right) with Dr Esam Al-Hazami in his diwaniya.



A famous public diwan in Kuwait.



Wajdi with a visitor in the diwaniya.

Book Review

I Who Have Never Known Men by Jacqueline Harpman

By Ghadeer Ghloum

In *I Who Have Never Known Men*, Jacqueline Harpman crafts a haunting dystopian tale centered around an unnamed protagonist and 39 other women. Imprisoned in an underground bunker, these women are cut off from men and the outside world. Through the protagonist's perspective, Harpman unravels their story, highlighting their isolation and struggle.

As the youngest of the group, with no memories of life before captivity, the protagonist offers a unique lens through which the reader explores existence in this grim reality. Her lack of memories becomes her strength, shielding her from the despair that torments the older women, who mourn their lost freedoms and past lives. While the others are weighed down by haunting memories, the protagonist's innocence and curiosity sustain her mental independence

and keep her questioning the world inside and beyond the bunker.

Harpman delves into themes of mental independence, power, and identity through the protagonist's journey. Her desire for exploration and understanding raises profound questions about human existence, reflecting the resilience of the human spirit in the face of oppression.

Who is Jacqueline Harpman?

Jacqueline Harpman was a Belgian author renowned for her psychological depth in writing. She authored several works and received multiple awards, including the prestigious Prix Médicis for Orlanda. Originally written in French, *I Who Have Never Known Men* was her first novel to be translated into English, bringing her unique storytelling to a wider audience.





'Rubber Duck Girl' tells about duck collections



By Faten Omar

Tala Bin Hussain, 22, discovered her passion for collecting rubber duck during a trip to Paris. What began as a small fascination soon grew into a hobby as her collection quickly expanded. Embracing her love for ducks, Tala didn't just keep them for herself; she generously distributed over 600 duck toys to friends and even strangers, sharing her quirky enthusiasm with people.

Kuwait Times: What sparked your interest in rubber ducks, and how did it evolve?

Tala: It all started when I started driving. The first place I went to was a pizza place that gives a free rubber duck with every pizza, I went there two times after that, so I had my first 3 ducks. After that I traveled to Paris, in the Oprah Merch shop, an American lady named Allison suggested I should buy a rubber Mozart duck - and from that day I started collecting character ducks.

KT: When did you start collecting the ducks? At what age?

Tala: I collected my first duck when I was 19 in Paris. In my last day, I saw rubber duck shop called Paris duck store, I did not have time to go in but my mom went back after two months and bought me five rubber ducks: a groom and bride, a hippie ducks, a dancer duck and mafia duck.



Tala Bin Hussain

KT: How many ducks do you have?

Tala: I used to have 60 ducks in my collection, but I kept them all in my cars dashboard but this year with the extreme heat some of them got extremely damaged, so I had to take them down. Right now, I have 40 ducks in my car. I distributed more than 600 regular rubber ducks to my friends and people around.

KT: Can you share some interesting facts about rubber ducks?

Tala: In 1992, there was a shipping container that had around 20,000 rubber ducks and they were swept off the boat that was going from China to USA and to this day, people are still finding ducks on shores across the globe. This helped scientists to learn about how ocean cur-



rents move - depending on the season.

KT: How do your friends and family feel about your duck obsession?

Tala: They all think it is weird. I'm known as the "Rubber Duck Girl" by my professors, but everyone loves my obsession at least twice a week, I send and receive Instagram posts about ducks.

KT: Tell us the strangest situation you were in because of your ducks?

Tala: People will just randomly come up to me and ask for a rubber ducks. Sometimes, I'd catch people taking pictures of my car. But the strangest is when my dad has to take my car for servicing, the workers laughed at my dad. He told them "this is my daughter's car - not mine". They beg to take pictures of the ducks.

KT: Do you have a favorite piece? Why?

Tala: My most valuable duck is the one my brother used up all his allowance to buy me - a Harley Quinn duck. It is more valuable to me. I love all character ducks but strangely, I love rubber ducks. I have a peacock and cow ducks. I'm currently searching for lady bug and bee ducks.

KT: Did you sell any of your ducks?

Tala: I view my ducks as my children. I would never sell a rubber duck but I give people a plain ordinary duck if they ever ask for one. I have a box of backup in my car in case someone asks of any.

KT: Are there any rubber duck that you're currently searching for?

Tala: Currently, I've been looking everywhere for the Sheikh rubber duck, zodiac duck, cherry blossom duck, gold duck, Rubik's cube duck and duck with passport stamps.

KT: Have you faced any challenges while building your collection?

Tala: Kuwait's weather is very unfor-



giving. I have to take down the ducks when the weather is above 50 otherwise they'll get damaged. I don't have any space on my dashboard anymore.

KT: Did you ever customize your own duck?

Tala: I want to create myself and to create ones based on Kuwaiti pop culture like "Khalti gmashta" characters (a 1983 Kuwaiti comedy-drama series) - but that would cost me a lot.

KT: What is your future plan?

Tala: I have dream of opening my own rubber duck shop in Kuwait and have custom ducks based on Kuwaiti culture. The past couple of years, I've noticed a bunch of car with rubber ducks on their dashboards. I think it would be better to introduce this in Kuwait with a twist - based of our history.



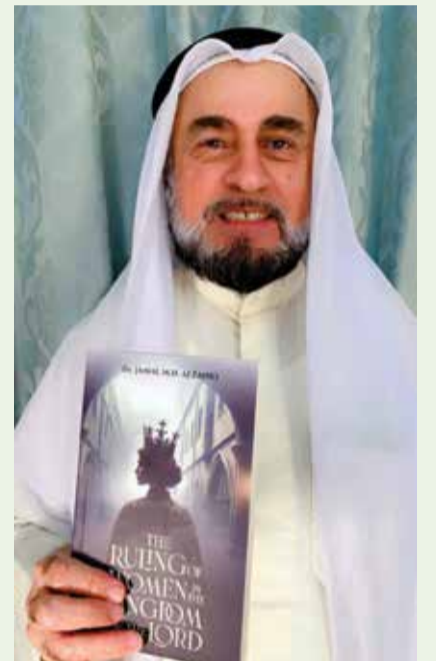
History book narrates 'Ruling of women in the Kingdom'

By Faten Omar

History is often considered a boring subject by many, but for Dr Jamal AlZanki, it has always been a captivating and vibrant world. His passion for uncovering the stories of the past led him to write "The Ruling of Women in The Kingdom of the Lord", a work that aims to share his love for history in an engaging and accessible way. By weaving historical facts into compelling narratives, AlZanki seeks to inspire a deeper appreciation for history. Author AlZanki is a specialist in the History of the Crusades, which concerns the invasion of Latin Europe to the Islamic East during the 12th century. He earned his PhD in History from the University of St Andrews in Scotland and lectured on Islamic and Latin Civilization at the University of Kuwait. After retiring in 2012, he has been teaching Islamic Civilization at Kuwait International Law College since 2013.

Kuwait Times: What inspired you to write this book?

AlZanki: I think few people enjoy reading academic study, while they will enjoy reading it as a novel. As a specialist in the relationship between Muslims and Latin Europe, I select this unique subject. This novel will show readers, the real political life in the Latin of the East. It seems that few people know that women of the Latin of the East, succeeded in ruling Latin East entities during that era. Probably, Western historians are ignoring this topic to not open the eyes of readers to the black life of Latin women.



Jamal AlZanki with his book.

KT: How did you choose the characters for your book?

AlZanki: I started the novel, with a dialog between Lord Baldwin of Boulogne and his cousin Lord Baldwin of Bourg, when they were traveling to the Council Clermont in southern France. In this Council, Pope Urban II launched a war against Muslims - "the Crusades". Baldwin of Boulogne would be the first king of Jerusalem and Baldwin of Bourg, would be the second king of Jerusalem. Baldwin of Bourg is the main character in the Novel. He got married to an Armenian, called Morphia. He planned to dominate all Latin countries.

His elder Melizand, would be the main character in the novel. She would be crowned by her father, with her husband Fulk and her infant Baldwin III, as rulers of the kingdom, after the death of her father King Baldwin II. The characters in the novel after the death of King Baldwin II, would be Queen Melizand and her husband King Fulk. Both engaged in rivalry to rule the kingdom. After the death of King Fulk, Queen Melisande tried to be free to rule the Kingdom, especially since King Balwin III, was only thirteen years old. The main characters would be Queen Melisande and her son King Baldwin III, and their rival to rule the Kingdom. King Baldwin III would succeed in controlling all powers and moved his mom out of politics.

KT: What was your main inspiration for writing "The Ruling of Women in The Kingdom of the Lord"?

AlZanki: As a specialist in the History of the Crusades, I discovered the involvement of women in politics during that era was not discussed in detail by the Latin historians. I decided to concentrate on this study to discuss this phenomenon and its effects on the Crusaders of the East.

KT: Who is the most historical figure that particularly stood out to you during your research?

AlZanki: The most historical character in my novel is Queen Melisande, who ruled the Kingdom of Jerusalem independently after the death of her husband King Fulk in 1142. King Baldwin II had crowned her daughter Melizand and her husband and his grandbaby Baldwin III before he died in 1030. When Queen Melisande ruled independently, she tried her best to engage her son King Baldwin III in bad behavior - to not let him rule

the Kingdom even though he was 21 years old. In 1151, he succeeded in stripping his mother of her legitimacy.

KT: How did you feel about writing from the perspective of Crusaders, given that their beliefs were quite different from your own as a Muslim? How did you maintain objectivity in narrating the events?

AlZanki: I adopted an approach that combines elements of a novel and a play. This approach helps condense a lengthy period filled with significant and intertwined events and layers - presenting it in an objective, unbiased manner. To achieve this, I chose to narrate it through the voices of the Crusader characters themselves.



"The Ruling of Women in The Kingdom of the Lord" book.

KT: What will your next book be about? And what is your next move?

AlZanki: I will publish a study "Yagi Sian of Antioch and the First Crusade". And I will write a historical novel, narrated by the main character.

WHAT'S ON IN KUWAIT

Event: Second International Autumn Consumer Expo
Location: Kuwait International Fairground
Date: October 17-19, 2024

Event: National Day of Spain Festival
Location: Talk-Snam Towers
Date: October 18, 2024

Event: Art N Dine - Kids club
Location: Art N Dine
Date: October 19, 2024

Event: Kids Adventure Camp
Location: The Scientific Center
Date: October 19, 2024

Event: Cancer Awareness Campaign Walkathon
Location: Al-Khairan Mall
Date: October 18, 2024

Event: Folio Club
Location: Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem Cultural Centre - Arabic Islamic Museum
Date: October 19, 2024

Event: Oud Fashion Talks
Location: Kuwait International Fairground- Hall 4B
Date: October 18, 2024

Event: Outdoor Sports
Location: Shaheed Park
Date: October 19, 2024



Kuwaiti artist 'Doss' transforms urban spaces with bold graffiti

'My most memorable piece is titled 'No Bad Newz Today' on the Kuwait Times printing press door'



By Sahar Moussa

In the vibrant streets of Kuwait, Mohammed Al-Eidani, better known as 'Doss', brings walls to life with his unique blend of street art and movement. A hybrid creative force, Doss channels the spirit of hip-hop culture and Kuwait's urban landscape into his work, transforming ordinary spaces into powerful visual statements. In his interview with Kuwait Times, Doss shares his journey, the challenges of street art, and the inspiration behind his evolving artistry.

Kuwait Times: What initially drew you to graffiti, and how did your journey as a street artist begin?
Mohammed Al-Eidani: My passion for hip-hop culture and the desire to express myself creatively drew me to graffiti. I started experimenting with it in 2018, but it wasn't until 2020 that I decided to take it seriously.

to create pieces that reflect what I'm feeling or what I want to say.

KT: In what ways do you incorporate Kuwaiti culture or heritage into your art?

Al-Eidani: I incorporate Kuwaiti culture and heritage into my art by using traditional motifs, colors, and themes,

KT: What is your most memorable piece?
Al-Eidani: My most memorable piece is titled 'No Bad Newz Today' on the Kuwait Times printing press door.

KT: What messages or themes do you often aim to convey through your graffiti?

Al-Eidani: I often use characters and quotes to uplift the community, drawing from shared experiences to inspire others.

KT: How do you feel the perception of graffiti has changed in Kuwait over the years?

Al-Eidani: The perception of graffiti in Kuwait has evolved significantly. It's now increasingly recognized as a legitimate art form that enhances urban spaces.

KT: You work with a unique medium in public spaces—what challenges and opportunities does that present?

Al-Eidani: Working in public spaces presents both challenges and opportunities, but I see it as a unique canvas that allows me to connect with a broader audience.

blending these elements with contemporary styles.

KT: Graffiti is sometimes viewed as controversial. How do you navigate the boundaries between art, expres-

KT: Are there any local or international graffiti artists who have influenced your style?

Al-Eidani: Yes, many artists have influenced my style, including Greg Simkins, Jamie Hewlett, Mister Cartoon, Kim Jung Gi, and Yousef Al-Bagshi, among others.



Graffiti Artist Mohammed Al-Eidani



KT: How does the urban landscape of Kuwait inspire your graffiti work?
Al-Eidani: Kuwait's urban landscape acts as a dynamic canvas for my graffiti. The blend of modern architecture and traditional elements inspires me

tic perspective and enriched my work.

KT: What role do you think graffiti plays in the broader Kuwaiti art scene?

Al-Eidani: Graffiti plays a growing role in Kuwait's art scene, offering a modern, youthful form of expression that contrasts with traditional art. It serves as a platform for social commentary, especially among younger generations.

KT: What advice would you give to aspiring graffiti artists who want to make their mark?

Al-Eidani: "One day or day one—you decide."



Dodgers smash Mets to seize lead in MLB playoff series

Dodgers seek their fourth trip to World Series in eight seasons and first MLB crown since 2020



NEW YORK: Shohei Ohtani #17 of the Los Angeles Dodgers hits a home run in the eighth inning against the New York Mets during Game Three of the National League Championship Series at Citi Field. — AFP

NEW YORK: Shohei Ohtani, Enrique Hernandez and Max Muncy smacked home runs to power the Los Angeles Dodgers over the New York Mets 8-0 on Wednesday, grabbing the lead in their Major League Baseball playoff series.

Ohtani delivered a three-run homer just inside the right-field line in the eighth inning. Hernandez crushed a two-run blast in the sixth and Max Muncy bashed a solo homer in the ninth to spark Los Angeles.

The blowout victory gave the Dodgers a 2-1 lead in the best-of-seven National League Championship Series, which continues on Thursday at New York. The series winner will face either the New York Yankees or Cleveland

Guardians in the World Series.

Muncy walked three times, added two hits and scored twice, crushing his 13th career playoff homer to equal a club record. "It's a pretty good night," Muncy said. "The home run is obviously pretty cool but at that point it doesn't matter. The thing that matters is getting on base for my teammates. They get a chance to drive me in."

Dodgers batters showed patience at the plate, waiting for just the right offering for homers and key hits. "We stay within ourselves. We stay within the (strike) zone and we get good pitches to hit," Muncy said. "When you do that all the time, you're going to have some good results."

Los Angeles pitcher Walker Buehler, a 30-year-old right-hander who struggled this year after 2022 ligament replacement surgery and missing the 2023 campaign, struck out six in four scoreless innings. "It has been a long road and a hard year for me," Buehler said. "When the stakes are this big, everything else seems small. The ball was moving around pretty good for me."

Four Dodgers kept Mets batters frustrated to the finish, completing a four-hit shutout with 13 total strikeouts. "Shutouts in the playoffs don't come easy," Buehler said. The Dodgers seek their fourth trip to the World Series in eight seasons and first MLB crown since 2020 while the Mets, who last

reached the World Series in 2015, have not won the MLB title since 1986.

October brings the best

The Dodgers opened the scoring in the second inning when Muncy walked, took second base when Teoscar Hernandez reached on a fielder's choice, advanced on a Gavin Lux ground out and scored on Will Smith's infield single.

Tommy Edman followed with a sacrifice fly to bring in Teoscar Hernandez from third for a 2-0 Dodgers lead. Buehler struck out Mets leadoff hitter Francisco Lindor to escape a bases-loaded jam in the second inning. Mets pitcher Luis Severino escaped his own bases-loaded

situation in the third when Lux grounded out to end the threat. But the Dodgers doubled the lead in the sixth when Edman singled and 33-year-old Puerto Rican outfielder Enrique Hernandez blasted the ball over the centerfield wall for his 15th career playoff homer.

"I love playing in October," he said. "It just brings out the best in me." Los Angeles struck again in the eighth when Will Smith walked, Enrique Hernandez singled and Ohtani smashed the ball for a homer that stood up after a video review challenge and made the LA lead 7-0. Muncy added his solo homer in the ninth and Ben Casparius retired the last three Mets batters in the ninth. — AFP

Evgeni Malkin, Pens enjoy historic night

TORONTO: Evgeni Malkin notched his 500th career goal and Sidney Crosby scored the overtime winner on a night when he netted his 1,600th career point as the host Pittsburgh Penguins claimed a 6-5 victory over the Buffalo Sabres on Wednesday.

Malkin became the 48th player in NHL history to net 500 goals. He is the second from Russia (joining Alex Ovechkin) and third player in franchise history (Crosby and Mario Lemieux) to reach that milestone. Crosby is only the 10th player to reach 1,600 points.

Malkin, who contributed three assists to increase his NHL-leading total to nine, has seven points in his past two games. Crosby finished with one goal and two assists. Drew O'Connor and Bryan Rust both netted one goal and one assist, while Jesse Puljujarvi and Rickard Rakell added a goal apiece. Joel Blomqvist stopped 26 of the 28 shots he faced in a relief performance of Triston Jarry, who struggled early.

JJ Peterka scored twice for the Sabres after missing two games with a concussion, while Tage Thompson, Jordan Greenway and Ryan McLeod each scored once. Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen made 37 saves.

Maple Leafs 6, Kings 2

Bobby McMann scored two goals in the first period and Auston Matthews had a goal and two assists as Toronto went on to rout visiting Los Angeles.

William Nylander had a goal and an assist for the Leafs, who have won three in a row. Morgan Rielly and John Tavares each added a goal. Mitch Marner had three assists and Oliver Ekman-Larsson, Max Domi and Jake McCabe each had two assists. Anthony Stolarz made 32 saves. Alex Turcotte and Kevin Fiala scored for the Kings, who are 1-1-2 to begin their season-opening seven-game road trip. With



TORONTO: Kevin Fiala #22 of the Los Angeles Kings battles against Simon Benoit #2 of the Toronto Maple Leafs during the first period in an NHL game at Scotiabank Arena. — AFP

Darcy Kuemper (lower-body injury) sidelined, Kings goaltender David Rittich made his first start of the season and allowed four goals on 14 shots. Phoenix Copley replaced him in the second period and made 10 saves.

Bruins 5, Avalanche 3

David Pastrnak and Hampus Lindholm scored 13 seconds apart in the second period and Boston won in Denver to keep Colorado winless through four games this season. Lindholm added an assist and Cole Koepke, Charlie Coyle and John Beecher also had goals for Boston. Joonas Korhonen turned away 22 shots as the Bruins won for the third time in four games since a season-opening loss.

Cale Makar and Mikko Rantanen had a goal and two assists each for the Avalanche, who lost another player to injury when Miles Wood left after taking a hard hit from Lindholm in the third period. Ross Colton had a goal, Na-

than MacKinnon finished with two assists and Alexander Georgiev made 20 saves.

Ducks 5, Utah 4 (OT)

Leo Carlsson scored 54 seconds into overtime to give Anaheim a victory over the Utah Hockey Club in the Ducks' home opener. Pavel Mintyukov scored two goals, the first multi-goal game of his career, and Troy Terry and Robby Fabbri each scored for Anaheim. Lukas Dostal made 26 saves, Mason McTavish added two assists and Carlsson finished with two points for the Ducks.

Michael Kesselring and Jack McBain each had a goal and an assist, Schmalz had two assists and Barrett Hayton also scored for Utah, which was playing the final game of a four-game cross-country road trip that began against the New York Islanders. Connor Ingram finished with 29 saves. — Reuters

Bahrain wants WCup qualifier moved after death threats

MANAMA: Bahrain's football association said it would request that a World Cup qualifying match scheduled for March be moved outside of Indonesia after the national team allegedly received death threats from Indonesian fans.

"The association will submit a request to remove the match from Indonesia to preserve the safety of the team," it said in a statement posted to X on Wednesday. "The association refuses to expose the lives of team members to any potential danger, especially since the actions of the Indonesian fans are completely unacceptable and incorrect."

The move comes after an October 10 match in Bahrain ended in a 2-2 draw, with Bahrain equalizing in the ninth minute of injury time. Indonesian officials and supporters afterwards complained the injury time had gone on for too long.

Wednesday's statement from Bahrain's football association said its players had since been "subjected to a torrent of insults, slander, threats and hacking operations" online. It also expressed "extreme surprise at the multiple death threats received by the team members on their personal social media accounts—a move that reflects the Indonesian public's disregard for human lives".

In a statement to reporters Wednesday evening, Indonesia football association executive committee member Arya Mahendra Sinulingga said there was "no need to worry" about player safety. "We will guarantee the safety and comfort for our guest, like Bahrain, because the Indonesian nation is a nation that is friendly to guests," he said, insisting that the match should stay in Jakarta. — AFP