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## Iran defiant after Zionist strikes

4 soldiers killed, damage limited • Kuwait strongly denounces attack • Turkey slams Zionist terror



**TEHRAN:** Iran warned on Saturday it would defend itself after Zionist air strikes killed at least four soldiers and further stoked fears of a full-scale regional war in the Middle East. Iran's military said only radar systems were damaged in the Zionist strikes on Tehran and other provinces. "Thanks to the timely performance of the country's air defenses, the attacks caused limited damage and a few radar systems were damaged," the armed forces general staff said in a statement read out on state television.

The Zionist entity warned Iran would "pay a heavy price" if it responded to the strikes, and the United States, Germany and Britain demanded Tehran not escalate the conflict further. Other countries, including many of Iran's neighbors, condemned the Zionist entity's strikes and some, such as Russia, urged both sides to show restraint

and avoid what Moscow dubbed a "catastrophic scenario".

Kuwait's ministry of foreign affairs on Saturday strongly denounced and rejected the Zionist occupation's overnight aggression on Iran. In a press release, the ministry said the aggression reflects "the policy of chaos adopted by (Zionist) occupying forces by breaching countries' sovereignty, jeopardizing regional security and breaking international law principles and norms as well as international charters.

It restated Kuwait's call on the international community and United Nations Security Council to halt such practices that pose a menace to the region's future and peoples and that underline the necessity of taking earnest steps to maintain regional security and stability as per international laws and charters.

The Islamic republic insisted

it had the "right and the duty" to defend itself, while its Lebanese ally Hezbollah said it had already launched rocket salvos targeting five residential areas in the Zionist entity's north. The Zionist army said 80 projectiles were fired across the border on Saturday. Confirming its own strikes after explosions and anti-aircraft fire echoed around Tehran, the Zionist entity military said it had hit Iranian missile factories and military facilities in several regions.

The "retaliatory strike has been completed and the mission was fulfilled", while Zionist aircraft "returned safely", a military spokesman added. Iran confirmed the Zionist entity had targeted military sites in Tehran province around the capital and other parts of the country, saying the raids caused "limited damage" but killed four soldiers.

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**TEHRAN:** Women walk past an anti-Zionist billboard covering the facade of a building in the Iranian capital on Oct 26, 2024. - AFP

### 124 killed as Sudan's RSF attack village

**CAIRO/DUBAI:** Sudan's paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) killed at least 124 people in a village in El Gezira State on Friday, activists said, in one of the deadliest incidents of an 18-month war and largest in a spate of attacks in the state. Following the surrender of high-ranking RSF officer Abuagla Keikal to the army last Sunday, pro-democracy activists said the RSF has carried out revenge attacks in the farming state where he comes from, killing and detaining civilians and displacing thousands.



**GEDAREF, Sudan:** Residents displaced from Gezira district arrive in this eastern city on Oct 26, 2024. — AFP

Gezira has already faced a months-long rampage in which residents told Reuters the RSF looted homes, killed scores of civilians and displaced hundreds of thousands. Al-Sireha village, in the north of the state, experienced the worst of the recent violence when at least 124 were killed and 100 injured in the RSF raid, the Wad Madani Resistance Committee, a pro-democracy group, said on Saturday.

In a statement on Friday, the RSF accused the army of arming civilians in Gezira and of using forces under Keikal's command, prompting its attacks. The RSF has seized control of large parts of Sudan in a conflict with the army that the United Nations says has caused one of the world's worst humanitarian crises.

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### Defense minister visits air force military sites

**KUWAIT:** First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior and Defense Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef Al-Sabah visited on Friday military sites of the air force defense to examine technical readiness of air defense systems. The ministry of defense said in a press statement that Sheikh Fahad received a comprehensive briefing on the tasks and duties of the air defense force, highlighting the level of readiness and the training programs provided to enhance the capabilities of the defense systems.

He was received upon arrival by Commander of the Air Defense Force Maj Gen Khaled Al-Shuraian and a number of air force officers. Sheikh Fahad praised the pivotal role of the air defense force in safeguarding the country's airspace, underscoring its importance as a key pillar of Kuwait's defense system. He emphasized the need to maintain the highest levels of vigilance to ensure the country's security and safety.

At the end of the visit, he expressed his pride in the efforts with the high efficiency and dedication he witnessed in work, and stressed that HH the Amir and Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah pays great attention to providing all capabilities that ensure the excellence and permanent readiness of the armed forces. —KUNA



**KUWAIT:** First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior and Defense Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef Al-Sabah visits an air force site on Oct 25, 2024. — KUNA

### Zionists murder dozens in Gaza, storm hospital

**GAZA:** Zionist forces withdrew from a hospital complex in northern Gaza on Saturday, one day after storming it, and the Palestinian enclave's health ministry said the troops had detained dozens of male medical staffers and some of the patients. Health officials said on Friday Zionist forces had stormed Kamal Adwan Hospital, one of three medical facilities struggling to operate in the area.

Footage circulated by the health ministry showed damage to several buildings after the Zionist forces withdrew. Medics said at least 44 of the facility's 70-member team of the hospital had been detained by the army. It later said the army had released 14 of them, including the hospital's director.

Medics said at least two children had died inside the intensive care unit after Zionist fire hit the generators and oxygen station in the facility on Friday. Medical staffers have refused Zionist army orders to evacuate the hospital or leave their patients unattended. Before the army raid, medics said at least 600 people had been in the hospital, including patients and their escorts.

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**GAZA:** A man carries the body of a child extracted from the rubble following Zionist bombardment of the four-storey Muqat family house in the Zarqa neighbourhood of Gaza City on Oct 26, 2024. — AFP

### Zionist strike kills Lebanon media workers

**BEIRUT:** Lebanon accused the Zionist entity of targeting journalists in a "deliberate" attack that killed three media workers in the country's south on Friday, calling the incident a "war crime". Lebanese television channel Al Mayadeen said cameraman Ghassan Najjar and broadcast engineer Mohammad Reda were killed in the strike on a journalists' residence in Hasbaya, south Lebanon.

Another TV outlet, Al-Manar, run by Hezbollah, said video journalist Wissam Qassem was also killed in the strike on a bungalow located in a resort that several media organizations covering the Zionist-Hezbollah war had rented out. After the strike a car bearing a "press" marking was crushed under debris. Roofing tiles were blown off, and rubble littered the inside of the bungalow and its surroundings.

Journalists from other media organizations were also sleeping nearby when the strike hit, in an area outside Hezbollah's traditional strongholds. "I woke up to the whistling sound of a missile and found my door burst open while thick smoke rose from the garden. I thought

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**SIDON:** Media workers carrying posters bearing the pictures of slain Lebanese journalists take part in a sit-in on Oct 26, 2024, a day after they were killed in a Zionist strike in Hasbaya in southern Lebanon. — AFP





## Local

# Producing drugs locally key to lower cancer treatment costs

## Oncologist says targeted cancer drugs, innovative treatments out of reach for many



KUWAIT: (From left) Dr Jinan Abdullah, Dr Rania Azmi, and Menna Farag are seen at an event held at the French Embassy to raise awareness about breast cancer.



Guests are seen at the event. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

By Passant Hisham

KUWAIT: In response to the rising costs of cancer medications in Kuwait and nearby countries, Dr Jinan Abdullah, a medical oncologist at the Kuwait Cancer Center, proposes that Middle Eastern companies should produce drugs locally. "This approach would empower them to gain control over the prices of drugs", Abdullah told Kuwait Times, on the sidelines of a discussion at the French Embassy focused on raising breast cancer awareness. "The prevalence of cancer is increasing and will continue to rise, so we need to address the problem at its roots."

Highlighting a largely overlooked aspect of cancer awareness, the French Ambassador to Kuwait Olivier Gauvin said during his opening speech: "While breast cancer primarily affects women, about 1 percent of cases occur in men." He emphasized the importance of male participation in awareness campaigns,

calling for their crucial role in fostering solidarity and promoting a collective fight against the disease.

### Support from charities

Given the financial strain many patients face, Abdullah said affording targeted cancer drugs and innovative treatments presents a significant challenge. She mentioned several financial assistance resources available in Kuwait, including charitable organizations like the Sidra Association for Psychological Care of Cancer Patients.

While acknowledging the effectiveness of these initiatives, she proposed drawing inspiration from successful international health policies and insurance systems to address the anticipated rise in cancer treatment costs and the growing population as a long-term solution. For instance, Abdullah mentioned that existing models, such as the French, Scandinavian, and British systems, "work effectively for both expatriates and locals."



French Ambassador to Kuwait Olivier Gauvin.

Continuing her discussion, Abdullah addressed the controversies surrounding mammograms and their safety concerns, reassuring the audience that they do not present any significant challenges and that their risks are comparable to those of chest X-rays. She emphasized the importance of mammograms in the early

diagnosis of breast cancer, stating, "The difference between early-stage and late-stage cancer lies in whether we can cure the patients or merely extend their lives."

She recommended that women begin screenings after the age of 40, or earlier if there is a family history of cancer. Other risk factors she mentioned include late childbirth, not breastfeeding, obesity, and a lack of exercise.

### Cancer warrior, survivor

Menna Farag, a five-year breast cancer survivor, and author of "When Cancer Messed With the Wrong Girl," reflected on her journey of navigating life as a cancer patient while striving to maintain normalcy. She recalled her efforts to balance all aspects of her life, managing the physical and mental challenges of treatment, working daily, and keeping up a social life, which she believes embody the core challenges cancer patients face — challenges often overlooked in awareness campaigns. Farag highlighted the need

for campaigns to address realistic, deeply personal questions, such as: "What does a woman do when her hair falls out? How does she care for her family when her body is weak?"

Farag urged greater collaboration among cancer organizations to advocate for laws protecting patients' rights. She also called for empowering awareness campaigns to support cancer patients in staying strong while managing life with cancer. Dr Rania Azmi, founder of the Fadia Survive & Thrive initiative in Kuwait, emphasized the crucial role of lifestyle choices in maintaining overall wellness and improving organ function, ultimately extending functional age, which refers to how well one's body operates compared to their chronological age. This means that someone may be chronologically older yet have the vitality and functionality of a younger individual, highlighting the importance of proactive health management and lifestyle adjustments in achieving a longer, healthier life.

## Indian Embassy hails classical status for 3 major languages

KUWAIT: The Indian Embassy in Kuwait hosted a special event to celebrate the recent conferment of Classical Language status by the Government of India to Marathi, Bengali and Assamese, along with Pali and Prakrit. Ambassador of India to Kuwait Dr Adarsh Swaika, addressed the gathering, emphasizing the significance of this recognition for linguistic and cultural preservation.

The event saw participation from the presidents of the Maharashtra Mandal, Bengali Cultural Society and Assamese Association in Kuwait, as well as members of the media and community. Dr Swaika expressed satisfaction at the active involvement of the Indian diaspora, remarking that 60-70 percent of the one-million-strong Indian community in Kuwait speaks a native language that now holds Classical Language status.

In his speech, the ambassador highlighted that the concept of "Classical Language" was introduced in 2004, with Tamil being the first to receive this recognition. Since then, Sanskrit, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam and Odia have joined the list. Now, with Marathi, Bengali and Assamese added, these languages serve as "custodians of Bharat's profound and ancient cultural heritage," the ambassador noted. He outlined the criteria for a language to qualify as classical, which includes antiquity of 1,500-2,000 years, a rich body of ancient texts and evidence of distinct historical and literary heritage.

Ambassador Swaika also elaborated on the government's efforts to promote Classical Languages, mentioning the establishment of universi-



Ambassador of India to Kuwait Dr Adarsh Swaika poses with attendees at the event.

ties, research centers, and awards to encourage the study and preservation of these languages. He noted that the recognition opens up educational and employment opportunities, particularly in archiving, translation, publishing, and digital media. "By elevating these languages, the government acknowledges India's linguistic diversity and emphasizes the need to preserve these rich heritages for future generations," he said.

The event featured cultural performances representing Maharashtra, Bengal and Assam. Dr Swaika thanked the participating associations and expressed his enthusiasm for the artistic contributions from the three regions. The evening concluded with community leaders sharing their thoughts on this recognition.



Dr Adarsh Swaika

## Teachers association calls for establishing national education body

KUWAIT: The President of the Kuwait Teachers Association called for issuing a decree to establish a national body to uphold educational quality chaired by Kuwait's prime minister. The recommendation is one of many issued by the 45th Educational Conference, organized by the Kuwait Teachers Association aimed at strengthening the educational system in the country.

President of the Kuwait Teachers Association Hammad Al-Houli told KUNA that the recommendations emphasized the importance of formulating a national strategy for education, training, and scientific research, along with preparing a national framework for curriculum standards. The recommendations also included the establishment of a national center for training and qualification for leaders and personnel in education and establishing an incentive system for educators. The conference also called for raising the standard of national university aptitude tests to become independent, of high quality, and equitable.

Recommendations also focused on the development of a digital learning environment that enhances the learning atmosphere using the latest technological and digital innovations. Houli added that they called for activating community partnership roles between educational institutions and civil society organizations. The conference featured participation from teachers from Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Turkey, and included 14 lectures and 12 workshops discussing various topics, including modern teaching strategies, global trends in educational development, sustainable education in light of the new Kuwait Vision 2035, electronic learning environments, and concepts and applications of digital technology, along with contemporary trends in idea development. — KUNA

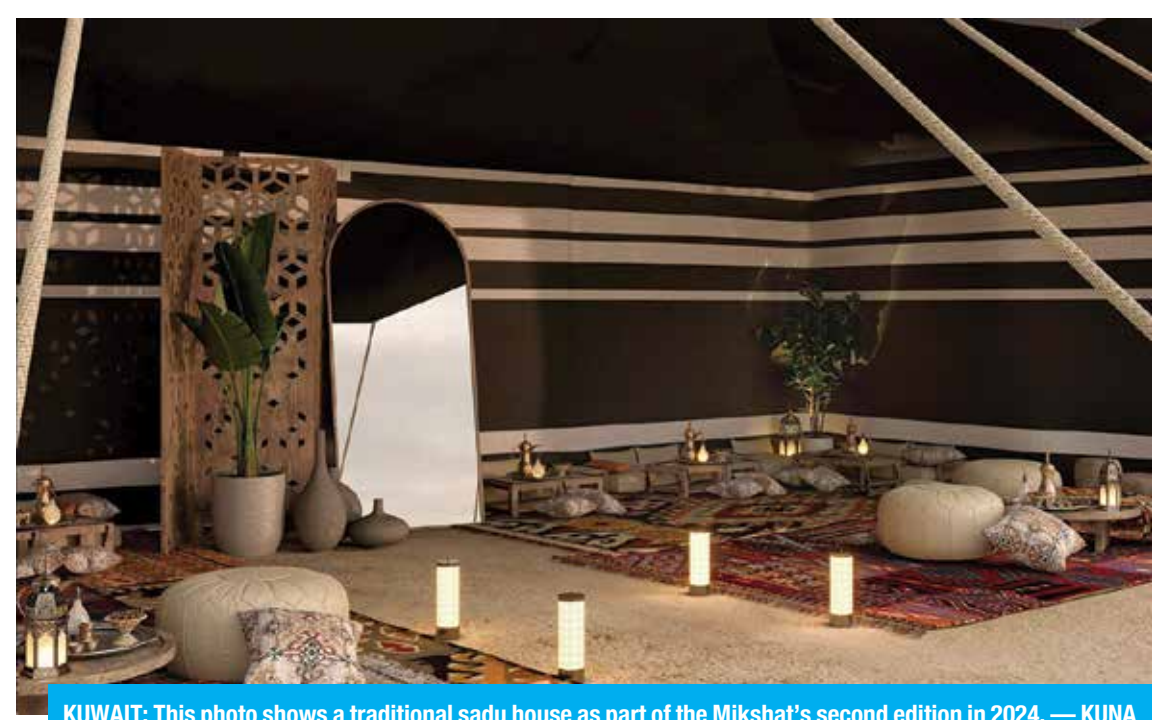
## Mikshat to open in November with new facilities

KUWAIT: A new and improved Mikshat will open to the public for the 2024-2025 season in early November, the social affairs ministry announced Saturday. This initiative is a collaborative effort between the National Cooperative Projects Committee's and the consumer cooperative societies federation. Inspired by the Kuwaiti word 'kashat', the tradition of enjoying picnics in the open desert, Mikshat is a unique entertainment and cultural project first launched by the ministry in 2023.

Acting Undersecretary Dr Khaled Al-Ajmi said in a press release that the project includes many additions and improvements compared to previous editions, with the number of food kiosks and establishments increasing to over 30, along with the expansion of the traditional cafe area and an increase in public facilities to

meet visitor needs. Ajmi noted that the project features 60 lounges designated for families, in addition to organizing entertainment events during official holidays to ensure an enjoyable recreational experience for all age groups. Large screens will be installed in a designated area to allow visitors to watch the Gulf Cup events and matches.

Visitors in previous Mikshat editions enjoyed several activities, such as renting camps for the full kashat experience, attending folklore stage performances, enjoying a meal or coffee break at various restaurants and cafes, and shopping for locally-made products. This year, Mikshat will have children playground and a small zoo, allowing children and families to take photos in a safe and enjoyable environment. Entry will be free for children up to the age of four and for individuals with disabilities, while admission fees will be affordable for all segments of society, he said. Mikshat will be open weekdays from 3pm to 11pm, and from 3pm until midnight in the weekend. Visitors can book tickets to enter Mikshat through the Mikshat website, which will launch soon, and via the (Eventat) app. — KUNA



KUWAIT: This photo shows a traditional sadu house as part of the Mikshat's second edition in 2024. — KUNA



# Gaza situation largest tragedy in modern history: Diplomat

Official condemns attacks against unarmed Palestinians, Lebanese • Denounces arming Zionist civilians



Ali Al-Qallaf

**NEW YORK:** The Zionist entity's attacks on Palestinian people made the Gaza Strip one of the largest tragedies in modern history, said a Kuwaiti official. Delivering a speech of Kuwait permanent mission to the UN before the first Commission on Disarmament and International Security, Kuwaiti diplomatic attaché Ali Al-Qallaf said the Zionist occupation's violations exacerbated the humanitarian crisis unfolding in the occupied Palestinian territories. He referred to atrocities committed by the Zionist occupation that left the largest number of children with amputation and targeted the tents of the displaced persons. He expressed Kuwait's strong condemnation of the Zionist occupation's weapons used systematically against unarmed people in Palestine and Lebanon, saying the ongoing escalation is a flagrant

violation of the UN Charter and the Security Council resolutions. The diplomatic attaché also voiced Kuwait's denunciation of remarks by some Zionist officials regarding distributing weapons to civilians that incites further bloodshed and undermines the international community efforts to achieve stability in the Middle East region.

Kuwait reiterated the necessity of implementing the Conventional Arms Trade Treaty to take into account the principles of the United Nations Charter, most notably respect for the sovereign right of states to secure their national defenses, Qallaf said. Kuwait underlined the significance of achieving balance between responsibilities upon countries exporting weapons and consumers, he said. He further stressed the importance of the UN pro-

gram combating illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. He said the program plays a decisive role in building confidence and enhancing international cooperation. Qallaf pointed to Kuwait's effective participation in international discussions related to illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. He said Kuwait supports the relevant UN resolutions based of its commitment to the importance of concerted efforts to combat illicit trade in these weapons. Qallaf affirmed Kuwait's readiness to partake in joint international efforts provided compliance with the UN Charter and giving rights to countries to have legal defensive potential. He finally expressed hope that the UN National Assembly session would lead to tangible outcomes to achieve international peace and security. — KUNA

## Italy won't withdraw UNIFIL troops until UN resolutions fulfilled

By Ghadeer Ghloom

**KUWAIT:** Italy's Ambassador to Kuwait Lorenzo Morini said dialogue is the only way out and an effective solution for the current war threatening to engulf the region. "We are fully convinced that the basis for resolving the current situation is to de-escalate the conflict, and after that, we can find a long-term solution within the framework of the UN Charter and resolutions," he told reporters during a meeting Saturday. "We have more than a thousand soldiers in the coalition in Lebanon, and we will not leave until the UN resolutions are implemented, and we have repeatedly called for de-escalation in the region with our European partners and also the G7 partners."

He highlighted the presence of approximately 400 Italian soldiers in Kuwait in the framework of the anti-ISIS coalition, explaining that they are monitoring the situation in the region, calling on all parties to refrain from any action or activity that could be harmful to the stability and unity of the region. "We are ready to do everything we can, but always within the framework of international law, the United Nations and UN resolutions." According to Morini, there is coordination with the Kuwaiti side in terms of monitoring the area, as the Italian forces have a surveillance system that they use to monitor the coalition's area of jurisdiction. "We need full coordination with the Kuwaiti army, especially the air force. We are working on training Eurofighter pilots, and we are also responsible for delivering Eurofighter aircraft," he said.

### Cultural festival

Morini met with the press to announce that the Italian Embassy is launching a series of diverse cultural activities during the period from October 28 to November 5, in celebration of the Italian Unity and Armed Forces Day, which falls on November 4 every year.

Morini pointed out that the events will include a series of events that will focus on Italian fashion designers, jewelry, artists, food and chocolate makers, in addition to other related elements to clearly



KUWAIT: Italian Ambassador to Kuwait Lorenzo Morini meets with reporters. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat



Italian Ambassador to Kuwait Lorenzo Morini

present the Italian lifestyle to the Kuwaiti public. The activities come within the framework of the "A Journey into Italian Creativity" festival, which aims to showcase some aspects of Italian excellences in art, fashion, design and culture. He said the festival is part of efforts to strengthen bilateral relations and support and deepen the strong bonds of friendship between the Italian and Kuwaiti people.

Morini shared some highlights of the cultural festival, which will begin on October 28 with a classical concert by the "Filarmonici di Roma", a famous Italian string quintet. The quintet will present a selection of masterpieces by the most important Italian composers such as Vivaldi, Rossini, Tartini, Pergolesi and Respighi. The concert will be open to the public, free of charge, and will be held at the American University of Kuwait Theater. "The National Unity

and Armed Forces Day is a celebration of the end of World War I and the liberation of Italy, as well as a tribute to the Italian Armed Forces and recognition of the role of the Italian soldiers who fought to liberate Italy and are still working for peace and stability in the international community," he said. An event to celebrate Italian Unity and Armed Forces Day will be held on November 5 at the Regency Hotel. Morini said that some Italian chefs will be present to give cooking lessons in some hotels.

An art exhibition titled "A Dawn of Peace" which reflects Kuwaiti-Italian cooperation will be held as part of the festival on November 4 in the ambassador's residence. The exhibit will also be open to the public.

He elaborated on cultural commonalities between Kuwait and Italy, saying: "When I arrived in Kuwait, I felt like I was in my country because the way Kuwaitis speak, the way they communicate with people, and the way they receive them is very similar to the Italian way of life." He added: "We are similar, we live in a very similar way and we all share the same value for the same basic elements of life. This is also the reason why many Kuwaitis travel to Italy every year because when you arrive in Italy, you may not understand the language, but they will understand you and you will understand immediately."

Morini also pointed out that around 160 Kuwaiti students went to study in Italian universities during the last 5 years, adding that the number is not enough and indicating that many do not realize that there are Italian universities that offer full courses in English.



WASHINGTON: Minister Noura Al-Fassam (center left) and Kuwait's Ambassador to US Sheikha Al-Zain Al-Sabah (left) meet with US Acting Assistant Secretary of State for Economic and Business Affairs Amy Holman (center right). — KUNA photos



Minister Al-Fassam speaks during her participation in an event as part of the annual gatherings of the international financial institutions under the Board of Governors of the World Bank Group and the International Monetary Fund.

## Current reliance on oil a threat to financial stability: Minister

**WASHINGTON:** Kuwaiti Minister of Finance, Minister of State for Economic and Investment Affairs, and Acting Minister of Oil Noura Al-Fassam said the current reliance on oil would expose the region to major risks that pose a threat to financial stability and sustainable growth. She explained that the fluctuations in global energy prices would lead to economic fluctuations and the possibility of a decline in demand for hydrocarbons in the long term. This came in a speech delivered by Minister Al-Fassam on Thursday evening during her participation in a GCC event, held in cooperation with the World Bank, headed by the Secretary General of the GCC Jassem Al-Budaiwi, in the presence of Kuwait's Ambassador to the United States Sheikha Al-Zain Al-Sabah. Gulf finance ministers and senior officials in the financial and economic sectors also participated in this event. Minister Al-Fassam added that Kuwait and the GCC countries share the ambition to build resilient and sustainable economies. Kuwait would continue to

prioritize sustainable progress in economic diversification, developing non-oil projects, generating job opportunities in the private sector, and strengthening its position as a major partner in Gulf development. She pointed out Kuwait's major projects, including the development of the Northern Economic Zone and the development of Mubarak Al-Kabeer Port, in addition to other projects in the tourism sector such as the development of Failaka Island, information and communications technology, and renewable energy. She explained that Kuwait and the GCC countries look forward to cooperation and economic integration by prioritizing facilitating cross-border trade, unifying regulations, and updating policies in trade, human capital, infrastructure, and digital transformation. Minister Al-Fassam pointed out that the event was held during the annual meetings of the World Bank Group and the International Monetary Fund in Washington, aiming to create new investment opportunities for the Gulf economy. The event discussed the economic and development policies expected to be adopted within the framework of joint Gulf action and presented proposals for new economic initiatives.

As part of the meetings, Al-Fassam met with US Acting Assistant Secretary of State for Economic and Business Affairs Amy Holman.

They discussed ways to enhance cooperation



Minister Al-Fassam meets with US Assistant Secretary of State for Energy Resources Geoffry Pyatt.

between the two friendly countries in the areas of financial and economic reforms, explored investment opportunities in Kuwaiti national projects, and focused on empowering women and supporting youth capacities and talents.

She also met with US Assistant Secretary of State for Energy Resources Geoffry Pyatt, where they praised the historical and commercial relationship between the two countries and discussed ways to enhance cooperation in alternative and renewable energy, including knowledge and experience transfer in this field. Both meetings were attended by Sheikha Al-Zain Al-Sabah. — KUNA

In my view

## Gaza's darkest moment?



By Nejouad Al-Yagout

The United Nations warned that the Gaza conflict is undergoing its "darkest moment" after the Zionist entity raided the Kamal Adwan hospital in Beit Lahiyah, northern Gaza. Can you imagine how a Gazan (or resident of Gaza) must feel hearing that? Its darkest moment? Can anyone see the irony of this description? This can't be their darkest moment because they have always been engulfed in darkness. And since October 7, the lights were officially turned off in Gaza.

To call this moment the darkest moment in the conflict is to whitewash all the heinous and atrocious crimes that have been perpetrated against Gazans for years. One of its darkest moments was when it was built as an open-air prison. Another "darkest moment" is how Gazans are made to feel as untouchables in their own land. Yet another darkest moment was when the world turned its back on them, even while expressing shock and horror at their fate. Over 40,000 people have been killed in a year.

Can we imagine the outrage and global support if that many people were killed in Kuwait by a foreign power within the span of a year or in any other country? Why is it OK for Palestinians to die then? Why? We watch the news and hear every day of Palestinians being shot point-blank or as they attempt to flee the fate of their family members and loved ones or while they are trying to deliver a baby at a hospital or receive treatment. Ten here, fifty there. Are we immune to these numbers?

We hear of children being killed every week. Are we that insensitive? And then to discount all the darkest moments that Gaza has gone through by claiming it is at its darkest moment seems almost cruel at best. If we held all of Gaza's darkest moments, even the most expert jurists in the world would not be able to determine which is the darkest.

Omar Shakir of Human Rights Watch stated: "As many people around the world are once again traveling two years after the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, Gaza's more than two million Palestinians remain under what amounts to a 15-year-old lockdown." And this was before October 7. Can you imagine a 15-year lockdown? We couldn't handle mere months of a lockdown! By the second or third month, people were rebelling against impositions and finding ways to circumvent laws, because they had the privilege to do so, without risk to their lives and homes.

Gazans have been enduring almost two decades of a lockdown without any privileges, without anyone able or willing to save them, with their lives and homes constantly at risk. Isn't that dark enough to be considered a darkest moment? What about the fact that a foreign colonizing power prohibits Gazans from building an airport or seaport on their own land? What about all the Gazans who have lost family members, homes, and access to proper education and medical care? Aren't those circumstances among their darkest moments?

In an article for The Guardian, Owen Jones reveals that "food was stockpiled less than 30 miles across the border at a (Zionist) port, including sufficient flour to feed most Gazans for five months; it was deliberately withheld." Isn't that one of Gaza's darkest moments — when an occupying power intentionally deprives its victims of the right to resources? Aply, the title of Jones' article is: "What atrocity would [the Zionist entity] have to commit for our leaders to break their silence?" Perhaps that is a question the world needs to ask. How many more "darkest moments" in Gaza will it take for the world to prove to itself that it is humane, after all.

We cannot pinpoint Gaza's darkest moment while Gazans are groping in the dark. It can't get any darker than it was then or than it is now. What the future holds, we do not know, but what we cannot do is ignore the fact that we have turned our back on Gazans. And no matter what we say or do, so long as the fate of Palestinians consists of one darkest moment after another, we will never be free (not even those who oppose freedom for Palestinians).



## China, Kuwait talk cooperation in elderly, social care

KUWAIT: Minister of Social, Family and Childhood Affairs Dr Amthal Al-Huwailah received on Thursday visiting Vice Chairperson of the Standing Committee of the Provincial People's Congress of Jiangsu Province of China, Zhang Baojuan, to discuss aspects of cooperation. The discussion dealt with experience sharing between the two friendly countries in such areas as care for the elderly and vulnerable people and social care, according to a statement from the Ministry. Both sides praised the deep-rooted relations between Kuwait and China, and expressed desire to promote the fruitful cooperation and improve the quality of social service, the statement noted. —KUNA

### Photo of the Day



KUWAIT: A black-headed gull (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*) stands on a branch as a seagull passes it by then flies away at a beach in Kuwait City on October 26, 2024. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



KUALA LAMPUR: Head of the DGCA Sheikh Humoud Mubarak Al-Humoud Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with deputy director general of civil aviation in Rwanda Winnie Ngamije. — KUNA photos



Sheikh Humoud meets with Uganda's civil aviation authority Olive Birungi Lumonya.



Sheikh Humoud poses for a photo with Asangba Chuba, India's civil aviation authority undersecretary.



Sheikh Humoud meets with Oman's chairman of the civil aviation authority Nayef Al-Abri.

# Kuwait eyes boosting flight operations with India

## Official emphasizes need for swift foreign-ministry level agreement to meet Kuwaiti airlines demand

KUALA LAMPUR: Increasing flight operations between India and Kuwait is a "top priority" for the Kuwaiti airlines, said Head of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation of Kuwait (DGCA) Sheikh Humoud Mubarak Al-Humoud Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. In a meeting with Asangba Chuba, India's civil aviation authority undersecretary, Sheikh Humoud emphasized the need for Indian authorities to coordinate with Kuwait's Ministry of Foreign Affairs to sign an agreement to boost operations as soon as possible.

The meeting was one of several Sheikh Humoud held with officials in the aviation industry, including representatives of Uganda, Rwanda, the Dominican Republic,

and Oman, on during the closing sessions of the annual meeting of the International Civil Aviation Conference (ICAO 2024) held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Discussions between Rwanda and Kuwait bore fruit Friday as the two countries signed a memorandum of understanding to exchange expertise and training in various fields, including air safety, navigation, and aviation security. The agreement came after Sheikh Humoud held two meetings with deputy director general of civil aviation in Rwanda Winnie Ngamije.

Sheikh Humoud discussed way to develop bilateral relations in civil aviation with deputy director general of Uganda's civil aviation authority Olive Birungi Lu-

monya. The two sides explored the possibility of establishing a partnership between Kuwait Airways and Uganda Airlines, and examined the air transport markets in the two countries.

Sheikh Humoud also met with Oman's chairman of the civil aviation authority Nayef Al-Abri, to discuss key developments and future plans for civil aviation and to exchange ideas on upcoming events in the regional and global aviation sectors. He also congratulated Hector Porcella, head of the civil aviation authority in the Dominican Republic, on his country's approval by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) to host the ICAO conference in 2025, expressing his best wish-

es for the Dominican Republic's success in organizing this global event and offering all possible cooperation.

The ICAO 2024 annual meeting, organized and overseen by ICAO, ended Friday after running for five days with participation from civil aviation authorities worldwide and numerous regional and international organizations specializing in civil aviation. This international meeting provided a platform for negotiations and consultations on air services, allowing policymakers, regulatory bodies, aircraft operators, and other stakeholders to connect. Kuwait signed two more agreements with South Korea and Malaysia during the conference. — KUNA

## The Gate Mall wraps up fifth shopping festival

KUWAIT: The Gate Mall, managed by Mudon Ahlia Real Estate Company, concluded its fifth edition of the Summer Shopping Festival for 2024 with a car prize-giving ceremony for the winners of the monthly draws. The event was attended by Ghazi Al-Osaimi, General Manager of Mudon Ahlia Real Estate, who presented the prizes to the winners.

The festival began on April 25 and continued until September 30, featuring outstanding daily prizes from the world's most famous high-end brands, in addition to monthly prizes, such as a trip to London with a week-long stay for two at the luxurious Churchill Hotel. Participants also had the chance to win 2024 Land Cruiser cars.

During the ceremony, car keys were handed over to five winners: Sabah Fayeze Kawther, Nawwal Hussein Al-Anzi, Nawwal Khalid Al-Hajri, Abrar Badr Al-Shayji, and Mohammed Sultan Al-Ajmi. The winners participated in the draw with invoices from different brands within the Gate Mall, including but not limited to: Al-Shaya Group, Azadea Group, Gastronomica (Burger Boutique), Abdul Samad Al Qurashi, and Kryolan Cosmetics.

Nizam Madi, Operation Manager for Azadea Group, said the shopping festival at the Gate Mall led to a significant increase in visitor numbers and sales, supported by effective promotional campaigns. He added such events not only boost sales, but also build stronger relationships with customers by offering an enjoyable shopping experience, enhancing their loyalty to the brand. Mohamed Munir, Purchasing Officer at Dar Al-Sabaek, praised the festival's role in stimulating shopping and increasing sales, confirming the great success achieved by this event.

Basil Al-Barbari, Operation Manager for Central Operations Management at Al-Shaya Group, said: "Al-Shaya Group has had a long-standing relationship with the Gate Mall since 2014, and we are proud



Basil Al-Barbari



KUWAIT: One of the winners receives their car key at the conclusion of The Gate Mall fifth Summer Shopping Festival.



Ghazi Al-Osaimi, Mudon Ahlia General Manager.

today to operate 15 diverse brands within the complex." He added: "The Gate Mall Festival represents the culmination of our fruitful cooperation with the mall management, aiming to enhance the customer experience and encourage repeat visits through providing a comprehensive shopping experience that includes exclusive offers and interactive activities that cater to the interests of all family members and showcase everything new and innovative in the world of shopping."

At the conclusion of the event, General Manager of Mudon Ahlia Real Estate Al-Osaimi expressed his gratitude to all attendees, noting that the festival achieved great success thanks to customer trust and their effective participation. He invited everyone to look forward to more surprises in the upcoming version of the Gate Mall Festival in 2025.



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Rescuers in Philippines battle floodwaters to reach stranded

## Harris, Trump battle for holdout votes in swing states across US

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A man carries away a child that was rescued following Zionist bombardment on the four-storey Muqat family house in the Zarqa neighborhood in the north of Gaza City on October 26, 2024. — AFP

# UN rights chief: 'Darkest moment' of war unfolding in northern Gaza

## Zionist entity's actions could amount to 'atrocities crimes': Turk

GENEVA: The UN rights chief said the "darkest moment" of the conflict in Gaza was unfolding in the north of the territory, warning Friday that Zionist entity's actions could amount to "atrocities crimes". Volker Turk pointed out that already "more than 150,000 people are reportedly dead, wounded or missing in Gaza" since the war there erupted just over a year ago. "Unimaginably, the situation is getting worse by the day," he said.

"My gravest fear is, given the intensity, breadth, scale and blatant nature of the Zionist entity operation currently underway in North Gaza, that number will rise dramatically," Turk, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, warned that Zionist entity's policies in northern Gaza "risk emptying the area of all Palestinians".

"We are facing what could amount to atrocity crimes, including potentially extending to crimes against humanity," Turk's statement pointed out that Palestinian armed groups also reportedly continue to operate among civilians, including in places of shelter, putting civilians in harm's way "which is totally unacceptable".

Turk called on the world's leaders to act, stressing that all states are responsible under the Geneva Conventions to ensure respect for international humanitarian law. "For months, I have pleaded with all parties to the conflict, as well as all states ... to act to stop the carnage and destruction, to ensure the prompt and unconditional release of all hostages, and to ensure international humanitarian and international human rights law are respected," he said.

"But still this goes on and on and on." His statement stressed the urgency of the situation, warning that "today the darkest moment of the Gaza conflict is unfolding in the north of the Strip, where the Zionist entity military is effectively subjecting an entire population to bombing, siege and risk of starvation".

"The bombing in North Gaza is non-stop," he said. At the same time, "the Zionist entity military has ordered hundreds of thousands to move... But there is no safe way to leave," he warned. The UN rights chief cautioned that there was "extremely limited access to this part of Gaza, (and) next to no aid has reached the area in weeks". "Many are now facing starvation."

At the same time, he said, "the Zionist entity military is striking hospitals, and staff and patients have been killed and injured or forced to evacuate simultaneously". The International Court of Justice had made clear Zionist entity's obligation to ensure the entry and delivery of desperately-needed humanitarian aid, Turk pointed out. In particular, he highlighted the court's binding orders to ensure that Zionist entity conforms with its obligations under the Genocide Convention, obligating other countries to act.

"Under the Genocide Convention, state parties also have the responsibility to act to prevent such a crime, when risk becomes apparent," he said. Turk warned that "international rule of law is being progressively dismantled", and urged world leaders "not to abandon that minimum of humanity". "Either the world ashamedly fails those who so desperately need help, or we stand united and put a stop to this." — AFP

## Jordanians 'boiling with anger' spurring border attacks

AMMAN: A cross-border attack in October by two young Jordanians against Zionist entity soldiers is a sign of deep anger at the war in Gaza in a country with strong ties to the Palestinians.

"Jordanians are boiling with anger, this is undeniable," said Oraib Rantawi, head of the Amman-based Al Quds Center for Political Studies. The attackers, who were killed in a firefight south of the Dead Sea last week that lightly wounded two Zionist entity soldiers, were members of the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan, although the Islamist group said they acted independently. It came just weeks after another attack by a Jordanian gunman at a border crossing with the occupied West Bank which killed three Zionist entity guards. The two assailants in the most recent attack, Hussam Abu Ghazaleh and Amer Qawoos, had "always participated in events in solidarity with Gaza and in support of the resistance", a Muslim Brotherhood spokesman recently told AFP.

While there have been protests, Rantawi said, many Jordanians want concrete action against Zionist entity, such as suspending trade or cutting diplomatic ties. "Some young people, particularly those from Islamist, nationalist and leftist movements, feel



Smoke rises from the site of a Zionist airstrike that targeted the outskirts of the southern Lebanese village of Aishiyeh on October 26, 2024. — AFP

that protests alone are not enough," he said. Jordan, where about half of the population is of Palestinian origin, has yet to officially condemn the attack. But, Prime Minister Jafar Hassan said after the latest attack: "We will not be a place for strife or accept the risking of the future of this country, and we will not allow any party to replicate their models of chaos and destruction in our homeland." In 1994 Jordan became the second Arab country, after Egypt, to recognize Zionist entity and establish diplomatic ties. Their shared border has remained largely calm since then. The attack came just hours after Zionist entity confirmed its forces in Gaza had killed Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar. — AFP

## Shock after Zionist strike kills journalists in south Lebanon

BEIRUT: Seeking a safe place to rest while covering the war in Lebanon, a group of journalists had gone to sleep in an area outside Hezbollah control, only to be awoken Friday by a deadly Zionist entity air strike. The strike on Hasbaya at around 03.30am (1230 GMT) killed cameraman Ghassan Najjar and broadcast engineer Mohammad Reda, who worked for the pro-Iran, Beirut-based broadcaster Al-Mayadeen, and video journalist Wissam Qassem of Hezbollah's Al-Manar television.

"I woke up to the whistling sound of a missile and found my door burst open while thick smoke rose from the garden. I thought there was a fire," Sky News Arabia senior correspondent Darine El Helwe told AFP. "I called one of my colleagues... He told me he was under the rubble," said Helwe, who has been covering the fighting between Zionist entity-Hezbollah for more than a year.

She said the impact of the blast had thrown a broadcast vehicle from its parking spot. AFP footage from the site showed small houses with red-tiled roofs badly damaged in the attacks, with the top of one residence completely smashed. Rubble and twisted metal were strewn everywhere and at least two cars with the word "Press" across their bonnets had been reduced to dust-covered wrecks.

A house "where our colleagues were sleeping has been razed," Helwe said while driving back to Beirut. Prime Minister Najib Mikati said the attack on sleeping reporters was deliberate and both he and Information Minister Ziad Makary labeled it a war crime. "We were asleep in our rooms, without our bulletproof vests and



A car marked 'Press' at the site of a Zionist airstrike that targeted an area where a number of journalists were located in the southern Lebanese village of Hasbaya on October 25, 2024. — AFP

helmets," Helwe said. She said the reporters thought they would be safe in the Druze-majority town which was relatively far from the main flashpoints further south but close enough to the border to allow them to cover hostilities.

Since last month, seven Lebanese and Arab media outlets had been renting out a complex of 10 houses on the banks of the Hasbani river, after the reporters evacuated from a nearby village that came under fire. Local official Naim Lahham told AFP it was "the first time that the town of Hasbaya was targeted" in a year of hostilities. Muhamad Farhat, a reporter with local broadcaster al-Jadeed, posted a video of himself covered in dust, his eyes red and teary amid the wreckage of his room.

"The Zionist entity enemy targeted a place where journalists were staying," he said in the video, his bed buried under the rubble behind him. In another video live on air, he said "the

Zionist entity enemy... hunted down the press again today while they were in an area relatively far" from the clashes. Mayadeen correspondent Fatima Ftouni, who made it out unscathed from the attack, wielded her microphone and her damaged press vest live on air, saying: "this is the only weapon we had". "What you see before you is neither a ballistic missile nor artillery shells: it is a microphone and a vest," she said, holding up her equipment.

On September 23, Zionist entity launched an intense air campaign in Lebanon and later launched ground incursions, following a year of limited cross-border clashes with Hezbollah over the Gaza war. Since then, Zionist entity strikes in Lebanon have killed at least 1,580 people, according to an AFP tally of Lebanese health ministry figures, though the real number is likely to be higher due to gaps in the data. Several journalists and media workers have also been killed. — AFP

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## International

# Harris, Trump battle for holdout votes in swing states across US

## Polls show a dead heat in the final days of election

TRAVERSE CITY, US: Kamala Harris and Donald Trump are battling for holdout votes on a penultimate weekend of campaigning across US swing states, with Michelle Obama joining the Democrat onstage before the Republican nominee hosts an eyebrow-raising rally in New York City.

With just 10 days left in a bitterly contested presidential race, the rivals converged Saturday on Michigan, one of the three fiercely-contested "Blue Wall" states—along with Wisconsin and top battleground prize Pennsylvania—that Democrats see as critical to any path to Election Day victory on November 5. Polls show a dead heat in the race's final days, and with more than 35 million people nationwide already casting early ballots, Americans are deciding whether to elect the country's first-ever woman president, or its oldest commander in chief.

Part of Harris's strategy is to peel moderate Republicans away from an increasingly vituperative Trump, who continues to demean certain Americans as the "enemy." On Friday he warned that if he wins the White House, people who committed election fraud "will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the Law, which will include long term prison sentences."

For Republican AD Jefferson, a 62-year-old laborer attending Harris's rally in Houston, the Trump turmoil is too much. "I just think she's less controversial," he told AFP. "I'm a Republican, but I feel like Trump is just too chaotic for me." Fresh off a high-energy rally in Texas with pop icon Beyoncé to highlight Republican restrictions on abortion, Harris heads to Kalamazoo, Michigan where she will court

voters by drawing on yet more starpower, this time deploying one of the Democratic Party's most popular emissaries: former first lady Michelle Obama. Her husband Barack Obama joined Harris on Thursday for a rally in Georgia.

Harris, 60, rallies on Sunday in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, the largest city in the largest of the swing states likely to determine the outcome of the presidential election under the US electoral system.

Trump, who swept the three Blue Wall states in his shock victory in 2016 only to see Joe Biden reclaim them for Democrats four years later, is strategizing that clawing back one or more of the trio and winning the other so-called Sun Belt swing states would propel him back into the White House.

With just a few thousands votes possibly the difference between victory and defeat in the tightest of swing states, Trump held rallies Saturday in Michigan and Pennsylvania, where a robust ground game and relentless barnstorming of the battlegrounds could prove decisive.

They follow the release late Friday of the extended, three-hour interview that Trump taped for the Joe Rogan Experience, America's most popular podcast. He is seeking to woo Rogan's massive, largely male audience, as the Republican candidate hunts for viral moments that tap into his everyman appeal.

Then on Sunday night, Trump performs a campaign quirk: rallying his supporters in Madison Square Garden, the iconic arena in the heart of Democrat-heavy New York. Analysts have pondered why Trump is campaigning in his native New York de-



US singer-songwriter Beyoncé (right) and US singer and actress Kelly Rowland attend a campaign rally for Kamala Harris at Shell Energy Stadium in Houston on October 25, 2024. -- AFP

spite virtually no chance of flipping the state. The brash billionaire and onetime reality television star may be keen to orchestrate a spectacle and demonstrate he can fill an arena in a Democratic bastion. But critics, including Trump's 2016 rival Hillary Clinton, have noted that Madison Square Garden was also the scene of a 1939 pro-Nazi rally organized by a group supportive of Adolf Hitler. "She said it's just like the 1930s," Trump said at a Friday rally in Mich-

igan, referring to Clinton's remarks a day earlier on CNN. "No it's not, no. This is called 'Make America Great Again.'"

The weekend campaigning follows a heated row over accusations that the Republican ex-president has been running to be an authoritarian leader, following claims by Trump's longest-serving White House chief of staff, echoed by Harris, that Trump is a "fascist" who cannot be trusted with power again. -- AFP

## Germany promises more visas for Indians during Scholz visit

NEW DELHI: Germany promised to dramatically boost the number of skilled Indians it permits to work in the country as Prime Minister Narendra Modi hosted Chancellor Olaf Scholz in New Delhi on Friday.

The German leader is on his third visit to India since last year, bringing several cabinet ministers for discussions between the leaders of the world's third- and fifth-largest economies. His administration agreed to increase the number of visas granted annually to skilled Indian workers to 90,000, up from 20,000.

"The message is that Germany is open for skilled workers," Scholz said. Modi hailed the agreement as an economic boon to both countries. "When India's dynamics and Germany's precision meet, when Germany's engineering and India's innovation meet... a better future is decided for the Indo-Pacific and the entire world," he said. India and Germany first signed a migration agreement two years ago to facilitate mobility for professionals and students. Berlin has also pledged to make its visa application process less bu-



India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi (left) and German Chancellor Olaf Scholz gesture before their meeting at the Hyderabad House in New Delhi on October 25, 2024. -- AFP

reaucratic and to improve the recognition of Indian professional qualifications in Germany.

Scholz arrived in India late on Thursday, following a state visit in February 2023 and the G20 summit in New Delhi later that year. India's foreign ministry said this week that the partnership between both countries had "deepened" over the years.

Germany and India are defense partners, and naval forces from both sides undertook a "maritime partnership exercise" earlier this week in the Indian Ocean. The maiden exercise was aimed at "further strengthening the maritime connect between the two nations and interoperability between the navies", a statement from India's navy read Thursday.

"We also want to deepen our cooperation on defense and agree to bring our militaries closer together," Scholz said. "Our overall message is clear: We need more cooperation not less." But the two countries diverge over ties with Russia and its war with Ukraine. While Germany strongly backs Kyiv, Modi this week attended a BRICS summit where he embraced Russian President Vladimir Putin. In contrast to Germany, Modi's government has maintained its longstanding ties with Moscow even as it also courts closer security partnerships with its Western allies. While in New Delhi, Scholz said reports that Russia could soon send North Korean troops to fight in Ukraine were "very worrying". "It is serious and, of course, something that escalates the situation further," he said.

"At the same time, it also shows that the Russian president is in dire straits. He has now allied himself with countries whose behavior he once strongly criticized." Scholz's visit also covered India's ambitious program to scale up production of "green hydrogen", a clean energy source in demand in Germany as Russian oil and gas supplies have shrunk and Berlin seeks to meet its climate goals. Representatives of both countries agreed on a bilateral "Green Hydrogen Road Map" on Friday, the details of which have yet to be published. Scholz and his team are expected to travel to Goa on Saturday to inspect naval vessels before returning to Germany in the evening. -- AFP

## Iran defiant after Zionist strikes...

Continued from Page 1

A semi-official Iranian news agency said there would be a "proportional reaction" to the Zionist strikes. Two regional officials briefed by Iran told Reuters that several high-level meetings were held in Tehran to determine the scope of Iran's response. One official said the damage was "very minimal" but added that several Revolutionary Guards bases in and around Tehran were also hit.

The Zionist entity had vowed to retaliate after Oct 1, when Iran fired around 200 missiles in only the second-ever direct attack against its arch-foe. Most of those missiles were intercepted but one person was killed. The Zionist retaliation drew condemnation from Hamas, Iraq, Pakistan, Syria and Saudi Arabia, which warned against further escalation. Jordan stated that Zionist jets had not used its airspace.

Turkey was one of the most outspoken critics. "Putting an end to the terror created by (the Zionist entity) in the region has become a historic task for the establishment of international peace and security," the Turkish foreign ministry said in a statement. "We condemn in the strongest terms the (Zionist) attack on Iran. By committing genocide in Gaza, preparing to annex the West Bank and killing civilians every day in Lebanon, (the Zionist entity) has brought our region to the brink of a greater war," the ministry added.

## 124 killed as Sudan's RSF...

Continued from Page 1

The war has displaced more than 11 million people, driven parts of the country to extreme hunger or famine, and drawn in foreign powers that have given both sides material support. It began in April 2023 when tensions between the RSF and the army, who had previously shared power, erupted into open conflict at a time when Sudan should have been transitioning to civilian rule after a 2021 coup.

"The RSF militia is raiding east, west, and central Gezira, and committing extensive massacres in one village after another," the committee said. Images on social media shared by the committee and others purported to show dozens of bodies wrapped for burial and mass graves being dug. "The people of Gezira are facing genocide by the Rapid Support Forces and it is impossible to treat the injured or even evacuate them

At roughly the same time as the Zionist entity struck targets in Iran, the Syrian state news agency SANA said a Zionist air attack targeted military positions in central and southern Syria. The Islamic Resistance in Iraq, a loose network of factions, claimed responsibility before dawn Saturday for a drone attack against a "military target" in the Zionist entity's north.

On Friday, two people died from shrapnel wounds after a Hezbollah rocket barrage into the Zionist entity's north, Zionist officials said. In addition to the residential strikes, Hezbollah said it had fired rockets at Zionist soldiers near the village of Aita al-Shaab in southern Lebanon and at an intelligence base as well as launching drones against the Zionist Tel Nof air base south of Tel Aviv. On Saturday, Lebanon's health ministry said a Zionist strike had killed a Hezbollah-affiliated medic in Bazuriyeh in the south of the country.

US National Security Council spokesman Sean Savett claimed the Zionist entity's response to Iran was "an exercise in self-defense". He urged Iran to "cease its attacks on (the Zionist entity) so that this cycle of fighting can end without further escalation".

In April, in its first-ever direct assault against Zionist territory, Iran launched more than 300 drones and missiles. Tehran said the barrage was retaliation for a strike on Iran's consular annex in Damascus that killed members of its Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. Explosions later in April shook Iran's Isfahan province in what US officials, cited by American media, said was Zionist retaliation. Iran said its Oct 1 missile attack on the Zionist entity was retaliation for a Zionist air raid that killed Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah as well as the assassination in Tehran of Hamas political leader Ismail Haniyeh. -- Agencies

for treatment. Those who have left on foot have died or are faced with death," said the Sudanese Doctors Union, calling for safe passages. A video circulated on social media purported to show an RSF soldier who said he was in Sireha and who filmed troops lining up men of all ages at gunpoint, using racial epithets, and forcing them to bleat like goats. Another video, shared by the resistance committee, showed an RSF soldier pulling an elderly man to his feet by his beard.

Sudan's Combating Violence Against Women Unit, a government body, said in a statement it had received reports of RSF soldiers raping women in Gezira villages as a tactic to humiliate the men and drive people out of the area. Keikal's defection occurred as the army renewed a push to regain territory across the country.

Sudanese army general Abdel Fattah Al-Burhan posted on X late on Friday that as more civilian blood was spilled, the Sudanese people's determination to resist the RSF grew stronger. But his comments were met with a wave of criticism that the army had not protected civilians in Gezira or elsewhere in the country. The RSF is accused by the United States and others of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and ethnic cleansing, particularly in West Darfur. -- Reuters

## Zionists murder dozens in Gaza...

Continued from Page 1

"The safety and lives of patients who are left inside Kamal Adwan Hospital without medical staff and much needed medication are at risk now," said Marwan Al-Hams of the health ministry. Three nurses were injured during the raid and three ambulance vehicles were destroyed, the ministry said. Zionist military strikes on the towns of Jabalia, Beit Hanoun and Beit Lahiya in northern Gaza have so far killed around 800 people during a three-week offensive, the Gaza ministry added. The Zionist military said on Friday that three of its soldiers were killed in combat in the north of the Gaza Strip.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) described the situation in northern Gaza as "extremely dire" and said people wishing to evacuate must be assured safe passage. "Ongoing evacuation orders, and continued restriction on introduction of essential supplies, leaves the remaining civilian population in north Gaza in horrific circumstances," the ICRC said in a statement on Saturday.

"Hospitals are being told to evacuate, leaving a potential vacuum of medical services for the many civilians who remain, and are critically under-resourced while new patients continue to arrive," it added. Senior Hamas official Basem Naim said the Zionist incursions in northern Gaza and storming Kamal Adwan Hospital were a violation of international humanitarian law that it could not have committed without "the protection of Western countries".

"We saw mayhem and chaos... The emergency wards (in Kamal Adwan) were overflowing, and we saw numerous patients being brought in and horrific trauma patients, completely overwhelming the staff," Rik Peep-erkorn, WHO Representative for the occupied Palestin-

## Zionist strike kills Lebanon media...

Continued from Page 1

there was a fire," Sky News Arabia correspondent Darine El Helwe told AFP. "We were asleep in our rooms, without our bulletproof vests and helmets," she said. Lebanon's Prime Minister Najib Mikati said the strike "targeting journalists" was among the "war crimes committed by the (Zionist) enemy". He also said the attack was "deliberate". Earlier, Information Minister Ziad Makary said the Zionist entity had "waited

for the journalists' nighttime break" to strike while they slept. "This is an assassination, after monitoring and tracking, with prior planning and design, as there were 18 journalists there representing seven media institutions," Makary wrote on X.

International Committee of the Red Cross president Mirjana Spoljaric told AFP that journalists are "protected persons". "And you know the approach of applying propaganda is not eliminating this protection," she added. The Zionist military on Friday said it had struck more than 200 militant targets in Lebanon over the past day, as it announced the deaths of five soldiers in fighting in south Lebanon. United Nations peacekeepers said Zionist soldiers fired at one of their observation posts in south Lebanon this week, adding the security situation was "extremely challenging". -- AFP

Separately on Saturday, Zionist forces killed a Hamas member during a raid in the city of Tulkarm, in the Zionist-occupied West Bank, the Zionist security force said in a statement. It claimed the man had been planning an imminent attack. Hamas said the man, identified as Islam Jamil Awda, had died "clashing with the occupation forces who besieged him for hours in a house in Tulkarm camp". Violence has surged across the West Bank since the start of the Zionist war in Gaza. The death toll from the Zionist genocidal campaign in Gaza is approaching 43,000, with the densely populated enclave in ruins. -- Agencies

Meanwhile, Zionist strikes on three houses in the nearby Gaza town of Beit Lahiya killed 25 people and wounded dozens more, medics said. Later on Friday, a Zionist airstrike killed nine people in Shati camp in Gaza City, medics said, raising the number of Palestinians killed by Zionist fire across the enclave to at least 72 since Thursday night.

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## International

## Rescuers in Philippines battle floodwaters to reach stranded

Flooding from Tropical Storm Trami claims more than 97 lives

MANILA: Rescuers in the Philippines raced Saturday to reach people still stranded in areas made inaccessible by flooding from Tropical Storm Trami, which has killed at least 97 people.

Trami battered the main island of Luzon and forced nearly half a million people to flee their homes as heavy rain caused widespread floods and landslides. In the hardest-hit Bicol region, residents trapped on the roofs and upper floors of their homes were still awaiting desperately needed assistance, officials said. "The floods have yet to subside. Calls asking for help are still pouring here," Bicol regional police director Andre Dizon told AFP.

"We need to rescue them as soon as possible because starvation can be a problem. We're hearing reports that children are already getting sick." In the region's Camarines Sur province, food and drinking water were in increasingly short supply as some areas remained completely submerged and difficult to access, he added. President Ferdinand Marcos visited the province on Saturday to inspect the damage.

"Our main problem here is that many areas are still flooded," he told government officials during a briefing. "We have flood control systems but the amount of water is unmanageable. This is climate change. This is all new, so we have to come up with new solutions too," Marcos added. Trami's death toll rose Saturday as rescuers retrieved more bodies from floodwaters and landslide sites, mostly from the Bicol region and Batangas province, south of Manila.

Police have recorded 36 deaths in Bicol, most

due to drowning. The number of confirmed dead in Batangas has risen to 54, provincial police chief Jacinto Malinao told AFP, with at least 21 people missing. Two were reported dead in separate incidents of electrocution and drowning in Cavite province, police told AFP on Saturday. Five more deaths have been confirmed in other provinces, bringing the total to 97, according to an AFP tally based on official police and disaster agency sources.

In Batangas, two hours south of the capital, rescuers were using backhoes and shovels to dig through mud as high as three meters (10 feet) in a desperate search for the missing in areas hit by landslides.

Cadaver-sniffing dogs have also been deployed to assist the operations. AFP reporters who visited the province on Friday saw roads blocked by felled trees, vehicles half-submerged in mud and homes severely damaged by flash flooding. "We are still hoping for the best," said Malinao, the police chief.

"We will not stop until all bodies are retrieved." The national disaster agency said Saturday that about 495,000 people have been displaced by the flooding, which has submerged hundreds of villages in swaths of the northern Philippines. About 20 big storms and typhoons hit the archipelago nation or its surrounding waters each year, damaging homes and infrastructure and killing dozens of people.

A recent study showed that storms in the Asia-Pacific region are increasingly forming closer to coastlines, intensifying more rapidly and lasting longer over land due to climate change. — AFP



Rescuers evacuate a family from their submerged house brought about from Tropical Storm Trami in Bula town, Camarines Sur province, South of Manila on October 26, 2024. — AFP

## Commonwealth: Time has come for talks on legacy of slavery

APIA, Samoa: The Commonwealth's 56 members agreed the "time has come" for talks about the legacy of the "abhorrent" transatlantic slave trade Saturday, in a landmark summit declaration that raised the prospect of future reparations.

Gathering in Samoa, leaders from Britain and dozens of former colonies held lengthy and occasionally tense talks over one of the most sensitive aspects of their shared and troubled past. In a joint statement, Commonwealth leaders noted calls for "reparatory justice" for the "abhorrent" transatlantic slave trade and the "enduring effects" of dispossessing Indigenous people, indenturedship and colonialism. "The time has come for a meaningful, truthful and respectful conversation towards forging a common future based on equity," a joint "Samoa Communique" said.

African, Caribbean and Pacific nations want Britain—and other colonial powers—to atone for slavery and other ills of colonization, and to start talks about compensation.

Many remain poorer than their one-time colonial masters and are still scarred by the brutal trade that saw an estimated 10-15 million enslaved people ripped from Africa over four centuries. While Britain has expressed remorse for slavery in broad terms, London has balked at the idea of paying financial reparations, which could come with a hefty price tag. During the summit, London tried to avoid making explicit commitments while trying to retain some semblance of Commonwealth unity.

"I should be really clear here, in the two days we've been here, none of the discussions have been about money", British Prime Minister Keir Starmer said after the meeting. "Our position is very, very clear in relation to that", he said, insisting talks had been "very positive". The meeting's conclusion was delayed for hours as leaders and officials tried to hammer out a compromise.

The final text may be more vague and legalistic than some former colonies wanted.

During the summit, Bahamas Prime Minister Philip Davis told AFP it was time for "a real dialogue about how we address these historical wrongs". "The hor-

rors of slavery left a deep, generational wound in our communities, and the fight for justice and reparatory justice is far from over." But one expert said the summit could come to be seen as historic.

"The commitment to conversations on reparatory justice wedges open the door for dialogue," said Kingsley Abbott, of the University of London's Institute of Commonwealth Studies. "The Commonwealth", he said, "should see this as an opportunity to lead on a potentially historic process, and to do so with vision and courage."

For Britain—still staking out its place in the world after empire and leaving the European Union—the summit was a high-stakes balancing act. Starmer is under political pressure at home, and King Charles III, whose family benefited from the slave trade over centuries, had faced calls to apologize personally.

The British royal, who was attending his first summit as monarch and as head of the Commonwealth, stopped well short of an apology on Friday, asking delegates to "reject the language of division". "I understand, from listening to people across the Commonwealth, how the most painful aspects of our past continue to resonate," he said.

"None of us can change the past. But we can commit, with all our hearts, to learning its lessons and to finding creative ways to right inequalities that

endure." Charles left to return to London before the final summit communique had been agreed.

Commonwealth leaders found more common cause on the "existential" issue of climate change. They agreed to an "Ocean Declaration", which recognizes current national maritime boundaries even if sea levels continue to rise. They also agreed to protect at least 30 percent of the ocean and to restore at least 30 percent of degraded marine ecosystems by 2030.

"What the ocean declaration seems to do and to say is that once your marine boundaries are fixed, they are fixed in perpetuity," outgoing Commonwealth Secretary-General Baroness Patricia Scotland told AFP. Commonwealth leaders also agreed to name Ghana's foreign minister Shirley Ayorkor Botchwey as the new secretary-general. A former lawmaker, she has served as foreign minister for the past seven years, notably steering Ghana's two-year tenure on the UN Security Council, ending in December 2023. She has backed the drafting of a Commonwealth free trade agreement and has previously said she stands for reparations. "Truly humbled by the overwhelming support of the Commonwealth Heads of Government in selecting me as the incoming Secretary-General of the Commonwealth", she posted on social media. "The work indeed lies ahead!" — AFP



Japan's Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba (center) arrives for an election campaign speech in support of the Liberal Democratic Party candidate in Tokyo on October 26, 2024. — AFP

partners or leading a minority government.

Local media speculated that Ishiba could potentially even resign immediately to take responsibility, becoming Japan's shortest-serving prime minister in the post-war period. The current record is held by Naruhiko Higashikuni who served for 54 days—four days more than British leader Liz Truss in 2022 -- just after Japan's 1945 defeat in World War II. "The situation is extremely severe," Ishiba reportedly said on the stump Friday. But at a rally on Saturday, he made a fresh promise of renewal to hundreds of supporters.

"We want to start afresh as a fair, just and sincere party, and seek your mandate," he said.

In many districts, LDP candidates are in neck-and-neck battles with those from the Constitutional Democratic Party (CDP) -- the second-biggest in parliament—led by popular former prime minister Yoshihiko Noda. "The LDP's politics is all about quickly implementing policies for those who give them loads of cash," Noda said at a rally on Saturday. — AFP

## Campaigning hits fever pitch in Japan election

TOKYO: Candidates in Japan's super-tight election made last-ditch appeals to voters on Saturday, with opinion polls suggesting the ruling coalition might fall short of a majority.

Such a bombshell outcome in Sunday's vote would be the worst result for the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) since 2009, and potentially a knockout blow to Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba. Ishiba—a fan of trains, 1970s pop idols and making model ships and planes—only last month took the helm of the LDP, which has governed Japan for almost all of the past seven decades. After a tough internal contest, the 67-year-old former defense minister became premier on October 1. Days later, he called the snap parliamentary elections, promising a "new Japan".

Ishiba pledged to revitalize depressed rural regions and to address the "quiet emergency" of Japan's falling population through family-friendly policies such as flexible working hours. But he has since rowed back his position on issues including allowing married couples to take separate surnames. He also named only two women ministers in his cabinet.

Rising prices have rankled voters, and also dogging Ishiba is the fallout from a party slush fund scandal that helped sink his predecessor, Fumio Kishida. A poll on Friday by the Yomiuri Shimbun daily suggested that the LDP and its coalition partner Ko-meito might struggle to get the 233 lower house seats needed for a majority. Ishiba has set this threshold as his objective, and missing it would undermine his position in the LDP and mean finding other coalition

## King Charles III departs Samoa, wraps Pacific tour

APIA, Samoa: Britain's King Charles III and his wife Queen Camilla departed Samoa Saturday, wrapping up a marathon 11-day tour that included a controversy-tinged stop in their Australian realm. The 75-year-old king carried out more than 30 events on the scaled-back visit, his first major foreign trip since a cancer diagnosis earlier this year.

The royal couple visited Sydney, Canberra and the Samoan capital Apia, where Charles attended a meeting of Commonwealth nations. The 56-nation bloc—made up mostly of British ex-colonies—had hoped to focus on a future threatened by climate change, but instead bickered over a troubled past marked by slavery and colonization.

At a rare night-time engagement Friday, the eve of his departure, Charles joked about his advancing years and the gruelling distance many delegates had travelled to reach this corner of the South Pacific.

"It will be interesting to see this evening who has the most success in battling jetlag," he joked over dinner. "I first visited, can you believe it, Samoa in 1974, as a young Naval Officer aboard a ship called HMS Jupiter" he recalled.

Returning 50 years later "just shows how unbelievably old I am" he joked. The lasting images from the tour may come for a glitzy visit to Sydney's famed Opera House and a naval fleet review on the sparkling harbor. But the past was also in focus during Charles' visit to Australia, where he was heckled by a lawmaker about the legacy of European settlement on Indigenous peoples. — AFP

## News in Brief

## Eight arrested in Bosnia

SARAJEVO: Eight people were arrested in Bosnia overnight in connection with the murder of a policeman by a 14-year-old, police said Saturday, amid reports the attacker may have been radicalized. Weapons and munitions were confiscated, police said, in the raids in Bosanska Krupa, the north-western town where the teenager Thursday evening mortally stabbed an officer and wounded another in a police station before being arrested, and nearby Bihac. Bosanska Krupa lies 300 kilometers (186 miles) northwest of the Bosnian capital Sarajevo. — AFP

## Manhunt in Russia after jail break

MOSCOW: Russian authorities announced a manhunt on Saturday after six convicts escaped their correctional facility through a secret tunnel and two of whom were later captured. Temporary search posts have been set up, while local law enforcement are in hot pursuit of the remaining fugitives. "I realize that the news may cause concern, but I ask you not to panic," said Igor Artamonov, governor of the western Lipetsk region. "Security forces are continuing efforts to track down and detain the criminals," he added. — AFP

## Dozens arrested in Bolivia

LA PAZ, Bolivia: Dozens of people were arrested in Bolivia during clashes Friday between supporters of former president Evo Morales, who set up more than 20 roadblocks across the country, and the police, the government said. Supporters of Morales, who is under investigation for allegedly abusing a minor during his time in office, began erecting roadblocks mid-October to prevent his possible arrest. The roadblocks disrupted fuel supplies with the state oil company last week saying that 570 tanker trucks had been stranded on roads blocked by Morales's loyalists. — AFP

## 3 killed in Australia aircraft collision

SYDNEY: Two light aircraft collided near Australia's largest city, Sydney, killing three Saturday, local police said. Emergency services received reports just before midday that two planes had collided near the town of Oakdale, about an hour's drive southwest of Sydney. "Two crime scenes have been established and three men have been located deceased," New South Wales Police said. The cause of the collision was not immediately clear, but police cordoned off areas of dense bushland and said they would provide details later Saturday. — AFP

## US OKs \$2bn Taiwan arms sale

WASHINGTON: The US State Department on Friday approved a \$2 billion arms sale package for Taiwan including advanced surface-to-air missile systems and radar, a move that could provoke Beijing. The sale, which awaits approval by Congress, includes several anti-aircraft systems, including NASAMS and 123 missiles totaling \$1.16 billion, according to the agency responsible for the sale. The agency also announced the sale of radar systems to Taiwan worth \$828 million. The equipment will be derived from US Air Force supplies. — AFP

## Premature baby found alive

AMSTERDAM: A premature baby taken away by his parents from a Paris hospital was found alive with them in an Amsterdam hotel Friday, four days after their disappearance which sparked a cross-border search, officials said. "Santiago's parents were found in a hotel in the Amsterdam region of the Netherlands. The baby was with them. He is alive and has had medical treatment," Eric Mathais, chief prosecutor in the Seine-Saint-Denis department north of Paris, said in a statement. Amsterdam police said they "today arrested a man and a woman in a hotel in the center of Amsterdam on suspicion of having kidnapped their premature baby," in a message on X. — AFP



SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2024

# IMF chief sees fiscal risks, need for CBs to be careful on rate cuts

## Georgieva seeks more details on BRICS payments system plans



Officials and delegation heads are seated for the International Monetary and Financial Committee (IMFC) plenary during the IMF/World Bank Annual Meetings in Washington, DC on October 25, 2024. — AFP

WASHINGTON: Governments around the world need to rebuild fiscal capacity and central banks should think carefully about the timing of interest rate cuts, International Monetary Fund Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva said on Friday.

"In the short term, a focus on the fiscal side as an immediate priority. Fiscal buffers have been exhausted, yet fiscal pressures are high," Georgieva said in a press conference during the IMF and World Bank annual meetings in Washington. Central banks need to "remain attentive, be evidence-based (and) carefully monitor data to make sure that they don't cut either too early or too late," she added.

The IMF wants to know more about a cross-border payments system discussed by the BRICS group of countries this week and aimed at boosting non-dollar transactions, the Fund's managing director said.

The meeting of the BRICS—meaning Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa—took place in the Russian city of Kazan at the same time as the annual meetings of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank in Washington. The BRICS group has expanded significantly since its inception in 2009, and now includes countries such as Iran, Egypt and the United Arab Emirates. Altogether the BRICS coalition accounts for a significant minority of the world's economic output.

At the Kazan summit, Russia secured a joint declaration encouraging the "strengthening of correspondent banking networks within BRICS and enabling settlements in local currencies in line with BRICS Cross-Border Payments Initiative (BCBPI)." The system is designed to rival the European-headquartered SWIFT payments system, from which Russia was barred following its 2022

invasion of Ukraine.

Speaking to reporters at the IMF's headquarters in Washington on Thursday, Georgieva said the Fund wanted additional information about the proposed payments system before taking a firm stance on it. "The idea of having a payments system of a group of countries is not new," she said. "What we need to see is more details," she added. "What is it in this idea? How that may translate into reality? And then we will be able to assess it."

During her press conference, Georgieva said the Fund was focused on two main objectives going forward: Ensuring inflation rates return to central bank targets without spurring a deep recession; and fixing the current "low growth, high debt path" that many countries are on.

She also addressed what she called the tragedy in the Middle East, which she said was affecting both

citizens and regional economies. "Egypt is losing 70 percent of the revenues it used to collect from the Suez canal because of the impact of the conflict," she said, adding that the IMF had downgraded the MENA region by 0.6 percentage points since April.

Earlier this month, Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi said the country had lost "\$6-7 billion" this year, in an apparent reference to Suez Canal revenues. Georgieva also welcomed the progress made in helping countries facing debt crises, notably via the Global Sovereign Debt Roundtable (GSDR) forum for dialogue between creditors and countries in debt distress.

While the GSDR was helping to make the process of debt restructuring "more predictable and efficient," there was more work to do, she said. "We need to do more to help countries in debt distress get back on their feet faster," she added. — Agencies

## Burgan Bank wins three Global Private Banker MEA Awards

KUWAIT: Following a year of all-around dedicated development of its Private Banking offering, Burgan Bank announced receiving three accolades at the Global Private Banker MEA Awards 2024 – a testament to the Bank's unwavering commitment to excellence and developing competitive products and services, and to its mission to lead with innovation and deliver a differentiated customer experience.

Regarded as the world's most authoritative and transparently judged private wealth awards, the Global Private Banker MEA Awards adopts a rigorous judgment process, which takes into consideration the qualitative and quantitative evaluation of nominees in several criteria, including Innovation, Client Experience and Engagement, Financial and Business Performance, and Strategy – with a focus on ESG integration, digital capabilities, and scalable customizations.

On its mission to offer its high-net-worth (HNW) and ultra-high-net-worth (UHNW) clients a next-level banking experience, Burgan Bank has exerted relentless efforts to expand its network of Private Banking-serving branches, partner with market-leading service providers on redefining luxury banking, and broaden the scope of services it offers by acquiring the latest necessary certificates.

### Setting a regional example

Nominated amongst an elite group of the Middle East and Africa's (MEA) top-tier private banks, family offices, and wealth managers, Burgan Bank received the "Best Private Bank for Credit" award, the "Best Private Bank for Fixed Income Securities"



award, and the "Best Private Bank for High-Net-Worth (HNW) Clients" award. The Bank received the "Best Private Bank for Credit" award for successfully providing clients with financing products at competitive rates and customizing them to meet clients' financial goals. In addition, the Bank was recognized for achieving and surpassing its key performance indicators (KPIs) with a notable loan portfolio expansion since January 2024. This is owed to Burgan's new lending program, which facilitates faster loan disbursement.

Meanwhile, Burgan Bank was awarded the "Best Private Bank for Fixed Income Securities" award based on its unparalleled access to fixed-income securities and its opportunity to invest in a diverse range of local and international bonds and sukuk, covering the full spectrum of risk ratings. This is complemented by the enhanced liquidity presented to clients via secondary market offerings.

Lastly, Burgan Bank's unparalleled service customization to suit clients' banking and investment requirements was the core factor for winning the "Best Private Bank for HNW Clients" award. To guarantee a convenient banking experience, the Bank gives its Pri-

chargers willfully violated Apple's patent rights in smartwatch designs.

But the jury awarded the tech giant, which is worth about \$3.5 trillion, just \$250 in damages – the statutory minimum for infringement in the United States. Apple's attorneys told the court the "ultimate purpose" of its lawsuit was not money, but to win an injunction against sales of Masimo's smartwatches after an infringement ruling. On that front, jury also determined that Masimo's current watches did not infringe Apple patents covering inventions that the tech giant had accused Masimo of copying.

Masimo said in a statement it appreciated the jury's verdict "in favor of Masimo and against Apple on nearly all issues," and that the decision only applied

private Banking clients access to various booking centers in Dubai International Financial Center (DIFC), the UK, and Saudi Arabia. Furthermore, the Bank continues to provide clients with top-tier investment products, leading to an outstanding increase in assets under management since January 2024.

### Committed to excellence

Earlier this year, Burgan Bank acquired a range of licenses from the Capital Markets Authority (CMA), including custodian, investment advisory, portfolio management, and unregistered securities brokerage licenses, further reinforcing its commitment to serving its esteemed clients and fulfilling financial, banking, and investment aspirations. In addition, the Bank continues to enroll its dedicated CMA-registered advisors and relationship managers in constant rigorous training, guaranteeing that they are equipped with comprehensive knowledge of investment approaches and business tactics to efficiently guide and advise HNW and UHNW clients as suited to their individual portfolios, liquidity requirements, and capacities for risk.

Complementing its elite Private Banking experience, Burgan Bank offers its clients a suite of exclusive benefits, including an invitation-only credit card and a wide range of premium offers and discounts. Adding to the Private Banking benefits, clients can make transactions via phone or email, as well as lend against investments, properties, and deposits. To learn more about Burgan Bank's Private Banking and Wealth Management services, clients can call the dedicated hotline at 1803080 or visit the Bank's website at [www.burgan.com](http://www.burgan.com).

It serves to note that Global Private Banker is a globally trusted news, business intelligence and research partner to the worldwide financial services sector. It empowers the world's leading private banks, wealth managers and family offices to make informed decisions through the provision of news, market intelligence and awards programs.

to a "discontinued module and charger."

"Apple primarily sought an injunction against Masimo's current products, and the jury's verdict is a victory for Masimo on that issue," Masimo said. Apple said in a statement that it was "glad the jury's decision today will protect the innovations we advance on behalf of our customers."

Irvine, California-based Masimo accused Apple of hiring away its employees and stealing its pulse oximetry technology after discussing a potential collaboration. Masimo convinced the US International Trade Commission last year to block imports of Apple's Series 9 and Ultra 2 smartwatches after the commission found their technology for reading blood oxygen levels infringed Masimo's patents. — Reuters

## UK govt urged to set 'ambitious' climate target

LONDON: UK government advisers on Saturday urged ministers to set an "ambitious" target of cutting greenhouse gas emissions by at least 81 percent by 2035 to combat climate change. The last Conservative government in 2020 set a goal of 68 percent emission cuts on 1990 levels by 2030.

But the nation's top climate change advisory body said earlier this year that "only six years away, the country is not on track to hit this target" and urged the new Labour government to step up its efforts.

In a letter Saturday to Energy Secretary Ed Miliband, the Committee on Climate Change (CCC) said the 81-percent target was "deliverable" and "informed by the latest science, technological developments, and the UK's national circumstances". But it added: "Setting a target is not enough. The UK must back up its international commitments through actions here at home."

The committee said in July only around one-third of the emissions reductions the UK needed to make were currently covered by credible plans—mostly in the electricity supply and surface transport sectors. Labour, which won power in July, is due to unveil its climate plans under the global Paris Agreement, which requires countries to take action to mitigate the worst impacts of global warming.

The legally binding international treaty on climate change, signed in 2016, aims to keep global average temperature rises "well below" 2C above pre-industrial levels. It also pushes to limit warming to 1.5C—seen as the threshold beyond which the worst impacts of climate change will be felt.

Countries are due to submit new five-year proposals to cover the period 2025 to 2035 ahead of COP30 in Brazil next December. To meet the 1.5C target, the world's carbon emissions must fall to net zero by 2050. Four years ago, the UK Conservative government set a goal of 68 percent emission cuts by 2030 compared with 1990 levels, which was in line with the CCC's advice at the time. Environmental groups welcomed the committee's latest recommendation but urged the government to go even further. — AFP



Ed Miliband

## Apple wins \$250 US jury verdict in patent case

CUPERTINO, US: Apple convinced a federal jury on Friday that early versions of health monitoring tech company Masimo's smartwatches infringe two of its design patents as part of a broader intellectual property dispute between the companies. The jury, in Delaware, agreed with Apple that previous iterations of Masimo's W1 and Freedom watches and





Ahmed Al-Kharji receives the award for the best bank in Bahrain.



Ufuk Uyan receives the award for the best bank in Turkey.



Khaled Al-Shamlan receives one of the awards.



Abdulwahab Al-Rushood receives the award.

# KFH wins 'World's Best Islamic Financial Institution 2024' award

Global Finance honors KFH during IMF/WBG meetings in Washington

KUWAIT: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) has won "World's Best Islamic Financial Institution" in 2024 by Global Finance magazine. This prestigious recognition underscores KFH's sustained growth in regional and international operations, market leadership in Islamic finance, excellence in digital banking, and a strong financial foundation and operational performance.

In its 17th annual awards for 2024, held during a special ceremony on the sidelines of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank Group (WBG) meetings in Washington, DC, Global Finance magazine honored KFH Group with four additional awards. KFH Group was recognized as the 'Best Islamic Corporate Bank - Global,' 'Best Islamic Project Finance Provider - Global,' and KFH-Turkey was named 'Best Islamic Financial Institution in Turkey.' Additionally, AUB, a subsidiary of KFH Group, was awarded 'Bahrain's Best Bank.' In a statement by the magazine, the winners of this year's awards are those firms that contributed to the growth of Islamic finance. They successfully met their customers' needs for Sharia-compliant products with modern and efficient delivery channels, while creating the foundation for sustainable growth.

On receiving the awards during the IMF and WBG meetings attended by KFH delegation, KFH Acting Group Chief Executive Officer Abdulwahab Iesa Al-Rushood said that this recognition affirms KFH's position as the largest Bank in Kuwait, with a market cap exceeding KD 12 billion, and the world's leading Islamic Bank.

He mentioned that the awards reflect the Bank's efforts in promoting its role and sustainability at the local, regional and global levels, which is attained by strengthening its market share and focusing on digital transformation, service quality and efficiency of its human talents, while paying attention to the strength of its financial position, creditworthiness, development and innovation policy in offering banking solutions.



(From left), Al-Kharji, Al-Rushood, Al-Shamlan and Ufuk Uyan (right) with a representative from Global Finance (center) pose for a group photo during the ceremony.

Al-Rushood pointed out that KFH Group's exceptional business framework involves elements of strength and performance incentives that constantly push towards further achievements and overcoming challenges, which has made KFH widely commended in the global markets.

He added that the awards confirm the reliability of KFH's approaches and successful policies that are implemented with a highly professional manner. They are also an incentive towards better levels of growth, making more efforts to consolidate its position in the local and international market, leading the competition, and continuing to add value to the markets in which it operates in different geographies, including 12 countries around the world, most notably Kuwait, Bahrain, Turkey,

Egypt, Britain, and Germany.

"The Best Islamic Corporate Bank - Global and Best Islamic Project Finance Provider-Global awards highlight KFH's unique performance and leadership in financing and supporting large corporations through a range of financing services and solutions," said Al-Rushood. He noted that both awards shed light on the bank's leading participation in financing major development projects that contribute to promoting economic growth including projects in energy, transportation, communication, infrastructure, industrial production, real estate development, digital transformation, and technology development.

Commenting on the "best Islamic bank in Turkey" award, Al-Rushood explained that KFH - Turkey is one

- Abdulwahab Al-Rushood: KFH is widely recognized in global markets due to its position and successes
- KFH received 4 awards in corporate banking, financing projects, and named the best Islamic bank in Turkey and best Bank in Bahrain

of the largest Islamic banks in Turkey, and among the top ten in the Turkish market. Further, its operations expanded into European markets by establishing KT Bank AG in Germany. He stressed KFH's commitment towards global banking, governance, and Sharia standards, saying that KFH is entirely dedicated towards managing its capabilities and utilizing the available material capacities and human talents, in addition to meeting its customers' aspirations. "KFH has been always a significant reference, a trusted brand, and a highly valuable source in the Islamic finance industry in Kuwait and the world," added Al-Rushood. It is worth noting that Global Finance announced awards have become a trusted standard of excellence for the global financial community, and are granted after extensive consultations with bankers, corporate finance executives and analysts worldwide. The criteria for selecting top firms include growth in assets, profitability, geographic reach, strategic relationships, new business development and innovation in products, in addition to reputation and customer satisfaction.

Founded in 1987, Global Finance is headquartered in New York and is considered a trusted source in the world of business and finance in over 193 countries. Its magazine is the legacy of 37 years of experience in international financial markets.

بيت التمويل الكويتي  
Kuwait Finance House



Your trust.. is our first award

5 earned local and international awards



World's Best Islamic Financial Institution

Kuwait Finance House (KFH)

Best Islamic Corporate Bank - Global

Kuwait Finance House (KFH)

Best Islamic Project Finance Provider - Global

Kuwait Finance House (KFH)

Best Islamic Financial Institution in Turkey

Kuveyt Turk

Bahrain's Best Bank

AUB, a subsidiary of KFH Group



## Business

# Gulf Bank launches self-service banking on ITMs and ATMs

## Service through strategic partnership with NCR ATLEOS

KUWAIT: As part of its 2025 strategy and digital transformation plans, Gulf Bank has signed a strategic partnership agreement with NCR ATLEOS, to offer self-service banking via Interactive Teller Machines (ITMs) and ATMs. These services will enable customers to conduct various transactions that are usually done at the branches, providing them with a wonderful interactive experience.

This partnership will transform Gulf Bank's network of more than 300 ATM and ITM machines, to become self-managed by the Bank – through implementing an in-house ATM Driving Payment Switch, using the CX Banking and NCR ATLEOS ATM Marketing solutions from NCR ATLEOS.

NCR ATLEOS will help provide Gulf Bank ATM users with a range of digital services throughout the day, which will simplify the customers' access to banking services and save time. The digital services include updating civil ID data, paying bills, depositing bank cheques, PIN changes, and activating debit cards. Customers will also be able to transfer within Gulf Bank accounts and to other banks locally and internationally, as well as pay outstanding amounts



• **Bader Al-Ali:** We aim to add a range of high-quality digital services to customers through our ATMs.



• **Hussam Zahdeh:** We are proud of our partnership with Gulf Bank and are keen to support its aspirations to become the Bank of the Future.

on credit cards. Customers using cards issued by other banks will be able to perform certain transactions such as cash withdrawals and balance inquiries.

In addition, the NCR ATLEOS ATM Marketing solution enables the bank to advertise on a larger scale, target marketing, and personalize the self-service machines. This solution provides the Bank with wide capabilities to identify user segments and address them through promotional advertisements on the ATM and ITM screens; all whilst providing customers with the services and solutions they need.

On this occasion, the Acting General Manager of Consumer Banking at Gulf Bank Bader Al-Ali said, "We

are pleased to collaborate with NCR ATLEOS to gradually introduce Gulf Bank's self-service ATM and ITM machines throughout the year, using the latest digital banking technology."

Al-Ali indicated that this project aims to provide customers with a safe and convenient digital banking experience that meets their needs and requirements. Through using regular and interactive ATMs, customers can receive a wide range of services, of which they can perform at any time, without the need to visit any of the branches. He further stated that the development of banking services at Gulf Bank, witnessed paradigm shifts and unprecedented breakthroughs – aligning with

the Bank's digital transformation plan and consolidating Gulf Bank's position as the Bank of the Future that provides its customers with the latest services.

Al-Ali stressed that Gulf Bank has a strong technological infrastructure, which is considered one of the latest and best in the banking sector; hence, making it one of the most prepared banks to provide advanced digital services and meet customer requirements. He further mentioned that the Bank is keen to provide its services to customers 24 hours a day, in various ways and means, of which include: The website, mobile application, Call Center, social media channels, ATMs and through its widely spread branches across the country.

Hussam Zahdeh, Area Vice President, Middle East, NCR ATLEOS Banking, said, "We are proud to collaborate with Gulf Bank – one of the leading banks in Kuwait – in providing the latest technology to manage and operate its ATMs and ITMs. NCR ATLEOS's technologies and expertise will provide easier and faster digital solutions and services." He added: "Through our strategic partnership, we are keen to support Gulf Bank's aspirations to become the Bank of the Future. By using our company's next-generation digital ATM software, Gulf Bank can improve its operational efficiency and provide customers with the high level of service they expect."



US Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell (left) chats with Britain's Chancellor of the Exchequer Rachel Reeves during the IMF/World Bank Annual Meetings in Washington, DC. — AFP

## UK's Reeves touts 'economic realist' approach to China

WASHINGTON: Britain needs to take a "hard-headed, economic realist" approach to relations with China in order to do a better job of boosting trade while minimizing risks to national security, British finance minister Rachel Reeves said on Friday. Reeves, speaking to Reuters at the International Monetary Fund and World Bank annual meetings in Washington, said the US had been able to boost exports to China while taking a tough line on Beijing's economic and trade practices.

"They take ... a hard-headed, economic realist position that there are opportunities as well for US firms and working people in the US to be able to export all around the world. And I want that for British businesses too," Reeves said on her first trip to Washington since becoming finance minister.

Britain's finance ministry is working on reviving high-level meetings with China that last took place in 2019, with Reeves considering travelling to Beijing in early 2025. Chinese state media reported that its government supported closer dialogue too. Unlike the US and the European Union, Britain has no plans to impose tariffs on Chinese-made electric vehicles. British Foreign Secretary David Lammy visited China last week on a two-day trip during which he said the government would prioritize national security in economic ties, but that 95 percent of business was not in an area where that was a major concern.

Relations with China under the previous Conservative government were soured by clashes over human rights, Beijing's crackdown in Hong Kong and allegations of Chinese espionage on British soil. The Labour administration, which took power in July, has commissioned a government-wide audit of the UK-China relationship and has said it would be "clear-eyed" when it comes to China, given allegations of Chinese cyber-hacking and spying. Chinese inward investment to Britain needed to be looked at on a case-by-case basis, Reeves said.

"In projects like nuclear energy, if we develop another nuclear power plant, that will not be with Chinese money," she said. "However, there are other parts of the economy where we do welcome Chinese investment, and it can help bring additional investment and jobs to the UK."

China is Britain's sixth-largest trading partner, accounting for 5 percent of goods and services trade worth \$65.5 billion pounds (\$112 billion), while Britain has a 1.2 percent market share of Chinese trade.

"There are big opportunities for UK firms to export more and to trade with China, including financial services," Reeves said. Last year, Reeves said in a speech in Washington that China was "unbalancing the old global order" and had "undercut and ignored" trade rules. Asked if she still held those views now that she was in government, Reeves said Britain should not rely on countries that did not share its values to provide its basic needs. "My desire to build a more secure and resilient economy certainly hasn't changed as an important part of the economic policy of this government," she said. — Reuters

## Iran aviation woes compounded by new EU sanctions

TEHRAN: Iranian photographer Tannaz was on her way to Tehran's airport when European sanctions on flag carrier Iran Air forced her to return home, unable to make it to work in Paris.

It was within hours of the European Union announcing measures last week against prominent Iranian officials and entities, including airlines, accused of involvement in the transfer of missiles and drones for Russia to use in its war against Ukraine. Tehran has consistently said such accusations were baseless, but with Western governments unconvinced, the latest sanctions went ahead, dealing a blow to Iran's already embattled airline industry.

Unable to make it to her photoshoot in Paris as Iran Air had grounded all Europe-bound flights over the sanctions, Tannaz was left grappling with the effect on her business, uncertain how she may keep working abroad under the new restrictions. "Considering the current situation and higher flight price options, I think I will lose many customers," said the 37-year-old who gave her first name only, fearing repercussions.

With no other Iranian airline serving European destinations, any alternative to the cancelled Iran Air route would likely cost her much more and include a layover, increasing travel time. Many Western and other international airlines had already suspended their Iran services, citing heightened tensions and the risk of regional conflict since the Gaza war broke out more than a year ago.

Despite having largely avoided being drawn into the conflict, Iran backs Palestinian group Hamas, whose October 7, 2023 attack on Zionist entity sparked the war, and has launched two direct attacks on Zionist entity.

Iran Air, far cheaper than its foreign competition, was "the only airline that flew to Europe in our country", said Maghsoud Asadi Samani of the national airline association. "With the new European Union

## UK's Labour govt prepares to unveil its first budget

LONDON: Britain's new Labour government unveils its maiden budget Wednesday, with Prime Minister Keir Starmer warning of "painful" decisions over taxes and public spending. The highly-anticipated fiscal update—the first under the centre-left government after 14 years of Conservative rule—is crucial to Starmer's mission of firing up Britain's sluggish economy.

The fresh government has promised a "decade of national renewal" as it pledges to protect living standards, fix public services and spur investment. But it will have to square such promises with the reality of public finances strained by surging debt over recent years caused largely by the COVID pandemic, according to analysts. Finance minister Rachel Reeves, who will present the budget to parliament, has promised "iron discipline" over public finances.

Below AFP looks in more detail at what to expect from her tax and spend plans. Reeves on Thursday announced a shakeup of Britain's fiscal rules, giving the government room to borrow billions more to fund investment in publicly-funded projects. "We need to invest more to grow our economy... but we'll only be able to do that if we change the way that we measure debt," she told the BBC. It is expected that she will use a wider measure of debt that takes into account the future returns on investment. Analysts estimate that the change could free up to £50 billion (\$65 billion) in extra fiscal headroom.

The government has pledged to claw back what it says is a £22-billion black hole in public finances inherited from the previous Tory government. "Alongside tough decisions on spending and welfare... taxes will need to rise," Reeves wrote in the Financial Times on Thursday. She added that her new fiscal



TEHRAN: A woman checks dresses displayed outside a shop along a street in Tehran on October 26, 2024. — AFP

sanctions against Iran Air, no Iranian aircraft will fly to Europe", news agency ILNA quoted Samani as saying. Earlier Western sanctions on Iran, including those reimposed after the United States withdrew in 2018 from a landmark nuclear deal, have taken a toll, too.

They contributed to soaring inflation, slashing Iranians' purchasing power, but also heavily restricted the acquisition of aircraft and spare parts, and limited access to maintenance services. "A significant number of planes in Iran have accordingly been grounded" for years, said economist Danial Rahmat.

Ageing aircraft fleets have worsened poor safety standards, part of a host of challenges Iran's aviation sector has long grappled with. Economist Said Leylaz said that while sanctions have had a serious impact, airlines' woes were rooted in mismanagement and corruption.

But Iranians have only a few alternatives. Rahmat said that now, they may have to primarily rely on flights via neighboring countries to reach Europe and other parts of the world. Not only would it "im-

pose higher costs and longer travel hours on Iranian passengers, but it would also provide an opportunity for airlines from these countries to acquire a larger market share" at the expense of Iranian firms, said Rahmat. Iran Air still flies to several regional destinations as well as some in Asia. Another company, Mahan Air, goes to Moscow and Beijing several times a week. Shortly after the latest EU sanctions were announced on October 14, Iran Air set up a daily route to Istanbul "to facilitate travel to Europe and reduce travelers' worries", news agency ISNA reported.

Leylaz said that the sanctions would likely boost Iran's ties with non-Western allies like China. The demand for flights to east Asia "and outside the European Union... to places where we are not sanctioned is very high", he added. President Masoud Pezeshkian has made easing Iran's economic isolation a key objective, but indirect talks with the United States that could have helped have been suspended over the regional conflict, according to Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi. — AFP

## US core capital goods orders remain solid

WASHINGTON: New orders for key US-manufactured capital goods increased more than expected in September, though business spending on equipment probably slowed marginally in the third quarter. With the Federal Reserve expected to continue cutting interest rates this year and in 2025, business investment likely remains supported. Reduced uncertainty as the nation moves past the closely contested Nov 5 presidential election is also seen providing a lift.

The Atlanta Fed pared its gross domestic product estimate for the third quarter to a 3.3 percent annualized rate from a 3.4 percent pace. The government is scheduled to publish its advance estimate of third-quarter growth next Wednesday. The economy grew at a 3.0 percent rate in the April-June quarter. "While monetary policy acts with a lag, the direction of rates is now clearly lower and with the US presidential election soon behind us, businesses may soon walk into a clearer environment more supportive of capex investment," said Shannon Grein, an economist at Wells Fargo.

Non-defense capital goods orders excluding aircraft, a closely watched proxy for business spending plans, jumped 0.5 percent last month after an unrevised 0.3 percent gain in August, the Commerce Department's Census Bureau said. Economists polled by Reuters had forecast these so-called core capital goods orders would edge up 0.1 percent. Core capital goods shipments fell 0.3 percent after dipping 0.1 percent in the prior month. Higher borrowing costs have been a constraint on business investment, though a loosening of financial conditions as the US central bank prepared to cut interest rates boosted spending on equipment in the second quarter. The Fed last month cut its policy rate by a half-percentage point to the 4.75 percent-5.00 percent range, having hiked it by 525 basis points in 2022 and 2023 to curb inflation. — Reuters



# Al-Sager: Kuwait is on the right track to drive economic growth

In his interview with Al-Arabiya TV on the sidelines of IMF and WBG meetings in Washington

KUWAIT: Isam Al-Sager, Group Vice-Chairman and CEO of National Bank of Kuwait (NBK), stated that the Group's net profit growth remains mainly driven by core banking business. In his interview with Al-Arabiya TV, on the sidelines of the Annual Meetings of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank Group (WBG) in Washington, DC joined by NBK, Al-Sager mentioned: "NBK posted strong net interest income growth for 9M 2024 on the back of growth in volumes, relatively higher interest rates, and operating efficiently to control operating costs and cost of risk."

"Our net interest income for the nine-months period reached KD 733.7 million, boosting by 10.2 percent over 2023, whereas net operating income reached KD 931.0 million, growing by 7.8 percent year-on-year."

rates are expected to support credit growth, but this is also conditional on a favorable macroeconomic and business environment and accelerated project awards, which combined will provide a greater momentum for private sector lending. On the retail side, we expect to see a gradual increase in demand for retail loans with each rate cut."

#### Saudi market

On NBK's operations in Saudi Arabia, Al-Sager emphasized that Saudi Arabia as a key and strategic market for the Group's international operations where we offer our services to diverse clientele that includes GREs, large corporations, and family-owned businesses.

ment deals, which restored confidence in the economy and the Egyptian currency," he explained.

Regarding NBK-Egypt, Al-Sager stated, "We maintain a very healthy loan portfolio in terms of asset quality, while the cost of risk at the end of 1H2024 in Egypt was below 1 percent (0.56 percent exactly), and NPL to total loans ratio stood at 1 percent. So, at this stage, we are not concerned about the credit quality of our loan portfolio in Egypt." "Our operating performance in Egypt remains among the most profitable locations for the Group with promising returns, while NBK-Egypt seeks opportunities to grow its contribution to the Group, which stands at around 5 percent of total assets and profits," he highlighted.

#### Boubyan and Gulf Bank merger negotiations

On the merger negotiations between Boubyan Bank and Gulf Bank, Al-Sager said, "As the majority shareholder in Boubyan Bank, we are supportive of the discussions. But our support is not unconditional, like all our previous transactions historically, we should find shareholder value creation in this transaction." "So far, the potential transaction makes sense from a strategic point of view as it is in line with NBK Group's diversification agenda and strengthens its position in the local market by expansion in Islamic banking through Boubyan Bank."

"There are steps that have started recently such as the due diligence process, and there is a long list of regulatory and market requirements, and once these are completed, we will be able to reach a final assessment of the feasibility of the transaction," he continued.

#### Project awards

Al-Sager said he is optimistic about the business environment and the project award market in Kuwait, especially in light of the strong activity witnessed by the project market during the third quarter of this year compared to the recent past years, expecting this momentum to continue in the remainder of 2024 as well as into 2025. He pointed out that the suspension of parliament had so far led to a simplification of the decision-making process, as the decision is now solely in the hands of the government. Therefore, we no longer have that entanglement of decision-making, which will reflect positively on the long-awaited economic reforms.

"Several projects were delayed for years and now we can say we are getting out of the bottleneck and Kuwait is on the right track to drive economic growth with a government-backed consensus to prioritize major development projects, and promote Kuwait as an attractive investment hub by passing a set of long-awaited key laws to support economic reforms. We remain optimistic to witness serious steps towards promoting the private sector's role in propelling development," he said.

"We think that our optimistic look about starting economic reforms and improving business environment in Kuwait in the coming period will be supported by actual steps on the ground," he stressed.

#### Fiscal reforms

On whether the fiscal reforms likely to be undertaken by the government, especially those related to current spending, will impact consumer spending and credit in Kuwait, Al-Sager said: "We need to look at the bigger picture as Kuwait needs reforms to support the transition to a dynamic and diversified economy,

- Our net profit growth remains mainly driven by core banking business

- We hedge against interest rate movements through our diversified business model and focus on fees business

- Increased business volumes could offset low-interest rate pressures on bank's profitability

- Saudi Arabia is a key growth market for our international operations, and we seek to strengthen our wealth management business in the Kingdom

- The Egyptian market is stabilizing, and we are optimistic about its potential

- Our operating performance in Egypt remains among the most profitable locations for the Group with promising returns

- Our optimistic outlook for economic reforms and improving business environment in Kuwait will be confirmed with implementation on the ground

- Bridging the non-oil economy's performance gap with neighboring countries requires changes in the composition of public spending, with greater emphasis on capital investments

- After years of project delays we can claim we are getting out of the bottleneck with a government-backed consensus to prioritize major development projects

- We expect the pickup in project award momentum in Kuwait to continue through the remainder of this year and into 2025



Isam Al-Sager speaks to Al-Arabiya TV in an interview.

"The cost of risk was 34bps during 9M2024, mainly resulting from lower credit loss and impairment provisions, while remaining committed to our conservative approach in managing credit exposures," he noted. "As regards asset quality, NPL ratio generally improved to reach 1.39 percent of total credit portfolio as at end of December 2024, whereas loan loss coverage ratio increased to 263 percent," he added.

#### Lower interest rates

On the impact of the rate cut cycle on banks' net margins during 4Q 2024 and next year, Al-Sager said, "It is true that margins come under pressure with low interest rates, but we must keep in mind that the increased volume of business activities resulting from the low interest rate environment may offset these pressures, as the declining rates will encourage lending, especially by large corporates."

"NBK is hedging against interest rate movements through its diversified business model and increased focus on fee business, and we expect net margins for 2024 to be largely stable, probably a few basis points higher than last year's levels," he explained. "As for 2025, the frequency and size of rate cuts globally remains uncertain, and its impact will be felt more clearly in the coming quarters," he added.

On a question about the possibility of a change in demand for lending due to the declining lending cost, Al-Sager replied: "For corporate lending, lower interest

"The Group seeks to increase its presence in the wealth management business through NBK Wealth, in addition to expanding its offerings to customers through funds and other wealth management services. As regards NBK's targets and growth expectations in Saudi Arabia, Al-Sager said that they will be in line with the bank's conservative approach, noting that NBK has been present in the Saudi market for a long time and serves large corporations and GREs, which align with the Group's conservative approach and risk management practices."

"We operate currently in KSA through 3 branches, in Riyadh, Jeddah and Eastern Province and target further expansion in the Saudi market." On a question about whether NBK-KSA intends to expand in the Saudi market through acquisitions, Al-Sager said, "Whenever we have a suitable acquisition opportunity, we will consider it seriously. We are not looking for acquisitions for the sake of acquisitions, but we seek opportunities that maximize returns for our shareholders."

#### Egyptian market

As for the Egyptian market, Al-Sager said that it is currently stable, which proves NBK's optimism about the market's huge potential and promising opportunities. "The Egyptian economy has recently benefited from the reforms aiming to attract more foreign inflows and the government's closing of several foreign invest-

## Russian CB hikes interest rate to 21%, highest since 2003

MOSCOW: Russia's central bank hiked its key interest rate by 200 basis points on Friday to 21 percent, the highest level since the early years of President Vladimir Putin's rule, when Russia was recovering from the chaos that followed the collapse of the Soviet Union. The move, driven by massive increases in state spending, especially on the military, also brings the rate above the level seen during the market panic at the start of what Russia calls its "special military operation" in Ukraine in February 2022. The central bank said the hike was needed to fight inflation, currently at 8.4 percent, adding that inflationary expectations among the public have reached their highest level since the start of the year. "Further tightening of monetary policy is required to ensure that inflation returns to target and to reduce inflation expectations," the regulator said.

Russia, which has just hosted a summit of the BRICS group of countries, has by far the highest key interest rate among the core BRICS members, who also include China, India, Brazil and South Africa. The regulator said another hike was possible at its next policy meeting and also updated its inflation forecast for 2025 to 4.5-5.0 percent, signaling that its 4 percent policy target was out of reach next year. "The central bank admitted that it will not be able to bring inflation back to target next year," said economist Evgeny Kogan, calling the move "a capitulation in the face of inflation".

Economists also noted that the regulator's forecast for the average key rate in 2024 created room for a further hike to 23 percent before the end of the year. The central bank's governor Elvira Nabiullina told a news conference there were "no limits" for the key rate level. Most analysts polled by Reuters had expected a 100 bps hike. The central bank said it took into account the new draft budget, seen as inflationary due to a higher-than-expected deficit of 1.7 percent of GDP for this year and massive hikes in utility tariffs. The new benchmark rate is the highest since it was introduced in 2013, replacing the refinancing rate as the main market guidance.—Reuters



Municipal workers remove a destroyed car on the site of a Russian missile strike in Dnipro, eastern Ukraine, on October 26, 2024. — AFP

## G7 finalizes \$50bn Ukraine aid backed by Russian assets profits

WASHINGTON: G7 leaders have finalized details surrounding a \$50 billion loan to aid Kyiv, backed by profits from Russian sovereign assets frozen after its invasion of Ukraine, according to a statement released Friday. Leaders of the Group of Seven wealthy democracies said they "have reached a consensus on how to deliver" the loans of approximately \$50 billion, with an aim to start disbursing funds by the end of this year.

"The loan proceeds will be disbursed through multiple channels to support Ukraine's budgetary, military and reconstruction assistance," G7 leaders added. Their announcement came as world financial leaders gathered in Washington this week for meetings hosted by the International Monetary Fund and World Bank. Finance ministers have "agreed on a technical solution ensuring consistency, coordination, fair distribution of lending, and solidarity among all G7 partners," the statement said. "We will not tire in our resolve to give Ukraine the support it needs to prevail," the leaders added. They called on Moscow to end its war and pay for damage caused to Ukraine.

This week, US President Joe Biden said that as part of the G7 package, the United States would provide \$20 billion in loans to Ukraine, to be paid back by the interest earned from immobilized Russian sovereign assets. This is aimed at supporting Ukraine now, "without burdening taxpayers."

"Our efforts make it clear: tyrants will be responsible for the damages they cause," Biden said. US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen signed a statement Wednesday with her Ukrainian counterpart Sergii Marchenko marking their intent to enter into the loan. The move also committed that new United States or Ukrainian tax dollars would not be the source of repayment. Economic concerns remain top-of-mind for US voters, with just over a week to go before the country's presidential election on November 5. Washington aims to provide at least \$10 billion of the loans for economic support, with the other half expected to take the form of military aid.

But this will require additional authorization from Congress. The remaining \$30 billion in loans is set to come from a combination of G7 partners, including the European Union, United Kingdom, Canada and Japan, US officials said. The EU, which has frozen roughly \$235 billion of Russian central bank funds—the vast bulk of immobilized Russian assets worldwide—said it would contribute approximately €18 billion (\$19.4 billion). "Russia must end its illegal war of aggression and pay for the damage it has caused," the 27-nation bloc's chief, Ursula von der Leyen, said in a statement.—AFP

## German finance minister to unveil plan to boost growth

WASHINGTON: German Finance Minister Christian Lindner said he is working on his own proposals to stimulate growth in Europe's biggest economy, which will not focus only on industry, but also on other economic sectors. "In the course of this public debate, we will of course also develop our own proposals and present them shortly," Lindner, of the Free Democratic Party (FDP), told Reuters in an interview on Friday on the sidelines of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank annual meetings.

The Free Democrats are organizing their own economic summit next Tuesday, the same day Chancellor Olaf Scholz has invited business groups to the chancellery for an industry summit. Earlier this week, Economy Minister Robert Habeck also laid out his economic plans. "The German economy is not just made up of industry," Lindner said. Equally important are small and medium-sized enterprises, liberal professions, start-ups and self-employed people, he said. "That's why we need to have a conversation about their needs, concerns and expectations."

Germany is working on structural reforms with its growth package, which includes 49 measures to boost investment, attract skilled workers and cut red tape, among other topics. The plans must be approved by the upper and lower houses of parliament later this year and Lindner sees resistance in the upper house and among coalition partners for tax relief measures. "The growth initiative is very broad-based, from the labor market to energy policy to tax issues," Lindner said. "My impression is that tax policy in particular is currently controversial."

Lindner aims to implement personal income tax cuts totaling 23 billion euros (\$25 billion) in 2025 and 2026 to mitigate a creeping burden from inflation. The Greens are questioning this measure. Although some measures have already been introduced, Lindner sees the growth package just as a first step.

"We need further ambition because the situation of the German economy is not satisfying to say the least," Lindner said, adding that there should be a new Agenda 2030, with a holistic approach to increase Germany's competitiveness.—AFP





# Picky protection rules hamper Swiss mushrooming craze



Mushrooms are displayed on a bench during a picked mushroom checking session.



A mushroom inspector shows an Amanita Phalloides commonly known as the death cap, a deadly poisonous mushroom picked for mushroom checking session.



A mushroom enthusiast holds a Sarcodon imbricatus, commonly known as the shingled hedgehog or scaly hedgehog.



A mushroom is photographed, during a picked mushroom checking session.



Head chef at the 1209 restaurant Thierry Brehonnet shows a dish made with gnocchi, mushrooms, meat and freshly picked herbs in the small resort of Blonay, western Switzerland.



Mushroom inspector Frederique Clerc (left) holds two mushrooms, during a picked mushroom checking session.



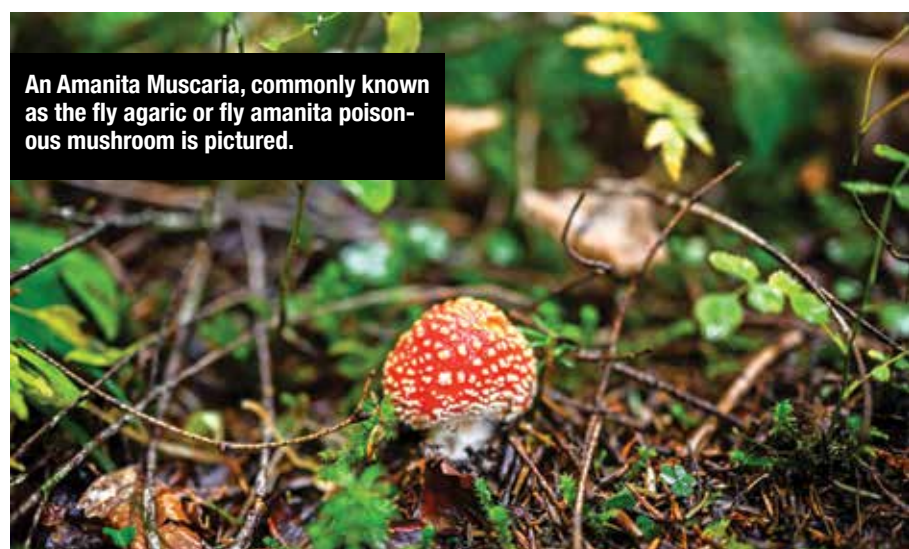
Mushrooms are displayed on a bench during a picked mushroom checking session.



Chef Thierry Brehonnet of Restaurant 1209 shows dried Heracleum Sphondylium, commonly known as giant hogweed or common hogweed, picked in the small resort of Blonay in western Switzerland.



A mushroom enthusiast holds a mushroom, during a picked mushroom checking session.



An Amanita Muscaria, commonly known as the fly agaric or fly amanita poisonous mushroom is pictured.



Mushroom inspector Frederique Clerc points the drawing of a mushroom on a book during a picked mushroom checking session, part of a five-day workshop organized by the Swiss Association of Official Mushroom Control Bodies (WAPKO) in a forest near Les Mosses, western Switzerland.



Chef Thierry Brehonnet of Restaurant 1209 picks a Geum, commonly called avens in a forest of the small resort of Blonay in western Switzerland.

After suffocating COVID-19 restrictions, many embraced the call of the wild and the joys of foraging, but tightening Swiss biodiversity protection measures are infuriating growing hordes of mushroom-picking enthusiasts. The pandemic times "made people return to the forest", said Jean-Michel Froidevaux, chairman of the Swiss Association of Official Mushroom Control Bodies, which regularly organizes training sessions for mushroom hunters and checks whether their foraged mushrooms are safe to eat.

"When you walk in the forest, there's not much to do apart from look around -- and then when you look down, you spot mushrooms." During training courses and picked mushroom checking sessions, "we saw loads of people who knew nothing about them", he told AFP, during a five-day workshop in Leysin, high up in the Alps. Faced with surging interest, the association has opened additional courses.

"Since 2020, it has exploded. We hardly have enough trainers," said mushroom inspector Frederique Clerc, as she accompanied a dozen rain-soaked mushroom-lovers, or mycophiles, near Les Mosses, a village high in the mountain pastures near Montreux. Jean-Paul Landraud, a retired pharmacist attending training courses with his wife, said interest in mushroom foraging was booming. "I came before Covid and there were a few dozen of us. Now there are 120," he said. "It has become popular: everyone goes mushroom picking."

### Trampling on the soil

That enthusiasm has sparked fears though that all the foraging could have adverse impacts on biodiversity. There is a burgeoning awareness of the importance of fungi, which, with their ability to decompose dead organic matter and to supply water and nutrients to trees, are considered guarantors of the forest ecosystem.

The vital role of fungus is due to be discussed during the United Nations Biodiversity Conference taking place in Colombia until November 1. In Switzerland,

several cantons had some restrictions pre-dating Covid on the number of days a year people could go picking and how much they could forage -- and now the rules are getting tighter. The western Vaud canton, encompassing Les Mosses and nearby Leysin, introduced new measures in July aimed at giving nature a break.

People can now forage no more than two kilograms of mushrooms per day, with picking prohibited in the first seven days of each month, and oth-

erwise only allowed between 7:00 am and 8:00 pm. Vaud's measures have triggered indignation on social networks, and some politicians have demanded they be withdrawn. "Everyone finds it ridiculous... we are very frustrated," said Florence Wyss, a retiree who started taking mushroom-picking courses after undercooked foraged mushrooms landed her in hospital. The Vaud biodiversity authorities insist that the measures are not about "stigmatizing" mycophiles.



Bio-fluorescent mushrooms are photographed responding to UV light, during a five-day workshop organized by the Swiss Association of Official Mushroom Control Bodies (WAPKO) in Leysin, western Switzerland.

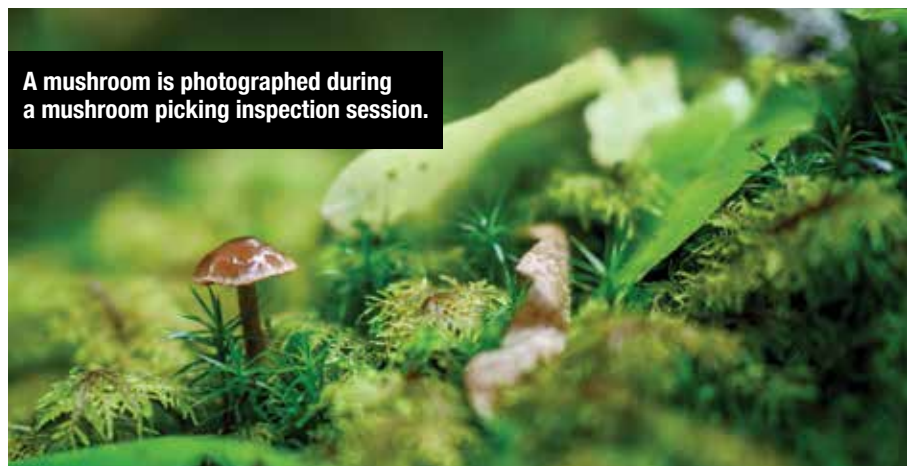
Pro Natura, Switzerland's oldest nature preservation organization, also warned the influx of people into the countryside "can have consequences for ecosystems", such as trampled vegetation, disturbed wildlife or over-exploited resources like mushrooms. But "we are more concerned about sports activities, when they require the creation of new infrastructure, such as specific tracks for mountain biking", the group's spokesman Nicolas Wuthrich told AFP.



Lifestyle



Chef Thierry Brehonnet of Restaurant 1209 shows a bunch of *Heracleum sphondylium*, commonly known as giant hogweed or common hogweed, picked in the small resort of Blonay in western Switzerland.



A mushroom is photographed during a mushroom picking inspection session.

Forest ecosystem

Mushrooms are not the only wild plants whetting appetites. There are a growing number of courses on foraging wild edible plants -- a trend inspired by a number of top international chefs, including Denmark's Rene Redzepi and France's Marc Veyrat. The Swiss branch of the Euro-Toques association, which represents European chefs and producers committed to quality local produce, organizes plant seminars for its members.

Its president Thierry Brehonnet, head chef at restaurant Le 1209 in the small ski resort of Blonay, has even made wild herbs his specialty, going

out to collect them in the gap between lunch and dinner sittings. "It's a philosophy," he told AFP, holding a sprig of sweet woodruff in his hand.

"After COVID, we realized that we had to use products growing close to home. We're returning to this side of nature, which we have to relearn how to master." Brehonnet dismissed concerns that this trend would harm biodiversity, insisting there is far less public interest in foraging wild plants than mushrooms. "We are not going to pick excessively," he said. "These plants will be preserved for a few more years." —AFP



Mushrooms are photographed during a mushroom picking inspection session.



Chef Thierry Brehonnet of Restaurant 1209 shows a bunch of *Aegopodium podagraria*, commonly called ground elder, he freshly picked in a forest of the small resort of Blonay.



A mushroom enthusiast smells a mushroom during a mushroom picking inspection session.—AFP photos

## Calls to charge tourists to enter Paris' Notre-Dame cathedral

French ministers have raised the idea of charging tourists to enter Paris' world-famous Notre-Dame cathedral when it opens in December after a five-year restoration. "Across Europe, people have to pay to get into the most remarkable religious buildings," Culture Minister Rachida Dati told conservative daily Le Figaro in an interview published late Wednesday. She said she had suggested "a symbolic charge for all tourist visits to Notre-Dame with the money totally dedicated to a major plan for conserving

religious heritage" in a conversation with Paris' Catholic archbishop.

Gutted by a fire in 2019, Notre-Dame is set to reopen on December 7 after a vast reconstruction effort. A five-euro-per-person charge would bring in around 75 million euros (\$81 million) a year, Dati estimated. "That way, Notre-Dame would be saving every church in Paris and in France. It would be a magnificent symbol," she added.

Dati was backed up by her conservative colleague Interior Minister Bruno Retailleau, who recalled paying five eu-

ros to visit the Sagrada Familia cathedral in Barcelona. Charging would be worth it "if for five euros we can save religious heritage that people may cherish whether they believe or not... it's just part of the French landscape," Retailleau told broadcaster France Inter. Dati also suggested charging visitors from outside the European Union more to visit French national monuments and museums "to finance renovating our national heritage".

"The French public shouldn't have to pay for everything by themselves," she added. France was the world's most

visited country in 2023, according to the UN's World Tourism Organization, with around 100 million arrivals -- beating out Spain, the US, Italy, and Turkey in the top five.—AFP

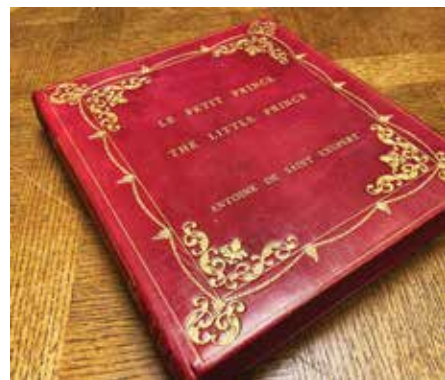
US tourists pose for a selfie in front of the Notre-Dame de Paris Cathedral during the renovation of various parts of the Notre-Dame de Paris Cathedral in Paris, on October 21, 2024.—AFP



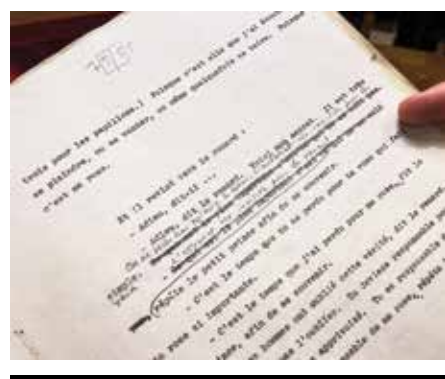
Literature Specialist Sammy Jay of Peter Harrington Rare Books holds a rare carbon typescript of late French writer Antoine de Saint-Exupery's "Le Petit Prince", featuring extensive handwritten corrections and sketches by the author, on October 16, 2024, during the book presentation at the Peter Harrington Rare Books, a London-based rare book dealer. — AFP photos



A rare carbon typescript of late French writer Antoine de Saint-Exupery's "Le Petit Prince".



A rare carbon typescript of late French writer Antoine de Saint-Exupery's "Le Petit Prince" is shown.



Literature Specialist Sammy Jay of Peter Harrington Rare Books holds a rare carbon typescript of late French writer Antoine de Saint-Exupery's "Le Petit Prince".

## Original 'Little Prince' typescript to go under hammer in UAE

A specialist London bookstore is selling an original typescript of Antoine de Saint-Exupery's children's classic "The Little Prince", complete with the author's hand-written corrections and revisions. The battered book and Saint-Exupery's passport, issued by the French culture ministry, will go on sale at the Abu Dhabi Art 2024 fair which opens on November 20, with an expected price of at least \$1.25 million.

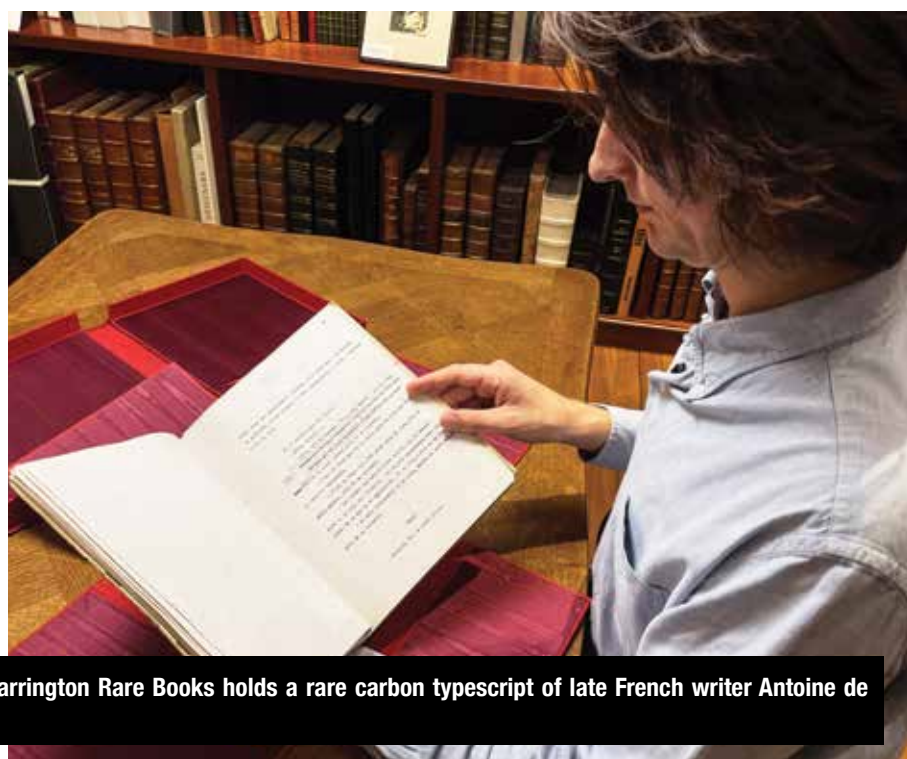
It was acquired earlier this year for an undisclosed sum by rare books specialist store Peter Harrington. The typescript also contains numerous drawings by the author as well as his famous phrase "One only sees clearly with the heart. The essential is invisible to the eyes". Sammy Jay, of Peter Harrington Rare Books, said it was one of three known versions of the transcript, one of which is held by the National Library of France (BNF).

"Unlike the other two which were given to people, he kept this one and it was his own working copy of the typescript so that's what makes it extra special," Jay said. In addition to the handwritten corrections, the version due to be sold includes passages that were later edited out. Such a book is extremely unusual in the rare books market, where sky-high prices are not the norm.

"You don't usually get something of this status," Jay said, citing the example of the scroll typescript for Jack Kerouac's novel "On The Road", which sold for \$2.4 million in 2001. "The market for rare and ancient books is very different from any other market in the sense that you don't often sell for millions," he said. "The Little Prince" remains one of the world's best-selling books having sold more than the first "Harry Potter" and "The Hobbit" combined, according to Jay.

The typescript, he said, had generated a lot of interest and was expected to be snapped up by a museum or private collection, possibly in Asia or the Arab world. Saint-Exupery wrote his tale about an alien prince and his interstellar travels while in exile in the United States in 1942, having fled France after the Nazi invasion.

The pilot-explorer left the United States in 1943 to fight on the north African front and the book was published the same year in the United States only. Saint-Exupery disappeared during a flying mission over the Mediterranean in July 1944, and never saw his book's worldwide success. —AFP



Musicians Phil Lesh (L), Bob Weir and Warren Haynes of the band The Dead perform at the Angel Orensanz Foundation on March 30, 2009 in New York City.

## Phil Lesh, co-founder of the Grateful Dead, dies at 84

Phil Lesh, an innovative bassist and founding member of The Grateful Dead, died Friday, according to a statement on his Instagram account. He was 84 years old. Over three decades, the classically trained Lesh and Grateful Dead icon Jerry Garcia shared a close musical partnership that resulted in the eclectic California rock band's psychedelic sound and famed onstage improv.

Lesh "passed peacefully" and was "surrounded by his family and full of love," the statement said. "Phil brought immense joy to everyone around him and leaves behind a legacy of music and love." Lesh was an early pioneer in the 1960s burgeoning electric bass sound, adopting a more melodic, improvisational approach to the instrument that was traditionally more of a timekeeper, with his chords dominating rather than in the background.

He was far from the band's most prolific writer but he co-wrote some of the Dead's most notable, jam-worthy tracks -- "Dark Star" and "St. Stephen" among them -- and also sang harmonies for the band, and less often led vocals.

Born March 15, 1940 in Berkeley, California, Lesh's life as a musician began with the violin. He later took up the trumpet, and composed for orchestras as his studies gave him a keen interest in avant-garde classical and free jazz.

As a volunteer recording engineer at a local public radio station while studying under the Italian modernist Luciano Berio, Lesh met bluegrass banjo player Garcia. He joined Garcia's new band -- The Warlocks -- in the fall of 1964, and took up the bass. He would later say he was more inspired by Bach's style of counterpoint -- a classical music theory focused on the relationship of harmonically interdependent musical parts -- than by his contemporaries.



Phil Lesh of The Dead performs at the Izod Center on April 28, 2009 in East Rutherford, New Jersey.—AFP photos

Counterculture

As the Grateful Dead, the band members became key figures in the counterculture starting in the 1960s and revolutionized fan engagement, with "Deadheads" traveling from show to show. Many followers recorded and swapped bootleg tapes of the concerts and enjoyed a communal drug-addled camp environment. The rockers disbanded in 1995, a few months after Garcia's death.

"Jerry was the hub," Lesh later told Rolling Stone. "We were the spokes. And the music was the tread on the wheel." Lesh continued to perform in the tradition of the Dead in various iterations for decades. He retired from regular touring in 2014. In 1998 Lesh underwent a liver transplant after a hepatitis C infection -- after which he used his concerts as a platform to encourage fans to become organ donors. In 2015 he said he had cancerous bladder tumors that followed a 2006 prostate cancer battle.—AFP



## Sports

# Pakistan thrash England to win series after Noman, Sajid heroics

'We'd like to dedicate this to the people of Pakistan, who've been through a lot'

**RAWALPINDI:** Pakistan sealed a memorable Test series win as they thrashed England by nine wickets on Saturday after Noman Ali and Sajid Khan delivered a spin masterclass. Noman and Sajid knocked over all 10 England wickets to dismiss the visitors for 112 as Pakistan raced to victory in Rawalpindi before lunch on day three of the third Test.

Captain Shan Masood hammered five boundaries in six balls, launching Shoaib Bashir over the ropes to complete a resounding victory, Pakistan's first home Test series win since beating South Africa in February 2021. It was a measure of revenge for Pakistan, who were whitewashed 3-0 two years ago by a rampant England.

"We'd like to dedicate this to the people of Pakistan, who've been through a lot," said Masood, who had lost his previous two series -- 3-0 to Australia and 2-0 to Bangladesh—since taking charge last year. "Hopefully this will put a smile on people's faces, and hopefully we can have full houses during matches." The 2-1 series win appeared improbable after a record-breaking England destroyed the hosts in the first Test in Multan by an innings and 47 runs. That triggered the surprise axing of superstars Babar Azam and Shaheen Shah Afridi, as well as pacer Naseem Shah.

Replacements Noman and Sajid turned the series on its head, knocking over 39 wickets between them in the subsequent two Tests. Pakistan won the second match by 152 runs, also in Multan and, unusually, on the same pitch as the first Test in a bid to aid the home spinners.

"The first win came after a long time and it was backed up by a series win. It's special," Masood

said. "For everyone to stand up and give their best, it means a lot. It's about character. To be here and standing as the winning team, it's the most special thing for us." Noman finished with figures of 6-42 and Sajid 4-69 after England resumed the day in trouble on 24-3.

It only got worse for Ben Stokes' men from there and they were dismissed in 37.2 overs for their lowest total in Pakistan. England's previous low was 130 in Lahore in 1987.

## 'Disappointing'

Joe Root top-scored in their feeble second innings with 33 while none of the other England batsmen could last long enough to stop Pakistan's charge to victory. "It is disappointing," said Stokes. "We got thrown some challenges over these last two games and weren't able to stand up to them. Credit to Pakistan on this win."

England's fate was effectively sealed once Noman dismissed overnight batsman Harry Brook, caught behind by Mohammad Rizwan for 26, and had Stokes leg-before for three. The usually talismanic England captain once again fell in bizarre fashion, offering no stroke to a Noman delivery he judged to be going down the leg side and getting struck in front of the stumps.

Stokes, who missed the first Test with a hamstring injury, managed just 53 runs in four innings. Sajid made it 75-6, dismissing Jamie Smith, who tried to hit him out of the ground only to miss the ball and lose his stumps for three.

Noman completed his sixth five-wicket haul when Root edged a sharp turning delivery to Rizwan,



**RAWALPINDI:** Pakistan's players and team officials celebrate with the series trophy after winning the third and final Test cricket match between Pakistan and England at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium in Rawalpindi on October 26, 2024. — AFP

quashing all hopes of an England fightback. Sajid dismissed Rehan Ahmed for seven while Noman wrapped up the innings by bowling Jack Leach for 10. It was just a matter of time after that.

Pakistan suffered a minor hiccup when opener Saim Ayub fell for eight but Masood's celebratory six-ball 23 not out sealed the series for the triumphant hosts. — AFP



**MEXICO CITY:** Ferrari's Spanish driver Carlos Sainz prepares to leave his garage during the second practice session of the Formula One Mexico City Grand Prix at the Hermanos Rodriguez racetrack, in Mexico City. — AFP

## Sainz tops times as Russell crashes in Mexico GP practice

**MEXICO CITY:** Carlos Sainz topped the times for Ferrari ahead of McLaren's Oscar Piastri in Friday's crash-hit second free practice at the Mexico City Grand Prix. The Spaniard clocked a best lap in one minute and 17.699 seconds to beat the Australian by 0.178 seconds in a session of mandatory Pirelli tyre testing interrupted when Mercedes' George Russell crashed heavily.

The British driver, who had also crashed at last weekend's United States Grand Prix in Austin, was unhurt, but required a check-up at the circuit medical centre before he was released to rejoin his team. Defending champion Max Verstappen of Red Bull also missed most of the session with engine problems.

Russell lost control of his car after riding over a kerb at Turn Eight at the Autodromo Hermanos Rodriguez and sliding backwards across the track into a protected wall at Turn Nine. One side of his car was destroyed. "I just don't know what happened," Russell said. "It bounced on the ground and before I could catch it had spun... It's one thing after another at the moment for us so it's a lot of work for the guys. "It means that FP3 will be very important, so I hope the car is fixed."

It was the third red-flag interruption of the day following two during the earlier free practice, when Russell topped the times. Yuki Tsunoda was third for RB ahead of Ferrari's Charles Leclerc—who won in Austin last Sunday—and McLaren's title-chasing Lando Norris, who is 57 points adrift of Verstappen with five races remaining this year.

Kevin Magnussen was sixth-quickest for Haas ahead of seven-time world champion Lewis Hamilton of Mercedes. Hamilton was followed by Sauber's Valtteri Bottas, local hero Sergio Perez of Red Bull and Liam Lawson in the second RB.

## Verstappen struggles

Three-time world champion and series leader Verstappen failed to clock a flying lap time after struggling with engine problems that saw him pit and miss most of the session. "I don't know what it is, but we're checking the engine," Verstappen said. "It's been pretty much a useless day with just four or five laps. I didn't have a run... really it's a day to forget."

Two-time champion Fernando Alonso of Aston Martin, entering his record 400th Grand Prix, was 11th in a session that began in warm conditions under bright skies as Norris—one of five drivers permitted to enjoy a "normal" practice session in the final 30 minutes—led the way. The five had missed opening practice when they handed their cars over to reserve drivers.

Verstappen was late out as Piastri set the early pace in 1:19.030, Verstappen telling his team he was hearing a "weird noise with the engine" that he called "very disturbing". The Dutchman aborted his early run and pitted shortly before Russell crashed to bring out the red flag 23 minutes into the session.

Russell climbed out of his Mercedes car but gingerly rubbed his rib cage as he was taken to the medical center. After a 24-minute stoppage for repairs to the barriers the action resumed with some notable absentees. — AFP

## Santner heroics seal historic New Zealand Test series win in India

**PUNE:** New Zealand made history with their first Test series triumph in India as spinner Mitchell Santner inspired a 113-run win in the second match on Saturday to stun the Pune crowd. The visitors bowled out India for 245 in their chase of 359 on day three to take an unbeatable 2-0 lead in the three-match series.

It is India's first Test series defeat at home since December 2012, when Alastair Cook's England beat them 2-1. Before now New Zealand had never won a Test series on Indian soil dating back to 1955 and the Black Caps celebrated to stunned silence.

"Immensely proud to be in a position of winning two Test matches here. Proud of the group," skipper Tom Latham said of his history-makers. "Lot of New Zealand teams have come over the past 69 years and 13 series, and to be the first team to win a series here is special."

Santner, whose 7-53 in India's first innings of 156 set up the famous win, rattled the Indian chase with six wickets on a turning pitch and trounced the hosts at their own spin game. "Every time you take wickets you get a little more confident," player of the match Santner said.

"I felt that today. Every time I got a wicket, it got a little better." The left-hander bowled unchanged from one end, returning figures of 6-104 in 29 overs. Ajaz Patel took the final two wickets and ended Ravindra Jadeja's resistance on 42 when the batsman holed out in the deep.

With the series defeat, India's record of 18 consecutive bilateral home series wins—the longest such run for any team—came to an end. "I don't think we batted well enough to get runs on the board," India skipper Rohit Sharma said. "It is a collective failure. The team has failed to accept the challenge thrown at us."

## Rohit hurting

Rohit, whose side travels to Australia for a five-Test series starting next month, added: "We lost the game and the series, that is hurting." But we

## Late Love helps All Blacks thrash Jones's plucky Japan

**YOKOHAMA:** The All Blacks crushed Eddie Jones's Japan 64-19 in a one-off Test on Saturday, running in 10 tries in a routine victory despite a sleepy start and a tougher second half.

Debutant Ruben Love put a polish on the score by claiming two late tries in the space of three minutes for New Zealand after coming off the bench in Yokohama. The match was the All Blacks' first in a tour that will also see them take on England, Ireland, France and Italy on successive weekends.

"It was a convincing win off some great defensive sets and great class touches and skills," said All Blacks coach Scott Robertson. "We gave the ball back too easily at times. We weren't urgent enough, they got a couple of early set-piece tries," he said, praising a "big and physical" Japan.

Japan drew first blood with Fiji-born winger Jone Naikabula steaming in to touch down by the posts in the fifth minute. New Zealand hit back when Mark Tele'a rampaged down the left wing and scored in the corner before captain Patrick Tuipulotu held off three tackles to bundle over the line.

Japan bounced back immediately, attacking off a line-out, punching holes in the defense before loose forward Faulua Makisi crashed through a wide gap off a close-range ruck. Japan lock Warner Dearn thought he had put the hosts back in front, taking a lucky bounce to break clear and gallop over the line, only for the try to be disallowed.



**PUNE:** India's Virat Kohli (R) plays a shot during the third day of the second Test cricket match between India and New Zealand at the Maharashtra Cricket Association Stadium in Pune on October 26, 2024. — AFP

won 18 series in India and that means we did a lot of good things (in the past). I will not think too much into this. "We had two-three bad innings, but it happens sometimes."

India's famed batting has flopped twice in the series including getting bowled out for 46 for their lowest total at home in the opener in Bengaluru. India still lead the World Test Championship table but Australia are a close second. India bowled out New Zealand for 255 inside the first hour of play and opener Yashasvi Jaiswal in his 65-ball 77 came out attacking to raise hopes of a miracle. The hosts lost Rohit for eight but raced to 81-1 at lunch in 12 overs.

Santner took down Shubman Gill for 23 soon after the break to end a 62-run second-wicket stand with the left-handed Jaiswal, who powered on after reaching his fifty. The in-form spinner finally had Jaiswal caught at slip, then ran out Rishabh Pant for a duck and trapped Virat Kohli lbw, dousing India's remote chances.



**YOKOHAMA:** New Zealand's Mark Tele'a (C) tackles Japan's Shinobu Fujiwara during the rugby union test match between New Zealand and Japan at Nissan Stadium in Yokohama, Kanagawa prefecture, south of Tokyo on October 26, 2024. — AFP

Then the flood gates opened for New Zealand with Billy Proctor, Sam Cane, Samipeni Finau and Pasilio Tosi all scoring to make it 36-12. Cam Roigard, back from a long injury break, took the visitors over the 50-point mark in the 44th minute after being let fly by hooker Aumua.

Japan then repeatedly pinned the now sloppy All Blacks in their 22, without breaching the wall of the New Zealand defense until reserve prop Uwe Helu, on his debut, scored the hosts' third try. But any hopes in the Nissan stadium were crushed when Love crossed over for two late tries.

"We left a lot of line-outs out there. One of the things we pride ourselves on is having top-quality ball off our line-out, especially so that our backs can get some go forward, so that was disappointing for us," said Tuipulotu, captaining for the first time. — AFP

## Two-time champion Alonso clocks up 400th F1 race

**MEXICO CITY:** Fernando Alonso sets a record he had no ambition or desire to achieve this weekend when he takes part in his record 400th Grand Prix, 23 years on from his fresh-faced debut. To the two-time world champion, it is a sign of his undying love for his sport and devotion to Formula One in particular even if, to his fans and admirers, it is a reminder of a great talent unfulfilled.

"To reach 400 now is a big number," said Alonso, who has admitted that travelling to 24 races a season is demanding but that he "pays off all the sacrifices" when he climbs behind the wheel of his Aston Martin.

"Knowing that no-one has reached that number in the past, it just demonstrates my love for racing, for F1 and how much I enjoy this lifestyle and motor racing in general." To many, the Oviedo-born Spaniard is the greatest driver of his generation, a man with an unequalled talent for speed and racing, but also someone with a knack of choosing to move to the wrong team at the wrong moment in his career.

"I would love to race half of the 400 and win one more championship, or to win more races," he said. "That's the important statistic you want to achieve." His sometimes self-effacing humor and individuality, coupled with a swashbuckling style on track, earned him great admiration as soon as he made his first appearance for Minardi at the 2001 Australian Grand Prix.

He kept his personality as he progressed to two world titles with Benetton, in 2005 and 2006, under the guidance of his manager Flavio Briatore. Since then, despite moves to McLaren and Ferrari, a third championship has eluded him. The last of his 32 wins came 11 years ago at his home Spanish Grand Prix with Ferrari. — AFP



Sports

# Freeman slam lifts Dodgers over Yankees in World Series thriller

'It might be the greatest baseball moment I've ever witnessed'

LOS ANGELES: Freddie Freeman blasted a sensational walk-off grand slam as the Los Angeles Dodgers came from behind to defeat the New York Yankees 6-3 in a thrilling World Series opener on Friday. Freeman, restored to the line-up after a nagging ankle injury, cracked a 423-foot two-out home run in the 10th inning to hand the Dodgers an electrifying victory at Dodger Stadium.

The Yankees looked to have snatched a precious advantage after Jazz Chisholm scampered home to give the Bronx Bombers a 3-2 lead in the top of the 10th. The Dodgers were then left staring at defeat after watching the Yankees notch two outs in the bottom of the inning to stand on the brink of victory.

But after New York loaded the bases with an intentional walk of Mookie Betts, Freeman stepped up to the plate with one last chance to snatch victory. Yankees reliever Nestor Cortes sent down a 92mph fast ball and Freeman caught it on the full and sent it soaring into right field in a moment of pure theater that was straight out of Hollywood.

"That's a dream come true," Freeman said after his winning moon-shot—the first walk-off grand slam in a World Series game. "But it's only one, we've got three more." Game two in the best of seven series takes place on Saturday. Former MVP Freeman has struggled to find his best form this postseason after turning an ankle just before the playoffs.

But the 35-year-old first baseman delivered in the clutch with a moment that is destined to become part of the folklore of World Series history. An elated Freeman joked that he had almost had an out-of-body experience as he rounded the bases before being mobbed by team-mates as roars of "Freddie, Freddie" cascaded down from the sold-out Dodger Stadium stands.

### 'Floating' Freeman

"It felt like nothing, just kind of floating," Freeman said. "Those are the kind of things, when you're five years old with your two older brothers and you're playing wiffle ball in the backyard, those are the scenarios you dream about, two outs, bases loaded in a World Series game.

"For it to actually happen and get a home run and walk it off to give us a 1-0 lead, that's as good as it gets right there." The defeat was desperately cruel on the Yankees, who behind a superb pitching performance from starter Gerrit Cole had largely kept the Dodgers vaunted offense led by Shohei Ohtani quiet.

The Dodgers had taken the lead with a run from Enrique Hernandez in the fifth inning after Will Smith's sacrifice fly. But the Yankees hit back in the sixth inning with a two-run home run from Giancarlo Stanton to take a 2-1 lead.

The Dodgers tied it up in the bottom of the eighth inning after Betts' sacrifice fly allowed Ohtani to come home. That sent the game to extra-innings and the Yankees appeared poised to snatch victory after Chisholm scored.

But Freeman provided a startling full-stop to a night of nerve-shredding drama as the hoped-for blockbuster between the two historical rivals unfolded. The Yankees and Dodgers, arguably the two most iconic franchises in Major League Baseball, are meeting in the World Series for a 12th time and for the first time since 1981.

Hype surrounding this year's Fall Classic has cranked into overdrive due to the big-hitting exploits of Dodgers superstar Ohtani and Yankees captain Aaron Judge. But in the event Ohtani and Judge were forced out of the spotlight by Freeman's inspired



LOS ANGELES: Freddie Freeman #5 of the Los Angeles Dodgers hits a walk-off grand slam during the tenth inning against the New York Yankees during Game One of the 2024 World Series at Dodger Stadium. — AFP

winner. "It might be the greatest baseball moment I've ever witnessed, and I've witnessed some great ones," Dodgers manager Dave Roberts said of Freeman's winner. "Once they decided to walk Mookie, I just felt good with Freddie at the plate. And just that swing, you knew it was gone.

"Just pure elation. You don't see teams celebrate after a game, a walk-off like that, but I just think it

was certainly warranted. It was a great game before that, but the way it finished—I just couldn't be more excited for our guys."

Yankees manager Aaron Boone meanwhile defended the decision to walk Betts to allow Freeman to come to the plate. "Just taking the left-on-left match-up there," Boone said of the decision to walk Betts. "I didn't deliberate long." — AFP

## Kuwait loses AFC Asian qualifier to Australia

KUWAIT: Kuwait national under-17 men's soccer team lost a Group G match of the AFC Asian Cup qualifiers to Australia 3-1 on Friday evening. The game saw Australia's Amlani Tatu scoring the opener at minute 21, Charlie Parkin doubling the lead, and Quinn MacNicol adding the final goal at minute 95.

Abdulrahman Mohammad scored Kuwait's sole goal at minute 96. The result of the game rose Australia's tally of points to six - equal to Indonesia, while Kuwait and Northern Mariana Islands remained nil. The Kuwaiti team has a third and final showdown against Northern Mariana Islands, slated for Sunday, while Australia and Indonesia will vie for the group's top place. — KUNA

## Sakamoto takes Skate Canada lead over Liu

MONTREAL: Three-time reigning world champion Kaori Sakamoto of Japan grabbed the lead over American comeback queen Alysa Liu after Friday's women's short program at Skate Canada. Sakamoto, the defending Skate Canada champion, won the short program with 74.97 points with 19-year-old Liu, in her first ISU Grand Prix event since 2021, second on 67.68 and 18-year-old Swiss Kimmy Repond third on 66.94.

Sakamoto, a 24-year-old from Kobe, took women's bronze and team silver at the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics. The four-time Japanese champion opened her 2024 Grand Prix campaign with a strong performance in the night's final routine after starting her season last month with a third-place effort at the lower level Lombardia Trophy event in Italy.

Liu, who made a triumphant return from second-placed Inter Milan, who host Juventus late on Sunday in the biggest match to date of their league title defence.

"It was a really important match for us, we tried in every way possible to score and in the end we managed to do it," said Di Lorenzo to DAZN. Antonio Conte's side created little else against spirited Lecce, who remain second from bottom on five points after a fourth straight defeat, as Khvicha Kvaratskhelia and Matteo Politano started on the bench.

Romelu Lukaku fluffed Napoli's best chance of the match when he skied over from inside the six-yard box nine minutes after half-time, and the hosts' were panicky in the final minutes as Lecce pushed for a leveler.

Lecce came into the match on the back of last weekend's 6-0 home hammering at the hands of Fiorentina which put coach Luca Gotti's job at risk but went toe-to-toe with Napoli and on another day could have easily left with a point. "I don't like



HALIFAX: Kaori Sakamoto of Japan skates her short program in the women's competition at ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating "2024 Skate Canada International" at the Scotiabank Center in Halifax. — AFP

to lose, even with our heads held high," said Lecce coach Luca Gotti. "But I'll take the attitude of our players today, let's hope we can take it into the coming matches." On Tuesday, Napoli travel to the San Siro to face AC Milan, who sit fifth and will not play this weekend after Saturday's match at Bologna was postponed due to torrential rain and flooding.

Bologna and its surrounding areas are still reeling from a massive downpour over last weekend which claimed the life of a 20-year-old man. Swathes of the Emilia-Romagna region in northern Italy, much of which is fertile agricultural flatland, were left under water following a second round extreme weather in a matter of weeks.

On Friday Serie A president Lorenzo Casini said the match would likely be played in February due to the two clubs' Champions League commitments and Milan's involvement in the four-team Italian Super Cup which will be played in Saudi Arabia in early January. — AFP

## Suarez, Alba give Miami winning start in MLS Cup

FORT LAUDERDALE: Jordi Alba struck a 60th minute winner as Inter Miami began their first MLS Cup playoff campaign of their Lionel Messi era with a 2-1 win over Atlanta United on Friday. Miami could book their place in the Eastern Conference semi-finals if they can win game two of the best-of-three series in Atlanta on November 2 but after a tight game they will be wary of the task that awaits in Georgia.

Inter, the top seed and favorites in the playoffs, made an electric start to the game with Luis Suarez firing them ahead in the second minute when his former Barcelona team-mate Alba found Diego Gomez and the Paraguayan slipped the ball to Suarez who made no mistake from close range.

Atlanta qualified through a wildcard game in Montreal on Tuesday and they were slow out of the blocks as Miami dominated possession and gave visiting keeper Brad Guzan a busy opening half. Alba fed Messi, whose sweetly struck, first-time shot forced the 40-year-old keeper into a fine, diving save. Atlanta suffered a blow when right winger Brooks Lennon had to go off in the 21st minute and five minutes later Messi threatened again with his effort from 25-yards forcing another save from the outstanding Guzan.

A minute later, Miami should have doubled their lead from a corner but David Martinez headed against the post with the goal at his mercy. Messi then hit the post with an attempt to beat Guzan at his near post and a thundering follow-up shot from Marcelo Weigandt had the former Aston Villa keeper at full stretch. Atlanta's problems continued with defender Stian Gregersen forced off with a muscle injury but just when it seemed everything was conspiring against them they got back on level terms in the 39th minute. Pedro Amador played a clever little pass to find Georgia winger Saba Lobzhanidze inside the box and his first-time, left-foot shot flashed into the far bottom corner. — AFP

## Di Lorenzo fires Napoli past Lecce and 5 points clear

NAPLES: Giovanni Di Lorenzo made sure Napoli will stay top of Serie A this weekend after firing the winner in Saturday's 1-0 win over Lecce to move his team five points clear. Captain Di Lorenzo bundled home the only goal of a scrappy game in Naples after Scott McTominay's header from a corner was saved by Lecce goalkeeper Wladimiro Falcone, giving Napoli their fourth win in as many matches.

The Italy full-back's third goal of the season for Napoli came after he was denied in the first half when his close-range finish was rightly ruled out for offside. Napoli are comfortably ahead of sec-

# Classifieds

### Clinics & Hospitals

#### Clinics

Kaizen center	25716707
Rawda	22517733
Adaliya	22517144
Khaldiya	24848075
Kaifan	24849807
Shamiya	24848913
Shuwaikh	24814507
Abdullah Salem	22549134
Nuzha	22526804
Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764
Qadsiya	22515088
Dasmah	22532265
Bneid Al-Gar	22531908
Shaab	22518752

Qibla	22459381
Ayoun Al-Qibla	22451082
Mirqab	22456536
Sharq	22465401
Salmiya	25746401

#### Hospitals

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

### Change of Name

I, **Jenin Varghese** Kattakara, father of Adora Suzann, holder of Indian Passport No: W7988821, do hereby change the name of my minor daughter to ADORA SUZANN (as given name) JENIN (as surname) for all purposes. I also undertake to effect the change in all her other public documents.

(#6182 24/10/2024)

I, **Subhas**, holder of Passport No. M7792645, do hereby change my name to Subhas (given name) Yadav (as surname) for all purposes. I, will henceforth be known in the name as Subhas Yadav and I also undertake to carry out this name change in all my documents, vide affidavit dated 29.08.2024 before notary Wilson H. Rodrigues, Udupi.

(#6183 24/10/2024)

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## Haaland fires Man City to top of Premier League, Villa held

Brentford beat fourth-bottom Ipswich 4-3 in a thrilling clash



MANCHESTER:- Manchester City's Norwegian striker #09 Erling Haaland (2nd L) falls backward as he scores the opening goal during the English Premier League football match between Manchester City and Southampton at the Etihad Stadium in Manchester. — AFP

**LONDON:** Erling Haaland fired Manchester City to the top of the Premier League as the striker sealed a 1-0 win against Southampton, while third-placed Aston Villa were frustrated by Bournemouth's last-gasp leveller on Saturday.

Haaland had gone three league games without a goal but he ended that mini drought in the first half at the Etihad Stadium. That was enough to lift Pep Guardiola's side into first place, two points ahead of second-placed Liverpool, who can regain pole position if they win Sunday's blockbuster clash with title rivals Arsenal.

City have not lost a league game at the Etihad for two years, a run encompassing 35 games, and bottom of the table Southampton, who have only one point from nine games this season, were never likely to shatter that impressive streak.

With Jack Grealish and Jeremy Doku ruled out, Guardiol

la made four changes to the team that thrashed Sparta Prague in the Champions League on Wednesday. Haaland had scored an audacious goal against Sparta and while his effort to kill off Southampton was more prosaic, it was arguably far more valuable given the context of a tense title race.

Matheus Nunes's cross reached Haaland in the fifth minute and the Norwegian showed strength and desire to get to the ball ahead his marker for a close-range strike. City spurned several chances to increase their lead but Haaland's 14th goal in all competitions this season gave the unbeaten champions seven wins from nine league matches as they chase a fifth successive title.

Aston Villa's hopes of pushing for the title suffered a setback as Bournemouth snatched a 1-1 draw at Villa Park. Villa are unbeaten in the Champions League, sitting top of the table after seeing off Young

Boys, Bayern Munich and Bologna.

But they couldn't follow their latest European success with a domestic victory despite taking the lead in the 76th minute. Ian Maatsen crossed and Leon Bailey teed up Ross Barkley to hook in his first goal for the club. But Evanilson rescued Bournemouth with the headed equaliser six minutes into stoppage-time.

### Wolves fight back

Brentford beat fourth-bottom Ipswich 4-3 in a thrilling clash in west London. Ipswich's Sam Szmodics produced a fine finish from 15 yards in the 28th minute before George Hirst clipped a composed strike past Mark Flekken three minutes later.

But Yoane Wissa netted in the 44th minute and Harry Clarke's own goal seconds later hauled Brentford level. Bryan Mbeumo's 51st minute penalty, awarded for Clarke's foul on Keane Lew-

is-Potter, put Brentford 3-2 up.

Capping a miserable day for Clarke, he was sent off in the closing stages after fouling Lewis-Potter to earn a second booking. Liam Delap's 86th minute equalizer appeared to have spared Clarke's blushes, but Mbeumo snatched victory with the last kick of stoppage-time.

Second-bottom Wolves staged a superb fightback to draw 2-2 at fifth-placed Brighton. Danny Welbeck bagged his sixth goal of the season in first half stoppage-time and Evan Ferguson struck with a clinical finish from Tariq Lamptey's 85th minute cross to leave Brighton in control.

But Rayan Ait-Nouri got one back three minutes later and Matheus Cunha saved winless Wolves from a sixth successive league defeat with a deflected equaliser deep into stoppage-time. Everton face Fulham in Saturday's late game at Goodison Park. — AFP

## Leipzig beat Freiburg to go top, Dortmund lose away again

**LEIPZIG:** RB Leipzig came from behind to beat Freiburg 3-1 at home on Saturday to leapfrog Bayern Munich and go top of the Bundesliga, while Borussia Dortmund's away woes continued with another defeat.

Freiburg, impressive this season under new coach Julian Schuster, scored first when Japan winger Ritsu Doan was in the perfect place to head in a Vincenzo Grifo cross. Leipzig, who looked heavy-legged after a 1-0 home defeat to Liverpool in the Champions League on Wednesday, were a goal down at half-time but equalized shortly after.

Germany defender Benjamin Henrichs, who was at fault for Freiburg's opener, cut a dangerous cross goalwards for captain Willi Orban to divert into the net. Lutsharel Geertruida put Leipzig in front after 58 minutes when he finished off a lightning-fast counter attack for his first Bundesliga goal.

Lois Openda put the home side in full control with 11 minutes remaining, again on the break—his fifth goal in eight games this season. Leipzig are now three points clear of Bayern, who play at last-placed Bochum on Sunday.

Orban said Leipzig "took a while to get our



LEIPZIG: Leipzig's Belgian forward Lois Openda scores his team's third goal against Freiburg on Oct 26, 2024. — AFP

motor running", adding "we could still feel the (Liverpool) game in our bones".

### 'Hard to get a win'

Just days after letting a 2-0 lead slip to lose 5-2 at Real Madrid in a rematch of last season's Champions League final, Dortmund's poor week continued with a 2-1 defeat at Augsburg despite going ahead early. As he did against Real, Dortmund winger Donyell Malen gave his side the lead, blasting an excellent Serhou Guirassy assist into the net after four minutes.

Augsburg were level after 25 minutes howev-

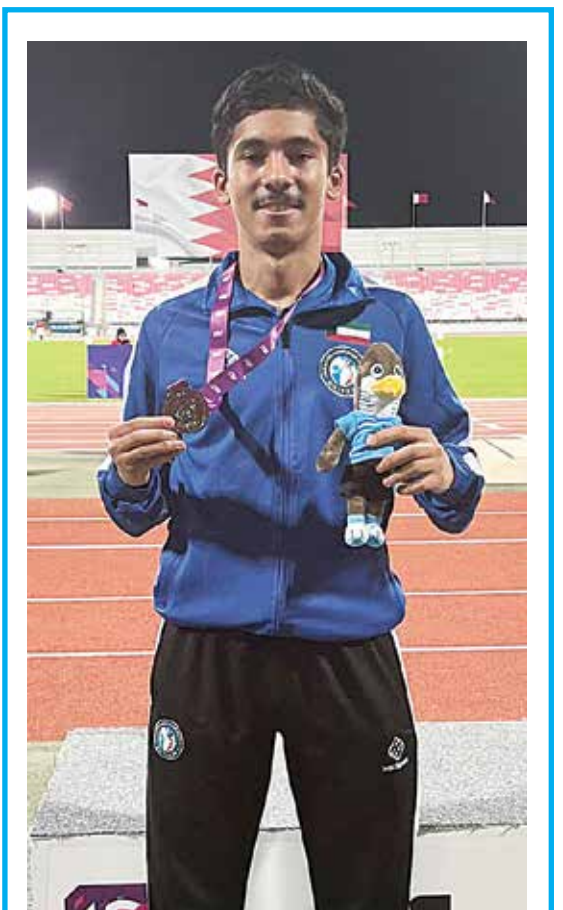
er, Alexis Claude-Maurice taking advantage of some lazy defending to waltz through the centre of the park and hit a low shot into the corner. Claude-Maurice scored five minutes into the second half, this time capitalizing on an Emre Can error to slide the ball into the right-hand corner.

A frustrated Dortmund coach Nuri Sahin told Sky: "The goals we conceded, just insane, and now we are leaving empty handed again. "It's too easy to score goals against us. When you concede two goals a game it's going to be hard to get a win."

Dortmund sporting director Sebastian Kehl said the club had "full trust, no question" in Sahin, adding "we're not where we want to be yet but we've said again and again we need time". The loss leaves Dortmund seven points off top spot after just eight matches and last season's Champions League finalists have not won away from home in the league since April.

Elsewhere, Stuttgart won 2-1 at home against promoted Holstein Kiel. Captain Deniz Undav opened the scoring 19 minutes in and El Bilal Toure, who scored a stoppage-time winner against Juventus midweek, added a stunner in the second half.

Jeff Chabot's second yellow meant Stuttgart were reduced to 10 men and Armin Gigovic cut the lead with six minutes remaining but Kiel, who lost Yann-Fiete Arp to a second yellow late, could not cut the gap further. In Hamburg, promoted St Pauli picked up a valuable point in a scoreless draw at home against Wolfsburg. — AFP



Abdul Latif Al-Failakawi

## Al-Failakawi wins silver in 800m race at World School Games

**MANAMA:** Kuwait School Sports Federation and Higher Education athlete Abdul Latif Al-Failakawi on Saturday won the silver medal in the 800-meter race at the 2024 World School Games Bahrain, held under the patronage of Bahraini King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa. National coach Saad Al-Hajri, in a statement to KUNA, credited this global achievement to the political leadership and officials from the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of State for Youth Affairs.

He noted that they provided the necessary resources for the delegation to secure the first medal in the World School Games. Al-Hajri praised Al-Failakawi's performance in the competitive 800-meter race. Morocco won the gold medal, and China finished in third place. Al-Hajri praised all the players who made great efforts in the tournament since its launch and supported each other. — KUNA