

## Business

# Climate protesters throng New York, demand end to fossil fuels

## Activists want Biden to declare climate emergency

NEW YORK: Tens of thousands of people took to the streets of New York on Sunday, calling for increased action against climate change ahead of the opening of the UN General Assembly. Taking up multiple city blocks, protesters from some 700 organizations and activist groups carried signs reading "Biden, end fossil fuels," "Fossil fuels are killing us" and "I didn't vote for fires and floods" in a demonstration that came on the heels of a summer marked by multiple climate change-linked disasters. US President Joe Biden is among the world leaders set to attend the UN General Assembly (UNGA), which is scheduled to formally open on Tuesday. "We are here to demand that the administration declare a climate emergency," said Analilia Mejia, director of the activist group Center for Popular Democracy.

"We must wake up and take immediate action," she told AFP. A UN climate report released this month named 2025 as the deadline for global greenhouse gas emissions to peak — followed by a sharp drop thereafter — if humanity is to cap global warming in

line with Paris Agreement targets.

The 2015 Paris treaty has successfully driven climate action, but "much more is needed now on all fronts," said the report, which will underpin a crucial climate summit in Dubai at the end of the year. Achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2050 — another Paris goal — will also require phasing out the burning of all fossil fuels whose emissions cannot be captured or compensated.

Mejia, 46, pointed to recent extreme weather events—from fires in Canada, Hawaii and Greece to flooding in Libya — as demonstrating the seriousness of the "existential crisis" posed by climate change. Another activist, Nalleli Cobo, 22, told AFP she'd like to see political leaders "come to my house" in the western US state of California and "spend the night living next to an oil and gas well."

Cobo, who has worked with Sweden's Greta Thunberg on climate campaigns, blames the "toxic air" she has been exposed to at her home for the ovarian cancer she contracted at 19. "Our lives are on the line," she said. Biden

has made a historic push for green manufacturing, offering billions of dollars for clean energy projects, but some young activists say he has not acted forcefully enough to lead the United States off dependence on fossil fuels.

California filed a lawsuit Friday against five global oil majors, alleging the firms caused billions of dollars in damages and misled the public by minimizing the risks from fossil fuels.

Top world scientists warn that the world is likely to experience new record heat in the next five years, and that global temperatures are more likely than not to breach a crucial threshold of an average 1.5 degree C rise. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has organized a Climate Ambition summit for Wednesday, during the General Assembly, at which he hopes to accelerate the ongoing work to counter climate change by governments as well as private sector organizations and financial institutions. "History will remember their action, or inaction," said Mejia. "And if we're lucky, human beings will be around to remember what (world leaders) did in this summit." — AFP



NEW YORK: People rally to end fossil fuels ahead of the 78th United Nations General Assembly and Climate Ambition Summit in New York on September 17, 2023. — AFP

## MENA Weekly Market Report

## Speculators rush into crude futures

A week that saw the short end of the US yield curve firm up amid rising energy prices and robustness in US data pointing to higher for longer rates, while the dollar paused following a week-long ascent. The commodity sector saw a sharp divide between surging energy prices led by fuel products and renewed weakness across metals and grains. The Bloomberg Commodity index traded higher for a third week, but the small increase was unevenly split with a 2.5 percent rally in the energy sector and firmer livestock prices being offset by losses in metals, both precious and industrial as well as grains. A tightening fuel product market amid lower output of crude oil from Saudi Arabia and Russia, as well as the higher for longer US rates, were the two main themes driving activity, together with data pointing to a US crop being less impacted by drought than originally feared.

Hedge funds and CTAs responded to these developments by aggressively adding to their long positions in WTI and Brent crude oil for a second week while all the major metals saw net selling.

Crude oil and fuel products: During a two-week period to September 12, the combined leveraged fund long in Brent and WTI has jumped by 137k contract or 35 percent in response to the Saudi and Russian year-end production extension. The combined net reached an 18-month high at 527k contract last week with buying being led by WTI (+30k to 279k) as inventories at Cushing, the delivery hub, continue to shrink amid the current tightness. The WTI long versus short ratio has spiked to 14.6 longs per short, from a June low of 1.5. Gasoil's strong rally was met by increased short selling while the length was added to the RBOB and ULSD contracts.

Gold, silver and copper: Continued weakness across precious metals amid the fallout from higher energy prices, dollar strength and rising yields helped trigger a 25 percent reduction in the gold long to 50k, a return to neutral in silver at 1.2k, and a reversal back to a net short in platinum. All developments leave these metals in a better position to rally on price-friendly news as seen Friday when the dollar rally stalled. The copper net flipped back to a net short of 3.8k contracts.

## US equities

Technology stocks pulled down the market. Adobe shares dropped by 4.2 percent after earnings, while Nvidia, Amazon, and Microsoft each declined by 3 percent, 3 percent, and 2.5 percent, respectively, putting pressure on the indices. The Nasdaq 100 decreased by 1.8 percent to 15,202, and the S&P500 lost 1.2 percent, settling at 4,450. We believe that the hype around generative AI has led to a rush of interest in the technology sector, but it will take much longer than current stock prices suggest for commercialization to fully materialize. The VIX rebounded to 13.79, rising from its year-low point due to a significant volume of options expiring.

Note: Ole Hansen is head of commodity strategy, Saxo Bank

## Shares in Chinese property giant Evergrande fall

HONG KONG: Shares in Chinese property giant Evergrande plunged by around 25 percent as markets opened in Hong Kong on Monday, following the arrest of several of the debt-ridden company's employees in China. Evergrande's stock price dipped to 0.47 around 9 am in Hong Kong (0100 GMT) on Monday, before ticking back up, after closing at 0.62 Hong Kong dollars on Friday.

The drop comes two days after police in the southern Chinese city of Shenzhen said in a statement that several employees of Evergrande's finan-

## Nov 30 deadline to join Gulf Bank's Al-Danah millionaire draw

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank is keen to announce that November 30, 2023, marks the final opportunity for customers to deposit and participate in the KD 2 million annual draw for the Al-Danah account. The annual grand draw, scheduled for January 18, 2024, will unveil the world's most significant cash prize linked to a bank account, where the first multimillionaire will be revealed. In a gesture of appreciation towards its valued customers and in celebration of the Al-Danah account's 25th anniversary, Gulf Bank made a groundbreaking announcement back in May. The annual grand prize value for the Al-Danah account has been increased to KD 2 million, solidifying its position as the most substantial cash prize associated with a bank account.

The grand draw event on January 18, 2024, will be conducted under the supervision of representatives from both the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and Ernst & Young. The Al-Danah millionaire account is one of the most rewarding and prestigious savings accounts in Kuwait, with periodic draws that have been creating millionaires since its launch in 1998 — now offering an annual grand draw prize worth KD 2,000,000, monthly opportunities for ten lucky winners to win KD 1,000, in addition to quarterly draws with KD 100,000 prizes each.



SYDNEY: Activists launched court action Monday accusing Australia's environment minister of failing to protect the Great Barrier Reef and other treasures from the climate risks of coal mining. — AFP

## Green group sues Australian minister over coal's impact

SYDNEY: Activists launched court action Monday accusing Australia's environment minister of failing to protect the Great Barrier Reef and other treasures from the climate risks of coal mining. They allege the minister, Tanya Plibersek, has unlawfully refused to act on "a large volume of expert and scientific evidence of climate risk".

The case focuses on applications to extend coal mining operations into the 2040s at two sites in New South Wales state owned by MACH Energy and Narrabri Coal Operations. Both coal mining firms have joined the minister in defending the case. The mining extension applications are in the final stages of the state and federal approvals process. The Environment Council of Central Queensland, which is bringing the case at the Federal Court in Melbourne, argued it was unlawful for the min-

ister to refuse to act on the "climate science".

The council said it wrote to Plibersek last year asking her to re-consider a number of coal mining proposals because of their link with global warming and the likely "significant impact" on environmental treasures such as the Great Barrier Reef. "We're doing this because we're so tired of the sound bites. So tired of photos of ministers posing with koalas, saying all the right things but failing to act," said the environmental group's president, Christine Carlisle.

"The science could not be clearer. It's time for our environment minister to step up and act on climate risk." Australia has committed to cutting carbon emissions by 43 percent by 2030 from 2005 levels, on a path to reaching net-zero emissions by 2050.

But the centre-left Labor government has refused to rule out approving new coal mines in a country that is one of the world's largest coal exporters.

"Our client asserts the minister has a legal responsibility to face up to the harm new coal and gas will cause to Australia's unique plants, animals and places," said Environmental Justice Australia senior lawyer Retta Berryman, who is representing the group in court. A spokesperson for Plibersek declined to comment because the case is before the courts. — AFP

## Participation conditions

Gulf Bank's Al-Danah account is open to both Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti residents in Kuwait. A minimum of KD 200 is required to open an account, and the same amount must be maintained for customers to be eligible for the upcoming Al-Danah draws. If the customer's account balance falls below KD 200 at any given time, a KD 2 monthly fee will be charged to the account, until the minimum balance is met. Customers who open an account and/or deposit more will enter the daily draw within two days.

Gulf Bank encourages Al-Danah customers to raise their chances of winning by increasing their depositing amount, using the electronic payment service available through the bank's website and mobile application. The Al-Danah millionaire account is one of the oldest and most prestigious savings accounts in Kuwait and was designed to encourage a culture of savings in society, and reward customers for their commitment to saving on a regular basis. Hence, Gulf Bank encourages everyone to open an Al-Danah millionaire account to start saving and to enjoy the multitude of benefits the account has to offer.

## Numerous features

Amongst the many advantages enjoyed by Al-Danah millionaire account, is that it is the only account that rewards customers for their loyalty, by providing loyalty chances. The loyalty chances are the total chances gained in the previous year, which are then transferred to the current year to reward customers for their loyalty to the bank. All chances gained by existing Al-Danah clients in 2022 have been transferred and added to the 2023 chances — taking into consideration the terms and conditions.

The Al-Danah account provides a multitude of valuable



services to its customers, including access to an exclusive Al-Danah ATM card, that is ideal for depositing money into their accounts at any time. Account holders can also calculate their chances of winning the monthly, quarterly, and annual draws using the Al-Danah calculator, available on Gulf Bank's online website and mobile application. To participate in the upcoming quarterly and annual Al-Danah draws this year, customers can visit one of Gulf Bank's branches or transfer directly through Gulf Bank's Online/Mobile Banking services. They can also direct their queries via WhatsApp on 1805805 for round-the-clock assistance from Gulf Bank representatives or call the Customer Contact Center on the same number. Additionally, customers can visit the dedicated Al-Danah account website to learn more about the account and its winners.

## Countries hone policies ahead of COP28 in Dubai

PARIS: We're heading into Climate Week NYC Sept 17-24, and then the UN's COP28 conference in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, later this year. As stakeholders from around the world gather at these big climate events, the latest edition of the S&P Global Sustainability Quarterly explores how companies and countries are approaching climate change and the energy transition?

Standard-setting bodies like the International Sustainability Standards Board (ISSB) are changing the landscape for climate disclosure. The ISSB released its first standards this summer, and as companies prepare to implement them, research from S&P Global Sustainable finds that climate disclosure varies widely around the world. Following the International Sustainability Standards Board's release of climate standards, S&P Global Sustainable data shows that scope emissions disclosure is still uncommon.

Against this global backdrop, we examine how the world's most populous country is approaching energy transition in research by S&P Global Commodity Insights - India's Energy Transition: More Energy, Fewer Emissions - that is also featured in "Look Forward: India's Moment," a collection of research about the challenges and opportunities facing India in the coming decades.

Managing sustainability risks in supply chains that span the globe has been a persistent challenge for companies, and new regulations in some parts of the world are putting more pressure on companies to ensure their suppliers act sustainably. We dive into this topic in research from S&P Global Market Intelligence about the global impact of the EU's anti-deforestation law, which will require companies selling certain products in the EU to confirm that their goods do not contribute to deforestation.

Research from S&P Global Ratings also helps us understand how companies in particularly complex sectors such as chemical manufacturing are approaching the decarbonization challenge. This research finds that the sector's medium-term decarbonization targets are unlikely to materially affect chemical companies' cost structures but could imply more significant disruptions to the sector post-2030. India is critical in the global push toward net zero because of its large and growing demand for energy. Its efforts to reduce emissions will also serve as a model for other emerging economies.

The European Union's regulation on deforestation-free products is likely to reconfigure trade and supply chains across deforestation-linked commodities over the next decade. Sectorwide challenges will intensify beyond 2030. Medium-term decarbonization targets are unlikely to materially affect chemical companies' cost structures but could imply more significant disruptions to the sector post-2030.

While there are potential risks on the horizon for chemical companies, S&P Global Ratings views the sector's credit risks as manageable under existing regulatory policies. Green, social, sustainable, and sustainability-linked bond issuance has risen this year, despite challenges posed by high global interest rates, while traditional bond issuance is stagnating.

