



3 Kuwait marks invasion 'versary with continued aid to Iraqis



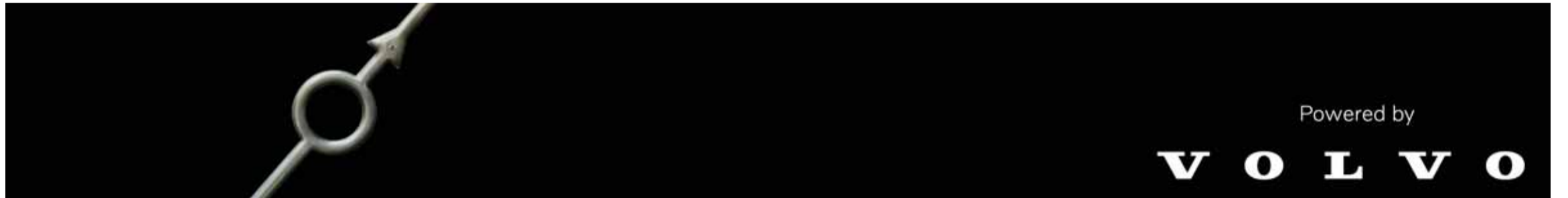
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Vaccinated residents arrive after months-long entry ban

Passengers from 5 South Asian nations have to spend 14 days in third country

Zain Ventures invests in pipe.com and swvl.com

KUWAIT/MIAMI/DUBAI: Zain Group, a leading telecom innovator in seven markets across the Middle East and Africa announces the creation of Zain Ventures and the closing of investments and signing a memorandum of understanding with both Pipe and Swvl to support their growth across Zain's regional footprint and beyond.

Bader Al-Kharafi, Zain Vice Chairman and Group CEO, commented: "The establishment of Zain Ventures is another step in Zain Group's '4Sight' strategy and progression to become a full-fledged digital services company. We have already enjoyed tremendous success in the



investments we have made in venture capital entities and startups that show promising potential for boosting our revenues in new and developing verticals, and formalizing these investments under a single entity at this time will create shareholder value." (See Page 8)

By Ben Garcia and Nawara Fattahova

KUWAIT: Fully vaccinated residents started returning to Kuwait yesterday after a months-long entry ban, ahead of a government plan to reopen schools. But passengers from five countries - Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka - are not allowed to enter Kuwait directly, unless they spend 14 days in a third country. Director General of the Directorate General for Civil Aviation Yousef Al-Fouzan confirmed to Kuwait Times yesterday. He noted that this decision was taken a few weeks ago due to the spread of the new Delta variant of the coronavirus.

No official circular from the DGCA was issued on the new list of banned countries or on the lifting of a ban on 68 countries from where passengers weren't allowed to fly directly to Kuwait that was announced previously, which also included Egypt. Unofficial reports on social media said direct flights with Egypt will resume from Aug 15, 2021, but this wasn't confirmed by DGCA officials. Abdullah Al-Baksh, monitor of projects and

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KUWAIT: A man greets his family upon their arrival at Kuwait International Airport yesterday as authorities allowed entry to fully vaccinated expats. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

News in brief

Ticket prices skyrocket

KUWAIT: The huge demand for tickets after Kuwait reopened the airport for vaccinated residents, combined with the limited number of available seats, has caused airfares to skyrocket to up to KD 500 for a one-way ticket from Dubai, KD 200 from Beirut and KD 350 from Istanbul. Meanwhile, the travel agencies union warned that a large number of Kuwaitis are stuck abroad after airlines canceled their tickets due to the massive demand for tickets to Kuwait, combined with the limits on passenger.

89 insurgents killed in Sinai

CAIRO: Egypt's military said yesterday it has killed 89 suspected insurgents in operations in North Sinai, a region where an affiliate of the Islamic State group has been active for nearly a decade. An army spokesperson's statement did not specify a timeframe for the operations, but said the army had suffered eight casualties. The army also said it destroyed 404 improvised explosive devices (IEDs), four explosive belts and 13 tunnels used by militants to infiltrate Egyptian territory. — AFP

Ghannouchi suffers 'malaise'

TUNIS: Rached Ghannouchi, the 80-year-old leader of turmoil-racked Tunisia's Islamist-inspired party Ennahdha, suddenly became unwell yesterday while working punishing hours but it was not serious, an aide said. Since President Kais Saied seized power in Tunisia on Sunday, Ghannouchi, also speaker of parliament, has been working 16 hours to 18 hours per day, aide Ahmed Gaaloul said. "(Ghannouchi) suffered a little malaise earlier in the day and had to go to a clinic to be examined," he added. — AFP

TikTok star shot dead

LOS ANGELES: TikTok star Anthony Barajas has died after being shot at a California movie theater in what authorities described as a "random and unprovoked" attack. Barajas, 19, died Saturday after the shooting that also killed his 18-year-old friend Rylee Goodrich, said police in Corona in southern California. Joseph Jimenez, 20, has been charged in the shooting. — AFP

Spending down, savings up due to pandemic

KUWAIT: The coronavirus situation had an impact on spending by Kuwaitis, especially during the lockdown period and the decrease in spending on travel and other means of entertainment. The COVID-19-affected lifestyle led many Kuwaitis to save more money from their salaries as markets, stores, cinema, gyms and beauty

salons were closed and people had to stay home, as well as being exempted from paying monthly installments for a year.

A lack of means of investment by local banks led the Central Bank of Kuwait to encourage citizens to save money and invest, as part of its campaign "Let's be Aware". This resulted in Kuwaitis buying luxury goods such as expensive watches and gold with their savings. In statements to KUNA, a number of citizens agreed that the pandemic affected their spending, as they turned from consumption to saving. They added they spent more money on food, online shopping and entertainment and less on travelling and restaurants.

According to the Central Statistical Bureau,

323,358 Kuwaitis work in the public sector with an average salary of KD 1,520, who were able to save money after being exempt from paying installments. Moreover, the Central Bank announced that deposits in local banks rose 4.1 percent in 2020, reaching their highest at KD 61 billion, with 78.1 percent from local sources.

Cash withdrawals through ATMs decreased by 67 percent in May 2020 with 870,000 transactions, compared to 2.6 million in May 2019. In June 2020, cash withdrawals decreased by 39 percent, 20 percent in July and 15 percent in August, compared to corresponding months in 2019, according to Shared Electronic Banking Services Company (Knet). — KUNA (See Page 2)

Chinese cities test millions as cases surge

BEIJING: Chinese cities rolled out mass testing of millions of people and imposed fresh travel restrictions as health authorities battled yesterday to contain the country's most widespread coronavirus outbreak in months. China yesterday reported 75 new coronavirus cases with 53 local transmissions, with a cluster linked to an eastern airport now reported to

have spread to over 20 cities and more than a dozen provinces.

The outbreak is geographically the largest to hit China in several months after the country's successes in largely snuffing out the pandemic within its borders last year. That record has been thrown into jeopardy after the fast-spreading Delta variant broke out at Nanjing airport in eastern Jiangsu province in July.

Authorities have now conducted three rounds of testing on the city's 9.2 million residents and placed hundreds of thousands under lockdown, in an effort to curb an outbreak Beijing has blamed on the highly

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SUQIAN, China: A staff member distributes free traditional Chinese medicine amid a rise in COVID-19 cases across the country yesterday. — AFP

A year after blast, Lebanon still bleeds

BEIRUT: On Aug 4, 2020, a fire at the Beirut port ignited one of the largest non-nuclear explosions in history. It disfigured the city, took more than 200 lives and shattered Lebanon's psyche. The blast was felt as far away as Cyprus, and the destruction is hard to fathom. But if one thing can outweigh what happened to Lebanon that day, it is what hasn't happened since.

Not one culprit has been put on trial, jailed or even identified. Families of the victims have received no visit, apology or explanation from those at the top. The reforms demanded by donors who flew to the wounded country's rescue are a dead letter, and a new government promised last September has yet to materialize.

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BEIRUT: In this file photo taken on Aug 4, 2020, a ship in flames is pictured at the port of Beirut following a massive explosion. — AFP

Local

Coronavirus situation affected money spending, saving for Kuwaitis

KUWAIT: The coronavirus situation had an impact on spending for Kuwaitis, especially during the lockdown period and the decrease in spending on travelling and other entertainment means. The COVID-19-imposed lifestyle forced many Kuwaitis to save more money from their salaries as markets, stores, cinema, gyms and beauty salons are closed and people had to stay home, as well as the exemption from paying monthly installments for a year. The lack of investment means provided by local banks led the Central Bank of Kuwait to encourage citizens on saving money and to invest, as part of its campaign "let's be aware." In the light of the drop in profit rate and fear of investing in shares and real estate that the pandemic brought, Kuwaitis headed towards buying luxury items such as expensive watches and gold with their savings. In statements to KUNA, a number of citizens agreed that the pandemic affected their money spending rate, as they turned from consumption to saving. They added that they spent more money on food items, online shopping and entertainment games and less on travelling and restaurants.

Sara Al-Mazyad noted that postponing monthly installment for banks for six months allowed her to save the money she used to pay for installments every month. She saved money worth KD 1,500 (\$4,800), which she used to spend on cafes and shopping. Al-Mazyad added that she thought of investing in her savings with something useful, but with the lack of investment options currently, she turned to buying gold. In the meantime, Hamad Al-Salem said he wasn't able to save his installment during the lockdown, as he spent it on online shopping and buying entertainment items for his kids. He

noted that staying home for a long time can lead to "emotional shopping," buying unnecessary items out of boredom and stress.

Meanwhile, Omar Al-Mutawaa said that online studying for children allowed him to save more money which he used to spend on buying school items and requirements for his three kids. According to the Central Statistical Bureau, there are 323,358 Kuwaitis working in the public sector with an average salary of KD 1,520 (about \$4,850), who were able to save money after the installment exemption. Moreover, CBK announced that deposits in local banks rose 4.1 percent during 2020, reaching its highest record at KD 61 billion, with 78.1 percent being from local sources.

In the meantime, CEO of the Shared Electronic Banking Services Company (Knet) Abdullah Al-Ajmi affirmed that the company cannot monitor saving, spending or investment rate, however, it can monitor money withdrawal or payment. The company noticed an increase in online payment and a decrease in cash payments as the pandemic started, Ajmi said. This increase in online payment led the company to distribute over 3,000 new points of sale across the country, especially in supermarkets, pharmacies and hospitals, he added. Cash withdrawal through ATMs decreased by 67 percent compared to May 2019, with 870,000 transactions, compared to 2.6 million. In June 2020, cash withdrawal went down to 39 percent, 20 percent in July and 15 percent in August, compared to the same time period in 2019, said the CEO. He noted that cash withdrawal dropped to KD 70.6 million in May 2020 by 64 percent, compared to the same month in 2019, the highest drop rate during the pandemic.



Transactions in points of sale went down by 55 percent in March 2020 on an annual rate, said Ajmi, adding that the decrease was highest in May 2020 with 66 percent, dropping from 17 million transactions to six million. The transactions value dropped from KD 855 million to KD 230 million in the same

month, compared to 2019. In the same context, professor of finance and financial facilities in Kuwait University Dr Talla' Al-Dihani said the pandemic closed most stores and markets, as well as the fact that tourism stopped, gave people the opportunity to save money. — KUNA

A year after blast, Lebanon...

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With a tail-spinning economy, a health sector ravaged by COVID-19 and a future stunted by an intensifying brain drain, Lebanon was already well on its way to collapse before last Aug 4. Yet the cataclysmic blast that shocked the world and sowed the kind of devastation caused by wars and natural disasters did not mark the end of the free fall.

"We thought that was rock bottom. How could it get worse?" Rima Rantisi, a lecturer at the American University of Beirut, remembers of the immediate aftermath. Shortly after 6:00 pm on that ill-fated Tuesday, hundreds of tons of poorly stored ammonium nitrate caught fire and caused what has been described as one of the largest ever non-nuclear explosions. Footage of the fireball erupting above the port and the white blast mushroom soaring skywards and tearing through the city drew inevitable comparisons with Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Whatever may have sparked the initial fire, it was the chain of irresponsibility and corruption that had allowed such hazardous material to be stored so near the city center for six years that drew the public's fury. "What became clear to me then, and which I have to remind myself of every day, is that the people who run the country are criminals and murderers - period," says Rantisi.

The blast killed 214 people, wounded thousands and made tens of thousands homeless, at least temporarily. "After the explosion, we understood this completely: As long as they are in power, nothing will get better,"

Vaccinated residents arrive...

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planning at the engineering department of the DGCA, said in a statement that the first flights carrying expats with valid residencies arrived at midnight. Kuwait airport received eight flights carrying 739 people onboard in nine hours since the entry ban was lifted, he added.

According to Deputy Director General for Kuwait International Airport Affairs Saleh Al-Fadaghi, the health authorities have limited the number of arrivals at the airport to about 1,000 per day. The airport yesterday wasn't crowded and several flights were delayed or cancelled, including flights from Damascus and Bodrum. No explanation was provided on the canceled flights. Returning residents should be vaccinated with two shots of the Pfizer-BioNTech, Oxford-AstraZeneca or Moderna vaccines or one dose of the Johnson & Johnson jab.

Lamis Aman, an HR employee at Arab Open University, was happy to set foot on Kuwaiti soil after more than seven months of absence. "I am fully vaccinated and thankful to join my colleagues at the university. It's been seven months - that's long enough for a vacation. I was in constant communication with my employers in Kuwait, who allowed me to work from home. So I never stopped working and I have been receiving my salary too," she told Kuwait Times at Kuwait International Airport.

"From Cairo I flew to Beirut, where I transited for 12 hours. I am very happy to be back," Aman said, adding staying out of Kuwait for a long period of time without a clear date of return is not a welcome idea. "I wouldn't want this experience to be repeated again in my life."

Ibrahim Saeed, an Egyptian who works in the medical field, also arrived yesterday after six months abroad. He was held temporarily at the immigration since he had no documentation about the vaccine and other requirements. "I told them I

Rantisi says. Musician Julia Sabra says she and her boyfriend are "still terrified of any sound" after moving back into their renovated home.

Another survivor, Shady Rizk, plans to emigrate. "The trauma, it rips you up inside," he says. "It's like internal crying." The Lebanese have had little reprieve over the past two years. In early 2020, coronavirus lockdowns snuffed out the last flickers of a protest movement that had kindled the ardent hope that Lebanon's days of hereditary barons were numbered.

As financial disaster loomed, those in the know spirited their money abroad. The rest proved powerless against a crisis that stripped the Lebanese pound of 90 percent of its value and trapped depositors' dollars in banks. "Before the blast, the economic collapse had started, as had the health crisis," says Karlen Hitti Karam. Her husband, brother and cousin were firefighters killed in the port inferno. "The same people caused all of this. We lost everything. Our lives stopped on August 4, 2020."

On Wednesday, families of victims are organizing a religious service at the port to mark the anniversary, while activists are planning anti-government demonstrations. The public was enraged by the lack of justice, and even foreign diplomats made no secret of their disgust. The first judge tasked with investigating the blast summoned former ministers for interrogation and was removed as a result.

His successor's attempt to do the same was met with fresh stalling tactics by parliamentarians last month. Volunteer work and foreign funding have allowed for some renovation, but the worst-hit areas, which include some of Beirut's cultural hotspots and heritage jewels, are a shadow of their former selves. Among the buildings directly exposed to the blast was the state electricity company headquarters, its gutted shell now facing the ruins of the port - in complete darkness. — AFP

work for the ministry of health and I was ushered from the immigration counter to check my papers. They confirmed it eventually and I was released after an hour. I transited in Beirut for seven hours," he added.

A few other passengers who got stuck at airport immigration were worried. Zainab Kamel Farad, a Lebanese woman who arrived yesterday said she was stopped at Kuwait airport for four hours. "When I left Lebanon, my father double-checked my vaccination status and it was green, meaning I had received the two shots recognized by Kuwait. But at the immigration counter, they told me my record says I have not been vaccinated yet. So I showed them my status on the PACI app and it was green," she told Kuwait Times.

"I also immediately informed my father, who was waiting for me outside. It took him some time to reach out to the authorities, who eventually cleared me. While waiting, they did a PCR test on me and said the result will be sent at night. I paid KD 20 for the PCR test. I was also advised to stay at home for seven days," Farad said. Alia Noor Aldine from Lebanon also reunited with her husband in Kuwait. Noor Aldine said she had been forced to move between Dubai and Lebanon to follow up on her work, and now she returned to Kuwait after a long wait.

For Suad Ghandoura, also an Egyptian resident, her joy was indescribable when she saw her children after months of separation. Things were very smooth and there was no difficulty during the entry process, especially since she has got the second dose of the COVID vaccine, Ghandoura said.

Abdullah Al-Sanad, spokesman of the health ministry, said on Friday that Kuwait would receive vaccinated expatriates from Aug 1. Arrivals must present the result of a negative PCR test taken within 72 hours before departure, he added. When they land in Kuwait, they must be quarantined at home for seven days, and if they want to end the quarantine early, they must have a negative PCR test result on the third day, Sanad noted. Kuwait decided in February to stop the entry of non-Kuwaitis to prevent the spread of the coronavirus.

Chinese cities test millions...

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contagious Delta variant and the peak tourist season. They are also scrambling to track more than 5,000 people nationwide who attended a theatre festival in Zhangjiajie, a tourist city in Hunan province which has locked down all 1.5 million residents and shut all tourist attractions after four visitors tested positive.

Health officials say the mini-outbreak in

Zhangjiajie was sparked by travelers from Nanjing and has helped spread the disease to more than 20 cities. "Zhangjiajie has now become the new ground zero for China's epidemic spread," virologist Zhong Nanshan told reporters Saturday. "We must cast the net wider when tracing close contacts of the Delta variant."

Beijing yesterday reported three locally transmitted infections - a family living on the outskirts of the Chinese capital that had returned from Zhangjiajie, the local health bureau said. Beijing has cut all rail, bus and air links with areas where coronavirus cases have been found. The Chinese capital has also closed its doors to tourists during the peak summer holiday travel season and is only allowing "essential travelers" with a negative nucleic acid test to enter. — AFP

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Local

Kuwaiti authors: Documenting Iraqi invasion vital for future generations

KUWAIT: The Kuwaiti people still remember the pain and horror felt when the Iraqis invaded their country some 31 years ago. This event prompted many authors to document such sorrowful historic act, deeming it as vital for future generations. In various interviews, the authors stressed that documenting Kuwait's most darkest hours did not come as easy with many of them finding it difficult to process the emotions describing the horrific events of the invasion.

Nasser Salmeen, a retired Colonel of the Kuwaiti army and a POW during the invasion, said that the journey of writing a book about the invasion started as a blog in one of the social media sites. The memoirs and photos of the 238 days of captivity were collected in the book "Diary of a Kuwaiti in Iraqi prisons-We will not forget," revealed Salmeen who was encouraged by the positive feedback from families and friends to publish a book about his bitter experience. "My goal is documenting the invasion for future generations so it would not be forgotten," affirmed Salmeen, adding that what he and others went through, as POWs should be highlighted for others.

Similarly, author Mohammad Jamal published his book "Kuwait and the days of invasion," a testament to the heroism of the Kuwaiti people against their unlawful Iraqi aggressors. "The book is dedicated to the Kuwaiti resistance and the international community's stance with the rights of Kuwait," Jamal commented on his publication. He said that he wanted to relate to the world the suffering of the people of Kuwait during the invasion so that no one would forget what had occurred. Another author, Salah Al-Ghazali, preferred to focus on how Kuwaitis administered the country from within and abroad in his book "Kuwait's fourth protective wall."

Despite Iraqis' controlling the entire country through their horrific invasion and occupation, Kuwaitis from within managed to run the country in coordination with the lawful government abroad,

revealed Ghazali who was himself a POW. On writing the book, Ghazali said that he had number of correspondence, reports, and letters from the Kuwaiti resistance digitally saved, adding that the documents contained data displaying civilian and military correspondence amongst Kuwaitis within and their government abroad. There were struggles in digitizing the documents, indicated the author, revealing that his first mission after the invasion was to travel to Dubai, the UAE, to purchase a computer. A number of 77 leading figures, from various backgrounds, helped in documenting and publishing the book, Al-Ghazali noted.

Meanwhile, author Major General Hussein Malallah focused his documentation on exposing the crimes of the Iraqi army in his book "Iraq's war criminals during the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait." The first portion of the book dealt with international conflicts and means to resolve them within the framework of the UN, Arab League, and Islamic law. The second part touched on the acts of the Iraqi army, which were in breach of the Geneva humanitarian convention, said the author who commended the Center for Research and Studies on Kuwait (CRSK) for aiding him during researching. He revealed that there were around 5,000 copies of the book distributed around the world in various languages.

Another author, Dr Abdulmohsen Al-Kharafi published two books "memoir of a sentry" and "lenses of a sentry" both dedicated to the written and photographic documentation of the Iraqi invasion and the operation desert storm, which led to the liberation of Kuwait. Dr Kharafi indicated that it was paramount to document this phase in Kuwait's history, affirming that the events in the books were direct encounters experienced by himself during the invasion and liberation of Kuwait.

Meanwhile, authors such as Dr Abdulaziz Al-Koos and Kuwait University Professor Dr Faisal Al-Wazzen chose to focus on the Iraqi invasion via



KUWAIT: This archive photo shows a military funeral held in Kuwait for the burial of the remains of 10 Kuwaiti martyrs who died while defending the nation during the Iraq's invasion. —KUNA

sharing pure historical documentations in their respective books "the encyclopedia of the Kuwait war-from the invasion until liberation" and "The history of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait." Dr Al-Koos' book touched on historic papers and documentations condemning the Iraqi invasion, while Dr Wazzen's book-published in six volumes-dealt with events prior and leading to the aggression, the Iraqi invasion period, as well as happenings months after the liberation of Kuwait namely the Iraqi recognition of the borders and independence Kuwait in 1994.

In relation, CRSK plays an important in documenting the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. CRSK Director Dr Abdullah Al-Ghunaim said that second article Amiri decree 92/178 stipulated that the center was tasked with collecting all documents, publications, and data concerning the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and analyzing the aggression's impact and ramifications. Gunaim added that the center published various books on the subject, which still engraved in the hearts and minds of the people of Kuwait. —KUNA

Speaker meets UN General Assembly chief

KUWAIT: National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem yesterday met the visiting United Nations General Assembly President of the 75th session Volkan Bozkir. According

to Dustour news network, the meeting discussed bilateral ties between Kuwait and UN. Bozkir, during the meeting, praised Kuwait's strong support to UN activities, especially humanitarian and relief. The meeting was attended by Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly Ahmad Al-Shahoumi, MPs Ahmad Al-Hamad, Salman Al-Hulaila, Nasser Al-Dosari, and Kuwait's permanent representative to the UN Ambassador Mansour Al-Otaibi. —KUNA



KUWAIT: National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem meets the United Nations General Assembly President of the 75th session Volkan Bozkir. —KUNA

Kuwait marks anniversary with relief to Iraqis

KUWAIT: As the State of Kuwait marks the 31st anniversary of the Iraqi invasion today, Kuwaitis themselves focused on closing the rift with their Iraqi brethren via continued humanitarian aid and relief. Despite the heavy impact of the 1990, Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, which caused harm on various levels, the State of Kuwait took on the responsibility of aiding the Iraqi people since 1993. In April 1995 - upon directives from late Amir Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah - the Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) delivered aid to the Iraqi people, knowing well that the people suffering in the fellow Arab country should not be confused with their brutal regime led by Saddam Hussein.

After toppling of the Iraqi regime in 2003, Kuwait managed to become one of the top countries providing aid to the Iraqi people through the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR). Those displaced within Iraq as a result of armed conflict also benefited from Kuwait's humanitarian assistance. In 2010, Kuwait donated \$1 million to the UNHCR and in 2014, it provided \$3 million to support humanitarian operations in Iraq. In 2015, the UNHCR received \$200 million to help those displaced in the fellow Arab country. In October of 2016, Kuwait donated to the UNHCR a sum of \$8 million to aid Iraqis fleeing from the brutality of so-called Islamic State (IS).

Kuwait donated in the same month a sum of \$6 million to the United Nations Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) to cover their operations in Iraq. In July 2016, the State of Kuwait donated a sum of \$176 million during a conference held in Washington to aid Iraq. In December 2016, Kuwait pledged a sum of \$5 million to WHO to help its operations in Iraq. The State of Kuwait-in its position as a UN humanitarian aid center-hosted in February of 2018 the Kuwait International Conference for the

Reconstruction of Iraq (KICRI). The conference resulted in a \$30 billion donations to help Iraqis overcome the destruction caused by IS.

Meanwhile on the Iraqi side, the visit by the late Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to Iraq on June 19, 2019 and the continued efforts by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah had helped in mending some of the pain caused by the Iraqi invasion. In recent history, the cooperation between two countries helped Kuwait receive the remains of 10 Kuwaiti POWs on July 11, 2021. The KRCS, on its part, provided various modes of assistance to the displaced Iraqis in

cooperation with the government and international organizations.

Some 500 units were constructed in the Iraqi region of Kurdistan by the KRCS in addition to the distribution of 56,000 foodstuff on suffering and needy families. The KRCS also handed in 2018 40,000 food baskets for displaced Iraqis in Kurdistan. Kuwaiti charities also played part in aiding Iraqis. In September of 2016, Kuwait-based International Islamic Charity Organization (IICO) provided \$1 million to displaced in Anbar and Salahuddin provinces as well as providing \$1.8 million to some 600,000 displaced Iraqis. —KUNA



BAGHDAD: This archive photo shows ambulances and medical equipment donated by Kuwait to Iraq. —KUNA

Kuwait Radio programs mark invasion 'versary

KUWAIT: Kuwait state-radio announced yesterday that it had prepared a list of programs to mark the 31st anniversary of the Iraqi invasion, which falls today. Assistant undersecretary for radio affairs at the Ministry of Information Saad Al-Fandi said that the state broadcaster

would focus its programs to remember the brutal Iraqi invasion of the State of Kuwait and the efforts of friends and allies in denouncing this horrific act. Various figures, politicians, entities, and diplomats will be featured in the programs, in addition to historic events and stories reflecting Kuwaiti heroism against the Iraqi invaders, he added. Fandi revealed that there would be blood donation campaign launched in coordination with the Kuwait Central Blood Bank as well as other activities during the anniversary. —KUNA



KUWAIT: Canada's Ambassador to Kuwait Louis-Pierre Emond visited Kuwait Times yesterday and discussed issues of mutual concern with Editor-in-Chief Abd Al-Rahman Al-Alyan. —Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

Kuwait's foreign policy played great role in liberation

KUWAIT: Kuwait marks today the 31st anniversary of the Iraqi Invasion, as the world remembers the sacrifice of Kuwaiti people to defend their land. On this occasion, Kuwaitis remember the efforts of late Amir Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, late Father Amir Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah, late Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and late former minister and ambassador Sheikh Saud Al-Nasser Al-Sabah, who played a big role in liberating Kuwait.

Since the country's independence in 1961, Kuwait worked on developing its foreign policy based on transparency, neutrality and dialogue. According to Dr Suleiman Al-Shaheen in his book on Kuwait's diplomacy, he noted that the country focuses on developing economy to serve the political side, as well as humanitarian work and development projects around the world. In a previous interview with KUNA, director general of Sheikh Saud Nasser Al-Sabah Kuwait Diplomatic Institute Ambassador Abdulaziz Al-Sharekh said that decades of diplomatic efforts and transparency made Kuwait a country that is highly respected by the world. Protecting the country's security and stability through developing cooperation and ties with other countries and maintain a wise relation with everyone had always been Kuwait's first priority, he said.

During the Iraqi Invasion, the world stood with Kuwait to regain its freedom, as countries never forgot Kuwait's generous aid, donations and humanitarian projects throughout the years through the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED), Sharekh added. Prior to the invasion, Iraq was continuously escalating media campaigns against Kuwait, until the disaster occurred on August 2nd, 1990. Kuwait's government exerted great efforts to rally support of the international community in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and the meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement foreign ministers on 5 October, 1990.

Kuwait called on the international community to implement the UNSC's resolution 660 issued on August 3, demanding withdrawal of Iraqi troops from Kuwait and paying compensations to Kuwait for the economic and social damage of the invasion. The US and the then Soviet Union condemned the invasion and called on Iraq to withdraw its troops immediately, while foreign ministers of Muslim states also demanded withdrawal during their meeting in Cairo, Egypt. The US also presented a bill to the UNSC to impose economic and military sanctions on Iraq to force it to withdraw the troops from Kuwait. The bill was approved by the UN and was issued as resolution 661, followed by resolution 662 which refused Iraq's step to annex Kuwait, calling on all countries and international organizations to disapprove it.

During that time, many countries agreed on sending their troops to the region as a step to resolve the situation, as Arab and foreign armies arrived in Saudi Arabia, forming an international alliance to liberate Kuwait. The UNSC then issued resolution 674 as the world's five great powers approved using military force against Iraq. At the end of November 1990, UNSC issued resolution 677, warning Iraq against eliminating the Kuwaiti identity and attempting to replace it with the Iraqi one. The council also issued resolution 678, giving Iraq an ultimatum until January 15, 1991 to withdraw its army or face war.

On 17 January, the troops of the international coalition to liberate Kuwait launched a military offensive on Iraqi locations in Kuwait and Iraq, including military bases, command centers, bridges, water stations and power plants. Then US President George Bush, now deceased, gave the green light to coalition leader Norman Schwarzkopf to begin land military operations. The operations began on 24 February, 1991, with the troops of 30 countries who destroyed the Iraqi army in Kuwait, liberating the country after 210 days of occupation. —KUNA

Local

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KUWAIT: Residents with valid visas started arriving in Kuwait yesterday after the country had closed the airport to returning residents for nearly six months. The re-opening marks a new chapter in Kuwait's plans to ease the COVID-19 restrictions. Only residents with valid visas who are fully vaccinated are allowed to return a month ahead of a government plan to re-open schools. —Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

Kuwait eyes 100K COVID-19 vaccine doses per day

KUWAIT: Following a steady arrival of COVID-19 vaccine shipments, Kuwait plans to increase the vaccination capacity to 100,000 per day, with the goal of giving at least one dose to every person registered on the platform by the end of August. In this regard, Kuwait has opened a COVID-19 vaccination center in Tadamon Sports Club in Farwaniya to administer doses to people who receive appointments via SMS. Al-Qabas daily reported yesterday quoting health ministry sources. In the meantime, the health ministry said that the COVID-19 vaccination campaign currently running at Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah Hospital is restricted to hospital staff and their first degree relatives.

The clarification was made in response to social media claims that vaccinations are being administered at the hospital to anyone without the need for a prior appointment.

Kuwait's daily coronavirus cases had risen by 733 on Saturday to 397,831 as deaths increased by six to 2,320. The number of people hospitalized with the virus stood at 921 as of Saturday, with 306 of them in intensive care units, ministry spokesperson Dr Abdullah Al-Sanad said, revealing that another 11,449 are receiving regular treatment. Another 1,236 people were cured of the virus, raising the total of those to have overcome the disease to 384,062 as of Saturday, Dr Sanad said, adding that a total of 3,404,612 swab tests have been conducted so far. He went on to urge the public to abide by health precautions, mainly following social distancing, in order to halt the spread of the virus. —KUNA

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Ahli Capital continues 'Box of Colors' initiative

KUWAIT: In line with its commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility, Ahli Capital Investment Company (ACIC), the investment arm of Al-Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK), continued its 'Box of Colors' Project with the distribution of wooden boxes along with art material to five different schools and centers that work with special needs students. The 'Box of Colors' Project, is one of the various initiatives ACIC has undertaken throughout the year as part of its Social Responsibility Strategy which focuses on supporting the special needs community in Kuwait.

Students were asked to decorate and paint wooden boxes providing them with at-home-activities during COVID-19, while simultaneously developing their creative skills. The boxes were then filled with chocolates and distributed to clients. 'Box of Colors' took place at Hope School for Special Needs, Al-Tomoooh Kuwaiti Sports Club, Al-Kharafi Activity Kids Center, Center 21 and the Kuwaiti Association for Learning Differences (KALD).

Wahran Trading Company also took part in this



initiative by sponsoring some of the gifts that were distributed to each child to thank them for their efforts. Ahli Capital is committed to the sustainable development of the Kuwaiti society and a key part of this commitment is realized through the creation of equal opportunities for individuals, and being a responsible member of the community.



ICSG payment aids families of deceased domestic workers

KUWAIT: Indian Community Support Group (ICSG), established in 2020 with support and guidance from the Indian Embassy in Kuwait, will make an ex-gratia payment of Rs. 100,000 (approximately KD 400) to the families of domestic workers who succumbed to the COVID-19 infection in Kuwait. Announcing the humanitarian gesture during a recent open-house interaction with the community, Indian Ambassador Sibi George said the ICSG initiative deserves the full support and appreciation of the Indian community in Kuwait.

More than 540 Indian expatriates have so far succumbed to the COVID-19 pandemic, resulting in many families losing their sole breadwinner. The ICSG officials, who were appointed by the Indian embassy to help the community during the ongoing COVID-19 crisis, have been at the forefront in helping the Indian community by distributing hundreds of

thousands of food rations to needy individuals and to families during the lockdown last year with the help of Al-Najat Charity.

Serving as an umbrella organization for several Indian associations, the ICSG coordinated procurement and distribution of food hampers in a transparent and efficient manner. Recently, ICSG also was actively involved in the air-sea bridge set up between the Governments of Kuwait and India to transport emergency medical assistance including oxygen cylinders and cryogenic tanks to help India overcome the sudden shortage of oxygen in several cities across India. The Indian government expressed its appreciation and wholehearted support to Kuwait for their timely help in saving thousands of lives.

Chairman of ICSG, Rajpal Tyagi expressed the committee's willingness to help distressed Indians affected by the COVID-19 crisis, and added the Group aims to ensure the wellbeing of all Indian nationals in Kuwait. He pointed out that members of ICSG were prominent and responsible members in the community, who could always be counted on to rise to any occasion that called for support to compatriots. The ICSG committee members include Rajpal Tyagi, K S Lamba, Dhiraj Oberoi, S K Wadhawan, Ashok Kalra, Dr Amir Ahmed, Jatinder Suri, Dr S Nayak, Choji Lamba, Ajai Goel, T Remesh and Reaven D'Souza.



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(Left) This photograph taken on Saturday near the town of Manavgat shows a burnt car in front of a burnt house as a massive forest fire which engulfed a Mediterranean resort region on Turkey's southern coast. (Right) A Sikorsky S-64 Skycrane helicopter flies over the burnt area of an abandoned Club Mediterranee in Lambiri, east of Patras, yesterday. — AFP

Fires rage across southern Europe

Turkey wildfires force more residents to flee • Greek firefighters battle forest blaze

ANKARA: Dozens of villages were evacuated in tourist hotspots in southern Turkey yesterday as wildfires that have claimed six lives raged for the fifth day, while Greece, Italy and Spain were also hit by blazes. Fanned by soaring temperatures, strong winds and climate change - which experts say increases both the frequency and intensity of such blazes - this year's fire season has been significantly more destructive than the previous average, EU data shows.

Turkey is suffering through its worst fires in at least a decade with nearly 95,000 hectares burnt so far this year, compared with an average of 13,516 at this point in the year between 2008 and 2020. A neighborhood in the tourist city of Bodrum has been evacuated, CNN Turk broadcaster reported, as flames were fanned by strong winds from the nearby Milas district. Unable to leave by road, 540 residents were taken to hotels by boats, the channel said. There were more evacuations in the resort city of Antalya, NTV broadcaster reported.

After hitting record levels last month, temperatures are set to remain high in the region. A temperature of 49.1 degrees Celsius was recorded in the southeastern town of Cizre on July 20. And the mercury is expected to reach 40 degrees Celsius in Antalya on Monday. Turkey's defense ministry released satellite images showing the extent of the damage, with forest areas turned

black and smoke still visible. President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has been criticized after it emerged that Turkey had no firefighting planes despite one-third of its territory being forested and fires becoming an increasing problem. According to EU figures, Turkey has been hit by 133 wildfires in 2021 so far compared with an average of 43 by this point in the year between 2008 and 2020.

Greek 'catastrophe'

Firefighters were also battling fires in Greece, after a major blaze broke out early Saturday near Patras in the west. Five villages have been evacuated and eight people hospitalized with burns and respiratory problems in the region, which remains on alert. Around 20 homes have been burnt down, according to a provisional figure from the fire brigade. The mayor of nearby village Aigialeias, Dimitris Kalogeropoulos, called it "an immense catastrophe".

Around 30 houses, barns and stables were consumed by flames in the villages of Ziria, Kamares, Achaia and Labiri. "We slept outside overnight, terrified that we would not have a house when we woke up," a Labiri resident told Greek TV station Skai. The seaside resort of Loggos was also evacuated, with nearly 100 residents and tourists sent to the nearby city of Aigio. According to EU data, 13,500 hectares had been burnt in Greece, com-

pared with an average of 7,500 at this point in the year from 2008-2020.

'Crazy summer'

Italy was again hit by fires after more than 20,000 hectares of forest, olive groves and crops were destroyed by a blaze in Sardinia last weekend. More than 800 flare-ups were recorded this weekend, mainly in the south, Italy's fire brigade said. "In the last 24 hours, firefighters have carried out more than 800 interventions: 250 in Sicily, 130 in Puglia and Calabria, 90 in Lazio and 70 in Campania," the brigade tweeted. It added that firefighters were still working against blazes in the Sicilian cities of Catania, Palermo and Syracuse. While the south of Italy has been burning, the north has suffered wild storms. "The cost of the damage caused throughout the northern Italian countryside by the violent storms and hail during this crazy summer amounts to tens of millions of euros," the Coldiretti agricultural organization said.

In Spain, dozens of firefighters backed by water-dropping aircraft were battling a wildfire that broke out Saturday afternoon near the San Juan reservoir, about 70 km east of Madrid. Firefighters said yesterday they had managed to stabilize the blaze overnight but local authorities urged people to stay away from the reservoir, a popular bathing spot for residents of the Spanish capital. — AFP

Iran's Raisi set to focus on economy and nuclear deal

TEHRAN: Iran's ultraconservative Ebrahim Raisi will be inaugurated tomorrow as the new president of the Islamic republic, a country mired in deep economic crisis and hit by crippling US sanctions. He replaces moderate president Hassan Rouhani, whose landmark achievement was the 2015 nuclear deal between Iran and six world powers. Raisi, 60, will have to tackle the nuclear talks aimed at reviving the deal from which the US unilaterally withdrew.

Two days after tomorrow's inauguration by the Islamic republic's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Raisi will take the oath before parliament. He won June's election when more than half the voters stayed away after many political heavyweights were barred from standing. A former judiciary chief, Raisi has been criticized by the West for his human rights record.

Iran's economic problems, exacerbated by the American sanctions, will be the new president's greatest challenge, according to Clement Therme, a researcher at the European University Institute in Italy. "His main objective will be to improve the economic situation by reinforcing the Islamic republic's economic relations with neighboring countries," Therme told AFP. "The goal would be to build a business model that would protect Iran's economic growth from American policies and decisions."

Therme believes Raisi's main priority will be to "remove US sanctions" so Iran can bolster trade with its neighbors and non-Western countries such as China and Russia. The 2015 deal saw Iran accept curbs on its nuclear capabilities in return for an easing of sanctions. But former US president Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew from the accord three years later and ramped up sanctions again, prompting Tehran to pull back from most of its nuclear commitments.

Trump's successor Joe Biden has signaled his readiness to return to the deal and engaged in indirect negotiations with Iran alongside formal talks with the agreement's remaining parties - Britain, China, France, Germany and Russia.

The US sanctions choked Iran, including by seeking to stop its oil exports, and the economy contracted by more than six percent in both 2018 and 2019. This was a blow to Rouhani who had hoped to liberalize the economy and develop the private sector. In the winter of 2017-2018, and again in 2019, street protests sparked by economic woes rocked the country. And in July this year, demonstrators in the oil-rich Khuzestan province, which has been hit by drought, took to the streets to vent their anger. — AFP

Afghan forces battle to thwart Taliban assaults on key cities

KABUL: Afghan government forces struggled against Taliban assaults on several major cities yesterday as the insurgents stepped up a nationwide offensive that saw a key airport in the south come under rocket fire overnight. Hundreds of commandos were deployed to the western city of Herat while authorities in the southern city of Lashkar Gah called for more troops to rein in the assaults.

Fighting has surged across the country since early May when US-led foreign forces began a final withdrawal from Afghanistan that is now almost complete. After seizing large tracts of rural territory and capturing key border crossings, the Taliban have started assaulting provincial capitals with grueling onslaughts.

Flights out of Kandahar, Afghanistan's second-largest city and the former stronghold for the insurgents, were halted after rockets struck the airport before dawn. Airport chief Massoud Pashtun said two rockets had hit the runway and repairs were underway with planes likely to resume service later yesterday. The facility is vital to maintaining the logistics and air support needed to keep the Taliban from overrunning the city, while also providing aerial cover for large tracts of southern Afghanistan.

The attack came as the Taliban inched closer to overwhelming at least two other provincial capitals, including nearby Lashkar Gah in Helmand province. "Fighting is going on inside the city and we have asked for special forces to be deployed," Ataullah Afghan, head of Helmand provincial council, told AFP. Afghan security forces have increasingly relied on air strikes to push the militants back from cities

even as they run the risk of hitting civilians in heavily populated areas.

"The city is in the worst condition. I do not know what will happen," said Halim Karimi, a resident of Lashkar Gah, a city of 200,000 residents. "Neither the Taliban will have mercy on us, nor will the government stop bombing." Further west in Herat, fighting continued on the city's outskirts overnight with air strikes targeting Taliban positions, following another day of dramatic clashes between the insurgents and Afghan security forces bolstered by local militia fighters.

Herat provincial governor's spokesman Jailani Farhad said around 100 militant fighters had been killed in the attacks. Both the Taliban and government forces tend to exaggerate their claims of casualties inflicted on the other's forces and true counts are difficult to independently verify. Yesterday, the ministry of defense said that hundreds of commandos had been sent to Herat to help beat back the insurgent assault. "These forces will increase offensive operations and suppress the Taliban in Herat," the ministry tweeted.

Increasing pressure

As fighting raged, President Ashraf Ghani again slammed the Taliban for failing to marshal their negotiating power to reach a peace deal. "We want peace but they want us to surrender," Ghani said at a cabinet meeting. The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) also took issue with the Taliban, demanding the insurgents "provide answers" for the rocket attack on its office in Herat Friday that killed an Afghan guard.

In a tweet posted yesterday, UNAMA indicated there were also "violent occurrences at the Herat base" on Saturday, without offering further details. For months, the Taliban's rapid territorial gains during the final stages of the US military withdrawal have largely been in sparsely populated rural areas. But in recent weeks they have brought increasing



HERAT: An Afghan National Army commando stands guard along the road in the Enjil district of Herat province yesterday as skirmishes between Afghan National Army and Taliban continue. — AFP

pressure on provincial capitals and seized key border crossings.

The capture of any major urban center would take their current offensive to another level and fuel concerns that the army is incapable of resisting the Taliban's advances. The government has repeatedly dismissed the militants' steady gains over the summer as lacking strategic value but has largely failed to reverse their momentum on the battlefield. The Taliban have seized Afghan cities in the past but have managed to retain them only briefly.

The insurgents overran the northern city of Kunduz in 2015 and 2016, and briefly held control of Ghazni after setting ablaze key government buildings and destroying telecommunication towers. Top US officials and generals have acknowledged that in recent weeks the US military, despite being in its final stages of withdrawal, has carried out air strikes against the Taliban to help the Afghan forces keep the insurgents from overrunning urban areas. — AFP

International

Zionists claim evidence linking Iran to deadly tanker attack

Tehran rejects 'baseless accusations' amid war of words

JERUSALEM: Prime Minister Naftali Bennett said yesterday Zionist entity had "evidence" Iran was behind the deadly tanker attack off Oman despite its denials, and warned his country could "send a message" in retaliation. Bennett's statement came after Iran rejected Zionists' "baseless accusations" it was responsible for the attack that killed two crewmen, and Tehran vowed to defend its interests after its arch-foe pushed for UN action against it.

"The intelligence evidence for this exists and we expect the international community will make it clear to the Iranian regime that they have made a serious mistake," the Zionist premier said at the weekly cabinet meeting in remarks conveyed by his office. "In any case, we know how to send a message to Iran in our own way."

The MT Mercer Street, managed by prominent Jewish billionaire Eyal Ofer, was struck Thursday off the Omani coast. A British security guard and a Romanian crew member were killed in what the US military and the vessel's operator Zodiac Maritime said appeared to be a drone strike.

Earlier yesterday, Iran denied involvement in the attack, with foreign ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh saying Israel "must stop such baseless accusations", and noting "it is not their first time to direct such accusations at Iran".

"Iran will not hesitate for a moment to defend its... interests and national security," Khatibzadeh added in a televised press conference.

In Jerusalem, Bennett slammed Iran's "cowardly" denial, saying he could "determine with absolute certainty that Iran carried out the attack against the ship". "Iran's aggressive conduct is dangerous not only to us, but also harms global interests, freedom of navigation and international trade," he said.

On Saturday, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken spoke to Zionist Foreign Minister Yair Lapid and agreed to work with other allies "to investigate the facts, provide support, and consider the appropriate next steps", a State Department statement said. Maritime industry analysts Dryad Global said the attack was the fifth against a ship connected to Israel since February. The oil products tanker was travelling from Dar es Salaam in Tanzania to Fujairah in the United Arab Emirates with no cargo aboard when it was hit, Zodiac Maritime said.

Tit-for-tat attacks

In recent months, there have been several reported attacks on Iranian ships that Tehran has linked to the Jewish regime. In March, Iran's foreign ministry said it was "considering all options" in response to an attack on a cargo ship in the Mediterranean it blamed on Zionist entity.

And in April, Tehran said its freighter Saviz was hit by an "explosion" in the Red Sea, after media reports said Zionist had struck the ship. The New York Times reported at the time that the Saviz had been targeted in a Zionists "retaliatory" attack after



AT SEA: This handout photo courtesy of US Navy and made available shows (left to right) French navy frigate FS Languedoc (D653), guided-missile destroyer USS Halsey (DDG 97), and aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76) steaming in formation in the Arabian Sea. — AFP

"Iran's earlier strikes on Zionists ships".

It came at a time of heightened tensions between the foes, with reports of a series of tit-for-tat strikes on shipping since early March. In a report published in March that cited US and Middle East officials, the Wall Street Journal said Zionist state has targeted at least a dozen vessels bound for Syria, mostly carry-

ing Iranian oil, since late 2019.

"The occupier regime knows that such (accusations) will not fix its problems. Whoever sows the wind reaps the whirlwind," Khatibzadeh said. Iran has also accused Zionists of being behind sabotage attacks against its nuclear sites, and killing a number of its scientists. — AFP

Mexico votes on prosecuting ex-presidents

MEXICO CITY: Mexicans voted yesterday in a national referendum promoted by President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador on whether to investigate and prosecute his predecessors for alleged corruption. Lopez Obrador, a self-styled anti-graft crusader, says the public consultation will strengthen participatory democracy, but critics see it as little more than a political stunt.

To be binding, 37.4 million people — 40 percent of the electoral roll—must participate, but many voters appear unenthusiastic. While the "yes" vote could win up to 90 percent, it will be difficult to achieve even 30 percent turnout, said Roy Campos, director of the polling company Mitofsky.

Rosario Gomez is among those who plan to vote at one of 57,000 ballot boxes set up by the electoral institute, compared with more than 160,000 for June's legislative and local elections. "It's about time these thieves pay!" the 52-year-old market vendor said.

'Political circus'

Mexico is ranked 124th out of 179 on Transparency International's world corruption perceptions index. But former presidents can be tried like any other citizen and critics argue that the referendum is unnecessary. "Waiting for the results of a consultation is making justice a political circus," said Jose Miguel Vivanco, regional director of New York-based Human Rights Watch.

Former National Electoral Institute president Luis Carlos Ugalde argued that if the prosecution has evidence against the ex-presidents, it's not necessary for "the people to tell you yes or no." Although the vote was Lopez Obrador's brainchild, he has ruled out voting himself because he does not want "corrupt and hypocritical conservatism" to accuse him of vindictiveness. The referendum question proposed by Lopez Obrador named five predecessors—Carlos Salinas, Ernesto Zedillo, Vicente Fox, Felipe Calderon, and Enrique Pena Nieto, whose terms in power stretched from 1988 to 2018.

Lopez Obrador has accused them of presiding over "excessive concentration of wealth, monumental losses to the treasury, privatization of public property, and widespread corruption," drawing angry denials. In the end, the Supreme Court modified the referendum question for a more ambiguous alternative. "It's not very sexy. Not even the lawyers understand it," analyst Paula Sofia Vazquez told AFP.

'Final straw'

The question reads: "Do you agree or not that the pertinent actions be carried out, in accordance with the constitutional and legal framework, to undertake a process of clarification of the political decisions made in the past years by the political actors, aimed at guaranteeing justice and the rights of potential victims?" Lopez Obrador has overseen a series of referendums since taking office on controversial issues including his "Maya Train" railroad project and canceling a partially finished airport for Mexico City. The result of yesterday's vote was expected to be known between 48 and 72 hours after polls close at 6 pm (2300 GMT). Omar Garcia, a survivor of the disappearance and presumed murder of 43 students in 2014, allegedly at the hands of corrupt police and drug traffickers, said listening to the people was valid even if it was not binding. — AFP

Albanian women, children return from Syria camps

TIRANA: Albania repatriated five women and 14 children yesterday from camps in Syria that house family members of former jihadist fighters, prime minister Edi Rama said. Since the March 2019 fall of the Islamist State militant group's last stronghold, local Kurds who led the anti-jihadist fight have been calling for the repatriation of thousands of foreign women and children held in overcrowded camps.

But most countries are reluctant to take back their citizens. According to official figures, 144 Albanians left to fight in Syria and Iraq between 2012 and 2014. Many of the men were killed and their relatives in Albania believe that some 30 mothers and children are stuck in the camps. "Getting these children and women out of hell was a very complicated operation," Rama told reporters during a visit to Lebanon yesterday.

He said they would be taken to a shelter for medical and psychological examinations before a deci-



QAMISHLI, Syria: Members of Kurdish security forces accompany Albanians who were detained at the Al-Hol camp for displaced families accused of being related to the Islamic State (IS) group, before handing them over to a delegation from their country in Syria's northeastern city of Qamishli. — AFP

sion is made on whether to allow them to rejoin their families. Albanian officials said repatriations would continue, but added they could not confirm the exact number of those remaining because the

situation changed regularly. Last week, neighboring North Macedonia and Kosovo repatriated 34 nationals from Syria, including men suspected of fighting for the Islamic State militant group. — AFP



OTTAWA: Mary Simon is sworn in as the first indigenous Governor General as her husband Whit Fraser, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, and his wife Sophie look on during a ceremony in Ottawa, Ontario. — AFP

Protesters demand probe into Canada indigenous schools

OTTAWA: Hundreds of protesters in Canada's capital called on Saturday for a probe into a boarding school system for indigenous children, as outrage built after the discovery of hundreds of unmarked graves at several of the facilities. Until the 1990s, some 150,000 indigenous, Inuit and Metis youths were forcibly enrolled in the schools, where students were physically and sexually abused by headmasters and teachers who stripped them of their culture and language.

"Indigenous Peoples need truth and justice," MP

Nigeria suspends cop indicted in US fraud trial

LAGOS: A senior police officer in Nigeria has been suspended after a social media celebrity standing trial in the US accused him of being complicit in fraud.

Deputy Police Commissioner Abba Kyari was implicated by Nigerian influencer Ramos Abbas, known as Hushpuppi, who pleaded guilty to money laundering and other crimes, prompting the police to launch an investigation.

Mumilaq Qaqqaq wrote on Instagram. "That means a special prosecutor and a fully-funded independent investigation, with international observers present, into Canada's crimes against Indigenous Peoples," she added, calling on Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Justice Minister David Lametti "to stop making excuses" and launch a probe.

The demonstrators gathered on Parliament Hill in Ottawa after two lawmakers from the left-wing New Democratic Party (NDP) called for a protest. The NDP called on Trudeau's government in early July to appoint a special prosecutor to lead an independent investigation into the country's painful history of residential schools for indigenous children. "People have been shocked by the number of graves that have been found... These are not accidents, these are not tragedies they represent a policy that was about the destruction of a people," NDP lawmaker Charlie Angus told public broadcaster CBC. — AFP

The Nigeria police service commission said Kyari's suspension on Saturday "would subsist pending the outcome of the investigation in respect of his indictment by the Federal Bureau of Investigation of the United States."

The commission also directed the head of the force "to furnish it with information on further development on the matter for necessary further action." The police said they were committed "to the pursuit of justice" in the matter.

The FBI said on Wednesday that Hushpuppi's crimes cost his victims almost \$24 million in total. The 37-year-old, known for showing off a lavish lifestyle on social media, was part of "an elaborate scheme to steal more than \$1.1 million from a businessperson attempting to finance the construction of a school for children in Qatar," the FBI said.

Scuffles in Berlin as COVID skeptics defy protest ban

BERLIN: Hundreds of anti-lockdown demonstrators defied a court-ordered protest ban on Sunday and gathered illegally in the streets of Berlin, resulting in scuffles with police. Police said some protesters had "harassed and attacked" officers in the capital's western Charlottenburg district and ignored roadblocks. "They tried to break through the police chain and pull out our colleagues. This led to the use of irritants, batons and physical violence," Berlin police tweeted.

Several people were arrested, they added. The protest was called by the "Querdenker" (Lateral Thinkers) movement, which has emerged as the loudest voice against Germany's coronavirus restrictions. Judges had banned several of its planned demos this weekend, including one for Sunday that was meant to draw some 22,500.

The court said it could not allow the rallies to go ahead over fears participants would flout rules on mask wearing and social distancing, at a time when Germany's infection numbers are on the rise again.

Berlin police deployed more than 2,000 officers in riot gear across the city, in anticipation of protesters gathering despite the ban. Some of the demonstrators held up signs saying "Freedom" and "No to the corona dictatorship", with very few masks seen among the crowds. Germany's Querdenker movement has drawn in a mix of people, including anti-vaxxers and conspiracy theorists as well as members of the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD). Querdenker protests have drawn thousands, at times tens of thousands, but are often broken up early for violating virus rules. Several of the demos have descended into violence. — AFP

The statement added that Abbas pleaded guilty to his part in the school financing scam "as well as several other cyber and business email compromise schemes".

According to the FBI, citing court documents, Abbas confessed to paying Kyari a bribe for the arrest of a former associate, Kelly Chibuzo Vincent.

"Kyari is a highly decorated deputy commissioner of the Nigeria Police Force who is alleged to have arranged for Vincent to be arrested and jailed at Abbas' behest," the FBI wrote, citing an affidavit.

"Kyari also allegedly sent Abbas bank account details for an account into which Abbas could deposit payment for Vincent's arrest and imprisonment." Kyari, who is celebrated for exposing several high-profile crimes in Nigeria, has denied the allegations against him. — AFP

International

'Bodies on the streets': Fighting brings destruction to Afghan cities

Residents in Lashkar Gah fighting pitched battles with Taleban

KABUL: Families abandoned their homes in droves, air strikes rained down on neighborhoods and bodies filled the streets as the Taleban took their fight to Afghanistan's cities over the weekend, starting a new bloody chapter in the country's long war. Residents in the southern city of Lashkar Gah said the Taleban were fighting pitched battles from "street to street" with Afghan security forces and had surrounded the police headquarters and governor's office.

"The aircraft are bombing the city every minute. Every inch of the city has been bombed," Badshah Khan, a resident of Lashkar Gah, the capital of Helmand province, told AFP by phone. "You can see dead bodies on the streets. There are bodies of people in the main square," he added.

The government remained in control of Lashkar Gah as of late yesterday thanks to the constant barrage of air strikes, but the future of the provincial capital seemed to hang from a thread as wave after wave of insurgents entered the city. Violence has soared across Afghanistan since early May when the Taliban launched a sweeping offensive across large swaths of the country as the US military began its final withdrawal following nearly 20 years of operations.

The Taleban gobbled rural districts at a rapid rate, often without a fight. But the country's military has been digging in to defend a string of provincial capitals scattered across Afghanistan—including Lashkar Gah, Kandahar and Herat. Following a brief lull in fighting during the Eid Al-Adha holidays late last month, the Taliban appear to have turned their attention to capturing cities, launching withering onslaughts on several provincial capitals.

'Situation getting worse'

In Lashkar Gah, resident Hazrat Omar Shirzad was livid after the Taleban forced him out of his house to take shelter from the air strikes. "The Islamic Emirate set the earth ablaze and the republic put the sky on fire. Nobody cares about the nation," said Shirzad. Fighting was also reported in Herat near the border with Iran to the west for a third straight day, where militants swarmed the outskirts of the capital. "With every passing day the security situation is getting worse," said Agha Reza, a businessman in Herat. "There is a 90 percent chance Herat city will collapse to the Taleban," he warned, saying that it lacked a steady supply of electricity and key roads were blocked due to clashes.

A school teacher in Herat on condition of anonymity told AFP that only some schools were open in the city as children preferred to stay indoors. "Last night we heard a lot of planes over the city... Today, I went to school and only boys had dared to come," she said. Fighters with veteran warlord Ismail Khan whose militia helped US-led foreign forces topple the Taliban regime in 2001 have rallied to save the city, marching shoulder to shoulder with Afghan security forces in the streets headed to the front.

And in Kandahar, days of fighting have displaced thousands of people who crowded into the city centre to escape the crossfire on the edge of the provincial capital.

Kandahar resident Khalid Hewadmal said the Taleban were forcing residents out of their homes as they moved closer into the city. "On Friday they had warned residents to leave their



HERAT: An Afghan National Army commando stands guard on top of a vehicle along the road in Enjil district of Herat province yesterday as skirmishes between Afghan National Army and Taleban continues. —AFP

homes," said Hewadmal. Kandahar was the birthplace of the Taliban movement and the fall of the city would deliver a massive blow to the government, effectively splitting the country into two before winter, when retaking of territory is par-

ticularly difficult.

The government has repeatedly dismissed the militants' steady gains over the summer as lacking strategic value but has largely failed to reverse their momentum on the battlefield. —AFP

Myanmar junta chief says new elections in 2 years

YANGON: Myanmar's junta chief said yesterday that elections would be held and a state of emergency lifted by August 2023, extending the military's initial timeline given when it deposed Aung San Suu Kyi six months ago. The country has been in turmoil since the army ousted the civilian leader in February, launching a crackdown on dissent that has killed more than 900 people according to a local monitoring group. A resurgent coronavirus wave has also amplified havoc, with many hospitals empty of pro-democracy medical staff, and the World Bank has forecast the economy will contract by up to 18 percent.

In a televised address junta leader Min Aung Hlaing said the military would "accomplish the provisions of the state of emergency by August 2023". "I pledge to hold multi-party elections," he added. The general's announcement would place Myanmar in the military's grip for nearly two and a half years—instead of the initial one-year timeline the army announced days after the coup.

The State Administration Council—as the junta calls itself—announced in a separate statement that Min Aung Hlaing had been appointed prime minister of the "caretaker government".

The army has justified its power grab by alleging massive fraud during 2020 elections won by Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy (NLD) in a landslide. Last week it cancelled the results of the polls, announcing it had uncovered more than 11

million instances of voter fraud.

Detained since February 1, Suu Kyi faces charges including flouting coronavirus restrictions and illegally importing walkie-talkies—which could see her jailed for more than a decade. International pressure, including sanctions targeting the military and army-linked businesses, has done little to knock the junta off course. The 10-country Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has tried to negotiate with the regime—though critics say the bloc lacks diplomatic clout and unity.

ASEAN leaders in April called for an "immediate cessation of violence" and a visit to Myanmar by a regional special envoy, an agreement that Min Aung Hlaing later walked back.

Yesterday, the general announced the selection of an ASEAN envoy—Thailand's former deputy foreign minister Virasakdi Futrakul—and declared the junta "ready to work on ASEAN cooperation". Myanmar's military has long had a close relationship with its Thai counterpart—which has a track record of being putsch-happy, staging more than a dozen coups in Thailand since 1932.

'Remarkable courage' -

Across Myanmar Sunday small groups of demonstrators marched—from the southern coastal city of Dawei to jade-producing town Hpakan—to demand a return to democracy. Protesters in the northern town of Kale held banners reading "strength for the revolution" while demonstrators set off flares at a march in the commercial capital Yangon.

But, six months since the generals ended a decade-long experiment with democracy, large-scale protests are no longer the norm due to violent crackdowns and mass arrests. A deadly COVID-19 surge, which has left staff and volun-

teers working in crematoriums and cemeteries overwhelmed with bodies, is also limiting turnout.

Pro-democracy medical workers—among the first to kick off a nationwide civil disobedience campaign joined by tens of thousands of government workers—now work underground to provide telemedicine consultations to the ill. But the need is still great, with pleas for help resounding across social media, and residents waiting in long lines for oxygen tanks and medicine for virus-afflicted relatives.

"In the six months since the coup, the people of Myanmar have demonstrated remarkable courage and conviction in the face of widespread violence... and now a devastating public health crisis," said the US embassy in Myanmar on its official Facebook page yesterday. "The United States remains firmly committed to supporting the people of Myanmar in their aspirations for a democratic, inclusive future of their own choosing." —AFP



YANGON: In this file photo, a protester uses a fire extinguisher as others holding homemade shields run during a demonstration against the military coup in Yangon. —AFP

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BANGKOK: Buddhist monks disinfect themselves after performing cremation duties for COVID-19 coronavirus victims, at Wat Chin Wararam Worawihan in Bangkok. —AFP

pandemic, from accusations of vaccine mismanagement to the lack of government compensation for affected sectors. Monk Supornchaitammo says he never expected this to be his routine, but is happy to help. "I didn't have it in my head that I would be doing something like this when I was ordained," he told AFP. —AFP

bamboos." Earlier in the day, he watched as doctors administered the Chinese-made Sinovac to his grandchildren. They will be among the two million teenagers expected to be vaccinated, Hun Sen said, adding that the kingdom is mulling inoculating children aged ten and eleven.

Several countries in Europe-like Denmark, France and Lithuania—have begun vaccinating children in a bid to faster reach herd immunity. Cambodia's mass inoculation campaign has so far seen more than seven million people out of the ten million eligible receive the UK-produced AstraZeneca, the US-donated Johnson & Johnson, or the Chinese-made Sinovac and Sinopharm jabs.

Hun Sen said yesterday authorities will also

NZ apologizes for raids on Pacific people

WELLINGTON: New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern yesterday formally apologized for police crackdowns in the 1970s that "unfairly targeted" the country's Pacific community. The infamous "dawn raids" were carried out by officers and immigration officials, often accompanied by dogs, to arrest and deport individuals who had overstayed their work visas.

Pacific people comprised a third of overstayers but represented 86 percent of prosecutions, while Britons and Americans in New Zealand—who also comprised a third of overstayers—saw just five percent of prosecutions in the same period. "Today, I stand on behalf of the New Zealand government to offer a formal and unreserved apology to Pacific communities for the discriminatory implementation of the immigration laws of the 1970s," Ardern told a gathering of Pacific dignitaries in Auckland.

"The government expresses its sorrow, remorse and regret that the dawn raids and random police checks occurred and that these actions were ever considered appropriate." While the crackdown took place nearly 50 years ago, Ardern said they remained vividly etched in the memories of those affected and "lives on in the disruption of trust and faith in authorities."

Minister for Pacific Peoples William Sio, who emigrated with his family from Samoa to New Zealand in 1969, described the raids as "racism of the worst kind."

Wellington encouraged migration from Pacific islands such as Samoa, Tonga and Fiji after World War II to fill worker shortages as the economy expanded. But those who migrated faced a backlash during the 1970s downturn, with claims they were taking jobs from New Zealanders.

When Ardern first announced she would issue an apology, Sio fought back tears as he recalled the terrifying experience of being targeted. "The memories are etched in of my father being helpless... someone knocking at your door in the early hours of the morning with a flashlight in your face, disrespecting the owner of our home," he said. "An Alsatian dog frothing at the mouth, wanting to come in without any respect for the people who live there. It was quite traumatizing." Ardern said New Zealand was committed to eliminating racism and she hoped the apology "has brought some much-needed closure and healing for our Pacific communities." —AFP

soon begin administering booster shots to adults who are fully vaccinated, and will take a page out of neighboring Thailand's book by mixing vaccines. In line with this policy, the premier—who has already received two doses of the AstraZeneca jab—said he wants to receive a booster shot of Sinovac. Cambodia has some of the region's weakest healthcare infrastructure and is ill-equipped to deal with a major outbreak of COVID.

On Thursday it imposed fresh restrictions on eight provinces bordering Thailand—which has seen skyrocketing cases and deaths due to the Delta variant. Cambodian migrant workers in Thailand have also been barred from returning home. —AFP

Thai monks don protective gear as COVID cases surge

BANGKOK: As COVID cases surge in Thailand, some Buddhist monks are donning PPE over their distinctive robes, delivering oxygen cylinders, taking nasal samples to help with testing, and even helping carry the dead to the crematoriums. Thailand is struggling to contain its latest outbreak fuelled by the highly contagious Delta variant, leaving healthcare services stretched and further damaging a battered economy. "There are a lot of Thais who are still ignored by the public health system," Mahapromphong, 33, the deputy abbot of Suthi Wararam Temple in the Thai capital, said.

"We take care of everyone we come across." Since July 21 he has been working in Bangkok's poorer neighborhoods, distributing oxygen tanks, food and medical supplies to the needy as well as taking samples for testing. Monks are highly respected in the Buddhist kingdom, and they were inundated with donations once word got out, he

adds. He learned how to do nasal swabs from the doctors and nurses working in his temple, which doubles as an isolation center for those infected with the virus. One man winced as Mahapromphong removed the swab and deposited the sample in a plastic pot. "It's better to be safe than sorry," the man said, his eyes watering. "Monks are able to live because we rely on people's donation," Mahapromphong told AFP.

"So it's time for us to give back to the people. At the very least, we could encourage them to keep fighting." Supornchaitammo, a monk at Chin Wararam Worawihan Temple, helps with the grim task of taking the bodies to the crematorium. "I'm willing to take the risk here," he said. "If I contract the virus then I'm ready to accept it without any regret."

'Everybody needs a helping hand'

Thailand has reported over 597,000 coronavirus cases and more than 4,800 deaths. The bulk of the new infections were detected since April, when the latest wave was sparked by a cluster at an upscale Bangkok nightlife district frequented by the politically connected.

Premier Prayut Chan-O-Cha's administration has been roundly criticized for its handling of the

ant, which has set back the region's successes last year in curbing pandemic tolls. While Cambodia appeared to have escaped the brunt of the virus last year, an outbreak first detected in February has steadily driven up the caseload to nearly 78,000.

Yesterday, the kingdom began vaccinating children between the ages of 12 to 17, starting the campaign in its capital Phnom Penh, as well as in the three hardest-hit provinces of Kandal, Koh Kong and Preah Sihanouk. "The vaccination for children today is a key step to herd immunity in communities," said the Cambodian leader.

"Children are like bamboo shoots. If the health of children is damaged now, we won't have good

Cambodia begins vaccinations for teenagers

HANOI: Cambodia began a roll out of COVID-19 vaccinations for teenagers in its capital Phnom Penh and three provinces yesterday, with Premier Hun Sen's grandchildren among the first to get the jab.

Several countries in Southeast Asia are currently experiencing a deadly COVID-19 resurgence largely driven by the highly contagious Delta vari-

Business

MONDAY, AUGUST 2, 2021

Zain Ventures invests in Pipe.com and swvl.com to push growth across Mideast

Bader Al-Kharafi: The launch of Zain Ventures opens up more value accretive opportunities

KUWAIT: Zain Group, a leading telecom innovator in seven markets across the Middle East and Africa announces the creation of Zain Ventures and the closing of investments and signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with both Pipe and Swvl to support their growth across Zain's regional footprint and beyond.

Zain Ventures was recently established to complement the existing investment portfolio of Zain Group and open the door to future investment opportunities in the venture capital, FinTech and Tech World, focusing on digital innovations in the fast-growing electronic services and startup ecosystem.

Pipe is a fast-growing US-based FinTech recognized as the world's first trading platform for recurring revenues with its recent fund-raising valuing the entity at \$2 billion in just under a year since its public launch in June 2020, making it one of the fastest fintech to reach this valuation in history. Swvl is transforming the \$1 trillion global mass transit market. The Company's proprietary mobility solutions, powered by cutting-edge technology, are helping to solve mass transit supply and demand challenges in complex, emerging markets - empowering massively underserved communities with transportation solutions that are reliable, convenient, safe, and affordable. It currently operates across 10 cities in the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Egypt, Kenya and Pakistan.

Swvl is set to go public through a formidable merger with the women-only led special purpose acquisition company (SPAC), Queen's Gambit Growth Capital, in collaboration with Agility, Luxor Capital Growth and Zain, valuing the startup at \$1.5 billion marking it as the first \$1 billion plus unicorn from the Middle East to list on Nasdaq and the only tech-enabled mass transit solutions company to list on any stock exchange. The transaction is expected to generate gross proceeds of up to US\$445 million, which will be used to fund and accelerate Swvl's growth plan with a goal of driving \$1 billion of annual gross revenue and expanding to 20 countries by 2025.

Bader Al-Kharafi, Zain Vice Chairman and Group CEO commented, "The establishment of Zain Ventures is another step in Zain Group's '4Sight' strategy and progression to become a full-fledged digital services company. We have already enjoyed tremendous success in the investments we have

made in venture capital entities and startups that show promising potential for boosting our revenues in new and developing verticals, and formalizing these investments under a single entity at this time will create shareholder value."

"We are extremely excited and confident that Zain Ventures' first investments in fast-growing and world-leading entities in their respective industries, Pipe and Swvl will be value accretive to all parties as we accelerate their growth across the region and beyond. We are keen on participating in and encouraging the global entrepreneurial startup ecosystem."

In regard to Swvl, Al-Kharafi noted, "Zain grasped the opportunity to invest in Swvl for reasons that are also core to our Sustainability, Diversity and Inclusion corporate strategy:

- 1) Supporting national transport infrastructure and optimizing mobility;
- 2) Serving the under privileged;
- 3) Sustainability and environmentally friendly;
- 4) Women empowerment and safety;
- 5) Unlimited synergies with Zain's footprint across the region.

The Zain team looks forward to playing its strategic role and being part of Swvl's trajectory growth and global success story," he said.

Commenting on the two entities, Malek

more clients are added to the platform."

Regarding Swvl, Hammoud added, "The enormous and relatively untapped entrepreneurial talents of the region are being showcased to the start-up ecosystem global community through this transaction that will see Swvl as the first \$1bn+ unicorn from the Middle East to list on Nasdaq."

More on PIPE

Pipe was founded in September 2019 with the mission of giving Software as a Service (SaaS) companies a way to receive their revenue upfront, by pairing them with investors on a marketplace that pays a discounted rate for the annual value of those contracts. The company has achieved a \$2 billion valuation in just under a year since its public launch in June 2020, making it one of the fastest fintech to reach this valuation in history.

The goal of the platform is to offer companies with recurring revenue streams access to capital, so they are not required to dilute their ownership by accepting external capital or forced to take out loans. Over 4,000 companies have signed up on the Pipe trading platform since its public launch in June 2020. The company's tradable annual recurring revenue (ARR) on its platform is in excess of \$1 billion and trending toward \$2 billion, with tens of millions of dollars currently being traded every month.

- US based Pipe, valued at \$2 billion, is the world's first trading platform for recurring revenues
- Swvl is a provider of transformative mass transit and shared mobility solutions across region, set to become the first \$1 billion plus unicorn from the Middle East to list on the Nasdaq

More on Swvl

In just four years, Swvl has become the industry leader in mass-transit across 10 cities in Egypt, Kenya, Pakistan, the UAE, Saudi Arabia and Jordan with plans to expand to 20 countries by 2025. Swvl's revenues and markets have grown rapidly, with more than 1.4 million riders booking more than 46 million rides to date with thousands of drivers on Swvl's platform.

Featuring diversified transit offerings that, in

Hammoud, Chief Investment and Digital Transformation Officer added, "Pipe is a start-up that is re-writing the rule book on fintech development, and in which many other prominent and shrewd venture capitalists and investment companies are supporting strongly, as shown by the latest round of funding we all participated in. We believe Pipe offers an incredible opportunity for capital appreciation and revenue growth and we look forward to participating in its continuing expansion as

the story. Last August, the US banned foreign companies whose chips use American technology from selling to Chinese tech giant Huawei, over espionage allegations.

Huawei began stockpiling semiconductors ahead of the sanctions coming into effect, and other companies followed their lead, further straining supplies.

Which industries have been hit?

The car industry has been the most visible victim so far, with many brands forced to slow their output in recent months. As automakers slashed production early in the pandemic, their chip suppliers turned to clients from other sectors - namely the makers of electronic goods in high demand due to the pandemic. That has left car brands, from Volkswagen to Volvo, scrambling to get hold of semiconductors now that sales are revving up again.

Smartphone makers had been relatively protected so far as they had existing stockpiles of chips, but they too are starting to suffer. Apple CEO Tim Cook warned this week that the shortages are set to hit the production of iPhones and iPads. Smaller phone-makers are likely to be worse affected, analysts say.

Games consoles like the PlayStation 5 and Xbox Series X have also been in short supply. So great is the clamor among gamers to get hold of chip-powered graphic cards needed for their playing, that they have been resorting to increasingly unusual strategies. The die-hards are tuning into live-streams on YouTube and Twitch, which ring an alarm every

Both recorded profits of more than a billion euros, beating expectations. The Swiss luxury group Richemont-Cartier, Piaget, and Montblanc beat its pre-pandemic level in the second quarter by 18 percent, while Italy's Prada bested 2019 first-half sales by eight percent. It is the "upper middle class, the rich and ultra-rich untouched by the crisis" who could not travel or eat out and instead bought luxury goods, said Arnaud Cadart at asset manager Flornoy. The Chinese, "who represent 35 to 40 percent" of luxury customers, are still crucial, he added. But while Chinese buyers previously made a lot of their purchases while visiting Europe, they are now making them at home.

'Violent rebound in the United States'

In fact, "what was surprising was not so much the recovery in China but the violent rebound in the United States," remarked Erwan Rambourg a sector analyst and author of "Future Luxe: What's Ahead for the Business of Luxury". Compared with previous crisis recoveries, after the September 11 terror attacks or the 2008 economic crisis for example,



Making semiconductors is a delicate process that involves pressing layers of chemicals into silicon. —AFP

time a card is listed for sale online.

Governments are hurrying to boost their chip-making capacities, meanwhile. In May, South Korea announced a whopping \$451 billion investment in its bid to become a semiconductor giant, while the US Senate last month voted through \$52 billion in subsidies for chip plants, known as "fabs". The European Union is seeking to double its share of global chip-manufacturing capacity to 20 percent of the market by 2030. But factories cannot open overnight - particularly those that make semiconductors, a delicate process that involves pressing layers of chemicals into silicon. —AFP

"the feeling of guilt, the idea that it is inappropriate to buy luxury goods, disappeared," Rambourg told AFP. "There is a young generation in the United States that feels comfortable with luxury purchases," in particular among the African-American, Hispanic and Asian populations, he explained.

Hermes chief executive Axel Dumas told a telephone news briefing: "We've seen a very strong rebound in activity in the United States from our loyal clients as well as a new clientele that came to us thanks to digital" marketing by the company.

Hermes's sales in the US jumped by a quarter from their pre-pandemic level. Citigroup analyst Thomas Chauvet noted that the fact that a roaring US stock market had made many Americans more wealthy, on paper at least, had also provided an important psychological boost to consumption. In Europe, the sector's performance was better than might be expected given the absence of tourists who normally generate half of sales, because local clients turned out. "Europeans had to a considerable extent deserted this market" but this year the trend was reversed, said Flornoy's Cadart. —AFP

Semiconductor shortage crimps global supplies

WASHINGTON: A shortage of semiconductors has sent shockwaves through the global economy, squeezing supplies of everything from cars to headphones. The dearth of chips has exposed the modern world's reliance on these minuscule components, the basic building blocks of computers which allow electronic devices to process data. Why is the shortage happening, and what can be done about it? How is the shortage linked to the pandemic?

The start of the COVID-19 crisis in early 2020 prompted a global spending spree on electronic items - from extra monitors as people rushed to set up home offices, to televisions and games consoles for beating lockdown boredom. Temporary factory closures due to the pandemic also put pressure on supplies. And as plants reopened, electronic goods producers continued to place orders - creating an ever-increasing backlog for the chips, which can be just a fraction of a millimetre long.

The pandemic isn't the only factor. A storm briefly halted production at several plants in Texas in February, and a fire ripped through a Japanese factory in March. US-China tensions are also part of

Luxury looks homeward as COVID curtails travel

PARIS: The luxury sector has flashed back from the COVID-19 pandemic but the crisis is still putting a crimp in travel, a key part of the market. Industry giants have reported results that show the world's well-heeled are splurging on luxury goods as sales surpass even pre-pandemic levels.

LVMH-home to Louis Vuitton, Moët, Fendi, and Kenzo brands among others - saw first-half sales climb by 11 percent above their pre-pandemic level to 28.7 billion euros (34.1 billion) as it reported a profit of 5.3 billion euros, a whopping 64 percent increase from 2019. Rival Kering - which owns the Gucci and Balenciaga brands - bested its pre-pandemic level by 8.4 percent with a record 8 billion euros in sales. Hermes reported a 29-percent jump to 4.0 billion in sales.



just a few short years, Swvl services have evolved from daily commuting to inter-city retail travel, to Software as a Service ("Saas") and Transport as a Service ("TaaS") offerings for businesses, schools, universities and other critical service organizations.

Swvl's established user base has a track record of loyalty, with more than 20 percent of inter-city riders opting to use multiple platform offerings. Further, the Company empowers drivers in emerging markets - who frequently experience income uncertainty from existing mass transit operations - to earn approximately double that of other ride-sharing platforms. With its SaaS and TaaS offerings, Swvl has already enabled more than 100 organizations around the world to reduce costs through dynamic routing, network planning, demand estimation, fleet optimization, and other leading transit services.

More on Zain Ventures

Investing in the world of venture capital provides Zain with a vast range of opportunities to diversify and expand its reach in the surrounding ecosystem. Over the years, Zain has expanded its relationship with regional and international venture capital funds such as MEVP, Wamda, and Colle Capital, supporting the respective portfolio companies whenever appropriate. Zain has also continued its active engagement in direct strategic investments in a variety of promising startups from the region, offering their support on multiple fronts including a wide geographical reach and progressive customer base for expansion opportunities.

Bangladeshis rush back to work as factories reopen

DHAKA: Hundreds of thousands of Bangladeshi garment workers rushed back to major cities Saturday, besieging train and bus stations, after the government said export factories could reopen despite a deadly coronavirus wave. With the economy badly hit by the pandemic, the government excluded the factories that supply top brands in Europe and North America from a nationwide lockdown order.

Authorities had ordered factories, offices, transport and shops to close from July 23 to August 5 as daily coronavirus infections and deaths hit record levels. Officially, Bangladesh has reported 1.2 million cases and more than 20,000 deaths. Experts say the real figures are at least four times higher. The government said however that the country's 4,500 garment factories, which employ more than four million people, could reopen from yesterday, sparking a rush back to industrial cities. The influential garment factory owners had warned of "catastrophic" consequences if orders for foreign brands were not completed on time.

Hundreds of thousands who had gone back to their villages to celebrate the Eid al Adha Muslim festival and sit out the lockdown, headed to Dhaka in any available transport - some just walking in the monsoon rain. At the Shimulia ferry station, 70 kilometers (45 miles) south of Dhaka, tens of thousands of workers waited hours for boats to take them to the capital. Garment factory worker Mohammad Masum, 25, said he left his village before dawn, walked more than 30 kilometers (20 miles) and took rickshaws to get to the ferry port. "Police stopped us at many checkpoints and the ferry was packed," he said. "It was a mad rush to get home when the lockdown was imposed and now we are in trouble again getting back to work," Jubayer Ahmad, another worker, told AFP. Bangladesh is the world's second largest garment exporter after China and the industry has become the foundation of the economy for the country of 169 million people. —AFP

Business

stc reports KD 139.4m revenues for H1 of 2021 with KD 16.5m net profit

Revenue growth as a result of wise operational plans, flexible strategy: Abdulrahman

KUWAIT: Kuwait Telecommunications Company (stc), a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and platforms to customers, enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, announced its financial results for the six-month period ended 30 June 2021.

On this occasion, Dr Mahmoud Ahmad Abdulrahman - stc's Chairman, stated: "With the continuing negative repercussions emerged at the start of COVID-19 pandemic since the first quarter of 2020, and that is still affecting most of the vital sectors in general, stc has spared no effort to update its strategy in line with the current situation. Updating stc's strategy has contributed to enhancing the customers experience by continuing to provide a variety of the finest and latest comprehensive digital services and products to the individual and business sectors as an initiative to move to the next phase of implementing the digital transformation strategy that the company has been adopting since 2019. Given the continuing challenges and risks

brought the two companies together on various occasions over the past years.

On the other hand, stc renewed its invitations to the aspiring Kuwaiti cadres to join its well-experienced team in the field of integrated communications. These invitations are aimed at hiring Kuwait competencies from different scientific backgrounds and experiences. As for the sports field, stc - the official sponsor of the Premier League championship and all the activities of the Kuwaiti Football Association (KFA) - celebrated the final match of the Premier League tournament through a ceremony to honor its champion.

With regards to Company's financial results, engineer Maziad Alharbi - stc's Chief Executive Officer, commented: "Due to the world-wide fundamental changes imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, represented in the increasing demand for the traditional communication and digital services, stc has been able to achieve these results by leveraging on the 5G network's capabilities and efficiency. Furthermore, stc has been seizing potential opportunities through the dedication of its employees and their eagerness to update and implement company's digital transformation strategy. Not to mention stc's keenness to provide integrated technical solutions that serve the Kuwaiti Government's directions pertaining the social distancing of individuals and corporates as well as its implementation of the gradual return to the normal working life and the daily activities in the country. Hence, the growing demand for the fixed and mobile broadband services has boosted company's profitability through stc's offerings of the finest products, services and offers that would help companies and organizations enabling the online institutional and educational interaction with the highest possible quality and efficiency. Thus, the growing demand for stc's services supports our ambition to increase company's revenue and cash flows over the short term."

Al-Harbi added, "stc's EBITDA reached KD 38.5 million during the first six months of 2021 compared to KD 35.9 million during the same period of 2020. Whereas, EBITDA margin reached 27.6 percent in the first six months of 2021, compared to 26.3 percent in the previous year. Accordingly, stc reported an increase in the net profit by 3.8 percent to reach KD 16.5 million (earnings per share of 33 fils) with a profit margin of 11.8 percent compared to KD 15.9 million (earnings per share of 32 fils) with a profit margin of 11.7 percent in 2020.



faced by the various sectors due to the current crisis in addition to the government's efforts aimed at gradually lifting the imposed restrictions on the governmental and private sectors, stc is keen to provide a wide range of services which will facilitate the recovery of businesses and the daily activities of the individuals and corporates. Driven by the rapid digital transformation that has become an absolute necessity to continue the daily business activities, stc develops a periodic precautionary plans that enable the company to continuously carry out its operations during the various lock down periods in order to ensure service delivery and customer satisfaction".

Commenting on the financial results for the six months period ended 30 June 2021, Dr Abdulrahman said: "Despite the ongoing fallouts resulted from the current crisis, stc was able to record an increase in revenues by 2.2 percent during the first half of 2021 to reach KD 139.4 million compared to KD 136.4 million for the same period of the previous year. This increase is mainly attributed to company's wise operational plans and the implementation of its flexible strategy. stc also managed to achieve growth in both EBITDA by 7.3 percent and net profit by 3.8 percent in the first six months of 2021 compared to the same period of the previous year."

Corporate social responsibility

In terms of stc's corporate social responsibility, Dr. Abdurrahman pointed out that the past year witnessed a number of social activities to include honoring the Al-Tarahom Volunteering Team members, as a recognition of their collaboration, vital role and the team's continuous initiatives that



enue market share of approx. 35 percent. With the ongoing repercussions and challenges we are facing due to the COVID-19 crisis, the increase in Company's financial results is attributed to the decline in stc's bad debt and its implementation of the cost optimization program in order to achieve the best results and enhance profitability through adopting a balanced and effective financial policy in relation to the operational and capital expenditure".

It is worth mentioning that the first half of 2021 witnessed a number of operational achievements, whereby stc celebrated the successful launch of the 5G Stand Alone (5G SA) backed by the 5G integrated technology. This milestone is considered the latest and the most advanced integrated comprehensive network that is compatible with the integrated 5G standards (3GPP).

Furthermore, in addition to the significant growth in its financial and operational performance during the first half of 2021, stc demonstrated its ability to overcome risks and cope with potential challenges. The Company achieved this while maintaining its operations and keeping its doors open to better serve its loyal customers during such circumstances. The actions taken by stc reflected positively towards customers based on the increased demand for the latest offers and solutions released throughout the Company's various points of sales channels and online platforms. Therefore, in order to maintain its operations and continue delivering uninterrupted services, stc carried on its comprehensive business continuity plan. Earlier in the year, the Company was certified with the latest version of the ISO Certification in Business Continuity (ISO 22301:2019) after completing a vigorous auditing process performed by Top Certifier. The certification comes as a testament to the diligent approach

taken by stc to implement protocols and guidelines across all business-related aspects during the pandemic.

The year witnessed an extraordinary event for stc, whereby, the Company received the approval from the Communication and Information Technology Regulatory Authority's (CITRA) to launch the first-of-its-kind mobile virtual network operator (MNVO) license to launch Virgin Mobile Kuwait in partnership with Virgin Mobile Middle East & Africa. Virgin Mobile Kuwait will operate using stc's network, with stc acting as a Host Facilities Based Provider "FBP" with Virgin Mobile Kuwait, offering prepaid plans to users, and making it the first virtual telecom service in the country.

In addition, solutions by stc, the Company's specialized arm in offering business solutions, provided a wide range of modern solutions and services to provide an integrated network infrastructure that will be serving the drive-in vaccination center on the South Island of Jaber Bridge. The initiative was carried out in line with the highest international standards.

The Company also announced adding Google products, in partnership with iSolutions, to its existing range of offerings to aid B2B customers' transition into the world of digital solutions. This comes in addition to launching its ultimate solution in cyber security and protection, "Shield". The pioneering service that has been revealed by the Security Operations Center (SOC) which belongs to solutions by stc - stc's specialized arm in offering business services - ensures online protection for businesses by identifying risks in possible data breaches, offering 360 degrees protection, and assessing critical assets to enable worry-free environments for businesses to thrive digitally".

China factory activity slows in July

BEIJING: Chinese factory activity weakened in July to its lowest level since the start of the pandemic, data showed yesterday as manufacturing was impacted by slowing demand, weak exports and extreme weather. The Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI), a key gauge of manufacturing activity in the world's second-largest economy, dropped to 50.4 in July from June's 50.9, the National Bureau of Statistics said.

A PMI reading of over 50 indicates expansion, while below that figure suggests contraction.

The reading appeared to be leveling out between April and June, and July shows the first marked decline, making it the lowest PMI figure since February 2020, analysts said. While the figure was worse than many forecasts, it was still above the 50-point mark that separates growth from contraction. China's fragile economic recovery is threatened by a recent resurgence of the Delta variant of the coronavirus that is threatening to dampen holiday consumption over the summer. "On the whole, China's economy continues to maintain expansion momentum, but the pace has slowed down," said NBS senior statistician Zhao Qinghe.

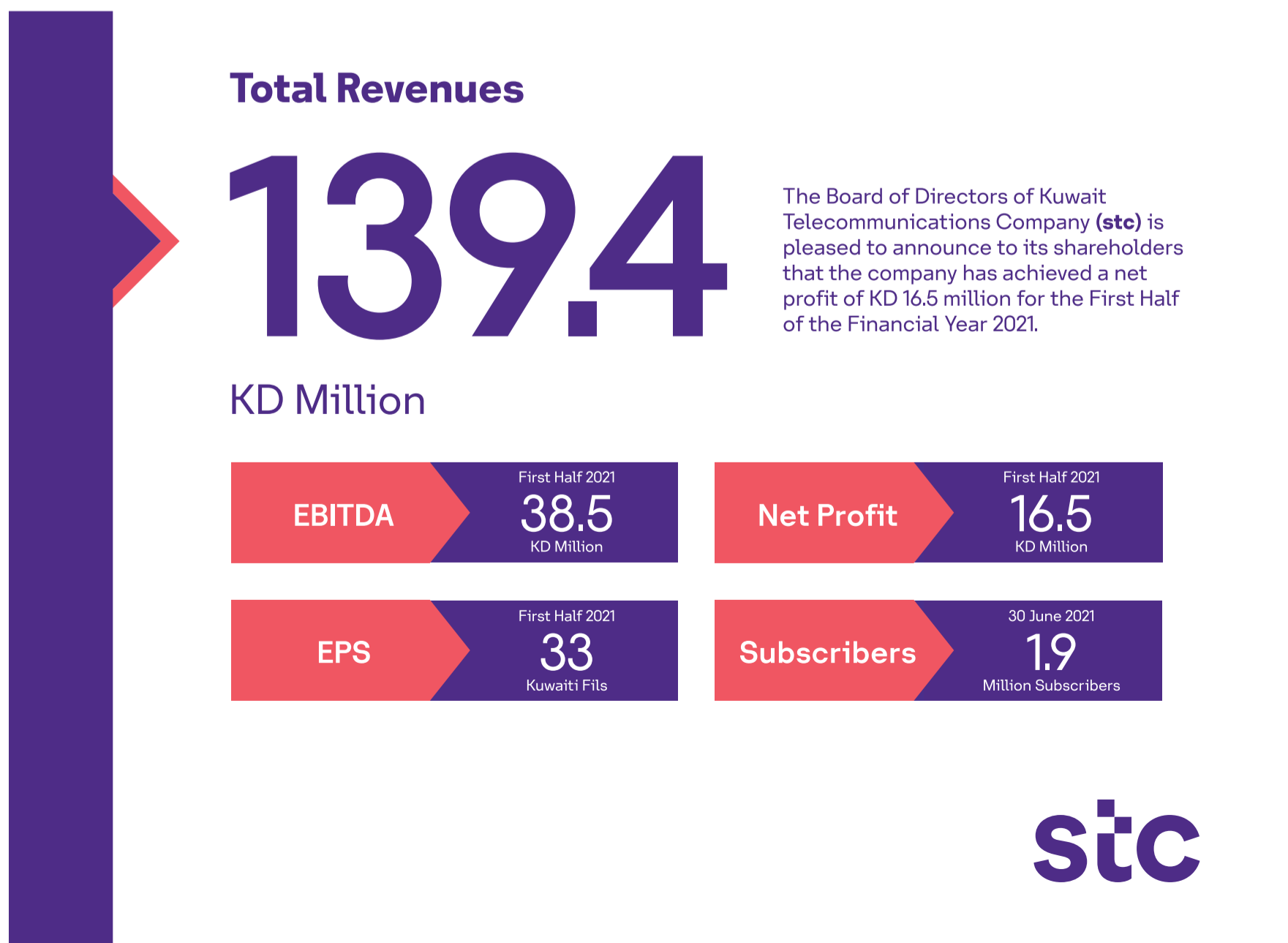
"In July, some companies entered the equipment maintenance period, which in addition to the impact of extreme weather such as localized high temperatures, floods and natural disasters, (caused) relatively weakened manufacturing growth compared to last month." Although Zhao did not refer to specific extreme weather events, deadly flooding in central Henan province caused over 70 deaths and billions of yuan worth of damage this month. Henan is home to key Foxconn plants that manufacture Apple iPhones.

Overall, export and import indices dropped this month, after a major port closure in the first three weeks of June stifled international trade at a key point in the global shipping network. "The most alarming signal is the new export order index, which (at 47.7 per cent) is at the lowest level since July last year," said Zhiwei Zhang, chief economist at Pinpoint Asset Management in a note.—AFP



Considering Company's financial position during the first half of 2021, total assets reached KD 372.7 million, while total shareholders' equity reached KD 208.7 million with a book value of 418 Kuwaiti fils per share. Furthermore, stc boasts a strong financial solvency position, considered to be amongst the best in comparison to telecom companies in the Middle East. Furthermore, stc's customer base stood at 1.9 million customer at the end of June 2021".

Alharbi noted: "stc's financial results for the first half of 2021 demonstrates its ability to compete and enhance its position as the second largest telecom operator in the Kuwaiti telecom market with a rev-



Business

Anwar Swailati wins KD 125,000 in NBK's Al-Jawhara monthly draw

KUWAIT: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) continues to reward its customers with an outstanding array of draws, prizes and offers all year round. In this context, the bank announced Anwar Taher Swailati as the winner of Al-Jawhara monthly prize worth KD 125,000 for July 2021. On the other hand, NBK announced the names of the winners of Al-Jawhara weekly draws worth KD 5,000 each including: Nabeel Asaad Ibrahim, Margo Georges El Khouly and Rabih Assem Sidani.

The draw was held at NBK head office in the presence of a representative from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, as well as representatives from NBK, noting that Al Jawhara monthly and quarterly draws are conducted in the presence of a representative from Deloitte. Al-Jawhara Account gives customers the opportunity to enter draws and win prizes of KD 5,000 weekly, KD 125,000 monthly as well as the grand prize of KD 250,000 quarterly. Every KD 50 deposited into Al-Jawhara Account gives the customer a chance to be one the next lucky winners, and if no withdrawal or transfers occur on the account during the holding period, customers will receive an additional chance to enter the draw for every KD 50 held in the account, doubling their chance to win.

On this occasion, Hisham Al-Nusif, Deputy General Manager of Consumer Banking, National Bank of Kuwait, said: "At NBK, we are committed to reward our customers through a range of special, exceptional prizes

that meet their expectations and reflect our keenness to continuously communicate with them and to meet their needs, as part of our endeavors to enrich their banking experience." Al-Jawhara Account and the prizes it offers are one of the key pillars of our strategy to encourage our customers to save, as part of the efforts to achieve financial inclusion, he added.

Al-Nusif affirmed that NBK ensures a quick and easy process for opening Al-Jawhara Account by visiting the nearest NBK Branch, or simply through NBK Mobile Banking or NBK Online Banking, in line with our Digital Transformation Strategy that provides our customers with integrated banking experience by enabling them to make all their banking transactions without visiting branches. Since 2012, National Bank of Kuwait has rewarded loyal customers with a total worth of prizes amounting to KD 2,200,000 in Al-Jawhara weekly, monthly and quarterly draws. In addition to providing top-notch, cutting-edge and highly secure banking services, NBK is keen to give customers a variety of offers, rewards and prizes that suit their expectations all year round.



Hisham Al-Nusif



CBK announces winners of Al-Najma draws

KUWAIT: Commercial Bank conducted the weekly and monthly draws on Al-Najma Account and Salary transfer campaign yesterday. The draws were conducted in the presence of Ministry of Commerce and Industry representative Abdulaziz Ashkanani.

The results of the draws were as follows:
1- Al-Najma monthly draw - the prize of KD 20,000 went to the winner Fouzeyah Salem Mohammad Farhan.
2- Al-Najma weekly draw - the prize of KD 5,000 went to the winner Ahmed Abdo.
3- Salary account campaign - the prize of up to KD 1,000 went to the winner Jarrah Mohammad Al-Shuwaier.

The bank stated that the salary campaign is aimed at customers who transfer their salaries of KD 500 or more to the bank, especially Kuwaiti employees and residents working in the government, oil sectors and companies listed with the bank as well as retirees, and take advantage of the ben-

efits of this campaign and get an instant cash gift from KD 250 to KD 500 or an interest-free loan of five times the salary and a maximum of KD 10,000, Kuwaiti pensioner, along with expatriate customers who transfer their debt amounting to KD 10,000 or above to the Bank will receive an instant cash gift of 1 percent from their transferred debt.

The bank stated that Al-Najma Account prizes are distinguished by the highest cash prize and diversity of prizes throughout the year clarifying that the account offers weekly prize of KD 5,000, monthly prize of KD 20,000 and a semi-annual prize of KD 500,000 in addition to the largest prize - linked bank account payout of KD 1,500,000.

Al-Najma Account can be opened by depositing KD 100, and customer should maintain a minimum amount of KD 500 to be eligible to enter all draws on Al-Najma Account prizes. As for the chances of winning, the more balance a customer maintains in Al-Najma Account, the more chances the account holder will get to win, the account also offers additional benefits like the ATM card, a credit card against customer's account and all CBK banking services that customer can enjoy.

The bank revealed that Al-Najma account is available to everyone, and anyone can open Al-Najma account through CBK mobile application in simple steps from anywhere and at any time.

Burgan Bank announces Yawmi draw winners

KUWAIT: Burgan Bank announced yesterday the names of the daily draw winners of its Yawmi account draw, each taking home a cash-prize of KD 5,000.

The lucky winners are:

1. Nisreen Ali Mahfoudh
2. Dana Abdulrahman Zubaid
3. Iqbal Eissa Alattar
4. Hamad Abdullah Al-Ateeqi
5. Mostafa Jassim Al-Mutawaa

In addition to the daily draw, Burgan Bank also offers a quarterly draw with more chances to win

higher rewards, offering the chance to one lucky customer to win KD 125,000 every three months. The Yawmi Account offers daily and quarterly draws, wherein the quarterly draw requires customers to maintain a minimum amount of KD 500 in their account for two months prior to the draw date. Additionally, every KD 10 in the account will entitle customers to one chance of winning. If the account balance is KD 500 and above, the account holder will be qualified for both the quarterly and daily draws.

Burgan Bank encourages everyone to open a Yawmi account and/or increase their deposit to maximize their chances of becoming a winner. The higher the level of the deposit, the higher the likelihood to win. For more information on opening a Yawmi account, the new quarterly draw or on any of the bank's products and services, customers are urged to visit their nearest Burgan Bank branch, or simply call the bank's Call Center at 1804080.



شركة الصفاة للاستثمار
AL SAFAT INVESTMENT COMPANY

KUWAIT BOURSA WEEKLY REPORT

WEEK ENDED ON
29 JULY 2021

Market	M. Cap (KD ml)	Last Close	WTD %	MTD %	YTD %	Quantity Traded	Value Traded	No. of Trades	P/E	P/B	% of Total M. Cap
Premier Market	28,959	7,164.62	3.3%	3.3%	18.4%	444,181,521	172,261,074	24,219	35.4	2.3	75.5%
Main Market	9,376	5,437.35	1.5%	1.5%	19.4%	1,467,726,826	146,621,748	42,918	24.6	1.7	24.5%
All Share	38,335	6,581.01	2.9%	2.9%	18.7%	1,911,908,347	318,882,823	67,137	32.8	2.2	100%

Sector	M. Cap (KD ml)	Last Close	WTD %	MTD %	YTD %	Quantity Traded	Value Traded	No. of Trades	P/E	P/B	% of Total M. Cap
BANKS	22,154	1,500.59	3.8%	3.8%	18.9%	270,503,865	113,704,235	12,593	32.5	2.4	57.08%
BASIC MATERIALS	961	1,077.06	-0.8%	-0.8%	19.9%	4,218,137	2,347,264	962	22.5	1.5	2.48%
CONSUMER DISCRETIONARY	532	1,035.36	3.6%	3.6%	38.7%	21,654,922	4,638,555	2,273	7.4	7.1	1.37%
CONSUMER STAPLES	235	771.48	0.9%	0.9%	-5.8%	2,712,908	1,701,463	374	14.4	1.6	0.61%
ENERGY	295	1,416.13	-0.8%	-0.8%	10.9%	32,174,989	1,401,863	1,027	12.4	1.3	0.76%
FINANCIAL SERVICES	3,389	1,216.82	1.3%	1.3%	30.9%	1,106,103,269	112,226,474	29,864	6.6	1.5	8.73%
HEALTH CARE	397	800.77	-0.8%	-0.8%	-3.1%	3,359	1,585	9	35.5	5.6	1.02%
INDUSTRIALS	4,116	1,159.62	2.7%	2.7%	30.1%	53,218,551	21,951,250	6,401	30.2	1.7	10.60%
INSURANCE	538	1,404.77	2.1%	2.1%	21.5%	727,259	54,075	97	10.5	1.2	1.39%
REAL ESTATE	2,593	1,209.24	2.0%	2.0%	26.9%	364,041,742	45,238,086	9,583	17.7	1.3	6.68%
TECHNOLOGY	10	756.60	-2.8%	-2.8%	50.5%	291,970	30,569	27	-	0.9	0.03%
TELECOMMUNICATIONS	3,343	1,089.91	1.6%	1.6%	-1.1%	45,555,056	13,179,504	3,193	15.9	2.0	8.61%
UTILITIES	250	597.37	1.3%	1.3%	-18.1%	10,702,320	2,407,902	734	20.4	3.6	0.64%

Top Gainers

Stock	last Close	Change %	Volume	Value	Trades
NCCI	85	19.6	18,593,765	1,446,568	721
ALEID	300	16.3	3,386,677	946,772	404
HAYATCOMM	91.5	15.8	9,785,959	864,000	496
QIC	73	14.5	986,517	69,851	20
NIH	114.0	11.8	15,287,561	1,645,775	477

Top Losers

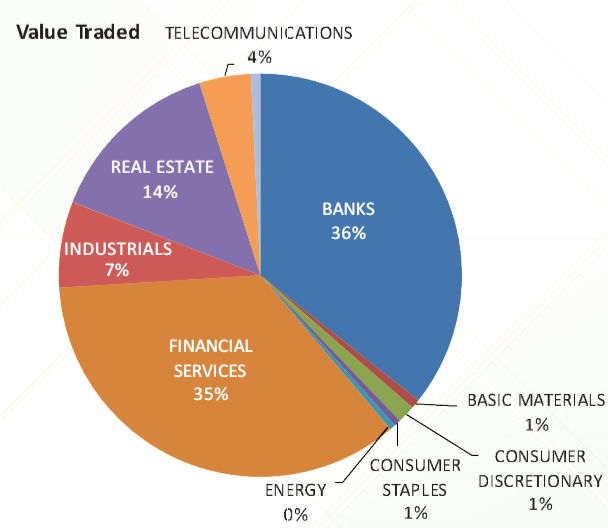
Stock	last Close	Change %	Volume	Value	Trades
MRC	128	-22.9	259,115	34,570	95
BAREEQ	38	-16.4	280,135,539	11,708,850	5,740
KHOT	79.6	-13.5	49,828	4,253	20
MUNSHAAT	52	-9.0	1,301,649	67,881	68
ALDEERA	187.0	-8.8	175,785	33,125	26

Top Volume

Stock	Last	Change %	Volume	Value	Trades
BAREEQ	38	-16.4	280,135,539	11,708,850	5,740
GFH	68	-1.7	143,903,975	10,084,494	3,251
MAZAYA	108	-5.3	131,619,425	14,904,230	1,985
AAYAN	159	7.4	122,615,524	19,063,204	2,287
ARZAN	160	8.8	76,186,910	11,956,430	1,812

Top Value

Stock	Last	Change %	Volume	Value	Trades
KFH	785	2.9	40,537,173	31,470,212	3,424
NBK	894	4.6	31,868,702	28,125,148	2,367
AAYAN	159	7.4	122,615,524	19,063,204	2,287
AUB	243	3.0	74,521,874	17,978,785	1,174
MAZAYA	108	-5.3	131,619,425	14,904,230	1,985



Market Summary:

- Last week was positive for both Premier and Main markets. The volume has increased 83% in the Premier market and 64% in the Main market with a 60% increase in value.
- The increase in volume has pushed the Premier index towards a very critical level at 7173 which is an all-time high with an expectation to overcome this point next week and turn it into a strong support level. The main index continues breaking records and registering new higher levels which show the strength and positivity of the index.
- Technically, the All-Share index has overcome the resistance at 6560 and now is targeting 6595 and 6760 while keeping the support levels at 6560 and 6495. The premier market is targeting 7173 which represents an all-time high point from then next target is at 7200 and 7380 while keeping the support at 7073 and 7045. Main market next target at 5465 and 5480 while keeping the support at 5393 and 5370.



A general view of the recently-opened Shanghai Planetarium.



People visit the recently-opened Shanghai Planetarium in Shanghai.



A visitor uses an interactive touch screen. —AFP photos

Post-pandemic separation from owners is a dog's life

Adopted en masse during the pandemic and spoiled for attention during remote working, many dogs (and their owners) have to adjust to a new lifestyle—and it's not always easy. Mona, a one-year-old mutt, will soon have to spend one or two days a week home alone, waiting for her owners Hannah and Richard to come back. Adopted last March, the pooch has never had to endure so much separation. But Hannah Peterzell isn't worried.

"We have left her home for a long time, and she's been totally fine with it," says the 26-year-old, standing in her Greenpoint, Brooklyn apartment. "Obviously, she's probably bored and whatever, but she can handle being alone." Peterzell doesn't envision spending more time away from Mona, who was born in Texas last year. And if her employer requires her to return to the office full-time, "I would definitely find a new job." Tinto, a Basset Hound from Manhattan's Upper West Side, was not adopted during the pandemic, but he grew accustomed to a busy apartment over the months, with three kids back home and the parents constantly around. "Every day is Saturday for the dog," says Rosaria Baldwin, the mom of the family.

So much so, Rosaria recalls, that the first weekend Tinto found himself with only the family's two daughters, he was "depressed, miserable." With the children ready to go back out on their own, and her husband required to travel frequently for work, Rosaria isn't taking any chances. She's adopting a second Basset Hound.



Volunteers work at the Animal Care Center of New York. —AFP

Training the owners

For others, particularly animals who have only known pandemic life, the transition isn't always smooth. Many owners have not put their dogs through training programs. "Some people get puppies and they assume that they're going to be like their childhood dog or they're going to be able to just use whatever knowledge they have," says Hannah Richter, a trainer at Andrea Arden Dog Training. And then a year later, Richter says, they find they're encountering behavioral issues when the puppy grows up. "And now we have to focus on training adult dogs, which is a little bit more difficult than training the puppies," Richter says.

Demand for training sessions is so high that appointments are made four weeks in advance, compared with before the pandemic when owners could book a trainer within days. Training is a long-term process, and owners of dogs that have grown up without find it can take months and cost several thousand dollars to get their pet up to speed, Richter explains. The owners-or "parents," as some prefer to call themselves-have to do their part of the work. "It's fairly easy for me to train the dog," Richter says, smiling. "But getting the client to train the dog is a lot harder, for sure."

'Perfect time to adopt'

While some "parents" are figuring out the new normal, the 110th Street Shelter is looking for new owners. After last year's wave of adoptions, the pendulum is swinging the other way. There is much less demand now, says Katy Hansen, the communications director for Animal Care Centers (ACC). Even worse, many families are bringing their dogs to the center-not out of post-pandemic fatigue, she says, but for lack of means after a difficult financial year. "They're really struggling there or have lost their housing, and they're moving into a house that already has a pet, or they're moving into a house that won't allow a big dog who barks," Hansen says, noting that New York landlords have a reputation of being pet-unfriendly.

To reduce the flow of pet returns, the ACC helps out cash-strapped owners with pet food or veterinary costs. The ACC also offers temporary foster homes—"a short-term solution for families that are in crisis," explains Hansen—with the goal being for the family to reclaim their pet later. Last year, ACC shelters were down to an average of 100 dogs, cats and rabbits combined. Today, there are 500. "People are now going outside; they're vaccinated; they feel more comfortable," says Hansen. "They're so excited to get around, which is actually the perfect time to adopt a pet, especially a dog." —AFP

China's space propaganda blitz endures at slick new planetarium

China has opened the doors on what it bills as the world's largest planetarium, a slick new Shanghai facility showcasing the nation's recent extra-terrestrial exploits while notably downplaying those of space pioneers like the United States. Beijing has spent much of this year bombarding the public with news of the country's rising space prowess, part of a larger propaganda blitz highlighting Chinese achievements under the ruling Communists to mark the party's 100th anniversary. In recent months, China has landed a spacecraft on Mars, set

loose a rover to explore it, and sent the first astronauts to a Chinese space station.

Scale-model replicas of spaceships from these and other missions figure prominently at the new Shanghai Planetarium, along with paeons to China's rapid scientific advancement, and clips of President Xi Jinping addressing the nation's taikonauts. "This year we had several astronauts go to space, which is a source of pride for China," said a woman surnamed Zhou, who brought her young daughter. "I wanted my child to have some

knowledge about space from a young age."

By contrast, the pioneering space-travel efforts of the then-Soviet Union and China's geopolitical rival the United States get only passing mention, if at all. The 1969 US landing on the moon is referenced only briefly in a small, dryly-worded display, and a section entitled "Space Heroes" lists only two Russian cosmonauts along with Yang Liwei, the first person sent into space by the Chinese space program.

The planetarium features working telescopes and a range of interactive

exhibits on the origins of the universe and history of astronomy, including Chinese-speaking versions of Copernicus and other luminaries explaining their theoretical breakthroughs. The building was designed by New York's Ennead Architects and resembles a union of swirling galaxies. It covers 38,000 square meters, (420,000-square feet) of floor space—roughly equal to five football fields—and cost 600 million yuan (\$93 million), according to Chinese media. —AFP



People look at a model of the sun while visiting the recently-opened Shanghai Planetarium.



A depiction of our planet Earth is seen as people visit the recently-opened Shanghai Planetarium.



People look at a model of the sun while visiting the recently-opened Shanghai Planetarium.



A youth (second left, background) jumps in a lunar simulator beside the replica of a Chinese probe while visiting the recently-opened Shanghai Planetarium.



Molin-Pradel family Ice-cream parlor is pictured at Schwedenplatz square in Vienna, Austria. — AFP photos



Silvio Molin-Pradel proudly shows varieties of ice-cream at his family's Ice-cream parlor at Schwedenplatz square.



Silvio Molin-Pradel shows the picture of his great-great-grandfather in his Ice-cream saloon at Schwedenplatz square.

HOW ITALIANS SOLD ICE CREAM TO THE MASSES IN VIENNA

Residents of the Austrian capital have queued for more than 130 years to sample the Italian ice cream of the Molin-Pradel family, one of Vienna's oldest gelato dynasties. "He helped democratize ice cream, which before was

boring Italy.

And it was entrepreneurs like Arcangelo Molin-Pradel, born into poverty in northern Italy's Dolomite Alps, who were among the first to benefit from the sweet tooth of the Viennese. The high



Silvio Molin-Pradel holds an ice-cream outside of his family's Ice-cream saloon.

reserved for the wealthy," Silvio Molin-Pradel says of his great-great-grandfather Arcangelo, who began selling it out of pushcarts in Vienna in 1886. More than a century later, ice cream consumption among Austrians is higher than in neigh-

boring Italy. And it was entrepreneurs like Arcangelo Molin-Pradel, born into poverty in northern Italy's Dolomite Alps, who were among the first to benefit from the sweet tooth of the Viennese. The high cost of sugar, milk and refrigeration-years before electric freezing was invented-meant ice cream was long reserved for aristocrats. But ingenious Italians like the Molin-Pradels changed that, producing ice cream based on water and fruit extract.

Ice cream migration

Originally from Zoldo, six hours from Vienna by car these days, the Molin-Pradels, like other families, were so poor that migrating for seasonal work was part of life-whether to work as seafarers, lumberjacks or ice cream makers. Vienna became one of the ice cream makers' first destinations outside Italy, says Maren Moehring, a history professor at the University of Leipzig in Germany. The Italian migrants' "frozen stuff" as some called it quickly became popular with ordinary Viennese. This sparked the ire of Austrian bakers, who perceived them as "dangerous competition", Moehring says.

In 1894, the ice cream makers got the right to open shops in Vienna rather than just selling ice cream from carts. "The Viennese were already used to sweets... so it wasn't hard to then serve this cold product," Molin-Pradel, who keeps his recipes a secret, tells AFP as he stands in the back of his salon at Schwedenplatz. At the central, tree-lined square in the heart of Vienna, the family still produces artisanal ice cream.

Each day in summer, about 5,000 customers order from dozens of flavors, ranging from traditional ones like chocolate and vanilla to avocado, lavender and hemp. "Every Viennese will tell you that 'their' Italian ice cream maker is better,"



A worker prepares ice-cream at Molin-Pradel's family Ice-cream parlor at Schwedenplatz square in Vienna.

says Molin-Pradel. "The colors must be pastel. It is a guarantee of quality," he says, adding that the business has expanded, including selling their ice cream through some Vienna supermarkets.

Lasting tradition

Out of roughly 370 ice cream shops in Austria, about 40 are still run by Italians in the small Alpine nation of almost nine million people, according to the Austrian Economic Chamber. Its data also show that Austria boasts an average per capita consumption of more than 60 scoops per year, or about eight liters of ice cream-more than in Italy, with an average con-

sumption of six liters. From one generation to the next, the gelato makers' skills and knowledge were passed on, "which explains their success", Moehring says. While ice cream makers in earlier times would typically return to Italy to take care of the harvests in the Alps by mid-August, today the season lasts well into October. Even today, Pradel-Molin goes on a pilgrimage to his ancestral home of Zoldo at the end of each season. It's still his source of inspiration to keep up with the latest flavors and other industry secrets, he says.— AFP



A worker prepares ice-cream at Molin-Pradel's family Ice-cream saloon at Schwedenplatz square.



A worker prepares ice-cream at Molin-Pradel's family Ice-cream saloon.



Silvio Molin-Pradel shows the picture of his great-great-grandfather in his Ice-cream saloon at Schwedenplatz square in Vienna.

Chinese pop star Kris Wu detained on suspicion of rape

Chinese-Canadian pop megastar Kris Wu has been detained on suspicion of rape, Beijing police said Saturday. Wu was accused last week by 19-year-old student Du Meizhu of date-raping her when she was 17, drawing widespread condemnation of the singer on Chinese social media and leading to several luxury brands dropping deals with him. "Wu Yifan, 30, Canadian nationality, is now criminally detained in accordance with the law by Chaoyang branch of Beijing public security bureau on suspicion of rape," police in Beijing's Chaoyang district said in a Weibo statement, using

Wu's Chinese name.

Officers said they launched an investigation after Wu, one of China's biggest celebrities, was reported by internet users for having "deceived young women multiple times into having sexual relations". The scandal evokes China's #MeToo movement sparked by Chinese feminists in 2018, in which women were empowered to voice their experiences of sexual harassment-sometimes involving powerful public figures. Wu originally shot to fame as a member of the K-pop boyband EXO, before leaving in 2014 to launch a successful solo career as a singer, actor,

model and variety show judge. Since Du's accusations, more alleged victims have spoken out online, accusing Wu's staff of predatory behaviour such as inviting them to boozy karaoke parties.

Star's denials

Brands including Louis Vuitton, Bulgari, L'Oreal Men and Porsche last week suspended their partnerships with him as a result of the escalating fallout. The star, who also holds Canadian citizenship and grew up between Vancouver and Guangzhou, has denied all allegations of assault and insisted he was innocent in multiple social media statements. "I only met Miss Du once at a friend's gathering, I didn't ply her with alcohol... I have never 'coerced women into sex' or engaged in 'date rape'," he wrote on July 19, adding he does not sleep with underage girls.

Wu's studio also published a lengthy response to Du's claims, denying any wrongdoing and alleging that she only met him once at a party, tried to extort his staff for millions of yuan and falsified her accusations. When the accusations surfaced, luxury firm Bulgari said it "attaches great importance to the incident relating to Kris Wu and decided to terminate all related collaborations with Wu from today." His lawyers are suing Du for defamation, and the student has said she is also taking legal action against Wu. Du said the star had attempted to buy her silence with 500,000 RMB (\$77,100). — AFP



This file photo shows actor Kris Wu attending the premiere of Paramount Pictures' "xXx: Return Of Xander Cage" in Los Angeles, California. — AFP

Sumatran tigers infected with coronavirus at Indonesian zoo

Two Sumatran tigers were recovering at a Jakarta zoo after being infected with coronavirus, Indonesian officials said yesterday, as they probed how the critically endangered animals got sick. Nine-year-old Tino and 12-year-old Hari tested positive in mid-July after they experienced flu-like symptoms, trouble breathing and appetite loss. But the male tigers were on the mend after treatment. "Both

animals are healthy now," Suzi Marsitawati, head of Jakarta's Parks and Forest Service, said in a statement. "Their appetite has returned to normal and they are active again."

Ragunan Zoo has been closed since June as COVID-19 cases soar nationwide. "We traced all the nurses and zookeepers (in contact with the tigers) and at the time they were sick, nobody was infected with COVID-19," Marsitawati said. "So we are still trying to find the source." Indonesia has been struggling to control its deadliest COVID-19 outbreak since the pandemic began as the highly infectious Delta variant tears across the archipelago. The country has reported more than 3.4 million cases and 94,119 virus deaths, but the official tally is widely believed to be a severe undercount, due to low testing and tracing rates. — AFP



This handout picture shows a Sumatran tiger locked up in a cage at the Ragunan Zoo in Jakarta, after Indonesian officials announced it was one of two tigers recovering from the COVID-19 coronavirus.— AFP

Sports

Whitlock reigns supreme on horse on night of gymnastic firsts

TOKYO: Max Whitlock defended his pommel horse title and Rebeca Andrade succeeded Simone Biles as vault champion on a night of gymnastic firsts at the Olympics yesterday. Ukraine-born Artem Dolgopyat assured his place in his adopted country's history by winning the floor exercise to claim the Zionist entity's first ever gymnastics medal. And then Nina Derwael hopped up onto the uneven bars to end Belgium's wait for gymnastics hardware, the world champion taking gold with American all-around champion Sunisa Lee in bronze.

Not to be outdone Andrade, who took silver behind Lee in the all-around, was Brazil's first female gymnastics champion. While Dolgopyat, Derwael and Andrade were all breaking new ground, for Whitlock it was a glorious case of history repeating itself. The Rio 2016 champion had qualified in only fifth place behind Taiwan's Lee Chih Kai, but turned the tables in style with a technically difficult and finely executed routine earning a significant score of 15.583, .183 clear of Lee. Japan's Kazuma Kaya took the bronze.

'Million times harder'

Whitlock, who also won floor gold at the Rio 2016 Games and horse bronze at London 2012, said: "This was the most nervous I have ever been for any competition I have ever done in my entire life. I always said it: retaining titles is 10 times harder than chasing it. Today proved that to me. It's a million times harder. It's the feeling of knowing you have done it before and that feeling of winning Olympic gold is crazy. You kind of want to experience that again, but you know how hard it is to do that."

He added: "I am sorry if I'm talking rubbish, but I don't even know how to feel, what to feel or what to say. It's crazy." There was heartache for Rhys McClenaghan of Ireland who arrived with hopes of earning his country's first ever gymnastics medal only to fall off the apparatus seconds into his performance.

Earlier on the floor, Dolgopyat had finished level on points with Spain's Rayderley Zapata but won the tiebreak with a higher difficulty score. China's Xiao Ruoteng took the bronze. Dolgopyat, who moved from Ukraine to Tel Aviv when he was 12, won only

Zionist entity's second ever Olympic title in any sport after Gal Fridman's 2004 windsurfing win in Athens. The 24-year-old came into the final as favorite by topping the qualifying standings.

After Russian team gold winner Nikita Nagorny was marked down after over-rotating and stumbling on his trademark triple pike tumble, Zapata looked destined for the title. But Dolgopyat turned the Spaniard's gold into silver when his routine matched Zapata's score of 14.933, and with their execution mark also the same, it went down to the difficulty level, with Dolgopyat taking the title by just 0.100.

Andrade meanwhile had come through injury hell to climb the podium in Tokyo, overcoming three visits to the operating table for right knee anterior cruciate ligament surgery to fulfill her Olympic dream. "I couldn't imagine myself up there on the podium. I think I matured a lot. I got better from the injuries," she said.

She opened with a Cheng followed by an Amanar to deny Mykayla Skinner, who took Biles's place in the final after



TOKYO: Britain's Max Whitlock competes in the artistic gymnastics men's pommel horse final of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games at the Ariake Gymnastics Centre in Tokyo yesterday. — AFP

the American superstar pulled out with "the twisties", a condition where gymnasts lose the ability to orientate themselves in mid-air. Biles was in the stands

watching the gymnastics competition go on without her having pulled out of the team and all-around, vault, uneven bars and floor. — AFP

China's Chen wins gold to deny Taiwan badminton double

TOKYO: China's Chen Yufei claimed women's badminton singles gold yesterday, denying Taiwan a second straight night of success in the sport. Taiwan had bagged its first-ever Olympic badminton medal the previous night with gold in the men's doubles competition.

But Chen ensured there would be no repeat in the women's singles, beating world number one Tai Tzu-ying 21-18, 19-21, 21-18 to capture the title. Tai scuffed a shot into the net to end a marathon final rally, and Chen fell to her knees and roared to the rafters.

India's P V Sindhu took bronze, beating China's He Bingjiao 21-13, 21-15. Sindhu, the world champion and 2016 Rio Games silver medalist, said she had to focus to put the disappointment of losing to Tai in the semi-finals behind her. "I had to had close all my emotions for this one match and just give my all," she said. "I'm very happy and I think I've done really well."

In men's singles, Denmark's world number two Viktor Axelsen overcame a nervy start to move into the final, ending Guatemalan underdog Kevin Cordon's unlikely tilt at the title. World number 59 Cordon has been the surprise package in Tokyo but Axelsen was ultimately too clinical for him, winning their semi-final 21-18, 21-11.

The Dane will face China's defending champion Chen Long in today's final, and he was glad to secure a top-two finish after taking bronze at the 2016 Rio Games. "Obviously I want more than just a final—this is not enough for me," said Axelsen. "I was so tense and wanted it so badly, so I couldn't even enjoy the game today. In a few hours I'll be really happy and proud, but right now it's just relief."

The two players were meeting for the first time,



TOKYO: China's Chen Yufei celebrates after beating Taiwan's Tai Tzu-ying to win the women's singles badminton final match during the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games at the Musashino Forest Sports Plaza in Tokyo yesterday. — AFP

and Cordon's unorthodox style caused Axelsen some early problems. "He has a really volatile playing style," said Axelsen. "He's really aggressive, playing tricky shots and a little bit unusual shots, but with good quality. So it was tough for me to get the pace high enough."

Cordon still has a chance to claim Guatemala's second-ever Olympic medal in today's bronze play-off against Indonesia's Anthony Sinisuka Ginting. "I had a chance in the first set," said Cordon, whose run to the semis has captivated his native Guatemala. "I took a risk to try to play faster than him or try to attack with my smash, but there were

some easy mistakes. And of course, with these kind of top players it's not easy to win easy points."

Rio champion Chen has the chance to emulate Chinese badminton legend Lin Dan in winning consecutive Olympic titles, after beating Ginting 21-16, 21-11 in the other semi-final. "I didn't think too much about my strategy because it's already the semi-finals—I just needed to execute," said Chen. "Because I haven't played internationally for the past year and a half, I don't know what level my opponents are at. That was a big question mark coming into the Olympics, so I'm happy I've been able to play well." — AFP

India's Sindhu hopes bronze can inspire new badminton generation

TOKYO: Indian badminton star P V Sindhu hopes she can inspire a new generation after adding Tokyo Olympic bronze to her 2016 silver medal yesterday. The world champion beat China's He Bingjiao 21-13, 21-15 to add another prize to her collection, five years after finishing second at the Rio Games.

Now she hopes the world's second-most populous country can use her achievement as a springboard for more badminton success. "I'm sure a lot of youngsters and others will get motivated to work hard and come up," she said. "I'm sure we can do this. If I can do it, everybody can do it."

Sindhu was aiming to become only the second Indian to win an individual Olympic gold medal, but lost to

Taiwan's Tai Tzu-ying in the semi-finals. She said she was "sad" at not being able to go one better than her 2016 silver.

But she was able to put the disappointment behind her to claim bronze. "I had to close all my emotions for this one match and just give my all," she said. "I'm very happy and I think I've done really well. Getting a medal for the country is definitely a proud moment for me and also the people out there." Sindhu followed up her 2016 Olympic silver by winning the world title in 2019. She said she would "definitely" look to challenge for Olympic gold again at the 2024 Paris Games, and backed herself to continue improving.

"Every time I win, it's a stepping



TOKYO: India's P V Sindhu poses with her women's singles badminton bronze medal at a ceremony during the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games at the Musashino Forest Sports Plaza in Tokyo yesterday. — AFP

stone," said the 26-year-old. "It builds up my motivation. I can do much better and I can work harder. I think that's my

passion towards the sport — once you achieve something, you want to achieve more and more." — AFP

'Champ' Matsuyama distraught as medal slips away

KAWAGOE: A distraught Hideki Matsuyama was left heartbroken yesterday after failing to win a medal at his home Olympics. In silver medal position at the start of the day, a shot behind eventual gold medalist Xander Schauffele, Asia's first US Masters champion fell at the first extra hole in a seven-way playoff for bronze.

Matsuyama, 29, had to cope with the twin pressures of carrying Japan's golden golfing hopes and shaking off a bout of coronavirus just a month ago. He had kept calm and in the mix all week, but wob-

bled when it mattered most, missing birdie putts on each of the last four holes in regulation. Making just one would have guaranteed a medal on a gripping final day at Kasumigaseki Country Club.

"Since I was in contention, I was really hoping that I could win a medal. I'm really disappointed I wasn't able to realize that," said a visibly upset Matsuyama, who usually displays little emotion. Rory Sabbatini of Slovakia won silver, while Taiwan's C T Pan earned bronze after prevailing in the agonizingly tense playoff on the fourth extra hole.

"My goal was of course to win the gold. I knew if I had ended my round with birdie, I was going to get a bronze medal," added Matsuyama, who closed with a two-under 69 in favorable scoring conditions and a 15-under 269 total.

"I'm left with a frustration that I wasn't able to convert the opportunities," he said of falling away on

a course where he has enjoyed enormous success in the past, winning the first of his two Asia-Pacific Amateur Championships in 2010 and a Japan Junior Championship. "I have no energy or endurance left at this point. But I kept fighting at the end with my heart. Unfortunately, I fell short at the end."

Matsuyama, who has won six times on the US PGA Tour, carded five birdies but his three bogeys proved costly as he finished three adrift of Schauffele. Following his historic Masters triumph at Augusta National in April, where he became the first Japanese male golfer to win a major, the entire nation's hopes were on Matsuyama to take gold for the Olympic hosts.

"I was not able to deliver the performance I was hoping for," added Matsuyama. "At the same time, the positive is that I was able to contend. I just was not able to put it together at the end. There are some things I need to work on." — AFP

'Nothing compares': Zverev routs Khachanov to win Olympic gold

TOKYO: Alexander Zverev said that "nothing is bigger" than winning an Olympic gold medal after brushing aside Karen Khachanov to take the men's singles title in Tokyo yesterday. The fourth seed, who ended Novak Djokovic's Golden Grand Slam bid in the semi-finals, produced a dominant display to win 6-3, 6-1 after just 79 minutes at the Ariake Tennis Park.

"There is nothing better than this," said Zverev, who fell to the ground in celebration after clinching the win. The world number five becomes only the second German to win an Olympic singles gold after Steffi Graf in 1988, while Boris Becker and Michael Stich took the men's doubles crown four years later.

Zverev is still waiting for a maiden Grand Slam title after several near misses, including when he blew a two-set lead to lose to Dominic Thiem in last year's US Open final. "To be honest, I don't want to talk about the next Grand Slam right now," he said when asked if his Olympic success could help him go one better at Flushing Meadows at the end of this month. "I just won the Olympic Games and I think there's nothing bigger than winning the Olympic Games."

The 24-year-old said this victory trumps his 2018 ATP Finals triumph and his four Masters titles. "A gold medal at the Olympics, for me, the value is incredible because you're not only playing for yourself, you're playing for your whole country," he said.

Khachanov had continued his return to form in Tokyo from recent weeks after reaching the Wimbledon quarter-finals, but this match proved a step too far. "He played I think an outstanding match. He was just better today, all credit to him," said the silver medalist.

A small crowd of locals gathered to protest against the staging of the Tokyo Olympics outside the venue at the start of the match, after a surge of Covid-19 cases in Japan. "We all heard it, it was quite loud," said Zverev. "I think the whole world will be quite happy that this event (Olympics) is going on. I think sports, in the time we're living in right now, is not only nice to have, but it's necessary."

Irrepressible Zverev

Zverev made short work of the final, crushing six aces and 16 winners past his overwhelmed opponent. He struck first blood with a break in the third game and then importantly saved a break point to take a 4-2 lead.

Zverev did not let up the pressure from there and brought up a set point in the ninth game, and although Khachanov recovered initially, a successful review gave Zverev a second chance. He capped an excellent opening set as Khachanov sent a stretching volley spinning into the tramlines. — AFP



TOKYO: Gold medalist Germany's Alexander Zverev poses with his medal during the Tokyo 2020 Olympic men's singles tennis medal ceremony at the Ariake Tennis Park in Tokyo yesterday. — AFP



Dressel wins fifth gold as McKeon makes Olympic history

TOKYO: Caeleb Dressel banked two more titles to end his Tokyo campaign with five golds yesterday, as Australia's Emma McKeon became the first female swimmer to win seven medals at a single Olympics. The American machine earned the title of world's fastest swimmer with a lightning 21.07 seconds in the 50m freestyle before helping the US men shatter their own world record in the 4x100m medley relay. "I'm proud of myself, I think I reached what my potential was here at these Games and it was just really fun racing," said Dressel.

The unassuming McKeon was just as impressive, blasting through the 50m in 23.81 to win then spearheading Australia to the women's medley relay honors on the final day of action. It boosted her medal tally to seven — four gold and three bronze — surpassing the six won by East German Kristin Otto (1952) and

American Natalie Coughlin (2008).

McKeon also matched the record for the most decorated female athlete at a single Games ever, tied with Russian gymnast Maria Gorokhovskaya (1952). McKeon snared gold in the 50m and 100m freestyle, 4x100m relay and the medley, along with bronze in the 100m butterfly and two further relays.

"It's very surreal now it's over. It all went by very quickly and I'm very happy with how the meet went," she said. "I look at the athletes that have gone before me and have been so impressed and inspired by what they've done but I've never been into the stats and medal counts. But to be in that kind of company, it's an honor and I know I've worked hard for it."

Like McKeon, Dressel took out the 50-100 free double, but also powered to the 100m butterfly title in world-record time, while adding 4x100m free and

medley relay to thrust himself into rarified company. He joins Americans Michael Phelps, Mark Spitz and Matt Biondi, and Otto, as the only swimmers to win five or more golds in one Games. "I'm giving a pat on the back then put it away and move forward," Dressel said. "I'm going to take a break, I'm pretty over swimming, and enjoy time with my family."

Australia's record tally

Once again the superpowers dominated the nine-day meet, where six world records fell. South African Tajana Schoenmaker joined Dressel with an individual mark when she crushed the long-standing women's 200m breaststroke best. New benchmarks were also set in the women's 4x100m relay (Australia), women's 4x200m relay (China), mixed 4x100 relay (Britain) and by the US in yesterday's men's medley.

While the US again topped the medal table with 30, including 11 gold, second-placed Australia made serious inroads. Among their 20 medals were nine golds — their highest number at an Olympics, and a huge improvement on their three titles in Rio. In contrast, the US underperformed from their 33 medals and 16 golds in Rio, with Dressel and Katie Ledecky doing the heavy lifting.

Both Dressel and McKeon returned for the event-closing relays with Dressel delivering a storming butterfly leg to steer the US to a world-record 3:26.78. It crushed their own global mark of 3:27.28 set at the 2009 world championships, with Adam Peaty's Britain taking silver ahead of Italy.

In the women's relay, McKeon swam the fly for Australia, leaving Cate Campbell to bring them home in an Olympic-record 3:51.60 to upset the American two-time defending champions. Canada were third. "It's a little bit more special being able to get a win from behind, over the Americans," said Campbell, in her fourth Olympics. "It's a dream come true."

Meanwhile, America's Robert Finke overcame fatigue to secure the Olympic distance double by winning the men's 1500m gold medal to go with his 800m title. "I came in not really expecting to get a medal or anything and to come out of it with two golds!" said Finke. — AFP



TOKYO: Britain's Charlotte Worthington competes in the inaugural BMX freestyle women's park final at the Ariake Urban Sports Park during the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo yesterday. — AFP

Britain's Worthington wins inaugural Olympics BMX freestyle gold

TOKYO: Britain's Charlotte Worthington won the inaugural BMX freestyle Olympic title yesterday by landing the first-ever 360 backflip in women's competition. Worthington scored a huge 97.50 points to take the lead and could not be caught, with favorite Hannah Roberts of the United States taking silver (96.10) and Switzerland's Nikita Ducarroz bronze (89.20). The British rider was working full-time in a restaurant just three years ago but found out that BMX freestyle was on the program at the Tokyo Games.

"In 2018 I went to a couple of events and contests and got speaking to people and found out about BMX being in the Olympics, and British cycling putting together a team," she said. "So at the time I was just taking a lot of really cool opportunities that I enjoyed doing, and it just kind of snowballed from there. It was something I found out I was really passionate about, and I really enjoyed it, so I'll never look back at the days of working in a kitchen."

Worthington, 25, said she was proud to pull off the 360 backflip — she fell on her first attempt. "I just had to have faith that it was ingrained in my body with the amount of work that we've been putting into it," she said. "Going out there the second time I was just ready to give it my all again. Once I landed that trick I knew that it was on. I pretty much zoned out for the rest of the run."

Australia's Logan Martin, 27, won the men's competition at Ariake Urban Sports Park with a score of 93.30, finishing ahead of Venezuela's Daniel Dhers (92.05) and Britain's Declan Brooks (90.80). Landing tricks such as a triple opposite tailwhip, 720 barspin and a flair opposite downside tailwhip, the world champion kept his cool on a day when most of his competitors were showing nerves.

"I've had so many highs in my career, but I've never, ever gotten teary, so that just shows how meaningful this one is to me," he said. "It's the biggest stage of them all, the gold medal, to bring that home and show my son. It's amazing." — AFP



TOKYO: USA's Caeleb Dressel celebrates winning to take gold in the final of the men's 100m freestyle swimming event during the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games at the Tokyo Aquatics Centre in Tokyo yesterday. — AFP

Five memorable moments from Tokyo Olympics swimming

TOKYO: The Tokyo Olympics swimming ended Sunday with USA on top of the medals table. AFP Sport has compiled five memorable moments:

The Katie-Ariarne show

The Katie Ledecky-Ariarne Titmus rivalry lived up to its billing, with the pair locking horns across three high-quality races. Australia's Titmus drew first blood, topping the decorated American in the 400m freestyle, but she needed the second fastest time ever to do so. She then out-sprinted Ledecky for the 200m title in another lightning-quick effort, before the American earned some revenge.

Ledecky remains the distance queen and not even Titmus could touch her over 800m, admitting her rival was "in a class of her own". Despite already being a three-time Olympian, Ledecky plans to compete at Paris in 2024 and even Los Angeles four years later,

with plenty more twists and turns to come in her developing duel with Titmus.

Dressel dazzler

Powerhouse Caeleb Dressel only added to his celebrity in Tokyo, winning five gold medals to cement himself as the top name in the sport. It wasn't the seven many had touted, which would have put him in the league of Michael Phelps and Mark Spitz, but his exploits were impressive nonetheless. The American, who won two relay golds in Rio, smashed his own world record in the 100m butterfly and was equally dominant in scooping the 50-100 freestyle double. Add in two relay medals and his star is shining brighter than ever.

Nailbiter

Tatjana Schoenmaker announced herself on the Olympic stage in style when she smashed the women's 200m breaststroke world record to claim South Africa's first gold in the pool since 1996. The 24-year-old had already won silver in the 100m and threatened Denmark's Rikke Møller Pedersen's 200m world benchmark in the heats, joking she wished her fingernails were just a bit longer. But Schoenmaker needed no help from a manicurist to clock 2min 18.95sec in the

final and clip 0.16s off Møller Pedersen's record.

History-maker

Emma McKeon came into the Tokyo Olympics well known in her native Australia but not so much elsewhere, but she changed that forever. The 27-year-old splashed her way to an incredible seven medals, four gold and three bronze, a feat no other female swimmer has ever managed at a single Olympics. She called the achievement "surreal" and credited experience for helping her go where no one else has been before. "I've been at these meets before where the emotions are so up and down. I knew what to expect," she said.

Mix-and-match

The debut of the 4x100m mixed medley relay added some much-needed atmosphere to a spectator-free Tokyo Aquatic Centre as men raced against women for the first time at the Olympics. The four-strong British team of Kathleen Dawson, Adam Peaty, James Guy and Anna Hopkin touched in 3min 37.58sec to break the world record of 3:38.41 set by China last year. As an added bonus, Hopkin was far enough ahead in the freestyle leg to fend off a late charge from US speedster Dressel, a fact she revelled in: "It's cool to say I've killed Dressel!" — AFP

Inclusive or unfair? Transgender weightlifter sparks Olympic debate

TOKYO: Transgender weightlifter Laurel Hubbard makes her Olympic debut in Tokyo today, with the New Zealander's historic appearance igniting heated debate on one of sport's most divisive issues. Hubbard was born male and competed as a man before transitioning to become a woman in her 30s, taking up the sport again after meeting the International Olympic Committee (IOC) guidelines for transgender athletes.

The IOC says she is the first openly transgender woman to compete at the Games, hailing it as a landmark moment for the Olympic movement. "Laurel Hubbard is a woman, is competing under the rules of her federation and we have to pay tribute to her courage and tenacity in competing and qualifying for the Games," IOC medical chief Richard Budgett told reporters in Tokyo. However, her presence in the women's +87kg category on the elite stage raises complex issues of bioethics, human rights, science, fairness and identity in sport. Supporters say her appearance is a victory for inclusion and trans rights. Critics argue she has an unfair advantage over female rivals due to physical attributes locked into her body during her decades as a male.

Debate on the issue is intense and sometimes vitriolic, with barbs flying from both sides online, prompting to New Zealand Olympic Committee's to take steps to shield Hubbard from social media trolls. But the IOC concedes there are legitimate questions about whether Hubbard has — in the jargon-heavy language the sporting body uses to discuss the issue — a "disproportionate competitive advantage".

Searching for 'sweet spot'

Female sporting advocates, including pioneering gay tennis star Martina Navratilova, have expressed concern that including transgender competitors is unfair and threatens to undermine hard-fought gains in lifting the status of women's sport.

"I am happy to address a transgender woman in whatever form she prefers, but I would not be happy to compete against her. It would not be fair," she said. Caitlyn Jenner, who won Olympic gold in the men's decathlon at the 1976 Olympics before coming out as a woman in 2015, declared earlier this year: "It just isn't fair." There are also fears that including trans women in high-impact sports could jeopardize the safety of other competitors, prompting World Rugby to ban them from international competition last year. But some national unions such as New Zealand Rugby have indicated they will allow trans women in grassroots competitions, underlining how opinions are divided on the issue. In making its decision, World Rugby cited scientific studies showing males were around 30 percent stronger than females.

University of Otago physiologist Alison Heather told AFP other male physical advantages included longer limbs and higher muscle mass, as well as a larger heart and greater lung capacity, which increases oxygen flow and endurance. But the IOC's Budgett said it was not as simple as comparing males to females, arguing it was possible trans women experienced a drop in performance when they underwent the process of transition. Budgett said more research was needed, adding: "Consider the fact there have been no openly transgender women at the top level until now (and) I think the threat to women's sport has probably been overstated." — AFP



GOLD COAST: In this file photo taken on April 9, 2018, New Zealand's Laurel Hubbard competes during the women's +90kg weightlifting final at the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games in Gold Coast, Australia. — AFP



TOKYO: France's Mourad Aliev waits outside the ring after losing by disqualification against Britain's Frazer Clarke during their men's super-heavy (over 91kg) quarter-final boxing match during the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games at the Kokugikan Arena in Tokyo yesterday. — AFP

French boxer stages ringside sit-in protest after Olympic 'injustice'

TOKYO: A French super-heavyweight boxer lashed out at an "injustice" and sat in protest on the side of the ring after he was disqualified for headbutting in the Tokyo Olympics quarter-finals yesterday. In what was the first major controversy in the boxing in the Japanese capital, Mourad Aliev was disqualified in the second round against Britain's Frazer Clarke.

The 26-year-old Aliev sat beside the ring ropes afterwards, seething, and claimed that officials had admitted they had made a mistake. "I sat down to protest against the unfairness for me," he said. "I prepared for these Games for four years... I really wanted to fight against the injustice, so that was my way to show that I don't agree with that decision."

He added: "So the judges went to discuss together

to know what happened. They said that I would have won, however it was already written that I was disqualified so the decision cannot be unmade. It was already too late."

Aliev said that the referee had failed to give him any warning before the bout was called off. "I was just stopped without any warning and they just told me that 'you lost' — just like that," he said. "So I think it was an act of sabotage."

Clarke, who had cuts to both eyes, called the situation "confusing". "The referee made his decision, that's what he's there to do. There's a bunch of great referees and officials here so you know we have to believe in what they do. "I think they've done whatever they deemed to be correct."

Clarke said that he told Aliev "to calm down". "I've been in these situations myself, often you're not thinking with your head, you're thinking with your heart and your emotions are all over the place," he said. Controversial scoring is often a feature of Olympic boxing, but the Rio 2016 competition was marred by especially poor judging and an IOC taskforce took over running the sport at the Tokyo Games to prevent a repeat. — AFP



Jacobs storms to shock Olympic 100m crown as Italy celebrates golden double

TOKYO: Lamont Marcell Jacobs stormed to a shock victory in the Olympics 100m final yesterday to cap a golden double for Italy on a dramatic day of athletics action at the Tokyo Games. Jacobs became the first Italian in history to be crowned Olympic 100m champion after powering home in a blistering 9.80sec, with Fred Kerley of the United States taking silver in 9.84sec and Canada's Andre de Grasse bronze in 9.89sec.

The 26-year-old Jacobs erupted as he crossed the finish line and leapt into the arms of compatriot Gianmarco Tamberi, who only moments earlier had clinched a rare shared gold medal for Italy in the high jump after a duel with Qatari world champion Mutaz Essa Barshim.

It was the final act of a pulsating day three of track and field at the Olympic Stadium which also saw a brilliant world record-breaking gold medal victory in the triple jump for Venezuela's two-time world champion Yulimar Rojas. But the undisputed headline-grabbing performance of the night belonged to Italy's Jacobs, who had never previously gone under 10 seconds before the 2021 season.

The muscular El Paso, Texas-born sprinter had only finished third in his semi-final earlier on Sunday, clocking 9.84sec behind China's Su Bingtian and Ronnie Baker of the US to qualify for the final as one of the two fastest losers.

Golden dream

But in the final he roared from the blocks, hit the front at around the 50-metre mark and then held on to become the first Olympic 100m gold medalist of the post-USain Bolt era. He was greeted by high jumper Tamberi, who had clinched a share of the gold medal with Barshim minutes earlier.

Both men hugged after settling for gold having both recorded a best clearance of 2.37 metres. "This is a dream I don't want to wake up from," said Barshim. "But we are here today sharing this moment and all the sacrifices. It's really worth it now in this moment."

In the triple jump meanwhile, Rojas did her best to electrify a largely empty stadium with a scintillating world record with her last leap of 15.67m, smashing the previous best of 15.50m set by Ukraine's Inessa Kravets in 1995. "I am lost for words. I can't describe this feeling and this moment," Rojas said. "Gold medal winner, with an Olympic record, and a world record... Wow. It is a fantastic night." It was the first world record of the Tokyo Olympics athletics program.

Golden Gong

Portugal's Patricia Mamona won silver with a national best of 15.01m, while Spain's Ana Peleteiro jumped 14.87m. Earlier yesterday, China's Gong Lijiao claimed gold in the women's shot put after leading the competition from start to finish. Gong sealed her win with a personal best of 20.58 meters on her sixth and final attempt having led from her opening effort of 19.95m.

American Raven Saunders took silver with 19.79m, while New Zealand veteran Valerie Adams, in her fifth Olympics, was left delighted as she claimed bronze with 19.62 to go with golds in 2008 and 2012, and silver in 2016.

It marked the end of a long journey to gold for the 32-year-old Gong, a bronze medalist at the 2008 Olympics in Beijing and a silver medalist four years later in London. In the women's 100m hurdles semi-finals, Puerto Rico's Jasmine Camacho-Quinn set an Olympic record to qualify for Monday's final with a



TOKYO: Italy's Lamont Marcell Jacobs celebrates as he crosses the finish line to win the men's 100m final during the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games at the Olympic Stadium in Tokyo yesterday. —AFP



TOKYO: Gold medalist Mutaz Essa Barshim (left) of Team Qatar and silver medalist Gianmarco Tamberi of Team Italy celebrate on the track following the Men's High Jump Final during the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games at the Olympic Stadium in Tokyo yesterday

superb display of technique and power.

Camacho-Quinn surged home in 12.26sec, smashing Sally Pearson's previous Olympic record set in 2012 of 12.35sec. The 24-year-old's performance suggested that world record holder Keni Harrison may once again be kept waiting for her first major outdoor title. The American favorite finished second in her heat in 12.51sec, trailing Jamaica's Britany

more records might be within reach. Thompson-Herah would almost certainly have clocked a faster time on Saturday had she not started celebrating well before the finish line, potentially edging her closer to Griffith-Joyner's 100m world record of 10.49sec, long regarded as untouchable.

Now Thompson-Herah is training her sights on Monday's opening heats in the 200m, where the Olympic and world record remains Griffith Joyner's 21.34sec, set at the drug-tainted 1988 Seoul Games. To threaten that, Thompson-Herah would need to significantly improve her 200m personal best of 21.66sec, set in Beijing in 2015. Yet after her 100m win on Saturday, Thompson-Herah says as far as her future is concerned, "anything is possible". Asked if she believed Griffith Joyner's 100m world record was attainable, she replied: "Most definitely."

"I think I could have gone faster if I wasn't pointing and celebrating early," she told AFP. "I wanted to show there was more in store. Hopefully one day I can unleash

Anderson (12.40sec).

In the opening rounds of the men's 400m, world champion Stephen Gardiner of the Bahamas and American Michael Cherry led a host of contenders into Monday's semi-finals of what promises to be an ultra-competitive race. In the 400m hurdles semi-final, world champion Karsten Warholm qualified safely for the final along with US rival Rai Benjamin. —AFP

that time." Thompson-Herah admitted that she had surprised even herself with her performances in Tokyo so far.

Lurking threats

Earlier this year she was still struggling for form and fitness, troubled by a sore Achilles. She finished third in both the 100m and 200m at the Jamaican Olympic trials in June, where Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce — who she beat for gold on Saturday — won both races.

"I never expected to run this fast," Thompson-Herah said. "Even though I felt great during the rounds, sometimes in the finals you get nerves. Behind this 10.6 was a lot of nerves. But I said 'You can do this, you've been here before, just execute.'" The 200m is likely to pose a stiffer challenge for Thompson-Herah, however. Although one obstacle has been removed, with the injury to Britain's Dina Asher-Smith that forced the reigning 200m world champion to withdraw from Monday's opening rounds, there are pitfalls lurking throughout the field. —AFP

Tokyo Olympics medals won yesterday

- Artistic Gymnastics - Men's Floor Exercise**
GOLD - DOLGOPYAT Artem - Zionist entity
SILVER - ZAPATA Rayderley - Spain
BRONZE - XIAO Ruoteng - China
- Artistic Gymnastics - Women's Vault**
GOLD - ANDRADE Rebeca - Brazil
SILVER - SKINNER Mykayla - United States of America
BRONZE - YEO Seojeong - Republic of Korea
- Artistic Gymnastics - Women's Vault**
GOLD - WHITLOCK Max - Great Britain
SILVER - LEE Chih Kai - Chinese Taipei
BRONZE - KAYA Kazuma - Japan
- Artistic Gymnastics - Women's Uneven Bars**
GOLD - DERWAELE Nina - Belgium
SILVER - ILIANKOVA Anastasia - Russian Olympic Committee
BRONZE - LEE Sunisa - United States of America
- Athletics - Women's Shot Put**
GOLD - GONG Lijiao - China
SILVER - SAUNDERS Raven - United States of America
BRONZE - ADAMS Valerie - New Zealand
- Athletics - Men's High Jump**
GOLD - BARSHIM Mutaz Essa - Qatar
GOLD - TAMBERI Gianmarco - Italy
BRONZE - NEDASEKAU Maksim - Belarus
- Athletics - Women's Triple Jump**
GOLD - ROJAS Yulimar - Venezuela
SILVER - MAMONA Patricia - Portugal
BRONZE - PELETEIRO Ana - Spain
- Athletics - Men's 100m**
GOLD - JACOBS Lamont Marcell - Italy
SILVER - KERLEY Fred - United States of America
BRONZE - de GRASSE Andre - Canada
- Badminton - Women's Singles**
GOLD - CHEN Yu Fei - China
SILVER - TAI Tzu-Ying - Chinese Taipei
BRONZE - P V Sindhu - India
- Cycling BMX Freestyle - Women's Park**
GOLD - WORTHINGTON Charlotte - Grain Britain
SILVER - ROBERTS Hannah - United States of America
BRONZE - DUCARROZ Nikita - Switzerland
- Cycling BMX Freestyle - Men's Park**
GOLD - MARTIN Logan - Australia
SILVER - DHERS Daniel - Venezuela
BRONZE - BROOKS Declan - Grain Britain
- Divng - Women's 3m Springboard**
GOLD - SHI Tingmao - China
SILVER - WANG Han - China
BRONZE - PALMER Krysta - United States of America
- Fencing - Men's Foil Team**
GOLD - France
SILVER - Russian Olympic Committee
BRONZE - United States of America
- Golf - Men's Individual Stroke Play**
GOLD - SCHAUFFELE Xander - United States of America
SILVER - SABBATINI Rory - Slovakia
BRONZE - PAN C T - Chinese Taipei
- Sailing - Women's One Person Dinghy - Laser Radial**
GOLD - RINDOM Anne-Marie - Denmark
SILVER - OLSSON Josefina - Sweden
BRONZE - BOUWMEESTER Marit - Netherlands
- Swimming - Men's 50m Freestyle**
GOLD - DRESSEL Caeleb - United States of America
SILVER - MANAUDOU Florent - France
BRONZE - FRATUS Bruno - Brazil
- Swimming - Women's 50m Freestyle**
GOLD - McKEON Emma - Australia
SILVER - SJOESTROEM Sarah - Sweden
BRONZE - BLUME Pernille - Denmark
- Swimming - Men's 1500m Freestyle**
GOLD - FINKE Robert - United States of America
SILVER - ROMANCHUK Mykhailo - Ukraine
BRONZE - WELLBROCK Florian - Germany
- Swimming - Women's 4 x 100m Medley Relay**
GOLD - Australia
SILVER - United States of America
BRONZE - Canada
- Swimming - Men's 4 x 100m Medley Relay**
GOLD - United States of America
SILVER - Great Britain
BRONZE - Italy
- Tennis - Women's Doubles**
GOLD - Czech Republic
SILVER - Switzerland
BRONZE - Brazil
- Tennis - Men's Singles**
GOLD - ZVEREV Alexander - Germany
SILVER - KHACHANOV Karen - Russian Olympic Committee
BRONZE - CARRENO BUSTA Pablo - Spain
- Tennis - Men's Doubles**
GOLD - Russian Olympic Committee
SILVER - Russian Olympic Committee
BRONZE - Australia
- Weightlifting - Women's 76kg**
GOLD - DAJOMES BARRERA Neisi Patricia - Ecuador
SILVER - NYE Katherine Elizabeth - United States of America
BRONZE - FUENTES ZAVALA Aremi - Mexico

Thompson-Herah eyes Olympic 'double-double'

TOKYO: Elaine Thompson-Herah sets out to follow up her Olympic 100 meters gold medal in the 200m today with the athletics world wondering how much faster she can run. The 29-year-old Jamaican sprint queen stormed to victory in the 100m on Saturday, eclipsing Florence Griffith-Joyner's 33-year-old Olympic record by 0.01sec with a time of 10.61sec. The win left Thompson-Herah firmly on course to repeat her 2016 Rio Olympics 100m-200m sprint double, for what would be an unprecedented women's "double-double". The victory also left hanging the question of how much Thompson-Herah has left in the tank — and whether

Classifieds

Hospitals & Clinics

Sabah Hospital	24812000
Amiri Hospital	22450005
Maternity Hospital	24843100
Mubarak Al-Kabir Hospital	25312700
Chest Hospital	24849400
Farwaniya Hospital	24892010
Adan Hospital	23940620
Ibn Sina Hospital	24840300
Al-Razi Hospital	24846000
Physiotherapy Hospital	24874330/9

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
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NOTICE
July 29, 2021

Mr. Thomas Rijo Roy, son of Mr. Roy Pothen Thomas, resident of Roy Bhavan Vazhuvady, Mavelikara, Thazhakkara, Alappuzha, Kerala-690102 and Ms. Kezia Mariam Cherian, daughter of Mr. Vinil Cherian, resident of Thekkil Puthen Veedu, Kallumkal, PO Thiruvalla, Pathanamthitta, Kerala-689102 both Indian nationals presently residing in Kuwait, have given notice of intended marriage between them under the Foreign Marriage Act, 1969. If anyone has any objection to the proposed marriage, he/she may file the same with the undersigned according to the procedure laid down under the Act/Rule with in thirty days from the date of publication of this notice. Communications in this regard can be made by Email (cw2.kuwa.it@mea.gov.in) / letters / telephonic calls (00965 - 22550171, 00965 - 22533125.)

K. Rethore
(K.S Rethore) First Secretary (CA) and Marriage Officer, Embassy of India, Kuwait

Sport Times

MONDAY, AUGUST 2, 2021

Jacobs wins first post-Bolt Olympic 100m gold; Dressel joins elite club



Qatar's gold medalist Mutaz Essa Barshim celebrates on the track following the Men's High Jump Final during the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games at the Olympic Stadium in Tokyo yesterday. — AFP



TOKYO: Italy's Lamont Marcell Jacobs celebrates with the flag of Italy after winning the men's 100m final during the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games at the Olympic Stadium in Tokyo yesterday. — AFP

TOKYO: Italy's Lamont Marcell Jacobs outshone a field of unusual suspects to claim a shock Olympic gold in the men's 100 meters yesterday, breaking retired Jamaican star Usain Bolt's 13-year hold on the blue-riband event. Meanwhile, Caeleb Dressel powered to his fifth swimming gold medal of the Tokyo Olympics as the United States won their duel in the pool with Australia, while Xander Schauffele claimed golf gold. In Tennis, Germany's Alexander Zverev won gold after beating Russia's Karen Khachanov in the men's final.

Jacobs, 26, timed a European record of 9.80 seconds, with American Fred Kerley taking silver in 9.84sec in one of the most understated major championship 100m races of recent times. Canada's Andre de Grasse, a bronze medalist at the 2016 Rio Games, repeated the feat in 9.89sec in Tokyo. "It's a dream, it is fantastic. Maybe tomorrow I can imagine what they are saying, but today it is incredible," said Texas-born Jacobs, who until 2020 had never gone below the 10sec barrier. It was my childhood dream to win an Olympic Games and obviously a dream can turn into something different, but to run this final and win it is a dream come true."

Qatar's Mutaz Barshim and Italy's Gianmarco Tamberi shared a rare Olympic athletics gold in the high jump. Barshim gave Qatar its first Olympic track and field title, and Tamberi recorded a best clearance of 2.37 meters. Maksim Nedasekau of Belarus also cleared that height to set a national

record. He though missed out on a share of the gold because of an earlier failure. The jubilant duo declined the chance of winning the title outright by turning down a jump-off. Also yesterday, China's Gong Lijiao lived up to her pre-Olympic form by winning gold in the women's shot put, denying New Zealand veteran Valerie Adams a third successive gold.

New record

Dressel dominated the men's 50m freestyle final, setting a new Olympic record of 21.07sec, and then returned to help his team smash the world mark in the men's 4x100m medley relay. The other undoubted star of the pool was Emma McKeon, who finished with four golds to become the first woman to win seven swimming medals at a single Games.

McKeon provided a golden finish when she helped Australia to the women's 4x100m medley relay crown, less than 40 minutes after winning the 50m freestyle. US swimmer Robert Finke touched first in the men's 1500m freestyle to make it a distance double after winning the 800m earlier in the meeting. The United States ended with 11 golds in the pool, two ahead of fierce rivals Australia, whose nine golds marked their best-ever showing.

Dressel, 24, didn't get close to matching Michael Phelps' eight-gold haul at Beijing 2008 but he joins just four other swimmers with at least five wins at a single Games. "I'm proud of myself," said the

American, who also won two relay golds at the 2016 Rio Games. "I think I reached what my potential was here at these Games.

McKeon, 27, became just the second woman to win seven medals at one Olympics in any sport, after Ukrainian gymnast Maria Gorokhovskaya in 1952, and is now Australia's most successful Olympian, with five gold medals and 11 overall. "I look at the athletes that have gone before me and have been so impressed and inspired by what they've done but I've never been into the stats and medal counts," she said. "But to be in that kind of company, it's an honor and I know I've worked hard for it."

US golf star Schauffele held his nerve at the Kasumigaseki Country Club to see off Slovakia's Rory Sabbatini by one shot. The American world number five finished on 18-under par 266 after carding a 67 while veteran Sabbatini shot a stunning, course-record 10-under-par 61. Behind them, there was a seven-man playoff for bronze.

US gymnastics great Simone Biles, struggling with a debilitating mental block, withdrew from the floor final, leaving her with just one more chance of competing in Tokyo.

With Biles taking a back seat due to mental health issues, freshly crowned all-around champion Sunisa Lee goes for uneven bars gold as the apparatus finals begin. Britain's Charlotte Worthington won the first BMX freestyle gold in Olympic history, while Australia's Martin Logan took the men's title. — AFP

Slovenia show class in basketball defeat of Spain

TOKYO: Ricky Rubio missed a three-point attempt in the final minute as Luka Doncic's Slovenia won a pulsating Olympic men's basketball game 95-87 against Spain and will now face Germany in the quarter-finals. Spain have the unenviable task of playing reigning champions the United States in the last eight tomorrow. France, who inflicted the Americans' first defeat at an Olympics since 2004 in their first game, will play Italy for a place in the semi-finals, and Australia take on Argentina.

Rubio scored 18 points to keep Spain in contention in their final Group C game in Saitama, but the Slovenians were more efficient in the closing stages and closed out the game with a late burst crowned by Edo Muric's three-pointer after Zoran Dragic and Klemen Prepelic had both sunk two free throws.

Dallas Mavericks star Doncic scored a modest 12 points but Denver Nuggets power forward Vlatko Cancar took up the scoring with 22 points. Rubio had kept Spain in the game on several occasions, scoring a layup with just over a minute remaining in a see-sawing game. The experienced Minnesota Timberwolves guard then missed a jump shot in the paint, handing the momentum back to the Slovenians. — AFP



SAITAMA: Slovenia's Luka Doncic jumps for a rebound in the men's preliminary round group C basketball match between Spain and Slovenia during the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games at the Saitama Super Arena in Saitama yesterday. — AFP

Olympic Committee said. But in the last week, temperatures in Sapporo hit over 34 degrees Celsius (93 degrees Fahrenheit), and they are forecast to hover between maximums of 31 and 34 degrees over the next week, when the race walks and marathons will take place. The mercury has surged even higher elsewhere in Hokkaido, with one town in the region becoming the first place in Japan this year to record temperatures over 38 degrees. The men's 20-kilometre race walk takes place in the region on Thursday, followed by the women's race and the marathons for men and women over the next few days.

Temperatures in Tokyo over the coming week are forecast to range from maximums of 30 to 34 Celsius. Heat has been a persistent concern for organizers, with a raft of counter-measures drawn up including misting stations and ice jackets.

In its bid for the Games, Tokyo argued that its summer included "many days of mild and sunny weather" and would offer "an ideal climate for athletes to per-

form their best," but many competitors and volunteers have struggled with the conditions.

Tennis matches have now been pushed back until later in the day after multiple complaints, with Russian player Daniil Medvedev warning "I can die" as he sweated through one match. Organizers yesterday defended their heat measures, but Tokyo 2020 CEO Toshiro Muto admitted "this is something we need to be vigilant about."

He said 30 people involved with the Games have so far been treated for "heat illness", which organizers say is milder than heatstroke. Those affected were mostly Games staff and volunteers, and none were in serious condition, he added.

While the Games have been held in places that are hotter or more humid than Tokyo, including Athens and Beijing, Japan's sweltering summers offer both, in an unpleasant and sometimes deadly combination. But, Muto added, "so far the counter-measures are going quite well, are successful." — AFP



Tokyo Olympics medals table after yesterday's events (G = Gold, S = Silver, B = Bronze, T = Total):

	G	S	B	T
China	24	14	13	51
United States	20	23	16	59
Japan	17	5	9	31
Australia	14	3	14	31
Russian Olympic Committee	12	19	13	44
Great Britain	10	10	12	32
France	5	10	6	21
South Korea	5	4	8	17
Italy	4	8	15	27
Netherlands	4	7	6	17
Germany	4	4	11	19
New Zealand	4	3	4	11
Czech Republic	4	3	1	8
Canada	3	4	7	14
Switzerland	3	4	5	12
Croatia	3	2	2	7
Taiwan	2	4	4	10
Brazil	2	3	5	10
Hungary	2	2	2	6
Slovenia	2	1	1	4
Ecuador	2	0	0	2
Kosovo	2	0	0	2
Qatar	2	0	0	2
Spain	1	3	3	7
Georgia	1	3	1	5
Romania	1	3	0	4
Sweden	1	3	0	4
Venezuela	1	3	0	4
Hong Kong	1	2	0	3
Slovakia	1	2	0	3
South Africa	1	2	0	3
Austria	1	1	3	5
Denmark	1	1	2	4
Serbia	1	1	2	4
Belgium	1	1	1	3
Jamaica	1	1	1	3
Norway	1	1	1	3
Poland	1	1	0	2
Tunisia	1	1	0	2
Ireland	1	0	2	3
Turkey	1	0	2	3
Zionist entity	1	0	2	3
Belarus	1	0	1	2
Estonia	1	0	1	2
Fiji	1	0	1	2
Uzbekistan	1	0	1	2
Bermuda	1	0	0	1
Ethiopia	1	0	0	1
Greece	1	0	0	1
Iran	1	0	0	1
Latvia	1	0	0	1
Philippines	1	0	0	1
Thailand	1	0	0	1
Colombia	0	2	1	3
Dominican Republic	0	2	0	2
Ukraine	0	1	5	6
Indonesia	0	1	2	3
Mongolia	0	1	2	3
Cuba	0	1	1	2
India	0	1	1	2
Portugal	0	1	1	2
San Marino	0	1	1	2
Uganda	0	1	1	2
Bulgaria	0	1	0	1
Jordan	0	1	0	1
North Macedonia	0	1	0	1
Turkmenistan	0	1	0	1
Kazakhstan	0	0	3	3
Mexico	0	0	3	3
Azerbaijan	0	0	2	2
Egypt	0	0	2	2
Argentina	0	0	1	1
Finland	0	0	1	1
Ivory Coast	0	0	1	1
Kuwait	0	0	1	1
Malaysia	0	0	1	1

Heatwave hits Japan site of Olympic marathon

TOKYO: Japan's northern Hokkaido region was supposed to offer cooler climes for next week's Olympic marathons and race walks, but now the area is battling a heatwave. Olympic organizers moved the two events from Tokyo in 2019, worried that even shifting the start times to dawn would not be enough to keep athletes safe from the heat.

The summer temperatures in Hokkaido's Sapporo were expected to be kinder — around five or six degrees Celsius cooler than Tokyo, the International