



**6** Sisi looks to new desert capital to cement legacy



**8** Airbus takes off with big order on first day of Dubai Airshow



**16** Australia beat New Zealand to win maiden T20 World Cup



# Amir accepts govt resignation as pardon decrees published

Opposition exiles to start returning today • 6 'Abdaly cell' abettors freed



KUWAIT: Inmates imprisoned in the Abdaly cell case are welcomed after they were freed yesterday under the Amiri pardon. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: HH the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah yesterday accepted the resignation of the government, tendered last week, and asked HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah and his ministers to remain as a caretaker Cabinet until a new government is formed. The next step will be for HH the Amir to ask the outgoing prime minister to form the next Cabinet, which is the most likely scenario, or name a new premier to form the government.

Sheikh Sabah tendered the resignation of his Cabinet after approving two Amiri decrees to pardon 11 former opposition MPs and activists who have been living in exile in Turkey for over three years to escape jail terms for taking part in storming the National Assembly building following a protest in 2011. It also came after a national dialogue between the government and opposition lawmakers that resulted in recommending to HH the Amir to pardon opposition convicts and prisoners, which the Amir ordered.

Meanwhile, the two pardon decrees became effective yesterday when they were published in the official gazette. The first decree pardoned members of the opposition, who have been living in exile for years. They include prominent former opposition lawmakers Musallam Al-Barrak, Faisal Al-Mislem, Mubarak Al-Waalan, Jamaan Al-Harbash, Salem Al-

Namlan and Khaled Al-Tahous, in addition to five opposition activists.

All the 11 were sentenced to several years in jail by the court of cassation in the summer of 2018 for storming the Assembly building. The first group of the pardoned politicians is scheduled to return to the country today, while the rest are expected to return in a few days. In his first interview since the sentence, Barrak told Sarmad online news service that he will continue to be the secretary general of the Popular Action Front opposition group. He thanked HH the Amir for pardoning them and all those who worked towards the pardon.

The second decree pardoned 24 Shiite prisoners who were jailed for giving shelter to members of a pro-Iran group convicted of plotting attacks on Kuwait, known as the Abdaly cell. Six of the prisoners were pardoned from serving the rest of their sentences.

They included Shiite cleric Hussein Al-Maatouq. They were released from the Central Jail yesterday. The sentences of the remaining 18 prisoners were reduced by half.

MP Bader Al-Humaidi said the new Cabinet must reflect the new developments in the country as a result of the national dialogue and should cooperate with the Assembly. But two opposition MPs expressed their opposition to the reappointment of the prime minister to form the new Cabinet.

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## Gaddafi son files to run for president



SEBHA, Libya: Seif al-Islam Gaddafi, son of slain Libyan dictator Muammar Gaddafi, registers to run in the country's presidential polls in this southern city yesterday. — AFP

TRIPOLI: Wanted Libyan war crimes suspect Seif al-Islam Gaddafi, son of slain dictator Muammar Gaddafi and once seen as his heir apparent, registered to run yesterday for next month's presidential election. Libya's first ever direct presidential poll, with a first round on Dec 24, would mark the climax of a process launched last year by the United Nations to try to draw a line under years of violence since the revolt that toppled Gaddafi in 2011.

Wanted by the International Criminal Court (ICC) for crimes against humanity allegedly committed during the NATO-backed uprising, Seif al-Islam completed "all the required legal conditions", the election commission said. "Seif al-Islam Gaddafi submitted... his candidacy for the presidential election to the High National Electoral Commission office in the city of Sebha," it said in a statement.

The 49-year-old, sporting a salt-and-pepper beard, recited a verse from the Holy Quran and

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## PACI adds new features to Kuwait Mobile ID app

KUWAIT: The Public Authority for Civil Information (PACI) yesterday launched a new update of the Kuwait Mobile ID application to include many important mod-

## After COP26, world needs urgent action

GLASGOW: The world must act quickly to cut greenhouse gas emissions and avoid "catastrophic" global warming, scientists and politicians warned after nearly 200 countries reached a last-minute agreement in Glasgow on Saturday. After two weeks of non-stop negotiations, almost all the world's nations have agreed on a compromise to speed up

## Drought forces Iraq farmers to leave their land

MOSUL: Iraqi wheat farmer Khamis Ahmad Abbas lost it all when his battle with drought forced him to abandon his land, pushing him into unemployment. Experts have warned that record low rainfall, compounded by climate change, are threatening social and economic disaster in war-scarred

ifications and services. In a statement, PACI Director General Musaed Al-Asousi said several features have been added to the 1.9.0 version of the application, namely an integrated e-wallet for various government identities and documents, driving license and birth certificate in the first stage.

The e-wallet allows adding any identity or government document in an easy way and linking it with various government agencies that issue these documents, such as the ministries of interior, health and others, Asousi said. The wallet also provides an interactive way to verify the validity of the document through a

the fight against rising temperatures.

But the deals stuck under the "Glasgow Pact" will not result in limiting global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, the most ambitious objective of the 2015 Paris Agreement. "Climate catastrophe is still knocking on the door," warned UN boss Antonio Guterres. "We have kept 1.5 within reach, but the pulse is weak," said Alok Sharma, Britain's COP26 president who has been overseeing the conference in the country's role as host.

COP27 is to be held in Egypt next November. Joeri Rogelj, director of research at the Grantham Institute, Imperial College London, said: "We

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Iraq, "Growing wheat and barley is a gamble. It all depends on the rain," said the 42-year-old father of nine.

Unable to make ends meet, Abbas quit his land in the Plains of Nineveh, northeast of Mosul, part of the so-called Fertile Crescent where agriculture was born 12,000 years ago. With temperatures soaring above 50 degrees Celsius and little rain, Abbas's fields quickly dried up. Three months ago, he packed up his family - two wives and nine children - and moved to Mosul. "Now I am unemployed," he told AFP, as he whiled away the time

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QR code, in addition to a liveness detection feature for the registration process, which increases security and privacy during registration, he added.

The 'forgot password' feature has also been added to the application, which allows resetting the password through the liveness detection feature, in addition to the third COVID-19 vaccine dose data, Asousi said. This update is a reflection of cooperation of the ministries of interior and health, in line with directives of HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah to promote digital transformation. — KUNA



GLASGOW: Britain's President for COP26 Alok Sharma reacts as he makes his concluding remarks during the COP26 UN Climate Change Conference on Saturday. — AFP



TEL KAIF, Iraq: A farmer works on agricultural land on the outskirts of this town north of Mosul on Oct 26, 2021. — AFP



## Local

## Kuwait Crown Prince receives state officials



KUWAIT: His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received yesterday at Bayan Palace National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Justice and Minister of State for Nazaha (integrity) Enhancement Abdullah Al-Roumi. — KUNA photos

## Heads of authorities meet upon Amir's directives



KUWAIT: National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem (right), His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah (center) and President of the Supreme Court and Chairman of the Court of Cassation Justice Ahmad Al-Ajeel meet at Bayan Palace yesterday. — Amiri Diwan photo

KUWAIT: Upon directives from His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the heads of the three authorities met at Bayan Palace yesterday. The meeting included Speaker of the National Assembly

Marzouq Al-Ghanem, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and President of the Supreme Court and Chairman of the Court of Cassation Justice Ahmad Al-Ajeel. — KUNA

## Drought forces Iraq farmers to...

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in a coffee shop in Iraq's second city. Once the seat of the Islamic State group's self-styled "caliphate", Mosul is still rebuilding after the devastating 2017 battle which ousted the jihadists. "Sometimes I get small jobs, just enough to feed my family," said Abbas bitterly, who longs for the old days when he harvested wheat and barley like his father and grandfather before him.

His plight is shared by many farmers in the Nineveh Plains. According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), 447 families who were forced from their land in Nineveh by IS and then returned to it after the jihadists' defeat were forced to leave again between June and July this year because of the drought. "Nearly all, if not all, the families were displaced due to inability to feed their cattle," the IOM said.

For centuries, the Nineveh Plains were the breadbasket of Iraq, with 6,000 sq km of arable land, said

agriculture ministry spokesman Hamid Al-Nayef. But this year, Nineveh province has been Iraq's "most affected" by drought and exceptionally high temperatures. In 2020, 927,000 tons of wheat were harvested in Nineveh, making it a "self-sufficient" province, said Abdelwahab Al-Jarjiri, who heads the local cereal authority. This year production plunged to 89,000 tons because of the drought.

The effects of low rainfall have been exacerbated by falling water levels on the Tigris and Euphrates rivers as a result of dam-building in neighboring Turkey and Iran, said Samah Hadid of the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC). "Iraq is facing its worst drought in modern times. This is due to record low levels of rainfall, reductions in water flow from its neighbors - which has primarily hit the Euphrates and Tigris rivers - and there is no doubt climate change has contributed to this crisis," she said.

"Far from being a problem in the distant future, climate change is already taking effect in the region and we see this clearly in parts of Iraq." This month, a dam near the northern town of Zawita dried up completely for the first time since its construction in 2009, the head of the local irrigation authority Hega Abdelwahid said. The dam, which used to contain up to 50,000 cubic meters of water, was fed by melting snow but there was very little rain this year, Abdelwahid said, and all that is left is cracked earth. — AFP

him in Zintan has repeatedly refused to hand him over to The Hague-based ICC, and freed him in 2017. A spokesman for the ICC, Fadi Abdallah, told Libya's Al-Ahram television that the court still wants Seif al-Islam.

Analysts say Seif al-Islam's bid for the presidency will be problematic for Libya's electoral process. "This is only going to complicate the electoral process further," said Wolfram Lacher, a senior associate at the German Institute for International and Security Affairs.

World powers meeting in Paris warned Friday that Libya was at a "crossroads" which would determine its future. "We urge all Libyan stakeholders and candidates to respect their commitments towards holding elections on 24 December 2021 (and) to accept the results of free, fair and inclusive elections," they said in a statement.

Despite a year of relative peace following a ceasefire between eastern and western camps, the process has been overshadowed by wrangling over the legal basis for the votes and the powers attached. Jalel Harchaoui, a Libya specialist at the Global Initiative think-tank, said that "the fact that Seif has submitted his candidacy can only add to the fragility of the election project".

Speculation has also been mounting over possible presidential bids by eastern-based military chief Khalifa Haftar and current Prime Minister Abdulhamid Dbeibah. Former interior minister Fathi Bashgha has confirmed he will run, while others expected to do so include diplomats Aref Al-Nayed and Ibrahim Dabbachi, as well as comedian Hatem Al-Kour.

"On December 24, Libyans will be able to choose a president... from among a former aggressor, a man who committed war crimes to seize power, and another one known for his obscene corruption," said Tarek Megerisi, a senior policy fellow at the European Council on Foreign Relations. He was alluding to Seif al-Islam, Haftar and Dbeibah. — AFP

## ACK students secure first, second places in Hackathon 2021

KUWAIT: Five Engineering students from the Australian College of Kuwait (ACK) won first and second places in the Digital Transformation Hackathon 2021 competition, organized by the Ministry of Oil. The competition took place from April 26, and concluded on May 30, 2021; yet, the winners of the competition were announced only on November 1, with an award ceremony held to honor them.

The Digital Transformation Hackathon competition brought together students and recent graduates from numerous universities in Kuwait, along with professionals in the oil industry, to compete in developing applications that can be added to the AGORA platform, which is an open, secure and scalable platform enabling oil and gas industry to connect physical assets to the digital world.

The competition had students compete in teams in various category groups. ACK students competed in the contestant Group A, which consisted of active students from different universities, and in Group D that consisted of fresh graduates or employees with less than five years senior-

ity in a non-oil and gas industry related company.

The team that won the first place (Gold Award) in Group D included two ACK Alumni: Aiya Chen Daoliang, Petroleum Engineering Graduate, and Ahmad Hatem Al-Sheikh, Civil Engineering Graduate. As for the team that won the second place (Silver Award) in Group A, it was composed of Sayuri Chamathka Gunawardena, Petroleum Engineering Graduate; Taiyeba Almgir Almgir, ACK Petroleum Engineering student; and Zahra Ali Sayed AlMousawi, ACK Electrical Engineering student. Both teams were under the supervision of Dr Mohamed Omar, Assistant Professor of Petroleum Engineering at ACK, and Dr Mohamed Mabrok, Associate Professor of Mathematics and Physics at ACK.

Commenting on the success of the students, Dr Mortadha Al Saba, Head of Petroleum Engineering department and Assistant Professor at ACK, said: "This achievement shows the dedication, commitment, and creativity of our engineering students at ACK along with continuous support from our faculty."



KUWAIT: A group photo featuring the winning students and staff from the Australian College of Kuwait.

## After COP26, world needs...

Continued from Page 1

are looking in the right direction, but we need to start moving and global emissions need to decline, immediately, rapidly, and extremely urgently." The agreement in Glasgow was the first time after 25 previous conferences that the words "fossil fuels" and "coal" - the main culprits of global warming - have made it into the final text.

"This is long overdue but very welcome," said Chris Littlecott, fossil fuel transition specialist at the think tank E3G. Their inclusion "confirms that coal is on the conveyor belt to the great trash compactor of history". He said the world now has a decade "to accelerate coal's demise and expand efforts to oil and gas too".

Recognizing coal and oil by name in the text was a painful process, with India and China managing at the last moment to further soften the wording to "phase down" instead of "phase out". The concession prompted a tearful Sharma to apologize to the world. Beijing's shift came as it announced on Wednesday a surprise deal with the United States, the second-largest emitter of greenhouse gases after China. President Joe Biden, who at the start of the summit lashed out at his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping for his absence in Glasgow, is due to hold a video conference with him today.

Beijing needs to deliver on promises made in Glasgow "with action - through putting an expiry date on domestic coal, said Byford Tsang of environmental group E3G. "How countries establish new cooperation to deliver more short-term action over the next 12 months will be the real test of success at Glasgow," the group said, highlighting other COP26 promises on reducing methane emissions, deforestation and the financing of the fossil fuel industry.

If countries, particularly the major emitters, stick to their incremental, "business-as-usual" policies, they will "condemn current and future generations to a world of untold suffering and harm", warned the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS). The poorest countries,

those least responsible for global warming but which are bearing its brunt, fought in Glasgow to obtain specific funding for "loss and damage".

But they reluctantly gave in, agreeing to further dialogue so as not to jeopardize the broader fight against global warming. "We always knew that Glasgow was not the finish line," said US envoy John Kerry on Saturday evening. It was a sentiment echoed by other rich-world politicians. "Now is the time for action and implementation," Dutch premier Mark Rutte tweeted.

French Environment Minister Barbara Pompili said that while COP26 was "far from having saved the planet, it put it on the right track." Pompili told RTL radio that while the final declaration was "not the most ambitious in the world" it represented a "compromise" that had at one point looked elusive. "We have a deal, we have the Glasgow Pact and I can tell you that until last night that was not a given." But Swedish environmental activist Greta Thunberg said the talks had achieved nothing but "blah, blah, blah", echoing earlier comments.

The final text urged nations to accelerate efforts to "phase down" unfettered coal and "phase out" inefficient fossil fuel subsidies. Large emitters China and India had opposed the mention of the polluting fuels, and the language in the final text was significantly more nuanced than earlier drafts. The deal also called on all countries to accelerate their emissions cuts by submitting new national plans by 2022, three years earlier than agreed in Paris.

But after resistance from rich nations led by the United States and EU, the text omitted any reference to a specific finance facility for the loss and damage climate change has already caused in the developing world. It instead only promised future "dialogue" on the subject. "For some loss and damage may be the beginning of conversation and dialogue," said Shauna Aminath, the Maldives environment minister. "But for us this is a matter of survival."

Although host Britain said it wanted COP26 to keep the 1.5C temperature cap in reach, a UN scientific assessment last week said countries' latest climate plans put Earth on course to heat 2.7C. The text noted "with deep regret" that wealthy nations had also failed to stump up a separate annual sum of \$100 billion they promised over a decade ago. — AFP

## Amir accepts govt resignation...

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MP Marzouq Al-Khalifa said the reappointment

of Sheikh Sabah to lead the next Cabinet "will take us back to square one", adding that he will not cooperate with him.

MP Fares Al-Otaibi reiterated that he will not cooperate with Sheikh Sabah if he is appointed as premier. He added that the national dialogue committee equated between those who acted against the interests of the nation and those who defended the country.



Local

# Kuwait says emphatically rejects recurring terrorist attacks on Saudi

Interior Minister urges more GCC cooperation on combating cybercrime



MANAMA: Interior Ministers of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries pose for a group photo during their meeting in Manama, Bahrain yesterday. — KUNA photos



The 38th meeting of the GCC ministers of interior in progress.

MANAMA: The visiting Kuwaiti Minister of Interior Sheikh Thamer Ali Al-Sabah yesterday affirmed the State of Kuwait's categorical rejection of the recurring terrorist attacks on the sisterly Saudi Arabia, targeting civilians and key installations of the kingdom. Addressing the 38th meeting of the GCC ministers of interior, Sheikh Thamer stressed on siding with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia regarding all measures it may take to protect its citizens and territories on grounds that "security of the Gulf is inseparable." He affirmed that these recurring attacks on the Saudi vital and oil sites, designed to target the world energy supplies, war-



Kuwait's Minister of Interior Sheikh Thamer Ali Al-Sabah speaks during the meeting.



GCC Secretary General Dr Nayef Al-Hajraf addresses the gathering.

namely the terrorist attacks with missiles and drones on Saudi Arabia. Speaking at the start of the session, the minister said he and his peers would address issues such as cyber-attacks, guided media and violent extremism. He decried the recurring terrorist attacks targeting the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, reaffirming that Manama supports any measures Riyadh might take in the face of these attacks.

Meanwhile, GCC Secretary General Dr Nayef Al-Hajraf said in a statement that the conferees praised special concern for the joint Gulf security action by the GCC countries' top leaders, adding that during the meeting, the ministers affirmed solidarity with Saudi Arabia and their full support for Riyadh for sake of safeguarding its security, stability and safety. Hajraf added that the ministers applauded a memorandum of understanding between Bahrain and the UAE, inked on margins of the meeting, for cooperation in electronic space and combating cybercrime. Moreover, they valued Manama's approach to establish correction centers and open prisons.

Furthermore, the ministers affirmed necessity of intensifying collective efforts to safeguard the GCC community from narcotics, noting the need for boosting rehabilitation programs and cooperation between public and private institutions in this respect. Furthermore, they stressed on the necessity of intensifying coordination among the security apparatuses to face organized crime and terrorism that target the council member countries. Elaborating, the GCC chief said the ministers during the session examined current preparations for carrying out the joint mobilization drill for the GCC security apparatuses, due in Saudi Arabia in January. — KUNA

“ We cannot be complacent in fight against drugs ”

rant training programs to repulse such offensives. He expressed gratitude to the Kingdom of Bahrain for hosting the meeting that coincided with the 40th anniversary of the GCC. He also indicated that meeting was designed to examine security challenges facing the GCC countries in the shadow of rapid regional events.

"We have taken strides on the path of cooperation and exchange of expertise and we have made great success for upgrading our security apparatuses, thus this cooperation must be bolstered further for sake of confronting all the dangers and

challenges depending on the common destiny of our countries," the Kuwaiti minister noted. He called on the GCC countries to be vigilant in the face of forthcoming serious challenges, warning against that the thoughts of deviation promoted by the terrorists, noting that the terrorist groups have been exploiting social media to affect the youth and promote radical thoughts.

The Kuwaiti Minister of Interior Sheikh Thamer, addressing his peers, noted that increasing dependence on the digital world globally coincided with an increase in cybercrimes; thus there must be collaborated efforts to attain cyber security and create a secure space environment, as basis for development — currently. "We cannot be complacent with respect of the scourge of narcotics," he stressed

further, affirming the approach to continue resisting the aggressive bids by narcotics' dealers "who target our potentials and youth," he said, noting the need to upgrade the means of resisting the drugs' dealing, manufacturing and smuggling, by means of information exchange, in addition to combating money laundering and counterfeiting of foreign currencies. He indicated that the coronavirus crisis added to the burden suffered by the security apparatuses in the GCC countries.

Regional security

Bahraini Minister of Interior Sheikh Rashed bin Abdullah said meanwhile that the 38th GCC interior ministers' meeting aimed at examining latest regional security developments and challenges



MANAMA: Kuwaiti Minister of Interior Sheikh Thamer Ali Al-Sabah meets Saudi Interior Minister Amir Abdulaziz bin Saud. — KUNA photos



Kuwaiti Minister of Interior Sheikh Thamer Ali Al-Sabah meets GCC Secretary General Dr Nayef Al-Hajraf.

## Interior Minister discussed security coordination with GCC counterparts

MANAMA: Kuwaiti Minister of Interior Sheikh Thamer Ali Al-Sabah discussed with Saudi Interior Minister Amir Abdulaziz bin Saud, and Omani Minister of Interior Hamoud Al-Busaidi, ways to boost cooperation, and joint security coordination.

Sheikh Thamer met with Saudi and Omani counterparts individually on the sideline of 38th GCC Interior Ministers meeting hosted by Bahrain, the interior ministry's security media and public relations department said in a statement. The statement added that Sheikh Thamer also met with Qatari Interior Ministry Undersecretary Sheikh Abdulaziz bin Faisal Al-Thani and discussed issues of common interest, as well as ways to boost joint security. Moreover, Sheikh discussed issues of common interest with GCC Secretary General Dr Nayef Al-Hajraf, during a meeting held on the sidelines of the GCC interior ministers' meeting. During the meeting, they discussed issues of common interest and looked into enhancing joint Gulf security coordination. —KUNA

## Police probe Saad Al-Abdullah man's death

KUWAIT: Kuwait police opened an investigation in a man's death after his body was found inside a house in Saad Al-Abdullah, the interior ministry said yesterday. Firemen had arrived at the scene in response to an emergency call and broke into the man's room, where they found him dead. The body was taken to the coroner for an autopsy to reveal the cause of death, the ministry said, noting that investigations are ongoing in the case.

Meanwhile, a suicide probe was opened into the death of a man who allegedly hanged himself inside a holding cell at the interior ministry's ruling imple-

mentation department's building. A similar investigation was also opened in the death of a man who allegedly committed suicide by hanging in the garden of his Omariya house. In the meantime, a third case was reported in Salmiya where a man fell to his death from the fifth floor of a building in the area, and police are investigating the case as a suicide, according to local reports.

In other news, the residency affairs department deported 2,221 residency violators from October 1 to November 11, the interior ministry announced. Detectives also raided 22 fake domestic help offices and arrested 106 residents who were reported absconding. Meanwhile, traffic officers arrested 187 juveniles for driving without a license during crackdowns on November 6-12, the ministry said. Police also issued 24,358 citations during the campaign, while 80 violators were detained in the traffic department's holding cell. A total of 32 vehicles were impounded during the same period.

## NBK launches safe camping campaign in collaboration with KFF

KUWAIT: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) in collaboration with Kuwait Fire Force launches awareness safety campaign during the camping season. NBK volunteers along with the Kuwait Fire Force team will visit camping sites throughout the season, to provide campers with a safety camping that includes a fire extinguisher, fire alarm and first aid support ensuring that camps adhere to regulations for safety and waste removal.

"The campaign targets limiting the fire incidents in

spring camping sites," said Talal Al-Turki, NBK Public Relations Senior Manager. "The campaign is divided into phases. NBK volunteers and Fire Force team will visit campsites to distribute the safety kits. Representatives from Kuwait Fire Force will also speak with campers and provide them with safety and security tips. On the other hand, NBK social media channels will be posting tips and videos on safety camping tips."

"NBK aims to help keep the environment clean and people safe this camping season. The camp site visits aim to urge campers to enhance their security as well as environmental awareness about precautions to be used to prevent campfires and maintain cleanliness," he added. Turki praised the Fire force efforts and the influential role they play in raising to avoid accidents during camping.



KUWAIT: Representatives from the Public Relations and Media Department of Kuwait Fire Force Lt Col Rashed Al-Helfi and Major Yaser Al-Haje are seen during their visit to NBK.

## KFF participates in Watan exercise in Qatar

DOHA: The Kuwaiti Fire Force (KFF) is participating with several firefighters and marine rescuers in the three-days Watan exercise which is held in Qatar this week. The head of the External

Relations and Ceremonies Department at KFF Lt Col Abdullah Al-Saleem said that this participation aims to exchange experience between the KFF and the Qatar Interior ministry and enhance bilateral cooperation. The exercise is organized from the 30th of November to the 18th of December to confirm the security readiness of Qatar in hosting the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022. The Watan exercise will be conducted with the participation of Qatar's military, civil, organizational and service authorities in addition to 13 brotherly and friendly countries. —KUNA





## Local

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## Ministry opens Sabah Al-Ahmad City health center

**KUWAIT:** Director of Ahmadi Medical Area Dr Ahmad Al-Shatti confirmed yesterday aspiration to include Sabah Al-Ahmad Residential City within the global health cities' system for its primary health care centers, and to provide more community services to the city's residents. This came in Dr Shatti's speech during an event held on the opening of Sabah Al-Ahmad Primary Health Care Center in Sabah Al-Ahmad Residential City, under the patronage of Ahmadi Governor Sheikh Fawaz Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. Dr Shatti noted the important role played by primary care centers, whether in early treatment or through prevention and awareness, saying they have become a role model in this regard.

Meanwhile, official spokesman for the Ministry of Health Dr Abdullah Al-Sanad, in a similar speech, said there are 108 primary care centers in Kuwait: 28 in Ahmadi Governorate, 26 in the Capital, 21 in Farwaniya, 19 in Jahra and 14 in Hawally. Sabah Al-Ahmad City is no less important than the rest of Kuwait's areas, he said, as there is a clear interest in health care in it, pointing out that there are several primary and specialized health centers that provide services to thousands of patients every month.

Dr Aseel Al-Sabri, director of the center, said in the meantime that Sabah Al-Ahmad Residential City is located about 45 kilometers from Al-Adan Hospital, so the Minister of Health was keen to organize the health centers with a division and a single mechanism of action, different from the usual pattern of clinics, to be a role model in the new residential cities. — KUNA

## Kuwait retains MILSET's vice presidency post

**KUWAIT:** The State of Kuwait has retained the vice presidency post of the International Movement for Leisure Activities in Science and Technology (MILSET) with the general assembly electing uncontested for the position Adnan Al-Mir, the head of the regional bureau in Asia. Daoud Al-Ahmad, MILSET's regional director, said yesterday that the organization held its universal virtual summit with broad participation by the member states including experts. Some of the highlights of the summit that grouped representatives of more than 100 countries was a seminar about the organization future. He added that three members of each regional office were assigned to partake in the final session to map out a strategy. Meshaan Al-Nayef of Kuwait was assigned for this task. The experts have agreed on 18 topics to be prioritized in the strategy for the coming five years — namely diversifying programs, activities and ensuring sustainability concerning youth in the continent. — KUNA

## Gulf Bank announces in-person return of 642 Marathon

**KUWAIT:** Gulf Bank has announced the much anticipated, in-person return of its biggest event of the year, the Gulf Bank 642 Marathon. The long-awaited sporting event is scheduled to take place on November 20, 2021 and is back this year in both virtual and in-person versions, inviting challenge-seeking athletes as well as beginners to participate in Kuwait's only internationally accredited race.

The Gulf Bank 642 Marathon is the biggest local marathon hosted in the heart of Kuwait, with a unique racecourse that takes participants through an unforgettable route through Kuwait's most beloved landmarks. In keeping with international precautionary measures, this year's in-person marathon will also include a wide variety of safety precautions.

The marathon event is the first Kuwaiti road race certified by the Association of International Marathons and Distance Races and World Athletics. Notably, the Gulf Bank 642 Marathon is the only marathon in Kuwait that has the bronze AbbottWMM accreditation from the AbbottWMM Wanda Age Group World Rankings, a global age group marathon ranking system.

Ahmad Al-Amir, the Assistant General Manager of Corporate Communications at Gulf Bank, commented: "We are more excited than ever to be planning the safe return of our beloved Gulf Bank 642 Marathon, and we can confidently say that the marathon is back, bigger and better than ever! We can't wait to welcome back our returning runners

### Photo of the Day



**KUWAIT:** Riders compete during the UIM ABP-Aquabike World Championship at the Marina beach in Salmiya on Saturday.

— Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

## Al-Hamra supports 'World Diabetes Open Day' in partnership with Dasman Diabetes Institute



**KUWAIT:** Officials pose for a group photo during a diabetes awareness event hosted at Al-Hamra Shopping Center.

**KUWAIT:** Joining the global fight against diabetes, Al-Hamra Real Estate Company recently hosted Dasman Diabetes Institute (DDI) at Al-Hamra Shopping Center to raise awareness on the growing health concerns posed by diabetes. Marking World Diabetes Day annually, the event themed 'Access to Diabetes Care' this year, was held in partnership with Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences, Kuwait Finance House, and Kuwaiti Danish Dairy Company (KDD).

Established in 1991 by the International Diabetes Federation with support from WHO, World Diabetes Day is observed every year on November 14 to improve prevention, diagnosis, and management of the disease. Al-Hamra Real Estate Company supported an open day campaign from 10:00 am to 7:00 pm wherein over 200 visitors registered and underwent free clinical consultations, complimentary

medical testing and screening, and nutritional screening. Participants were advised on proactive measures to adopt, to eat healthily, manage their weight and stay active to avoid the dangers of the chronic health condition, moreover, the possible onset of other serious health problems such as heart disease, vision loss, and kidney disease. In keeping with the tradition of the blue circle, the global symbol for diabetes awareness, Al-Hamra's iconic Business Tower was lit in blue.

Bibi Al-Hamad, Senior Executive - Communication and Digital Marketing of Al-Hamra Real Estate Company said: "We believe that widespread knowledge and collective efforts against a common rising problem in our midst will curb or prevent diabetes. Additionally, diabetes patients are easily vulnerable to COVID-19 and its risks as witnessed during the outbreak of the pandemic. Al-

Hamra Real Estate Company encourages individual behavior change and we hope through these positive, community-wide campaigns, to address the ongoing crisis and inspire a sustained lifestyle change that will curb related health concerns as well. We thank Dasman Diabetes Institute (DDI), KFAS, KFH, and KDD for being part of this special day that seeks to safeguard the overall health of our communities."

"Holding such events and activities stems from DDI's mission statement, where health promotion and awareness are a priority for the Institute. Since its establishment in 2006, the Institute organizes and takes part in many events and campaigns to shed light on diabetes and its related conditions. This is in accordance with the Institute's belief that, 'Prevention is better than cure,' Dr Qais Al-Duwairi, Director-General of DDI said.



A man undergoes a medical check up during the event.

Last year, Gulf Bank wrapped up a special virtual edition of its Gulf Bank 642 Marathon, in which contestants had the opportunity to participate over the period of a month from all around the world. The "Special Edition" virtual race attracted the participation of over 1,037 contestants from 18 countries, and was held in recognition of the role that exercise plays in enhancing both our mental and physical wellbeing. By implementing a wide range of creative digital solutions, Gulf Bank was able to successfully organize a successful online version of the annual marathon known and beloved by the local and international community.

Gulf Bank offers a distinct model for sustainability programs, implementing both internal and community-led initiatives year-round. Gulf Bank is committed to maintaining a robust Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) social responsibility program, heading various educational initiatives throughout the year that have a sustainable impact on the lives of youth and society.

Gulf Bank's vision is to be the leading Kuwaiti Bank of the Future. The bank is constantly engaging and empowering its employees as part of an inclusive and diversified workplace in recognition of every employee's role in delivering customer excellence and serving the community at large. With its extensive network of branches and innovative digital services, Gulf Bank is able to give its customers the choice of how and where to conduct their banking transactions, all while ensuring a simple and seamless banking experience.

Gulf Bank is committed to maintaining a robust sustainability program at the community, economic, and environmental levels through sustainability initiatives that are strategically selected to benefit both the country and the bank. Moreover, the bank supports Kuwait Vision 2035 "New Kuwait" and works with various relevant parties to achieve this vision.



**KUWAIT:** Officials attend a press conference to announce the Gulf Bank 642 Marathon.

from all over the region and the world. Anyone who has participated in the Gulf Bank 642 Marathon knows that the marathon is more than a local sporting activity - it is a community event that everyone looks forward to, both individuals and families alike."

Commenting on this year's marathon, Ahmed Al-Majed, General Manager at the Suffix company for sports events management, said: "We are proud to have received the bronze accreditation from the Abbott World Marathon Majors this year, a recognition bestowed to only 128 races worldwide. We look forward to raising the bar for sporting events in the region, and invite everyone to save the date

for what's bound to be one of the most exciting days of the year!"

For the seventh year in a row, Gulf Bank is launching the Gulf Bank 642 Marathon in partnership with local sports management company, Suffix. The race consists of four categories open to runners of all abilities, including: the 5K Family Fun Walk/Run, the 10K Souq Run, the 21K Half Marathon, and 42K Full Marathon. The 5K is open to runners aged 11 and above, the 10K to runners aged 16 and above, and the 21K to runners aged 18 and above. The race takes runners through beautiful landmarks in Kuwait, starting at the entrance bridge of Souq Sharq, and heading in and out of Souq Al-Mubarakiya.





Egypt leader looks to 'new capital' to cement his legacy

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## Indian trash-tackling brothers win award



GUAYAQUIL: Members of the Ecuadorian police remove the body of an inmate on the roof of a pavilion of the Guayas 1 prison in Guayaquil, Ecuador. — AFP

# Prison riot kills 68 in Ecuador

## Bloodbath as rival gangs battle with guns, explosives, blades

**GUAYAQUIL, Ecuador:** Prison inmates from rival gangs in Ecuador fought each other with guns, explosives and blades in a bloodbath that left at least 68 dead in the same prison where a riot in September claimed 119 lives, officials said. Authorities said late Saturday they had re-gained control of the prison in Guayaquil for a second time in as many days after President Guillermo Lasso's spokesman said fighting had again broken out earlier in the day between inmates from rival gangs tied to drug trafficking rings.

In the initial riot that began Friday night prisoners fought with "savagery," said Pablo Arosemena, governor of the province of Guayas where the prison is located. The riot began around 7:00 pm Friday when prisoners tried to enter Block 2 of the jail where their rivals were held, firing gunshots, detonating explosives and swinging machetes, and prompting police to move in. At least 68 prisoners were killed and another 25 were wounded, according to a statement which the Ecuador Prosecutor's Office posted on Twitter. In the second outbreak of fighting Saturday, inmates from two other blocks attacked each other, said presidential spokesman Carlos Jijon.

He confirmed a little while later that police had

pushed through to the prison's interior and that the situation was "under control." Officials said the violence started when one of the gangs inside the prison, the Tiguerones, was left without its leader because he was released after serving part of his sentence for stealing auto parts. Other groups, sensing weakness in the Tiguerones with that man gone, went on the attack to try to crush the gang, Arosemena said. He said their goal was "to go in and carry out a total massacre."

**'Help them'**  
Earlier Saturday, police officers in riot gear were seen climbing up the blood-stained prison walls, while the body of an inmate in an orange prison jumpsuit lay on the roof of the jail encircled by barbed wire. Images posted on social networks, whose authenticity has not been confirmed by the authorities, showed a pile of bodies in a night-time prison courtyard being consumed by flames while inmates standing nearby beat the bodies with sticks.

In another video, a prisoner from the block that was being attacked says, "We are locked in our pavilion. They want to kill us all." "Please share this video. Please help us!" the inmate implores, as repeated bangs are heard in the background. Dozens of people gathered outside the prison gates Saturday morning, fainting or weeping as they tried to learn the fate of their loved ones inside. "They are human beings, help them," read a banner held by one of the families, kept back by a deployment of police and soldiers supported by an armored car.



### Sept prison riot claimed 119 lives

A group of women with one cell phone shouted prisoners' names to an inmate who was inside the prison and on the line, hoping to know if those men were still alive. "Here there are relatives from block two and they need to know about the boys," the woman holding the phone said. A crackly voice was heard from the phone but the signal was spotty and then there was just silence. At a coroner's office in the city, Felix Gonzalez

showed up holding his imprisoned son's ID card and asked if his body was there. "It is not fair for him to die for stealing a cell phone," Gonzalez told AFP.

More than 300 prisoners have been killed this year in Ecuador's criminal detention system, where thousands of inmates tied to drug gangs square off in violent clashes that often turn into riots. September's unrest was one of the worst prison massacres in Latin American history, and the latest deadly violence in Guayaquil only reaffirmed the broken state of Ecuador's jails. Rival drug gangs have been waging a bloody feud in the Guayas 1 prison in Guayaquil, a facility that was designed for 5,300 inmates, but houses 8,500.

But even after a crackdown in the wake of the September 28 tragedy that killed 119, the unrest has persisted, with at least 15 more inmates dying prior to Friday's deadly burst of violence. Two weeks after the September disaster, the president declared a 60-day state of emergency in a bid to tame surging drug-related unrest. Violence has spiked dramatically in recent months in Ecuador, where the economy is ailing. Between January and October this year, the country registered almost 1,900 homicides, compared to about 1,400 in all of 2020, according to the government. — AFP

## Queen suffers 'sprained back'

**LONDON:** Queen Elizabeth II has a "sprained back" and will miss Sunday's Remembrance service - her first planned public appearance since resting on medical advice, Buckingham Palace said. The ceremony honoring fallen troops is close to the monarch's heart and her absence will deepen concerns over her health after she stepped back on medical advice and spent a night in hospital undergoing unspecified tests at the end of last month.

She then resumed "light duties", but pulled out of a scheduled attendance at the UN climate change summit in Glasgow after being advised to rest. "The Queen, having sprained her back, has decided this morning with great regret that she will not be able to attend today's Remembrance Sunday Service at the Cenotaph," a palace statement said. "Her Majesty is disappointed that she will miss the service." Her son Prince Charles will lay a wreath on her behalf, as in previous years.

Charles and his son Prince William represented the family in Glasgow, making a series of speeches. A two-day trip to Northern Ireland was also shelved as was her appearance Tuesday at the General Synod, the national assembly of the Church of England which she heads. The 95-year-old was due to view Sunday's annual service in London from a balcony, as she has done since 2017, when she handed over some duties to younger members of the family. "Mindful of her doctors' recent advice, The Queen has decided not



LONDON: In this file photo, Britain's Queen Elizabeth II attends a ceremony at the Cenotaph on Whitehall in central London. — AFP

to attend", the statement said. Queen Elizabeth II succeeded her father, King George VI, in 1952 and next year is her Platinum Jubilee, marking her 70th year on the throne. She returned to her Windsor Castle residence, west of London, on Tuesday, after a long-planned weekend away at her Sandringham estate in eastern England. The palace has previously said it was her "firm intention" to attend Sunday's Remembrance event, which brings together veterans, their families and political leaders.

The Queen, who also pulled out of the separate Festival of Remembrance event on Saturday, is head of the Armed Forces and served as a mechanic during World War II. Royal aides have blamed a busy

recent schedule that had left her "exhausted" but she was recently seen driving in the grounds of Windsor. She took a step back from work on October 20, the day after a reception at Windsor Castle where she chatted with Prime Minister Boris Johnson and US billionaire Bill Gates.

She spent the following night in hospital, her first since 2013, where Buckingham Palace said she underwent "preliminary examinations". The monarch had appeared in strong form in public until recently, despite the loss of her 99-year-old husband Prince Philip in April. She had attended official engagements almost daily, similar to her pre-pandemic workload, since returning from her traditional summer holiday in Balmoral, Scotland. — AFP

## 26 Maoist rebels killed in gunfight

**NEW DELHI:** At least 26 Maoist rebels were killed on Saturday in a gunfight with special commandos in a remote Indian forest, police said, the latest deadly clash in the vast country's longest armed conflict. Police said three commandos were badly wounded in the hours-long clash in the dense forests of Gadchiroli district, some 1,000 kilometers east of Mumbai, the capital of Maharashtra state.

Gadchiroli is one of dozens of Maoist hotbeds dotting the mineral-rich districts of central and eastern India where tens of thousands of guerrillas are fighting the government for better rights for marginalized and indigenous peoples. Police said the firefight erupted after special police commandos intercepted a group of rebels in the Mardintola forest.

"At least 26 Naxals are dead," an officer from Maharashtra police told AFP on condition of anonymity, using a local term for the left-wing rebels. The officer said special forces were still conducting a search operation in the remote area amid sporadic gunfire. Gadchiroli police chief Ankit Goyal told AFP that they were trying to retrieve the bodies of the slain Maoists. "The exact number of casualties and their

identities will be known after the bodies are recovered," Goyal said.

He said three police commandos were airlifted to the city of Nagpur for treatment after suffering serious injuries. The deadly clash in Gadchiroli is the latest in India's long-running Maoist insurgency that began in the 1960s, and has cost thousands of lives. The government has deployed tens of thousands of forces to battle the rebels across the insurgent-dominated region known as the "Red Corridor", which stretches across several central, southern and eastern states.

Delhi has also pumped millions of dollars into infrastructure development in the remote areas dominated by tribal communities, and claims to have confined the armed insurgency to 53 districts in 2020, down from 96 in 2010. Police in eastern Jharkhand - one of the worst affected states - said Friday they had arrested a top leader of the outlawed rebel group, Prashant Bose, who is in his late 70s, had a bounty of 10 million rupees (\$134,000) on his head and was arrested in the state's Seraikela district. Bose is accused of orchestrating more than 100 violent attacks over the last four decades. — AFP



## International

# Dozens of migrants detained; EU readies Belarus sanctions

## 50 migrants cross the heavily-guarded border 'by force'

**WARSAW:** Dozens of migrants have been detained after crossing into Poland from Belarus, Warsaw said yesterday, warning of a possible larger breakthrough ahead of an EU meeting to widen sanctions on Belarus. Police said on Twitter that 50 migrants had crossed the heavily-guarded EU and NATO border near the village of Starzyna "by force" on Saturday. They were all later detained, the border guard said, adding that they could see signs of "a bigger attempt at crossing the border today". Thousands of migrants from the Middle East are camped out on the EU-Belarus border, creating a stand-off between the EU and US on one side and Belarus and its ally Russia on the other.

Western countries accuse Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko's regime of deliberately engineering the crisis by encouraging migrants to come to Belarus and then taking them to the border. Belarus denies the charges and blames the West. "If someone thinks that Lukashenko or Belarusians will flinch, then this will not happen," Lukashenko, referring to himself in the third person, said in an interview released on Saturday.

Aid agencies say at least 10 migrants have died so far and have warned of a humanitarian crisis unfolding as temperatures drop below freezing, urging a de-escalation to help the migrants. In the biggest camp, near the village of Bruzgi in Belarus, Belarusian authorities say there are 2,000 people, including pregnant women and children. Belarusian authorities have delivered aid including tents and heaters - a move that could make the camp a semi-permanent presence on the border.

**'Provocation' on border?**  
Poland has refused to allow the migrants in and has accused Belarus of preventing them from leaving. Interior Minister Mariusz Kaminski on Saturday said a rumor was being spread among the migrants that on Monday Poland would allow them through and coaches would come from Germany to pick them up. "A provocation is being prepared," Kaminski said.

The government has sent a text message to all foreign mobile phones along the border saying: "It's



### Mideast migrants camp out on the EU-Belarus border

a total lie and nonsense! Poland will continue to protect its border with Belarus. "Those who spread such rumors seek to encourage the migrants to storm the border, which may lead to dangerous developments," the text message reads. EU foreign ministers are also due to meet on Monday to widen the sanctions already imposed on Belarus for its crackdown on opponents of Lukashenko, who has ruled the country for nearly 30 years.



**GRODNO:** A family has a meal at a camp set up by migrants near the Belarusian-Polish border in the Grodno region. — AFP

EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said ministers would allow sanctions on anyone "taking part in the trafficking of migrants" in Belarus, including airlines, travel agencies and officials. "Lukashenko got it wrong. He thought that by acting in this way he would twist our arm and force us to cancel the

sanctions. The opposite is happening," Borrell told Journal du Dimanche, a French weekly. Following pressure from EU diplomats, Turkey has now banned Iraqis, Syrians and Yemenis from flying to Belarus and private Syrian carrier Cham Wings Airlines is also halting flights to Minsk. — AFP

## In Texas, 'sanctuary cities' pass their own anti-abortion laws

**TEXAS:** While the US Supreme Court ponders a ruling on Texas' controversial abortion law, some communities in this conservative state are deciding not to wait and are declaring themselves "sanctuary cities for the unborn." Inspired by SB 8, the highly restrictive Texas law that bans abortion after six weeks and makes no exception for rape or incest, around forty local municipalities have passed measures effectively prohibiting the procedure on their territory.

This week, Anson, a town of about 2,400 residents in central Texas, became the latest community to adopt such legislation, a move that made resident Mariah Mayo proud. "I stand here today for ... the innocent unborn who are unable to have their voices heard," Mayo, a local nurse, was quoted as saying by Liveaction.org, an anti-abortion organization. "I agree 100 percent with what my preacher said and I too want abortions to be outlawed.

Let's add this to our many reasons why we are proud to live here in the great city of Anson, Texas." Laws restricting abortion have been passed in multiple Republican-led states over the years, but they have been struck down by the courts because they violated previous Supreme Court rulings that guarantee the right to an abortion until the fetus is viable outside the womb, typically around 22 to 24 weeks.

The Texas "heartbeat law" differs from other efforts in that it attempts to insulate the state by giving members of the public the right to sue doctors who perform abortions - or anyone who helps facilitate them - once a heartbeat in the womb is detected. In recent years, the term "sanctuary cities" has been used to refer to Democratic communities that passed legislation to shield undocumented migrants from deportation or prosecution by the federal government under former president Donald Trump.

### Activist pastor

The idea of creating abortion-free communities belongs to Mark Lee Dickson, a former Baptist pastor in his mid-thirties who comes from a Texas family of anti-abortion activists. Wearing a baseball cap that is usually turned backward, Dickson started his campaign in 2019 in the town of Waskom, a small community on the state border with Louisiana. Dickson managed to convince local officials that an abortion clinic in the neighboring state was planning to relocate to their town.

Even though the clinic denied any such plans, Waskom's five municipal council members, all of them men, unanimously passed legislation that effectively prohibited abortions in their community. Since then, Dickson has been crisscrossing Texas, persuading local municipalities to follow suit - with success. Dozens of communities have declared themselves abortion-free sanctuaries and about twenty other cities are considering the measure, according to the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), one of the country's leading human rights organizations. Similar efforts are underway in the states of Ohio and Michigan. "They are going to continue to do this until there is no access to abortion at all. That is their goal. Let's be very clear about that," said Blair Wallace, a policy and advocacy strategist with the ACLU of Texas. — AFP

## Al Jazeera TV chief in Sudan held, after 6 killed in protests

**KHARTOUM:** Sudanese security forces have arrested the bureau chief of Qatari-based Al Jazeera TV, the network said yesterday, a day after the latest crackdown on anti-coup protesters left at least six dead. Among those killed were two teenagers, according to a medics' union. It was one of the bloodiest days since a coup almost three weeks ago, derailing a transition to full civilian rule, sparking international condemnation and provoking regular protests. Sudan has a long history of military coups, enjoying only rare interludes of democratic rule since independence in 1956.

"Security forces raided the house of Al-Musalami Al-Kabbashi, the Al Jazeera bureau chief in Sudan, and detained him," the network said on Twitter without elaborating. Al Jazeera has given prominent coverage to demonstrations against the October 25 power grab, but last week it also aired a detailed interview with top general Abdel Fattah el-Burhan. The protests, including by tens of thousands of people nationwide on Saturday, have continued despite internet outages forcing demonstrators to communicate via graffiti and SMS messages.

Among those killed on Saturday was Alsheikh Yasser Ali, 18, who was protesting in Khartoum's



**KHARTOUM:** Sudanese protesters carry an injured man to safety during an anti-coup demonstration in the Khartoum Barre neighborhood, outside the capital. — AFP

twin city of Omdurman to demand civilian rule. "I attended the body's autopsy, which showed that he took a bullet to the shoulder which hit the heart and the lungs," his uncle Zaher Ali told AFP. "I almost collapsed in the morgue." An independent union of medics said a 15-year-old was also among the six killed Saturday. Five were shot dead, while one died from "suffocation by tear gas", the medics said, who have recorded a total of 21 killed since the coup.

### Media crackdown

Other media outlets besides Al Jazeera have

been targeted since the putsch, when Burhan declared a state of emergency, detained the civilian leadership and removed the government installed after the April 2019 military ouster of autocratic president Omar Al-Bashir. Burhan, de facto head of state since Bashir fell, has sacked the heads of Sudan's state television and the official news agency. The head of media council granting journalist permits has also been switched, and handed back to Abdelazim Awad, who led the council during Bashir's authoritarian rule.

The coup has triggered punitive measures by Western countries and the World Bank, imperiling the impoverished country's need for investment and aid. The United Nations has called on security forces to show restraint, in a country where more than 250 people had already died in mass protests leading to Bashir's ouster. Yesterday, Britain's Minister for Africa, Vicky Ford, said she was "deeply concerned at reports of protesters killed", adding that Sudan's "military must listen to the huge numbers calling for restoration of the democratic transition."

Earlier, Washington's embassy in Khartoum said it regretted the loss of life and injuries to "dozens of Sudanese citizens demonstrating...for freedom and democracy." Gunshots were heard and tear gas fired as security forces tried to break up Saturday's protests, witnesses and AFP correspondents said. But police denied using "live rounds" and said 39 of their personnel were "severely wounded" in confrontations with the protesters, whom they accused of attacking police stations. — AFP



**NEW ADMINISTRATIVE CAPITAL:** This file photo shows a view of construction work ongoing at the 'business and finance district' of Egypt's 'New Administrative Capital' megaproject, some 45 kilometers east of Cairo. — AFP

## Egypt leader looks to 'New Capital' to cement his legacy

**NEW ADMINISTRATIVE CAPITAL, Egypt:** An opulent presidential palace, a brand new parliament, a regal opera house and spacious parks are all part of the vision for an ambitious new administrative capital rising up out of the Egyptian desert. As far as the eye can see, building sites dot the horizon heralding the arrival of this crown jewel of President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi's grand urban plans.

About 50 km east of the north African country's 1,000-year-old capital, Cairo, construction workers are racing to finish the project. It had been set to be unveiled on June 30 - the date marking the anniversary of 2013 mass protests, backed by the military, which toppled the divisive rule of late Islamist president Mohamed Morsi. But the launch was postponed because of the COVID pandemic that led to a downturn in the market.

After a series of false starts, Sisi this month issued a directive for civil servants to relocate to the new capital in December for a "six-month trial period". The city is forecast to cost around \$45 bil-

lion, is roughly the size of Singapore, and has been touted as a solution to overpopulation in the sprawling metropolis of Cairo, home to more than 20 million people.

After being first elected in 2014, Sisi anointed the new capital as "the birth of a new state ... and republic". Some believe, however, the new city, just known officially as the New Administrative capital, will not compete with Cairo in the same way as Brazil's new capital Brasilia and even risks eventually being swallowed up by its huge neighbor.

"The new capital for me is a mystery," said Galila El-Kadi, an urban planning professor and director of the Marseille-based Research Institute for Development. "It's already on the edge of Cairo without anyone moving there yet and within a few years it will expand and fuse into Cairo. This will only increase problems of managing human density of such magnitude," she told AFP.

Sisi has staked his legacy on massive infrastructure projects, and ground has also been broken in other new cities including on the Mediterranean Sea at El Alamein, in the fertile Delta near Mansoura and in the south near Aswan. In 2019 Sisi inaugurated a massive mosque in the new capital with capacity for 3,000 worshippers, as well as the largest cathedral in the Middle East for the Copt population, seeking to enhance his image as the country's self-proclaimed unifier. — AFP

## Jihadist attacks kill 7 Nigerian troops

**KANO:** At least seven Nigerian soldiers were killed in two separate ambushes by IS-affiliated jihadist fighters in the northeast of the country, the army and military sources said. Convoys have increasingly come under attack from Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) jihadists in the northeast where soldiers are battling to end a 12-year Islamist insurgency that has killed more than 40,000 civilians.

On Saturday four soldiers, including a military commander, were killed when ISWAP fighters ambushed them as they moved to provide reinforcements during a jihadist attack on Askira Uba town in Borno state, the army said in a statement. "Sadly, a gallant senior officer Brigadier General Dzarma Zirkusu and three soldiers paid the supreme sacrifice in a very rare display of gallantry as they provided reinforcement in a counter offensive against the terrorists," the statement.

Troops supported by fighter jets "neutralized several" jihadists in the fight and destroyed many of their vehicles, added the statement issued by the military's spokesman. Another three soldiers were killed on Friday when ISWAP fighters ambushed a military convoy in neighboring Yobe state, according to two military sources. Scores of jihadists opened fire on the convoy with heavy guns in an ambush at Tamsu Kawu village along the 120-kilometre highway linking Maiduguri and Yobe state capital Damaturu, the two sources told AFP.

"We lost three soldiers in the ambush from ISWAP terrorists," said one of the military officers. The militants seized a military vehicle in the attack, said the military officer. His account was supported by a second military officer who gave the same toll. The attacks happened as the military claimed a string of successes against the jihadists, including raids on their camps. On September 17, at least 16 Nigerian soldiers were killed in an ISWAP ambush on the highway linking Maiduguri and the garrison town of Monguno in the Lake Chad region. A week later, eight soldiers died when the jihadist group ambushed a military convoy near the town of Dikwa in the same area. ISWAP has been consolidating territory in the Lake Chad area since rival Boko Haram commander Abubakar Shekau was killed in fighting between the two jihadist forces earlier this year. — AFP



## International

## US, China trade warnings ahead of Biden-Xi summit

## Tensions mount over Taiwan, human rights and trade

WASHINGTON: The top diplomats from China and the United States have exchanged stern warnings over the flashpoint issue of Taiwan, ahead of today's highly awaited summit between their leaders. The virtual meeting of presidents Joe Biden and Xi Jinping comes against a backdrop of rising tensions - in part over Taiwan, a self-ruling democracy claimed by Beijing, but also over trade, human rights and other issues. In a phone call Friday with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi to discuss preparations for the summit, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken raised concerns over Beijing's "military, diplomatic, and economic pressure" on Taiwan.



WASHINGTON: This combination of file pictures shows Chinese President Xi Jinping (left) and US President Joe Biden. US President Joe Biden will hold a hotly anticipated virtual summit with his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping today, the White House announced, as tensions mount over Taiwan, human rights and trade. — AFP

ties near Taiwan in recent years, with a record number of planes intruding into the island's air defense identification zone in early October. Washington has repeatedly signaled its support for Taiwan in the face of what it has described as Chinese aggression.

## 'Responsibly manage competition'

Biden has largely kept the tougher approach on Beijing of his predecessor Donald Trump, with both administrations seeing a rising China as the top challenge of the 21st century. And while the world's top two emitters of greenhouse gases unveiled a surprise agreement last week to work together on climate change, Washington and Beijing have indicated they will not give ground on flashpoint issues. US officials have framed today's summit as an opportunity to "responsibly manage competition" while trying to cooperate in areas where the two align.

Xi last week warned against the return of Cold War-era tensions in the Asia-Pacific region. Biden and the Chinese leader have talked by phone twice since the veteran Democrat moved into the White House. The pair also met extensively when Biden was Barack Obama's vice president and Xi was vice president to Hu Jintao. The US president had hoped to meet Xi at a recent G20 summit in Rome, but the Chinese leader has not traveled since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic and instead agreed to virtual talks by the end of the year. — AFP



## US concerned over 'diplomatic military pressures'

Wang warned of the dangers of US actions that might seem supportive of "Taiwan independence." Washington switched diplomatic recognition from Taipei to Beijing in 1979, but an act of Congress passed that year requires the United States to provide weapons to Taiwan for self-defense. The US government is careful not to show it recognizes Taiwan but it

enjoys broad, bipartisan support in Congress, with a group of lawmakers visiting the island this month - angering Beijing.

"Any connivance of and support for the 'Taiwan independence' forces undermines peace across the Taiwan Strait and would only boomerang in the end," Wang told Blinken, according to a readout of the call released by China on Saturday. China has ramped up military activi-



THE HAGUE: Nobel Peace Prize winner 2014 Kailash Satyarthi (left) presents the International Children's Peace Prize 2021 to Vihaan and Nav Agarwal from India on November 13, 2021. — AFP

## Indian trash-tackling brothers win award

THE HAGUE: Two teenage brothers from India urged world leaders to act against climate change after winning a prestigious global children's award on Saturday for tackling pollution from household waste in New Delhi. Vihaan and Nav Agarwal, aged 17 and 14, received the 2021 KidsRights International Children's Peace Prize for developing an initiative to segregate recyclables and organize pickups for trash from thousands of homes. The award cited their "courage and commitment to tackling pollution in their home city", ranked recently as the worst in the world for air quality due to a toxic mix caused partly by the burning of rubbish.

New Delhi authorities on Saturday announced a one-week closure of schools and said they would consider a "pollution lockdown" to protect citizens from toxic smog. The siblings follow in the footsteps of previous winners including environmental activist Greta Thunberg and Nobel laureate and Pakistani education campaigner Malala Yousafzai.

"Our message would be you guys need to act. So many children all around the world are acting," Vihaan told AFP in a remote interview when asked what he would say to leaders at the COP26 climate talks reaching their climax in Glasgow this weekend. "Another message would be: don't get in our way," Nav added. "To all the

young people... you should never fear climate change. You just have to take that one step, and when you do it's just amazing the amount of change you as a one person can actually create."

## 'Waste shouldn't go there'

Indian Nobel Peace laureate Kailash Satyarthi, a children's rights activist who won the 2014 Nobel jointly with Malala, presented the brothers with the prize run by the Dutch-based KidsRights foundation at a ceremony in The Hague on Saturday. The brothers said that growing up in Delhi affected the asthmatic Vihaan's health, and curtailed the boys' ability to play outdoors and indulge their love of nature.

The spark of inspiration for their "One Step Greener" initiative came after the collapse of the Ghazipur landfill site in 2017, which killed two people and led to a spike in pollution. One third of Delhi's air pollution is caused by burning waste in landfill sites. "The thought process in our mind was like, our waste shouldn't go there, our waste shouldn't become fodder for this fire," said Vihaan.

They also took inspiration from British naturalist David Attenborough and conservationist Jane Goodall, as well as their grandparents, they said. The brothers began at home, separating out recyclables from their rubbish until they had such a mountain of trash that their grandfather told them either they or the waste had to leave. But recyclers said they wouldn't pick up such a small quantity, so the boys used a WhatsApp group in their neighborhood to get enough together to make it worthwhile. — AFP

## Journalist killed as minibus hit by bomb

KABUL: A well-known Afghan journalist was killed and at least four other people injured Saturday when a suspected bomb destroyed a minibus near a Taliban checkpoint in Kabul, a media watchdog and officials said. The incident happened in Dasht-e Barchi, a Kabul suburb dominated by members of the mostly Shiite Hazara community, who for years have been the target of violence by the Islamic State (IS) group. "Unfortunately we lost another reporter," the Afghan Journalists Center tweeted hours after the blast, saying Hamid Seighani, who worked for the Ariana television network, had died in the blast.

His wife, also a journalist, posted "I lost Hamid" on her Facebook page. Since the Taliban returned to power on August 15, dozens of bombs have been set off in eastern Nangarhar province - a hotbed of IS activity - but the capital Kabul has largely escaped such violence. "I was in my car and an explosion happened in the vehicle in front of us," a witness said. "It was completely burnt." He said the explosion occurred near a Taliban checkpoint, and that gunfire could be heard briefly immediately afterwards.

A nearby hospital posted a notice saying it had admitted one dead and four injured. Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid tweeted that one person had been killed and two injured. The blast comes a day after at least three people were killed and 15 wounded by a bomb at a mosque in Nangarhar. That bombing - for which no group has yet claimed responsibility - underscores the many challenges facing the new Taliban regime in Afghanistan, with the UN warning the country is also on the brink of the world's worst humanitarian crisis.

In a statement, the Nangarhar governor's office said officials had arrested two "perpetrators" in connection with the mosque blast, but provided no other details. "Further investigation into the incident is ongoing and more actions will be taken," it said. While Kabul has largely been free of Islamic State activity since the Taliban takeover, IS fighters recently raided the city's National Military Hospital, killing at least 19 people and injuring more than 50 others. — AFP



SANAA: Yemenis inspect the site of reported Saudi-led airstrikes targeting the Houthi-controlled capital Sanaa. — AFP

Hodeida. The Hodeida ceasefire was agreed at Yemen's last peace talks in Sweden in 2018, but clashes have since broken out between the rebels and pro-government troops around the city. The Saudi-led coalition inter-

vened in Yemen in 2015 to shore up the government, a year after the Houthis seized the capital Sanaa. Tens of thousands of people, mostly civilians, have been killed and millions displaced, in what the UN calls the world's worst humanitarian crisis. — AFP

## News in brief

## Fire ravages COVID ward

SOFIA: Three patients died in a fire that broke out yesterday on a coronavirus ward in a hospital in southeast Bulgaria, the rescue services said. The three male patients, aged 66, 70 and 81, were all ill with COVID-19 and died on the fourth floor of a hospital in the city of Sliven, the head of the local rescue services, Vladimir Demirev, told Bulgarian television. Six other patients on neighboring wards had to be evacuated. The incident occurred as the EU member headed to the polls for the third time this year yesterday amid the deadliest wave of COVID-19 yet in the country. "The most likely cause of the fire was a lit cigarette of one of the patients," the Bulgarian health ministry said in a statement. Bulgaria's hospitals, frequently run down, are currently overwhelmed by the number of coronavirus infections. — AFP

## Qaeda suspects killed

DUBAI: A suspected US drone strike yesterday killed three people in central Yemen, including two alleged Al-Qaeda jihadists, local government officials said. "A drone that is believed to be American targeted a car carrying a man, who is likely an Al-Qaeda member, and his wife, resulting in the injury of both," a government official, who spoke on condition of anonymity said. "Three people, a civilian and two suspected Al-Qaeda gunmen, who were in a vehicle that was heading to the site to assist the wounded were targeted in another strike and killed." A second government official in the border region between the central provinces of Shabwa and Al-Bayda confirmed the two strikes and death toll. — AFP

## Fake hacking warnings

WASHINGTON: Fake emails purportedly from the US Department of Homeland Security warning of cyberattacks were sent out Saturday from a secure FBI computer server, computer security experts said. The FBI confirmed independent security group Spamhaus's report that a large number of fake emails were sent in two waves early Saturday from an address on the government's Law Enforcement Enterprise Portal, which is used by multiple government agencies. Some of the emails, sent in the name of the Homeland Security cyber threat detection group, were headlined: "Urgent: threat actor in systems." They warned recipients that they were the target of a "sophisticated" hacking attack from a known extortion gang, according to Spamhaus. — AFP

## IS ambush kills 13 fighters

BEIRUT: At least 13 fighters loyal to the Syrian government were killed Saturday in an Islamic State group ambush in the country's east, a war monitor said. The attack by the jihadist group killed "at least 13 members of a local pro-regime group and wounded others", the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said. It took place in the Masrib area, in the west of Deir Ezzor province, while the fighters were conducting a sweep of the area, said the Observatory, which relies on a network of sources inside Syria. Observatory chief Rami Abdel Rahman told AFP it was the deadliest attack on pro-government forces in five months. The IS group's self-proclaimed caliphate was declared defeated in Syria in the riverside hamlet of Baghouz in March 2019 following a gruelling US-backed offensive. — AFP

## Settlers attacking Palestinians

JERUSALEM: A Zionist rights group said yesterday that in 170 incidents of Jewish settler violence against Palestinians, troops did not intervene to protect Palestinians and at times actively joined the attacks. In the report, the B'tselem rights group said it documented a total of 451 settler attacks on Palestinians in the West Bank since early last year. "Settler attacks against Palestinians are a strategy employed by the apartheid regime, which seeks to advance and complete its misappropriation of more and more Palestinian land," it said. Zionist entity, which has occupied the West Bank since 1967, rejects claims that its treatment of the Palestinians amounts to apartheid. — AFP

## Tunisian presidential 'coup'

TUNIS: More than 1,000 Tunisians gathered yesterday near the country's parliament to protest a presidential power grab they have deemed a "coup" It was the latest rally opposing President Kais Saied's July 25 decision to sack the government, suspend parliament and seize an array of powers, citing an "imminent threat" to the country-birthplace of the Arab Spring uprisings against autocracy. Protesters shouted, "The people want to bring down the coup d'etat" and branded the president an "agent of colonialism", AFP correspondents reported. Some carried signs reading "No to the intimidation of the media" and demanding "an independent judicial authority". On September 22, Saied suspended parts of the constitution and installed rule by decree, maintaining full control of the judiciary as well as powers to sack ministers and issue laws. — AFP



# Business

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2021

## Zain Ventures participates in ZoodPay, the 'Buy Now Pay Later' Super App series B \$38m round

LAUSANNE, Switzerland: Zain Group, a leading telecom innovator operating in seven markets and serving over 48 million customers across the Middle East and Africa, announced an investment in ZoodPay, 'Buy Now Pay Later' (BNPL) Super App's series B \$38 million fundraising through its venture capital arm 'Zain Ventures', joining other global and existing investors in the round.

Zain Ventures will work closely with the teams of ZoodPay's fintech solution and its demand generation marketplace ZoodMall to accelerate their growth and expansion across the region, stimulating local and cross-border e-commerce transactions, boosting socio-economic activity and creating jobs.

Headquartered in Switzerland, the ZoodPay & ZoodMall app already has more than 8 million users and ten offices across the Middle East and Central Asia. The business commits to delivering a "Swiss quality" shopping experience and cross-border services to merchants and shoppers across fast-growing fintech and e-commerce emerging markets such as Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan.

ZoodPay's Super App BNPL fintech solution offers ZoodMall online and offline shoppers in core geographies convenient options and instant approval to buy products in their local currency in cash or with the flexibility of paying in four to six monthly instalments, without any interest or fees. ZoodMall is the Middle East and Central Asia's fastest-growing mobile-only marketplace, providing consumers access to 7 million products from over 30,000 local and cross-border merchants.

A statement from Zain Group noted, "The ZoodPay Super App and its marketplace ZoodMall offers an attractive, convenient, and unique value-proposition to digital-savvy online shoppers and the underbanked population across Zain's markets, supporting the company's '4Sight' strategic Fintech and digital lifestyle aspirations to customers and beyond. Zain is confident this strategic investment will be value-accretive to Zain Ventures on multiple fronts as the team works closely with the successful ZoodPay team on accelerating its growth and expansion across our footprint."

A statement from OrientSwiss, the parent company of ZoodPay and ZoodMall noted, "As local and cross-border e-commerce grows, partnering with



dynamic companies such as Zain will be a positive boost for all stakeholders in the ecosystem, whether they be customers, merchants or investors. OrientSwiss would like to thank the Zain Ventures management team and other investors for their trust and confidence, and looks forward to taking the ZoodPay Super App ecosystem to new heights."

ZoodPay: An innovative Ecosystem for Merchants: <https://www.zoodpay.com/ecosystem>

ZoodPay's Buy Now Pay Later Super App also encompasses the ZoodMall marketplace, and the logistics cross-border corridor, ZoodShip. This ecosystem empowers and incentivizes merchants from the Middle East, Central Asia, China, Europe, Russia, and Turkey to open their storefronts to local, new low-penetrated and fast-growing markets without additional set-up costs or fees. Merchants have a unique one-stop value proposition offer to shoppers, supporting them in gaining

new customers (including the underbanked) with higher-order value and building brand loyalty by offering:

1. Secure, flexible, and popular payment methods either by cash or through ZoodPay's BNPL solution
2. Creating demand generation and marketing for products through the ZoodMall B2C marketplace
3. Full-operational logistics support for delivery and customer support to reduce product returns.

### More on the BNPL global ecosystem

Millions of shoppers across the globe now use a Buy Now Pay Later (BNPL) platform (also known

- Zain Group's venture capital arm, Zain Ventures will support the growth of ZoodPay's fintech solution and its marketplace ZoodMall across the Middle East
- ZoodPay and ZoodMall ecosystem has a successful track record in boosting local and cross-border e-commerce and advancing socio-economic development in emerging markets
- ZoodPay offering online shoppers and underbanked communities flexible payment options

as point-of-sale loans or lay-by) to finance their online or in certain cases, offline purchases. BNPL provides the option for shoppers to receive their items immediately and pay over a period of instalments, often interest free with just a few clicks when checking out. Shoppers typically have a down payment and then pay the remaining sum in instalments during a period that can range from two weeks to three months, or longer in certain instances.

The advantage for shoppers is that they can buy a more expensive item than they might normally be able to pay for in one go, say a mobile phone for \$500, and spread the cost of their purchase over weekly or monthly instalments.

COVID-19 accelerated the growth of online shopping, and BNPL platforms which had been popular and growing prior to the pandemic, benefited exponentially due to the change in consumer spending habits and fast-growing e-commerce adoption.

According to a report from Worldpay, a payment processing firm, global e-commerce transactions totaled \$4.6 trillion in 2020, up 19 percent from 2019. Worldpay states that BNPL accounted for 2.1 percent, or about \$97 billion of all global e-commerce transactions in 2020 and this figure is expected to double to 4.2 percent by 2024.

### More on Zain Ventures

One of the key elements of Zain Group's '4Sight' strategy, 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 E-services and entrepreneurial startup ecosystem. 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 supporting their portfolio companies whenever appropriate. Zain has also continued its active engagement in direct strategic investments in a variety of promising startups from the region and afar, offering them support on multiple fronts including a wide geographical reach and progressive customer base for expansion growth opportunities.

## Airbus takes order for 255 A321s at Dubai Airshow

DUBAI: Airbus took a mega-order for 255 single-aisle A321 aircraft yesterday, the European plane-maker said in a statement, on the first day of a major air show in Dubai. It said the order came from Wizz Air, Frontier, Volaris and JetSMART—all from US company Indigo Partners—for a total value of more than \$33 billion, according to the latest list price published by Airbus in 2018.

The total cost of the order was not disclosed, but list rates are rarely applied to large deliveries. Hungarian low-cost carrier Wizz Air will receive 102 aircraft, American Frontier Airlines will receive 91, while 39 will go to Mexico's Volaris and 23 to Chilean JetSMART.

Airbus CEO Guillaume Faury said that because the four companies fall under the same aviation-focused equity firm, it allowed for a large order and for an attractive price, adding: "It's a give and take situation." Deliveries are set to begin in 2025. The embattled aviation industry flocked to the Dubai Airshow yesterday as it emerges from coronavirus pandemic travel restrictions and faces pressure to reduce its impact on climate change.

The five-day event in the United Arab Emirates is the industry's first large gathering since COVID-19 clipped the sector's wings last year, when border closures left airports deserted and hundreds of aircraft idle. Air traffic has bounced back since then, though it was still 53 percent lower in September than its pre-pandemic levels.

Indigo Partners chief Bill Franke said the company wanted "to be early in the (recovery) process". Christian Scherer, Airbus Chief Commercial Officer and head of Airbus International, said the Indigo Partners airlines had "acted fast and decisively over the last few months to position themselves for this landmark order as the effect of the pandemic recedes and the world wants more sustainable flying".

### Steady demand

The pandemic will have no long-term impact on the need for new aircraft, according to a market outlook released Saturday by European plane maker Airbus,



DUBAI: Two men stand next to an Acropolis Aviation Airbus A320-251N aircraft while in the background is seen another Emirates Airbus A380 aircraft on the tarmac at the 2021 Dubai Airshow in the Gulf emirate yesterday.

which foresees greener fleets emitting less CO<sub>2</sub>. There would be demand for 39,020 new passenger and freighter aircraft by 2040, bringing the global fleet to 46,720, the company said, releasing its outlook.

The forecast is not far off the 39,210 planes Airbus estimated in its 20-year market forecast issued in September 2019 — before a COVID-induced downturn which will still leave airlines with close to \$52 billion in losses this year. While Airbus has returned to profit and delivered 460 aircraft in the first 10 months of the year, its American rival Boeing is still losing money and has supplied just 268 planes.

Yet Boeing projects new deliveries in the industry to total 43,610 by 2040, or roughly the same as the 43,315 forecast by aviation data firm Cirium.

Global air traffic has started to bounce back from the worst of its pandemic decline, though in October it was still around half the level before the global health crisis idled aircraft. "Our industry is extremely resilient, the only thing is that we've lost two years of traffic because of the pandemic," Christian Scherer, chief commercial officer and head of Airbus International, told reporters in Dubai.

The market is only expected to return to pre-pandemic levels between 2023 and 2025. Domestic air travel is doing better-which benefits Airbus and its A320 family of narrow-body aircraft.

"While having lost nearly two years of growth over the COVID period, passenger traffic has demonstrated its resilience and is set to reconnect to an annual growth of 3.9

percent per year," Airbus said in the statement. "The middle classes, who are the likeliest to fly, will grow in number by two billion people to 63 percent of the world's population."

### Under pressure

Growth would be fastest in Asia, with China's domestic market becoming the largest. Close to 40 percent of the industry's new planes would be for replacement, according to Airbus, which sees demand shifting "from fleet growth to the accelerated retirement of older, less fuel-efficient aircraft".

Compared with previous generations of planes the newest versions save 15-20 percent on fuel, reducing the carbon emissions which contribute to global warming. With the industry under pressure to further reduce its carbon footprint, Airbus will present at the airshow a model of its ZEROe concept hydrogen-burning aeroplane which would eliminate CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Boeing will show off its ecoDemonstrator aircraft, a version of the 737 MAX used to try out new and cleaner technologies. "By 2040 the vast majority of commercial aircraft in operation will be of the latest generation, up from some 13 percent today," the Airbus statement said.

The Dubai Airshow starts while the Glasgow COP26 climate conference to limit global warming is ending. Airlines will have to invest in newer planes that pollute less to meet a pledge by the International Air Transport Association (IATA) to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2050. —AFP

## Boeing to convert 11 737s into cargo planes

DUBAI: Boeing got the ball rolling yesterday at a major air show in Dubai, announcing a contract with an Icelandic company to convert 11 single-aisle 737 aircraft into cargo planes. The five-day Dubai Airshow, the aviation industry's first large gathering since COVID-19 clipped the sector's wings last year, comes as global air traffic remains around half the level of 2019.

But global demand for air cargo transport is nine percent above pre-crisis levels, according to the International Air Transport Association (IATA). The American plane-maker yesterday did not disclose the value of the contract with Icelase to convert 11 Boeing 737-800BCFs-previous generation of the MAX series-into cargo planes.

To meet growing demand, Boeing announced it would open three new

freighter conversion lines in Canada and the United Kingdom, in addition to those recently opened in China and Costa Rica.

"It was a nascent phenomenon before COVID. Pre-COVID, we just couldn't put enough 737 (cargo planes) out there to satisfy the market," Ted Colbert, CEO of Boeing Global Services, told reporters in Dubai. The aviation industry has weathered the global supply chain crisis that has created headaches for the shipping industry.

But amid a slump in global air traffic, during which traditionally half of all air freight was carried in the holds of passenger aircraft, airlines have turned to cargo planes. And due to the decrease of air traffic during the pandemic, hundreds of planes have been abandoned — particularly older generation ones — which could potentially be turned to cargo aircraft. Boeing said in a statement it forecast 1,720 freighter conversions over the next 20 years to meet demand, adding it has "more than 200 orders and commitments from 19 customers".

While wide-body aircraft, such as the Boeing 777, 767 and A350 have their own cargo versions, single-aisle aircraft such as the 737 do not. —AFP



DUBAI: Military equipment is displayed at the Dubai Airshow in the Gulf emirate yesterday. — AFP



Business

NBK Money Market Report

# Dollar soars amid runaway inflation; supply chains, labor markets adjust

## Prices paid to US producers climb 0.6%

KUWAIT: In the beginning of last week, senior Fed officials including chair Jerome Powell and Vice-chair Richard Clarida, maintained their stance that the current imbalances would eventually recede as global supply chains and labor markets adjust, meaning that inflation will ultimately prove to be transitory and would fade over time. Unfortunately for team transitory, that sentiment did not age well, as inflation data released on Wednesday challenged it.

Consumer prices in the US reached a 3-decade high in October due to a combination of persistent supply shortages and strong consumer demand. The Labor Department reported last week that the consumer price index increased by 6.2 percent from a year ago, marking the fastest 12-month pace since 1990. The figure also marks the fifth straight month of inflation running above 5 percent. The core figure, which excludes volatile food and energy items, climbed 4.6 percent in October y/y, its highest level since 1991. In September, it stood at 4 percent.

The drivers of the uptick were increases across the board including costs of energy, shelter, food, used cars, new vehicles, and travel. Contributing largely to the inflationary pressures, energy costs soared 4.8 percent just from September to October, and are up around 30 percent for the year. Food prices jumped 0.9 percent over the month, with a 1 percent rise in "food at home" costs. Prices for used cars, which had driven the bulk of the inflation's surge during spring, picked up again after two months of declines, rising 2.5 percent from September and 26.4 percent for the year. Hotel expenses also increased 1.5 percent following several months of lower prices, bringing the annual rise to almost 26 percent. Rents and other shelter related costs, which represent around a third of CPI and are considered one of the more inelastic factors of inflation, kept advancing steadily. Owners' equivalent rent rose 0.4 percent

from September, and 3.1 percent on the year. The data also confirmed prices were picking up across a broader number of sectors, now including medical care, household furnishings, and recreation, in addition to transportation services that rose 0.4 percent after two months of decreases.

The surge in inflation complicates the US Federal Reserve's strategy for unwinding the ultra-easy monetary policy imposed early on in the pandemic, and puts pressure on the Biden administration's economic agenda. For months, Fed Chair Jerome Powell described inflation as

"transitory" and asserted the view that prices will return to normal as soon as labor and supply shortages clear. However, more recently, Powell did acknowledge that higher prices might last well into next summer.

President Joe Biden on Wednesday signaled out the rising energy costs as a primary driver of inflation, and said that it was a "top priority" to reverse the continuing trend. Biden's administration is now scrambling to tame the soaring inflation, as the rising prices undercut the US's economic recovery, jeopardizes his spending plans and kills the Democratic Party's chances in next year's midterm elections. Biden also plead with Congress to pass his \$1.75 trillion spending bill, defending it by saying "17 Nobel Prize winners in economics have said that my plan will ease inflationary pressures," although some Republicans have countered that such a huge injection of spending will make inflation worse.

Following the release of the data, US government bonds saw a sharp selloff, intensifying concerns that the Fed will need to act more decisively to put brakes on the rising inflation. Yields on two-year Treasury notes, which are highly sensitive to interest rate expectations, rose by the most since the market turbulence triggered by the coronavirus outbreak in March 2020. The yield increased 0.09 percentage points to 0.52 percent, signaling a significant drop in price.

| Currencies | Previous Week Levels |        |        |        | This Week's Expected Range |         | 3-Month |
|------------|----------------------|--------|--------|--------|----------------------------|---------|---------|
|            | Open                 | Low    | High   | Close  | Minimum                    | Maximum | Forward |
| EUR        | 1.1554               | 1.1431 | 1.1608 | 1.1450 | 1.1300                     | 1.1600  | 1.1477  |
| GBP        | 1.3495               | 1.3352 | 1.3607 | 1.3413 | 1.3300                     | 1.3575  | 1.3418  |
| JPY        | 113.43               | 112.70 | 114.30 | 113.85 | 113.00                     | 115.00  | 113.69  |
| CHF        | 0.9124               | 0.9100 | 0.9237 | 0.9213 | 0.9100                     | 0.9360  | 0.9185  |

the biggest move was in the five-year note, which rose 0.14 percentage points to 1.22 percent, while yields on the Benchmark 10-year bond rose 0.06 percentage points to trade around 1.51 percent. Expectations for a June 2022 rate hike jumped around 30 percent and now sits at 80 percent.

The dollar reacted by touching its strongest point against the euro in 16 months on Thursday, and closed the week at 1.1450, the sterling also saw a sharp drop against the dollar, reaching its lowest level since December 2020 to close the week at 1.3413. The risk sensitive Australian dollar sank as low as 0.7277 against the dollar for the first time in a month, but gained back some of its strength to close the week at 0.7334. The dollar index closed the week at 95.122, its highest level since July 2020.

### Producer prices climb 0.6%

Looking at prices paid to US producers, the figure climbed 0.6 percent from the prior month and 8.6 percent on a yearly basis. The annual advance marked the largest since 2010 and matched economists' expectations. Excluding volatile food and energy items, the core PPI figure rose 0.4 percent and was up 6.8 percent from a year ago. Similar to the CPI figures, higher energy costs drove the PPI gain as more than 60 percent of the headline increase was due to 1.2 percent rise in goods. Meanwhile, the cost of services saw a more moderate 0.2 percent for a second month in a row.

### Sentiment rises in Europe

In Europe, the ZEW Indicator of Economic Sentiment for Germany rose for the first time since May. According to data released last week, the metric gained 9.4 points to reach a new reading of 31.7. For the Eurozone as a whole, sentiment stands at 25.9 points, 4.9 points higher than the previous month. Furthermore, the survey revealed inflation expectations declined sharply, with the indicator dropping 31.4 points compared to October. "This shows that the experts expect the inflation rate in the Eurozone to decline over the next six months," the ZEW press release said.

### UK growth slows

Data from the UK showed growth had slowed more than expected in the third quarter as the boost from businesses reopening eased, and shortages of goods and workers hit economic activity. The data released by the Office for National Statistics on Thursday showed that gross domestic product rose by a monthly rate of 0.6 percent in September, up from the 0.2 percent expansion in August. The September figure was stronger than the 0.4 percent forecast by economists yet 0.6 percent below the level of February 2020.

The three months leading to September however, are telling a different story, showing UK output grew 1.3 percent, significantly lower than the 1.5 percent increase forecast by the Bank of England due to downward revisions to figures of both August and July. Growth was also sharply down from the 5.5 percent expansion in the second quarter when it was boosted by the reopening of many businesses. The brakes on growth were put by a combination of rising coronavirus cases and shortages of raw materials, components, and labor. The quarterly data, which is used by the BoE and the Office for Budget Responsibility, now show that output is still 2.1 percent below its pre pandemic levels, a larger gap than any other G7 country.

The Bank of England forecasts growth to slow in the fourth quarter to 1 percent, reflecting supply chain disruptions and the impact of higher inflation on businesses and household spending.

### Commodities

In the commodities complex, oil prices fell on Friday, wiping out gains from the previous session as the dollar continued firming amid expectations that the Fed would bring forward an increase to interest rates. Brent crude dropped 0.82 percent to close the week at \$82.17, while the US West Texas Intermediate dropped 0.74 percent to close at \$80.87. Looking at gold, the precious metal lost some of its shine on Friday as some investors locked in profits from a six-session streak of gains, closing the week at \$1,864.044 per ounce. While a stronger dollar typically makes takes a negative effect on gold prices, the yellow metal is reaping benefits of its reputation as a store of value and a hedge to higher inflation readings.

### Kuwait

Kuwaiti dinar  
USD/KWD closed last week at 0.30210



شركة الصفاة للاستثمار  
AL SAFAT INVESTMENT COMPANY

## KUWAIT BOURSA WEEKLY REPORT

WEEK ENDED ON 11 NOVEMBER 2021

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| 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 | 32,208         | 7,926.43   | 2.2%  | 3.0%  | 31.0% | 546,785,077     | 208,858,599  | 24,594        | 28.4 | 2.4 | 75.0%             |
| Main Market    | 10,736         | 6,141.01   | -0.1% | 2.7%  | 34.9% | 2,179,695,376   | 192,154,474  | 64,366        | 19.4 | 1.7 | 25.0%             |
| All Share      | 42,944         | 7,318.00   | 1.6%  | 3.0%  | 32.0% | 2,726,480,453   | 401,013,073  | 88,960        | 26.7 | 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                  | 24,773         | 1,672.57   | 2.5%  | 3.3%  | 32.5%  | 285,260,373     | 121,704,984  | 11,141        | 31.1 | 2.4 | 57.08%            |
| BASIC MATERIALS        | 984            | 1,101.66   | -1.3% | 0.2%  | 22.6%  | 5,571,681       | 3,149,522    | 889           | 27.1 | 1.6 | 2.27%             |
| CONSUMER DISCRETIONARY | 711            | 1,385.52   | 1.7%  | 9.6%  | 85.6%  | 74,842,509      | 14,129,676   | 4,478         | 9.7  | 5.7 | 1.64%             |
| CONSUMER STAPLES       | 234            | 767.81     | -0.3% | -1.1% | -6.2%  | 3,118,461       | 1,553,734    | 313           | 15.6 | 1.6 | 0.54%             |
| ENERGY                 | 324            | 1,559.27   | 5.4%  | 6.9%  | 22.1%  | 92,537,361      | 4,140,033    | 2,626         | 17.1 | 1.6 | 0.75%             |
| FINANCIAL SERVICES     | 4,197          | 1,473.55   | -0.6% | 2.5%  | 58.5%  | 1,177,807,418   | 123,066,329  | 32,268        | 10.2 | 1.8 | 9.67%             |
| HEALTH CARE            | 395            | 794.82     | 0.0%  | 0.0%  | -3.8%  | 211,219         | 173,351      | 80            | 20.7 | 5.3 | 0.91%             |
| INDUSTRIALS            | 4,366          | 1,227.96   | 0.3%  | 2.1%  | 37.8%  | 164,989,069     | 44,317,356   | 11,215        | 28.4 | 1.8 | 10.06%            |
| INSURANCE              | 661            | 1,586.60   | 3.4%  | 7.4%  | 37.2%  | 24,091,022      | 4,778,977    | 1,636         | 11.7 | 1.4 | 1.52%             |
| REAL ESTATE            | 3,068          | 1,425.84   | 1.2%  | 4.1%  | 49.7%  | 583,650,651     | 62,805,701   | 18,911        | 25.4 | 1.4 | 7.07%             |
| TECHNOLOGY             | 11             | 785.70     | 3.8%  | 1.9%  | 56.3%  | 389,360         | 42,177       | 49            | -    | 0.9 | 0.03%             |
| TELECOMMUNICATIONS     | 3,407          | 1,109.68   | 0.9%  | 0.6%  | 0.7%   | 304,619,504     | 18,862,771   | 4,816         | 21.1 | 1.4 | 7.85%             |
| UTILITIES              | 269            | 642.11     | 0.8%  | 3.4%  | -11.9% | 9,391,825       | 2,288,462    | 538           | 20.7 | 4.3 | 0.62%             |

### Top Gainers

| Stock     | Last Close | Change % | Volume      | Value     | Trades |
|-----------|------------|----------|-------------|-----------|--------|
| ENERGYH   | 75         | 39.15    | 14,428,898  | 994,242   | 863    |
| JIYAD     | 87         | 20.17    | 10,620,133  | 893,679   | 481    |
| REMAL     | 21.8       | 17.20    | 66,991,921  | 1,437,531 | 1,518  |
| BAREEQ    | 42.2       | 15.30    | 153,998,905 | 6,907,819 | 3,453  |
| HAYATCOMM | 123        | 13.89    | 10,966,059  | 1,291,372 | 419    |

### Top Losers

| Stock    | Last Close | Change % | Volume      | Value      | Trades |
|----------|------------|----------|-------------|------------|--------|
| FTI      | 65.5       | -16.98   | 172,932     | 12,469     | 31     |
| AGHC     | 196        | -10.09   | 16,532,653  | 3,452,194  | 1,101  |
| CLEANING | 68.5       | -9.03    | 12,407,391  | 908,776    | 725    |
| GFH      | 92.7       | -8.13    | 402,259,291 | 38,616,750 | 8,001  |
| KGL      | 83         | -7.99    | 22,132,209  | 2,043,653  | 1,131  |

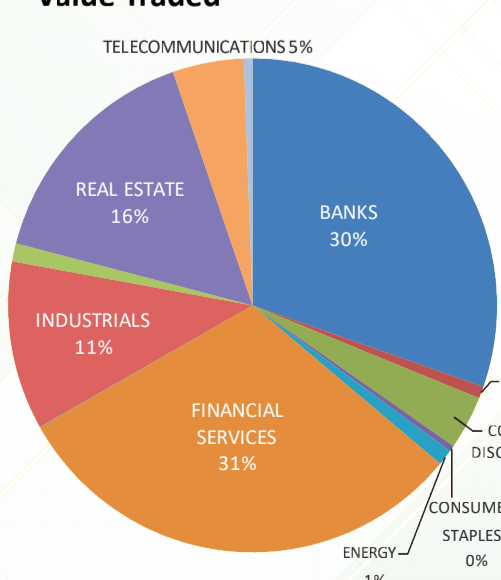
### Top Volume

| Stock  | Last | Change % | Volume      | Value      | Trades |
|--------|------|----------|-------------|------------|--------|
| GFH    | 92.7 | -8.13    | 402,259,291 | 38,616,750 | 8,001  |
| AAN    | 18.9 | 0.53     | 273,503,823 | 5,332,201  | 2,488  |
| BAREEQ | 42.2 | 15.30    | 153,998,905 | 6,907,819  | 3,453  |
| GBK    | 260  | 4.42     | 107,398,692 | 27,187,317 | 1,426  |
| KRE    | 183  | 3.39     | 88,080,515  | 16,066,893 | 1,899  |

### Top Value

| Stock | Last | Change % | Volume      | Value      | Trades |
|-------|------|----------|-------------|------------|--------|
| GFH   | 92.7 | -8.13    | 402,259,291 | 38,616,750 | 8,001  |
| NBK   | 1.05 | 5.42     | 31,174,580  | 31,901,830 | 2,291  |
| KFH   | 847  | 0.47     | 32,548,105  | 27,484,355 | 2,867  |
| GBK   | 260  | 4.42     | 107,398,692 | 27,187,317 | 1,426  |
| KRE   | 183  | 3.39     | 88,080,515  | 16,066,893 | 1,899  |

### Value Traded



### Market Summary:

- The Premier Market Volume decreased 4% while value increased 3%. Main Market Volume and value decreased 30% due to the delay in the Q3 financials announcements.
- The Premier and All-Shares indices closed at a new all-time high record due to Q3 positive announcements and strong momentum, while the Main Index closed below last week for the first time in a few weeks.
- Technically, the All-Share Index registered a new all-time high-level closing at 7318 creating support levels at 729, 7267, and 7215. Staying above 7318 will lead to 7370 and 7710. The Premier Index registered a new all-time high-level closing at 7926 creating support levels at 7868, 7840, and 7819. Staying above 7926 will lead to 8820. The Main Index closed at 6141 creating support levels at 6130, 9085, and 6023. Once overcome the resistance at 6180 it will lead to 6250, 6335, and 6850.



## Business

# Ooredoo ranked the 'first telecom company to deploy IPv6 in Kuwait'

## Al-Babtain expresses pride of CITRA recognition

**KUWAIT:** Ooredoo Telecom, the first to introduce innovative digital services in Kuwait, was ranked as the first telecom company to adopt the sixth version of the Internet Protocol (IPv6) in Kuwait by the Communications and Information Technology Authority, to be an important factor for the growth and continuity of Internet services and related services provided by Ooredoo Kuwait for its customers, and in response to the growing demand for faster and more efficient communication services in the era of streaming data.

Ooredoo has always been exerting significant efforts to meet the increasing demand on the existing and emerging communication technologies. In doing so, it wants to ensure a better future for the Internet and telecommunication sector in the State of Kuwait and a constant provision of digital services. Hence, the company is adapting the most efficient strategies to adopt the Internet Protocol version 6 (IPv6), which is essential for technological progress and goes in line with the aspiration of Kuwait vision 2035 "New Kuwait".

Driven by its keenness to lead the digital transformation journey and enrich people's digital lives, Ooredoo Kuwait extensively uses emerging technologies such as big data, the Internet, cloud services and others. In the age of streaming data, communication between machines, the Internet Protocol version 6 (IPv6) is an important factor in meeting



the challenges associated with the fourth generation of Internet Protocol (IPv4), and the growing shortage that has a significant impact on the continuity of service delivery and access in a fast, efficient and better quality for all its users.

Abdulaziz Yaqoub Al-Babtain, CEO of Ooredoo Kuwait, expressed his pride of this recognition and said: "Today we live in an era of artificial intelligence, development, growth, digitization and accelerating challenges in the technology sector, which

requires us to keep pace with change and overcome all challenges that may hinder individuals from enjoying high quality internet services. These challenges ignite us to continually improve our capabilities and services to provide our customers with the best services".

From his side, Salim Al-Ozainah, Chairman and CEO at the Communications and Information Technology Authority: "This recognition affirms the Communications and Information Technology



Authority towards strengthening the telecom sector in line with the digital transformation, which is the cornerstone of the "New Kuwait 2035" vision, which aims to develop and promote investment in the communications and information technology sector, the use of modern and innovative technology, and the change of culture, which it would raise the level of efficiency of services provided to citizens and residents alike, and lead the growth and prosperity of our beloved Kuwait".



Grand Hypermarket's 77th and Kuwait Region's 25th store at Shuwaikh has been inaugurated yesterday by HE Shaikh Dawood Salman Al Sabah and Mr. Shamsudheen bin Mohyudheen in the presence of Dr. Anvar Ameen Chelat MD Grand Hyper, Mr. Aboobacker ED, Mr. Ayyoob Kachery RD Kuwait, Mr. Mohammed Suneer CEO, Mr. Thehaseer Ali DRO, Mr. Rahil Bassim COO along with management team and well wishers.



## Huawei nova 9 - Here is what blew our minds in the trendy flagship and camera king

**KUWAIT:** Everybody wants a smartphone that does not only look stylish and trendy, but one that comes with solid and innovative features. Be it a high-resolution camera setup, powerful all-day performance for intensive everyday use or some cool features that make the daily use of the phone easier and simpler.

Huawei has something that ticks all of the above boxes. Introducing the Trendy Flagship & Camera King - the Huawei nova 9. The latest addition to its popular mid-range HUAWEI nova series comes with an all-new colourway called Colour No. 9, an astonishing Ultra Vision AI Quad Camera, 66W Huawei Supercharge in addition to cool Super Device and EMUI 12 features, which all but make using the smartphone, fun and enjoyable.

The Huawei nova 9 is now available in Kuwait in the all-new Colour No. 9 and Black and consumers will be able to get them at a price of KD 129,900 from Huawei's online platforms as well as certified retailers.

### Huawei nova 9

#### A marvelous and elegant color and design

The HUAWEI nova 9 debuts with a brand new colourway - Colour No. 9. The low-saturation bluish purple finish is created with a new 'Starry Flash AG Glass' manufacturing process to produce an out-of-this-world effect. The Huawei nova 9 has a stunning 6.57-inch Original-Color Curved Display with a tapered surface that flows like a waterfall, minimizing the left and right bezels for more immersive viewing.

It can display 1.07 billion colours, featuring a

refresh rate of up to 120Hz and 300Hz touch sampling rate for improved responsiveness. Combined with support for full-path P3 colour, the display ensures spectacular viewing experiences with smooth visuals, vivid colours and incredible details. While measuring only 7.77mm thick with a weight of 175g, making it perfect for slipping into your handbag or pocket when out and about! The Huawei nova 9 sports a Star Orbit Ring design, making it even more recognizable and eye-catching.

### Ultra vision camera system

The rear camera system includes a 50MP Ultra Vision Camera, an 8MP Ultra Wide Angle Camera, a 2MP Depth Camera and a Macro Camera that lets you capture at as close as 4cm. Both the front and rear cameras support 4K shooting at 30fps, allowing you to express yourself through short videos and vlogs for social media. The main camera has a large 1/1.56-inch sensor and a RYYB color filter array with a high light sensitivity. This collects 40 percent more light compared to a standard RGG sensor, ensuring the utmost clarity on all images, while enabling outstanding low light performance.



Once the camera hardware captures an image, the XD Fusion Engine gets to work. The HUAWEI nova 9 inherited Huawei flagship smartphones' XD Fusion Engine, which uses sophisticated computational photography techniques to greatly enhance image details and quality.

Having a good hair day? Do not let it go to waste! The Huawei nova 9's 32MP front camera is perfect for selfies in addition to its 4K selfie video shooting, and Portrait Mode will help your self-portraits pop with Bokeh Portrait. There are also AI Beauty effects and filters you can use. Selfies never looked so slick.

Moreover, introducing an all-new feature - Continuous Front/Rear Recording. With this new innovation, you can also switch between the front and rear cameras, allowing them to fluidly capture their story within a single video file. Dual-View Video recording allows users to showcase their live reaction to events, simultaneously using the front and rear cameras with no editing required or, for when you want to show the big picture and the detail, you can simultaneously capture a close up shot and wide angle shot at the same time.

With the Petal Clip app, you can easily choose from a variety of video templates and themes before posting your vlogs or other videos to social media in no time. Making group shots and video easier as well, the Huawei nova 9 also supports Remote Shutter. This means you can easily set-up your Huawei nova 9 on a tripod and capture a group photo with your friends without having to worry about awkward frames as you walk to and from the camera.

### Charge rapidly with 66W Huawei supercharge

Whether for gaming, recording, working or simply browsing the Internet, the Huawei nova 9 delivers excellent battery life with a large and long lasting 4300mAh battery, which is supported by a 66W Huawei SuperCharge. The smartphone can be charged much faster; it only takes 15 minutes to charge to 53 percent and 38 minutes to full 100 percent.

## AVEVA announces AITS as AVEVA select partner in Gulf region

**DUBAI:** AVEVA, a global leader in industrial software, driving digital transformation and sustainability, announced that AITS (Advanced Integrated Tech Solution), a provider of innovative technologies for the fourth industrial revolution, has become an AVEVA Select partner for the Gulf region, under a new name 'AVEVA Select Gulf'. Being an AVEVA Select partner allows AITS to deliver AVEVA's full portfolio of leading-edge industrial software solutions to regional customers that will help them become more sustainable and profitable.

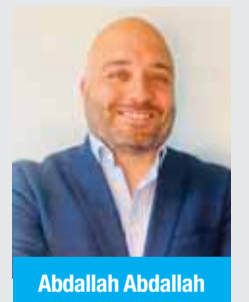
As AVEVA's partner for the Gulf region, AITS has won major contracts across industries over the past four years. These include successful implementations for the Utilities sector as well as deploying Unified Operations Center, AVEVA's command-and-control solution for operators, for Water Wastewater, Roads Management, Oil and Gas operations and Smart City projects in the region.

The coveted 'AVEVA Select Partner' designation allows distributors to enable customers simplify design, optimize production, and maximize performance. By leveraging the breadth of the AVEVA software portfolio, AVEVA Select partners can take advantage of programs designed to suit every product and solution specialization in the engineering and industrial segments. The AVEVA Select Program offers an effective way for partners to penetrate new markets and build upon existing solutions and local relationships.

As an authorized AVEVA Select partner, AVEVA Select Gulf can leverage AVEVA's comprehensive software portfolio, enabling them to help organizations accelerate their digital transformation journeys. With AVEVA's Engineering solutions, they can assist customers in efficiently delivering capital projects on time and within budget. The AVEVA Operations suite eliminates supply chain value leaks while improving operational efficiency and enhancing collaboration. AVEVA Select Gulf can also empower customers and partners to balance operating expenses and risk to optimize performance with AVEVA Asset Performance Management.

"AITS customers and partners will continue to get the same premium support, with an impressive added value of wider access to AVEVA's complete portfolio, which assures a new level of Performance Intelligence using technologies such as AI, IIoT, big data and cloud. The AVEVA Select program helps our distributors to optimize on opportunities and to support their customers in digital transition," said Georges Millet, EMEA Partners Vice President, AVEVA. "We are pleased to welcome AITS to the AVEVA Select family and look forward to developing and capitalizing on mutually beneficial growth strategies."

"The current transformation in the GCC is taking place on the digital, social and economic fronts with leaders of all six counties focusing on the promotion of creativity, youthful innovation and sustainable economic growth. This transformation is underpinned by technological developments in cloud computing, AI and enterprise software solutions. At AVEVA Select Gulf, we believe in the created opportunities and are excited to offer AVEVA solutions to our customers and partners," concluded Abdallah Abdallah, Managing Director, AVEVA Select Gulf.



Abdallah Abdallah



Business

# From crab balls to cars, Biden's hometown feels inflation pinch

## Wave of inflation sweeps US as COVID vaccines help businesses reopen

WILMINGTON: A pizzeria in President Joe Biden's hometown Wilmington recently took sparkling water off the menu because it got so pricey managers figured no one would buy it. At the car dealership that Biden's presidential motorcade occasionally passes when he comes to town, sales people have had trouble keeping new vehicles in stock, while prices for their used models have climbed ever higher in recent months.

"Each day is a new day. We're not really sure what's going to happen in the business or in the economy when we wake up in the morning," said Jim Ursommarso, vice president of Union Park Automotive.

The wave of inflation that's swept the United States this year as COVID-19 vaccines have helped businesses reopen and consumers spend has spared no part of the country—not even Wilmington, the city that has provided a backdrop for much of Biden's political career.

Voters in the Mid-Atlantic city gave Biden seven times more votes than his predecessor Donald Trump in last year's election, but business owners now fret as prices rise and public approval in his administration falls. "Here in Delaware, he's loved. But as time has gone by, we have been lacking the reciprocity," said Serena Kelley Jefferson, co-owner of Serena's Soulfood, whose mother cooked for Biden, and who recently took crab balls off her menu because they became too costly to serve profitably.

### Inflation spreads

Inflation was predicted to increase as the US economy recovered in 2021, but a Wednesday report from the Labor Department showing the consumer price index last month experienced its biggest year-on-year

gain in more than three decades was an unwelcome surprise. This year's initial price spikes were most severe for products like used cars and airplane tickets. The latest data, however, showed them extending into groceries and gasoline, with ripple effects across the economy.

"After the pandemic, this was the worst thing that could happen to small businesses, especially restaurants," said Gianni Esposito, whose eponymous pizza parlor has received Biden repeatedly, including on the day he began his latest presidential campaign in 2019.

"Now you cannot find a lot of employees. Everything you have to buy, it's 30, 40, 50 percent more expensive." As of Friday, poll amalgamator FiveThirtyEight put Biden's approval rating at 42.8 percent, lower than all other presidents at this point in their terms except for two.

"I didn't vote for him, but I wasn't against him like I am now," said Candice Gronski, 50, an accountant living just over the state line in Pennsylvania who typically votes Republican but felt like Biden nonetheless failed to meet her expectations.

### Not to blame

The US inflation rate has been muted for years, and the latest price increases are driven by a mix of factors that might not have occurred without the pandemic. Supply chains are snarled worldwide thanks to the disruptions caused by COVID-19, while energy costs have risen over global oil prices briefly went negative in 2020. In the United States, American consumers are flush with cash and spending it with the help of three rounds of stimulus checks and an expanded government social safety net that both Trump and Biden approved.



WILMINGTON: Gianni Esposito serves pizza at his restaurant Gianni's Pizza in Wilmington, Delaware. Inflation was predicted to increase as the US economy recovered this year. — AFP

But businesses haven't been able to keep up, since many people who could work have decided not to. Meanwhile, the global semiconductor shortage has slowed down production across a range of industries, including the auto sector, driving prices higher. The increases may well hamper Biden's push for an expansion of the country's social services costing \$1.85 trillion over 10 years.

Following the latest inflation report, Joe Manchin, a centrist senator whose vote is crucial to getting the bill

through Congress, warned, "the threat posed by record inflation to the American people is not 'transitory' and is instead getting worse." As he filled up his car with gasoline that was upwards of a dollar more expensive per-gallon then it was a year ago, Phil Johnson said inflation wasn't affecting his life.

Biden "inherited a lot of this when he took office in January," the 32-year-old worker in the financial sector said. "The stimulus checks won't last forever and inflation can't stay at six percent." — AFP



Naqeeb Amin honoring fresh AUB employees

## AUB holds training program for its employees for 2021

KUWAIT: Ahli United Bank (AUB) received the 5th batch of its fresh employees for the year 2021. This program is part of the Bank's strategy seeking to attract the best young staff to enhance its human wealth which the bank considers a key factor in its unique position and continuous success.

In this context, the Bank has introduced its comprehensive induction programs to the new employees. These programs aim to make the new employees familiar with the work systems at the Bank and to identify the nature of the work of the Bank's different departments and their functions.

They also aim to train the new employees on customer service skills. Through these programs, trainees receive a detailed explanation on the excellent products and services the bank provides to its customers. Moreover, they seek to explain the basis and rules of the Islamic banking system. The key objective of these programs is also to help the trainees quickly integrate into work and build fellowship relationships with the bank's team. On this occasion, Naqeeb Amin, HR

General Manager at Ahli United Bank said that the provision of good professional training and preparation for the bank's new employees, to form their first professional launch in the banking sector, is one of the factors that make the work environment at AUB most attractive to fresh graduates who seek to work within a unique system that helps them improve their skills and achieve their professional aspirations.

At the same time, the bank's management is concerned to design the training programs for young staff who have recently joined the bank. These programs raise their efficiency and readiness for banking work. Furthermore, these programs are in line with the bank's vision to provide the best banking services that gain customers' satisfaction.

Amin added: The great concern that AUB attaches to training and development reflects the vision of the bank's senior management, which always emphasizes the attention the bank pays to its employees, especially young ones. The Bank also aims to provide all forms of necessary support, and open up horizons of creativity and excellence for them to truly be an added value to our human wealth which we are proud of. Amin praised the interaction of the fresh employees with the induction training programs. He stressed that they consistently met expectations, demonstrated seriousness and great enthusiasm to acquire more skills and experience. Moreover, he said that those fresh employees have a high willingness to start the banking career.

## Burgan Bank reveals winners of Yawmi account draw

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:

- Huda Safar Safar
- Hussain Julaieed Alenezi
- Zainab Abbas Ramadhan
- Naser Abdulaziz Alawadhi
- Sajedah Ghassan Alnaqeb

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.

## CBK announces winners of Al-Najma account campaign

KUWAIT: Commercial Bank of Kuwait conducted the weekly draws on Al-Najma Account and Salary Transfer Campaign yesterday. The draws were conducted in the presence of Ministry of Commerce and Industry representative Ahmed Al-Basman.

The results of the draws were as follows:

1. Al-Najma weekly account - the prize of KD 5,000 went to the winner Abboakar Aashikali Khan
2. Salary account campaign - the prize of up to KD 1,000 - went to the winner Fatemah Ali Al-Otaibi

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 benefits of this campaign and get an instant cash gift from KD 400 to KD 500 or an interest-free loan for a period of up to four years and up to KD 70,000, Kuwaiti pensioner, along with expatriate customers who transfer their debt to the bank will receive an instant cash gift of 2 percent from their transferred debt up to KD 1,000.

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.

## COP26 outcome hinged on handful of key issues

GLASGOW: Fourteen days of gritty negotiations by 20,000 diplomats from nearly 200 countries - and the hopes of salvaging a deal at COP26 - boiled down to cash, coal, compensation and the willingness to speed up the drawdown of fossil fuels. Here's a breakdown of the main sticking points that got unpicked for a deal to get hammered through. The Paris Agreement that enjoined the world's nations to reduce planet-warming greenhouse emissions does not contain the words "coal", "oil", "natural gas" or "fossil fuels".

This may seem odd, given that global warming is overwhelmingly caused by burning hydrocarbons, but it helps explain why the first-ever mention of fossil fuels in a document flowing from the 2015 treaty has been described as "historic" and "precedent-setting". An initial draft of what would become the final text called on "parties to accelerate the phasing-out of coal and subsidies for fossil fuel".

But under pressure from India, China, South Africa and Saudi Arabia, that clarion call got progressively watered down to: "accelerate efforts towards phase-out of unabated coal power and inefficient fossil fuel subsidies." "Unabated" refers to emissions from coal-fired power plants that are not syphoned off to prevent them from entering the atmosphere. And in a dramatic, last-minute change agreed across huddles in the final plenary, "phase-out" of unabated coal became a "phase-down".

The call for action in the 1992 UN climate convention rests on two pillars: mitigation to cut emissions, and adaptation to help poor and vulnerable countries prepare for climate change in the future. But since that bedrock treaty was crafted, climate impacts have become a here-and-now reality, with yearly economic cost measured in the billions. Facing that reality, the UN climate forum bolted on the concept of "loss and damage" to cover climate-driven catastrophes for which it is too late or impossible

to prepare for. "When you don't do enough mitigation you get more into the adaptation space, and when you don't do enough adaptation you have to deal with loss and damage," Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum, Fiji's minister for economy and climate Change, told AFP.

The loss and damage mechanism introduced in 2013, however, has remained largely an empty shell.

Developing countries drew a line in the sand in Glasgow, demanding concrete steps. But their hope for the establishment of a funded "facility" was shot down, with the United States in particular concerned that such a step could put it and other rich countries on the hook for billions, if not trillions, in damages. A compromise, laid out in the text, would be the establishment of a yearly "dialogue", running through to 2024, to "discuss the arrangement for the funding of activities".

Under the 2015 Paris Agreement nations agreed to update their emissions-cutting plans every five years. The first set of revisions came due at the end of 2020, but most were not submitted until this year because of the COVID pandemic. But with emissions still on the rise, and warnings from scientists that the world has only this decade to drastically cut carbon pollution, calls have grown for additional updates before the next scheduled reporting round in 2025. The new text "requests parties to revisit and strengthen the 2030 targets in their nationally determined contributions (NDCs) as necessary to align with the Paris Agreement temperature goal by the end of 2022." In UN jargon, "requests" is close to "must do", and many countries—China, India, Saudi Arabia among them—were not keen on accelerating the timetable.

One of the thorniest debates during recent UN climate talks has been Article 6 of the Paris agreement, which deals with cross-border trade of carbon reduction credits. The issue has dogged climate negotiations for years, with fears that if set up poorly, it would mean countries could trade dubious emissions reductions that cover up their failure to reduce greenhouse gas emissions at the source. Laurence Tubiana, who helped craft the 2015 Paris climate treaty as France's chief negotiator, said that the new text had "closed some of the egregious loopholes, such as double counting". "But it is not enough to stop bad faith companies and countries gaming the system," she told AFP, adding that a watchdog would need to monitor the implementation of the markets.—AFP



## Thailand will host APEC 2022

KUWAIT: "Chalom" is a kind of Thai bamboo basket used to carry travel items and goods as it has become a symbol of trade in Thailand since ancient times. The interlaced bamboo strips are strong and resilient as well as tough and durable so it could bolster the regional economy and help it grow with "stability, prosperity and sustainability."

The 21 openings in between the interwoven bam-

boo strips signify all the 21 member economies in APEC.

The unique characteristics of Chalom reflect the theme of Thailand's host year "Open, Connect, Balance."

Open - Chalom is a symbol of open trade. Connect - Chalom is basketry used to carry goods or travel items, signifying connectivity.

Balance - Chalom is made of natural and environmentally friendly materials, supporting the Bio-Circular-Green Economy (BCG) Model.

The three colors of Chalom also serve as specific symbols: Convenience Blue for OPEN, Connection Pink for Connect and Sustainable Green for Balance.





## Old houses in Muharraq, Bahrain's cultural treasure

The old houses in Muharraq, the Kingdom of Bahrain, are considered as a cultural treasure for the island nation. An extension of the Sheikh Ibrahim bin Mohammed Al-Khalifa Center for Culture and Research, the area includes many important structures such as the Abdullah Al-Zayed house, which was the location for the first Bahraini newspaper in the beginning of the 20th century. — KUNA



## 'Death ticket': More lawsuits filed over Travis Scott concert

Prominent US attorney Ben Crump announced the filing on Friday of dozens more lawsuits on behalf of people who attended the disastrous Travis Scott concert, including a woman who said she didn't know she was buying a "death ticket." Crump told reporters in Houston, where nine people died during the November 5 concert by the hip-hop artist, that he and affiliated attorneys had filed 93 lawsuits against concert promoter Live Nation and others.

"We represent more than 200 victims who were injured mentally, physically

and psychologically at the Astroworld festival," Crump said. "Some of these victims have been catastrophically injured. They witnessed people being killed. They witnessed people in agony," he said. "People were literally fighting for their life just to get out of there." "We're not going to let anybody off the hook," said Crump, who has represented the family of George Floyd and a number of other African-Americans killed by police.

At least nine people died during the crush at the concert attended by some 50,000 people at NRG Park in Houston.

Lawsuits have been filed against Live Nation; Scoremore, a Texas concert group; ASM Global, an international venue group; and others including Scott and fellow singer Drake, who took to the stage in the final 15 minutes of the concert, well after authorities had declared an emergency. Also attending Crump's press conference were several people who had gone to the concert.

"It was a nightmare day," said Gertrude Daugherty, a 59-year-old grandmother. "I never thought that going to an entertainment would turn

out to be such a disaster. "Never know that you will buy a ticket and it will be your death ticket," Daugherty said. Dishon Isaac, 31, described the scene at the concert as a "war zone." "Fights were breaking out. People were throwing water bottles," Isaac said. "We were like sardines in a can," he added. "I realized I had to get out of there or I was going to get crushed to death. "I'll never forget the look of terror on people's faces," Isaac said. — AFP



This combination of file pictures shows (left) US rapper Travis Scott arriving for the 2021 MTV Video Music Awards and (right) US rapper Drake attending the Los Angeles premiere of the new HBO series 'Euphoria'. — AFP

## The Spice Girls are in confidential talks about a 2023 world tour

Mel B, Emma Bunton and Geri Horner were spotted arriving at the Mandeville Hotel in London for a meeting last week and bandmate Mel C reportedly joined in from Los Angeles via Zoom. An insider told The Sun on Sunday newspaper: "The four girls have been discussing a world tour for a while, and this - very confidential - meeting was put in the diary so they could iron out the final details."

"The current plan is the tour will begin

in Australia and go from there. They are all very excited that the wheels are now in motion, and are hoping to give their fans a 2023 tour bigger and better than 2019." The group were reportedly encouraged to reunite by superfan Adele, who attended one of the concerts from their previous world tour. The insider added: "One person who will definitely be in the audience is Adele. "She is a real superfan, and told Mel seeing the girls in 2019 made her year."

Victoria Beckham did not attend the meeting but her bandmates are reportedly trying to convince her to perform during one of the concerts. Fashion designer Victoria didn't take part in the 2019 world tour and said at the time: "It took me a lot of courage not to go on tour with the Spice Girls again, but to be the one who says, 'You know, I'm not doing it because things feel different now than they used to'. "I'd rather concentrate on my family and my company." — Bang Showbiz



Spice girls

## Japan's former princess Mako moves to New York with husband

Japan's former princess Mako Komuro departed for the United States yesterday with her husband, swapping ancient imperial rites for the bright lights of New York after leaving the royal family. The pair tied the knot in Tokyo last month in muted fashion, following years of tabloid gossip and online sniping over their union that Komuro said caused her "sadness and pain".

A move to the United States had long been rumored. The two 30-year-olds finally boarded a commercial flight yesterday from Tokyo to New York, where Kei Komuro attended law school and now works. Heavily guarded by police and airport officials, the couple passed before some 100 journalists and cameramen without responding to questions. Mako, the niece of Emperor Naruhito, lost her royal title when she married a commoner under post-war succession laws that also only allow male members of the imperial family to ascend the throne. After announcing their engagement in 2017, the Komuros were confronted with a barrage of reports alleging that Kei's family had run into financial difficulties.

Japan's royals are held to exacting standards, and the Imperial Household Agency said Mako developed complex post-traumatic stress disorder because of

the media attention. "I have been scared, feeling sadness and pain whenever one-sided rumors turn into groundless stories," Mako said at a press conference after their marriage. Kei said he felt "very sad that Mako has been in a bad condition, mentally and physically," declaring: "I love Mako. We only get one life, and I want us to spend it with the one we love." The

Apple. The original plan had been for Kei to travel to the United States ahead of Mako, with the former princess joining him after she got her first passport, reports said. But Kei stayed in Japan longer than expected to attend the funeral of Mako's grandfather. Japan's emperor holds no political power, but is an important symbolic figurehead. With a dwindling supply



Japan's former princess Mako Komuro (center), the elder daughter of Prince Akishino and Princess Kiko, and her husband Kei Komuro (second right) walk to their departure gate for their flight to New York at Tokyo's Haneda international airport yesterday. — AFP

controversy surrounding the pair, and their US move, has drawn inevitable comparisons with another royal couple: Britain's Prince Harry and Meghan Markle.

Japanese media said the Komuros, who met at university in Tokyo, have already secured a place to live in the Big

of male royals, there has been some debate over changing the rules in Japan, with polls showing the public broadly support women being allowed to rule. But any change is likely to be slow, with traditionalists vehemently opposed. — AFP



# Santa Paws: South African canines sled on sandy beaches



A pack of 20 dogs run for 5 kms on Muizenberg beach in Cape Town. — AFP photos



One of the 20 dogs that completes the team poses for a photograph before the start of the race at Muizenberg beach.

Muizenberg outside Cape Town can boast of many things - golden sands, colorful beach huts, great surf. But this popular spot has something its rivals can't even begin to match-teams of up to 30 huskies pulling sleds. Every Saturday, tourists and joggers are treated to scenes straight from the Arctic with dogs that have swapped snow for sand. Locals and holidaymakers alike are stunned to see the barking teams of huskies mushing along the white beach at up to 25 km/h (15 m/h) with a blue sled at the rear.

It's the brainchild of husky lover Sam Gunter, 43, who realized the breed, though



Scarlet takes a break during the run on Muizenberg beach, Cape Town.

very popular locally, were not getting the amount of exercise they needed. He built two sleds and started inviting husky owners to bring their hounds to Muizenberg beach outside of Cape Town each Saturday. Eleven years down the line, there are now around 100 huskies that

regularly sled on different weekends. This Saturday, 23 black-and-cream thick-furred huskies turned up with their owners-some having driven for up to an hour to the beach. Gunter straps them into blue harnesses. Once all are safely in, he gives a shout of "go" and the dogs do what comes naturally. Always in a straight line, they run up back and forth, pausing briefly to rest.

"It is the perfect exercise for huskies who were bred to pull sleds and they just love it," said Gunter from Strand, a small resort town located 40 kilometers (25 miles) up the beach. "They get so excited... and can't wait to get going. And after work-

ing hard all week it is my weekly therapy and is just wonderful to see," Gunter, a financial broker told AFP.

### 'Huskies need exercise'

Popular for their thick fur and bright blue eyes they "can easily get neglected," he warned. "Huskies need lots of exercise... they need to do up to 20 km a day." "This way at least once a week they get a five kilometer run for between 35 and 45 minutes."

The dogs only run in the evening or when temperatures are 15 degrees Celsius or lower, because they are Nordic

dogs, "so you have to be careful in the South African climate not to overheat them". Depending on the day, husky sledging can attract quite a crowd of spectators. Gunter says he is the only person in Africa doing husky sledging, "and the looks you get from some sunbathers when 30 huskies come past with Santa hats pulling a sled, is one to behold." "At this time of year people would be looking out for reindeers pulling a sleigh through the sky but in our case we have huskies pulling a sled on a beach!" — AFP



Sam Gunter (center) and two young assistants, prepare the sled as the first two dogs arrive at the meeting point at Muizenberg beach in Cape Town.



One of the first pairs of dogs tied to the rope, is excited about the start of the race.



Regan, 17, the oldest son of Sam Gunter, helping him train dogs and make them run on the beach of Muizenberg.

## What's next for Britney? Check Instagram

After nearly 14 years living under a strict conservatorship she deemed abusive and exploitative, Britney Spears is free. And now that a California court has lifted the controversial legal arrangement barring one of the world's best-selling pop stars from managing her own life and finances, many fans are asking what's next. Speculation abounds-Kids? Travel? Suing her family? — but the answer is elusive, particularly given the guarded lifestyle Spears was legally bound to during more than a decade that saw her largely governed by her father, Jamie.

The magnetic superstar, who turns 40 on December 2, has not given an interview in years, rarely makes public appearances and last performed in October 2018. Today most of what the public knows about Spears—who soared to global fame as a teenager on a burst of hits including her breakout "...Baby One More Time," before a highly publicized mental breakdown saw her become a paparazzi punching bag-comes from her eccentric Instagram account.

For years the bubbly star has posted regularly, sometimes uploading videos of herself twirling or doing dance routines, other times waxing poetic on hopes and dreams. The line of communication from Spears's lavish Los Angeles mansion to the outside world-she has more than 90 million followers across Instagram and Twitter-has offered the singer a modicum of control over her image, and is perhaps where the most accurate reading of her plans lies.

In October-a few weeks after her father was removed from the conservatorship, paving a path for the arrangement's termination-Spears voiced anxiety over her future in a lengthy missive. "I'll just be honest and say I've waited so long to be free from the situation I'm in," she wrote. "Now that it's here I'm scared to do anything because I'm afraid I'll make a mistake."

### Family planning

Marriage has been a theme, with Spears in September announcing her engagement to 27-year-old Sam Asghari. Earlier this week she said Donatella Versace was designing her gown, although a date for the nuptials has not been set publicly. Spears also has said she wants to have another child. She shares two boys, both now teenagers, with her ex-husband Kevin Federline, who has majority custody.

In a chilling accusation in June she told the Los Angeles judge who ultimately ended the conservatorship that under the arrangement she was forced to keep in

place a contraceptive IUD, despite her wishes to conceive. Along with control of her own reproductive system Spears now has power over her fortune, estimated to be some \$60 million. This year she's taken a number of vacations including to Hawaii and French Polynesia, where she posted about taking flying lessons.

### Performing 'not her top priority'

But while Spears seems focused on family and travel, high on the priority list of fans-and industry players-is whether she will resume performing or release new music. The superstar dropped four studio albums under the conservatorship, most recently 2016's "Glory." She also was among the singers to stage wildly bankable Las Vegas residencies in recent years. Her four-year "Britney: Pieces of Me" run grossed a reported \$138 million. But in January 2019 she abruptly canceled her planned return to Vegas, going on indefinite professional hiatus.

She wrote on Instagram in July that

"I'm not gonna be performing on any stages anytime soon with my dad handling what I wear, say, do, or think!!!!" "I'd much rather share videos YES from my living room instead of onstage in Vegas." In the same post Spears indicated that she had been shut out of the planning of her Vegas shows, becoming more puppet than performer. Since Friday's court proceeding tabloids have been abuzz over her next career moves, with Page Six citing an "insider" who said Spears "wants to make music and perform again" but it's "not her top priority right now and hasn't been for a while."

### Tell-all?

Also on deck are upcoming hearings over the millions involved in the fight to free Britney-all of which have been billed to the singer's estate, with a constellation of lawyers and family members on both sides seeking payments. It is possible Spears could take legal action against her father, which she hinted at during a court hearing but has made no formal steps towards.

Her primary recourse against her father would be providing evidence he mismanaged Spears's money or overcharged her in his role as her financial conservator; he stepped down as conservator of her person in 2019, with a professional taking over. Spears said recently scripts for TV and film depictions of her story have been pouring in, though she said "I'm not dead" and not interested in someone else portraying her. She has also alluded to a tell-all: "Lord have mercy on my family's souls if I ever do an interview," she wrote in October. — AFP



Supporters of the FreeBritney movement celebrate following a court decision ending her conservatorship outside the Stanley Mosk courthouse in Los Angeles, California. — AFP

## Legendary novelist Wilbur Smith dies aged 88

Internationally acclaimed author Wilbur Smith has died in South Africa aged 88, his publisher announced Saturday. "Global bestselling author Wilbur Smith died unexpectedly this afternoon at his Cape Town home after a morning of reading and writing with his wife Niso by his side," said a statement released on the Wilbur Smith Books website. With 49 titles under his belt since his first novel 'When the Lion Feeds' was published in 1964, Smith became a household name in literature.



In this file photo internationally acclaimed Central African born author, Wilbur Smith, shares his experience during the second day of the International Festival of Literature in Dubai. — AFP

"The undisputed and inimitable master of adventure writing, Wilbur Smith's novels have gripped readers for over half a century, selling over 140 million copies worldwide in more than thirty languages," said the statement. His bestselling 'Courtney Series', was the longest running in publishing history, said the statement. It spanned generations and three centuries, "through critical periods from the dawn of colonial Africa to the American Civil War, and to the apartheid era in South Africa". — AFP



## Sports

# Four-goal Mbappe fires France to World Cup finals, Belgium also qualify

## Netherlands made to wait after 'outrageous' performance

PARIS: World champions France booked their place at next year's World Cup in Qatar in style as Kylian Mbappe fired in four goals in an 8-0 thrashing of Kazakhstan at the Parc des Princes on Saturday. Karim Benzema scored twice and there were further goals for Adrien Rabiot and Antoine Griezmann whose penalty marked his 42nd goal for France, taking him ahead of Michel Platini. Only Thierry Henry (51) and Olivier Giroud (46) have scored more for France.

The French will be joined at the finals by neighbors Belgium as the world's top-ranked team saw off Estonia 3-1 in Brussels to ensure top spot in Group E ahead of Gareth Bale's Wales who beat Belarus 5-1 in Cardiff. The Netherlands, who missed out on the 2018 World Cup, looked on course to join them as they led Montenegro 2-0 going into the last 10 minutes of their encounter in Podgorica. However, the Dutch conceded two goals in the last 10 minutes to draw 2-2. They still top Group G but are just two points ahead of Turkey and Norway.

On the sixth anniversary of the 2015 attacks in Paris which claimed the lives of 130 people, France put on a spectacular show for their supporters. Mbappe set the ball rolling when he put the world champions ahead after just six minutes. The Paris Saint-Germain star, playing on his home ground, added a second six minutes later and completed his first hat-trick for France with a thundering header just after the half-hour.

Leading 3-0 at the break, France turned up the heat even more in the second half as Benzema struck twice before Rabiot and Griezmann had their moments in the spotlight. It was fitting that Mbappe

had the final say, stroking home his fourth to complete the rout three minutes from time.

France top Group D, leaving Finland and Ukraine to scrap over second place. "A World Cup is a dream, an aim, it's everything and it's a unique chance to play in a team that can win it. We're going over there to win it," Mbappe said.

The Finns have a two-point advantage going into the final round of matches after seeing off Bosnia-Herzegovina 3-1. The Finns had Jukka Raitala sent off before half-time but goals from Brentford forward Marcus Forss, Robin Lod and Daniel O'Shaughnessy sealed the win.

### Belgium comfortable

Belgium had dropped just a single point in qualifying up to this point and knew that victory over Estonia would guarantee them top spot in Group E. Manager Roberto Martinez, however, was without first-choice strikers Romelu Lukaku, Mitchy Batshuayi and Touri Tielemans who were all injured.

“

We're going over there to win it

”

That meant a call-up for Christian Benteke and the Crystal Palace forward did not disappoint, taking his chance to press his claims by netting the opener after just 11 minutes. "I know I'm only the third choice in the hierarchy of the forwards but I'm not giving up," said Benteke. "The place in the squad for Qatar will be earned on the pitch."

Yannick Carrasco doubled the lead eight minutes into the second half and although Erik Sorga pulled one back for the visitors, Thorgan Hazard put the game to bed shortly after. That win meant that Wales, who had already secured a place in the play-



PARIS: France's forward Kylian Mbappe celebrates after scoring a goal during the FIFA World Cup 2022 qualification football match between France and Kazakhstan at the Parc des Princes stadium in Paris, on Saturday. — AFP

offs, would not be able to catch them. The Welsh, however, boosted by the presence of Bale making his 100th appearance, produced their own impressive show with Aaron Ramsay scoring twice on a noisy night in Cardiff.

The Dutch, meanwhile, who would have qualified with a win over Montenegro, will rue careless defending after Memphis Depay had scored twice to give them a 2-0 lead. Ilija Vukotic marked his international debut with a goal in the 82nd minute to give the home side some hope and four minutes later Nikola Vujnovic looped in a header to halt the orange march to Qatar. "The way we played in the second

half was just outrageous," Dutch captain Virgil Van Dijk told Dutch broadcaster NOS. "Our organization was just awful. We should have qualified here."

The Dutch are just two points ahead of Turkey, who put six past Gibraltar, and Norway who proved toothless without the injured Erling Braut Haaland as they were held to a 0-0 draw against Latvia in Oslo. The Dutch host Norway in Rotterdam on Tuesday in the final round of matches while Turkey travel to Montenegro. France and Belgium join Denmark and Germany as confirmed qualifiers from Europe with the other six automatic places to be settled over the course of the final matchday. — AFP

### News in brief

#### Gallagher gets first call

LONDON: Crystal Palace midfielder Conor Gallagher has been drafted into the England squad for today's World Cup qualifier in San Marino after Jordan Henderson, Jack Grealish, Raheem Sterling, Mason Mount and Luke Shaw withdrew yesterday. The Three Lions only need to avoid defeat against the minnows in Serravalle to secure their place in next year's tournament in Qatar. Liverpool captain Henderson and Manchester City's Grealish have returned to their clubs for further assessment on injuries. City forward Sterling is unavailable due to a personal matter, while Chelsea midfielder Mount requires dental surgery and Manchester United left-back Shaw is following a concussion protocol. Gallagher steps up from the Under-21s for his first senior call-up. The 21-year-old has impressed for Palace this term, scoring four goals for Patrick Vieira's side.

#### Italy lose three players

MILAN: Italy were on Saturday hit with another round of injuries as the European champions prepare for their crucial final 2022 World Cup qualifier against Northern Ireland. Having already had captain Giorgio Chiellini and first-choice striker Ciro Immobile among the several players ruled out of Friday's 1-1 draw with Switzerland, coach Roberto Mancini has now lost three more for today's clash at Windsor Park. Alessandro Bastoni and Davide Calabria are out injured while fellow defender Cristiano Biraghi leaves the Azzurri camp for "personal reasons", the Italian Football Federation said. Mancini has called up Davide Zappacosta to his squad for the match, which will decide whether Italy qualify for next year's tournament in Qatar after missing out in 2018. Italy lead Switzerland at the top of Group C on goal difference with one match remaining and a single guaranteed spot for the tournament.

#### Saudi launches women's league

RIYADH: The Saudi football federation on Saturday said it was launching the first edition of a women's league later this month. The November 22 launch is part of a program set up by the Saudi Arabia Football Federation in 2017 to support women's football. According to the federation, the new women's league will be playing in two phases within the regional league. Sixteen teams will take part in the first phase with games played in three cities — the capital Riyadh, Jeddah and Dammam. Six teams from each region will play in the matches, with the exception of Dammam where only four teams will play. Those who qualify will be able to play in a knockout competition at the Kingdom Final Championship due to be held early next year in the Red Sea city of Jeddah.

## Clippers torch Timberwolves, Heat hold off Jazz

LOS ANGELES: Paul George ignited Los Angeles' offense by scoring a game-high 23 points as the Clippers won their seventh straight game with a 129-102 NBA victory over the Minnesota Timberwolves on Saturday.

Reggie Jackson added 21 points for the Clippers, who beat the Timberwolves for the third time in 11 days in front of a crowd of 19,060 at Staples Center arena in downtown Los Angeles. Ivica Zubac and Isaiah Hartenstein both put up double-doubles for the Clippers, who took advantage of a tired Timberwolves team one night after Minnesota clobbered the Los Angeles Lakers on the same court.

Zubac had 10 points and 12 rebounds, Hartenstein tallied 12 points and 12 rebounds, Eric Bledsoe had 14 points and nine assists and George also had nine rebounds for the Clippers in the win. "It was an all-around team win," Clippers coach Tyrone Lue said. "Everybody did their part." Anthony Edwards led the Timberwolves with 21 points after he had contributed just nine points to Friday's 107-83 win over

the Lakers.

Karl-Anthony Towns was held to eight points on just three-of-11 shooting from the field on Saturday night. For Towns, it marked his first single-digit scoring game since 2018 and it came one night after scoring 29 points against the Lakers. "We're fronting him on the post and coming with the low man," Lue said of guarding Towns. "We just try to switch everything so he can't get shots off. We just want to slow him down."

In Salt Lake City, the Miami Heat snapped a three-game losing skid and swept the season series against Utah with a 111-105 victory over the Jazz. Tyler Herro powered the Heat with 27 points and eight rebounds in front of a crowd of 18,300 at Vivint Arena. Duncan Robinson scored 22 points and added a half dozen three pointers and Kyle Lowry finished with 21 for the Heat.

"We were physically and mentally ready to go into this game," Lowry said. "We lost three games on this road trip - two of them we had an opportunity to really win. We just got to continue to build and today was a good building block for us."

Bojan Bogdanovic scored 19 of his 26 points in the fourth quarter to lead the Jazz, who lost for the fourth time in their last five games. The two teams meet just twice this season. Miami also won the first meeting 118-115 on November 6 in Florida.



LOS ANGELES: Reggie Jackson (left) and Paul George of the LA Clippers are interviewed after the game against the Minnesota Timberwolves on Saturday at STAPLES Center in Los Angeles, California. — AFP

"I wouldn't say we're out here panicking, but I think it's upsetting," Jazz player Donovan Mitchell said. "I think that'll be the word I use. It's upsetting because we know each other, we know what we're doing. And it's just time for us to go out there and do it."

Miami jumped out to a 23-7 lead in the first quarter thanks to some solid three-point shooting from Robinson and Bam Adebayo. Clarkson carried the Jazz on his back to slash the deficit, scoring 11 consecutive points in just 76 seconds

to trim the lead to 27-24.

The Heat led by as many as 27 points in the second half before the Jazz used another late rally to pull within 109-105 with just 14 seconds to go in the fourth quarter. But four seconds later, Herro drained two more free throws to ice the win for the Heat. Elsewhere, Darius Garland scored 22 points and hit two free throws with nine seconds left to lift the Cleveland Cavaliers a 91-89 come-from-behind victory over the Boston Celtics. — AFP

## MS Dossary's Game On Kuwait PS5 e-football tourney kicks off tomorrow

KUWAIT: Esports athlete Musaed "MS Dossary" Al-Dossary has put together an e-football tournament of his own designs, and it will be taking place in Kuwait in November 2021. This e-football esports tournament is MS Dossary's Game On Kuwait. The tournament will be played on Sony's PlayStation 5 gaming console. This is Sony's recently released next-gen gaming machine.

The qualifiers round will be held offline and begin from November 11 and 12. The qualifiers will continue on November 16 and 17, 2021. The MS Dossary's Game On Kuwait final will be on November 19, 2021. All of the teams that have passed in the qualifiers will automatically become eligible to compete during the final.

E-football 22 is the video game that will be used during competitive play. E-football 22 is the latest iteration of EA's bestselling football video game series, and the most popular football simulation. It is enjoyed by fans and gamers around the world. Most people who play football games are familiar with e-football, but there are some important differences that MS Dossary has brought to Game On Kuwait.

The first and most important is the rule system of switching, or substituting between teammates, where all teams consist of two players that rotate once certain conditions are met in-game. Teammates will switch between each other at halftime, as an example. Teammates will also switch when a red card is handed out, or in the event of a tie, at which point the game will go straight into golden goal rules. If a game



remains tied after the golden goal period, teammates will switch again and go into a penalty shootout. Players switch between each penalty attempt to keep the game lively.

Teams will be allowed one free player switch exchange at any time that the ball is not in play. This is at the discretion of the teams to decide. Those interested and looking to enroll, and register can do so at the following website: <https://www.redbull.com/mean/events/ms-dossary-game-on/registration>

Registrations are currently open for all teams. The only conditions are that there are two players per team, and they must be able to attend offline and in person in Kuwait during the course of the tournament days.

MS Dossary is a champion esports athlete who specializes in the football sports simulator e-football franchise. He is the first esports athlete to win two championships in the same year, and the only athlete to take back-to-back wins at the Xbox E-FOOTBALL World Championships. He lives and trains in his home country of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

## Osimhen scores as Nigeria move closer to topping World Cup group

JOHANNESBURG: Napoli forward Victor Osimhen scored to set up Nigeria for a 2-0 win over Liberia on Saturday that moved them closer to a fourth consecutive World Cup appearance. The Super Eagles host Cape Verde in a top-of-the-table Group C clash tomorrow and will win the section provided they avoid defeat in Lagos.

Nigeria have 12 points and Cape Verde 10 after five rounds while the Central African Republic (four) and Liberia (three) are out of the running. Should the six-time World Cup qualifiers top the table, they join nine other section winners in a draw that will create five two-leg ties with the winners going to the 2002 finals in Qatar.

Osimhen converted a 15th-minute penalty after Kelechi Iheanacho was fouled and substitute Ahmed Musa added the second goal, also from a spot kick, in added time. The qualifier was staged in the Moroccan coastal city of Tangiers because no stadium in Liberia meets international standards.

Cape Verde, an island nation of 560,000 people that has never competed at the World Cup, kept their hopes alive by coming from behind to beat the Central African Republic 2-1 in Mindelo. Julio Tavares netted early in the second half to cancel the lead Isaac Ngoma gave the visitors after 11 minutes, and Ianique 'Stopira' Tavares notched the 75th-minute winner. Ivory Coast will take a one-point lead over Cameroon to Douala tomorrow for a showdown that will decide who progresses from Group D. — AFP





**KUWAIT:** Kuwait's Yousef Al-Abdulrazzaq (center), France's Jeremy Perez (left), and Spain's Alejandro Molina Miranda (right), winners of the runabout GP1 competition during the UIM ABP-Aquabike World Championship, pose with their trophies on the podium in Salmiya, Kuwait on Saturday. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



**Estonia's** Jasmiin Ypraus (center), Sweden's Emma-Nellie Ortendahl (left), and Sweden's Jonna Borgstrom, winners of the ski ladies' competition during the UIM ABP-Aquabike World Championship, pose with their trophies on the podium in Salmiya, Kuwait on Saturday.



**UAE's** Rashid Al-Mulla (center), Italy's Roberto Mariani (left), and UAE's Abdel Jalil Al-Awadhi (right), winners of the freestyle competition during the UIM ABP-Aquabike World Championship, pose with their trophies on the podium in Salmiya, Kuwait on Saturday.

# Yousef Al-Abdulrazzaq wins Kuwait Grand Prix as Frenchman Perez takes world title

## Borgstrom wins women's 2021 Aquabike World Championship

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Grand Prix went to the "hometown hero" Yousef Al-Abdulrazzaq with new crowned world Champion Jeremy Perez at second place ahead of Spain's Alejandro Molina Miranda. Perez has sensationally retained his UIM-ABP Aquabike Runabout GP1 world title with what seemed like an improbable victory. Yousef grabbed the holeshot and pulled away early which allowed him to protect his second place points as best as possible. Rasmus Koch Hansen got a second in the first lap and stole points from the leaders.



Kuwait's Yousef Al-Abdulrazzaq competes during the UIM ABP-Aquabike World Championship.



UAE's Rashid Al-Mulla competes freestyle during the UIM ABP-Aquabike World Championship.



### UAE's Mulla freestyle world champ

Lino Araujo started in a dismal ninth place but moved up to fourth protecting his third place for the World Title. But the award for sheer grit goes to Perez despite engine problems he managed to keep the boat going despite moving backwards to ninth at one point. He got back in seventh place which gave him just two points over Yousef's total. That plus practically swimming the boat over the finish proved that you never know who is going to take the title in Runabout in 2021 until the last lap.

In the ski ladies' competition, Jonna Borgstrom was crowned the 2021 Aquabike World Championship after she placed third in the Kuwait Grand Prix. The result gave her the prestigious year-end podium where she stood alongside her fellow Sweden countrywoman Emma-Nellie Ortendahl, whose second place gave her the runners-up slot on the World Championship podium. Third place went for the winner of the Grand Prix, Estonia's Jasmiin Ypraus.

"I am happy how it ended up. When the final Moto started I didn't wanted to push it, only get to the finish

line," said Borgstrom. Jasmiin Ypraus rounded off her best weekend on the UIM-ABP tour finishing first to take the Grand Prix of Kuwait podium, with second place going to Emma-Nellie Ortendahl and the final step on the Grand Prix podium going to the just



USA's Anthony Radetic competes during the UIM ABP-Aquabike World Championship.

crowned World Champion Borgstrom.

#### Freestyle title

Team Abu Dhabi's Rashid Al-Mulla produced yet another outstanding performance to maintain his unbeaten run to win the Grand Prix of Kuwait and the UIM-ABP Aquabike Freestyle World Championship title on Salmiya Beach in Kuwait.

The 34-year-old Emirati has totally dominated the Freestyle category this season with an array of barrel-rolls, back-flips, reverse 360s, and combinations and victory in both motos gives him an unassailable lead in the points' standings. "To win the World Championship is a special feeling. I am so happy for my team and my country," Mulla said. The European Champion, Italy's Roberto Mariani is second in World Championship with Paulo Nunes trading third spot. Second place in the Grand Prix of Kuwait went for Roberto Mariani ahead of Abdel Jalil Al-Awadhi from UAE.

Meanwhile, Victory Team's Kevin Reiterer was once again in a class of his own with a faultless performance in Saturday's final moto in Ski GP1 to win Moto 3 at the Grand Prix of Kuwait and seal his fourth UIM-ABP

Aquabike World Championship. Second place in the World Championship Podium went to Spain's Nacho Armillas with Anders Keller to end the year in third overall.

In the windy sea of Salmiya Beach, Ski GP1 was a two-man show between Spain's Nacho Armillas and the three-time world Champion Reiterer. The Spanish rider was the winner of the first two Motos with Reiterer second in both of them but it was enough the first place for the Victory Team's rider in Moto 3 (8.64s faster than Armillas), to give him the title of World Champion.

"It means a lot to me and especially the team. I am lucky to work with such dedicated and hard-working people. It's one thing to have a dream and go out and try to be the best but to share that dream and success with the people behind the program is incredible," said Reiterer.

Second place in the World Championship Podium went to Spain's Nacho Armillas with Anders Keller to end the year in third overall. Nacho Armillas was declared the winner of the Grand Prix of Kuwait with Kevin Reiterer taking second and the final place of the podium going to France's Mikael Poret.



Members of Kuwait's national women's cycling team compete during the Arab Championship.

## Kuwait women cyclists win in Arab Championship

**CAIRO:** Kuwait's national women's cycling team took first place in the time category yesterday during the Arab Championship held in Cairo, Egypt. The team's win came after beating Egypt and the UAE whose teams finished second and third respectively. Kuwait is participating in the six-day tournament with teams in the men's, women's and juniors' competitions in various categories.



CAIRO: Kuwait's national women's cycling team (center) poses on the podium yesterday after winning the time category during the Arab Championship.

# Classifieds

## Hospitals & Clinics

|                        |            |                     |          |
|------------------------|------------|---------------------|----------|
| Sabah Hospital         | 24812000   | Kaifan              | 24849807 |
| Amiri Hospital         | 22450005   | Shamiya             | 24848913 |
| Maternity Hospital     | 24843100   | Shuwaikh            | 24814507 |
| Mubarak Al-Kabir       |            | Abdullah Salem      | 22549134 |
| Hospital               | 25312700   | Nuzha               | 22526804 |
| Chest Hospital         | 24849400   | Industrial Shuwaikh | 24814764 |
| Farwaniya Hospital     | 24892010   | Qadsiya             | 22515088 |
| Adan Hospital          | 23940620   | Dasmah              |          |
| Ibn Sina Hospital      | 24840300   |                     | 22532265 |
| Al-Razi Hospital       | 24846000   | Bneid Al-Gar        | 22531908 |
| Physiotherapy Hospital | 24874330/9 | Shaab               | 22518752 |
|                        |            | Qibla               | 22459381 |
| <b>Clinics</b>         |            | Ayoun Al-Qibla      | 22451082 |
| Kaizen center          | 25716707   | Mirqab              | 22456536 |
| Rawda                  | 22517733   | Sharq               | 22465401 |
| Adaliya                | 22517144   | Salmiya             | 25746401 |
| Khalidiya              | 24848075   |                     |          |

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DUBAI: Australia's players pose with the trophy after winning the ICC men's Twenty20 World Cup final match against New Zealand at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium yesterday. — AFP

## Australia win maiden T20 World Cup

DUBAI: Mitchell Marsh smashed an unbeaten 77 as Australia hammered New Zealand by eight wickets to clinch their maiden Twenty20 World Cup title yesterday. Chasing 173 for victory, Australia depended on a 92-run second-wicket stand between David Warner, who made 53, and Marsh to achieve their target with seven balls to spare in Dubai. Warner became Trent Boult's second wicket but Marsh kept up the charge to power Australia home to their long-awaited T20 crown and add to their five 50-over World Cup trophies.

Glenn Maxwell, who made 28, joined Marsh, who hit six fours and four sixes in his 50-ball knock, to put on 66 runs and hit the winning boundary as the Aussies came charging in to celebrate the triumph. "It's huge. We felt like a lot of people wrote us off but we spoke about being the first team to do this for Australia and it feels really special," said Matthew Wade.

Skipper Kane Williamson hit a valiant 85 in New Zealand's 172-4 after being invited to bat first in a crucial toss won by Aaron Finch as teams chasing have won

all but one game at the venue. Australia, whose previous best was a runners-up finish in 2010, came into this edition's semifinal with one loss to England and beat Pakistan in the final-four clash with a chase of 177. Australia fast bowler Josh Hazlewood returned figures of 3-16 and leg-spinner Adam Zampa had 1-26.

### 'Superb player'

"Kane's a superb player," said Hazlewood. "It was another classical innings, runs all around the ground and he hurts you when you bowl poorly." Australia suffered an early blow in their chase when Finch departed for five off Boult as a largely neutral but not packed-to-capacity crowd roared. But the left-right batting pair of Warner and Marsh combined to take apart the bowling with fours and sixes galore.

Marsh hit Adam Milne for one six and two fours on his first three balls of the knock to signal his ruthless intent. Warner also kept up his punishing act as he hammered leg-spinner Ish Sodhi for 17 runs in one over with just a single to Marsh. He smoked Jimmy Neesham for a

six to raise his third half-century of the tournament but soon fell to Boult. Warner, with 289 runs in total, ended second behind Pakistan's Babar Azam (303) in the tournament's batting chart.

Earlier Williamson, who was dropped on 21, started cautiously but once settled took on the opposition bowling to reach his first half-century of the tournament. He finished with 10 fours and three sixes in his 48-ball blitz to lift New Zealand from 57-1 in 10. The Kiwis initially struggled and lost Daryl Mitchell caught behind for 11 off Hazlewood.

Opening batsman Martin Gupthill failed to get quick runs despite his three boundaries and a 48-run second-wicket stand with Williamson. Williamson survived a spill by Hazlewood in the deep with the ball popping out of the fielder's hand to find the boundary. Pace spearhead Mitchell Starc was the bowler. The captain hit back with two more fours off left-arm quick Starc who was taken for 60 runs from his four overs, to get some momentum into the innings.

Zampa sent Gupthill trudging back to the dugout after the opener's 35-ball 28



Australia's David Warner receives the Player of the Tournament trophy yesterday.

but Williamson kept up the charge with two sixes off Maxwell. Williamson again picked out Starc to smash four fours and one six in a 22-run 16th over and put on 68 with Glenn Phillips, who made 18. Hazlewood returned in his final over to

break the stand with Phillips' wicket and then got Williamson out with a leg-cutter. The seventh edition of the tournament was moved out of India due to the coronavirus pandemic to be staged in Oman and United Arab Emirates. — AFP

## Rossi bows out an 'idol' as Bagnaia wins season-closer

VALENCIA, Spain: Valentino Rossi was described as an "idol" yesterday as he closed the door on his career with a 10th-place finish at the season-ending Valencia MotoGP, won by Ducati's Francesco Bagnaia, appropriately one of the great Italian's proteges. The 42-year-old Rossi, a nine-time world champion across all categories, took all the applause from the 75,000 crowd as he rode an ovation lap in Valencia, which was his 432nd GP since starting his career back in 1996.

Jorge Martin, of the Ducati-Pramac team, and Jack Miller (Ducati) completed the podium at the 18th race of the season for a first ever Ducati podium sweep. Yamaha's Fabio Quartararo, who had already secured the world championship, finished fifth after a heavy fall in qualifying. It was a fourth win of the season for Bagnaia, who came through the VR46 Academy created by Rossi.

The 24-year-old finished the season 26 points behind Quartararo as runner-up in the title race. He dominated the race but once former Brazilian footballer Ronaldo waved the chequered flag, all the attention turned to Rossi as the riders stopped to pay homage, fireworks went off and cries of "Vale, Vale" echoed around the stands. His number 46 was

everywhere, including on Bagnaia's helmet and up in the stands of the Ricardo Tormo circuit where his initials and number 'VR46' fluttered on yellow flags in the Valencian sunshine.

In the paddock, the nine motorcycles that brought him world titles were lined up side by side since Thursday when he posed with each for an evocative photo-shoot. A giant street-art fresco displaying the portrait of the smiling "Dottore" overlooked the starting line.

### 'My idol'

If this season was his poorest in 26 seasons at world level - he finished a distant 18th in the standings - there were no tears, just a trademark grin from "The Doctor". "Rossi, he's been my idol since I was little," said 22-year-old Quartararo who was not even born when the Italian won his first world title in the 125cc category in 1997. "He influenced me a lot in this sport and in the way of working. He's a rider that I adore, as a rider and as a person for that matter. "It is sad that this is his last race but we celebrated it well with the whole Yamaha team."

Rossi's last title dates back to 2009 and his last GP victory in 2017 but that has not dulled the adoration felt by fans. He claimed his first world title in 1997, a year after making his 125cc debut, following up with the 250cc championship in 1999. Graduating to the premier class he was runner-up in his first season in 2000 before taking the final world title race in the 500cc format a year later with Honda.

He added six more in the new MotoGP class in 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2008 and 2009, the first two with Honda, the rest with Yamaha. He retires



CHESTE, Spain: Petronas Yamaha SRT Italian rider Valentino Rossi waves after the MotoGP race of the Valencia Grand Prix at the Ricardo Tormo racetrack yesterday. — AFP

with 115 victories including a record 89 in MotoGP, 235 podiums (199 in the top flight), also a record, and the longest career of any rider in the sport's premier class. Next season his VR46 team will make its debut in MotoGP next year as a Ducati satellite.

Australian rider Remy Gardner became Moto2 world champion, emulating his father Wayne's

500cc world championship in 1987, in spite of only finishing tenth behind his main rival and Kalex teammate Raul Fernandez. Spain's Xavier Artigas of Honda won his maiden Moto3 GP on the same track earlier after countryman Pedro Acosta, winner of the world title last week at the age of just 17, fell on the final lap. — AFP