



**FOR THE FIRST TIME IN KUWAIT**  
you can now activate your profile  
using Kuwait Mobile ID

Verify your profile on our app  
**with Kuwait Mobile ID**  
**and send money in minutes.**

Kuwait Mobile ID  
هويتي



[westernunion.com](http://westernunion.com)

أمان  
aman

صيرفة  
Exchange



**5** Thousands rally against COVID curbs in Europe and Australia



**6** Guns, stress, politics: Road rage shootings on the rise



**13** 'Riyadh Safari' converts desert into park with exotic species



**16** Manchester United end Solskjaer's 3-year reign



# Amir receives Crown Prince; Cabinet consultations start

## Former MP Al-Muslim thanks Amir for 'erasing the penalty'



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah at Dar Al-Yamama yesterday. — Amiri Diwan photo

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah yesterday received HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah less than a week after delegating part of his powers to him. In the meantime, HH Sheikh Mishal yesterday began official consultations to name a prime minister to form the next Cabinet after HH Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah submitted his resignation of the Cabinet about two weeks ago.

The Crown Prince held talks with Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem, the former Prime Minister HH Sheikh Nasser Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and also received former National Assembly Speaker Ahmad Al-Saadoun. Routine consultations to elect a Prime Minister were carried out in accordance with the Kuwaiti constitution. The Crown Prince was delegated part of the Amir's constitutional powers including consultations to form a new Cabinet.

HH Sheikh Mishal can either name a new Prime Minister or ask HH Sheikh Sabah to form the next Cabinet. There is no timeframe for forming the Cabinet. HH Sheikh Sabah submitted his resignation following an Amiri order to pardon a number of opposition activists and former lawmakers who left Kuwait and lived in Turkey for three and a half years to escape jail terms. Nine of the 11 ex-MPs and activists have already returned to the country including prominent opposition figure Mussallam Al-Barrak and were greeted to a resounding reception.

Only former opposition MP Faisal Al-Muslim and activist Abdulaziz Al-Jarallah have not yet returned. Muslim has decided to come back next week. On Saturday, he greeted those who returned and their families. He also thanked the Amir and wished him good health for "erasing the penalty", adding that "our duty in facing corruption and its figures will continue". He said on Twitter that he will explain his position this week.

## Saudi girls 'dream' big with launch of soccer league



RIYADH: A player of the first Saudi Women's National Football Team, managed by veteran German Monika Staab, attends a training and shows off her skills at Prince Faisal bin Fahad bin Abdulaziz stadium in Riyadh. — AFP

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia's launch of its first women's football league yesterday will clear the way for girls who dream of turning professional - and maybe even playing in a World Cup. Long condemned for harsh restrictions on women, Saudi Arabia lifted a decades-old ban on female footballers only a few years ago, and it is now aiming to develop a national team strong enough to contest major tournaments.

The ultra-conservative Muslim nation has faced criticism of using sports events to gloss over its poor human rights record and the jailing of women activists. Its latest step in the reform drive came this month when the Saudi football federation announced the formation of a women's soccer league in which 16 teams will take part with games in Riyadh, Jeddah and Dammam.

Among those excited by the move was Farah Jafri, who said she hoped to turn pro and play in England's top division as well as represent her country on the biggest stage at the World Cup. "In the beginning of my football journey, I faced some difficulties in that not all people accepted it," she told yesterday. "But my family and friends used to encourage me a lot," said the ponytailed 18-year-old dressed in a jersey.

Like many other girls who were passionate about football but unable to participate in competitions, Jafri played on the street with her relatives or at school with friends. — AFP (See Page 13)

## Kuwait holds broad funeral for martyrs

KUWAIT: Kuwait yesterday held a broad funeral with military protocols for 19 of the faithful martyrs who sacrificed their lives during the flagrant 1990-1991 aggression and occupation of the country. The somber procession and gathering of mourners were led at Al-Sulaibikhat cemetery by Minister of Interior and Acting Minister of Defense Sheikh Thamer Ali Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, Minister of Education Dr Ali Al-Mudhaf, Minister of Oil and Higher Education Dr Mohammad Al-Fares, Kuwait Army Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Khaled Saleh Al-Sabah.

Others include; Interior Undersecretary Major General Sheikh Faisal Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, National Guard Undersecretary Lieut Gen Hashem Al-Rifai, Chairman of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation Sheikh Abdullah Ali

Continued on Page 2



KUWAIT: Mourners carry the coffins of 19 Kuwaiti prisoners of war (POWs) whose remains were recently found in a mass grave in Iraq. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

## Sudanese PM to return to government

KHARTOUM: Sudan's top military leader and the prime minister he ousted almost a month ago have reached a deal for the premier's return to government and the release of civilian leaders, mediators said yesterday. But while Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok was liberated from weeks of effective house arrest, thousands of protesters again rallied in several cities as security forces in the capital fired teargas at demonstrators.

General Abdel Fattah Al-Burhan on October 25 declared a state of emergency and ousted the government in a move that upended a two-year transition to civilian rule and sparked international condemnation. The power grab triggered a wave of mass street protests in which 40 demonstrators have been killed, according to medical sources. But after weeks of intense internal and international pressure, mediators yesterday announced that the military had reached an agreement to reinstate Hamdok as premier.

"A political agreement has been reached between General Burhan, Abdalla Hamdok, political



Sudan's Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok

forces and civil society organizations for Hamdok's return to his position, and the release of political detainees," senior Sudanese mediator Fadlallah Burma, acting head of the Umma party said. The developments have raised hopes the strife-torn northeast African country will be able to return to its fragile transition process toward full democracy that started after the 2019 ouster of veteran autocrat president Omar Al-Bashir.

An official from the premier's office confirmed that Hamdok's "house arrest ... has been lifted and the forces guarding his house have withdrawn". Hamdok later arrived at the presidential palace in Khartoum, the seat of government, state TV announced.

Continued on Page 2

## Indian man found alive after a night in morgue freezer

NEW DELHI: An Indian man declared dead after a road accident shocked his relatives when they found him still breathing despite a night in the freezer of a hospital morgue. Srikesh Kumar was rushed to a clinic in a critical condition after he was hit by a motor-bike in Moradabad, east of the capital New Delhi.

He was transported to a private medical facility where he was declared dead on arrival by the doctor, and then transported to a government hospital for post-mortem on Friday. "The emergency medical officer examined him. He did not find any signs of life and hence declared him dead," Rajendra Kumar, the hospital's medical superintendent, said yesterday.

The doctor said police were informed and the body was placed in the morgue freezer until his family arrived six hours later. "When a police team and his family came over to initiate the paperwork for the autopsy, he was found alive," he added. Rajendra Kumar said the 45-year-old was undergoing further treatment but was still in a coma. "This is nothing short of a miracle," he added. — AFP

## Local

# Crown Prince holds traditional consultations to form Cabinet



KUWAIT: His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace yesterday National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem, His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, as part of traditional consultations to form the Cabinet. — KUNA

## Sheraton Kuwait Hotels extend gratitude to frontliners



KUWAIT: Mounir Amer, General Manager of Four Points Hotel Kuwait and Mazen Mhanna, the Deputy General Manager of Sheraton Kuwait Hotel present a certificate of appreciation to Dr Awatef Al Shammeri, Head of the Tuberculosis Control Unit.

KUWAIT: As part of the annual Marriott International Global Customer Appreciation Week 2021 "Spirit to Serve" initiative, the management and the team of Sheraton Kuwait and Four Points by Sheraton Kuwait organized a visit to the Tuberculosis Control Center. It came as a step to extend the gratitude to the frontliners for their unrelenting service to combat the pandemic and provide safety for the people of Kuwait. A nod to the dedication and sacrifice they showed to perform their duty to ensure the health and safety measures are carried out.

Mounir Amer, General Manager of Four Points Hotel Kuwait and Mazen Mhanna, the Deputy General Manager of Sheraton Kuwait Hotel were received by Dr Awatef Al Shammeri, Head of the Tuberculosis Control Unit. They discussed the challenges and achievements during the pandemic with real-time data on the infection rates, vaccination updates and their strategy to put an end to this pandemic. The management and team reiterated their gratitude and salute to all their efforts in making Kuwait a safe place.

## Kuwait, FAO discuss food security

KUWAIT: Kuwait's Director General of the Public Authority of Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources Sheikh Mohammad Al-Yousef Al-Sabah discussed with a FAO delegation issues related to food security, proposed programs to boost it and ways to overcome obstacles hindering to attain it. This came in a press statement yesterday, after Sheikh Mohammad Al-Yousef received Assistant Director General and Regional Representative for the Near East and North Africa of Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Dr Abdulhakeem Al-Waer and

his delegation. The meeting, attended by a team of senior officials of the authority, dealt with Kuwait's preparations for the success of the experts' tasks, as they'll make field visits inside Kuwait including plant and animal wealth farms during the coming period. They will also examine work sites to check the latest developments and provide the necessary data for the joint programs between the two parties, for the development of the agricultural, livestock and fisheries sector in the country. They also discussed and coordinated a memorandum of understanding regarding the organization's permanent office in Kuwait. The delegation praised Kuwait for its full support for the organization's programs, plans and policies, which primarily aim at sustainable agricultural development in all countries, especially Arab ones. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Director General of the Public Authority of Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources Sheikh Mohammad Al-Yousef Al-Sabah meets the FAO delegation, led by Dr Abdulhakeem Al-Waer. — KUNA

## Kuwait holds broad funeral...

Continued from Page 1

Al-Salem Al-Sabah, senior military leaders and families of the martyrs. The ministers extended their solace to the martyrs' families, uttering prayers for the souls of the deceased - hailing the prisoners and the missing citizens who sacrificed themselves for Kuwait. Head of the prisoners and missing committee at the Foreign Ministry Rabie Al-Adsani affirmed that the remains of the 19 martyrs had been identified through DNA examinations by the

department of criminal evidence.

Names of the latest batch of the martyrs who have been just laid to rest are: Badr Mubarak Hamed Dhiab Al-Bra'isee, Saeed Awad Ayed Al-Rashidi, Saud Nayef Jazza' Al-Daihani, Mekhled Jbairan Sharid Al-Daihani, Walid Mekhled Hamed Dhiab Al-Bra'isee, Nayef Mehmel Dhaifallah Al-Mutairi, Fawaz Btaihah Dghaim Al-Mutairi, Moussa Sattar Jaber Khalaf Al-Enezi, Nayef Awad Ayed Al-Rashidi, Khaled Duaij Abdullah Khalifa Al-Khaldi, Saad Mansour Mohsen Al-Ajmi, Bader Met'eb Obaid Rashed Al-Mutairi, Fares Abdulrahman Fares Al-Mutairi, Nayef Khalaf Huwaider, Salah Hussein Sayed Al-Enezi, Mohammad Humoud Obaid Sulaiman Al-Hola, Mohammad Abdulatif Abdulaziz Al-Khraz, Fares Mohammad Deham Jahem Al-Enezi and Hussein Ali Jassem Al-Shemmari. — KUNA

Omdurman, as well as in the eastern state of Kassala, the restive eastern coastal city of Port Sudan and the northern city of Atbara, according to witnesses.

### History of coups

The return of Hamdok, a British-educated economist who has worked for the United Nations and African organizations, has been a key demand of international community. "The agreement will be officially announced later today, after the signing of its terms and the accompanying political declaration," the statement said. Mediators said the deal was reached following talks among political factions, ex-rebel groups and military figures.

Sudan, which is mired in a dire economic crisis, has a long history of military coups, having enjoyed only rare interludes of democratic rule since independence in 1956. Burhan, who served under Bashir's three-decades long rule, become Sudan's de facto leader after the army ousted and jailed the president in 2019. The veteran general headed the Sovereign Council of military and civilian figures, with Hamdok as prime minister leading the cabinet.

But deepening splits and long-simmering tensions between the military and civilians marred the transition, and last month Burhan led the army takeover. Burhan has insisted that the military's move "was not a coup" but a step "to rectify the transition". Earlier this month, he announced a new ruling council in which he kept his position as head, along with a powerful paramilitary commander, three senior military figures, three ex-rebel leaders and one civilian. But the other four civilian members were replaced with lesser known figures. — AFP

## Militant opens fire in Jerusalem; 2 die

JERUSALEM: A militant of the Palestinian Islamist Hamas movement opened fire yesterday in Jerusalem's Old City, killing one person and wounding three before he was shot dead, Zionist officials, police and medics said. Prime Minister Naftali Bennett ordered security to be boosted and called for people to be on "heightened alert" over the risk of further attacks.

The wounded, who included two civilians and two police officers, were rushed to Jerusalem's Hadassah hospital. One of them, a man in his 30s, died of his injuries, medical sources said without giving further details. "This morning there was a serious shooting attack in the Old City of Jerusalem," Bennett said in a statement. "At the moment we have one dead and three wounded. Two policewomen and one policeman quickly neutralized the terrorist."

Police said the attacker had fired a "Carlo-type weapon", a type of submachine gun. The Old City is in the Zionist-annexed eastern part of Jerusalem, which Palestinians claim as the capital of their future state. Zionists captured east Jerusalem in the 1967 Six-Day War and later annexed it, in a move not recognized by most of the international community. After the shooting, dozens of police officers deployed on the narrow streets of the historic

walled city, as workers hosed down large pools of blood from the cobblestones, said an AFP reporter. The body of the attacker, who died at scene, was carried away on a stretcher.

### 'Premeditated' attack

Zionist Public Security Minister Omer Bar-Lev said the attacker was a Palestinian living in the Shuafat neighborhood in east Jerusalem. "He was a member of Hamas, the political branch not the armed wing," Bar-Lev told Kan television channel, saying he had been wearing long robes to hide his weapon. "It appears he was wearing a large galabiya (robe) or that he had disguised himself as an Orthodox Jew," Bar-Lev said, adding the gunman's wife had travelled abroad three days ago, while his son was also out of the country.

"It seems that this attack is premeditated," Bar-Lev said. Hamas, in power in the Gaza Strip, congratulated the gunman and hailed the "continuation" of the fight to "liberate" Jerusalem, but without specifically claiming the attack. It comes six months to the day since the end of an 11-day war in Gaza with Zionists in May.

On Friday, Britain said it intended to follow the United States and European Union in placing an outright ban on Hamas as a terror group, saying it was not possible to distinguish between the Islamists' political and military wing. Attacks targeting security forces are common in the Old City as well as in the occupied West Bank. They are often carried out by individual young Palestinian men in so-called lone-wolf attacks. — AFP



JERUSALEM: Municipality workers hose-off blood from the scene of a shooting in the old city of Jerusalem yesterday. — AFP

## Sudanese PM to return to...

Continued from Page 1

A group of Sudanese mediators including politicians, academics and journalists who have been locked in crisis talks in recent weeks, released a statement outlining the main points of the deal. It included the restoration of Hamdok as prime minister, the release of all detainees and what it said was the resumption of the constitutional, legal and political consensus governing the transitional period.

However, the main civilian bloc which spearheaded the anti-Bashir protests and signed a 2019 power-sharing deal with the military rejected yesterday's agreement. "We affirm our clear and previously declared position that there is no negotiation, no partnership, no legitimacy for the coup," said the mainstream faction of the Forces for Freedom and Change in a statement.

The deal announcement came as pro-democracy activists launched the latest in a wave of mass protests to denounce the coup and the ensuing crackdown, in which medics say 16 people were killed last Wednesday alone.

Police deny firing live ammunition and insist they have used "minimum force" to disperse the protests. They have recorded only one death, among demonstrators in North Khartoum. Yesterday, hundreds of protesters also gathered in Khartoum's twin city

Local

# Kuwait's Amir, Crown Prince, Prime Minister condole with martyrs' families

Amir proudly recalls martyrs' sacrifices, patriotic role



KUWAIT: Mourners and officials pray over the coffins of 19 Kuwaiti prisoners of war (POWs) whose remains were recently found in a mass grave in Iraq and identified following DNA tests, during a funeral before their reburial at a cemetery in Kuwait yesterday. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



Mourners carry the martyrs' coffins to their final resting place.

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah addressed cables of condolences to families of the homeland martyrs who were laid to rest yesterday. His Highness the Amir expressed his sentiments of sorrow to the families of the martyrs Badr Mubarak Hamed Dhiab Al-Bra'isee, Saeed Awad Ayed Al-Rashidi, Saud Nayef Jazza' Al-Daihani, Mekhled Jbairan Sharid Al-Daihani, Walid Mekhled Hamed Dhiab Al-Bra'isee, Nayef Mehmel Dhaifallah Al-Mutairi, Fawaz Btaihah Dghaim Al-Mutairi, Moussa Sattar Jaber Khalaf Al-Enezi, Nayef Awad Ayed Al-Rashidi, Khaled Duaij Abdullah Khalifa Al-Khalidi, Saad Mansour Mohsen Al-Ajmi, Bader Met'eb Obaid Rashed Al-Mutairi, Fares Abdulrahman Fares Al-Mutairi, Nayef Khalaf Huwaider, Salah Hussein Sayed Al-Enezi, Mohammad Humoud Obaid Sulaiman Al-Hola, Mohammad Abdulatif Abdulaziz Al-Khraz, Fares Mohammad Deham Jahem Al-Enezi and Hussein Ali Jassem Al-Shemmari.

His Highness the Amir expressed his deepest condolences to the families of the martyrs who have been laid to rest, proudly recalling their sacrifices,

their patriotic role in defending the dear homeland and redeeming its soil with their blood. His Highness the Amir prayed to Allah Almighty to bestow mercy upon the martyrs' souls and shelter them in his paradise and inspire their gracious families to be patient. Meanwhile, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah addressed identical cables of solace to the bereaved families, wishing their lost ones heavenly mercy and wishing them ability to be patient. His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah addressed cables of identical content to the martyrs' families. National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem also sent cables to the families of the 19 martyrs, in which he expressed sincere condolences and recalled the heroic actions of the martyrs who sacrificed their lives to their homeland. The state of Kuwait held yesterday a broad funeral with military protocols for the 19 martyrs who lost their lives during the Iraqi invasion 1990, after receiving their remains from Iraq and identifying them through DNA examinations. — KUNA



Mourners watch as the martyrs' coffins are carried for burial.



Kuwait's martyrs are laid to rest.



Mourners bury the martyrs' coffins.

## Ethiopian Embassy opens temporary section for passports

KUWAIT: The Ethiopian Embassy in Kuwait will open a temporary consular section to deliver renewed passports to Ethiopian nationals effective today and for a week, the Consular Department at Kuwait Foreign Ministry said yesterday. The pass-

ports' handover will be at Al-Yarmouk Sports Club in Mishref from 8:00 am to 12:00 pm and from 2:00 pm to 6:00 pm. Personnel will hand over the new passport to the Ethiopian citizen or their sponsor provided that the old passport or a receipt are presented, the department explained.

Earlier yesterday, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received a phone call from Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, discussing means of boosting bilateral relations between the two friendly countries and exchanging views on latest regional and international developments of common concern. — KUNA

## Tunis Book Fair participation enhances cooperation

TUNIS: A Kuwaiti cultural official underlined the importance of Kuwait's participation in book fairs with various Arab countries in order to enhance the Kuwaiti presence and the cultural ties between them and other official intellectual institutions. Director of the Kuwait Book Fair Saad Al-Enezi made the statement yesterday on the sidelines of a ceremony honoring the official guests held by the management of the Tunis Book Fair, which started

last week and lasted for 10 days. During Enezi's presence at the fair, at the invitation of the Tunisian Ministry of Culture and the administration of the fair, he held various cultural meetings. He hoped that the book fair in Kuwait would soon return with a new look, marking the return to normal life after a long period of stoppage due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Enezi thanked the fair's management for the reception and their interest in the Kuwaiti presence in the Tunis Book Fair. He underlined his keenness to strengthen Arab cultural ties in various fields, foremost of which is publishing work and providing different platforms. He recalled the many Kuwaiti publications published by the National Council for Culture, Arts and Literature, like Al-Arabi magazine. — KUNA

On the occasion of the



Subscribe or renew your subscription  
KD 20 instead of KD 30 for 1 year

For individuals only

Tel: 24833199 ext.: 163-325-353- 354 or 66500982



kuwaittimes.net

## News in brief

## Olympic committee attends assembly

DUBAI: The Kuwait Olympic committee attended yesterday the 40th Asian Olympic council general assembly meeting. Heading the Kuwaiti delegation is head of Kuwaiti Olympic committee, Shiekh Fahad Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, along with Deputy Secretary Ali Al-Marri. The general assembly highlighted the Olympic movement in Asia by displaying developments in the four upcoming Olympic games hosted in Asia: Hangzhou 2022, Aichi-Nagoya 2026, Doha 2030 and Riyadh 2034. The meeting handled various topics in relation to Olympic games amongst which were the sixth Asian indoor and martial arts games, as well as third Asian youth games. During the meeting, Sheikh Fahad Al-Nasser met with Emirati State minister for entrepreneurship and small and medium enterprises and head of general authority for sports, Dr Ahmad Al-Falasi, and exchanged perspectives in relation to sports developments in the Gulf. Participating in the meeting are 30 Olympic committees from Asia and 14 others attended the meeting virtually.

## Kuwait in hockey championship

KUWAIT: The Head of Kuwait Winter Games Club Fahad Al-Ajmi announced that the International Ice Hockey Federation approved the participation of the Kuwaiti national team in the 2022 Ice Hockey World Championship Division 4, which will be held in Kyrgyzstan from March 3-9, 2022, with the participation of six Asian teams. Ajmi said the competition includes the teams from Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan and Iran, noting that the champion moves to the higher level in the next tournament, as it is held once every two years. The team will prepare well to compete in this vital tournament, as it will set up a training camp in Turkey next December, before participating in the third Gulf Sports Games hosted by the country in January 2022, he added. He commended the General Sports Authority's support for his team as well as overcoming obstacles to participate in the five winter games.

## Shooting tourney starts Thursday

KUWAIT: The late Sheikh Abdallah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah shooting tournament will start on Thursday and conclude on Saturday, featuring competitions in the Olympic air pistol and rifle as well as Olympic archery. President of Kuwait and Arab Shooting Federations Duaij Khalaf Al-Otaibi said Kuwait Shooting Sport Club is proud to organize championships that carry the names of Kuwaiti personalities who had a major role in Kuwait's renaissance. Otaibi lauded the support the family of the late Sheikh Abdallah Al-Mubarak gives to further develop Kuwait shooting. He hoped that Kuwaiti shooters would exert their best efforts to have good results.

## Kuwait lose at youth tourney

BAGHDAD: Kuwait's national team was defeated by Iraq 0-3 in their first match of the West Asian Youth Football Championship that was held in Basra. The goals were scored by Belnad Omar and Azhar Ali in the 59th, 64th and 83rd minutes. The Iraqis top their group with three points followed by Bahrain with goal difference after beating Palestine 2-1, while Yemen has not played so far. All matches of Group A are held in Basra; however, Group G games will be played in Irbil as of November 23. It includes Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and the UAE.

# 'Gulf Bank 642 Marathon' returns for seventh edition

## Over 7,000 participants took part in a day of fun after a two-year wait



KUWAIT: The Gulf Bank 642 Marathon at the starting line.



Gulf Bank CEO, Tony Daher, with the marathon's organizers.



Gulf Bank staff in a group photo.

KUWAIT: The Gulf Bank 642 Marathon, one of the biggest social and sporting events in Kuwait, launched on Saturday with more than 7,000 participants at the starting line, from 93 nationalities, and with 350 organizing volunteers on the exciting sports and family day.

In celebration of the widespread success of this year's Gulf Bank 642 Marathon, Gulf Bank organized an awards ceremony honoring the top three winners from each race category. The ceremony took place at Al-Shaheed Park in the presence of Gulf Bank CEO, Tony Daher, and the Director General of the Public Authority for Sport, Dr Humoud Flaiteh Al-Shimmari, along with representatives of the Ministry of Interior and marathon sponsors.

This year, the participants kicked off in small groups in order to maintain social distancing and to ensure everyone's safety. The marathon started at 7:30 am at Souq Sharq Bridge with an atmosphere filled with positive energy, excitement and beautiful weather. It was the perfect time for our participants to run through the landmarks of Kuwait till they reached the finish line at Souq Sharq Mall on the Arabian Gulf, which is next to the Grand Mosque of Kuwait and Mubarakiya, depending on the distance category, runners continued on their respective running paths, jogging past a variety of Kuwait's beautiful landmarks, from the Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Cultural Center to the Kuwait Towers, before crossing the finish line.

The marathon and routes were designed this way in order to motivate the participants to have a fun family day, even if they do not exercise regularly. The Gulf Bank 642 Marathon was launched for the seventh year in a row to promote societal sustainability in Kuwait.

For the seventh year in a row, the Gulf Bank 642 Marathon was held in partnership with Suffix Sports Management. The race consisted of four categories that were open to runners of all abilities, including: the 5K Family Fun Walk/Run, the 10K Souq Run, the 21K Half Marathon, and the 42K Full Marathon.

The Gulf Bank 642 Marathon is distinguished by its Bronze Label from World Athletics, which is given to only 128 marathons globally. The Gulf Bank 642 Marathon is the only marathon in Kuwait that has the



Gulf Bank management with Public Authority for Sport representatives and organizers.

Bronze accreditation. The marathon is also recognized by The AbbottWMM Wanda Age Group World Rankings, which is a global age group marathon ranking system.

Gulf Bank employees also participated in the day's fun, with Gulf Bank employees taking part in the marathon. Groups from other local companies also enjoyed their day outside of the office working on their health and fitness together.

Commentating on this year's Gulf Bank 642 Marathon, Ahmad Al Amir, Deputy General Manager for Corporate Communications at Gulf Bank, stated: "We are happy that life is going back to normal, and what makes us even happier is our ability to organize The Gulf Bank 642 Marathon and accept participants again. We want to keep our commitment of promoting social sustainability and motivating people to have a healthy and enjoyable family day out in Kuwait. On this occasion, we would like to thank all those who participated in making this year's Gulf Bank 642 Marathon an unforgettable experience. We would like to extend a special thanks to the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Health, Kuwait Municipality,

Public Authority for Sport, and all our volunteers."

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. The Bank also supports Kuwait Vision 2035 "New Kuwait" and works with various relevant parties to achieve it.

For more information regarding the Gulf Bank 642 Marathon, and to view the marathon winners' names, please visit [www.gulfbank642marathon.com](http://www.gulfbank642marathon.com) or check out the Instagram account @GulfBank642.



The participants in the marathon.

## Indian Community School celebrates Children's Day

KUWAIT: Children's Day is a commemorative day celebrated annually in honor of children. The date varies by country. World Children's Day is celebrated on November 20th every year to commemorate the Declaration of the 'Rights of the Child' by the UN General Assembly. In India, it is celebrated on November 14th on the birthday of the first prime minister of independent India, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. He was a passionate advocate of education for India's children and youth and affirmed that education was imperative for the country's growth. He was fondly addressed as 'Chacha Nehru' by children.

Indian Community School Kuwait, Amman Branch celebrated the children's day with great vigor and

happiness. Various assemblies by the students from Kindergarten to Secondary were held on November 14, 2021 to bring out the significance of the most important day in their lives.

All the assemblies followed the formal structure by commencing with the recitation of verses from the Holy Quran. This was followed by school prayer, National Anthem of Kuwait and pledge, invoking the blessings, owing allegiance to the country we live and our motherland. Inspiring thoughts were well delivered by the children. Instilling the importance of knowing about the happenings of the world, News headlines were well presented by the children.

Next to follow were the special programs by our precious children from Kindergarten to Secondary. Thought provoking speeches, skits, melodious and soulful songs, action songs, foot tapping and scintillating solo and group dance performances, brainstorming quizzes, enacting role models, sharing childhood memories and depicting generation gap using modern technology were presented which were a feast to eyes and ears.

The teachers of classes 3 and 4 presented a spe-



cial skit and song for the children. All the teachers wished their dear children on the occasion of children's day. The supervisors and the head of the departments delivered special wishes highlighting the importance of children's day.

Principal Rajesh Nair addressed the assembly and gave a motivating speech about the inherent value of



children's day and wished all the children a very happy children's day. Many congratulations to all the children who enthralled everyone with their awesome and amazing performances. Kudos to the Assembly in charge and all the teachers for their devoted and diligent contribution. Thanks to all the parents who helped and guided their children.



Bulgaria presidential poll seen testing anti-graft reform appetite

## Hijacker's mid-air escape fascinates Americans, 50 years on

Page 6

Page 7



BRUSSELS: People take part in a demonstration against Belgium government's measures to curb the spread of the COVID-19 and mandatory vaccination in Brussels yesterday. — AFP

# Thousands rally against COVID curbs

## Dutch police face a second night of rioting

**THE HAGUE:** Tens of thousands took to the streets in cities across Europe and Australia as anger mounted over fresh COVID restrictions imposed against a resurgent pandemic. And Dutch police faced a second night of rioting - this time in The Hague - after the previous night's violence in the port city of Rotterdam. Clashes erupted after a day of mainly peaceful protests elsewhere in the Netherlands, with rioters throwing stones and fireworks at police and setting fire to bicycles. Several people were arrested.

Europe is battling a fresh wave of infections and several countries have tightened curbs, with Austria on Friday announcing a nationwide partial lockdown - the most dramatic restrictions in Western Europe for months. The Netherlands went back into partial lockdown last Saturday with at least three weeks of curbs, and is now planning to ban unvaccinated people from entering some venues, the so-called 2G option.

Several thousand protesters angry at the latest measures gathered in Amsterdam. Another thousand marched through the southern city of Breda near the Belgian border, carrying banners with slogans such as "No Lockdown". Organizers said they opposed Prime Minister

Mark Rutte's plans to exclude the unvaccinated from bars and restaurants. "People want to live, that's why we're here," said organizer Joost Eras.

But "we're not rioters. We come in peace," he said, distancing himself from the chaos the previous night in Rotterdam, in which police said they had fired both warning and targeted shots and used water cannon. In Austria, around 40,000 came out to protest in central Vienna near the Chancellery, responding to a call from the far-right FPÖ party. They held up banners decrying "Corona dictatorship" and slamming the "division of society".

"It's not normal that the government deprives us of our rights," said 42-year-old teacher Katarina Gierscher, who travelled for six hours to attend the rally.

Some protesters wore a yellow star reading the words "not vaccinated", a nod to the Star of David many

Jews were forced to wear during the Nazi era. Austria's Interior Minister Karl Nehammer expressed his outrage, saying in a statement that it "insults the millions of victims of the Nazi dictatorship and their families". From today, 8.9 million Austrians will not be allowed to leave home except to go to work, shop for essentials and exercise. The restrictions will initially last 20 days with an evaluation after 10 days.

Vaccination against COVID-19 in the Alpine nation will be mandatory from February 1 next year. Thousands also marched in Croatia's capital Zagreb and in Denmark, around a thousand people protested

against government plans to reinstate a COVID pass for civil servants going to work. "Freedom for Denmark," cried some of the marchers at a rally in Copenhagen organized by the radical Men in Black group, who believe COVID-19 is just a "scam".

In Australia around 10,000 marched in Sydney and there were also protests in other major cities against vaccine mandates applied to certain occupations by state authorities. "In Australia where a fanatical cult runs our health bureaucracies, they say it's OK" to vaccinate children, right-wing politician Craig Kelly told the Sydney crowd to large cheers.

On Saturday, France dispatched dozens of elite forces to its Caribbean island of Guadeloupe after arson and looting overnight in the overseas territory, despite a newly imposed night curfew. In Iran, the health ministry said Saturday more than half of the population had been fully vaccinated against COVID-19, as infection and death rates in the country have started to drop.

Winter sports have again been hit by the pandemic. Germany has ordered next month's Ski Jumping World Cup in Klingenthal to be held behind closed doors. But it wasn't all bad. In France, jubilant skiers hit the slopes as resorts fully opened their doors for the first time in almost two years. "We're delighted to be able to get the lifts up and running again and to be able to do our job 100 percent," rescue worker Emmanuel Laissus told AFP in the Val Thorens resort in the southeast. — AFP



Protesters take to the street across Europe, Australia

## China downgrades diplomatic ties with Lithuania

**BEIJING:** China has officially downgraded diplomatic ties with Lithuania, the foreign ministry in Beijing said yesterday, after Taiwan established a de facto embassy in Vilnius. China baulks at any official use of the word "Taiwan" in case it gives international legitimacy to the island, which Beijing considers part of its territory to be taken one day. "The Chinese government had to lower diplomatic relations between the two countries... to safeguard its sovereignty and the basic norms of international relations," the ministry said in a statement announcing the downgrade to the charge d'affaires level. "The Lithuanian government must bear all consequences that arise from this."

It added that Lithuania had "abandoned the political commitment made upon the establishment of diplomatic relations" with China. It was a reference to the "One China" policy, under which countries officially recognize Beijing over Taipei. Lithuania's foreign ministry yesterday said it regretted China's decision. "Lithuania reaffirms its adherence to the 'One China' policy, but at the same time has the right to expand cooperation with Taiwan," the ministry said in a statement.

Lithuanian Prime Minister Ingrida Simonyte stressed that Taiwan's office in Vilnius does not have diplomatic status. "The fact that Lithuania wants to intensify economic, cultural or scientific ties with Taiwan was announced in our government's program, so our move should not be very surprising,"



VILNIUS : File photo shows the name plaque at the Taiwanese Representative Office in Lithuania, Vilnius. China has officially downgraded its diplomatic ties with Lithuania to the "charge d'affaires" level, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said yesterday. — AFP

she told reporters. Chinese state broadcaster CCTV called the move a "solemn warning against the crude provocation of China's core interests".

"This fully reveals Lithuanian politicians' strategic short-sightedness," CCTV said in a commentary, adding that those who "play the so-called 'Taiwan card'" are "stupid without knowing it". Taiwan announced in July that it would open the office, its first new diplomatic outpost in Europe in 18 years. That prompted a fierce rebuke from China. It withdrew its ambassador from Lithuania and demanded Vilnius do the same, which it eventually did. China also halted freight trains to Lithuania and stopped issuing food export permits.

The opening of the Vilnius office is the latest sign that some Baltic and central European countries are seeking closer relations with Taiwan, even if that angers China. In May, Lithuania announced it was quitting China's 17+1 cooperation forum with central and eastern European states, calling it "divisive". Politicians in the Czech Republic have also pushed for closer ties with Taiwan. Only 15 countries officially recognize Taipei over Beijing. But Taiwan maintains embassy equivalent representative offices with many nations and several countries have similar arrangements in Taipei. International support for the island has grown since China's President Xi Jinping came to power. — AFP

## CONDOLENCES

The Owners,  
Management and Staff of  
**AI-Rashed International Shipping Co KSCC**  
Extend our Heartfelt  
condolences to the family of



**Anish Stephen Markose**  
Ex Commercial Manager

**AI Rashed Group Holding Co KSCC**

**On his sudden and untimely demise  
at Bangalore India on 19 November, 2021**

**May his soul Rest in Peace**

## International

## Self-defense 'is not' illegal: Rittenhouse

## Ruling sparks sporadic protests across the country

WASHINGTON: Kyle Rittenhouse, the US teen acquitted after fatally shooting two men during protests and riots against police brutality in Wisconsin last year, said self-defense is "not illegal" after being cleared, as the verdict reverberated across America. On Friday, a jury found the 18-year-old Rittenhouse not guilty of reckless and intentional homicide and other charges stemming from the August 2020 shootings in Kenosha, Wisconsin.

The ruling sparked sporadic protests across the country late Friday—from New York to Portland, Oregon—but also drew praise from Rittenhouse supporters at the courthouse and gun rights advocates, highlighting how divisive the case was. In comments broadcast by Fox News, the teen—seen smiling as he rides in a car after the verdict—said he was relieved that his "rough journey" had come to an end.

"The jury reached the correct verdict—self-defense is not illegal," Rittenhouse said, ahead of a full interview with Fox to be shown today evening and a subsequent documentary scheduled to air in December. "I'm glad that everything went well... We made it through the hard part." Rittenhouse's family later said via a spokesman that they had been moved to an undisclosed location. "They are doing well right now, they're in an undisclosed location, and they're a family and everybody's just ecstatic," spokesman David Hancock told CBS.

Rittenhouse's case drew national attention, in part because it arose from the Black Lives Matter demonstrations that swept the country last year and

featured a controversial mix of guns, racial tensions and vigilantism. The teen testified during the two-week trial that he shot dead two men and wounded another with his AR-15 semi-automatic rifle in self-defense after being attacked during a night of unrest in Kenosha.

Rittenhouse, who lived in neighboring Illinois, claimed he went to Kenosha to protect businesses from looters and act as a medic. Prosecutors countered by arguing the then 17-year-old Rittenhouse "provoked" the events on a chaotic night sparked when a white policeman shot a Black man, Jacob Blake, in the back several times during an arrest,

leaving him paralyzed. But the jury sided with Rittenhouse.

For John Huber, father of one of the men killed in Kenosha, the "shock" had not dissipated when he appeared on CNN Saturday morning. "We still can't believe it," Huber said. "He should have got about 40 years in prison. That was

our expectation." "That guy gets to run free and he's now a hero. And this is my son right here. This is Anthony," Huber said, holding up a small urn and a photo of his son. "There's no justice right now for our family and there's no closure."

## Divisive case

The reaction to the verdict reflected the national divide over the right to bear firearms in America—and where the line should be drawn on that constitutionally protected right. President Joe Biden warned against violence following the verdict and appealed for calm. "While the verdict in Kenosha will leave many Americans feeling angry and con-



ATLANTA: Demonstrators gather to protest the acquittal of Kyle Rittenhouse on November 20, 2021 in Atlanta, Georgia. —AFP

cerned, myself included, we must acknowledge that the jury has spoken," Biden said in a statement. "I urge everyone to express their views peacefully, consistent with the rule of law."

In an editorial, the Wisconsin State Journal called the verdict "disappointing" and said it was "sure to embolden militant people who seek to take the law into their own hands." "But further violence in response to the verdict won't help anyone," it added. Meanwhile, the Gun Owners of America cheered Rittenhouse as a "warrior for gun owners and self defense rights" and said it would be "awarding him" with an AR-15 like the one he used that night in Kenosha. Rittenhouse—who had

faced five charges in total—earned praise from some Republican lawmakers and former president Donald Trump.

The most serious charge—intentional homicide—carried a mandatory sentence of life in prison. The jury deliberated for a total of 26 hours over four days before delivering a unanimous verdict of not guilty on all counts. Shannon Watts, founder of gun control group Moms Demand Action, slammed the verdict. "That a teenager could travel across state lines to a protest he had nothing to do with; shoot three people, killing two; and face no criminal consequences is a miscarriage of justice and an indictment of our criminal justice system," Watts said. —AFP

## US road rage shootings on the rise

CALIFORNIA: After a speeding driver cut her off abruptly on a Californian highway in May, Joanna Cloonan gestured rudely towards the car. A passenger grabbed a pistol and fired at her vehicle, killing her six-year-old son in the back seat. A woman in Texas was shot in the back last week while shielding her seven-year-old daughter from gunfire toward their vehicle, and another driver in Kentucky is recovering from gunshot wounds sustained after an argument involving a parking space.

Road rage incidents involving a gun have been responsible for record levels of injury and death in the United States since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, according to a recent report from Everytown for Gun Safety, a nonprofit that advocates against gun violence. Data shows that traffic skirmishes involving firearms have been on the rise since 2018, and the report said that "if current trends continue, 2021 is on track to be the deadliest year on record." The pandemic, which introduced many new sources of stress to people's lives, has also seen record increases in gun sales and shootings, Everytown said.

## 'Entitlement' and 'narcissism'

Ryan Martin, an anger researcher at the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, told AFP that "just the existence of a life-threatening illness puts people on edge, when the frustrations that they encounter would have been kind of mild two years ago." In a country where the right to bear arms is fiercely guarded, the omnipresence of guns magnifies the problem, according to Martin, a psychology professor.

Firearms are "a driving factor in multiple ways because it gives you a lethal mechanism to act out that anger," he said. "Data also shows that having a gun in the car with you makes you more likely to become angry. It's called the weapons effect."

Individualistic American attitudes may also be partly to blame. "The individualism that we see in the US probably exacerbates a lot of anger response. There is a sense of entitlement that comes with the way in which Americans tend to think about freedom," Martin said.

Martin and emotional management specialist Pauline Wallin both suggest that deep political divides also contribute to the violence. Wallin, a psychologist based in Pennsylvania, said that because Americans are increasingly polarized, a person cutting you off in traffic is more likely seen as the "enemy" rather than an "inconvenience."

"We're more apt to blame other people for what happened," she said. "It's somebody else's fault... it's all about narcissism." Even pandemic safety measures like masks became framed as a political debate under former president Donald Trump, and divisive messaging did not disappear with his administration, Wallin said.

"Poor management of frustration" is at fault for most road rage incidents, according to the psychologist. "You have to take some deep breaths. You have to calm yourself down because you can't think logically when you're very upset," she said. "Ask yourself, will this matter tomorrow? In a week?" Martin said drivers have to realize that engaging in an aggressive, hostile way is "never going to be a positive outcome." "Let it go," he advised. —AFP

## Hijacker's mid-air escape fascinates Americans, 50 years on

WASHINGTON: On the eve of Thanksgiving, 1971, a nondescript, 40-something man who called himself Dan Cooper approached the airport counter and bought a one-way ticket for the short flight from Portland to Seattle. Within hours, he had strapped a bag holding \$200,000 in ransom to himself—today worth about \$1.3 million—and parachuted off the plane, never to be found.

Fifty years after his leap into the unknown, the case of DB Cooper—an alias spawned by the media—remains the only unsolved plane hijacking in the history of the United States. The US Federal Bureau of Investigation called him "a quiet man who appeared to be in his mid-40s, wearing a business suit with a black tie and white shirt." He ordered a bourbon and soda while waiting for the plane to take off.

His plan was fairly simple. After the aircraft departed, Cooper handed the flight attendant a note. When she didn't immediately react, he reportedly leaned over and said: "Miss, you'd better look at that note. I have a bomb."

After getting a glimpse of the mass of wires in his briefcase, the badly shaken flight attendant wrote down his demands—four parachutes and \$200,000 — and brought them to the captain as instructed.

## Egypt makes Gaza comeback with post-war reconstruction

GAZA: Posters of Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi beam out over a site in the war-battered Gaza Strip where laborers and bulldozers are hard at work rebuilding. After years of retreat, Egypt is making its presence felt again in the neighboring Palestinian enclave, emerging as a key benefactor in the aftermath of the last bout of fighting between Hamas and Zionists in May. In the weeks following the deadly violence, a number of Egyptian workers crossed the border on a mission to lay down a coastal road in the Gaza's northern city of Beit Lahya.

"The president's instructions are to reconstruct the Gaza Strip. We are about 70 engineers, civil servants, lorry drivers, mechanics and workers," said a worker who preferred not to give his name. He added that he was

"happy to help Palestine". During the 11-day conflict that erupted between Zionists and armed Islamist factions in Gaza last May — the worst since 2014 — Egypt worked behind the scenes to mediate a ceasefire. Cairo also pledged a \$500 million package to reconstruct the enclave which borders Zionists and Egypt.

## 'Common interests'

Relations between Cairo and Hamas — an offshoot of Egypt's veteran Islamist opposition Muslim Brotherhood group — have been sour, particularly after the 2013 military ouster of late president Mohamed Morsi, also of the Brotherhood. The sight of Egyptian workers rebuilding Gaza as Egypt invests millions in the enclave was "unexpected, unimaginable", Palestinian economist Omar Shaban said. "Egypt and Hamas are not friends, but they have common interests," he explained in his office in Al-Rimal, a Gaza district that was heavily bombed by Zionists in May. "Egypt wants to maintain the ceasefire by engaging in the after-war reconstruction efforts."

Hamas is in desperate need of inter-

national aid for reconstruction, while positive relations with Egypt are an added benefit as it controls the Rafah border, often the only access point for much-needed construction material to the enclave. Egypt, meanwhile, "understands that it doesn't have a lot of options" in Gaza, where Hamas — nearly 15 years after seizing power from the Fatah movement and despite four wars with Zionists — still holds firm,



This FBI file handout image obtained on March 27, 2008 shows the likenesses of D.B.Cooper. On the eve of Thanksgiving, 1971, a nondescript, 40-something man who called himself Dan Cooper approached the airport counter and bought a one-way ticket from Portland to Seattle. —AFP

that the hijacker has never been found. Theories, some far-fetched, have poured in over the years, and dozens of people have claimed, sometimes on their deathbed, to be DB Cooper.

FBI investigators examined many intriguing profiles, like that of Barbara Dayton, an amateur pilot and transgender woman who allegedly confessed to her friends; of Lynn Doyle Cooper, whose niece became convinced of his involvement after he showed up bloody and battered to Thanksgiving dinner that year; and of Sheridan Paterson, a World War II veteran interviewed by Fryar. —AFP



RAFAH: File photo shows Egyptian workers pose for a photo by construction equipment provided by Egypt arriving at the Palestinian side of the Rafah border crossing between Egypt and the Palestinian Gaza Strip enclave. — AFP

national aid for reconstruction, while positive relations with Egypt are an added benefit as it controls the Rafah border, often the only access point for much-needed construction material to the enclave. Egypt, meanwhile, "understands that it doesn't have a lot of options" in Gaza, where Hamas — nearly 15 years after seizing power from the Fatah movement and despite four wars with Zionists — still holds firm,

Shaban said.

Over recent years, Qatar has become the prime donor of aid for the impoverished territory, but in the aftermath of the May fighting, the flow of cash came to a halt. The energy-rich Gulf country — considered to be sympathetic to the Muslim Brotherhood and its offshoots — has dispensed tens of millions of dollars in aid to poor families in Gaza. —AFP

## Seven Turks held in Libya for almost two years return

ISTANBUL: Seven Turkish citizens held in eastern Libya for almost two years were released and returned home after intense diplomacy, the Turkish

foreign ministry said yesterday. The Turks were released after joint efforts between Turkey and its regional ally Qatar, the ministry said in a statement. Turkish media said most of them worked in the restaurant business. The North African country has been mired in civil war and strife since the overthrow of dictator Muammar Gaddafi in a 2011 uprising. The bloodshed has drawn in competing Libyan factions and Islamist groups as well as foreign powers.

Turkey has sent troops as well as pro-Turkish

militia units from Syria to shore up the UN-recognized government in Tripoli, while Russia and other countries support eastern-based strongman Khalifa Haftar. In 2019, Turkish officials said the Turks were detained by eastern Libya forces loyal to Haftar. "The situation of our citizens were closely monitored during this process by our embassy in Tripoli and the National Intelligence Organization," the foreign ministry said. President Recep Tayyip Erdogan also placed telephone calls to the citizens who returned home, it added. —AFP

International

# Bulgaria presidential poll seen testing anti-graft reform appetite

## Radev is the country's most popular politician

**SOFIA:** Bulgarians voted yesterday to elect their president, a largely ceremonial role that the current incumbent has transformed and put at the heart of the struggle against corruption in the European Union's poorest country. Incumbent President Rumen Radev, the frontrunner with 49 percent in the first round of voting last weekend, faces off against academic Anastas Gerdjikov after neither could secure an outright majority.

While Radev, a former fighter pilot, is the country's most popular politician, Bulgaria itself is riven by fractious political parties that have failed to deliver a stable government needed to tackle deep-seated graft and the worsening coronavirus pandemic.

ty after last weekend's surprise victory in the third general election this year of a new anti-graft party.

We Continue the Change now hopes to find coalition partners to end six months of political deadlock that have drawn out the worst political crisis since the end of communism three decades ago. But while Gerdjikov, also 58, only drew 23 percent in the first round, the University of Sofia rector is backed by the GERB party of former conservative premier Boyko Borisov, which came a close second in the general election. Gerdjikov will also probably garner strong support from the nation's sizeable Turkish minority, comprising about nine percent of the seven million population.

### Moscow's man no more

The Turkish MRF party has been allied with GERB and has been snubbed by We Continue the Change in coalition talks. Analysts also say that voter apathy might make the win more difficult for Radev, who was backed by the Socialists for his first five-year term but now runs as an independent.

Only 40 percent of those eligible turned out for the first round last Sunday, and lacking a party machine the former air force chief of staff depends on a broad spectrum of backers. These include We Continue the Change, whose founders-Harvard graduates Kiril Petkov and Assen Vassilev-served as ministers in the first interim administration Radev appointed in May after the inconclusive April poll.

Radev had supported the protests against Borisov's 10-year rule last summer, shouting "Mafia out!" with his fist raised in the air as he briefly joined the crowd. He has also turned around perceptions that he is pro-Russian, said Gallup analyst Parvan Simeonov. "Radev is no longer considered a Moscow man," he said.

"On Sunday, vote for the president who started the change," Petkov urged in a video address this week. In a presidential debate on Thursday, Radev said he



**SOFIA:** An electoral staff member of a mobile polling center, wearing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), presents a ballot box to a woman in self-quarantine to collect her vote for the second-round of the presidential election and the parliamentary elections. —AFP

regretted most that he "didn't manage to contribute to the toppling of Borisov's regime sooner".

### Pandemic failure

But the end of Borisov's reign also marked the beginning of the political deadlock. And that has coincided with an onslaught of the coronavirus in the EU member with the lowest COVID-19 vaccination rate and one of the world's highest pandemic mortality rates. The second caretaker administration Radev appointed after parties failed yet another attempt to

form a government after polls in July was strongly criticised for its poor handling of the outbreak. The country has struggled to roll out jobs in the face of strong anti-vaccination sentiment and prolific fake news.

Both interim administrations did, however, win plaudits for an avalanche of revelations about corruption, fraud and mismanagement under Borisov, which Gallup analyst Svetlin Tachev said "played in Radev's favour". Polls, which opened at 7:00 am (0500 GMT), were due to close at 1800 GMT with the first exit poll results due shortly afterwards. —AFP

“A clash between two visions”

"Everything's going wrong. I want that to change for my children, grandchildren and former pupils," retired teacher Dobrinka Nakova told AFP in the capital Sofia while out to vote. New Bulgarian University political science professor Antony Todorov summed up the vote as "a clash between two visions" in the eastern European country.

It is one between "the soft tolerance of endemic corruption and the firm opposition to a model of governance that uses public power for private purposes," Todorov wrote in a blog post this week. A clear win for Radev, 58, may usher in a period of political stabilisation.

## India police charge Amazon executives over online drug sales

**NEW DELHI:** Indian police have charged executives from Amazon's local arm over claims the US retail behemoth's online portal was used to smuggle and sell marijuana. Two men were arrested last week with 21 kilograms (46 pounds) of the drug in central

Madhya Pradesh state and told officers they were using Amazon's India platform to ship their goods elsewhere in the country.

They admitted to shipping their crop by falsely marketing it as stevia leaves, a natural sweetener, according to a police report seen by AFP yesterday. Executives from Amazon's India unit had been included in the charges because of contradictions between evidence collected in the police investigation and responses received by the firm, the report said.

Neither police nor Amazon gave any indication of how many employees were facing charges. Amazon said it was investigating the case and pledged full cooperation with police in a statement to AFP. "We do not

allow the listing and sale of products which are prohibited under law to be sold in India," a company spokesperson said.

India is a key market for Amazon with local investments worth \$6.5 billion in the country since its 2013 debut. The drugs case is the latest legal headache for the online marketplace's Indian arm, which is also facing an anti-trust probe along with Walmart subsidiary Flipkart.

Both firms are being investigated by competition watchdogs over claims they gave preferential treatment to some sellers. Amazon also launched an internal probe after reports in September that one or more of its Indian employees had bribed government officials. —AFP

## Kremlin slams US 'hysteria' over Ukraine conflict

**MOSCOW:** Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov yesterday slammed the United States for driving "hysteria" over a possible Russian invasion of Ukraine, after Western countries accused Moscow of a troop build-up near the ex-Soviet country.

His comments come as Western countries this week raised alarm over Russian military activity near Ukraine and Washington said it has "real concerns" over what it called "unusual" activity. "This hysteria is being whipped up artificially," Peskov said on state television.

"Those who have brought their armed forces from overseas are accusing us of unusual military activity on our own territory. That is, the United States." Ukraine's army has been locked in a simmering conflict with pro-Russian separatists in two breakaway regions bordering Russia since 2014, after

Moscow annexed Crimea from Ukraine.

Kiev and its Western allies accuse Russia of sending troops and arms across the border to support the separatists—claims Moscow denies. Peskov's comments come after US Secretary of State Antony Blinken on Saturday declined to say whether US intelligence believed Russian President Vladimir Putin was aiming to seize land from Ukraine.

"We don't know what President Putin's intentions are. But we do know what's happened in the past," Blinken said. "We know the playbook of trying to cite some illusory provocation from Ukraine or any other country and using that as an excuse for what Russia plans to do all along."

Putin for his part said Thursday that the West is "escalating" the Ukraine conflict by holding drills in the Black Sea and flying bombers near its borders. After an uptick in violence at the beginning of the year, Russia massed around 100,000 troops on Ukraine's borders in the spring, raising fears of a major escalation in the conflict.

Russia later announced a pullback but both Ukraine and its ally the United States said at the time the withdrawal was limited. The conflict has claimed the lives of more than 13,000 people. —AFP

## Border crisis 'greatest' bid to destabilize Europe

**BOHONIKI:** Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki yesterday called the migrant crisis on the Belarusian-Polish border, the EU's eastern frontier, the "greatest attempt to destabilise Europe" since the Cold War.

The premier issued his strong remarks as he prepared to meet with EU leaders

promises of an easy crossing into the European Union.

Belarus has denied the claim, instead criticising the EU for not taking in the migrants.

Caught in the middle, migrants often report being forced to cross the border by Belarusian officials, then being pushed back into Belarusian territory by Polish authorities.

Belarusian President Alexander "Lukashenko launched a hybrid war against the EU. This is (the) greatest attempt to destabilise Europe in 30 years," Morawiecki said on Twitter.

"Poland will not yield to blackmail and will do everything to defend the EU's borders." He linked to a video statement in which he cautioned that "today the target is Poland, but tomorrow it will be Germany,

### Divert attention

Brussels and NATO have previously also described the migrant crisis as a "hybrid tactic". Morawiecki is visiting the Baltic states — two of which also share a border with Belarus — yesterday to discuss the conflict and has announced he will visit other EU capitals this week.

Some observers believe Poland is using its rhetoric on the border issue to try to distract from controversial reforms that the EU believes limit the independence of the judiciary.

The European Commission wrote to Poland on Friday to launch a process that could lead to it being deprived of funds over threats to the EU legal order.

"While the problem on Poland's border is serious and requires Western solidarity — for example by sanctioning Belarus — Morawiecki blows it out of proportion to divert attention from Poland's violation of the rule of law," political expert Marcin Zaborowski told AFP.

The policy director at the Globsec think tank argued that the Belarus action "pales in comparison with the war in Ukraine, cyber attack in Estonia in 2007 and Russian support for far-right extremism in Europe."

Yesterday, Poland's border guards reported new attempted crossings, including by a "very aggressive group of around 100" migrants.

Poland's Defence Minister Mariusz Blaszczak said Saturday that Belarus has now changed tactics by directing smaller groups of migrants to multiple points along the border. He added that he expected the border showdown to last months.

### Migrant deaths

The migrants have spent thousands of dollars to fly into Belarus on tourist visas, determined to reach the European Union. Many are desperately fleeing war and poverty in the Middle East.

Once at the border, they are faced with squalid, freezing conditions.

Polish media say at least 11 migrants have died since the crisis began over the summer. A Yemeni migrant who died in Poland in September will be laid to rest on Sunday in the eastern village of Bohoniki, with his brother in attendance.

Yemen's foreign ministry said he "died on the border between Poland and Belarus as a result of the severe drop in temperatures." On Saturday, the Belarusian health ministry said that a World Health Organization (WHO) mission had arrived in Belarus to help organise medical support for the migrants. —AFP



**VILNIUS:** Lithuania's Prime Minister Ingrida Simonyte (R) and Poland's Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki (L) arrive to address a joint press conference during their meeting on the migrant crisis on the Polish border with Belarus, in Vilnius yesterday. — AFP

at a time when Warsaw is facing not only a border crisis but heightened tensions with Brussels over allegations it is breaching its commitment to the bloc's democratic principles.

The West accuses Belarus of artificially creating the crisis by bringing in would-be migrants — mostly from the Middle East — and taking them to the border with

Belgium, France or Spain."

He also claimed that Lukashenko had the "back-room support of Vladimir Putin," the Russian president and an ally of the Belarusian regime.

Lukashenko told the BBC earlier that it was "absolutely possible" his forces had helped people cross into the EU but denied orchestrating the operation.

**CONSUMER PROTECTION DEPARTMENT**

**RECALL INFORMATION**

**MERCEDES-BENZ**  
MODEL: S-Class (223 Platform)  
MODEL YEAR: 2021 – 2022

**S-Class**

**RECALL REASON**

Mercedes-Benz AG has determined that on certain S-Class (223 platform) vehicles the software of the airbag control unit might not meet specifications. The control unit for the occupant recognition might be deactivated permanently by the airbag control unit at vehicle shut down. As a consequence, the passenger airbag might be deactivated despite a person sitting on the passenger front seat.

**REMEDY**

As a precautionary measure, Mercedes-Benz AG, via its Mercedes-Benz service partners, will update the software of the airbag control unit on the affected vehicles. The required work will certainly be carried out free of charge.

**CONTACT**

Please contact Al Mulla Automobiles Co.  
Phone 1-887-888 at Extension 1721, 1722, 1723, 1724, 1726, 1731, 1732  
Mercedes-Benz Service Centre – Al Rai Industrial Area - Fourth Ring Road  
Mercedes-Benz Service Centre – Al Shuwaikh Industrial Area - 13 Street  
Mercedes-Benz Service Centre for Passenger Cars – Al Ahmadi - 29 Street

This Recall is run pursuant to articles (42,43,44,45,46 and 47) of no. (39/2015) issuing the executive by laws of law no. (39/2014) on Consumer Protection.

135 مركز الطوارئ @mociq8 | www.moci.gov.kw



# Business

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 2021

## Australian fruit farmers face harvest headache amid rising labor shortage

### Many seasonal workers shut out of the country to halt spread of pandemic

**NASHDALE, Australia:** In near-perfect conditions, thanks to abundant rain and healthy trees, Australian fruit grower Michael Cunial's cherry orchard looks set to yield a bumper crop. He has just one problem: the harvest. Like many farmers in Australia, during harvests he relies on seasonal workers, many of whom have been shut out of the country since its international borders closed in March 2020 to halt the spread of the coronavirus pandemic.

Even if he can find workers for the cherry harvest, he may have to pay them more than he has in previous years. In common with most Australian fruit growers, Cunial has paid seasonal workers for what they can pick. But the system has left many workers earning less than the minimum wage, so the rules may be about to change.

"The system of a piece rate tends to make sense," the fruit grower said at his 50-hectare (120-acre) farm, Curinya Orchards, in Nashdale-about four hours' drive from Sydney. "If you want to have a go, you can actually make really good money. And if you're hopeless, you don't."

Cunial said he expects "really big" cherries this year, which will probably be ready for harvest in early- to mid-December. He hires about 50 seasonal workers for the annual harvest and pays them piece rate. But the system has been condemned by the Fair Work Commission, Australia's industrial relations tribunal.

#### Below minimum wage

Ruling on a complaint by the Australian Workers Union, it said seasonal farm workers should get the

minimum hourly wage of Aus\$25.41 (US\$18.50). "The totality of the evidence presents a picture of significant underpayment of pieceworkers in the horticulture industry when compared to the minimum award hourly rate," the commission found. Farming federations, which oppose the finding, have until November 26 to appeal. According to a 2018 study of more than 8,000 horticultural farms by the Fair Work Ombudsman, 56 percent of them underpaid a proportion of their workers.

Working hard is not always enough. Victor, a young Frenchman who preferred not to be identified by his full name to protect his employment prospects, had to work 88 days in farming to be allowed to stay a second year—a condition of the working holiday visa. "I have worked in the vineyards. I had to wrap the branches around wire. We were paid 11 cents a branch. I was among the top 10 percent and I still only got Aus\$9 an hour, less than half the minimum wage," he said.

Cedric Gestin, another French worker who is in his third year in Australia, says he has always preferred farms that pay by the hour. After three years working full-time in Cunial's cherry orchard, Remy Genet manages the seasonal workers. "I have got guys who can fill 60 lugs (fruit crates), earn Aus\$700 in a day, and others who can only fill nine lugs in the same field. The difference is the motivation," he said.

"Of course, there are farms where even the good ones never earn enough money because there is not enough fruit or the farm is badly run. But where some people can make money, everyone can make money."



**NASHDALE, Australia:** A worker inspecting cherries at a cherry farm located in the rural New South Wales state town of Nashdale, some 212 km from Sydney. — AFP

#### 'Keep an eye on them'

Cunial says he is concerned about the prospect of laying off workers who do not pick enough if there is a switch to hourly pay. "We are going to have to keep an eye on them. And within maybe half a day, we're going to have to let people go if this decision comes to fruition," he said.

"Cherries have got a window of about five days to a week, if you're lucky, before you need to get them off a tree. So if you don't have the pickers,

they could just end up going bad on the tree." Cunial has another challenge: he is finding it hard to recruit since the borders closed. The number of young people in Australia on working holiday visas dropped from nearly 120,000 in December 2019 to 39,000 in 2020. The labor shortage is coinciding with an expected record farming production, forecast to be worth Aus\$73 billion across all crops in the 2021-2022 season-up seven percent from the previous year. — AFP

## CBK launches fourth round of 'Certified Shariah Auditor' certificate program

**KUWAIT:** In an effort to enhance the governance of Shariah supervision in the Islamic banks in Kuwait, and reinforce Shariah auditing in such banks, the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) launched the fourth round of the Certified Shariah Auditor Certificate Program within the Kafaa Initiative. The Kafaa Initiative was launched by the CBK in collaboration with Kuwaiti banks and is managed by the Institute of Banking Studies (IBS).

This came in a statement in which Dr Mohammad Y Al-Hashel, governor of the Central Bank of Kuwait and chairman of the board of directors of the Institute of Banking Studies, stated the importance of this program aimed at strengthening Shariah auditing in the Islamic Shariah-compliant financial institutions, as auditing is considered one of the basics of Shari'ah governance, particularly in



**Dr Mohammad Y Al-Hashel**

light of the changes in the Islamic banking sector and the banking industry in general.

Dr Al-Hashel added, the program was launched to meet the need for more qualified resources in the field of Shariah audit. He also mentioned the great demand witnessed in the past sessions of this program, from which 100 Certified Shariah Auditors graduated, after passing all the requirements to obtain this certificate, which has become mandatory for practicing Shariah audit work on CBK- and Capital Markets Authority (CMA)-regulated Islamic banking and financial entities.

The governor added that developing technical and professional qualified cadres in all aspects of financial, economic and banking business in the State of Kuwait, including Islamic Shariah-compliant financial and banking services, is a strategic direction of the CBK, CMA and Centre for Islamic Economic (CIE). Therefore, CBK is keen to support the banking and financial sector in Kuwait, with highly trained and

qualified cadres in the areas necessary for the banking system's work, and develop human capital capable of pushing the banking industry in Kuwait to further development and leadership.

On December 20, 2016, the CBK issued instructions regarding "Shariah Supervisory Governance in Kuwaiti Islamic Banks", including a set of elements regulating the governance of Shariah supervision, and the general requirements of the governance of Shariah supervision, its principles, the roles of the board of directors, the executive management and the Shariah Supervisory Board, the internal and external Shariah audit, the scope and objectives of the Shariah audit as well as the required conditions and qualifications. Passing the certificate of the Certified Shariah Auditor is one of the mandatory requirements for the entities subject to the supervision of the CBK and CMA, which are compatible with Islamic Shariah.

The governor concluded his statement by referring to the most prominent features of this certificate, which focus on the aspects of knowledge of the Islamic financial industry, as well as on the practical and applied aspects in the field of Shariah audit, according to best practices and the latest scientific materials in this regard. The Shariah Auditor Certificate is certified by the CBK, CMA, and CIE.



**COLOMBO:** A Sri Lanka's main opposition activist wearing a mask of Sri Lanka's President Gotabaya Rajapaksa takes part with others in a demonstration to denounce the shortage of cooking gas, sugar, kerosene oil and a few other commodities as the country faces a major foreign exchange crisis, in Colombo. — AFP

## Sri Lanka ends farm chemical ban as organic drive fails

**COLOMBO:** Sri Lanka abandoned its quest to become the world's first completely organic farming nation yesterday, announcing it would immediately lift an import ban on pesticides and other agricultural inputs. The island country has been in the grips of a severe economic crisis, with a lack of foreign exchange triggering shortages of food, crude oil and other essential goods.

Authorities had already walked back restrictions on fertilizer imports last month for tea, the country's main export earner. But ahead of planned farmer protests in the capital, Sri Lanka's agricultural ministry said it would end a broader ban on all agrochemicals including herbicides and pesticides.

"We will now allow chemical inputs that are urgently needed," ministry secretary Udith Jayasinghe told the private News First TV network. "Considering the need to ensure food security, we have taken this decision." Vast tracts of farmland were abandoned after the import ban, first introduced in May.

Shortages have worsened in the past week, with prices for rice, vegetables and other market staples having doubled across Sri Lanka. Supermarkets have also rationed rice sales, allowing only five kilograms (11 pounds) per customer.

Farmers' organizations had planned to march on the national parliament in Colombo on Friday to demand the import of essential chemicals to protect their crops. President Gotabaya Rajapaksa had justified the import ban by saying he wanted to make Sri Lankan farming 100 percent organic.

The policy was introduced after a massive hit to the cash-strapped island's economy in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, with tourism earnings and foreign worker remittances drastically falling.

Authorities attempted to save foreign exchange by last year banning a host of imported goods, including some food and spices. Sri Lanka also shut its only oil refinery last month after running out of dollars to import crude. — AFP

## Billionaire Sawiris wants 'level playing field' for Egypt business

**EL-GOUNA, Egypt:** Naguib Sawiris—one of Africa's richest men, with an estimated fortune of over \$3 billion—has warned that the Egyptian government's involvement in the private sector makes for an unfair playing field. "Companies that are government-owned or with the military don't pay taxes or customs," Sawiris told AFP from a luxury hotel in the Red Sea resort town of El-Gouna, which his family founded. "We of course can't do that, so the competition from the beginning is unfair." "The state has to be a regulator, not an owner" of economic activity, said the outspoken 67-year-old, Egypt's second-richest man after his own brother, Nassef.

Since President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi took power in 2014, the former army general has embarked on massive national infrastructure projects, with a new capital in the desert as the centerpiece of his urban vision. The military's economic reach has grown under his leadership, partnering up with firms such as the Sawiris family's Orascom. The army has played a key though opaque role in Egypt's economy for decades, producing everything from washing machines to pasta as well as building roads and operating gas stations.

No official figures are published about its financial interests. Egypt's economy "has been given a push late-

ly because of government spending on infrastructure, such as new highways and the new capital... and the private sector is building these projects," Sawiris said.

But "you can't depend on the state forever" to sustain the national economy, the magnate warned. "There's still competition from the government, so foreign investors are a bit scared off. I myself don't even bid when I see government firms (in the race) because it's not a level playing field."

#### 'Hope after the revolution'

A scion of Egypt's wealthiest family, Sawiris built his fortune in telecommunications by investing in mobile networks in countries such as Bangladesh, Iraq and Pakistan. Orascom has the only operating telecoms license in North Korea, building the regime's sole mobile network Koryolink.

Gambling on freedoms that emerged after Egypt's 2011 revolution that overthrew long-time autocrat Hosni Mubarak, Sawiris founded the liberal Free Egyptians party. "We had hope in the youth after the January 25 revolution, but they said they weren't interested in forming a political party. They were more interested in toppling the regime—and then what?" he said.

"It'll only come back, and that's what happened." Sisi has been criti-



**CAIRO, Egypt:** In this file photo, Egyptian tycoon and El-Gouna Film Festival co-founder Naguib Sawiris speaks during a press conference in Cairo. — AFP

cized over his heavy-handed rule, with human rights organizations decrying a crackdown on dissent. Sawiris was coy about commenting on the current political scene. "You have a parliament at least. I don't want to say too much here," the tycoon said with a wry smile. His party failed to win a single seat in the latest legislature, stacked with Sisi loyalists. "No true revolutionary who cares about the lives of people and wants to truly solve their daily problems ever wins," he lamented.

#### 'Sense of creation'

An avid Twitter user with over 7.5

million followers and a penchant for controversy, Sawiris says he has started to slow down. But the cinema-lover, who co-founded Egypt's El Gouna Film Festival five years ago, still has a keen eye for business opportunities. "I like real estate because there's a sense of creation. "When you first go to a barren site and then later you see a new building and it looks good-like here in Gouna—you're seeing something in real life that was born out of a desert." His business acumen served him well in 2008 during the global financial crisis, when he invested in gold and gold-mining in West Africa and Australia. — AFP

Business

NBK Money Market Report

# Inflation haunts global economic recovery; Biden inks \$1 trillion bill

## Some European countries reintroducing pandemic restrictions amid fears

**KUWAIT:** The theme for this week is a rise of inflation figures in developed economies that might force central bank policy makers to hike interest rates sooner than expected. Therefore, markets are pricing in the hikes amid a rally in energy prices, supply-chain bottlenecks and a surge in COVID-19 cases.

### Biden sign \$1tn bill

In the United States, President Biden signed the \$1 trillion bipartisan infrastructure bill. After years of failed debates in Washington to improve physical infrastructure Biden was finally able to persuade and settle the differences of both parties. For President Biden, the signing of the bill fulfills one portion of Biden's economic vision, primarily since the plan aims to boost the labor market and fuel the economy. Such a massive project will require time, since the funding is spread out over a five-year period. Therefore, it could take months or years for many of the planned projects to begin.

The plan will place \$550 billion of new money into transportation, broadband, and utilities. From the \$550 billion, \$65 billion will be invested in expanding broadband, which became a priority after the pandemic left millions of Americans at home without internet access. The legislation will allocate \$110 billion into roads and bridges, \$66 billion in freight and passenger rail, and \$49 billion into public transit systems. The bill will place \$55 billion into improving water systems and replacing lead pipes.

### Retail sales

In the United States, retail sales rose by 1.7 percent in October and surpassed the expected 1.2 percent increase. The core retail sales, which exclude volatile items, also rose by 1.7 percent versus a 1 percent gain the month prior. The three month surge in retail sales suggests that households are continuing to spend despite rising inflation. The spending data shows US prices rising at their fastest pace in 30 years as the increase in purchasing power

forces businesses to pass growing costs on the customers. However, it would be difficult to gauge the impact on demand without the inflation-adjusted consumer spending data (PCE), which will be released next week. Nonetheless, such a pace in US prices has fueled speculation that the US Federal Reserve may raise interest rates sooner than expected.

According to the Commerce Department's report, 11 of the 13 categories witnessed an increase in sales. The main gainers are electronics and appliance stores, as well as building material stores and e-commerce businesses. Petrol stations receipts have jumped 3.9 percent, which shows that Americans are paying some of the highest prices at the petrol pump since 2014. This rise in retail sales comes just before the holiday season, therefore this could reflect a pulling forward as gift-buyers attempt to avoid shipping delays. Nonetheless, the solid retail sales report has benefited the US dollar and equities.

### Market movement

On the forex front, the greenback was at the highest level in more than 12 months, with the US dollar index flirting with a high of 96.0. Throughout the week, the US dollar was trading slightly lower, however it remains supported above the 95-mark. The strong US dollar has kept the euro on the back foot, as the pair dropped around 1.41 percent this week and closed at 1.1288. Alternatively, the cable has posted a 0.31 percent gain this week and closed at 1.3446.

Moving to Wall Street, equities continue to rally with the S&P reaching its 66th all-time high of 4,704.54. Following robust US corporate earnings growth, the tech-heavy NASDAQ 100 is flirting with its highest level around the 16K-mark. Futures on the S&P 500 and NASDAQ 100 have risen around 0.3 percent and 0.4 percent, respectively. The rally in equities is buoyed by expanding retail sales and solid corporate earnings reports.

Shifting to the debt market, US Treasurer Janet Yellen has stated that she will be updating Congress on how much time lawmakers have to either raise or suspend the debt ceiling before the US government runs out of cash. The Treasury has stated that \$182 billion has been used this month alone from the \$369 billion available cash. Therefore, the yield on treasury bills maturing by the end of the year have risen, and bond prices have fallen after Yellen's

The ECB's monetary stimulus of \$2.1 trillion bond-buying program is expected to end in March. Lagarde stated, "Even after the expected end of the pandemic emergency, it will still be important that monetary policy-including the appropriate calibration of asset purchases-supports the recovery throughout the euro area and the sustainable return of inflation or our target". In terms of interest rates, Lagarde reiterated that it is extremely unlikely for an

Bank of England Governor Bailey reiterated that the decision not to raise interest rates in November was extremely close, which places pressure on the next BOE rate statement. BOE's governor Bailey and chief economist Huw Pill have both stated that the suspension of the furlough scheme was a key reason the Monetary Policy Committee did not hike interest rates.

Following the release of the rate statement, Governor Andrew Bailey commented that he is "very uneasy about the inflation situation" as the central bank expects inflation to peak around 5 percent, more than double its target. The UK's inflation registered a 10-year high due to surging energy costs, shortage of workers and supply-chain bottlenecks. The consumer price index rose by 4.2 percent in the 12 months to October, up from the 3.1 percent recorded in September. The data reinforces expectations that the Bank of England will raise interest rates in December after its shocked markets by keeping rates on hold.

### Energy crisis

On the commodities complex, the tight energy market witnessed in the last couple of months has fueled crude prices to a seven-year high. OPEC+ has maintained its daily increase of 400,000 barrels and such action has helped to keep the surge in crude prices less volatile. Nonetheless, major world powers are not impressed with OPEC+'s actions to counter the surge in crude prices. Therefore, President Biden is expected to tap the United States strategic petroleum reserve (SPR), the world's largest crude supply of petroleum, in order to ease the crude market domestically. The West Texas Intermediate has dropped below the \$80 a barrel mark, following news that China might also tap into its strategic petroleum reserve to offset some of the price pressures on its economy.

### Kuwait

Kuwaiti dinar USD/KWD closed last week at 0.30160.

Currencies	Previous Week Levels				This Week's Expected Range		3-Month Forward
	Open	Low	High	Close	Minimum	Maximum	
EUR	1.1453	1.1250	1.1464	1.1290	1.1100	1.1400	1.1330
GBP	1.3417	1.3397	1.3514	1.3451	1.3300	1.3575	1.3460
JPY	113.91	114.97	113.59	114.02	113.00	115.00	113.70
CHF	0.9222	0.9187	0.9329	0.9287	0.9100	0.9400	0.9250

comments. Additionally, the yield on 10-year treasuries advanced two basis points to 1.60 percent.

interest rate hike next year.

### United Kingdom

The United Kingdom's government has been paying up to 60 percent of wages for furloughed employees for an amount of up to 1,875 sterling pounds. A furloughed employee is an individual that is temporarily laid off or in other words, it is an unpaid leave of absence. However, the employees technically retain their jobs. Since it is an unpaid leave the government has been compensating such furlough employees. Employment in the United Kingdom has risen in the month after the closure of the government's furlough scheme. The rise in employment serves as the first hard evidence that the labor market is tight and was able to withstand the ending of the wage subsidy scheme. Between September and October, there was a rise of 160,000 employees that helped to increase the total employment to 29.3 million. The labor market conditions will serve as a crucial factor in guiding central bank policymaker's interest rate decisions this upcoming December.

### Europe

In Europe, European Central Bank President Christine Lagarde reiterated that inflation in the eurozone will ease as economies rebound and inflation will fall below the 2 percent target. However, some European countries have reintroduced pandemic restrictions due to a surge in Covid-19 cases. Therefore, it would be difficult to assess the euro area's economic rebound. Nonetheless, Lagarde believes that the economic recovery is inevitable when she stated "as the recovery continues and supply bottlenecks unwind, we can expect the price pressure on goods and services to normalize". Additionally, Lagarde emphasized that a tightening approach to the current situation is more likely to damage the economy rather than to benefit it and such impact would be witnessed when inflation inevitably returns to lower levels.



شركة الصفاة للاستثمار  
AL SAFAT INVESTMENT COMPANY

## KUWAIT BOURSA WEEKLY REPORT

WEEK ENDED ON 18 NOVEMBER 2021

- (965) 22 675 140
- Al-Safat Tower, Hawalli, Beirut St.
- alsafatinvest.com
- research@alsafatinvest.com
- alsafatinvestment
- al-safat-investment-company

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	32,031	7,882.86	-0.5%	2.5%	30.3%	417,105,464	190,915,306	25,626	29.8	2.3	74.9%
Main Market	10,710	6,126.16	-0.2%	2.5%	34.6%	1,832,894,201	184,263,292	55,617	17.8	1.6	25.1%
All Share	42,741	7,283.41	-0.5%	2.5%	31.3%	2,249,999,665	375,178,598	81,243	27.4	2.1	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	24,585	1,663.45	-0.5%	2.7%	31.8%	236,066,474	111,021,110	11,701	31.0	2.3	57.04%
BASIC MATERIALS	979	1,097.45	-0.4%	-0.2%	22.1%	4,570,207	2,356,000	742	26.8	1.6	2.27%
CONSUMER DISCRETIONARY	702	1,369.19	-1.2%	8.3%	83.4%	51,306,003	10,323,599	3,533	16.8	5.5	1.63%
CONSUMER STAPLES	231	759.16	-1.1%	-2.2%	-7.3%	2,586,421	1,407,790	239	15.4	1.6	0.54%
ENERGY	303	1,456.66	-6.6%	-0.2%	14.0%	50,526,374	2,034,641	1,666	12.8	1.4	0.70%
FINANCIAL SERVICES	4,180	1,465.86	-0.5%	1.9%	57.7%	926,101,075	100,828,927	27,531	9.5	1.8	9.70%
HEALTH CARE	393	791.93	-0.4%	-0.4%	-4.2%	94,394	45,860	46	29.1	5.2	0.91%
INDUSTRIALS	4,380	1,235.25	0.6%	2.7%	38.6%	134,234,914	53,840,033	10,865	39.5	1.3	10.16%
INSURANCE	680	1,636.53	3.1%	10.8%	41.5%	15,060,669	2,916,724	1,233	7.9	1.2	1.58%
REAL ESTATE	3,027	1,416.67	-0.6%	3.5%	48.7%	662,176,456	78,365,639	20,155	20.3	1.3	7.02%
TECHNOLOGY	11	771.15	-1.9%	0.0%	53.4%	86,126	8,813	21	n.a	0.9	0.03%
TELECOMMUNICATIONS	3,371	1,099.78	-0.9%	-0.3%	-0.2%	158,592,200	9,957,052	2,977	21.2	1.4	7.82%
UTILITIES	263	628.95	-2.0%	1.3%	-13.7%	8,598,352	2,072,411	534	20.3	4.2	0.61%

### Top Gainers

Stock	last Close	Change %	Volume	Value	Trades
SANAM	90	24.83	13,105,563	1,110,217	579
TAHSSILAT	52.2	22.82	14,514,048	732,869	958
TAAMEER	49.6	11.21	53,216,507	2,669,844	1,586
EQUIPMENT	74.1	10.76	11,675,153	838,944	509
GFH	101	8.95	370,159,533	35,932,501	6,000

### Top Losers

Stock	last Close	Change %	Volume	Value	Trades
YIACO	0	-100.00	36,78	16,390	7
MENA	69.9	-22.76	100,569,748	7,994,763	3,190
ENERGYH	59.9	-20.13	5,214,641	323,422	523
WETHAQ	58.5	-18.18	7,585,752	461,004	633
OSOUL	88	-14.02	1,349,131	125,124	109

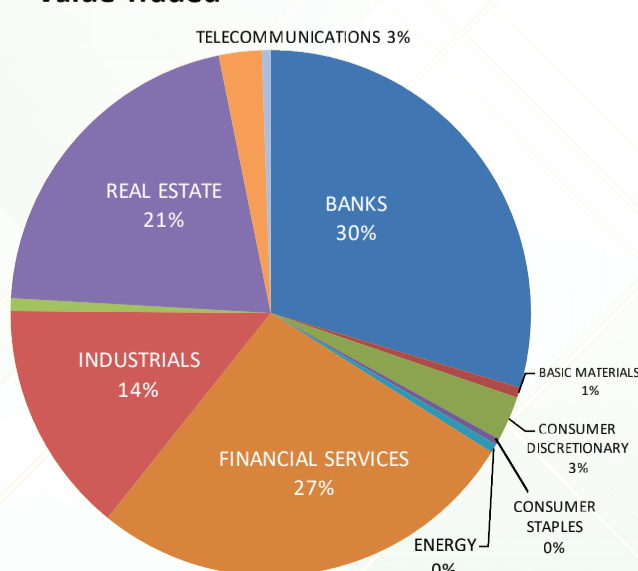
### Top Volume

Stock	Last	Change %	Volume	Value	Trades
GFH	101	8.95	370,159,533	35,932,501	6,000
NRE	240	7.14	165,022,139	38,115,927	3,384
AAN	19	0.53	144,712,689	2,712,931	1,372
MENA	69.9	-22.76	100,569,748	7,994,763	3,190
MANAZEL	57.1	3.63	61,718,726	3,456,891	1,778

### Top Value

Stock	Last	Change %	Volume	Value	Trades
NRE	240	7.14	165,022,139	38,115,927	3,384
GFH	101	8.95	370,159,533	35,932,501	6,000
NBK	1,036	-1.33	30,561,048	31,625,398	2,603
KFH	846	-0.12	36,778,706	30,934,636	2,979
AGLTY	1,043	2.15	26,137,773	27,630,983	3,623

### Value Traded



All Share Price Index YTD



### Market Summary:

- Premier market volume and value decreased 24% and 9%, respectively. Main market volume and value decreased 16% and 4%, respectively.
- All indices closed below last week's closing due to reaching a resistance level of which they couldn't overcome. Trading now at support level with a minor correction which might end during this week.
- Technically, the All-Share index closed at 7283 above the support level at 7267 and 7215. Premier index closed 7882 above the support level at 7868, 7840, and 7819. The Main index closed at 6126 above the support level at 6085 and 6023.

## Business

# Markaz organizes training session on effective communication in workplaces

## Masterclass features workplace culture advisor and speaker Dawn Metcalfe



KUWAIT: Kuwait Financial Centre "Markaz" announced that it recently organized a masterclass featuring internationally renowned workplace culture advisor, author and speaker Dawn Metcalfe. The masterclass, which was entitled "Effective Communication in High-Performing Teams" and held at Chairman's Club, Kuwait City, on 17 November, came as part of Markaz's ongoing efforts to create and sustain an organizational culture that thrives on open and candid communication and enables employees to reach their full potential.

During the hybrid event, which saw the enthusiastic participation of Markaz employees, Dawn delved deep into the critical importance of effective communication in building successful, well-engaged and high-performing teams. She shared powerful ideas to improve communication skills. The session focused on understanding our own emotional reactions to others, and that no matter where we come from, it is equally hard to have the difficult conversations that are vital for success. The participants in



Dawn Metcalfe



Peter Kelly

the event also received a signed copy of the speaker's book, 'The HardTalk Handbook'.

"Operating in a complex and highly specialized business environment, Markaz professionals have been bred to understand from 47 years of company experience that one of its strongest success factors has been to communicate clearly, transparently and often, to win and retain the fullest confidence of its clients," said Peter Kelly, Executive Vice President,

Human Resources, Markaz. "Candid business conversations can sometimes be uncomfortable, particularly when work boundaries overlap, and can reduce the effectiveness of communication around critical issues. The highly engaging masterclass by Dawn Metcalfe was a significant addition to our efforts aimed at encouraging our people to be skilled in speaking up and speaking out to ensure that our clients' interests are at the heart of every professional discussion."

Dawn authored The HardTalk Handbook and Managing the Matrix and is also the founder and Managing Director of Dubai-based consultancy PDSi. She is an expert in winning business behaviors and her professional focus is on how individuals, teams and businesses can use the levers already available in their organizations to build sustainable cultures to match and support their objectives. She speaks regularly at industry and private events and writes for many publications including Harvard Business Review.

## EnerTech Kuwait signs \$190m financing facility for Sindh's Nabisar-Vajihar water project

KARACHI: On 17 November 2021, an official ceremony for signing of the financing documents of senior facility worth \$190 million for Nabisar-Vajihar Water Supply was held in Karachi, Pakistan. CEO of EnerTech Global Abdullah Al-Mutairi and Ambassador of Pakistan Syed Sajjad Haider attended the ceremony virtually.

The concession agreement was signed between the EnerTech Holding Company and the Government of Sindh, Pakistan on 24 June 2021. The project aims to build and operate a historic water supply and storage project, with a total project cost of

about \$190 million, in the Thar region of Sindh province, Pakistan. The water provided by the project will be used for the water sector. Energy, which will lead to job creation and development in the Thar region of Sindh.

EnerTech Holding is a wholly-owned by the Kuwait Investment Authority (KIA). The 25-year concession agreement is for the processing and supply of 45 cusec water from Napisar, Sindh, via a 61-kilometre pipeline to Vajjihar, Sindh. Mutairi, while expressed his views on the strategic project, applauded the government of Pakistan, financial institu-



tions/banks and his team of Ener Tech Pakistan for timely execution of this project. He regarded Pakistan as an emerging economy and expressed his desire/aim to invest, develop projects and avail opportunities in clean water, renewable energy and sustainable

infrastructure development in Pakistan. Ambassador Sajjad applauded all the stakeholders on the "historic day" and emphasized that realization of the Agreement is manifestation of growing bilateral relations between the two countries.

## Huawei's latest nova 9 comes jam-packed with new experiences

KUWAIT: Six years ago, Huawei launched the Huawei nova Series. Huawei's trendy smartphone series for the younger generation. Since the series' conception, it has been on an upward trajectory and continued to drive innovation, unique design, and affordability.

While Huawei's smartphone offering is much more known for the Huawei Mate Series and Huawei P Series: Both series exemplify Huawei's dedication to innovation and it is not hard to see how the two line-ups became so loved by smartphone consumers across the globe. However, we see a rising star in the Huawei nova Series.

Today, we are putting the Huawei nova Series center-stage and giving it the attention it deserves. By end of October 2021, we'll see the arrival of the Huawei nova 9 - featuring a stunning design and display, innovative camera features with the 50MP Ultra Vision Camera System, supercharging capa-

bilities, visionary Super Device features all complemented with a smooth performance, and even more apps, thanks to AppGallery.

Dubbed as the Trendy flagship & Camera King, the Huawei nova 9 is set to be an affordable, fashionable, and high-performance smartphone that is packed with apps and innovation.

### AppGallery on Huawei nova 9

Since AppGallery's launch in 2019, the platform has been updated to boast a diverse and multiplying variety of apps that cater to the majority of use-cases. To put this into perspective with a couple of key statistics, Huawei works with over 4.5 million registered developers to constantly bring new content to the platform, with over 141,000 apps integrated with HMS (Huawei Mobile Services).

These are huge numbers and are set to grow further. Thanks to AppGallery, Huawei nova 9 will come armed with all the latest apps, making it the perfect companion if you want anything and everything at your fingertips.

Created for the younger generation, the Huawei nova 9 will come with a host of social media and chat applications including the most popular ones. These will all be downloadable via AppGallery or via the official developer sites. Looking for some-



thing to eat when there is nothing in the fridge? It is now even easier to get your favorite food delivered directly to your door, with your HUAWEI nova 9.

### Play with nova

With nova 9, you will be able to experience a constant stream of exciting, challenging, and enriching games, connecting you with the games you want to play. The anticipated new nova: Huawei nova 9 is officially in Kuwait now.

## CBK announces winners of Al-Najma draws

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 Ibrahim Ismail Al-Ghreir

2- Salary account campaign - the prize of up to KD 1,000 went to the winner Abrar Yaqoub Hameed Hasan

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 two 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.

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

## 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:

- Mubarak Abdullah Al-Enezi
- Tariq Mohammad Al-Barrak
- Ghassan Mohammad Zein
- Ramadhan Abdulfattah Abuhakmah
- Waleed Saleh Alali

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.

## solutions by stc launches online payment solutions 'Tajer'

KUWAIT: Solutions by stc, the specialized business arm of Kuwait Telecommunications Company - stc, announced the launch of an integrated solutions powered by Payzah called "Tajer" that aims to support organizations, especially SMEs, in setting up their E-commerce platforms. The full fledge solution builds on solutions by stc's various products targeting the B2B segments under the Company's extensive offering line.

Tajer offers customers a variety of innovative features including designed and ready to use E-commerce website, a payment gateway, point-of-sale solution, and ECR (electronic Cashier Registration) system to streamline their operations seamlessly and with ease. The solution will aid businesses in saving valuable time and effort through a cost-effective approach that will streamline their unique digital transformation journeys. Business owners will be able to track their expenses and income while storing their invoices to track sales and instantly issue receipts to customers via email and other means and mediums.

With a wealth of added features, Tajer can improve businesses in various business models, providing a dedicated payment gateway. Through Tajer platform, merchants can set their target areas according to their branches, receive notifications on new orders, integrate their various social media channels, manage inventory, provide delivery estimates, generate invoices, and offer payment options such as K-Net, credit card or cash on delivery.

Tajer platform is designed to assist merchants in their digital transformation strategies, and powered by Payzah, an innovative cloud-based payment company specialized in providing online payment solutions. By automating and digitizing the process, Tajer by Payzah can assist companies in generating higher sales by managing payments and orders efficiently, in addition to scheduling deliveries, boosting online sales, and other retail-based solutions. Through the e-Store solution, merchants can utilize effective sales tools and instant reporting features that are incorporated into the platform to boost overall efficiency and aid decision-making procedures. Merchants can also benefit from the integrated promotional tools to schedule campaigns for any of their products and services while tracking the progress to enhance their sales figures, taking control of the stock & Inventory management. This will allow merchants to generate PDF invoices to share with clients, while enjoying additional benefits that can be managed through the Tajer mobile App or the platform's web app.

Moreover, Tajer offers more solutions for merchants like payment gateway that enables merchants to add various payment methods to their own website or application to facilitate online transactions. Plus, POS solution that accept electronic card payments for the merchant's customers in safer and more efficient way with the flexibility of using a wide range of cards including credit, debit, GCC issued cards or international ones. In addition, electronic cash register (ECR - cashier) system that is designed to assist merchants in selling their products in more effective way in retail outlets. Merchants can track sales, minimize register errors, collect inventory data and much more.

solutions by stc released a statement indicating that the new platform Tajer aims to reshape the local E-commerce market by introducing a cost-effective and full-fledged concept that offers an array of value adding benefits. In line with its commitment to provide a range of B2B solutions all under one roof, solutions by stc continues to introduce innovative solutions that enable businesses in implementing their digital transformation strategies while enhancing their operational activities. B2B customers can enjoy the numerous features offered by Tajer through custom tailored bundles that serve their own unique needs. solutions by stc will also be offering special discounts and affordable monthly rates to assist each business segment in achieving their strategic goals.

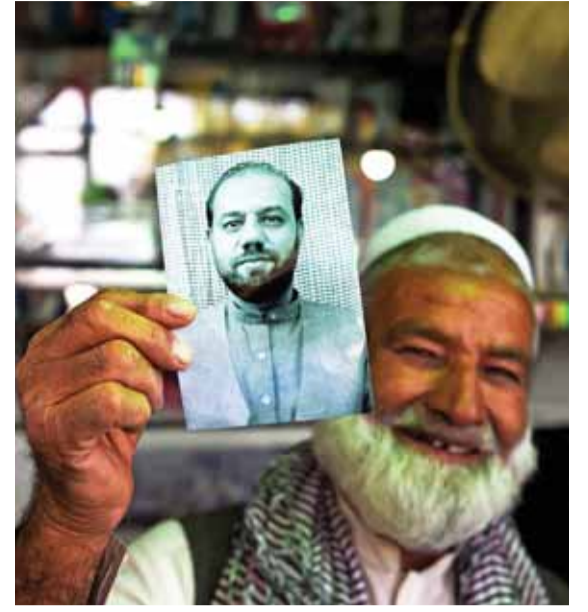
solutions by stc stated that the Company is proud to offer this innovative and transformative platform to its B2B customers who will greatly benefit from the feature packed solutions. Since the onset of the pandemic, solutions by stc has been keen to support SMEs in their gradual recovery and return to normalcy. Through this approach, the Company released a variety of value adding solutions in addition to Tajer, which is now available to customers seeking to adopt a simple and streamlined online payments and business solutions to enhance their operations.



In this photograph Afghan photographer Haji Mirzaman (right) takes a portrait of a boy with his homemade wooden box camera known as "kamra-e-faoree" on a sidewalk in Kabul. — AFP photos



Afghan photographer Haji Mirzaman holds negative images after developing them inside a homemade wooden box camera.



Afghan photographer Haji Mirzaman shows a processed photograph taken with his homemade wooden box camera.



Afghan photographer Haji Mirzaman speaks during an interview with AFP at his home in Kabul.



Afghan photographer Haji Mirzaman develops a portrait picture of a man taken with his homemade wooden box camera.



Afghan photographer Haji Mirzaman (right) stands next to his homemade wooden box camera known as "kamra-e-faoree".

## Historic development: Afghanistan's disappearing box cameras

Haji Mirzaman was just a teenager when he started taking photos using a homemade wooden box camera in his cousin's studio in downtown Kabul. He took black-and-white portraits of people for passports, identity cards and other documents using his "magic box" on a sidewalk, producing prints in a couple of minutes. Now in his 70s, he says the instant camera-or "kamra-e-faoree" as it is known in Dari has survived wars, invasions and a Taliban ban on photography, but is now

in danger of disappearing because of digital technology. "These cameras are retired now," he told AFP at his small house in Kabul as he set up the box on its wooden tripod. "I am just keeping this last remaining camera."

The box is both camera and dark-room, and to show how it works Mirzaman put photographic paper and developing liquid inside the device in preparation for a shot. He then briefly removed the lens cover and instantly created a negative. Reaching inside the

box through a light-proof funnel, he processed the negative and then developed a print. In a few minutes, the photo was ready. "Nowadays, photographers all use digital cameras... fewer and fewer people know how this camera works," he said.

### Golden age

The boxes were made by local carpenters, he said, but the lenses were imported. The golden age of box cameras in Afghanistan came when compul-

sory national service was introduced in the 1950s, meaning thousands of recruits needed photos for military identity cards. The Taleban, who ruled Afghanistan from 1996 to 2001 and forbade images of people, allowed Mirzaman to take official photos with his box camera. After the group's ouster, the machines thrived again when millions of students returned to schools and ID cards were made compulsory.

Since their return to power in August, the hardline Islamists have made no

public declaration on taking pictures-and young fighters are frequently seen snapping photos of each other, or selfies, with their mobile phones. Mirzaman has taught all four of his sons photography, but none now uses box cameras. The family's last remaining kamra-e-faoree is now on display outside their studio-a striking reminder of Afghanistan's photographic history. — AFP

## Mexico fights 'plagiarism' with indigenous fashion fair

Mexico is fighting back against what it calls the plagiarism of indigenous textiles, bringing together traditional artisans and international designers for dialogue aimed at creating a more equitable fashion industry. Dozens of indigenous weavers and other artisans are gathering this weekend at the Los Pinos former presidential residence in Mexico City for the "Original" fair hosted by the culture ministry. Alongside an open-air market selling clothes and accessories such as the huipil, a traditional white cotton blouse with finely embroidered patterns, there are fashion parades resembling indigenous pride marches.

The goal is to end what Mexico's leftist government denounces as cultural appropriation of the motifs, embroidery and colors of indigenous communities by foreign fashion houses. "Plagiarism is not a tribute. Theft is not the fruit of inspiration," Culture Minister Alejandra Frausto said at the fair's inauguration. She denounced the "modern-day pirates" who "take what they like and label it as any kind of merchandise."

### 'Lack of communication'

Mexico won an apology a year ago from French designer Isabel Marant after Frausto demanded an explanation for Marant's use of the traditional patterns of the Purepecha community in her collection. Similar complaints have been lodged against major clothing brands, including Zara and Mango. Marant said future designs would properly "pay tribute to our sources of inspiration." A representative of her company was due to meet directly with indigenous artisans at the Mexico City fair, as was one for the Spanish designer Agatha Ruiz de la Prada. On Friday, two young designers from Paris sat down with craftsman Ignacio Netzahualcoyotl and his partner Christian Janat at their workshop in the state of Tlaxcala east of Mexico City.

"Plagiarism is the result of a lack of communication," Netzahualcoyotl said afterward. "We ask that our work be paid for fairly," he added. "The price must take into account the design, the patterns, the number of hours worked," he said after presenting his fabric to the two Parisians. "We want to come to an agreement with



the artisans with whom we are going to work," said French designer Theophile Delaeter, co-creator of the Calher Delaeter brand with his Franco-Mexican co-creator Alonso Calderon Hernandez.

### 'It's theft'

Indigenous artisans at the fair complained of discovering copies of their fabric on the internet. "A few months ago, we fought because we found a comput-

er-reproduced huipil," said Candy Margarita de la Cruz Santiago, a young weaver from the southern state of Oaxaca. Legal measures are being put in place to tackle the problem.

"Under new provisions that we've had since last year, written consent of the communities is necessary when this kind of textile art is going to be used for profit," said a representative of the National Institute of Copyright, Marco Antonio

Morales Montes. Mexico is also asking for a discussion within the World Intellectual Property Organization about the issue, he added. Artisan weavers like Marta Serna Luis, 58, hope the steps will bring them the recognition they are seeking. "We must apply the law against the perpetrators of plagiarism. It's theft," she said. — AFP



Models present creations at the Centro Cultural Los Pinos, former Los Pinos presidential office, during the Original Fashion Week in Mexico City. — AFP photos

## Lifestyle | Features



Members of the National System of Orchestras of Venezuela play during an attempt to enter the Guinness Book of Records for the largest orchestra in the world, with more than 12,000 musicians, at the Military Academy of the Bolivarian Army in Fuerte Tiuna Military Complex, in Caracas.— AFP photos



Venezuelan Vice-President Delcy Rodriguez (third left) and Venezuela's Defence Minister Vladimir Padrino (second right) attend the attempt of members of the National System of Orchestras of Venezuela to enter the Guinness Book of Records for the largest orchestra in the world.

Members of the National System of Orchestras of Venezuela play during an attempt to enter the Guinness Book of Records for the largest orchestra.

# VENEZUELA SETS LARGEST ORCHESTRA WORLD RECORD

Venezuela on Saturday locked in the Guinness record for the world's largest orchestra after thousands of local musicians performed Tchaikovsky's "Slavonic March." The performers were brought together by Venezuela's publicly funded "El Sistema" program, which was founded in 1975 and has since provided

classical music training to thousands of working-class children. Gustavo Dudamel, the music director of the Paris Opera and the Los Angeles Philharmonic, is one of its most notable alumni.

"I can confirm that this attempt has been successful, congratulations," an official in charge of delivering the verdict announced

on a screen during a ceremony at the El Sistema headquarters. "You are officially amazing." About 12,000 musicians, including both children and adults who are members of the country's main orchestra, the Simon Bolivar, played for the record on November 13. In the end, Guinness World Records recognized only 8,573 of them as

having set the record, according to a certificate issued by the organization.

Performance of the piece was observed by around 260 auditors from the accounting firm KPMG, charged with ensuring each musician complied with the rules to set a new record, which include not sharing instruments and playing for at least five

minutes during the score. "This is a great achievement not just for El Sistema but for our country," said program director Eduardo Mendez. Russia had held the previous record, set in 2019 by more than 8,000 musicians.—AFP

## Franco-Cameroon artist Fred Ebami explores African icons in pop-art

Inspired by Andy Warhol's pop-art movement, Franco-Cameroonian artist Fred Ebami is exploring African and African-American icons with colorful, digitally drawn portraits. Whether it is singer Nina Simone, boxing legend Muhammad Ali, Nigerian afrobeats star Fela Kuti or Nobel winner Wole Soyinka, his works cut across the worlds of music, sports and literature. Even his homage to Warhol's famed 1962 "Campbell's Soup Cans" painting brings the taste closer to home with his own "Pepper Soup", a spicy dish popular in Nigeria and Cameroon. "African versions though... a bit more spicy!" he says jokingly, in an interview with AFP.

For the first time, the 45-year-old artist is showcasing his work in Lagos, the commercial and cultural capital of Africa's most populous nation. Ebami was influenced by the biggest names in pop art, a movement born in the late 50s in the United Kingdom and the United States, where he has lived for many years. Born in Villeneuve-la-Garenne, in the suburbs of Paris, the artist says his



early influences were manga and comics. But it was from Roy Lichtenstein that Ebami borrowed striking features and colours to paint icons that inspire him. Later, it was Warhol's work that influenced him to paint four versions of the American's famous tomato soup cans.

### Political topics

"Pop art is inspired by popular culture and is critical of a consumerist society, I also want to play with that," he says. And for him, there is no better place than Lagos, a megacity of some 20 million people and a mecca for capitalists on

the continent. In addition to the exhibition, the artist has partnered with a Nigerian design brand and sells household objects and a limited edition of T-shirts. "What I want is to make art accessible to everyone," says Ebami, who is also exhibiting in Brest, in France, and on social media where he widely shares his work. "I don't want my art to be shown only in galleries, I want it to touch as many people as possible."

Appealing to a broad public doesn't stop him from tackling political topics, "to foster a debate, a discussion," he says. Last year, when mass youth protests against police brutality rocked Nigeria, he made a portrait of one of the leading activists, Aisha Yesufu, with a raised fist and slogan saying "stop the bleeding". "The issue of police violence does not just concern Nigeria, it's also something you find elsewhere in Africa, but also in Paris, in the United States, and I thought it was important to support the movement (against it)," Ebami says.

Through art, he also wants to pay tribute to black women, still often victims of stereotypical representations inherited from colonial times. Next to portraits of Angela Davis and Kanye West dressed as former African leader Mobutu, visitors are invited to look at the portrait of an unknown black woman. The words "Not Your Exotism" are painted on the colorful background. — AFP



## Aniston calls cancel culture 'the new sport'

Jennifer Aniston has slammed cancel culture as "the new sport." The 'Friends' actress, 52, is now starring as a news anchor on 'The Morning Show', a drama series which focuses on the effects of "cancel culture", a social media term which sees someone ostracized for doing or saying something others deem as controversial. She said: "Obviously, that's a new thing that's happening. It's the new sport. It feels reckless, which is why I think we really wanted to explore it in the show. What happens when someone gets cancelled? Where do they go? Is that it?" The Apple+ series - which recently finished airing its second season and is yet to be renewed for a third - Jennifer plays Alex Levy, who during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic falls ill with the dis-



ease and decides to speak directly to a once-loyal audience who may be turning against her as a result of her character's actions earlier in the show. Despite being diagnosed with coronavirus, Jennifer's character had previously made the controversial decision to travel internationally in the early days of the pandemic, which left the news anchor facing a public backlash. —AFP

## Ryan Reynolds was 'in a bad place' in his 30s

The 45-year-old actor - who has daughters James, six, Inez, five, and Betty, two, with wife Blake Lively and was previously married to Scarlett Johansson - is "proud" of himself for tackling his problems and "working out" his issues". He admitted: "I was in a bad place in my 30. There was just too much conflict in my head. I saw a therapist. I read some books. "That's a good time to work out your issues. I'm proud of myself for doing that." And the 'Deadpool' star described learning how to deal with conflict without fighting has been life-changing for him.

He told The Times magazine: "Acquiring the tools for conflict resolution has been crucial for me. If someone is angry with us we have an instinct to fight back. "Learning how to listen and empathize even in the heat of confrontation was essential for me. It changed my life." Ryan hopes being open about his



issues can help other people in similar positions. He said: "I've spoken out about my anxiety issues. I hope it helps people. I overthink, overwork, overworry. I overcommit sometimes too." The Wrexham FC owner has a "very strict" routine to ensure he can put his family first.

He explained: "At home I wake up at 4.45am to meditate. That's pretty much the only time I get to myself. "The kids are up two hours later and then they get 100 per cent of my attention. I walk them to school then go to work. "In the evenings I have a very strict regime. I don't care who's on the phone. I'm with my wife and family and I put my phone away. I'm in bed by 9.30pm. Sorry, you're not talking to a sexy 2.30am swinger here..."— Bang Showbiz



Players of the first Saudi Women's National Football Team, managed by veteran German Monika Staab, attend a training and show off their skills at Prince Faisal bin Fahad bin Abdulaziz stadium in Riyadh. — AFP photos

## SAUDI GIRLS 'DREAM' BIG WITH LAUNCH OF SOCCER LEAGUE

Saudi Arabia's launch of its first women's football league today will clear the way for girls who dream of turning professional and maybe even playing in a World Cup. Long condemned for harsh restrictions on women, Saudi Arabia lifted a decades-old ban on female footballers only a few years ago, and it is now aiming to develop a national team strong enough to contest major tournaments.

The ultra-conservative Muslim nation has faced criticism of using sports events to gloss over its poor human rights record and the jailing of women activists. Its latest step in the reform drive came this month when the Saudi football federation announced the formation of a women's soccer league in which 16 teams will take part with games in Riyadh, Jeddah and Dammam. Among those excited by the move was Farah Jafri, who said she hoped to turn pro and play in England's top division as well as represent her country on the biggest stage at the

World Cup.

"In the beginning of my football journey, I faced some difficulties in that not all people accepted it," she told AFP. "But my family and friends used to encourage me a lot," said the pony-tailed 18-year-old dressed in a jersey. Like many other girls who were passionate about football but unable to participate in competitions, Jafri played on the street with her relatives or at school with friends. Her only other outlet was watching games on television, she said. The kingdom adheres to a rigid interpretation of Islam, and the involvement of women in sport is still frowned upon in some quarters. But since the rise to power of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman in 2017, some restrictions on women have been lifted as the country opens up to the world through sweeping reforms. The shift has enabled women to get behind the wheel and take part in mixed-gender settings, even as a rigorous crackdown on dissent remains in place.

'Number one'

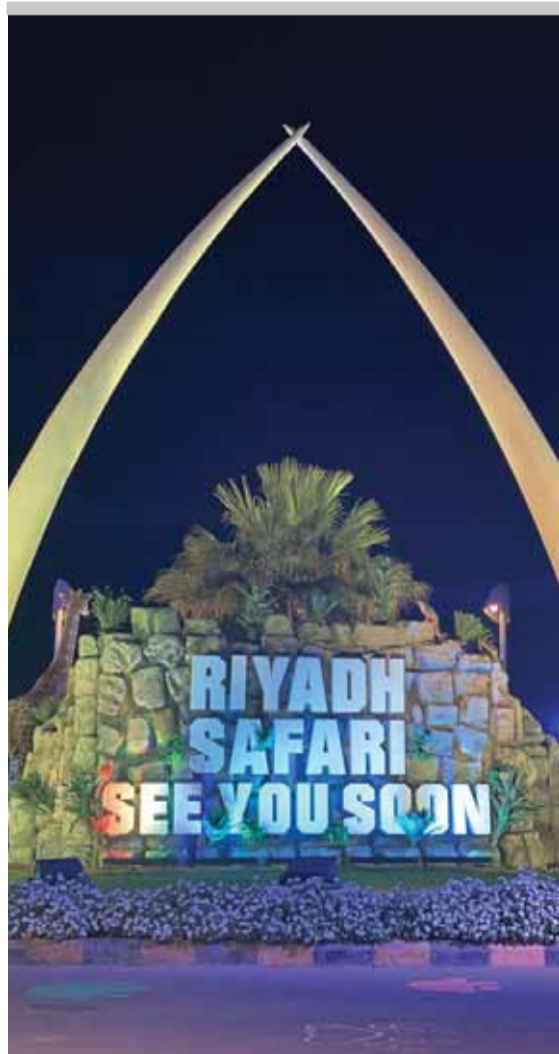
Jafri is one of around 30 players selected from 400 candidates to be part of the Saudi national women's squad, according to officials. "I dream of the day I can represent my country in the women's World Cup," she said, adding that she also hopes to play for English side Manchester City at the club level. There are no women's teams affiliated with sports clubs in Saudi Arabia, whose men's team has qualified for the World Cup five times.

During a training session in Riyadh, the women in the national team excitedly took to the field at Prince Faisal bin Fahd Stadium, some of them without veils but wearing long tracksuits under their shorts. Officials have yet to announce any sports clothing restrictions for the Saudi women, who in the past faced close scrutiny from the religious police enforcing a strict dress code. The team's goalkeeper, Lama al-Oneizi, said she was elated to be part of the team. "I fulfilled my dream

and even my parents' dream because they are the ones who encouraged me a lot on this journey," the 25-year-old told AFP.



Saudi Arabia has so far set up three training centers for girls between the ages of 13 and 17 across the country, with plans to establish up to nine by 2025. It announced this week that Monika Staab of Germany was appointed as head coach of the women's national team, which has been dubbed the "Green Eagles". "Everything is new, just like a baby starts to walk, to stand," said Staab, who won the inaugural UEFA Women's Cup in 2002 as the manager of Eintracht Frankfurt. The Saudi national women's squad is currently preparing for its first friendly match in February. Staab, who has previously coached the national women's teams for Bahrain and Qatar, said she was optimistic. "In five to eight years, they would be number one in the Gulf and this would be a big achievement," she said. — AFP



## 'Riyadh Safari' converts desert into park with exotic species

The organizers of the 2021 Riyadh Season, which kicked off on October 20, impressively managed to turn the desert into a spacious park that boasts rare and numerous animals and provides a special safari for visitors via Riyadh Safari. Riyadh Safari, which is one of the areas of the 2021 Riyadh Season, is home to over 700 various, rare and exotic animals and more than 250 rare birds, offering an awesome and unforgettable safari experience.

The park is located just a short drive away from Riyadh. Being home to many animal species including ligers, white lions, Zebras, hippos, giraffes and cheetahs and much more, the wildlife park is one of the top places to visit during the 2021 Riyadh Season. — KUNA



## Sports

# Evicted villagers pay the price for MotoGP's Indonesia return

## First major race in the archipelago since 1997

**LOMBOK:** The holiday island of Lombok welcomed thousands of fans yesterday for Indonesia's first superbike race on a new circuit that is part of a mega tourism infrastructure project denounced by the UN over the eviction of local families.

With a population of more than 270 million people, many of whom get around on two wheels, Indonesia has one of the world's biggest communities of bike-race fans. But the archipelago had not hosted a major race since 1997.

Several villages have been relocated voluntarily or by force for construction of the new Mandalika circuit. But around 40 families — along with their cattle and dogs — are still holding out in the center of the track despite intimidation to cede their land. Environmentalists also question the wisdom of hosting large-scale events on an island under threat from natural disasters.

The superbike spectacle on the 4.3-kilometer (2.7-mile) circuit yesterday was a prelude to a MotoGP race — the top tier of the motorcycle Grand Prix — to be held on the island in March 2022. "I am here to watch World Superbike. It is very cool and I almost could not believe (Indonesia has this circuit) ... The event will help the economy here," said Rini Yuniarti, a fan from Bali.

The government hopes to create thousands of jobs and attract up to two million foreign tourists a year with the circuit complex, which covers more than a thousand hectares bordered by white-sand beaches. But the gleaming new project has been the subject of bitter conflict between authorities and local residents. Near one village in the area the houses have been abandoned and a metal sign reads: "This land belongs to the state."

But Abdul Latif, 36, and his four children have so far stayed behind because they have not received any compensation for leaving. "Life is difficult here now... Access is very restricted," he said. "We play cat-and-mouse with security personnel guarding the area."

Another villager, 54-year-old Abdul Kadir, said young people struggled to get to school because they were blocked by security. "We have to go through a tunnel to go to school," said her 10-year-old daughter. "I would like to go to school easily like before."

Making matters worse, local wells have run dry for six months since tunnels were built under the circuit, leaving residents without water.

### 'They dragged me away'

Many villagers have lost their livelihoods, with farmers confiscated their land and fishermen relocated from the coast. Security forces have been deployed to remove some families while others have been coerced into accepting meagre compensation packages, said human rights lawyer Widodo Dwi Putro, who is defending the villagers.

Sibawai, a 53-year-old farmer, has lost most of his land. He said the authorities tried to evict him several times before police came for him in January 2021. "They deployed around 700 personnel just for my land. I tried to prevent the bulldozers from entering but they dragged me away," he said.

United Nations experts in March called on the Indonesian government and the companies involved in the project "to respect human rights". Special rapporteur on human rights and extreme poverty Olivier De Schutter said the project had seen "complaints about land grabbing, evictions of indigenous communities in the Sasak ethnic group and intimidation and threats against defenders of local populations".

Several international companies previously associated with the \$3 billion-dollar project denied still being a part of it, including construction giant Vinci and holiday operator Club Med. The Accor group operates a Novotel on the site and is building a Pullman hotel.

The company told AFP it did not own the land or the hotel but would manage it on behalf of the



**KUTA MANDALIKA:** This aerial picture taken on November 17, 2021 shows the Mandalika International Circuit, with a section (top center) inside the circuit showing a village inhabited by about 40 families surrounded within the track, in Kuta Mandalika in Central Lombok. —AFP

Indonesian public company Indonesia Development Tourism Corporation. The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, which is due to contribute \$250 million to the project, said it had carried out a study and did not identify any human rights violations.

### 'Just the start'

Lombok is one of 10 new locations that Indonesian authorities want to develop into tourism destinations in the same vein as Bali. The impoverished island has struggled to rebuild since a major earthquake struck in 2018, killing more than 500 people. For most locals, tickets to the motorbike races are too expensive and many have to settle for watching from a hill overlooking the circuit. But authorities are hopeful the venture will suck in investment.

Superbike and Moto GP events represent "one of the best ways to attract visitors and for significant

investments to be made in our region", said Zulkieflimansyah, governor of West Nusa Tenggara province, of which Lombok is a part. "This international road circuit will be just the start."

Asked about the accusations of human rights violations, Zulkieflimansyah — who like many Indonesians goes by one name — said he was "very optimistic" that the disputes would be settled to the satisfaction of investors and the local community.

Maharani, an environmental activist with NGO the Lombok Research Centre, said the risks from earthquakes and tsunamis were a worry. "A landslide could directly come down to hit and cover the circuit area. In the case of a tsunami the circuit could become a water pit," he said. Abdul Latif, stuck in the center of the circuit clinging to his home, had no desire to watch the race. "I feel abandoned and isolated," he said. "Like a bird in a cage." —AFP

### News in brief

#### Liverpool ends Arsenal's unbeaten run

**LIVERPOOL:** Liverpool handed Arsenal a reminder of the gulf they have to bridge to compete with the Premier League elite by ending the Gunners' 10-game unbeaten run with a 4-0 thrashing at Anfield. The Reds' front three of Sadio Mane, Diogo Jota and Mohamed Salah were all on target before substitute Takumi Minamoto set the seal on a return to form for Jurgen Klopp's men after losing for the first time in 26 games in their last outing at West Ham. Victory lifts the Reds up to second and within four points of leaders Chelsea. —AFP

#### Barca give Xavi debut victory

**BARCELONA:** Xavi Hernandez made a winning start as Barcelona coach on Saturday as a dubious Memphis Depay penalty was enough to defeat local rivals Espanyol 1-0 in La Liga. The win lifts Xavi's team from ninth in the table to sixth, six points behind fourth-placed Atletico Madrid, who earlier needed a late Felipe header to win 1-0 at home to Osasuna. Sevilla, in third, were held to a 2-2 draw by Alaves. There was also an undeniable uplift in mood at Camp Nou, with the 74,418 attendance almost double the 37,278 that watched Barca draw against Alaves two weeks ago. —AFP

#### Messi scores first Ligue 1 goal

**PARIS:** Lionel Messi struck his first goal in Ligue 1 on Saturday as Paris Saint-Germain overcame a red card for goalkeeper Keylor Navas to defeat Nantes 3-1. Kylian Mbappe carried on his prolific goalscoring run with an early opener at the Parc des Princes, but Randal Kolo Muani equalized for Nantes in the second half after Navas was sent off. A freak own goal by Dennis Appiah put PSG back in front with 10 minutes left before Messi wrapped up a 12th win in 14 league games this season ahead of next week's Champions League trip to Manchester City. —AFP

#### Fiorentina ends Milan's unbeaten run

**MILAN:** Dusan Vlahovic struck twice as Fiorentina ended AC Milan's unbeaten Serie A record on Saturday with a thrilling 4-3 win in Florence. Fiorentina are up to sixth on 21 points, four away from the Champions League positions. Milan's first league defeat in their 13th match of the season meant they missed the chance to go top. Leonardo Bonucci struck twice from the penalty spot in a 2-0 win at Lazio which continued Juventus' climb up the Serie A table following a rocky start to the campaign. Italy defender Bonucci smashed home almost identical spot-kicks in each half at the Stadio Olimpico in Rome to move Juve seventh, level on points with Fiorentina and fifth-placed Lazio. —AFP

## Ogier heads into semi-retirement with eighth WRC title

**PARIS:** Sebastien Ogier heads into semi-retirement having clinched an eighth World Rally Championship title in nine years but without ever quite escaping the shadow of his former mentor Sebastien Loeb.

The 37-year-old Ogier wrapped up the title on Sunday at Monza by holding off his Toyota teammate Elfyn Evans to move within one of Loeb's record tally of nine world championship triumphs. Between them, the two Frenchmen have won 17 of the last 18 titles but because Ogier missed out in 2019, he will, unless he changes his mind, finish one short of his compatriot.

Ogier plans to race selected rallies next season while trying other disciplines. He has said he wants to compete at the 24 Hours of Le Mans, where his current employer Toyota also enters cars. Loeb finished second in that race in 2006 and has also finished second in the Dakar Rally.

The pair brought a new approach to rallying. "They changed rallying. They brought style! By being very precise, very direct," said Jari-Matti Latvala, Ogier's boss at Toyota. "Before, drivers were much more

aggressive on the ground. Loeb came in and started to be much straighter with the car, without sliding, and Ogier continued."

Ogier grew up in Gap, in the shadow of the French Alps. As a child he used to marvel as the Monte Carlo Rally zoomed through his mountains. His father was a fuel delivery driver and his mother an accountant. Ogier has a degree in mechanics and contemplated becoming a ski instructor. He is also French champion in the competitive Lyon variation of boules. He started his rally career with Citroen.

"Ogier had the human qualities, intelligence and adaptability in particular, and a fluidity of driving that would enable him to become a great driver," said Olivier Quesnel, his boss at Citroen, in 2008. Ogier won the WRC junior championship in 2008.

"He arrived at Citroen at a very young age and trained with Loeb," recalls Xavier Mestelan Pinon, technical director of Citroen Racing at the time. "He had the talent and potential to get to this level, and he also had the chance to learn from the best. In the beginning, he worked



**MONZA:** France's Sebastien Ogier (center) celebrates his 8th World title with co-driver France's Julien Ingrassia (right) as runner-up Britain's Elfyn Evans (left) looks on, on the podium yesterday after the ACI Rally Monza 2021 of the FIA World Rally Championship at the Monza racetrack, Italy. —AFP

hard to 'copy' Sebastien."

But the two egos could not fit in one garage. A clash was inevitable. After a 2011 season in which they both won five rallies, Ogier left. "I knew we were letting go of a real diamond. It was painful to let go of such a driver, who had grown up with us, but we had other projects with Loeb," said Mestelan Pinon.

Ogier joined Volkswagen and competed the following year with their second-tier Skoda subsidiary. The next season he moved up and won the first of four straight titles with Volkswagen. He then won two with Ford. After an ill-fated return to Citroen, where he finished third in 2019 as Estonia's Ott Tanak broke the French reign, Ogier joined Toyota. —AFP



## Mobil 1 along with Red Bull clinch thrilling victory

**AUSTIN:** Mobil 1 along with Red Bull Racing is one of the most successful teams in recent Formula One history, winning 62 Formula One Grand Prix races, four Drivers' and four Constructors' World Championships during the last 15 years. The vast knowledge and expertise needed to succeed in Grand Prix Racing fits perfectly with the Mobil 1 team's approach: It's about clear thinking, extensive research, and a combined effort of technology and creativity.

Commenting on the partnership, Team Principal Christian Horner mentioned: "Mobil 1 has been an iconic brand in Formula One for more than 30 years, and our partnership provides us with a unique opportunity to tap into ExxonMobil's world-class expertise."

Max Verstappen claimed a brilliant United States Grand Prix from his rival Lewis Hamilton in the last stages of the breathless race held in Austin Texas in October 24, putting Sergio Perez's heroic performance in the third place. Throughout the season, ExxonMobil supports Red Bull Racing Honda on and off the track. Earlier this year, Mobil 1 brought a new engine oil upgrade called the Mobil 1 RB16B Engine Oil designed specifically for the new Honda power unit, helping deliver maximum power without compromising protection or fuel efficiency.

## Knicks beat Rockets, Wizards topple Heat

**LOS ANGELES:** Bradley Beal scored 21 points as the Washington Wizards battled back from a 16-point third quarter deficit to defeat the visiting Miami Heat 103-100 on Saturday. Spencer Dinwiddie and Kentavious Caldwell-Pope combined for all 15 points during a 15-2 fourth quarter run for the Wizards, who moved within a half game of Eastern Conference leading Brooklyn Nets.

Both Caldwell-Pope and Dinwiddie finished with 16 points as the division-leading Wizards split the home-and-home series with the second-place Heat. Miami beat Washington 112-97 in Florida on Thursday night. Caldwell-Pope and Dinwiddie scored every point during the fourth quarter run to give the Wizards a 99-96 lead with 1:43 remaining. Kyle Kuzma nailed four of six free throws in the final minute for the Wizards, who snapped the Heat's four-game winning streak. Jimmy Butler scored 29 points and Tyler Herro added 20 in the loss.

In New York, Alec Burks scored 20 points and Julius Randle flirted with a triple double as the New York Knicks used a fourth quarter surge to beat the mistake-prone Houston Rockets 106-99. Burks, who scored just three points in the first three quarters, helped put the finishing touches on a contest that featured 12 lead changes and nine ties at Madison Square Garden.

"I was just trying to make winning plays and it just happened like that. Shots went in," Burks said. Randle had 16 points, 10 rebounds and nine assists, while Emmanuel Quickley came off the bench to score 13 points in the win. —AFP

Sports

# Solskjaer pays price for failing to rekindle Man Utd's golden years

## United's fifth defeat in seven league games was the final straw

LONDON: As Ole Gunnar Solskjaer trudged forlornly towards Manchester United's fans at Vicarage Road, the merciless booing that greeted the ashen-faced Norwegian served as a bitter coda to his failed reign.

United had just suffered a 4-1 thrashing against lowly Watford, the latest in a long list of calamitous defeats during Solskjaer's three years in charge. The axe was about to fall on the United manager and the club's supporters had finally turned on a man they regarded as a legend for his heroics during his Old Trafford playing days.

stormed off the Old Trafford pitch in disgust after Solskjaer only brought him on in the second half of a draw with Everton. Even Alex Ferguson, the great United manager who brought Solskjaer to the club in 1996, added to the mounting pressure when he reacted to the Ronaldo incident by saying you should "always start with your best players".

### United in decline

In truth, Solskjaer often looked out of his depth at Old Trafford. The 48-year-old's previous experience in management had come with Norway's Molde — where he was working when United called to hire him in late 2018 — and a brief stint with Cardiff that featured Premier League relegation and concluded with the sack after less than a year.

Even Jose Mourinho and Louis van Gaal, both boasting far more in terms of success and service time than Solskjaer, had been unable to solve the problems that have bedeviled United since Ferguson retired in 2013. After replacing Mourinho on an interim basis, Solskjaer earned a permanent contract by winning 14 of his first 19 matches. Supposedly reconnecting United to their soul with his commitment to an attack-

ing style that contrasted with the pragmatic Mourinho, Solskjaer was feted by fans who chanted "Ole's at the wheel".

As a player, Solskjaer won six Premier League titles in 11 years with United, shining as a selfless super-sub with an eye for goal. But the man idolized at Old Trafford for his dramatic Champions League final winner against Bayern Munich in 1999 failed to fulfil hopes of a return to the glory days. United finished third in the 2019/20 season, losing in the semi-finals of the FA Cup, League Cup and Europa League. And while they came second last term, they remained underachievers on the big occasion, crashing out of the Champions League group stage and losing to Villarreal on penalties in the Europa League final.

Solskjaer was given a new contract in July, but his failure to get a grip on a squad packed with big personalities proved fatal. It must have been galling for Solskjaer that his last moments as United manager featured Bruno Fernandes arguing with the fans who jeered after the final whistle at Watford. If only Solskjaer's players had shown such defiance during matches, they might have avoided another depressing chapter in United's post-Ferguson decline. — AFP



### Another depressing chapter in post Ferguson decline

Solskjaer was sacked yesterday with seventh-placed United languishing 12 points behind Premier League leaders Chelsea and six adrift of the top four. It was a dismissal that felt years in the making after Solskjaer repeatedly dodged the bullet during previous troubled periods.

Coming hot on the heels of a humiliating 5-0 home defeat against arch-rivals Liverpool and a 2-0 loss to Manchester City, United's fifth defeat in seven league games was the final straw. There was an alarming lack of cohesion, direction and fight in a star-studded team that flopped despite the close-season signings of Cristiano Ronaldo, Jadon Sancho and Raphael Varane.

Those deals, especially re-signing Ronaldo from Juventus, were expected to prove the catalyst for United to push hard for their first English title since 2013. Instead, they appeared increasingly rudderless as Solskjaer struggled to gel his new recruits into a team packed with attacking talent but painfully short of midfield steel and prone to embarrassing blunders at the back. When Liverpool ran riot at Old Trafford on October 24, the malaise at the heart of United's brittle squad was brutally exposed. Solskjaer's decision to opt for a high-pressing game-plan was picked apart by Liverpool, with United's players reportedly complaining that the manager did not give them enough preparation time.

That hint of dissent came just weeks after Ronaldo



MANCHESTER: In this file photo taken on September 11, 2021 Manchester United's manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer embraces striker Cristiano Ronaldo after the English Premier League football match against Newcastle at Old Trafford in Manchester, north west England. — AFP

## Five candidates to replace Solskjaer

MANCHESTER: Ole Gunnar Solskjaer's time as Manchester United manager finally ran out on Sunday as the Norwegian was sacked following a humiliating 4-1 defeat at Watford. Solskjaer failed to win a trophy in nearly three years in charge at Old Trafford and tangible signs of progress after finishing second in the Premier League last season have been blown away amid a run of five defeats in their last seven league games. United are already 12 points off the pace at the top of the table and the club have announced their intention to appoint an interim manager until the end of the season before making a permanent appointment. Here, AFP Sport looks at five of the leading candidates to be Solskjaer's successor:

### Zinedine Zidane

Expectations were high for United to challenge for major trophies this season after the signings of serial winners Cristiano Ronaldo and Raphael Varane, along with £73 million (\$100 million) winger Jadon Sancho. Three of Ronaldo and Varane's Champions League titles came under Zidane at Real Madrid and the Frenchman is also a free agent having ended his second spell with the Spanish giants in May.

Zidane proved himself a master of molding a star-studded squad into a team at Madrid, where he also won two La Liga titles. That is exactly what United

need and his global profile fits the brand-building exercise the English giants have gone down in recent years, at times to the detriment of a well-functioning team on the field. According to reports, he is the favored candidate of the club's American owners, the Glazer family.

### Brendan Rodgers

The outstanding option on the domestic market for United is Leicester boss Brendan Rodgers. The Northern Irishman's past as a Liverpool manager may rule him out for many United fans, but he has rebuilt his reputation since a rollercoaster three years at Anfield between 2012 and 2015. Rodgers proved himself capable of handling the demands of winning every week in three years at Celtic, where he won a clean sweep of seven domestic trophies before returning to the Premier League with Leicester.

The Foxes have narrowly missed out on the Champions League for the past two seasons to Chelsea despite far inferior resources and beat the European champions to win the FA Cup for the first time in the club's history last season. However, Leicester have also struggled of late with just two wins in their last nine league games.

### Erik ten Hag

The Dutchman is responsible for one of the form teams in Europe right now with Ajax already into the Champions League last 16. Ten Hag was linked with a number of top jobs after leading the four-time European champions to the semi-finals of the Champions League for the first time since 1997 two

years ago. But unlike many of his players from that run, he is yet to be poached by one of Europe's top clubs. The former Bayern Munich youth team coach would fit the attacking style demanded of a United manager.

### Luis Enrique

The Spain coach is another with plenty of experience in getting the best out of a collection of talented individuals. He won the treble in his first season at Barcelona and added another La Liga title with a front three of Lionel Messi, Luis Suarez and Neymar.

Fluent in English, Luis Enrique has never hidden his desire to one day coach in the Premier League. His success with Spain this year at Euro 2020 and the Nations League finals shows he is also capable of producing an exciting side without the same quality of stars he had on offer at the Camp Nou.

### Mauricio Pochettino

The Argentine is the one that got away for many United fans as the Red Devils kept faith with Solskjaer while Pochettino was a free agent for over a year following his sacking by Tottenham in 2019. Now in charge of Paris Saint-Germain, Pochettino is unlikely to jump ship mid-season with a 12-point lead at the top of Ligue 1 and another chance to win the club's first ever Champions League.

However, Pochettino's time in the French capital has not been plain sailing, particularly in his dealings with PSG's sporting director Leonardo. By waiting until the end of the season to make a permanent appointment, United are opening the door to another shot at luring Pochettino to Old Trafford. — AFP

## What's next for Man Utd?

LONDON: Manchester United once again have to press the reset button after Ole Gunnar Solskjaer became the fourth manager to be shown the door since Alex Ferguson stepped down in 2013. United have fallen a long way in those eight years, watching from the sidelines as their fiercest rivals, Manchester City and Liverpool, have become the new dominant forces in the Premier League.

David Moyes, Louis van Gaal and Jose Mourinho all came and went before beloved former United striker Ole Gunnar Solskjaer was appointed as caretaker boss in December 2018 with a brief to restore the club to former glories by tapping into its DNA. United rediscovered their spark in a honeymoon period under the Norwegian, summed up in a breathless Champions League comeback against Paris Saint-Germain — a result that helped persuade club bosses to hand him a permanent deal. Despite persistent concerns over his lack of experience and technical nous, Solskjaer has come agonizingly close to delivering the club's first silverware since 2017, losing on penalties in last season's Europa League final and finishing second in the Premier League. Club bosses were confident enough in the direction of travel to hand him a new three-year contract in July.

Former United goalkeeper Peter Schmeichel said in his recent autobiography that his former team-mate had brought the "heart and soul back" to the club after the divisive Mourinho reign but in the end that did not prove enough. Solskjaer, 48, said after his side's chastening 4-1 defeat to lowly Watford on Saturday that he felt for the fans and understood their pain after they vented their fury at Vicarage Road.

"We've had a hard time since Sir Alex (Ferguson) left the club and fans who have been with us the last few years since I came in, they've been unbelievable, they've understood the situation," he said. "The signings this summer with Rafa (Raphael Varane), Jadon (Sancho) and Cristiano (Ronaldo) of course raised everyone's expectations, rightly so, because we brought some top players."

### Zidane link

The question is, who do United turn to now to take the club forward? A club statement on Sunday stated the intention to hire an interim manager till the end of the season with former midfielder Michael Carrick in the hotseat for the forthcoming games. By delaying Solskjaer's departure, one prominent candidate is now off the market as Tottenham snatched up a former Premier League winner in Antonio Conte. United have been consistently linked with Paris Saint-Germain boss Mauricio Pochettino and the Argentine may well be the motivation for waiting till the summer. Former Real Madrid boss Zinedine Zidane, Leicester manager Brendan Rodgers and Ajax coach Erik ten Hag have also been linked with the role.

United, for so long a byword for stability under Ferguson, have been reluctant to sack their managers until they feel their hand is forced. That tipping point has now been reached, with the club seventh in the Premier League, already six points off the top four and out of the title race after just 12 games. Whoever does take over at Old Trafford will have a richly talented but bloated and unbalanced squad to work with. United can boast abundant riches in attack, with Ronaldo, Edinson Cavani, Marcus Rashford, Sancho, Marcus Greenwood and Anthony Martial all vying for starting spots. — AFP

# Classifieds

### SHARING ACCOMMODATION

For Filipino Bachelor ONLY Farwaniya block 1, near Oncost and India gate. Available from December 10, 2021. Contact 94418396 or 97345734. **22-11-2021**

### CHANGE OF NAME

I, Asad Uddin holder of Indian Passport No. T2416263 and Civil ID No. 287052008849 adding my name from Asad Uddin to Mohammed Asad Uddin S/o Mohammed Moulana hereinafter in all my dealings and documents I will be known by the name Mohammed Asad Uddin and also change my date of birth from 20/05/1987 to 13/10/1993. **(C 0978) 22-11-2021**

I, Siji Jobin, holder of Indian Passport No. M290484 and Civil ID No. 287062207323 has changed by Surname from Jobin to Rajan. Name: Siji, Surname: Rajan hereinafter in all my dealings and documents I will be known by the name of Siji Rajan. **(C 0979)**

I, PREMJI CHAMATHEEMAL BHASKARAN (PASS-

PORT NO. Z3081020), S/o BHASKARAN, RESIDING AT CHAMATHEEMAL HOUSE, P.O. MANASSERY, MUKKAM, KOZHIKODE, KERALA-673602 (CURRENTLY RESIDING IN KUWAIT), ON BEHALF OF MY MINOR DAUGHTER LAKSHMI, HOLDER OF PASSPORT NO. R2312579, HEREBY CHANGE HER NAME TO LAKSHMI PREMJI, WITH IMMEDIATE EFFECT. **(C 0980)**

I, PREMJI CHAMATHEEMAL BHASKARAN (PASS-PORT NO. Z3081020), S/o BHASKARAN, RESIDING AT CHAMATHEEMAL HOUSE, P.O. MANASSERY, MUKKAM, KOZHIKODE, KERALA-673602 (CURRENTLY RESIDING IN KUWAIT), ON BEHALF OF MY MINOR DAUGHTER GOWRI, HOLDER OF PASSPORT NO. R2312578, HEREBY CHANGE HER NAME TO GOWRI PREMJI, WITH IMMEDIATE EFFECT. **(C 0980) 19-11-2021**

I, SUHANI AVINASH D/o FRANCIS AARON SOLOMON, holder of Indian Passport No. T6756529 and Civil ID No. 285110105681 has changed my name from SUHANI AVINASH TO SUHANI SOLOMON. Hereinafter in all my dealings and documents, I will be known by name of SUHANI SOLOMON. **(C 0976) 18-11-2021**

EMERGENCY ☎ 112

### REQUIRED

#### Officer- Gold Bar Sales

We looking for a person/Lady who have 2 to 3 years experienced in Gold Bar selling with reputable organization in Kuwait.

#### Desired candidate should have below criteria

- Education / Qualifications: Bachelor's degree /
- How to deal customers and suppliers.
- Manage paper work for trade.
- Good Contact in Kuwait Gold Market and Good contact with Individuals
- Generic & Specific Skills:
- Knowledge of MS Office
- Bilingual in Arabic and English
- Good Communication skills
- Telephone Etiquettes
- Interpersonal Skills

Send your CV on email: jahangir@speedremit.com Contact: 94127056

### REQUIRED

#### Relationship Officer

A well reputed organization required the services of Relationship Officer for its Loyalty Merchant set up in Kuwait.

#### Desired candidate should have below criteria

- Education / Qualifications: Bachelor's degree.
- Knowledge: Basic knowledge of loyalty products, functionality & rules.
- Experience: 2 to 3 years banking experience in Sales relating to a loyalty Wallet products business.
- Good Contact in Kuwait Local Market.
- Set up Merchants network for loyalty program.
- Generic & Specific Skills:
- Knowledge of MS Office
- Bilingual in Arabic and English
- Good Communication skills
- Telephone Etiquettes
- Interpersonal Skills

Send your CV on email: jahangir@speedremit.com Contact: 94127056





MANCHESTER: In this file photo taken on March 28, 2019 Manchester United's Norwegian manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer is seen during a photo call at Old Trafford in Manchester, northwest England, after it was announced that he was appointed as the club's full-time manager on a three-year contract. — AFP

## Man Utd finally end Solskjaer experiment

### Carrick takes over while club look to appoint interim manager

MANCHESTER: Manchester United ended Ole Gunnar Solskjaer's three-year reign as manager at Old Trafford yesterday, but plan to wait until the end of the season to name the Norwegian's permanent successor.

Saturday's 4-1 embarrassment at the hands of struggling Watford was the final straw for the United board, who had stuck by Solskjaer in recent weeks despite humiliating home defeats to Liverpool and Manchester City. Former midfielder Michael Carrick, who was part of Solskjaer's coaching team, will take charge of the forthcoming games while the club look to appoint an interim manager till the end of the season.

"Manchester United announces that Ole Gunnar Solskjaer has left his role as Manager," the club said in a statement. "Ole will always be a legend at Manchester United and it is with regret that we have reached this difficult decision. While the past few weeks have been disappointing, they should not obscure all the work he has done over the past three years to rebuild the foundations for long-term success."

Solskjaer leaves with United already realistically

out of the Premier League title race, 12 points behind leaders Chelsea down in seventh in the table, and having exited the League Cup. Carrick's first game in charge will be a crucial Champions League trip to Villarreal tomorrow. Another defeat in Spain would leave the Red Devils needing both results in the final round of matches in Group F to go their way to avoid crashing out at the group stage for a second consecutive season.

"Ole couldn't get a performance out of them in the end. The players look drained of confidence and I'm not surprised today," said Gary Neville, former United captain and teammate of Solskjaer. "They need to get the next appointment right and that'll probably be at the end of the season. They haven't planned for this, they haven't prepared for it. It's deteriorated so badly and so quickly."



#### Zidane top replacement candidate

'Nightmare'  
A run of five defeats in Solskjaer's final seven league games contrasts sharply with the anticipation that surrounded the club in August when Cristiano Ronaldo made a surprise return to Old Trafford in the final days of the transfer window.

United handed Solskjaer a new three-year contract in July and also spent over £100 million (\$134 million) on Jadon Sancho and Raphael Varane as they looked to build on finishing second in the league to Manchester City last season. However, Solskjaer was unable to assemble the pieces of his star-studded squad into a collective unit despite Ronaldo's return of nine goals in 14 games.

"We don't know what to do with the ball, we don't know how to defend properly and we're conceding a lot of goals," said United goalkeeper David de Gea, whose double penalty save from Watford's

Ismaila Sarr counted for nothing. "It's not acceptable for this club and the level of players that we have. It's another nightmare."

Solskjaer had ridden out storms before in a rollercoaster but ultimately trophyless three years. However, even his credit as a club legend for scoring the winning goal in the 1999 Champions League final to win a historic treble for Alex Ferguson's side was fading as he was booed by the travelling support at Vicarage Road. "You signed me for the best club in the world and gave me the biggest honor in football," tweeted United captain Harry Maguire. "Thank you for everything boss. Legend."

Zinedine Zidane, who won three Champions League titles with Ronaldo and Varane at Real Madrid, is the bookmakers' favourite to succeed Solskjaer, with Leicester manager Brendan Rodgers and Ajax boss Erik ten Hag also in contention.

But the decision to wait until the summer to make a permanent appointment could open up a wider pool of potential candidates, including Paris Saint-Germain boss Mauricio Pochettino, who has previously been linked with the job. — AFP

### Hamilton wins Qatar Grand Prix to cut Verstappen's lead

DOHA: Lewis Hamilton won yesterday's inaugural Qatar Grand Prix with a commanding performance from pole to cut Max Verstappen's world championship lead to eight points. The Mercedes seven-time champion comfortably held off his arch Dutch rival's Red Bull under the Losail circuit's lights to leave the battle for the F1 drivers' crown delicately poised with only two races remaining. Fernando Alonso took third for Alpine, the former two-time world champion's first podium since 2014.

One week on from arguably his toughest and greatest win in Brazil, Hamilton enjoyed one of his easiest. And after an unprecedented eighth world title appeared to be slipping from his grasp after Verstappen's wins in the USA and Mexico, it is the 36-year-old Briton rather than the 12-year-younger pretender who has the momentum.

"We needed those points today. I can't wait to watch the race

replay to find out what happened behind me," he said after his 102nd career win. "I'm really grateful for these points, it's been a hell of a year. Back-to-back wins here, feel good, I feel fit, fitter than I've ever felt. Bring on the next two!"

Verstappen, who was demoted from second to seventh on the grid for a yellow flag infringement in qualifying on Saturday, took second, and picked up a point for the fastest lap. "Our starting position was compromised, but luckily we had a really good start," he said. "Of course, I know it's going to be difficult to the end but it keeps it nice, keeps it exciting. This track was fun to drive as well. I feel good, but it's going to be a tight battle to the end."

Hamilton's faster engine, fitted last weekend in Sao Paulo, will give Red Bull a likely tough time again at the ultra-quick new circuit in Saudi Arabia in a fortnight's time ahead of the season-closing race in Abu Dhabi in mid-December. — AFP

### Man City sweep aside Everton to close on Chelsea

MANCHESTER: Raheem Sterling, Rodri and Bernardo Silva got the goals as Manchester City cruised to a 3-0 win over Everton to move within three points of Premier League leaders Chelsea. With the focus of the football world on events across Manchester yesterday as United sacked manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer, City made light work of seeing off an Everton side still decimated by injuries to key players.

Pep Guardiola was also without Kevin De Bruyne after the Belgian tested positive for coronavirus and the injured Jack Grealish, but still had far too much in reserve for the Toffees. Sterling was denied a penalty midway through the first half by a VAR review after referee Stuart Attwell initially pointed to the spot for a trip by Michael Keane.

The England international did not have to wait long to net on his 300th Premier League appearance as he turned home Joao Cancelo's sensational pass with the outside of his right foot for his 98th goal in the English top flight.

Without the presence of Dominic Calvert-Lewin up front, Everton rarely



MANCHESTER: Manchester City's midfielder Riyad Mahrez takes a freekick during the English Premier League football match between Manchester City and Everton at the Etihad Stadium in Manchester, north west England yesterday. — AFP

threatened. Rafael Benitez's men have now taken just two points from the last 18 on offer in the Premier League to drop into the bottom half of the table and just six points clear of the relegation zone.

Rodri's stunning long-range drive into the top corner 10 minutes after the break ended the game as a contest. City were then content to cruise for the final half-hour with one eye on Wednesday's

Champions League clash with Paris Saint-Germain.

Sterling should have slotted home his second of the afternoon from Riyad Mahrez's inviting cross, but was instead denied by international teammate Jordan Pickford as he tried to round the goalkeeper. City did get a deserved third five minutes from time when Silva followed up after Cole Palmer's shot was blocked. — AFP