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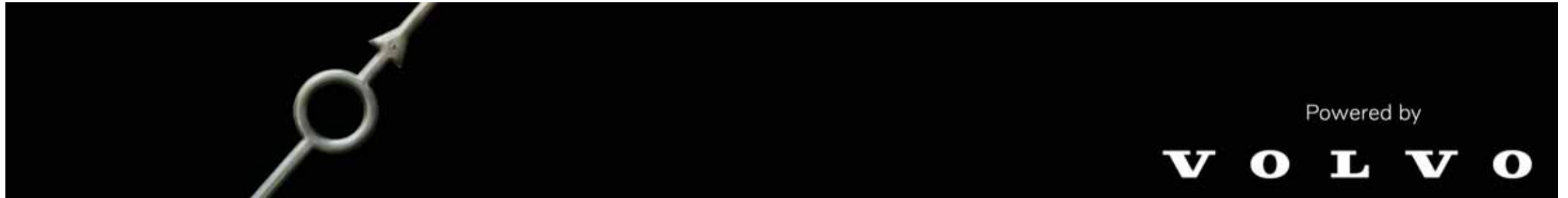
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16 France beat Spain to win Nations League



Visa curbs, worker exodus lead to manpower crunch

Plenty of service sector jobs, but few applicants despite higher salaries

Tens of thousands of residents to lose driving licenses

KUWAIT: Security sources revealed there are plans to confiscate tens of thousands of expired driving licenses from residents who continue to use them in violation of the law. The sources said many of these residents "cheat" the law to avoid deportation by continuing to use expired licenses. They only pay a fine of KD 5 when caught because they are treated as individuals who have licenses which have not been renewed, although the purpose for which they were given the license no longer exists.

Sources said they should be treated as residents who do not have licenses and should be deported if caught driving. Sources said around 20,000 driving licenses were issued to university students, but most of them completed their studies and did not hand over their licenses.

Continued on Page 2

By Ben Garcia

KUWAIT: A severe shortage of workers in Kuwait is affecting companies and the job market, especially in the services sector. According to a human resources manager, because of the high demand for manpower, many small and large companies are now paying higher salaries to workers compared to pre-pandemic times. "Nowadays, hiring people locally is very difficult for many companies in Kuwait, but it's a great time for workers, because those getting a salary of KD 150 before are now being offered KD 250-300," Julie Gayon said.

According to official figures, the total number of workers in the labor market was 1,536,033 in the private sector and 411,464 in the public sector until the end of March. A labor market report found nearly 200,000 expatriates left Kuwait in one year since March 2020. Meanwhile, more than 67,800 expats left Kuwait in the first quarter of 2021, according to a government report.

"There are too many vacancies and

too few applicants. Companies are telling me to provide them with only a few workers, but we can't find anyone. We have a high demand for restaurant workers, but we cannot supply the manpower easily," Gayon said. Besides domestic helpers, demand for workers continues to grow in the hospitality, health and retail sectors.

Last week, Kuwait reopened entry visas (commercial visit visas and permits) for foreigners to work in activities related to food security in the country. The decision, effective immediately, covers the following activities: Farms, restaurants, catering and bakeries, fishing and fish sale, shepherding and dairy production, foodstuff factories, suppliers and supermarkets, and water and soft drink bottling companies.

But several manpower agencies told Kuwait Times that the ban hasn't been lifted yet. "We tried already, but the ministry said they are prioritizing healthcare workers for now. I don't know when they are going to start issuing visas," officials at manpower and



KUWAIT: A worker welds a metal bar at a workshop in Shuwaikh in this recent file photo. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

recruitment agencies said. "We have several people ready to be deployed from the Philippines, but visa applications are still stalled. The ministry peo-

ple are saying they're not ready. We are eagerly waiting for the approval," a recruitment officer added.

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News in brief

Outdoor exhibitions to resume

KUWAIT: The Cabinet yesterday allowed commercial exhibitions with proper permits to resume in open public spaces from Sunday, Oct 17, provided the venues comply with guidelines aimed at preventing the spread of COVID-19. — KUNA

Dubai seizes 500 kg of cocaine



DUBAI: The UAE authorities seized half a ton of cocaine with a street value of more than \$136 million, Dubai police said on Sunday. Officers "recently thwarted a smuggling attempt of 500 kilograms of pure cocaine into the country", a police statement said. In the operation dubbed "Scorpion", a suspect of Middle Eastern origin was arrested. — AFP

Lebanon fuel tank fire put out



BEIRUT: Firefighters in Lebanon put out a huge blaze that raged at a key fuel storage depot yesterday to the relief of many in the country gripped by desperate energy shortages. The fire broke out around 8:00 am in a large petrol tank belonging to the army at the Zahrani facilities some 50 km south of Beirut.

Vaccines prevent severe COVID, even from Delta

PARIS/GENEVA: Vaccination is highly effective at preventing severe cases of COVID-19, even against the Delta variant, a vast study in France has shown. The research published yesterday - focusing on prevention of severe COVID and death, not infection - looked at 22 million people over 50 and found those who had received jabs were 90 percent less likely to be hospitalized or die. The results confirm observations from the US and UK, but researchers say it is the largest study of its kind so far.

Looking at data collected starting in Dec 2020, when France launched its jab campaign, the researchers compared the outcomes of 11 million vaccinated people with 11 million unvaccinated subjects. They formed pairs matching an unvaccinated individual with a vaccinated counterpart from the same region and of the same age and sex, tracking them from the date of the vaccinated person's second jab to July 20.

Continued on Page 2

3 economists win Nobel for 'natural experiments'

STOCKHOLM: Three US-based academics yesterday won the Nobel Economics Prize for research on the labor market using "natural experiments", or observational studies, that have revolutionized empirical research in the field, the jury said. Canadian-American David Card, Zionist-American Joshua Angrist and Dutch-American Guido Imbens shared the prize for providing "new insights about the labor market" and showing "what conclusions about cause and effect can be drawn from natural experiments", the Nobel committee said in a statement.

The Economics Prize wrapped up a male-dominated 2021 Nobel season which saw a total of 12 men win prizes and only one woman. Card won half of the 10-million-kronor (\$1.1 million) prize for work focused on the labor market effects of minimum wages, immi-



KUWAIT: People are vaccinated against COVID-19 at a field clinic in Bneid Al-Gar yesterday, a day after the health ministry announced it is launching a COVID-19 vaccination campaign across several areas in Kuwait. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat (See Page 3)



Guido Imbens Joshua Angrist David Card

gration and education. The framework they developed has been widely adopted by researchers who work with observational data. "By clarifying the assumptions necessary to establish a causal relationship, their framework has also increased the transparency - and thus credibility - of empirical research," the committee said. The three laureates "have revolutionized empirical work in economics. They have shown that it's indeed possible to answer important questions, even when it's not possible to conduct randomized experiments," Nobel Committee member Eva Mork told reporters. — AFP

Saudi, Iran signal warming ties but 'real steps' needed

RIYADH: Regional archrivals Saudi Arabia and Iran are showing signs of warming relations, but experts say more work is needed to ease tensions after a five-year rift. Saudi Arabia and Iran cut ties in 2016 after protesters attacked Saudi diplomatic missions in the Islamic republic following the kingdom's execution of a revered Shiite cleric. In recent weeks, officials from both countries, on opposing sides in multiple Middle East conflicts, have spoken positively about breakthrough talks held in Baghdad since April.

The discussions were launched under Iran's former moderate president Hassan Rouhani and have continued under his ultraconservative successor, Ebrahim Raisi. A foreign diplomat residing in the kingdom who is privy to the negotiations said that

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Local

Kuwait's Deputy Amir receives Saudi Ambassador



KUWAIT: His Highness the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets Ambassador of Saudi Arabia to Kuwait Prince Sultan bin Saad Al-Saud. — KUNA

KUWAIT: His Highness the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace yesterday Ambassador of Saudi Arabia to Kuwait Prince Sultan bin Saad Al-Saud. The Ambassador handed in a letter from the Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud to His

Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. The letter focused on bilateral relations, issues of common interest, and the latest updates on the regional and international fronts. The letter also included an invitation to His Highness the Amir to the fifth Future of Investment Initiative. — KUNA

Kuwait against torture, inhumane treatment: Ambassador to UN

GENEVA: Kuwait's participation in the 18th meeting of the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT) reflects its keenness in human rights issues with all its forms and aspects, a senior Kuwaiti diplomat said yesterday. This came in the speech Kuwait's Permanent Representative to the United Nations and other international Organizations Ambassador Jamal Al-Ghunaim gave during the meeting held in Geneva, Switzerland.

Kuwait's contribution to the CAT committee elections, that will take place during the meeting, comes in support of efforts in this domain, he added. Kuwait is among few countries keen on implementing all of its obligations, including handing the periodical reports on its scheduled timings, due to its partnership in international agreements related to the human rights, including CAT. This commitment came from the high responsibility and transparency Kuwaiti policy follows on human rights issues, which highly served a good reputation, and mutual trust with



Ambassador Jamal Al-Ghunaim

human rights institutions, and all other international conventions committees related to this matter, he added.

Kuwait joined CAT in 1998, which reflected the state's deep belief in CAT values, a convention that Kuwait was a pioneer among other Arab countries to join it. Kuwait, since joining CAT, took many measures that boost the implementation of this convention, the diplomat said. Enhancing and protecting the human rights is a "strategic choice", and anti-torture value is a deep-rooted value in the traditions of the Kuwaiti people, he affirmed. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Kuwait Red Crescent Society launched a donation drive in the Avenues Mall yesterday to help cover school expenses of children of families in need in Kuwait. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



Roads authority assigned to execute railway project

KUWAIT: The Cabinet asked the Public Authority for Roads and Transportation (PART) to implement the railway project, a local Arabic daily reported yesterday quoting sources. A time schedule must be prepared for the implementation in agreement with the dates approved by the GCC secretariat

general, reported Al-Qabas. This means the responsibility of the project's implementation has moved from the Kuwait Authority for Partnership Projects (KAPP) to PART.

The railway project is part of GCC countries' plans to build a joint railway network to boost the economy, increase trade volumes and create more job opportunities in the region. The decision to move the project to PART was according to the law that allows it to establish companies, as it allows it to establish a shareholding company to carry out the task. The cost of the first stage of the project is around KD 300 million. The line will be 111-km long with four stations, including for maintenance, storage, loading, passengers and goods.



Visa curbs, worker exodus lead to...

Continued from Page 1

Even some private hospitals and clinics are complaining of a shortage of staff. "We are exhausted, but we cannot complain, since patients are our number one priority rather than ourselves. We don't get days off, we are overworked, and are prevented by the management to take annual leave too," a nurse at a private hospital told Kuwait Times.

Rico Cinco, who owns two restaurants in Salmiya, said he has been waiting for the reopening of visas for restaurant workers for nearly two years now. "I needed people to work at my restaurants even before the

pandemic. While waiting for the reopening of visas, I work from the kitchen to the dining area to help my staff. I hope the government meets our need for manpower," he said.

Hypermarkets in some areas of Kuwait are even accepting workers on domestic visas. "We have no choice. We need people, so we hire domestic helpers although it's illegal," a manager of a hypermarket told Kuwait Times. Shops and garages are also short of workers. "I hope everything will be okay by next year; if not, I will have to close my business. I need people, but they demand high salaries," a garage owner in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh said.

But not all sectors are in demand, as many companies affected by the coronavirus pandemic are laying off workers. "We are still in bad shape. If we want to keep our jobs, we should be ready to accept salary cuts or be terminated. There are no new projects yet," an engineer told Kuwait Times.

Moderna and AstraZeneca jabs, but not Janssen which was authorized much later and is far less widely used in France. The results also suggest that over the period of study - up to five months - vaccination protection against severe COVID did not diminish.

Meanwhile, the World Health Organization's vaccine advisers yesterday recommended people with weakened immune systems should be offered an additional dose of all WHO-approved COVID-19 vaccines. The UN health agency's experts also said over-60s fully immunized with China's Sinovac and Sinopharm vaccines should be offered an additional third COVID-19 vaccine dose.

The Strategic Advisory Group of Experts on Immunization (SAGE) stressed it was not recommending an additional booster dose for the population at large, which is already being rolled out in some countries. The WHO wants a moratorium on booster doses for the general population until the end of the year to prioritize first doses in the dozens of nations starved of vaccines. SAGE said it would review the issue of general booster doses on Nov 11. — AFP

Tens of thousands of residents to...

Continued from Page 1

This prompted the traffic department to put a block on them so they cannot be renewed.

There are also 40,000 residents who got driving licenses as per existing conditions, but as they changed their professions, they lost one of the conditions for obtaining a license. But many of them still

drive using those licenses, and if caught, they only pay a KD 5 fine. This made the traffic department to link up with the manpower authority, so any resident who has a license cannot renew their residency permit until after making sure there is no block on them at the traffic department. If there is a block, the resident must hand over the expired driving license to be able to renew their residency permit.

The sources said a circular will be issued soon to ban driving using old licenses even if they are still valid, and holders must exchange it with the new one, in order to restrict those who received the licenses in an illegal manner or lost one of the conditions that allows them to get a license. — Al-Rai

Saudi, Iran signal warming ties but...

Continued from Page 1

the two sides "were on the verge of agreeing... to ease tensions between them and the (diplomatic) proxy war in the region" during the last round of talks.

Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan has confirmed a fourth round took place in September, and expressed hope they would "lay the foundation" to address issues between the countries. His Iranian counterpart, Hossein Amir-Abdollahian, has said the discussions are "on the right track". "We have achieved results and agreements, but we still need more dialogue," he said earlier this month.

The foreign diplomat said the two sides would "most likely put the final touches to an agreement" in a new round of talks that could come within days. "They, in principle, have reached an agreement to reopen consulates... and I think an announcement of normalization of ties may come in the next few weeks," the diplomat told AFP on condition of anonymity.

Saudi media have toned down their rhetoric towards Tehran, with the state-run Al-Ekhabriya television last week reporting "direct and honest" discus-

sions that would "achieve stability in the region". It also cited Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's statement this year that Riyadh wants "a good and special relationship" with Tehran.

Last month, Saudi King Salman expressed hope that talks with Iran would "lead to tangible outcomes to build trust" and revive bilateral cooperation. But he also called on Tehran to cease "all types of support" for armed groups in the region, referring especially to Yemen's Houthi rebels, who have escalated missile and drone attacks on the kingdom.

Since 2015, Riyadh has led a military coalition to support the government against the Houthi insurgents after they seized the capital Sanaa. Riyadh accuses Iran of supporting the Houthis with weapons and drones, but Tehran says it only provides the rebels with political support. "Saudi Arabia is interested in ending the conflict in Yemen... which has cost it billions of riyals," the foreign diplomat said.

But Tehran also seeks economic opportunities with Riyadh as it looks to revive its sanctions-battered economy, according to the diplomat. Saudi government adviser Ali Shihabi said that while the atmosphere was positive, Tehran would have to take "substantive" action, particularly on Yemen, before Riyadh would agree to measures like the reopening of embassies. "Iran needs to take real steps, not just (engage) in nice talk," Shihabi told AFP. — AFP

Vaccines prevent severe COVID...

Continued from Page 1

Starting 14 days after a second dose, a vaccinated subjects' risk of severe COVID was reduced by 90 percent, according to the research conducted by Epi-Phare, an independent medicines safety research group that works closely with the French government. Vaccination appears to be nearly as effective against for the Delta variant, with 84 percent protection for people 75 and older and 92 percent for people 50-75.

That estimate, however, is only based on a month of data, since the variant became dominant in France only in June. "The study should be followed up to include results from August and September," epidemiologist Mahmoud Zureik, the head of Epi-Phare, told AFP. The study covers vaccination with the Pfizer/BioNTech,

Local

Int'l cooperation within NAM vital to face challenges: Kuwait

Foreign Minister leads Kuwait's delegation at Non-Aligned Movement meeting



BELGRADE: Foreign Minister Sheikh Dr Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah chairs Kuwait's delegation at the ministerial meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement countries yesterday.



Foreign Minister Sheikh Dr Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah meets President of the 67th session of the UN General Assembly Abdulla Shahid.



Foreign Minister Sheikh Dr Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah meets his Yemeni counterpart Ahmad Awad Bin-Mubarak. — KUNA photos

BELGRADE: Kuwait's Foreign Minister and State Minister for Cabinet Affairs Sheikh Dr Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah said yesterday that Kuwait affirmed the importance of continued international cooperation to face all challenges and achieve economic and social growth. This came during the minister's speech at the ministerial meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) countries held in the Serbian capital, Belgrade. "We are gathered here today to celebrate the 60th anniversary of establishing the movement, which is a good chance for us to discuss the challenges we have faced, probably the most urgent is the change in the scale of power 30 years after the cold war," said the Kuwaiti minister. "We appreciate the essential role the founders have made 60 years ago to contribute in achieving international balance."

"After more than a year of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, we must praise the important role of Azerbaijan, the current President of the movement, for the call to hold two important meetings, the virtual summit in May of 2020 under the rubric (United against COVID-19), and the 31st extraordinary session of the UN General assembly, which led to more coordination and solidarity between members of the movement," he continued.

"In regard to our central issue, the Palestinian cause, we stress on gathering all forces and efforts to end the suffering of the Palestinian people that lasted more than 73 years, to end this hostile occupation that violates all international laws, and

restore security and peace in the Palestinian lands," he added. The Kuwaiti minister concluded his speech by reiterating Kuwait's commitment towards the principles and goals of which this movement was established upon 60 years ago, and Kuwait's willingness to reinforce the role of the movement.



All effort to end Palestinians' suffering

Foreign Minister's meeting

Sheikh Dr Ahmad held talks on Sunday with President of the 67th session of the UN General Assembly Abdulla Shahid on the sidelines of the session of the meeting. During the meeting, the Kuwaiti minister congratulated Shahid, of the Maldives, on the achievements he made during his leadership of the UNGA 76th session, "the presidency of hope." Sheikh Dr Ahmad expressed Kuwait's desire to work more closely with the UNGA for opening more horizons of peace and security across the globe, wishing the UNGA President success in his mission.



Foreign Minister Sheikh Dr Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah meets Serbian Prime Minister Ana Brnabic.

Meanwhile, Kuwait's Foreign Minister met with his Yemeni counterpart Ahmad Awad Bin-Mubarak on the sidelines of the session. Sheikh Dr Ahmad strongly condemned the terrorist attack on the convoy of Yemeni Minister of Agriculture and Aden Governor earlier Sunday. He expressed sincere condolence to those casualties of the blast. He stressed that implementing and adhering to the Riyadh agreement to unite efforts of all three references to

face terrorism in order to stand behind Yemen legitimate government.

In the meantime, Sheikh Dr Ahmad met yesterday with Serbian Prime Minister Ana Brnabic. The meeting discussed the 60th anniversary of the first NAM conference that is taking place in Belgrade, Serbia. During the meeting, the two officials also reviewed the Kuwait-Serbia bilateral ties and the latest regional and international developments. — KUNA

Three dead, one injured in King Fahad Road crash

KUWAIT: Three people were killed and another was left in a critical condition following an accident reported yesterday at dawn in Kuwait. Ahmadi firemen rushed to the scene following a report about a car crash on King Fahad Road. They found out that the accident left three people, including a man and two children, dead, while another man was rushed to hospital with severe injuries.

An investigation was opened to reveal the cause of the accident.

Meanwhile, firemen extinguished a blaze reported in a mall under construction in the Sabah Al-Ahmad Sea City yesterday. No injuries were reported. Khairan, Zour, Mina Abdullah and backup fire stations participated in fighting the blaze which covered a 1,000-square-meter area, Kuwait Fire Force said.

In other news, drugs control department officers arrested a man with 10 kg of chemical derivatives and 100 gm of shabu. An undercover agent was sent to buy drugs from the suspect and the arrest was made during the exchange. When the suspect's residence was searched, the above-mentioned amounts of drugs were found. The suspect confessed to trading in drugs. He was sent to concerned authorities.



KUWAIT: This handout photo released by the Interior Ministry yesterday shows a man it says was arrested with possession of drugs.



This handout photo released by Kuwait Fire Force yesterday shows fire engines outside a mall under construction in the Sabah Al-Ahmad Sea City where a fire was reported.



KUWAIT: People receive their COVID-19 vaccines during a mass vaccination campaign in the Bneid Al-Gar district of Kuwait City yesterday. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

Kuwait reaches out to people still unvaccinated

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Health launched yesterday a vaccination campaign in the Bneid Al-Gar district of Kuwait City, as part of a mass vaccination campaign to reach out to people around the country who are yet to be inoculated against the deadly virus.

The ministry had announced Sunday launching the campaign across several areas in Kuwait, starting in Bneid Al-Gar, with a layout to cover numerous areas to provide the service to all age categories. This campaign aims to raise vaccination rates, and to cover all workers who were not able to get the vaccine for any reason, it noted. The Ministry of Health has launched several vaccination campaigns to reach all parts of the community.

Kuwait had announced on Sunday 31 new coron-

avirus cases registered from 20,950 medical swabs taken over the previous 24 hours, taking the tally to 412,079, while zero deaths were recorded in the same period as the death toll stood at 2,454. Twelve patients were at intensive care units (ICUs) as of Sunday, while about 650 others are being hospitalized at wards. As many as 35 people recovered from the virus in the corresponding period, bringing the total recoveries to 409,002, the ministry's spokesman Dr Abdullah Al-Sanad said.



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Altaf Suleiman

Kuwait's Altaf Suleiman participates in Boston Marathon

KUWAIT: Kuwait's Altaf Suleiman participated in the Boston Marathon yesterday, which is an achievement for Kuwait and the Gulf. Altaf has earlier participated in five marathons. Altaf first participated in the New York Marathon in Nov 2014, then in London in April 2016, Tokyo in Feb 2017, Berlin in 2018 and Chicago in Oct 2019. The Boston Marathon is an opportunity to make this achievement at the Kuwait and Gulf level, which is something she has sought for years.

Many marathons are held in several cities around the world, annual events in which professional and amateur athletes participate. Among these marathons, six are most famous and enjoy extensive coverage around the world - New York, Chicago, Boston, London, Berlin and Tokyo - referred to as majors. Completing these six marathons is considered a great achievement for all participants. Athletes get a medal with six stars to indicate their participation and are inducted in the Hall of Fame. In addition to Suleiman, Malik Marafie also participated in the Boston Marathon, representing Kuwait.

Photo of the Day



KUWAIT: A picture taken yesterday from Kuwait City's Al-Hamra highrise shows the landmark Kuwait Towers as cargo ships, in the background, cross the Arabian Gulf waters off the shore of oil-rich Gulf emirate. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat
(To have your picture featured in the Kuwait Times' 'Photo of the Day' section, please send your horizontal, high resolution and unedited photos to local@kuwaittimes.com, along with the full name and Instagram account, in addition to a description showing the picture's location and date taken)

Sheikh Mubarak hosts dinner in honor of London's Lord Mayor

KUWAIT: Sheikh Mubarak Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah hosted a dinner party yesterday evening at the White Palace in honor of the current Lord Mayor of the City of London, William Russell, and the elected Lord Mayor of the City of London, Vincent Keaveny and the accompanying delegation, during his official visit to the State of Kuwait. The dinner party was also attended by the British Ambassador to the State of Kuwait, Belinda Lewis, along with accredited embassy personnel.

Sheikh Mubarak Al-Abdullah welcomed the Lord Mayor of the City of London and his accompanying delegation to their visit to the State of Kuwait, which comes after the COVID-19 pandemic, saying: "The visit indicates the strong relations between the two friendly countries in various fields, which extend for more than a hundred years, and that there are many opportunities for how to strengthen and develop economic and financial relations, and that Kuwait, in its public and private sectors, is ready

to work to support the development of relations in the financial services sector in London."

On the occasion of his visit to Kuwait, the Lord Mayor of the Financial District, William Russell, said: "I am always pleased to visit Kuwait, especially since this visit comes after the pandemic, which led to the extension of my term of service for an additional year." He added, "This is a critical moment for all of us to boost global trade and advance economic growth while we rebuild better after the pandemic. Kuwait is an important and historical partner for the City of London and the UK in general. We have long-standing partnerships with Kuwait's financial institutions."

Many other common cultural, social and educational issues between the two countries were also discussed, as the Sheikh Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah Foundation sponsors a postgraduate scholarship program for Kuwaiti and Arab students in cooperation with the Mansion House



KUWAIT: (From left, front row) Alderman Vincent Keaveny, Lord Mayor Elect of the City of London, William Russell, Lord Mayor of the City of London with his wife Hilary Russell, Lady Mayoress, (second row) Belinda Lewis, the British Ambassador to Kuwait, and Sheikh Mubarak Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah.

Scholarship Program, which is supervised by the office of Lord Mayor of the City of London, where a Kuwaiti

student won the scholarship in the last academic year. At the end of the ceremony, souvenirs were exchanged.



ACK resumes in-person classes for Fall 2021-2022

KUWAIT: The Australian College of Kuwait (ACK) has welcomed its students back on campus on October 3, 2021 after a long distance learning period because of the COVID-19 pandemic. In preparation for the return of the students, the college took all necessary measures to ensure the safety of its students, staff and faculty while making sure to provide students with the best possible learning experience despite all the precautions and regulations.

Students in both Engineering and Business schools will take part in the hybrid learning program, meaning students will be divided into two groups; half will be attending on campus and the other half will be attending online. The groups will alternate on a weekly basis. As for the School of Aviation, students will learn the theoretical

aspects of their major online while attending classes on campus for practical sessions. Lastly, when it comes to the English language program, students will attend campus daily for their classes.

The Health and Safety Department at ACK is continuing its efforts to ensure adherence to the mandatory protocols in place to protect students, staff and faculty, and has introduced various new measures to increase safety. Among these measures are the issuing of student e-ID with a QR code verification system to allow students to enter campus each time. Furthermore, students and visitors entering any of the college's buildings must also pass through a thermal camera that will raise an alarm if the guest has a high body temperature or is not wearing a mask.

On campus, the college has posted awareness signage with the social distancing protocols, increased supply of sanitizers, instituted social distancing in classroom seating, and added a faculty safety checklist sign. Indoor seating areas have been closed, while outdoor seating areas remain open with social distancing guidelines.

Burgan Bank trains Ministry of Justice accounting experts

KUWAIT: Burgan Bank has organized a special training course for the newly hired accounting experts of the Ministry of Justice. This initiative highlights the bank's strategic commitment under its social responsibility programs to promoting a stronger community engagement and maximizing the value of its expertise through knowledge sharing and transfer.

The special course was organized by Burgan Bank's Learning and Talents Development Department in collaboration with the Retail, Corporate and Legal Departments. Designed to share the bank's knowledge and experience for the purpose of enhancing the public's understanding of the banking sector's dynamics and functions, it offered the 25 participating accounting experts the chance to engage in a unique learning experience.

The training program focused on the objectives of growing the participants' awareness, technical skills and knowledge of the banking sector and helping them develop their potential and improve their abilities. These objectives would ultimately help the participants elevate their performance to contribute to the successful accomplishment of the mission of the Ministry of Justice. By identifying the links between the acquired knowledge of the banking concepts and functions and their roles at the Ministry of Justice, the trainees would be

able to advance the management of the legal and social matters relevant to their roles.

Bashar Khalid Al-Qattan, Manager at the Learning and Talent Development Department, commented this training saying "At Burgan, we value knowledge and we believe that it is a unique resource which is worth through use and sharing. Therefore, we engage in dynamic projects and partnerships focused on leveraging and sharing knowledge in order to foster a community-wide collective creativity and push for an innovative lifelong learning mindset. Organizing this training for the accounting experts of the Ministry of Justice is another confirmation of the bank's firm support to empowering Kuwaiti human capital and promoting their skills to contribute to positive change and progress in our community."

Burgan Bank keeps developing its social responsibility programs to reflect the core values of its corporate culture, which revolve around encouraging continuous learning and fostering creativity and innovation as pillars of sustainability and development. It also maintains impactful collaborations with organizations acting for the same goals of promoting impactful learning opportunities as well as awareness and capacity building among the Kuwaiti human capital in particular to contribute to preparing the future leaders of change and the driving force of progress and growth.



Bashar Al-Qattan





Tunisian president appoints new govt

US couple arrested for selling nuclear warship data

US, UK warn citizens of threats

Avoid hotels in Afghanistan, authorities warn

KABUL: The United States and Britain warned their citizens yesterday to avoid hotels in Afghanistan, days after dozens were killed at a mosque in an attack claimed by the Islamic State group. The Taliban, which seized power in August and declared an Islamic emirate, are seeking international recognition and assistance to avoid a humanitarian disaster and ease Afghanistan's economic crisis.

But, as the hardline Islamist group transitions from a rebel army to a governing power, they are struggling to contain the threat from the Afghanistan chapter of IS. "US citizens who are at or near the Serena Hotel should leave immediately," the US State Department said, citing "security threats" in the area. "In light of the increased risks you are advised not to stay in hotels, particularly in Kabul (such as the Serena Hotel)," Britain's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office added.

Since the Taliban takeover, many foreigners have left Afghanistan, but some journalists and aid workers remain in the capital. The well-known Serena, a luxury hotel popular with business travelers and foreign guests, has twice been the target of attacks by the Taliban. In 2014, just weeks before the presidential election, four teenage gunmen with pistols hidden in their socks managed to penetrate several layers of security, killing nine people, including an AFP journalist and members of his family. In 2008, a suicide bombing left six dead.

US aid pledge discussed

In August, during a chaotic evacuation of foreign nationals and at-risk Afghans, NATO countries issued a chorus of warnings about an imminent threat, telling people to stay away from Kabul airport. Hours later, a suicide bomber detonated in a crowd gathered around one of the airport gates,

killing scores of civilians and 13 American troops. The attack was claimed by IS, which has since targeted several Taliban guards, and claimed a devastating bomb attack in Kunduz city on Friday that ripped through a mosque during Friday prayers—the bloodiest assault since US forces left the country in August.

In recent years, the Islamic State's Afghanistan-Pakistan chapter has been responsible for some of the deadliest attacks in those countries—massacring civilians at mosques, shrines, public squares and even hospitals. The terror threat has partly overshadowed Taliban efforts to improve their international standing. Over the weekend, senior Taliban and US delegations held their first face-to-face talks in the Qatar capital Doha since the US withdrawal.

The talks "focused on security and terrorism concerns and safe passage for US citizens, other foreign nationals and our Afghan partners," according to State Department spokesman Ned Price. "Human rights, including the meaningful participation of women and girls in all aspects of Afghan society," were also raised, Price said in a statement. According to the State Department, the discussions were "candid and professional" and US officials reiterated that "the Taliban will be judged on its actions, not only its words".

The Taliban said the United States had agreed to send aid to Afghanistan, though the US said the issue had only been discussed, and that any assistance would go to the Afghan people and not the Taliban government. "US representatives stated that they will give humanitarian assistance to Afghans and will provide facilities for other humanitarian organizations to deliver aid," the Taliban's foreign ministry said, warning that the aid should not be linked to political issues. — AFP



Taliban seek international recognition



KANDAHAR: People with their belongings rush to pass to Pakistan from the Afghanistan border in Spin Boldak. — AFP

The 2021 Nobels: An almost 100% male affair

STOCKHOLM: Press freedom, the plight of refugees and climate modeling: 12 men and only one woman won Nobel Prizes this year for conferring "the greatest benefit to humankind". While four women won Nobel prizes in 2020 - close to the 2009 record of five—the awards remain male-dominated as much of the prizewinning work dates back 20, 30 or even 40 years when fewer women reached the top levels of academic research. In 2019, there was only one woman laureate, and in 2017 and 2016 there were none. Here are the 2021 winners in each discipline:

Medicine

US scientists David Julius and Ardem Patapoutian won the Medicine Prize for discoveries on receptors for temperature and touch. Their discoveries "unlocked one of the secrets of nature by explaining the molecular basis for sensing heat, cold and mechanical force," the jury said. The duo's research, conducted independently of each other in the late 1990s and 2000s, is being used to develop treatments for a wide range of diseases and conditions, including chronic pain.

Physics

Awarded for the first time to two climate experts, the Physics Prize went to Klaus Hasselmann of Germany and Syukuro Manabe of Japan and the United States, as well as to Italian theorist Giorgio Parisi. Working in the 1960s, Manabe showed how levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere correspond to increased Earth surface temperatures. Crucially, he recognized the role of water vapor in trapping heat, which is much more than carbon dioxide alone. Hasselmann was credited for working out how climate models can remain reliable despite sometimes chaotic variation in weather trends. Parisi was meanwhile honored for his work in the 1980s on the theory of complex systems. His work helped physicists understand apparently entirely random materials, with wide-ranging applications including mathematics, biology and machine learning.

Chemistry

Germany's Benjamin List and Scottish-American

David MacMillan won the Chemistry Prize for developing a pioneering type of catalyst. Working independently of one another in 2000, they created a tool to build molecules that has spurred new drug research, scaled up production and made chemistry more environmentally friendly. The new technique, called "asymmetric organocatalysis" and which relies on small organic molecules, is used to control and accelerate chemical reactions.

Literature

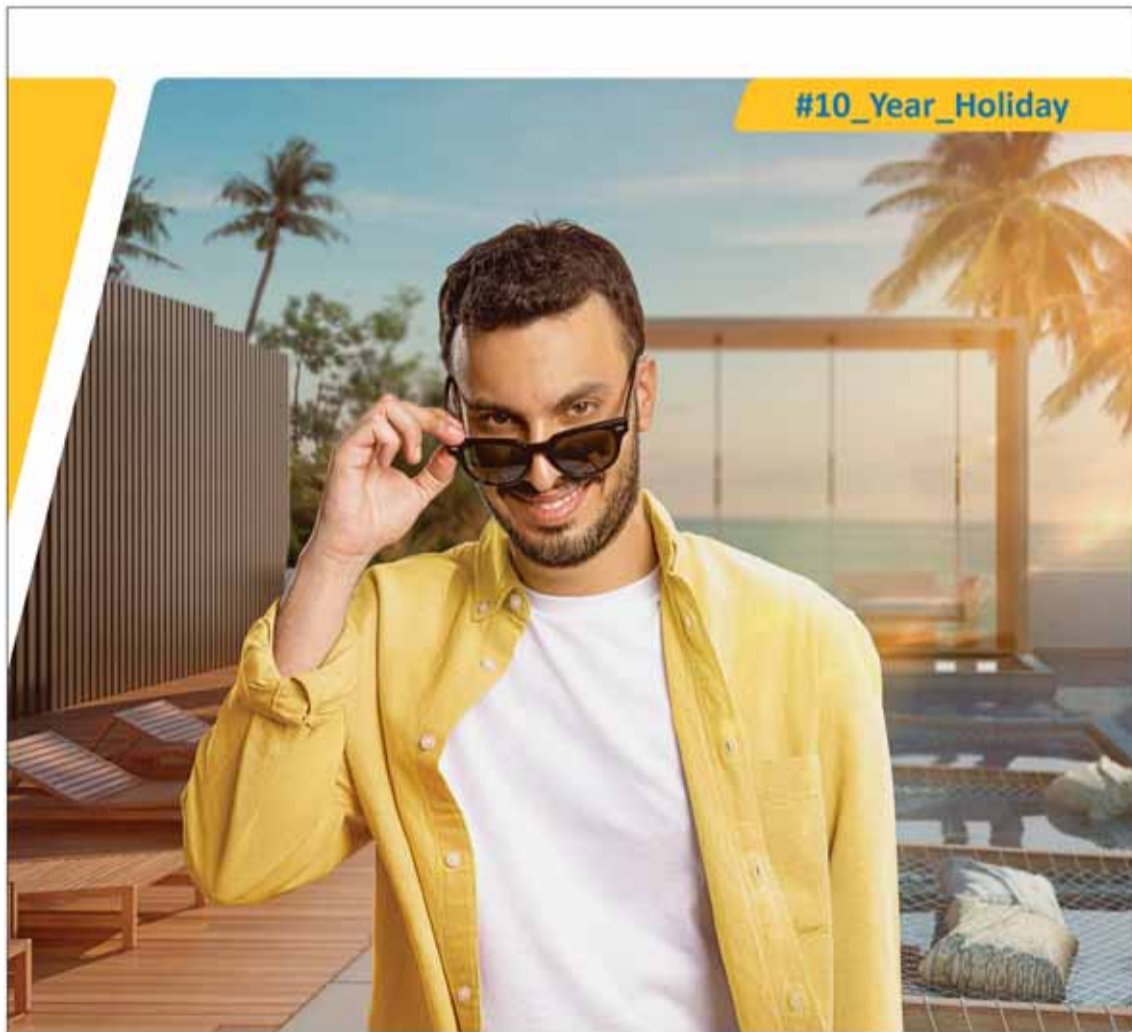
Novelist Abdulrazak Gurnah, who was born in Tanzania but has lived in Britain for more than 50 years, won the Literature Prize for his portrayal of the effects of colonialism and the trauma of the refugee experience. The Swedish Academy said Gurnah was honored "for his uncompromising and compassionate penetration of the effects of colonialism and the fate of the refugee in the gulf between cultures and continents". He is the fifth African to win the prestigious honor.

Peace

Investigative journalists Maria Ressa of the Philippines and Dmitry Muratov of Russia won the Peace Prize for their work promoting freedom of expression at a time when liberty of the press is increasingly under threat. Ressa, also a US citizen, is co-founder of Rappler, a digital media company for investigative journalism, and a vocal critic of Philippines President Rodrigo Duterte. Muratov in 1993 co-founded Russia's leading independent newspaper Novaya Gazeta, one of the few media outlets left voicing criticism of Putin. Muratov has served as chief editor several times. Novaya Gazeta's opponents have responded with harassment, threats, violence and murder.

Economics

Three US-based economists, Canadian-American David Card, Israeli-American Joshua Angrist and Dutch-American Guido Imbens, won the Economics Prize for work on the labor market using "natural experiments", or observational cause-and-effect studies, that have revolutionized empirical research in the field. Card's work has focused on the labor market effects of minimum wages, immigration and education. Meanwhile, Angrist and Imbens figured out a methodological way to interpret data from "natural experiments", demonstrating how precise cause and effect conclusions can be. — AFP



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Afghan Shiites stunned but not broken by blast

KUNDUZ: The imam had just led his congregation in a chorus of "Allahu Akhbar" (God is Greatest) when Abbas recalls hearing a "terrible sound" before being knocked to the ground. "It was a noise I had never experienced in my 24 years," he told AFP from his hospital bed in the northern Afghan city of Kunduz. Now Abbas knows that a suicide attacker had detonated his bomb, ripping through the crowd during Friday prayers at the Gozar-e-Sayed mosque and instantly killing dozens of Shiite worshippers.

But despite the distress and his injuries, Abbas vowed to continue his work as a prayer caller (muezzin) and reciter (Qari) at the mosque, saying he sees it as his "human responsibility" to carry on. Friday's blast killed around 100 Shiite Muslims, according to locals, the latest in a string of attacks on Afghanistan's minority community, considered heretics by Sunni Muslim extremists like the Islamic State-Khorasan (IS-K) group, which claimed the attack.

Disoriented and realizing his leg was injured, Abbas dragged himself to the side of the octagonal room. "I was afraid of a second explosion so I and some others threw ourselves out of the window," he said. He then crawled from the scene and was taken

to hospital by rickshaw. Lying in the orthopaedics ward, wrapped in blue sheets and with bandages on his right arm and leg due to shrapnel wounds, he said those responsible for the carnage were "worse than animals". "The mosque is a place that every Muslim should go and pray," he said defiantly. "Terrorists that want to sow discord among us or want us to leave our sect or religion must know that their wish will not come true and they will take it to the grave."

The Azizullah Safar Regional Hospital in Kunduz was still treating 16 patients on Sunday, doctors said, with seven in the intensive care unit (ICU). Women nurses tended to the wounded who were hooked up to drips and heart rate monitors. Nuriya Ahmadi, a nurse in the ICU ward for the past five years, said attacks like Friday's traumatize the victims, but also the medical staff caring for them. "Patients in a critical condition affect our mental condition too, especially patients who are brought from such incidents," she told AFP.

"We try to do everything we can to fulfil our responsibility to them." Since coming to power two months ago, the Taliban have imposed strict restrictions on women workers, but Ahmadi said staff at the ICU ward were yet to face any problems. "In this ward, female patients are admitted in one section, and in two others, male patients are admitted," she said. Some work was only supposed to be carried out by men, she said, adding though that generally, "we will continue our work as before." Ghulam Rabbani Sherzai, a junior doctor in the main ward, described the heavy strain of dealing with mass casualties. — AFP

International

Kremlin decries 'high' COVID-19 deaths, rejects new measures

Russia's total fatalities hit 217,372 - the highest toll in Europe

MOSCOW: The Kremlin yesterday described Russia's COVID fatality toll as "high" and the country's vaccination rate as "unacceptably" low, even as it rejected new restrictions so as to protect the economy. Officials yesterday registered 957 new deaths from COVID-19 over 24 hours, bringing the country's total fatalities to 217,372 - the highest toll in Europe - even as authorities are accused of downplaying the severity of Russia's outbreak.

Under a broader definition of deaths linked to the virus, the Rosstat statistics agency said Friday that by the end of August more than 400,000 people in Russia had died with the coronavirus. The growing toll from the virus comes as Russia's jab drive has stalled. As of yesterday, just over 30 percent of Russians had been fully vaccinated, according to the Gogov website, which tallies COVID-19 data from the regions. "Yes, indeed, the level of vaccinations we have is small, unacceptably small," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters, saying that this is the reason for "such a high mortality rate."

But he dismissed the notion that authorities could do more, saying they had done everything to give the public the chance to "save their lives by getting vaccinated". The Kremlin's task, he added, is to balance limiting the spread of the virus with ensuring that "the economy continues working".

While several Russian-developed jabs have been available for months, authorities have struggled to inoculate a vaccine-sceptic population.

Independent polls show that more than half of Russians do not plan to get a shot. The surging infections have come without any real pandemic restrictions to limit the spread, though several regions have re-introduced QR codes for access to public places. Capital Moscow has so far withheld



Officials register
957 new deaths

from bringing back restrictions, but yesterday announced that it would open two dozen sites around the city where residents could get free express tests. Officials said the additional sites would allow authorities to "completely avoid the introduction of severe restrictions" and "not harm the city's economy". — AFP



MOSCOW: People walk through the Red Square on a sunny autumn day in Moscow. — AFP

News in brief

Austria gets a new leader

VIENNA: Austria's top diplomat Alexander Schallenberg took over as chancellor yesterday as the ruling party tries to emerge from a corruption scandal that cost the job of one of Europe's youngest leaders. Sebastian Kurz, a 35-year-old once feted as a "whizz kid", said late Saturday he was quitting the top job after being implicated in a corruption scandal. Schallenberg, 52, was sworn in by President Alexander Van der Bellen shortly after 1:00 pm. Van der Bellen said the government now had the "great responsibility of restoring trust". Kurz's centre-right People's Party (OeVP) and their junior Green coalition partners are hoping to move on from the scandal and serve out the rest of their term until 2024. However, the fallout from last week's events may continue to reverberate. — AFP

New Zealand's 'no jab, no job' policy

WELLINGTON: New Zealand announced yesterday a sweeping "no jab, no job" policy for most healthcare workers and teachers to prevent the spread of COVID-19. "We can't leave anything to chance so that's why we are making it mandatory," said COVID-19 Response Minister Chris Hipkins, who is also the education minister. Doctors, nurses and other frontline health workers must be double-jabbed by December 1 while everyone working in the education sector who has contact with students must have their two doses by January 1. The Royal New Zealand College of General Practitioners backed mandatory vaccinations with president Samantha Murton describing it as a "bold, but necessary call" to make. Secondary schools will also be required to keep a register to show the vaccination status of students. — AFP

Kazakhstan court jails 13

ALMATY: A court in Kazakhstan sentenced 13 people yesterday to up to five years in prison on extremism charges which activists slammed as a crackdown on dissent. They were all members of an unregistered organization that is designated as extremist in the oil-rich country and has links to a fugitive tycoon. The Koshe Party is affiliated with Mukhtar Ablyazov, a former energy minister and bank chairman whom Kazakhstan has tried and sentenced in absentia for murder and embezzlement. Yesterday, the court handed four men five-year jail terms. Nine others, including four women, saw restrictions on their freedom imposed for between one and two years. One of the ex-Soviet state's most prominent watchdogs, the Kazakhstan International Bureau for Human Rights and Rule of Law, said the ruling showed that "the ossified authoritarian system will not allow people decided on democratic change to join together". — AFP

Over 1,000 migrants cross Channel

LONDON: Britain has rescued or intercepted a total of 1,115 migrants attempting to cross the Channel over just two days, the country's interior ministry said on Sunday. Rising numbers of Channel crossings by migrants in small boats have contributed to growing tensions between the UK and France following Britain's departure from the EU at the start of this year. On Saturday, British authorities said they had recovered 491 people in 17 operations and 624 people in 23 operations on Friday, while French authorities prevented 414 migrants from reaching Britain over the same two days. On Sunday the French authorities said they had rescued a further 342 migrants who were attempting the crossing. Dan O'Mahoney, who heads the Home Office team looking to curb the number of migrants reaching the UK, said the government was "determined" to tackle what he called the "unacceptable rise in dangerous Channel crossings". — AFP

Sankara, pan-African icon who wanted to 'decolonise minds'

OUAGADOUGOU: Dubbed Africa's Che Guevara, Thomas Sankara wanted to "decolonize minds" in Burkina Faso and across the continent, but his revolutionary dreams were cut short when he was gunned down in a 1987 coup after just four years in power. The trial of the alleged perpetrators of the assassination, including his former friend Blaise Compaore who succeeded him as president and went on to rule for 27 years, opened yesterday in the capital Ouagadougou.

Despite his short time in power, Sankara remains for many a revered figure. During mass protests which toppled Compaore in 2014, young people carried portraits of Sankara aloft - though many had not even been born during the Marxist-Leninist leader's rule. "Sankara is a whole philosophy, a way of thinking and being, a way of life. Sankara is a pride of Africa," high-school teacher Serge Ouedraogo said. "Today, we can say that Sankara represents a compass for the people of Burkina Faso. He is a guide, it is he who blazed the trail of hope for the people."

Rise to power

Born on December 21, 1949 in Yako in the north of the poor, landlocked country, Sankara was raised in a Christian family, his father a military veteran. He

was just 12 when the country gained independence from France. After finishing high school in Ouagadougou, he underwent military training abroad. He was in Madagascar for the 1972 insurrection which overthrew President Philibert Tsiranana, considered by foes to be a lackey of former colonial power France. Returning to his homeland in 1973, Sankara was assigned to train young recruits, and stood out while fighting in a border war with Mali in 1974-1975.

After a coup d'etat in 1980, the new leader, Colonel Saye Zerbo, appointed Sankara his secretary of state for information. But the soldier's radical views made him quit the government a year and a half later. Sankara was appointed prime minister in January 1983 after another military coup, which led to a quiet power struggle at the heart of the army. He was arrested in May 1983 but was then made president in August after yet another coup - this one led by his close friend Compaore.

Aged just 33, Sankara symbolised for supporters African youth and integrity. He changed the country's name from the colonial-era Upper Volta to Burkina Faso - "the land of honest men". He moved into a rundown presidential palace with his wife and two sons, along with his guitar - he was a decent player, according to his contemporaries. He also brought a second-hand Renault 5, and imposed the small French model as the car for all government personnel, doing away with bigger vehicles.

Denouncing 'imperialist' wars

Slender and athletic, Sankara always dressed in army fatigues, and on his belt liked to show off a pistol with a mother-of-pearl handle given to him by



In this file photo taken on August 31, 1986, Captain Thomas Sankara, President of Burkina Faso, salutes upon his arrival in Harare for the 8th Summit of Non-aligned countries. — AFP

North Korean leader Kim Il-Sung. The priorities in his reform program included reducing the size of the civil service, improving healthcare, nationwide literacy, food self-sufficiency, measures to help peasant farmers, vaccination campaigns and building pharmacies in villages. He banned female genital mutilation and forced marriages, among other measures to promote women's rights, which he oversaw with an iron fist. The population was policed by the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution and sanctioned by the Popular Revolutionary Tribunal, which antagonized traditional tribal chiefs and others wielding wealth and power. "We must decolonize minds," he proclaimed. — AFP



TUNIS: A handout photo shows President Kais Saied (center) and Prime Minister Najla Bouden (3rd left) posing with the ministers of the new government in Tunis yesterday. — AFP

Tunisian president appoints new govt

TUNIS: Tunisia's President Kais Saied appointed a new government yesterday, 11 weeks after firing the last one in a controversial power grab, as the country faces acute economic and political crises. State television broadcast a swearing-in ceremony of the cabinet headed by Najla Bouden, the North African country's first female prime minister.

Bouden vowed that "the fight against corruption will be the most important aim" of the new government, in her first public speech since her nomination. The trained geologist also pledged to "raise living standards" of Tunisians and "restore their faith in the state". But Saied has significantly pared back the powers of her office and will technically head the administration himself.

The president on July 25 sacked the previous prime minister, Hichem Mechichi, suspended parliament and granted himself judicial powers. Opponents termed his move a coup but many Tunisians, sick of a political class seen as corrupt and incompetent, initially welcomed it. Saied, a former legal academic, has repeatedly criticized the constitution Tunisia adopted in 2014 which brought in a mixed parliamentary-presidential system, three years after a revolution overthrew veteran dictator Zine El Abidine Ben Ali.

The president named Bouden as premier on September 29, more than two months after sacking the administration of Mechichi and removing lawmakers' immunity. In a speech following yesterday's

ceremony, Saied reiterated that his moves were constitutional in light of "imminent peril" facing Tunisia. He said he had acted to "save the Tunisian state from the clutches of those who lurk at home and abroad, and from those who see their office as booty or as a means to loot public funds". He also vowed to "cleanse the judiciary".

'Drift from democracy'

Saied, who was elected in late 2019, seized an array of powers amid a socio-economic crisis aggravated by the Covid-19 pandemic. The move came as Tunisia faces a looming debt crisis, spiraling inflation and widespread unemployment worsened by the coronavirus pandemic. Bouden, 63, is a political unknown and is not known to have economic expertise, although the new Economy Minister Samir Saied and Finance Minister Sihem Boughdiri both have experience in financial policy.

Economist and former trade minister Mohsen Hassan last month urged the new administration to return urgently to bailout talks with international donors, saying Tunisia was "paying the price of political instability", the coronavirus crisis and "the political class's ignorance of economics". Civil society groups have warned of a drift away from democracy and on Sunday at least 6,000 people demonstrated in central Tunis against Saied's power grab. Only two members of the previous administration were included in yesterday's line-up: chief diplomat Othman Jarandi and Education Minister Fethi Selouati. The strategically vital interior ministry will be led by Taoufik Charfeddine, a Saied ally who held the position in 2020 until he was sacked by Mechichi. — AFP

Blackmail and scandal: Ex-top cop goes on trial

MADRID: Notorious former police chief Jose Manuel Villarejo, whose revelations have shaken Spain's political and business elite to the core, goes on trial this week for blackmail and corruption. Over the last few years, dozens of powerful businessmen, high-ranking civil servants, ministers and magistrates have been tainted by scandals involving this feared former policeman at the heart of the so-called "sewers of state".

With an air of mystery, a grey goatee and a beret perched on his bald head, Villarejo, 70, is accused of secretly recording conversations with the rich and powerful to either blackmail or discredit them on behalf of other prestigious clients. Although Villarejo is implicated in multiple cases, Wednesday's trial will look at just three, all of which involve businessmen suspected of using his services to spy on both colleagues and competitors. The trial, which will be held in San Fernando de Henares, near Madrid, at the Audiencia Nacional, Spain's top criminal court, is expected to continue until January.

But many others are on the docket in this sprawling, complex investigation known as "the Villarejo case", including some which have drawn even more media attention for their scandalous nature. "This first trial will be important for establishing the credibility of the Spanish judicial system," said Manuel Bravo Perez, who co-wrote a book on the Villarejo case. "People are waiting with bated breath to see what happens during the trial," he told AFP.

If convicted for these first three offences, Villarejo could face 109 years in jail, if prosecutors get their way. But the ex-police chief will attend the trial as a free man since the court lifted his pre-trial detention in March, after serving three years behind bars at a Madrid prison. Born into a modest family in the southern Andalusia region, Villarejo was "what you might call a 'corrupt copper'-corrupt because he set up a private consulting business while he was still very much part of the police," explained Bravo Perez. — AFP

International

Triads arrested in Hong Kong speedboat smuggling raids

Gangs using high-powered speedboats to smuggle contraband

HONG KONG: Dozens of Hong Kong triad members have been arrested in a series of operations targeting gangs using high-powered speedboats to smuggle contraband to the Chinese mainland, police said yesterday. Smuggling has been a mainstay of the triad organized crime gangs operating on both sides of the border for years but the phenomenon has surged during the coronavirus pandemic.

Police embarked on a crackdown after a marine officer was killed last month when her vessel was rammed by smugglers during a high-speed chase. Yesterday, Hong Kong police said 365 people had been arrested in a series of joint raids over the last two weeks, including 35 men with triad backgrounds suspected of running the sea smuggling operations.

Chinese mainland police also arrested two men suspected of being involved in the collision that killed the officer, senior superintendent Ho Chung-tung, from Hong Kong's Organized Crime and Triad

Bureau, told reporters. More than 50 speedboats have been seized along with 1,700 tons of frozen meat worth HK\$500 million (\$64 million). Frozen



365 arrested in a series of joint raids

meat is just one part of a cornucopia of in-demand goods that gangs smuggle into China. Recent speedboat smuggling busts have netted everything from luxury watches, handbags and shoes to

endangered animal parts, cosmetics, wines, whisky and cigars.

Police said so far this year they have seized HK\$730 million worth of contraband goods from speedboat smuggling gangs compared to HK\$490 million in the whole of last year. Hong Kong has no sales tax, something that makes successful smuggling hugely lucrative. Mainland China is also awash with fake brands while regular food health scares have reinforced the demand for international goods. Until the crackdown sparked by the marine officer's death, smugglers often relied on sheer force of numbers. Each day, dozens of Chinese mainland vessels would wait just outside Hong Kong's waters near the city's airport.

Speedboats stuffed with goods, some of them fitted with as many as six engines to outrun police, would then emerge en masse and rush to the waiting mainland boats. Some of these dramatic recent smuggling runs were captured on camera by mem-

bers of the public using phones. Three customs officers were killed in January last year when their boat capsized during a chase with speedboat gangs in waters off the airport. While Hong Kong has long been one of the safest cities in the world in terms of street crime, triad organized crime gangs have a long presence in the city.

The gangs trace their origins to 19th century Chinese fraternal organizations. Most fled to Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan when the communists took power in mainland China in 1949. But in recent decades, most triad gangs switched ideological allegiance and embraced Beijing. Since Hong Kong's 1997 handover from Britain, some of Beijing's most ardent critics have found themselves at the wrong end of a triad assault. Major gangs like Wo Shing Wo, 14K and Sun Yee On have a presence in both Hong Kong and the Chinese mainland as well as links to international organized crime. — AFP

Militants kill five troops in Kashmir

SRINAGAR: Militants shot dead five soldiers in Indian-administered Kashmir yesterday, the army said, stoking tensions in the restive territory following a string of civilian murders. Separately two suspected rebels were shot dead in different incidents, authorities said. Colonel Devendar Anand told AFP that one officer and four soldiers "were killed during a search operation probably by infiltrators" in a mountain pass near the Line of Control (LoC) dividing the area from Pakistan-administered Kashmir. "The operation is ongoing," he added. The shootings were the deadliest attack on military forces in the area since a ceasefire along the LoC announced in February.

Divided

Kashmir has been split between India and Pakistan since their independence in 1947, with both claiming

the Himalayan region in full. For over three decades, rebel groups have been fighting Indian soldiers and demanding independence for Kashmir or its merger with Pakistan. Tens of thousands of civilians, soldiers and rebels have died in the fighting. India accuses Pakistan of supporting the militants. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Hindu nationalist government angered many Kashmiris in 2019 by scrapping the Muslim-majority region's semi-autonomous status. This was accompanied by a huge security operation and communications blackout with tens of thousands of extra soldiers joining the estimated half a million already on the ground.

650 arrested

Tensions have flared further in recent weeks with a spate of shootings of civilians in the area, with seven killed last week alone in attacks claimed by an anti-India militant group. They included two teachers gunned down at a school on Thursday, sparking public outrage in Kashmir and outside. Politicians from all sides have condemned the killings. Some 650 residents suspected to have links with banned religious and militant groups have been detained following



SRINAGAR: A security personnel checks the bag of a motorist along a street in Srinagar, after recent attacks by the suspected anti-India militants in Indian-administered Kashmir. — AFP

the shootings, a police source said. "No stone will be left unturned to find the killers," the senior police officer told AFP on condition of anonymity. Authorities say at least 29 civilians - including workers from pro-India political parties - have been shot dead in Kashmir this year, one of them by security forces.

A relatively new militant group The Resistance Front claimed responsibility for the seven killings last week and

accused those killed of working for "occupier mercenary forces and occupier stooges". The statements, issued only in English, were circulated in numerous WhatsApp groups and could not be independently verified by AFP. One of the two suspected rebels killed yesterday was suspected of being involved, authorities said. His family told reporters that soldiers picked him up on Sunday at then shot him while in their custody. — AFP

US couple arrested for selling nuclear warship data

WASHINGTON: A US couple has been arrested in the state of West Virginia for allegedly selling information on nuclear warships to what they believed was a foreign state, the Justice Department said Sunday. Jonathan Toebbe, 42, who worked as a nuclear engineer for the US Navy, and his wife Diana, 45, were arrested by Federal Bureau of Investigation agents on Saturday and charged with violating the Atomic Energy Act in a criminal complaint, the Justice Department said in a statement.

For nearly a year, the couple "sold information known as restricted data concerning the design of nuclear powered warships to a person they believed was a representative of a foreign power," the statement said, adding that the recipient of the information was in fact an undercover FBI agent. US nuclear-powered submarines were at the center of a major diplomatic crisis between Paris and Washington last month, when Australia scrapped a large contract to buy submarines from France.

Toebbe, who was based in Annapolis, Maryland and had access to restricted data on nuclear-powered warships through his work, collaborated with his wife to exchange data on submarine nuclear reactors for around \$100,000 in cryptocurrency,



ATLANTIC OCEAN: In this file photo, the Virginia-class attack submarine Pre-Commissioning Unit New Mexico (SSN 779) undergoes Bravo sea trials in the Atlantic Ocean. A US couple has been arrested in the state of West Virginia for allegedly selling information on nuclear warships to what they believed was a foreign state, the Justice Department said. — AFP

the complaint affidavit alleges. When Toebbe first tried to establish contact with the foreign government - which was not identified in the affidavit - he wrote, "I apologize for this poor translation into your language."

Please forward this letter to your military intelligence agency," according to the complaint. "I believe this information will be of great value to your nation. This is not a hoax." The affidavit says Toebbe in April 2020 mailed a package to the foreign government "containing a sample of restricted

data and instructions for establishing a covert relationship," according to the statement.

According to the complaint, the FBI intercepted the package, and the undercover agent posed as a representative of the foreign government in order to establish a relationship with the couple. The agent sent Jonathan Toebbe, who used the pseudonym "Alice," an email offering him a gift as thanks for the data. But Toebbe responded with caution, asking instead to set up a "dead drop" location and to be paid in cryptocurrency. — AFP

Thousands evacuated; coal mines shuttered as floods hit north China

BEIJING: More than 120,000 people have been evacuated, coal mines shut and crops destroyed after unseasonably heavy rainfall flooded north China's Shanxi province over the weekend, state media reported yesterday, with more rain forecast. The deluge comes just months after record floods hit the country's central Henan province in July - killing more than 300 people - and raises fears about ensuring the supply of energy ahead of the winter.

Many parts of Shanxi, a landlocked province that generally has dry weather, saw record-breaking rainfall over the past week, according to the provincial government, which ordered coal mines to take flood-proofing measures and make emergency plans to be "activated immediately in case of grave danger".

At least 60 coal mines in the province - one of China's top coal-

producing regions - have suspended operations due to the floods, according to a local government statement, even as the country faces a power supply crunch. Beijing recently ordered coal mines to spare no cost to increase production and ensure supply, and said it will allow higher electricity prices in a bid to boost generation. Analysts have warned the move could add to inflation concerns.

China has been hit by widespread power cuts amid record coal prices, state electricity price controls and tough emissions targets that have squeezed the power supply. More than 1.75 million residents have so far been affected by the floods in Shanxi, which state news agency Xinhua reported had received more than three times the average monthly rainfall for October in just five days last week. An estimated 190,000 hectares of crops were destroyed and 17,000



JINZHONG: This aerial photo shows a flooded area after heavy rainfalls in Jinxiu, in Jinzhong city, China's northern Shanxi province. — AFP

buildings were reduced to rubble, the local Communist Party newspaper Shanxi Evening News reported.

Shanxi's meteorological bureau said Sunday there would be more rain in the coming days, urging farmers to "rush to harvest when the weather is clear". Authorities have not yet published a death toll. Video footage

published by the Shanxi Evening News showed rescuers wading through murky waters and floating on rafts down flooded urban streets. Meanwhile, state broadcaster CCTV showed workers repairing a broken dam and railway tracks left suspended over water after part of the bridge they were on collapsed. — AFP

News in brief

Iraq arrests IS finance chief

BAGHDAD: Iraq has captured the alleged finance chief of the Islamic State group, Sami Jasim Al-Jaburi, who was sought by the United States, in an operation abroad, Iraqi authorities said yesterday. Jaburi, also the suspected former deputy to the late IS leader Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi, was arrested "in Turkey", a senior Iraqi military source told AFP without elaborating. Prime Minister Mustafa Al-Kadhemi had earlier announced on Twitter that Jaburi was arrested by the intelligence services "outside the borders" of Iraq, in a "complex external operation," without naming the location. It was not immediately clear if Turkish authorities were involved and there was no immediate reaction from Ankara. The US had offered a reward of up to \$5 million for the capture of Jaburi. — AFP

Car bomb kills six in Syria

BEIRUT: A car bombing in the northern Syrian city of Afrin yesterday killed six people, including at least one Turkey-backed rebel fighter, a war monitor said. Afrin, like all areas held by pro-Turkish rebels, is the scene of regular targeted killings, bombings and shootings that largely remain unclaimed. Yesterday, an explosive-laden vehicle detonated in "an area crowded with civilians" in the centre of the rebel-held city, said the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights. The explosion hit near a market and military outpost for the hardline Jaysh Al-Islam rebel group, according to the monitor which relies on a network of sources inside Syria. At least two civilians and one Jaysh fighter were among those killed, while 12 other people were wounded, the Observatory said. "Hospitals in Afrin received charred corpses of unidentified persons," the monitor added. — AFP

Bouteflika's brother on trial

ALGIERS: Algerian prosecutors have sought a seven-year jail term for Said Bouteflika, the brother of late president Abdelaziz Bouteflika, on corruption charges, one of his lawyers said yesterday. President Bouteflika was forced to resign in the face of mass protests against his bid for a fifth term in office in 2019, and died in September aged 84. His departure was followed by a string of prosecutions against senior members of his inner circle, most prominently his brother Said who had been seen as the real power behind the scenes after the longtime ruler suffered a stroke in 2013. Said Bouteflika's defense lawyer Salim Hadjouti told AFP that "there is nothing in the case file. It's empty, a political file, not a legal one." He said the prosecution had also sought at least 10 years behind bars for ex-justice minister Tayeb Louh and seven for tycoon Ali Haddad, both close to the former president, as well as jail terms for other defendants. — AFP

China and India lash out

BEIJING: China and India yesterday blamed each other for the failure of high-level talks to ease tensions along a disputed Himalayan border between the nuclear-armed neighbors. The strategically important Galwan river valley between Tibet and India's Ladakh region became a high-altitude flashpoint last year after one of the deadliest troop clashes in decades. Senior military officials from the two countries held their first round of talks in two months, but it ended without any progress. India made "unreasonable and unrealistic demands", Chinese military spokesman Long Shao-hua said in a statement issued by the People's Liberation Army's western theatre command. The statement did not say what the demands were. In response, India's defense ministry said China was "not agreeable" to discussing "constructive suggestions... (and) could not provide any forward-looking proposals". India said both sides have agreed to maintain communications and stability. — AFP

Business

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2021

Qatar not happy with high gas prices: Energy minister

Al-Kaabi reiterates Doha has no plans to return to OPEC

DOHA: Qatar, the world's biggest liquefied natural gas exporter, said yesterday it was not pleased with current global prices which have surged to record peaks. "I am unhappy about gas prices being high," Energy Minister Saad Al-Kaabi told a press conference.

High prices, he said, "are negative for the customer, and the customers being satisfied is the most important thing to me." Kaabi added: "If the customer is unhappy, he's not going to buy."

Low energy prices during the COVID-19 pandemic were expected to wipe out Qatar's budget surplus and lead to a deficit for 2021, the government had forecast in December. Gas prices have since soared while oil has struck multi-year highs, fuelling global fears over spiking inflation and rocketing domestic energy bills. Kaabi said Qatar's production was "maxed out" at 77 million tons per year.

"We have never 'less than' maxed out... we've not gone down, we've not gone up," he said. "We're just consistent. We're producing what we can." European and UK gas prices surged last week to record peaks, energized by fears of runaway demand in the approaching northern hemisphere winter.

Europe's reference Dutch TTF gas price hit

162.12 euros per megawatt hour and UK prices leapt to 407.82 pence per therm on October 6, before easing. Gas demand is also heightened in Asia, particularly from China, a major customer for Qatar. In 2019, the same year Qatar walked out of the OPEC oil cartel, the Gulf emirate said it aimed to increase its liquefied natural gas output to 126 million tons by 2027, based on a rise in its proven reserves. That was at the height of a diplomatic rift and economic blockade-settled early this year-of Doha by its neighbors.

At the press conference where he announced a name change for state-owned Qatar Petroleum to QatarEnergy, Kaabi reiterated that Qatar has no plans to return to the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC).

"It (oil) is not our main business. That's why we opted to get out. Some people made it political," he said. "We see, going forward, we're always going to be more of a gas company and country... it doesn't fit our strategy."

Gas has helped fuel Qatar's rise to become one of the world's richest countries, transforming one of the smallest Arab states and helping it to successfully bid for the 2022 football World Cup finals. — AFP



DOHA: Qatar's Minister of State for Energy Affairs Saad Sherida Al-Kaabi announces that Qatar Petroleum changed its name to Qatar Energy, during a press conference in Doha yesterday. — AFP

Sri Lanka president admits govt 'not delivering' as prices soar

COLOMBO: Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa admitted his government is "not delivering" as shortages persist of food, medicines and other essential items because of a dire foreign exchange squeeze. "The people may have a sense of displeasure towards me and the government for not delivering as they expected," Rajapaksa's office quoted him as saying on Sunday.

"I accept that. Not only me, but all ministers and Members of Parliament should accept it," he told troops in a speech marking the 72nd anniversary of the military's founding. A shortage of foreign currency has hindered the ability of the island nation of 21 million people to import goods, prompting the government to declare a state of emergency and impose rationing. On Friday, the government removed price restrictions on essential foods in a desperate bid to end hoarding of staples such as rice, sugar, lentils and milk powder.

Within hours of Rajapaksa's remarks on Sunday, the government also announced an 85 percent hike in the price of liquefied petroleum gas used in cooking stoves, starting yesterday. The prices of wheat flour and cement were also increased by nearly 10 percent. The state-run Petroleum Corporation said it was asking the government to substantially increase retail prices for all fuels to offset losses of \$350 million in the first eight months of this year.



COLOMBO, Sri Lanka: Workers unload gas cylinders from a truck at a gas outlet in Colombo yesterday. —AFP

Private economists and international rating agencies say Sri Lanka's economic woes predate the pandemic. Foreign reserves were \$7.5 billion when Rajapaksa took office in November 2019 but had fallen to \$2.5 billion by the end of September, raising concerns about Colombo's ability to service its huge foreign debt.

Soon after coming to power, Rajapaksa slashed sales taxes by half and drastically reduced taxes on

corporate profits and personal income, hoping it would boost investments and strengthen the economy. But instead Sri Lanka recorded its worst economic performance last year with a 3.6 percent contraction in output fuelled largely by the fallout from the pandemic on tourism.

The government banned imports of non-essential goods, including vehicles, in March 2020 because of the currency shortages. — AFP

Still no decision on whether IMF chief keeps her job

WASHINGTON: The International Monetary Fund said Sunday it still had not decided whether its embattled chief would keep her job, with the lack of clarity over Kristalina Georgieva's future threatening to overshadow the body's fall meetings this week. An investigation by a law firm has concluded that the Bulgarian managing director manipulated data in favor of China while in a senior role at the World Bank.

The IMF board met again with representatives of the firm, WilmerHale, and with Georgieva over the weekend. The board said in a statement published late Sunday that it made "further significant progress today in its assessment with a view to very soon concluding its consideration of the matter".

It added: "The Executive Board has consistently expressed its commitment to a thorough, objective, and timely review." The 24-member board—which usually makes decisions by consensus—could meet again later, according to two sources familiar with the matter. The week-long fall meetings of both the IMF and the World Bank were also scheduled to start, when Georgieva, 68, is due to speak during a roundtable, as well as give a press conference tomorrow. The storm at the top of the fund could pull focus from topics nominally at the top of the agenda, such as threats to global economic growth and helping countries bounce back from

the COVID-19 pandemic.

WilmerHale's controversial findings center on the drafting of the 2018 and 2020 editions of the World Bank's report ranking countries according to their ease of doing business. The World Bank's ethics committee called in the law firm when the report proved controversial, and led to the resignation of the bank's former chief economist Paul Romer.

WilmerHale found that Georgieva—along with her associate Simeon Djankov, a former Bulgarian finance minister who created the "Doing Business" report, and Jim Yong Kim, then president of the World Bank—pressured staff to change the calculation of China's ranking to avoid angering Beijing.

The push came while bank leadership was engaged in sensitive negotiations with Beijing over increasing the bank's lending capital. Georgieva—who took over as head of the fund in October 2019 — has repeatedly denied the WilmerHale report's conclusions. There was no immediate reaction from her on Sunday. Her fate divides members of the IMF, with Europe and Africa wanting her to stay in post, while the United States and Japan are reluctant to see her continue, according to several sources familiar with the matter.

Several leading economists have come to Georgieva's defense. In a statement released by a PR agency retained by Georgieva, six former World Bank officials called her "a person of the greatest integrity and committed to development". And in an opinion piece published late September in Project Syndicate, an online media outlet, Nobel laureate and former chief economist at the World Bank Joseph Stiglitz called the efforts to impeach Georgieva a "coup" and the WilmerHale report "a hatchet job". — AFP

WB chief calls for debt relief for poor countries

WASHINGTON: Debt loads in low-income countries surged 12 percent to a record \$860 billion in 2020 amid the pandemic, prompting World Bank President David Malpass yesterday to call for a "comprehensive plan" to deal with the issue.

"Sustainable debt levels are vital for economic recovery and poverty reduction," he said. Efforts to combat COVID-19 exacerbated already-rising debt levels, and addressing the problem will require relief from lenders, Malpass said. The situation is urgent since the Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI) launched by G20 nations early last year, allowing countries to defer debt payments while dealing with the pandemic, expires at the end of the year.

"We need a comprehensive approach to the debt problem, including debt reduction, swifter restructuring and improved transparency," Malpass said. World Bank data released yesterday showed the deterioration in debt indicators was widespread and impacted countries in all regions, across all low- and middle-income countries.

"Many developing countries entered 2020 in a vulnerable position, with public external debt already at elevated levels," the report said, and then governments provided unprecedented resources to try to contain the virus and the economic fallout. The World Bank and IMF likewise ramped up support, especially for the most vulnerable countries.

In 2020, net inflows from multilateral creditors to low- and middle-income countries rose to \$117 billion, "the highest level in a decade," the report said. "The risk now is that too many countries will emerge from the COVID-19 crisis with a large debt overhang that could take years to manage," Malpass said in the report. — AFP

IEA chief pleads for 'real global action' on climate

PARIS: As head of the organization that advises countries on energy policy, Fatih Birol has a blunt message to governments ahead of a crucial climate summit: He wants "real global action", not just words. "I want to see a plan," Birol, the executive director of the International Energy Agency, said. In an interview, he discussed his hopes for the two-week COP26 meeting that will be held in Scotland from October 31.

What do you expect from the summit?

"There are three major outcomes I hope to see. The first one is: when we look at the countries today, who made commitments for net zero (emissions) by 2050, even if those commitments were to be fulfilled, we are far from reaching our climate goals. Therefore I would hope to see a reinforcement of those commitments. "Number two, and for me it's the fault line of the entire climate debate, it is financing clean energy investments in emerging countries. More than 80 percent of the emissions in the next 20 years will come from emerging countries, and only less than 20 percent of the clean energy investments go to emerging countries. It is the reason why it's urgent that the advanced economies, including the G20 countries, should make sure that the financing of clean energy investments in emerging countries are one of the key outcomes coming from COP26 meeting.

"The third one is a political one. The government leaders attending the COP meeting should give an unmistakable signal to the investors around the world saying 'you investors if you invest in the old energy sources, you are going to risk losing money. Because we are determined as the governments of this world to bring the world in a clean energy future.'"

Is momentum building up before the COP?

"There's an excellent political momentum around the world from China to the United States, from Europe to African countries. But now this political momentum should need to be transformed into real global action, instead of sporadic government initiatives here and there. "It is excellent to have those targets but I'd like to see the milestones to reach those targets and how they are going to finance (them). "I want to see a plan, an energy plan. Of course it's a good start to have this pledge, to have this commitment to 2050. But how is it going to happen?"

"How do we deal with coal? Today one third of the emissions come from the coal use in electricity generation. This is the main issue. "The problem is in Asia, especially China, India, Indonesia. Two big countries make (up) almost close to half of the world population and in all of them more than 60 percent of the power comes from coal. How do we retire them (coal plants) before the investment is paid back? This is a key issue." — AFP



Fatih Birol

Business



New Nissan KICKS: Style meets technology

Nissan Intelligent Mobility, moving us to a world that's safer, more sustainable and exciting

By Nawara Fattahova

KUWAIT: The pastel light gray color is the first thing that attracted me to the brand new Nissan KICKS, which I was given the opportunity to drive and test its performance and options. The color perfectly matched its adorable design, which suits both families and young drivers.

Driving KICKS was a great experience, with easy handling of the wheel, stability of the vehicle on the road and minimum consumption of fuel. I could control the entire driving experience without taking my hands off the wheel. Getting into the car, the leather-wrapped seats and steering wheel grabbed my attention, with double-stitching and quality finishes making a premium interior.



With new levels of soundproofing and ample interior space, the new KICKS provides a superior comfort experience for every passenger. Apart from having all the modern features that are typically available in most vehicles, a new feature was added to KICKS. The Bose Personal Plus Audio System allows you to feel the playlist like never before through the Bose UltraNearfield speakers built right into the driver's headrest.

Style meets technology in KICKS. You can connect in an instant with compatible smartphone integration. The semi-autonomous driver assistance systems gives you maximum confidence so that you have total control of the vehicle without effort.

Safety
Safety is one of Nissan's priorities. The new KICKS comes equipped with the highest safety standards. The Safety Shield 360° is a set of technologies that maximize your capabilities through semi-autonomous driver assistance systems. Then with the intelligent forward collision warning, KICKS is watching two vehicles ahead, even when you can't see what's going on up front. And when it detects sudden deceleration in front of you, it gives you a warning to slow down.

The intelligent emergency braking can help save you from a potential frontal collision. It monitors your speed and distance between you and the car ahead and can let you know if you need to slow down. It can also automatically engage the brakes to help avoid a collision or lessen the severity of an impact. The intelligent around view monitor has four cameras that give you a 360° birds-eye view of your vehicle, so you can squeeze through city streets or nab a tough parking spot.

Also, the blind spot warning keeps an eye on the blind spot area and gives you a heads-up if it detects a vehicle hiding there. Furthermore, when you're backing out of a space, the rear cross traffic alert watches around the rear of your KICKS, warning you about cars it detects creeping up on you from either side. In addition, the lane departure warning helps make sure you change lanes only when you mean to. If the system detects that you're drifting over, it'll warn you.

KICKS was designed from the Nissan emotional geometry concept. The unmistakable personality of the new KICKS generates an immediate attraction for its lines. Daring, sporty and sophisticated. The double v-motion front grille highlights the personality of the new KICKS. Its imposing chrome front grille, provocative and captivating, with sharp forms, breaks through as you drive.

Expressive design

The new KICKS also leaves its unmistakable signature. Its new rear assembly design is expressive,



dynamic and memorable. Furthermore, it has new LED headlights, new LED taillights, and new fog light design. The new KICKS expresses itself with style at every turn with the 17" aluminum-alloy wheels. And when you turn off the new KICKS, the exterior mirrors fold automatically for added safety.

The new KICKS is compatible with both Apple and Android. Equipped with Siri voice control, Apple CarPlay brings your contacts, favorite messaging apps, Apple Music playlists, Apple Maps, and more on board to your KICKS. Simply plug in your compatible iPhone and go.

With Android Auto, you can keep your eyes on the road and hands on the wheel while using your voice to help you with your day. Ask Google to play your favorite song, navigate home, or respond to a text hands-free. Just say "Hey Google" or long-press the voice control button on your steering wheel.

Customize every detail of your drive with the innovative new digital information display. From caller ID to available safety alerts, you'll always have the information you want at a glance on the crisp, full-color

screen. Also, your smart devices are essential. Keep them charged and connected with the standard USB port, easily accessible by the driver and front-seat passenger.

Spacious

To provide even more space to the spacious new KICKS, it was equipped with the KICKS' 60/40 2nd-row split-folding seats and maximum length of 57", which offers flexible seating configurations to fit your lifestyle. With 432 liters of cargo volume behind the rear seats, KICKS has more than enough room to pack it all in. You can even fit a bike in there with the seats down, thanks to a lower trunk floor. Also, the tight steering angle achieved by the new Kicks allows you to maneuver comfortably in tight spaces and congested streets.

Nissan Intelligent Mobility moves you one step ahead in car that feels like an extension of you, helping you see more and sense more. Nissan Intelligent Mobility is about a better future, moving us to a world that's safer, more sustainable and exciting.



Climate justice: Rich nations dodge finance pledge

PARIS: A hundred billion dollars every year—that's the aid promised more than a decade ago to help developing nations curb their carbon pollution and adapt to devastating climate impacts. But rich countries have not delivered on that pledge, a failure that could undermine a critical COP26 climate summit in Glasgow next month already riven with tensions, experts say.

The context

The vow to gradually ramp up aid for the Global South to \$100 billion (86.5 billion euros) per year by 2020 was first made at the 2009 UN climate summit in Copenhagen. A decade later, wealthy nations were still far from the mark, with the total below \$80 billion in 2019, according to the OECD, which took on the role of tracking climate finance.

If only outright grants and not loans are considered, the amount drops by almost half, say NGOs that monitor money flows. With a Democrat back in the White House, the US has doubled its aid and promises \$11.4 billion per year by 2024, but it's still not enough to close the gap. Canada and Germany are expected to announce enhanced commitments before the Glasgow summit opens on October 31.

China may be the world's top carbon polluter today, accounting for more than a quarter of global emissions, but the United States and other rich countries are historically the main emitters of greenhouse gases. COP26 host Boris Johnson recently reminded leaders at the UN that Britain had pioneered the industrial revolution and was the first country "to send enough acrid smoke into the atmosphere to disrupt the natural order". "We understand that when developing countries look to us for help, we have to shoulder our responsibilities," the British Prime Minister continued.

Stakes high at COP26

One of the biggest challenges facing climate negotiations is a deficit of trust among parties, and climate

finance may be the most fraught issue on the table. "The shortfall in funds is costing lives and livelihoods," Sonam Wangi, chair of the Least Developed Countries (LDC) negotiating bloc, said in a statement. "Developed countries delivering on their decade-old commitment to support vulnerable countries ... will be critical for building trust and accelerating the global response to climate change."

UN climate chief Patricia Espinosa agrees that living up to those promises could be a key for unlocking other logjams. "The complexity of the outcome of COP26 is that it is not one or two or three decisions, it has to be a package," she told journalists.

"If we can get a good perspective regarding the \$100 billion, that would ... give us the means to make progress on some other issues."

\$100bn a floor, not a ceiling

In 2009, \$100 billion sounded like a lot of money, but the recent crescendo of heatwaves, flooding caused by extreme rainfall, drought and evermore powerful storms has made it clear that it's not nearly enough, experts agree. The sum seems especially paltry compared to the multi-trillion dollar Covid recovery packages that have been cobbled together to prop up rich economies.

"A combined global fiscal response to the crisis of close to \$12 trillion begs a question," climate finance experts commissioned by the UN wrote in a recent report.

"If a pandemic can provoke such a rapid and far-reaching response, at scale, surely the world can muster the necessary will to act with similar decisiveness and urgency in response to the climate crisis?" "The \$100 billion target therefore needs to be seen as a floor and not as a ceiling," the added.

Former Maldives president Mohamed Nasheed, representing the Climate Vulnerable Forum of 48 countries home to a billion people, said financing should be broadened to include sovereign debt relief. "We are so threatened that we might not have an island or a country much longer, so it's hardly possible for us to pay the debt if we are not around," he said.

"Is it not then reasonable for climate vulnerable countries to call upon debt holders to restructure their debt?" he added, saying he would be taking this proposal to the Glasgow talks.—AFP

Spreading customer awareness on finance regulations vital: KFH

KUWAIT: Acting Group Deputy General Manager - Products at Kuwait Finance House (KFH), Nehal Al-Mosalem emphasized the significance of educating customers and the public about various banking services and products provided to them as she believes in the importance of enhancing financial education for different society categories and achieving the best benefits from banking products and services.

To enhance public awareness on all types of personal finance operations, Al-Mosalem added that finance transactions comprise two types: consumer finance which covers personal needs e.g., purchase of cars, furniture or acquiring beneficiary services such as educational and health services as well as other consumer purposes. The second type covers residential needs e.g., purchase, build or renovate private residence.

She stated in a press release, as part of supporting the banking awareness campaign "Diraya", that consumer finance is a 5-year mid-term personal finance not exceeding KD 25,000. Housing finance is a long-term personal finance for a maximum 15-year period and a cost not exceeding KD 70,000.

Al-Mosalem added that to regulate the provision of personal credit facilities in a way that enables the customer to benefit from such facilities without being exposed to default risk, and to avoid burdening the customer with financial obligations, the Central Bank of Kuwait has enacted a set of controls that banks must adhere to when providing finance, whether for employees or retirees, considering the financial conditions of each of these two categories.

Yellen says 'confident' US will implement global minimum tax

WASHINGTON: US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen said Sunday she was "confident" Congress would pass legislation to implement a global tax agreement in the United States enacting a minimum international tax on big corporations. The OECD-brokered deal, which sets a global tax of 15 percent, is aimed at stopping international corporations from slashing tax bills by registering in nations with low rates. "I am confident that what we need to do to come into compliance with the minimum tax will be included in a reconciliation package," Yellen told ABC's "This Week," referring to the federal budget bill currently being debated in Congress.

The multi-trillion dollar spending package is the

cornerstone of President Joe Biden's economic agenda. Budget reconciliation is a political move that would allow Democrats, who control the House of Representatives and Senate by a slim majority, to act without Republican votes. "I hope that... it will be passed and we will be able to reassure the world that the United States will do its part," Yellen said, praising the "historic" agreement. The 136 nations now on board with the global tax agreement represent 90 percent of global gross domestic product.



Nehal Al-Mosalem

Under the deal, they will be able to generate around \$175 billion in additional revenue. The OECD said countries are aiming to sign a multilateral convention in 2022, with an eye on implementing the reform in 2023. Each country in the deal must now incorporate the agreement into its own legislation. However, some questions remain, such as the Biden administration's ability to get the reform through Congress. Democrats want to include the measure in the \$3.5 trillion infrastructure spending package, but their majority in the Senate is so small that the party cannot afford any defections among their ranks.—AFP

She indicated that total monthly financial obligations shall not exceed 40 percent of the customer's net monthly salary for employees or 30 percent for retirees.

She highlighted the bank's role in providing financial advice regarding customer's needs and obligations and the risks of the increased financial obligations, providing all the information about the finance contract, clarifying the details of the finance process, e.g. rate of return/discount rate to the finance amount, number of

installments, details of each installment and other information before signing the contract with the customer. In addition, the bank should give the customer a period of two days to review the contract and read the terms and conditions carefully, so that the customer would be aware of his rights and obligations under the contract before signing it.

KFH continues its endeavor to support "Diraya" campaign which was launched based on the Central Bank of Kuwait initiative in cooperation with the Kuwait Banking Union.

The campaign "Diraya" aims to spread awareness concerning customer's rights in personal finance operations, the mechanism to file complaints concerning banking services and diversified banking cards, the methods to avoid being exposed to fraud operations and spread awareness on the risks of encashments and high-risk investments. Also, it aims to highlight the banking sector role in general, and the banking products provided by the private sector, by introducing a set of instructions and information on regular basis through social media and various e-channels of the bank.

Business

ABK announces successful issuance of KD 50m subordinated tier 2 bonds

Ahli Capital, Kamco Invest, Markaz and NBK Capital joint lead managers

KUWAIT: Al-Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK), as the Issuer, and Ahli Capital Investment Company K.S.C.C. "Ahli Capital", Kamco Investment Company K.S.C.P. "Kamco Invest", Kuwait Financial Centre K.P.S.C. "Markaz", and Watani Investment Company K.S.C.C. "NBK Capital," serving as the joint lead managers, announced in a statement the successful issuance of KD 50 million subordinated tier 2 bonds, for a period of 11 years, callable after 6 years, offering a rewarding return for holders of both fixed interest and variable interest bonds. The issuance was oversubscribed, reflecting the investors' trust in the quality of the issue, the reputation of ABK, and the effectiveness of the joint distribution of the lead managers. This marks ABK's first Kuwaiti dinar denominated bond issuance.

The KD25 million fixed rate bonds offer 4 percent interest, and the KD 25 million floating rate bonds provide a margin of 2.25 percent over the discount rate. The interest will be paid in two instalments annually on the 10th April 2022 and the 10th October 2021, with the first coupon payment date commencing on the 10th April 2022.

ABK's Subordinated Tier 2 bonds were rated "BBB" (Investment grade) with a stable outlook by Capital Intelligence. The rating reflects the strength of the Bank's solid capital ratios, good loan asset quality, very strong loss reserve coverage, comfortable liquidity and pro-active and robust risk management.

Commenting on the occasion, ABK's Group CEO, George Richani, said: "This transaction has been met with great interest by investors in view of the excellent reputation of all parties involved. ABK's clear business strategy along with the professional expertise of our lead arrangers, has helped in closing the issuance in a



short period. Strong demand from a great number of institutional and individual investors reflects the market's confidence in the Kuwaiti banking sector in general, and in ABK and all the joint lead managers in particular. We are confident that this issuance will contribute to enhancing ABK's capital adequacy and support our growth plans."

Fawzy Al-Thunayan, Chairman of Ahli Capital, said: "We are pleased to be completing this bond issuance and witnessing such a high level of interest. The success

of this transaction is attested to the robust investor demand and further underlines our commitment to paving the way for future issuances that will ultimately strengthen local and regional debt markets. ABK's solid reputation and clear growth strategy have been a catalyst in closing the bond issuance in record time."

Faisal Sarkhou, CEO of Kamco Invest, said: "With great pride, we assist ABK in their inaugural Kuwaiti Dinar denominated bond issuance, which saw strong investor interest and was oversubscribed. The success

of the bond issuance is a testament to the collaboration of all parties involved. We are encouraged by the healthy investor response as this is a strong indicator of Kuwait's positive economic outlook and the investor community's confidence in the country and the banking sector."

Commenting on the bond issuance, Ali Khalil, CEO of Kuwait Financial Centre (Markaz), said: "Our collaboration with ABK is built on previous successful transactions of which the last were the current bonds. It is gratifying that the issuance was widely received by our clients and local institutions signifying the high quality of the issue and reflecting investors' confidence in and appetite for local issuances. At Markaz, we look forward to supporting different sectors in obtaining the required financing to develop its operations through managing its sukuk and bonds issuance. We have structured the first BOT-Backed bonds in Kuwait, the first sukuk for a Kuwaiti real estate company and the first high-yield bonds. We are pleased to be part of ABK's first Kuwaiti Dinar issuance building on our longstanding relationship and commitment to supporting the nation's businesses and economy."

Nabil Maroof, CEO of NBK Capital said: "The bond issuance reflects our confidence in the local market while further developing the local debt capital market. We are honored to have assisted ABK in this successful transaction."

In closing, Richani added: "I would like to extend our appreciation to the Central Bank of Kuwait, the Capital Markets Authority (CMA) and our joint lead arrangers, Ahli Capital, Kamco Invest, Markaz and NBK Capital for the effective role they played in this transaction's success."

Sheraz Hussain wins KD 4,000 in Burgan Bank's Value Account draw

KUWAIT: Burgan Bank yesterday announced Sheraz Gul Hussain as the winner of the Value Account KD 4,000 draw. The winner expressed his excitement of winning the cash prize of KD 4,000. Dedicated to offer the best in-class services, Burgan Bank's Value Account presents customers with exceptional features which were specifically

designed to suit the needs of expatriates living in Kuwait. Account holders will be able to enjoy matchless benefits that include receiving a free credit card for one year, application for a loan, in addition to a chance to enter the quarterly draw to win KD 4,000 as well as other discounts from selected merchant stores.

Burgan Bank will continue presenting exclusive services and draws with an aim of exceeding customers' expectations while offering them chances to win valuable cash prizes all year round.

Opening a Value account is simple, interested Individuals with salaries starting from KD 150 and above are eligible to open a Value Account.

CBK bonds and related Tawarruq

KUWAIT: The Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) announced the most recent issues of CBK bonds and related Tawarruq at a total value of KD 240 million for three months with a rate of return at 1.125 percent.

AL-SHALL WEEKLY REPORT

Liquidity in Kuwait real estate market edged up in August

KUWAIT: The latest released data by the Ministry of Justice -Real Estate Registration & Authentication Department- indicate an increase in real estate market liquidity during August 2021 versus July 2021 (excluding the artisanal activity and the coastal strip system), whereby the total value of contracts and agencies increased by 15.5 percent from July to August, rising from KD 373.1 million to KD 431 million. When compared to August 2020 (KD 268.7 million), liquidity increased by 60.4 percent.

Trading activity during August 2021 was distributed between KD 418.2 million in contracts and KD 12.8 million in agencies. Number of real estate deals in August scored 1,237 of which 1,190 contracts and 47 agencies. Al-Ahmedi Governorate had the highest share of real estate deals of 66 percent, representing 817 deals. Hawally Governorate share was about 11 percent, the second highest representing 136 deals. Al-Jahra Governorate had the lowest share of 2.5 percent and representing 31 deals.

The value of the private residential activity scored KD 341.9 million, rising by 35.8 percent compared with KD 251.8 million in July 2021. Its contribution percentage rose to 79.3 percent of total real estate trading versus 67.5 percent in July 2021. The liquidity domination of the private residential activity is the result of converting residential areas into investment ones. The monthly average trading value of private residential activity in the last 12 months scored KD 242.2 million. August trading value was higher by 41.2 percent than the 12-months-average, whereby the number of deals for this activity rose to 1,132 deals versus 642 deals in July 2021. Accordingly, the average value of private residence activity deal scored KD 302,000 versus KD 392,000 in July 2021, a decline of -23 percent.

The value of residential investments activity decreased from KD 115.8 million in July 2021 to KD 61.9 million in August 2021 (-46.5 percent), in addition to a decrease in its contribution to total liquidity (14.4 percent in August versus 31 percent in July). The monthly trading average value of residential investments during the last 12 months scored KD 55.3 million, indicating that the trading value during August 2021 was higher by 12 percent compared with the last 12 months' average. Its deals rose to 93 deals compared with 74 deals in July 2021. Therefore, the average value per deal for residential investments scored KD 666,000 versus KD 1.6 million in July 2021, representing a drop of -57.5 percent.

Commercial activity trading value increased to KD 19.8 million or by 260.3 percent compared with KD 5.5 million in July 2021. Its contribution to total real estate trading value rose to 4.6 percent in August versus 1.5 percent in July 2021. The trading value of commercial activity in August 2021 was -8.3 percent lower than the last 12 months' average of KD 21.6 million. Moreover, 9 deals were counted in August compared with 6 deals in July 2021. The average value per deal for August 2021 scored KD 2.2 million versus KD 916,000 for July 2021, a 140.2 percent increase. Also, 3 deals were conducted in regards to the warehousing activity totaling KD 7.4 million during August 2021.

When comparing total August 2021 trading with

August 2020, we note that real estate markets liquidity increased from KD 268.7 million to KD 431 million, a 60.4 percent increase as mentioned previously. The rise was driven by the increase of the private residential activity by 89.3 percent, while the commercial activity dropped by -6.2 percent and the residential investments activity dropped by -3.3 percent.

National dialogue

In our view what was published about the national dialogue topics is not correct but is close to being correct because these topics have been addressed by more than one party and they have been neither corrected nor denied. As far as we know, each side of the dialogue presented 4 topics representing its demands on the other side.

The two sides are the parliamentary majority as one party and the government and its supporters as the other party. The first party demands, ie, the parliamentary, are forgiveness for politicians-in-exile and other bloggers, an amendment to the electoral law, an amendment to laws restricting freedom of opinion and a fundamental Cabinet reshuffle that includes a greater number of majority representatives.

The government party demands include the return to and acceptance of National Assembly's regular sessions according to the de facto formation to approve the Public

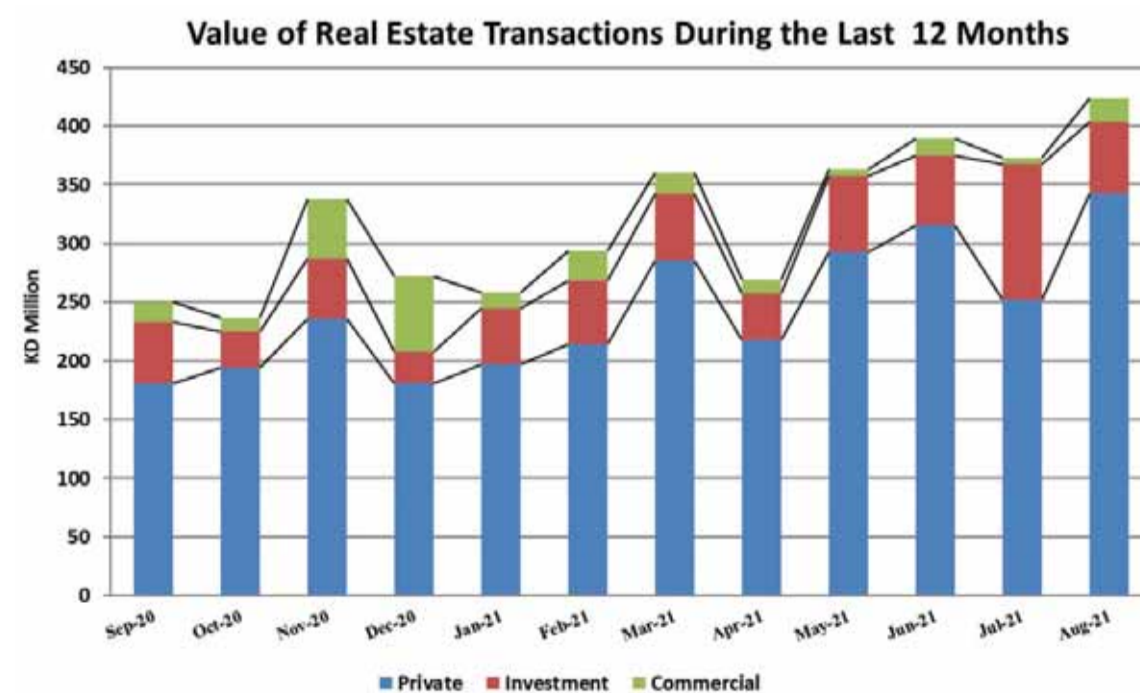
and fragile political settlement to be followed by one of two possibilities. The first is positive and it will not be achieved without a fundamental Cabinet composition amendment and the necessity of presenting a serious and binding program for financial and economic reform.

The second is negative, ie, the government's quota formation remains dominant, passing the Public Debt Law and withdraw from the future generations' reserve are tolerated to buy more time for the old and existing political and financial approach, or to repeat the scenario after the government borrowing in 2017 and then the future generations' reserve will face the same fate as the general reserve.

We still believe that the success chances for the current political settlement project and the national reform project in its comprehensive sense could have been much better if the change of administration preceded it. We wish the three months were utilized to affect a fundamental government change and present its reform program. But as usual, the opportunity was missed. In light of the country's tense situation, we cannot but stick to any hope because it is the future and fate of a country that may live its last chance are at stake. It is not the victory or defeat of this party or that.

Trading at Boursa Kuwait

Kuwait Clearing Company issued its report regarding



Debt Law, agreement on the orderly withdrawal from the future generations' reserve, and the acceptance of the immunity of the Prime Minister from interrogations until the end of the current session.

In principle, dialogue under the current unprecedented tense situation in the country is required but describing the current dialogue as national, if its topics are true, is incorrect. The proposal is nothing more than a political settlement project to move from the state of complete paralysis and tranquility to motion, even if with minimal progress. The homeland's real crisis is in its liquidity drain, its economy's inability to create sustainable job opportunities for its citizens, and the transformation of concern about the inability to finance the necessary needs into a daily matter because it is linked to the oil prices' movement and production reflecting the extent of addiction to it, which is unfortunate. If the dialogue succeeds, as we understand it, it will be nothing more than a temporary

"Trading Volume according to Nationality and Category" for the period 01/01/2021 to 30/09/2021, published on the official website of Boursa Kuwait. The report indicated that individual traders still represent the largest trading group with an increasing contribution. They acquired 46.4 percent of total value of sold shares (44.5 percent for the first 9 months of 2020) and 45.7 percent of total value of purchased shares (43.4 percent for the first 9 months of 2020). Individual investors sold shares in the amount of KD 4.412 billion and purchased shares in the amount of KD 4.345 billion, the highest net seller of KD 67.301 million.

The second largest contributor to market liquidity is the institutions and companies sector, with a rising contribution. It acquired 26.3 percent of total value of purchased shares (26 percent for the same period of 2020) and 25.4 percent of total value of sold shares (24.4 percent for the same period of 2020). This sector purchased

shares worth KD 2.501 billion and sold shares worth KD 2.415 billion, with the only net purchase of KD 85.874 million.

The third contributor is the clients' accounts (portfolios) and its contribution declined. This sector captured 23.8 percent of total value of sold shares (24.7 percent for the same period of 2020) and 23.8 percent of total value of purchased shares (25.6 percent for the same period of 2020). This sector sold shares worth KD 2.262 billion and purchased shares worth KD 2.261 billion, with a net selling of KD 773 thousand.

The last contributor to liquidity is the investment funds sector and its contribution also dropped. It acquired 4.5 percent of total value of sold shares (6.4 percent for the same period of 2020) and 4.3 percent of total value of purchased shares (5 percent for the same period of 2020). This sector sold shares worth KD 427.834 million and purchased shares worth KD 410.034 million, with a net seller value of KD 17.800 million.

Boursa Kuwait continues to be a local Boursa with Kuwaiti traders forming the largest trading group. They sold shares worth KD 8.164 billion capturing 85.8 percent of total sold shares (81.8 percent for the same period of 2020) and purchased shares worth KD 8.095 billion acquiring 85.1 percent of total value of purchased shares (81 percent for the same period of 2020), representing the most selling group of KD 68.913 million.

Percentage share of other foreign investors contributing to trading activity out of total purchased shares value scored 12.5 percent (14.4 percent for the same period of 2020), purchasing shares worth KD 1.193 billion and selling shares worth KD 1.073 billion, 11.3 percent of total sold shares (14.6 percent for the same period of 2020); thus the only-group with net purchase of KD 120.048 million. GCC investors' share of total value of sold shares scored 2.9 percent (3.6 percent for the same period of 2020) worth KD 280.687 million, while their contribution to purchased shares was 2.4 percent (4.6 percent for the same period of 2020), worth KD 229.553 million, with a net sale of KD 51.134 million.

Relative distribution among nationalities has changed, distributed among 85.4 percent Kuwaitis, 11.9 percent traders from other nationalities and 2.7 percent GCC traders, compared with 81.4 percent, 14.5 percent and 4.1 percent for Kuwaitis, other nationalities and GCC traders respectively, for the same period of 2020. This means Boursa Kuwait remains local with a tendency of an increased share contrary to the trends of last year. The appetite of traders outside the GCC region is greater than that of GCC traders, and the majority of trading remains attributed to individual traders.

Number of active accounts between the end of December 2020 and the end of September 2021 decreased by -23.1 percent, compared with a noticeable increase of 90.3 percent between the end of December 2019 and the end of September 2020. Number of active accounts at the end of September 2021 was at 19,223 accounts or 4.7 percent of total accounts versus 19,080 accounts at the end of August 2021 or 4.7 percent of total accounts for the same month, rising by 0.7 percent during September 2021.

The weekly performance of Boursa Kuwait

The performance of Boursa Kuwait for last week was more active, where the traded value, traded volume, number of transactions and the general index (AlShall Index) increased. AlShall Index (value weighted) closed at 603.7 points as of last Thursday, showing an increase by 0.1 points or by 0.02 percent compared with its level last week. It remained higher by 115.9 points or by 23.8 percent compared with the end of 2020.

Business

Al-Sayer wins 14th prestigious cycle of the Arabia CSR Awards

Award regarded as the 'Green Oscars of the Middle East'

KUWAIT: Al-Sayer achieved the first place in the 14th prestigious cycle of the Arabia CSR Awards organized by Arabia CSR Network (ACSRN) on 4th October 2021 in Dubai. Regarded as the 'Green Oscars of the Middle East,' the awards recognized the corporate social responsibility (CSR) principles and implementation strategies of 40 green champions from across the region. The winners were representing both the public and private sectors from nine Arab countries and under 13 diverse categories. They were adjudged based on international benchmarks such as the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC) Principles, the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) Standards and the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) model and the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals.

The awarding ceremony was attended by Al-Sayer representatives: Eng Ibrahim Al-Fouzan, Senior Business Director, Toyota Service & Eng Nehad Al-Haj Ali, Group Manager, Corporate Excellence. Eng. Fouzan said that "Al-Sayer continuous participation in Arabia CSR award is an affirmation of our commitment to the ongoing improvements on all our daily practices covering the four main pillars of Economy, Society,

Nature and Wellbeing. We thank Arabia CSR Network for this event which recognize entities and organizations for their efforts towards enhancing sustainability measures."

Al-Sayer was announced as the winner of 13th Arabia CSR Awards in the Middle East in Automotive business category. According to Mohamed Naser Al-Sayer, Executive Board Member & Chairman of Sustainability Committee: "We are proud to be among the 40 'green champions' in the Middle East winners who were adjudged based on international benchmarks such as the UN Global Compact principles, Global Reporting Initiative Standards, the European Foundation for Quality Management model and the UN Sustainable Development Goals based on Al-Sayer Sustainability Report and our commitment to encourage and dare our stakeholders to embrace sustainability in all elements of their day-to-day lives by working together and to create lasting, positive change for everyone today and in the future".

Habiba Al-Mar'ashi, President & CEO of ACSRN in her opening speech said, "We are at a point in time when we truly have the most important choice to make - to continue living and operating our businesses in an



unsustainable way - or to embrace the sustainable development goals and create a better and more resilient world for ourselves and our children and their children. There is a real risk today that because of COVID-19, the existing inequalities in our societies

will be further exposed and will increase significantly. We cannot and should not let this happen. Long-term and sustainable recovery requires concerted efforts, comprehensive strategies and both public and private investment".



NBK opens advanced self-service branch at Khairan Square

KUWAIT: As part of its continuous efforts to provide the most advanced, top-notch banking services, National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) announced the opening of its newest advanced self-service branch at Khairan Square, which features exceptional banking services and solutions that enable customers to conduct all their transactions quickly and easily, using state-of-the-art interactive devices.



Mohamed Al-Othman

NBK Customers will be able to conduct their transactions by themselves 24/7, as the branch embraces ATM, CDM and ITM. In addition, the bank is offering a conference room for customers to meet with officers, through NBK Mobile Banking, NBK Call Center, or by scanning the QR code at the branch and booking an appointment, from 10 am to 10 pm, all week round.

The new branch also features screens displaying all new and revamped services, and available offers, as well as meeting spaces, all encompassed in a modern design to ensure customer convenience and a unique banking experience. The new branch underscores NBK's care to ensure customers' convenience while conducting their

banking transactions; starting from the design embracing the latest technologies, and the display screens available all over the branch.

On this occasion, Mohamed Al-Othman, GM - Consumer Banking Group at National Bank of Kuwait said: "The new branch reflects our keenness to provide top-notch and exceptional banking services to our customers to ensure offering them banking solutions that are on par with the latest international standards. This comes in line with our efforts to implement the Group's digital transformation roadmap, which aims to strengthen our position as a leading provider of digital banking services."

Khairan Square Branch located in Khairan, in conjunction with The Grand Avenues branch, are considered as a revolution to the concept of traditional banking branches. Starting from the design and the mechanism of providing interactive services and adopting state-of-the-art technological solutions, these branches represent a qualitative leap in the way of providing banking services and a milestone in our digital evolution journey, he added.

Al-Othman highlighted that NBK strives to provide the utmost benefit to its customers through its strategy aiming to create integration between its branch network covering all areas in Kuwait, and its advanced digital offerings. This comes in line with its digital transformation roadmap, which opens the way to offer customers a wider spectrum of products and services.

NBK continues to strengthen its leading position in the banking sector, boasting the largest domestic banking network in Kuwait with 68 branches all over Kuwait, in addition to a large POS network exceeding 15,000 terminals, including the largest market share of NFC-enabled POS terminals in Kuwait. In addition, NBK has the largest owned ATM network comprising 355 ATMs, including more than 116 CDMs.

bullet" that could reverse climate change. "But there are some really interesting and exciting applications that are emerging," he said. These include using AI to analyze data on deforestation and melting sea ice, to better predict which areas will be affected next.

Apps and search engines

Skeptics may argue that a single person can only have a limited impact, but the eco-conscious have various apps at their disposal to monitor their personal carbon footprints. Various apps estimate the emissions produced by a car or plane ride, while others allow shoppers to scan items and see information on how eco-friendly they are. Google last week announced

Gulf Bank announces Al-Heed as winner of cash prize worth 12 times his salary

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank conducted its ninth monthly Salary Package draw of the year to announce the winner for September 2021. The lucky winner, Naser Al-Heed, will claim a cash prize worth 12 times his salary. The draw was held on Monday at Gulf Bank's main branch, in the presence of a representative from the Ministry of Commerce & Industry.

Mohammad Al-Qattan, the General Manager of Consumer Banking at Gulf Bank, said: "We would like to congratulate Naser Al-Heed, this year's ninth Salary Package draw winner. We would also like to wish all our clients the best of luck in our upcoming monthly draws, in addition to our annual draw for the grand prize of 100 times the winner's salary. Gulf Bank's Salary Account is the only account in Kuwait that offers cash prizes to reward its clients, in addition to exclusive offers that are specifically tailored to meet our clients' needs."

Throughout 2021, Gulf Bank's Salary Package offers clients a wide range of exclusive offers, including the ability to choose between an interest-free loan or a cash prize of up to KD 300, and a free credit card, with these offers being valid for workers in both the public and private sectors. Gulf Bank is also providing special offers for frontline workers in appreciation of their continuous efforts in combating the pandemic.

Frontline workers' salary package

Gulf Bank recently tailored a special offer for employed Kuwaiti frontline workers who wish to transfer their salaries to Gulf Bank. Upon transferring their salaries, these clients will immediately receive a set of benefits, including a cash gift of up to KD 300, or an interest-free loan of up to KD 25,000 or a special car loan offer from approved showrooms. They will also be eligible to receive a Visa or MasterCard credit card with all annual fees waived for the first year, a free MasterCard World card (upon KD 5,000 expenditure). The frontline offer also consists of other benefits, including a free safety deposit box for a period of one year upon opening the account, free concierge services, and a customer segment upgrade. The new frontline offer is open to Kuwaiti employees working in the Fire Brigade, National Guard, Civil Aviation (including Kuwait Airways) and in the following Ministries: Health, Defense, Information and Interior.

Salary package - Exclusive offer

As part of the vast range of services and benefits

tweaks to its search tools to show drivers the most fuel-efficient routes and display emissions information for flights. The search engine Ecosia, meanwhile, uses the profits from its ads to pay for reforestation, with more than 135 million trees planted so far.

Remote work

Has the shift towards remote work during the pandemic been good for the environment? It's still unclear, say researchers. Last year the huge drop in commuting was hailed as a contributor towards a drop in global emissions, as much of the world hunkered down.

But signing in online still means employees use energy at home-and in the winter, heating individual

available to Salary Account customers, Gulf Bank offers its clients the opportunity to choose the most appropriate benefits from a wide selection of attractive options. With the 2021 Kuwaiti salary offer, new customers who transfer their salaries to Gulf Bank are automatically enrolled in the monthly draws, giving them the chance to win cash prizes of up to 12 times their salary. Customers are also enrolled in a yearly draw of Kuwait's largest salary prize, a cash prize of up to 100 times the winner's salary.

Gulf Bank's Salary Account also gives new customers the opportunity to receive either a cash gift of up to KD 300 upon transferring their salaries to Gulf Bank, or an interest-free loan of up to KD 25,000. Customers must have a minimum salary of KD 500 and are eligible for the offer following their first salary transfer to Gulf Bank. Customers can also enjoy additional benefits like a Visa or MasterCard credit card free of charge for a year. They can also apply for a loan of up to KD 70,000 with a repayment period of 15 years, or a consumer loan of up to KD 25,000.

Salary account draws

Gulf Bank conducts monthly and annual Salary Account draws, in which all salaried customers who transferred their salaries to Gulf Bank in 2019, 2020 and 2021 are automatically enrolled. During the monthly draws, Salary Account customers have the chance to win a prize of up to 12 times their salaries and can even win up to 100 times their salaries in the annual draw. It is worth noting that Gulf Bank is the only bank in Kuwait that offers its salaried customers the opportunity to win sums of these amounts on a monthly and annual basis, as a reward for transferring their salaries to Gulf Bank.

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. Gulf Bank supports Kuwait Vision 2035 "New Kuwait" and works with the different relevant parties to achieve it.

Digital technology: Friend or foe against climate change?

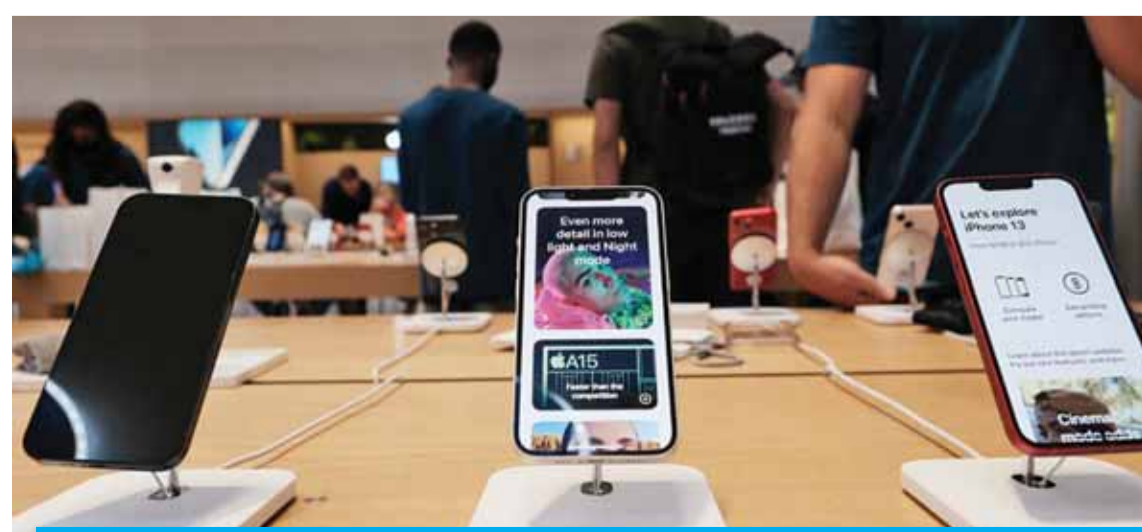
PARIS: From the energy that goes into making smartphones to the fact that even emails create carbon emissions, the world's internet addiction comes with costs to the climate. But could digital technology be part of the solution to climate change, as well as the problem?

Ahead of next month's COP26 climate talks, AFP looks at five ways in which tech could help to limit the impact.

Artificial intelligence

Among the many items on the COP26 agenda, countries are preparing a roadmap for using artificial intelligence (AI) to fight climate change. AI relies on complex calculations by high-powered computers that can eat up vast quantities of energy. Training a single AI algorithm system can use nearly five times the emissions produced by a car over its lifetime, according to University of Massachusetts researchers.

But AI is already helping to make a wide range of industrial processes more energy-efficient, simply by making calculations that humans can't. Consultancy PwC estimates that greater AI use in four key sectors of the economy, including agriculture and transport, could cut global emissions by four percent. Peter Clutton-Brock, co-founder of the Centre for AI and Climate, said artificial intelligence was not "a silver



PARIS: The International Energy Agency found that if all white-collar workers stayed home one day a week, global emissions could be cut by 24 million tons or roughly equivalent to London's emissions in a year.

dwelling could be less efficient than a single office for a whole team. The International Energy Agency found that if all white-collar workers stayed home one day a week, global emissions could be cut by 24 million tons-roughly equivalent to London's emissions in a year. Workers with long car commutes could certainly cut their carbon footprints by staying home, the IEA said. But it concluded that drivers with a daily commute of less than six kilometers (3.7 miles) might actually use more energy by staying home with the heaters on.

Cloud computing

For years it was feared that the giant, energy-hungry data centers the internet depends upon could become a major contributor to climate change. But a study published in the journal Science last year suggests these fears have not been realized, thanks to unexpected leaps in efficiency.

By 2018 data centers were still only consuming about one percent of the world's electricity, despite rocketing demand for data storage. Tech giants' desire to cut their electricity bills is partly to thank for this.

Google, for instance, used AI to reduce the costs of cooling its data centers by 40 percent.

Smart cities

The United Nations estimates that cities account for 70 percent of greenhouse gas emissions. And with the population forecast to grow ever more urban, designing energy-efficient cities is a top priority. The Internet of Things (IoT) — connecting objects with sensors that can communicate and make intelligent decisions—is already being used in urban design. A pilot project in Amsterdam, for example, used IoT to guide drivers to empty parking spaces, reducing the time spent driving around the city searching for one. — AFP

Lifestyle | Features



Osmair Camargo Candido, 60, known as Fininho, teaches future necropsy professionals at a school in Sao Paulo.



Osmair Camargo Candido, works as a gravedigger at a cemetery in Sao Paulo, Brazil.

Gravedigger and philosopher: The double life of Osmair Candido

For Osmair Candido, who has worked as a gravedigger for the past 30 years, the pandemic was worse than a nightmare, an ordeal the Brazilian overcame only with the help of a few old friends-Kierkegaard, Kant and Nietzsche. The soft-spoken 60-something-whose occupation necessitates spending most of the day in a small cemetery in Sao Paulo is not just a laborer but also a man of letters, a philosopher. During the pandemic he says he sometimes cried, overwhelmed by the rampant death, but adds that philosophy kept him from fainting with distress and fatigue like his colleagues near the graves he was digging.

"Before we only had one burial a week," but at the worst of the pandemic "it was up to 18 a day," he tells AFP, comparing the scene to something from Dante. With the help of the philosophers Heidegger, Kierkegaard, Kant, Hegel and Diderot, he was able to "accept death." But above all it was the works of Nietzsche and the ancient Greeks that helped him "a lot in the most difficult moments." When Candido left his house each morning, he did not know whether he would return from the Penha Cemetery "alive or dead, contaminated or not." Each evening he took "one, two, three

or four showers."

Six months ago, "the hearses were arriving back-to-back and there were 100 to 200 coffins piled up waiting to be buried." "Nobody wanted to touch them, to take the risk," says Candido, who adds that he never caught Covid-19. The worst was the burial of a teenager: "From behind a wall, I heard a woman scream. The scream came before her son's body." She then clutched his coffin, preventing his burial.

Master of philosophy

Candido has buried more than 3,000 people in his three-decade gravedigging career. "During all of these years, I have seen very few people prepared for death. Death requires a lot of respect, attention and silence," he says. Wandering among the graves in the wooded cemetery, Candido recounts how he came to philosophy. Birdsong fills the air. Faded, plaster Virgin Mary statues, archangels, and weathered yellow photos of loved ones serve as the backdrop. Cats, signatures of cemetery, abound.

It all began, he says, when he took German classes at Uniban university in Sao Paulo, after being a boxer and win-



Osmair Camargo Candido, 60, known as Fininho, works as a gravedigger at a cemetery in Sao Paulo, Brazil. — AFP photos

dow washer. He stopped his studies, however, to become a gravedigger. Today he earns about 3,000 reais (\$540) a month. "I loved literature, but I couldn't buy books," he recalls. "So they gave me some. And then I decided to study philosophy. I really liked it."

Thanks to a scholarship he was finally able to graduate with a master's degree from Mackenzie Presbyterian University in

Sao Paulo, during which time he communicated via email with French philosopher Jean Baudrillard. If he is now able to stare death in the face, it is only because he is already living a second life-Candido is now also a philosophy teacher. In the evening, wearing a white lab coat emblazoned with the National Association of Necropsy emblem, Candido teaches ethics to young autopsy technicians.

They take notes as the slender Black man, who has white hair and rimmed glasses, quotes from Aristotle and the likes. Candido, who usually gets up at 3:00 am, is also currently finishing a three-volume book on philosophical thoughts, two of which are devoted to the pandemic. Several publishing houses have said they want to publish it.

Adoration for Kant

"Philosophy has made me grow up, get out of myself, understand and consider others and other ideas. It was a big step," Candido says. While he "adores" Emmanuel Kant, the gravedigger had a bit of trouble with his "Critique of Pure Reason." "I read it up to 100 times, until I understood it! In Portuguese, but some parts in German," he says. Candido believes that it was thanks to the philosophers that he did not have to go to "psychiatric hospitals for treatment" as his fellow cemetery workers did. "I studied philosophy, loved philosophy and so I will die," he says with a smile. — AFP



Tunisian photographer Jacques Perez (wheelchair) attends the launch of his exhibition 'Memories before Oblivion' at Khreiddine (Hayreddin) Palace in the Medina of Tunisia's capital Tunis. — AFP photos



People view the photographs of Tunisian photographer Jacques Perez.



A visitor views the photographs of Tunisian photographer Jacques Perez.



People view the photographs of Tunisian photographer Jacques Perez.

Jameela Jamil feels 'sick of the Internet'

The 35-year-old actress has hit back at her online critics after she received a producing credit on boyfriend James Blake's latest album, 'Friends That Break Your Heart'. Jameela - who previously hosted the BBC Radio 1 Chart Show - tweeted: "A lot of mostly women insisting I couldn't possibly have actually worked on my boyfriend's music, and that he must have just credited me to be nice... I was a DJ for 8 years, and studied music for 6 years before that. You are part of the problem of why women don't pursue producing (sic)" Jameela subsequently urged women within the music industry to support each other. She said: "Didn't expect this conversation to blow up the way it did, or to see so much support. Saddened to see how many women in music have faced so much gaslighting over their skill and input and sending you love. We have to AT LEAST do better for each other because these are BLEAK TIMES (sic)" Jameela also took to Instagram to address the issue, revealing James "had to fight me to take credit on this album because I was so preemptively sick of the internet. Especially after this same thing happened on his last record that I worked for countless hours on." The TV star added: "In the end I took the credit I deserved because of how important it is for women who work on music to visibly exist in the space of music production, and because I would want any of you who follow me to take ownership of what is rightfully your achievements. "I hope you're taking credit for your work wherever you are in the world right now. I hope you know that if you're not being believed over your achievements... that it's not a reflection of you... it's a reflection of people who are so underachieving, cowardly and insecure that they can't fathom that you could be impressive. And it happens at every level in every industry. Even to me. Even when I don't credit myself, my boyfriend just quietly credited me. (sic)"



It's all in the eye: Tunisia's veteran photographer Jacques Perez

"It's the eye that makes a photograph, not the camera," says 90-year-old Jacques Perez, who has forever retained his curiosity for his homeland Tunisia. An exhibition of his work named "Souvenirs d'Avant l'Oubli" (Memories before Oblivion) is being held until the end of October in a palace in the medina of Tunis, the old city where he was born and still lives. "I didn't study to take photos-no need. It's above all about seeing. I like to look at 360 degrees and show what I saw," he said. "This was not a vocation, it came on its own." Perez said he began photography at the age of 11 or 12: "I was lucky to have a German mother and an Italian grandmother who gave me illustrated

magazines" and educated his eyes.

After 15 years of amateur photography alongside a teaching job, he was commissioned by a major Tunisian publisher to create a photo book of Sidi Bouzid, a poor but picturesque blue-and-white city, that launched his career. In the exhibition, all his works are "inhabited" by people, Perez said. "People speak to me, their faces intrigue me, I would like to know what's behind them." This idea is at the core of the work of Perez, a photographer of international repute, from the United States to France. He "is a humanist photographer," like those who inspired him, including Robert Doisneau, Henri Cartier-Bresson and Elliot Erwitt, said exhibition curator Hamideddine Bouali.

'It's all intuitive'

Perez has only ever wanted to photograph his own country, in all its diversity. "I feel concerned only by Tunisia," he said. The 70 photos in the exhibition cover the breadth of his work: the sea and fishermen, the daily life of Tunisians, the old arts and crafts. Some of the most striking images are portraits of women, including "Lady of Chebika" and "Lady with a Lion". Both were spontaneous portraits by Perez, who likes to interact with his subjects and has shunned "stolen" images or those shot from far away with telephoto lenses.

In the Lady of Chebika, wrinkled with age, "her face interested me but I did not know if I could approach her," Perez said.

"I got closer, she did not react. I got closer again and she gave me a sign of assent. I took the picture." "It's all intuitive," he said, stressing that "photographers have this ability to predict the next move". He himself is surprised that he was able to capture the moment when a drop fell from the jar of a water carrier. It's all about "patience", he said, knowing how to "wait for the right moment without provoking it". But he remains humble, stating that "I do not take myself seriously. I am neither the father, nor the cousin, nor the grandfather of the Tunisian photo. I am just a photographer in Tunisia." — AFP

Lifestyle | Features



Street vendors Jung Jung-soon (left) and her husband Lim Chang-joo (right) make dalgona, a crisp sugar candy featured in the Netflix smash hit series Squid Game, for which they were hired to be on set to make during production.



Street vendor Lim Chang-joo stamps an umbrella shape onto a dalgona.



Street vendor Lim Chang-joo makes a dalgona for wrapping. — AFP photos

Sweet taste of Squid Game success for South Korean candy couple

Simple, sweet, and fictionally fatal: The stallholder who makes the traditional South Korean children's treat featured in the global cultural phenomenon "Squid Game" and once associated with post-war poverty has hit a real-life jackpot. The Netflix smash hit series features a group of South Korea's most marginalized and deeply in debt, who compete in children's games for the chance of 45.6 billion won (\$38 million), with lethal consequences. In one particular challenge, the contestants try to cut out shapes including a star and an umbrella from a crisp sugar candy called a dalgona, without it cracking-

and those who fail are killed. The life-or-death game was inspired by director Hwang Dong-hyuk's experience growing up in Seoul in the 1970s: But then, the prize for a child who successfully removed the shape was another free dalgona. Hwang was always determined to win an extra treat and remembers employing multiple tactics in his efforts, including licking the candy to loosen the shape and using a needle heated over briquettes-techniques repeated in the show's nail-biting dalgona challenge scene. "I would make the dalgona maker extremely perplexed by succeeding on the most difficult



Street vendor Jung Jung-soon makes a dalgona.



In this picture wrapped dalgona are seen at the street stall of Lim Chang-joo and his wife Jung Jung-soon.



Customers wait in line as street vendor Lim Chang-joo (back left) and his wife Jung Jung-soon (front left) sell dalgona.

shape of umbrella," the director recently said in a YouTube video.

But the candy was a difficult prop to manage on set as it softens easily, especially during South Korea's humid rainy season, so Hwang and artistic director Chae Kyung-sun hired "dalgona experts" to have the candy freshly made on location. Those specialists were Lim Chang-joo and his wife Jung Jung-soon, who produced between 300 and 400 dalgona over three days of filming. Now, their humble roadside stall in Seoul's theatre district little more than an umbrella, an awning and their equipment-is one of the hottest spots in the South Korean capital.

Orders for the 2,000-won (about \$1.70) sweets start piling up as soon as it opens, and before long, customers face six-hour waits, with some giving up and leaving empty-handed. In about 90 seconds, Lim melts an individual portion of sugar above a burner, before adding baking soda, flat-

tening it into a circle, and punching it with the customer's preferred shape. He offers a wider range of choices than the four forms in the show-and has a newly added "N" for Netflix. "I never imagined it would become this popular," Lim told AFP of the series, adding that his life has now become "super hectic". "Of course, I'm happy because my business is doing well and how dalgona has become famous in other countries." He hopes they make and eat their own dalgona, he added.

Financial crisis

Historians say dalgona first emerged in the 1960s when the South was still assailed by post-war poverty while desserts-such as ice cream or chocolates-were not widely available and prohibitively expensive. Very sweet, with hints of nuts and bitterness, the candy was hugely popular, with many vendors setting up their stalls near schools. Lim and Jung started their dalgona opera-

tion with 30,000 won after closing their tailoring business of 20 years around the time of the 1997 Asian financial crisis. The sweet endured throughout the South's rise to become the world's 12th-largest economy, following decades of rapid economic growth during the authoritarian rule of the post-war period.

And "Squid Game" is the latest manifestation of the ever-widening influence of the country's popular culture, epitomised by K-pop sensation BTS and the Oscar-winning movie "Parasite". "South Korea has always been at the nexus of the modern and pre-modern, Western tools and Eastern ways, and preserving the past while sacrificing everything for the future," said Michael Hurt, who teaches cultural theory at the Korea National University of Arts. "Dalgona is a nexus item in a nexus culture." — AFP

Clooney feels philosophical about growing old

The Hollywood star turned 60 in May and George accepts his career has moved into a new phase over recent years. He explained: "The only thing you can do that's dumb is try to hold on to things that you aren't anymore, right? You know, there was a picture, I was in Italy and somebody took a picture of me - I think it was a paparazzi picture on the boat, and I saw this old, grey-haired guy on the boat and I was like 'who is that?' And it was me! "If you don't really have some understanding of time and ageing, then I think you'll constantly try to do things that you know are past your due date." George also admitted that his life has changed markedly since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. The award-winning star - who is married to barrister Amal Clooney - told Sky News: "It changed everybody, right? Suddenly, we think Zooming is OK, I haven't seen anybody in person." George also explained how the pandemic has changed his life as a filmmaker. George - who has four-year-old twins Ella and Alexander with Amal - said: "It changes a lot, it's harder as a filmmaker because you're not able to communicate in the same way because you're wearing all this crap (PPE). "But you know, it's a funny thing, it also reminds us of how resilient we are - I just saw a picture of all these kids during the London Blitz, and they're all wearing those huge gas masks, 500 kids with those gas masks, and you go 'well, if they could do it, we can do it - we'll figure it out!'"



Iggy Azalea can't wait for Halloween

The 31-year-old rap star - who was born in Australia, but moved to the US during her teens - has taken to Twitter to reveal she's already looking forward to the annual celebration on October 31. Iggy - who has a 17-month-old son called Onyx Kelly with her ex-boyfriend Playboi Carti - wrote on the micro-blogging platform: "I just got back from a haunted house and I had SoOOoO much fun!!!! "I'm ready for it to be Oct 31st already [pumpkin emoji] (sic)" Iggy also revealed via Twitter that she's



currently having a trampoline built for her baby boy. The blonde beauty admitted she loves online shopping and is looking forward to the Cyber Monday sales on November 29. She tweeted: "Why am I already excited for cyber Monday sales and it's still October lmao something is wrong with me. (sic)" Asked if there's something she's particularly keen to buy, Iggy replied: "New outdoor furniture." Asked whether Onyx has a big playground, she shared: "They have one walking distance from my house so he plays on that but I'm building him an in ground trampoline." Meanwhile, Iggy previously insisted that she's enjoying her life as a single woman. The "Work" hitmaker split from Carti last year, but suggested she's not living her life with any regrets.



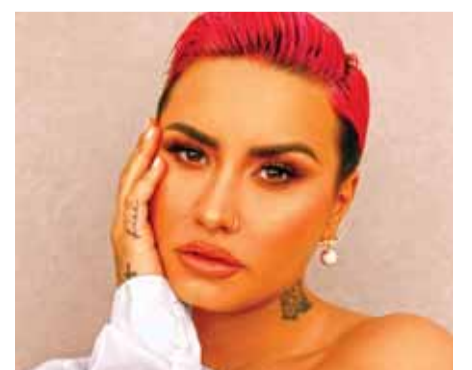
Stewart felt under pressure playing Princess Diana

Kristen Stewart felt the weight of responsibility playing Princess Diana in "Spencer". The 31-year-old actress portrays the late princess in the new psychological drama film, which focuses on Diana's decision to leave the Royal Family, and Kristen has admitted that she felt under pressure in the role. She shared: "I felt I wanted to protect her. I had to just not focus on other people's idea of her, and really focus on my own. And that in itself was just so distinct and specific to me." Kristen studied Diana's behavior and mannerisms in preparation for the role. And she admits that the late princess - who died in Paris in 1997, aged 36 - was "unpredictable" in many ways. She told the BBC: "I think to do her justice is to allow her to be impulsive. "Anything I watched her in, whether it was an interview, or even in a still photograph, it always feels unpredictable. Like you don't know what's going

to happen. "And it's because she has this vulnerability and this raw emotion that she cannot conceal. There's no way to do a perfect impression of that. "You have to feel it, and it has to be yours. So I think I just had to relax." The movie touches on Diana's eating disorder and struggles with her mental health. Reflecting on the project, Kristen shared: "The movie is very surreal. I think that when you go through extreme trauma in life, there are times where you feel crazy. I never felt the implication of Diana, losing it. "There are there are times where you are at odds with communication and therefore feel because of this muzzled energy, a bit locked in your own head. "And she spoke about that. I mean, that was something that she talked about all the time. And so I felt to be honest, it felt truer than the truth." — Bang Showbiz

Lovato shares new song in memory of their late friend

Demi Lovato has dedicated their new song to a friend who died of a drug overdose. The 29-year-old pop star has taken to social media to dedicate their new single, 'Unforgettable', to Tommy Trussell III, who died in October 2019. Demi - who has battled drug and alcohol addiction - wrote on Twitter: "Two years ago I lost someone who meant so much to me. His name was Tommy and he was such a beautiful, special man. I wrote this song the day after I found out that he had lost his battle with addiction. This disease is extremely cunning and powerful.. (sic)" Demi's post featured a 20-second clip of the new track. The singer also revealed that proceeds from the record will go to The Voices Project, a grassroots recovery advocacy organization. Demi wrote online: "I'm beyond grateful and proud to announce all net proceeds of this song will



be going to the Voices Project founded by @RyanForRecovery if you know anyone who is struggling please call 1-800-662-HELP (sic)" Demi previously paid a tribute to their late friend, who passed away at the age of 31. Demi wrote on Instagram at the time: "Devastated. Please hold your loved ones tight. Tell them they are special and that you love them. Make sure they know it. RIP to my boo @sirtruss. (sic)" The "Sorry Not Sorry" hitmaker also described addiction as a "terrible disease".

Sports

Bills beat Chiefs in grudge match, Bucs down Dolphins

Falcons beat Jets in London; Patriots bounce back

LOS ANGELES: The Buffalo Bills avenged their defeat in last season's American Conference title game on Sunday with a convincing 38-20 NFL victory over the Chiefs in Kansas City. Buffalo quarterback Josh Allen out-duelled counterpart Patrick Mahomes in a game that included a weather delay of more than an hour, torching the vaunted Chiefs offense for 315 yards and three touchdown passes.

Allen also rushed for 62 yards and a TD as Mahomes delivered one of his worst NFL performances. He threw two interceptions, the second — off the hands of Tyreek Hill — was returned 26 yards for a third quarter touchdown that swelled the Bills' lead to 31-13. Mahomes also gave up a fumble late in the fourth quarter that extinguished all hopes of an unlikely Chiefs rally.



Cowboys thump hurting Giants

Outstanding Brady

The defeat dropped the Chiefs to 2-3, the first time since 2015 that they have been below .500. To make matters worse, Chiefs running back Clyde Edwards-Helaire departed the game with a right knee injury in the third quarter. With the Chiefs languishing in last place in the AFC West division, Buffalo improved to 4-1 with a their fourth straight victory to solidify their hold on the top spot in the AFC East.

The Tampa Bay Buccaneers, who beat the Chiefs in last season's Super Bowl, also improved to 4-1 with the help of another outstanding performance from quarterback Tom Brady and a record-setting day for receiver Antonio Brown.



KANSAS CITY: Josh Allen #17 of the Buffalo Bills leaps over the defense of L'Jarvis Snead #38 of the Kansas City Chiefs during the second half of a game at Arrowhead Stadium on Sunday in Kansas City, Missouri. — AFP

There was no letdown for the Super Bowl champion Bucs as they returned home after Brady's emotional win against his old team, New England, in Massachusetts last week. Brady completed 30-of-41 passes for 411 yards and five touchdowns in a 45-17 victory over the Miami Dolphins, despite injuring his right thumb early in the contest. Two of those scoring passes were to Brown, who became the fastest player in NFL history to reach 900 receptions when he made his first catch on Sunday, off a 10-yard first-quarter toss from Brady.

Brown, 33, reached the mark in his 143rd NFL game to beat Hall of Fame receiver Marvin Harrison, who did it over 149 games in a 13-season career with the Indianapolis Colts. "It's pretty amazing," Brady said of Brown's feat. "I've played with some great quarterbacks," said Brown, an 11th-year pro. "(Ben) Roethlisberger. Tom Brady. It's a blessing."

Mike Evans also caught two touchdown passes for the Bucs, who trailed the Dolphins 10-7 in the first quarter before Brown and Brady heated up. On a third and three yards play from their own 37-yard line, Brown

beat Pro Bowl cornerback Xavien Howard up the middle, caught a short pass from Brady and raced for a 62-yard touchdown. In the second quarter Tampa Bay capped a 77-yard drive with a four-yard touchdown pass from Brady to Brown in the end zone.

Elsewhere, Matt Ryan completed 33-of-45 passes for 342 yards and two touchdowns to spark the Atlanta Falcons over the New York Jets 27-20 at Tottenham Hotspur Stadium in London. Greg Joseph kicked a 54-yard field goal on the final play to give Minnesota a 19-17 home victory over winless Detroit.

The Patriots bounced back from their loss to the Bucs as Nick Folk kicked a 21-yard field goal with 15 seconds remaining to give New England a 25-22 victory at Houston. In Cincinnati, Green Bay's Aaron Rodgers threw for 344 yards and two touchdowns in the Packers' 25-22 over-time triumph over the Bengals.

It wasn't decided until after five consecutive missed field goals starting with 2:12 to play in the fourth quarter. Mason Crosby finally connecting on a 49-yarder after three misses to win for Green Bay. Bengals quarterback Joe Burrow was taken to hospital as a precaution after the game with a possible throat contusion. Burrow, who took a hard hit early, completed the game, throwing two touchdowns and two interceptions.

Cowboys cruise

It was a bruising day for the New York Giants, who were beaten 44-20 by the Dallas Cowboys and saw star running back Saquon Barkley depart on a cart in the first quarter with an ankle injury. Giants quarterback Daniel Jones took a helmet-to-helmet hit from Jabril Cox and after struggling to stand up left the game with what was later confirmed as a concussion, and wide receiver Kenny Golladay was ruled out with a knee injury after halftime.

Elsewhere, the Arizona Cardinals maintained the league's only unbeaten record with a 17-10 victory over the San Francisco 49ers and the Chargers ended the Cleveland Browns' three-game winning streak with a 47-42 victory in a shoot-out in Los Angeles. — AFP



CHICAGO: Luis Robert #88 of the Chicago White Sox slides in to score a run as the ball gets away from Martin Maldonado #15 of the Houston Astros at Guaranteed Rate Field on Sunday in Chicago, Illinois. — AFP

White Sox stay alive in playoffs, Red Sox push Rays to brink

LOS ANGELES: The Chicago White Sox stayed alive in the Major League Baseball playoffs, roaring back from four runs down to beat the Houston Astros 12-6 in their American League division series on Sunday. Facing elimination at their home ballpark, the White Sox rallied once, lost the lead and rallied again to cut the deficit in the best-of-five series to 2-1.

The Astros had arrived in Chicago eyeing a sweep after winning the first two games in Houston. Houston's Kyle Tucker doubled in two runs in a three-run second inning and smacked a two-run home run in the third as Houston took a 5-1 lead.

But Yasmani Grandal hit a two-run homer off Houston starter Luis Garcia to trim the deficit to 5-3. And Leury Garcia hit a three-run home run off Astros reliever Yimi Garcia to put the White Sox up 6-5. Houston responded, Alex Bregman driving in a run with two out in the fourth inning to knot the score at 6-6. In the bottom of the fourth, Jose Abreu put Chicago back in front with a run-scoring single that sent Luis Robert to third base.

Houston brought in relief pitcher Zack Greinke, who induced Grandal to ground out. Astros first baseman Yuli Gurriel threw to home plate on the play, but the ball deflected off Grandal's arm, allowing Robert to score. Houston argued the play in vain and Abreu, who had advanced to third on the play, scored on a hit from Eloy Jimenez.

"I think we made a statement," Grandal said after the White Sox padded their lead with three runs in the eighth. "We were down by four, but you've got to play the whole game. We've been doing this all year. We had big comebacks and the fact that we did it there, I feel like we have the momentum back — and that's all we need."

Rays on brink

In Boston, Christian Vazquez crushed a walk-off two-run home run over the Green Monster outfield wall to lift the Red Sox to a 6-4, 13-inning win over Tampa Bay that pushed the defending American League champion Rays to the brink of elimination.

The victory gave Boston a 2-1 lead in the best-of-five series, making Monday's game at Fenway Park a must-win for the Rays. The Red Sox withstood a trademark late challenge from the Rays, who rallied for two runs in the eighth inning to tie the game, then squandered chances in the 10th and 11th innings. Boston also got a lucky break in the top of the 13th, when it appeared that a hit from Tampa Bay's Kevin Kiermaier had scored Yandi Diaz from first base with a hard-hit ball to the warning track. But the ball bounced off Boston rightfielder Hunter Renfroe and back over a low rightfield wall, and after the umpires discussed it, Diaz was sent back to third base and Kiermaier to second as the play was ruled a ground-rule double. MLB rules stipulate a ball that deflects off a player and into foul territory is a ground-rule double.

So it was still tied 4-4 when Vazquez came to the plate against Rays relief pitcher Luis Patino in the bottom of the 13th and delivered a towering shot. "I was just watching all the at-bats before me," Vazquez said. "He was throwing a lot of fastballs. He's got a heavy fastball so I was ready for that fastball in the middle — to drive it." — AFP

Expansion Kraken expect to be competitive from day one

LOS ANGELES: Jason Botterill spent seven seasons playing in the National Hockey League including stints in non-traditional hockey markets like Atlanta and Dallas where they had to build contenders from the bottom up. So when the NHL's newest expansion franchise, the Seattle Kraken, went looking for front office talent, Botterill was a natural choice to be their new assistant general manager.

"I was a part of Atlanta the first year. I have seen different organizations from their infancy," Botterill told AFP. "Compared to Atlanta we (Kraken) had more players available at the expansion draft. I saw us develop loyal passionate fans in the Dallas area. We are at a big advantage in our market here. There are already a lot of knowledgeable hockey fans in Seattle. They have had a successful junior team here for long time. That will help us from the get go."

The Kraken are the NHL's 32nd team and will compete in the Pacific Division. They open the regular season today in Las Vegas against the Golden Knights. When it came to brand new teams in the NHL, losing used to be the norm. That is until the Golden Knights rewrote the playbook for expansion teams and made it all the way to the Stanley Cup finals in their inaugural 2017-18 season. So will the Kraken be like the Golden Knights or fall back into what expansion teams used to be and take their lumps like the 1974-75 Washington Capitals, who won just eight games all season. Botterill says what the Kraken lack in star power this season they will make up for in depth and versatility.

'Versatile line-up'

"You look at some of the players we acquired (Jordan) Eberle, (Jaden) Schwartz and (Mark) Giordano. We were looking for guys with good high end hockey sense," Botterill said. "We don't have a (Connor) McDavid or a (Nathan) MacKinnon. It will be important to find depth throughout our lineup. We tried to put a premium on the versatility of players to create this lineup." Seattle's roster is a mixture of veterans and young talent. The player with the most experience is Giordano, who spent 15 years with the Calgary Flames. The 38-year old veteran is looking forward to a fresh start with a new team.

"It's a pretty cool experience for all of us," Giordano told NHL.com. "Most years you come back to a team, there's 13, 14 guys that you played with the

year before. This year, none of us have played together." Former Edmonton Oiler forward Eberle said training camp was much different than other teams he played on and it came with an added level of excitement. "All the guys were here earlier than I've seen groups on other teams come in," he said. "We were all here two weeks in advance of camp. That bonding was huge."

Former Philadelphia Flyers general manager Russ Farwell said the Kraken wasted no time getting their name out in the community. "The city is really excited," said Farwell, who runs the major junior Seattle Thunderbirds club. "They have done a wonderful job of marketing the team. You see their logo everywhere. I think they will make it work."

Fairweather town

Once the initial novelty of a new NHL franchise wears off, Farwell said the Kraken success will hinge on whether they are able to deliver a winning team. "This is a bit of a fairweather town. It depends on how they do," Farwell told AFP.

Farwell was surprised the Kraken didn't make more deals around the time of the expansion draft. Botterill said the Kraken, who paid a \$650 million expansion fee, made up for a lack of trades by signing free agents. "Ron (GM Francis) did a great job of overseeing that," Botterill said. "It is a different environment from when Vegas came in. We didn't have the same number of trades as Vegas, but we were more aggressive from our free agency standpoint."

"It is difficult to predict with an expansion team but with the resources we had, the players we got in free agency and players we got in the expansion draft, we think we are going to be competitive from day one."

Season ticket holder John Harrison said the Kraken have taken the city by storm. "This city is crazy for the Seattle Seahawks and eventually it is going to be the same thing for Kraken," said Harrison. "They will have a rabid fan base which will support them and even help them win games."

Harrison said two things working in favor of the Kraken are a downtown rink and Seattle's reputation as one of the US's major tech hubs. "Downtown Seattle is growing and getting more pricey. The season ticket base is people who work for Amazon and Google. People in their 30s, living downtown," he said. — AFP



CALGARY: In this file photo taken on September 29, 2021 the Seattle Kraken celebrate after defeating the Calgary Flames 2-1 in shootout during an NHL preseason game at Scotiabank Saddledome in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. — AFP

Sports

Messi's Argentina thrash Uruguay, Brazil lose 100% qualifying record

Neymar's return fails to inspire the Selecao

MONTEVIDEO: Lionel Messi opened the scoring as Argentina thumped neighbors Uruguay 3-0 in an entertaining World Cup qualifier on Sunday. Goals from Rodrigo De Paul and Lautaro Martinez rounded off a successful night for Lionel Scaloni's team in Buenos Aires as they maintained their unbeaten start to the qualification campaign and closed the gap at the top of the single South American table to six points behind Brazil, who drew 0-0 with Colombia.

"We played a great match, I think we're improving a lot," said Messi. "It was a tough match and we had to win it. Uruguay sit back and are dangerous. Once we scored the first goal we started to find spaces and many appeared."

The first half was a classic end-to-end thriller with both sides hitting the woodwork before Argentina opened the scoring. Uruguay's Luis Suarez looked lively early on and had three gilt-edged chances, all from the corner of the six yard box. Two, including an acrobatic volley, were parried by goalkeeper Emiliano Martinez, while his third effort came back off the near post.

For Argentina, Giovanni Lo Celso skewed wide from 10 yards and Lautaro Martinez was narrowly unable to direct De Paul's cross on target. Lo Celso then broke from deep and rounded goalkeeper Fernando Muslera, but his shot crashed down off the bar onto the goalline before bouncing away to safety.

Messi had a low shot from the D

deflected inches past the post and then broke the deadlock in bizarre fashion. His chip into the box with the outside of his left boot was missed by Nicolas Gonzalez, whose presence seemed to deceive Muslera, the goalkeeper also missing the ball as it nestled in the bottom corner.

Muslera flirted with disaster moments later when he dribbled past Martinez in his area but Uruguay's nerves were rattled and Argentina doubled their lead with another scrappy goal. Messi's pass was deflected into the path of Martinez

Messi in the last minute.

Neymar returns

The returning Neymar could not inspire Brazil to victory as hosts Colombia ended their perfect start to the qualification campaign in Barraguilla. The Selecao had won their first nine qualifiers, scoring 22 goals to lead the table by eight points before kick-off.

Coach Tite's side are still almost certain to qualify for next year's finals in Qatar as they maintain a 13-point lead over fifth-placed Colombia, with the top four progressing automatically. "Neymar did well as the team's leader," said Tite, but "he was well marshalled" by a Colombian side that has "more technical qualities than other teams."

Brazil started brightly and dominated the opening quarter as Colombia goalkeeper David Ospina made saves from Neymar and Lucas Paqueta. Neymar's cute reverse pass then put Paqueta in one-on-one with Ospina but on the stretch he poked the ball wide. Neymar was at the heart of much of Brazil's attacks but when he teed up a teammate on the edge of the area, it was defensive midfielder Fred who appeared on the scene, and it was no surprise to see him blaze over the bar from 18 yards.

Colombia grew more adventurous in the second half and Brazil goalkeeper Alisson Becker saved efforts from Mateus Uribe and Juan Quintero, while Radamel Falcao had the ball in the net



BUENOS AIRES: Argentina's Lionel Messi (left) celebrates with Argentina's Nicolas Gonzalez after scoring against Uruguay during the South American qualification football match for the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 at the Monumental stadium in Buenos Aires on Sunday. —AFP

20 minutes from time but it was disallowed for a foul on Militao. Raphinha almost fashioned a winner for Brazil when he picked out fellow substitute Antony with a perfect in-swinging delivery, only for Ospina to make a brilliant reaction save from point-blank range.

It was a good day for the bottom two teams in the group as Bolivia beat Peru 1-0 and Venezuela defeated Ecuador 2-1. Ramiro Vaca's goal eight minutes from

time gave Bolivia victory despite fellow substitute Henry Vaca sent off on 75 minutes. Goals from Darwin Machis and Eduard Bello either side of a penalty from Enner Valencia were enough to give Venezuela a rare win. In the late match, goals from English-born Ben Brereton and Mauricio Isla gave Chile, who had Charles Aranguiz sent off, a 2-0 win over Paraguay, who had Omar Aldieret dismissed. — AFP



Bolivia, Venezuela, Chile win

whose miss-kick fell kindly for De Paul to stroke home. Martinez then had a chance to put the game to bed in first half stoppage time but shot straight at Muslera. He did secure the win, though, on 62 minutes when left unmarked at the back post to tap in De Paul's cross.

The second half did not match the thrill-a-minute first but Argentina controlled the game. It could have been worse for Uruguay but Muslera made a fine double save from Angel Di Maria and

Formula one heads into unknown with title race balanced

ISTANBUL: The Turkish Grand Prix may have been a dull, processional race but it was also a taut game of worn-tire poker and after it ended, the players continued to try to bluff each other. With six of the 21 rounds to race, Max Verstappen of Red Bull has retaken the lead in the drivers' championship by six points over reigning champion Lewis Hamilton of Mercedes. The battle has not been so close since 2016 when Hamilton edged Mercedes teammate Nico Rosberg by five points.

After the spray had settled, the two teams started spinning. The mental games were also internal after Hamilton ended the race blaming Mercedes tacticians for his lowly fifth place. Much of race was driven under a cloud of uncertainty with rain constantly threatening but never falling heavily. Only the two drivers who started with grid penalties, Hamilton and Carlos Sainz of Ferrari, drove with consistent aggression.

Verstappen was content to plod round in second and grab the points he needed. The Dutchman said his greatest challenge was "staying awake". Mercedes won with Valtteri Bottas and picked 36 points to 33 by Red Bull. But the Austrian team had two podium finishers, with Sergio Perez third, and Verstappen took the lead in the drivers' championship.

"I think we managed to maximize the result," said Verstappen before suggesting he was the underdog. "I wish I had a bit more pace in the car," the Dutchman said.



ISTANBUL: Red Bull's Dutch driver Max Verstappen spins off during the qualifying session at the Intercity Istanbul Park in Istanbul on October 9, 2021, ahead of the Formula One Grand Prix of Turkey. —AFP

"But we are in the fight and we keep fighting, and we'll see in the coming races how competitive we are going to be."

Hamilton was furious after a late tire change which he thought cost him two places. "We shouldn't have come in," he said over team radio. "I told you!" Later he became a good team player. "We win as a team and we lose as a team. Overall, the car was great this weekend," the Briton said. "If we can continue to perform like that over the next few races, we'll be in a good position come the end of the season."

It is difficult to judge form for the final six races. The next three - in the United States, Mexico and Brazil - were not held last year. Qatar and Saudi Arabia are new and the last one, Abu Dhabi, has been redesigned to create more spectacle on a circuit with a reputation as boring. "I've stopped trying to anticipate whether it's historically a strong race for us or not," said Mercedes boss Toto Wolff.

Red Bull boss Christian Horner liked his team's chances. "We're going to Austin, where we should be in the mix, then

Mexico and Brazil, where we've always been strong," he said. "We don't know anything about Qatar, we don't know anything about Jeddah. Same with Abu Dhabi," he added. "So you can say it's 50-50."

'We're fighting'

Mercedes has dominated in Austin since 2014, taking pole every time and winning every year except 2018. "Austin's one of Lewis's strongest circuits and we know that he's very, very quick around there," said Horner.

At altitude in Mexico City engines lose performance, which, has usually favored Red Bull's better aerodynamics. Verstappen won in 2017 and 2018 and only lost to Hamilton in 2019 because of a penalty. The Dutchman won the last race in Brazil in 2019 but Hamilton has won there twice.

Verstappen also won in Abu Dhabi last year, but Hamilton won the previous two. Mercedes has won seven straight drivers' and constructors' titles, but Red Bull, and their engine supplier Honda, seem to have closed the gap. — AFP

World Cup in 2022 'will be my last', says Neymar

RIO DE JANEIRO: Brazil star Neymar said Sunday that the 2022 World Cup will be his last as he "doesn't have the strength to put up with more football". "I think it will be my last World Cup," the 29-year-old told DAZN. "I will play it like it is the last because I don't know if I will still have the mental strength to put up with even more football."

Neymar, who has played in two World Cups and is his country's second top scorer of all time behind Pele, will be 34 when the 2026 tournament

rolls around. "I will do everything to get to the 2022 World Cup in great shape and will do everything to win for my country, to fulfill my biggest dream since I was little," added the Paris Saint-Germain star.

Neymar played in the 2014 World Cup on home soil and scored four goals. However, he was to suffer a back injury before Brazil were humiliated 7-1 by Germany in the semi-finals. Four years later, in Russia, Brazil were knocked out by Belgium in the quarter-finals.

So far, his international honors have been limited to the 2013 Confederations Cup and an Olympic gold medal in Rio in 2016. Injury ruled him out of the 2019 Copa America which Brazil won as well as the 2021 edition where Argentina triumphed in the final. — AFP



BARRANQUILLA: Brazil's Neymar (left) and Colombia's Yerry Mina are seen during their South American qualification football match for the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 at the Metropolitan stadium in Barranquilla, Colombia, on Sunday. — AFP

Classifieds

Hospitals & Clinics

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

Clinics

| | |
|---------------|----------|
| Kaizen center | 25716707 |
| Rawda | 22517733 |
| Adaliya | 22517144 |
| Khaldiya | 24848075 |

NOTICE
October 10, 2021

Mr. Patson Paul Cardoz, son of Mr. Cardoz Paul, resident of H No 236 Araddi, Parra Bardez, Goa and Ms. Astrid Albertina Dias, daughter of Mr. Agnel Eutismo Dias, resident of Mandur Dongrim, Dactem Bhatt, PO Box Neura Ilhas, Goa both Indian nationals presently residing in Kuwait, have given notice of intended marriage between them under the Foreign Marriage Act, 1969. If anyone has any objection to the proposed marriage, he/she may file the same with the undersigned according to the procedure laid down under the Act/Rule within thirty days from the date of publication of this notice. Communications in this regard can be made by Email (cw2.kuwait@mea.gov.in) / letters / telephonic calls (00965 - 22550171, 00965 - 22533125).

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

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Mbappe completes France comeback against Spain to win Nations League



MILAN: French players celebrate with the trophy at the end of the Nations League final football match between Spain and France at San Siro stadium in Milan on Sunday. — AFP

MILAN: Kylian Mbappe fired France to Nations League glory on Sunday after netting the winner which completed a comeback from a goal down to beat Spain 2-1 in Milan. Mbappe struck with 10 minutes remaining to win the title for world champions France after Karim Benzema had levelled just two minutes after Mikel Oyarzabal put Spain into a 64th-minute lead. The win will ease some of the pain created by an early exit from Euro 2020 at the hands of Switzerland and highlighted just how powerful France are going forward.

"I really wanted to win a trophy with France, and now it's done," said Benzema, who returned the France fold ahead of the Euro, to M6. "We showed strength of character, because this team is very strong, never gives up and we have proven it today. It is the sign of a great team not to panic, to be patient and to wait for the right opportunity."

Les Bleus came out on top of a match at the San Siro which came to life after Oyarzabal slid home the opener. As well as the two goals from their superstar

attackers, France had other opportunities to score through Mbappe before a frantic finish in which Spain launched an assault on the French goal. Didier Deschamps can thank Hugo Lloris the match didn't go into extra-time after the France captain pulled off a fine stoppage time save to deny Yeremi Pino a late leveller. Earlier Italy took third place after beating Belgium 2-1 in Turin through goals from Nicolo Barella and Domenico Berardi.

France ease the pain

France started the strongest and should have been ahead with five minutes on the clock when Benzema was put through perfectly by Paul Pogba. The Real Madrid striker tried to dribble around Spain goalkeeper Unai Simon but went too far

wide and ended up aimlessly hitting a low pass across goal which was easily cut out by Cesar Azpilicueta.

Two minutes later a lightning passing move led to Aymeric Laporte, playing against the country of his birth for the first time since obtaining Spanish nationality, cutting out a low cross. There was little more in the way of goalmouth incident in the opening period as Spain held off France's attacking by keeping a stranglehold on possession — 64 percent in the first half.

A previously niggly contest suddenly got going in the 63rd minute when a sweeping French passing move started by Benjamin Pavard ended with Theo Hernandez smashing a first-time finish against the crossbar. Just

seconds later Spain took the lead through Oyarzabal, who swept home a precision left-foot finish to the delight of the Spanish fans gathered behind that goal. However no sooner had those supporters stopped celebrating than France were level through Benzema, who curled home an outstanding strike after being fed by Mbappe.

Mbappe then had two chances in quick succession to put France head, first chipping way over with Simon off his line in the 68th minute and then hitting a tame shot at the Athletic Bilbao goalkeeper after being set up by Benzema.

The Paris Saint-Germain forward had his goal with 10 minutes remaining though, outfoxing Simon with some deft footwork before slotting home after being set free by Theo Hernandez. Spain responded by going all out for the equalizer, but Lloris first palmed away a Oyarzabal volley in the 90th minute and then got his hand to Pino's strike to ensure the trophy went to Paris. — AFP

“ We showed strength of character ”

Deschamps hails Benzema's maturity after triumph

MILAN: Didier Deschamps heaped praise on Karim Benzema after the once-exiled forward played a key role in France's Nations League triumph. Benzema scored France's equalizer in a 2-1 win over Spain which handed the world champions the trophy, and Deschamps was delighted with his striker. "Karim is a crucial player and he has proved over two matches that he has very obvious talent, it's there for all to see," Deschamps told reporters. "He has improved in different areas, he's clinical, he plays his part in the build-up."

Real Madrid forward Benzema had been banished from the national team for over five years but was recalled by Deschamps ahead of Euro 2020. He performed impressively in the Nations League Final Four in Italy, pulling a goal back with France two down in their 3-2 win over Belgium on Thursday and levelling the scores on Sunday night with a sumptuous curling shot just after Mikel Oyarzabal had put Spain ahead. "From a personal perspective he's no longer the same person, he's matured. He's been at the highest level for a long while now and I'm delighted he's able to celebrate tonight with France."

Enrique proud

Luis Enrique said Sunday that he was happy with his Spain side despite them coming up short. Spain went ahead in an exciting clash at the San Siro in Milan through Mikel Oyarzabal's strike midway through the second half but were overhauled by Benzema's goal and Kylian Mbappe's winner 10 minutes from time.



MILAN: France's Kylian Mbappe (left) and Karim Benzema celebrate with the trophy at the end of the Nations League final football match between Spain and France at San Siro stadium in Milan on Sunday. — AFP

The defeat came after a strong performance which could easily have been rewarded by taking the match to extra-time had it not been for some fine saves from Hugo Lloris late on. "I know that we were able to win against European champions and play almost even with the world champions so for players and the team that is all good," Luis Enrique told reporters. "The important thing is that the team maintains its personality and will to win."

Mbappe's decisive strike made the Spain players livid as they were convinced it should have been ruled out for offside but a VAR check ensured that

the goal stood. However Luis Enrique did not want to aim any anger at referee Anthony Taylor, insisting that he wanted to concentrate on his team's positive display. "We don't have the best point of view on pitch as coaches but I think this decision was difficult," he added. "I don't want to say anything about it. I'm used to not talking about referees and concentrate on what I can control. "I've been a coach for 10 years and I've never spoken about referees. I've got nothing to say, I'm concentrating on trying to get my team to play the best way and accepting wins and losses." — AFP

Denmark bid to wrap up World Cup spot

PARIS: Denmark can qualify for the 2022 World Cup with victory over Austria today, as they remain the only side heading into the next round of European qualifiers not needing other results to go their way to progress.

The Euro 2020 semi-finalists have impressed with seven straight wins, without conceding a goal, to move seven points clear of second-placed Scotland in Group F. Group winners qualify automatically for the tournament, with the runners-up heading into playoffs alongside two sides from the Nations League.

The electric atmosphere at Copenhagen's Parken Stadium played a big part in the Danes' European Championship run, which started with the loss to Finland when Christian Eriksen suffered a shocking collapse mid-match.

The agonizing last-four defeat by England at Wembley could have derailed Kasper Hjulmand's men, but they are the only country in European qualifying still with a 100-percent record. Three more points would ensure the next chapter of the team's journey will be at the World Cup. They will also qualify with a draw if Scotland are held by the Faroe Islands, or if the Scots lose.

Elsewhere, England could move to the brink of qualification in a home clash with Hungary tonight, when their nearest Group I rivals Albania and Poland meet in Tirana. Sweden are looking to move two points clear of Spain at the Group B summit with victory against Greece tonight. Switzerland have a chance to edge level on points with European champions Italy in Group C when they take on Lithuania in Vilnius. — AFP