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fuel rise in homeschooling



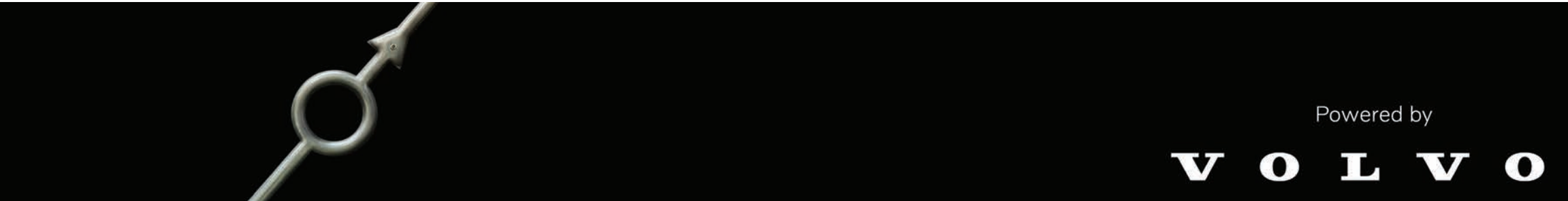
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amid high drama in Russia



# Students begin returning to school after 18 months

Some private schools reopen with strict health and safety protocols

## Officials congratulate Kuwait Times on 60-year anniversary



Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Hamad Jaber Al-Ali Al-Sabah (left) and Minister of Information and Culture and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Abd Al-Rahman Badah Al-Mutairi (right) congratulated Kuwait Times on the 60th anniversary of its founding.



German Ambassador to Kuwait Stefan Mobs reads the first issue of Kuwait Times. The envoy, along with a large number of other personalities, companies and readers, sent congratulatory messages to Kuwait Times.

By Ben Garcia

KUWAIT: Students returned to schools for the first time in more than 18 months yesterday after several private schools resumed on-campus classes with strict implementation of health protocols. Like most countries around the world, Kuwait shut down schools and universities in March 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic and resorted to online education.

All foreign-language and bilingual schools were permitted to resume in-person classes from yesterday, but many did not reopen due to logistical challenges. Online classes however continue. Public and private Arabic schools will reopen on Oct 3. The maximum capacity for any classroom is 20 students, with students sitting one to two meters apart. Students aged over 12 years and all teachers must be vaccinated, while masks should be worn at all times. Those who choose not to get vaccinated are required to undergo a PCR test every week on Sunday.

Classes are divided into two groups: The first group will go to school on Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday, while the second group will go on Monday and Wednesday. In the next week, groups will swap attendance, with the second group going

Continued on Page 2



KUWAIT: Students arrive at a school yesterday as in-person classes resumed after more than 18 months of closure due to the COVID-19 pandemic. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat (See Page 4)

## MP says exiled activists will be pardoned soon

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: MP Mohannad Al-Sayer said yesterday he believes that a decision to pardon a number of opposition ex- MPs and activists - who have been living abroad for several years - will be issued soon. "We will be pleased shortly with the return of our brothers who are living abroad," Sayer said in reference to around a dozen opposition figures who have been living in self-exile for over three years in Turkey.

The opposition figures left the country in the summer of 2018 to escape harsh jail terms issued by the state's highest court, which convicted them of taking part in storming the National

Assembly building during an anti-corruption protest in Nov 2011. Sayer said opposition lawmakers support any initiative for cooperation on this issue and reject politicizing it.

The opposition has been pressing to pass legislation in the Assembly that would issue a general pardon to the exiles and other prisoners jailed on political and freedom of expression charges. But their attempt has so far been unsuccessful and efforts are currently underway to secure a decree by HH the Amir to pardon them.

Last week, nine of the exiled figures issued a statement in which they criticized the failed efforts of the opposition MPs and accepted a reported initiative to pardon them as part of a dialogue for national reconciliation. Former MP Faisal Al-Mislem, one of the exiles, wrote on Twitter yesterday that if no pardon is issued, then opposition MPs must submit the general pardon legislation in the first session of the Assembly's new term in late October.

## Iceland elects women-majority parliament

REYKJAVIK: Iceland yesterday became the first country in Europe to have more women than men in parliament, a day after a general election that saw the left-right coalition win a clear majority. Of the 63 seats in the Althing parliament, 33 were won by women, or 52 percent, projections based on the final results showed yesterday. No other European country has had more than 50 percent women lawmakers, with Sweden coming closest at 47 percent, according to data compiled by the World Bank.

Around the world, five other countries currently have parliaments where women hold at least half the seats, according to the Inter-Parliamentary Union: Rwanda (61 percent), Cuba (53 percent), Nicaragua (51 percent) and Mexico and the United Arab Emirates (50 percent). Unlike some other countries, Iceland does not have legal quotas on female representation in parliament, though some parties do require a minimum number of candidates be women.

The Nordic country has long been a pioneer in gender equality and women's rights, and has topped the World Economic Forum's ranking of most egalitarian countries for the past 12 years. Iceland was the first country to elect a woman as president in 1980. "I am 85, I've waited all my life for women to be in a majority... I am really happy," Erdna, a Reykjavik resident, told AFP.

While Prime Minister Katrin Jakobsdottir's left-right coalition won a majority in Saturday's vote, it remained to be seen whether the three parties would continue to govern together. The coalition has brought Iceland four years of stability after a decade of political crises, but Jakobsdottir's Left-Green Movement emerged weakened after losing ground to its rightwing partners, which both posted strong showings.

The Left-Green Movement, the conservative Independence Party and the center-right Progressive Party together won 37 of 63 seats in parliament, up from the 33 they held before the vote. But the Left-Green Movement itself won only eight seats, three fewer than in 2017, raising questions about Jakobsdottir's future as prime minister.

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## Zionists kill 5 Palestinians in West Bank

BIDDU: Zionist forces clashed with Palestinians in the West Bank yesterday in several fierce gun battles that left five Palestinians dead and two Zionists seriously wounded, officials said. The violence started after Zionist army troops and special police units launched an overnight operation to dismantle a Hamas cell and arrest suspected militants, the Zionist army said.

The raids marked some of the heaviest fighting in recent weeks in the Palestinian territory that has been occupied by the Zionist state since 1967. The Palestinian health ministry confirmed five deaths from Zionist gunfire, including two near Jenin and three more in the Biddu area, made up of several villages between Ramallah and Jerusalem.

"The sound of gunfire" rang out around 4:00 am (0100 GMT), followed by "strong explosions", said Ayed Shamasneh, 44, a resident in the Biddu area, where an AFP photographer saw blood soaking the ground in the village of Beit Annan.

Continued on Page 2



BURQIN: Mourners carry the body of Osama Soboh, a Palestinian killed by Zionist soldiers, during his funeral in this village in the occupied West Bank yesterday. — AFP

## Egypt to tax social media personalities

CAIRO: Egypt said it will tax social media content creators in a revenue raising exercise as more citizens look to online platforms to make a living. The tax authority said "YouTubers and bloggers" earning over 500,000 pounds (\$32,000) annually would be taxed, in a statement issued Saturday. Egypt, the

Arab world's most populous country with over a 100 million people, has reached a 60 percent internet penetration rate, according to official figures.

Social media was awash with comments after the taxation move. "Poor vegetable sellers are taxed, so we can also tax the rich," an Egyptian wrote on Twitter. But another said the latest decision would drive content creators out of the country. "If the government wants to tax YouTubers then it must at least give us better Internet and scrap the whole limited gigabytes packages," a

user chimed in on Twitter.

Mohamed Al-Gayyar, a senior tax authority official, tried to temper reactions yesterday. "Anyone who makes a profit in Egypt must be fairly taxed whatever their field of work is," he said on public television. In a late Saturday interview on private television, another tax official Mohamed Keshk said those who fail to comply with the new decision could be found in breach of tax evasion laws carrying a jail sentence of up to five years.

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## Local

# Amir receives Crown Prince, new Diwan chief

## Sheikh Nawaf meets Prime Minister following return from UN session



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Furthermore, His Highness the Amir received His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah who returned from a mission to the United States, where he led the Kuwaiti delegation to the 76th session of UN General Assembly. In addition, His Highness the Amir

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The unusual coalition mixing left and right came about after the 2017 elections, in a bid to bring stability to the nation after years of political upheaval. Deep public distrust of politicians amid repeated scandals sent Icelanders to the polls five times from 2007 to 2017. This is only the second time since 2008 that a government has made it to the end of its four-year mandate on the sprawling island, and the first time since 2003 that a government has retained its majority. —AFP

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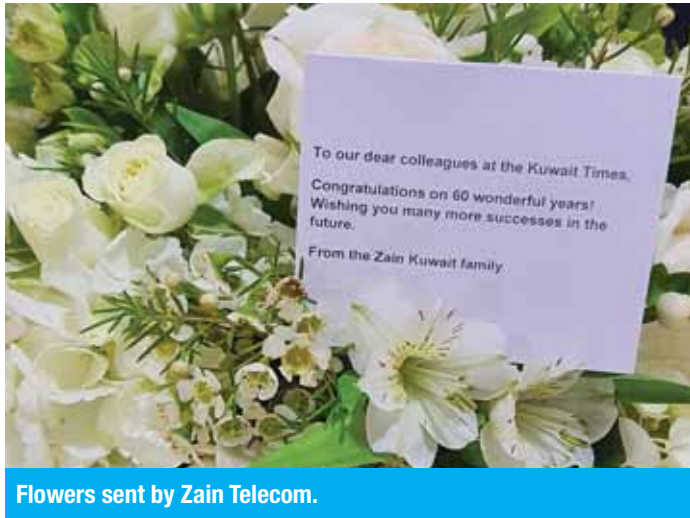


(From left) Kuwait Times Deputy Editor-in-Chief Abdullah Boftain, Public Relations Manager at Sheraton Hazem Al-Muhanna and Kuwait Times Marketing Manager Taleb Kanjo pose for a group photo with a cake presented by Sheraton to Kuwait Times on its 60th anniversary.

KUWAIT: Kuwait Times received an out-pouring of love, appreciation and congratulations on its 60th anniversary from government officials, ambassadors, businesses and colleagues in the press. The list of congratulators includes the Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Information, the Institute of

Banking Studies, Zain Telecom, the National Bank of Kuwait, Sheraton Hotel and several Arabic newspapers including Al-Anbaa, Al-Qabas, Al-Rai and Annahar. Oman's Ambassador to Kuwait Saleh Al-Kharousi and Germany's Ambassador to Kuwait Stefan Mobs also sent special congratula-

tory messages to Kuwait Times. Kuwait Times also received congratulatory messages from a large number of other companies, personalities and readers. Kuwait Times would like to say thank you to everyone for their kind words and continued support. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



Flowers sent by Zain Telecom.



Flowers sent by Minister of Information and Culture and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi.



Al-Rai Arabic daily's coverage on Kuwait Times' 60th anniversary.



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Established 1961  
The First Daily in The Arabian Gulf

THE LEADING INDEPENDENT  
DAILY IN THE ARABIAN GULF  
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Editor-in-Chief  
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## Security of Kuwait, Gulf region vital to UK's security: Minister

**LONDON:** Britain confirmed yesterday its commitment to the security of Kuwait and all countries in the Arabian Gulf region, as these are strategic and vital to the UK's security. In an interview, UK Minister of State for the Middle East and North Africa James Cleverly said the government of Prime Minister Boris Johnson is committed to work with its Gulf partners to ensure the security, stability and prosperity of the region.



James Cleverly

The UK and Kuwait stand by each other in defense of their security, he added. Britain and Kuwait have been close partners and friends for decades, as Kuwait is one of the oldest foreign investors in London, he said, adding that after Kuwait's liberation from the invasion, both sides became closer. Cleverly was glad about the return of joint military exercises after the agreement to conduct the Desert Warrior exercise next year. Both countries are also working to develop cooperation in the field of cyber security, he pointed out. The UK always looks to make its relationship with Kuwait more solid in all aspects, especially security and military, as well as in the field of trade, health and education, he explained, saying that the meeting of the joint steering committee held last week was a vital opportunity to push this agenda forward.

Cleverly underlined that his country values the vital role played by Kuwait in the region, especially through mediation and efforts to support regional security and stability. Since Kuwait chaired the 65th International Atomic Energy Agency General Conference, it shows the country is a reliable mediator to resolve international challenges through dialogue, he mentioned. The UK will work with Kuwait to support global peace and security, he underscored. In response to a question about the conflict in Yemen, Cleverly said the issue raises concern to the UK, and they are constantly discussing with all of their international partners in order to end this conflict.

The UK will continue to work with its partners in the region to try to find a peaceful solution to the conflict, he added, calling on the Houthis to deal seriously with negotiations. On the Iranian nuclear file, Cleverly said last week in New York, the UK Foreign Secretary Liz Truss met her Iranian counterpart Hossein Amirabdollahian, on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly. He expressed the UK's readiness to work with Iranians to show them that securing their future does not come from acquiring nuclear weapons, and will deal with them if they show their commitment to peace and non-interference in the internal affairs of countries in the region. — KUNA

## KDIPA takes huge steps to attract technology firms

**KUWAIT:** The State of Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA) carried out huge steps to attract big technology companies, allowing 42 of them to open offices in the Arab Gulf state including General Electric and Huawei. Technology is a main part of 2035 New Kuwait vision and KDIPA worked on achieving maximum benefits from potential of the Kuwaiti people by using expertise of major companies around the world. Using expertise offered by foreign companies will be an added value for the national economy and thus diversify resources and provide jobs for citizens.

KDIPA, the government's arm responsible for promotion for foreign companies, offered a bundle of incentives like waiving of taxes and giving those firms a priority in government's bids. KDIPA succeeded in attracting more than 42 foreign companies and 11 representative offices were opened in Kuwait. In return, the companies will be offering training opportunities for Kuwaiti citizens regarding use of modern technology and techniques, which would be used in their projects. Huawei Technologies-Kuwait, according to a KDIPA report for fiscal year 2019-20, executed a number of projects with local partners to complete the 5G networks, as well as providing training programs for 51 Kuwaitis who were certified in Information Technology and 5G Application.

General Electric (GE) joined hands with the Ministry of Electricity and Water (MEW) to provide solutions for the comprehensive electronic upgrade of the West Sabbiya power station, the largest in Kuwait. GE provided research opportunities for around 1,143 Kuwaitis over remote control systems, turbines, repair of generators, gas turbines technologies, mechanical systems and project management. EZ energy services, which is responsible for operation and maintenance of Shamal Al-Zour power station, provided training in security and safety for MEW's engineers, a KDIPA report said. Honeywell Kuwait for technical and computer services trained six Kuwaitis on the Process Knowledge System (BKS), an advanced tool for management of operations and assets which help industrial companies boost their profits and productivity. KDIPA approved foreign direct investment with a percentage of 99.6 in services, information systems 37.3 percent, oil and gas with 24.5 percent, and training, health, investment, energy and water with 20.4 percent. — AFP

### Photo of the Day



**KUWAIT:** Vehicles drive through a dust storm which hit Kuwait yesterday, caused by strong northwesterly winds with speeds reaching up to 60 kilometers per hour. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

# Children, teachers return to on campus school in Kuwait

**KUWAIT:** Foreign schools in Kuwait resumed on campus learning yesterday after being closed to students since March 2020. All foreign-language schools were allowed to reopen for students on Sept 26, while public and private Arabic schools will reopen on Oct 3. Health protocols will be in place including a maximum capacity for any classroom of 20 students, with students sitting two meters apart and wearing masks.

Meanwhile, the education ministry said yesterday that the teaching and administrative staff at public schools have been complete across Kuwait with the high school staff resuming work for the schooling year 2021-2022 yesterday. The number of teachers at public schools, including the high school stage, topped 16,892, according to a statement from the Ministry of Education. The figure includes 7,882 male teachers and 11,010 females. The staffers of the Capital Educational area is made up of 3,354 teachers, Hawally area 2,353, Farwaniyah 3,408, Al-Ahmadi 4,293, Al-Jahra 2,748 and Mubarak Al-Kabeer 2,203 the statement noted.



**KUWAIT:** Students arrive to school as in-person classes resumed in Kuwait yesterday. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



## Suicide probe in law firm employee's death

**KUWAIT:** Police have launched a suicide investigation into a man's death after he allegedly jumped from the window of his office building in Kuwait yesterday. Firemen, paramedics and police had headed to the scene in response to an emergency call reporting that a law office employee jumped from the window of the 12th floor office. The victim, an Egyptian man in his 50s, was pronounced dead on the scene. Further investigations are in progress.

### Injury in fire

A woman was critically injured after jumping from the second floor of a Mahboula building during a fire. Firemen evacuated residents and put out the blaze. A major and a corporal were injured and taken to hospital, Kuwait Fire Force said in a statement. Investigations are underway to determine the cause of the blaze. Meanwhile, a fire broke out at auto repair garages in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh Saturday night, prompting Jleeb, vocational Ardhiya, Mishref and backup centers to respond. The fire covered an area of 1,000 sq m. It was put out and no injuries were reported. In the meantime, a fire broke out in the kitchen of a Fahad Al-Ahmad house. Mangaf firemen responded and put out the blaze. No injuries were reported.

### Fatal crash

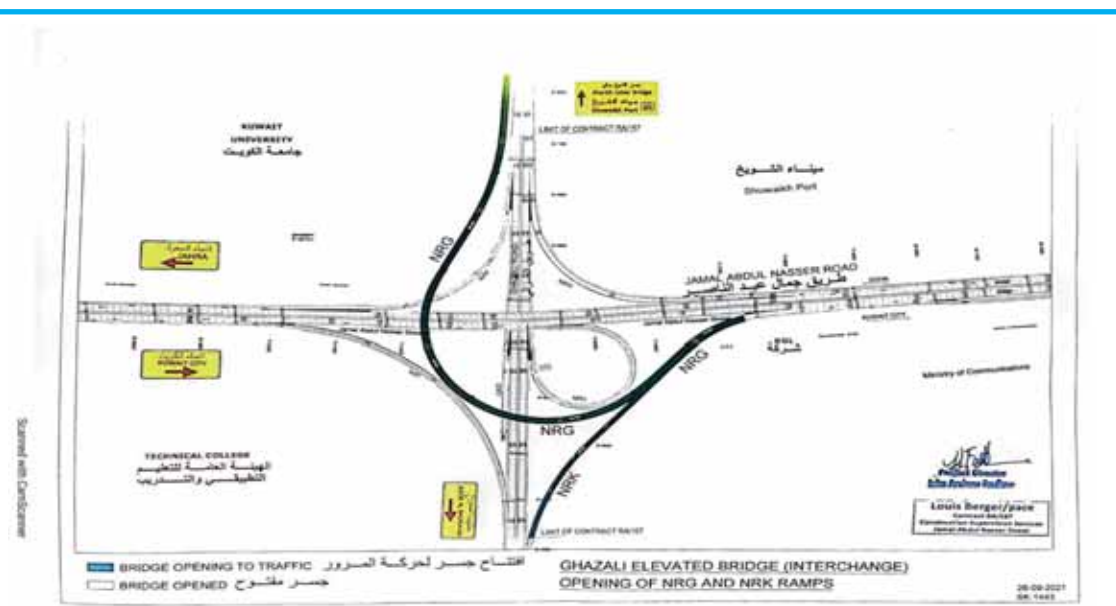
A man died and another was critically injured in a collision between two lorries reported in the early hours of yesterday morning on Road 6.5. Firemen

extricated both the deceased and the injured men from the vehicles and handed them to paramedics, Kuwait Fire Force said. An investigation was opened into the accident.

### Two held with drugs

Police arrested two men with possession of 50 kilograms of synthetic marijuana, 20 grams of hashish and two grams of heroin, the interior ministry announced yesterday. Meanwhile, the ministry

said that Nuwaiseeb customs officers confiscated 1.5 kg of heroin and 5.4 gm of shabu, in addition to 359 cartons of cigarettes, in two different cases yesterday. Customs officers found the heroin and shabu hidden in a truck that arrived at Kuwait via the Nuwaiseeb border. In a separate case, an officer suspected a vehicle on its way out of the country, so he searched it and found 359 cartons of cigarettes. A passenger cannot carry more than two cartons of cigarettes. The cigarettes will be sold in an auction.



**KUWAIT:** The Public Authority for Roads and Transport said two ramps on Jamal Abdunnasser Street near Ghazali intersection for those coming from Jaber Causeway towards the Capital will open today, as part of a series of openings held in coordination with the interior ministry.





China warns of 'grim' situation with Taiwan

## Evacuations as Cyclone Gulab bears down on eastern India



KABUL: Fighters from around Afghanistan perform their judo and wrestling skills during a gathering in Chaman-e-Huzuri park, downtown Kabul. —AFP

# Afghan fighters seek glory on dusty field

## Grapple gangs: Militants pit their skills against each other in a sport

**KABUL:** Every weekend, fighters from around Afghanistan gather on a public field in the capital to pit their skills against each other in a sport that is a mix of judo and wrestling. The informal gatherings attract big partisan crowds, with fans cheering for their favorites - usually someone from their home district - and jeering those they want to see lose. "I have been fighting for 17 years," said Mohammad Atef, a well-built 31-year-old from Samangan province in northern Afghanistan, after disposing of his opponent with an expert throw.

"It is popular in Samangan, Kunduz, Baghlan - and there are many famous wrestlers in Sheberghan too." Judo and wrestling are particularly popular in the north, with villages and districts producing local champions they put forward for regional contests and even national glory. The discipline the Afghans follow on the dusty field is a mix of both, with referees to make sure an obscure set of rules is followed and to declare a winner.

Bouts are usually settled quickly - a fight rarely lasts longer than a minute or two - with opponents

giving each other a sporting hug no matter the result. "Today my competitor was from Kunduz," said Atef after disposing of his rival with an acrobatic throw. "I used a spiral technique and I finally defeated him." Matches are made by promoters who choose opponents based on a combination of weight and record. There is a small purse for the winner and although gambling is officially banned by the Taliban, it is clear side bets are made on the bouts - with money furtively changing hands between wily old spectators after each fight.

Hekmat, a 21-year-old also from Samangan, is just starting his career and was beaming after his first victory at the weekend. "It is around 10 years that I am wrestling... from childhood," he said. "I have just come to Kabul in recent months after I have wrestled in other provinces and districts." There was no sign of the Taliban in the crowd gathered in Kabul - those present say the group eschews physical contests. "We organize this ourselves," said one referee. "This is not for the Taliban." —AFP



KABUL: Fighters perform their judo and wrestling skills during a gathering in Chaman-e-Huzuri park, downtown Kabul. —AFP

## Campaign highlights clothing to protest Taliban dress code

**GLENWOOD:** After seeing photos of black-clad Afghan women in full face veils at a pro-Taliban rally in Kabul, Bahar Jalali, an Afghan-American historian, launched a campaign highlighting the vibrant colors of traditional Afghan dresses. "I was very concerned that the world would think that those clothing worn by those women in Kabul was traditional Afghan clothing, and I don't want our heritage and culture to be misrepresented," said Jalali, who lives in Glenwood, Maryland, about an hour's drive from Washington.

Jalali, 56, created the social media hashtags #DoNotTouchMyClothes and #AfghanistanCulture, which quickly became popular, with women posting photos of themselves wearing colorful, embroidered Afghan clothing and smiling for the camera. "Afghan women don't wear hijab," Jalali said. "We wear a loose chiffon headscarf that reveals the hair. And anybody who's familiar with Afghanistan history, culture, knows that the clothing worn by those women have never been seen before in Afghanistan," she said, referring to demonstrators at the pro-Taliban protest at a university lecture in Kabul earlier this month.

About 300 women - covered head-to-toe in all black in accordance with strict new dress policies for women in education under the Taliban - waved Taliban flags, as speakers railed against the West and expressed support for the hardline Islamists. "Afghan women don't dress that way. Afghan women wear the colorful dresses that we showed the world." Women's rights in Afghanistan were sharply curtailed under the Taliban's 1996-2001 stint in control, but since returning to power



GLENWOOD: Bahar Jalali, an Afghan academic, looks at her Twitter account as she speaks with AFP during an interview in her home in Glenwood, Maryland. —AFP

last month, they have claimed they will implement a less extreme rule.

Women will be allowed to attend university, as long as classes are segregated by sex or at least divided by a curtain, and women must wear an abaya robe and niqab, which cover the whole body and face, save for a slit for the eyes. Jalali moved to the United States when she was seven. She remembers Afghanistan under secular rule, with some women wearing short skirts and sleeveless dresses on the streets of Kabul, while others choosing to wear headscarves.

In 2009, Jalali returned to Afghanistan to teach

history and gender studies at the American University in Kabul, in what was the country's first gender studies program. After 8.5 years there, she returned to the United States and now teaches Middle Eastern history at Loyola University Maryland. "My students were very passionate about gender equality, male and female students," she recalled. "So I really can't imagine how this new generation of Afghanistan that has never witnessed Taliban rule, that has grown up in a free and open society, is going to be able to adjust to this dark period that Afghanistan has now entered." —AFP

## World 'better place' 25 years after nuke test-ban treaty

**VIENNA:** Twenty-five years after its adoption, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty has made the world a safer place, experts say, despite never being ratified and concerns over North Korea. The Americans conducted the world's first nuclear test in the desert of New Mexico on July 16, 1945. Between then and September 24, 1996, when the treaty opened for signature, more than 2,000 nuclear tests were carried out, says Robert Floyd, head of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO), a UN body.

Since September 24, 1996 there have been only about a dozen tests, carried out by India, North Korea and Pakistan. Nevertheless eight nuclear powers, including China, North Korea and the United States have refused to ratify the landmark treaty, preventing it from entering into force and despite increasing pressure, there is little sign that they will change their minds, analysts say. "We're in a much better place," insists Floyd, an 63-year-old Australian, during an interview with AFP in his bright office on the seventh floor of one of the UN towers in Vienna.

The accord has set a "global norm against testing," he adds. "The only country to test this century is North Korea." To ensure the absence of nuclear tests, the CTBTO, which operates with an annual budget of around 111 million euros (\$130 million), has set up more than 300 monitoring stations around the world, which are capable of detecting the slightest explosion in real time.

### 'Testing taboo'

The treaty effectively stops nuclear proliferation "by making testing taboo," says Jean-Marie Collin of the French branch of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN). A total of 170 countries have now ratified the accord, including nuclear powers Britain, France and Russia, on the grounds that they have sufficiently advanced simulation programs. Still missing are Egypt, India, Iran, Israel and Pakistan, as well as China, North Korea and the United States.

Floyd said he wanted to have "a conversation" with those states about "the pathway that we can have, to get from where we are now to a point where they would ratify and we could see, for all of humanity, a legally binding ban". But he gave no further details about how he wants to overcome the long-entrenched impasse. If the treaty comes into force, the CTBTO would have the power to carry out on-site inspections. In Washington, no one since former US president Bill Clinton "has dared" to present the text to Congress because the Republicans formally oppose signing it, says Emmanuelle Maitre of the Foundation for Strategic Research. —AFP



## International

# A race wide open as Germany votes in post-Merkel election

## The most unpredictable elections in its recent history

**BERLIN:** Germany was voting yesterday in one of the most unpredictable elections in its recent history, with Angela Merkel's conservatives and the centre-left Social Democrats in a tight race for her crown as she prepares to leave the political stage. The epochal election ushers in the end of 16 years in power for Merkel and places Germany, a byword for stability, in a new period of uncertainty.

Opinion polls show the race for the chancellery headed for a photo finish, with Merkel's CDU-CSU conservative alliance on around 23 percent, just behind the centre-left Social Democrats (SPD) on 25 percent—well within the margin of error. "We will certainly see some surprises," said Nico Siegel, head of the Infratest Dimap polling company. Despite the SPD's lead in the polls, a victory for the conservatives "can't be ruled out", he said. "The race for first place is wide open."

Polls opened at 0600 GMT and will close at 1600 GMT. Around 40 percent of Germany's 60.4 million eligible voters have said they are undecided, while the same proportion have already cast their ballots by post—including Merkel her-

self. President Frank-Walter Steinmeier was among the early voters yesterday, declaring that "to vote is to live democracy" as he cast his ballot in Berlin. The two men jostling for the top job—Finance Minister and Vice Chancellor Olaf Scholz, 63, of the SPD, and Armin Laschet, 60, of the CDU-CSU—voted in their respective hometowns of Potsdam and Aachen.

it will be, and it's always important who governs." In Berlin, Hagen Bartels, 64, said he was expecting "the surprise that the biggest party is not the SPD but probably the CDU".

### Close contest

With both parties likely to fall well short of the majority needed to govern alone, there could be weeks or even months of fraught coalition negotiations. After Germany's last election in September 2017, it was February before the CDU-CSU formed a coalition with the SPD. Laschet, an affable but gaffe-prone centrist and longtime Merkel ally, was for some time the clear favorite. But his popularity began to wane after a series of blunders over the summer, including being caught on camera laughing in the background during a tribute to the victims of devastating floods in Germany.

In the meantime, Scholz, who at the start of the year had looked down and out in the race, saw his ratings begin to rise as he avoided making such embarrassing mistakes. Along with social justice, climate change has been one of the top concerns among voters in the run-up to the election. In Aachen, first-time voter



**AACHEN:** Germany's conservative Christian Democratic Union CDU leader and candidate for chancellor Armin Laschet and his wife Susanne Laschet arrive to cast their ballots at a polling station in Aachen yesterday. — AFP

Maite Hoppenz, 18, told AFP that climate change was "definitely a big topic for me because I think it will certainly have a big impact on my future". Benedikt

Ruedesheim, 33, said he would have liked to see "a bit more clarity about who is planning what" on climate change as he cast his vote in Berlin. — AFP



### Epochal poll marks end of Merkel's reign

Laschet stressed that "every vote counts" in an election that would determine "the direction of Germany in the next years", while Scholz said he hoped the good weather was "a good sign" for his party. At a polling station in Aachen, voter Ursula Becker, 62, told AFP: "This year it's quite exciting who

## Abortion rights around the world

**PARIS:** Abortion laws vary wildly around the world, with a minority of countries having outright bans. Tiny San Marino, which sits on a mountainside in the centre of Italy, is one of the few European countries where terminating a pregnancy is still illegal. It holds a referendum on loosening its abortion ban yesterday. Here is a snapshot of the global situation:

### Total ban

Predominantly Catholic Malta is the only European Union country to ban abortion totally, imposing jail terms of between 18 months and three years if the law is broken. Abortion is also banned in the micro-states of Andorra, the Vatican and San Marino, which are in Europe but not members of the EU. San Marino, where abortion is punishable with three years in prison for the woman and six years for the doctor, will vote on liberalizing its law yesterday. It will decide whether to allow abortion up to 12 weeks of pregnancy. After the 12th week, abortion would only be allowed if the mother's life was in danger or in the case of foetal abnormalities which could harm the woman physically or psychologically.

Globally there are other total bans in Congo-Brazzaville, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, the Dominican Republic, Egypt, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Honduras, Laos, Madagascar, Nicaragua, the Philippines, Palau, Senegal and Suriname. In El Salvador, the courts have handed lengthy jail sentences, some of up to 30 years, to women who have lost their babies, including through abortion. Women who have had miscarriages have also been prosecuted.

### Restricted

Many countries allow abortions in cases where the mother's life is deemed to be in danger. A partial list includes Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Guatemala, Iraq, Ivory Coast, Lebanon, Libya, Myanmar, Paraguay, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syria, Uganda, Venezuela, the West Bank/Gaza and Yemen. In Brazil the law only allows terminations in cases of rape, risk to the life of the mother or if the foetus is missing part or all of the brain. In 2017, Chile ended a strict near three-decade-long ban when then president Michelle Bachelet decriminalized abortion in certain cases.

### Change

Women from Europe, North America and Oceania benefit from the most liberal legislation, in some cases acquired only recently. Argentina legalized abortions in December 2020 up to 14 weeks of pregnancy. Previously, terminations had only been allowed in two instances: rape, and danger to the mother's life. In 2019 South Korea's constitutional court ordered the country's decades-old abortion ban to be lifted in a landmark ruling.

New Zealand only decriminalized abortion in March 2020. Up to then it was punishable with a 14-year prison term. In Australia, the state of Queensland legalized abortion in 2018, abolishing an 1899 British colonial era law. Only New South Wales, the country's most populous state, continues to ban abortion. In Ireland abortion has only been legal since 2018 following a historic referendum which did away with a constitutional ban on abortion that was one of the strictest in the world. It was also legalized the following year in Northern Ireland, the only part of the United Kingdom where it was prohibited. — AFP

## 'Eternal' chancellor: Merkel prepares to leave the stage

**BERLIN:** She was called "the leader of the free world" as authoritarian populists were on the march in Europe and the United States, but Angela Merkel is wrapping up a historic 16 years in power with an uncertain legacy at home and abroad. In office so long she was dubbed Germany's "eternal chancellor", Merkel, 67, leaves with her popularity so resilient she would likely have won a record fifth term had she sought it.

Instead, Merkel will pass the baton as the first German chancellor to step down entirely by choice, with a whole generation of voters never knowing another person at the top. Her supporters say she provided steady, pragmatic leadership through countless global crises as a moderate and unifying figure. Yet critics argue a muddle-through style of leadership, pegged to the broadest possible consensus, lacked the bold vision to prepare Europe and its top economy for the coming decades.

What is certain is that she leaves behind a fractured political landscape.

It is also because of the long shadow she casts that her party's candidate, Armin Laschet, has struggled to sharpen his own profile. His Social Democratic opponent, Finance Minister Olaf Scholz, has actively - and perhaps successfully - sold himself as the real continuity candidate. Assuming she stays on to hand over power, Merkel will tie or exceed Helmut Kohl's longevity record for a post-war leader, depending on how long the upcoming coalition negotiations drag on.

### 'Do the right thing'

The unflappable Merkel has served for many in recent years as a welcome counterbalance to the big, brash men of global politics, from Donald Trump to Vladimir Putin. A Pew Research Center poll this week showed large majorities in most democracies around the globe having "confidence in Merkel to do the right thing in world affairs".

However, the last days of her tenure have also been marred by what Merkel called the "bitter, dramatic and terri-



**GJAKOVA, KOSOVO:** Kosovo artist Alkent Pozhegu works on the final touches of an image made with grain and seed, depicting the portrait of German Chancellor Angela Merkel, in the town of Gjakova. — AFP

ble" return to power of the Taliban in Afghanistan - a debacle in which she shares the blame as Germany completed its evacuation.

A trained quantum chemist raised behind the Iron Curtain, Merkel has long been in sync with her change-averse electorate as a guarantor of stability. Her major policy shifts reflected the wishes of large German majorities - among them phasing out nuclear power after the 2011 Fukushima disaster - and attracted a broad new coalition of

women and urban voters to the once arch-conservative CDU.

Before the coronavirus pandemic, her boldest move - keeping open German borders in 2015 to more than one million asylum seekers - seemed set to determine her legacy. But while many Germans rallied to Merkel's "We can do it" cry, the move also emboldened an anti-migrant party, Alternative for Germany (AfD), ushering a far-right bloc into parliament for the first time since World War II. — AFP

## Swiss voters firmly back gay marriage

**GENEVA:** Nearly two-thirds of Swiss voters have approved the government's plan to introduce same-sex marriage, according to the first projections following yesterday's referendum triggered by opponents of the move. Market researchers GFS Bern—who conducted the main polling throughout the campaign—projected that 64 percent of voters backed the "marriage for all" proposals, which would bring the Alpine nation into line with most of western Europe.

The polling stations closed at noon, with the full results expected to follow within hours. Switzerland decriminalized homosexuality in 1942, but numerous local and regional police forces continued to keep "gay registers", some into the early 1990s. Same-sex couples can already register a civil partnership, with around 700 such partnerships established each year.

However, this status does not provide the same rights as marriage,

including for obtaining citizenship and the joint adoption of children. After years of debate and discussion, the Swiss parliament approved a bill last December allowing same-sex couples to marry in the country of 8.6 million people. But it was challenged under Switzerland's direct democracy system, with opponents gathering the 50,000 signatures needed to put the issue to a referendum. The government and parliament urged voters to back "marriage for all", in order to eliminate the "unequal treatment" between heterosexual and gay couples.

Opinion polling during the campaign showed that members of some Christian congregations and supporters of the right-wing populist Swiss People's Party (SVP) - Switzerland's largest political party—were the most likely to oppose legalizing same-sex marriage. The law change will allow same-sex couples to marry in civil ceremonies, and provide them with the same rights as other married couples. Foreign spouses will become eligible to apply for citizenship through a simplified procedure, and same-sex couples will be permitted to jointly adopt. And, in what proved the most controversial aspect of the referendum campaign, lesbian couples will have access



**BERN:** Supporters pose for a picture after the first projections following a nationwide referendum on same-sex marriage, in Swiss capital Bern. — AFP

to sperm donations.

### Stark poster campaign

Opponents plastered Swiss cities with stark posters decrying the commodification of children and warning the law will "kill the father". One of the posters showed a crying baby with its ear tagged like cattle, and the question: "Babies on demand?" Another featuring a huge zombie-like head, meant to represent a dead father, was covered

over by a nearby primary school in the southern Wallis canton out of fear it would frighten the children. A second vote was held alongside the referendum, on an initiative brought forward by the youth wing of the Socialist Party, entitled "Reduce taxes on wages, tax capital equitably". Proponents of the so-called "99 percent" initiative wanted greater taxation on high levels of capital income, with the threshold to be set by parliament. — AFP

## Evacuations as Cyclone Gulab bears down on eastern India

**KOLKATA:** Tens of thousands of people have been evacuated in three Indian states ahead of a cyclone expected to smash into the east coast later, authorities said. Cyclones are a regular menace in the northern Indian Ocean but many scientists say they are becoming more frequent and severe as climate change warms sea temperatures.

Cyclone Gulab is expected to make landfall between the coastal states of Odisha and Andhra Pradesh, bearing gusts of up to 95 kilometers per hour, the state-run India Meteorological Department said. The storm system from the Bay of Bengal would bring "strong winds and very heavy (and) extremely heavy rainfall", the weather bureau added in an advisory yesterday. Odisha and Andhra Pradesh officials ordered tens of thousands of people living along the coast to move to shelters, as hundreds of emergency workers were sent to the region.

Authorities in West Bengal to the north of Odisha-said yesterday that, while Gulab appeared unlikely to hit the state directly, they were still taking precautions. "We have so far evacuated more than 20,000 people to schools (and) government offices, which have been turned to cyclone shelters," Bankim Hazra, a state minister responsible for

the low-lying areas, told AFP. Odisha Special Relief Commissioner P.K. Jena said seven districts in the state were on high alert and evacuation efforts were under way. Ganjam, a coastal district, was expected to be badly hit by the cyclone, Jena added in a statement.

In Andhra Pradesh, some 85,000 families were expected to be moved from low-lying areas to temporary relief shelters. In May, more than a million people were evacuated from their homes along India's east coast before it was battered by Cyclone Yaas with winds gusting up to 155 kilometers an hour-equivalent to a category two hurricane. At least 20 people were killed and tens of thousands were displaced in the storm, which caused widespread damage worth more than \$2 billion in Odisha and West Bengal states and in neighboring Bangladesh. — AFP



## International

# Syria's COVID spike sees hospitals reach capacity

## Russia raids kill 11 pro-Turkish fighters in Syria

**DAMASCUS:** Hospitals in the Syrian capital Damascus and the coastal province of Latakia have reached capacity due to rising coronavirus admissions, a health official said yesterday. "We have started transferring COVID-19 patients from the province of Damascus to the (central) province of Homs, and from Latakia to the province of Tartus," Tawfiq Hasaba, a health ministry official, was quoted as saying by Syrian state TV.

The move came after "hospitals in these areas reached capacity because of a large spike in coronavirus cases," he added. Syria on Saturday logged 442 new coronavirus infections in government-held areas—a new daily record for a conflict-hit country that has documented more than 32,580 cases, including 2,198 deaths in regime-controlled territory, since the start of its outbreak last year. "It is the first time the number of cases reaches 400" in one day, Hasaba said, adding that the number of new infections was highest in Damascus, Aleppo and Latakia.

Coronavirus cases have been on the rise across Syria since mid-August, including in the northwest and northeast, large parts of which fall beyond government control. According to the World Health Organization, only two percent of Syria's population has been at least partially vaccinated. Syria's conflict has since 2011 killed nearly half a million people and ravaged a healthcare sector struggling to cope

with a mass outflux of professionals. Around 70 percent of the country's pre-war medical staff have left since the start of the war.

### Russia raids kill 11

In another development, at least 11 fighters from a pro-Turkish rebel group were killed yesterday in Russian air raids in northern Syria, a war monitor said yesterday. The strikes hit a school used as a "military base" by the Al-Hamza Division outside the north Syria town of Afrin which has been under the control of Turkey and its Syrian rebel proxies since 2018, said the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights. "Eleven fighters were killed and another 13 were wounded in the Russian strikes," said the monitor, which relies on a network of sources inside Syria.

It said the death toll could climb further amid ongoing efforts to pull victims from the rubble.

Observatory head Rami Abdul Rahman said such Russian raids are rare in this region of Syria, which has been controlled by Turkey and its Syrian rebel allies for three years. A Russian raid outside Afrin last month targeted a position of Faylaq al-Sham, another Turkey-backed rebel group, he said. A spokesperson for the National Army, a coalition of Turkey-backed rebel groups, called yesterday's attack a "clear message from Russia" to Turkey, showing that there are no "red lines".

Only 2% of Syria's population has been vaccinated



RAQQA: Syrian students walking to school are seen through a shattered glass in the northern city of Raqqa. —AFP

Turkey supports Syrian rebel forces battling President Bashar Al-Assad's government and it has also launched multiple operations across Syria's northern border against Kurdish forces and against the Islamic State group. Russia, on the other hand, is a staunch supporter of the Syrian regime and has

intervened militarily in support of Assad since 2015. Although they back opposite sides, Ankara and Moscow have worked together to broker several ceasefire deals in Syria's northwest, including a 2020 truce agreement in the Idlib region, the country's last major opposition bastion. —AFP

## China warns of 'grim' situation with Taiwan

**TAIPEI:** Chinese President Xi Jinping warned that relations between Beijing and Taipei were "grim" yesterday, urging the island's main opposition party to help seek "unification of the country." China views self-ruled democratic Taiwan as part of its territory and vows to retake it one day, by force if necessary. Xi has become the most belligerent leader since Mao Zedong, describing the seizure of the island as "inevitable."

In a congratulatory letter to Eric Chu - the newly elected leader of the Beijing-friendly Kuomintang (KMT) party - Xi said the Chinese Communist Party and the KMT should collaborate under a "shared political basis." "In the past our two parties insisted on '1992 consensus' and opposing 'Taiwan independence' ... to promote peaceful developments in cross-strait relations," Xi said in the letter released by the KMT. "At

present the situation in the Taiwan Strait is complex and grim," he said, urging the parties to jointly seek peace and "the unification of the country."

Ties between Taiwan and China improved markedly under former president Ma Ying-jeou of the KMT between 2008 and 2016, culminating with a landmark meeting between Xi and him in Singapore in 2015. The KMT has side-stepped frictions with China by accepting the so-called 1992 consensus - a tacit agreement that there is only "one China" without specifying whether Beijing or Taipei is its rightful representative. In response, Chu said in a letter to Xi that the two sides should "seek common ground and respect their differences" to promote peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait.

Beijing has stepped up military, diplomatic and economic pressure on Taiwan since the 2016 election of President Tsai Ing-wen, who views the island as a sovereign nation and not part of "one China." Last year, Chinese military jets made a record 380 incursions into Taiwan's defense zone, with some analysts warning that tensions between the two sides were at their highest since the mid-1990s. On Thursday, China flew 24 warplanes



TAIPEI: Eric Chu (center), Taiwan's newly-elected main opposition Kuomintang (KMT) chairman, poses with supporters following his election victory for the party's leadership at the KMT headquarters in Taipei yesterday. —AFP

including two nuclear-capable bombers into Taiwan's air defense zone, the biggest incursion in weeks, after voicing its opposition to Taipei joining a major trans-Pacific trade deal. —AFP

## North Macedonia holds first high-stakes census, first in 20 years

**SKOPJE:** Since early September Ilna Dimitrijevska has been walking endless kilometers every day, going door to door asking people to take part in North Macedonia's first census in nearly two decades. Her task may be straightforward enough, but the census remains highly sensitive due to the potential impact on the nation's minorities. In this small Balkan country - which gained independence in 1991 following the break-up of the former Yugoslavia and came close to civil war in 2001 - the long postponed census is far from being a mere statistical operation.

Special rights such as the language used in official correspondence between the state and a citizen or ethnic quotas for public administration jobs depend on a minority being officially shown to make up at least 20 percent of the population. Out of a population of around two million people, 64 percent were Macedonians and 25 percent ethnic Albanians, according to the last census. Turks, Roma, Serbs

and other minorities made up the remainder.

In the Ilinden municipality close to the capital Skopje where Dimitrijevska has been pounding the pavements, the majority of the population is Macedonian. After checking people's identity the young woman interviews them and continues on to the next household. "It is going on very well here, no enumerators were refused" by residents, she said. "There were a few households where we had to return several times, but now all is done."

The census in the European Union-aspirant country is supposed to be held every 10 years. The last one, however, took place in 2002, just a year after an armed conflict between ethnic Albanian rebels and government forces which only ended through the intervention of the international community. A peace deal granted greater rights to the ethnic Albanian minority which had complained of discrimination and limited opportunities and representation. The census scheduled for 2011 fell victim to political disputes and mistrust with both sides saying the other would manipulate the result.

### Last chance

Since the last census, the population is believed to have shrunk to around 1.6 to 1.7 million due to mass emigration, experts estimate, stoking fears

Although that's a small percentage of the 700,000 school-aged children in Austria, it is three times more than in previous years, according to ministry statistics. "I'm getting contacted by at least 10 people or so per day" who want to take their children out of school, a mother of three who runs a Facebook group for homeschoolers told AFP. Many of those who get in touch are upset about the latest anti-virus measures in schools, the mum, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said.

### Rigorous testing

Since going back to school this month, children of all ages must now take a COVID test three times a week - at least one must be a PCR test - and tests will continue to be needed for those not vaccinated. Masks are not required in the classroom but must be worn in the corridors this month while authorities monitor the situation. Students from the age of 12 are also urged to get vaccinated - mobile teams visit schools to offer jabs and the prospect of no longer needing to test.

Actress Eva Herzig, known for her past role in the TV crime series "Steirerkrimi", has spoken publicly about her decision to teach her children at home with the help of other parents and teachers who have left the school system. "I hear from so many mothers that



SKOPJE: A member of the census commission (left) leaves after she conducted an inventory of a citizen in the municipality of Ilinden near Skopje, during the North Macedonia's first census in nearly two decades. —AFP

that lower numbers could jeopardise rights. "If this census does not succeed, there is no chance to make people open their doors next time," Xhelal Jakupi, of a census commission in Saraj said. In the rural area, near Skopje and populated mostly by ethnic Albanians, the process is going smoothly for now. —AFP

teachers pressure children, saying they expect them to be vaccinated," she told Oe24 TV news channel last week. "As a mother, I have to decide on the limits... This is my child and I protect my child," she added.

### Isolated from peers

Unlike other European countries such as Germany where at-home schooling has been illegal since 1919 and presence in school is mandatory, Austrian parents only need to inform authorities in writing to deregister their children. Education Minister Heinz Fassmann admits that the rise in homeschooling worries him, especially the impact on youngsters no longer learning with others of their own age in a classroom. "I hope it is just a wave that comes and goes," he said.

His ministry plans to require parents considering homeschooling to attend a meeting to ensure they are fully aware of what it entails. It also wants homeschoolers to sit standard exams twice yearly, rather than just the current end-of-year ones. But Evelyn Kometter, of the National Parents' Association, says more support should be available for homeschoolers and their parents who "don't feel their arguments are taken seriously". "The increasing number of parents taking their kids out of school should alert society," she said in a statement to AFP. —AFP

### News in brief

#### 2 inmates dead in Iran jail

**TEHRAN:** Iranian prison authorities confirmed the deaths of two inmates within a week at a jail south of the capital and opened investigations into the circumstances. "A committee has been set up to probe the death of Amir-Hossein Hatami in Grand Tehran prison," penitentiary authorities in the capital announced in a brief statement issued late Saturday. The Ghanoun newspaper said Hatami was a 22-year-old who worked in Tehran bazaar and had been arrested after getting into a fight. On Thursday, the chief of Iran's prisons, Mohammad-Mehdi Hadj-Mohammadi, ordered an investigation into the death of Chahine Nasser, another inmate of Grand Tehran, located some 30 kilometers from the capital. Hadj-Mohammadi last month acknowledged cases of "unacceptable behavior" after footage of prison guards beating and mistreating detainees was reportedly obtained by hackers who accessed surveillance cameras at Tehran's Evin prison. —AFP

#### UK probe teacher's murder

**LONDON:** Police in Britain investigating the murder of Sabina Nessa, a teacher who was found dead in a southeast London park last weekend, said they arrested a 38-year-old man yesterday. Primary school teacher Nessa, 28, was killed after leaving her home to go to a bar just a five-minute walk away, in the latest case to galvanize public concern about women's safety in the UK. Detectives from London's Metropolitan Police took the suspect into custody in the early hours of Sunday at an address in East Sussex, a county southeast of the British capital. Detective Chief Inspector Neil John, from the Met's specialist crime command, called the arrest a "significant development". Two other men arrested this week on suspicion of murder have been released pending further investigation. Hundreds of people held a vigil on Friday evening in the southeast London neighborhood of Kidbrooke, where Nessa lived and her body was discovered last Saturday. —AFP

#### 50 killed in Yemen's Marib

**DUBAI:** At least 50 Houthi rebels and Yemeni pro-government troops have been killed as fighting intensifies for the city of Marib, a key battleground of the seven-year conflict, military sources said yesterday. Hundreds of fighters have died this month alone after the Iran-backed rebels renewed their campaign for Marib, the government's last stronghold in the oil-rich north. "In the past 48 hours, 43 Houthi fighters were killed, mostly in coalition airstrikes" west of Marib, a military source told AFP, while another source said at least seven loyalists died in fighting. The rebels rarely announce their casualties. About 400 people have been reported dead in clashes in September for the northern city, following a lull in fighting in the region. The Houthis initially escalated their efforts to seize Marib in February, hoping to gain control of the strategically vital city and the region's oil resources. —AFP



TAEZ, Yemen: A man walks past shops that have been closed as part of a wider strike by merchants in protest against deteriorating economic and living conditions due to the prolonged state of conflict, in Yemen's third city of Taiz. —AFP

## Austria's anti-virus measures fuel rise in homeschooling

**VIENNA:** Father-of-two Shkelqim Kameni took his children out of school because of Austria's strict COVID testing for pupils and his opposition to the vaccine. The 28-year-old shop manager from the western city of Salzburg is among a sharp rise in parents opting to homeschool instead. Even weeks before the new school year started this month, the divisive issue garnered media coverage and has provoked heated exchanges online between parents.

Speaking to AFP at an anti-vaccine demonstration, Kameni said he was afraid that rigorous COVID testing created too much pressure in the classroom. "Probably a child (who tests positive) will be mobbed... it's psychological abuse of children: it's child abuse," he said at the rally in downtown Vienna this month, attended by thousands. More than 7,500 children have been withdrawn from school for this academic year, the education ministry says.



# Business

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2021

## UK to offer 10,500 post-Brexit visas to counter worker crisis

### Minister blames industry rep for petrol-buying frenzy

**LONDON:** Britain will issue up to 10,500 temporary work visas to lorry drivers and poultry workers to ease chronic staff shortages, the government announced Saturday, in a U-turn on post-Brexit immigration policy. The short-term visas, to run from next month until late December, come as ministers grapple with a huge shortfall in drivers and some other key workers that has hit fuel supplies and additional industries.

A tanker drivers shortage has caused large queues at petrol stations in recent days, as people ignore government pleas not to panic-buy fuel after some garages closed due to the lack of deliveries.

The decision to expand the critical worker visa scheme is a reversal by Prime Minister Boris Johnson, whose government had tightened post-Brexit immigration rules insisting that Britain's reliance on foreign labor must end. It had resisted the move for months, despite an estimated shortage of around 100,000 heavy goods vehicle (HGV) drivers and warnings from various sectors that supplies would run short. Transport Secretary Grant Shapps nevertheless insisted he was taking action "at the earliest opportunity" and that a broader package of measures announced would ensure pre-Christmas preparations "remain on track".

Meanwhile, Britain's transport secretary yesterday accused lorry industry representatives of helping to spark petrol panic-buying, as he defended a U-turn on post-Brexit immigration policy to ease an escalating supply crisis. Grant Shapps's comments came hours after the government said it will issue up to 10,500 short-term work visas to lorry drivers and poultry workers to ease chronic staff shortages that have hit supplies to various sectors.



Disruption spread to fuel retailers this week after a number run by BP and ExxonMobil-owned Esso were forced to close to customers due to a lack of deliveries-immediately prompting long queues forming at numerous petrol stations.

But in broadcast interviews yesterday claimed a road haulage association leak to the media about potential fuel delivery shortages had contributed to the panic-buying, and blamed the industry for being "counterproductive". "There has been some pretty irresponsible briefing out by one of the road haulage associations which has helped to spark a crisis and that's very, very unhelpful," he told Sky News.

Shapps, who insisted there was no actual fuel shortfall at UK refineries and storage facilities, accused the haulage industry of being "desperate" to employ more European drivers and "undercutting British salaries". "I know that's been their ask all along," he added. But Rod McKenzie, of the Road Haulage Association-reportedly alleged to have



**CAMBERLEY, UK:** A security guard assists drivers queuing to fill up at a Tesco petrol station in Camberley, west of London yesterday. —AFP

made the leak-called the claim "nonsense".

He said the government needed to encourage a "holistic" approach to the numerous problems the industry faces. "The industries must also play their part with working conditions continuing to improve and the deserved salary increases continuing to be maintained in order for companies to retain new drivers," he added. But one business leader dismissed the new measures as inadequate.

#### Millions of pounds for 'skills bootcamps'

"This announcement is the equivalent of throwing a thimble of water on a bonfire," said Ruby

McGregor-Smith, president of the British Chambers of Commerce. The additional testing would take time to impact while new visa numbers were "insufficient" and not "enough to address the scale of the problem", she added. The new measures will focus on rapidly expanding the number of new domestic drivers, and include deploying Ministry of Defense driving examiners to help provide thousands of extra tests over the next 12 weeks. Meanwhile the education ministry and partner agencies will spend millions of pounds training 4,000 people to become HGV drivers, creating new so-called "skills bootcamps" to speed up the process. —AFP

## Brexit, COVID put brakes on cross-Channel classic car sport

**CHICHESTER, UK:** As vintage vehicles of all shapes and sizes from the last century roared around England's Goodwood Motor Circuit last weekend, something stood out to seasoned observers: far fewer cars and drivers from Europe. Meanwhile, historic racing events on the European mainland have seen a dramatic drop in UK classic vehicle owners and teams competing-a bigger loss to a pursuit Britain has always dominated.

Industry insiders blame the shift on the travel-throttling coronavirus and Brexit, which has made transporting cars and tools across the Channel more costly and onerous. Opinion differs over the long-term impacts of both on the economically valuable sector, with some predicting busy but more insular UK events alongside less competitive races on the continent.

"The British are the number one in

terms of classic cars... so without the British, probably you get 50 percent less people and competition," said owner Calilo Sielecki, whose collection includes a UK-based 1954 Aston Martin DB3S. A two-time runner-up at France's famous Le Mans races-and a similar model to those driven by James Bond, the British agent in the blockbuster 007 film franchise-it was among the British absentees from April's Monaco Historic Grand Prix. That event recorded nearly half as many UK-based drivers or vehicles participating compared to 2020.

"We didn't go... because it was complicated about the pandemic and also because of moving the cars," Sielecki told AFP from Goodwood's annual Revival meet, where his son Mathias competed in the DB3S. The 63-year-old Argentinian said taking it to Monte Carlo next year was "not impossible" but the "tough" new transport requirements could prove an obstacle.

#### 'Damaging'

Carol Spagg, managing editor of Historic Motor Racing News, cautioned it was "too early to tell" whether Britain's departure from the European Union would have a lasting effect.

"The COVID situation has meant



**CHICHESTER, US:** People attend the Goodwood Revival meeting 2021, north of Chichester in southern England. As vintage cars of all shapes and sizes spanning the last century roared around England's Goodwood Motor Circuit last weekend, one thing stood out to seasoned observers: far fewer Europe-based drivers. —AFP

that cars have not been crossing borders in anything like the usual numbers," she noted. Spagg is keeping a keen eye on next week's Spa Six Hours in Belgium, another major meet, where a "healthy" 106 British-based drivers are registered for its main endurance race.

Patrick Peter, head of France's Tour Auto events, noted its signature rally from Paris to near Marseille this month attracted just three UK-based drivers, compared to 18 in 2019. "We don't

know what's happened for what (reason)," he explained. "But clearly there is some negative impact from Brexit."

Others argue ending the easy cross-Channel movement of cars on trailers and mechanical items since January could mean permanent and damaging change. "You've got to sort out all sorts of paperwork... it's damaging-mainly on the continent," said Hans Hugenholtz, a Dutchman living in Belgium who owns a fleet of classic cars, including seven he races. —AFP

## Kabul's carpet, antique dealers struggle after foreigners flee

**KABUL:** Traders of carpets, antiques and souvenirs on Kabul's famed Chicken Street said yesterday business has completely dried up since the vast majority of foreigners left the Afghan capital as the Taleban took over.

The once-bustling hotspot, where aid workers and adventurous tourists would shop for vintage tribal rugs, pottery and metalware, is almost empty of visitors looking for a bargain. "Business has drastically changed because we don't have a lot of foreigners going here and there in Kabul," carpet seller Abdul Wahab told AFP outside his empty showroom.

"So that has affected our business, like carpets, jewelry and the tribal things of Afghanistan," Wahab said most of his customers had been expats, such as NGO staff and diplomats, but almost all of them evacuated by the end of August, after the Taleban stormed to power in the weeks before.

Vintage rugs can fetch thousands of dollars, which means only foreigners and the richest of Afghans are Wahab's target market. Asked how many rugs he now sells per week, the dealer said: "Now, it's none."

#### 'Hippie trail' fame

Chicken Street was hugely popular in the 1960s and '70s among Kabul's "hippie trail" visitors, who stayed in nearby guesthouses and shopped for clothes and hashish. Tourism plummeted during and after the Soviet-Afghan war that started in 1979, but the street experienced a rebound after the US invasion in 2001.

Wahab said that, despite the recent lack of custom, he remained "very optimistic" that trade would pick up in the coming months. "Our business only depends on security. If the security is good, foreigners will come, and then they will buy carpets or other textiles that are available in Afghanistan."

Another dealer, 64-year-old Qadir Raouf-who owns a family carpet shop across the street-agreed.

"For the future, when there is peace, we can do good business," he said.

"There are no foreigners to come. I hope the situation will be quiet and people are coming, starting business again." Originally from Herat in western Afghanistan, Raouf has had his carpet shop in Kabul for more than 45 years, sourcing old and new rugs from



**KABUL, Afghanistan:** Workers carry carpets on their shoulders at Chicken Street in Kabul yesterday. —AFP

all over the country.

"These are our national things," he said of his carpets. "We show them to all the world: Afghan people can make carpets."

#### 'I want to serve'

Haji Jalil has been selling porcelain artefacts-some of them up to 300 years old-for almost 30 years.

"Our business has not been good for the last two years," he said in his Chicken Street shop, blaming the COVID-19 crisis for the start of the

downturn. "This street is fully dependent on the economy," he told AFP. "If people's financial situations are good, they come and buy the decorative goods such as carpets, handicrafts, precious and semi-precious stones."

"Now businesses all over Afghanistan are not doing well." However, the 65-year-old said he had no plans to leave. "I want to serve the people of my country," he said. "Our business may be good outside Afghanistan and foreigners may come and buy our products. —AFP

## How US debt limit became 'a hostage that's worth ransoming'

**WASHINGTON:** A decade ago, a standoff between Democrats and Republicans over increasing the United States' authority to borrow brought the country days away from a default and caused a major ratings agency to downgrade its credit for the first time. In the aftermath, top Senate Republican Mitch McConnell described the debt limit to The Washington Post as "a hostage that's worth ransoming," and a decade later, it's in captivity once again.

The ceiling on how much debt the United States can take on is the subject of fierce negotiations in Washington between Democrats who control Congress but can't rally enough votes to increase it unilaterally, and Republicans who refuse to vote for any increase at all. The dispute has unusually high stakes because absent an increase, the United States could default on its bills in October, likely devastating its economy and undercutting a pillar of the international financial system.

Lawmakers have bargained over increasing the debt limit for decades.

But the willingness to push the world's largest economy to the brink dates back to 2011, when ascendant Republicans were committed to reining in spending by Democrats, and used the limit to achieve that. "Most of the (Republican) leadership sees the 2011 debt limit standoff as ultimately a success in that they were able to force (then-president Barack Obama) to sign what was the biggest spending cut bill in decades without actually having any default," said Brian Riedl, who was then chief economist to Republican Senator Rob Portman.

The deal they cut was meant to lower the government's spending over the course of years. It did not stick: the US national debt and budget deficit have soared in the years since due to spending by both Republican and Democratic presidents. Others involved in the 2011 standoff warn that even without a default, the brinkmanship has its own consequences.

"The ways that it could be affecting our country and its economic strength are difficult to measure, but it's likely they're occurring under the surface, that our credibility is being eroded," said Shai Akabas, Director of Economic Policy at the Bipartisan Policy Center, who a decade ago worked with now-Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell in analyzing a default's effects. —AFP



## Business

# Global Finance names KFH 'Safest Islamic Bank in the GCC for 2021'

Among top five across all Islamic and conventional banks in Mideast

**KUWAIT:** Global Finance Magazine has named Kuwait Finance House "KFH" as the Safest Islamic Bank in the GCC for 2021 as part of its 30th annual ranking of the World's Safest Banks. KFH has also been ranked among the top five Safest Banks in the Middle East 2021 across all Islamic and conventional banks.

KFH was selected through an evaluation of long-term credit ratings from Global rating agencies- Moody's, Standard & Poor's and Fitch- of the 500 largest banks worldwide.

Abdulwahab Al-Rushood, Acting Group Chief Executive Officer at KFH, said that the top rankings that KFH earned on the list of safest banks affirm its robust position, prudent risk management, diversified products and services, and advanced cyber security systems, while continuing offering uninterrupted retail and corporate services through different service channels including online and smart branches. The ranking also confirms the importance of the geographical reach and harmony among group banks, stability and the bank's high efficiency and ability to adapt to various economic conditions and volatility.

Al-Rushood pointed out that the rankings reflect the credibility and the prestigious position that KFH enjoys regionally and internationally, its solid financial positions, prudent procedures, feasible strategies and activities as well as diversified products and services. Furthermore, the rankings confirm the sustainable growth KFH has achieved, its high valuable brand which boosts customer confidence, and its global leadership in Islamic finance industry, thus ranking KFH as the Safest Islamic Bank in the GCC is well deserved.

Al-Rushood reiterated that KFH continues its strategy to lead the international development of Islamic financial services and become the most trusted and sustainably most profitable sharia-compliant bank in the world, and to deliver superior innovation and customer service excellence while protecting and enhancing the interests of all its stakeholders and moving forward in the digital transformation strategy.

Meanwhile, Joseph Giarraputo, publisher and editorial director of Global Finance said that the past year demonstrates the resilience of the banking sector, which stood as a bulwark against collapse during the coronavirus pandemic, supplying critical emergency funding as well as, in many cases, emergency equipment and supplies. "The safest banks are paragons of stability and continue to provide necessary support for governments and communities as they seek to recover from pandemic's economic shocks," he added.

Founded in 1987 and headquartered in New York, Global Finance has a circulation of 50,000 and readers in 191 countries and 34 years of experience in international financial markets. The magazine is an international reference in the financial sector, covering topics of corporate finance, joint ventures, capital markets, currencies, banks and risk management.

KFH was established in Kuwait in 1977 and is enlisted on the Kuwait Stock Exchange. KFH Group is a global pioneer in the field of Islamic banking services, where it offers a wide array of Islamic financial products and services, not to mention a high standard of innovation and customer service.

KFH manages its operations in the GCC, Asia, and Europe through over 520 branches, including KFH-Turkey, to offer services for the bank's



Abdulwahab Al-Rushood



customers in Turkey, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Germany, and the UAE. KFH's mission is to achieve highest levels of excellence and innovation in the field of customer service, while developing common interest for all those con-

cerned with the financial institution. KFH's vision is to spearhead the global development in Islamic financial services, and to upgrade the bank into the level of becoming the most sustainable profitable Islamic bank in the world.

KFH's values include cementing leadership through all its businesses, including leadership in the Islamic banking services worldwide, through innovation, superior customer service and the development of its employees. In addition, KFH is committed to all its procedures, and to setting up long-life partnerships with the concerned authorities.

**Al-Rushood:** Rankings affirm bank's robust position, prudent risk management, diversified services, advanced cyber security

**Global Finance:** Safest banks are paragons of stability and continue to provide necessary support for governments and communities

بيت التمويل الكويتي  
Kuwait Finance House



Kuwait Finance House  
**SAFEST ISLAMIC  
BANK IN GCC**





# Jazeera Airways takes delivery of its latest Airbus A320neo

## Expansion of airline supports local economy in the long-term



Jazeera receives new aircraft from Airbus France

**KUWAIT:** Jazeera Airways continues to move forward in its growth plans as it takes delivery of its latest Airbus A320neo from the manufacturer's facility in Toulouse, France. The new aircraft landed at Kuwait International Airport on September 24 at 4.50pm local time, growing the Jazeera fleet to 16 aircraft and supporting the expansion of the airline's network to over 50 destinations in 2022.

Speaking of the new delivery, Jazeera Airways Chief Executive Officer, Rohit Ramachandran, confirmed that the airline has not revised its aircraft order book during the pandemic, foreseeing a strong return of travel appetite to pre-COVID-19

levels and more. He said: "We're investing in A320neo aircraft to enable Jazeera Airways to serve destinations located up to 6.5 hours from our hub Kuwait. These expansion plans are supporting a strong appetite for travel from tourists as well as a large community of expatriates living in the Middle East who look for a value offering. We have opened a number of new destinations this year, giving more travel choices for our customers. Next year will see further expansion of our ever-growing network as the world pulls clear of the pandemic."

"Jazeera Airways is also positively contributing to the business and economic environment by cre-

ating new job and trade opportunities for Kuwait, while maintaining a flexible business model enabling the airline to weather through challenges. We're supporting new jobs for pilots, engineers, cabin crew and local businesses. In fact, Jazeera Airways has a strong multiplier effect on the Kuwait economy: Every KD 1 we invest brings an additional KD 11 benefit to Kuwait. Jazeera Airways also continues to safeguard the rights of customers, shareholders and stakeholders and will continue to do so with its expansion."

Today, Jazeera Airways operates a fleet of 16 aircraft, eight of the A320 model and eight of the

A320neo model. One further A320neo will be delivered this year.

The A320neo offers a range of benefits: Fuel-saving and longer range, quieter engines with less CO2 emissions, additional payload and lower operating costs. The aircraft is fitted with the airline's standard cabin configuration including its signature leather seats.

Jazeera Airways operates commercial and cargo flights out of its Jazeera Terminal T5 at Kuwait International Airport and has rights to fly to 50 popular destinations across the Middle East, India and Europe.



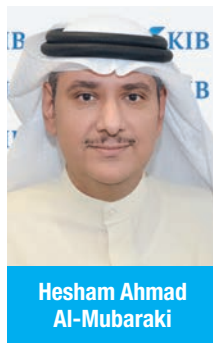
Jazeera's new aircraft Airbus A320neo arrives at the Kuwait International Airport

## Hesham Al-Mubarakhi appointed GM of wholesale banking at KIB

**KUWAIT:** In recognition of his academic and professional competencies and his ability to successfully carry out key leadership roles, Kuwait International Bank (KIB) announced that it recently appointed Hesham Ahmad Al-Mubarakhi as General Manager of Wholesale Banking, after having served as the Deputy General Manager of the Department since late 2019. In his new role, Al-Mubarakhi will lead and develop

his team to enhance KIB's commercial banking services, financing activities, and the various product offerings and financial solutions the Bank provides to local corporate customers.

With his hard-earned wealth of in-depth industry experience, Al-Mubarakhi is perfectly poised to head the Wholesale Banking Department at KIB. Beginning his career in the banking sector as a Credit Officer at Ahli United Bank (AUB),



Hesham Ahmad Al-Mubarakhi

Kuwait Finance House (KFH) and as Executive Manager of the Corporate Banking Group at Boubyan Bank.

he has since served in several leadership positions within the banking industry, prior to joining the team at KIB. Amongst his most noteworthy positions: Serving as Deputy General Manager of Local Real Estate Financing at

Within this vein, KIB remains committed to attracting and retaining distinguished local talents from within Kuwait's banking sector, continuing to hone and develop their skills to further advance their careers. The decision to appoint Al-Mubarakhi to the position of General Manager came as a result of his highly-developed capabilities as a seasoned banker, as well as the impressive expertise he has amassed over the course of a career spanning more than 20 years in wholesale banking, private and corporate financing, and Islamic banking. Accordingly, KIB is proud to count Al-Mubarakhi as the newest mem-

ber of its senior management team. His appointment comes in line with the Bank's strategic focus on investing in its human capital and retaining high caliber talent to lead in senior positions; all of which actively contributes to enhancing KIB's foothold as a leading banking institution.

It serves to note that Al-Mubarakhi holds a bachelor's degree in Business Administration, with concentration in Finance, from Kuwait University, as well as a slew of academic and professional certifications from various prestigious international institutions and universities.



شركة الصفاة للاستثمار  
AL SAFAT INVESTMENT COMPANY

## KUWAIT BOURSA WEEKLY REPORT

WEEK ENDED ON 23 SEPTEMBER 2021

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Market	M. Cap (KD ml)	Last Close	WTD %	MTD %	YTD %	Quantity Traded	Value Traded	No. of Trades	P/E	P/B	% of Total M. Cap
Premier Market	30,395	7,516.72	0.1%	1.1%	24.2%	436,349,460	138,526,983	17,855	29.3	2.3	75.8%
Main Market	9,711	5,609.09	0.1%	1.8%	23.2%	990,255,354	113,863,211	35,862	21.5	3.7	24.2%
All Share	40,106	6,876.00	0.1%	1.3%	24.0%	1,426,604,814	252,390,193	53,717	27.5	2.7	100%

Sector	M. Cap (KD ml)	Last Close	WTD %	MTD %	YTD %	Quantity Traded	Value Traded	No. of Trades	P/E	P/B	% of Total M. Cap
BANKS	23,335	1,582.35	0.1%	1.4%	25.3%	244,932,112	89,462,439	7,993	33.4	2.3	57.57%
BASIC MATERIALS	958	1,074.18	0.8%	-0.8%	19.5%	2,650,458	1,464,878	672	23.8	1.5	2.36%
CONSUMER DISCRETIONARY	570	1,110.45	-0.1%	1.9%	48.8%	22,696,871	3,367,347	1,826	9.4	42.4	1.41%
CONSUMER STAPLES	236	774.23	1.8%	4.6%	-5.4%	1,803,449	1,064,495	279	16.0	1.6	0.58%
ENERGY	286	1,374.21	0.8%	0.9%	7.6%	20,074,362	1,093,323	769	14.1	1.3	0.71%
FINANCIAL SERVICES	3,625	1,311.55	0.2%	4.1%	41.1%	691,549,489	91,721,970	22,423	9.0	1.7	8.94%
HEALTH CARE	392	791.65	-0.8%	0.0%	-4.2%	111,969	55,196	71	27.4	5.3	0.97%
INDUSTRIALS	4,131	1,166.95	-0.1%	0.1%	31.0%	77,378,975	21,223,050	6,039	26.7	1.8	10.19%
INSURANCE	605	1,450.66	0.3%	-0.6%	25.5%	5,653,736	1,206,172	528	10.6	1.2	1.49%
REAL ESTATE	2,749	1,280.27	0.1%	3.0%	34.4%	331,677,653	34,006,376	11,028	28.9	1.3	6.78%
TECHNOLOGY	10	727.50	1.0%	-0.2%	44.7%	189,397	18,857	30	-	0.9	0.02%
TELECOMMUNICATIONS	3,372	1,100.60	0.0%	-1.2%	-0.2%	20,373,361	5,940,991	1,524	15.9	2.1	8.32%
UTILITIES	261	623.68	0.4%	1.7%	-14.4%	7,512,982	1,765,101	535	20.5	5.0	0.64%

### Top Gainers

Stock	last Close	Change %	Volume	Value	Trades
NCCI	126	47.9	65,116,035	7,485,485	3,319
GFC	50	26.9	71,878	3,565	36
NIH	135.0	16.4	18,214,696	2,370,261	650
SENERGY	49	14.7	9,654,598	470,791	378
KBT	99.5	14.4	27,856,368	2,604,190	1,109

### Top Losers

Stock	last Close	Change %	Volume	Value	Trades
KHOT	80	-12.6	10,405	875	13
IFA	118	-6.4	14,088,142	1,693,519	697
AGHC	150.0	-6.3	2,342,796	357,614	160
ARZAN	167	-6.2	60,709,425	10,381,055	1,535
CGC	366.0	-4.4	2,950,418	1,091,750	424

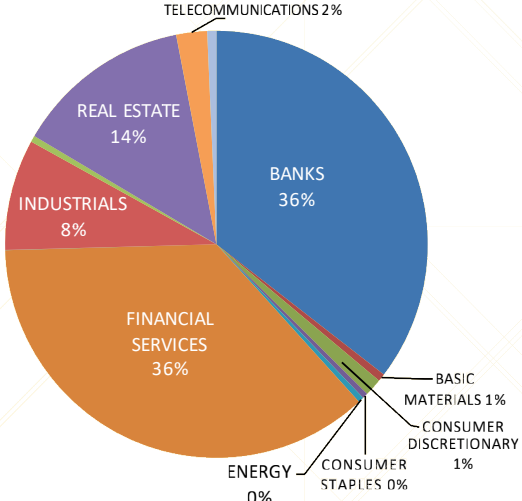
### Top Volume

Stock	Last	Change %	Volume	Value	Trades
GFH	69	1.0	77,552,485	5,318,276	2,074
AUB	287	4.0	75,190,478	21,138,467	852
NIND	245	3.4	72,485,983	17,536,342	1,315
SECH	107	6.1	68,641,749	7,231,179	983
NCCI	126	47.9	65,116,035	7,485,485	3,319

### Top Value

Stock	Last	Change %	Volume	Value	Trades
AUB	287	4.0	75,190,478	21,138,467	852
NIND	245	3.4	72,485,983	17,536,342	1,315
KFH	825	-0.6	21,204,177	17,490,262	2,017
NBK	960	0.0	14,977,569	14,350,338	1,590
GBK	236	-0.4	47,139,001	11,097,705	703

### Value Traded



### Market Summary:

- The Premier Market volume increased while value decreased which shows the decrease in prices while trading continued on rising. The main market witnessed a huge jump in both volumes reaching 49% and value increased 52% which also shows the increase in price and the investors' buying.
- All Share, Premier, and Main indexes registered new all-time high levels. Despite the Main index reaching a new high level, it closed below the upward trend it started and it needs to return above this trend, which is much expected to happen.
- Technically, the All-Share index registered a new all-time high-level closing at 6879 creating support levels at 6855 and 6830. Staying above 6850 will lead to 6905 passing the resistance at 6875. Premier index registered a new all-time high-level closing at 7516 creating support levels at 7490, 7980, and 7440. Staying above 7500 will lead to 7590 passing the resistance at 7517. The Main Index registered a new all-time high-level closing at 5609 creating a support level at 5600, 5668, and 5555. Staying above 5600 will lead to 5665 passing the resistance at 5641.



## Business

# NBK holds workshop on modern concepts in business development

## Workshop titled 'How (and How Not) to Lead Change in Organizations'

KUWAIT: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK), in collaboration with the Institute of Banking Studies and the attendance of various NBK Group Heads, organized a workshop on "How (and How Not) to Lead Change in Organizations", conducted by Professor Jim Dowd, Senior Lecturer and Executive Director of Harvard Business School.

NBK offered the remote workshop for 37 executive leaders, with the aim of introducing them to the most prominent modern concepts in the field of business development, in cooperation with lecturers from world renowned institutions, such as Harvard Business School. Professor Dowd presented various modern and significant concepts in the business world that directly impact the work of various departments across the bank. He also highlighted the importance of how to develop work and improve teamwork to achieve strategic goals.

The workshop also touched on the latest methods and mechanisms that both leaders need to successfully deal with the challenges introduced by rapid changes in the work environment and technological advancements, in addition to knowing how to effectively and efficiently overcome such obstacles. The workshop was met with huge interest, as attending executive leaders and managers exchanged visions, real-life situations and challenges they encountered.

Professor Jim Dowd has extensive experience in leadership development, organizational culture and change. He is the Faculty Chair in Leadership and

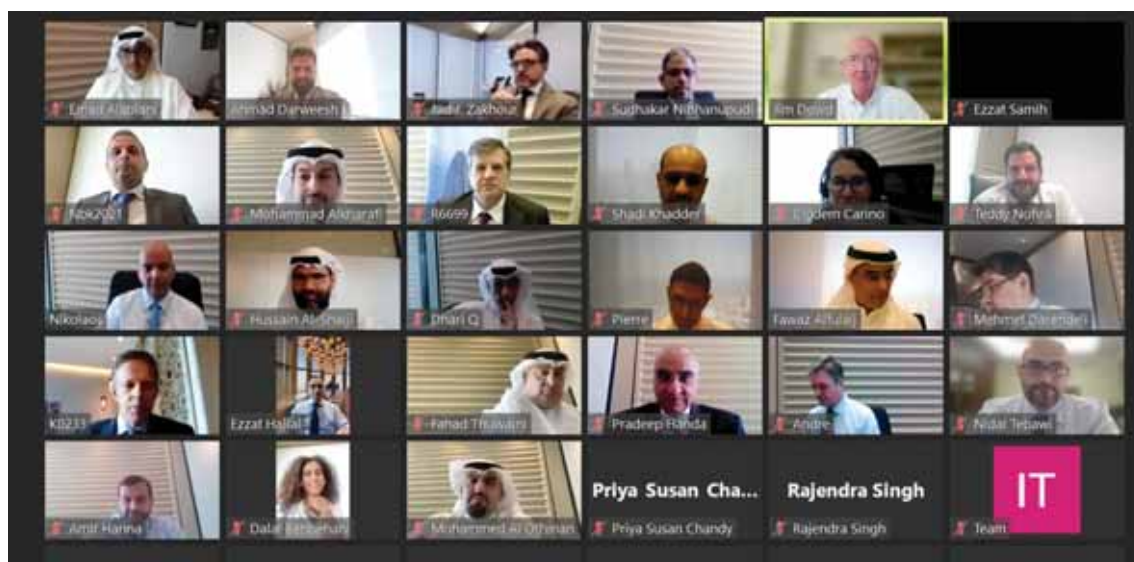
Change Programs, and was a former Professor of Organizational Behavior at IMD Business School - Switzerland. In 1993, he co-authored the book Vision, Values and Courage: Leadership for Quality Management.

As quoted by Emad Al-Ablani, Head of Group Human Resources: "Our people are the true wealth, they are the cornerstone of our successes. Therefore, we are keen to continue developing and expanding their expertise and skill sets through organizing unique events". "This workshop is a continuation of the Collective Executive program we provided for group heads in the bank with the most prestigious international educational and training institutions, including INSEAD Business School and Harvard Business School, in line with our strategy to provide the best training programs for executive leaders," he added.

Emad Al-Ablani emphasized that NBK is committed to provide the best training and development opportunities for its employees, showcasing their exceptional talents and capabilities, as it continues to promote its excellence and leadership in the local and regional markets.



Emad Al-Ablani



Professor Jim Dowd and other participants

He also highlighted the importance of the ongoing development and training process of NBK's employees, across all levels, to ensure that they constantly stay up to date with the latest developments, in order to successfully handle any challenges they are faced with. This process asserts NBK's leadership and unique position in offering

top-notch banking services and products to its customers. Furthermore, NBK is keen to continuously support, empower and qualify its Leaders & employees by providing specialized training programs designed according to the utmost methodological and scientific standards, in order to develop specialized professional leaders.

### NBK Money Markets Report

## Hawkish central banks fuel risk sentiment globally

KUWAIT: Following a two-day meeting for the Federal Open Market Committee, Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell said the US regulator could begin scaling back its asset purchases in November, continuing to gradually complete the process by mid-2022. Additionally we are now seeing a growing number of Fed officials expecting a rate increase in 2022 as the central bank charges ahead with the reduction of its stimulus program. The dot plot is now showing 9 FOMC officials expecting a rate increase in 2022, 2 members higher than the dot plot of June. For 2023 the dot plot is now showing 17 officials to expect hikes up from 13 members in June. Both the forecast for earlier rate hikes coupled with the looming taper now represents the biggest step towards normalization since the central bank took unprecedented action at the start of the pandemic.

#### Markets react

On the FX front, the greenback initially dipped after the FOMC meeting, however it quickly recovered and found its footing as the overall market reaction was positive. The single currency dipped and entered the 1.1600 level before recovering back to the 1.1700 level. The Swiss Franc was the strongest performing currency in the week, while the Sterling Pound was the weakest. The sense of normalization boded well with US equities. Following the meeting major US indices recouped their losses from earlier last week and managed to close the week relatively flat. As for the bond market, US 10-year treasury yield surged to early July's highs of 1.44 percent. The market is currently pricing in a hike of 0.25 percent in December 2022 with a probability of over 100 percent following the Fed's meeting and the new dot plot.

#### US Manufacturing

Following the Fed's meeting last Wednesday, US PMIs were released on Thursday and showcased a softer figure for both sectors for September. The services PMI came at 54.4 and below the expectations of 55.1 which was also the previous reading. Similarly, the manufacturing PMI just missed expectations by 0.2 and came at 60.5. Both sectors are well above the reading of 50 which marks expansion in the sector.

## Children in Kuwait spend more than a third of their time on YouTube

KUWAIT: A new Kaspersky Safe Kids research has revealed the online content that children were most interested in during summer 2021. During this time, TikTok, YouTube, and WhatsApp remained in the top of popular applications where kids spent the most time in the Middle East. Instagram's popularity among children continued to decline while Eurovision became popular, and Brawl Stars surpassed Roblox in popularity.

Summer is the best time for relaxation and entertainment as there are no schools, lessons and homework. During this period, children have more time to consume various content, watch more bloggers, play online games and chat with friends. Kaspersky analyzed anonymized data, such as search queries and the most popular Android applications as well as website categories, all voluntarily provided by Kaspersky Safe Kids users, to explore how the

### Rates – 26<sup>th</sup> September, 2021

Currencies	Previous Week Levels				This Week's Expected Range		3-Month
	Open	Low	High	Close	Minimum	Maximum	Forward
EUR	1.1734	1.1684	1.1755	1.1720	1.1520	1.1815	1.1745
GBP	1.3743	1.3610	1.3751	1.3679	1.3475	1.3780	1.3687
JPY	109.97	109.12	110.79	110.75	109.75	112.70	110.62
CHF	0.9317	0.9215	0.9333	0.9243	0.9140	0.9440	0.9227

#### BoE meeting

The BOE's MPC has voted by 9-0 to keep the bank rate on hold at 0.10 percent, and by 7-2 to keep the QE target unchanged. MPC members Michael Saunders and Dave Ramsden voted for a reduction of the target for bond purchases from GBP875bn to GBP840bn, i.e. ending net purchases "as soon as practical". The minutes show the Committee agreed that recent developments had strengthened the case for the "modest tightening" it already thought was necessary over its forecast period.

The most eye-catching statement was that, for the members who did not vote to stop QE, "any future initial tightening of monetary policy should be implemented by an increase in Bank Rate, even if that tightening became appropriate before the end of the existing UK government bond asset purchase program".

This appears to open the door to a rate rise by the end of this year, even while the BoE is injecting net stimulus into the economy via QE. Indeed, the committee now sees CPI inflation remaining above 4 percent into Q2 2022, according to the minutes. With inflationary pressures and a hawkish MPC members, the market is pricing a hike by the BOE as early as March 2022 with a probability of 89 percent. The meeting was viewed hawkish by market participants and that helped push the cable from the week's low of 1.3610 to close Thursday's session at 1.3720. Nevertheless, the hawkish Fed and the dollar strength overshadowed and the cable retreated to close the week at 1.3679.

#### UK PMIs ease

UK PMIs saw a slowdown in growth momentum with both manufacturing and services sectors posting lower readings than expected. The services PMI came at 54.6, 0.4 lower than the previous reading while the manufacturing PMI came at 56.3 missing expectations of 59 and a previous reading of 60.3. Rates of expansion in both output and new orders were each the weakest in the respective seven-month sequences of growth.

#### Eurozone PMIs

The eurozone's economic activity measured by PMIs was no different than other major economies as both sectors continued to grow but at a slower rate. This reflects the peaking of demand in the second quarter and supply chain bottlenecks and concerns over the ongoing pandemic. The reading for the services sectors came at 56.3, down from 59 in the previous month and lower than the expected figure of 58.4. Likewise, the manufacturing sector came at 58.7, down from 61.4 in the previous month.

#### Swiss National Bank meeting

At its quarterly monetary policy meeting, the Swiss National Bank (SNB) kept its policy rate unchanged at -0.75 percent, as expected. In line with this decision, the sight deposit rate was left unchanged at -0.75 percent, a level that has prevailed since January 2015. The SNB indicated in its statement that the Swiss franc remains 'highly valued', a wording used since September 2017. The Swiss nominal effective exchange rate has risen by about 0.5 percent since the last SNB meeting in June, so no change was expected on that front. The Bank stressed that it 'remains willing to intervene in the foreign exchange market as necessary' even if the SNB has not been very active in FX markets over the past few months.

#### BoJ meeting

In Japan, the Bank of Japan left its main monetary policy rates unchanged as widely expected. As for the Japanese yen, the currency lost 7.22 percent of its value to the US dollar since the beginning of the year as risk sentiment increased post the critical part of the pandemic and vaccine rollouts globally. Additionally, expectations for wider interest rate differentials helped lower the value of the yen against the US dollar.

#### Kuwait

Kuwaiti dinar

USD/KWD closed last week at 0.30100

Among other internet trends, it is important to note the explosive popularity of new toys Simple Dimple and Pop It. They were covered by music tracks that went viral on TikTok, and a lot of reviews on toys appeared on YouTube.

"The research shows that children do not change their preferences that frequently and continue to watch the same type of content, but the main characters change. For example, Italian rockers Maneskin replace BTS, and the game Friday Night Funkin' overtakes Among Us. The numbers also show that music is of greater interest to modern children than sports. Even such global events as Euro 2020 and the Tokyo Olympics could not capture their attention," comments Anna Larkina, web content analysis expert at Kaspersky.

To ensure children have a positive online experience, Kaspersky recommends that parents:

- Surf and learn together. See where children spend their time online and explore how to best keep them safe.
- Consider downloading parental control apps and discuss this topic with your child to explain how such apps work and why they need them to stay safe online.
- Spend more time communicating with children about online safety measures. Tell your children what must not, under any circumstances, be published on the internet and why.

## CBK announces winners of Al-Najma campaign

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

#### The results of the draws were as follows:

- 1- Al-Najma weekly account - the prize of KD 5,000 went to the winner Malayil Moosa Koya
- 2- Salary account campaign - the prize of up to KD 1,000 - went to the winner Athari Mohammad Al-Kandari

The bank stated that the salary campaign is aimed at customers who transfer their salaries of KD 500 or more to the Bank, especially Kuwaiti employees and residents working in the government, oil sectors and companies listed with the Bank as well as retirees, and take advantage of the benefits of this campaign and get an instant cash gift from KD 400 to KD 500 or an interest-free loan for a period of up to 4 years and up to KD 70,000, Kuwaiti pensioner, along with expatriate customers who transfer their debt to the bank will receive an instant cash gift of 2% from their transferred debt up to KD 1,000.

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

Al-Najma Account can be opened by depositing KD 200, and customer should maintain a minimum amount of KD 500 to be eligible to enter all draws on Al-Najma Account prizes. As for the chances of winning, the more balance a customer maintains in Al-Najma Account, the more chances the account holder will get to win, the account also offers additional benefits like the ATM card, a credit card against customer's account and all CBK banking services that customer can enjoy.

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

## Burgan Bank reveals winners of Yawmi account draw

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

#### The lucky winners are:

- Ammar Abdulhusain Esmaeel
- Adnan Ahmad Albaghli
- Basmah Abdullah Alwatyan
- Raedah Mahmoud Samarah
- Mohammad Haji Alqaisi

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

Burgan Bank encourages everyone to open a Yawmi account and/or increase their deposit to maximize their chances of becoming a winner. The higher the level of the deposit, the higher the likelihood to win.



## Lifestyle | Features

## ARGENTINIAN COUPLES WIN TOP TANGO COMPETITION AFTER MARADONA TRIBUTES



Argentina's Yanina Muzyka (left) and Emmanuel Casal celebrate after winning the Tango Stage final competition in the framework of the Tango Dance World Championship in Buenos Aires. —AFP photos

Two Argentinian couples won the world's biggest tango competition, held in Buenos Aires, on Saturday at the end of a festival that paid tribute to late legendary soccer player and long-time tango fan Diego Maradona.

Held through a combination of in-person and virtual events due to the COVID-19 pandemic,

this year's world tango dance championship involved around 800 dancers from 25 countries. The finals were staged in front of the illuminated Buenos Aires Obelisk at the heart of the Argentine capital.

Couple Emmanuel Casal and Yanina Muzyka won the "stage tango" category, while Agustin



Argentina's Barbara Ferreira (right) and Agustin Agnez (left) celebrate after winning the Tango Salon final competition.

Agnez and Barbara Ferreira were crowned winners of the "salon" category.

Throughout the competition, songs and dances paid homage to Argentine sports great Diego Maradona, who died of a heart attack on November 25 last year aged 60. Widely regarded as one of the best soccer players of all time, the

captain of Argentina's 1986 World Cup-winning team had recorded tango songs as an amateur singer and was known to show off his dancing skills at parties. The tango competition coincided with the reopening of Buenos Aires' famed "milongas" or tango salons after the pandemic had forced them to shut for 18 months. —AFP



Argentina's Yanina Muzyka and Emmanuel Casal dance during the Tango Stage final competition in the framework of the Tango Dance World Championship.

## STARS LEND VOICES TO WORLD-SPANNING CONCERT FOR CLIMATE, VACCINES

A "once-in-a-generation" music event circled the world Saturday, with a slew of megastars taking the stage in New York and beyond for Global Citizen Live — 24 hours of shows across the planet to raise awareness on climate change, vaccine equality and famine. Between star-studded sets of some of the biggest names in music—including Elton John, BTS, Coldplay, Lizzo, Jennifer Lopez and Billie Eilish—actors, politicians, company executives, royals, actors and activists made appeals or announced donations to tackle major global challenges.

NGO Global Citizen wants one billion trees planted, two billion vaccines delivered to the poorest countries and meals for 41 million people on the brink of starvation. After the show ended in Paris and handed off to New York, Britain's Prince Harry and his wife, Meghan Markle, took to the stage to advocate for COVID-19 vaccine access to be treated "as a basic human right." "My wife and I believe the way you're born should not dictate your ability to survive," the Duke of Sussex said to cheers from the thousands-strong crowd at Central Park. The Duke and Duchess of Sussex followed pop veteran Cyndi Lauper with a rendition of her "Girls Just Want to Have Fun" dedicated to Afghan women. As night fell, the crowd swelled and attendees roared for shows from headliners, including Eilish, who bounded around the stage in her staple T-shirt and shorts ensemble. Between sets, funding announcements poured in and calls to action were hammered home, even from the International Space Station.

USAID Administrator Samantha Power announced in a recorded message the United States would "contribute more than \$295 million to countries around the world to stave off famine and extreme hunger, confront gender-based violence and address the urgent humanitarian needs the COVID-19 pandemic is leaving in its wake." Global Citizen co-founder and CEO Hugh Evans urged the audience to "take action" to help raise \$6 billion needed by the World Food Program, tackle vaccine inequality and pressure leaders ahead of the UN COP26 climate change conference in November. "Charity alone... will never be sufficient to end extreme poverty or

tackle climate change," he said. "The actions of a movement of people is needed to drive lasting change."

After an appearance by renowned 92-year-old American biologist Edward O. Wilson, the show moved to Los Angeles, opened by pop band 5 Seconds of Summer at the Greek Theatre in Los Angeles, with Demi Lovato, Adam Lambert and Stevie Wonder, among others, also billed. Lead vocalist Luke Hemmings celebrated being in their first concert in almost two years "and for an honorable cause." "This is an amazing thing to witness and be part of." The broadcast on social media opened with a pre-recorded performance by pop superstars BTS in Seoul before the show kicked off in Paris with Elton John.

The "Rocketman" performed hits including "Tiny Dancer" and "Your Song" in front of the Eiffel Tower in a dazzling green suit. "No one should be left behind," said the 74-year-old pop legend, who appeared despite a hip injury that forced him to cancel the rest of his tour dates this year. Ed Sheeran was the headliner in Paris alongside Black Eyed Peas and Stormzy. The concerts required COVID-19 vaccination proof or negative tests.

Pre-recorded performances were also delivered by Green Day in Los Angeles, DJ superstar Alok in Rio, Kylie Minogue in London and Andrea Bocelli in Tuscany. This week's comeback gig by The Fugees in New York—their first in 15 years—was also billed as part of the event. Global Citizen has been behind other high-profile charity events, including a concert earlier this year that called for global COVID-19 vaccinations. The organization describes itself as a movement with a mission to end extreme poverty by 2030.

Its app uses incentives such as concert tickets to encourage users into pressuring governments on issues around sustainability and equality. The New York event included tributes to other major benefit concerts, with Chinese global superstar pianist Lang Lang performing a medley of Queen's famed Live Aid performance in 1985. The weekend event also brought charitable pledges from international companies such as Lego, Cisco, Verizon and Pepsico. —AFP



US pop band Black Eyed Peas members perform during a 'Global Citizen Live' concert in Paris.

## JOEL COEN'S MACBETH: PURE AND SOMBER

Without his brother Ethan, but with cinema heavyweights Denzel Washington and Frances McDormand, American director Joel Coen took up the challenge of adapting Macbeth, producing a sleek film that remains true to Shakespeare's great text. With "The Tragedy of Macbeth," which premiered on the opening night of the 59th New York Film Festival on Friday, Coen follows in the footsteps of Orson Welles, Akira Kurosawa, Roman Polanski and other cinema greats who adapted the play for the screen.

"Macbeth is maybe the Shakespeare play that lends itself to cinema the most," Dennis Lim, director of programming at the festival, told AFP. "I think there's something about the structure, the pace, the action, and the themes." Having won numerous awards, including Oscars for "Fargo" and "No Country for Old Men," the Coen brothers have worked across different genres, directing adventure films, comedies and thrillers laced with black humor. For this project, Joel Coen chose a work with a long history and layers of meaning.

## VHS tapes

Filmed in black and white, the play of light and shade is omnipresent, especially on the face of

Macbeth, who is portrayed masterfully by Washington. Coen cited Danish cinema master of the 1920s and 1930s Carl Dreyer and German expressionism as inspirations for his interpretation of Macbeth. The film's dialogues, which ring very to close Shakespeare's text, are rendered deftly by Washington and McDormand, both Academy Award winners. "The first thing that got me hooked on wanting to be an actor for the rest of my life was the sleep-walking scene from the tragedy," McDormand told reporters Friday at the film's premiere.

"And I did it when I was 14, so I've pretty much been practising rehearsing for 50 years," said the 64-year-old actress, who is married to Coen. The film will also be screened at the London Film Festival in October and then released in theaters for a limited time on December 25 before being broadcast in January 2022 on the Apple TV+ streaming platform. Asked about this strategy, which some contend spells catastrophe for the big screen, Coen said he and his brother owe their success in independent cinema to home video, relating it to TV. "The reason we were able to have a career is because the studios at that point had an ancillary market that was a backstop for more risky films, which were VHS cassettes or all these home video markets, which is essentially television." —AFP



Romanian film director Alina Grigore receives the "Concha de Oro" (Golden Shell) award to the best film for "Blue moon" (Crai nou) during the 69th San Sebastian Film Festival closing ceremony in the northern Spanish Basque city of San Sebastian. —AFP photos



Danish film director Tea Lindeburg poses with her "Concha de Plata" (Silver Shell) to the best director award for the film "Du som er i himlen / As in heaven".

## 'Blue Moon', Chastain, among San Sebastian festival winners

"Blue moon", Romanian director Alina Grigore's first film, won the top prize at the San Sebastian festival Saturday, while Denmark's Tea Lindeburg another first-timer, took best director for "As In Heaven". The best leading performance accolade—open for the first time to both sexes—was shared by Denmark's Flora Ofelia Hofmann Lindahl, who starred in "As in Heaven" and American Jessica Chastain for her role in "The Eyes of Tammy Faye". Chastain, a two-time Oscar nominee, played the late Tammy Faye Bakker, wife of controversial TV evangelist Jim Bakker and also co-produced the film.

"I'm so honored to share this award with Flora," said Chastain. "I hope the film reminds us to look beyond our first judgments," she added. "I love what I do," said Hoffman Lindahl, who starred in "As in Heaven," set in the 19th century. "It was a unique and fantastic experience," the Dane added of playing a 14-year-old, the eldest of her siblings and first in her family to go to school, whose plans radically are changed when her mother goes into labor. The prize for best supporting performance went to the cast of "Quien lo impide" (Who's Stopping Us) while Terence Davies won the best screenplay jury award for "Benediction". —AFP



Danish actress Flora Ofelia poses with her "Concha de Plata" (Silver Shell) to the best lead performance award for her role in the film "Du som er i himlen / As in heaven".



(From left) Corey Hawkins, Moses Ingram, Joel Coen, Frances McDormand, Bertie Carvel, Harry Melling, and Denzel Washington attend the opening night screening of The Tragedy Of Macbeth during the 59th New York Film Festival at Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center. —AFP





A Reticulated Python is pictured in a case at the house of Faisal Malaikah.



A Reticulated Python is pictured in a case.



Faisal Malaikah carries a Reticulated Python at his house in the Saudi Red Sea resort of Jeddah. —AFP photos



Faisal Malaikah holds up a Reticulated Python.

# Saudi masters ‘live art’ of python crossbreeding in palace home

Saudi Faisal Malaikah's love for non-venomous snakes has evolved from having just one when he was five to ultimately crossbreeding dozens to produce “live art” in unique colors and patterns. In the garden of his palace in the Red Sea city of Jeddah, the 35-year-old businessman has a sign on the wall in green block letters that reads: “THE SNAKE ROOM”. “There are people who collect precious stones or classical cars or paintings; as for me, I like to collect live art,” the father of three told AFP, referring to his collection of more than 100 reticulated pythons—the world's longest snake—from southeast Asia.

“They are popular in the fashion industry, where their skin is used to make bags, shoes and belts, but one out of every 1,000 snakes hunted is one with a rare color. “The hunters sell the unique-coloured snakes to collectors like myself... and I crossbreed to produce rare genetic mutations with patterns and colors unseen before,” he said, pointing at a gold and grey-dotted white snake wrapped around his left arm. Malaikah said he had no interest in selling to fashion brands, criticised by animal rights group for their unethical use of animal skins. “I value life, so I love (the snakes) alive and not as bags or shoes,” the breeder said.

In the well-air-conditioned room, the creatures slither around in large glass-encased boxes, with holes just big enough for them to flick their tongues out. Sawdust lines the floor of the boxes, absorbing odors from the snakes' droppings. Crossbreeding the pythons takes time and patience, said Malaikah. It takes “three or four generations... and about 10 to 12 years” to produce a tri-coloured snake, he added. In the wild, pythons are constrictors—meaning they coil their bodies around their prey and squeeze until it dies, swallowing it whole. They are not venomous. At the palace, Malaikah feeds them chicken or rabbit once a week.

“Some worth \$100,000”

Working alongside Malaikah is his friend, 32-year-old Ibrahim Aal-Sharif. Sharif said Malaikah, the CEO of a finance company, had spared no expense, bringing in specialists from the United States to learn more about crossbreeding and mutations.



A Reticulated Python is pictured near snake eggs.

“Malaikah has spent lots of time, effort and money on this hobby,” he said. In one of the enclosures is a six-meter (20-foot) long white python with golden markings. The eight-year-old snake weighs 100 kilograms (220 pounds) and moves with great effort. “The snakes I have are unlike any in the world or very rare, some worth \$100,000,” said Malaikah.

But he said most of his snakes are worth between \$200 and \$20,000 each. For Malaikah, living among the widely feared creatures is a dream come true. “Since I was a boy, I would go to libraries looking for books about snakes and reptiles,” he said. “You can say that I have always lived in an atmosphere of a biology class,” he added, laughing. While collecting snakes may have been an unusual hobby for a child, Malaikah said his family never had a problem with it. “These are mysterious creatures, and it is natural for people to be afraid of them... but I love them, especially that they are my creations.” —AFP



Faisal Malaikah holds up Reticulated Pythons.



Faisal Malaikah holds up a Reticulated Python.



Faisal Malaikah holds up a Reticulated Python.



A Reticulated Python is pictured in a case.



Reticulated Pythons are pictured in their cage.



Faisal Malaikah carries a Reticulated Python.



Faisal Malaikah holds up Reticulated Pythons.



Reticulated Pythons are pictured in their cage.



## Sports

# PSG, Man City to benefit from expected end to financial fair play restrictions

## UEFA mulls salary cap of 70 percent of club's revenue

**LAUSANNE:** Paris Saint-Germain and Manchester City go head-to-head in the Champions League tomorrow after a summer which underlined their status as the new superpowers of European football, and any possible restraints on their enormous spending could soon disappear along with UEFA's Financial Fair Play rules.

The story of PSG, City and Financial Fair Play (FFP) is essentially the story of the last decade in European football. Abu Dhabi's Sheikh Mansour bought City in 2008, while in 2010 Qatar Sports Investments purchased PSG. Also in 2010, UEFA introduced FFP in response to a debt crisis that was submerging clubs across the continent.

FFP meant clubs could not lose more than 30 million euros (\$35.2m) over a three-year period if they wanted to play in European competition.

Rivals of PSG and City have consistently asked how the duo can be respecting the rules when they spend as much as they do, most notably when the French side splurged the two biggest transfer fees in history to sign Neymar and Kylian Mbappe in 2017.

PSG were not punished then, while City were handed a two-year Champions League ban by UEFA in February 2020 for FFP breaches when they were found to have overstated revenue from sponsorship between 2012 and 2016. Yet the Court of Arbitration for Sport overturned that ban. Most alleged breaches, the court said, "were either not established or time-barred".

That ruling showed the limits of FFP, and in any case UEFA responded to the economic crisis caused by the coronavirus pandemic — with total projected losses of over eight billion euros — by

relaxing the rules. Assessments of the 2020 and 2021 financial years would be done together rather than separately. Clubs are also expected to be able to register losses over the 30 million-euro limit.

Essentially, with cash-strapped clubs desperate, UEFA realized it no longer made sense to prevent investment. "What they're saying is, put in all the money you want," says Raffaele Poli from the Football Observatory at the International Centre for Sports Studies in Neuchatel, Switzerland.

### Salary cap

And it now seems clear this relaxation will not be temporary. UEFA is working on a complete overhaul of its budgetary rules. Details are still being negotiated but it now seems clear the strict limits applied under FFP will be replaced by a salary cap expected to be around 70 percent of a club's revenue.

There will be a transition period in which the limit will gradually drop, for example the cap might start at 80 percent of revenue, then drop to 75 percent. It is a similar system to those used in American sports but the introduction of a Europe-wide salary cap is a delicate issue, given the continent's 55 national federations all follow different accounting and tax rules within their own countries.

In practice, such a cap would do little to restrain wage inflation. In May, UEFA claimed spending on salaries in 2019 represented 64 percent of total revenue for all clubs, "more than in any other industry".

However, the major change in store for the nouveaux riches of the European game is not a cap on wage spending, but instead the likely lifting of any



**PARIS:** PSG's players celebrate after winning the French L1 football match between Paris Saint-Germain and Montpellier at The Parc des Princes stadium in Paris on Saturday. —AFP

sporting punishment — bans from the Champions League or from signing players — for going over the limit.

### Luxury tax

Instead, UEFA is set to introduce a "luxury tax", as has been mentioned several times in the past by president Aleksander Ceferin. For every euro a club goes over the limit, it will have to pay into a pot and that money will be redistributed to other clubs.

Ceferin has warned that the envisaged new rules are not likely to improve "competitive bal-

ance", an issue close to the Slovenian's heart. It will not stop the biggest trophies being shared only among a very select few elite clubs.

According to Poli, limiting wage spending to a percentage of revenues will simply "entrench the existing hierarchy" as it will still only be the very richest teams who can attract the best players. Indeed, the luxury tax is likely to tip the balance even more in favor of those backed by oil or gas-rich states, or oligarchs, for whom there will no longer be any questions about possible breaches of FFP rules. —AFP

### News in brief

#### PSG win without Messi

**PARIS:** Lionel Messi was again sidelined for Paris Saint-Germain and in the Argentine's absence it was Idrissa Gana Gueye and Julian Draxler who scored as the Ligue 1 leaders beat Montpellier 2-0 on Saturday. Senegal midfielder Gueye crashed a shot into the roof of the net from 20 meters to give PSG an early lead at the Parc des Princes and substitute Draxler added a late second as Mauricio Pochettino's team maintained their perfect start to the French season. They have won eight matches out of eight in Ligue 1 and are already 10 points clear of second-placed Marseille, who do nevertheless have two games in hand. —AFP

#### Real Madrid frustrated

**MADRID:** Real Madrid failed to capitalize on Atletico Madrid's shock defeat by bottom club Alaves on Saturday as they were held to a goalless draw by a determined Villarreal in La Liga. Dropped points for Spain's leading pair allowed Sevilla to make up some ground at the top, with Julen Lopetegui's side beating Espanyol 2-0 to jump above Atletico and into second. Atletico face Barcelona next weekend after travelling to AC Milan in the Champions League on Tuesday, a game made more important after a goalless draw at home to Porto cranked up the pressure in a group that also includes Liverpool. —AFP

#### Inter's dramatic draw

**MILAN:** Inter Milan missed the chance to go top of Serie A on Saturday after a thrilling 2-2 draw with Atalanta which allowed city rivals AC Milan to hold onto first place with their 2-1 win at Spezia. Champions Inter sit third, two points behind leaders Milan, after a breathless match at the San Siro which ended with substitute Federico Dimarco hitting the bar with an 86th minute penalty and Roberto Piccoli then having a last-gasp winner for Atalanta ruled out amid frantic protests from the away side. Atalanta are fifth following the draw which highlighted the attacking threat and the clear intention from Gian Piero Gasperini's side to continue to punch above their weight in Italy's top flight. —AFP

#### Brentford deny Liverpool

**BRENTFORD:** Jurgen Klopp said he was not able to enjoy a "wild ride" as Liverpool twice let the lead slip to draw 3-3 at Brentford on Saturday to edge just one point clear at the top of the Premier League. Defeats for Chelsea and Manchester United earlier in the day propelled Liverpool to the top of the table and gave the Reds a golden chance to open up a three-point lead. However, Brentford showed why they have made such a bright start to their first top-flight season for 74 years in a six-goal thriller that swung from end to end throughout. —AFP

#### Dortmund crash without Haaland

**BERLIN:** Defending champions Bayern Munich finished the weekend three points clear at the top of the Bundesliga table after close rivals Borussia Dortmund and Wolfsburg both suffered away defeats on Saturday. Without injured star striker Erling Braut Haaland and club captain Marco Reus, Dortmund had midfielder Mahmoud Dahoud sent off for two first-half yellow cards as their 1-0 defeat at Borussia Moenchengladbach left them fourth in the table. Earlier, Wolfsburg lost 3-1 at Hoffenheim, falling to third and losing second place on goal difference to Bayer Leverkusen, whose 18-year-old Germany international Florian Wirtz sealed a 1-0 win over Mainz to become the youngest player to reach the milestone of 10 Bundesliga goals. —AFP

## Pressure mounts on Solskjaer as Man Utd stumble again

**LONDON:** Cristiano Ronaldo's sensational return to Manchester United allowed fans to dream big but three defeats in four games have ramped up the pressure ahead of Villarreal's Champions League trip to Old Trafford on Wednesday.

There is no need for Ole Gunnar Solskjaer to hit the panic button yet, with his side just one point behind Premier League leaders Liverpool after six matches.

But there are worrying signs for the Red Devils, who must rediscover their mojo quickly after a shock reverse in their Champions League opener against Young Boys, a League Cup exit to West Ham and Saturday's defeat against Aston Villa.

The one result that breaks up that nasty sequence was a 2-1 victory at West Ham, but that only came courtesy of a late winner and a David de Gea penalty save in stoppage time. In other circumstances the game against Unai Emery's Villarreal might appear routine but United are already on the back foot in Europe after their embarrassing loss in Switzerland.

And they have a recent bad experience against the Spanish side, losing on penalties to them in the final of last season's Europa League, a result that denied them their first silverware since 2017. United boast a squad that on paper can compete with anybody, with an rich array of attacking talent including Ronaldo, Edinson Cavani, Bruno Fernandes, Mason Greenwood and Paul Pogba.

And that's not even including big summer signing Jadon Sancho, Anthony Martial, Jesse Lingard or the injured Marcus Rashford. But Solskjaer's side

## Joshua wants Usyk rematch '110 percent'

**LONDON:** Anthony Joshua said he was "110 percent" likely to activate a rematch clause with Oleksandr Usyk after losing his world heavyweight titles to the Ukrainian in stunning fashion in London on Saturday. Usyk gave a boxing masterclass in recording a unanimous points victory to deprive Joshua of his World Boxing Association, International Boxing Federation and World Boxing Organization belts in front of the dethroned champion's home crowd of more than 66,000 at the Tottenham Hotspur Stadium.

His victory extended Usyk's unbeaten professional record to 19 wins and scuppered the prospects of an all-British world heavyweight title unification bout between Joshua and Tyson Fury. It also meant Usyk became just the third cruiser-weight world champion after Evander Holyfield of the United States and Britain's David Haye to also take a heavyweight title, with the 34-year-old achieving the feat in just his third professional contest in the heavyweight ranks.

The contract for this bout, however, contained a rematch clause. And Joshua, who previously lost his belts when beaten by Andy Ruiz in New York in June 2019 before regaining the titles in a rematch in Saudi Arabia six months later, is determined to face Usyk again. "A hundred percent, 110 percent," he told a post-fight press conference. "I'm ready to

still regularly look less than the sum of their parts. United had 28 shots in the match against Villa but just four were on target and the visitors posed a regular threat. They slipped to their first defeat against the Midlands club since 2009 after Kortney Hause's late goal and Fernandes's missed penalty in stoppage time.

Solskjaer felt his team were not clinical enough in the 1-0 defeat. "When we got up there, the final decision, the final execution, the quality in the pass or the shot or decision wasn't good enough to get goals," he said. "The game ebbed and flowed and was probably a good game for the neutrals but unfortunately, we didn't get a goal."

### Must-win?

United must stop the rot on Wednesday and in the context of Europe it could be make or break. "It's a big game, a Champions League night and we know we've started that group badly," said Solskjaer. "We'll be ready."

Despite some eye-catching wins this season, United have often lacked cohesion and relied on moments of individual magic from players such as Fernandes, Pogba and Ronaldo. There is the lingering sense that United are lacking the midfield balance to make a concerted challenge.

After a string of near-misses in the hunt for silverware, Ronaldo's return added to over £100 million of investment in Sancho and Raphael Varane means Solskjaer has to deliver this season. But the Norwegian's record in Europe does not inspire confidence. United have lost seven of his 11 Champions League matches since taking charge in 2018.

The 48-year-old was handed a new three-year deal in July — reward for the progress United have made in the three years since he replaced Jose Mourinho. The club's bosses have remained patient so far with their former star striker but they will be keen to see a return on their considerable investment sooner rather than later.

get back to training. There's an old saying 'If you want to go down as a great fighter, don't fight southpaws', especially good ones. He (Usyk) is a good fighter." Joshua suffered a badly swollen right eye which required medical attention in a fight where only the bell appeared to save him from a last-round knockout. "I couldn't see in the ninth round," explained Joshua. "My eye was shut, but it was a good experience, because in adversity, you've just got to learn to control yourself... it's the first time it's happened in a fight."

Joshua, sounding remarkably upbeat despite a convincing loss, insisted: "I'm a different kind of animal. I'm not a sulker, this is a blessed opportunity to be able to fight for the heavyweight championship of the world. Straight away I've already been watching the fight and figuring out what I could have done better." Joshua's defeat put paid to a fight anytime soon with Fury, who defends his World Boxing Council heavyweight title against Deontay Wilder in Las Vegas next month — the third time the pair have met after a split-decision draw and a win for Fury. Joshua, however, insisted: "I'll fight Tyson Fury, Wilder, without the belts. It's great, it's legacy but with or without the belts I'll fight whoever."

### 'Lucky city'

Usyk, three years older than Joshua, also made light of giving away three inches (7.62 centimeters) in height as well as nearly 20lbs (nine kilograms) in weight during his latest triumph in London following a heavyweight gold medal at the 2012 Olympics — a Games where Joshua took the super-heavyweight title. "London is a really lucky city for me but not a single professional victory



**MANCHESTER:** Manchester United's manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer consoles Bruno Fernandes after he missed a penalty during their team's English Premier League football match against Aston Villa at Old Trafford in Manchester on Saturday. —AFP

### Bruno takes responsibility

Fernandes says he will keep taking penalties "without any fear" despite the spot-kick miss that condemned Manchester United to a 1-0 defeat against Aston Villa. Writing on Instagram, Fernandes said: "Nobody is more frustrated and disappointed than me for missing the penalty and the consequent defeat. I've always assumed my responsibilities and I've always embraced them under pressure in moments like this. Today, I failed. But I took a step forward and faced the challenge with the same ambition and responsibility as when, on the many other occasions, the ball ended up in the net.

"Criticism and contrasting opinions are a big part of football. I've learned to live with it, even using them to drive me on, and I consider it also a very important part of my commitment to never stop trying to improve and to become the best player I can possibly be, for me and the team. Today I once again took the responsibility given to me almost since I joined United and I will take it again without any fear or dread whenever called upon." —AFP



**LONDON:** Ukrainian boxer Oleksandr Usyk (left) fights British heavyweight champion boxer Anthony Joshua at the end of their heavyweight boxing match at Tottenham Hotspur Stadium in north London on Saturday. —AFP

can be above an Olympic gold," said Usyk via a translator. "At this point it is the biggest fight in my career but it wasn't the hardest one. I cannot say (who was) but, most likely, it's ahead of us." Most of Usyk's wins have come outside Ukraine, with the new champion — who spent three months in a preparation camp away from his wife and family — adding: "I would love to have the rematch at Olympiyskiy Stadium in Kiev."

But Joshua's promoter, Eddie Hearn, suggested any rematch would be in Britain, in February or March. Hearn said a defeat by the "outstanding" Usyk was easier to accept than the "bolt from the blue" that was the first Ruiz fight. "I think in a strange way he (Joshua) enjoyed the fight because I think he knows he learnt so much and, deep down he knows he was beaten by the better man tonight," he said. —AFP



## Sports

# Hamilton claims 100th win amid high drama in Russia

## Seven-time champion takes drivers' lead from Verstappen

**SOCHI:** Lewis Hamilton finally claimed his 100th Formula One success yesterday, the peerless Mercedes driver emerging triumphant amid high drama at the rain-hit Russian Grand Prix to retake the championship lead.

With a late downpour causing havoc Hamilton reached the unprecedented century after being stuck on 99 since the British Grand Prix in July. The 36-year-old Briton moved back to the top of the drivers standings by two points from Max Verstappen, who finished second. After taking his 100th chequered flag 14 years after his first in Canada Hamilton told his team on the car radio: "Phew. That was hard work man!"

The seven-time champion had looked destined to come away for the fifth race in a row stuck on the 99 mark with McLaren's Lando Norris firmly in command up front. But with five laps to go, the rain that had been threatening the 15th round of the championship for so long arrived, causing mayhem.

With cars fitted with slicks starting to lose grip and coming in for intermediates Hamilton joined them, leaving Norris leading. But with three laps left and Norris a sitting duck and sliding all over the circuit Hamilton eventually hit the front to finally nail the magic number of victories.

After jumping out of his car he said: "The rain came, it was very opportunistic, the team did a great job, I'm grateful for the points. It's taken a long time to get to 100 wins. I wasn't even sure it would come. The team made such a good call at the end. I didn't want to let Lando go. I'm incredibly

grateful to all these men and women here and back in the factory. Wow, 100."

### 'So determined'

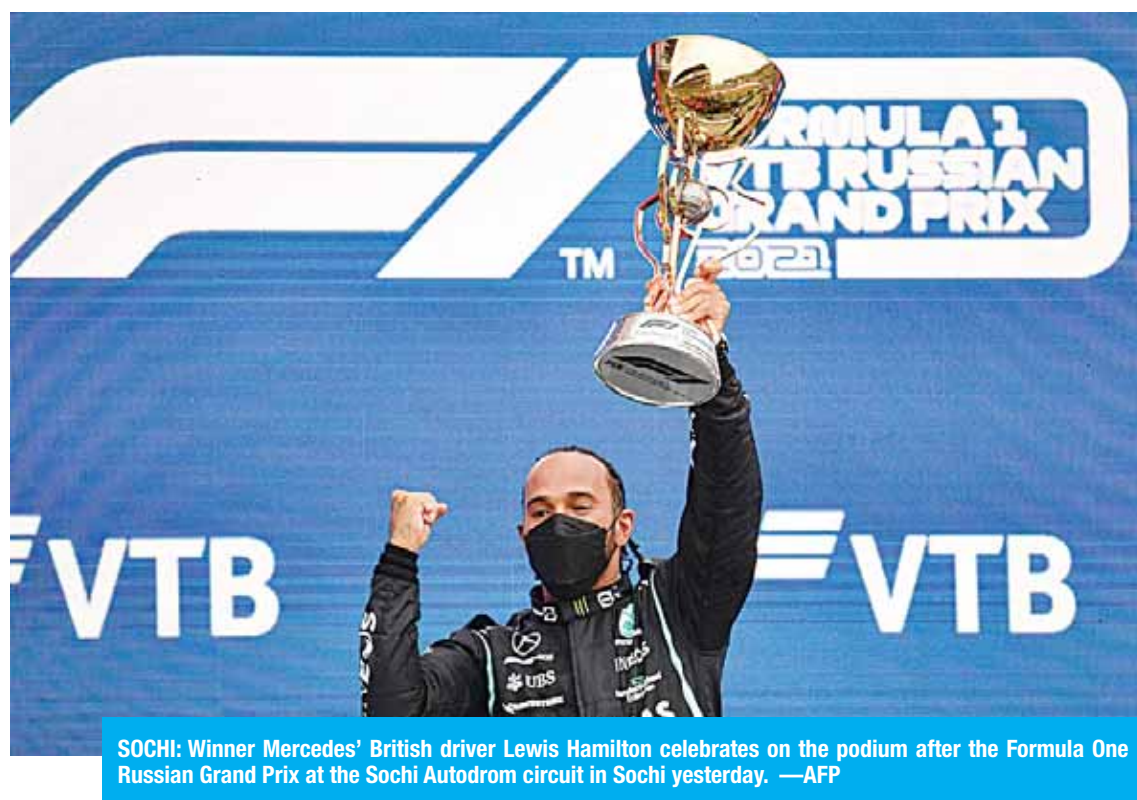
Hamilton had set off from the second row after a rare mistake in qualifying 24 hours earlier. "Going to bed last night, with the job that I did yesterday, there were subtle little mistakes. I was so determined to do the best job I could. It was tough."

At the start, as flecks of rain began to appear on drivers' visors, a ballerina pirouetted on a grand piano at the back of the grid to add a surreal touch to the occasion. On lights out, Ferrari's Carlos Sainz won the long 900m sprint to the first turn from Norris and George Russell in the Williams as Hamilton slipped from fourth to seventh.

Mercedes' tactical card with Valtteri Bottas — whose engine they had replaced so he would start near Verstappen near the back of the grid and try and hold him up — worked for all of seven laps when the Dutch driver

er nipped past the Finn, to smug smiles from the Red Bull garage. On lap 13 Norris took to the team radio to say "Got him" after swooping past Sainz to regain the lead he lost at the start. Sainz pulled his Ferrari into the pits on the next lap to promote Daniel Ricciardo into second to leave McLaren racing first and second.

Approaching midway the top 10 had yet to pit, with Verstappen, up to sixth. Ricciardo was the first of the front runners coming on for a change of rubber, but a tardy tire change saw the Monza winner rejoining back in 14th, as Hamilton took advantage



**SOCHI:** Winner Mercedes' British driver Lewis Hamilton celebrates on the podium after the Formula One Russian Grand Prix at the Sochi Autodrom circuit in Sochi yesterday. —AFP

of clean air to set a fastest lap.

The century-chasing man came in finally on lap 27, with Verstappen following suit, the pair dropping to ninth and 12th. Norris came in for a slick stop, the McLaren mechanics high-fiving in relief after Ricciardo's problematic visit.

Mercedes team principal Toto Wolff took to the airwaves to tell Hamilton: "You can win this race". With 10 laps left, Norris had regained the lead,

Hamilton looming in the young Briton's wing mirror, around one second behind.

Then the rain came down. Cars began to come in for a change of rubber for better grip including Hamilton with Norris staying out on hards, 25 seconds clear now, as McLaren gambled. Fernando Alonso pirouetted like the pre-race ballerina and Norris followed to hand Hamilton the lead, and another slice of F1 history. —AFP

## Hamilton — 'Wild and free' but fiercely focused on winning

**SOCHI:** Lewis Hamilton cemented his position as one of Formula One's true greats when he won his 100th Grand Prix in Sochi yesterday, another staggering achievement for a boy who grew up in modest circumstances.

Hamilton already held the record for most victories after breaking Michael Schumacher's mark of 91 in Portugal last October. His fifth victory in the Russian Grand Prix also put the 36-year-old Briton top of the driver standings and on course to break a tie (seven) with Schumacher for most driver titles. It has been quite a ride. The son of a black father and a white mother, whose parents separated in his youth, Hamilton grew up on a housing estate. His father Anthony at one time held down three jobs to fund his son's embryonic racing career in karting. It was clear from an early age that Hamilton had a gift for speed and the gutsy natural instincts of a born racer. In 1995, aged 10, and wearing a jacket and shoes borrowed from his predecessor as British Formula Cadet karting champion, he went to a glittering awards ceremony in London where he met McLaren's then-boss Ron Dennis. He asked for an autograph and told him "one day I want to race for you". Dennis replied: "Phone me in nine years and I'll sort you a deal."

### Mercurial and tempestuous

Bold, determined and original, he almost won the title in his first record-breaking season as he reeled off nine successive podiums from his debut in Melbourne, astonishing with his speed and his style. On and off the track, he was fast, mercurial and occasionally tempestuous and the combination led to a fierce rivalry with team-mate and two-time champion Fernando Alonso at McLaren. He narrowly missed the 2007 title, but in 2008 grabbed fifth place on the final corner in Brazil to edge Felipe Massa by one point and at 23 become the youngest ever champion. Hamilton showed frustration as McLaren failed to deliver the speed to beat Sebastian Vettel and Red Bull, who reeled off four straight title triumphs from 2010 to 2013, by which time Hamilton had departed for Mercedes. Escaping the management regime of Dennis and his father, Hamilton found freedom at Mercedes alongside team-mate Nico Rosberg, his teenage karting friend and rival.

This enabled Hamilton to express himself with a headline-grabbing trans-Atlantic lifestyle, mixing with musicians and 'fashionistas'. He showed little love for conventions and, for many observers, gave his sport a welcome injection of freshness and diversity as champion again in 2014 and 2015. Rosberg broke Hamilton's supremacy in 2016 and then



**SOCHI:** Mercedes' British driver Lewis Hamilton steers his car to win the Formula One Russian Grand Prix at the Sochi Autodrom circuit in Sochi yesterday. —AFP

retired, leaving the Englishman to dominate. His former McLaren team-mate Jenson Button said Hamilton had pure speed. "For me, over one lap, I don't think there is anyone as quick as Lewis and I don't think there ever has been," Button said. That speed has in recent seasons been allied to a more mature attitude to his job as team leader.

### 'Only human'

Mercedes team chief Toto Wolff said of Hamilton: "He is never satisfied. He never settles. He is never happy with where he is as a racing driver and a human being." Having achieved so much as his sport's most high profile figure, Hamilton has expressed views on social issues more frequently. He began voicing his concerns for the environment and in 2019 used Instagram to declare the planet was "a messed-up place" and he felt he wanted "to give up". That commentary, including revelations about his vegan lifestyle, led to the man who frequently used private jets and competes in a sport hardly known for its green credentials being accused of hypocrisy. "I'm only human," he retorted. "Like everyone, we have up and down days. That's what I've been really trying to convey." Last year, following the death of George Floyd, he pressed for greater diversity in the paddock and vocally supported the Black Lives Matter movement. His belief in self-expression and freedom has shaped his advice for young drivers. "What I can definitely advise any kid that's out there trying to race is don't listen to people who tell you that you need a mental coach or you need someone to help control your mind," he said. "You need to let it run wild and free and discover yourself. It is all about discovery. And only you can do it." —AFP

## Zain supports Jet Ski World Champions for 10th year

**KUWAIT:** Zain, the leading digital service provider in Kuwait, announced its strategic partnership with the Kuwait National Jet Ski team for the tenth year. The team, part of the Kuwait Sea Sport Club, recently left Kuwait to take part in the upcoming second round of the World Jet Ski Championship 2021 to be held in October in Arizona, United States.

Zain is proud to partner with the World Champions for the past decade as part of its Corporate Sustainability and Social Responsibility strategy. The company wishes the team and staff all the best of luck on their upcoming participation in the training camp of the World Championship to be held in Arizona by the UIM (the international governing body of powerboating). Zain's support of the team for the past ten years comes to affirm its confidence in the talents of Kuwait's youth in representing the nation in internationally renowned championships.

The Kuwait National Jet Ski team is authorized by the Kuwait Sea Sport Club to officially represent Kuwait in regional and international Jet Ski championships. The champions won a number of prominent titles during their past participations in the biggest Gulf, Asian, and international competitions.



**KUWAIT:** The World Champions leaving Kuwait International Airport.

# Classifieds

## Hospitals & Clinics

Sabah Hospital	24812000	<b>Clinics</b>	Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764
Amiri Hospital	22450005		Qadsiya	22515088
Maternity Hospital	24843100	Kaizen center		Dasmah
Mubarak Al-Kabir Hospital	25312700	Rawda	22517733	
Chest Hospital	24849400	Adaliya	22517144	22532265
Farwaniya Hospital	24892010	Khaldiya	24848075	Bneid Al-Gar
Adan Hospital	23940620	Kaifan	24849807	Shaab
Ibn Sina Hospital	24840300	Shamiya	24848913	Qibla
Al-Razi Hospital	24846000	Shuwaikh	24814507	Ayoun Al-Qibla
Physiotherapy Hospital	24874330/9	Abdullah Salem	22549134	Mirqab
		Nuzha	22526804	Sharq
				Salmiya
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**I My self** Thanvisha holding of Indian Passport No. V1967722, residing in Village Ananthampalli that I have change My Name as: Given Name: Thanvisha Surname: Erapuraju. 21-9-2021

**EMERGENCY 112**



## Arsenal overpower Tottenham 3-1

### Jimenez strikes as Wolves sink Southampton



LONDON: Arsenal's Portuguese defender Nuno Tavares (right) crosses the ball during the English Premier League football match between Arsenal and Tottenham Hotspur at the Emirates Stadium yesterday. — AFP

**LONDON:** Arsenal struck three times inside 35 minutes to beat Tottenham 3-1 yesterday and move above their north London rivals in the Premier League table. Just three weeks ago Spurs sat top and Arsenal bottom after their worst start to a league season for 67 years. However, the Gunners have been rejuvenated by six summer signings and the return to fitness of a number of key players.

Emile Smith Rowe opened the floodgates by taking advantage of some awful Tottenham defending on 12 minutes. Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang then rounded off a brilliant team move before Bukayo Saka rolled home the third 11 minutes before half-time. Son Heung-min pulled a goal back for the visitors 11 minutes from time, but it was too little, too late for Nuno Espirito Santo's men. Arsenal climb to 10th ahead of Spurs on goal difference with both sides on nine points from six games.

However, they are going in opposite directions with Tottenham losing their last three league games by a combined score of 9-1. The last time north London derby took place in front of a full crowd, Unai Emery and Mauricio Pochettino were still in charge of the sides. Both clubs have had little reason to celebrate in the two years since. But there are encouraging signs for Arsenal that the decision to invest heavily in youth during the transfer window is beginning to pay off.

The Gunners spent more than any other Premier League club over the summer, investing £150 million in players aged between 21 and 23, despite failing to qualify for European football for the first time in 25 years. Four of the new faces started with all 11 of the starting line-up either signed in the two years since Mikel Arteta was appointed or handed a contract extension in that time. Saka and Smith Rowe are two of those to have committed their long-term future to the club where they came through the ranks and were the stars of a first 45 minutes that sent the Emirates into raptures.

Smith Rowe was allowed a huge amount of space to amble into the box and slot home Saka's cross. The hosts rampaged through Spurs with ease for a brilliant second goal in a move reminiscent of Arsenal's glory days under Arsene Wenger. Tottenham claimed in vain for a foul on Pierre-Emile Hojbjerg as Granit Xhaka turned onto Aaron Ramsdale's pass out from the back. Aubameyang then flicked the ball through for Smith Rowe to charge in on the Spurs goal before having the presence to turn back and pick out his captain for a cool finish.

The Tottenham Hotspur stadium played host to Anthony Joshua losing his world heavyweight boxing titles to Oleksandr Usyk on Saturday. And Nuno's men were dealt a knockout blow before the

break. Harry Kane found himself back in his own box trying to make a tackle, but the ball broke kindly for Saka to sweep the ball past Lloris. Kane's frustrating day continued into the second-half as he prodded wide with just Ramsdale to beat before seeing strong appeals for a penalty waived away for a challenge by Ben White.

#### Wolves sink Southampton

In another development, Raul Jimenez scored an emotional first goal since his horrific head injury in November as Wolves earned a 1-0 win over Southampton yesterday. Jimenez feared he would never play again after suffering a fractured skull in a clash with David Luiz at Arsenal last year. The Mexico striker only returned to action at the start of this season and had gone without a goal in his first five games. Jimenez had shown signs of frustration with the supportive headband he now wears to protect himself, even angrily removing it after a missing a headed chance against Brentford last weekend.

But the 30-year-old enjoyed a cathartic moment as his superb second half strike fired Bruno Lage's men to their second Premier League win this season. Jimenez had never gone six Premier League games without a goal since he arrived at Molineux in 2018. In the 61st minute, he danced through the Southampton defense, twice eluding Jan Bednarek

and leaving Mohammed Salisu bewildered on the turf, before calmly slotting past Alex McCarthy. The end of Jimenez's 336-day wait to score sparked a joyous celebration with his team-mates.

He was also embraced by the club's travelling fans in one corner of St Mary's after the final whistle. "I was thinking 'when will the goal come?'. I was fighting for it, working for it and all the team deserve it," Jimenez said. "I knew it was coming eventually. It felt really good. Four of our five games have been incredible. We need to keep going like this." Dedicating the win to Jimenez, Lage said: "This three points and this goal go straight to Raul. It was a special goal for Raul. "I saw since the first day that he was a guy with a big ambition and hungry to come back to play to score goals for us.

"Raul is a good example, you can be a top player and a top man. "Every time he's there working to do everything, to understand our way, to press, to help our team." The uplifting scenes that greeted Jimenez's decisive contribution were a stark contrast to the mood among Southampton supporters. Ralph Hasenhuttl's side remain winless after six league matches and were booed off at full-time. The scoreline could have been even worse for listless Southampton if McCarthy had not denied Jimenez a second goal with a fine save in stoppage-time. — AFP

## Fati returns in Messi shirt to lift Barcelona

**MADRID:** Barcelona's Ansu Fati made the perfect return after 10 months out through injury by scoring in a 3-0 victory over Levante yesterday, a result that eases the pressure on coach Ronald Koeman. Fati, wearing the number 10 shirt previously belonging to Lionel Messi, came on to a raucous reception at Camp Nou, 323 days after his last appearance in November last year.

And the 18-year-old came back in style, carrying the ball forward and lashing it into the net in injury time to complete a much-needed victory for Barca. Fati was hoisted into the air by his teammates and then he climbed into the crowd behind the substitutes bench, to embrace members of his family and the club's medical staff. "I want to say thank you to the doctors and everyone who has been with me through all this, and the fans who have been unbelievable," said Fati afterwards.

After needing three operations on a knee injury, many wondered if Fati would ever get back to the levels he showed so spectacularly when he first broke into the first team in 2019. There is still a long way to go for the teenager but his return, and a brilliant goal, raised the roof at Camp Nou and lifted spirits after a turbulent few weeks consumed by speculation about Koeman's future. "You saw the reaction in the stadium - we know he is a very good player," said Koeman's assistant Alfred Schreuder, who took on media duties with Koeman serving a touchline ban.

"The goal was not even a chance. He created it out of nothing. This is the individual quality he has and it's what we need." Koeman may not be saved by this result - the club could look to make a change during the upcoming international break - but there was at

least renewed positivity inside the stadium, even before Fati's dramatic intervention. Barcelona's first win in four games moves them up to fifth in La Liga, five points behind Real Madrid with a game in hand. They play Atletico Madrid at the Wanda Metropolitano next weekend.

#### New era?

Memphis Depay had given them an early lead with a penalty and Luuk de Jong made it two by scoring his first goal for the club since joining from Sevilla on the last day of the transfer window. But the real excitement centered around the 17-year-old Gavi and 19-year-old Nico Gonzalez, both academy graduates, who delivered displays to suggest Barca's youngsters could yet be the faces of the new era. Depay earned the penalty he scored in the fifth minute when he skipped past and the tripped over the dangling leg of Nemanja Radoja before converting to give Barca the perfect start.

De Jong's second was instigated by Depay as well as he released Sergino Dest down the left, who cut inside and curved a pass into the striker, who took the ball on and fired in. Barca should have extended their lead before half-time. Gerard Pique somehow poked wide from a yard out before Gavi's superb through ball sent Depay clear but he left himself too much to do from the angle. Gavi then tried and failed to lob Aitor Fernandez. Levante were generous opponents, allowing Barcelona space to dictate through midfield while never really threatening a comeback.

Nico lashed wide from the edge of the box and Depay was denied again from the angle before substitute Riqui Puig almost completed a weaving run but overran his final touch. Puig, a popular graduate of Barca's La Masia academy, had enjoyed an enthusiastic reception from the home fans but it was nothing compared to Fati's welcome, the teenager unable to hold back a grin as he heard the cheers. — AFP

## Juve beat Sampdoria 3-2 as tearful Dybala limps off

**TURIN:** Juventus held off Sampdoria to win their second match of the Serie A season 3-2 yesterday but will have to face Chelsea without star forward Paulo Dybala after the Argentina forward limped off with a thigh injury. Dybala opened the scoring early at a wet Allianz Stadium, with Leonardo Bonucci and Manuel Locatelli netting the other goals to move Juve ninth on eight points, but soon afterwards the 27-year-old left the field in tears after the latest in a long line of injuries.

Massimiliano Allegri's side host holders Chelsea in their second Champions League group match on Wednesday and the coach said that both Dybala and centre-forward Alvaro Morata, who also exited with a thigh problem towards the end of the match, would be out of action until after the next international break which runs from after next weekend's matches to October 15.

"Dybala and Morata definitely won't be available for Chelsea and Torino (on Saturday)," Allegri told reporters after the match. Dybala got off to a great start by flashing home his third goal in all competitions this season with nine minutes on the clock, striking home a beautiful first-time finish after Locatelli's shot was blocked.

The hosts were affected by Dybala's emotional exit in the 22nd minute and performed worse without him on the field, but looked to have taken



TURIN: Juventus' Argentine forward Paulo Dybala falls after colliding with Sampdoria's Gambian defender Omar Colley during the Italian Serie A football match. — AFP

a big step towards victory when Bonucci slotted home his penalty in the 43rd minute. Samp responded immediately though and almost pulled one back through Fabio Quagliarella before Maya Yoshida nodded the away side back into the game from Antonio Candreva's whipped cross two minutes before half-time.

Juve had lost points from winning positions three times in their first five matches but Locatelli re-established the hosts' two-goal lead in the 57th minute with his first Juve goal, tapping home Dejan Kulusevski's pull back. Home supporters were again worrying about the result though with seven minutes remaining when Candreva met Adrien Silva's pass with a well taken first-time finish, but that turned out to be the match's last significant act. — AFP