

3 Rare weather phenomena as humid ‘Marzam’ begins



5 Pope apologizes for ‘evil’ of Indigenous abuse in Canada



5 Trump returns to Washington for first time since 2020 defeat



16 Kuwait takes 5th position in Boxing Championship



# Five political groups call for ‘changing electoral system’

## Constitutional Movement selects five candidates for polls

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: Five Islamic, liberal and national political groups on Tuesday welcomed the appointment of Sheikh Ahmad Al-Nawaf Al-Sabah as the new prime minister and urged reforms that include changing the electoral system. In a joint statement, the five groups expressed the hope that the next government will undertake reforms that lead to the election of a true representative National Assembly through the amendment of the election system and

an effective monitoring of the general polls.

This will lead to the election of reformist MPs who are expected to cooperate with government projects to serve the Kuwaiti people, the statement said. Kuwait Democratic Forum, the National Islamic Alliance, The Salaf Alliance, The Popular Action Front and the Islamic Constitutional Movement (ICM) signed the statement.

Sheikh Ahmad was named on Sunday to form the next Cabinet after the outgoing prime minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah resigned more

than three months ago amid a prolonged political deadlock. The ex-premier was grilled by three opposition lawmakers and a non-cooperation motion was filed against him. A large number of MPs have welcomed the appointment of Sheikh Ahmad and called on him to fight corruption and undertake reforms. After forming the Cabinet, HH the Amir is expected to dissolve the national assembly and call for fresh polls.

The ICM yesterday selected five candidates to contest the upcoming polls, one in each constituen-

cy. The candidates include current MPs Osama Al-Shaheen, Hamad Al-Matar and Abdulaziz Al-Saqaabi in the first, second and third electoral districts. They also selected Moath Al-Duwailah and Saad Al-Hajeri in the fourth and fifth constituencies.

In the meantime, leading opposition MP Hasan Jowhar said yesterday that the Kuwaiti voters should be allowed to freely elect their representatives. “Fair election is the first challenge to the credibility of the next cabinet in fighting corruption and an indicator to its reformist policy,” Jowhar said on Twitter.

## Breakthrough in mysterious child hepatitis

WASHINGTON: British researchers reported a breakthrough Monday in mysterious hepatitis cases affecting young children, finding the serious liver condition was linked to co-infection of two common viruses, but not the coronavirus. The World Health Organization (WHO) has reported at least 1,010 probable cases, including 46 that required transplants and 22 deaths from the illness dating back to last October. Previous theories had centered on a spike in commonly found adenovirus infections being behind the cases.

But in two new studies carried out independently and simultaneously in Scotland and London, scientists found another virus, AAV2 (adeno-associated virus 2) played a significant role and was present in 96 percent of all patients examined. AAV2 is not normally known to cause disease and cannot replicate itself without another “helper” virus being present. Both teams concluded that co-infection with either AAV2 and an adenovirus, or sometimes the herpes virus HHV6, offered the best explanation for the severe liver disease.



Photo shows a hepatic function panel blood test tube.

“The presence of the AAV2 virus is associated with unexplained hepatitis in children,” said infectious disease professor Emma Thomson of the University of Glasgow, who led the Scottish paper, in a statement. But she also cautioned it was not yet certain whether AAV2 was causing the disease or was rather a biomarker for underlying adenovirus infection that is harder to detect but was the main pathogen.

### No coronavirus link

Both papers have been posted online to “preprint” servers and still await peer review before they are published in journals. The two studies looked both at patients who acquired hepatitis and those that did not, finding that AAV2 was mostly present in those who got the illness, not those that didn’t. The Scottish study further tested genes of children who had become sick and those that didn’t, honing in on differences in their Human Leukocyte Antigen that might explain why some are more susceptible than others.

Continued on Page 6

## Sharp decline in real estate deals

KUWAIT: The Kuwait housing real estate scene has witnessed a sharp decline in deals by 50 percent in the first half of 2022 compared to the same period in 2021. Some attributed this decline to price inflation of real estate and the static purchasing power on part of clients in Kuwait leading to a huge margin between supply and demand. There were 2,470 deals worth KD 1.13 billion (around \$3.3 billion) in the first half of this year as opposed to 4,814 deals worth KD 1.40 billion (around \$4.6 billion) in the same period in 2021.

Speaking on this issue, local real estate expert and Director General of Abraj Behbehani company, Alaa Behbehani, said Tuesday that the price inflation was the main cause of the sharp decline. Kuwait, as in the case of other countries, has been affected by the increase of interest rate announced by the US Federal Reserve, said Behbehani, adding that the latter continued to increase the interest rate of the US Dollar, which contributed in turn to withdrawal of liquidity from the world market. — (See Page 4)

## Iraq’s Kurd farmers battle drought as Dukan retreats

LAKE DUKAN: Farmers in Iraqi Kurdistan seeking to irrigate crops face seeing their economic lifeline slip away as the waters of Lake Dukan recede and dams upstream in Iran stem the flow. Bapir Kalkani, who is also a trade unionist, farms near the picturesque lake but has seen marked changes over the past three years as Iraq suffers prolonged drought.

“There was water where I’m standing now” in 2019, the 56-year-old said. “It used to go three kilometers further, but the level has retreated.” Sesame and beans are being grown on the plain under a blazing sun, adjacent to the lake which is fed by a

Tigris tributary, the Lower Zab river which has its source in Iran.

The large artificial lake was created in the 1950s following construction of the Dukan dam, to supply irrigation and drinking water for the region, as well as to generate electricity. But for several years both the lake and the river have been shrinking – as have all of the rivers in Iraq. The country is classified as one of the five nations most vulnerable to the effects of climate change and desertification. Its water reserves have fallen by 60 percent compared with last year, the government says.

Continued on Page 6

## NFL, rugby, soccer players face risk of brain diseases

LOS ANGELES: New research by a team of international experts has found that people playing contact sports such as American football, rugby and soccer face a dramatically elevated risk of developing degenerative brain diseases, a statement said Tuesday. The Concussion Legacy Foundation said analysis by experts at universities in the United States, Australia, New Zealand, Brazil and Britain had found “conclusive” evidence that repetitive head impacts cause the brain disease chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE).

Researchers said brain banks by the US Department of Defense, Boston University, US Department of Veterans Affairs and the Mayo Clinic had all published studies showing contact sport athletes were 68 times more likely to develop CTE than those who did not. “This innovative analysis gives us the highest scientific confidence that repeated head impacts cause CTE,” said Chris

Nowinski, the Concussion Legacy Foundation chief executive and lead author of the study.

The Concussion Legacy Foundation wants more global sporting bodies to acknowledge a causal link between head impacts and CTE. A statement from the foundation said while the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the National Football League had already made such an acknowledgement, organisations such as football’s governing body FIFA, World Rugby and the International Olympic Committee had not.

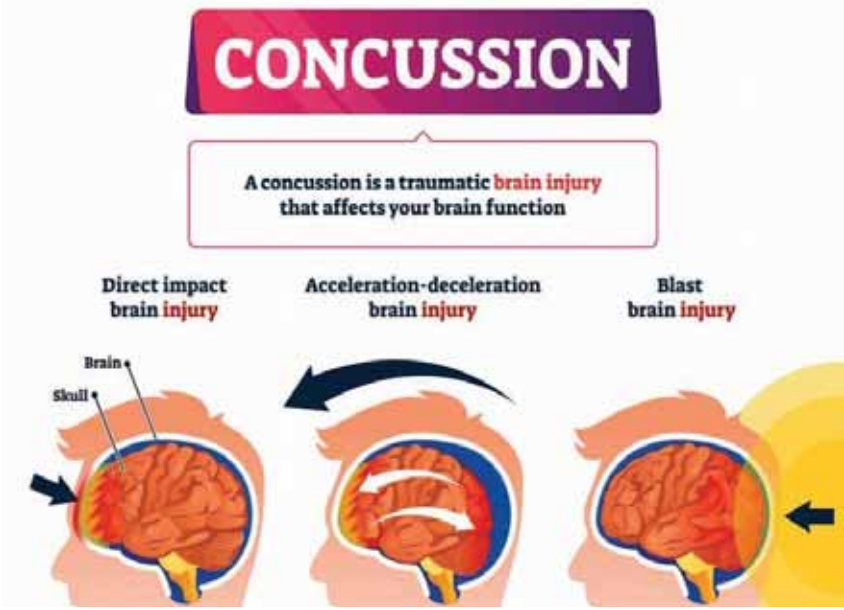
University of Michigan professor of environmental health sciences Adam Finkel said repetitive head impacts should be placed in the same bracket as other common public health hazards. “It is time to include repetitive head impacts and CTE among child protection efforts like exposure to lead, mercury, smoking, and sunburns,” Finkel said.



KUWAIT: Aerial photo captures Kuwait’s coastal area along Kuwait City. Kuwait housing real estate scene recorded a sharp decline in deals by 50 percent in the first half of 2022 compared to the same period in 2021. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat



RANIYE: Bapir Kalkani, an Iraqi Kurdish agricultural trade unionist, inspects his wheat farm in the Rania district near the Dukan reservoir, northwest of Iraq’s northeastern city of Sulaimaniyah in the autonomous Kurdistan region. — AFP



“Repetitive head impacts and CTE deserve recognition in the global public health discussion of preventable disorders caused by childhood exposures.” The research comes as more sports take measures designed to limit head contact.

England’s Football Association last week obtained approval to trial the removal of heading in grassroots competitions and leagues. Similar rules have been in force in the United States since 2015 in youth football. — AFP



# Kuwait's Amir congratulates Indian President on winning elections

## Bahrain, Qatar PMs congratulate Kuwaiti Premier on post

**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent on Tuesday a congratulatory cable to the President of India Droupadi Murmu on winning her country's election and swearing the constitutional oath. His Highness the Amir wished President Murmu more success during her endeavors. His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and Prime Minister retired General Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent similar cables to President Murmu. In other news, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace on Tuesday His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

Meanwhile, Bahraini Crown Prince and Prime Minister Salman bin Hamad Al-Khalifa phoned the newly-appointed Kuwait's Prime Minister retired General Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah to

congratulate him on his new post. In his call, the Bahraini Premier wished Sheikh Ahmad best of luck and success in his duties to serve Kuwait and contribute to



**Crown Prince  
receives  
Sheikh Nasser  
Al-Mohammad**

its development and prosperity. The Kuwaiti Premier thanked his Bahraini counterpart for his good gesture which demonstrated the strong fraternal relations

between the two nations under their wise leaderships.

Qatari Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Khalid bin Khalifa bin Abdulaziz Al Thani also phoned Sheikh Ahmad on Monday to congratulate him on his new post and wished him luck and success in his duties. Sheikh Ahmad thanked his Qatari counterpart for the gesture which reflects the strong fraternal relations between the two nations, wishing the two countries further progress and prosperity under their wise leaderships.

In other news, India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi congratulated Sheikh Ahmad on his appointment as Prime Minister of Kuwait. In a tweet message, Modi said, "My congratulations and best wishes to His Highness Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah on his appointment as the Prime Minister of Kuwait. I look forward to working with him to further deepen and expand our excellent bilateral relations." —Agencies



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah

## Kuwait's envoy presents credentials to Mauritanian FM

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait's new Ambassador to Mauritania Ebadah Al-Dosari has submitted a copy of his credentials to Mauritanian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Cooperation and Mauritanians Abroad Dr Mohamed Ould Marzouk. In a press statement on Monday, the Kuwaiti Embassy in Mauritania stated that Minister Ould Marzouk hailed the deeply rooted bilateral relations during his reception of Ambassador Dosari. He also expressed appreciation to Kuwait for its enormous support to development projects in Mauritania over the past years. Meanwhile, Ambassador Dosari conveyed the greetings of Kuwait's Foreign Minister Sheikh Dr Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah to Minister Ould Marzouk. He stressed eagerness to do all in power to strengthen bilateral relations during his tenure to meet the aspirations of the two Arab nations. —KUNA

## Palestinian Ambassador congratulates Sheikh Ahmad Al-Nawaf

**KUWAIT:** Ambassador of Palestine to Kuwait Rami Tahboub congratulated retired General Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah on being appointed as Kuwait's new prime minister. "On behalf of the Palestinian community in Kuwait and myself, I am honored to convey congratulations to His Excellency retired General Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah for the confidence put in him by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, naming him Prime Minister of Kuwait," the Ambassador said in a statement. "I wish His Excellency success in his next duties for the sake of Kuwait and its beloved people. May Allah protect Kuwait and its people from all evil."



Palestinian Ambassador Rami Tahboub

## Kuwait's Foreign Minister meets GCC Chief; receives call from Iran counterpart



**KUWAIT:** Foreign Minister Dr Sheikh Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah meets GCC Secretary General Dr Nayef Al-Hajraf. —KUNA

**KUWAIT:** Foreign Minister Dr Sheikh Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah met on Tuesday with the visiting Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Dr Nayef Al-Hajraf. During the meeting, they discussed enhancing efforts to support the process of joint Gulf action towards greater solidarity and interdependence within the framework of the Gulf system, said the GCC

Secretariat in a statement. It added that they also discussed topics related to the latest developments on the regional and international arenas. Meanwhile, Foreign Minister Sheikh Ahmad received a phone call on Tuesday from his Iranian counterpart Hussein Amir-Abdollahian. During the conversation, they discussed the bilateral relations, in addition to regional and global issues of common concern. —KUNA

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## Zain strategic partner of NUKS USA

**KUWAIT:** Zain, the leading digital service provider in Kuwait, announced its strategic partnership with the National Union of Kuwaiti Students in the United States of America (NUKS USA). The announcement came during the company's participation in the annual orientation event held at The Arena Kuwait under the patronage of Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education and Research Dr Ali Al-Mudhaf.

The orientation was attended by representatives from the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, representatives from the US embassy in Kuwait, as well as Zain Kuwait Corporate Affairs Department Manager Hamad Al-Musaibeeh, NUKS USA Director Yousef Ashkanani, and newly accepted students in the US scholarship program, NUKS USA officials, and sponsors.

During his opening speech, Zain Kuwait Corporate Affairs Department Manager Hamad Al-Musaibeeh said: "Proud today to announce the continuation of our strategic collaboration with NUKS USA, through which we are set to support its activities and programs throughout the upcoming year. This is not a new collaboration for Zain, as it has been the strategic partner of NUKS USA for nearly 20 years since its inception".

Musaibeeh continued: "At Zain, we are always keen on strengthening our bonds with Kuwaiti students abroad, especially in the US, since they represent the biggest gathering of Kuwaiti students overseas. We consider them Kuwait's ambassadors, and this is the least we can do for them. I'm proud that Zain has become an integral part of the NUKS USA family".

Musaibeeh added: "Throughout the past years, we shared many exciting programs and unique activities with the students, including academic sessions, cultural seminars, sports competitions, entertainment programs, workshops, and much more. We were happy with the huge reaction we received from the students year after year".

Musaibeeh announced: "This year, we are back with even more exciting activities for the students, including all-new Zain esports video game competitions that are exclusive to NUKS USA students. We are also sponsoring a padel competition to be held by NUKS here in Kuwait, as well as many more programs to be unveiled soon".

Zain is proud to continue its strategic partnership with NUKS USA, as it is considered a main supporter of the union for nearly 20 years. NUKS



**KUWAIT:** Zain Kuwait Corporate Affairs Department Manager Hamad Al-Musaibeeh speaks during the orientation.

USA is considered the largest gathering of Kuwaiti students abroad, and Zain's support comes in line with its Corporate Sustainability and Social Responsibility strategy towards the youth and education sectors. The company is proud to have become an integral part of the union's success, through which it connects with the country's youth abroad.

Zain's support to NUKS USA comes as part of its responsibility as a leading national company to help provide bright and enthusiastic young Kuwaitis with a great social experience, as well as listen to their ideas and experiences while pursuing their education abroad.

The National Union of Kuwaiti Students in the United States of America (NUKS USA) serves nearly 14,000 Kuwaiti students studying in the United States. The union aims, through its events and programs, to connect Kuwaiti students with each other on one level, and with their nation and the latest updates of the Kuwaiti community on another. NUKS USA was publicized in the USA and was granted the recognition of the United States government. The achievement is considered a proud milestone for Kuwait's youth, and is a direct result of the great relations between the State of Kuwait and United States. Such a recognition is a clear reflection of the strategic relations between the two nations.



## Local

# Lawyer warns of rising threat of online scams in Kuwait

## Scams through bank money transfers can be tricky: Jasem

By Faten Omar

**KUWAIT:** Users of various social media platforms in Kuwait have reported an increase in online scams by fraudsters who use those platforms as their base, with a significant increase reported in dangerous and highly targeted online scams. Taking advantage of people's fears and concerns, scammers trick users into clicking on links or attachments that contain malware.

To understand the issue from a legal standpoint, Kuwait Times spoke to Mohammad Al-Jasem, lawyer and Interpol-accredited expert in international law enforcement cooperation. "Internet fraud has two sides: One where the money transfer happens inside the country, and one where the transfer happens outside the country," he said. "In all cases, there are two ways to track this crime through the IP address."

He added, "If the money transfer was within Kuwait, the victim can file a case with the scammer's username, and the Department of Cybercrime in Kuwait can trace him via the IP address. The department contacts website owners to collect data of the scammer. It tracks the internet line and reveals the data about the wanted person."

Jasem revealed that scams through bank money transfers could be tricky. In case the transfer was made within local banks, the government can trace the name of the bank account's holder and the exact transferred amount, Jasem explained. "On the other hand, if the money is transferred outside the country, once the IP address is determined, correspondence is carried out," he said. "But most social networking platforms or major companies do not cooperate in this regard under the pretext of maintaining their clients' privacy, except in mur-

der threat cases."

He indicated that scamming through social media platforms can be a real problem. There are cases in which the scammers' accounts could be blocked but the money of the victims could never be refunded. "The amount can be tracked through the bank, where sometimes there is a cooperation between the Cybercrime Department and the relevant departments in other countries of the Interpol offices," he explained.

"The scam's money is considered a form of money laundry, because the source of money is illegal," he pointed out. "The crimes are linked to each other. The most difficult case is the unencrypted transfer. Transfers are delivered to anyone who has an ID, even if it is forged, and most scammers use this method. It is considered a smart scam."

Group-IB, one of the global leaders in cyber security, released a report, on Tuesday, saying that it has identified a wide-scale phishing campaign targeting users in the Middle East by impersonating well-known postal services from several Arab countries including Kuwait. Since as early as 2020, over 270 domains were discovered making use of the regional delivery and postal service brands. All the domains were part of a single massive phishing infrastructure.

The pandemic-driven explosive growth of online shopping created a perfect storm for threat actors, who found fertile ground for inventing new attack scenarios. Globally, CERT-GIB identified more than 400 domains impersonating postal brands as part of this phishing campaign, with more than half of them (276) intended for users in the Middle East. In the Middle East specifically, scammers have impersonated over 13 different delivery brands, postal operators, and public companies from at least eight different countries,



including Kuwait and other Arab countries.

Recently, Trend Micro, a global cyber security leader, released its annual "Navigating Frontiers New" report for 2021, highlighting the growing threat of cyber-attacks targeting individuals and digital infrastructures in a hybrid business environment.

The report indicated that Trend Micro solutions responded to more than 94.2 billion threats globally during 2021, a 42 percent increase in the number of detected detections compared to 2020. The report also revealed a huge increase in the number of attacks, which reached more than 53 billion during the second half of last year, compared to 41 billion threats in the first half of 2021.

In Kuwait, Trend Micro solutions blocked nearly 15 million e-mail attacks, responded to more than 1.7 million malware attacks, and prevented more than 3.5 million attacks related to victims clicking on malicious links. In addition, the report stated that the networks households use in Kuwait were a magnet for cybercriminals who targeted systems, devices, and networks, and in this regard, Trend Micro's "Smart Home Network" solutions blocked nearly 400,000 internal and external attacks, as well as prevented more than 700,000 attacks from hackers, who are seeking to target or control home networks, from happening.



Mohammad Al-Jasem



### Two ways to track through IP address

## In my view Ignorance in societies

By Yousuf Al-Azmi

local@kuwaittimes.com



"True ignorance is not the absence of knowledge, but the refusal to acquire it." - Karl R Popper

The first thing that comes to mind when we speak about ignorance and backwardness is the nature of ignorance, its reasons and results, whether there is a manufacturing of ignorance and its cost calculations, profits and losses, failure and success, or is it spontaneous due to time features that influenced the spread of knowledge, and the presence of ignorance in its place as an inevitable result due to what things will turn out later. Ignorance has its various forms in each era, and has its popular goods!

Maybe the most important reasons for the spread of ignorance is poverty, so you mostly find the spread of ignorance - from understanding religion to understanding life - in poor environment. Also, among the most important effects of ignorance is that it directly affects the individuals' manners, so because of the unavailable human being needs, he may resort to using banned matters. Notice with me that the most important reason for the spread of illegal drugs, prostitution and theft is poverty. When you find a drug pusher selling his goods through aids who were forced by poverty and need to carry out illegal acts, also when you ask anyone who is involved in prostitution, they instantly say it is out of need. Also, for those who commit illegal acts and embezzlements, you find the answer ready that it is poverty.

So, ignorance and poverty are synonymous, and it is very difficult to find ignorance in a country where development and good education is available. Of course, I am talking to you about a medium not accurate standard, because there must be holes in some walls, but education closes the holes and mends the basic structure for the development of the human being. Former German Chancellor Angela Merkel was asked, why does the majority of Germany's budget go for education, culture, arts and most human knowledge, and salaries of teachers, intellectuals, innovators in Germany? She answered: Simply because the cost of ignorance is too high!

The main cost of ignorance is the spread of all types of crimes, and possibly the corruption of administrative and financial systems in the state, and the weak tendency for all types of development in many of the citizens. Also, in such environment that is rich with corruption, the fake academic certificates will be something widespread. Imagine if the person treating you is a fake doctor who received his qualification illegally, and the engineer who builds your house, then the foundation collapses because the engineer's degree is not genuine, the teacher who is in reality an employee and not a teacher and the responsibility of educating the future generations is on his shoulders. Imagine the destiny of those upcoming generations that were in the trust of a so-called teacher but in fact he does not have true academic qualifications, and because of that, private lessons are widespread, and at the end the main goal for going to school becomes to receive a certificate and not to learn, and you can imagine the future of this generation!

In countries where ignorance and backwardness is common, we find the sectarian expression in abundance, and the status of the corrupt is high, rather they will be in the forefront of the social political scene, and you find bribes everywhere, and you find the trade in religion, principles and sectarianism, on which the fraudulent are living, as ignorance became slogans that do not represent open societies where co-living exists as well as the tolerance of others. In the ignorant society, we find those who resort to religion to make a living, and those who are sincere only to the social group he belongs to, and finally we find the majority of those succeed because ignorance instilled its roots and the naive and ignorant are convinced with the credibility of those liars!

In the society where ignorance is spreading, you find the failed person fighting the successful person, because he does not imagine the presence of a successful person in his environment. Even at work in failed countries, evaluation will be done on basis that are not related to productivity or achievement, rather it will be on different basis that are far from that, mainly jealousy.

When the human being in the ignorant and backward society wakes up and decides to learn and improve himself, he will be fought everywhere starting from closer circle to the learning place, and obstacles will be put for him in order to make him fail and keep him from improving, because it is hard for the ignorant to see those who shed ignorance! In our current era, within the spread of social media and various applications, we find ignorance present, and among the forms of ignorance is to honor the fools as the famous on social media.



KUWAIT: This file photo shows rain clouds above Kuwait City. —KUNA

## Chance of rain on Friday as 'unusual weather' hits Kuwait

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait is expected to be affected by unusual weather conditions in the next few days,

including a chance of rain and thunderstorms on Friday that may last for several days, veteran meteorologist Essa Ramadan said. A maritime air mass originating from the Arabian Sea and Arabian Gulf is expected to hit Kuwait on Thursday, raising humidity and chances for accumulation of rain clouds, Ramadan explained in a statement, noting that this phenomenon happens very rarely in Kuwait at this time of the year.

Ramadan explained that the humid "Marzam"

season will start Thursday, signaling the start of a period of high humidity and temperatures, before the appearance of Suhail star at the end of August. Ramadan said humidity is expected to rise and winds to become southeasterly starting Wednesday evening, noting that humidity would increase Thursday and continue for a week, accompanied by hot weather with a chance of rain in some areas. He said chance for rain starts Friday and continues for several days and horizontal vision would drop.

## Manpower authority officials meet Sri Lankan Ambassador



**KUWAIT:** Acting Director of Public Authority of Manpower (PAM) Dr Mubarak Al-Azmi received Sri Lanka's Ambassador to Kuwait Mohammad Jowhar on Tuesday. Azmi welcomed the guests, lauded the

historic relations between the two countries and expressed keenness on strengthening them. The two sides discussed ways to improve cooperation on matters related to Sri Lankan manpower in Kuwait.



Commerce and Industry Minister Fahad Al-Shuraian.

## Minister extends official's suspension

**KUWAIT:** Commerce and Industry Minister Fahad Al-Shuraian issued a new decision extending the suspension of the Director General of Kuwait Ports Authority for three months starting July 28, 2022 and paying him half of his salary during the suspension period. The minister first suspended the director on April 28th. Former Commerce and Industry Minister Dr Abdullah Al-Salman issued a ministerial decision to suspend the director Sheikh Yousuf Al-Abdallah Al-Sabah in favor of investigations for three months or until the investigating committee completes its work.



## Local

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## News in brief

Dweller data service  
added to Sahel app

KUWAIT: The Public Authority for Civil Information (PACI) on Tuesday added the dweller data service to the government Sahel application. The new service gives landlords access to the data of tenants and allows them to report online to PACI in case of any inaccurate data or problems with tenants or co-owners, according to a PACI press release. The service, which has been available on PACI website since February 2021, enables landlords to supervise their real estate; adding it to Sahel makes access to it easier, the statement added.

Kuwait crude drops  
to \$107.53 pb: KPC

KUWAIT: Kuwait crude oil dropped \$1.40 during Monday's trading sessions to reach \$107.53 per barrel (pb) compared with 108.93 pb last Friday, Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) said Tuesday. Benchmark Brent futures however gained \$1.95 to \$105.15 pb and West Texas Intermediate rose \$2 to reach \$96.70 pb.

Store closed  
in Eqaila

KUWAIT: Commerce and Industry Ministry inspectors closed a store in an Eqaila area mall for selling counterfeit products. The ministry is taking legal action against the store for violating intellectual property protection regulations, the ministry said in a statement to the press on Monday.

## Photo of the day



KUWAIT: Birds drink from water pots at a location in Kuwait. —Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

Price inflation causes sharp decline  
in Kuwait's housing real estate

## Property deals down by 50 percent in first half of 2022

KUWAIT: The Kuwait housing real estate scene has witnessed a sharp decline in deals by 50 percent in the first half of 2022 compared to the same period in 2021. Some attributed this decline to price inflation of real estate and the static purchasing power on part of clients in Kuwait leading to a huge margin between supply and demand. There were 2,470 deals worth KD 1.13 billion (around \$3.3 billion) in the first half of this year as opposed to 4,814 deals worth KD 1.40 billion (around \$4.6 billion) in the same period in 2021.

Speaking on this issue, local real estate expert and Director General of Abraj Behbehani company, Alaa Behbehani, said Tuesday that the price inflation was the main cause of the sharp decline. Kuwait, as in the case of other countries, has been affected by the increase of interest rate announced by the US Federal Reserve, said Behbehani, adding that the latter continued to increase the interest rate of the US Dollar, which contributed in turn to withdrawal of liquidity from the world market. The effects of the Federal Reserve's decision might not be felt now within the national market but within a year from now, Behbehani elaborated. He continued to say that Kuwait was not immune to happenings in the world economy, saying that bank deposits had become more attractive to major investors who were looking for security rather than invest in real estate.

Behbehani warned that the economic tremors, which jolted major world economies in the US, Europe, China, Japan, the UK, and elsewhere, were pointing towards a sort of economic depression due to the huge connectivity amongst major markets. What's happening on a global scale has its impact on local affairs, affirmed Behbehani,



Alaa Behbehani



indicating that investments worth KD 380 million were taken out from real-estate in Kuwait and



2,470 deals  
worth KD 1.13  
billion in six  
months

invested somewhere else in early 2022, which pointed to a lack of interest in investing within the

sector. The expert predicted that the second half of the year would continue with the same trend with lack of housing real estate deals, while commercial real estate might see a bit of activity post-COVID 19 restrictions.

While housing real estate might not have been scoring high numbers within the first half of this year, other real estate sectors such as commercial and investment had been booming. Investment real estate saw 674 deals worth KD 579 million (around \$1.9 billion) in the first half of 2022 as opposed to 587 deals worth KD 268 million (around \$884 million) the same period last year. Commercial real estate also saw a jump by 111 deals worth \$390 million (around \$1.2 billion) in contrast with KD 59 million (around \$195 million) in the first half of 2021. —KUNA

Kuwait's Army Chief  
of Staff meets  
Indian Ambassador

KUWAIT: Chief of General Staff of Kuwait's Armed Forces Lieutenant General Sheikh Khaled Al-Saleh Al-Sabah met with Indian Ambassador to Kuwait Sibi George on Tuesday. The two sides discussed inter alia, bilateral ties, ways of enhancing cooperation in various fields especially in the domains of defense and security, and other matters of mutual interest, the Indian Embassy said in a press statement.



KUWAIT: Kuwait's Army Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Sheikh Khaled Al-Saleh Al-Sabah exchanges gifts with Indian Ambassador to Kuwait Sibi George.



## A photograph of three men in traditional Native American regalia. The man on the left wears a white shirt and a headdress with blue, red, and white feathers. The man in the center wears a red shirt and a headdress with red feathers. The man on the right wears an orange shirt and a headdress with black feathers. All three are looking towards the right.

**MASKWACIS, Canada:** Pope Francis wears a headdress presented to him by Indigenous leaders at Muskwa Park in Maskwacis, Alberta, Canada. — AFP

# Justin Trudeau: Reconciliation is the responsibility of all Canadians

away our own shame, as benefactors." Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, who was also at the Maskwacis ceremony, said that "reconciliation is the responsibility of all Canadians."—AFP



Potential rivals are gaining ground as the negative publicity piles up. All eyes are on the progress of Florida Governor Ron DeSantis, who has not yet declared a bid for the presidency, but has growing stature on the right. And a recent New York Times/Siena College poll showed that nearly half of Republican primary voters would vote for any Republican other than Trump. Last week, the right-leaning editorial boards of two newspapers owned by the Murdoch family, the Wall Street Journal and New York Post, issued harsh critiques of Trump's behavior during the January 6 calamity. Trump showed he is "unworthy" of becoming president again, the usually friendly Post wrote. —AFP

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## International

# Northern Irish Nobel laureate David Trimble dies at 77

## His courage in helping achieve the Good Friday Agreement leaves a legacy

**DUBLIN:** David Trimble, the Nobel peace prize-winning former first minister of Northern Ireland whose statecraft helped end decades of conflict, died Monday aged 77. Trimble, a key architect of the landmark 1998 peace deal in the troubled UK province, won the prize along with pro-Irish leader John Hume that year after the pair sealed the historic agreement.

"It is with great sadness that the family of Lord Trimble announce that he passed away peacefully earlier today following a short illness," his Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) said in a statement. No further details were given about the death of a politician who, despite his staunch pro-UK convictions, worked with Irish nationalists to end the three decades of bloodshed known as the "Troubles".

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson described Trimble as a "giant of British and international politics". He "will be long remembered for his intellect, personal bravery and fierce determination to change politics for the better", Johnson tweeted.

Irish premier Micheal Martin hailed the Nobel laureate as "someone who played a crucial and courageous role in bringing peace to Northern Ireland".

### Fresh troubles

Sinn Fein's Michelle O'Neill, in line to be Northern Ireland's next first minister after her nationalist party swept to a historic victory in assembly elections in May, lauded Trimble's "very significant contribution to the peace process".

"His courage in helping achieve the Good Friday Agreement leaves a legacy a quarter-century on for which he and his family should be rightly proud," she added. Trimble's death comes at a time of renewed tensions in Northern Ireland with the now-dominant pro-UK force, the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), refusing to serve under O'Neill until London rips up a post-Brexit trading pact with the European Union.

The UK government is pushing through legislation to unilaterally rewrite the so-called Northern Ireland Protocol, sparking legal action by the EU. But the DUP has still refused to enter the power-sharing government with Sinn Fein. The UUP also opposes the protocol. But at his final public appearance at the end of June, Trimble said the cornerstone of peace remained in place. "People are actually not throwing the (Good Friday) agreement to pieces, their complaints are still based on the existence of the agreement," Trimble said at the unveiling of a portrait of him.

"They are not saying 'throw it out', so that's the thing to bear in mind." UK Foreign Secretary Liz Truss, who drafted the contentious protocol legislation and is running to succeed Johnson as prime minister, praised Trimble as "a great figure".

He was, she tweeted, "instrumental in delivering the Belfast Good Friday Agreement and the optimistic Northern Ireland of today". At the start of a televised debate with Truss, her Conservative party rival Rishi Sunak also lauded Trimble as "a giant of unionism" and "a deserving winner of the Nobel Peace Prize".

### 'Huge and lasting legacy'

The 1998 Good Friday accord largely ended 30 years of conflict in Northern Ireland that killed 3,500. Despite resistance within the unionist community, which steadfastly believes in Northern Ireland's place within the United Kingdom, Trimble brought his party to the table in the fraught peace talks.

As part of the process he became the party's first leader in 30 years to meet with the Irish premier in Dublin, and in 1997 he became the first unionist leader since Ireland's partition to negotiate with Sinn Fein.

The nationalist party's leader at the time, Gerry Adams, acknowledged the challenges that Trimble faced persuading his own side. "David's contribution to the Good Friday Agreement and to the quarter-century of relative peace that followed cannot be underestimated," he said. Following the 1998 deal, Trimble served as first minister of Northern Ireland. However, the UUP's popularity waned amid unionist dislike for elements of the 1998 accord seen as too accommodating to republicans.

The rival DUP eventually supplanted it as the biggest unionist party. DUP leader Jeffrey Donaldson said Trimble had braved "a considerable threat to his safety" in defending the union with the UK. "He leaves a huge and lasting legacy to Northern Ireland. He can undoubtedly be said to have shaped history in our country," he said. Trimble, who led the UUP for a decade from 1995, lost his UK House of Commons seat in 2005. He sat as a peer in the House of Lords—the upper chamber of the British parliament—from 2006. —AFP



**MANILA, Philippines:** File photo shows Northern Irish Nobel Peace Prize laureate Lord David Trimble discusses efforts to negotiate a peace accord between the Philippine government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, in the south during a press briefing in Manila. — AFP

## Greek firefighters battle sixth day to save national park

**ATHENS:** Hundreds of firefighters on Tuesday fought for a sixth day to save one of Greece's most important national parks from a fire that has already devastated vast swathes of forest. "Firebreaks are being broadened (at the Dadia national park)," Dimitris Petrovits, deputy governor of the Evros region in northeast Greece, told reporters.

More than 2,500 hectares (6,178 acres) of pine forest are already estimated to have been lost to the fire that erupted last Thursday. "It is very difficult to check the fire because the vegetation is so dense," a fire department spokesman told AFP.

More than 300 firefighters, four aircraft and six helicopters are active in the area, he said. Dadia, around 900 kilometres, (560 miles) northeast of Athens, calls itself one of the most important protected areas in Europe, offering ideal habitat for rare birds of prey, and says it is home to the only breeding population of black vultures in the Balkans. The park's deputy manager Anna Konstandinidou said the 428-square-kilometre (165 square-mile) facility has already sustained "incalculable" damage. "It's been a great shock," she told state television ERT.

"The (bird) observatory has been completely destroyed. The only goal now is to save the most important area that contains the black vulture nests," she said. The park hosts three out of Europe's four vulture species—the black vulture, the griffon vulture and the Egyptian vulture—and 36 of Europe's 38 species of raptors.

Its varied habitats also support 104 butterfly species, 13 amphibian species, 29 reptile species and about 65 mammal species, 24 out of which are bats. Greece is particularly vulnerable to fires during the summer season. —AFP

## Firefighters tackle California wildfire as heat grips parts of US

**MIDPINES, United States:** Firefighters were battling California's largest wildfire of the summer on Monday, a blaze near famed Yosemite National Park that has forced thousands of people to evacuate, officials said. The Oak Fire in central California broke out on Friday and is raging while parts of the United States swelter through a heat wave, including the usually cool Pacific Northwest.

The fire in Mariposa County has engulfed 17,241 acres (6,977 hectares) and is 16 percent contained, Cal Fire, the state fire department, said. "Fire crews are working aggressively using bulldozers, hand crews and aircraft," with only "minimal growth on the fire" seen on Monday, the department said.

It is the most destructive blaze so far this fire season, according to Cal Fire, destroying more than three times the acreage of the nearby Washburn Fire, which has been nearly 90 percent contained. But it remains much smaller than last year's Dixie Fire, which burned nearly one million acres. Jon Heggie, a Cal Fire battalion chief, told CNN the latest wildfire was "very indicative" of other blazes seen in the region over the last two years. "These fires are burning with just such a velocity and intensity, it makes it extremely challenging and extremely dangerous for both the public and the firefighters," Heggie said.

"It's moving so quickly it's not giving people a lot of time, and they sometimes are just going to have to evacuate with just the shirts on their back." One such couple, Jane and Wes Smith, lost their home and everything in it to the inferno, CNN reported.

"It's pretty sad to see the house that I grew up in and was raised in gone," their son Nick Smith told the broadcaster. "It hits hard." Cal Fire said 55 residential, commercial and other structures had been destroyed.



**NEW YORK:** People stand together during a moment of silence as the climate clock counts down seven to six during a demonstration for "Climate Emergency Day" at Union Square in New York. — AFP

## Iraq's Kurd farmers battle drought as...

Continued from Page 1

### Rainfall becoming rare

With rainfall becoming a rarity and after three successive years of drought, Iraq has been forced to halve the area it devotes to agriculture. "If we hadn't had a little rain in late spring, there would have been no crops in Kurdistan this year," Kalkani said.

Farmers in the area used to dig shallow wells fed by the Dukan so they could irrigate their crops. But not any more. "The wells have lost 70 percent of their water," he said. Sesame farmer Shirko Aziz Ahmed had to dig a well several metres deep so he could access water and raise it using a diesel-powered pump. "Sesame needs a



**RANIYE:** This picture shows cracked soil in a dried-up irrigation canal through a wheat field in the Rania district. — AFP

lot of watering, so I'm going to have to dig even deeper as the water level goes down," he said.

Drought is not the only source of the farmer's water problems. Iran has built several dams on the Lower Zab, notably the Kolsa barrage. "The Kolsa dam has caused at least an 80 percent drop in the water levels" of the Lower Zab, said Banafsheh Keynoush of the Washington-based Middle East Institute. She said Iran is going through one of the worst droughts in its history and has had to revise its irrigation policy.

"Iran is on a dam-building spree, and many of its dams are small," she told AFP. The Dukan dam in Iraq has also been badly affected by the reduced river flow, said its director Kochar Jamal Tawfeeq. "Now we have only 41 percent, below half of the capacity" of the dam, he said. It supplies drinking water for "about three million people in Sulaymaniyah and Kirkuk", two major cities downstream, he said. But at just 300 mm of rainfall last year - half the previous annual average - the skies have not been generous. And Tawfeeq said 2022 is on track to mirror last year's figures. "We are releasing 90 cubic meters per second," the director said. "When the reservoir is full, we release 200 to 250." Tawfeeq said farmers were being told "not to grow crops that need too much water".

He said Baghdad had sent teams to Iran to discuss the reduced flow of the Lower Zab river, but "there's no cooperation from the Iranians". Iran contends its river flow contribution into the Tigris and Euphrates basin is only about six percent, according to Keynoush. "What Iran is trying to say is: 'The Euphrates and Tigris problems you have are really between you and Turkey'," where the two main rivers have their sources, she added.

But Iraq itself is not above criticism, said Azzam Alwash, founder of the Nature Iraq non-government organization and presidential adviser. Iraqi Kurdistan in the north plans to construct new dams but the projects lack any coordination with Baghdad, Alwash said. Downstream, in central and south Iraq, the situation is being exasperated by a lack of modernization of water resources and could result in disaster, he warned. — AFP

## Jetliners narrowly escape collision

**ISLAMABAD:** Two Pakistan passenger jets had a high altitude near-miss in Iranian airspace owing to human error by air traffic controllers, an airline official said on Tuesday. Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) said the close call happened on Sunday, when Iranian air traffic control (ATC) cleared Peshawar-bound PIA flight PK-268 to descend from 36,000 feet to 20,000 feet.

Another PIA passenger liner - PK-211 bound for Dubai - was underneath cruising at an altitude of 35,000 feet, and the planes came within 1,000 feet of each other, according to the state-owned carrier. PIA spokesman Abdullah Hafeez Khan told AFP a cockpit "collision avoidance system helped the two pilots to correct the course and avoid a collision after the planes came close to each other". "We will write to the Iranian authorities to investigate the incident as the ATC should not have cleared the Peshawar-bound flight to descend," he added.

## Breakthrough in mysterious...

Continued from Page 1

Both teams ruled out recent or prior SARS-CoV-2 infection as a direct cause. No coronavirus was found in the livers of the patients, and while the Scottish study found that two-thirds of the patients had antibodies against the coronavirus, that rate was similar to the overall population prevalence among children at that time.

It is unclear why hepatitis cases spiked recently, but both teams underscored the possibility that

In 2016, a PIA plane burst into flames after one of its two turboprop engines failed while flying from the remote north of Pakistan to Islamabad, killing more than 40 people. And two years ago a PIA jet crashed while landing at Karachi's Jinnah International Airport killing all but two of the 99 passengers and crew on board, casting the firm's safety standards into doubt. —AFP



**A Pakistan International Airlines Boeing 777**

lockdowns could have contributed, either by lowering immunity in children or by changing the patterns of virus circulation. Deirdre Kelly, a professor of pediatric hepatology at the University of Birmingham who was not involved in the work, said: "It looks like a plausible explanation for these cases. It think this coinfection is the key."

But, she added, more work was needed to understand why some children develop severe disease and require transplantation. Thomson said it was also important "to understand more about seasonal circulation of AAV2, a virus that is not routinely monitored." "It may be that a peak of adenovirus infection has coincided with a peak in AAV2 exposure, leading to an unusual manifestation of hepatitis in susceptible young children." — AFP



International

# Five killed, dozens hurt as anti-UN protests spread in east DR Congo

## Protesters smash windows and loot valuables, helicopters airlift UN staff

**GOMA:** At least five people have been killed and dozens injured during anti-UN protests in eastern DR Congo, a government spokesman said Tuesday as the unrest spread. On Monday, hundreds of people blocked roads and chanted hostile slogans before storming the UN peacekeeping mission's headquarters and a supply base in Goma, the main city in North Kivu province.

Protesters smashed windows and looted valuables, while helicopters airlifted UN staff from the premises and security forces fired teargas in a bid to push them back. In a post on Twitter, government spokesman Patrick Muyaya said "at least five people (were) dead, about 50 wounded" in the unrest.

The security forces had fired "warning shots" at protesters to stop attacks on UN personnel, he said. The unrest continued on Tuesday, with the fatal shooting of a man near the supplies base, an AFP correspondent saw.

The security forces were pushing back crowds outside the depot as protesters waved placards bearing slogans such as "bye bye MONUSCO". Anti-UN protesters also took to the streets in the North Kivu towns of Beni and Butembo, according to witnesses.

Soldiers were deployed on the road leading to the MONUSCO base in Beni, which lies about 350 kilometres (215) miles north of Goma, while protesters burned tyres. Security forces also dispersed protesters who

had gathered in front of a MONUSCO base in Butembo, another provincial hub, local sources said.

### Anger

The UN mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo, known as MONUSCO, is one of the world's biggest peacekeeping operations. But it has regularly come under criticism in the troubled east, where many accuse it of failing to do enough to stem decades-long bloodshed.

More than 120 armed groups roam the volatile region, where civilian massacres are common and conflict has displaced millions of people. The killings have continued despite the presence of thousands of UN peacekeepers, sparking bouts of anger among local people.

In late 2019, nine anti-UN protesters were killed as Beni and Butembo were terrorised by the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), which the Islamic State group describes as its central African affiliate. In a statement on Monday,

Khassim Diagne, the deputy special representative of the UN secretary general to MONUSCO, said the peacekeepers were there to protect civilians. "The incidents in Goma are not only unacceptable but totally counterproductive," he said.

### M23

The latest protests come after the president of the senate, Modeste Bahati, told supporters in Goma on July



**GOMA:** A wounded man is rushed away on a motorcycle after protesters stormed and looted a warehouse belonging to the peacekeeping mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO) at the UN facilities in Goma. —AFP

15 that MONUSCO should "pack its bags." They coincide with the resurgence of the M23 — a militia that lay mostly dormant for years before resuming fighting last November.

The rebels have since made significant advances in eastern Congo, including capturing the North Kivu town of Bunagana on the Ugandan border. The UN first deployed an observer mission to eastern Congo in 1999.

In 2010, it became the peacekeeping mission MONUSCO—the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo—with a mandate to conduct offensive operations.

It has a current strength of about 16,300 uniformed personnel, according to the UN. The peacekeepers have suffered 230 fatalities during the course of their mission. —AFP

## Japan executes man over 2008 stabbing rampage

**TOKYO:** Japan on Tuesday executed a man convicted of killing seven people in a truck ramming and stabbing rampage in Tokyo's popular Akihabara electronics district in 2008, the justice ministry said. Justice Minister Yoshihisa Furukawa said Tomohiro Kato had undertaken "meticulous preparation" for the attack and displayed a "strong intent to kill".

Furukawa said he "approved the execution after extremely thorough scrutiny," noting that Kato's death sentence had been upheld by the court system. Kato went on the rampage on June 8, 2008, telling police: "I came to Akihabara to kill people. It didn't matter who I'd kill."

He was arrested on the spot shortly after the attacks, in which he rammed a rented two-tonne truck into a crowd of pedestrians before getting out and randomly stabbing people. "This is a very painful case that led to extremely grave consequences and shocked society," Furukawa said Tuesday.

Police said Kato documented his deadly journey to Akihabara on Internet bulletin boards, typing messages on a

mobile phone from behind the wheel of the truck and complaining of his unstable job and his loneliness.

Prosecutors said his self-confidence plummeted after a woman he chatted with online abruptly stopped emailing him when he sent her a photograph of himself. His anger against the general public grew when his comments on an Internet bulletin board, including his plans to go on a killing spree, were met with no reaction at all, prosecutors said.

While awaiting trial, Kato wrote to a 56-year-old taxi driver whom he injured in the stabbing spree, expressing his remorse. The victims "were enjoying their lives, and they had dreams, bright futures, warm families, lovers, friends and colleagues," Kato wrote according to a copy published in the Shukan Asahi weekly. And in court, he offered remorse for the attack. "Please let me use this occasion to apologise," he said about the bloody rampage that also left 10 people injured.

### Support for death penalty

After the 2008 rampage, Japan banned possession of double-edged



**TOKYO, Japan:** File photo shows rescue workers gathering at the site where a man went on a stabbing spree in Tokyo's Akihabara electronic shops street. Japan executed a man convicted of killing seven people in a stabbing rampage in Tokyo. —AFP

knives with blades longer than 5.5 centimetres (about two inches), punishable by up to three years in prison or a 500,000 yen fine. The attack was Japan's worst mass killing in seven years and Kato was sentenced to death in 2011, a decision that was upheld by Japan's top court in 2015.

Kato's execution is the first in Japan this year and comes after three prisoners were hanged in December 2021.

Those executions ended a two-year hiatus and were the first under Prime Minister Fumio Kishida's administration.

Japan is one of the few developed countries to retain the death penalty, and public support for capital punishment remains high despite international criticism. Executions are carried out by hanging, generally long after sentencing. More than 100 people are currently on death row in Japan. —AFP

## Shortages leave bankrupt S Lanka's hospitals empty

**COLOMBO:** Entire wards are dark and nearly empty in Sri Lanka's largest hospital, its few remaining patients leaving untreated and still in pain, and doctors prevented from even arriving for their shifts. An unprecedented economic crisis has dealt a body blow to a free and universal healthcare system that just months earlier was the envy of the country's South Asian neighbours.

Suffering from diabetes and high blood pressure that inflamed her joints, Theresa Mary travelled to the capital Colombo for treatment at the National Hospital of Sri Lanka. Unable to find a ride for the last leg of her journey, she had to limp the last five kilometres (three miles) on foot.

She was discharged four days later, still finding it difficult to stand on her feet, because the dispensary had run out of subsidised painkillers. "Doctors asked me to buy medicines from a private pharmacy, but I don't have money," Mary, 70, told AFP.

"My knees are still swollen. I don't have a home in Colombo. I don't know how long I have to walk." The National Hospital normally caters to people all over the island nation in need of specialist treatment, but it now runs on reduced staff and many of its 3,400 beds are lying unused.

Supplies of surgery equipment and life-saving drugs have been almost exhausted, while chronic petrol shortages have left both patients and doctors unable to travel for treatment. "Patients scheduled for surgeries are not reporting," Dr Vasan Ratnasingham, a member of a gov-



**COLOMBO, Sri Lanka:** A woman purchases medicine at a private pharmacy in Colombo. Entire wards are dark and nearly empty in Sri Lanka's largest hospital, its few remaining patients leaving untreated and still in pain, and doctors prevented from even arriving for their shifts. —AFP

ernment medical officers' association, told AFP.

"Some medical staff work double shifts because others cannot report for duty. They have cars but no fuel," Sri Lanka imports 85 percent of its medicines and medical equipment, along with raw materials to manufacture the remaining share of its needs.

But the country is now bankrupt and a lack of foreign currency has left it unable to source enough petrol to keep the economy moving—and enough pharmaceuticals to treat

being invaded by China, which views the self-ruled island as part of its territory to be seized by force if necessary. On the second day of the island's largest annual war drills, Tsai, dressed in military fatigues, boarded the Keel Lung class destroyer to supervise a live-fire exercise off Taiwan's eastern coast.

Fighter jets and warships set off various types of missiles aimed at intercepting "a group of enemy ships", the military said. Anti-submarine rockets and depth bombs were also discharged and a Dutch-built Sword Dragon class submarine practised an emergency ascent, it added.

"The precise and solid exercise carried out by everyone just then demonstrates the capabilities and

determination of the Republic of China's military to protect our home and defend our country," Tsai said in a message broadcast to the ship, using Taiwan's formal name.

Beijing's sabre-rattling has increased considerably since Tsai took office in 2016, as she rejects its stance that the island is part of China. When asked to comment on Tuesday's drills, China's foreign ministry warned that "the road to independence is a dead end".

"Taiwan's delusional attempt to confront militarily the mainland is like a mantis trying to obstruct a chariot. It will eventually fail," said spokesman Zhao Lijian. This year's five-day "Han Kuang" (Han Glory) war games have incorporated lessons from Russia's inva-

### News in brief

#### Morocco intercepts migrants

**RABAT:** Morocco's navy intercepted more than 350 illegal migrants, including four children, in waters off its coast, a military official said on Tuesday. The 359 people rescued between Saturday and Monday had been "aboard makeshift boats, kayaks or swimming" in the Mediterranean and the Atlantic, the unnamed official said, quoted by MAP news agency. Mainly from sub-Saharan Africa, the migrants, who also included 10 women, received first aid aboard navy vessels before being transported to the nearest Moroccan ports, according to the same source. On Monday, the Moroccan authorities said the bodies of eight migrants were recovered off the southern shores of the North African kingdom. Morocco is a key transit point on routes taken by migrants seeking better lives in Europe. The Caminando Fronteras charity says almost 1,000 migrants died or were reported missing at sea in the first half of the year as they tried to reach Spain.

#### Evacuations as forest fires spread

**FRANKFURT, Germany:** Local officials in Germany were planning more evacuations on Tuesday as forest fires tore through the east of the country in the wake of punishing heatwave. Authorities in the eastern region of Saxony triggered a "disaster alert" in the Bad Schandau area, as wildfires spread through the Saxon Switzerland National Park. Scientists say climate change is making heatwaves around the world more frequent and more intense, which increases the risk of fires. The alarm was due to the "continuing terrible forest fire situation" in the park, which is close to the border with the Czech Republic, officials said. The fire broke out on the Czech side of the border in the twin Bohemian Switzerland National Park. Czech authorities evacuated dozens of people from the area on Monday.

#### PNG election poll count extended

**PORT MORESBY, Papua New Guinea:** Vote counting in Papua New Guinea's general elections was extended by a fortnight on Tuesday, as violence and destruction disrupted the already month-long poll. The country's governor general announced the extension, with the return of writs moving from July 29 to August 12, as he called for an end to attacks in an election marred by the "hijacking" of ballot boxes and at least a dozen deaths. "I am appealing to everyone from the candidates, their supporters, scrutineers and elections officials to refrain from violence and allow the process to complete in an orderly and peaceful manner," Governor General Bob Dadae said in a statement. "Don't wait till you are in Parliament to show leadership. Hindering and abetting violence and mayhem is not a sign of leadership, and those involved in such should not consider themselves leaders at all." —AFP

## Taiwan practises repelling Chinese sea invasion

**TAIPEI, Taiwan:** Taiwan simulated intercepting Chinese attacks from the sea in annual war games on Tuesday, with President Tsai Ing-wen hailing the military's "determination" as she watched from onboard a destroyer.

Democratic Taiwan lives under constant threat of

sion of Ukraine, which has heightened fears of a Chinese assault on the island.

CIA chief Bill Burns said last week Beijing appeared determined to use force in Taiwan, with Russia's experience in Ukraine affecting its calculations on when and how-not whether-to invade. The Taiwan Strait, the narrow waterway separating the island from mainland China, is often a flashpoint between the two sides, with Beijing maintaining it is not international waters.

Last week China slammed Washington as "a destroyer of peace" in the strait, following the latest in a series of passages by US warships through the waterway. —AFP



WEDNESDAY, JULY 27, 2022

## Business



KUWAIT: A night view of Kuwait City. Kuwait's annual inflation has edged up to 4.52 percent in May, said Central Statistical Bureau, Kuwait in its latest report.

# Kuwait's inflation edges up to 4.52%

## Government must invest in food security sector to maintain price stability: Expert

By Majd Othman

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait's annual inflation has edged up to 4.52 percent in May, recording an annual increase in the general measurement of consumer prices, said Central Statistical Bureau, Kuwait in its latest report.

The report suggests that the spike in the inflation is a result of the increase in the prices of some major commodity groups, the movement of indices and a decrease in the prices of some other groups.

"The rise in oil prices is one of the direct reasons for the increase in prices globally as the rise in the costs of transportation and shipments of essential commodities added to the inflation pressure, said Maitham Al-Shakhs, an independent economic researcher.

According to Central Statistical Bureau, the monthly prices of the food and beverage group recorded an increase of 0.99 percent in May 2022 compared to the previous month as a result of the increase in the prices of cereals and bread group, meat and poultry group, fish and seafood group, dairy, cheese and eggs group, fresh, frozen and dried fruits group, fresh, frozen and dried vegetables, sugar and its products

group, beverage group, while the prices of oils and fats groups and a group of other foodstuffs were stable.

Annually, the prices of food and beverage group witnessed an increase of 8.23 percent in May 2022 compared to 2021 of the same month.

Regarding the government intervention in checking the price spiral in the country, Al-Shakhs said, relying on the government for absolute support is wrong, at the same time the lack of government support is also wrong.

"Moderation in support is what is required at the moment. If the government wants to support measures to rein in inflation, it can do it through an increase in salaries or like what happened in previous years when there was a certain amount of financial support to ease the burden of cost of living," he said.

"However, a government intervention by handing out cash to citizens is something that will not check the inflation. It might mitigate the burden of some consumers by easing the prices, but it could fuel the prices of many commodities as a result of the lack of effective control by the Ministry of Commerce. The ministry becomes powerless to stop traders from artificially jacking

up the prices as they could exploit the government subsidies. When the subsidy levels rise, the merchants will tend to exploit the situation and take benefits out of the situation," he pointed out.

"The real government support lies in investing in local and international factories

try. At the same time, there are opportunities for agricultural investment in many Arab countries and others, and the opportunities exist and they are real. But the question, for years, has been that why the government did not intervene in this aspect of support. Maybe because of some political reasons or

ucts we import currently and working on reducing its prices as against the prices of imported products are among the other remedial solutions to rein in inflation. "We have many experiences with the farm produces made domestically. Unfortunately, Kuwaiti products could not face the stiff competition of imported products as their prices are less compared to the products manufactured locally. Ironically, consumers are concerned more about prices rather than quality," he pointed out.

"The Entrepreneurs Fund and the Public Authority for Industry have a great job to do under the current circumstances. They need to extend real support to make national products available in the markets. This, in my view, will save the state a lot of money from extending direct support, be it in the form of salaries or other means," he said.

The report of the Central Statistical Bureau mentioned that the prices have witnessed an annual increase in the education group of 18.95 percent, the clothing and footwear group by 6.37 percent, housing services 2.26 percent, home furnishings 2.27 percent, the recreational and cultural group 3.88 percent, restaurants and hotels by 2.77 percent, and the miscellaneous goods and services group 3.21 percent.



**'Make Kuwaiti products available in market'**



Maitham Al-Shakhs

to get the best prices for the essential food products such as investing in international farms to obtain wheat and rice at low prices. This must be the real support by the state in terms of food security," Al-Shakhs added.

"What we are missing significantly is the expansion of investment in external food security, as we are not an agricultural coun-

other reasons," he quipped.

"After the entry of the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development into many countries, I think, it is a great opportunity for the government to invest in the food security sector in order to maintain price stability," she mentioned.

Supporting local manufacturing of prod-

## EU agrees plan to cut Russian gas and protect Germany

**BERLIN:** The European Union agreed a plan to reduce gas consumption on Tuesday, an act of solidarity with Germany and a response to Russia's manipulation of supplies as an economic weapon.

The plan, approved by energy ministers in Brussels, will see exceptions and carve-outs as some EU countries blanched at making too deep a sacrifice for Berlin and a few landlocked member states.

But Hungary was the only member state to oppose the plan, which passed on a majority vote, and the ministers' Council of the European Union hailed the deal as a victory for EU unity.

"In an effort to increase EU security of energy supply, member states today reached a political agreement on a voluntary reduction of natural gas demand by 15 percent this winter," the council said.

"The Council regulation also foresees the possibility to trigger a 'Union alert' on security of supply, in which case the gas demand reduction would become mandatory," the statement continued.

"The purpose of the gas demand reduction is to make savings ahead of winter in order to prepare for possible disruptions of gas supplies from Russia that is continuously using energy supplies as a weapon."

### 'Dirty games'

Germany, the EU's economic powerhouse, is hugely dependent on Russian gas and remains at the mercy of the supply from Gazprom for the years still needed to find alternative sources.

"It is true that, Germany with its dependence on Russian gas, has made a strategic mistake but our government is working... to correct this," Germany's economy minister Robert Habeck said as he arrived.

France said showing solidarity with Berlin would help in turn protect all of Europe, even though Germany takes a major share of the 40 percent of EU gas imports that came from Russia last year.

"Our industrial chains are completely interdependent: if the chemical industry in Germany coughs, the whole of European industry could come to a halt," said French minister for energy transition, Agnes Pannier-Runacher.

The plan asks member states to voluntarily reduce gas use by 15 percent — based on a five-year average for the months in question — starting next month



**COPENHAGEN, Denmark:** In this file photo taken on May 16, 2022, shows blue and red gas flames on a kitchen gas stove in Copenhagen, Denmark. —AFP

and over the subsequent winter through March.

Czech industry minister Jozef Sikela, whose country holds the rotating EU presidency, said the plan would deliver a strong answer to state-run Gazprom's plan to cut gas deliveries to Europe.

Russian President Vladimir Putin "will continue to play his dirty games in misusing and blackmailing gas supplies," Sikela said.

Gazprom has said it is cutting daily gas deliveries to about 20 percent of capacity from Wednesday.

### 'Wise strategy'

The EU member countries had already rejected an earlier European Commission proposal to give Brussels — rather than the member states — the power to impose gas use cuts in an emergency.

And the 15-percent target will also be adapted to the situation of each country through a series of exemptions, taking into account their level of stocks and whether or not they have pipelines to share gas.

"Nobody challenges the need for solidarity, but the means of solidarity can be very different and the initial proposal was not necessarily the most effective approach," Spain's minister for ecological transition, Teresa Ribera Rodriguez, said.

Exceptions are planned for island states such as Ireland, Cyprus or Malta and countries, such as Spain or Portugal, with limited links to the interconnected gas supply grid.

Gazprom said Monday that it was halting the operation of one of the last two operating turbines due to the "technical condition of the engine", but Simson dismissed this claim.

"We know that there is no technical reason to do so," she said. "This is a politically motivated step and we have to be ready for that and exactly for that reason the pre-emptive reduction of our gas demand is a wise strategy."—AFP



## Saudi Arabia's non-oil exports up nearly 27% to \$7.44bn in May

**RIYADH:** Saudi Arabia's non-oil exports including re-exports grew to \$7.44 billion in May, compared with 22 billion Saudi riyals during May 2021, according to data released on Monday by the General Authority for Statistics.

Growth was driven by products of the chemical and allied industries, which made up more than 35 per cent of total non-oil merchandise exports, followed by plastics and rubber products, which accounted for more than 31 per cent, government data showed. Saudi Arabia's non-oil economy has continued to expand as the kingdom recovers from the coronavirus-induced slowdown.

New business in the country's non-oil private sector rose at the sharpest rate for eight months in June amid a rise in orders. The headline seasonally-adjusted S&P Global Saudi Arabia Purchasing Managers' Index rose to 57 in June from 55.7 in May,

the highest reading since October 2021 and slightly above the survey's long-run average of 56.8.

The International Monetary Fund estimates that the Saudi economy will expand 7.4 per cent this year, driven by higher oil revenue, a projected improvement in the country's non-oil gross domestic product and its efforts to diversify the economy. Saudi Arabia's overall exports increased more than 83 per cent in May to 144.1 billion riyals, up from 78.6 billion riyals in the same month last year. This increase was mainly driven by oil exports, which rose more than 105 per cent in the same period, the report said. The share of oil exports in total exports increased to 80.6 per cent in May, from 72 per cent in May 2021. Meanwhile, the kingdom's imports increased nearly 22 per cent to 53.9 billion riyals in May, from 44.2 billion riyals in the same period last year.—Agencies



## Business

# Ooredoo Kuwait's consolidated revenue increased 4% to KD 306.1m in H1 2022

## NMTC records strong performance of KD 112m of EBITDA for H1 2022

KUWAIT: National Mobile Telecommunications Company K.S.C.P "Ooredoo" (Ticker: OOREDOO) announced Tuesday its financial results for the half year ended 30 June 2022.

- Consolidated revenue increased by 4 percent to KD 306.1 million in H1 2022, compared to KD 294.7 million in H1 2021. Revenues were positively impacted by the gradual easing of restrictions in Kuwait, record revenue in Palestine and healthy market growth in Tunisia and Algeria.
- EBITDA increased by 7 percent in H1 2022 to KD 112.2 million, compared to KD 104.9 million in H1 2021.



Sheikh Mohammad Bin Abdullah Al-Thani



Abdulaziz Yaqoub Al-Babtain

Net profit attributable to NMTC increased to KD 20.8 million in H1 2022 from KD 7.0 million in H1 2021. Net profit growth was driven by solid operational and financial earnings from Ooredoo Kuwait, Ooredoo Tunisia, Ooredoo Algeria, Ooredoo Palestine and Ooredoo Maldives.

- The consolidated earnings per share was 42 fils per share for H1 2022, compared to 14 fils per share earned in H1 2021.
- Consolidated customer base increased to 24.1 million in H1 2022 compared by 23.9 million in H1 2021.

Sheikh Mohammad Bin Abdullah Al-Thani, Chairman of the Board of Directors commented: "NMTC reported further growth for the first half of the year, driven by record revenues in Palestine and healthy market growth in Tunisia and Algeria. Furthermore, the easing of COVID restrictions in Kuwait had positive impact on the Company's revenues for the period. Consolidated revenues stood at KD 306 million for H1 2022, a 4 percent increase compared to the same period last year, supported by a healthy EBITDA margin of 37 percent."

In Kuwait, the company further focused on driving operational efficiencies, resulting in 14 percent increase in revenue to KD 117 million, and 18 percent increase in EBITDA. Tunisia reported 2 percent revenue growth in local currency terms.

In Algeria, revenue increased 4 percent in local currency terms, and the company's customer base went up by 2 percent. Revenues in Palestine increased 6 percent to KD 18 million, and the company reported strong EBITDA increase of 12 percent, driven by operational efficiencies across the business. Finally, Ooredoo Maldives reported 10 percent increase in revenues and the Company now serves a total of 375 thousand customers.

The first half of 2022 is off to a solid start, as we continue to streamline efficiencies across the business, while remaining focused on digital transformation in our core markets. We look forward to our continued growth and remain optimistic about the remainder of the year."

Abdulaziz Yaqoub Al-Babtain, Ooredoo Kuwait's Chief Executive Officer, commented: "It goes without saying that Ooredoo has made quantum leaps in the world of telecommunication, technology, cybersecurity and security services, making it a well-reputed company with a leading position in the world of innovative digital services, information technology, internet and communications," Al-Babtain said. Al-Babtain added: "With the diversity of customer segments, we diversified our campaigns and marketing strategies to satisfy every segment. This led to an increase in the number of our customers, which mirrors their great trust in us which we take pride of."

### "Cloud Service Provider" license

He pointed out, "Our keenness to provide innovative digital services made Ooredoo maintain its position as the first in providing the fastest internet network in Kuwait for the second year in a row, according to the Global Index Speed test by Ookla, the world leader in applications and data analyses of fixed and mobile Internet speed tests."

Al-Babtain further added: "We are also proud to be the first Telecom in Kuwait to obtain the Cloud Service Provider license from the Communication and IT Regulatory Authority. The "Cloud Service Provider" license, which is new in Kuwait, was issued to Ooredoo following an extensive review of the company's technical capabilities, cloud infrastructure robustness, security policies and safeguards, data handling and storage procedures as well as technical and security certifications. This achievement which represents a milestone in the history of Ooredoo Kuwait's Data Center was followed by obtaining Tier 3 certification in Kuwait, being the only one of its kind nationwide. The center is also fully equipped to provide exceptional experience in services and solutions such as managed hosting services, CPE, cloud services, NOC and SOC in addition to an array of other services. This comes to further reiterate the company's commitment to being the leader in information technology solutions."

tries at risk of poverty and even famine. Lebanon's capacity to store large quantities of wheat has also taken a blow after a deadly mega-blast at Beirut's port in August 2020 heavily damaged the country's main grain silos. The price of subsidized Arabic bread has gone up since the onset of an unprecedented economic crisis in Lebanon in 2019. Lebanese bakeries have begun rationing subsidized bread, with the government and bakeries trading blame for shortages. Bakeries accuse cash-strapped authorities of failing to provide enough subsidized flour, an accusation the economy ministry denies.

Caretaker Economy Minister Amin Salam accuses bakeries of hoarding subsidized flour and using it for unsubsidized products such as sweets. Lebanon is grappling with an unprecedented financial crisis, branded by the World Bank as one of the planet's worst since the 1850s.

The small Mediterranean country defaulted on its debt in 2020, the local currency has lost around 90 percent of its value on the black market, and the UN now considers four in five Lebanese to be living under the poverty line. — AFP

## Lebanon approves \$150 million World Bank wheat loan

BEIRUT: Lebanon's parliament approved on Tuesday a \$150 million World Bank loan to import wheat, as shortages of subsidized bread intensify in the cash-strapped country, local media reported. Long lines have formed in front of bakeries and supermarkets where people wait hours for a bag of subsidized Arabic bread — in short supply as a years-long economic crisis depletes state coffers.

Lebanon imports 80 percent of its wheat from war-torn Ukraine, according to a representative of Lebanon's wheat importers.

But wheat-exporting powerhouse Ukraine has struggled to sell and sow its crops since Russia's invasion in February, putting consumers in poorer coun-



BEIRUT: Lebanon's parliament approved on Tuesday a \$150 million World Bank loan to import wheat, as shortages of subsidized bread intensify in the cash-strapped country, local media reported.

## EasyJet hit by aviation disruption but slashes loss

LONDON: British airline EasyJet on Tuesday said it took a sizeable financial hit from sector-wide disruptions, notably staff shortages, but still slashed quarterly losses as demand recovers. As airport staff shortages spark flight cancellations, EasyJet said in a statement that it booked a one-off charge totaling £133 million (\$160 million). That saw the airline post a pre-tax loss of £114 million in the group's third quarter, or the three months to the end of June.

However, that marked a major improvement from a loss of around £318 million for the same period of last year, as travel demand picked up from a

COVID-induced downturn. Third-quarter revenue increased more than eight-fold to £1.8 billion, while traffic rebounded close to pre-COVID levels. EasyJet chief executive Johan Lundgren said the carrier was hit by "short-term disruption issues", but that it was experiencing "the return to flying at scale".

Traffic surged more than seven-fold to 22 million passengers in the quarter after the lifting of COVID travel curbs. That was almost 90 percent of the group's 2019 capacity, before the pandemic ravaged the global aviation sector by grounding planes worldwide.

EasyJet said "the unprecedented ramp-up across the aviation industry, coupled with a tight labor market" had caused "widespread operational challenges culminating in higher levels of cancellations than normal". Despite the disruption, EasyJet operated 95 percent of its planned schedule in the quarter.

Airlines and airports are struggling to recruit staff having sacked thousands of workers as the world entered COVID pandemic lockdowns. — AFP

### Financial Highlights:

	Quarterly Analysis			Half Year Analysis		
	Q2 2022	Q2 2021	% change	H1 2022	H1 2021	% change
Consolidated Revenue (KWD m)	153.2	148.6	3%	306.1	294.7	4%
EBITDA (KWD m)	56.4	54.1	4%	112.2	104.9	7%
EBITDA margin (%)	37%	36%	-	37%	36%	-
Net Profit attributable to NMTC (KWD m)	12.4	6.0	107%	20.8	7.0	197%
Consolidated Customers (m)	24.1	23.9	1%	24.1	23.9	1%

### Ooredoo Business drives digital transformations

Al-Babtain continued: "As part of our clear strategy in pushing our business towards digital transformation, Ooredoo Business announced its collaboration with Huawei launching Ooredoo Cloud Connect in Kuwait, a new generation of cloud-optimized managed network services powered by the Huawei Cloud Campus MSP platform that aims at enabling businesses to keep up with the pace of ongoing innovations. Ooredoo Cloud Connect brings software defined networking (SDN), programmable networking and API-based operation to LAN and WAN services. Through this offering, customers will be able to maximize their performance, agility and flexibility for their businesses."

### Embracing "The Digital Age"

Al-Babtain concluded: "Embracing the digital age and delivering products that keep up with the needs of our customers helped in our growth. These achievements are yet another milestone for the company's plans to further embrace digitalization and solidify its position as a leading local telecom service provider."

### Strategic interest in the field of mobile financial services

With the ever-growing development and need of financial services worldwide, Ooredoo Kuwait has expressed its interest in perusing various opportunities in the area of Mobile Financial Services.

### Review of operations

The Group's operational performance can be summarized as follows:

### Ooredoo - Kuwait

Ooredoo Kuwait reported 14 percent increase in Revenue to KD 117.0 million in H1 2022 compared to KD 102.7 million in H1 2021. EBITDA increased 18 percent to KD 35.1 million in H1 2022 compared to KD 29.7 million in H1 2021, driven by operational efficiencies across the busi-

ness. Ooredoo's customer base in Kuwait increased to 2.6 million in H1 2022, up 14 percent compared to H1 2021.

### Ooredoo - Tunisia

The Tunisian Dinar depreciated by 7.7 percent year-on-year, leading to a decrease in Revenues to KD 62.0 million in H1 2022 compared to KD 65.7 million in H1 2021. In local currency terms, revenues were up by 2 percent. EBITDA stood at KD 27.1 million in H1 2022. Ooredoo's customer base in Tunisia decreased to 6.9 million customers in H1 2022 compared to 7.2 million customers in H1 2021.

### Ooredoo - Algeria

Ooredoo Algeria's customer base increased by 2 percent to 12.9 million in H1 2022 compared to 12.6 million in H1 2021. Business in Algeria was negatively impacted by the devaluation of the Algerian Dinar, which depreciated by 6.4 percent year on year. Consequently, revenue decreased to KD 90.7 million in H1 2022 compared to KD 92.6 million in H1 2021. In local currency terms, revenues were up by 4 percent. EBITDA stood at KD 33.2 million in H1 2022.

### Ooredoo - Palestine

Revenue increased by 6 percent to KD 17.5 million in H1 2022, compared to KD 16.6 million in H1 2021. The business reported a strong EBITDA with an increase of 12 percent to KD 6.5 million in H1 2022 compared to KD 5.8 million in H1 2021, driven by operational efficiencies across the business. Customer base in Palestine increased by 5 percent to reach 1.4 million customers in H1 2022 compared to 1.3 million in H1 2021.

### Ooredoo - Maldives

Ooredoo Maldives reported a 10 percent increase in revenues to KD 18.8 million in H1 2022, compared to KD 17.0 million in H1 2021. EBITDA improved by 16 percent to reach KD 10.3 million in H1 2022 compared to KD 8.9 million in H1 2021. Ooredoo Maldives now serves a total of 375 thousand customers.

## Results for the First Half of 2022

**ooredoo**  
Enjoy the Internet

NET PROFIT to NMTC  
GROWTH OF

**+197%**

**20.8**  
KD Million

**Consolidated Revenue**

**+4%**

**306.1**  
KD Million

**EBITDA**

**+7%**

**112.2**  
KD Million

**EPS**

**+200%**

**42**  
Kuwaiti Fils



## Business

# E-commerce giant Alibaba seeks dual-primary listing in Hong Kong

## Seven Ant Group execs including CEO and CTO removed from Alibaba partnership

**HONG KONG:** E-commerce giant Alibaba said Tuesday it will seek a primary listing in Hong Kong, potentially giving access to China's vast pool of investors, as mainland officials indicate a long-running crackdown on the tech sector could be coming to an end. The move also comes as Chinese tech companies traded in New York grow increasingly worried about a regulatory drive by United States authorities as tensions simmer between the superpowers.

While Alibaba has a secondary listing in Hong Kong, it does not allow it to join a popular Stock Connect program that links to bourses in Shanghai and Shenzhen. The primary listing, which is expected to take place before the end of the year, would open that door.

News of the plan sent shares in Alibaba soaring 4.8 percent Tuesday, boosting other tech firms and helping drag the broader Hang Seng Index higher. The Hangzhou-based group is one of a number of tech behemoths ensnared in a wide-ranging regulatory crackdown on alleged anti-competitive practices since late 2020.

The campaign to rein in big tech is driven by fears that massive internet companies control too much data and have expanded too quickly. But officials appear to be taking a lighter touch as they grapple

with a slowing economy. And in May, Premier Li Keqiang urged support for tech companies to list both domestically and abroad.

CEO and group chairman Daniel Zhang said on Tuesday the primary listing aimed to foster "a wider and more diversified investor base to share in Alibaba's growth and future, especially from China and other markets in Asia". "Hong Kong is also the launch pad for Alibaba's globalization strategy, and we are fully confident in China's economy and future."

Alibaba said on Tuesday it had an average daily trading volume of \$3.2 billion in the United States in the first six months of the year, while its Hong Kong secondary listing saw around \$700 million.

### Mainland access

Hong Kong's Stock Connect program allows firms to take advantage of liquidity from mainland China for easier financing and higher valuations, but to qualify they must conduct a majority of their annual trading in the Chinese finance hub. Alibaba is among a category of "innovative" Chinese firms with weighted voting rights or variable interest entities that would be eligible for dual-primary listing in Hong Kong, following a rule change by the bourse in

January. Analyst Willer Chen, at Forsyth Barr Asia, told Bloomberg that the move would be "massive" for Alibaba, adding that inclusion in Stock Connect could lead to a "more diversified investor base".

Beijing has opposed an attempt by US regulators to inspect the audit papers of Chinese firms listed there, and Alibaba is one of 250 companies facing potential removal if no deal is reached.

Domestically, Alibaba is still reeling from the tech crackdown as well as China's slowing economy caused by the fallout from strict COVID curbs. The firm has lost around two-thirds of its value since a 2020 peak, according to Bloomberg, and in May the firm reported that profit fell 59 percent in the last fiscal year.

### Shake-up at Ant

News of plans for the dual-primary listing came as Alibaba announced it had removed all executives linked to its digital payments arm Ant Group from a joint governing body. Seven Ant Group executives including CEO Eric Jing and Chief Technology Officer Ni Xingjun were removed from Alibaba Partnership, a group that can nominate the majority of Alibaba's board, as of May 31, according to an annual report Tuesday.



It is part of a lengthy state-guided restructuring process after a planned 2020 share offering by Ant Group—which would have been the world's largest IPO at the time—was scuttled last minute, according to a spokesman for the company. Ant Group has terminated its data sharing agreement with Alibaba and reshuffled its board recently, filling half the seats with independent directors and reducing the number of non-executive directors from the Alibaba Group to two from three. But Beijing last month rebuffed reports it had started discussions on the potential revival of the IPO. —AFP

## India's airlines gear up for a surge in travel

**MUMBAI:** Airlines in India are accelerating their fleet expansion plans as they prepare for a surge in growth amid the sector's recovery from the coronavirus pandemic. "The Indian aviation industry is in a robust growth phase," says Neha Singh, an associate partner specializing in aviation at Link Legal. "A growing strong middle class ... is key to the industry's growth. Fleet expansion is inevitable."

Air India, which was taken over by Tata Group in January after the government privatized the debt-laden carrier, is considering ordering up to 300 new planes to overhaul its fleet, reported Bloomberg.

India's Jet Airways is planning to return to the skies this year and is considering a deal to buy new jets, while budget carrier Akasa Air has launched its first flights after signing an agreement in November last year to purchase 72 Boeing 737 Max aircraft.

Before the pandemic, India was the world's fastest-growing aviation market but it now faces high fuel costs and a turbulent geopolitical environment after Russia's invasion of Ukraine. "Possibly this is the correct time for increasing capacity," said Singh. "We are looking at rapid growth and the sector has to start preparing despite the odds of high fuel prices or pandemic, war or any other form of disruption."

As the global recovery in travel continues to recover on the back of easing COVID restrictions, Asia-Pacific airlines experienced a 453.3 per cent rise in May traffic compared with the same period in 2021, according to the latest passenger data from the International Air Transport Association (IATA). This was up from an increase of 295.3 per cent year-on-year in April 2022. Capacity for airlines in the region rose 118.8 per cent and the load factor was up 43.6 percentage points to 72.1 per cent. —Agencies



**KUWAIT:** The Ambassador of South Africa to Kuwait, Dr Manelisi GENGE, top management of LuLu Hypermarket Kuwait, diplomatic personnel and shoppers during the inauguration of 'Proudly South African 2022' promotion at the Al-Qurain outlet.

## LuLu Hypermarket launches 'Proudly South African 2022' promotion

**KUWAIT:** LuLu Hypermarket, the leading retailer in the region, launched its 'Proudly South African 2022' promotion at the Al-Qurain outlet of the hypermarket on 24 July. The Ambassador of South Africa to Kuwait, Dr Manelisi GENGE, cut the ceremonial ribbon to inaugurate the event, in the presence of top management of LuLu Hypermarket Kuwait, and a large gathering of shoppers and well-wishers. Among the diplomatic personnel attending the event were the ambassadors of the Kingdom of Lesotho, Boomo Frank Sofonia; Charge d' Affairs of the Republic of Zimbabwe, the Republic of Malawi Younos Abdul Karim; and the Kingdom of Eswatini Nkhuluko Horace Dlamini.

The week-long promotion, which runs till 1st August at all branches of the hypermarket in Kuwait, features the best of products from the

'Rainbow Nation' being offered at very special prices. The wide range and variety of products on offer, including colorful succulent fruits, nuts and other produce, attests to the geographical diversity of the land that allows for the growing of different food items based on climate, soil and elevation.

Samples of the country's physical variation are evident in the attractive images of iconic monuments and breath-taking landscapes displayed at vantage points across the hypermarkets during the promotion period. The large scenic displays also highlight South Africa's amazing diversity in terms of flora and fauna, and the stupendous tourism potential of the land.

The promotion, which offers shoppers a wide range and multiplicity of high-quality food products, provides them with the



opportunity to purchase some of the finest and most popular South African food items at very special prices. Among the products being offered at incredibly competitive prices are well-known brands such as: Bakers, Blue Diamond, B-Well, Cape Cookies, Cape Herbs, Clark & Sons Inc., Mandela Tea, Nandos, Robertsons, Royal Biltong and many others.

The 'Proudly South African 2022' promotion, which follows the highly successful 'Awesome South Africa 2021' festival held last year at LuLu Hypermarket, underlines the hypermarket's commitment to importing high-quality food and non-food items from around the world, and making them readily available and affordable for shoppers in Kuwait.

## Explore the stylish Nissan KICKS 2023

**KUWAIT:** Refreshed with style and technology upgrades designed to meet the growing needs of its urban young customers, Abdulmohsen Abdulaziz Al-Babtain Co (AABC) - the sole authorized dealer of Nissan in the State of Kuwait, announces the availability of the new Nissan KICKS in Kuwait. Placing a large focus on enhancing connectivity, innovation and personalization, the Nissan KICKS2023 edition allows drivers to further express their personal style as they cut through the city with precise handling and available advanced driver assist features.

Nissan's lineup of KICKS has attracted young, enthusiastic drivers to the brand every year and has maintained its reputation for offering an impressive array of class-leading features with equally attractive value.

### New exterior design

While maintaining KICKS' compact urban crossover dimensions - with its large interior space and nimble, city-sized exterior for easy maneuverability - the extensive exterior changes immediately set KICKS apart from the competition. The Nissan KICKS2023 is available in KICKSSL.

Starting with a bold front end, the new KICKS features a "Double V-motion" grille, while the LED headlights offer a high-tech, modern and premium effect, which is even further enhanced on the SL grade's super-thin LED multi-reflector design and additionally includes LED fog lights and side turning lamps on door

mirrors. A stylish rear end begins with a new bumper and back door finisher and LED combination light that stretches from side to side, adding a strong horizontal line that emphasizes KICKS' wide rear structure. Like in front, the redesigned rear bumper imparts a sense of more "lifted" volume and a premium feel.

The new KICKS continues with its floating roof with a wrap-around visor look to the windscreen and side glass. The wide C-pillar appears hidden, with a black finish that blends into the tailgate glass and still allows excellent outward visibility for all.

Standard exterior features include Intelligent Auto Headlights with adjustable sensitivity and timing, along with rear wiper and available roof rails, heated outside mirrors with integrated turn signals and rear roof spoiler.

### Smart, stylish interior

Redesigned with brown leather seats and leather handles, the new KICKS interior also has a new stylish and premium feel. The versatile interior offers a sporting flavor - provided by a D-shaped steering wheel, comfortable 6-way driver's seat, 4-way adjustable front passenger seat and 60/40-split fold-down rear seat.

For peace of mind, Nissan Kicks with Safety Shield(r) 360, which includes Automatic Emergency Braking, Lane Departure Warning, radar-based Blind Spot Warning, and Rear Cross Traffic Alert. Among the other on-board technologies, KICKS features an available Intelligent Around View Monitor, which provides a virtual composite 360-degree bird's-eye view of the KICKS' exterior. For the ultimate audio experience, the 2023 Nissan KICKS includes the class-exclusive Bose Speakers, which uses eight



speakers and proprietary Bose signal processing to provide what Bose calls. Key to its dynamic sound is a pair of lightweight 2.5-inch Bose UltraNearfield neodymium speakers located inside the KICKS' driver's seat head restraint.

A Bose PersonalSpace Control feature is built into the infotainment system's audio settings, providing adjustable listening options from front-focused sound to a wider, more enveloping experience. The system also includes a digital amplifier with six channels of custom equalization and digital system processing. To always keep drivers connected, the new Nissan KICKS also provides Apple CarPlay and Android Auto.

### A crossover for the adventurous

Every new KICKS comes with a standard 1.6-liter DOHC 16-valve 4-cylinder engine with Continuous Variable Valve Timing Control System. The engine is rated at 118 horsepower at 6,000 RPM and a maximum torque of 15.1 Kg-m at 4,000 RPM which is paired with a smooth, Xtronic transmission powering the front wheels.



KICKS offers a standard Traction Control System, Vehicle Dynamic Control and Hill Start Assist, front disc/rear drum Anti-lock Braking System (S grade) and electric power steering.

New for the recently launched KICKS as standard on all grade, is an electronic parking brake with auto hold, which can ease driver workload in certain situations. KICKS also includes an Integrated Dynamic Control Module, featuring Active Engine Brake, Intelligent Trace Control and Intelligent Ride Control, to help provide a higher level of driving enjoyment.

Nimble handling is provided by a front independent strut, stabilizer bar suspension matched with rear suspension featuring twist beam and twin-tube shock absorbers. The Nissan KICKSSL grade is equipped with 17-inch aluminum-alloy wheels. KICKS is also equipped with a total of 6 airbags and Intelligent Driver Alertness.

Combining an invigorating style with world-class technology and value for money, visit the Nissan Al-Babtain showrooms situated in Al-Rai, Ahmadi, and Al-Jahrato experience the popular Nissan KICKS 2023.



## Business

# IMF cuts global growth outlook amid US and China slowdowns

## The world may soon be teetering on the edge of a global recession

WASHINGTON: Surging inflation and severe slowdowns in the United States and China prompted the IMF to downgrade its outlook for the global economy this year and next, while warning Tuesday that the situation could get much worse.

"The outlook has darkened significantly since April. The world may soon be teetering on the edge of a global recession, only two years after the last one," IMF chief economist Pierre-Olivier Gourinchas said.

In its latest World Economic Outlook, the International Monetary Fund cut the 2022 global GDP estimate to 3.2 percent, four-tenths of a point lower than the April forecast, and about half the rate seen last year. Last year's "tentative recovery" from the pandemic downturn "has been followed by increasingly gloomy developments in 2022 as risks began to materialize," the report said. "Several shocks have hit a world economy already weakened by the pandemic," including the war in Ukraine which has driven up global prices for food and energy, prompting central banks to raise interest rates sharply, the IMF said.

Ongoing COVID-19 lockdowns and a worsening real estate crisis have hindered economic activity in China, while the Federal Reserve's aggressive interest rate hikes are slowing US growth sharply.

But the IMF offered a stark caveat to the forecasts, cautioning that "risks to the outlook are overwhelmingly tilted to the downside," and if they materialize could push the global economy into one of the worst slumps in the past half-century. Key among the concerns is the fallout from the war in Ukraine including the potential for Russia to cut off natural gas supplies to Europe, as well as a further spike in prices and a food shortage due to the chokehold the war has on grain supplies that could trigger famine.

In an ominous warning, the WEO said "such shocks could, if sufficiently severe, cause a combination of recession accompanied by high and rising inflation ('stagflation')." That would slam the brakes on growth, slowing it to 2.0 percent in 2023. The global growth rate has only been slower five times since 1970, the IMF said.

### Inflation priority

The top priority for policymakers is to rein in soaring prices, even at the cost of inflicting pain on their citizens, the fund said, since the damage caused by allowing inflation to rage out of control would be



WASHINGTON: Handout photo released by the Argentine Ministry of Economy of Argentina's Economy Minister Silvina Batakis (left) and International Monetary Fund Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva posing for a picture in Washington, on July 25, 2022. — AFP

much worse. Gourinchas, in a blog post about the report, noted that the "synchronized" moves by major central banks to deal with the inflation threat "is historically unprecedented, and its effects are expected to bite."

"Tighter monetary policy will inevitably have real economic costs, but delaying it will only exacerbate the hardship," he said. The IMF now sees consumer prices jumping 8.3 percent this year, nearly a full point higher than previously forecast, while emerging market economies face a 9.5 percent increase in consumer prices. But, "further supply-related shocks to food and energy prices from the war in Ukraine could sharply increase headline inflation."

That would increase the pain for poor nations least able to withstand the shock, where food makes up a larger share of family budgets.

### US, China slowdown

While the global economy did a bit better than expected in the first three months of the year, it appears to have "shrunk in the second quarter—the first contrac-

tion since 2020," the IMF said. The IMF downgraded growth forecasts for most countries, including big revisions for the United States and China, which cut more than a point off the prior forecasts. The fund now sees US growth this year of just 2.3 percent, amid slowing consumer spending and rising interest rates, and the report said a recession-defined by two quarters of negative growth may already have begun.

China's economy is expected to slow dramatically in 2022, expanding just 3.3 percent—the lowest in more than four decades other than the 2020 pandemic crisis—due to COVID concerns and the "worsening crisis" in the property sector, the report said. "The slowdown in China has global consequences: lockdowns added to global supply chain disruptions and the decline in domestic spending are reducing demand for goods and services from China's trade partners," the report said.

There were some exceptions to the gloomy outlook, including upgrades for Italy, Brazil and Mexico, as well as for Russia which is still expected to contract but is benefitting from rising oil prices due to Western sanctions, the WEO said. — AFP

power can replace some of the gas used for electricity production.

"I'm predicting that the lifetime of the nuclear power plants will be prolonged at the end of the year," Merz recently told public broadcaster ZDF.

### Green shift

Scholz's junior coalition partner, the liberal FDP, is also turning up the pressure. "The run-time should be extended until spring 2024," senior FDP member Michael Kruse told the daily Bild. "We must use everything that can contribute to electricity production. Nuclear power plants are part of that." Katrin Goering-Eckardt, deputy president of the German parliament, signaled that the mood was shifting even among her Green party, which has opposed atomic power for more than 40 years.

Nothing should be ruled out "if it comes to the point that we have a real emergency situation, that hospitals can't operate... then we have talk about it", she told public broadcaster ARD.

Social Democratic party co-leader, Saskia Esken, on Monday also said there should be no red lines when it comes to tackling the energy crisis. In the Bavarian city of Munich, local officials from the SPD and Greens have urged the federal government to keep the region's Isar 2 plant, one of the three remaining nuclear plants, online for longer.

Munich mayor Dieter Reiter said the extension could be made possible by not running the plant at full capacity, allowing the nuclear fuel rods to last longer.

Should Germany abandon its nuclear exit, it would not be the government's first energy U-turn since the start of the Ukraine war. In a move described as "bitter" by Green Economy Minister Robert Habeck, Germany recently decided to restart mothballed coal-fired power plants to preserve gas. —AFP



WERNE, Germany: This file photograph taken on March 24, 2022, shows a controller at a pipe for gas lines is pictured at Open Grid Europe (OGE), one of Europe's largest gas transmission system operators, in Werne, western Germany. —AFP

it is expected to remain elevated in the second half," Unilever said. Alex Smith, analyst at research group Third Bridge, forecast more price hikes were likely in the coming months as a result. "Inflation will continue to erode Unilever's margins for the next 12-18 months, although margin pressure has been partly mitigated by price increases in the first half," Smith noted.

"Our experts see further price increases in the second half." Unilever had experienced strong demand for hand and household cleaning products during the coronavirus outbreak. It cautioned Tuesday that China's renewed lockdowns had weighed on the Asian giant's consumer spending in the second quarter of this year. Unilever became a wholly British company at the end of 2020 after it completed a merger of its Dutch and British corporate entities. —AFP

## Seven risks behind IMF global growth outlook of doom

WASHINGTON: A perfect storm of doom has been pummeling the global economy in recent months, undermining global growth expectations, but the IMF on Tuesday warned the worst-case scenario is plausible, which would cut growth to one of the lowest levels in the past five decades. If these seven risks to the outlook occur, global growth could fall to just 2.0 percent in 2023:

### War in Ukraine

Europe has a gas problem: In the wake of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the report notes that since April, Russian pipeline gas shipped to Europe has fallen to about 40 percent of the previous year's level. European Union governments in particular have accused Moscow of squeezing supplies in retaliation for Western sanctions over its war.

The pain is not expected to let up anytime soon, and the IMF predicts volume will "decline further." Worst case scenario? A total cessation of exports in 2022 could increase worldwide inflation and force energy rationing in Europe, with subsequent growth reduction and "negative cross-border spillovers."

### Inflation surge

At every turn, the troubled outlook seems to circle back to Ukraine. Supply-related shocks have sent food and energy prices higher, spurring inflation and prompting governments to raise borrowing costs to tamp down demand.

In a worst-case scenario, central bank actions could precipitate recession even as costs simultaneously rise, creating a scenario known as stagflation. Wage-price spirals also are a possibility with low unemployment in several economies prompting workers to demand higher pay. If policymakers fail to handle the situation deftly, they could cause further complications.

However, inflation is expected to return to near pre-pandemic levels by the end of 2024.

### Central banks overshoot

Central Banks are carrying out a delicate balancing act in their attempts to prevent contraction by raising interest rates quickly. What happens if they blunder?

Recession — and the likelihood is rising. "The risk of recession is particularly prominent in 2023," the IMF said.

"In several economies growth is expected to bottom out, household savings accumulated during the pandemic will have declined, and even small shocks could cause economies to stall," the report warned.

### Debt distress

Debt dynamics are expected to worsen in advanced economies as borrowers face rising interest rates and low growth, but distress in emerging markets and developing economies is especially worrying. As advanced economies raise interest rates to fight inflation, lending costs will increase, putting the pressure on governments forced to borrow to support their economies during the pandemic, while at the same time their currencies will depreciate, as capital floods out of those countries.

The IMF estimates that 60 percent of low-income countries are already "in or at high risk of government debt distress."

### China troubles

Progress in the face of China's ongoing COVID outbreaks, including fiscal support and reworking of Beijing's zero-Covid strategy, offers some signs of hope in the world's second largest economy. However, the possibility of large-scale outbreaks due to even more contagious variants means widespread lockdowns remain a real threat, with financial impacts for the wider global economy.

China's troubled property sector, meanwhile, is not expected to improve anytime soon, creating the specter of a "sudden, wider crisis."

Unrest from food and energy prices and Food and energy prices are essential to daily life and the pronounced rise in prices threatens not just family budgets but also social stability.

"Higher food and energy prices are robust predictors of unrest," the IMF said. Chief among the factors driving higher food prices has been Russia's blockade of Ukrainian grain exports.

### Fragmented economy

The war in Ukraine's tentacles are far-reaching. Beyond the obvious economic factors, the conflict has created global political fragmentation and geopolitical blocs that no longer work together smoothly. That means differing technology standards, cross-border payment systems and reserve currencies. Decreased multilateral cooperation between blocs could even result in less interaction on climate change, thereby worsening the food crisis. —AFP



Tufan Erginbilgic

## Aircraft engine maker Rolls-Royce picks new CEO

LONDON: British aircraft engine maker Rolls-Royce on Tuesday said it had chosen former BP executive Tufan Erginbilgic to replace long-serving chief executive Warren East.

Erginbilgic, a dual UK and Turkish national, replaces East from the start of 2023, Rolls said in a statement. East is stepping down after a tumultuous eight years in the top role during which time he turned around performance and slashed thousands of jobs.

Rolls-Royce chair Anita Frew described Erginbilgic, 62, as "a proven leader of winning teams within complex multinational organizations". She said he had "an ability to drive a high-performance culture and deliver results for investors". Erginbilgic worked for more than 20 years at BP, including as head of its downstream unit.

He left the British energy major in 2020 and is currently a partner at private equity firm Global Infrastructure Partners. East told AFP last week that he was "quite pleased" with his time at Rolls-Royce. "We've put in place a lot of efficiency and productivity improvements," he said on the sidelines of the Farnborough Airshow, adding that the engine maker's focus was on decarbonisation of aviation.

The 60-year-old's tenure was marked by corruption fines that pre-dated his arrival, as well as troubles with the company's Trent family of engines. Rolls, whose products power Airbus and Boeing aircraft, axed 9,000 jobs and offloaded assets in drastic cost-cutting after the COVID pandemic grounded jets and sparked a collapse in air traffic. East guided the group back to profit in 2021 after the painful restructuring and Rolls has gone on to reap the benefits of aviation's recovery and growth in government defense spending. — AFP

## Unilever sales jump on higher prices, but profit slips

LONDON: British consumer goods group Unilever said Tuesday that first-half revenues jumped on higher prices, but net profit fell on rising costs and taxation. Turnover leapt 15 percent to 29.6 billion euros (\$30.2 billion) in first six months of 2022 compared with a year earlier, but sales volumes fell, Unilever said in a statement. Profit after tax slid almost seven percent to 2.9

billion euros on higher finance, input and restructuring costs, alongside slowing world economic growth.

Unilever manufactures food, cleaning and beauty products, including Magnum ice-cream, Cif surface cleaner and Dove soap. Input costs are soaring on the back of runaway inflation-and global supply-chain pressures. "Unilever has delivered a first-half performance which builds on our momentum of 2021, despite the challenges of high inflation and slower global growth," said chief executive Alan Jope. Sales were "driven by strong pricing to mitigate input cost inflation, which, as expected, had some impact on volume".

The company warned that the outlook remains blighted by soaring cost inflation. "High-input cost inflation has been widespread across our markets, and





# BigPicture 2022 competition captures the magical beauty of life on earth

**N**atural World Photography Competition celebrates life cycles and natural resilience. The California Academy of Sciences puts on the contest, which judges photos that capture nature in eight different categories. This year's competition encouraged photographers to submit images showcasing life on Earth and

illustrated some of the planet's threats. 'Bee Balling', a picture that captures a rare moment of cactus bees swarming together in a mating ball, was selected as this year's grand prize winner. — [bigpicturecompetition.org](http://bigpicturecompetition.org)





## Lifestyle | Features



A picture taken shows the 3,480-metre high Rifugio Guide del Cervino refuge at Testa Grigia peak between Zermatt Switzerland and Breuil-Cervinia, Italy.



A photograph shows a hut with shutters decorated with the Swiss cross.



A photograph shows a banner marking the Swiss border near the 3,480-metre high Rifugio Guide del Cervino refuge at Testa Grigia peak between Zermatt Switzerland and Breuil-Cervinia, Italy.

Way up in the snowy Alps, the border between Switzerland and Italy has shifted due to a melting glacier, putting the location of an Italian mountain lodge in dispute. The borderline runs along a drainage divide—the point at which meltwater will run down either side of the mountain towards one country or the other. But the Theodul Glacier's retreat means the watershed has crept towards the Rifugio Guide del Cervino, a refuge for visitors near the 3,480-metre (11,417-foot) Testa Grigia peak and it is gradually sweeping underneath the building.

Frederic, a 59-year-old tourist, opens the narrow wooden door to enter the refuge's restaurant, the light flooding in from outside. The menu is in Italian, not German, and priced in euros rather than Swiss francs. Nonetheless, at the counter, he orders a slice of pie and asks: "So-are we in Switzerland or in Italy?" It is a question worth asking as it has been the subject of diplomatic negotiations that started in 2018 and concluded with a compromise last year-but the details remain secret.

### Sleeping on the Swiss side

When the refuge was built on a rocky outcrop in 1984, its 40 beds and long wooden tables were entirely in Italian territory. But now two-thirds of the lodge, including most of the beds and the restaurant, is technically perched in southern Switzerland. The issue has come to the fore because the area, which relies on tourism, is located at the top of one of the world's largest ski resorts, with a major new development including a cable car station being constructed a few meters away.

An agreement was hammered out in Florence in November 2021 but the outcome will only be revealed once it is rubber-stamped by the Swiss government—which will not happen before 2023. "We agreed to split the difference," Alain Wicht, chief border official at Switzerland's national mapping agency Swisstopo told AFP.



His job includes looking after the 7,000 boundary markers along landlocked Switzerland's 1,935-kilometre border with Austria, France, Germany, Italy and Liechtenstein. Wicht attended the negotiations, where both parties made concessions to find a solution. "Even if neither side came out winners, at least nobody lost", he said.

### Line in the snow

Where the Italian-Swiss border traverses Alpine glaciers, the frontier follows the watershed line. But the Theodul Glacier lost almost a quarter of its mass between 1973 and 2010. That exposed the rock underneath to the ice, altering the drainage divide and forcing the two neighbors to redraw around a 100-metre-long stretch of their border. Wicht said that such adjust-

ments were frequent and generally settled by comparing readings by surveyors from the border countries, without getting politicians involved.

"We are squabbling over territory that isn't worth much," he said. But he added that this "is the only place where we suddenly had a building involved", giving "economic value" to the land. His Italian counterparts declined to comment "due to the

complex international situation". Former Swisstopo chief Jean-Philippe Amstein said such disputes are typically resolved by exchanging parcels of land of equivalent surface area and value. In this case, "Switzerland is not interested in obtaining a piece of glacier," he explained, and "the Italians are unable to compensate for the loss of Swiss surface area". — AFP

## Adele announces rescheduled Vegas residency dates

Adele delighted fans Monday by detailing the dates for her rescheduled shows in Las Vegas, after postponing them earlier this year the day before she was due to start. The residency entitled "Weekends With Adele" at the Colosseum at Caesar's Palace will feature eight extra shows in addition to the 24 rescheduled dates, and is slated to run from November 18, 2022 through March 25, 2023. "Words can't explain how ecstatic I am to finally be able to announce these rescheduled shows. I truly was heartbroken to have to cancel them," the Grammy Award-winning superstar said on her website.

"But after what feels like an eternity of figuring out logistics for the show that I really want to deliver, and knowing it can happen, I'm more excited than ever!" In a tearful video in January the artist had pushed back the sold-out show saying it wasn't



In this file photo a member of staff sorts copies of the new album from British singer-songwriter Adele, "30" in Sister Ray record store in the soho area of central London. — AFP

ready, blaming "delivery delays and COVID." "Now I know for some of you it was a horrible decision on my part, and I will always be sorry for that, but I promise you it was the right one," the 34-year-old said in her statement Monday.

"To be with you in such an intimate space every week has been what I've most been looking forward to and I'm going to give you the absolute best of me. Thank you for your patience, I love you." Last fall the British performer released her first record in six years—"30"—a cathartic, big-balad album that lays bare the emotional torture of navigating divorce. —AFP

Sorvino was best known for his role as Paul Cicero in "Goodfellas," directed by Martin Scorsese and released in 1990, alongside Robert De Niro, Joe Pesci and Ray Liotta.

The following year, he distinguished himself in the television series "Law and Order," where he played a policeman. In 1995, he took on the role of Henry Kissinger in Oliver Stone's film "Nixon." "My father the great Paul Sorvino has passed," his daughter Mira Sorvino, who won an Oscar in 1996 for her role in Woody Allen's "Mighty Aphrodite," said on Twitter. "My heart is rent asunder—a life of love and joy and wisdom with him is over," she said.

Paul Sorvino played a wide variety of supporting roles in movies or in television series, but he was a multi-faceted artist, with a particular love of sculpture and opera. "Most people think I'm either a gangster or a cop or something, but the reality is I'm a sculptor, a painter, a best-selling author, many, many things—a poet, an opera singer, but none of them is gangster, but, you know, obviously I sort of have a knack for playing these things," he said in a 2014 interview in the Orlando Weekly. — AFP

## Paul Sorvino, 'Goodfellas' actor and father of Mira Sorvino, dies

US actor Paul Sorvino, famous for his role in the gangster classic "Goodfellas" and the father of actress Mira Sorvino, has died at the age of 83, his family said Monday. "I am completely devastated. The love of my life & the most wonderful man who has ever lived is gone. I am heartbroken," his widow Dee Dee Sorvino wrote on her Facebook page. Born in April 1939 in New York, Paul



## Joni Mitchell wows with surprise set at Newport Folk Fest

Joni Mitchell delivered her first full set in more than 20 years this weekend, surprising attendees at the Newport Folk Festival alongside country star Brandi Carlile. The show followed Mitchell's stage cameo earlier this year, when she joined other artists as they performed a moving tribute to her life's work at the MusiCares pre-Grammy gala.

Both moments marked rare public appearances for the trailblazing Mitchell, who in 2015 suffered a brain aneurysm that left her temporarily unable to speak, the aftermath of which has involved extensive physical therapy. Mitchell and Carlile sang duets including the 78-year-old's "A Case of You" and "Both Sides Now," while the Canadian-born folk icon delighted the crowd by playing the lengthy solo from "Just Like This Train" on an electric guitar. Mitchell last appeared at Newport, an annual festival in Rhode Island, in 1969.



In this file photo singer-songwriter Joni Mitchell attends the 2022 MusiCares Person of the Year gala in her honor at the MGM Grand Conference Center in Las Vegas, Nevada. — AFP

Sunday's 13-song set also featured her classic environmentalist anthem "Big Yellow Taxi" and "The Circle Game" along with renditions of "Summertime," "Love Potion No. 9" and "Why Do Fools Fall in Love." The revolutionary singer-songwriter earlier this year was honored as MusiCares' Person of the Year at the charity gala that precedes the Grammys, where she gave a brief performance. The next night she accepted the Grammy for Best Historical Album, appearing in a red leather beret, sunglasses and floral pants, her flowing blonde hair in pigtails. —AFP



Fishermen clean seaweed out of their fishing nets in Freetown where mass of floating seaweed has for weeks bunged up the otherwise pristine coastline of Sierra Leone's capital Freetown, disrupting beach-goers and damaging fishing gear in a country normally known for its white-sand shores. — AFP

## Seaweed onslaught disrupts S.Leone fishing and tourism

A mass of brown seaweed has for weeks choked the coastline of Sierra Leone's capital Freetown, damaging fishing gear and disrupting tourism in a country otherwise known for its white-sand beaches. The West African state has experienced the phenomenon several times in the past, but local people say the problem seems far worse this year. "There is an unprecedented deposit this year," Amidu Kamara, a fisherman at Freetown's Tambakula wharf, told AFP.

He said dead seaweed had destroyed fishing nets and clogged boat engines. "We have to move from one spot to the other to escape the seaweed, but it keeps coming", he added. The stuff is believed to come from the Sargasso Sea, in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, according to Paul Lamin, a director at the government's Environmental Protection Agency. "My department received reports from other countries in West Africa where the seaweed was found in March and April this

year, but in Sierra Leone it usually occurs during the rainy season and the quantity fluctuates on yearly basis," he said.

### Business slow

Normally, Lumley Beach in the west end of the city is packed with young people at the weekends. But nowadays it is desolate. At the Sugarland Beach resort, manager Aruna Foday complained that rotting seaweed had hurt the bottom line. "We are closing the bar and restaurant for now due to the heavy stench from the seaweed and hope to resume after the rains", he said. "Business has been slow for us."

Not all beach-goers were deterred, however. Mohamed Bangura, 23, was kicking a football around with friends on a recent, overcast Sunday afternoon. "We use our bare hands to clean up spaces to play football every weekend," he said, noting that it nonetheless "stinks disgustingly".

Though July and August—when seaweed normally tends to appear—is the low season for tourism, the National Tourist Board has nonetheless launched a clean-up effort. "It's a difficult task because the seaweed keeps coming on an hourly basis," said general manager, Fatmata Kroma, who appealed for help from the community. She noted that man-made waste was also washing up on beaches and posing a further challenge to the tourism industry. "The ocean is not a dust-bin," she said. — AFP



## Sports

# Popp explodes for Germany after ending Euro 2022 woe

## 115th appearance for Germany

**MANCHESTER:** Alexandra Popp seem destined never to play at a European Championship due to injury, but the veteran striker is now leading Germany's charge back to the top of the women's game at Euro 2022. An Olympic gold medalist and Champions League winner at club level with Wolfsburg, the Euro had been the bete noire of the 31-year-old's glittering career until touching down in England a few weeks ago. Her determination to play in Wolfsburg's Champions League final win over Lyon despite ankle ligament damage ruined her chances of playing at Euro 2013. Four years later it was a knee issue that cost Popp a place in the squad for Euro 2017.

Further injury woe looked set to derail what will realistically be her last chance to be crowned a European champion at international level. Popp has had two more knee operations on her meniscus over the past 15 months, only making a comeback in March. And even when she proved her fitness in time to be selected by Martina Voss-Tecklenburg, Popp's pre-tournament preparations were disrupted by a positive test for coronavirus.

A trained zookeeper, Popp has reacted like a caged animal since being released upon the tournament as a substitute in Germany's opening game against Denmark. In her 115th appearance for Germany, she took just 25 minutes to score on her first match at the Euro with a diving header to cap a 4-0 win over the Danes. In an emotional celebration

the striker sank to her knees and appeared on the verge of tears in what she later described as the most emotional moment of her career.

### Stateswoman

Another COVID-19 case in the German camp to Lea Schueller then opened the door for Popp to start against Spain, which she marked with another headed finish. Further goals against Finland and Austria in the quarter-finals have made Popp the first player to score in four consecutive games at the same women's Euro.

Her desire to make a mark was made clear by the sprint to charge down a clearance by Austrian goalkeeper Manuela Zinsberger in the final minute of the 90 that rebounded into the net. "There are few players in the world who have similar qualities," said former Germany women's coach Horst Hrubesch this week. Popp's presence has been vital not just on the field for a fresh-faced German team trying to restore their grip on the European game.

Die Nationalelf have dominated the Euro over the years, winning the title eight times. However, progress to the last four in England is their first semi-final at a major tournament since the 2015 World Cup. As one of the older stateswomen in the squad, Popp was part of a delegation to negotiate bonuses from the German football association that could rise to 60,000 euros (\$61,000) per player for winning Euro 2022.

That payout is just two games away as Germany have swept all before them so far in winning all four



**LONDON:** Germany's striker Alexandra Popp (3rd right) scores her team's second goal during the UEFA Women's Euro 2022 Group B football match between Finland and Germany at Stadium MK in Milton Keynes, north of London. —AFP

games without even conceding a goal. Germany's toughest test yet awaits against France in Wednesday's semi-final, but Popp has plans in mind for the final in

front of a sold out Wembley on Sunday. "How about raising the trophy in the air?" Popp said. "That sounds like a good plan." —AFP

## Senegalese pirogue race day of friendly feuds-and fun

**SAINT-LOUIS:** Koutaye Niang has been racing in the Saint-Louis regatta for 20 years, but this year's competition, held Saturday in Senegal's historic second city, was the "best day" of his life. Niang—who, like all his teammates, is a fisherman from the coastal city's Guet N'dar quarter—was the captain of one of three winning pirogues that ended a rival team's five-year hot streak at this year's fishing boat race, a traditional event dating back generations.

"All those who live (in my community), Dak, feel like kings today," the 43-year-old said, radiating with pride and wrapped in the red and green colors of his team's flag. The regatta—held annually in the former capital of colonial French West Africa, some 250 kilometers north of Dakar—sees hundreds of men board long wooden pirogues to race two-and-a-half kilometers through the estuary where the Senegal River meets the Atlantic Ocean.

The city's fishermen have been racing recreationally for over a century, but the event became more formalized in the 1950s, according to the president of the organizing committee, El Hadj Mactar Gueye. "There are a lot more people now, and it's more official," said N'Deye Seck, 75, a tailor in the N'dar Market. Her own father and brothers participated when she was young, and she remembers the former French president Charles de Gaulle attending in 1959, months before Senegal's independence.

### Ancestral loyalties

On the eve of this year's event, Guet N'dar—one of Africa's most populated neighborhoods—was buzzing with nervous energy. Men clad in traditional boubou tunics for Friday prayers and women in elegant "moussor" head wraps jostled in the streets with gleeful children, horse-drawn carts and stray livestock. On the riverbank, an old man chipped away at wooden planks to fashion oars, while younger men coated them in red and white paint.

Saint-Louis's fishermen are divided into three teams, each representing a geographical section of the old quarter. Groups of between 50 and 70 people from each team compete in one of three race categories. Separate races are also held for fishermen from elsewhere around the country. "It's a feeling of joy whenever we win," said Younouss Dieye, a rower with the Pondou Khole team who has been competing in the regatta for over a decade. He said he trained for 10 days before the race.

At sunrise on Saturday, young men played wooden "tam tam" drums and spectators danced and blew plastic whistles as the narrow fishing boats, measuring between 15 and 20 metres, were launched into the water. The previous day's boubous were replaced by colorful sports tops, with the number 23 jersey of American basketball player LeBron James ubiquitous in the Pondou Khole community, whose team colors are yellow and blue. Nearby, a vendor sold bucket hats and bowties in the same colours.

### 'The blood that flows'

Further down the river, in the Dak community, spiritual leaders burned incense and smashed packets of ice where boats were launched. "This is the only truly local sport here," said Assane Diaw, a former competitor whose family has been racing for about 100 years. "We have football teams, but the pirogue race is uniquely Saint-Louisien." He said his grandfather's generation competed in the same boats they used for fishing, but nowadays the teams use specially made racing pirogues.

As for the prize, he said: "It's the love that people have... it's the blood that flows." By afternoon, tens of thousands of onlookers had gathered along the river. Young people clamored up the arches of the Faidherbe Bridge, which links the island city to Senegal's mainland, for a better view. Elated Dak supporters jumped into the river when their team won the first and second races, the victors waving oars and beating their chests before tipping their boats over and plunging in themselves. —AFP

## 'No panic' as 'dented' All Blacks prepare to face Springboks

**WELLINGTON:** All Blacks head coach Ian Foster insisted Tuesday there is no panic in their ranks before facing South Africa away, even with New Zealand's pride dented by their home series defeat to Ireland. "We didn't get what we wanted out of that series, so to come together and put in the work again is the best thing for this group," Foster told reporters after the All Blacks trained in Wellington.

There has been a huge outcry in New Zealand, with some pundits calling for Foster to be sacked, following this month's 2-1 home series loss to Ireland. "We're not panicking — I'm not sure about the rest of the people," Foster tersely replied when asked if the key to facing South Africa is not to panic. "With all the emotions around when you lose a series, it's easy for people to scratch at you and poke holes. I get all that." Back-to-back home defeats mean New Zealand has just one win from their last five games.

Foster badly needs a victory to

restore faith, starting with away Tests on August 7 and 14 against world champions South Africa in the Rugby Championship. Although Foster and All Blacks captain Sam Cane kept their jobs, New Zealand Rugby reacted to the Irish defeats by sacking forwards coach John Plumtree and attack coach Brad Mooar. Foster admitted it was "horrible" sacking the pair. "They are good men, but my role is to do what is best for the team," he added. "It's not a judgment on them, we just needed to make a change."

"We're going into the Rugby Championship to try to win, it's a big challenge, but what a great opportunity for us," said Foster. Former Ireland coach Joe Schmidt, now a selector for New Zealand, has taken on a key analysis role and will work alongside Foster. Jason Ryan has been brought in as the new All Blacks forwards coach after winning six Super Rugby titles with the Crusaders. After seeing New Zealand out-muscled by the Irish pack, Ryan said his charges



**WELLINGTON:** New Zealand's rugby head coach Ian Foster (center) monitors players during All Blacks training session at Sky Stadium in Wellington on July 26, 2022. —AFP

have a point to prove.

"There is no hiding from it, the All Black pack has been dented," he said. "In the forwards' meeting, we didn't hide anything and have been really honest, we have to be. We are disappointed, we will move on and get bet-

ter quickly — because we have to."

All Blacks back Richie Mo'unga said the squad is relishing the chance to "right a few wrongs" in South Africa, "because we know we are better. We need to make a statement about who we are as All Blacks". —AFP

## Three talking points from Tour de France

**PARIS:** While the epic 21-day battle for the 2022 Tour de France title was eventually won by Denmark's Jonas Vingegaard, the buzz around the race has raised several topics. Here, AFP Sport looks at three talking points, with Belgian Wout van Aert once again shining, a fast Tour de France and Covid's effect on the race all in the spotlight: Wout van Aert: man of many talents

Van Aert was hailed as "the best rider in the world" by Tour de France winner and Jumbo-Visma teammate Vingegaard, while Geraint Thomas reflected that the Belgian could do whatever he wanted. Van Aert won three stages of the 2021 Tour, taking a time-trial through Bordeaux, the sprint on the Champs Elysees and a mountain summit finish at Ventoux. This year he targeted the green points jersey, where he scored a crushing victory.

He also acted as sherpa for Vingegaard in his crucial stage 11 and 18 triumphs in the Alps and

Pyrenees, but is considered too heavily built to survive in the mountains on his own. He came second on all of the opening three stages in Denmark and then won the fourth with a late escape on what should have been a mass bunch sprint on stage four, won stage eight in a sprint at Lausanne, and took the penultimate-stage time trial.

"He can do whatever he wants. He would need to get under 70kg," said Thomas, who won the 2018 Tour, but finished second in 2019 when arriving heavier. Vingegaard said he doubted van Aert would endanger his one-day ability by dropping weight. "I don't think he has ambitions to win the Tour de France, if he does I'd be happy to share the leadership with him though," said Vingegaard.

### COVID and injuries

Some 176 riders embarked from Copenhagen on the 2022 Tour, with eight riders on each of the 22 teams. Only 135 set off on Sunday morning on the final run into Paris as a hefty 41 failed to get to the finish line. Seventeen of those pulled out after testing positive for COVID. Team UAE were the first to introduce single rooms for their riders, but ended up losing three of their team to COVID during the race and another just before it, isolating defending

champion Tadej Pogacar. Jumbo went further, introducing state-of-the-art COVID air filters in their bedrooms, while nearly all teams banned handshakes, high-fives and selfies.

### Is Tour getting faster?

There are several factors concerning the speed at which a Tour de France is raced. Almost all riders come to the race in peak condition, with most teams selecting their very best riders. The route changes every year, meaning one with a large amount of mountains may be expected to be slower. The design and technology of bikes have advanced over the past 15 years and nutrition science over the past five.

Cooling vests, personalized beds, air filters, and single rooms rather than twin ones count for marginal gains. But the manner in which a Tour is raced has a large impact, with recent versions offering all-rounders such as Julian Alaphilippe and van Aert a chance to break for glory too. This has caused the rise of complete riders such as 2021 and 2021 champion Tadej Pogacar, a climber who can mix it with the one-day specialists. The 2021 Tour was won at an average speed of 41.7 kph and 2022 at 42.02 kph. —AFP

## 'Wonderful day' for Dutch rider Marianne Vos

**PROVINS:** Dutch rider Marianne Vos took over the yellow jersey in the women's Tour de France with victory in a three-way sprint to win the second stage from Meaux to Provins on Monday. Team Jumbo-Visma's Vos edged out Silvia Persico and Katarzyna Niewiadoma to claim the jersey from compatriot Lorena Wiebes who finished 29 seconds behind in sixth place.

"It's not revenge, it's an absolutely wonderful day," said Vos who finished second behind Wiebes in Sunday's opening stage on the Champs-Elysees. Trek-Segafredo's Elisa Longo Borghini, winner of Paris-Roubaix and a definite contender for the yellow jersey in France, finished fourth in the stage, two seconds back.

Less fortunate was her Italian compatriot Marta Cavalli, winner of this year of

the Amstel Gold and the Fleche-Wallonne and a potential winner of the overall title here. The 24-year-old was taken to hospital after suffering a head injury in one of three nasty crashes in a last 30 kilometres where the crosswinds and gusts of up to 45 km/h made the riders jump about the prospect of a break in the peloton. "We don't have much news from Marta, she is suffering from a head injury," said team manager Stephen Delcourt on arrival in Provins.

"We remain in contact with the doctor. She has been sent to the hospital to carry out a CT scan as a priority." The FDJ-Suez-Futuroscope rider was already on the ground when she was hit by Australian champion Nicole Frain who came flying through without braking. Cavalli, who was runner-up on this year's Giro d'Italia, climbed back on her bike but failed to finish the stage with the team pulling her out and sending her to hospital. "She suffered a big shock. We didn't want to take any risks," said Delcourt.

### 'Worried'

"She wanted to carry on but the team said no. We don't want to play with the



**WELLINGTON:** New Zealand's rugby head coach Ian Foster (center) monitors players during All Blacks training session at Sky Stadium in Wellington on July 26, 2022. —AFP

lives of us runners. "We are very worried. You saw the very spectacular crash and how dangerous our sport is. We really have to be careful. I am very worried for the safety of our riders." It was a bad day all round for FDJ as Danish rider Cecilie Uttrup Ludwig, their other potential challenger, got caught up in

another crash and lost more than a minute to Vos, Longo Borghini and Niewiadoma. In addition to Cavalli, another Italian Gaia Masetti also gave up as well as the German Laura Süssemilch, who is undergoing hospital tests for possible fractures, according to her Plantur-Pura team. —AFP



Sports

# US mulls more events after a thrilling World Championships

## Slew of athletes grabs spotlight during championships

**EUGENE:** As a metaphor for a sport with lofty ambitions, Armand Duplantis soaring to a pole vault world record was the perfectly scripted final act that a thrilling World Athletics Championships deserved. The Swedish star brought the curtain down on the 10-day track and field extravaganza in Eugene on Sunday with a jaw-dropping leap of 6.21m, sailing over the bar with ease to electrify Hayward Field. Duplantis - routinely referred to as a "rock star" by World Athletics chief Sebastian Coe - is part of a golden generation of athletes who lit up the 10-day championships in Oregon.

A slew of other athletes also grabbed the spotlight during the championships, with 400m hurdler Sydney McLaughlin delivering a dazzling world record run and the charismatic Noah Lyles racing to gold in the 200m. Those kind of compelling performances delighted both Coe and United States Track and Field (USATF), who are desperate to boost the profile of the sport in the country after years where it has languished out of the spotlight.

In pursuit of that goal, more major track and field events in the United States are a certainty. In 2023, Eugene will host the finale of the Diamond League season - the first time in history that the

meeting has been held outside of Europe. Others have even wondered whether Los Angeles could be a contender to host the World Championships in 2027, a year ahead of the Olympics in 2028 in the city.

**'Catalyst' for athletics**

Asked about that possibility on Sunday, USATF chief executive Max Siegel did not rule it out. "As far as hosting other events we'd love to continue to host events," Siegel told reporters when asked about 2027. "The more that we can support and give visibility to the sport is great for all of us. The timetable is something that we would have to work through. "But we look forward to working with World Athletics and hosting more events here."

Coe meanwhile said the championships had drawn an additional 400,000 new followers to World Athletics social media platforms with seven million engagements. Videos posted by World Athletics drew 41 million views. Siegel says US officials will continue to work with World Athletics to determine how best to exploit those numbers.

"Anecdotally I've had more people who are not traditional track fans reach out to me," Siegel said.

"There's a huge awareness because of the World Championships. "We're working in partnership with World Athletics to get both quantitative and qualitative data as to where the sport sits, with tons of strategies to reposition the sport and the brand and to tell the stories of the athletes. We have a pretty robust plan leading up to LA 2028. "We're going to capitalize on this event and use it as a catalyst to reposition the sport."

**Global spotlight**

Athletics will also benefit from a schedule over the next six year that will mean the sport is more or less permanently in the global spotlight. A consequence of the Tokyo Olympics' postponement by a year - and the knock-on decision to reschedule the Eugene championships to 2022 - means that the sport will now have a global championship in seven of eight years between 2021 and 2028.

Next year's World Championships in Budapest are followed by the 2024 Paris Olympics, before Tokyo hosts the World Championships in 2025. A lone fallow year in 2026 is followed by the 2027 World Championships and the 2028 Olympics. "If you look at the next six or seven years we have

athletics absolutely centre stage in northern hemisphere terms in the most broadcastable part of the year," Coe said. "I'm really pleased we've got the opportunity to showcase athletics, but I don't minimize the challenges some athletes are going to face."

While the likes of McLaughlin, Lyles and 800m star Athing Mu were the figureheads of a successful US team, the global spread of talent in Eugene was also notable. The evergreen Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce bagged a fifth world 100m crown, while compatriot Shericka Jackson blazed to victory in the 200m in 21.45sec, the second fastest time in history. On Sunday, Nigeria's Tobi Amusan delivered arguably the most stunning world record of the championships, scorching to 12.12secs before going on to win gold in the women's 100m hurdles.

Those performances encourage Coe to believe that the sport has a range of stars to market itself around in the post-USain Bolt era. "We recognize the unique nature of what Usain Bolt brought to our sport," Coe said on Sunday. "But I'm probably more optimistic about the bandwidth of talent that is coming through... We've got a whole group of young athletes that are there or thereabouts." —AFP

## Nigerians bask in Amusan's record-breaking athletic glory

**LAGOS:** Nigerians, including three presidential candidates, basked in the glory of the country's first world athletics gold medal, welcoming a respite from bad news about economic hardships and deepening insecurity. Tobi Amusan, 25, won gold in the women's 100m hurdles on Sunday in the World Athletics Championships after breaking the world record in a semi-final where she clocked 12.12sec in Eugene, Oregon. Her winning time of 12.06sec in the final will not be recognized as a world record, however, due to regulations over a strong tailwinds assisting runners.

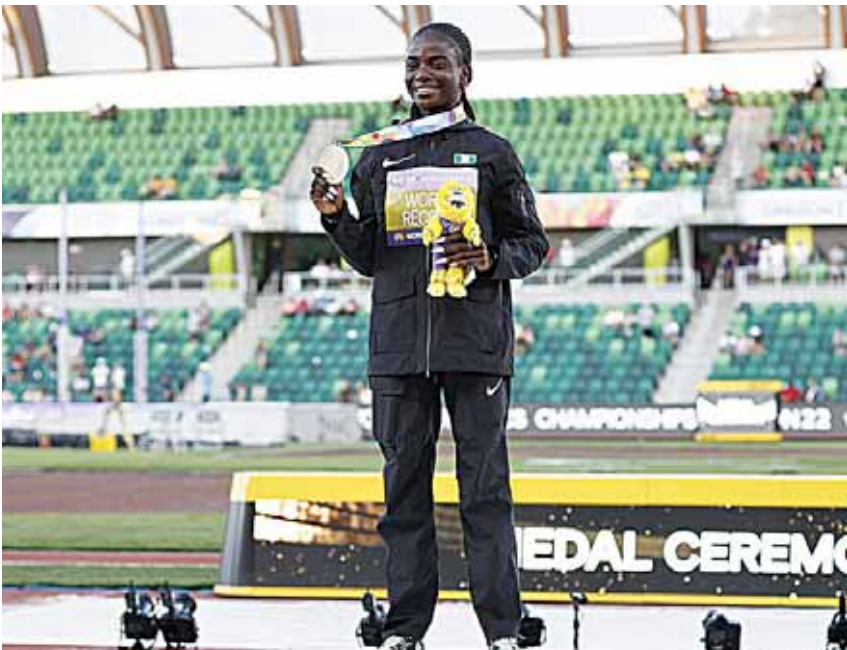
President Muhammadu Buhari praised the "outstanding feat by a compatriot and two-time African Games champion, who in one night stunned the athletics world with her superlative and stellar performance". He said Amusan's feat would inspire upcoming generations of Nigerian

athletes. Buhari, who came to power in 2015, will step down after next year's presidential elections.

The three main challengers in the February ballot also hailed Amusan's success as well as that of Nigeria's Ese Brume who won silver medal in the long jump. Atiku Abubakar of the main opposition Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) said he was "particularly proud of this feat... it underscores my plan to refocus investments in sports, and creative sectors, amongst others."

Peter Obi of the Labour Party said the athletes' feats showed Nigeria was "a great country blessed with talents ready to rule the world."

Ordinary Nigerians also showed their appreciation. "She has done it for us, Tobi Amusan, you have written your name boldly in our history and posterity will be kind to you. Thank you, Nigeria is proud of you!!!" said Enetomhe Stephen on social media.



EUGENE: Gold medalist Tobi Amusan of Team Nigeria poses during the medal ceremony for Women's 100m Hurdles on day ten of the World Athletics Championships Oregon22. —AFP

Praise for the athletes comes as Nigeria is struggling with high inflation and unemployment as well as power outages and jihadist and gang attacks, including killings and kidnappings for ransom. —AFP

## Kuwait's Saqoby qualifies for prestigious Championships

**KUWAIT:** The head of Freestyle Football in Kuwait and champion Dr Ali Yousuf Al-Saqoby qualified for one of the most prestigious world championships which will be held in August 2022 in Prague, Czech Republic. As one of the top athletes in the world, he is making a strong return after gradually recovering from an injury. Ali is one of the very few Arabs planning to take a strong position in the world ranking as mentioned in his instagram story, with the hopes of making Kuwait proud.

It is worth mentioning, that Ali is also a qualified dentist (a UK graduate). Despite working as a dentist, he still does an incredible job in competing at a professional level even as the president of Kuwait Football Freestyle Association. Having been mentioned in the Arabic textbook as an inspiring figure and a champion, he aims to inspire the youth.



Dr Ali Yousuf Al-Saqoby

## Kuwaiti wins first place in Jet Ski Stock Category



By Abdellatif Sharaa

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait's Jet Ski team is participating in the Europe International Championship being held in Poland with 33 countries participating. Faisal Taha Burabee won first place in the Stock Category, while in the teams competition, Kuwaitis were not that lucky as Mohammad Burabee and Mohammad Al-Baz could not continue.

Their jet ski malfunctioned and they could not get enough points to win despite being in top places in the preliminaries. Waleed Al-Adsani, Salem Al-Mutawaa and Fahad Al-Rayes faced the same issue.



## Javelin champ Chopra out of Commonwealth Games

**NEW DELHI:** India's Olympic javelin champion Neeraj Chopra was ruled out of the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham with injury on Tuesday, two days ahead of the opening ceremony. Chopra, 24, picked up the injury during the World Athletics Championships in Oregon, where he won silver at the weekend. The Indian Olympic Association did not say what the injury was but after coming second behind Grenada's Anderson Peters he complained about "discomfort" in his thigh.

Chopra was the reigning champion at the Commonwealth Games, which start on Thursday. "Chopra had called me earlier today from the US to convey his inability to take part in the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games owing to fitness concerns," Indian Olympic Association secretary general Rajeev Mehta said in a statement. "(He) had an MRI scan done on Monday and, based on it, he has been advised a month's rest by his medical team."

Chopra made history for his country when he won the javelin at last summer's Tokyo Games, becoming India's first Olympic athletics gold medalist. Speaking after the World Championships in Oregon, Chopra was quoted as saying by the NDTV news network: "After the fourth throw I did feel a bit of discomfort in my thigh. I wasn't able to put in that much effort. —AFP

# Classifieds

Hospitals & Clinics				
Sabah Hospital	24812000	Clinics	Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764
Amiri Hospital	22450005		Qadsiya	22515088
Maternity Hospital	24843100		Dasmah	22532265
Mubarak Al-Kabir Hospital	25312700		Bneid Al-Gar	22531908
Chest Hospital	24849400		Shaab	22518752
Farwaniya Hospital	24892010		Qibla	22459381
Adan Hospital	23940620		Ayoun Al-Qibla	22451082
Ibn Sina Hospital	24840300		Mirqab	22456536
Al-Razi Hospital	24846000		Sharq	22465401
Physiotherapy Hospital	24874330/9		Nuzha	Salmiya

CHANGE OF NAME	
I, Shah Manan Kumar Jitendra Bhai, holder of Indian Passport No. Z3827682 having permanent address Gujarat, India 380015 residing in Kuwait at present, hereby declare that henceforth my name will be read as: Given name - Manan Jitendrabhai and Surname - Shah. (C# 2025)	
I, KANAIALAL VAL-LABHBHAI PAREKH S/o VALLABHBHAI PAREKH, R/o BEDEKAR COMPLEX, A-Wing, Room No#101, Maharashtra, India, Dist. Raigad, Shriwardhan, Pin 402110. Passport No. P6317340. I have changed my name from Kanaialal Vallabbhbai Parekh to ZAID VALLABHBHAI PAREKH. Kanaialal and Zaid both names belong to one and the same person. (C#2023)	
I, Ranjit Khiva S/o Nachhatar Khiva R/o Mohalla. That now I have changed my name from Ranjit Khiva to Ranjit Singh. All concern may be noted. That Nachhatar Khiva and Nacchatar Singh both name's are belong to one. (C#2024)	





KUWAIT: China's Maimaiti Aihemaiti (left) and Kuwait's Abdelrahman Al-Enezi compete in the men's super heavyweight (+92kg) boxing final bout during the Kuwait International Boxing Championship in the Sabah Al-Salem district on July 25, 2022. —Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

## Uzbekistan secures first position in International Boxing Championship

Kuwait (fifth) wins one silver and two bronze



KUWAIT: Gold medalist Uzbekistan's Dilshodbek Ruzmetov celebrates on the podium following the men's light heavyweight (80kg) boxing final bout during the Kuwait International Boxing Championship on July 25, 2022.

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: With five gold medals and a bronze, Uzbekistan's team took the first position in Kuwait's first International Boxing Championship that was concluded on Monday. Thailand was second - with a gold and two silver medals while China took third with one gold and a silver medal. Fourth place went to Iran with two silver and two bronze. Kuwait secured fifth with one silver and two bronze as Kyrgyzstan (sixth) grabbed one silver and a bronze. Ukraine (seventh) took one silver while Iraq (eighth) won two bronze. Morocco and Hong Kong (ninth) won a bronze medal each.

The bout between Kuwait's champion Abdelrahman Al-Enezi and China's Maimaiti Aihemaiti (92kg+) was highly competitive. The Chinese has a height advantage



KUWAIT: Thailand's Sarawut Suthet (right) and Iran's Sajid Mohammad compete during the Kuwait International Boxing Championship at the Boxing Hall in the Sabah Al-Salem district.

and was able to deliver straight punches while keeping his distance as Al-Enezi focused on short hook punches.

Meanwhile, Kuwait Boxing Federation Chairman Mohammad Mansi lauded the friendly spirit that dominated the championship and the cooperation of all delegations during his speech at the conclusion of the boxing tournament. "We were honored and pleased to host you all. Your active participation and fruitful cooperation contributed to the success of the event," he said, adding that the Championship saw exciting bouts and was filled with good spirits among the fighters.

Mansi thanked the Interior, Information and Health ministries as well as Kuwait Olympic Committee Public Authority for sport for their cooperation and support. Kuwait's silver medalist in the 92kg+ Abdelrahman Al-

Enezi said he gave his best in his final bout of a career that spanned 22 years, adding that the fight was tough but close in all rounds. Al-Enezi thanked Kuwait Boxing Federation for the support he and other boxers received.

Results of the final bouts were as follows: In the 51kg: Abdumajid Mannopov (UZB) defeated Mostafa Rigi (IRI). In the 57kg: Abdumalikhalokov (UZB) beat SarawutSukthet (THA); In the 63kg: Khunatip Pidnuch (THA) outpunched Bagher Faraji (IRI); In the 71kg: Javlonbek Yuldoshev (UZB) defeated Sitthisak Yuldoshev (THA); In the 80kg: Dilshodbek Ruzmetov (UZB) overpowered UuluErkin Adylbek (KGZ); In the 92kg: DiyorbekUralov (UZB) beat MykytaGorbatenko (UKR) while in 92kg+: Maimaiti Aihematiti (CHN) defeated Abdelrahman Al-Enezi (KWT).

up to \$7,000 a night. It is a favored weekend destination for rich families in the Gulf state that has one of the world's highest per capita incomes.

England are in the Souq Al Wakra hotel, where authorities plan to close off a section of the nearby public beach for Harry Kane and the rest of the squad. There is no alcohol, as in most of Qatar, but the hotel facilities are being modified to bring in extra gym equipment and video games and other entertainment for the players. The bulk of the teams are in hotels "within a 10km (six mile) radius of each other, further ensuring that the event's thrilling atmosphere is concentrated in and around Doha", FIFA said.

Brazil have chosen the city centre Westin near a main road, while the United States will be in the main district for expatriate residents. Lionel Messi's Argentina and former champions Spain have opted for "luxury" lodgings at Qatar University from where they can walk to their training ground. More than one million fans are expected to visit Qatar for the tournament that finishes on December 18. Some will be in \$2,000 a night hotels but many are expected to stay in cheaper portable cabins and desert camps. —AFP

## Arab Boxing Federation picks sports reporters

KUWAIT: International Federation Of Arab Boxing has selected six sports reporters from the GCC countries to carry out media duties of the federation that has 72 countries as members. The federation's board approved the selection of Mazen Al-Buraiki from Oman (chairman) and Abdelaziz Al-Hamar from Qatar (deputy chairman). Other members include Fahad Al-Enezi from Kuwait; Hanan Al-Beloushi from UAE; Iman Al-Turki from KSA and Fatima Al-Najim from Bahrain. Federation President Dr Al-Hadi Al-Sudairi welcomed the new sports media reporters. Chairman of the media committee Mazen Al-Buraiki said the selection reflects the development of the sports media in GCC countries and its role in covering international and domestic events.



Fahad Al-Enezi

## Premier League names 1st female chair Britain

LONDON: The Premier League on Tuesday announced Alison Brittain as its first female chair after clubs "voted unanimously in favor" of her appointment. The CEO of hospitality business Whitbread will take over from interim chairman Peter McCormick early next year. "I have been a football fan since I was a child and so am absolutely delighted to be appointed chair of the Premier League," she said in a statement. "The game is of enormous national importance, is loved by so many people around the world and can have a tremendous positive impact on communities. "It will be a real privilege to be able to help to develop plans for the future and work with all the key stakeholders in the game to ensure its long-term sustainability and success." Premier League chief executive Richard Masters welcomed the appointment of Brittain. "She has a tremendous track record in business, gets things done with a down-to-earth style and is well-respected and liked in all the industries she has worked," he said. "She also has a keen interest in the game and how it can develop further and I am very much looking forward to working with her." —AFP



Alison Brittain

## WCup teams pick 'palaces', wellness resorts, uni digs

DOHA: The 32 football teams taking part in this year's World Cup will be based in copies of Arabian palaces, in wellness resorts and luxury hotels where alcohol is banned, FIFA said Tuesday. According to a list released by the sport's world governing body, 24 of the teams will be in bases - hotels but also university lodgings - concentrated around the capital. All teams have chosen to stay in the tiny Gulf state for the tournament which starts on November 18. Defending champions France will be at the Al Messila, a resort near Doha that boasts of its "private palace setting". Villas can cost more than \$2,500 a night - not including champagne.

Germany will be in the Zula overlooking the Gulf that

bills itself as the biggest wellness resort in the Middle East. Owned by Qatar's ruling family, the resort's royal suite costs more than \$10,000 a night. Manuel Neuer and his teammates will be the furthest from Doha, a 100-kilometre (62-mile) drive to the capital. The resort advocates "traditional Arabic and Islamic medicine" and has a strict no alcohol rule. Zula general manager Daniele Vastolo said a lot of the teams had visited the resort because it allowed them to be "in a bubble" away from Doha's crowds.

### World Cup solitude

He added that security would also be easier as there is only one entrance. "There will be no fans coming here bothering the guests or team to ask for photographs and autographs. So I think here they can really be isolated. "But at the same time if they have one day that they look for distractions, they can drive to Doha."

Fans will get easier access to the Al Shamal Stadium nearby, the German training ground, which is styled on a fortress. Belgium have chosen the Hilton Salwa on the opposite coast with its own private beach, a private water theme park, with slides and cliff jumps, and villas costing