

3 Volunteer teachers hold free revision classes, workshops



9 Palestine farmers sound alarm over foot-and-mouth outbreak



12 'Shershaah' steals show as Bollywood's Oscars return



16 Nadal wins 14th French Open, record 22nd Grand Slam title



# Kuwait summons Indian envoy after BJP official insults Prophet

## Indian Embassy blames 'fringe elements' amid boycott calls

**KUWAIT:** The foreign ministry on Sunday summoned the Ambassador of India to Kuwait Sibi George, where he met the assistant secretary of state for Asia affairs, who handed him an official protest note expressing Kuwait's categorical rejection and condemnation of statements offensive to the holy Prophet (PBUH), Islam and Muslims made by a politician of the ruling Bhartiya Janata Party.

A statement by the foreign ministry said that the Indian ambassador was summoned by the ministry and was handed an official letter of complaint against the politician who offended

the Muslim world through such a heinous act. The ministry explained that while Kuwait welcomes the statement issued by the BJP in India during which it announced the suspension of the official because of these offensive statements, it demands a public apology for the vile statements from the perpetrator, which if they continue without punishment, will lead to increased extremism.

The ministry pointed out such statements reflect a clear ignorance of the message of peace of Islam and its tolerance and role of the great work of Islam in building civilizations and

nations, including India.

A statement by the Indian Embassy in Kuwait said the ambassador had a meeting at the foreign office in which concerns were raised with regards to some offensive tweets by individuals in India. "The ambassador conveyed that the tweets do not, in any manner, reflect the views of the government of India. These are the views of fringe elements," the statement said.

"In line with our civilizational heritage and strong cultural traditions of unity in diversity, the government of India accords the highest respect to all religions. Strong action has

already been taken against those who made the derogatory remarks," said the statement.

"A statement has also been issued by concerned quarters emphasizing respect for all religions, denouncing insult to any religious personality or demeaning any religion or sect. Vested interests that are against India-Kuwait relations have been inciting the people using these derogatory comments. We should work together against such mischievous elements who aim to undercut the strength of our bilateral ties," the statement added.

Continued on Page 6

## MP asks oil minister if Saturday's quake was due to fracking

By B Izzak

**KUWAIT:** MP Khaled Al-Otaibi asked Oil Minister Mohammad Al-Fares on Sunday if Saturday's powerful earthquake that hit Kuwait was manmade because of oil production operations at Ahmadi oilfields. The lawmaker said in his question that the powerful earthquake measuring 5 on the Richter scale hit Kuwait early Saturday south of Ahmadi, and it was reported by scientists and experts that the cause of the earthquake was oil production operations.

Otaibi added that experts pointed out that the unprecedented earthquake was manmade, resulting from so-called hydraulic fracturing operations which pump large quantities of water into oil reservoirs. He said local experts advised the ministry of oil to follow the example after fracking earthquakes in the United States and halt such oil operations for two weeks to assess the impact, and then use alternative technologies, because the safety of the Kuwait population is more important than oil production.

The lawmaker specifically asked the minister for details about oil production in the last 12 months and whether the ministry has increased production recently. If the ministry did indeed hike production, what are the reasons for this and whether they are part of international agreements or a decision by the ministry, he asked.

Continued on Page 6

## Police seize 3 containers with 5m Captagon pills

**KUWAIT:** Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior Lt Gen Anwar Al-Barjas on Saturday led a crackdown on drug traffickers, as three containers were seized with nearly five million Captagon pills inside. The illicit drugs were smuggled from an Asian country into Shuwaikh Port in Kuwait, according to a statement from the ministry's General Directorate of Security Relations and Media. The street value of the seizure is estimated at KD 8 million (\$26.4 million), the statement said, noting the crackdown was carried out in collaboration with the General Administration of Customs.

Acting on tips and under authorization from the public prosecution, the General Administration for Drug Control decided to intercept and search the three containers camouflaged as foodstuff containers. Barjas thanked the staff of the General Administration for Drug Control and General Administration of Customs for their dedicated effort to combat drug traffickers. He conveyed to them the greetings and appreciation of First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Gen (rtd) Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Officials inspect the Captagon pills that were found in containers at Shuwaikh Port.

## Bangladesh port depot fire kills 49

**SITAKUNDA, Bangladesh:** At least 49 people died and hundreds were injured after a fire sparked a huge chemical explosion at a shipping container depot in Bangladesh, officials said on Sunday. The toll was expected to rise, with some of the more than 300 people injured in serious condition, officials said, while volunteers reported that there were more bodies inside the smoldering, wreckage-strewn facility.

The fire started late on Saturday at the depot in Sitakunda, which stores

around 4,000 containers, many filled with garments destined for Western retailers. The facility is about 40 km from the major southern port of Chittagong. The blaze caused containers holding chemicals to explode, engulfing firefighters, volunteers and journalists in an inferno, hurling people and debris through the air, and turning the night sky a blazing orange.

Buildings located kilometers away rattled with the force of the blast. Elias Chowdhury, regional chief doctor, told AFP that the number of dead was 49 but would likely increase. "The death toll will rise as the rescue work has not been completed yet," Chowdhury said. "These people - including several journalists who were doing Facebook lives - are still not accounted for."

Continued on Page 6



SITAKUNDA, Bangladesh: Firefighters carry the body of a victim from the site after a fire broke out at a container storage facility about 40 km from the key port of Chittagong on June 5, 2022. — AFP

## Saudi Arabia eyes tripling of foreign tourists in 2022

**RIYADH:** Saudi Arabia aims to triple foreign tourism this year as pandemic restrictions ease, hajj pilgrims return and the first elements of the crown prince's signature projects open, its tourism minister told AFP Sunday. The famously conservative and closed-off kingdom inaugurated tourist visas in September

Continued on Page 6



Ahmed Al-Khatheeb

## Philippine towns covered in volcano ash

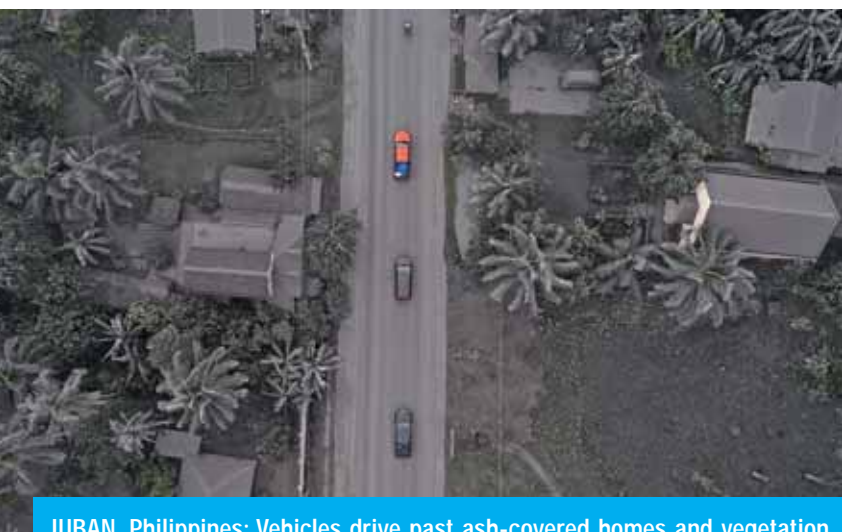
**MANILA:** A volcano in the eastern Philippines spewed a huge, dark cloud on Sunday, prompting evacuations from ash-covered towns while authorities warned of possible further eruptions. The blast from Bulusan volcano in the rural Sorsogon province lasted about 17 minutes, sending a grey plume shooting up at least one kilometer, according to the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (PhiVolcs).

No casualties were reported, but authorities raised the alert level to one

on the five-level system, indicating "low-level unrest". "There was a phreatic eruption of the Bulusan volcano, meaning the explosion was caused by the boiling water under the crater," PhiVolcs head Renato Solidum told local radio DZBB. A group of 14 hikers and four local guides were midway down the 1,565-m tall mountain, unaware that an ash cloud was shooting up on the other side of the mountain, civil defense official Leo Ferreras of nearby Barcelona town told AFP by phone.

"All of them got down safe and sound," he added. The local government of Sorsogon, about 500 km south of the capital Manila, said 10 villages in two towns were affected by the ashfall. Images of the aftermath showed houses, roads, and trees in

Continued on Page 6



JUBAN, Philippines: Vehicles drive past ash-covered homes and vegetation on June 5, 2022 after Bulusan volcano erupted, sending a plume of ash over the area. — AFP



## Local

## ‘Where did you get this?’

By Dhari Buyabes

“Where did you get this?” (Min ayna laka hatha?) is a historical phrase in Arabic. It is a question asked to persons who grow suspectedly rich. Embedded in culture, this question symbolizes accountability. Its importance is growing with corruption being a global issue nowadays. In English, a similar concept is illicit enrichment. Countries fight this corruption crime in many ways, including by monitoring the wealth of politically exposed persons (PEPs).

The United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) - the only legally binding universal anticorruption instrument - defines illicit enrichment as “a significant increase in the assets of a public official that he or she cannot reasonably explain in relation to his or her lawful income” (Article 20). Illicit enrichment is also criminalized in Kuwait as per Law No. 2 of 2016 regarding the establishment of Kuwait Anticorruption Authority (Nazaha) and the Special Provisions of Financial Disclosure.

In Kuwait, Nazaha fights illicit enrichment through the financial disclosure system. Simply put, financial disclosure is a declaration of a person's assets and liabilities. According to Law No. 2 of 2016, there are specific public officials who are required to submit the financial disclosure. These include officials in the rank of a department director up to the prime minister. These persons are required to declare their assets, such as cash, properties, and movables once they hold office, update the information every 3 years, and submit a final disclosure when they leave office.

Regarding its role, Nazaha inspects these declarations for suspected corruption crimes. If such is found, Nazaha investigates the case and refers it for prosecution. Furthermore, late and non-submission of the financial disclosure are considered crimes as per the law. Penalties include fines, imprisonment, and termination of office.

Nevertheless, financial disclosure remains an important preventative tool to foster transparency and accountability. It protects the integrity of public officials and prevents doubts in them. In fact, financial disclosure statistics show a high degree of compliance as 99.5 percent of disclosures have been submitted. This is more than 28,000 disclosures, which reflect a growing culture of transparency and integrity in Kuwait.

Combating corruption has many forms. Prevention is among the most important ones. Tools such as the financial disclosure prevent corruption and further promote accountability. By submitting the financial disclosure, public officials assert their integrity and promote public trust.

*NOTE: Dhari Buyabes is a specialist at the International Cooperation Department of Kuwait Anticorruption Authority (Nazaha)*



## Kuwait's charity finances medical campaign for refugees in Jordan

## Arab Parliament urges US embassies to respect Arabs' privacy, culture

**AMMAN:** Kuwait's Mercy International-part of The Social Reform Society (SRS), financed 35 catheterization operations and distributed 580 food basket to Syrian refugees in Jordan, said an official on Sunday. The head of the association's delegation Abdullah Al-Ajmi said to Kuwait News Agency that 35 operations were done in Amman out of 95, depending on emergency cases.

He added that the group of operations which were carried out over two days is the seventh among the catheterization operations in Jordan for Syrian refugees, pointing out that the beneficiaries have reached about 280 people. He noted that Mercy International continues to provide aid to the needy people to alleviate their suffering - including Syrian refugees in Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey.

He pointed out that the association works in accordance with the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Social Affairs' regulations - praising Jordan's role in facilitating the

process. For his part, a Syrian, Mohammad Hussein, who was undergoing catheterization operation, praised Kuwait's leadership and people for their support.

## Arabs' privacy, culture

In another development, the Arab Parliament has called on the US embassies in the Arab countries to respect the Arab societies' privacy, culture and religious constants like the Arabs do towards other societies. This came in a statement by the Arab Parliament on the backdrop of some US embassies' pro-gay rights post circulated on the social media accounts.

This act is unacceptable and runs counter to the norms and rules approved in the diplomatic relations amongst countries that based on respecting religious and societal values of the countries, the statement said. It stressed that respecting the culture and privacy of societal values in Arab countries does not contradict

the principle of freedom of expression, which should not be used as a pretext to infringe the culture and privacy of societies.

The respect of this privacy is a basic human right that should be adhered to at all times and everywhere, it pointed out. Meanwhile, Kuwait's Foreign Ministry on Thursday, summoned Acting Charge d'Affaires of the US Embassy James Holtsnider on the backdrop of the embassy's pro-gay post on its social media accounts. The Ministry stressed the necessity for the embassy to respect the country's laws and regulations as stipulated in the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations of 1961.

## Global peace, security

Mediation efforts are crucial towards boosting peace and security around the world, a Saudi diplomat said on Sunday, emphasizing that such efforts are all the more imperative given the global status

quo. The international community should work as a cohesive unit to push forward mediation efforts in dealing with some of the most “complicated matters,” Saudi Deputy Foreign Minister Waleed AlKhraiji told a pan-Islamic gathering to discuss mediation.

The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) is a major proponent of mediation efforts, thanks largely to the fact that some 60 percent of conflicts around the world lie within the bloc's geographic area. Given the spread of conflicts around the world, the use of mediation as a tool to resolve such disputes is the only way to ensure a peaceful resolution to the unrest, according to Turkey's Permanent Representative to the OIC Mehmet Eker. Echoing the Turkish envoy's sentiments, Pakistan's Permanent representative to the bloc, Saeed Sheikh, agreed that the use of mediation is the only surefire way to keep conflicts at bay. — KUNA

## Kuwait envoy highly evaluates Speaker's 'Schengen mission'

**BRUSSELS:** Kuwait Ambassador to Belgium Jasem Al-Budaiwi on Sunday lauded the freshly concluded mission by Speaker of the Kuwaiti National Assembly Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem in Brussels, where he held a long chain of meetings with European parliamentarians for relieving Kuwait nationals of Schengen visa.

The parliament Speaker's visit, which was successful by all standards, came within the framework of high-level coordination between Kuwait and the European Union: a mission that would contribute to boosting the bilateral relations between the two sides, said Ambassador Al-Budaiwi, also Kuwait envoy to the European Union (EU) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), in a statement to KUNA, shortly after Al-Ghanem concluded the mission.

Al-Ghanem had a series of meetings with members of the European Parliament and the house chairperson, Roberta Metsola. Simultaneously, Kuwaiti Minister of State for National Assembly Affairs and Youth Affairs Mohammad Al-Rajhi held talks with officials of the European Commission (EC). Ambassador Al-Budaiwi has added that the Kuwaiti-European relations are strategic and significant due to the high level of coordination on many regional and international files and the mutual views' harmony toward international principles and norms, namely the joint respect for these laws and advocacy

of the rule of law world wise.

Elaborating, Al-Budaiwi has said that the Kuwaiti diplomats have been active in Brussels throughout this year since January, when Foreign Minister Sheikh Dr Ahmad Al-Nasser Al-Sabah met EU's Commissioner for Home Affairs Ylva Johansson, responsible for the Schengen file. Minister Sheikh Dr Ahmad had also taken part as a guest of honor at a business breakfast with EU member states' foreign ministers, in response to an invitation by Cypriot Foreign Minister Ioannis Kasoulides, in the Belgian capital.

In May, Kuwaiti Deputy Foreign Minister Majdi Al-Dhafiri held talks with EC Vice Chairperson and Commissioner for Promoting (our) European Way of Life, Margaritis Schinas. The latter lauded Kuwait's support for the United Nations Charter and its clear stance in support for the existing international order that is based on principles that tackle global issues. Moreover, Schinas expressed satisfaction that the State of Kuwait was listed among the states that would be relieved of the Schengen visa.

This step came as the backdrop of the Europeans' conviction, Shinas had noted, that Kuwait conducted crucial reforms, in addition to its explicit stand backing for the current international order, based upon rules and adherence to the UN charter. Ambassador Al-Budaiwi stated that the meetings held by the National



National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem, Ambassador Jasem Al-Budaiwi and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Mohammad Al-Rajhi are pictured in the photo. — KUNA

Assembly speaker with the EC president and many EP members, who represent a bevy of political parties, focused on means of elevating the bilateral relations toward a host of issues, in addition to rallying support for the EC proposals to relieve the Kuwaiti citizens of the Schengen visa.

Furthermore, Ambassador Al-Budaiwi affirmed that the Kuwaiti parliament speaker Al-Ghanem and his accompanying MPs heard “excellent remarks” toward Kuwait by the EP members, succeeded in winning their backing regarding the visa issue, adding that the Europeans heaped praise upon Kuwait's foreign policy which they labeled as balanced and crucial in the region. He also noted that the European legislators

lauded Kuwait for its stances regarding a host of global files, amid current escalation in some regions.

Elaborating, he added that the European side had also spoken positively of Kuwait's democracy and the wide-scale reforms at various levels in the country. Al-Budaiwi affirmed that the visit by the Kuwaiti parliamentarians and the assembly chairman coincided with “a government mission” on part of the Minister Al-Rajhi, who met Schinas and Johansson, relaying Kuwait's gratitude for the EC officials for devoting prior attention to the visa topic. Al-Rajhi's visit, he concluded, constituted a chance for the EC officials to ask about certain relevant matters. — KUNA

## On the occasion of National Day of the Italian Republic

By Carlo Baldocci  
Ambassador of Italy to Kuwait

It is with great pleasure that I address to you a brief message today, on the occasion of celebrating - the first time after the two-years period of COVID-19 pandemic - the 76th Anniversary of the National Day of the Italian Republic. A young and modern Republic with an ancient civilization and thousands of years of history.

Allow me to recall one of the great challenges that the world had to deal with two years ago; Italy was heavily hit by the COVID-19 pandemic. In this regard, I cannot but thank the State of Kuwait once more for its solidarity and immediate aid and be impressed by what Your Country has always been doing in terms of solidarity and humanitarian aids around the world, and in particular for Italy during the initial tragedy that my Country went through, for the many victims of the pandemic.

With our Kuwaiti friends we share the same attitude in dealing with international threats and crises through dialogue and tolerance and in many occasions we have similar analysis and positions, which results in mutual understanding and in reinforcing day by day our excellent bilateral relations. In December 2021, both Countries celebrated 60 years of extraordinary friendship with a series of events in Kuwait: musical concerts, art and architectural exhibitions outlining the two nations' mutual cooperation and rich history of cross-fertilization and interaction.

This year we also started with a rich cultural agenda, with different programs and activities such as concerts, seminars, art, gastronomy and events that keep bringing more of Italy to Kuwait, with the aim to make Kuwaitis enjoy what Italy is famous for worldwide, as well as discover different sectors where our Country has an international leading position. As you all know, Italy is a cultural megapower!

In this regard, I would like to take this opportunity to invite everybody to visit the Italian exhibitions that are currently going on: “DIVA, Italian Glamour



in Fashion Jewelry” exhibition, curated by Professor Alba Cappellieri at Contemporary Art Platform (CAP), which will continue until June 18th and also “The Mystic Letters”, a calligraphy exhibition by Antonella Leoni, at Dar Al-Funoon and will continue until June 23rd.

Europe is also an important part of our destiny; few weeks ago (May 9th) our Embassy participated in the Europe Day 2022, a one-day event organized by the EU delegation to Kuwait, in which EU Countries participated with booths presenting traditional aspects of their history. This event was a very important celebration, through which the participants showcased a variety of products to Kuwait friends. From our side, we displayed various products that were appreciated by the visitors. The event was also enriched with the performances of two Italian musical bands, the “Trio Chagall” and “La Notte della Taranta” folkloristic band.

Lets also not forget the presence of a large number of Italian enterprises in the Emirate, which confirms the great potentials that the local market offers to our Country System. Italian Companies regularly participate with great success in tenders for major infrastructural projects.

The economic exchange between the two Countries is also in constant growth. Kuwaiti imports from Italy have more than doubled over the past decade and the Italian products are always received with great interest in Kuwait. Our Country in not known only for its valuable brands of fashion,

furniture and for the highly appreciated food, but also for its exports to Kuwait of machineries and other mechanical and electromechanical equipment, and advanced technology.

Today, for better understanding the Country, we can proudly say that, among others, Italy is: •Leader in the circular economy, with the highest recycling rate out of the total of special and urban waste; champion in efficiency to compete on green and quality: with a score of 268 points out of 300, Italy ranks first in Europe in terms of efficiency in employment of resources.

•The world's largest renewables operator is Italian: Enel, with its subsidiary Green Power, is the largest private operator in the sector in the world of renewable. •The first in the world for the number of sites on the World Heritage list of UNESCO and it is also a leader in design. •The third in the world for specialization in space technologies and European leader in earth observation.

•Ranks first in Europe for the registered and protected agricultural and food products linked to the territory. •The second in Europe for Italian mechanics and fourth in the world for export of machine tools. •The “Made in Italy” tiles are the first in the world for the export value. •The world leader in wood-furniture thanks to sustainability. •The world top for export of glasses.

Finally, I would like to conclude by thanking all of you, distinguished guests, for being here tonight and wish you a wonderful evening.

## News in brief

## 43,156 flights expected

**KUWAIT:** The Directorate General of Civil Aviation expected to operate 43,156 flights in the summer season of 2022, from January 1st until September 30th. DGCA Deputy Director-General for Planning and Projects Saad Al-Otaibi told KUNA on Sunday that air traffic is expected to reach up to 6,001,221 travelers this summer. He noted that this large number is divided by 2,994,786 departures and 3,006,435 arrivals in and out of Kuwait International Airport. He affirmed the DGCA's preparation by increasing staff and services to absorb these numbers.— KUNA

## Kuwait, US army officials meet

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Army Chief of Staff Lieutenant-General Khaled Saleh Al-Sabah and Deputy Commander of the US Central Command, Vice Admiral James Malloy held a meeting on Sunday which focused on issues of mutual interest. The Chief of Staff said in a press statement that during his meeting with Malloy and his accompanying delegation at the Staff's office, they discussed vital matters and topics of common interest, especially those related to military aspects, and cordial conversations were exchanged between them. Several senior officers from Kuwait's army attended the meeting. — KUNA



## Local

# Moalimun Mutatawioun provides free lessons, revisions, workshops

## Group includes teachers, lawyers and photographers



'Moalimun Mutatawioun' members pose for a group photo.

By Nawara Fattahova

KUWAIT: Most parents are complaining of paying great amounts for private lessons at home for their children to pass exams. The students complain that they don't receive enough information in school, so they need additional classes at home. In 2017, a Kuwaiti teacher Bader bin Ghaith, came up with an idea along with other teachers to form an initiative called 'Moalimun Mutatawioun' (Volunteering Teachers). The founders were inspired by a grandmother who was facing problems teaching her grandson, especially since she did not have enough resources for private tuitions, so she approached bin Ghaith.

Moalimun Mutatawioun includes teachers, lawyers, and photographers. They provide free revisions of all subjects in the Kuwaiti public-school curriculum for all grades, from elementary till high school. They also provide free workshops for parents. Furthermore, they hold workshops for teachers in various fields, including children's right and teachers' duties. Kuwait Times interviewed two volunteer teachers, Hanadi Karam and Altaf Al-Hanou, to learn more. Some excerpts:

**Kuwait Times: Are you still accepting volunteers in your team?**

Moalimun Mutatawioun welcomes any volunteer teacher from the ministry of education from all fields and all grades of school. Whoever is able to improve education with their ideas, workshops or lectures is welcome to join our team to serve the largest possible number of students. The volunteer teacher

should be from the ministry of education and should be currently working in their field so that they are updated on any changes in the curriculum.

**KT: How many teachers are volunteering in this initiative?**

We currently have around 80 volunteer teachers from both genders, in addition to the administrative team.

**KT: How many students have benefited from Moalimun Mutatawioun till today?**

Since 2017 till date, around 20,000 students from both genders have benefited from our services. Only in this academic year, we have served around 4,500 students.

**KT: Do you provide services for students who are giving the second round of revision exams?**

Yes, we provide revisions for the second-round revision exams. The plan of our initiative is to revise both the first and the second round of exams and provide workshops for teachers that will boost their careers, which includes using different technologies, teaching techniques and educational games. In addition, we provide psychological and legal workshops in all fields related to education and learning.

**KT: How can students register in your system?**

They can register daily at 4:00 pm at our headquarters with their civil ID on the same day of the revision class according to the schedule published

on our official accounts on social media including Instagram, Twitter and Telegram.

**KT: If you reach the maximum number of students for the session, how will you choose between them? Which students have priority?**

There is no preference. Early registration is the privilege. There is exception for disabled students, who can register even after we reach the maximum number of students.

**KT: Can the same student benefit from your services more than once in different grades?**

Yes, a student can register every year. For instance, if they are revising lessons in the ninth grade and pass to the 10th grade, they can also get lessons in this and the next grades. Students can even register for different subjects during the same semester. We conduct classes from 5:00 to 7:00 pm and from 7:00 to 9:00 pm, and they can join both sessions.

**KT: Is all the revision done in class, or do you also provide online classes?**

We hold online classes daily as well during the same period, with a different schedule and in different timings. Students don't need to register for online classes. They just have to enter through the link on our Telegram account and join immediately.

Moalimun Mutatawioun is currently holding classes at the Kuwait National Library. In the past they were operating at Dar Al Othman and Promenade Mall. Their Instagram account is @Kuwaiti\_teachers



## June branded 'the month of bawareh'

KUWAIT: Dust storms are a regular occurrence in Kuwait in June as the month is locally branded "the month of bawareh" and the dusty weather is also witnessed in July, said Dr Hassan Dashti, the weather monitor at the national meteorology center on Sunday. Hot weather distinguishes a long summer in the country, particularly sensed with onset of June, when the high atmospheric pressure recedes in favor of the Indian low pressure that extends to Africa and continues until end of September, Dashti said.

Summer season is characterized with rain absence, high heat and strong winds, namely "AlBawareh" that begin to blow late May with "Al-Bareh Al-Sagheer (small)" and proceeds until mid-July with "Al-Bareh

Al-Kabeer (grand)" that triggers dust storms, amid very hot northwesterly winds. The high heat is due to the movement of the Indian low pressure winds toward Zagros Mountains, where the wind loses its heat due to compression at the high elevation at a rate of six degrees per km.

These winds after elevating, move downward regaining the temperature at 10 degrees per km, speeding toward Iraq, then Kuwait and East Saudi Arabia. These very hot gales may roll at 90 kms per hour, causing dust and sand storms, low visibility, and may lead to cessation of various navigations in addition to various other issues for peoples. After tapering off, tiny particles of the storms remain hanging in the air, thus causing complications for persons suffering from allergy and asthma. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Kuwaitis walk across the road during a dust storm. Dust storms are a regular occurrence in Kuwait in June as the month is locally branded 'the month of bawareh.' — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

## UNDP official praises Kuwait

KUWAIT: Kuwait's response to rescue calls and aiding people in need all over the globe is highly appreciated and endorsed, the Resident Representative for United Nations Human Development Program (UNDP) in Afghanistan Abdullah Al-Dardari said earlier on Sunday. Kuwait is keen on being present in all international humanitarian venues and activities in support of refugees and people in need, he added in remarks to KUNA, following a meeting with Kuwait Red Crescent Society's (KRCS) Vice Chairman Anwar Al-Hasawi, at the society's headquarters in Kuwait.

He expressed his appreciation to KRCS' role in supporting people suffering from natural disasters, and working to alleviate their humanitarian sufferings. He hailed its continuous coordination with international companies and organizations in the humanitarian field. He informed his accompanying delegation during the meeting of the size of humanitarian programs implemented by KRCS at the regional and international levels, as well as its latest contributions to the Afghani people.

The UN official called on rescuing the Afghanis and intensively working to offer them their needs of food, health and educational services, as they are in extreme need for support more than any time before. The Afghanis are suffering from a severe shortage of food and medical equipment add medications, as well as other needs, he affirmed. Meanwhile, Al-Hasawi added in remarks to KUNA his happiness of Al-Dardari's visit, to be briefed of KRCS' activities and achievements of regionally and internationally.

He praised the UNDP in Afghanistan, offering aid and rescue to the people there. The meeting also tackled the aid offered to afflicted people and those in need, especially offered to the Afghani people in cooperation with humanitarian organizations and Qatar Red Crescent Society (QRCS), he said. KRCS has a number of projects and activities in favor of people in need in various parts of the world, including offering food, education, medical treatment, and medications, Al-Hasawi added. He called on everyone to support such humanitarian efforts conducted by the society. — KUNA



UNDP delegation with KRCS officials

## Minister pushes digital drive amid tech advances

KUWAIT: It is imperative to start a digital transformation to keep up with the meteoric advancements in technology, State Minister for Communication and Information Technology Affairs Rana Al-Fares said on Sunday, citing the move as a worthy long-term investment. After the COVID-19 pandemic had turned the world upside down, the outbreak triggered soaring demand for digital assets as online virtual worlds skyrocketed in popularity, Al-Fares—also Minister of State for Municipal Affairs—told the third GCC conference on artificial intelligence and technology.

Accelerating the switch to digi-

tal means has now become a 'dire necessity,' the minister underlined, saying the digital industry was expected to remain on an upward trajectory given its appeal to young entrepreneurs and fledgling businesses. The digital realm has surged in popularity across the Gulf region, including Oman, according to the Sultanate's ambassador to Kuwait Saleh Al-Khousi, saying the government there aimed to instill in youngsters a sense of technological knowhow. The conference, held virtually, will continue until June 7th and gathers top decision makers and officials from the Gulf region. — KUNA

Legalese

## Working hours and days under Kuwait labor law



By Fajer Ahmed

fajer@kuwaittimes.net

I'm grateful for the opportunity to clarify the laws and regulations for the Kuwaiti society, providing both expats and Kuwaiti citizens with a better understanding of their rights and obligations in various daily scenarios they might encounter. Today I will be answering some questions regarding working hours and working days under the Kuwait labor law. The answers are only applicable for the private sector, although some other sectors do have similar laws and regulations.

**Question: I am currently working 12 hours a day, for 6 days a week without a break, sometimes even 7 days a week if there is an emergency. Is this legal? Am I entitled to overtime pay?**

**Fajer:** Yes you are entitled to overtime pay, as the maximum working hours under the labor law are 48 hours of work per week, and 8 hours per day. This is implemented for both physical and mental work. Therefore, the maximum working days are 6 days per week. The employer must provide one hour break for every 5 hours of consecutive work a day. Twenty-four hours of break must be provided once a week, and they must be continuous.

Overtime is also calculated for any additional hours to the 48 hours mentioned by law. There is also a limit to how many hours you work overtime - it is two hours per day, with a maximum of 180 hours a year, and three days a week or 90 days a year. The calculation for overtime is 1.25 times your salary for overtime worked on regular days, 1.5 times your salary for hours worked on your day off, and 2 times the basic hourly rate for all hours worked on public holidays.

**Question: I am working 26 days a week, and my boss when calculating my salary, divides it into 30 days. Is this the correct way to do it?**

**Fajer:** No. If you are working 26 days a week, then your monthly salary should be divided by 26 days and not 30 days.

**Question: Our company policy states that I am only entitled to 30 days off per year, and I can only go on holiday after working for 9 months. Is this correct?**

**Fajer:** It is only correct that you are entitled to a minimum of 30 days off a year, but an employee is eligible after 6 months of working and not 9 months, as per the Kuwait labor law amendments. If you have any legal related questions, please forward them to fajer@kuwait-times.net

**NOTE:** Fajer Ahmed graduated from Kuwait University with a bachelor's in law in 2013 and established her own law firm. Ahmed is a lawyer, published writer and owner of Kuwait's only used bookstore/cafe.



## Local

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## stc celebrates World Environment Day

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Telecommunications Company - stc, a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and platforms to customers, enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, celebrated the World Environment Day at The Avenues, which was organized in collaboration with National Geographic Ultimate Explorer. The initiative coincides with the global event that was established in 1972 by the United Nations (UN) at the Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment.

Serving as a continuation of stc's awareness campaigns and ongoing commitment to protect the environment, the Company organized the initiative under the slogan "Be The Change". The awareness campaign included a large container placed at stc's booth to collect plastic water bottles in Phase 4 of The Avenues, where stc Corporate Communications team held interactive activities with the children and distributed eco-friendly souvenirs.

As part of the collaboration with National Geographic Ultimate Explorer, 30 vouchers were given to the participants who contributed in the mission of collecting plastic water bottles. In addition, competitions took place for entrance tickets to the "National Geographic Ultimate Explorer" located at Assima Mall whereby winners will get a chance to experience and learn more about the environment at the attraction, as well as the different ways to preserve it.

In line with its corporate social responsibility strategy, stc will deliver all collected bottles to a recycling factory with the objective of reducing waste output within the community. Commenting on the initiative, Danah Al-Jasem, General Manager of Corporate Communications at stc, said, "As members of our community and in line with our commitment as a pioneer in the telecom industry giving us a chance to voice out such beneficial initiatives to the public audience, we greatly believe in the importance of preserving and protecting our environment to build a more sustainable future for the upcoming generations."

Al-Jasem emphasized, "On behalf of stc, I would like to express my gratitude to the team at National Geographic Ultimate Explorer as well as all those who played a role in achieving the successful outcome of this initiative. Their collective efforts and contributions were purely directed to protect and raise awareness on the environment. As an influential member of this community, stc is committed to playing a key role in supporting and backing different initiatives that aim to protect the environment which falls within our extensive CSR program."



## KIB sponsors, participates in students' career fair

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait International Bank (KIB) continues to broaden the scope of its community development and engagement program by including more initiatives within its agenda that aim to empower the Kuwaiti youth, and support fresh local talents who wish to become professionally involved within the banking sector. As part of this initiative, KIB announced its support for the recently launched students career fair, organized by the National Union of Kuwait Students (NUKS): Kuwait University Branch and was held at the new Kuwait University campus in Shaddadiyah.

As an event sponsor, KIB also participated at the fair, with a branded booth set up so that Bank representatives - from Human Resources and Corporate Communications - can introduce both students and visitors alike to KIB and its various work fields. They were also given the opportunity to submit their CVs and conduct job interviews and have all of their questions and inquiries about the Bank and the sector answered. Within this engagement, KIB aimed to raise more financial and banking awareness amongst attendees, as part of its ongoing support to the "Let's

# Women's Economic Empowerment Platform established in Kuwait

## Five leading companies join forces as founding partners



(Left to right) Ms. Shereen Alsaad, Program Analyst - Sustainable Development, UNDP, Eng. Zainab Haider, IT Administration & Planning Group Leader - ELEVATE Leader, EQUATE, Ms. Salma Al-Hajjaj, General Manager - Human Resources, Gulf Bank, Ms. Sevda Erensel, Corporate Communication Consultant, Limak, Emad Al-Ablani, General Manager - Head of Group Human Resources, NBK, Waleed Al Khashti - Chief Corporate Communications and Relations Officer at Zain Kuwait and Ms. Josephine Moss, UN Women.

**KUWAIT:** Equate Petrochemical, Gulf Bank, LimakInsaat Kuwait SPC, the National Bank of Kuwait (NBK), and Zain Kuwait have announced the establishment of the Women's Economic Empowerment Platform Kuwait (KWEPP) to support the growth and advancement of women in the workplace. The platform aims to promote the adoption of real and sustainable policies on various topics related to women empowerment in the private sector, especially on topics of recruitment, retention, and leadership in Kuwait's private sector.

The platform was announced by the founding members during a press conference held at the United Nations House in Kuwait, with attendance of Dr Khaled Mahdi Secretary-General of the General Secretariat of the Supreme Council for Planning and Development and HE Ayse Hilal Sayan Koysak, the Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey to Kuwait.

KWEPP will operate under the leadership of the General Secretariat of the Supreme Council for Planning and Development (GSSCPD) and the Women's Research and Studies Center (WRSC) at Kuwait University. Supported by UN Women and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the platform is also formally recognized as being in line with New Kuwait Vision 2035 and the country's efforts to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

The platform aims to help facilitate collaborative, gender-focused initiatives in the private sector that target female career development and visibility among member companies. Signatories will work together to discuss, define, and accomplish particular key performance indicators (KPIs) and gender-focused targets, as well as commit to quantifiable goals that would economically empower women in Kuwait's private sector.

KWEPP will operate under four main pillars: (1) Collaborate to create change in companies and the community. (2) Share best practices that empower women in the private sector. (3) Support career development programs for women in the private sector. (4) Commit to doable, measurable actions towards women's economic development.

The event began with opening remarks by Women's Mentor Forum Founder, Besma Al-Qassar, followed by key statements from GSSCPD's Dr Khaled Mahdi, WRSC's Dr Lubna Al-Kazi, the UNDP's Hideo Hadzialic, UN Women's Susanne Mikhail Eldhagen, and Limak's Ebru Ozdemir, before concluding with the MoU signing and a fireside chat among the founding signatories.

Five of Kuwait's key private sector companies pledged their support to the platform during the event, which included: Equate's Eng. Zainab Haider, Gulf Bank's Salma Al-Hajjaj, Limak's Sevda Erensel on behalf of Ebru Ozdemir, NBK's Emad Al-Ablani on behalf of Shaikha Al-Bahar, and Zain's Eaman Al-Roudhan.

Limak Holding Chairperson, Ebru Ozdemir, said: "Since starting its operations in Kuwait in 2015, Limak has been implementing a strategic plan to invest in the development of local human capital; and we are doing our best to transfer our experience, expertise and knowledge, create local job opportunities for Kuwaiti youth, and train and qualify young men and women through education and empowerment initiatives. Young Kuwaiti engineers are involved in our projects and we invest in their training so that they can directly contribute to the future of their country. We have sought to uplift young Kuwaiti women through our projects here and our



Firas Al-Darmi

Accordingly, KIB was representing the banking sector at this event, as one of its leading financial institutions, given how the sector is considered one of the largest and most vital in Kuwait, due to its impact on the local economy and the major role it plays on the social level.

In his statement affirming the Bank's ongoing commitment to support, and actively take part in these career expos in Kuwait, General Manager of KIB's Human Resources Department, Firas Al-Darmi, reiterated: "Career fairs in Kuwait provide ample opportunities for our local youth to communicate directly with employers and business professionals, as they aim to educate themselves further on labor market needs. This includes the different types of professional skills and capabilities that are most required nowadays, as well as the different means by which they can utilize their talents and find their

be Aware" national campaign.

NUKS's career fair sought to inform students, mainly graduates, on some of the specializations that are highly in-demand within the labor market, from both government and private sectors, as well as all the different fields in which they can find professional job opportunities.



Besma Al-Qassar  
Women's Mentor Forum Founder

program, Engineer Girls of Kuwait."

"Limak's initiatives will only continue to grow through strategic and nation-wide human capital development initiatives that have been planned for Kuwait over the next few years and beyond. This brings me to why we are gathered today, as we celebrate the official launch of the KWEPP. We are looking for you all to support this initiative that aims to empower women working in Kuwait's private sector. I am grateful to our Strategic Partners for their trust in this Platform, and support to take our efforts beyond the classroom and put them into the workforce. As a final word, I would like to welcome any company operating in Kuwait in joining us on this Platform to support Kuwait's women in the private sector", she added.

Secretary General of the General Secretariat of the supreme council for planning and development, Dr Khaled Mahdi, stressed on "The government of Kuwait continues to support the principles of empowering women, while this platform is in line with the seven pillars of the development plan and the vision of (New Kuwait 2035), which comes within the framework of seeking to implement the fifth goal of the sustainable development goals in addition to setting a target in the development plan to achieve 35% of decision-makers to be women leaders, compared to 21% at the present time in the public sector."

He added that "one of the biggest evidences of the political leadership's interest in Kuwait to support and empower women is the recent choice of the appointed members of the Municipal Council, as four women were chosen out of the six seats chosen by the government in the Municipal Council, and this is a clear confirmation of the Kuwait leadership's confidence in Kuwaiti women and their main role in implementing Kuwait's future vision."

National Bank of Kuwait Group Deputy CEO, Shaikha Al-Bahar, said: "We, at NBK, fully support all initiatives and efforts related to promoting women's economic empowerment in Kuwait, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Agenda 2030 and Kuwait Vision 2035. Supporting this platform comes amid rising optimism that parity and equality have become a focal point, as it recently started to attract more interest and gained additional support, especially at a time when the world needs women's participation and their alliance with men as equal partners to face the challenges ahead."

"NBK is committed to establishing the culture of women's empowerment across the entire Group. This is clearly reflected through female board representation both in Kuwait, and NBK's international subsidiaries. Additionally, we are fully committed to



passion in building their careers".

Al-Darmi also highlighted how KIB has been strongly consistent with attending these career fairs, considering how they present the Bank with the prospect of finding potential talents among young nationals and have them join its workforce. He further explained how career fairs also aid in the process of evaluating the level and scope of their qualifications and capabilities and developing induction and training programs that are best suited to match and enhance their skillsets, in order to fully equip and qualify them to become productive members within the sector, in accordance with its required high standards, especially those related to KIB's.

It serves to note that KIB remains fully committed towards upholding its social responsibility, with



Khaled Mahdi - Secretary General of the General Secretariat of the supreme council for planning and development.

advancing gender equality and view it as a key element of our talent development and management. NBK adopted numerous procedures and measures aimed at promoting women's full and effective participation in leadership positions by providing appropriate guidance and opportunities to further develop their career paths and promote professional growth", she added.

Zain Kuwait Chief Executive Officer, Eaman Al-Roudhan, said: "Without a doubt, and as proven by many studies, women empowerment and gender inclusion have shown to push economic growth and enhance socio-economic outcomes. Naturally, dismissing this issue will eventually restrict growth and limit development within communities. It was a natural step for us to be the first company in Kuwait to join the UN's Women Empowerment Principles (WEPIs) years ago. Today, we are thrilled to be a founding member of the Women Economic Empowerment Platform."

This step came as part of our strong belief in the UN's Sustainable Development Goals by making sure our strategies and initiatives were well-aligned with the 17 goals. In 2018, Zain signed the pledge for women empowerment, right after launching our own WE program for women empowerment across the Group's opcos in 2017. The step reflected our support to the talents, creativity, and limitless energies of women in the Kuwaiti community."

Gulf Bank General Manager of Human Resources, Salma Al-Hajjaj, said: "Supporting women in the workplace and empowering them has been a long-standing commitment at Gulf Bank. So much so that women's empowerment has taken center stage when it comes to setting future strategies or designing inclusive policies. Today at Gulf Bank the female work force represents 45% of our human capital and is growing. Last year the board and executive management agreed to remove all gender biased statements from our policy and provide equal pay and benefits for males and females; including extending benefits to families of female staff." Al-Hajjaj emphasized that the private sector plays a crucial role in creating an environment in which women can more meaningfully participate in the economy and that Gulf Bank has set concrete targets to achieve this.

Equate's IT Administration & Planning Group Leader, En. Zainab Haider, said: "At EQUATE Group, we are proud of our partnership with the Women Economic Empowerment Platform, whose mission is to educate, collaborate, and support women in the workplace. Our participation and contribution reaffirm the Group's commitment to growing Kuwaiti women's employment and advancing them to leadership positions. This is a component of our sustainability plan, which is aligned with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Kuwait's New Kuwait 2035 vision."

UN Women Regional Director for the Arab States region, Susanne Mikhail Eldhagen, said: "Today I congratulate the founding members of the Kuwait Women's Economic Empowerment Platform on the creation of this Platform. A truly inspirational example of how to advance Kuwait's development priorities and Sustainable Development Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls." Any private sector company operating in Kuwait, regardless of industry or size, is invited to join Women's Economic Empowerment Platform Kuwait as long as they are committed to implementing gender diversity programs and activities that economically empower women.



plans to continue promoting financial literacy within the community - which also falls under the umbrella of the "Let's Be Aware" campaign dedicated to raising banking awareness in the country. In his concluding statement, Al-Darmi pointed out that through these youth events and gatherings, KIB has been able to closely interact and communicate with students, educating them on the set of banking services and products that they benefit from as part of its Youth segment.

In line with "Let's Be Aware", the Bank seeks to extend the knowledge of visitors at the NUKS career fair on matters related to the safe usage of bank accounts, reserving banking rights and understanding duties in every financial transaction being carried out, and more.





60 Rohingya found abandoned on Thai island: Police

## Canada handgun sales soar after Trudeau proposes freeze



Picture taken on an unknown date and released by press-service of Commander-in-Chief of the Ukrainian Armed Forces on June 4, 2022 shows self-propelled howitzers M109A3, provided in the framework of international technical assistance by Norway, shooting on the front line with Russian troops in an unknown place of Ukraine. — AFP

# Putin warns over missile supplies

## Russia destroy tanks supplied to Ukraine by European countries

KYIV: Russian President Vladimir Putin warned Sunday that Moscow will hit new targets if the West supplies Ukraine with long-range missiles, hours after several explosions rocked the Ukrainian capital Kyiv. If Kyiv is provided with such missiles “we will draw the appropriate conclusions and use our arms... to strike targets we haven’t hit before,” Putin was quoted by Russian news agencies as saying.

He did not specify which targets he meant. Putin’s comments came after the United States last week announced that it would supply Ukraine with advanced missile systems. Ukrainian officials earlier on Sunday said Russian missiles hit railway infrastructure sites in the first such strikes on Kyiv since April 28.

Russia said that it had destroyed tanks supplied to Ukraine by eastern European countries during the strikes. “High-precision, long-range missiles fired by the Russian Aerospace Forces on the outskirts of Kyiv destroyed T-72 tanks supplied by eastern European countries and other armoured vehicles that were in hangars,” Russian defence ministry spokesman Igor Konashenkov said.

One person was wounded and AFP reporters saw

several buildings with blown-out windows near one of the sites that was targeted. Leonid, a 63-year-old local resident who used to work at the facility, said he heard three or four explosions.

“There is nothing military there but they are bombing everything,” he said. Vasyl, 43, said he heard five blasts. “People are afraid now,” he said, walking back to his damaged home with two loaves of bread. Ukrainian authorities did not want to identify the precise locations of the explosions for security reasons.

### Severodonetsk ‘divided’

Meanwhile, in the east of the country, the battle for control of Severodonetsk raged on. The city is the largest still in Ukrainian hands in the Lugansk region of the Donbas, where Russian forces have been advancing gradually after retreating or being beaten back from other parts of the country, including Kyiv.

Lugansk regional governor Sergiy Gaiday said that Russian forces had lost ground in the city and it was now “divided in two”. “The Russians were in control of about 70 percent of the city, but have been forced back over the past two days,” he said

on Telegram.

“They are afraid to move freely around the city.” Russia’s army on Saturday claimed some Ukrainian military units were withdrawing from Severodonetsk, but Mayor Oleksandr Striuk said Ukrainian forces were fighting to retake the city. “We are currently doing everything necessary to re-establish total control” of the city, he said in an interview broadcast on Telegram.

### ‘Put Russia in its place’

Tens of thousands of people have been killed, millions forced to flee and towns turned into rubble since Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered an all-out assault on his pro-Western neighbour on February 24. Western powers have imposed increasingly stringent sanctions on Russia and supplied arms to Ukraine, but divisions have emerged on how to react.

French President Emmanuel Macron said Friday Putin had committed a “fundamental error” but that Russia should not be “humiliated” so that a diplomatic solution could be found. Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba reacted Saturday by saying such calls “only humiliate France” and any country

taking a similar position.

“It is Russia that humiliates itself. We all better focus on how to put Russia in its place,” he said.

Despite diplomatic efforts, the conflict has raged in the south and east of the country. The press service of the Ukrainian president’s office on Sunday reported nine civilians killed in the Donetsk and Lugansk regions from shelling.

### Fears over food

Apart from the human toll, the conflict has caused widespread damage to Ukraine’s cultural heritage. On Saturday, Ukrainian officials reported a large Orthodox wooden monastery, a popular pilgrim site, had burnt down and blamed Russia shelling. Moscow continues to prove “its inability to be part of the civilised world,” Culture Minister Oleksandr Tkachenko said in a statement. Russia’s defence ministry blamed “Ukrainian nationalists” for the blaze.

Russian troops now occupy a fifth of Ukraine’s territory, according to Kyiv, and Moscow has imposed a blockade on its Black Sea ports, sparking fears of a global food crisis. Ukraine and Russia are among the top wheat exporters in the world. — AFP

## West African leaders put off sanctions on juntas

ACCRA, Ghana: West African leaders on Saturday failed to agree what action to take against military juntas in Mali, Burkina Faso and Guinea, postponing a decision for a month, insiders at the meeting said. They decided to wait until the next ECOWAS summit on July 3, a senior source in the Ghanaian presidency told AFP, asking to remain anonymous.

Another source said the leaders had not been able to agree, “particularly over Mali”. The summit in Ghana’s capital Accra had been billed as the forum to agree whether to ease or ramp up sanctions against the three junta-ruled nations facing jihadist insurgencies.

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) had met in a bid to rule whether to keep, lighten or lift retaliatory measures on Mali, imposed in January after its military regime announced plans to stay in power for another five years. Ghana’s President Nana Akufo-Addo opened the summit, attended by the heads of state of most of the 15-member countries but without any representative

from Mali, Burkina Faso or Guinea visible in the audience. “This present summit will re-examine and assess the situations in Mali, Guinea and Burkina Faso in light of recent developments within the region and global context,” he said. “Our objective has always been to find ways to help these countries return to constitutional order.”

### Insurgency

ECOWAS, keen to limit political instability spreading further, has held summits and tried to pile on pressure to shorten the juntas’ so-called transition periods before a return to civilian rule. But strongmen Colonel Assimi Goita in Mali, Colonel Mamady Doumbouya in Guinea and Lieutenant-Colonel Paul-Henri Sandaogo Damiba in Burkina Faso, have all resisted that pressure and since been sworn in as presidents.

They invoke the severity of domestic crises—that span jihadist insurgency to social problems—and claim they need time to rebuild their states and organise elections. A UN report published last week said the West African sanctions had contributed to worsening living conditions, particularly for the poor.

One of the most volatile and impoverished countries in the world, Mali is battling a decade-old jihadist revolt, which began with a regional insurrection and then spread to Niger and Burkina Faso. ECOWAS closed borders and suspended trade and

tres-and flew at different altitudes of up to 90 kilometres, it added. Japanese Defence Minister Nobuo Kishi said the simultaneous test-firing from multiple locations was “unusual”.

“This is absolutely unacceptable,” he added. According to local reports, two missiles were shot from each site, likely from transporter erector launchers (TELs) — the largest number of ballistic missiles North Korea has recently launched on a single day and occasion. Analysts say the volley of missile launches Sunday-one of nearly 20 weapons tests by Pyongyang so far this year-is a pointed message for Seoul and Washington.

“It shows North Korea’s intention to neutralise the missile defence system of South Korea and the United States with multiple simultaneous attacks during emergency,” said Cheong Seong-jang, a researcher at the Sejong Institute. The move comes barely a day after South Korea and the United States wrapped up large-scale, three-day exercises involving the USS Ronald Reagan, a 100,000-tonne nuclear-powered aircraft carrier. — AFP



OUAGADOUGOU, Burkina Faso: Supporters of Burkina Faso ousted president Roch Marc Christian Kaboré gather in Ouagadougou, during an indoor rally demanding his release. —AFP

financial exchanges, except for basic necessities.

In Guinea, the military overthrew president Alpha Conde in September and has vowed a return to civilian rule in three years. Burkina Faso’s government was overthrown in January, when disgruntled colonels ousted elected president Roch Marc Christian Kaboré. —AFP



SEOUL, South Korea: People sit in front of a screen showing a news broadcast with file footage of North Korean leader Kim Jong-un and his wife Ri Sol-ju, at a railway station in Seoul. North Korea launched multiple ballistic missiles into waters off its east coast on June 5. — AFP

## Three killed in Philadelphia shooting

WASHINGTON: Three people were killed and 11 others wounded on Saturday after multiple shooters opened fire into a crowd in the US city of Philadelphia, according to police. The shooting took place on a busy street known for its nightlife.

Police Inspector D. F. Pace told reporters that two men and a woman had been killed, adding that officers responding to the incident “observed several active shooters shooting into the crowd.” “You can imagine there were hundreds of individuals enjoying South Street, as they do every single weekend, when this shooting broke out,” Pace said.

He said that “numerous” officers were already on the scene when the first shots were heard, describing it as a “standard deployment” for the area on summer weekend nights. A responding officer fired at one of the shooters, who dropped his gun and fled, though it was unclear whether the man was hit, Pace said.

Local media reported that no arrests had been made. Pace said two semi-automatic handguns, one with an extended magazine, were recovered at the scene. He added that police would have to wait until morning to review surveillance footage from nearby businesses that were closed on Saturday night.

Pace described the investigation as “fluid,” saying there were still “a lot of unanswered questions.” The US has been rocked by a series of high-profile shootings in recent weeks, including at a school in Texas, a church in California, a grocery store in New York and a hospital in Oklahoma. The incidents have collectively left dozens dead.

Bystander Joe Smith, 23, told The Philadelphia Inquirer that his mind had flashed to the recent incidents when he heard the first shots ring out on Saturday. “Once it started I didn’t think it was going to stop,” he told the outlet. — AFP



## International

# Canada handgun sales soar after Trudeau proposes freeze

## Several gun stores in British Columbia province saw lines outside within hours

**OTTAWA, Canada:** Aman Sandhu checked store after store for a handgun in Canada's British Columbia, hoping to make a purchase before a freeze on sales takes effect, but struggled to find one in stock. "I'm concerned that if I don't buy one now, I may never have the choice again," Sandhu, a member of the Dawson Creek Sportsman's Club, told AFP.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's proposed freeze on pistol sales—which he announced in the wake of a series of high-profile mass shootings in the United States—has pushed some Canadians to rush out to gun stores while they still can.

While Sandhu is keen to buy a pistol, he is also wary of becoming mired in new rules that include hefty penalties for even minor lapses. "Jeez, if I slip up, I could screw up the rest of my firearms ownership," he said, describing a handful of long guns in his collection.

Several gun stores in British Columbia province saw lines out the door within hours of the liberal leader's declaration on Monday. Other shops across Canada said they sold out within days. "Sales have been brisk," said Jen Lavigne, co-owner of That Hunting Store in a strip mall on the outskirts of the capital Ottawa, nestled between a barbershop, a Chinese buffet restaurant, and a conservative lawmaker's constituency office. "We sold 100 handguns, or almost our entire stock, in the last three days, since the prime minister announced the freeze," she said, showing off her nearly empty handgun cabinet.



### 'Sales have been brisk'

Monday, citing "a level of gun violence in our communities that is unacceptable."

### 'Catch-22'

Almost two-thirds of gun crimes in Canadian cities over the past decade involved handguns, according to government data. At That Hunting Store, a man picking up a new handgun for competition, who identified himself as David, lamented the new restrictions on top of already cumbersome rules that drag out purchases.



Former Vice President Atiku Abubakar.

Wealthy and influential 75-year-old Abubakar is a Muslim from northern Nigeria.

The serial presidential candidate was chosen last week at the PDP convention in Abuja. Under an informal agreement among the political elite, Nigeria's presidency is usually alternatively shared between candidates from the north and the south. After eight years under northerner Buhari, most agree the presidency should now go to a candidate from the south.

Rotating power in such a way seeks to maintain political balance in a country almost equally divided between the mostly Christian south and predominantly Muslim north. —AFP

a committee to inspect the houses of people impacted by the earthquake and will the ministry bear the costs of losses and damages, he asked.

Meanwhile, the National Assembly's financial and economic affairs committee yesterday approved a proposal calling to increase marriage assistance provided to Kuwaitis to KD 8,000 from KD 6,000. Head of the committee MP Ahmad Al-Hamad said the proposal calls to consider half of the assistance as a gift while the second half will be considered as a soft loan to be repaid in easy installments.

airport authority said no flights have been affected by the eruption so far, though pilots were warned about coming near the area.

Authorities reminded residents that entry into the four-kilometer radius around the volcano is prohibited and advised those living next to it to be cautious "due to the increased possibilities of sudden and hazardous phreatic eruptions". Residents near the valleys and rivers were also alerted about the danger of mud and stream flows in the event of heavy rainfall. Bulusan volcano has been active in recent years, with a dozen similar eruptions recorded in 2016 and 2017. The Philippines is located in the seismically active Pacific "Ring of Fire" and has over 20 active volcanoes.— AFP

affected places. I saw eight or 10 bodies," one volunteer told reporters. Mujibur Rahman, the director of B.M. Container Depot, the firm operating the facility with around 600 workers, said that the cause of the initial fire was still unknown. The container depot held hydrogen peroxide, fire service chief Brigadier General Main Uddin told reporters. "We still could not control the fire because of the existence of this chemical," he said.

Mohammad Ali, 60, who runs a nearby grocery store, said the blast was deafening. "A cylinder flew around half a kilometer from the fire spot to our small pond when the explosion occurred," he told AFP. "The explosion sent fireballs into the sky. Fireballs were falling like rain. We were so afraid we immediately left our home to find refuge... We thought the fire would spread to our locality as it is very densely populated," he added. — AFP



OTTAWA, Canada: Lavigne, co-owner of That Hunting Store, speaks with customers in Ottawa, Canada. Canadians rushed to buy handguns this week, after Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced a proposed freeze on sales in the wake of recent mass shootings in the US. —AFP

"It's ridiculous," he said. "It takes two months just to get a license with all the background checks." Gun shop owners interviewed by AFP unanimously decried the freeze, which must still be passed by parliament.

"This measure is only going to hurt legal gun owners," Lavigne said, adding: "It's not going to reduce any of the crime because the bad guys don't follow the rules." Darryl

Tomlinson, owner of Canadian Gun Guys in Winnipeg, said he worries for the future of his store and shooting range, as well as the social network of members.

"This handgun measure is going to take away livelihoods and break up communities," he said. "It's a Catch-22. We're busy now, but I fear we're going to be put out of business in the fall," Tomlinson said of the week's sales boom. —AFP

## Nigeria's Buhari seeks consensus candidate

**LAGOS:** Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari has urged aspirants seeking the ruling party's ticket for the top job to choose a consensus candidate ahead of its primary this week, his office said. Buhari, 79 and a northern Muslim, will step down next year after two terms in office.

His ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) will hold its convention from Monday through Wednesday to pick a flagbearer for the February 2023 presidential vote. Thirteen aspirants have been cleared to vie for the ticket.

Leading the pack are Vice President Yemi Osinbajo, former Lagos governor Bola Tinubu, ex-transport minister Rotimi Amaechi and Senate president Ahmad Lawan. At a meeting with the presidential hopefuls in Abuja late Saturday, Buhari said: "Our choice of flagbearer must be formidable, appealing to the electorate across the board, and should command such ability to unify the country."

The president urged the contenders to hold consultations amongst themselves to "reduce the number of aspirants, bring up a formidable candidate and scale down the anxiety of party members". Buhari has not endorsed any aspirant.

Whoever emerges as APC flagbearer will face the main opposition challenger, former vice president Atiku Abubakar of the People's Democratic Party (PDP), as well as candidates from other parties.

## MP asks oil minister if Saturday's quake...

Continued from Page 1

Otaibi asked the minister if what happened was the result of fracking and pumping water and what measures had the ministry taken. In case the earthquake was manmade, has the ministry formed

## Philippine towns covered...

Continued from Page 1

Juban town covered in ash, with vehicles struggling to navigate the road due to poor visibility.

Authorities deployed a fire truck to clear the area and residents helped sweep the ash off the roads. "The evacuation is ongoing there, but our priority is senior citizens and those with asthma," Juban disaster official Dennis Despabiladeras said. The Manila

## Bangladesh port depot...

Continued from Page 1

Firefighters continued to douse pockets of fire on Sunday afternoon, with television footage showing smoke still billowing from some containers, more than 19 hours after the fire began. Reazul Karim, operations director of the fire department, said that at least seven firefighters died and at least four others were missing. "Never in our fire department history have we lost so many firefighters in a single incident," Bharat Chandra, a former senior firefighter, told AFP.

"There are still some bodies inside the fire-

## Underground abortion group in spotlight, 50 years on

**WASHINGTON:** Heather Booth was a student in Chicago in 1965 when she received a call from a friend in need. His sister, he said, was pregnant but not ready to have a child. She was "nearly suicidal." Drawing on her contacts in the city, Booth helped the young woman find a doctor willing to perform an illegal abortion—in what she believed would be a one-off "act of goodwill."

"But word must have spread," the 76-year-old said in an interview from her home in Washington, more than half a century later. That one act would grow into an underground network of women called "Jane," whose members helped end thousands of unwanted pregnancies, safely and without stigma—eventually performing 11,000 abortions themselves.

By January 22, 1973 — when the US Supreme Court's landmark Roe v. Wade decision created a nationwide right to abortion—seven "Jane" members were awaiting trial. One of them was Martha Scott, who at the age of 80 — and with the court now expected to repeal that right—looks back defiantly on her decision to break the law many years ago.

"I felt very strongly... that we are doing this illegal thing because it is important to do, because it can't be done legally," Scott said in a video interview from her home in Chicago. "We were just ladies down the street," she said, but "bad laws require you to choose to act in ways that may be a little risky."

Booth and Scott, whose journey with the "Janes" is



WASHINGTON, United States: Heather Booth, who started the Jane Collective, stands for a portrait in the study of her home in Washington, DC. Heather Booth was a student in Chicago in 1965 when she received a call from a friend in need. —AFP

spotlighted in an upcoming HBO documentary, have stark memories of the time before Roe—when desperate women would harm themselves attempting to end their pregnancies.

"Some were taking lye (a caustic ingredient in soap), some were using a coat hanger," said Booth. "Some were doing damage to themselves, throwing themselves down stairs or off a rooftop." Without alternatives, women sought out abortions from illegal providers, many of whom were motivated by profit or unscrupulous in other ways, with little concern for women's health.

Eleanor Oliver, another former member of the network, said when she sought an illegal abortion in Washington, she was told the doctor might want her to be "a little cozier and friendlier than just a patient." —AFP

## Kuwait summons Indian envoy...

Continued from Page 1

Qatar on Sunday also summoned the Indian envoy in the country over the offensive comments. In response, Indian Ambassador to Qatar Deepak Mittal released a similar statement in which he said the comments are views of fringe elements.

Earlier on Sunday, after hashtags calling for the boycott of Indian products began trending on Twitter in Arab countries over inflammatory remarks against Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) by BJP spokespersons Nupur Sharma and Naveen Kumar Jindal, the party suspended

Sharma from BJP "with immediate effect", while Jindal's primary membership of the party has been cancelled.

The Grand Mufti of Oman along with Twitter handles with a large following have called for the boycott of Indian products. In a statement released on Sunday by BJP's party general secretary Arun Singh, the party asserted that it "is strongly against any ideology which insults or demeans any sect or religion," adding that it "respects all religions and strongly denounces insult of any religious personality."

The BJP statement, however, made no direct mention of any incident or comment. It also did not provide any context for the statement, either by referring to Sharma's comments or about the religion in question. Sharma's and Jindal's remarks have drawn protests from Muslim groups. — Agencies

## Saudi Arabia eyes tripling of foreign...

Continued from Page 1

2019, just months before the coronavirus pandemic decimated the industry globally.

An uptick in domestic travel in 2020 and 2021 - authorities tallied a record 64 million "domestic visits" last year - helped save the nascent Saudi tourism sector from collapse, and now authorities want to seize more of the international market, Ahmed Al-Khateeb said in an interview. "Now we are pushing and moving to attract more... international visitors," he said, specifying the goal for this year was 12 million, up from 4 million in 2021.

"We are back and we are very optimistic. Countries started to open their borders, restrictions started to ease down and people started to travel," he said. Saudi Arabia has raised eyebrows with its goal of attracting 100 million visitors by 2030, an element of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's Vision 2030 reform agenda intended to

diversify the oil-dependent economy and open up to the world.

While the kingdom has in recent years relaxed rules barring cinemas, gender-mixed concerts and sporting extravaganzas, other regulations including an alcohol ban remain in place, potentially denting its appeal. Khateeb specified Sunday that of the 100 million targeted visitors for 2030, 30 million are meant to come from abroad while the rest would be people travelling within Saudi Arabia.

Some 30 million visits will be religious trips by both residents and foreigners, largely to Makkah and Madinah, Islam's two holiest sites. Next month authorities plan to allow one million pilgrims to perform the hajj, after two years in which the coronavirus pandemic forced drastic limits on numbers for the annual ritual.

Another high-profile feature of the tourism push is so-called mega-projects spearheaded by Prince Mohammed, including the \$500 billion futuristic megacity known as NEOM and Diriyah, the seat of the first Saudi state which is being redeveloped as a heritage and entertainment destination. A restaurant district in Diriyah is set to open in September, while other elements of such projects will come online "from 2025 onwards", Khateeb said. — AFP



## International

# Kazakhstan holds referendum to move past Nazarbayev era

## Tokayev blamed the violence on ‘terrorists’ seeking to seize power

**ALMATY:** Voting was underway in Kazakhstan Sunday for a referendum to overhaul the constitution after deadly unrest in January ended the founding leader Nursultan Nazarbayev’s three-decade grip on Central Asia’s richest country.

The bloodshed — which grew out of peaceful protests over a spike in car fuel prices — left more than 230 people dead and prompted authorities to call in troops from a Russia-led security bloc. The drive for a “New Kazakhstan” in the wake of the violence has come from the man that Nazarbayev hand-picked to replace him as president in 2019, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev.

Tokayev, 69, describes the snap referendum as a shift from “super-presidential” rule that will strengthen parliament. But it is the absence of special privileges for 81-year-old Nazarbayev that is the most eye-catching change to the constitution.

Prior to January’s crisis, Tokayev was widely seen as ruling in the shadow of Nazarbayev and his super-rich relatives. Even after stepping down as president, Nazarbayev retained the constitutional title of “Elbasy”, or “Leader of the Nation” — a role that afforded him influence over policymaking regardless of his formal position.

The new constitution does away with that status. Another amendment prevents relatives of the president from holding government positions — a clear nod to the influence of Nazarbayev’s family and in-laws, who lost powerful positions in the aftermath of the violence.



**‘He has his place in our history textbooks’**

slow trickle of voters in cloudless, breezy summer conditions. Ayan, an 18-year-old student voting for the first time, said he welcomed the former president’s removal from the basic law.

“He has his place in our history textbooks, but all citizens should be equal in the constitution,” he said, after casting his vote at his university, where a small group of activists protested for the release of political prisoners and against the vote.

In the capital Nur-Sultan, named for Nazarbayev, a 46-year-old businessman called Bolat told AFP that he did not intend to vote. “It’s a formality to cement the position of the current leadership. The result will be the same,” he said.

The constitution is almost certain to pass, and there has been no visible “no” campaign. Voting in Almaty and Nur-Sultan began at 7:00 am (0100 GMT) and concludes at 8:00 pm (1400 GMT). Polling stations in the west will close an hour later, at 9:00 pm.

Kazakhstan’s New Year crisis remains poorly understood, with a days-long internet shutdown at the peak of the unrest helping to further obscure the events. Protests stirred in the oil-producing west over a New Year fuel price hike, but it was Almaty — 2,000 kilometres (1,200 miles) away — that became the epicentre of armed clashes, looting and arson. Nur-Sultan, which was called Astana prior to 2019, remained largely untouched.

### Leadership struggle

Tokayev blamed the violence on “terrorists” seeking to seize power and issued a “shoot-to-kill” order to Kazakh troops. But the arrest on treason charges of a Nazarbayev ally who served as nation-



ALMATY, Kazakhstan: A woman casts her vote at a polling station as part of the vote for a referendum to overhaul the constitution in Almaty on June 5, 2022. —AFP

al security chief at the time fuelled speculation that a leadership struggle was at the heart of the violence. After stability was restored, Tokayev criticised Nazarbayev for allowing inequality to fester, while crediting his mentor’s state-building achievements. Both former and current presidents are allies of neighbouring Russia, and the arrival of a 2,000-plus detachment of peacekeepers from a Moscow-led security bloc bolstered Tokayev’s control over the situation in January.

The Kremlin claimed the intervention requested

by Tokayev did not extend to any political settlement, which was “the internal affair of Kazakhstan”. Nazarbayev has made few public appearances since the crisis, but cast his vote in the capital Sunday, after expressing support for Tokayev and the changes. In an interview published Monday he said that his relatives should be “held accountable” if they committed crimes, but were entitled to a fair trial — an apparent reference to nephew Kairat Satybaldy, a businessman presently detained on embezzlement charges. —AFP

## Cambodians vote in local polls

**PHNOM PENH, Cambodia:** Cambodians voted in local polls on Sunday as a revived opposition party attempted to dent Prime Minister Hun Sen’s decades-long grip on power ahead of national elections next year. Hun Sen, one of the world’s longest-serving leaders, has ruled Cambodia for more than 37 years and turned the country into a one-party state in 2018 when his party won every seat in a national election.

Voting shortly after polls opened at 7 am (0000 GMT), the prime minister was all smiles as he entered a school polling station on Phnom Penh’s outskirts with his wife Bun Rany-but declined to speak to media.

Critics and rights groups have accused him of creating a climate of fear by locking up scores of political opponents and activists. The opposition Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP) — which won 44 percent of the popular vote in local elections in 2017 — was forced to forfeit its positions after a court dissolved it later that year.

Scores of opposition figures have since fled the country, while others have been arrested. Opposition leader Kem Sokha, who was arrested and jailed for more than a year, is facing a treason trial, while CNRP co-founder Sam Rainsy is living

in France to escape convictions he says are politically motivated.

Sunday’s vote in 1,652 communes, or village clusters, will take the country’s political pulse ahead of the national elections in 2023. Hun Sen’s ruling Cambodian People’s Party (CPP) made a show of strength in Phnom Penh on Friday with a massive parade of cars, trucks, motorcycles and tuk-tuks.

And many voters appeared persuaded-citing peace and development in the country as they cast their ballot for his party inside schools or Buddhist temples. “I picked the same old candidate, I did not change. We have been working together since the beginning, so we know who is good and who is bad,” Srey Chan Samuth, 76, said.

A total of 17 parties are running in the local election, with more than 11,600 positions up for grabs-the majority of which are presently controlled by the ruling party. But all eyes are on the performance of the Candlelight Party (CP) — founded by Rainsy in 1995 — which has registered candidates to contest nearly all communes and has been gaining strong support.

### ‘Last hope’

“The Candlelight Party is the last hope for the people, although we are suffering from intimidation and threats, and political harassment,” party secretary-general Lee Sothearyuth told AFP. UN Human Rights Office spokeswoman Liz Throssell said she was disturbed by patterns of obstruction

have had no food for three to five days”, a police statement said. Group members told officers their boat was among three vessels carrying 178 people that had left Myanmar and Bangladesh, having paid an agent around 5,000 ringgit (\$1,300) for the journey.

The first two boats carrying 119 people were stopped and arrested by Malaysian authorities, according to the Thai police statement. The boat’s crew then decided to abandon those onboard on Koh Dong island-telling them that they had reached Malaysia, the group told officers.

The incident comes after the bodies of 14 Rohingya people, including children, were discovered washed up on a beach last month after they attempted to flee Myanmar. Hundreds of thousands of Rohingya people fled a military crackdown in the nation in 2017, bringing with them harrowing stories of murder, rape and arson.

Those still in Myanmar are widely seen as interlopers from Bangladesh and are largely denied citizenship, many rights and access to healthcare and education. Muslim-majority Malaysia is a key destination for Rohingya fleeing persecution in Myanmar or refugee camps in Bangladesh.

In 2019, a Thai boat captain was charged with smuggling 65 Rohingya people from Myanmar after

“It is highly likely that other countries will identify cases and there will be further spread of the virus,” the UN health agency added. Few hospitalisations have been reported, apart from patients being isolated.

The WHO listed the non-endemic countries reporting the most cases as Britain (207), Spain (156), Portugal (138), Canada (58) and Germany (57). Besides Europe and North America, cases have also been reported-in single figures-in Argentina, Australia, Morocco and the United Arab Emirates.

One case of monkeypox in a non-endemic country is considered an outbreak. “Some countries are reporting that new generations of cases are no longer appearing only among known contacts of previously confirmed cases, suggesting that chains of transmission



PHNOM PENH, Cambodia: Cambodian election officials count ballots at a polling station during local commune elections in Phnom Penh on June 5, 2022. —AFP

targeting opposition candidates ahead of the poll.

She warned that the CP “faces a paralysing political environment” after at least six candidates and activists were arrested in the run-up to the vote. The CP is well-positioned to attract supporters and is the only party that “poses a realistic threat” to Hun Sen’s CPP, according to Sebastian Strangio, a Cambodian politics expert.

“A strong opposition showing would demonstrate that the popular discontent with CPP rule continues to simmer beneath the surface of Cambodian politics,” he told AFP. CPP spokesman Sok Eysan downplayed the threat, telling AFP his party would “overwhelmingly” win. —AFP



KOH DONG, Thailand: This handout from the Royal Thai Navy taken on June 4, 2022 and released on June 5 shows members of the Thai Navy and park officials offering food to Rohingya found stranded on the Thai island of Koh Dong. —AFP

their vessel was shipwrecked on an island off the coast of Satun province. The same area was the hub of a multimillion dollar trafficking route, which unravelled in 2015 after the discovery of mass graves of Rohingya and Bangladeshi migrants along the border with Malaysia. —AFP

are being missed through undetected circulation of the virus,” the WHO said. “Although the current risk to human health and for the general public remains low, the public health risk could become high if this virus exploits the opportunity to establish itself in non-endemic countries as a widespread human pathogen,” it said in a disease outbreak update.

“WHO assesses the risk at the global level as moderate considering this is the first time that many monkeypox cases and clusters are reported concurrently in non-endemic and endemic countries.”

### Atypical cases

Most reported cases so far have been presented through sexual health or other health services and

## Australia accuses China of dangerous interception

**SYDNEY:** Australia on Sunday accused the Chinese military of putting an Australian Defence Force flight crew at risk when their plane was intercepted late last month over the South China Sea. Defence Minister Richard Marles revealed a Chinese strike fighter had on May 26 intercepted an Australian P-8 surveillance craft, flying close and releasing flares before it accelerated and cut in front of the plane.

“At that moment, [the Chinese plane] then released a bundle of chaff which contains small pieces of aluminium, some of which were ingested into the engine of the P-8 aircraft,” Marles told media Sunday. “Quite obviously, this is very dangerous”. The crew were unharmed and were able to return to their base, Marles said, but Australia had conveyed its concerns to Beijing — the first contact the country’s new government has had with the Chinese military since it came to power on May 21.

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said it was not unusual for Australia to undertake surveillance in the South China Sea, a region Beijing fiercely contests is its domain entirely, despite a 2016 Hague ruling that dismissed its historic claims.

China’s stance has heightened tensions with the United States and its allies, which insist on freedom of navigation in the area. Albanese said Australia had acted in “accordance with international law, exercising the right to freedom of navigation and overflight in international waters, and airspace”.

The incident comes just three months after Australia accused the Chinese military of shining a military-grade laser at one of the country’s defence planes over waters north of Australia. The former Australian administration labelled the incident “an act of intimidation” and said it had the potential to endanger lives.

And earlier this month, Canada’s military made a similar accusation, saying Chinese pilots acted unprofessionally during recent encounters with its planes in international airspace. The Canadian aircraft, deployed in Japan as part of a multinational effort to enforce UN sanctions against North Korea, had to quickly modify their flight path to “avoid a potential collision with the intercepting aircraft”, it said. —AFP

have mainly involved men who have sex with men, said the WHO. The organisation said many cases were not presenting with the classical clinical picture for monkeypox: Some have described having pustules appear before symptoms such as fever, and having lesions at different stages of development-both of which are atypical.

The WHO said there had been no deaths associated with outbreaks in non-endemic countries, but cases and deaths continue to be reported from endemic areas. The WHO listed the endemic states as Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Congo-Brazzaville, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Gabon and Ivory Coast, plus Ghana where it has been identified in animals only. —AFP

## 60 Rohingya found abandoned on Thai island: Police

**BANGKOK:** Fifty-nine Rohingya people have been discovered on a Thai island, saying they were abandoned by traffickers en route to Malaysia, a senior police officer said Sunday. The group-among them five children-were found on Koh Dong island in the southern Satun province on Saturday, said lieutenant general Surachet Hakpan.

Each year, thousands of the mostly Muslim minority Rohingya people, heavily persecuted in Buddhist-majority Myanmar, risk their lives in months-long expensive journeys to reach Malaysia over Thailand’s seas.

Police said they had been charged with illegal entry and could face deportation to Myanmar following a court case. “We are providing humanitarian assistance and will investigate whether they are victims of human trafficking or if they entered illegally,” Surachet said.

The group appeared “starving and was likely to

## WHO confirms 780 monkeypox outbreak cases

**GENEVA:** The World Health Organization said Sunday that 780 laboratory-confirmed monkeypox cases had been reported to it from 27 non-endemic countries, while maintaining that the global risk level was moderate. The WHO said the 780 figure, for cases from May 13 to Thursday, was probably an underestimate due to limited epidemiological and laboratory information.



MONDAY, JUNE 6, 2022

## Business

## Managing inventories a pandemic headache for American businesses

## Fickle consumer demand causes a feast-or-famine cycle

**NEW YORK:** More than two years into the COVID-19 pandemic, American businesses are still struggling to manage their inventories in a feast-or-famine cycle caused by fickle consumer demand. “We have way too much inventory right now,” said Ginny Pasqualone, chief executive of Sparkledots, a children’s clothing manufacturer.

“It’s important that we have a large selection of merchandise that our clients can choose from,” she said, but store traffic has been hit by inflation concerns, with some customers “very scared that they’re not going to survive another recession.” For now, Sparkledots is holding more goods in inventory, but that ties up company capital and limits its ability to add to its 18-worker staff.

“It sucks our growth for the future,” Pasqualone said. Such is the dilemma affecting businesses of all sizes. Large store chains like Walmart, Target and Macy’s have acknowledged in recent weeks that they misread consumer patterns, leaving them with excess supplies of appliances, casual clothing and bicycles. Bicycles were a hot commodity early in the pandemic, prompting surprisingly large orders, said Wayne Sosin, owner of Workman Cycles, a New York manufacturer best known for its tricycles.

“Retailers bought whatever they could as if bike sales would continue to have unprecedented demand,” Sosin said. “It was so obvious to me that (this) would not last.” Still, Sosin said demand remains strong in some parts of the business, placing stress on supplies of some key bicycle parts.

**Unexpected shift**

Torrid consumer demand since 2020 fueled by government pandemic relief programs has led to

product shortages and backlogs in seaports. “The business can no longer count on the idea that you’re going to have this easy, just-in-time inventory and that you can only keep stock on hand that you need,” said Phil Levy, an economist for logistics company Flexport.

Companies are unsure how much the outsized buying during the pandemic will persist and for which goods. “The way we tend to predict things is by looking at past patterns,” Levy said. “But we don’t have data on how the consumers behaved during the five recent major modern pandemics.”

In the most recent quarter, the big-box chain Target saw sales of appliances, clothing and other goods slow as consumers shifted spending to travel and other service-oriented consumption.

“We didn’t anticipate the magnitude of that shift,” Target Chief Executive Brian Cornell said on an analyst conference call. As a result, Target had bought too many televisions and too much outdoor furniture. Similarly, department-store chain Macy’s was caught off guard by a 20 percent drop in sales of casual clothing and housewares in the most recent period, compared with the prior quarter.

At the same time, “supply chain constraints relaxed,” unexpectedly boosting deliveries of merchandise, said Macy’s Chief Executive Jeffrey Gennette.

**‘Wildcards’**

Retailers have adopted different strategies for dealing with a glut of goods.

Target has moved some of its goods outside of stores into temporary storage facilities, while liquidating seasonal merchandise no longer in demand.

Dhabi’s largest-ever market debut. With exceptional demand from local retail and institutional investors as well as the global institutional investor community, this historic listing is the fourth company we have successfully brought to market.”

“This IPO demonstrates our ongoing contribution to support the diversification of Abu Dhabi’s buoyant and dynamic equity capital market and reinforces ADNOC’s continued role as the critical enabler of growth and expansion of the UAE economy and private sector and in solidifying Abu Dhabi’s position as global investment destination of choice,” he added. Thomas Gangl, Borealis of CEO commented, “The extraordinary subscription numbers and interest in becoming a shareholder of Borouge underpin the attractiveness of the company and the growth path Borealis and ADNOC have been embarking on successfully over the years”.

Hisham Khalid Malak, chairman of the ADX, commented, “We congratulate Borouge on their successful IPO, and we are excited to welcome them on the Abu Dhabi Securities Exchange as one of the largest IPOs in the history of our dynamic exchange, marking yet another immense milestone for us”. Hazeem Sultan Al-Suwaidi, CEO of Borouge, said, “We are proud to have completed this highly successful IPO and to begin our first day of trading on ADX. Borouge has seen exceptionally strong demand from regional and international investors, with significant cornerstone commitments from high-quality investors, a clear indicator of the strength of our investment thesis and strategic roadmap,” he said.

With the landmark IPO offering local and inter-

the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change, Gonzalez said. Biden also hopes to secure an agreement on regional cooperation on an issue over which he has faced domestic attacks from the rival Republican Party-migration. The number of Central Americans and Haitians seeking to enter the United States has been surging as they flee poverty and violence in their homelands.

**‘Unfortunate subplot’**

Biden has secured the attendance of other key presidents including Argentina’s left-leaning Alberto Fernandez, whom Biden also visited to Washington, and Brazil’s far-right Jair Bolsonaro, despite his questioning of the legitimacy of October elections.

Benjamin Gedan, who heads the Latin America program at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, said that Lopez Obrador’s absence would mark a “significant void” and said the Mexican leader seemed more focused on domestic political gain. The boycott threat has been “a really unfortunate subplot in the run-up to the summit because it has drained an enormous amount of US diplomatic energy for a bizarre cause celebre,” Gedan said.

He said that Biden has crafted a positive agenda, avoiding simply summoning Latin American leaders to lecture them on democracy, corruption and China. But he said it was unclear whether Biden will bring substantial resources to the table, in contrast to China’s lavish infrastructure spending and trade privileges. “The real barometer for this summit will be whether the United States offers meaningful new market access, lending and foreign assistance to support economic recovery and infrastructure in the



OAKLAND: A truck drives by stacks of containers at the Port of Oakland, California. — AFP

Others plan to offer more discounted items. Apparel chain Urban Outfitters expects promotions to increase “not just in the second quarter, but throughout the year and into the holiday season,” said Chief Executive Richard Hayne.

The consumer remains the “wildcard,” said Brian Yarbrough, an analyst who follows consumer companies at Edward Jones. Demand for goods has remained fairly robust even as consumers spend

more on services and contend with inflation, Yarbrough said. Among other unknowns is the state of ocean shipping between Asia and the United States. Will ports on the US West Coast again struggle with delays, or even a possible strike due to high-stakes labor negotiations this summer? “How long will it take to ship freight from Asia to the US to have stuff on the shelves this fall?” wonders Levy. “You just don’t know.” —AFP

## ADNOC delivers record-setting IPO on ADX

**ABU DHABI:** Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC), together with Borealis, listed their petrochemicals joint venture Borouge, on the Abu Dhabi Securities Exchange (ADX), following the completion of Abu Dhabi’s largest-ever Initial Public Offering (IPO) and the Middle East’s largest-ever petrochemicals listing. The IPO, which raised gross proceeds of more than \$2 billion for the offering of 10 per cent of the company’s total issued share capital, attracted total gross demand of more than \$83.4b and was almost 42 times oversubscribed in aggregate. The retail offering, which attracted higher retail demand than any UAE IPO in nearly 20 years, was 74 times oversubscribed.

Borouge’s shares began trading at Dhs 2.45, implying a market capitalization for the company of \$20.05 billion at the time of listing. Borouge is the fourth company that ADNOC has brought to market since 2017 and follows the highly successful IPOs of ADNOC Distribution, ADNOC Drilling and Fertiglobe.

Dr Sultan bin Ahmed Al-Jaber, Minister of Industry and Advanced Technology, ADNOC MD and group CEO, and Borouge chairman, said, “ADNOC is delighted to have delivered today’s truly record-setting IPO of Borouge, which marks Abu



ABU DHABI: UAE Minister of State and ADNOC Group CEO Sultan Ahmed Al-Jaber speaks during the Abu Dhabi International Petroleum Exhibition and Conference in this file photo. — AFP

national investors the opportunity to own shares in one of the world’s leading petrochemical players, Borouge expects to pay a dividend of \$975 million for the fiscal year 2022; and to pay a dividend of no less than \$1.3 billion for fiscal year 2023, equivalent to a 6.5 per cent dividend yield based on the offer share price.



Joe Biden

region,” Gedan said.

“And there I think, inevitably, the United States will disappoint.” The Summit of the Americas is the first held by the United States since the inaugural meeting in 1994 in Miami, where then US president Bill Clinton sought the creation of a trade area to cover the whole continent except communist Cuba. The United States has since soured on free trade, with Biden following the lead of his predecessor Donald Trump, who said such pacts hurt US workers.

Trump championed a hard line on Venezuela and Cuba, reversing his predecessor Barack Obama’s opening to the island, and did not attend the last Summit of the Americas, in Peru in 2018. —AFP

## Baby formula plant linked to US shortage resumes production

**WASHINGTON:** Production resumed Saturday at an Abbott Nutrition baby formula plant in the US whose closure helped fuel a crippling nationwide shortage. The facility in Sturges, Michigan has met initial government sanitary requirements for reopening, the company said in a statement.

The plant, a major producer of formula, shut down and issued a product recall in February after the death of two babies raised concerns over contamination. Subsequent shortages were particularly worrying to parents of infants with allergies or with certain metabolic conditions. They desperately scoured stores and online sources for the specialized formulas.

Their concerns became so acute that President Joe Biden met virtually this week with infant-food executives and insisted his administration was doing everything it could to help.

The crisis, coming at a time when soaring inflation and supply-chain delays have fanned a growing sense of unease among many ordinary Americans, has been seized on by Biden critics to question the competence of his administration.

**‘Working hard’**

Abbott, which controls about 40 percent of the US baby food market, said Saturday that it was restarting production of its hypoallergenic EleCare formula and that the product should be back on store shelves around June 20. “We’re also working hard to fulfill the steps necessary to restart production of Similac and other formulas,” Abbott said. “We will ramp production as quickly as we can while meeting all requirements.” The formula shortages, initially caused by supply chain blockages and a lack of workers due to the pandemic, were exacerbated when Abbott closed its Sturges plant.

The plant was shut down amid complaints the plant lacked adequate protections against contamination from bacteria-complaints echoed after a six-week inspection by US Food and Drug Administration agents. “Frankly, the inspection results were shocking,” FDA chief Robert Califf told members of a House subcommittee last month.

There was standing water in key equipment that presented “the potential for bacterial contamination,” plus leaks in the roof and a lack of basic hygiene facilities, he said.

But Abbott officials, while apologizing for the formula shortage, have said there is no conclusive evidence linking the formula to infant illnesses or deaths. For Biden, the issue had blown up into a political maelstrom. He told reporters Wednesday that he was only informed about the looming problem in early April and that he had pulled all the levers of government to resolve shortages ever since.

“I don’t think anyone anticipated the impact of the shutdown of one facility,” Biden said at a virtual meeting with the executives from five companies helping to take up the slack caused by Abbott’s problems. “Once we learned the extent of it and how broad it was, it kicked everything into gear,” Biden said. —AFP

## Biden faces cloud on summit to reset Latin America ties

**WASHINGTON:** President Joe Biden is hoping to show a new era of US engagement with Latin America at a long-heralded summit next week, but the meeting has been clouded by boycott threats and charges of an unambitious agenda.

Regional leaders will descend on Los Angeles starting Monday for the weeklong Summit of the Americas at a time when China, seen by the United States as a fast-emerging rival, has been making inroads in a zone Washington has historically considered its turf. Days ahead of the summit, the White House was still finalizing the invitation list in a bid to please Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, who has threatened not to come unless all nations are included.

Biden, vowing to champion democracy, had planned to exclude the leftist governments of Cuba, Nicaragua and Venezuela on the grounds that they are autocratic, and instead to welcome representatives of civil society from the three countries. Juan Gonzalez, the top White House adviser on Latin America, told reporters that Biden plans to “advance a vision of a region that is secure, middle class and democratic,” which is “fundamentally in the national security interest of the United States.”

Biden is expected to make announcements at the summit on economic cooperation and fighting both



## Business

# Palestinian farmers sound alarm over foot-and-mouth outbreak

## Farmers in occupied Palestinian territory face unique challenges



WADI AL FAR'AH, Palestinian Territories: Farm owner Mohammed Basheer carries a dead lamb in the village of Wadi Al Far'ah after major foot and mouth outbreak devastated West Bank flocks on April 25, 2022. — AFP photos



WADI AL FAR'AH, Palestinian Territories: A worker walks among sheep inside a farm in the village of Wadi Al Far'ah after major foot and mouth outbreak devastated West Bank flocks on April 25, 2022.

**NABLUS, Palestinian Territories:** An outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in the West Bank early this year has killed thousands of livestock, pushing Palestinian farmers already living under occupation to the brink of bankruptcy.

Mohammed Basheer said he had to incinerate hundreds of his dead lambs after the outbreak devastated livestock across the West Bank, leaving him with more than just a stinging financial loss. For Basheer, the ordeal underlines the unique challenges facing farmers in the occupied Palestinian territory, who complain that they are underserved by the Palestinian Authority and face constant threats from Jewish settlers.

"I got no help from the PA, not even a telephone call," Basheer, who owns thousands of livestock near the city of Nablus, told AFP, voicing frustration over what he described as inaction from the Palestinian agriculture ministry. Palestinian farmers blamed the PA for halting a vaccinations program that had proven essential in protecting livestock against an endemic disease.

And with animals absent from large stretches of grazing land, farmers fear land grabs from Jewish settlers who have repeatedly set up illegal outposts

on West Bank land they claim is unused.

The PA "should protect us because we protect the land," Basheer said. "The farms protect the land... If you remove the farmers, Zionist entity takes the land."

### Farmers 'destroyed'

A new strain of foot-and-mouth disease (FMD), which causes potentially lethal fevers and blisters in young animals, was detected in livestock last November in Jordan. It soon spread across the West Bank, a territory occupied by Zionist entity since 1967, and heavily reliant on agriculture.

But the PA's agriculture ministry has not carried out a regular vaccination drive since 2019. A ministry official, who requested anonymity, told AFP that a normal year sees 60 to 70 percent of goats and sheep in the West Bank vaccinated against FMD. That figure dropped to 20 percent in 2020 and 2021, the official said.

The ministry blamed the coronavirus pandemic, saying FMD vaccines were harder to source as vaccine-makers worldwide pivoted operations to meet demand for COVID jabs. The ministry also blamed Zionist entity, claiming it obstructed the PA from

procuring sufficient supply.

The Zionist entity's defense ministry body responsible for civil affairs in the Palestinian territories (COGAT) told AFP that the allegation was false. "There has been no formal request from the Palestinian Authority for the import of such vaccines," a COGAT statement said.

"Nonetheless, considering the health requirement that has arisen, the State of Zionist entity has transferred vaccine doses that were in its possession to the Palestinian Authority."

The Palestinian ministry has officially confirmed around 2,000 animal deaths as a result of the FMD strain this year. But farmers and the agriculture ministry official said livestock deaths were likely far higher than the acknowledged toll. Basheer said FMD losses had cost him \$150,000 and accused Zionist entity of hoarding vaccines. "Our occupiers had continuous vaccines for all farmers, but we haven't had anything in three years," he said.

"They've destroyed the farmers."

### 'Farmers can't stand alone'

In the West Bank's Area C, which remains under full Zionist entity's control, vacant agricultural land

is a prime target for Jewish settlement expansion, according to experts. Eyal Hareuveni, a researcher at the anti-settlement watchdog B'Tselem, told AFP that settler land grabs are often backed by Zionist entity's "twisted interpretation" of an Ottoman-era law that says land not cultivated for three consecutive years can be claimed. "Zionist entity can designate this as state land and take it for their own use, even if it's land that is registered as private Palestinian land," Hareuveni said.

More than 475,000 Jewish settlers live in the West Bank in communities widely regarded as illegal under international law. Zionist entity's governing coalition has continued to approve new settler homes across the territory, while acting sporadically against new outposts. With no new cases detected since April, PA officials say the FMD outbreak is now under control.

Abbas Milhem, executive director of the Palestinian farmer's union, told AFP that by faltering on vaccinations, the PA had effectively given a boost to the settler movement. "The real fight against occupation and annexation is in the land, but the farmers can't stand alone," he said. "We need some accountability for this." —AFP



شركة الصفاة للاستثمار  
AL SAFAT INVESTMENT COMPANY

## KUWAIT BOURSA WEEKLY REPORT

WEEK ENDED ON 02 JUN 2022

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| Market         | M. Cap (KD ml) | Last Close | WTD % | MTD % | YTD % | Quantity Traded | Value Traded | No. of Trades | P/E  | P/B | % of Total M. Cap |
|----------------|----------------|------------|-------|-------|-------|-----------------|--------------|---------------|------|-----|-------------------|
| Premier Market | 35,674         | 8,589.53   | 1.8%  | -1.0% | 12.4% | 779,511,920     | 351,612,082  | 47,007        | 29.2 | 2.8 | 77.8%             |
| Main Market    | 10,179         | 6,080.08   | 1.6%  | 0.1%  | 3.3%  | 789,124,755     | 109,579,609  | 34,210        | 14.5 | 1.4 | 22.2%             |
| All Share      | 45,852         | 7,765.29   | 1.7%  | -0.7% | 10.3% | 1,568,636,675   | 461,191,691  | 81,217        | 25.9 | 2.5 | 100%              |

| Sector                 | M. Cap (KD ml) | Last Close | WTD % | MTD % | YTD %  | Quantity Traded | Value Traded | No. of Trades | P/E  | P/B | % of Total M. Cap |
|------------------------|----------------|------------|-------|-------|--------|-----------------|--------------|---------------|------|-----|-------------------|
| BANKS                  | 27,072         | 1,809.72   | 1.4%  | -0.9% | 11.5%  | 554,974,159     | 243,691,192  | 25,559        | 29.1 | 2.8 | 58.35%            |
| BASIC MATERIALS        | 1,064          | 1,193.41   | 2.3%  | -1.1% | 16.5%  | 6,218,479       | 5,023,521    | 969           | 14.9 | 1.6 | 2.29%             |
| CONSUMER DISCRETIONARY | 802            | 1,572.17   | 3.2%  | -0.8% | 17.6%  | 21,022,563      | 12,584,232   | 3,905         | 19.6 | 9.1 | 1.73%             |
| CONSUMER STAPLES       | 197            | 646.86     | 0.4%  | -0.8% | -11.5% | 1,397,741       | 720,046      | 324           | 21.2 | 1.3 | 0.42%             |
| ENERGY                 | 247            | 1,187.45   | -1.4% | 1.8%  | -16.9% | 11,674,227      | 844,451      | 681           | 12.0 | 1.2 | 0.53%             |
| FINANCIAL SERVICES     | 4,475          | 1,537.67   | 3.2%  | -0.1% | 8.0%   | 676,959,968     | 105,417,769  | 26,251        | 15.8 | 2.2 | 9.65%             |
| HEALTH CARE            | 238            | 480.10     | -0.1% | 0.0%  | -39.8% | 260             | 137          | 3             | 16.1 | 2.3 | 0.51%             |
| INDUSTRIALS            | 4,683          | 1,318.48   | 3.6%  | -0.3% | 15.5%  | 82,517,889      | 45,918,131   | 10,388        | 42.5 | 1.5 | 10.09%            |
| INSURANCE              | 642            | 1,540.82   | 2.7%  | 2.5%  | 0.5%   | 994,304         | 171,843      | 153           | 7.3  | 1.0 | 1.38%             |
| REAL ESTATE            | 2,819          | 1,310.12   | 1.3%  | -0.8% | -1.2%  | 171,113,293     | 22,171,393   | 7,887         | 14.2 | 1.4 | 6.08%             |
| TECHNOLOGY             | 9              | 668.57     | 2.1%  | -0.1% | -2.2%  | 83,317          | 7,658        | 23            | -    | 0.8 | 0.02%             |
| TELECOMMUNICATIONS     | 3,910          | 1,274.87   | 0.9%  | -1.5% | 17.0%  | 37,903,770      | 23,832,669   | 4,647         | 15.8 | 2.4 | 8.43%             |
| UTILITIES              | 236            | 565.79     | 0.0%  | 0.0%  | -5.7%  | 3,776,705       | 808,647      | 427           | 16.6 | 2.7 | 0.51%             |

### Top Gainers

| Stock    | last Close | Change % | Volume      | Value      | Trades |
|----------|------------|----------|-------------|------------|--------|
| ALSAFAT  | 171        | 24.82    | 109,486,162 | 18,082,605 | 4,589  |
| THUFTAYA | 158        | 21.54    | 33,055      | 4,992      | 10     |
| AAYAN    | 184        | 17.20    | 60,715,497  | 10,513,154 | 2,254  |
| ALAFCO   | 216        | 15.51    | 22,568,349  | 4,397,667  | 1,060  |
| SHIP     | 742        | 12.25    | 3,592,511   | 2,602,531  | 764    |

### Top Losers

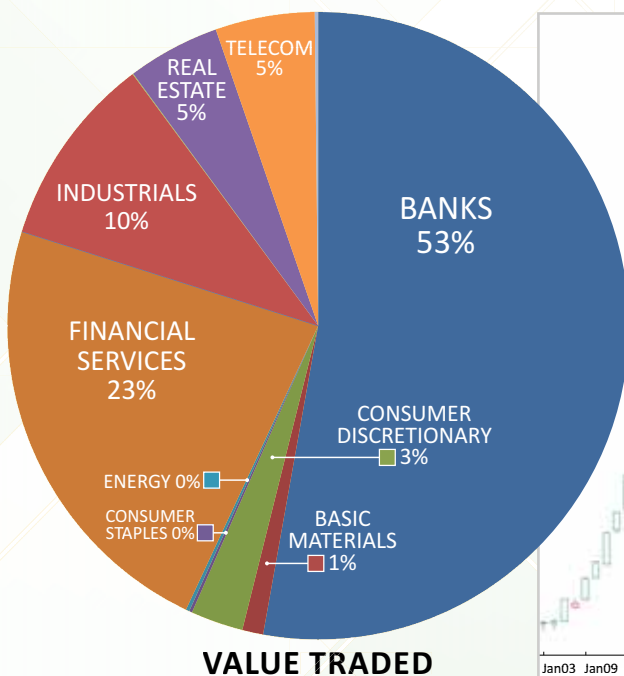
| Stock   | last Close | Change % | Volume      | Value      | Trades |
|---------|------------|----------|-------------|------------|--------|
| NINV    | 339        | -12.63   | 18,865,090  | 6,740,288  | 1,872  |
| ALEID   | 283        | -8.41    | 6,617,543   | 2,006,898  | 945    |
| GBK     | 314        | -7.92    | 294,186,715 | 93,748,510 | 7,570  |
| PAPCO   | 70         | -7.41    | 14,435      | 936        | 10     |
| MARAKEZ | 46.4       | -7.20    | 377,117     | 19,404     | 173    |

### Top Volume

| Stock   | Last  | Change % | Volume      | Value      | Trades |
|---------|-------|----------|-------------|------------|--------|
| GBK     | 314.0 | -7.92    | 294,186,715 | 93,748,510 | 7,570  |
| ALSAFAT | 171   | 24.82    | 109,486,162 | 18,082,605 | 4,589  |
| GFH     | 96.1  | 0.42     | 105,132,165 | 10,179,102 | 2,916  |
| ALOLA   | 98.6  | 3.25     | 94,442,949  | 9,433,681  | 2,105  |
| AUB     | 275   | 2.23     | 78,277,063  | 21,587,745 | 1,984  |

### Top Value

| Stock | Last  | Change % | Volume      | Value      | Trades |
|-------|-------|----------|-------------|------------|--------|
| GBK   | 314   | -7.92    | 294,186,715 | 93,748,510 | 7,570  |
| KFH   | 878   | 2.09     | 73,995,791  | 65,864,122 | 7,286  |
| NBK   | 1,029 | 2.29     | 35,434,079  | 36,511,236 | 3,447  |
| AGLTY | 1,135 | 3.09     | 19,846,207  | 22,594,443 | 3,902  |
| AUB   | 275   | 2.23     | 78,277,063  | 21,587,745 | 1,984  |



### Market Summary:

- Premier market volume and value increased by 37% and 19, respectively. Main market volume and value increased 24% and 30%, respectively. The significant increase in both volume and value was due to the MSCI rebalancing.
- Premier and Main indices continued the positive performance and now trading at support levels. Expectations to continue and try to overcome the resistance.
- Technically, the All-Share index closed at 7765, with support levels at 7677, 7635, and 7556, while resistance at 7810. Premier index closed at 8589, support levels at 8527, 8335, and 8273, while resistance at 8687. The Main index closed at 6080, support levels at 6058, 6023, and resistance at 6083.







## Business

# Al-Tuwaijri: Banking industry to witness major transformations over five years

## Boubyan Bank's CEO participates in 'Seamless Global Conference' in Dubai



Abdulla Al-Tuwaijri at Seamless Global Conference

**KUWAIT:** Boubyan Bank's CEO - Private, Consumer & Digital Banking, Abdulla Al-Tuwaijri, stated: "The huge technological developments in banking services bring many challenges to banks around the world, especially challenges related to competition and the ability to attract more customers."

This came as a part of a discussion panel and an interview wherein Al-Tuwaijri participated during the activities of Seamless Global Conference held in Dubai. The panel discussion focused on payment methods in future banks, while the interview focused on potential transformations in digital banks by 2030, and how this would influence customers. Al-Tuwaijri explained that banks attempted to strike a balance between traditional in-branch banking service and digital services, while pouring in more investments into digital offerings, and then increasing the segment of customers using such digital banking propositions.

### Toughest challenges

Speaking about the toughest challenges facing the business while operating in a decentralized payment system, he stated: "There are many challenges, including the different versions of government-driven, corporate-driven, and retail-driven payment systems. This is causing confusion now until they merge into concrete case studies." He went on to add: "Among the most prominent challenges are operating standards; any system that is not interoperable will always be at a micro-scale, and the implementation of this new system will take time. We should also take into account that if innovation is too fast for customers, it would be difficult for them to keep up with it. Moreover, we must ensure customers' privacy, protect them from volatility, reduce financial crime and fraud, and ensure legal compliance."

### Where are we headed in the future?

Al-Tuwaijri reviewed the outlook for the next five years and what is possible for the bank in the future, as banks may focus on Banking as a Service (BaaS) indirectly, where they leverage their licenses and balance sheets to provide products through 3rd parties.

This can also be achieved through embedded finance where banking services become frictionless and occur outside the existing digital and traditional channels through ecosystems and embedded in everyday routines.

### Importance of exploring future opportunities

Al-Tuwaijri went on to add: "Upon discussing investment in digital banking, the bank took many elements into consideration: the most important

- Boubyan Bank has been ahead of others in banking sector transformations
- Bank has been investing in digital services with a clear strategy for growth
- Technological developments in banking services to bring many challenges

element was the youth segment in the Kuwaiti society, which accounts for more than 60 percent in addition to the rapid and accelerating developments in the world of digital banking across the globe."

"Boubyan's name became synonymous with value propositions being offered "for the first time" in Kuwait and the region. The bank was the first in the region to launch digital murabaha, allowing customers to obtain the necessary approvals for murabaha within minutes, whether through their mobile or PC", he added.



### Boubyan and digital excellence

Furthermore, in his two lectures Al-Tuwaijri highlighted Boubyan Bank's digital experience, stating that the bank adopted innovation and creativity, while focusing on high quality customer service via digital and traditional channels that is aligned with Kuwaiti and Islamic cultures. He added: "In Boubyan, innovation is represented in a new business model, a new customer, a new market, a new experience and way of doing things, or - finally - a new technology or tool, while success is measured by striking a balance between quality and quantity, and short-term and long-term."

He gave an example of the bank's launch of many first-to-market innovations in Kuwait and the region, citing that some of them evolved into ecosystems, such as link payment (PayMe) that

that figure increased by 20 percent during the pandemic, and now about 75 percent of our customers' base are digitally active."

"Our Digital Assistant, Msa3ed, was more than just a chatbot during the pandemic; it was helping with many CSR initiatives, including spreading awareness and guidance on vaccinations, and how to book appointments with government entities, etc", he added.

### Nomo... Bank of the future

During a special interview, Al-Tuwaijri dwelt on Boubyan Bank's steps towards digital expansion through last July's announcement of the full launch of Nomo Bank in Kuwait and UK as the first Islamic digital bank from London which can offer its services to Boubyan Bank's customers and non-customers. Al-Tuwaijri went on to add: "The new Nomo's digital-first banking experience lets users apply for a UK-based bank account in minutes using their smart phones, thereby giving them the chance to enjoy unique banking experience in Kuwait and worldwide."

"This cuts out lengthy application processes that can take a prolonged time. Also, through a clear and intuitive smartphone App, Nomo allows its customers to spend, send and invest their wealth on the go, with 24/7 access wherever their lifestyle takes them", he added.

He elaborated: "Nomo's banking proposition is unique in that it gives non-UK residents from Kuwait, and soon from GCC, the great opportunity of opening a UK-based account and enjoying the many prestigious benefits of the UK banking system. Also, the local banking solutions of the new bank help customers avoid high international fees and open up investment opportunities that would not be usually available to non-UK residents."



## US services growth slows amid rising prices: Survey

**WASHINGTON:** The dominant services sector saw growth slow in May, while price gains pulled back from the blistering pace in the prior month but remained high, according to an industry survey released Friday. Amid robust demand, firms also are finding it hard to replenish depleted inventories due to the ongoing global supply chain snarls, according to the Institute for Supply Management (ISM).

ISM's services index fell 1.2 points to 55.9 percent, indicating strong but easing growth due to a decline in business activity and slowing supplier deliveries.

The prices index dropped from the all-time high of 84.6 percent in April, decreasing 2.5 percentage points to 82.1 percent, the survey showed. "Growth continues-albeit slower-for the services sector, which has expanded for all but two of the last 148 months," survey chair Anthony Nieves said in a statement. "COVID-19 continues to disrupt the services sector, as well as the war in Ukraine. Labor is still a big issue, and prices continue to increase," he said. Survey respondents noted strong demand but long delays for orders, and ongoing headaches due to the shortage of workers.

One executive in the utilities industry described the situation as "exhausting." "Continuous shortages, transportation delays and price increases all contribute to the destruction of historical lead times and firm

commitments on delivery dates. This requires placing orders earlier and qualifying secondary sources. It is relentless," the executive said.

Meanwhile, US job gains continued in May but at a slower pace, and rapid wage increases cooled as well, a welcome sign for US policymakers trying to ease red-hot inflation. President Joe Biden, who has been pummeled in opinion polls as prices have spiked, said the employment data released Friday showed the world's largest economy weathering the inflation surge while maintaining healthy growth. "We've laid an economic foundation that's historically strong," Biden said in comments in his home state of Delaware, emphasizing the resiliency of the US economy despite rising consumer prices. "Now we're moving forward to a new moment where we can build on that foundation-build a future of stable, steady growth-so we can bring down inflation without sacrificing all the historic gains we've made."

American employers added 390,000 jobs last month, the Labor Department reported, a sign of a slowdown in hiring but still a better-than-expected result amid the ongoing shortage of workers. Employers have struggled to fill open positions, which has pushed wages higher, and average hourly earnings rose another ten cents compared to April, to \$31.95. The pay rate is 5.2 percent higher over the last 12 months ended in May, but that is slightly slower than the 12-month increase posted in April, the report said.

That could be good news for the Federal Reserve, which has launched an aggressive campaign to raise interest rates to combat the highest US inflation in more than 40 years. "Average hourly earnings growth remains moderate relative to last year," former White House economic advisor Jason Furman said on Twitter. —AFP

## AU head 'reassured' after talks with Putin on food shortages

**MOSCOW:** African Union head Macky Sall said on Friday he was "reassured" after talks in Russia with President Vladimir Putin on food shortages caused by Moscow's military campaign in Ukraine.

Putin hosted the Senegalese president, who chairs the African Union, at his Black Sea residence in Sochi on the 100th day of Moscow's offensive. Global food shortages and grain supplies stuck in Ukrainian ports were high on the agenda. "I found Vladimir Putin committed and aware that the crisis and sanctions create serious problems for weak economies, such as African economies," Sall told journalists, adding that he was leaving Russia "very reassured and very happy with our exchanges".

Putin in a televised interview in the evening accused the West of "bluster" by claiming Moscow was preventing grain exports from Ukraine. "There is no problem to export grain from Ukraine," he said, suggesting several possible routes.

Exports could transit through the Russian-controlled ports of Mariupol and Berdyansk, or the Ukrainian-held port of Odessa as long as Ukraine "cleared" the waters around it of mines, according to Putin. Other transport options include the Danube River via Romania, Hungary or Poland, he added.

"But the simplest, the easiest, the cheapest would be exports via Belarus, from there one can go to Baltic ports, then to the Baltic Sea and then anywhere in the world." But Putin said any export via Belarus would be conditional on the "lifting of sanctions" by the West against Minsk, allied to Moscow.

### 'On Africa's side'

Ahead of the talks, which lasted three hours, Sall asked Putin "to become aware that our countries... are victims" of the conflict. He said it was important to work together so that "everything that concerns food, grain, fertilizer is actually outside" Western sanctions imposed on Moscow after Putin sent troops to Ukraine on February 24. In his remarks before the talks, Putin did not mention grain supplies but said Russia was "always on Africa's side" and was now keen to ramp up cooperation.

"We place great importance on our relations with African countries, and I must say this has had a certain positive result," Putin added. Washington and Brussels have imposed unprecedented sanctions against Moscow, pushing Putin to seek new markets and strengthen ties with countries in Africa and Asia. The Kremlin said the two leaders discussed expanding "political dialogue" between Russia and the African



SOCHI, Russia: Russian President Vladimir Putin meets with Senegal's President and Chairperson of the African Union (AU) Macky Sall in Sochi in this file photo on June 3, 2022. —AFP

Union as well as economic and humanitarian cooperation. Speaking to reporters earlier on Friday, Putin's spokesman said the Russian leader would explain to Sall "the real state of affairs" concerning grain supplies stuck in Ukrainian ports.

"No-one is blocking these ports, at least not from the Russian side," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said. Putin has said Moscow is ready to look for ways to ship grain stuck at Ukrainian ports but has demanded the West lift sanctions.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov is expected in Turkey next Wednesday for talks on creating a "security corridor" to unblock grain exports from Ukraine.

### 'Food emergency'

Moscow's military campaign in Ukraine and a barrage of international sanctions on Russia have disrupted supplies of fertilizer, wheat and other commodities from both countries, pushing up prices for food and fuel. Cereal prices in Africa, the world's poorest continent, have surged because of the slump in exports from Ukraine, sharpening the impact of conflict and climate change and sparking fears of social unrest.

The UN has said Africa faces an "unprecedented" crisis caused by the military operation.

On Thursday, landlocked Chad declared a "food emergency", urging the international community to help. Ships loaded with grain remain blocked in Ukraine, which before February was a leading exporter of corn and wheat and alone accounted for 50 percent of world trade in sunflower seeds and oil.

Navigation in the Black Sea has also been hampered by mines placed by both Russian and Ukrainian forces. In 2019, Putin hosted dozens of African leaders in Sochi in a bid to reassert Russia's influence on the continent. Though never a colonial power in Africa, Moscow was a crucial player on the continent in the Soviet era, backing independence movements and training a generation of African leaders. —AFP



## Lifestyle | Awards



Bollywood actress, Kriti Sanon arrives for the green carpet of 22nd edition of the International Indian Film Academy (IIFA) Awards in Abu Dhabi. — AFP photos



Bollywood actor Salman Khan (second left) with actress Divya Khosla Kumar (left) and actress Sara Ali Khan (right) attend a press conference ahead of 22nd edition of the International Indian Film Academy (IIFA) Awards.

# War film 'Shershaah' steals show as Bollywood's Oscars return

War movie "Shershaah" marched off with Best Picture and Best Director as Bollywood's Oscars returned for the first time since the pandemic began with an all-singing, all-dancing awards ceremony in Abu Dhabi on Saturday. "Shershaah", depicting Indian war hero Vikram Batra, who was killed in the 1999 Kargil conflict with Pakistan, had been tipped to dominate after receiving 12 nods for the first International Indian Film Academy Awards since 2019. "I would like to thank the family of Vikram Batra for helping me make this movie," director Vishnuvardhan told the crowd at the end of the energetic, five-hour gala in the United Arab Emirates capital.

Indian A-listers packed the ceremony, which featured a belly-dancing number during the lavishly choreographed stage show. Bollywood, the Hindi-language film industry known for its strong musical tradition, is the world's most prolific producer of movies. Best leading male went to Vicky Kaushal for "Sardar Udham", a drama depicting an Indian revolutionary's revenge on the British officer behind the 1919 Amritsar massacre. And Kriti Sanon won best female lead for "Mimi", a comedy-drama that tackles the thriving surrogacy industry and attitudes towards single mothers. Sai Tamhankar won best supporting female for the same film.

But cricket movie "83", which depicts India's seminal 1983 World Cup triumph and received nine nominations, missed out on the major prizes. The IIFA awards follow a torrid period when India and its film industry were sent reeling by COVID-19, which shuttered cinemas and triggered a rush to streaming services.

## 'You saved the film industry'

Host Salman Khan, one of Bollywood's heavyweights, opened proceedings by riding into the auditorium on a motorbike, a gold IIFA trophy perched on the handlebars. "We saw that in the last two years the world closed down. Many of us lost our loved ones. Many lost their jobs as well. We faced many difficulties. All of us together overcame the difficulty," he told the packed venue. "When the world slowly opened, cinema halls were the last to open. But it got filled up first. You saved the film industry and everyone who worked in the industry," said Khan.

Tiger Shroff, son of 1980s superstar Jacky Shroff and one of the new breed of actors, ripped off his jacket to perform the opening number bare-chested, in shades and sparkly trousers. Outside, the green carpet-switched from red in 2007 to support climate awareness-



Indian singer, Asees Kaur.



Bollywood actors, Abhishek Bachchan (left) with wife Aishwarya Rai Bachchan arrive for the green carpet.



Bollywood actor, Pankaj Tripathi (center) arrives for the green carpet of 22nd edition of the International Indian Film Academy (IIFA) Awards in Abu Dhabi.

bore glamorous stars such as Aishwarya Rai Bachchan and Urvashi Rautela, along with Emirati royalty such as Sheikh Nahyan bin Mubarak Al Nahyan, the minister of state for tolerance.

A group of nominees including A.R. Rahman, B. Praak, Jaani and Pritam shared the award for musical direction; Sharvari Wagh won best debut female and Ahan Shetty was named best debut male. Pankaj Tripathi won best supporting male actor for "Ludo". Jubin Nautiyal won best male playback singer-whose voice is dubbed over the actor's-for his work on "Shershaah".

The Hindi-language film industry was worth \$2.5 billion in 2019 and produces more movies than any other. India also releases hundreds of films in its 21 other official languages every year. But pandemic lockdowns sent the industry into a tailspin, with multiplex chains suffering major losses and dozens of small cinemas going bust. India's media and entertainment earnings slumped by a quarter to \$18.7 billion in 2020, according to accounting firm EY. The



Bollywood actor Tiger Shroff arrives for the green carpet.



Indian television presenter, Maniesh Paul arrives for the green carpet.



Indian filmmaker, Anurag Basu (left) arrives for the green carpet of 22nd edition of the International Indian Film Academy (IIFA) Awards in Abu Dhabi.

## Here's the complete list of winners:

- Best Picture - Shershaah
- Best Director - Vishnu Varadhan, Shershaah
- Best Actor In A Leading Role - Vicky Kaushal, Sardar Udham
- Best Actress In A Leading Role - Kriti Sanon, Mimi
- Best Actor In A Supporting Role - Pankaj Tripathi, Ludo
- Best Actress In A Supporting Role - Sai Tamhankar, Mimi
- Best Debut Male - Ahan Shetty, Tadap
- Best Debut Female - Sharvari Wagh, Bunty Aur Babli 2
- Best Playback Singer Male - Jubin Nautiyal, Raatan Lambiyan, Shershaah
- Best Playback Singer Female - Asees Kaur, Raatan Lambiyan, Shershaah
- Best Music (Tie) - A R Rahman, Atrangi Re, and Tanishk Bagchi, Jasleen Royal, Javed-Mohsin, Vikram Montrose, B Praak, Jaani, Shershaah
- Best Lyrics - Kausar Munir, Lehra Do, 83
- Best Story Original - Anurag Basu, Ludo
- Best Story Adapted - Kabir Khan, Sanjay Puran Singh Chauhan, 83



Actress, Nargis Fakhri arrives for the green carpet.



Actress, Amrin Qureshi arrives for the green carpet.



## Lifestyle | Features



Noureddine Jaber plays a song during rehearsals at a studio in Omdurman, the capital Khartoum's twin city. —AFP photos



A saxophonist plays a song during rehearsals at a studio in Omdurman, the capital Khartoum's twin city.



A musician plays the conga during rehearsals at a studio in Omdurman, the capital Khartoum's twin city.

# Sudan band's music empowers sidelined ethnic group

Noureddine Jaber, a musician with a unique part-guitar, part-tamboura instrument, is giving voice to Sudan's long-marginalized eastern communities through a new album. Hailing from the Red Sea city of Port Sudan, Jaber belongs to the Beja people, a group of nomadic herders and breeders with unique languages, culture, food and music. They have borne the weight of disenfranchisement especially under autocratic president Omar Al-Bashir who was ousted in 2019. But the title of his first album, due out later in June, conveys a different message: "Beja Power."

During Bashir's three-decade rule, non-Arab groups complained that his government allowed Arab culture to dominate, giving little representation to the country's many ethnic minorities. Also known as "Noori", Jaber grew up devouring the rich heritage of distinct tunes of the Beja people who trace their roots back millennia. Though he first formed his band in 2006, it was only in recent months that he

was able to record his first album, at the age of 47. "Beja music is the window to the struggles of its people," said Jaber, who called his six-member band "Dorpa", which means "the band of the mountains" in Bedawit, a Beja language. "The Beja have long been marginalized and we are trying to convey their voice through music."

Though their region is a maritime trade hub known for its lush fertile fields, and rich gold mines, it is also one of the most impoverished parts of Sudan, itself one of the poorest countries in the world. At a studio in Omdurman, the capital Khartoum's twin city, Jaber leads his band through rehearsal, producing a mellow, toe-tapping sound somewhat similar to jazz. "Let's play the 'Saagama'," Jaber tells his bandmates: a bassist, saxophonist, rhythm guitarist, bongos player, and a conga drummer. In his hand he holds his unique "tambo-guitar", an instrument he fashioned from a guitar neck and his father's vintage tamboura, a type of lyre played in East Africa. Jaber's invention is embossed with small shells and a map of Africa.

## 'Very special rhythm'

"Saagama", which means migration in Bedawit, is one of the album's most evocative tracks, inspired by ancient melodies from Sudan's east. Unlike him, the rest of the band all hail from different parts of ethnically diverse Sudan. They say it took them years to learn the Beja music scales and tones, traditionally played on drums and the tamboura. "I've never been to east Sudan. I only learned the music from Noori," conga player Mohamed Abdelazim told AFP. "The way they play drums in the east is different, very distinct. It has its own very special rhythm."

According to Jaber, the Beja's under-representation in Sudanese culture is part of why many fail to recognize their music. Under Bashir, he told AFP,



A picture shows Noureddine Jaber's unique "tambo-guitar", an instrument he fashioned from a guitar neck and his father's vintage tamboura, during rehearsals.

"the rule was for the Arab culture to prevail while other African ethnicities fade." Beja musicians regularly faced restrictions, with authorities often stopping their performances. "It could be for anything, lack of permits or because the audience were mixed groups" of men and women together, in contrast to those of Arab performers, Jaber said. Abdelhalim Adam, the band's bassist, is originally from the ethnic Folani tribe of the Darfur region, on the other side of the country in Sudan's west. For him, joining the band was particularly meaningful. "The Beja's struggle is similar to our tribes in North

Darfur," Adam said. "They are as marginalized."

Darfur was ravaged by civil war that began in 2003 when ethnic minority rebels took up arms against Bashir's Arab-dominated government, which unleashed the Janjaweed militia blamed for atrocities. Hundreds of thousands were killed and millions have been displaced since. The Beja also rebelled against Bashir's government for more than a decade. Communities in the east then joined nationwide calls for his ouster in the protests which began in 2018. —AFP



A musician plays the bongos during rehearsals at a studio in Omdurman.

## Three Chinese astronauts arrive at space station

Three Chinese astronauts arrived at the country's space station on Sunday, the Chinese space agency for human flights said, the latest stride in Beijing's aim to become a major space power. The trio blasted off in a Long March-2F rocket at 0244 GMT from the Jiuquan launch centre in northwestern China's Gobi desert, reported state broadcaster CCTV. The team is tasked with "completing in-orbit assembly and construction of the space station", as well as "commissioning of equipment" and conducting scientific experiments, state-run CGTN said Saturday.

The astronauts entered the central module



The rocket carrying the Shenzhou-14 mission with three Chinese astronauts lifts off at the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in Northwest China's Gansu Province.



Chinese astronauts Cai Xuzhe (left), Chen Dong (center) and Liu Yang pose during a ceremony prior to the launch at the Shenzhou-14 mission at the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in Northwest China's Gansu Province. —AFP photos

of the Tiangong station at around 1250 GMT, the China Manned Space Agency (CMSA) said. The journey took about "seven hours of flight", CCTV reported. Tiangong, which means "heavenly palace", is expected to become fully operational by the end of the year. China's heavily promoted space program has already seen the nation land a rover on Mars and send probes to the Moon.

The Shenzhou-14 crew is led by air force pilot Chen Dong, 43, the three-person crew's main challenge will be connecting the station's two lab modules to the main body. Dong, along with fellow pilots Liu Yang and Cai Xuzhe, will become the second crew to spend six months aboard the Tiangong after the last returned to earth in April following 183 days on the space station.

Tiangong's core module entered orbit earlier last year and is expected to operate for at least a decade. The completed station will be similar to the Soviet Mir station that orbited Earth from the 1980s until 2001.

"We are blessed by the gods," said Philippe Morel, owner of Tropicarium zoo in Servion village, western Switzerland. He said the creature was of "incredible zoological interest" as a small group of schoolchildren marveled at the baby in front of a glass window.

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) lists the Galapagos giant tortoises, which can live up to 200 years, as endangered. Around 23,000 tortoises are believed to live on the archipelago. The park's owner said he believed the albino tortoise's lifespan would be limited to a few weeks in the wild but is hopeful the creature, whose sex is still unknown, will live a long life. "It's crazy how much it climbs," Morel said.

"It's more active than the other," said his son, Thomas Morel, who is in charge of the animals at the zoo, while showing another tortoise—the usual black-born in early May. The birth is also exceptional because the tortoises have difficulty reproducing due to their size—they can reach up to 200 kilograms (440 pounds). The

## Space ambitions

The world's second-largest economy has poured billions into its military-run space program, with hopes of having a permanently crewed space station by 2022 and eventually sending humans to the Moon. The country has made large strides in catching up with the United States and Russia, whose astronauts and cosmonauts have decades of experience in space exploration. But under Chinese President Xi Jinping, the country's plans for its heavily promoted "space dream" have been put into overdrive.

In addition to a space station, Beijing is also planning to build a base on the Moon, and the country's National Space Administration said it aims to launch a crewed lunar mission by 2029. China has been excluded from the International Space Station since 2011, when the United States banned NASA from engaging with the country. While China does not plan to use its space station for global cooperation on the scale of the ISS, Beijing has said it is open to foreign collaboration. —AFP

rate of successful births is only around two percent. So far there have been new tortoise arrivals in only three zoos worldwide, including two in Switzerland. —AFP



A picture shows a unique albinos Galapagos giant tortoise baby on the back of another turtle, both born in early May at the Tropicarium of Servion, western Switzerland. —AFP

## Rare albino Galapagos giant tortoise born in Swiss zoo

Visitors to a Swiss zoo caught a glimpse on Friday of a rare albino Galapagos giant tortoise born in May. The baby tortoise may be a unique sight to behold with fair skin and red eyes. It weighs around 50 grams (1.7 ounces), and fits in the palm of one's hand. Albinism is a genetic condition that results in little or no production of the pigment melanin, which determines the color of the skin, hair and eyes. In animals, it can be accompanied by loss of sight and hearing.

The condition has never been observed in the tortoise species whose skin and shell are usually black, both in captivity and the wild.



In this file photo US singer Mariah Carey participates in the ceremonial lighting of the Empire State Building in celebration of the 25th anniversary of "All I Want For Christmas Is You" in New York City. —AFP

## Mariah Carey sued for \$20 million over Christmas smash hit

Mariah Carey has been sued in the United States for alleged copyright infringement over her global hit 1994 song "All I Want for Christmas Is You," court documents show. The plaintiff, a musician named Andy Stone, says he co-wrote and recorded a festive song of the same name in 1989 and never gave permission for it to be used. In the suit filed on Friday in Louisiana, Stone alleges that Carey and her co-writer Walter Afanasieff "knowingly, willfully, and intentionally engaged in a campaign to infringe" his copyright.

He is seeking damages of \$20 million for alleged financial loss. Carey's song is one of the most successful music singles of all time, topping the charts in more than two dozen countries and enjoying considerable air-time every Christmas. It features prominently in the 2003 Christmas-themed romantic comedy film "Love Actually." The song has sold an estimated 16 million copies worldwide and earned Carey a reported \$60 million in royalties over the last three decades. Stone's song, released with his band Vince Vance and the Valiants, enjoyed moderate success on Billboard's country music charts.

Despite having the same titles, the songs sound different and have different lyrics. Stone, though, accuses Carey and Afanasieff of aiming to "exploit the popularity and unique style" his song, causing "confusion." "Defendants' unauthorized use of the 'All I Want for Christmas Is You' in association with their exploitation of the derivative work acts to capitalize on the goodwill and unique talent of Plaintiff in an effort to obtain commercial advantage," the suit says. It was unclear why Stone has filed the suit almost 30 years after Carey released her song. —AFP



## Sports

# Stokes, Root spark England revival against New Zealand

## England captain sets up a dramatic finish

**LONDON:** England captain Ben Stokes rode his luck as he combined with predecessor Joe Root in a thrilling rally at Lord's on Saturday to set up a dramatic finish to the first Test against New Zealand. England were 216 for five at stumps on the third day, needing just 61 more runs to reach a victory target of 277 but with no more recognized batsmen left to come in.

In what is Stokes' first match as skipper since succeeding Root, England collapsed in familiar fashion to be 69 for four, with towering paceman Kyle Jamieson taking four for 49. Stokes himself might have been out for one after playing on to opposing all-rounder Colin de Grandhomme, only to be reprieved by a marginal no-ball call. He then celebrated his 31st birthday with a dashing 54 - England's first fifty of this match-while star batsman Root was 77 not out at stumps after the close friends had put on 90 for the fifth wicket.

Wicketkeeper Ben Foakes then kept Root company with an unbeaten nine off 48 balls. England, bottom of the World Test Championship table after

winning just one of their previous 17 matches, now have a chance to take a 1-0 lead in this three-match series. Earlier, England great Stuart Broad sparked a sensational New Zealand collapse after Daryl Mitchell made a hundred as the World Test champions, who had been 251 for four, were dismissed for 285.

But by then Mitchell, who made 108, and Tom Blundell (96) had shared a stand of 195 - more than either New Zealand (132) or England (141) managed in their first innings. Mitchell insisted the hosts would have their work cut out on Sunday in what is also former New Zealand captain Brendon McCullum's first match as England's Test coach. "The morning is the toughest time to bat," Mitchell told BBC Radio. "Hopefully, the ball will zip around and it will give us the opportunity to win the match. "We know that we are one wicket away from being into their bowlers."

### 'Game on'

Broad, meanwhile, was glad England were back

in the match. "It's game on, isn't it?" he said. "Stokesy played a really good knock and if he was still in, it would be close to game over but it was great bowling from Jamieson." He added: "Root has been so reliable for years, he calms the dressing room down, and holds the key tomorrow (Sunday)." Jamieson removed openers Alex Lees and Zak Crawley before Ollie Pope fell cheaply for the second time this match, bowled by a superb ball from left-arm quick Trent Boult.

And when Jamieson cleaned up Jonny Bairstow, England were reeling at 69 for four on a good pitch and in sunny conditions seemingly ideal for batting. New Zealand were a bowler down when the unlucky de Grandhomme went off with a heel injury and left-arm spinner Ajaz Patel, who had taken all 10 India wickets in his last Test in Mumbai in December, saw Stokes slog-sweep a six off just his second delivery on Saturday. But Stokes, trying to uppercut a rising short ball from Jamieson that cramped him for room, feathered a catch to wicketkeeper Blundell.

The unobtrusive Root then completed a 107-ball fifty, taking one ball more to get to the landmark than Stokes. New Zealand had resumed on 236 for four, a lead of 227. Mitchell was 97 not out overnight and Blundell unbeaten on 90 after they had come together with the Black Caps in trouble at 56 for four. The 31-year-old wasted no time in reaching his second Test century and first abroad, driving Broad for three from his first ball Saturday to bring up a 189-ball hundred including 11 fours.

After waiting 366 deliveries to take the fifth wicket, England then astonishingly collected three in three balls. Broad, recalled with James Anderson after England's two all-time leading Test wicket-takers were controversially left out of a series loss in the Caribbean, had Mitchell caught behind and bowled Jamieson either side of Pope running out de Grandhomme. Blundell, a helpless observer as the wickets tumbled, took his score to 96 only to fall short of a hundred when plumb lbw to Anderson. —AFP

## Derby crown fits Stoute, the doyen of 'Sport of Kings'

**PARIS:** "He is no longer a spring chicken but he has not lost his talent," Michael Holding told AFP regarding Michael Stoute, the trainer who proved his close friend right on Saturday by winning his sixth Epsom Derby. Whilst Stoute raised his top hat to salute Desert Crown crossing the winning line, three cheers rang out for him as he became at 76 the oldest trainer to win the 'blue riband' of flat racing. "It was wrong, it should have been for the horse," joked Stoute. "I appreciate it though. It has been a great afternoon. "I am to be proud of that (oldest trainer to win the Derby at age 76), I'm proud of the horse."

The cricket-mad Barbados-born trainer was a fitting victor on a day the race was named in memory of another titan of the turf, nine-time Derby winning jockey Lester Piggott, who died aged 86 last Sunday. Extraordinarily, it had been 12 years since Stoute's previous Derby winner Workforce, and he had just three runners in the race since then prior to Desert Crown's success. The best of those had been Carlton House, owned by Queen Elizabeth II, who went off favorite in 2011 and finished third.

The Queen had been unable to attend the Derby and watched an event which was part of the Platinum Jubilee celebrations on television from Windsor Castle. "It is very nice (winning the Derby on a jubilee year) but I'm sad I didn't win it for her (the Queen) as I think we were unlucky with Carlton House," said Stoute. "That would have been the biggest thrill." Desert Crown may not have won in the style of Stoute's first Derby winner, the ill-fated Shergar, who won the 1981 edition by a record 10 lengths, but the trainer has described the latter as a freak.

### 'Pack up and do what?'

Holding says another feature of Stoute-they have been firm friends since the legendary West Indies pace bowler visited his stables in 1985 — is how modest he is. Stoute has never been one to shout about his successes- "he is not a good communicator in public" says Holding-as when in 2018 he broke the record for winners at Royal Ascot which he held jointly with his late great rival Henry Cecil.

"Henry's record was formidable because he accumulated them when Royal Ascot was a four-day meeting for most of his career, I have had more five-day weeks," said Stoute. Once again on Saturday it was left to others, like his long-serving assistant trainer James Savage, to sing the praises of a man who has been training for 50 years. "This is my 23rd season with Sir Michael and it is my fourth Derby win there," said Savage.

"It is a special place Freemason Lodge (Stoute's stables). "He is an extremely loyal man and a very fair man and you know if there is a good horse around he will get the best out of it. "There is a reason I've stayed there for so long. It is because I like working for a fair man and a very good trainer." Stoute, whose father was chief of the Barbados police, suffered a huge personal loss when his long time partner Coral died in 2020 — he said earlier this week he "thought of her every day."

Holding, who has retired to the Cayman Islands and admits he misses more his daily visits to the stables than commenting on cricket, said it was not in the nature of the man to give up after such a heavy blow. "Everybody is saying is he going to pack up?" said Holding. "I said to myself 'pack up and do what? Sit in the house and watch TV and read the paper'... that is not his style or life. "He has put so much time and effort into training, he ain't going to lose it (his talent) like that." —AFP

## Fourth West Asia Futsal tournament



By Abdellatif Sharaa

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Futsal National team seeks to win their match with Saudi Arabia on Monday in the



second round of first group competitions of the 4th West Asia Futsal tournament. Palestine (from the same group) will play Iraq (4:00 pm). Saudi Arabia's team top the standings with 3 points, then Kuwait



and Iraq -second - and third respectively with one point and Palestine remains pointless in fourth place. The first round saw an exciting match between Kuwait and Iraq that ended 2-2.

## Handball Cup winners tournament kicks off

By Abdellatif Sharaa

**KUWAIT:** The 38th Gulf Handball Cup winners tournament kicked off on Saturday at Sheikh Saad Al-Abdallah halls complex with the host (Kuwait sports club) beating Muscat team 28-18. Earlier matches saw Al-Ahli (Qatar) beat Al-Jazeera (UAE) 28-26. Both matches are from the first group. In the second group, Mudar Club (Saudi Arabia) defeated Kuwait's Salmiya Club 26-21.

Kuwait and Mudar clubs' goalkeepers were instrumental in securing the wins. Hassan Safar and Abdelmalek Salahji were awarded best player of the match in recognition of their efforts. On Monday, the third round of the preliminaries will feature Oman vs UAE's Aljazeera at 5:00 pm. This will be followed by a match between Bahrain's Al-Najma and Saudi Arabia's Mudar.

### Seewan retires

The first day of the tournament was marked with the official pronouncement of retirement of National team player Hussein Seewan, who retired after 20 years on the court. He won many tournaments while playing for Sulaibkhat, Qurain, Kuwait, Arabi, Qadisiya, Salmiya and Burgan. He also played for Al-Sadd from Qatar.

The retirement match was under the patronage of Deputy Speaker of National Assembly Ahmad Al-Shuhoumi who was present along with Director General of Public Authority for Sport Dr Humoud Fulaiteh and Kuwait Club Chairman Khalid Al-Ghanim. Al-Shuhoumi lauded the performance of Hussein Seewan.

Meanwhile, Chairman of Kuwait Sports Club Khalid Al-Ghanim welcomed the participating teams in Kuwait. "We are extremely happy with this gathering and we wish them all good luck," he said. Al-Ghanim said Kuwait Club handball team aims at winning the Gulf tournament despite the significant competition.



Kuwait players celebrate



pull clear at the top of the leaderboard at 13-under 203 after 54 holes.

The 35-year-old world number 17, chasing the seventh PGA Tour victory of his career, set the tone for a spectacular round after chipping in from just off the green on the par-four first hole from 44 feet to claim his opening birdie. He rolled in a 10-foot birdie putt on the par-five fifth, and then grabbed another on the seventh when his wedge from 114 yards landed within four feet of the cup.

Another birdie followed on the par-3 eighth when Horschel's tee-shot left him with a six-foot putt, and three more birdies after the turn completed a magnificent round. It marked a stark contrast from Horschel's outing at the Charles Schwab Challenge at

Colonial last week, when he failed to reach the weekend after missing the cut. "I just don't like missing cuts, simple as that. I don't miss a lot of them and when I do I get ticked off about it," said Horschel, who has posted just one bogey through three rounds this week.

"We just haven't played well, the swing hasn't been good enough, and the putting hasn't been good enough. "I just said this week, 'Forget it. I'm going to go out there and try and win this thing' and get back to the mindset that I'm one of the top players in the world and I can compete anywhere against anybody," he added. Aaron Wise and second-round leader Cameron Smith head the chasing pack, five shots off the lead at eight under. —AFP

## Horschel pulls clear with sizzling 65 at Memorial

**WASHINGTON:** Billy Horschel fired a brilliant seven-under-par 65 to take a commanding five-shot lead after the third round of the PGA Tour's Memorial tournament at Muirfield Village in Ohio on Saturday. Horschel's superb short play engineered seven birdies in a flawless bogey-free round that saw the American



## Sports

# England beaten in Hungary; Italy hold Germany in Nations League

## Ireland slump to a first defeat in nine games

**PARIS:** A tired England side went down to a surprise 1-0 defeat in Hungary in the UEFA Nations League on Saturday, while Germany had to come from behind to draw 1-1 with an inexperienced Italy team. RB Leipzig star Dominik Szoboszlai scored the only goal of the game from the penalty spot in the second half in Budapest as Hungary beat England for the first time since 1962. Defeat on penalties to Italy in the European Championship final last year was the only time Gareth Southgate's side had been beaten in their previous 22 games.

"We proved at Euro 2020 what we're capable of doing against the best, and we've shown this again. The tough thing will be to repeat this," Hungary captain Adam Szalai told broadcaster M4 Sport. England's line-up featured debuts for Leicester City full-back James Justin and West Ham United forward Jarrod Bowen, but the visitors failed to trouble the hosts, who were roared on by a 30,000 crowd largely consisting of school children.

"They are bitterly disappointed because we want to keep winning matches. If we want to be a team right at the top tier of football, we need to come here and win," said England manager Gareth Southgate, before conceding that fatigue played a role. "It has been a long season. The heat was a factor and took a lot out of the players." Hungary were forced to play the game behind closed doors due to the behavior of fans during their home matches at Euro 2020.

However, UEFA guidelines allow children under the age of 14 to be given free tickets under such circumstances and the Hungarian Football Federation took full

advantage. The goal came in the 66th minute, with Szoboszlai beating Jordan Pickford from the spot after England substitute Reece James was adjudged to have fouled Zsolt Nagy. Southgate's men will next face Germany and Italy, who played out an entertaining stalemate in Bologna in Saturday's other League A, Group 3 game.

### Ireland lose

Roma captain Lorenzo Pellegrini gave a much-changed Italy team the lead 20 minutes from time when he turned in a superb cross from teenage debutant Wilfried Gnonto. Gnonto, 18, had just been sent on after impressing in FC Zurich's run to this season's Swiss Super League title.

However, Germany needed just three minutes to draw level as the home defense failed to clear Jonas Hofmann's ball into the middle and Joshua Kimmich fired in. Germany play England in Munich on Tuesday while European champions Italy-looking to move on following their failure to qualify for the World Cup-host Hungary before travelling to face Southgate's side in Wolverhampton next weekend.

Elsewhere the Republic of Ireland slumped to a first defeat in nine games as they suffered a surprise 1-0 loss away in Armenia. Eduard Spertsyan scored the only goal in the second half in Yerevan in the League B, Group 1 opener. Armenia now travel to play Scotland on Wednesday while Ireland host Ukraine the same night before facing Scotland in Dublin next weekend.

There were also Nations League wins on Saturday for Montenegro, Luxembourg and Turkey while



**BUDAPEST:** Hungary's midfielder Dominik Szoboszlai (center) scores the opening goal from the penalty spot past England's goalkeeper Jordan Pickford during the UEFA Nations League football match Hungary v England at the Puskas Arena in Budapest, Hungary, on June 4, 2022. —AFP

Finland were held 1-1 at home by Bosnia and Herzegovina after taking the lead through a Teemu Pukki penalty. The winners of each of the four groups in League A will go through to the final stages in June

next year with promotion and relegation between the other leagues and the chance to earn places in Euro 2024 qualifying play-offs for teams who fail to qualify via the usual route. —AFP

## Mane grabs hat-trick for Senegal and hints at leaving Liverpool

**JOHANNESBURG:** Sadio Mane scored a hat-trick as Senegal overcame Benin 3-1 on Saturday in the first match of their Africa Cup of Nations title defence, and hinted that he will not be at Liverpool next season. Speaking to the media before the Group I clash, Mane said: "I will do what they (the Senegalese people) want. "Like everyone else, I am on social media and see the comments. Is it not between 60 and 70 percent of Senegalese want me to leave Liverpool?" Mane, who forms a deadly strike partnership with two-time African Footballer of the Year Mohamed Salah from Egypt, has been linked to German giants Bayern Munich.

He had said he would reveal his future plans after Liverpool lost to Real Madrid in the Champions League final last weekend, but did not do so. "We will see soon," he told the media conference in Senegal. "Do not be in hurry because we will see this together." The 30-year-old reigning African Footballer of the Year converted a 12th-minute penalty at the national stadium in Diamniadio near Dakar. Mane struck again on 23 minutes, bursting into the box and scoring at the second attempt after goalkeeper Saturnin Allagbe blocked his initial shot.

Benin had Sessi D'Almeida sent off

early in the second half of the 2023 qualifier and Mane completed his hat-trick on the hour from another penalty before Junior Olaitan reduced arrears. Next up for Senegal is a trip to Rwanda on Tuesday, and it is hard to imagine any result other than another victory for the Teranga Lions. Rwanda drew 1-1 away to Mozambique and they share second place behind Senegal and ahead of Benin, who were guided by caretaker Moussa Latoundji after the departure of French coach Michel Dussuyer.

### Dream debut

Eric Chelle, whose coaching experience has been limited to French lower-league clubs, made a dream debut as boss of Mali, who hammered Congo Brazzaville 4-0 in Bamako. Mohamed Camara put the Malians ahead with just one minute on the clock and they were four goals ahead by half-time as El Bilal Toure netted twice and Kalifa Coulibaly once. Mali top Group G on goal difference from the Gambia, who edged South Sudan 1-0 through a goal from Ablie Jallow at the end of the opening half.

Gambia debuted in the Cup of Nations this year and beat higher ranked sides Tunisia and Guinea and held Mali before bowing to hosts Cameroon in the quarter-finals. Algeria coach Djamel Belmadi made



**DIAMNIADIO:** Sadio Mane, the man of the match against Benin, runs with the ball at the Stade Me Abdoulaye Wade of Diamniadio on June 4, 2022, during the first day of the CAN 2022 qualifiers against Benin. —AFP

sweeping squad changes after the then defending champions made a stunning first-round Cup of Nations exit, then lost a 2022 World Cup play-off against Cameroon. Among those axed was West Ham United forward Said Benrahma, while Manchester City winger Riyad Mahrez, the Desert Foxes' captain, missed out due to an undisclosed injury.

Despite the introduction of young blood it was an old hand-centre-back Aissa Mandi—who set up a 2-0 Group F victory over Uganda in Algiers. Islam Slimani nodded a free-kick against the crossbar and the rebound struck the Villarreal defender on the shoulder and fell into the net after 28 minutes. The boost of a first-minute

headed goal by George Mwaigomole was not enough to produce a win for Tanzania in the same group with Niger levelling through Daniel Sosah to force a 1-1 draw.

In other matches, Mauritania hammered Sudan 3-0, Namibia and Burundi drew 1-1 and the match between the Democratic Republic of Congo and Gabon started four hours late. A jet carrying the Gabonese delegation from Paris to Kinshasa developed problems and had to make an emergency landing in Barcelona. On Sunday, Salah-inspired Egypt host Guinea while Qatar World Cup qualifiers Ghana and Tunisia are away to the Central African Republic and Botswana respectively. —AFP

## US' Na quits PGA Tour to play Saudi-backed series

**LOS ANGELES:** Veteran US golfer Kevin Na said Saturday he has resigned from the PGA Tour in order to avoid facing sanc-

tions for playing in the Saudi-backed LIV Golf Invitational Series. The 38-year-old world number 33, who has five victories on the PGA Tour, was this week named in the field for the lucrative new series' opening event teeing off in Britain next week.

Several other golfers including former world number one Dustin Johnson and European Ryder Cup stars such as Ian Poulter and Lee Westwood have also signed up to the event. The PGA Tour has warned that members playing in the opening LIV tournament—which clashes with the tour's RBC Canadian Open—will face unspecified disciplinary action. Na

said Saturday he was seeking the "freedom to play wherever I want and exercising my right as a free agent gives me that opportunity." "However, to remain a PGA Tour player, I must give up my right to make these choices about my career," Na wrote on Twitter. "If I exercise my right to choose where and when I play golf, then I cannot remain a PGA Tour player without facing disciplinary proceedings and legal action from the PGA Tour. "I am sad to share that I have chosen to resign from the PGA Tour. This has not been an easy decision and not one taken lightly. —AFP

## Avalanche reach brink of NHL Final by beating Oilers

**MONTREAL:** JT Compher scored the deciding goal with 7:18 remaining, and Colorado moved one victory from the National Hockey League's Stanley Cup Final on Saturday by defeating Edmonton 4-2. The victory gave the Avalanche a 3-0 lead in the best-of-seven Western Conference final, and Colorado can complete a sweep with a victory Monday at Edmonton.

With another triumph, the Avalanche—who won the first two games in Denver—would advance to face either the defending champions Tampa Bay Lightning or the New York Rangers for the crown. With the game deadlocked, Edmonton's Evan Bouchard fired a slapshot off the goalpost, and Colorado cleared the puck just as Avalanche left wing Compher was released from the penalty box. Compher won the puck from Bouchard, skated in alone on Oilers goalie Mike Smith and slid the puck past him to give Colorado a 3-2 edge.

Mikko Rantanen added a goal into an unguarded net with 30 seconds remaining to provide the Avs' final victory margin. Colorado became the first team since the 2011 Los Angeles Kings to win its first six road games in an NHL playoff run. Edmonton's Connor McDavid opened the scoring only 38 seconds into the contest, and the Oilers then killed a five-minute penalty on Edmonton's Evander Kane for boarding Colorado's Nazem Kadri, who didn't return.

The Avalanche equalized with 3:48 remaining in the first period when a puck centered by Colorado's Valeri Nichushkin was tipped by Edmonton's Darnell Nurse past Smith into the goal. Nichushkin, a 27-year-old Russian right wing, netted his second goal of the night past a screened Smith at 4:37 of the second period to put the Avalanche ahead. But Edmonton's Ryan McLeod answered with an unassisted goal 7:34 into the third period to lift the Oilers level at 2-2, setting the stage for the late drama. Czech goalie Pavel Francouz made 27 saves for the Avalanche. —AFP

# Classifieds

## Hospitals & Clinics

|                           |            |                     |          |
|---------------------------|------------|---------------------|----------|
| Sabah Hospital            | 24812000   | Rawda               | 22517733 |
| Amiri Hospital            | 22450005   | Adaliya             | 22517144 |
| Maternity Hospital        | 24843100   | Khalidiya           | 24848075 |
| Mubarak Al-Kabir Hospital | 25312700   | Kaifan              | 24849807 |
| Chest Hospital            | 24849400   | Shamiya             | 24848913 |
| Farwaniya Hospital        | 24892010   | Shuwaikh            | 24814507 |
| Adan Hospital             | 23940620   | Abdullah Salem      | 22549134 |
| Ibn Sina Hospital         | 24840300   | Nuzha               | 22526804 |
| Al-Razi Hospital          | 24846000   | Industrial Shuwaikh | 24814764 |
| Physiotherapy Hospital    | 24874330/9 | Qadsiya             | 22515088 |
| <b>Clinics</b>            |            | Dasmah              | 22532265 |
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## Nadal wins 14th French Open title

Oldest male champion at Roland Garros • Victory extends record to 22 Grand Slams

**PARIS:** Rafael Nadal won a 14th French Open and record-extending 22nd Grand Slam title on Sunday with a straight-sets rout of Casper Ruud to become the oldest male champion at Roland Garros and he vowed to “keep fighting”. In a disappointing final, 36-year-old Nadal won 6-3, 6-3, 6-0 with victory coming 17 years to the day since he claimed his first French Open as a 19-year-old in 2005.

Nadal won the last 11 games of the final and is now two Slams ahead of old rivals Novak Djokovic and Roger Federer with Sunday’s victory coming against all the odds. Nadal, the oldest winner in Paris since a 34-year-old Andre Gimeno in 1972, had not been certain of taking part after a chronic left foot injury, which has plagued him throughout his career, flared up again.

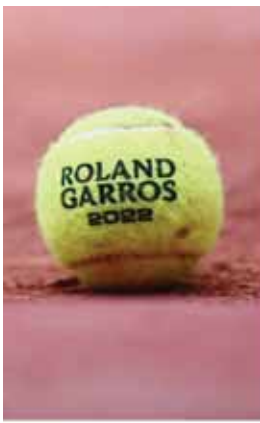
He also needed the best part of a grueling 12 hours to see off Felix Auger-Aliassime, Novak Djokovic and Alexander Zverev in the previous three rounds. “I don’t know what I would do in terms of injuries if it wasn’t for the team, my family and everyone around me,” said Nadal. “I would’ve already retired much before if it wasn’t for you. I never believed, that I’d be here at 36, being competitive again. Being here, means a lot to me on the most important court in my career. It helps me to keep going. For me, it’s incredible to play here. It’s an incredible feeling. I don’t know what can happen in the future, but I’m going to keep fighting to try to keep going.”

His two-hour 18-minute win on Sunday took his record at the tournament to 112 wins against just three losses and also put him halfway to a rare calendar men’s Grand Slam last achieved by Rod Laver in 1969. “The most important thing is to congratulate Rafa,” said Ruud.

### ‘True champion’

“You are a true champion. This is the first time I have faced you so now I know what it’s like to be the victim! There will be many others. “You have taken me into your academy with open arms and you are a true inspiration to me. We all hope you continue for some more time.” Nadal, unbeaten in 13 previous finals in Paris and playing in his 30th Grand Slam decider, got off to a flying start against Ruud, the first Norwegian man to feature in a championship match at the majors.

He broke for 2-0 and even though he handed the break straight back courtesy of a two uncharacteristic double faults, he was quickly back in front again for 3-1. The Spaniard wrapped up the opener in 49 minutes against his 23-year-old opponent who has trained at his academy in Manacor since 2018. World number eight Ruud,



**PARIS:** This combination of file pictures created on June 5, 2022 shows Spanish Rafael Nadal holding the Mousquetaires (Musketeers) Cup after his 14 victories at the tennis French Open at Roland Garros. Nadal won a 14th French Open and record-extending 22nd Grand Slam title with a straight-sets rout of Casper Ruud to become the oldest male champion at Roland Garros. —AFP

the in-form player on clay since the start of 2020 with 66 wins on the surface, was under siege again in the second set, having to fight off three break points in the opening game.

There was a sudden glimmer of hope when he broke for 3-1 with Nadal again coughing up a

double fault. However, Nadal roared back with a double break for 4-3. Ruud saved three set points in the ninth game but his first double fault of the final handed Nadal a two-set lead. Nadal had said on the eve of the final that he would rather lose Sunday’s match in exchange for a new foot.

However, without needing to hit top gear, he was in complete control against Ruud, racing away to the title with three breaks in a third set which was over in 30 minutes. Nadal sealed the win with a backhand down the line, his 37th winner of the final. —AFP

## Inoue, Donaire promise repeat of 2019 classic

**TOKYO:** Naoya Inoue and Nonito Donaire produced a stone-cold bantamweight boxing classic when they fought in Japan in 2019, and the pair are promising that more is in store in Tuesday’s much-anticipated sequel. Japan’s “Monster” Inoue and “Filipino Flash” Donaire will meet again in Saitama for a unification bout that sees the unbeaten Inoue’s WBA and IBF world titles and Donaire’s WBC belt on the line.

Inoue claimed a unanimous points win when the two met at the same venue in November 2019, in a bout that was voted fight of the year by the Boxing Writers Association of America. Inoue recovered from a fractured eye socket and double vision early on to floor Philippines veteran Donaire in the 11th round and walk away with the World Boxing Super Series trophy.

It was the first time the ferocious-punching Inoue had been seriously tested in his career, and he has since gone from strength to strength. He is unbeaten in all his 22 bouts, winning 19 by knock-out, and is regarded as one of world boxing’s best pound-for-pound fighters. The 39-year-old Donaire bounced back from the defeat to become the oldest world champion at 118 pounds (53.52kg) when he beat Nordine Oubaali for the WBC bantamweight title in May last year.

Donaire, who has won nine world title belts across four weight divisions in a storied 21-year professional career, told reporters this week that his first fight against Inoue “felt like an awakening”. “Since the last fight against Inoue, I’ve changed everything in order to become stronger—my diet, my training, my mind set, everything,” said Donaire, who defended his title by knocking out fellow Filipino Reymart Gaballo in December. “Now I have a strong desire to win.”

Donaire says his “purpose” is to unify the four main bantamweight belts, with Inoue and Britain’s WBO interim champion Paul Butler standing in his way. Inoue has the same goal and intends to achieve it before the year is out. The 29-year-old Inoue’s most recent fight was an eighth-round



**SAITAMA:** In this file photo, Naoya Inoue of Japan (right) and Nonito Donaire of Philippines fight in their World Boxing Super Series bantamweight final at Saitama Super Arena in Saitama. — AFP

stoppage of unheralded Thai Aran Dipaen in Tokyo in December. He is determined to make Tuesday’s fight against Donaire more one-sided than their last encounter, telling reporters, “it will be over without him touching me”.

### ‘Drama in Saitama’

“I think Donaire might retire if he loses,” Inoue told reporters. “People say Donaire can still do the business but it’s not going to be that kind of fight.” Inoue dismissed the bout’s “Drama in Saitama” tagline, saying “there won’t be any drama this time”. But Donaire showed in December that he still packs a punch, knocking out Gaballo in the fourth round with a thunderous body shot to take his record to 42-6 with 28 KOs. Donaire is now the face of Philippines boxing, after spending years in the shadow of the recently retired Manny Pacquiao, and he is enjoying a resurgence late in his career.

A likeable and popular figure outside the ring, he treated Japanese reporters to an impromptu impression of his favorite “Dragon Ball” anime character earlier this week. He said the fight will be “lots of fun”, and refused to entertain any negative thoughts as he prepared to battle the man nicknamed “Monster”. “I am the undisputed—that goes into my head, that goes into my meditation,” said Donaire. “In the next few days, that’s all I’m saying. I am the best, I am the champion, I am the undisputed.”—AFP

## ‘Smart’ Haney outpunches Kambosos

**MELBOURNE:** Unbeaten American Devin Haney fought a “smart fight” to comfortably beat Australia’s George Kambosos on points Sunday and become the first undisputed lightweight world champion in modern boxing history. Highly-rated WBC title holder Haney, a clear favorite, successfully defended his belt for a fifth time and in the process took the WBA, IBF and WBO straps off Kambosos with a unanimous verdict in Melbourne.

Victory made him the first undisputed lightweight champion since Pernell Whitaker in 1992 and the first in the four-belt era, which began in 2004. Kambosos was undone by Haney’s sensational speed, instinct and relentless left jab that frustrated the Australian who struggled to land enough big blows.

It was a defensive masterclass by the American, whose slick skills and tactical nous won the day in front of a 41,000-strong pro-Kambosos crowd at an electric Marvel Stadium. All three judges scored in Haney’s favour, 116-112, 116-112 and 118-110. “This is a dream come true,” said Haney, who got a big boost on the eve of the fight when his father and lead trainer Bill was granted an 11th-hour visa after initially being denied entry to Australia over a three-decades-old drugs conviction.

“I knew this was a big moment, it would have hurt me to win this without my dad so I’m glad he was here in my corner. “I was comfortable,” added the 23-year-old. “I was sticking to the game plan to hit and not get hit. I fought a smart fight. I handicapped him of his best things.” Victory in the 135-pound limit fight stretched his phenomenal record to 28-0 with 15 KOs while Kambosos, 28, suffered his first professional defeat in 21 bouts since making his professional debut in 2013.

The win elevates Haney to an exclusive club of fighters. He is only the eighth boxer to hold all four belts from the major sanctioning bodies—WBC, WBA, IBF and WBO—at the same time. The seven others are Bernard Hopkins (middleweight), Jermain Taylor (middleweight), Terence Crawford (super lightweight), Oleksandr Usyk (cruiserweight), Josh Taylor (super lightweight), Saul Alvarez (super middleweight) and Jermell Charlo (super welterweight).



**MELBOURNE:** Devin Haney of the US (right) fights with Australia’s George Kambosos during their lightweight title boxing match in Melbourne on June 5, 2022. — AFP

### Respect

There was a rematch clause in the fight contract and Haney vowed: “I will be back”. Kambosos, who stunned Teofimo Lopez at Madison Square Garden in November to claim the WBA, IBF and WBO titles, was originally in talks to fight Vasily Lomachenko in his first title defense. But the plans fell through when the Ukrainian opted to stay in his homeland after Russia invaded which opened the door to Haney. “I have to change a few things and I will get him back later this year,” said Kambosos. “I landed a few shots, but he had a smart game plan and did what he had to do to win. He got the decision and respect to him.”

Haney’s dangerous left jab troubled Kambosos from round one as they sized each other up. Kambosos landed a huge right in the second round, similar to the one that dropped Lopez, but Haney looked unbothered and continued jabbing to good effect. Looking for a way inside, Kambosos was in constant motion but couldn’t produce any telling blows. He finally found the target with a vicious left hook to the head at the death in round four, but Haney kept jabbing with Kambosos’s face showing wear with his left eye swollen and red.

With the crowd roaring Kambosos on, the fight sprung to life in round nine with both men swinging, but it was a desperate final act by the Australian who knew he was facing defeat. On a stacked undercard, Australian Jason Moloney knocked out Filipino Aston Pallete in round three to claim the vacant WBO international bantamweight crown. —AFP