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# Environment group warns air pollution worsening in Kuwait

## Green Line blames oil, industrial sectors for rising emissions

### EU celebrates Europe Day in Kuwait



KUWAIT: Envoys of European Union member states in Kuwait gather to celebrate Europe Day, the National Day of the European Union, at Shaheed Park on May 9, 2022. This Day celebrates solidarity and unity in Europe. Information booths from the European Union and the 17 EU member states with diplomatic representation in Kuwait offered national specialties and showcased culture. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

By Faten Omar

KUWAIT: The Green Line Environmental Group has warned the Kuwaiti government about worsening air pollution in the country. In its weekly environment newsletter, Green Line said Kuwait is among the most polluted countries in the world, according to the World Air Quality Index, where Kuwait is ranked 11th over high rates of air pollution.

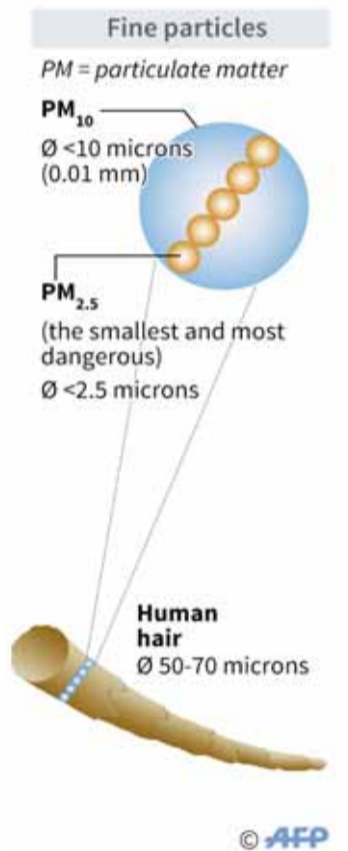
The environmental group said the global index monitors PM2.5, most dangerous particulate matter, adding Kuwait faces a huge environmental problem caused by the oil sector and other industrial operations that lead to a high density of dangerous emissions. PM2.5 includes toxins like sulfate and black carbon, which pose the greatest health risks since they can penetrate deep into the lungs or cardiovascular system.

According to Green Line, air pollution is worsening daily despite government promises to address this problem since the establishment of the Environment Public Authority in 1995. Environmental expert Mansoura Khurabet, Green Line Vice President for Environmental

and Scientific Affairs, has previously issued similar warnings. "We are constantly warning about PM2.5, which is the most severe type of air pollutant and the most dangerous to public health in Kuwait," she said.

Khurabet stressed air pollution is considered a crime that violates environmental and human rights, and it is necessary to hold those who cause it responsible, indicating PM2.5 leads to health effects that depend on the period of exposure. If a person is exposed to PM2.5 emissions for a short period, the symptoms are cough, intense tightening in the chest and a feeling of suffocation. But if the exposure is for longer periods, it may have serious outcomes such as cancer, chronic lung disease and heart and blood diseases.

A full 99 percent of people on Earth breathe air containing too many pollutants, the World Health Organization said last month, blaming poor air quality for an estimated seven million deaths each year. Fresh data from the UN health agency showed that every corner of the globe is dealing with air pollution, although the problem is much worse in poorer countries.



### News in brief

#### Central Bank rejects transfer fees

KUWAIT: The Central Bank of Kuwait on Monday warned local banks against collecting any fees on local online transfers. Such fees require new approvals to maintain balanced relations between banks and clients and support the trend towards digital transformation and encouraging clients to use online channels, it said in a statement.

#### Indian rupee falls to new low

MUMBAI: The Indian rupee plunged to an all-time low against the greenback on Monday, as US monetary policy tightening roiled sentiment and foreign investors continued to dump domestic stocks. The rupee fell past its previous record low of 76.98 against the US dollar in March to 77.56 on Monday. — AFP (See Page 8)



RIYADH: Saudi Transport Minister Saleh bin Nasser Al-Jasser takes part in the Future Aviation Forum on May 9, 2022. — AFP

#### Saudi eyes aviation market

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia on Monday pitched aviation industry leaders on its plans to become a global travel hub. The kingdom's aviation goals include more than tripling annual traffic to 330 million passengers by the end of the decade. It also wants to draw \$100 billion in investments to the sector by 2030, establish a new national flag carrier, construct a new "mega airport" in Riyadh and move up to five million tons of cargo each year. Officials outlined how they intend to hit those targets during a global aviation forum that began Monday in Riyadh. — AFP (See Page 4)

### Sri Lanka prime minister quits as violence kills 5

COLOMBO: Sri Lankan Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa quit on Monday, as an outbreak of political violence killed five people including an MP and wounded almost 200. Lawmaker Amarakeerthi Athukorala from the ruling party shot two people - killing a 27-year-old man - and then took his own life after being surrounded by a mob of anti-government protesters outside Colombo, police said.

And another ruling-party politician who was not named opened fire on anti-government protesters in the southern town of Weeraketiya, killing two and wounding five, according to police. Sri Lanka has suffered months of blackouts and dire shortages of food, fuel and medicines in its worst economic crisis since independence.

This sparked weeks of overwhelmingly peaceful demonstrations against President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, as well as his brother the prime minister. On Monday scores of Rajapaksa loyalists attacked unarmed protesters camping outside the president's office on a seafront promenade in downtown Colombo, AFP reporters said.

Continued on Page 6



COLOMBO: A vehicle belonging to security personnel and a bus are set alight near Sri Lanka's outgoing Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa's official residence on May 9, 2022. — AFP

### Putin defends Ukraine war on Victory Day

MOSCOW: President Vladimir Putin defended Russia's war in Ukraine as necessary to protect the

"Motherland" as Moscow flexed its military muscle on Monday at a huge parade marking the 1945 victory over Nazi Germany. Fierce battles raged in eastern Ukraine while Putin made his Victory Day speech against a backdrop of intercontinental ballistic missiles rumbling through Red Square.

The Russian leader made no major announcements on Russia's next steps but channeled Russian pride in its World War II triumph to mobilize support for the Ukraine invasion, now in its third month.

In a sign of international opposition to the war, protesters splattered Russia's ambassador to Poland with red liquid when he tried to lay a wreath in Warsaw to mark Victory Day.

The conflict is mired in the history between ex-Soviet neighbors Ukraine and Russia, with Putin saying the so-called "special military operation" in Ukraine is in part to "de-Nazify" the country. Putin blamed the West and Ukraine for today's

Continued on Page 6

### Marcos Jr holds runaway lead in Philippine poll

MANILA: The son of late Philippines dictator Ferdinand Marcos on Tuesday headed for a historic landslide victory in the country's presidential election, after Filipinos brushed aside warnings about weakening their already fragile democracy. Nearly 40 years after his namesake father was deposed by a popular revolt and his family chased into exile, Ferdinand Marcos Jr had garnered more than dou-

ble the number of votes of his nearest rival, according to an unofficial tally of results.

With more than 84 percent of precincts reporting, Marcos had received over 27 million votes to liberal candidate Leni Robredo's 12.9 million. If sustained, the tally - published by local media from Commission on Elections figures - would make Marcos the first Philippine president since his father's ouster to be elected with an absolute majority.

It would also signal an astonishing turnaround for the fortunes of the Marcos clan, who have come from being pariahs to in reach of the presidential palace in a generation. Marcos' campaign was marked by a relentless online whitewashing of his father's brutal and corrupt regime, as well as an

Continued on Page 6



MANILA: Presidential candidate Ferdinand Marcos Jr speaks to members of the media at his party headquarters on May 9, 2022. — AFP

## Local

# Kuwait's Amir congratulates Saudi King on successful medical check-ups

## Crown Prince congratulates Saudi counterpart on King's successful check-ups

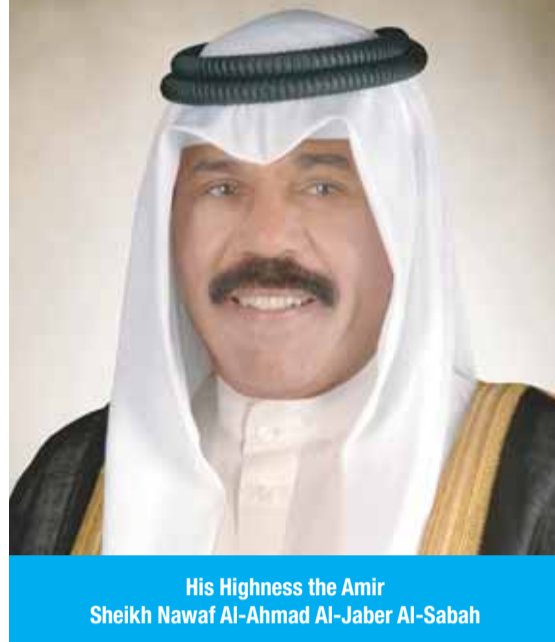
**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent on Monday a cable to Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud to congratulate him on the successful medical check-ups he underwent recently. In the cable, His Highness the Amir wished Saudi King everlasting wellbeing and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia more progress and welfare under his wise leadership.



### Crown Prince receives senior officials

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent similar cables.

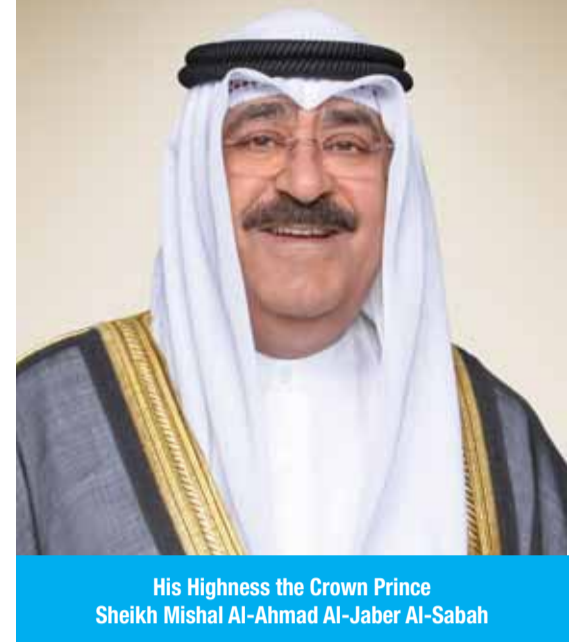
His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meanwhile sent a cable to Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman to congratulate him on the successful medical check-ups of King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud. In the cable, His Highness the Crown Prince



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



King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud



His Highness the Crown Prince  
Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah

wished his Saudi counterpart everlasting health for the King and for Saudi Arabia more progress and prosperity under their wise leadership.

The Saudi Royal Court had announced Sunday that King Salman bin Abdulaziz underwent a successful colonoscopy. The Saudi Press Agency, quoting a Royal Court statement, said King Salman

would be spending some time at King Faisal Specialist Hospital in Jeddah, based on treatment plan recommended by the medical team.

In other news, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received Monday, at Bayan Palace, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior General

(Rtd) Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. His Highness the Crown Prince received Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Talal Khaled Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. He also hosted Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Oil and State Minister for Cabinet Affairs Dr Mohammad Al-Fares. —KUNA



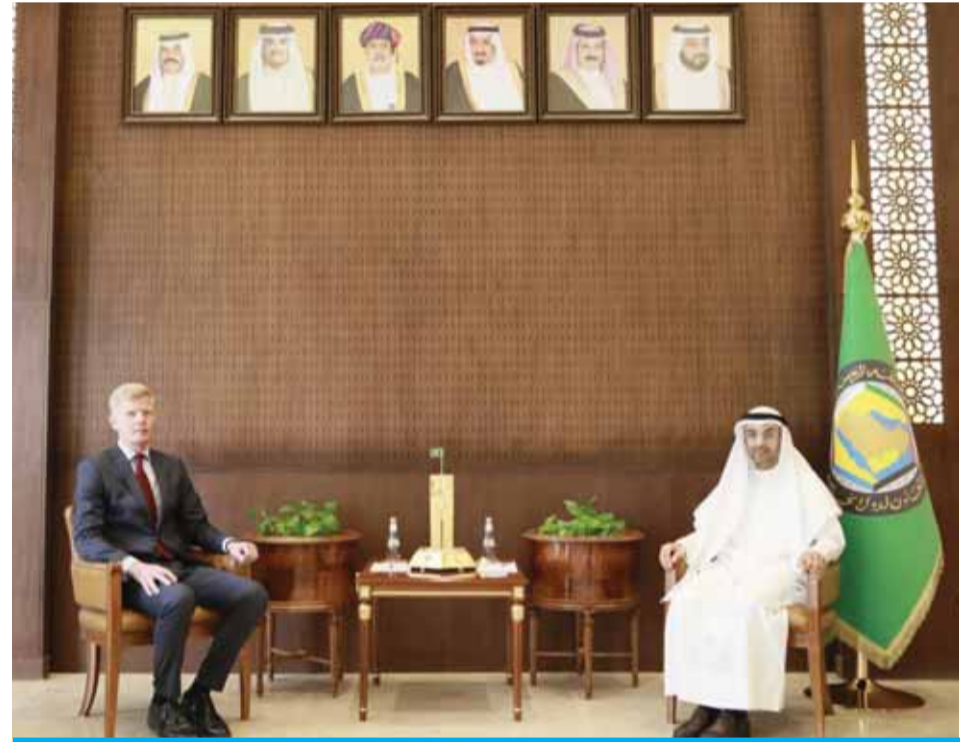
**KUWAIT:** Indian Ambassador to Kuwait Sibi George meets KISR's Acting Director General Dr Mane Mohammad Al-Sudairawi.

### Indian Ambassador meets KISR official

**KUWAIT:** Indian Ambassador to Kuwait Sibi George met Dr Mane Mohammad Al-Sudairawi, Acting Director General of Kuwait Institute of Scientific Research (KISR) on May 9, 2022. They discussed, among other things, ways of strengthening bilateral cooperation in the domain of science and technology, particularly in the context of new age technologies such as artificial intelligence and research and development (R&D).

### GCC chief affirms support for boosting Yemen's security

**RIYADH:** GCC Secretary General Nayef Al-Hajraf affirmed on Monday support for efforts aimed at bolstering Yemen's security and stability. The GCC Secretariat General said in a statement that Hajraf affirmed backing for the country during a meeting with the UN special envoy for Yemen Hans Grundberg, at the secretariat headquarters. It added that the two sides examined the efforts designed to end the conflict in Yemen, the truce that had been declared by the UN envoy and inter-Yemeni consultations, recently hosted by the GCC secretariat. The statement added that Hajraf and Grundberg affirmed necessity of following up on implementation of the relevant resolutions and boosting the approach for Yemen's development and relief plans. — KUNA



**RIYADH:** GCC Secretary General Nayef Al-Hajraf meets the UN special envoy for Yemen Hans Grundberg. — KUNA

### Kuwait Times Ramadan Quiz winners receive their prizes



**KUWAIT:** Ismail Fakruddin receives the award from Kuwait Times Advertising Department Manager Taleb Kanjo.



**Inshiya Taher** receives the award from Kuwait Times Advertising Department Manager Taleb Kanjo.



**Aya Al-Tair** receives the award from Kuwait Times Advertising Department Manager Taleb Kanjo.



**Abdullah Fawaz** receives the award from Kuwait Times Advertising Department Manager Taleb Kanjo.

**KUWAIT:** Ismail Fakruddin, Inshiya Taher, Aya Al-Tair, and Abdullah Fawaz received their 'Kuwait Times Ramadan Quiz' awards at Kuwait Times head office. The winners received KD 50 in cash each and a one-year newspaper subscription.

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Local

# Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem: Arab Scout Forum an initiative to empower youth

API, Arab Scout Federation serves youth issues: Official



KUWAIT: National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem attends the Arab Scout Forum. — KUNA photos



National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem talks to reporters on the sidelines of the forum.



API Director General Dr Bader Malallah addresses the forum.

KUWAIT: National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem confirmed that Kuwait's hosting of the Arab Scout Forum was a vital initiative in empowering Arab youth and uniting them in the scouting and parliamentary sectors. Ghanem said in a statement to reporters Monday, after sponsoring the opening ceremony of the forum organized by the Arab Parliamentary Scout Union (APSU) at the Arab Planning Institute (API), that there is a dire need for these meetings that have a role in promoting Arab action. He commended the role of APSU, headed by MP Dr Abdullah Al-Turaiji, and API, led by Director General Dr Bader Malallah, for organizing this forum, as the cooperation protocol signed between APSU and API will bring positive results.



**Kuwait deserves capital of Arab scouting honor**

the aim of promoting the Arab scout movement.

**Youth issues**

Cooperation between the Institute and the Scout Federation of Arab Parliamentarians serves the issues of Arab and Kuwaiti youth in particular, Malallah said in a press statement on the sidelines of the opening ceremony. He added that honoring Kuwait as the capital of Arab scouting work is worthy, as it was and still supports its Arab brothers and provides development and humanitarian aid on a continuous basis. He stressed Kuwait's keenness to provide support to Kuwaiti and Arab youth through its initiatives to establish a Special Fund for Small Projects, which was established by the late Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

Meanwhile, Turaiji said in a similar statement that empowering young people and preparing them to be future leaders is the most important objective of the forum. He explained that the forum will include a training course for Arab Scout youth in coordination with the leaders of the Arab Planning Institute, pointing out that a number of events will be held.



A general photo of the attendance at the Arab Scout Forum.

Secretary-General of the Arab Scout Organization Amro Hamdi expressed his thanks to the State of Kuwait for honoring a large number of Arab scouts who, over the years, contributed to raising status of Arab scouting at the national, Arab and international

levels. He pointed out that the Arab Scout Organization seeks to achieve an ambitious program for the future of scouting that aims to develop practical skills and future information that open up prospects for developing the field. —KUNA



RIYADH: Kuwait's Education Minister Dr Ali Al-Mudhaf meets the chief of the Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States (ABEGS) Dr Abdulrahman Al-Assimi. — KUNA photos

## Saudi, Kuwait education ministers eye more cooperation

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia's Education Minister Dr Hamad Al-Sheikh held talks on Monday with his Kuwaiti counterpart Dr Ali Al-Mudhaf, aiming to give impetus to common plans and goals concerning classroom development. The Kuwaiti minister also had a similar meeting with the chief of a pan-Gulf Arab education body known as the Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States (ABEGS) Dr Abdulrahman Al-Assimi, as they sought to keep the crucial sector afloat after disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The encounters, both of which occurred on the sidelines of a global education conference in the Saudi capital, precede forthcoming talks involving education officials from the two Gulf Arab neighbors, the Kuwaiti minister said. On the talks, ABEGS chief Al-Assimi said he examined along with the Kuwaiti and Saudi ministers, how his organization can contribute towards educational development in the two countries. Having been dealt a blow by the COVID-19 pandemic, the education



Kuwait's Education Minister Dr Ali Al-Mudhaf meets Saudi Arabia's Education Minister Dr Hamad Al-Sheikh.

sector is in dire need of reforms to bring development goals to fruition, according to Dr Saleh Al-Qusomi, the Saudi education ministry's undersecretary. More than 200 global education bodies have come together for the talks in Riyadh, which will shed light on some of the perennial challenges encumbering educational development. —KUNA

## Kuwait partakes in World Utilities Congress in Abu Dhabi

ABU DHABI: Kuwait Business Council in Dubai and The Northern Emirates participated on Monday in The World Utilities Congress 2022 that kicked off Monday and runs until May 11 at the Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre (ADNEC). The Vice President of Kuwait Business Council in Dubai, Firas Al-Salem said in a statement to the press, that the council in these three days displays the latest

researches and experiments in this field. "The congress explores opportunities to grow businesses in UAE and countries in the region, in addition to fast growing economies in Asia, and it also sheds the light on the primary procedures in digitalizing power and water sources," said Salem. He pointed out that the global exhibition also brings together more than 50 strategic and technical discussion sessions. The congress will focus on proactive measures for decarbonization, curbing carbon emissions, and attracting the long-term capital investment needed for a sustainable future. It will convene more than 10,000 global utility professionals to explore critical topics, including the future of low carbon power and water supplies. —KUNA

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## News in brief

World Cup arrives  
in Kuwait on May 16

KUWAIT: The FIFA World Cup trophy will arrive in Kuwait on May 16, 2022, as part of its World Cup Qatar 2022 tour sponsored by Coca-Cola and includes stops in 54 countries. The trophy will be displayed at the Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Cultural Center between 1:00 pm and 3:30 pm.

Mishref vaccine center  
open from 3 to 8 pm

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Health announced the updated operation hours at COVID-19 vaccination centers as follows (Sunday to Thursday): Kuwait International Fairground in Mishref: 3:00 pm to 8:00 pm; Jleeb Youth Center: 3:00 pm to 8:00 pm; Jaber Causeway: 4:00 pm to 9:00 pm; Primary care centers (Shamiya, Siddiq, Omariya, Masayel, Naem): 3:00 pm to 9:00 pm.

E-cigarettes may cause  
cancer: Gulf Health Council

KUWAIT: The Gulf Health Council said that e-cigarettes contain carcinogen components that may cause pneumonia and pose other serious health risks. In a tweet commenting on arguments that e-cigarettes are less risky than traditional cigarettes, the council said they are still very dangerous due to their availability and marketability that make them favorable for heavy consumption especially by young people.

Saudi fights to  
lead 'saturated'  
Middle East  
aviation market

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia on Monday pitched aviation industry leaders on its plans to become a global travel hub, drawing skepticism from analysts who questioned how it could compete against regional heavyweights. The conservative kingdom's aviation goals, part of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's wide-ranging "Vision 2030" reforms, include more than tripling annual traffic to 330 million passengers by the end of the decade.

It also wants to draw \$100 billion in investments to the sector by 2030, establish a new national flag carrier, construct a new "mega airport" in Riyadh and move up to five million tons of cargo each year. Officials outlined how they intend to hit those targets during a global aviation forum that began Monday in Riyadh. Organizers said 2,000 delegates are trying to chart the airline industry's post-pandemic recovery.

"Over the next 10 years the kingdom will emerge as the Middle East's leading aviation hub," Transport Minister Saleh Al-Jasser told the forum's opening session. The strategy hinges on tapping the large domestic market of Saudi Arabia, whose population is around 35 million, he told AFP in an interview, citing what analysts described as a major advantage for Saudi carriers over regional rivals Emirates and Qatar Airways.

"We are very focused on building connectivity to Saudi Arabia, in helping the tourism industry to grow in Saudi Arabia and helping the Saudi people connect to the world... That's what we

are focused on," he said. But steep competition raises questions about how feasible the Saudi plans are. "They're fighting multiple headwinds on the aviation front," said Robert Mogielnicki with the Arab Gulf States Institute in Washington.

"You have established regional players that have great brand recognition and are already important parts of the economies of Qatar and Dubai." In Saudi Arabia, by contrast, "the air transport sector is not as central to the economy so that urgency is not there, though the Saudis do have big ambitions for the sector. It's a new entity, so they're going to have to play catch-up."

## 'Not going to be easy'

The kingdom is currently served by flag carrier Saudia and its budget subsidiary flyadeal, both based in the coastal city of Jeddah, as well as other budget carriers including the Riyadh-based flynas. Even without the kingdom's planned new airline, Saudi carriers are fighting for space not just with Emirates and Qatar Airways but also regional budget airlines like flydubai and Air Arabia.



RIYADH: President of Saudi Arabia's General Authority of Civil Aviation (GACA) Abdulaziz al-Duailej speaks at the Future Aviation Forum in Riyadh, on May 9, 2022. —AFP photos

"It is a rather saturated market," Henrik Hololei, the European Commission's Director-General for Mobility and Transport, told AFP. "It's clear that it's not going to be easy for any airline that wants to have a global reach to enter that market."

Multiple analysts highlighted the need for Saudi Arabia to improve its airports.



People attend the Future Aviation Forum in the Saudi capital Riyadh, on May 9, 2022.

## Photo of the day



KUWAIT: Vehicles drive through heavy dust on a highway in Kuwait on May 7, 2022. Kuwait is expected to be hit by another dust storm this weekend according to weather forecasts. — Photo by Fouad Al-Shaikh

Kuwait warns against Zionist  
entity's settlement plans

KUWAIT: Kuwait's Foreign Ministry on Sunday cautioned against repercussions of the Zionist entity's settlement plans and projects of 4,000 new housing units in the occupied West Bank. The ministry also warned against the destruction of 12 Palestinian villages in Khalil Governorate, and the displacement of 4,000 from their homes. In a statement, the ministry said that these settlement schemes, which blatantly violate international law and legitimacy; mainly the resolution 2334, underestimate the bases of peace and global efforts aiming to find a solution to the cause, in line with international resolutions and the Arab peace initiative. The efforts also seek to achieve a comprehensive and fair peace, based on the two-state solution, it noted. The ministry called on the UN Security Council to assume its responsibilities by compelling the Zionist occupation forces to stop settlement projects and abide by international law and resolutions, as well provide protection to the Palestinian people, the statement stressed. It also reiterated Kuwait's firm and principled position in support of legitimate rights of the brotherly Palestinian people to establish an independent state with East Jerusalem as its capital, according to the statement. — KUNA



HEBRON: Builders work on new constructions in a settlement zone on a site where the old central bus station for the Hebron Governorate formerly stood, in the old town of the flashpoint Palestinian city of Hebron in the occupied West Bank, on May 8, 2022. —AFP

## FUTURE AVIATION FORUM



Saudi staff receive visitors at the Future Aviation Forum in Riyadh.

Last weekend the head of the company that operates the airport in Jeddah, gateway to the holy sites in Makkah and Madinah, was fired after what state media described as "a crisis of overcrowding

and flight delays". Hololei said "the vision and very ambitious announcements" need to be complemented by details. "How they are going to play the cards, this remains to be seen." — AFP

## Future Aviation Forum





Fear still reigns in Brazil after bloody police raid

Yazidis again displaced anew by fierce clashes in north Iraq

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BEIRUT: A handout picture provided by the Lebanese presidency shows Lebanese President Michel Aoun (L) at the Foreign Ministry headquarters in the capital Beirut overseeing the voting process for Lebanese expatriates as they vote ahead of the May 15 legislative election. — AFP

## Lebanon activists run in election

‘Running for parliamentary elections for me is a continuation’

BEIRUT: As a law student in late 2019, Verena El Amil joined mass street protests against Lebanon's political elite. Now she wants to fight them at the ballot box. At age 25, she is one of a growing number of independent candidates running in a May 15 parliamentary vote in the crisis-torn country. “We are going to fight,” the young lawyer, dressed in a black leather jacket and combat boots, said at a coffee shop outside Beirut.

“The slogans we screamed during the protests are the ones we want to carry into campaigns and into parliament.” The vote will be the first major electoral test since a youth-led protest movement from October 2019 vented its rage at Lebanon's graft-tainted political class.

The revolutionary fervour has been sapped since by cascading crises, from a financial collapse and the pandemic to the 2020 Beirut port blast that killed more than 200 people. While most of her fellow graduates have fled abroad, Amil honed her political skills in student activism and spent all her savings on the campaign. “Running for parliamentary elections for me is a continuation,” said Amil, one of the youngest candidates to stand. “After the 2019 protests, we all grap-

pled with defeat and the reality of a massive emigration wave. “But in spite of this, we still need to try, and I am running for the elections to show that we are still trying.”



‘We are going to fight’

### ‘Election as protest’

The number of independent candidates running against established parties has more than doubled since the last vote in 2018. Beirut-based think tank the Policy Initiative said opposition and independent candidates make up 284 of the 718 hopefuls-up from 124

four years ago. They are running in 48 different electoral lists across Lebanon, including in peripheral regions where traditional leaders have seldom faced a challenge.

Also in the race this time is Lucien Bourjeily, an activist, writer and director who emerged as one of the key figures of the 2019 protest movement. Running for a seat for the second time, Bourjeily said he sensed more engagement from the public this time around.

But the opposition is mainly gunning for accountability, not a major win, he said, urging voters to document any signs of electoral fraud. “The way we documented people getting beaten and losing their eyes and getting killed on the street, we should document how votes will be stolen,” he said. “People should treat election day as a protest.”

### ‘Haphazard, disorganised’

Even in a clean election, opposition candidates would face an uphill challenge, lacking the funds and campaign machines of the traditional parties. Lebanon's electoral law is designed to benefit established players, and the opposition is far from united.

“You have competing opposition lists in most districts, and this is unacceptable,” said Carmen Geha, a professor of public administration at the American University of Beirut. “We needed hope, and hope would have come from a national campaign.”

Voter turnout may be low, in part because high fuel prices deter travel to ancestral towns and villages where constituents are required to cast their vote. An Oxfam report last month said only 54 percent of over 4,600 people surveyed said they intended to vote, a trend it blamed largely on widespread “disappointment and hopelessness”.

Most of those planning to abstain cited a lack of promising candidates, while nearly half of those who plan to vote said they would choose an independent candidate, the British-based charity said. Veteran activist Maher Abou Chakra, who ran briefly for the election before pulling out, criticised the opposition for lacking a coherent strategy to rock the establishment. “Lebanon's political regime is hundreds of years old... and it is deeply entrenched,” he said. “You can't challenge it in a haphazard and disorganised way.” — AFP

## Ukraine soldier's ordeal offers view into prisoner swaps

ZAPORIZHZHIA, Ukraine: Ukrainian soldier Glib Stryzhko's mother knew he'd fallen into Russian hands but it wasn't until her gravely wounded 25-year-old son made a secret phone call to her that she found out where he was. “One of his guards took pity on him,” she told AFP. That small mercy, as well as details of his experience—including a tormentor's knife and a painfully long kilometre-long offer a window into the dramatic but often obscured reality of war prisoner exchanges. Nearly killed in intense fighting in the key port city of Mariupol, Stryzhko was captured in April and eventually taken to Russia before suddenly being put on a plane and sent towards home with others to be swapped for Russian prisoners.

“After we were loaded onto the bus waiting for us, the driver said: ‘Guys, you can breathe. You are home now,’” Stryzhko said from his hospital bed in the southeastern city of Zaporizhzhia. “Then I started to cry very hard.” Getting to that point took just weeks, a remarkably short timeline among war captives, whose fates have always been part of an emotional, high-stakes and sometimes political process that can go on long after the shooting has stopped. In Ukraine's case, over 350 of its troops have been freed so far in swaps, which happen on a one-for-one basis between people of the same rank, Deputy Prime Minister Iryna Vereshchuk told AFP. Stryzhko's twisting route home started on social media. A comrade happened to spot him on a Telegram channel where pro-Russian sepa-

ratists in Ukraine post images of captured enemy soldiers. The comrade called Stryzhko's mother, who was horrified to hear the news but somehow hopeful now she knew her son was alive.

“This man had our phone number. Glib had given it to him, as if he was expecting this to happen,” his mother Lesia Kostenko, 51, told AFP. “That was when we started to look.” Her son was posted at the Ilych steelworks in the thick of the battle for Mariupol. That conflict attracted global attention because of the civilians trapped in another steel plant, Azovstal.

### Russian denials

Stryzhko was hit by a tank shell and buried under rubble on April 10 before his unit got him to a hospital, where he said he was taken prisoner. Now recovering from massive injuries to his pelvis, jaw and one eye, Stryzhko explained how his captors shuttled him and other prisoners around, first to Novoazovsk, near the Russian border. “We were lying there in the hospital and we weren't receiving any serious treatment,” he said. He was there for about a week before being moved to a hospital in Donetsk, where, incredibly, he ended up getting access to a phone and called home. “During the first call he told us where he was,” his mother said.

Word of the call spread to other families of POWs and they started asking her to see if Stryzhko knew anything about their captive loved ones. He didn't. The family also lobbied the government for help getting Stryzhko back, including the deputy prime minister.

“His relatives contacted me and asked my help as a minister—his mother, his brother, his friends. They were all looking for him,” Vereshchuk said. The minister said she pressured the Russians to exchange Stryzhko but they refused to admit he was in their custody until she confronted them with the knowledge he was in Donetsk Hospital 15. “After that they were forced to hand him over,” Vereshchuk said. After about a week in Donetsk, Stryzhko said the Russians were moving him yet again. This time it was to prison, he was told.

There followed more painful movement and jostling. He was carried in a blanket, then laid on the floor of a bus, but in the end it seemed he was too seriously injured to be out of hospital. He would be moved again. “I stayed in the bus for some time. Then they put me in an ambulance and the next stop was the Russian border,” Stryzhko said. He was told they were headed for Taganrog, about an hour's drive from Ukraine.

When Stryzhko talked about his experience with his captors, a thread emerged of both indifference and a certain cruelty. He said the doctors mostly did their medical duties but there was a nurse who cursed him in Russian and left meals by his bedside, knowing he couldn't feed himself. “Then the nurse came back and said ‘You're all done, then?’ and took the food away,” he said. He was constantly under guard in hospital, yet the guards themselves could be terrifying. —AFP



JERUSALEM: Relatives and friends mourn at a cemetery in Lod during the funeral of Oren Ben Yiftach, a 35-year-old Zionist who was killed in an axe attack the night before in Elad. — AFP

## More violence after Zionist entity arrests axe murderers

JERUSALEM: Two Palestinians were shot dead and another was wounded in separate incidents in the Zionist-occupied West Bank and annexed east Jerusalem on Sunday, officials said, the latest in a spate of violence. The unrest came hours after the arrest of two Palestinians suspected of axing three Zionists to death, and as a series of anti-Zionist attacks and bloody violence has left dozens dead since late March, among them Palestinian and Arab-Zionist perpetrators.

In the southern West Bank, a Palestinian armed with a knife infiltrated the Tekoa settlement before being shot by a resident, the army said. “Soldiers were dispatched to the scene and are searching the area for additional suspects,” a statement from the military said. The Palestinian health ministry said Mutasem Attalah, 17, was killed. A short time earlier, a 19-year-old Palestinian without an entry permit stabbed a police officer outside the Old City in east Jerusalem before being shot and “neutralised” by forces at the scene, a police statement said.

The officer was taken to hospital in moderate condition, police said, with medics saying the stabber was not dead. Earlier Sunday, Zionist soldiers shot dead a Palestinian who tried to enter Zionist entity through the Jewish state's barrier in the north of the occupied West Bank. Soldiers “identified a (person) trying to cross the security barrier” near Tulkarem, an army statement said. “The force shot at him in accordance with procedures. The suspect was taken for medical care.” A spokesman for the Sheba hospital in central Zionist entity told AFP the Palestinian had died of his wounds, with the Palestinian health ministry identifying the deceased as Mahmud Eram. —AFP

## UK urges N Ireland parties to form a new government

BELFAST: UK Northern Ireland Secretary Brandon Lewis on Monday called on all parties in the province to form a new power-sharing government in Belfast, after historic elections and despite unresolved Brexit disputes. All five main political parties were due to meet Lewis for talks at the devolved legislature in Belfast, on their first day back in the job since Sinn Fein won Thursday's vote.

The nationalists, formerly the political wing of the IRA, ended a century of dominance by pro-UK unionists to become the biggest party in Northern Ireland.

The win allows Sinn Fein to nominate the symbolic position of first minister but the DUP, which came second, said post-Brexit trading arrangements need to be addressed first before it joins a new executive.

Lewis urged “a stable and accountable devolved government” in Northern Ireland and said all parties should “fulfil their responsibilities and form an executive as soon as possible”. “We have to address the outstanding issues relating to the Northern Ireland Protocol and we want to do that by agreement with the EU, but as we have always made clear, we will not shy away from taking further steps if necessary,” he added. The Democratic Unionist Party collapsed the last assembly in February by withdrawing its first minister because of its opposition to the Northern Ireland Protocol.

The arrangement, signed as part the UK's exit from the European Union, provides sweeping checks on goods heading to Northern Ireland from the British mainland and keeps the province largely under European trading rules. The DUP fears that by creating an effective border in the Irish Sea, Northern Ireland is being cast adrift from the rest of the UK and makes a united Ireland — Sinn Fein's aim — more likely. Sinn Fein leader Michelle O'Neill, who is set to become first minister, tweeted that “the voters have spoken”. “No party can hold back progress. It's now time to get to work,” she added as she arrived at the Stormont Assembly buildings.

Separate trading arrangements for Northern Ireland were agreed because the province has the UK's only land border with the EU. Keeping the border open with neighbouring Ireland, an EU member, was mandated in the 1998 Good Friday Agreement that ended three decades of violence over British rule.

In Dublin, Irish prime minister Micheal Martin also urged the DUP to join the new executive and backed Brussels in its ongoing talks with London about the application of the protocol. —AFP



ZAPORIZHZHIA, Ukraine: Photograph shows Ukrainian soldier Glib Stryzhko, 25, and his mother Lesia Kostenko during an interview with AFP in Zaporizhzhia, in Ukraine. — AFP

## International

Yazidis again displaced anew  
by fierce clashes in north Iraq

Violence forced more than 1,700 families to flee

**ZAKHO, Iraq:** Iraqi policeman Jundi Khodr Kalo was among thousands of Yazidis again forced to flee their homes this month, after fierce clashes between the army and local fighters in their Sinjar heartland. "Last time we were displaced because we were afraid of the Islamic State" jihadist group, said Kalo, 37, from the non-Arab, Kurdish-speaking minority.

The Yazidis are a monotheistic, esoteric community who were massacred by IS when the extremists swept across Iraq in 2014. Two days of fighting broke out on May 1 in northern Iraq's Sinjar region between the army and Yazidi fighters affiliated with Turkey's banned Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK).



'We lived in a camp for six years'

A local official said the violence forced more than 1,700 families, or over 10,200 people, to flee. Some 960 families have settled in a displacement camp in the neighbouring Iraqi Kurdistan region, while others have sought shelter with relatives, according to the United Nations. Kalo, his wife and their five children took refuge in the crowded Chamisku camp, home to more than 22,000 people, near the city of Zakho.

'Not an ideal solution'

Like many Yazidis, the Kalo family suffered long years of displacement after IS overran swathes of their country. "We lived in a camp for six years," he said, only returned to their home village two years ago. Going back "was not easy... but we managed to get by". "But lately, the situation got worse," he told AFP.

Sinjar is the site of sporadic skirmishes between Iraqi security forces and the Sinjar Resistance Units-local fighters allied with the PKK separatists. "Every day we would hear the sound of shooting and explosions. We were afraid for our families," Kalo said. But life in Chamisku, like in other camps, is tough, too.

Residents take shelter in tarpaulin tents, where foam mattresses line the ground. AFP journalists saw dozens of people queuing for handouts of rice, tea, sugar, flour and milk. "The situation in these camps is crowded," said Firas al-Khateeb, a spokesman for the United Nations' refugee agency (UNHCR).

He cited "a risk of limited access to basic services due to a reduction of humanitarian funding". Living in displacement camps "for long periods of time is not an ideal situation", he added. "But any return (home) must be voluntary, maintain human dignity", and be to a "peaceful environment", Khateeb said.

'Need security, stability'

Iraqi authorities say calm has returned to Sinjar following the fighting, which killed an Iraqi soldier. Each side has blamed the other for starting the clashes in the region, the scene of simmering tensions and multiple actors. The army is seeking to apply an agreement between Baghdad and Iraq's autonomous Kurdistan region for the withdrawal of Yazidi and PKK combatants. The deal is seen as crucial for the Kurdistan Democratic Party, which has been looking to restore its former influence in Sinjar.

It is also key to facilitating the return of Yazidis displaced years ago by IS. But the Yazidi fighters, who are affiliated with the Hashed al-Shaabi-a pro-Iran former paramilitary organisation-accuse the army of trying to take control of their stronghold.

Iraqi security forces said military reinforcements were dispatched to Sinjar to "impose state authority". "We will not allow the presence of armed groups," the



ZAKHO, Iraq: Displaced Yazidis stand near their tent at the Chamishko camp for internally displaced persons (IDP) in the city of Zakho in the north of Iraq's autonomous Kurdish region. Thousands of Yazidis were again forced to flee their homes this month, after fierce clashes between the army and local fighters in their Sinjar heartland. — AFP

forces said in a statement Thursday. The Sinjar region has also been a target of Turkish air strikes on rear bases of the PKK, which Ankara considers a terrorist organisation.

In such a complex and dangerous atmosphere, Yazidi civilians say they feel like collateral damage. "We need security and stability, otherwise we will not go back to Sinjar," said labourer Zaem Hassan Hamad. The 65-

year-old took refuge in Chamisku with more than a dozen family members, including his grandchildren.

IS forced him to flee once before, and he said he did not want to keep repeating that traumatic experience. "We cannot go home and be displaced again," he said. "If the Hashed, the PKK and the army remain in the region, the people will be afraid," he added. "No one will ever go back." — AFP

Tehran says EU  
nuke coordinator  
to visit this week

**TEHRAN:** The European Union's coordinator for talks between Iran and world powers over restoring a frayed 2015 nuclear deal will visit Tehran this week, Iran's foreign ministry said Monday. The coordinator, Enrique Mora, has played a key role as an intermediary between the US and Iran during a year of on-off talks in Vienna that seek to revive the deal.

The date of Mora's arrival in Iran's capital has not been confirmed, but local press reported he is expected on Tuesday. "The agenda for talks in Tehran is nearly finalised," foreign ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh said at a weekly press briefing.

Mora "will meet with Ali Bagheri, the Islamic Republic of Iran's chief nuclear negotiator." The 2015 deal gave Iran sanctions relief in exchange for curbs on its nuclear programme to guarantee that it could not develop a nuclear weapon, something Tehran has always denied wanting to do.

It was agreed between Iran and the five permanent United Nations Security Council members China, Russia, the United States, United Kingdom and France,



TEHRAN, Iran: Iran's foreign ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh holds a press conference in Tehran on May 9, 2022. The European Union's coordinator for talks between Iran and world powers over restoring a 2015 nuclear deal will visit Tehran this week, Iran's foreign ministry said. — AFP

alongside Germany. But Washington unilaterally withdrew in 2018 under then-president Donald Trump and reimposed biting economic sanctions, prompting Iran to begin rolling back its own commitments.

Talks in Vienna have focused on bringing Washington back into the deal and lifting its sanctions, while ensuring Tehran's full adherence to its own commitments. — AFP

Britain, Cyprus  
hail 'new era'  
on military land

**NICOSIA, Cyprus:** Thousands of Cypriots living on British military land will have the right to develop their properties under a deal to take effect next week, ending decades of unequal treatment, officials said Monday.

Under the 1960 treaty granting Cyprus independence from Britain, the United Kingdom retained control of two Sovereign Base Areas covering three percent of the island's land area. These include not only the bases themselves but Cypriot communities home to around 12,000 people — more than the number of British military personnel and their families.

Non-military development on base land has until now been generally restricted. Cypriot property owners on base land were subject to "62 years of distortions and imbalances" which the deal to be implemented from May 16 will remove, Cyprus's President Nicos Anastasiades said at a ceremony.

Residential, commercial and other developments will be possible under the arrangement. "It is a truly historic agreement", Anastasiades told the ceremony

attended by base officials. British High Commissioner Stephen Lillie told the gathering that "a new era of non-military development" begins next week.

"From that day, landowners in the bases will be able to submit planning applications and develop their land much like they can anywhere else in Cyprus," he said, describing it as a "levelling up." In a statement, British Forces Cyprus said that, for the first time, third-country nationals in addition to Cypriots will be able to own property, live, and run a business in the base areas — subject to environmental, security and zoning considerations.

Anastasiades reached an agreement in 2014 with then-British Prime Minister David Cameron paving the way for the changes being implemented from next week. In an interview with AFP, Anastasiades said the agreement did not mean an alteration to the 1960 treaty and did not require discussions with Greece and Turkey, the other 1960 signatories.

He said it is simply changing the status of the residents in the base areas, "giving a chance for development which is a great thing. We are talking about a huge extent of land." The base areas cover 254 square kilometres (98 square miles).

Cyprus, an eastern Mediterranean island, has been divided since 1974 when Turkey invaded following a Greek-sponsored coup. The Republic of Cyprus, whose overwhelming majority are Greek Cypriots, has effective control over the southern two-thirds of the island. — AFP

Sri Lanka prime  
minister quits as...

Continued from Page 1

"We were hit, the media were hit, women and children were hit," one witness said, asking not to be named.

Police fired tear gas and water cannon and declared an immediate curfew in Colombo, which was later widened to include the entire South Asian island nation of 22 million people. A total of 181 people were hospitalized, a Colombo National Hospital spokesman told AFP. Eight were injured elsewhere. The army riot squad was called in to reinforce police. Soldiers had mostly been deployed throughout the crisis to protect deliveries of fuel and other essentials, but not to prevent clashes before.

"Strongly condemn the violent acts taking place by those inciting & participating, irrespective of political allegiances," President Rajapaksa tweeted. "Violence won't solve the current problems." Mahinda Rajapaksa tendered his resignation as prime minister, saying it was to pave the way for a unity government - but it was unclear if the opposition would cooperate.

Marcos Jr holds  
runaway lead in...

Continued from Page 1

embrace of current authoritarian president Rodrigo Duterte, who retains widespread popular support.

Before polling day, rights activists, Catholic leaders and political analysts had warned Marcos Jr could rule with an even heavier fist if he wins by a large margin. Delivering a late-night address from his campaign headquarters in Manila, a tired but beaming Marcos thanked volunteers for months of "sacrifices and work". But he stopped short of claiming victory, warning that "the count is not yet done". "Let's wait until it's very clear, until the count reaches a hundred percent then we can celebrate."

Cleve Arguelles, a political science lecturer at Manila's De La Salle University said it was already clear that "this will be a historic election" for the

The US ambassador Julie Chung tweeted that Washington condemned "the violence against peaceful protesters today, and call(s) on the government to conduct a full investigation, including the arrest & prosecution of anyone who incited violence". Mary Lawlor, UN special rapporteur, said she had heard "disturbing reports... of repression & disproportionate use of force against peaceful demonstrators who are protesting against allegations of corruption & widespread impunity in Government".

After the Colombo violence, anti-government protesters who had been demonstrating peacefully since April 9 began retaliating across the island, despite the curfew. MP Athukoralala's car was surrounded by thousands of people in the town of Nittambuwa as he returned home from the capital after the clashes. He shot two people before fleeing to a nearby building and then "took his own life with his revolver", a police official told AFP by telephone. Athukoralala's bodyguard was also found dead at the scene, police said.

Angry mobs set alight the homes of at least three pro-Rajapaksa politicians, along with some nearby vehicles, while buses and trucks used by the government loyalists in and around Colombo were targeted for destruction. Doctors at Colombo National Hospital intervened to rescue wounded government supporters, with soldiers breaking open locks to open the gates. — AFP

Philippines. The results are a crushing blow for supporters of Robredo, the incumbent vice president whose campaign morphed into a movement to defend democracy and brought almost a million people onto the streets in one recent rally.

Analyst Mark Thompson said there now needed to be soul searching among an opposition that needs to broaden its message beyond "good governance". "They need to make clear that they're going to improve the lives of the average Filipino," said Thompson, who is director of the Southeast Asia Research Centre at the City University of Hong Kong.

Marcos was able to tap into widespread anger at a string of post-dictatorship governments, which many Filipinos believe had failed to materially improve their lives. Crucially, he also secured the support of several of the country's powerful political dynasties, who through networks of patronage can be called on to deliver blocs of votes. Those alliances were set for a further victory with his running mate Sara Duterte garnering an even bigger lead over rivals in her vice presidential race. In the Philippines, the winner only has to get more votes than anyone else. — AFP

Putin defends  
Ukraine war...

Continued from Page 1

conflict, telling the parade that Russia faced an "absolutely unacceptable threat" and warning against the "horror of a global war".

"You are fighting for the Motherland, for its future, so that no-one forgets the lessons of the Second World War," he said.

The celebration in Red Square also featured some 11,000 troops and more than 130 military vehicles, although a planned military flypast was cancelled.

On the ground, the key battles are being fought in Ukraine's east, which Russia is seeking to secure having tried and failed to take the capital Kyiv and the north. The governor of eastern Lugansk region, Sergiy Gaiday, said on Monday there were "very serious battles" around Bilogorivka and Rubizhne, as Russia tries to take the Russian-speaking Donbas. Donbas encompasses Lugansk and the neighboring region of Donetsk.

An AFP team saw columns of trucks filled with soldiers and heavy equipment move down the main road leading away from the city of Severodonetsk, suggesting Ukraine was giving up the defense of its last stronghold in Lugansk. Russian forces were heavily shelling the roads, while the Ukrainians were firing back to help cover the apparent pullout.

Officials said 60 civilians were killed in a Russian air strike on a school in the eastern village of Bilogorivka on Sunday - one of the highest single death tolls since the February 24 invasion. Pro-Russian separatists meanwhile feted Victory Day in Ukraine's devastated southern port of Mariupol, where depleted Ukrainian forces are defending their final bastion at the Azovstal steelworks.

Separatist leader Denis Pushilin and residents carried a giant black and orange ribbon of Saint George - a symbol of WWII celebrations in Russia - through the city that has seen some of the heaviest fighting since the invasion on Feb 24. Full control of Mariupol would allow Moscow to create a land bridge between the Crimean Peninsula, which it annexed in 2014, and eastern regions of Ukraine run by pro-Russian separatists.

Ukrainian leader Volodymyr Zelensky invoked the ghosts of World War II to chide Russia for claiming sole credit for winning. "We will not allow anyone to annex this victory. We will not allow it to be appropriated," he said in a video speech about an hour before Putin spoke. Hailing what he said were Ukrainian victories against Nazi German forces during World War II, he said "We won then. We will win now."

Yet in Kyiv the commemoration day was largely shunned as life slowly returned to normal, weeks after fierce fighting raged in its suburbs. The capital's Maidan square was largely empty. Small patrols of police and Ukrainian armed forces kept quiet with air sirens temporarily disrupting the quiet morning, as people waited for any sign from Putin of an upcoming escalation. "Whatever he says, we need to do what we need to win and free our land. And that's it," said retired diplomat Mykola, 75.

The West, which has hailed Zelensky as a hero, rallied behind Ukraine's defiance of Russia as the historical significance of Victory Day continued to resonate. British Defense Secretary Ben Wallace accused Putin of "mirroring fascism" and said Russia's bemedaled generals should "face court martial" for their handling of the war. European Union President Charles Michel however found himself having to take shelter from missile strikes during a surprise trip to Odessa.

In Warsaw, pro-Ukraine activists hurled red liquid at Russian ambassador Sergei Andreev and other men in his entourage at the cemetery of Soviet soldiers in the Polish capital. They chanted "fascists" and brandished the Ukrainian flag as they blocked his way, an AFP correspondent at the scene saw. "The admirers of neo-Nazism have again shown their faces," Russian foreign ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said on Telegram, repeating Russia's assertion that it is fighting neo-Nazis in Ukraine.

The fighting continued unabated on the ground. In Severodonetsk, the easternmost city still held by Ukraine, a Ukrainian soldier with the nom de guerre Koval said that Russians had now entered its northern side. "We are defending the southern half of the city," the soldier told AFP. One ray of hope has come from prisoner swaps. Ukrainian soldier Glib Stryzhko, 25, was gravely wounded and captured in Mariupol in April but finally released after a secret phone call to his mother. "After we were loaded onto the bus waiting for us, the driver said: 'Guys, you can breathe. You are home now,'" Stryzhko told AFP from his hospital bed in Zaporizhzhia. — AFP

## International

# Fear still reigns in Brazil favela a year after bloody police raid

## Having the police here all the time doesn't make us feel safer

**RIO DE JANEIRO, Brazil:** One year after 28 people were killed in the bloodiest police raid in Rio de Janeiro history, the tension is still palpable in the Jacarezinho slum, where authorities have deployed a massive law enforcement operation. Brazil marked the first anniversary Friday of the early-morning raid against alleged drug traffickers that turned the impoverished favela into a battlefield, with explosions and heavy gunfire that left streets strewn with bodies.

Residents of Jacarezinho, a slum of brick and tin-roof houses on Rio's north side that is home to 80,000 people, have accused the police of killing innocent victims in cold blood. Seeking to calm an explosive situation, the state government in January launched a program called "Cidade Integrada" (Integrated City), aiming to "reclaim the territory" dominated by drug traffickers and to set up social projects to improve life in the favela.

But many residents say the heavy police presence only makes them more afraid. "Everyone's scared. Having the police here all the time doesn't make us feel safer—on the contrary," said "Vera," a 31-year-old shopkeeper who was afraid to provide her real name. Two armored police vehicles were posted near her shop.

Heavily armed officers regularly patrol the slum's tangled maze of narrow streets, and passersby typically avoid making eye contact. "Since 'Integrated City' started, shootouts are an almost daily occurrence, with no warning," said Pedro Paulo da Silva of local community organization LabJaca. "Police see (the favelas) as enemy territory," he said. "Everyone is a potential target."



### Two officers have been indicted

The tension erupted into the open the night of April 25, when police shot and killed an 18-year-old man, the father of a four-month-old baby. His mother called the killing a "summary execution." Residents poured into the streets in protest, lighting fires to block entrances to the favela. Police say they have opened an internal investigation.

Many residents say just seeing officers on patrol brings back dark memories of May 6, 2021 and the terrifying raid that left one policeman and 27 alleged suspects dead. Scores of protesters on Friday marked the anniversary, marching to the favela's memorial to the dead, a small blue wall with plaques bearing their names. "Police are murderers!" they chanted as two heavily armed officers watched.

"There's a feeling of sadness, but above all of injustice. A lot of others have died since. And it's not going to stop," said 19-year-old Taciana Barbosa, who had two childhood friends killed in the raid. Despite international calls for an independent inquiry, including from the United Nations, just two officers have been indicted and two more were placed under investigation for the Jacarezinho killings.

"As long as no one is brought to justice, people's contact with law enforcement agents will still be very affected by that trauma," said Guilherme Pimentel, the ombudsman for the Rio public defender's office. There have been glaring reports of abuses by police stationed in the favela, including invading residents' homes and stealing from them.

"I came home one day and found my door open.



**RIO DE JANEIRO, Brazil:** People walk on the streets of Jacarezinho favela in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. One year after 28 people were killed in the bloodiest police raid in Rio de Janeiro history, the tension is still palpable in the Jacarezinho slum, where authorities have deployed a massive law enforcement operation. —AFP

They turned the whole place upside down. They must have had dogs, because I found poop on the floor. They come looking to steal our valuables. I didn't have any," said 39-year-old resident Thiago Baia, who heads a local cultural association. "I've been afraid ever since. I get anxiety attacks when I try to sleep."

### ID cards and Zumba

The state government says it has inaugurated several social projects as part of Integrated City,

including a job training program for mothers that has 1,400 participants. The authorities have also started gymnastics and Zumba classes, and opened a public registrar's office that has allowed many residents to obtain "their first-ever ID cards," according to Governor Claudio Castro.

Not everyone is convinced. "The job-training courses have started, but we haven't seen any of the rest," said Da Silva. "It's the same problem every time they launch a new program: they never actually talk with the people who live here." —AFP

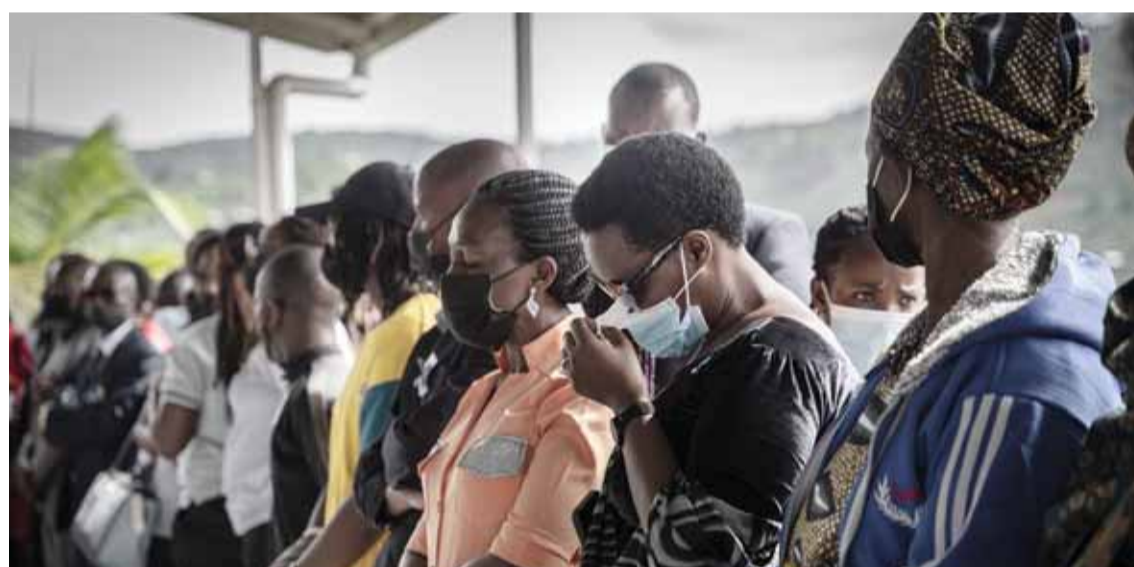
## France puts ex-top Rwanda official on trial for genocide

**PARIS:** A former senior Rwandan official goes on trial in Paris on Monday accused of complicity in the African nation's genocide, the most senior figure yet to face justice in France over the 1994 massacres. The case of Laurent Bucyibaruta is the fourth from the Rwandan genocide to come to court in France, which had long been under pressure from activists to act against suspected perpetrators who had taken refuge on French soil.

An estimated 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus perished in 100 days of slaughter in 1994 in which Hutu militiamen massacred Tutsis taking cover in churches and schools. Standing trial on charges of genocide, complicity in genocide and complicity in crimes against humanity, the 78-year-old Bucyibaruta faces a life sentence if convicted.

At the heart of the case are several "security" meetings, either ordered by Bucyibaruta or in which he participated. The accusation says they were slaughter-planning sessions. In particular the former prefect of the southern province of Gikongoro is accused of persuading thousands of people to take refuge in the Murambi Technical School, by promising them food and water—and protection.

But days later, in the early hours of April 21, tens of thousands of Tutsis were executed in one of the genocide's grimmest episodes. The court will also discuss Bucyibaruta's responsibility in the massacre



**NYAMAGABE, Rwanda:** An attendee reacts during the 28th local commemoration of the genocide against the Tutsi at the Murambi genocide memorial in Nyamagabe, southern Rwanda. Laurent Bucyibaruta, a former Rwandan prefect of Gikongoro (now renamed as Nyamagabe), goes on trial in France from May 9, 2022. —AFP

of around 90 Tutsi pupils at the Marie Merci school in Kibeho on May 7 and in the execution of Tutsi prisoners—including three priests—in Gikongoro prison. Bucyibaruta denies the charges and refutes any involvement in the killings.

His lawyers will first call for the case to be thrown out for unreasonable delays, as the proceedings began 22 years ago. But if that fails, Bucyibaruta's defence told AFP they would call for his acquittal.

The trial is expected to last two months and feature over 100 witnesses including survivors from Rwanda, who have flown over or will appear via videoconference. Bucyibaruta, who has been in France since 1997 and is under judicial supervision, has a myriad of health problems which should limit the hearings to seven hours a day.

Four people in three cases have already been convicted in French courts over the genocide: a former hotel driver handed a 14-year sentence, an army officer sentenced to 25 years in prison, and two mayors who were given life sentences. —AFP

The government had reportedly been hoping for a full resumption of operations as soon as last month, but no official timetable has been announced. Barrick Niugini said last month it had signed a shareholders' agreement for the 49-percent stake but was still awaiting the signature of landowners.

Under the deal, parties in Papua New Guinea—including government nominee Kumul Mineral and landowner representative Mineral Resources Engawould take the remaining 51 percent. It was unclear if the violence would further delay the resumption of mining operations.

AFP contacted Barrick Niugini's co-operator Canadian Barrick Gold seeking comment. Tribal conflicts are a frequent occurrence in Papua New Guinea's highlands, but an influx of automatic weapons has made clashes deadlier.

In 2019, at least 24 people—including two pregnant women and their unborn children—were killed in Hela province when highland clans clashed, apparently over control of local gold deposits in the region's mineral-rich soil. —AFP

Several conservative states are already shifting. The southern state of Mississippi will ban abortion except in cases of rape or incest, or danger to the life of the mother, Republican Governor Tate Reeves told NBC Sunday. —AFP

the face in terms of disrespect for their judgments about the size and timing of their families."

With Democrats lacking the necessary majority to push through codification, the only other option would appear to be changing Senate rules to lower the number of votes required to pass such a bill. But Republicans—and a few senators in President Joe Biden's Democratic Party—oppose such a move.

Senator Kirsten Gillibrand said "we will never give in" to Republican efforts to roll back abortion rights protections. "We are half-citizens under this ruling," she told CNN, referring to the draft opinion. "And if this is put into law, it changes the foundation of America."

## Clan gun battles kill at least 17 near PNG gold mine: Police

**PORT MORESBY, Papua New Guinea:** Security forces moved in Monday to halt gun battles between rival Papua New Guinea clans that police said have killed at least 17 people near a major gold mine in the rain forest-blanketed highlands. Clans also torched buildings in the town of Paiam and nearby Porgera during the three days of fighting, according to police, who were backed by troop deployments in the volatile region.

Two mobile police units were "containing the situation in Porgera town and have moved into the mine site, too," Police Commissioner David Manning told AFP on Monday. The fighting began with attacks between members of the rival Aiyala and Nomali clans, Manning told Papua New Guinea's

## US Senate to vote Wednesday on abortion bill

**WASHINGTON:** The US Senate will vote Wednesday on a national abortion rights bill—a process likely doomed to fail—after a leaked draft decision signalled the Supreme Court's readiness to overturn the 1973 Roe v Wade decision. Democratic Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, who has called the draft ruling an "abomination," said he has teed up the vote on codifying the right to abortion in America, which the conservative-majority court appears poised to ban.

The prospects of success are virtually zero, given

### News in brief

#### Ghana vessel sinks

**ACCRA, Ghana:** Ghanaian authorities said Monday they had rescued 15 people from a sinking trawler off the country's coast while at least 11 others were still missing, including a Chinese national. The Ghana-owned but Chinese-operated ship known as MV Comforter II sank on Friday during a stormy south of Ghana's second port city Takoradi, 220 kilometres (135 miles) from the capital Accra. "Official records have it that there were 26 crew members on board... So far, we've rescued 15 people and 11 are still missing," said Paul Bannerman, deputy director at the Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture Development. Those missing are 10 Ghanaians and one Chinese, Bannerman told AFP. "They were fishing in a stormy environment," he said. An investigation into the incident is underway, he added, along with search and rescue efforts. The state-owned Ghanaian Times quoted a marine police source saying the fishing vessel capsized. —AFP

#### More than 40 migrants drown

**RABAT:** At least 44 migrants drowned on Sunday when their boat capsized off the coast of the Western Sahara, migrant aid agency Caminando Fronteras said. Twelve others survived the tragedy, which happened when the boat sank off the coast of Cap Boujdour, the agency's Helena Maleno tweeted. The survivors were arrested, Maleno wrote. The bodies of seven victims were brought back to shore but the others could not be retrieved, she added. There was no immediate confirmation from authorities in Morocco, which sees the disputed Western Sahara as an integral part of the North African kingdom. It was not clear where the boat was heading, but usually migrants leaving from that area try to reach Spain's Canary Islands. Morocco is a key transit point on routes taken by migrants hoping for better lives in Europe. —AFP

#### Turkey not to expel Syrian refugees

**ISTANBUL:** President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Monday pledged that Turkey would not drive Syrian refugees back to their home country despite pressure from opposition parties. Turkey is today home to more than 3.6 million Syrian refugees who fled after civil war broke out in 2011 in its southern neighbour. Last week, the main opposition CHP leader Kemal Kilicdaroglu said his party would return Syrian refugees to their homeland within two years if he came to power. "We will protect up to the end these brothers who fled the war and took refuge in our country" no matter what the CHP leader claims, Erdogan said in a televised address. "We will never expel them from this land. "Our door is wide open to them. We will continue to host them. We will not throw them into the lap of murderers." Erdogan is facing rising public anger over the refugees' and is wary of the issue dominating next year's presidential elections. Turkey has welcomed nearly five million refugees in total, including Syrians and Afghans, but their presence has caused tensions with locals, especially as the country is in economic turmoil with the weakening lira and soaring energy and food prices. —AFP

# Business

TUESDAY, MAY 10, 2022

## Indian rupee falls to new low on Fed action, inflation fears

### Foreign investors continue to dump domestic stocks

**MUMBAI:** The Indian rupee plunged to an all-time low against the greenback on Monday, as US monetary policy tightening roiled sentiment and foreign investors continued to dump domestic stocks. Rising oil prices and a strengthening US dollar have weighed heavily on the rupee with a surprise rate hike by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) last week doing little to stem capital outflows.

The rupee fell past its previous record low of 76.98 against the US dollar in March to 77.56 on Monday.

The fall came as Indian stocks on the benchmark Sensex and Nifty50 indices extended losses for a fourth day, falling more than one percent each on Monday before recovering ground later in the day.

Banks, metals and oil and gas stocks declined the most, with market heavyweight, the conglomerate Reliance, losing more than 3.0 percent following its quarterly results reported late on Friday. Foreign investors have withdrawn a net 1.34 trillion rupees (\$17.3 billion) from Indian equities so far this year, stock exchange data showed. The war in Ukraine and resurgence of COVID-19 restrictions in China have exacerbated outflows from emerging mar-

kets like India as foreign funds turn risk-averse.

Inflation worries on the back of rising commodity prices have also soured sentiment in Asia's third-largest economy, which imports more than 80 percent of its oil needs. Consumer price inflation in India hit a 17-month high of 6.95 percent year-on-year in March, and economists expect data to be released later this week to show that number rising beyond seven percent in April.

The US Federal Reserve last week hiked the key lending rates by half a percentage point, but also held off on signaling more aggressive measures. "After an unscheduled rate hike by the Reserve Bank of India, if India's inflation moves higher than 7.0 percent... the pressure will be on for the RBI to act again," forex firm OANDA's Jeffrey Halley said in a note.

"That may give some strength to the rupee but is unlikely to be bullish for local equities." India's forex reserves declined for an eighth consecutive week, slipping below \$600 billion in the week ending April 29 as the central bank sold foreign currency in an effort to stabilize the rupee. —AFP



**MUMBAI:** A vegetable seller counts Indian rupee notes in Mumbai on May 9, 2022. The Indian rupee plunged to a fresh all-time low against the US dollar on May 9, as aggressive US monetary policy roiled sentiment and foreign investors continued to dump domestic stocks. — AFP

### Ailing Palestinian economy needs more aid: WB

**WASHINGTON:** The World Bank on Monday urged donors to boost support for the Palestinian Authority, which it said was facing a destabilizing budget crisis linked partly to "record low" foreign aid contributions. The report published ahead of a donor conference in Brussels paints a contrasting view of the Palestinian economy, which is seeing a post-lockdown recovery even as food insecurity worsens in places. The economy in the West Bank,

a Palestinian territory occupied by Zionist entity, posted 7.8 percent growth in 2021 — part of a rebound also fuelled by an increased number of Zionist work permits for Palestinians to find jobs in the Jewish state.

In Gaza—a separate Zionist-blockaded territory ruled by Islamist group Hamas—the economy was slowed down by an 11-day war with Zionist entity last year but still saw 3.4 percent growth.

The growth in the West Bank allowed the PA to increase tax revenue but the financial outlook remains "precarious", the World Bank said. "The fiscal situation remains highly challenging," the organization said, adding that the PA was now paying only "partial salaries since November". The PA's 2021 budget deficit hit \$1.26 billion, while a

"record low" \$317 million was received in foreign aid, the World Bank said.

Palestinian Prime Minister Mohammed Shtayyeh was set to meet EU officials in Brussels to push for "progress in the European position in terms of supporting the PA", the authority's spokesman Ibrahim Melhem told AFP. Zionist entity's regional cooperation minister Issawi Freij is also expected at the Brussels conference. Zionist entity's Prime Minister Naftali Bennett opposes Palestinian statehood but has said he wants to boost economic opportunities in the West Bank. He has argued that Palestinians earning high wages along with other economic opportunities could help reduce violence in the long-running conflict, which has spiked again in recent weeks. —AFP



**GAZA STRIP:** A Palestinian farmer participates in the annual wheat harvest in a field in Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip on May 8, 2022. —AFP

### Boursa Kuwait shares decline; Gulf mixed

**KUWAIT:** The Boursa Kuwait closed its trading on Monday with the general market index declining by 19.9 points to reach the level of 8,387.78 points, a decrease of 0.24 percent. The main market index rose by 6.9 points to reach 6,427.26 points, an increase of 0.11 percent, trading 130.6 million shares through 5,796 transactions worth KD 16.6 million (about \$59.7 million).

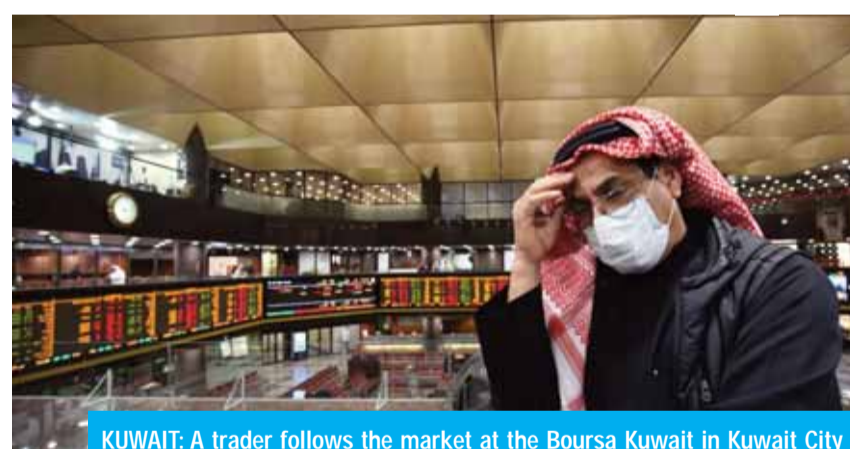
The primary market index edged lower by 31.08 points to reach 9,334.62, a decline of 0.33 percent, trading 97.8 million shares in 7,688 transactions worth KD 45.3 million (about \$163 million).

Meanwhile, stock markets in the Gulf region were largely mixed on Monday with Dubai's main share index up more than 0.5 percent as oil prices fluctuated.

Dubai's main share index was up 0.56 percent. Index heavyweight Emirates NBD Bank and Dubai Investments PJSC drove gains. Shares of Dubai Islamic Bank were up marginally after a document showed the United Arab Emirates' largest Islamic lender has hired banks to arrange a sale of five-year US dollar-denominated sukuk.

Saudi Arabia's Tadawul benchmark index edged up 0.07 percent, boosted by materials and consumer staples.

Oil prices lost two percent on demand worries and the haven dollar rose, while bitcoin plunged to a 2022 low below \$33,000 as investors shunned the volatile cryptocurrency. Oil prices rebounded on Monday in see-saw trading, with some investors taking profits after signs of progress in the US-Iran nuclear talks while others kept bullish sentiment bolstered by rising consumption amid ongoing supply constraints. World stock markets mostly sank Monday on stubborn fears over the impact of rising US interest rates, surging inflation and China's COVID lockdowns. —Agencies



**KUWAIT:** A trader follows the market at the Boursa Kuwait in Kuwait City in this March 1, 2020 file photo. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

### Indonesia maintains steady growth in Q1 thanks to exports

**JAKARTA:** Indonesia's economy maintained steady growth in the first quarter of 2022 despite global tensions, official data showed on Monday, as the nation reaped the benefits of soaring commodities prices and an easing of COVID restrictions.

Indonesia was badly affected by the coronavirus pandemic, with its exports and tourism-reliant economy taking a massive hit in 2020 as GDP shrunk by 2.07 percent—its first recession since the 1997 Asian financial crisis. But Southeast Asia's largest economy has picked up in recent months, and the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) on Monday reported an on-year expansion of 5.01 percent in January-March. "The high economic growth for the first quarter of 2022 is caused by the recovery of public activities," head of the bureau Margo Yuwono said during a press conference.

"Public mobility in the first quarter of 2022 has been really good." Exports showed an especially impressive growth of 16.22 percent in the first quarter of 2022 as prices for Indonesia's palm oil, nickel and tin soared on the global market. Moody's Analytics said Indonesia's first-quarter showing exceeded their forecast.

"The result indicates that Southeast Asia's largest economy is on track to achieve the government's full-year growth target of 4.5 percent to 5.3 percent," it said in a note released Monday. Indonesia in March had dropped quarantine requirements for all travellers with a negative PCR test. —AFP

### Sri Lanka: Timeline of a crisis

**COLOMBO:** Sri Lanka, whose prime minister Mahinda Rajapaksa resigned on Monday, has been mired for the past two months in a deep political and economic crisis.

The island nation of 22 million people is experiencing acute shortages of food, fuel and other essentials, a crisis that has inflicted widespread misery and triggered weeks of mass demonstrations. The South Asian country emerged from a devastating civil war in 2009 only to be rocked by Islamist bombings in 2019, before being hit hard the following year by the COVID-19 pandemic which torpedoed its vital tourism sector.

Here is how the crisis has unfolded:

**March 31:** President's home threatened  
Hundreds of protesters, rallied by unidentified social media activists, try to storm the home of President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, demanding his resignation.

**April 1:** State of emergency  
As protests spread, Rajapaksa declares a state of emergency, giving security forces sweeping powers to arrest and detain suspects.

**April 2:** Troops deployed, curfew  
Sri Lanka declares a 36-hour nationwide curfew and deploys troops.

**April 3:** Cabinet resigns  
Almost all of Sri Lanka's cabinet resigns at a late-night meeting, leaving Rajapaksa and his brother Mahinda — the prime minister — isolated.

**April 4:** More resignations  
Gotabaya Rajapaksa offers to share power with the opposition under a unity administration led by him and Mahinda, but is rebuffed.

The governor of the central bank, having resisted calls to seek a bailout from the International Monetary Fund, announces his resignation.

**April 5:** President loses majority  
President Rajapaksa's problems deepen as finance minister Ali Sabry resigns just a day after he was appointed. The embattled leader loses his parliamentary majority as former allies urge him to quit. He lifts the state of emergency.

**April 9:** Biggest street protest  
Tens of thousands march on the president's office in the biggest protest to date, demanding that Rajapaksa resign.

**April 10:** Medicine shortages  
Sri Lanka's doctors say they are nearly out of life-saving medicines, warning that the crisis could end up killing more than the coronavirus pandemic.

**April 12:** External debt default

The country announces it is defaulting on its external debt of \$51 billion as a "last resort" after running out of foreign exchange to import desperately needed goods.

**April 18:** New government  
On April 18, the president unveils a new government, ousting two of his brothers and a nephew but keeping on his eldest brother Mahinda as prime minister.

**April 19:** First casualty  
On April 19, the police kill a protester, the first casualty of several weeks of anti-government protests. The next day the International Monetary Fund (IMF) says it has asked Sri Lanka to restructure its colossal external debt before a rescue package can be agreed.

**April 28:** General strikes  
On April 28, a general strike brings the country to a standstill. After a second strike on May 6, Rajapaksa declares another state of emergency. The police step up security around lawmakers from the ruling party.

**May 9:** Premier resigns  
On May 9, Mahinda Rajapaksa resigns as prime minister after violent clashes between his supporters and anti-government protesters that leave three dead and more than 150 injured. A lawmaker from the ruling party shoots two anti-government protesters, killing one, then takes his own life during a confrontation outside the capital. The authorities announce a nationwide curfew. — AFP



## Business

# China's April exports slump to lowest in two years as virus bites

## COVID resurgence shuttered factories, causes congestion at key ports

BEIJING: China's export growth slumped in April to its lowest level in almost two years, customs data showed Monday, as a COVID resurgence shuttered factories, sparked transport curbs and caused congestion at key ports. The data shows the extent of growing damage to the world's second largest economy as millions are confined to their homes—particularly in key business hub Shanghai—to stamp out its worst COVID resurgence since the early days of the pandemic.

Beijing has persisted with a strict zero-COVID policy involving lockdowns and mass testing, but the economic costs are mounting as manufacturing hubs and supply chains atrophy under grueling restrictions. Export growth plunged to 3.9 percent on-year last month, the Customs Administration said Monday. While this was above analysts' expectations of 2.7 percent growth according to a Bloomberg poll, it marked the lowest rate since June 2020.

Import growth was flat in April, an improvement from a 0.1 percent contraction in March, as Chinese consumers remain hesitant under a welter of restrictions across the country.

Customs spokesman Li Kuiwen tried to strike an upbeat note on Monday saying the economy still has room to make a turnaround and that its "positive fundamentals" remain unchanged.

But analysts are less optimistic. "Export growth could get worse in the next couple of months due to the pandemic and China's stringent COVID containment measures, falling external demand, and loss of orders to other regions," Nomura chief China economist Ting Lu told AFP. Export growth was among the key economic drivers of the last several quarters but could turn into a "drag" on the economy, he warned. Last month, China's trade surplus came in at \$51.1 billion, according to official data.

### 'A dilemma'

In April, China's biggest city Shanghai was almost entirely sealed off as it became the epicenter of the country's worst coronavirus surge, with many factories halting production and trucker shortage causing goods to pile up at its port. Restrictions also appear to be looming in other cities, including the capital Beijing. "Lockdowns in large cities like Shanghai and rising input costs are major reasons" behind the underwhelming trade figures, analyst Zhaopeng Xing of ANZ Research said. While top leaders have offered words of reassurance for tech, infrastructure and jobs, experts warn that Beijing's unwavering adherence to its zero-COVID strategy will continue to hack into growth. "China faces a dilemma: how to contain Omicron outbreaks without causing too much damage to the economic activities," said Zhiwei Zhang, chief economist at Pinpoint Asset Management. — AFP



## US cuts Internet costs for low income families

WASHINGTON: The United States government has reached agreements with 20 major telecom companies to cut costs or raise internet broadband speeds for tens of millions of eligible households, the White House announced Monday.

The "Affordable Connectivity Programme" (ACP) requires internet service providers who have signed up to give eligible households "high-speed, high-quality internet plans" for no more than 30 US dollars per month, the administration said in a statement. "Lowering prices—including the cost of high-speed internet service—is President (Joe) Biden's top priority," said the statement, which added that the new program was part of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law passed by Congress last year.

Households are eligible for the program if their income is below twice the US federal poverty level, or if they already qualify for certain other federal poverty alleviation programs such as Medicaid or nutritional assistance. The federal poverty level for a family of four in 2022 is \$27,750 per year.

The Biden administration estimates more than 48 million households will qualify for the program, with more than 11.5 million households already signed up, the statement said. Additionally, eligible households can receive a discount of up to 30 dollars per month on any internet service plan offered by a participating provider, with households on Native American tribal lands eligible for discounts of up to 75 dollars per month.—AFP



QINGDAO, China: Immigration inspection officers check an oil tanker carrying imported crude oil at Qingdao port in China's eastern Shandong province on May 9, 2022. — AFP



## Announcement of Public Subscription in the Share Capital Increase for the Shareholders of Boubyan Bank K.S.C.P.

**Issuer and Subscription Agent:**  
Boubyan Bank K.S.C.P., a Public Shareholding Company Incorporated in the State of Kuwait

**Subscription Advisor:**  
Boubyan Capital Investment Company

**CR. no.:** 104042

**Clearing and Depository Agent:**  
Kuwait Clearing Company K.S.C.

**Notice to Potential Investors:**  
We advise investors to read and understand the content of this Prospectus ahead of investment, and to perform risk assessment and to seek professional advice since this advertisement does not include all the information that must be studied by potential investors before taking the decision to invest in the offering's shares, and since no confirmation may be given as to the completeness of this information.

**Subscription prospectus:**  
The Prospectus is available for printing and downloading at Boubyan Bank's website [www.bankboubyan.com](http://www.bankboubyan.com), and Boursa Kuwait Website and you may also get your copy of the Prospectus from the headquarters of Boursa Kuwait, Kuwait Clearing Company, or Boubyan Bank.

**Percentage increase in issued share capital**  
The capital of the Issuer will be increased by KD 40,000,000 (Forty million Kuwaiti Dinars) representing an increase of %11.98 (eleven point ninety eight percent) in the Issuer's authorized and issued share capital immediately prior to the Offering.

**Total Value of the Offering:**  
KD 200,000,000 (Two hundred million Kuwaiti Dinars) inclusive of the nominal value 100 (one hundred) Fils and the share premium 400 (four hundred) Fils per share.

**Nature of Shares:** Ordinary Shares

**Minimum Subscription:** 1 (One) Share

**Subscription Period Allocated for Exercising Pre-Emptive Rights "Rights Issue":** From May 15<sup>th</sup> 2022 to May 29<sup>th</sup> 2022

**The Period for Trading Pre-Emptive Rights:** From May 15<sup>th</sup> 2022 to May 22<sup>nd</sup> 2022

**Pre-Emptive Right:**  
Shareholders recorded in the Bank's Shareholder's Register with Kuwait Clearing Company K.S.C. at the close of trading on Boursa Kuwait on the Record Date, i.e. shareholders recorded in the Bank's Shareholders Register as at May 11<sup>th</sup> 2022. For clarity, any trading on the Bank's shares prior to the Record Date, but for which the trade settlement process at Boursa Kuwait has not been completed as at the Record Date (Ex-Date), and as a result have not yet been recorded on the Bank's Shareholder Register, will not be considered in determining the Eligible Shareholders enrolled as at the Record Date.

**Period for Public Subscription in Surplus Shares (if any):** From June 05<sup>th</sup> 2022 to June 19<sup>th</sup> 2022

**Subscription Instructions:**

**First: Subscription through the website:**  
The website allows subscription in capital increase of 20,000 (twenty thousand)

shares, equivalent to KD 10,000 (KD ten thousand) or less. Payment shall be made through K-NET service.

**The Subscriber shall:**

1. Login to the website via the link: <https://www.ipo.com.kw>
2. Register the civil ID number, thus, the system shall verify whether subscriber is eligible for subscription or not (verification shall be conducted during the period of exercising the pre-emption right only).
3. Record the number of shares to be subscribed for.
4. Be transferred to the payment portal via the K-NET service, where the subscriber can pay from his/her/its own account (no other person may pay on behalf of the Subscriber except in the cases provided for under law). (Required documents shall be reviewed upon submitting the subscription application, and the Subscriber shall bear all legal consequences in case of violation.)

**Second: Subscription through visiting the clearing and depository agent «to subscribe in a number of shares exceeding 20,000 (twenty thousand) shares»:**

1. The Subscriber shall log on the link <https://www.ipo.com.kw> to print the subscription information document, including but not limited to the name of the subscriber, the civil ID number, the number of shares to be subscribed and their value.

2. The Subscriber shall visit his/her/its own bank and submit a copy of the Subscription Document printed from the above link and transfer the amount required to the Bank Account (not profit bearing) to increase the bank's share capital of (net amount without any charges by the transferring bank and the receiving Bank) stated below:

**Bank Name:** Boubyan Bank K.S.C.P.  
**Account No:** 0003001366  
**IBAN:** KW85BBYN  
000000000000000003001366  
**SWIFT:** BBYN  
**Beneficiary:** Boubyan Bank K.S.C.P.  
**Reference:** Boubyan Bank capital increase + subscribers ID number (civil Identity Card number) + subscriber's contact details (Telephone number)

3. The Subscriber shall get an original deposit voucher of the amount transferred from his own bank and then refer to the clearing and depository agent to complete the remaining procedures.
4. The Subscriber shall visit the headquarters of the Clearing and Depository agent located at the Arabian Gulf Street, Ahmad Tower, the Fifth floor to submit the documents listed under the section for «Documents Required Upon Submitting Subscription Applications» in this Prospectus during usual business hours from 09:00 am to 01:00 pm.

5. The Clearing and Depository Agent shall provide the Subscriber with a deposit receipt of the Subscription.

**Failure of any Subscriber to submit a duly completed Subscription Application Form (together with all applicable supporting documentation thereto) at the premises of Kuwait Clearing Company, after the transfer or deposit of the Subscription Monies as required in this Prospectus, shall render the Subscription Application of a Subscriber null and void. Subscription monies shall not be accepted in cash.**

**Risk Factors:**

**There are some risks associated with investment in the issue shares. Such risks may fall into the following categories:**

- (A) Issuer-related risks.
- (B) Regulatory risks.
- (C) Risks associated with the State of Kuwait.
- (D) Risks associated with the issue shares.

**"Neither the Capital Markets Authority nor any regulatory authority in the State of Kuwait may bear any liability for the content of this advertisement, the accuracy thereof, or any loss which may arise due to any part thereof".**

**Contact details for inquiries:**

**Investor Relations Unit:**  
22325020  
[Investor-Relations@bankboubyan.com](mailto:Investor-Relations@bankboubyan.com)



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Towards perfection

## Business

# G7 countries pledge to phase out dependency on Russian oil

## 'Putin brought 'shame' on Russia with his invasion of Ukraine'

WASHINGTON: The G7 club of wealthy nations committed Sunday to phasing out its dependency on Russian oil and issued a scathing statement accusing President Vladimir Putin of bringing "shame" on Russia with his invasion of Ukraine. The statement from the Group of Seven-France, Canada, Germany, Italy, Japan, Britain and the United States-did not specify exactly what commitments each country will make to move away from Russian energy.

But it was an important development in the ongoing campaign to pressure Putin by crippling Russia's economy, and underscores the unity of the international community against Moscow's actions. "We commit to phase out our dependency on Russian energy, including by phasing out or banning the import of Russian oil. We will ensure that we do so in a timely and orderly fashion, and in ways that provide time for the world to secure alternative supplies," the joint statement said.

"This will hit hard at the main artery of Putin's economy and deny him the revenue he needs to fund his war," the White House said. The announcement came as the G7 held its third meeting of the year on Sunday via video conference, with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky participating. The West has so far displayed close coordination in its announcements of sanctions against Russia, but has not moved at the same pace when it comes to Russian oil and gas. The United States, which was not a major consumer of Russian hydrocarbons, has already banned their import. But Europe is far more reliant on Russian oil. The European Union has already said it is aiming to cut its reliance on Russian gas by two-thirds this year, though Germany has opposed calls for a full boy-

cott, with member states continuing intense negotiations Sunday.

The G7 also slammed Putin personally for his actions in Ukraine. The Russian president's "unprovoked war of aggression" against its Eastern European neighbor has brought "shame on Russia and the historic sacrifices of its people," the group said in its statement. "Russia has violated the international rules-based order, particularly the UN Charter, conceived after the Second World War to spare successive generations from the scourge of war," the statement continued.

### Fresh US sanctions

The date of Sunday's G7 meeting is highly symbolic: Europeans commemorate the end of World War II in Europe on May 8. Sunday's meeting also comes on the eve of the May 9 military parade in Russia, which marks the Soviet Union's victory over Nazi Germany. Washington also announced a new round of sanctions against Russia in a White House statement on Sunday, focusing on two major areas: the media, and access by Russian companies and wealthy individuals to world-leading US accounting and consulting services. The US will sanction Joint Stock Company Channel One Russia, Television Station Russia-1, and Joint Stock Company NTV Broadcasting Company. Any US company will be prohibited from financing them through advertising or selling them equipment.

"US companies should not be in the business of funding Russian propaganda," said a senior White House official who requested anonymity, stressing that these media were directly or indirectly controlled by the Kremlin. Another line of attack by Washington: banning the provision of "accounting,



PARIS: G7 leaders pose for a group photo at the Elysee Palace in Paris on May 8, 2022, on the 74th day of the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

trust and corporate formation, and management consulting services to any person in the Russian Federation," according to the White House. Those services are used to run multinational companies, but also potentially to circumvent sanctions or hide ill-gotten wealth, the White House official said. The official stressed that while the Europeans had the closest industrial links with Russia, the United States and the United Kingdom dominated the world of accounting and consulting, notably

through the "Big Four"—the four global audit and consulting giants Deloitte, EY, KPMG and PwC. Washington has also announced new bans on the export of American products to Russia, covering a range of capital goods from bulldozers to ventilation systems and boilers. The United States announced on Sunday that it would impose visa restrictions on 2,600 Russian and Belarusian officials, as well as sanctions against officials of Sberbank and Gazprombank. — AFP

## Al-Rushood highlights KFH's Q1 performance during earnings webcast

KUWAIT: AbdulWahab Al-Rushood, Acting Group Chief Executive Officer at Kuwait Finance House (KFH) highlighted the bank's financial performance during earnings webcast Q1-2022. He said that KFH reported net profit for KFH shareholders of KD 69.5 million for Q1-2022; an increase of 39.0 percent compared to the same period last year.

Al-Rushood added that earnings per share for Q1-2022 reached 7.55 fils; an increase of 39.0 percent compared to the same period last year. Net financing income for Q1-2022 reached KD 159.0 million; an increase of 3.5 percent compared to the same period last year. Financing receivables as of the end of Q1-2022 reached KD 11.9 billion, ie an increase of KD 496.5 million or 4.4 percent compared to end of year 2021. Investment in Sukuk as of the end of Q1-2022 reached KD 3.0 billion; an increase of KD 228.6 million or 8.4 percent compared to end of year 2021. Total assets as of the end of Q1-2022 reached KD 22.2 billion ie, increase of KD 375.3 million or 1.7 percent compared to end of year 2021. Depositors' accounts as of the end of Q1-2022 reached KD 15.8 billion. Shareholders' equity as of the end of Q1-2022 reached KD 1.9 billion.

Al-Rushood indicated KFH has successfully achieved solid financial results and growth in all key financial indicators for the first quarter 2022 despite local and global economic challenges. This emphasizes the efficient strategy and plans set by KFH. He mentioned that KFH maintained positive ratios in terms of ROA, ROE, profitability, and asset quality as well as the coverage ratio of provisions, indicating KFH's competitive performance on a Group level attracted more customers and investors.

Al-Rushood said that KFH enjoys high liquidity ratios, creditworthiness and a diversified financing portfolio that support its business growth and enhances the investment and financial capabilities of the Bank in Kuwait and the countries where Group subsidiaries operate (Turkey, Bahrain, Germany, Malaysia and Saudi Arabia). KFH is the largest Islamic bank in Kuwait and



AbdulWahab Al-Rushood



Shadi Zahran



Fahad Al-Mukhaizeem

and other non-yielding income as compared to net financing income.

### Fahad Al-Mukhaizeem, Group Chief Strategy Officer

Fahad Al-Mukhaizeem, Group Chief Strategy Officer highlighted the Kuwait operating environment with an overview on KFH's strategy. He added that due to the uncertainty with the outbreak of the war in Europe between Russia and Ukraine, The International Monetary Fund (IMF) reduced its growth forecast on the global economic outlook from 4.4 percent to 3.6 percent for 2022. The Middle East region remains a region strongly correlated with the oil market conditions. Since it includes many oil and gas exporting countries, The IMF expects the Middle East region to grow at 4.6 percent in 2022 because it is a year in which oil prices are booming. IMF expects Kuwait GDP growth to reach 8.2 percent in 2022, which is the highest growth rate among all the GCC countries.

Al-Mukhaizeem added that the Central Bank of Kuwait raised its key discount rate by 25bps to 1.75 percent on March 16th, 2022, tracking a rise in the Federal Reserve funds rate. Kuwait's Long-Term Issuer Default Rating (IDR) remained solid as Moody's rating was fixed at "A1" with a stable Outlook (Sep 2020), and S&P affirmed at "A+" with a negative Outlook (April 2022), while Fitch rates Kuwait at "AA-" with Stable Outlook (Jan 2022).

He pointed out that KFH's long term credit rating stands at "A" by Fitch with Stable Outlook, and at A2 by Moody's with Stable outlook. In addition, KFH Group was recently named as the Best Islamic Financial Institution in the World and in the Middle East by Global Finance Magazine, and Best Treasury & Cash Management Banks in Kuwait by Global Finance Magazine. Over the quarter KFH led the premier market at Boursa Kuwait with the highest market capitalization.

Al-Mukhaizeem said that KFH is moving forward with its digital transformation efforts and offering unique digital financial solutions that exceed customers' expectations. This is a major pillar of the bank's strategy which is being implemented across the group, and represented by the continued double digit increase in the growth rate of online users.

the second-largest bank overall, with a market share of 22.4 percent by local assets at end-2021.

He reiterated that KFH proved its CSR leadership through millions in contributions to many strategic social initiatives, in addition to that KFH signed agreements with the Kuwait Red Crescent Society to execute several relief, medical, and humanitarian projects inside and outside Kuwait leading to KFH winning the "Corporate Social Responsibility in the Middle East" Award from EMEA Finance magazine.

### Shadi Zahran, Group CFO

Meanwhile, Group Chief Financial Officer Shadi Zahran presented the financial performance of KFH group for the first quarter of 2022. He said that the Group has achieved Net Profit After Tax attributable to Shareholders for the quarter ended 31st March 2022 of KD 69.5mn higher by KD 19.5mn or 39 percent compared to Q1-21 of KD 50.0 million. The higher profit is mainly from increase in total operating income and lower provisions.

Zahran added that financing income has witnessed an increase by KD 5.6 million or 2.5 percent compared to same period last year mainly due to increase in average profit earning assets.

Net financing income at KD 159 million increased by KD 5.4 million or 3.5 percent compared to same period last year mainly due to increase in financing income while COF remained at Q1-21 level of KD 71.2 million.

Net Operating income at KD 148.2 million increased by KD 20.6 million or 16.2 percent compared to same period last year; mainly from higher net gain from foreign currencies by KD 15.1 million and Investment income by KD 8.4 million. Zahran highlighted that contribution of net financing income declined from 76 percent in Q1-2021 to 70 percent in Q1-2022. This is mainly due to increase in contribution of investment income

## stc wins two prestigious awards

KUWAIT: Kuwait Telecommunications Company - stc, a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and platforms to customers, enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, announced that it has received the "Best Telecommunications Service Provider Kuwait 2022" and "Most Innovative Digital Transformation Telecom Company Kuwait 2022" awards from the globally recognized World Economic Magazine. stc was awarded in recognition of the Company's exceptional achievements & initiatives in 2021 in enabling and empowering digital transformation across Kuwait's private and public sectors.

The recognition from the World Economic Magazine reflects stc's continuous pursuit to elevate customer experience and their journeys through providing a wide range of innovative solutions in the field of Information and Communications Technology and digital products.

The awards also reflect stc's strategic vision of enabling digital transformation in Kuwait in line with Kuwait Vision 2035, whereas it focused on developing and enhancing its 5G infrastructure. This in return allowed stc to provide individual customers and corporate clients with reliable high-speed connectivity, custom-tailored solutions, and advanced technology all under one umbrella.

Commenting on the awards, stc CEO, engineer Maziad Al-Harbi said, "In a year full of challenges due to COVID-19 pandemic, the telecom sector continues to play a significant role in enabling the digitization strategies and digital transformations of corporate and



Maziad Al-Harbi

government entities, with the introduction of advanced solutions and tools that can accelerate the path towards those objectives. stc has moved forward to implement its corporate strategy with the aim to position stc as a digital pioneer, where our vision is focused in implementing its sustainable business growth and expansion strategy, while switching from providing traditional services to offering digital, cloud, internet of things (IoT), Data Center as well advanced IT solutions within the integrated communications technology sector, in line with Kuwait's digital transformation journey."

He added: "Throughout the past couple of years, stc has successfully optimized its operations, invested in developing the largest 5G network in Kuwait and enhanced its digital channels to provide its customers with an unrivalled experience. In 2021, stc was the first operator in Kuwait to launch the FULL 5G (standalone 5G) providing better customer experience".

Al-Harbi added, "stc's future plans focus on gaining market leadership and being a pioneer through providing an effective model based on its digital platforms where stc seeks to enter strategic partnerships within the ICT sector and explore more smart investments to address the challenges in the market."

He added: "We at stc carefully consider the diverse needs of our customers to provide them with custom tailored solutions that fit their requirements. Our progressive drive and pioneering digital solutions played a significant role in the exceptional year stc has had in



terms of introducing new concepts to market. Our range of digital solutions provided start-ups, SMEs, and enterprises with innovative products, such as a 5G Dedicated Line, 5G Live Bus, cloud-based surveillance, and artificial intelligence, as well as other solutions that provide a well-rounded experience, designed to enhance the efficiency of their existing operations through digitized concepts. In terms of our individual customers, we worked effortlessly in enhancing their journey with stc by upgrading our network, expanding our offering line, as well as other initiatives that aim to enrich their lifestyles," he said.



## A super offer from Behbehani Tire Center — Pirelli

KUWAIT: Following the great success of the last promotional campaign 'Buy 2 Tires & get 2 Tires Free' and since Pirelli always strives to provide its customers without standing service and quality, Behbehani Tire Center re-launched the 'Buy 2 Tires & get 2 Tires Free' campaign that will last till end of May and is applicable on a wide range of selected sizes. This process takes place at our highly equipped centers with fully advanced technologies and machinery. Our specialized team of experts who underwent advanced training courses from Pirelli International factories will provide our valued customers with the highest quality service.

This amazing opportunity is available for everyone willing to change their vehicle tires in preparation for the Summer season. It is vital to prepare your tires before Summer begins since weather becomes hotter and harsh which will endanger tires safety condition.

Pirelli Premium tires are offered in a wide variety of specifications and sizes that suit different car makers and car types. In addition to a range of motorcycle tires made available locally, Behbehani Tire Center also provides a particular center for replacing Truck tires. Pirelli tires are suitable for the Gulf and Kuwait weather, as they are meticulously crafted to provide superior performance and high stability on all roads. They are also able to withstand harsh weather conditions, high temperatures and speeds.

You can visit Behbehani Tire Center branches in four different locations which include the biggest flagship Pirelli store in Shuwaikh on the 4th Ring Road next to Abdul Wahab showroom. The second Showroom is located in Al-Rai, next to ACE Hardware. The third showroom is located in Ahmadi. The Fourth and the ultra-sophisticated showroom in Industrial Shuwaikh near Abyat showroom branching from Canada dry Road. In assurance of our customers' satisfaction, all our centers have a comfortable waiting area, latest technologies and machinery reinforced by teams of specialized technicians and experts in the field.

## Business

# Western multinationals, local tycoons congratulate Hong Kong's new leader

## Major economies decry rubber-stamp selection process

**HONG KONG:** Western multinationals and local tycoons published newspaper adverts congratulating John Lee on becoming Hong Kong's next leader, following a rubber-stamp selection process decried as anti-democratic by many major economies Monday.

Lee, 64, a former security chief who oversaw the crackdown on Hong Kong's democracy movement, was anointed the business hub's new leader on Sunday in a near-unanimous vote by a small committee of Beijing loyalists. He was the sole candidate in the race to succeed outgoing leader Carrie Lam at a time when Hong Kong is being remolded in China's authoritarian image.

Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the UK and the United States on Monday joined the European Union in voicing alarm. "We... underscore our grave concern over the selection process for the Chief Executive in Hong Kong as part of a continued assault on political pluralism and fundamental freedoms," the G7 group said in a joint statement with the EU.

Beijing hailed the process as "a real demonstration of democratic spirit" and said it was the culmination of a strategy to ensure only "patriots" run Hong Kong.

### Corporate congratulations

Ta Kung Pao and Wen Wei Po, two newspapers that answer to the office which sets Beijing's Hong Kong policy, were filled with adverts on Monday from leading companies and business figures praising Lee's selection. Most were from Chinese and Hong Kong businesses as well as community organizations. The "Big Four" accountancy firms-KPMG, Deloitte, EY and PwC-were among Western multinationals placing adverts, as were city airline Cathay Pacific and conglomerates Swire and Jardine Matheson. Messages were also carried by Hong Kong's family tycoon-dominated property giants, including Sun Hung Kai and Henderson Land Development.

Western businesses have found themselves in an increasingly precarious position in Hong Kong, especially as tensions have risen with China.

Many have embraced progressive political causes in Western markets, such as the anti-racism Black Lives Matter movement, same-sex equality and riding supply chains of labor abuses.

But they usually steer clear of any criticism of China's policies towards hotspots such as Hong Kong, Xinjiang, Tibet and Taiwan. Some companies such as HSBC, Standard Chartered, Swire and Jardine



**HONG KONG:** Ballots are counted for the selection process of the city's chief executive in Hong Kong on May 8, 2022. John Lee, the former security chief who oversaw the crackdown on Hong Kong's democracy movement, was declared the business hub's new leader on May 8, 2022 by a small committee of Beijing loyalists. — AFP

Matheson publicly backed Beijing's national security law, which was imposed on Hong Kong after 2019's democracy protests to curb dissent.

### Can Hong Kong reopen?

The elevation of Lee, who is under US sanctions, places a security official in Hong Kong's top job for the first time after a tumultuous few years for a city battered by political unrest and economically debilitating pandemic controls. Despite the city's mini-constitution promising universal suffrage, Hong Kong has never been a democracy, the source of years of protests since the 1997 handover from Britain to China. Lee won 99 percent of the votes cast by the 1,461-strong

committee that picks the city's leader.

The former police officer has vowed to strengthen Hong Kong's national security and integrate the city further with the mainland.

He wants to reboot the city's economy and slowly reopen its pandemic-sealed borders at a time when its rivals have moved to living with the coronavirus.

But it is unclear how he can do that given China has doubled down on its strict zero-COVID strategy. On Monday morning, Lam met her successor and both gave short speeches stressing that they would prepare for an orderly transition. Lee, who takes over on July 1, was Lam's security chief and then her deputy. He was asked by reporters whether Hong Kongers could criti-

cize his administration or risk being arrested for "speech crimes" like dozens of democracy activists in recent years.

Lee took umbrage at that description. "I think you are very wrong to describe that people are now charged simply because of their expressed opinions," he said.

"People are brought to court because of the suspicion against them and their actions contravening the law," he added. "It is their action." Lee said his first port of call would be China's top agencies in Hong Kong-the Liaison Office, the national security committee, the foreign ministry's office and the People's Liberation Army garrison. — AFP

## Global stocks deepen losses on rising rates, China lockdowns

**LONDON:** World stock markets mostly sank Monday on stubborn fears over the impact of rising US interest rates, surging inflation and China's COVID lockdowns. Frankfurt, London and Paris each shed more than one percent nearing the half-way stage after Tokyo closed down 2.5 percent. Shanghai edged higher and Hong Kong was shut for a holiday. Oil prices lost two percent on demand worries and the haven dollar rose, while bitcoin plunged to a 2022 low below \$34,000 as investors shunned the volatile cryptocurrency. Stock markets had dived last week after the Federal Reserve ramped up interest rates by a half-percentage point and flagged more hikes to tackle decades-high inflation.

### Anxiety spreads

"Anxiety is stemming from the Fed's next moves, with uncertainty creeping in about the scale and speed of interest rate hikes," said Hargreaves Lansdown analyst Sophie Lund-Yates. "All this comes at the same time as China grapples with ongoing lockdowns and the prevailing economic storm these entail." Millions of people in Beijing stayed home on Monday as China's capital tries to fend off a COVID-19 outbreak with creeping restrictions on movement.

Beijing residents fear they may soon find themselves in the grip of the same draconian measures that have trapped most of Shanghai's 25 million people at home for weeks. Lockdowns across dozens of Chinese cities-from the manufacturing hubs of Shenzhen and Shanghai to the breadbasket of Jilin-have wreaked havoc on supply chains over recent months and further stoked global inflationary pressures. Investors were given more bad news on Monday as China's April exports slumped to their lowest level in almost two years, due to the nation's strict zero-COVID policy. Exports plunged to 3.9 percent on-year, while imports were stagnant for April. Global markets have also taken a beating this year from Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

President Vladimir Putin on Monday defended Russia's offensive in Ukraine and blamed Kyiv and the West, as he looked to use grand Victory Day celebrations to mobilize patriotic support for the campaign. However, investors were relieved that Putin made no major announcements, despite reports he could use the anniversary to announce an escalation of the conflict or a general mobilization. "Putin has not declared a war on Ukraine to enable full mobilisation which is obviously a relief," noted Markets.com analyst Neil Wilson. — AFP

## ITS granted CITRA cloud license

**KUWAIT:** We are proud to announce that ITS Cloud and Hosting Solutions has been granted the CITRA cloud license, one of the first of its kind in Kuwait. This comes at a time where the government communications committee has recently issued a decree instating new security regulations for the storage classified and confidential governmental data on cloud servers.

Our newly licensed cloud services, with our Kuwait Tier III data center, will provide the gravely needed infrastructure to store, locally and securely, confidential commercial and governmental data ensuring all privacy and data protection requirements. This strategically positions our company to service all Kuwait governmental agencies, including ministries, national petroleum companies, governmental associations, the Kuwait Central Bank, financial institutions and the banking sector at large. Particularly, in collaboration with our International and local partners, we will have the opportunity to provide highly secured and reliable cloud services catering for highly sensitive data.

The certified Cloud and Hosting Solutions that will be provided with our International local partners is also available to private businesses, providing the cloud infrastructure for their secure online data storage and management needs. The flexible and versatile cloud solutions offer enhanced computing capacity and access to a plethora of powerful business application while surpassing financial burdens of investing in in-house computing infrastructure. The strategic direction of Cloud services, with its global accessibility and availability, would offer clients scalability and high-performance computing via its state-of-the-art facilities and reliable data center infrastructure, opening the way for seamless integration of digital business processes into public or private cloud environments.

## Huawei launches new Huawei Watch Kids 4 Pro in Kuwait

**KUWAIT:** Huawei officially announced the Huawei Watch Kids 4 Pro, featuring a vibrant and fluid design and integrating technology and premium materials to offer kids a fun and educational experience. Huawei Watch Kids 4 Pro aims to be a unique watch that will accompany kids to keep them safe and healthy and help them to enjoy exploring the world.

Huawei Watch Kids Pro 4 includes features like Huawei's own self-developed network positioning services for optimal location accuracy. With the 5MP front camera, the Huawei Watch Kids 4 Pro supports HD video calls using Huawei MeeTime. Users can make HD video or voice calls on the Huawei Watch Kids 4 Pro with contacts that own Huawei devices, such as phones, visions, and tablets.

The Huawei Watch Kids 4 Pro smartwatch is available in blue and pink in Kuwait on Huawei's official website and select retailers.

With years of accumulated technological expertise in the field of communication, Huawei Watch Kids 4 Pro applies 9-system positioning technologies. Thanks to the GPS, Beidou, Glonass, A-GPS, WLAN positioning, base station positioning, roaming positioning, accelerometer-assisted positioning, and SOS camera assisted positioning. Parents will receive notifications when their kids leave or enter the Safe Zone. At the same time, the privacy framework of Huawei Watch Kids 4 Pro is designed with reference to the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), enabling strict data encryption and privacy protection for kids.

Huawei Watch Kids 4 Pro features unique built-in LED lights on the watch body. When the display is turned on, the LED lights have special effects and users can interact with the light in real-time. The LED lights also provide a safety beacon to keep your kids safe when walking in the dark.

Huawei Watch KidsDS 4 Pro adopts Huawei's smart network selection algorithms. It can intelligently detect



the optimal network in most countries or regions and stay connected to it, ensuring a stable network connection around the world. Users can make HD MeeTime video or voice calls on the Huawei Watch Kids 4 Pro with contacts who own other Huawei devices, such as Huawei smartphones, and Huawei tablets.

### Grow healthy, grow happy

Huawei Watch Kids 4 Pro is equipped with a 5ATM water-resistant design. Particularly, the buttons have a waterproof enclosure design that has passed strict waterproof tests. It is water resistant up to 50 meters. It also includes a swim training mode that can identify breaststroke, freestyle, butterfly and backstroke. In swim training mode, the smartwatch records the swimming distance, duration, calorie usage, pace curve, time, average stroke, and main swimming style as well as the SWOLF index. This can help kids optimize their swimming postures and record all swimming data.

The Huawei Watch Kids 4 Pro not only supports swim training mode, but it also provides a counting feature and one-min activity challenge for skipping rope, free skipping rope and sit-ups. In addition, the smartwatch can track users' steps and provide a ranking which is helpful for kids to challenge themselves when they exercise.

## CBK bonds and related Tawarruq

**KUWAIT:** The Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) announced the most recent issues of CBK bonds and related Tawarruq at a total value of KD 160 million for six months with a rate of return at 2.000 percent.

## ECB should raise rates as soon as July: Finland CB

**HELSINKI:** Finland's central bank chief Olli Rehn said Monday the ECB would have to raise its key interest rate as soon as July, as the bloc battles soaring inflation spurred by Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The ECB has kept interest rates at rock bottom over the last years to prop up a weak European economy.

But with consumer prices bounding up dramatically, calls have grown for the ECB to end its stimulus and follow other central banks in raising its key rates. Unlike in the US where wages have risen by six percent for the year, in Europe, the increases have been limited to between 1.5 and 2.5 percent. Rehn noted in an interview with Welt daily. However, he said there were already signs of such second-round effects of inflation. "We must therefore prevent the inflation expectations from becoming entrenched," he said. —AFP

## Jazeera Airways announces new service to Nepal

**KUWAIT:** Jazeera Airways, Kuwait's leading low-cost airline operating in the Middle East, Asia and Europe, on Monday announced the launch of a new service to the Gautam Buddha International Airport (BWA) in Bhairahawa, Nepal, connecting the large community of Nepalese expatriates living in the Middle East and Europe to the south-west area of the country.

This is the second service operated by Jazeera Airways to Nepal and responds to high demand for travel to the Terai plains of Nepal. Flights to Gautam Buddha International Airport (BWA) will commence on May 15, 2022. Announcing the new route, Jazeera Airways Chief Executive Officer, Rohit Ramachandran, said: "Jazeera Airways continues to expand its network to offer destinations that also cater to large expatriate communities that are often not served by direct and



connecting routes from Kuwait and the Middle East. The new service to the Gautam Buddha International Airport (BWA) gives the Nepalese community a more convenient connection that gets them closer to that area of the country."

This new direct service to Bhairahawa is also the gateway to Lumbini, the birthplace of Gautam Buddha in 623BC for pilgrims and tourists. Gautam Buddha International Airport (BWA) is located approximately 270 kilometers west of the capital Kathmandu, close to the country's borders with India.



In this file photo taken on December 04, 1987, shows flowers and letters lay in front of the entrance of 20 rue Monsieur le Prince in Paris where Malik Oussekine died, killed by the police a year ago, on the fringe of a demonstration against the reform of the higher education system, best known as the Devaquet law. — AFP photos



In this file photo shows people observe a minute of silence 06 December 2006 in front of a memorial stone in memory of Franco-Algerian student Malik Oussekine (1964-1986).

## DECADES ON, 'FRANCE'S GEORGE FLOYD' GETS SCREEN TREATMENT

The name resonates deeply among French minorities as a symbol of police violence, but it has taken 35 years for the death of Malik Oussekine to be recounted on-screen. On the night of December 6, 1986, two police officers beat to death the 22-year-old French-Algerian on the sidelines of a student protest in Paris. He had not been involved in the demonstration, and his killing became a turning point-triggering weeks of unrest and leading to the unprecedented conviction of the officers. While Oussekine's name has continued to reverberate among minorities, his story has never been adapted for the screen until now. As if making up for lost

time, two versions are being released this month: a film, "Our Brothers", premieres at the Cannes Film Festival, and a Disney+ mini-series, "Oussekine", is released worldwide on Wednesday.

"He was attacked because of the colour of his skin. He is France's Arab George Floyd," historian Pascal Blanchard told AFP, referring to the African-American whose death at the hands of police in 2020 sparked massive international protests. He said much of French society had allowed Oussekine's story to be brushed under the carpet as with so much of its troubled history with immigrant populations. "It's not a question of whether Malik Oussekine has been for-

gotten, but by who?" said Blanchard.

### 'Historical cancers'

France is still wrestling with the trauma of its colonial period, particularly the bloody war of independence in Algeria from 1954 to 1962. Among its darkest moments was the massacre of up to 200 Algerian protesters by police in Paris on October 17, 1961 — many of them shot dead and their bodies thrown into the Seine. The events of that day went officially unacknowledged for decades until President Emmanuel Macron finally described them as "inexcusable crimes" at the 60th anniversary last year-though without apologizing.

Oussekine's death was crucial in marking the end of total police impunity—the first time that officers were convicted for this type of crime, according to the family's lawyer, Georges Kiejman. It has taken until now, as the grandchildren of the original wave of North African immigrants comes of age, for there to be enough distance and confidence to address the past.

"For our generation, it is important to say that these individual stories form part of the French national story. They are not separate. These are French stories," said Faiza Guene, 36 and born to Algerian parents, who helped write the screenplay for "Oussekine". Its director, Antoine

Chevrollier, was part of the team behind hit spy series "The Bureau", and the lauded political saga "Baron Noir". "The important thing is to make this name and this story resonate so that we never forget," he told AFP.

Chevrollier, who grew up in a small village in the Loire Valley, says he only became fully aware of the power of Oussekine's name when he moved to Paris and began to hang out with people from different backgrounds. "I hope the series will help ease the tensions that are unsettling the country. It is time that we in France begin to treat these historical cancers." — AFP

## Canadian offices going to the dogs as work-from-home ends

Daisy moseys over to greet visitors, her tail wagging. She's listed as chief morale officer on Tungsten Collaborative's website, and is among the many pets joining their owners returning to Canadian offices after working from home through the pandemic. The 12-year-old Lab sniffs for treats. Before long, a Basset Hound named Delilah waddles over, offering up her belly for a rub, along with other four-legged colleagues Eevee the Greyhound and German Shepherd puppy Hudson, who lets out a bark.

chase balls down a hallway or chew squeaky toys. There's a row of water bowls in the office kitchen, if they get thirsty. The Ottawa company is listed by the Humane Society as dog-friendly, and it's actually helped drum up business, Dicke said, as well as increased staff productivity. Workers are forced to take regular breaks for dog walks instead of "eating lunch at their desk," for example, and are not fretting about their pet being left alone at home, he explained.

According to a recent Leger survey for

"Allowing dogs is a good indicator" of a company's culture, he said, and the kind of "not too corporate" workplace that appeals to him. Across town at construction joint venture Chandos Bird, people designing a nuclear research laboratory are visibly smitten by 10-year-old Samson.

His owner Trevor Watt didn't want to leave the Yorkshire Terrier alone after moving into a new house and starting work in a new office in January. It was supposed to be a temporary arrangement until Samson got used to his new surroundings, but he endeared himself with colleagues and staff in neighboring offices, who take turns walking him. "He loves going to work," Watt said. "When I say I'm going to w-o-r-k, he's ready to jump in the car." Watt likes it, too. "I don't have to worry about him." "Dogs in new environments get very anxious, when left alone," he explained. "I think a lot of new owners know that now that they've had their puppies through Covid."

If Samson needs to go out, he just puts a paw on Watt's leg. He has toys and a bed at the office, and wanders from desk to desk. Petting him is a great way to "decompress after a tough meeting," commented Watt's boss Byron Williams. Dogs in the workplace, however, can also create challenges, he said, such as "if somebody is scared of dogs" or allergic to dander. One of Watt's coworkers is terrified of dogs. It was agreed with her that Samson would be leashed the days she comes to the office. At other offices, workers surveyed by AFP lamented carpet stains, disruptive barking and pet hair or drool on clothes-not a great look for impressing clients. Downtown, many stores and cafes have water bowls for dogs, and several shopkeepers such as Emma Inns of the Adorit fashion boutique bring their dogs to work. "If they're home alone, they get into trouble," she said of Rosie, Oscar and Camilla. —AFP



Dave McMullen (left) and Bill Dicke hold a meeting with their dogs at Tungsten Collaborative in Ottawa, Canada.

Daisy's proficiencies include "stress management" and "client engagement," according to her biography, which notes that many of the industrial design studio's "greatest innovations can be traced back to a long walk" with her. "We encourage people if they have pets to bring them (to work)," Tungsten president Bill Dicke, 47, said in an interview with AFP. "You develop this relationship being at home with your pet on a day-to-day basis and all of a sudden you go back to work, so now they have to be crated for the day or roam the house alone, it's not fair to them," he opined.

"The tolerance for pets (at work) during the pandemic has increased," he added. These dogs sleep under desks or in the boardroom throughout the day,

PetSafe, 51 percent of Canadians support bringing dogs to the office. Younger workers were the most supportive, with 18 percent of those aged 18 to 24 years saying they would change jobs if their employer refused to allow them to bring their pet to work. With an estimated 200,000 Canadians adopting a dog or cat since the start of the pandemic in 2020, bringing the nationwide total to 3.25 million, it could force employers now pressing staff to return to the office to consider this option.

### 'Going to w-o-r-k'

Johan Van Hulle, 29, joined Tungsten last year. Its dog policy, he said, "was a key part of the decision" to take the job, after working from home with Eevee.



Adorit Boutique owner Emma Inns pose for a portrait with her dogs in Ottawa, Canada. — AFP photos



Bill Dicke, president of Tungsten Collaborative gives a high five to his dog Nature in Ottawa, Canada.



This undated photo shows a small bronze statue unearthed from the tomb of Cavalupo at Vuci, which gives its name to the 'boxers' of the southern necropolis of Mont'e Prama at the Mont'e Prama archeological site in Cabras, western central Sardinia.



This undated photo shows one of the two statues of boxers found during the excavation campaign of 2014. — AFP photos

## Two more statues of Iron Age boxers unearthed in Sardinia

Archaeologists in Sardinia have unearthed the torsos of two more limestone statues of boxers within the Iron Age necropolis of Mont'e Prama, Italy's culture ministry said Saturday. Culture Minister Dario Franceschini called the find at the archeological site in Cabras, western central Sardinia, an "exceptional discovery" that should shed more light on the ancient Mediterranean culture whose tombs and statuary have been slowly uncovered since the 1970s.

The naked torsos and other fragments have been identified as boxers, due to a shield that wraps around their bodies, and are similar to another two sculptures unearthed a few metres away in 2014 and now on display at the local museum, the ministry said.

Archaeologists working on the southern part of the sprawling necropolis-first discovered in 1974 by local farmers-also found the continuation of the site's funerary road on a north-south axis, along

which have been found tombs dating back to between about 950 BC to 730 BC. While small and medium-sized fragments are being documented and recovered from the earth, "the two large and heavy blocks of torsos will need time to be freed from the sediment surrounding them and to be prepared for safe recovery," said the culture ministry's superintendent for southern Sardinia, Monica Stochino.

The site is believed to be part of the Nuragic civilization that controlled the island of Sardinia for centuries beginning in the Bronze Age. The people erected mysterious stone towers called "nuraghe" that today dot the Sardinian countryside and whose original purpose remains unknown.

Thousands of fragments and major pieces from Mont'e Prama discovered over the decades have so far been reassembled into about two dozen statues, each over 2 meters tall, that have been identified as warriors, archers or boxers. Archaeologists still do not know precisely what the statues represent or what purpose they served.

Nor is it clear where they were originally located before being deliberately shattered in ancient times, according to researchers-who cannot agree whether by Phoenicians, Carthaginians, or by warring Nuragic groups themselves-and strewn above and near the tombs. — AFP



(From left) Eric Hauserman Carroll, Victoria Alonso, Sheila Atim, Louis D'Esposito, Rachel McAdams, Elizabeth Olsen, Benedict Cumberbatch, Michael Waldron, Benedict Wong, Mitchell Bell, Xochitl Gomez and Adam Hugill attend the Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness World Premiere at Dolby Theatre in Hollywood, California.



(From left) Benedict Wong, Elizabeth Olsen and Benedict Cumberbatch attend the NY special screening of Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness.

# HUGE OPENING FOR 'DOCTOR STRANGE' GIVES HOLLYWOOD A BOOST

**D**octor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness" enjoyed a blockbuster opening over the weekend, taking in an estimated \$185 million, industry watcher Exhibitor Relations reported Sunday. That represented the biggest opening weekend of the year, the second-biggest of the pandemic era and the 11th biggest all time, analysts said.

"This is another sensational Marvel opening, by Marvel's own dominant standard," said David A Gross of Franchise Entertainment Research. The superhero sequel, directed by Sam Raimi and distrib-

uted by Disney, again stars Benedict Cumberbatch in the title role, backed by Elizabeth Olsen, Chiwetel Ejofor and Rachel McAdams. The complicated plot-how could a multiverse story not be complicated? — includes alternate universes, witches and sorcerers, death and revival, and even an octopus demon. With the huge bump from "Dr Strange," the weekend's estimated gross offered more evidence of Hollywood's return from the darkest pandemic days: It was nearly 10 times the \$22 million from the same weekend last year.

"Strange" shoved Universal's animated action-comedy "The Bad Guys" out of the top spot where it had resided for two weeks. The DreamWorks Animation production took in \$9.8 million for the Friday-through-Sunday period. In third, also down one spot from last weekend, was Paramount's family-friendly "Sonic the Hedgehog 2," at \$6.2 million.

Warner Bros' "Fantastic Beasts: The Secrets of Dumbledore," the latest episode in the "Harry Potter" prequel series, also slipped a notch, to fourth, at \$4 million. And with multiverse-based films seemingly

everywhere, A24's "Everything Everywhere All at Once" held to fifth spot, at \$3.3 million. Michelle Yeoh stars as a beleaguered laundromat owner who is called on to save, well, pretty much everything.

Rounding out the top 10 were: "The Northman" (\$2.8 million) "The Lost City" (\$2.5 million) "The Unbearable Weight of Massive Talent" (\$1.5 million) "Memory" (\$1.2 million) "Father Stu" (\$800,000) — AFP



Benedict Cumberbatch attends the NY special screening of Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness in New York City. — AFP photos

## Ncuti Gatwa named first Black actor to take on leading 'Doctor Who' role



and I'm going to try to do my best," he added.

**B**ritish actor Ncuti Gatwa, known for his role in popular series "Sex Education" will be the first Black actor to play the leading role in the cult BBC science fiction series, "Doctor Who", the channel announced Sunday. The Rwandan-born Scottish actor, 29, will become the 14th incarnation of the Time Lord from 2023 as the series celebrates its 60th anniversary.

He takes over from British actress Jodie Whittaker, who was the first woman to play character known as "The Doctor" in the show. "It feels really amazing. It's a true honor. This role is an institution and it's so iconic," Gatwa told BBC News. "I feel very grateful to have had the baton handed over

The adventures of the doctor-a time travelling, humanoid alien who traverses the universe-have maintained a loyal following since they were first aired in 1963. Gatwa will work alongside screenwriter and producer Russell T Davies, creator of the series "It's a Sin", hugely popular in the UK.

It is a return for Davies, who stepped down as executive producer of the show in 2008 after he relaunched the series in 2005. Whittaker took on the role in 2017 from Scottish actor Peter Capaldi, best known for playing a foul-mouthed spin doctor in the BBC satire "The Thick Of It". She announced she would leave the role in July 2021. — AFP



A woman stands inside "Rail Car" the new wrought iron artwork by US singer Bob Dylan, presented at the Art Center of Chateau la Coste at Le Puy-Sainte Reperate, southeastern France. — AFP

## Bob Dylan installs artwork in French vineyard

**B**ob Dylan's first permanent artwork has been installed on the grounds of a wine estate in southern France. "Rail Car" is a large wagon with walls made from iron wheels, cycle parts, wrenches and other tools, now sitting among the vines of the swanky Chateau La Coste in Provence.

It is part of the chateau's renowned

"Art and Architecture" walking tour that also includes sculptures and installations by the likes of Tracey Emin, Frank Gehry, Richard Rogers and another musician, Michael Stipe of REM. Dylan is also showing 24 paintings under the heading "Drawn Blank" at the chateau's art centre alongside works by Claude Monet, Henri Matisse and Marc Chagall that are said to have been an inspiration.

The 80-year-old has sold more than 125 million albums over his six-decade career and won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2016. He has published multiple books of his drawings and paintings, and exhibited his work at several major galleries around the world. — AFP

## Saudi Arabia hosts the first virtual international yoga conference

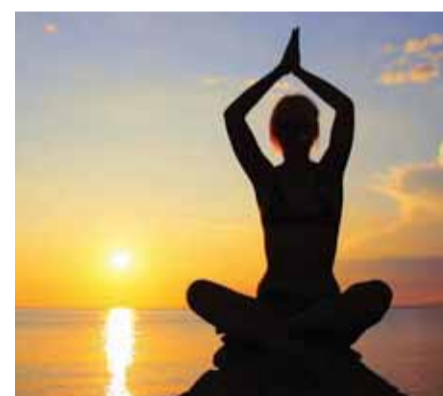
**F**or the first time in the Middle East, on June 1, Saudi Arabia will witness the launch of the first virtual conference to discuss and shed light on the therapeutic and scientific aspects of practicing yoga on the body and mind. The event will be hosted by the Saudi Yoga Committee in cooperation with the Singapore-based Asian Yoga Therapy Association.

The conference is an extension of the committee's participation in the 100-day countdown campaign for International Yoga Day 2022 and the Yoga Festival held by the Morarji Desai Yoga Institute of the Ayosh Ministry of India (Indian Ministry of Yoga).

The three-day conference will also address lectures and scientific theses presented through symposiums that present studies and scientific research on the health benefits of practicing yoga by a group of medical and yoga experts from Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, India, Japan, the United States and Europe.

### What will the participants show?

The participants will present the benefits of yoga and its relationship to a number of health problems in the medical and sports fields, as well as shed light on health problems at the general level, such as: mental health, neurological disorders, obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular health, women's health, and rheumatic diseases, where yoga experts and international associations specialized in the medical field will present Medical and scientific evidence and a dis-



ussion of ways and means of practicing yoga and its benefits for health and quality of life.

### First of its kind

On this occasion, the head of the Saudi Yoga Committee, Nouf Al-Marouei, explained that the conference for the first time will be held by default for rehabilitative yoga, which is the first of its kind in the Middle East.

She said: "We are pleased to announce our first International Conference on Therapeutic Yoga from 1-3 June 2022, which will bring together distinguished speakers, experienced clinicians and scientists from all over the world to honor the occasion through multiple academic plenary sessions and panel discussions spanning over three years. Days to present medical and scientific evidence and

research and discuss yoga methods and practices for health and quality of life.

In turn, the Saudi Yoga Committee welcomes the joining of experts in the medical field, sports rehabilitation, therapeutic yoga, yoga instructors, physiotherapists and those interested in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Arab world to this conference, which will be held in English and will have scientific content.

It is noteworthy that in early April, the Saudi Yoga Committee received an invitation from the Morarji Desai National Yoga Center of the Indian Ministry of Ayosh (Yoga Ministry) to participate in the campaign to countdown 100 days to the International Day of Yoga.

On the sidelines of the opening event of one of the 100 m countdown initiatives for International Yoga Day, which was recently managed by the Saudi Yoga Committee within the campaign protocol, the Saudi Yoga Committee presented a number of yoga sessions with the participation of a group of Saudi trainers and trainers, followed by a virtual lecture entitled "The benefits of practicing yoga during fasting" presented by Dr Rasha Al-Radadi, Assistant Professor at Taibah University, practiced yoga in the presence of more than 100 participants, which included several axes, including the impact of yoga on the human body, scientific medical research, yoga, practicing yoga in Ramadan, and therapeutic yoga concepts and benefits.

## Acclaimed comic book artist George Perez dies aged 67

**G**eorge Perez, an acclaimed comic book artist and writer known for his influential work on such superhero titles as the Avengers, Wonder Woman and the Teen Titans, has died, Marvel and DC Comics announced. Perez was 67. He revealed last year that he was battling pancreatic cancer. "George Perez was an artist, a writer, a role model and a friend," Marvel Entertainment said on Twitter. "His work paved seminal stories across comics, and his legacy of kindness and generosity

will never be forgotten." DC Comics tweeted that Perez's contributions "were pivotal in both driving and reinventing DC's long and rich history." Perez and writer Marv Wolfman had created such characters as Cyborg, Raven and Starfire. Their "Crisis on Infinite Earths," a



In this file photo comic book artist George Perez arrives for Excelsior! A Celebration of The Amazing, Fantastic, Incredible and Uncanny Life Of Stan Lee at TCL Chinese Theatre in Hollywood, California. — AFP

reboot, "saw several major characters killed off in a multiverse saga that still resonates in popular culture," according to Deadline.com. Perez was known for his clean, dynamic and realistic style.

"George Perez never went half way, in art or life. He pushed the limit of what a comic could do: his style was somehow, impossibly both overwhelmingly powerful and subtly graceful," tweeted Tom King, a comic book writer who, like Perez, had won a coveted Eisner Award, an accolade akin to an Oscar in the industry. Perez's family had moved in the 1940s from Puerto Rico to New York, where his father found work in a factory.

His talents emerged early; Perez began working as an assistant at Marvel before turning 20, and was soon working on titles including "Astonishing Tales" and "The Avengers." DC publisher Jim Lee said Perez's art style was "both dynamic and incredibly expressive... the perfect storytelling canvas for some of the most important events in DC history." — AFP

## Sports

# Mavericks drill 20 three-pointers to pull level with Suns; Sixers win

## 76ers level their Eastern Conference series with Miami

LOS ANGELES: The Dallas Mavericks rained 20 three-pointers and again neutralized Phoenix point guard Chris Paul to beat the top-seeded Suns 111-101 on Sunday and knot their NBA playoff series at two games each. Star guard Luka Dončić scored 26 points and Dorian Finney-Smith added 24 for Dallas, who have won two games at home to level the best-of-seven Western Conference matchup after dropping the first two games in Phoenix.

The Suns, who finished the regular season with the best record in the league, will try to regain the advantage when they host game five on Tuesday. It's guaranteed to shift back to Dallas for game six on Thursday. The Philadelphia 76ers also won a second straight game at home to level their Eastern Conference series with Miami at two-all.

Former NBA MVP James Harden scored 31 points to lead six Philadelphia players in double figures in a 116-108 victory. Center Joel Embiid, who missed the first two games with a concussion and facial fracture, scored 24 points, his presence again making things tougher for Miami defensively. "The organization on offense, it helps a lot with him on the floor," said Philadelphia's Danny Green, who made three three-pointers on the way to 11 points. "Without him we look a little discombobulated."

"James was incredible tonight for us," Green added of Harden, who also pulled down seven rebounds and handed out nine assists in his strongest showing of these playoffs. Embiid carried the Sixers early, scoring 15 points in the first quarter. Harden, who didn't score in the opening period, took over with 13 points in the second and

Philadelphia took a 64-56 lead into halftime after an opening half that featured 17 lead changes.

The Sixers, up 89-85 going into the fourth, pushed the lead to 10 with less than six minutes remaining. Miami had cut it to five when Harden drove to the rim for a basket then drained a three-pointer. Embiid, still playing in a protective mask, grabbed an offensive rebound and fed Tyrese Maxey for a dunk that made it 111-103 and Harden made another three-pointer to push the lead to 11 with 1:07 left, effectively sealing the win. Harden scored 16 points in the fourth quarter as the Sixers withstood a 40-point performance from Miami's Jimmy Butler.

"We know it's going to be tougher in their building," Green said of game five looming in Miami on Tuesday. "We've got to come in more intense, more focused." In Dallas, the Mavericks held off the Suns despite a poor shooting effort from Dončić, who connected on just nine of 25 shots and just one of 10 from three-point range. Overall, the Mavs were on fire from beyond the arc, their eight three-pointers in the first quarter helping them build a 37-25 lead.

Their 14 three-pointers in the first half tied a franchise playoff record for three-pointers in a half. They led 68-56 at the break and even more ominously for Phoenix, veteran point guard Paul committed his fourth foul trying to make a tip-in with 1.1 seconds left before half-time. Paul picked up his fifth foul early in the third quarter and headed to the bench. He returned with 10:28 left in the fourth and promptly fouled out thanks to a hand to the arm of Mavericks guard Jalen Brunson.



DALLAS: Spencer Dinwiddie #26 of the Dallas Mavericks is pressured by Cameron Johnson #23 of the Phoenix Suns during the first half of Game Four of the 2022 NBA Playoffs Western Conference Semifinals at American Airlines Center on May 8, 2022.—AFP

### A dangerous team

Devin Booker led the Suns with 35 points. Jae Crowder added 15 and Deandre Ayton scored 14. But the Mavericks bench out-scored the Phoenix reserves 36-26. "This team was amazing," said Dončić, who was outstanding but received little support in the Mavs' two series-opening defeats. "Everybody that gets to the court leaves everything

out there. If we play hard and we get stops, we're a dangerous team." While Dončić struggled with his shots, he added 11 assists along with four rebounds. He also forced four steals as the Suns turned it over 17 times. While Phoenix managed to cut the deficit to four points with less than two minutes to play in the third quarter, the Mavericks repelled every challenge.—AFP



## Kuwait to host 3rd Gulf Games

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: The Third Gulf Games will be hosted by Kuwait from May 13th to May 31st, under the patronage of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. Assistant Secretary of Kuwait Olympic Committee Ali Al-Merri said the opening ceremony will break world records and will qualify for the Guinness World Records.

Al-Merri who heads the volunteers and protocol committee at the games refused to speak about the nature of the record - adding that it will be a surprise, and will be held at the main indoor court of Rafa Nadal Academy at Sheikh Jaber Al-Abdallah International Tennis Complex. He said the celebration will not be traditional - in line with a "new youthful approach that imposes its reality for the first time."

He said 650 volunteers, mostly Kuwaitis, will be the "pumping heart" of the games. Al-Merri said the Gulf event will be unique and will reflect distinguished numbers. There will be an opening ceremony, followed by the distribution of several medals. The games are the first Gulf event that has the participation of both genders (but not mixed) and it is the first time Saudi women will participate in a joint Gulf event.

Meanwhile, as Kuwait National teams are preparing for the Gulf Games, Kuwait Women Futsal team defeated their Kyrgyzstan counterpart 3-1 in the second friendly match during the training camp. The goals were

scored by Reem Al-Mulla, Laura Al-Thuwaini and Shorouq Basha.

Kuwait Olympic Committee Board member, Head of Women Committee Fatima Hayat said the training camp abroad is in preparation for the Gulf games and later, West Asia Championship. She said the team started with 1-1 draw with the hosts. Kuwait's goal was scored by Nehal Al-Suqobi. The team will start their Gulf Games competition with UAE team on May 15th - followed by Saudi Arabia's on May 17th then Bahrain on May 19th.



Meanwhile, Secretary General for the Kuwait Athletics Association, Head of National teams committee Dr. Mania Al-Ajmi expressed his pleasure at the new Kuwaiti record in the 800 meters by Bader Suwaid during the Bursa International Youth Competitions on Sunday. Suwaid's number was 1 minute, 49 seconds and 49 tenths of a second, while the previous number scored by Monammad Al-Azmi was 1 minute, 49 seconds and 53 tenths of a second.



## Todd Boehly: Can he mimic Dodger's title revamp at Chelsea

LOS ANGELES: For Todd Boehly, the billionaire US businessman heading the consortium buying Chelsea in a 4.25 billion-pound (\$5.2 billion) deal, ownership of a Premier League club is a long-sought move. The 46-year-old from Virginia, who grew up a fan of Major League Baseball's Baltimore Orioles, was a key member of the ownership group that bought the Los Angeles Dodgers from Frank McCourt in 2012 for \$2 billion - then a record for a North American sports team acquisition. In the decade since Guggenheim Baseball Management - the investment group that also includes Mark Walter and Los Angeles Lakers legend Magic Johnson - took over a Dodgers team in disarray, the club have become perennial contenders, making the playoffs the past nine seasons. They reached the World Series three times in four years, coming away empty in 2017 and 2018 before winning the title in 2020.

The turnaround, along with the revitalization of Dodger Stadium, was fueled by a multi-million-dollar media deal and, under Boehly and his co-investors, the Dodgers have eclipsed the New York Yankees as the biggest-spending club in MLB. Boehly and Walter each put up \$100 million to buy the Dodgers while more than \$1 billion came from Guggenheim Partners insurance companies. "There is only one Dodgers," Boehly said at the time. "It's not, 'Oh well, if you don't get this one, you can go get that one.'" Steering the Dodgers out of their post-McCourt malaise hasn't been Boehly's only dive into turbulent waters. In October, he became interim chief executive of the Hollywood Foreign Press Association, the group that awards the Golden Globes, as it dealt with the fallout from a Los Angeles Times investigation that revealed ethical lapses and a lack of diversity.

### Opportunity for global return

Boehly departed Guggenheim Partners in 2015 and co-founded the holding company Eldridge Industries, of which he is the chairman and chief executive. He is also chairman of Security Benefit, which has a commercial partnership with the Dodgers, and MRC Entertainment, a Beverly Hills-based media company that owns Billboard, Rolling Stone, Variety, the Hollywood Reporter and Dick Clark Productions. Boehly has also expanded his sports interests. He is a part owner of the WNBA's Los Angeles Sparks and last year joined with Walter to purchase a stake in the NBA's Los Angeles Lakers. The opportunity to buy Chelsea, the reigning European champions, came after Russian owner Roman Abramovich put the club on the market in early March, just days before he was sanctioned by the British government in response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine.—AFP

## Conway, Moeen lead as Chennai rout Delhi

MUMBAI: Devon Conway's 87 and inspired bowling by Moeen Ali helped holders Chennai Super Kings thrash COVID-affected Delhi Capitals by 91 runs in the Indian Premier League on Sunday. The left-handed Conway recorded his second 80-plus score in just his fourth match this season to guide Chennai to an imposing 208 for six in Mumbai. Moeen then returned figures of 3-13 with his offspin as Chennai bowled Delhi out for 117 in 17.4 overs. Fast bowlers Mukesh Choudhary, Simranjeet Singh and Dwayne Bravo took two wickets each.

Conway, who had a change of captaincy midway as M.S. Dhoni took over from Ravindra Jadeja, have only a slim chance of making the play-offs but improved on their net run-rate and moved to eighth in the 10-team table. "You just want to enjoy the IPL. When two other teams are playing, you don't want to be under pressure," Dhoni said on his team's play-off hopes. "You just have to think about what to do in the next game. If we make the playoffs, great. But even if we don't it's not the end of the world." Delhi, who came into the game after a positive Covid test to one of their net bowlers and with opening batter Prithvi Shaw in hospital with a fever, stay fifth as the Twenty20 tournament moves towards the business end. Coach Ricky Ponting said his team will never make excuses and have earlier faced a similar situation when Delhi's New Zealand import Tim Seifert tested positive just hours before the start of a match last month.

"That's not an excuse for us. It's not the first time that we've had to deal with it on game day. In one of the earlier games against Punjab Kings we had to deal with the same thing and ended up winning that game really comfortably," Ponting told reporters. "Although today wasn't ideal preparation, we need to play better cricket. To lose by 91 runs and put a huge dent in our net run-rate means we need to bounce back really strongly in our next game." Conway set up the victory for Chennai with a 110-run stand with opening partner Ruturaj Gaikwad, who made 41, before Shivam Dube and Dhoni exploded. Dube hit a 19-ball 32 in another attacking stand with Conway, who struck seven fours and five sixes in his 49-ball knock, but fell to Marsh. Left-arm pace bowler Khaleel Ahmed denied Conway, who made a match-winning 85 not out against Sunrisers Hyderabad last Sunday, his hundred after getting the batter caught behind.—AFP

## Homa outduels Bradley to win PGA Wells Fargo title

WASHINGTON: Max Homa held off fellow American Keegan Bradley down the stretch on Sunday to win the Wells Fargo Championship for his fourth career US PGA title. World number 38 Homa fired a two-under par 68 in cold and breezy conditions to finish on eight-under 272 for a two-stroke victory at rain-soaked TPC Potomac at Avenel in suburban Washington. "It feels good," Homa said. "It's a special day for me. I just feel like life is good and I'm playing some good golf."

Homa, 31, had captured prior four trophies at the 2019 Wells Fargo, Riviera in February 2021 and last September at Napa, California. Homa joined Masters champion Scottie Scheffler, fellow American Sam Burns, Australian Cameron Smith and 2021 Masters winner Hideki Matsuyama of Japan as multiple PGA Tour winners in the 2021-22 season.

"It's super awesome," Homa said. "I'm coming into

my own and starting to believe in myself and that's all I can ask for." Third-round leader Bradley, the 2011 PGA Championship winner in his major debut, made a closing bogey to shoot 72 and settled for a share of second on 274 with countryman Cameron Young and England's Matthew Fitzpatrick.

"I didn't play my best golf," Bradley said. "It was choppy and then I had a couple good stretches but I had a chance there at the end, so I'm proud of that aspect of it." Four-time major winner and defending champion Rory McIlroy was fifth on 276 after a closing 68 with India's Anirban Lahiri, American Lanto Griffin and Germany's Stephan Jaeger on 277. Bradley, ranked 64th, was chasing his first title in four years but couldn't match Homa as both endured roller-coaster back nines.

Homa sank a birdie putt from just inside 10 feet at the par-3 ninth, then made a three-foot birdie putt at the par-5 10th to grab the lead alone at 9-under. Bradley knocked his approach into a hazard at 11 on the way to a double bogey while Homa sank a par putt from just inside nine feet to seize a three-stroke advantage. Homa found deep right rough off the 13th tee on the way to a bogey and Bradley two-putted from 48 feet for birdie at the par-4 14th to pull back within one.—AFP

Sports

# Kalajdzic's equalizer spoils Bayern Munich title party

## Stuttgart keep their survival hopes alive

**BERLIN:** Austria striker Sasa Kalajdzic dampened spirits at Bayern Munich's Bundesliga title party on Sunday as Stuttgart held the champions to a 2-2 draw to keep their own survival hopes alive. Bayern were presented with the Bundesliga trophy in front of their own fans, but Kalajdzic's second-half equaliser means they have failed to win in the two games since claiming a tenth successive title last month.

Bayern's players had already faced criticism for their decision to take a two-day team holiday to Ibiza ahead of last week's defeat to Mainz, and they delivered another under-par performance against the relegation candidates. "They deserve to be champions and they won't care too much about the draw today, but it could be an extremely important result for us," Kalajdzic told DAZN. Four points adrift of safety at kick-off, the visitors needed a result and burst out of the blocks in the first half. Omar Marmoush missed an early chance to take the lead on the counter-attack before Tiago Tomas smashed in a brilliant shot to stun the home fans.

Thomas Mueller hit the bar for Bayern at the other end, and was later denied by a flying save from Florian Mueller. Serge Gnabry finally broke through Stuttgart's defense on 35 minutes, lashing in a shot from a tight angle via defender Konstantinos Mavropanos. Mueller put Bayern ahead just before half time, prodding the ball home after an elegant pirouette in the box. Yet the visitors fought back after the break when Borna Sosa picked out Kalajdzic with a looping cross to level the scores at 2-2.

Both sides had chances to win the game late on, and Bayern's disappointing evening was crowned

when Kingsley Coman was sent off in stoppage time. "I think a draw was a fair result. We played with a lot of courage today, and we got a bit of luck too," said Kalajdzic. Stuttgart remain three points adrift of safety in the relegation play-off place, but could still overtake Hertha Berlin on the last day of the season due to superior goal difference.

### Leipzig return to top four

Elsewhere, RB Leipzig shook off their Europa League blues by taking a huge step towards Champions League qualification with a 4-0 win over Augsburg. After a bitter semi-final defeat to Rangers in midweek, Leipzig cruised to a thumping win at home to pull two points clear of Freiburg in fourth.

Andre Silva curled in his 11th goal of the season to open the scoring at the end of a cagey first half. Christopher Nkunku turned in a Nordi Mukiele cross to double the lead after the break, and the two Frenchmen linked up again for Leipzig's third just a few minutes later. Any hope of a miraculous Augsburg comeback was buried just after the hour mark when Emil Forsberg converted a penalty to make it 4-0.

"It's been a very difficult and emotional few days, so we are going to enjoy today," said Silva. Europa League finalists Eintracht Frankfurt also returned to Bundesliga action on Sunday with a 1-1 draw at home to Borussia Moenchengladbach. Goncalo Pateiro's 25-metre screamer was the high point as the two mid-table sides shared the points in an entertaining dead rubber just days after Frankfurt's semi-final victory over West Ham.



MUNICH: Bayern Munich players including Bayern Munich's German defender Niklas Suele (center) celebrate with the trophy after the German first division Bundesliga football match between FC Bayern Munich and VfB Stuttgart in Munich, southern Germany on May 8, 2022. — AFP

French striker Alassane Plea gave Gladbach the lead after just four minutes when he turned in Jonas Hofmann's low cross after a sharp passing move from the visitors. Paciencia equalized for the hosts in breathtaking style on 66 minutes, catching

Gladbach keeper Tobias Sippel off guard with a net-busting long-range effort. Daichi Kamada thought he had snatched a late winner for the hosts when he turned in a corner on 89 minutes, but the goal was ruled out for offside. — AFP

## Milan close in on title glory; Tonali double sinks Verona

**MILAN:** Sandro Tonali fired AC Milan closer to the Serie A title with a brace in Sunday's 3-1 win at Verona which maintained their two-point lead over Inter Milan at the top of the league. Italy midfielder Tonali struck with almost identical goals created by Rafael Leao either side of half-time before Alessandro Florenzi completed the scoring near the end to leave Milan needing four points from their final two games to claim a first Scudetto since 2011.

Their superior record in this season's Milan derbies gives the seven-time European champions an advantage which would keep them ahead of champions Inter should the two local rivals end the season level on points. "I'm in love with my players," said coach Stefano Pioli to DAZN. "I see the effort they put in every day and I know the journey we've been on... we've got to keep this concentration, determination and belief in the final two games."

Milan overcame the toughest test of their run-in against ninth-placed Verona and now host Europe-chasing Atalanta next weekend before travelling to Sassuolo on the closing weekend of what has been an enthralling campaign. Inter meanwhile are in Sardinia on Sunday against a Cagliari team fighting for its Serie A life, with their final opponents Sampdoria and the small matter of the Italian Cup final against Juventus on Wednesday further complicating matters.

### Tonali takes control

Tonali's double was the second time in three matches he has been crucial to Milan's title charge after also netting a late winner at Lazio a fortnight ago. The 22-year-old thought he had opened the scoring in the 15th minute when he raced onto a long ball from goalkeeper Mike Maignan and slotted past Lorenzo Montipò, only for the wild celebrations among the large contingent of away fans to be cut short by a tight offside ruling via VAR.

After also going close through Davide Calabria Milan fans started thinking about a Stadio Bentegodi hoodoo—they have thrown away two league titles at Verona in the past-six minutes before the break when Davide Faraoni finished off a



VERONA: AC Milan's French forward Olivier Giroud goes for the ball during the Italian Serie A football match between Hellas Verona and AC Milan on May 8, 2022 at the Marcantonio-Bentegodi stadium in Verona. —AFP

beautiful Verona move by nodding home Darko Lazovic's floated cross. However Tonali had a deserved goal deep into first-half stoppage time when after Leao burst into the box he met the Portugal attacker's pass and pushed in the equaliser.

It galvanised Milan who were in front shortly after the restart thanks to a carbon copy effort, the only real difference being that Leao's low pass for Tonali's second was with his left foot. From then on Milan were in almost complete control and Florenzi made sure Milan continued their charge for a first league crown since 2011 when he exchanged passes with Junior Messias before rifling home his second Serie A goal of the season. —AFP

## Pirates sweep toward CAF Cup final; Bakata the Mazembe hero

**JOHANNESBURG:** Innocent Maela and Goodman Mosele scored inside 30 minutes as Orlando Pirates of South Africa swept to a 2-0 win at Al Ahly Tripoli of Libya on Sunday in a CAF Confederation Cup semi-final first leg. The Soweto Buccaneers were too organized in defense and too clinical in attack for the hosts and are well placed to reach the final after the return match next Sunday.

In the other first leg, an added-time goal from 19-year-old John Bakata snatched a 1-0 home win for TP Mazembe of the Democratic Republic of Congo over Renaissance Berkane of Morocco. Pirates were sunk 3-2 by another Libyan club, Al Itihad, when they visited the north African nation three months ago, with goalkeeper Siyabonga Mponthshane taking much of the blame.

Mponthshane subsequently lost his place and Ghanaian Richard Ofori, available after a lengthy injury absence, has bolstered the defense. Ofori was rarely troubled at the Martyrs of February Stadium in coastal city Benghazi—a venue used by all Libyan clubs because the national stadium in Tripoli was damaged during years of civil conflict.

At the other end of the artificial pitch, Ahly captain and goalkeeper Muhammad Nashounsh was constantly in action as Pirates showed no inclination to defend, even when two goals ahead. Pirates attacked from the kick-off and were ahead within eight minutes when Nashounsh parried a Kwame Peprah header only for perfectly-positioned Maela to nod the loose ball into the net.

### Floodlights fail

Peprah was also the architect of the second goal on 29 minutes as his cross found Mosele, who scored with a looping shot into the corner of the net. The end of the match was delayed as the floodlights failed three times in quick succession, but there was no denying Pirates an easier-than-expected victory. In Lubumbashi,



John Bakata

substitute Bakata struck on 95 minutes in the southern Congolese mining hub, nodding a Glody Likonza cross past goalkeeper Hamza Hamiani.

Mazembe, seeking a record-equalling third Confederation Cup title after winning the 2016 and 2017 finals, dominated the match without translating their superiority into goals. The home side had 26 goal attempts, but only seven on target, and winning the corner count 16-0 had no impact before Bakata broke the deadlock. Mazembe coach Franck Dumas replaced all three forwards during the second half and the gamble finally paid off with the match seemingly heading for a goalless stalemate.

Constantly under pressure, 2020 Confederation Cup winners Berkane had five players yellow-carded as they frequently committed fouls and wasted time. History favors Mazembe reaching the final as the five previous clubs who established 1-0 first-leg leads in Confederation Cup semi-finals all qualified. Mazembe are the equal second most successful club in CAF competitions with Zamalek of Egypt, winning 11 titles, including the marquee Champions League five times. The Confederation Cup is the African equivalent of the European second-tier competition the Europa League. —AFP

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MADRID: Real Madrid's Brazilian forward Rodrygo fights for the ball with Atletico Madrid's Croatian defender Sime Vrsaljko during the Spanish League football between Club Atletico de Madrid and Real Madrid CF at the Wanda Metropolitano stadium in Madrid on May 8, 2022. —AFP

## Atletico edge past weakened Real

### Sevilla peg back Villarreal 1-1

MADRID: Atletico Madrid won a La Liga derby against Real Madrid for the first time in six years on Sunday as a 1-0 victory left Diego Simeone's side on the cusp of securing Champions League qualification. Yannick Carrasco's first-half penalty proved enough at the Wanda Metropolitano against a heavily weakened Real Madrid, who took the chance to rotate after their incredible Champions League comeback against Manchester City on Wednesday.

With Karim Benzema, Luka Modric and Thibaut Courtois among those on the bench for the already-crowned champions, Atletico took advantage, even if they missed a string of chances that made the contest far more uncomfortable than it needed to be. Atletico sit fourth, six points clear of Real Betis in fifth, with three games left to play. Their better head-to-head record over Betis means they will be guaranteed to finish in the top four if Betis fail to win away at Valencia on Tuesday.

If Betis beat Valencia, Atletico can make sure of their spot themselves by winning away at Elche on Wednesday. "It is very important to qualify and we have to get one more win in three games to achieve

it," said Atletico captain Koke. "If we work like this, we'll get there." Sevilla's place also looks almost sealed after a 1-1 draw away at Villarreal earlier on Sunday gave them a seven-point cushion over Betis.

Atletico had not beaten Real Madrid in La Liga since 2016 and not at home since 2015, while their last eight games in all competitions against their city rivals had brought two goals and no victories. Ending that run will certainly bring much satisfaction to Atletico's fans and players but the bigger relief will be Champions League qualification, which has been in doubt for the duration of what has been an inconsistent and disappointing campaign.

Carlo Ancelotti made a raft of changes to his starting line-up as only Toni Kroos, Casemiro and Eder Militao remained from the team that pulled off the sensational victory over City. It meant rare starts for the likes of Luka Jovic up front, Eduardo Camavinga in midfield and Jesus Vallejo at the back while Ukrainian Andriy Lunin made his first league appearance of the season in goal.

Lunin did nothing wrong but nobody stood out, with Camavinga out of sorts and Jovic replaced in

the second half. "We have rested some players, we have avoided problems, and we have given minutes to those who have had less," said Ancelotti. "It will be like this for the next few games." Atletico's greater intensity showed in the first half as Angel Correa drove an early shot wide after a poor pass from Camavinga allowed Geoffrey Kondogbia to rob Kroos before Carrasco weaved through but flashed wide.

The goal came from another misplaced pass, this time from Marco Asensio in midfield, and as Matheus Cunha bore down on goal, he was squeezed out between Vallejo and Militao. Atletico wanted a penalty and while the referee initially waved away appeals, he changed his mind after consulting the replay, with Vallejo deemed culpable. Carrasco slammed in the spot-kick.

Kroos shot wide and then Jovic's only contribution was to hit Jan Oblak when the ball spilled out to him after Rodrygo raced in behind. Without the second goal, the tension grew and as every fresh opportunity went begging, the sense that Real Madrid might capitalise increased. Carrasco fired over after Nacho Fernandez gave the ball away and

then another Camavinga error gave Cunha a chance but his effort was saved.

Vinicius Junior, Modric and Fede Valverde all came on for the visitors but the pattern continued as Antoine Griezmann dragged wide and then Carrasco broke through, only to shave the outside of the post. In the last 10 minutes, Valverde and Vinicius both tested Oblak, who then had to push Asensio's fizzing free-kick wide of the post. Nacho headed over Vinicius' cross from six yards out but Atletico held on. Sevilla also took a step closer to finishing in La Liga's top four after Jules Kounde's 96th-minute equaliser snatched a 1-1 draw away at Villarreal.

Villarreal thought they had won it at La Ceramica when Giovanni Lo Celso scored with four minutes of normal time remaining, but Sevilla grabbed a dramatic equaliser to boost their hopes of securing Champions League qualification next term. After their superb run to the Champions League semi-finals, Villarreal are making a late push for next season's Europa League but Kounde's strike means they sit three points behind Real Sociedad in sixth. — AFP

### Five-star City take a grip of Premier League title race

MANCHESTER: Pep Guardiola said he never doubted Manchester City's response to Champions League heartbreak after thrashing Newcastle 5-0 to take a firm grip of the Premier League title race. Raheem Sterling's double and goals from Aymeric Laporte, Rodri and Phil Foden moved Guardiola's men three points clear of Liverpool with three games left to play.

City also edged four goals ahead of the Reds on goal difference, which could still decide the title if the defending champions lose one of their remaining games against Wolves, West Ham and Aston Villa. "If some people doubted us they don't know this team," said Guardiola. "It's one of the best groups I ever trained in my life." "It was a perfect afternoon. Before the start of the game I felt our crowd were disappointed but not upset and angry about who we are as a team and what we have done the last five years."

The title is the only trophy left for City to fight for after blowing the chance to reach a second consecutive Champions League final, against Real Madrid on Wednesday. The Spanish giants came from two goals down in the dying stages to win a classic semi-final 6-5 on aggregate and set up a meeting with Liverpool in Paris. Guardiola was quick to point out that what happened in Madrid is a lesson that there is still a long way to go in the final three games.

#### Decisive weekend

But this has the potential to be the decisive weekend in the title race after Liverpool were held 1-1 at home by Tottenham on Saturday. City showed no



MANCHESTER: Newcastle United's Brazilian midfielder Bruno Guimaraes (right) tackles Manchester City's English midfielder Jack Grealish during the English Premier League football match between Manchester City and Newcastle United on May 8, 2022. —AFP

signs of physical fatigue or a mental hangover as they took full advantage, but they do have injury problems for the run-in. Kyle Walker and John Stones were absent from the starting line-up and captain Ruben Dias was forced off at half-time. Guardiola confirmed all three are out for the season with Nathan Ake also nursing an ankle problem. "Everything can happen, if it happened in 56 seconds (against Madrid), it can happen in three games. So calm and prepare for Wolves on Wednesday."

Guardiola freshened his side up with four changes to the side that started in the Bernabeu with Bernardo Silva, Foden and Riyad Mahrez were left on the bench. City's strength in depth shone through as Sterling, Jack Grealish, Ilkay Gundogan and Oleksandr Zinchenko all starred in a brilliant team performance. Sterling has been a peripheral figure in recent months, but scored his first league goals since February at a vital time. —AFP

### Happy Verstappen triumphs in Miami

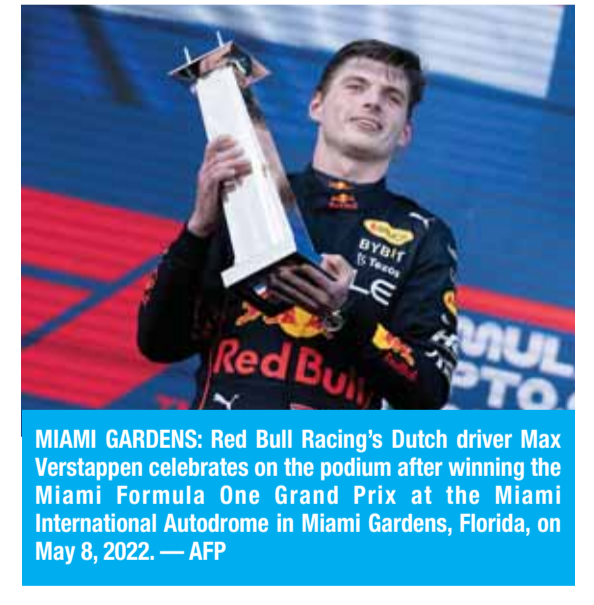
MIAMI GARDENS: World champion Max Verstappen resisted a late attack from series leader Charles Leclerc of Ferrari to claim an accomplished victory for Red Bull in sweltering conditions at the inaugural Miami Grand Prix on Sunday. In a physically exhausting race for the drivers and teams at the Miami International Autodrome, the 24-year-old Dutchman produced a mature performance to make the most of superior straight line speed in a largely processional race until a late Safety Car intervention.

His second win in succession and third of the season enabled him to trim Leclerc's advantage to 19 points in the drivers' championship. Leclerc has 104 and Verstappen 85. It was the 23rd win of the Dutchman's career. "It was an incredible Grand Prix, very physical as well, but I think we kept it exciting until the end," said Verstappen, interviewed by retired American driver Willy T. Ribbs after the race. When Ribbs suggested he looked ready to "get into a boxing ring", Verstappen retorted: "I think I'll stick to racing, but I appreciate boxing a lot. It felt a bit like that out there in terms of how we feel now."

"I'm incredibly happy with winning here in Miami and it was an incredible Sunday for us." Leclerc said he felt that the Red Bull was clearly a faster car than his Ferrari in a hot and punishing race. "It was such a difficult race, physically," said Leclerc. "We struggled quite a bit with the medium tyres, especially in the first stint, and was overtaken there. That made our race a bit more difficult from that moment onwards."

#### 'Step up'

"On the hard tyre, we were very competitive and towards the end I thought I could get Max at one point, but today they had the advantage in terms of pace." He said he hoped Ferrari would make a 'step



MIAMI GARDENS: Red Bull Racing's Dutch driver Max Verstappen celebrates on the podium after winning the Miami Formula One Grand Prix at the Miami International Autodrome in Miami Gardens, Florida, on May 8, 2022. — AFP

up' with upgrades for the Spanish Grand Prix later this month, but added that he had enjoyed the atmosphere generated by a sell-out crowd that was sprinkled with celebrities.

"It was fun and it's amazing to see so many people again," he said. "I keep saying it, but it's great to see so many Ferrari fans in the grandstands. "Now, we need to keep pushing. Upgrades will be very important throughout the year and I hope that we can do a step up from the next race onwards."

Verstappen came home 3.786 seconds ahead of Leclerc with Carlos Sainz third in the second Ferrari after holding off a late charge from Sergio Perez. George Russell finished fifth after recovering from 15th on the opening lap to come home ahead of Mercedes team-mate, seven-time champion Lewis Hamilton. "I did the best I could. It's a good result for the team," said Hamilton, who had spent the buildup to the race rowing with the sport's governing body about how much jewellery he wears. —AFP