



3 Each patrol vehicle should have two armed policemen



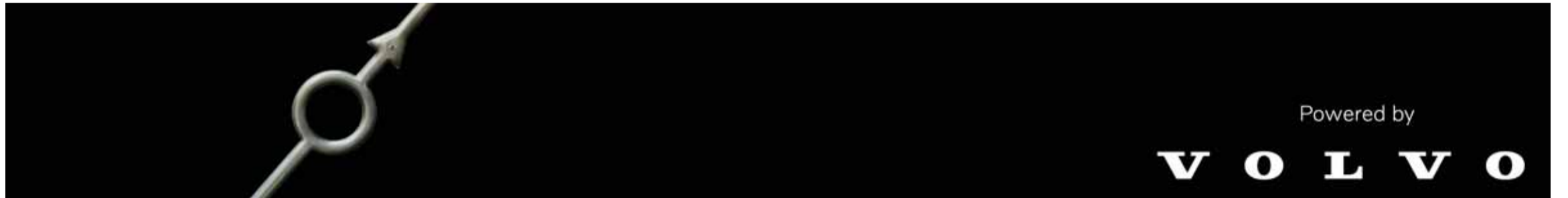
9 Rebel-held Syria shifts power - towards solar



12 'Talibanned': Popular Afghan pastimes again under threat



13 History-making Jabeur beats Swiatek, will face Sabalenka



MoH: Over 2.3 million COVID vaccine doses administered

ICU occupancy up 10% • Frontliners to be rewarded • Nod to recruit Pakistani medics



KUWAIT: A medic administers COVID-19 vaccine doses to people queuing in their cars at a drive-thru inoculation site at Jaber Causeway yesterday. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

KUWAIT: More than 2,375,455 doses of the COVID-19 vaccine have been administered in Kuwait since the beginning of the vaccination campaign, Health Ministry Spokesman Dr Abdullah Al-Sanad said on Sunday. The number of those who have received a single dose of the vaccine reached 1,452,148, while 923,307 others received two shots, he added in a press statement, stressing the continuation of the campaign.

Dr Sanad hailed the efforts of all medical, technical and voluntary teams, as well as cooperation of all state bodies over the past period. He affirmed continuation of providing services to the country's targeted segments so as to reach herd immunity.

Dr Sanad also said the average occupancy rate of COVID-19 wards in hospitals increased nine percent last week, while it increased by 10 percent for intensive care units (ICU). He called on the public to abide by health precautions and register for COVID-19 vaccinations. Dr Sanad expressed his trust in the awareness of the public to find a way out of this pandemic with the best results.

The health ministry yesterday said 1,977 people were infected with the novel coronavirus over the past 24 hours, taking total cases to 365,649. The

death toll from the virus climbed to 2,029 after registering 12 more mortalities (11 unvaccinated and one fully vaccinated) in this period, Dr Sanad said. Some 1,841 people recovered in the same period, taking total recoveries to 345,106. On Sunday, Kuwait reported 1,654 new cases and 12 deaths.

Meanwhile, the Civil Service Commission announced yesterday that the finance ministry has received lists of civil servants and personnel eligible for financial rewards from 16 departments and authorities for serving on the frontlines against COVID-19. Some of lists have been approved as they are free of any remarks, according to regulations, the CSC said in a statement. The commission noted that other lists delivered by various departments and sectors with names of personnel nominated for financial awards will be examined.

The CSC addressed the minister of finance on Sunday on setting mechanisms and measures for the disbursement of rewards, in line with law 4/2021 stipulating approval of state departments for the 2020-2021 fiscal year, with additional allotments for the extra payment for frontliners and personnel who served in the back-up ranks.

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News in brief

Nearly 8,000 deported in 6 months

KUWAIT: Kuwait deported 7,808 in the first half of 2021, the interior ministry said. The deportees were in violation of residency and traffic laws, in addition to committing other felonies and offenses, the ministry's relations and security information department said in a statement without elaborating.

Policeman stabbed in Jahra

KUWAIT: Police arrested a man who stabbed a traffic patrolman in Jahra, the interior ministry announced yesterday, adding that the policeman sustained a shoulder wound and is in stable condition. The suspect had stopped behind a vehicle that had broken down and approached the policeman attending to it. The cop suspected the man was inebriated, so he asked him for his ID, at which point the man grabbed a sharp tool from his vehicle and hit the policeman on his right shoulder.

England to lift COVID curbs

LONDON: British Prime Minister Boris Johnson yesterday revealed plans to lift most of England's legal coronavirus restrictions, including facemasks and social distancing from July 19, urging personal responsibility rather than government edict. — AFP

Bushehr plant back online

TEHRAN: Iran's only nuclear power plant has been brought back online, its manager said early yesterday, after two weeks off-grid amid a power shortage and rolling blackouts across the Islamic republic. The Bushehr plant's shutdown was initially blamed on a "technical fault" that required repairs. — AFP

Priest dies in custody

NEW DELHI: An ailing 84-year-old rights activist and Jesuit priest detained for nine months without trial under Indian anti-terrorism laws died yesterday ahead of a bail hearing. Father Stan Swamy, who campaigned for marginalized tribal communities, was arrested last year for allegedly inciting violence between different Indian castes in 2018. — AFP

OPEC+ postpones meeting to end oil output impasse

LONDON: After failing last week to agree on crude oil output levels, the 23 members of the OPEC+ group of producers called off a meeting planned yesterday to overcome the impasse, a source close to the alliance told AFP. No new date was given for them to reconvene. Since May, the group has raised oil output little by little, after slashing it more than a year ago when the coron-

avirus pandemic crushed demand.

At stake is the current proposal that would see the world's leading oil producers raise their output by 400,000 barrels per day (bpd) each month from August to December. That would add a further two million bpd to markets by the end of the year, helping to fuel a global economic recovery as the coronavirus pandemic is brought under control.

But that plan risks being delayed or even failing over a further proposal to extend the cap on incremental increases through to the end of 2022. "The market is now fearing several scenarios," said Bjarne Schieldrop, a Norway-based analyst with SEB. In one, there is no deal and no increase in production, sending oil prices shooting up, he said. Another sees a "free-for-all (in) production and a

collapse in the oil price". North Sea Brent and West Texas Intermediate, the most widely traded crude oil futures contracts, rose to their highest levels since Oct 2018 after the meeting was postponed. Brent traded 1.16-percent higher at \$77.05 a barrel, while WTI was up by 1.34 percent at \$76.17. Holding out against the new deal however, is the United Arab Emirates, which on Sunday criticized the terms of that extension as unjust.

Oil prices, which had already been sliding owing to concerns about the global economy, plummeted in April 2020 as coronavirus spread around the world and battered global consumption, transport and supply chains. OPEC+ decided to withdraw 9.7 million bpd from the market and to gradually restore

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Biden marks 'independence' from COVID

WASHINGTON: US President Joe Biden celebrated US Independence Day on Sunday with an upbeat assessment of a country he said is roaring back to post-pandemic life, even if COVID-19 has yet to be fully "vanquished". Speaking before a festive crowd of 1,000 guests on the White House South Lawn, Biden drew a comparison between the declaration of independence from the British Empire in 1776 and today's rapid recovery from the coronavirus.

"Two hundred and forty five years ago, we declared our independence from a distant king. Today, we are closer than ever to declaring our independence from a deadly virus," he told the crowd of invited military members and essential workers. "We've gained the upper hand against this virus," he said. But he added, "Don't get me wrong: COVID-19 has not been vanquished."

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WASHINGTON: US President Joe Biden, First Lady Jill Biden, daughter Ashley Biden and granddaughters Finnegan Biden and Naomi Biden pose for a selfie during Independence Day celebrations at the White House on Sunday. — AFP

Norway fund sells off assets linked to Zionist settlements

OSLO: Norway's largest pension fund announced yesterday it had divested assets in 16 companies for their links to Zionist settlements in the West Bank, including telecom equipment giant Motorola. "Motorola and oth-

er companies risk complicity in international law violations in occupied Palestine," KLP, which manages some \$95 billion worth of assets, said in a statement.

The divestment follows the February 2020 UN publication of a list of 112 companies with activities linked to Zionist settlements, considered illegal under international law. The Zionist government has denounced the publication of the list - which included companies like Airbnb, Expedia, Motorola and Tripadvisor - as a "contemptible effort". "Divesting from Motorola Solutions was a very straightforward decision over its surveillance role in the occupied territories," KLP said, argu-

ing the company provide software used in border surveillance. KLP also divested telecom operators offering services within the West Bank as they contributed to making "the settlements attractive residential areas".

These included Bezeq, Cellcom and Partner Communications, and Alice Europe - which was delisted from the Amsterdam stock exchange in January. Also included are five banks that facilitated or financed the construction of housing and infrastructure in occupied territories, as well as engineering and construction groups, including the French multinational Alstom.

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