



4 Kuwait mulls work from home for some categories



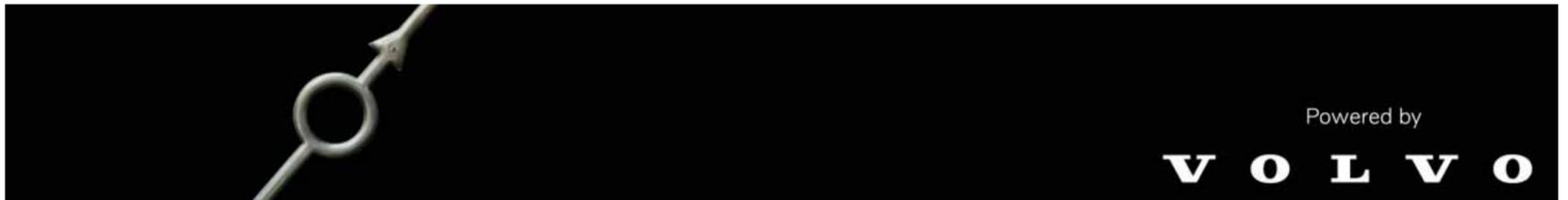
8 CBK launches e-payment service amid digital expansion plan



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Cabinet confident life 'back to normal' soon

Iraq says Katyusha missiles fired by outlawed groups

Kuwait's Mutairi wins silver at Tokyo Paralympics

Volvo Kuwait to present Mutairi a car

TOKYO: Kuwait's Ahmad Al-Mutairi won a silver medal in the men's T33 100-meter race at the Tokyo Paralympics yesterday.

Volvo Kuwait announced yesterday that it will present a car to Kuwaiti champion Ahmed Naqa Al-Mutairi as a token of appreciation. Volvo Kuwait Chairman Bader Nasser Al-Kharafi, speaking on the occasion, said, "We congratulate the hero Ahmed Naqa Al-Mutairi for this great achievement. He deserves all our admiration and congratulations."

British athletes Andrew Small claimed gold in 17.73 seconds while Harri Jenkins won bronze. Al-Mutairi, who won a gold in

the event at the 2016 Rio Games and the 2019 world champion, finished in his season's best time of 17.83 seconds, missing gold by just 0.1 seconds at Tokyo's National Stadium.

Minister of Information and State Minister for Youth Affairs Abdurrahman Al-Mutairi yesterday praised Ahmad Al-Mutairi for winning the silver medal at Tokyo Paralympics 2020. In a statement, the minister expressed his pride in Al-Mutairi's remarkable achievement. He praised the valued and continued support of His Highnesses the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, HH the Crown Prince Sheikh



TOKYO: Ahmad Al-Mutairi, who won a silver medal at the Tokyo Paralympics, at the National Stadium yesterday.

Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah to the domain of sports in Kuwait. He stressed the importance of providing suitable environment for Kuwaiti athletes with disabilities.

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By B Izzak

KUWAIT: The government said yesterday it was confident that life in the country will return to normal "soon" after indicators on the coronavirus pandemic have recorded positive results leading to achieving herd immunity. Health Minister Sheikh Basel Al-Sabah briefed the Cabinet's weekly meeting that the country has witnessed a major drop in the number of cases, deaths and patients due to the increase in the number of vaccinations.

"The Cabinet expressed confidence that these positive indicators will lead to herd immunity and the return of life to normal very shortly," said a statement issued following the meeting. The Cabinet however renewed its call to citizens and residents to continue to observe health conditions and take the

vaccinations. For most of the past 10 days, the number of new cases remained below 200 as the number of deaths dropped sharply and coronavirus patients at hospitals have declined to just 200. Those receiving treatment at intensive care units also fell to just 89 yesterday.

During the meeting, Defense Minister Sheikh Hamad Jaber Al-Ali Al-Sabah briefed the Cabinet on the firing of three Katyusha missiles from inside Iraq towards the Kuwaiti-Iraqi border zone. The minister told the Cabinet the rockets caused no material damage or human losses.

He told the Cabinet that Kuwait coordinated with the Iraqi authorities over the incident and it was "found that this type of projectiles is used by outlawed groups" in Iraq.

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Kuwait bans delivery bikes on main roads



KUWAIT: Kuwait's traffic authorities imposed a ban on delivery motorbikes on highways and Ring Roads starting from October 3, 2021 due to a rise in accidents.

According to the Traffic General Department, the new regulation, issued to "streamline the delivery motorcycle service" in the country, prohibits bikes delivering items to use the first, fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh Ring Roads, in addition to roads 30, 40, 50, 60 and 80, as well as Jamal Abdul-Nasser Road and Jaber Causeway. Delivery services on bikes have reportedly mushroomed in Kuwait in recent months due to the COVID-19 restrictions.

IS rockets hit Kabul airport as US pulls out

KABUL: The Islamic State group claimed a rocket attack on Kabul airport yesterday as US troops raced to complete their withdrawal from Afghanistan and evacuate allies under the threat of further violence. The Pentagon warned yesterday of a "real" and "specific" threat of new attacks at Kabul airport, just hours ahead of a US deadline to complete its frenzied withdrawal from

Afghanistan that has been marred by Islamic State violence.

President Joe Biden has set a deadline of August 31 to withdraw all US forces from Afghanistan, drawing to a close his nation's longest war, which began in retaliation for the September 11 attacks. The return of the hardline Islamist Taliban movement, which was toppled in 2001 but took back power a fortnight ago, triggered a massive exodus of terrified people aboard US-led evacuation flights.

Those flights, which have taken more than 122,000 people out of Kabul airport, will officially end today when the last of the thousands of American troops pull out. US forces

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KABUL: A US Air Force aircraft takes off from the airport in Kabul yesterday. Rockets were fired at Kabul Airport where US troops were racing to complete their withdrawal from Afghanistan. — AFP

WHO sounds alarm over COVID deaths

COPENHAGEN: The World Health Organization warned yesterday that another 236,000 people could die from COVID in Europe by December 1, sounding the alarm over rising infections and stagnating vaccine rates on the continent. The warning comes as the world passed the grim milestone of 4.5 million deaths from COVID since the start of the pandemic, according to

an AFP tally yesterday.

Infections rates are ticking up globally again, as the highly transmissible Delta variant takes hold—especially among the unvaccinated—preying on populations where anti-virus measures have been relaxed. The head of WHO Europe said yesterday that infections and deaths were on the rise again in Europe, particularly in poorer nations in the Balkans, the Caucasus and Central Asia. "Last week, there was an 11 percent increase in the number of deaths in the region—one reliable projection is expecting 236,000 deaths in Europe, by

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BERLIN: A man receives a Johnson & Johnson Janssen COVID-19 vaccine in a so-called 'Impfzug' (vaccination train) operated by Berliner S-Bahn in Gruenau near Berlin yesterday. — AFP

Ukraine pins hopes on Gulf visitors

LVIV, Ukraine: Saudi tourists ride horse-drawn carriages, pose for portraits by street artists and play chess on benches with locals in Lviv, a city in Ukraine more accustomed to hosting European guests. But with strict COVID-19 travel restrictions still in place across Europe, travellers from the Middle East—especially Saudi Arabia—now rank among the top visitors to

the ex-Soviet state.

The trend has given hope to the country's pandemic-hit tourism industry. "We need to seize the moment," says Bogdan Gets, a tour guide on a sightseeing train that ferries tourists along cobbled streets in central Lviv, a city in western Ukraine known for its Renaissance architecture. For Gets and his colleagues at "Chudo Tour" (Wonder Tour), the unexpected influx of tourists from the Middle East is a chance to recover after a string of lockdowns that put pressure on Ukraine's struggling economy.

In the first half of 2021, the number of Saudi tourists alone visiting Ukraine skyrocketed to 14,000 compared to just 350

in the same period last year, according to the country's state tourism agency. This new cohort are attracted by a visa-free regime enacted in August last year and cheap direct flights.

In previous years, the city was mostly visited by Poles, Belarusians, Turks, Germans and Britons. "Last year put the tourism industry in extreme conditions", the agency said, and "radically changed" how tourists decide which countries to visit. Before the pandemic 32-year-old Asma, a tourist from Saudi Arabia, travelled with her husband and two sons to various European destinations every year, but never considered Ukraine.

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LVIV, Ukraine: Tourists from the GCC countries sit in a street cafe in Lviv, some 540 km west of Kiev. — AFP