



**3** MoH reiterates efficacy of COVID-19 vaccines



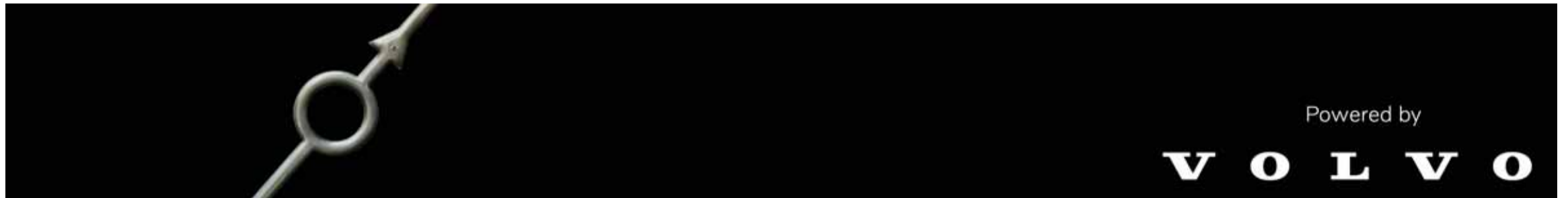
**5** US approves Pfizer vaccine as doses begin shipping



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# 40 MPs reiterate support for Humaidi as speaker

## Three candidates to contest deputy speaker's post



KUWAIT: Newly-elected MPs meet at the diwaniya of MP Marzouq Al-Khalifa yesterday. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

By B Izzak

**KUWAIT:** At least 40 MPs yesterday reconfirmed their commitment to vote for MP Bader Al-Humaidi as the speaker of the newly-elected National Assembly, effectively meaning that incumbent two-time Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem will not be able to lead the Assembly for a third time. Holding their third meeting since election results were announced a week ago at the diwaniya of MP Marzouq Al-Khalifa, the lawmakers did not finalize their candidate for the deputy speaker's post, but unanimously agreed on MP Osama Al-Shaheen to become the Assembly supervisor.

Opposition MP Hassan Jowhar announced yesterday his intention to contest the deputy speaker's post, joining MP Ahmad Al-Shuhoumi, who is not part of the gathering, and incumbent deputy speaker Essa Al-Kandari. MPs Hisham Al-Saleh and Muhannad Al-Sayer declared their support for Jowhar, who requires at least 33 votes to win.

Thirty-six lawmakers attended the meeting yesterday but a number of other MPs declared their support, saying they could not attend for personal reasons. The government's position with its 16 Cabinet ministers, who can vote, will make no difference unless at least eight MPs change their mind on the inaugural day of the Assembly. Ghanem, who has been speaker since 2013, has not made any comment on the issue since he retained his seat as a member of parliament.

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## Carbon neutrality by 2050: World's most urgent mission

Op-ed



By Antonio Guterres  
UN Secretary-General

As the world marks the fifth anniversary of the adoption of the landmark Paris Agreement on climate change, a promising movement for carbon neutrality is taking shape. By next month, countries representing more than 65 percent of harmful greenhouse gasses and more than 70 percent of the world economy will have committed to achieve net zero emissions by the middle of the century.

At the same time, the main climate indicators are worsening. While the COVID-19 pandemic has temporarily reduced emissions, carbon dioxide levels are still at record highs - and rising. The past decade was the hottest on record: Arctic sea ice in October was the lowest ever, and apocalyptic fires, floods, droughts and storms are increasingly the new normal.

Biodiversity is collapsing, deserts are spreading, oceans are warming and choking with plastic waste. Science tells us that unless we cut fossil fuel production by 6 percent every year between now and 2030, things will get worse. Instead, the world is on track for a 2 per cent annual rise.

Pandemic recovery gives us an unexpected yet vital opportunity to attack climate change, fix our global environment, re-engineer

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## Iran opposition figure executed

**TEHRAN:** Iran authorities yesterday executed Ruhollah Zam, a former opposition figure who had lived in exile in France and was implicated in anti-government protests, days after his sentence was upheld. State television said the "counter-revolutionary" Zam was hanged in the morning after the supreme court upheld his sentence due to

"the severity of the crimes" committed against the Islamic republic.

Judiciary spokesman Gholamhossein Esmaili had on Tuesday said Zam's sentence was upheld by the supreme court "more than a month ago". London-based human rights group Amnesty International, in a statement after his verdict was confirmed, described Zam as a "journalist and dissident". It said the confirmation marked "a shocking escalation in the use of the death penalty as a weapon of repression". Iran's Revolutionary Guards announced

the arrest of Zam in Oct 2019, claiming he had been "directed by France's intelligence service". State television said he was "under the protection of several countries' intelligence services". The official IRNA news agency said he was also convicted of espionage for France and an unnamed country in the region, cooperating with the "hostile government of America", acting against "the country's security", insulting the "sanctity of Islam" and instigating violence during protests in 2017.

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Ruhollah Zam

## US executes another death row inmate

**WASHINGTON:** US authorities on Friday carried out their 10th execution of the year, the last in a series of capital punishments that President Donald Trump's administration has carried out

before he leaves office, Alfred Bourgeois, a black man sentenced to death for the murder of his two-year-old daughter, was executed by lethal injection at a prison in Terre Haute, Indiana.

"Bourgeois was pronounced deceased at 8:21 pm Eastern Standard Time by the Vigo County Coroner," the federal prison said in a statement. The execution occurred a day after another convicted prisoner, Brandon Bernard, was also executed in Terre Haute. Following a paternity test, Bourgeois, a 55-year-old former truck driver, took temporary custody of his daughter and

brought her on a trucking route for part of the summer of 2002.

He severely abused her and eventually smashed her skull on the windshield. Since the crime took place on a military base where he was making a delivery, he was tried in federal court and sentenced to death in 2004. He remained on death row, with the United States having suspended federal executions beginning in 2003, in particular because of questions over the legality of drugs used in injections.

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## Biden and Harris named as Time 'Person of the Year'

**NEW YORK:** US President-elect Joe Biden and Vice President-elect Kamala Harris have been named Time magazine's 2020 "Person of the Year" for their election victory over Donald Trump. "For changing the American story, for showing that the forces of empathy are greater than the forces of division, for sharing a vision of healing in a grieving world," Time said, explaining its choice.

The Democratic pair was chosen ahead of three other finalists: Frontline healthcare workers and Anthony Fauci, the racial justice movement and President Trump. Time's magazine cover has portraits of Biden, 78, and Harris, 56, with the subtitle "Changing America's story". "Together, they offered restoration and renewal in a single ticket. And America bought what they were selling,"

the publication said.

Biden beat Trump by 306 electoral college votes to Trump's 232 to end the real estate tycoon-turned-politician's presidency after one term. Biden received roughly seven million more votes than his Republican adversary, who is yet to concede, claiming widespread fraud of which there is no evidence. Time praised the Democratic ticket for ousting an incumbent president for the just the 10th time in US history.

"Biden and Harris had to revive the party's fading strength with white voters without college degrees; energize its emerging base of diverse, urban young voters; and motivate the hordes of angry suburbanites, particularly college graduates and women, who had fled the Trump-era GOP," it wrote.

Time magazine's award - handed out annually since 1927 - honors the person or people who most impacted the news, for better or worse, during the calendar year. When asked by Time what he would like people to say about him after four years in the White House, Biden replied: "That America was better off and average Americans are better off the day we left than the day we arrived. That's my objective." — AFP

