

SPOTLIGHT

PRINCE BANDAR REVEALS CONTRAST BETWEEN PALESTINIAN LEADERSHIP'S FAILURES AND KINGDOM'S BACKING

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INTERVIEW

SABAH AL-BINALI, OURCROWD HEAD, EXPLAINS INVESTMENT LOGIC OF ISRAEL-UAE ENTENTE

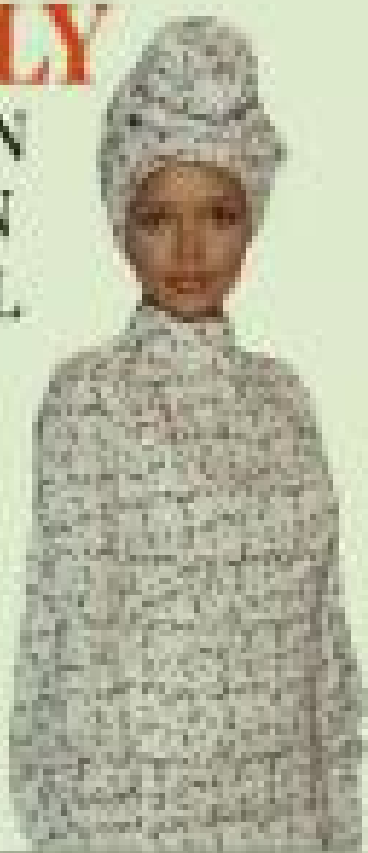
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&FINALLY

HALIMA ADEN GETS COZY IN ST. JOHN FALL CAMPAIGN

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CIVILIANS PAY THE PRICE

Fragile truce holds in Karabakh

Combatants accuse each other of violating cease-fire, but little sign of renewed violence

'VIRTUAL' SUMMIT

Listen to your people, C20 host tells world leaders

Agencies: Stepanakert, Azerbaijan

Armenia and Azerbaijan accused each other on Saturday of breaching a fragile cease-fire in Nagorno-Karabakh, minutes after it came into effect at noon.

Azerbaijan's Defense Ministry said Armenian forces had carried out attacks on the frontline and shelled populated areas. "Armenia is bla-

2 Riyals • Vol. XLV  
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tantly violating the cease-fire regime," the ministry said.

The Armenian Defense Ministry accused Azerbaijan of shelling a settlement inside Armenia, and ethnic Armenian forces in Karabakh said Azeri forces had launched a new offensive five minutes after the truce took hold.

Nevertheless, there was little sign of the level of violence that has killed hundreds since renewed fighting over Nagorno-Karabakh began on Sept. 27. The mountainous enclave is internationally recognized as part of Azerbaijan, but is populated and governed by ethnic Armenians.

The cease-fire followed 10 hours of talks in Moscow mediated by Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov. Azeri President Ilham Aliyev said the two sides were now trying to reach a political settlement, but that there



People in Nagorno-Karabakh take refuge in a bomb shelter. AP

would be further fighting. "We'll go to the very end and get what rightfully belongs to us," he said.

Armenia's Foreign Ministry said it was using all diplomatic channels to try to support the truce,

and Nagorno-Karabakh's Foreign Ministry accused Azerbaijan of using the talks as cover to prepare for more military action.

Dmitri Trenin, director of the Carnegie Moscow Center, said Russia

would press for peace. "For Russia, the most important issues are the security of its borders from militants ... and Turkey's rising role in the region," he said. "This means Moscow can't walk away ... and allow a war to rage."

FAST FACT

Armenia said Azeri forces launched a new attack five minutes after the truce took hold.

Arab News Riyadh

Governments should ensure their people's voices are heard, the Saudi co-chair of the C20 "virtual" summit said on Saturday.

Dania Al-Maena was wrapping up the C20, the civil society strand of the G20. "We must always listen to voices without discrimination or proxy," she said. "Rules-based, fair and solidarity-driven multilateralism is our best way to tackle our complex cross-border problems."

The C20 said civil society was being "sidelined from global and local decision-making." It urged G20 leaders to "adopt just policies for an inclusive recovery, restore faith in multilateralism, and attend immediately to the climate and ecological crisis."

Detailed report Page 2



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The Muslim World League promotes the principles of tolerance and encourages interfaith dialogue to make the world safer for all people, regardless of faith.

**Dr. Mohammed bin Abdulkarim Al-Issa**  
Secretary-general, Muslim World League



# Radars

## COVID-19 Advisory

It is a new coronavirus and cases first appeared in the Chinese city of Wuhan, in the form of acute pneumonia.

### Symptoms

Symptoms may appear within 2-14 days of exposure to the virus



Sore throat



Shortness of breath

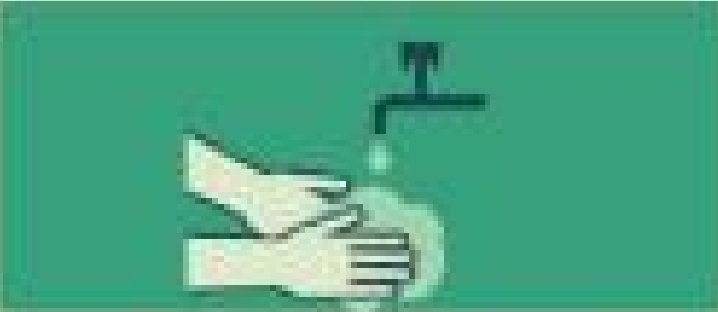


Cough



Fever

### Preventive methods



Wash your hands frequently with soap



Avoid crowded areas



Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth



Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces



Avoid approaching people having signs of a cold, flu or cough



Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash

## The Register

THE PICTURES THAT MARK THE DAY



The Civil Society 20 (C20) engagement group for the G20 countries has concluded the work of this year's summit, which was held virtually from Oct. 6 to 10, with more than 20,000 participants from 109 countries, the Saudi Press Agency reported.

According to the C20 website, the group "provides a platform of Civil Society Organizations around the world to bring forth a non-government and non-business voice" and "provides a space through which CSOs can contribute in a structured and sustained manner to the G20."

The summit's agenda had 65 discussion sessions and workshops, in which the more than 380 speakers included representatives of the governments of twenty countries, international civil society organizations and specialized international organizations, as well as experts and decision-makers.

Prince Abdul Aziz bin Salman, the minister of energy, participated in a special dialogue on the future of green energy.

A number of representatives of the Saudi presidency of the G20 countries

also took part in the summit, including Fahd Al-Mubarak, minister of state; Munir Al-Desouki, assistant minister of communications and information technology; and Abdul Aziz Al-Rasheed, assistant minister of finance for international affairs and macro-financial policies.

The work of the summit was concluded when the Minister of Human Resources and Social Development Ahmed Al-Rajhi received the final statement of the Contact Group on behalf of King Salman during a meeting with the steering and advisory committees of the C20 group.

## What's Trending

Today's hot topics explained by Ameera Abid



FIGHT AGAINST HUNGER

### #NobelPeacePrize

This year's Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to the World Food Programme (WFP) for its efforts to combat hunger and its fight against using hunger as a weapon of war.

Executive Director David Beasley tweeted his reaction to the win: "We are deeply humbled to receive the #NobelPeacePrize. This is an incredible recognition of the dedication of the @WFP family, working to end hunger every day in 80+ countries. Thank you @NobelPrize for this incredible honor!"

@USAID tweeted: "The US is proud to be the largest and longest contributor to @WFP, partnering with them to help #EndHunger." As we congratulate WFP on winning the #NobelPeacePrize, we call on other donors to step forward & provide additional support to help meet growing humanitarian needs."

### BTS SONGS AND CONCERTS

## #MapOfTheSoulOne



BTS never stop giving their fans content; even during the quarantine the band has produced new songs and two concerts.

The previous concert "Bang Bang Con The Live" was a huge success. And for their latest performance, "Map of the Soul ONE", the band was hoping that a small number of fans would be able to attend in person. But due to the pandemic, they decided that the concert would be streamed.

BTS showcased brand new music and styles in their last performance. The concert showed the members performing solo songs like "Persona" by RM and "Interlude: Shadow" by Suga.

They also performed songs from

their new album, the first time they had been heard live. The band also wooed fans with some of their classics such as "N.O.", "No More Dream" and "We are Bulletproof part 2."

Park Jimin, one of the main vocalists and dancers in the group, broke down as he heard the voices of the fans through the stream.

@bybrianbyrne tweeted: "We are together bulletproof. Thank you for the most incredible concert of my life."

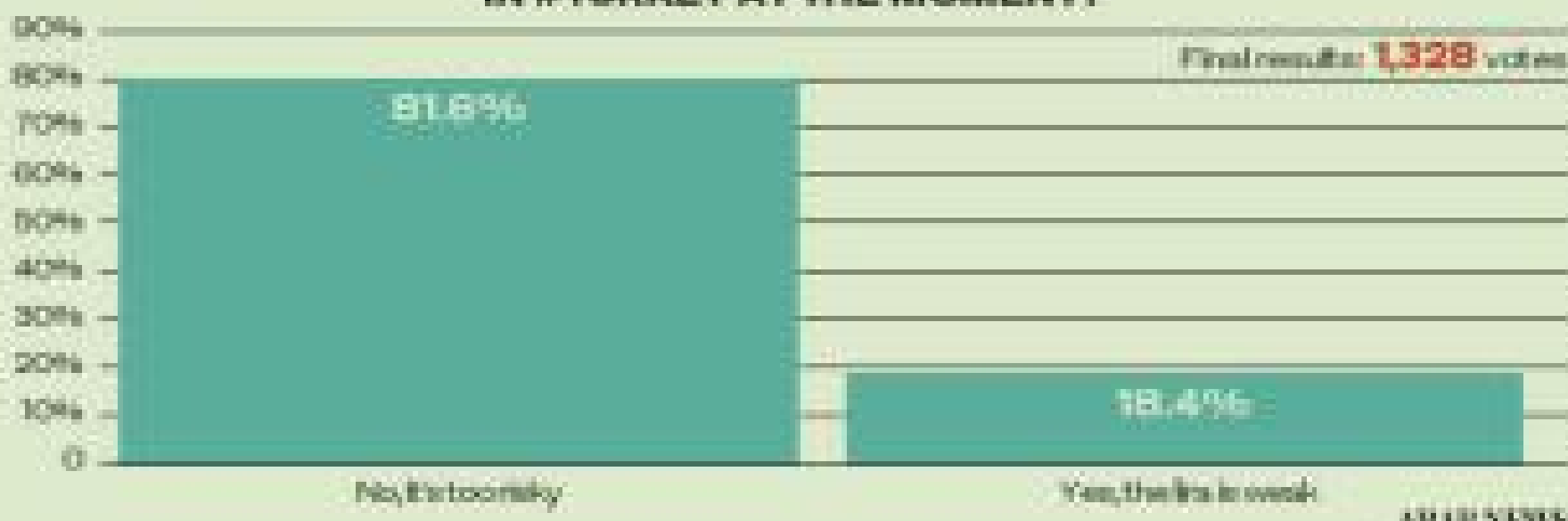
@yonkisuga said: "Thank you so much for working hard for this and how you prepared this concert. You never disappoint us, you keep on surprising us. We will be strong for you, we will always be strong for you. Please be strong as well for us, you know we are bulletproof."



## Twitter Poll

Nearly 82 percent of respondents to an Arab News Twitter poll said investing in the Turkish lira was a huge risk.

#POLL: GIVEN ITS MILITARY INVOLVEMENT IN LIBYA & ESCALATION OF TENSIONS WITH GREECE WOULD YOU INVEST YOUR MONEY IN #TURKEY AT THE MOMENT?



### Prayer Times in Saudi Arabia

	Oct. 11	Fajr	Sunrise	Dhuhr	Asr	Maghreb	Isha
Makkah		5:00	6:15	12:08	3:29	6:00	7:30
Madinah		5:01	6:17	12:09	3:29	5:59	7:29
Riyadh		4:32	5:49	11:40	3:01	5:30	7:00
Abha		4:49	6:02	11:57	3:19	5:51	7:21
Dammam		4:19	5:36	11:27	2:47	5:16	6:46



# Spotlight



If there is now a denial of what Saudi and Gulf leaders have done in service of the Palestinian issue, this will not affect our attachment to the cause.  
**Prince Bandar bin Sultan**

SAUDI ARABIA

## Setting the record straight

Prince Bandar's interview revealed a contrast between the Palestinian leadership's failures and the Kingdom's support

Arab News Riyadh

As a towering figure in global diplomacy, Saudi Arabia's Prince Bandar bin Sultan Al-Saud had the inside track on many of the personalities and issues that have shaped the decades since the early 1980s. But the world had to wait until this month to catch a glimpse of some of the decisions and actions witnessed by him in the rooms where they happened and which decided the fate of millions of people in the Middle East, Palestinians in particular.

Unsurprisingly, Al Arabiya's interview with the former Saudi ambassador to the US, who also served as head of the Saudi Intelligence Agency and the National Security Council, has been dominating the political conversation like no other in recent memory. His reminiscences are a study in contrasts, between Saudi Arabia's steadfast position on the Palestinian cause and the Palestinian leadership's self-inflicted wounds and "failures," including their criticism of Gulf states over the UAE-Israeli peace deal.

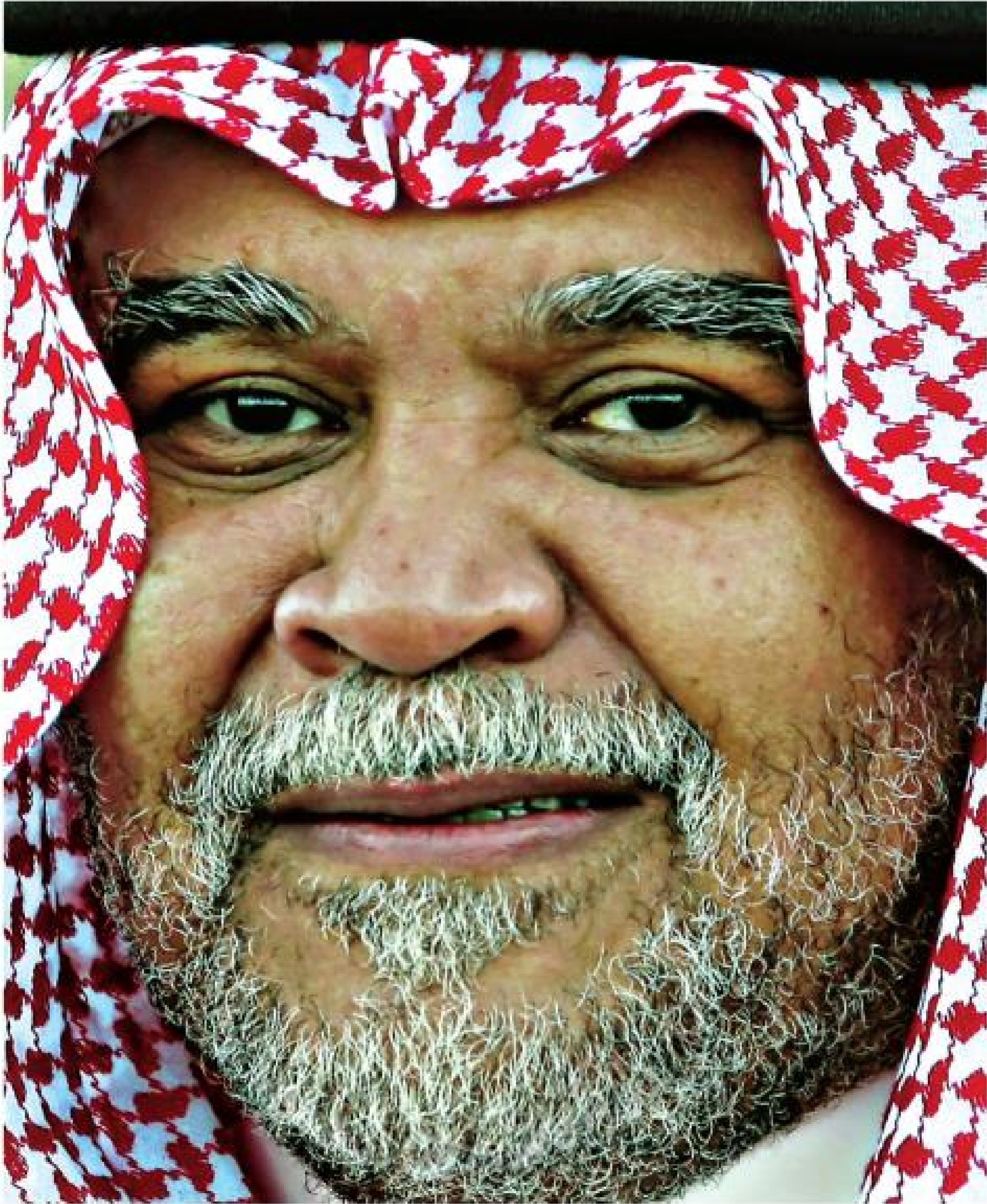
What has come to light are not just the blunders of Palestinian leaders through the decades but also their dilly-dallying, the cumulative impact of which has cost their people dear and set back their statehood cause. What perhaps counts in favor of the present Palestinian leadership is that the reason why Prince Bandar decided to make these crucial revelations was their loud condemnations of the US-UAE-Israeli trilateral declaration of August.

Prince Bandar admitted that his initial reaction to the Palestinian statements was one of anger, but afterwards of sadness and hurt. "I recalled events I was witness to relating to the Palestinian cause from 1978 to 2015," he said, before delivering a fascinating, first-person tour d'horizon, documenting the multidimensional support — moral, material, military, diplomatic and economic — extended by the Saudi leadership and state to Palestinians from 1939.

Prince Bandar recalled the Saudi role in the aftermath the 1948 war, when Arab League countries decided to help the distressed Palestinian people.

"Fighting alongside their Egyptian brothers, the Saudi Army entered Palestinian land and did very well ... Three thousand Saudi soldiers were on the Egyptian front and inside Palestine. In this war, 150 Saudis were martyred. At the time, the Saudi army had just been established and had limited capabilities, but the armies that had been created before it had limited capabilities as well."

Even though the Palestinian leadership's statements inspire little confidence, the dominant response elicited by Al Arabiya's interview has been: If only Palestinians could rewind history and try a different way. Consider Prince



Bill Clinton with Yitzhak Rabin and Yasser Arafat after the signing of the Oslo Accords in 1993, above; Saudi Arabia's Ambassador Prince Bandar bin Sultan in discussion with US President George H.W. Bush 1990 in Washington, right. AFP

Bandar's account of the events of 1986, when King Fahd asked him to propose to US President Ronald Reagan that he do something to help the Palestinian cause.

"I went and met with President Reagan. I informed him that the Palestinians now agreed to UN Resolution 242, which they had rejected in 1973 ... I took a letter to Secretary of State (George) Shultz saying that if the Palestinians recognized UN Resolution 242 ... denounce terrorism and recognize the right of the region's states to live in peace, Reagan was ready to recognize the PLO and hold talks with it.

"I left and called King Fahd, and told him about the offer. 'Are you sure?' he asked. I told him that I had the letter written and signed so he told me to go ahead with the plan and asked me to head to Tunisia

It is well known to everyone that Abu Ammar (Yasser Arafat) always loved to kiss people.

to deliver the letter to Abu Ammar (Yasser Arafat) directly. I went there and met Abu Ammar (who) stood up as usual, and said, 'Palestine is free' and he started dancing and kissing and hugging me.

"It is well known to everyone that Abu Ammar always loved to kiss people. I asked him about the announcement date so he could go meet with (Jordan's) King Hussein to hold a joint declaration and so on. 'Not possible,' he replied. 'How is it not possible? This is what you asked for and we got it for you,' I said. He replied: 'I follow an Arab code of ethics.' I said: 'Absolutely, now go for it and don't waste another opportunity.' He then proceeded to tell me that he first needed to go to Saudi Arabia to thank King Fahd for what he had done before going to King Hussein ... When he requested a

plane, I told him he could use the plane I came on to go to Jeddah. He took the plane and we did not see him for a month. He went to South Yemen and North Korea, with whom we did not even have ties. He also visited countries in Africa and Asia before arriving in the Kingdom. After all this time, the Americans said that they were no longer interested. Many things had happened and their focus had shifted."

Prince Bandar was equally candid in his verdict on the Arab repudiation of the 1978 Camp David Accords. "It became the mistake that played a major role in deepening the Palestinian tragedy, as the Arab nation boycotted Egypt, the mother of the world, because the Palestinians rejected the autonomy provisions ... and considered this peace treaty a betrayal of the Arab nation," he said.

After the Oslo Accords of 1993 and 1995, Prince Bandar said, he sought Arafat's views on the Camp David Treaty. Arafat told the prince: " ' B a n d a r , Camp David's autonomy provisions were ten times better than the Oslo Accord.' I said:

days after they left Saudi Arabia, we received news they had already gone back on their word and started conspiring and plotting against each other once again."

Of course, as Prince Bandar made it clear, the follies of their leaders do not mean that the Palestinian people have forfeited the right to return to their homeland or demand that Israel withdraw from Arab lands. Peace cannot be made at the expense of Palestinian rights, he said, adding poignantly: "A single drop of Palestinian blood is more precious than the earth's treasures."

Having made that point, Prince Bandar asserted that whenever the Palestinian leadership asked for advice and help, Saudi Arabia would provide them with both without expecting anything in return, but they would always take the help, and ignore the advice.

"Then they would fail and turn back to us again, and we would support them again, regardless of their mistakes," he said. This aspect of the relationship, he felt, might have convinced the Palestinian leadership that "there is no price to pay for any mistakes they commit towards the Saudi leadership or the Saudi state, or the Gulf leaderships and states."

Noting "the circumstances and times have changed," Prince Bandar added: "I think it is only fair to the Palestinian people to know some truths that have not been discussed or have been kept hidden."

### BIO

**1949** Year Prince Bandar bin Sultan was born.  
**1968** Graduated from Royal Air Force College Cranwell.  
**1978** Appointed King Khalid's personal envoy.  
**1983** Appointed KSA ambassador to US.  
**2005-2015** Served as secretary-general of National Security Council.  
**2012-2014** Director-general of Saudi Intelligence Agency.  
**2014-2018** King Abdullah's special envoy.

"Well, Mr. President, why did you not agree to it?" He said, 'I wanted to, but (Syrian President) Hafez Al-Assad threatened to kill me and to drive a wedge among the Palestinians, turning them against me.' I thought to myself: 'So he could have been one martyr and given his life to save millions of Palestinians,' but it was as God willed it."

Fast forward to February 2007, when King Abdullah brought the Palestinian leaders Mahmoud Abbas and Khaled Meshaal to Makkah for crisis talks to end deadly Fatah-Hamas violence and form a unified leadership.

"After (King Abdullah) checked what they had written and read it in front of everyone and asked them to yow before God and in front of everyone that they agree to this deal, he asked them to shake hands and congratulated them, saying, 'God is our witness, and we are in his holy land. (Prince) Saud (bin Faisal), take the brothers to the Kaaba and let them pledge their word before God and before the Palestinian people.' Only a few

Then the Palestinian leadership would fail and turn back to us again, and we would support them again.





# News Saudi Arabia



A Saudi-led Arab coalition soldier patrolling the Saudi border with Yemen. AFP/Files photo

FIGHTING TERROR

## Coalition intercepts Houthi drone targeting Kingdom

OIC chief expresses solidarity with Saudi Arabia in all its measures to protect its territories, citizens, and residents

Arab News Riyadh

**An explosive-laden drone targeting the southern part of the Kingdom was intercepted and destroyed by the Arab coalition backing Yemen's internationally recognized government on Saturday.**

Coalition spokesman Col. Turki Al-Maliki said the drone was aimed at civilians and civilian facilities in the southern region.

Yemen's Iran-backed Houthi militias have been launching missile, drone and rocket strikes targeting civilian centers in Saudi Arabia for the past few years.

The secretary-general of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), Dr. Yousef Al-Othaimen, condemned the attack and expressed the OIC's solidarity with Saudi Arabia, supporting the

measures it takes to protect its border, citizens and residents.

The coalition forces had intercepted another explosives-laden drone in Yemeni airspace launched by the Houthi militia on Wednesday. Al-Maliki said the launching of the drone shows how the Houthis

### BACKGROUND

**Saudi Arabia and its Arab allies entered the war in Yemen in 2015 against the Houthis, who drove the internationally recognized government into exile in 2014.**

continue their systematic attacks on civilian targets in Saudi Arabia.

He said the militants are launching ballistic missiles, drones and remotely piloted boats from Yemen's Hodeidah governorate in violation of international humanitarian law and the Stockholm

cease-fire agreement.

Pakistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs called for the immediate cessation of such attacks, saying the successful interception of the drone had prevented the loss of innocent lives. The statement reiterates Pakistan's full support of the Kingdom against any threats to its security and territorial integrity.

Earlier, the US called on Houthi militants in Yemen to stop launching attacks on Saudi Arabia.

"The US remains deeply concerned by the Houthis' aggression, supported by Iranian weapons shipments in violation of UN arms embargoes," State Department spokeswoman Morgan Ortagus said.

"We call on the Houthis to immediately cease their cross-border attacks against Saudi Arabia and halt their attacks on the city of Marib, where nearly a million Yemenis have sought refuge since the beginning of the war."

SLOWING DOWN

## Saudi Arabia's COVID-19 daily tally continues decline

Rawan Radwan Jeddah

Saudi Arabia recorded 405 new cases of COVID-19 on Saturday, raising the total number of cases to 338,944. Infections in the Kingdom have been decreasing since June 16, when cases exceeded 4,000 a day.

There are currently 9,184 active cases, with 842 of these in critical care units. Of Saturday's new cases, 58 percent are male, 12 percent are children and 4 percent are adults above the age of 65.

### FASTFACT

**338,944**

Total cases

The death toll increased by 22, bringing the total number to 5,018.

There were 455 recoveries recorded, raising the total number to 324,737. Madinah reported 55 recoveries, Makkah

and Riyadh had 40 apiece and Yanbu had 34 recoveries.

Saudi Arabia's health authorities have conducted 46,189 polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests in the past 24 hours, raising the total number of tests conducted so far to 6.97 million. The Ministry of Health said that more than 1.27 million people have visited Tetamman clinics in the past 48 hours. These facilities are for people who have COVID-19 symptoms such as fever, shortness of breath and chest pain.

## Road to 2030

### Education sector: Challenges bring future opportunities

BASIL M.K. AL-GHALAYINI



A few months back, I was talking to the owner of a private school in Jeddah who wanted to find ways of expansion through consolidation with other private schools in the Kingdom. Last week, I had a similar discussion with another owner who wants to explore strategic and financial options for his family-owned school's future. Obviously, the "new normal" post-COVID-19 pandemic, especially in the education sector, has presented great challenges for many of the privately owned educational and academic organizations.

The education sector has been, and I believe still is, one of the main pillars of the Saudi Vision 2030 reform plan, with a special focus on enabling the private sector to play an active role in developing it. Having said that, the family-owned school has been facing difficult times with the impact of the pandemic this year.

Through Vision 2030, the country is committed to increasing private sector participation in the education sector. Several initiatives to unlock the sector for private investment have been launched, with some already implemented. These include the acceptance of 100 percent foreign-owned educational institutions and the use of public education buildings for private schools, hence reducing capital expenditure. Announcements were made last year about financial institutions setting up fixed income instruments via sukuk to build and operate private schools.

Another government initiative to enhance the

development of the education sector in the country is through the privatization of public schools and universities.

Privatization is the transfer of ownership of specified assets or services from the government to the private sector. The transfer of ownership can take several forms including a full/partial assets sale through the Initial Public Offerings (IPOs), management buy-out (MBO), Private Public Partnerships (PPP), Build Operate and Transfer (BOT), concessions or outsourcing.

The National Center for Privatization (NCP) was set up as the engine for privatization in the country. NCP is responsible for developing an ecosystem and executing a framework for the privatization of government assets and services in different sectors, including education.

NCP's mission is to help creating opportunities for local and international investors. With the precautionary measures the ministries of health and education are taking to protect lives of students via distant learning, it is still early for NCP to fully implement its execution plan.

In the present climate I see potential for the consolidation of educational establishments as publicly listed education companies explore the opportunities for the acquisition of distressed family-owned schools. The challenges facing some owners in the private education sector could be long-term opportunities for BMO.

Basil M.K. Al-Ghalayini is the chairman and CEO of BMO Financial Group.

### The Day's FIGURES

#### COVID-19: MOST AFFECTED GCC COUNTRIES



Source: Worldometer

## Briefs

THE BEST OF THE REST

#### Cultural awareness

##### Saudi scouts set sights on world jamboree

The Saudi Arabian Boy Scout Association is set to take part in competitions involving more than 2.5 million scouts from 170 countries around the world.

Starting Oct. 16, the 63rd World Jamboree On the Air (JOTA) and 24th World Jamboree On the Internet (JOTI) will take place over three days.

The association has prepared radio stations at its headquarters in Riyadh and in scout groups across the Kingdom for the events. It also prepared its information center for the world's largest digital scout event, which promotes friendship and global citizenship over the airwaves.

Saleh Al-Harbi, the association's secretary-general, said that the event receives the attention and support of the World Organization of the Scout Movement, and is important for generating goodwill towards the scouting movement.

He added that the event enhances scouting by promoting its principles in accordance with the youth's needs and aspirations in today's world. Al-Harbi said the educational event is open to scouts around the world, and will involve young people taking part in a dynamic program that discusses communications technology and the values of global citizenship. **SPA Riyadh**

#### Esports

##### Saudi Dota 2 League begins in Riyadh

The 2020 Saudi Electronic League started on Friday with prizes of up to SR2 million (\$533,200).

The event has been organized by the Saudi Arabian Federation for Electronics and Intellectual Sports (SAFEIS).

The first tournament, the Saudi Dota 2 League, began with the participation of eight pro e-clubs at the Sarena SAFEIS gaming arena in Riyadh. It runs until Oct. 31. The league will be available to watch on Twitch and YouTube.

SAFEIS Chairman Prince Faisal bin Bandar bin Sultan said: "Saudi youth have always been an important part of esports around the world, and so many of them have managed to win international tournaments. This is a lifestyle that we want to encourage and invest in Saudi Arabia."

He added: "The federation was not established to create a sector from scratch. The main components to find a successful environment for esports were already present in Saudi Arabia among our young men and women who are completely passionate about these games. This is what makes our role more vital, to channel these energies toward building an integral sector and turning esports into a professional practice." **SPA Riyadh**

#### Competition

##### Theater Forum in Dammam to showcase talent

The Culture and Arts Association in Dammam on Thursday began accepting applications to participate in the Theater Forum for "Monodrama and Duodrama," due to be launched on Dec. 2, by posting the application form on its social media sites, setting Nov. 15 as the deadline to apply.

The forum includes a competition in scriptwriting, as well as a number of other diversified programs and activities. It will offer the opportunity for talented applicants to participate in order to further their knowledge of dramatic writing.

Youssef Al-Harbi, director of the Saudi Arabian Society for Culture and Arts (SASCA), said: "Interest in theater is one of the most important features of society, as it reinforces other cultural activities. Looking for young talents in creative writing is a cultural responsibility."

The forum includes practical seminars, lectures, panel discussions, and training workshops supervised by the theater committee at SASCA to increase interest and participation in theatrics. **SPA Dammam**



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Saudi photographer Bader Awwad Al-Balawi participated with a typology series revolving around ballah kushks (boiled chickpea kiosks) based on the coastline of Saudi Arabia's eastern region. Supplied

PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

# Misk photography and digital art exhibition re-imagines GCC identity

17 GCC artists present works of art that represent their complex cultures through photography, film, and digital works

Ruba Obaid Jeddah

**Aiming to represent the complexity of the region's history, peoples, languages, religions, and ideologies, the Misk Arts Institute launched its first photography and digital art exhibition this week under the title "IMPRINT — Re-Imagining Identity" which will explore the concept of identity in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) region.**

The exhibit is at the Prince Faisal Bin Fahad Fine Arts Hall in Riyadh, which opened its doors once again after undergoing restoration.

The exhibition offers a well-designed virtual tour. Virtual visitors are provided with an integrated experience, can smoothly navigate their movement around the hall sections, view all the artworks in detail, and are provided with all the necessary information about the artworks.

The pieces reflect the identity concept, representing the past, present, and future of the land, the cities, and the region's people. They shift the gaze from the politics, oil wealth, and religion attributed to the Gulf, and offer new and personal narratives instead.

Saudi photographer Bader Awwad Al-Balawi participated with a typology series revolving around ballah kushks (boiled chickpea kiosks) based on the coastline of Saudi Arabia's eastern region. They used to sell various kinds of food and drinks but are mainly known for the traditional dish ballah,



## FASTFACTS

- The exhibit is at Prince Faisal Bin Fahad Fine Arts Hall in Riyadh, which opened its doors once again after undergoing a restoration project.
- The exhibition offers a well-designed virtual tour.
- Virtual visitors can smoothly navigate their movement around the hall sections, view all the artworks in detail, and are provided with all the necessary information about the artworks.

which is basically a bowl of boiled chickpeas with several types of spices and pickles.

"I used to pass by those ballah kushks daily; they are located in the same line along the coastline in the eastern province, selling the same dish," Al-Balawi told Arab News.

He decided to present the work as a typology, putting 12 photos together. "It was an interesting experiment for me — I wanted to challenge myself to present something common in an artistic way," Al-Balawi said. "However, I gradually realized how important this project was, especially as these kushks were removed a year later by the municipality, and were replaced by food trucks."

Their removal meant that, without his images, very little trace

that they had ever existed remained.

"It played a very important documentation role and was short-listed for the Art Jameel Prize" he said. "Kushks are part of our identity, as they used to be part of our weekend activities in the past. I love this project because it represents me personally, as a customer, photographer, and an observer of the changes happening in the region."

The Riyadh-based multidisciplinary artist Ailan Ghareem also participated, with two artworks from his polaroid installation "Mount of Mercy," a large series of photographs, hidden letters, and personal objects the artist has collected that were left by pilgrims at Mount Arafat during the annual Hajj in Makkah.

The gathering at Mount Arafat

These huge, beautiful mountains remind me of how we should remain strong and hopeful for this year. They are still standing tall despite the rain, wind, and sandy storms.



is a central ritual of Hajj on the second day of pilgrimage. It is also known as the "Mount of Mercy" and is where the Prophet Muhammad is said to have given his last sermon.

According to Ghareem, hundreds of photographs are left on the ground every Hajj season, or hidden among rocks, some with messages of supplication written on the reverse, some taken during the Hajj, others clearly brought from abroad to be left there.

These ritual remnants are regularly collected by Saudi religious police and burned. In preserving these deposited objects, Ghareem documented this little talked-about ritual and expanded it into a depiction of collective faith.

In addition to the exhibition, Misk

Art Institute also opened the door to amateur artists, and presented 19 works in a dedicated section.

Fay Ibrahim, from Jubail, was one of the selected amateur artists, with two photographs taken of mountains in Najran, in south-western Saudi Arabia.

"This is my second time participating at an exhibition, and it's a wonderful experience to see the photos I captured on my mobile hanging on the wall next to other works by different artists," Ibrahim told Arab News.

Explaining the idea behind her photos, she said: "These huge, beautiful mountains remind me of how we should remain strong and hopeful for this year. They are still standing tall despite the rain, wind, and sandy storms. They remain looking marvelous with all the cracks in between. We should be proud of ourselves remembering that the scars are a part of us and they are what build us, making us who we are."

She added that it was helpful for local artists to have a platform where they could display their work and establish new relationships with other artists from across the region.

The exhibition curator is Bahraini researcher and writer Latifa Al-Khalifa. She explores Middle Eastern and North African culture, with a focus on the Arabian Gulf.

Those interested in visiting the exhibition can start their virtual tour or book their ticket through the link: <https://miskartinstitute.org/exhibitions/imprint>. The exhibition will continue until Jan. 28, 2021.

## ECO CONCERN

# Kingdom goes green with tree campaign

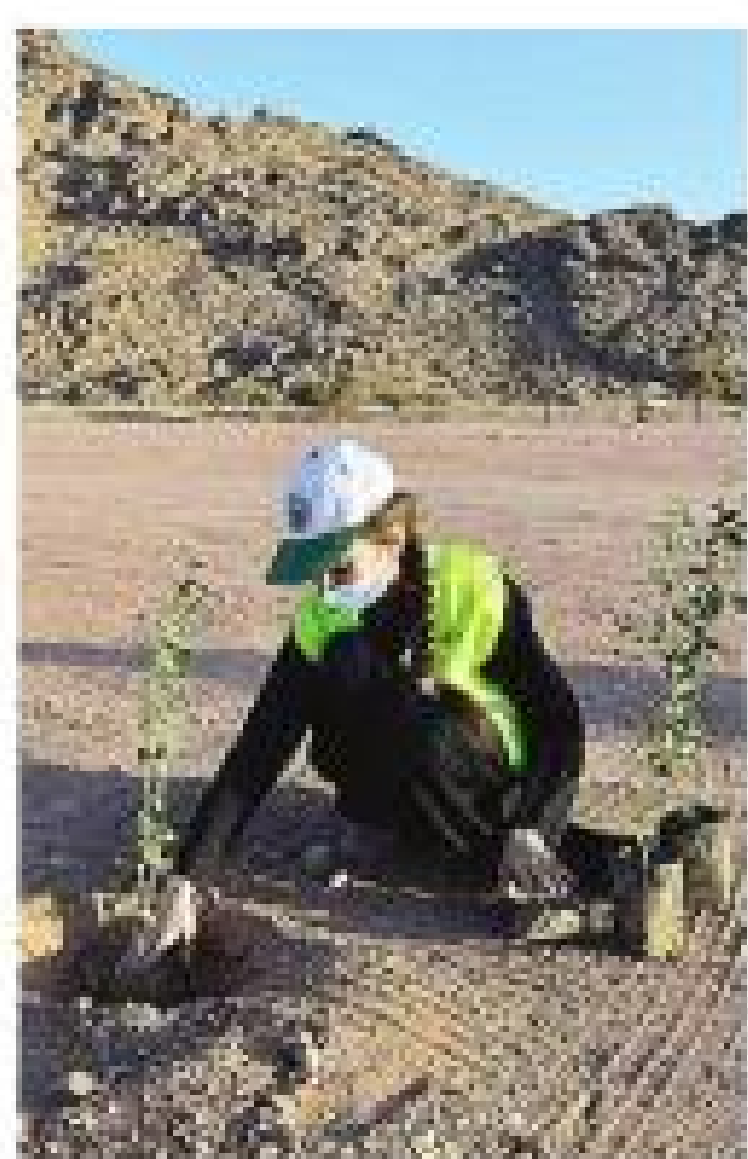
Arab News Riyadh

A new campaign by the Saudi Ministry of Environment, Water and Agriculture is set to plant 10 million trees in 165 sites across the Kingdom, including 37 ministry-owned locations.

The "Let's Make it Green" project will boost the Kingdom's

environmental credentials as part of the Vision 2030 framework, which looks to address some of Saudi Arabia's key long-term ambitions, including battling deforestation and promoting environmentalism.

Several Saudi ministries posted messages of encouragement with tree emojis in response to the campaign, while the initiative was



widely praised on several social media sites, including Twitter.

The campaign will take place between Oct. 10 and April 30. It was launched in cooperation with the National Center for Plant Cover Development and Combating Desertification, and will involve both public and private enterprises.

The ministry said the campaign is part of efforts to develop natural vegetation cover, reduce desertification, recover biodiversity in natural environments, restore damaged plant cover, promote awareness of the environment and improve quality of life for the Kingdom's citizens.

**The 'Let's Make it Green' campaign will plant endangered tree species in areas with high levels of grazing and logging, as well as in urbanized natural sites.**

"Let's Make it Green" will plant endangered tree species in areas with high levels of grazing and logging, as well as in urbanized natural sites. Several of the regions targeted in the campaign have seen a dramatic reduction in tree and plant numbers in recent years.

The Kingdom loses about

120,000 hectares of trees every year through overgrazing and logging. Environmental degradation as a result of the relatively harsh Gulf climate remains a threat, too.

The ministry said it provided the campaign with a significant number of endangered seedling species, which were successfully bred through one of its programs in the Kingdom.

The campaign will also target national parks, promote seed dispersal and reforestation in Najran and Al-Baha, as well as protect mangrove trees in Makkah and Jazan. It will also look to safeguard natural marshes in other sites.



## News Middle East

### NEGLIGENCE

## Aden seaport authorities demand hire fees before dumping fertilizers

Saeed Al-Batati Al-Mukalla

Seaport authorities in Aden continue to store urea fertilizer despite an order to dump the hazardous material, government officials said on Saturday.

In August, a committee assigned by Yemen's attorney general to investigate reports of thousands of tons of ammonium nitrate being stored at the port found that the material was in fact a different fertilizer, urea. It ordered the seaport authority to get rid of it as it could explode if mixed with other materials.

The investigation followed a media report about ammonium nitrate gathering dust at the port that could cause a massive explosion, similar to

the one that ravaged Beirut on Aug. 4.

The story caused uproar and panic in Yemen, prompting lawmakers, government officials and the public into demanding a quick investigation.

When asked why the judiciary order had not been followed, Mohammed Amzrahbeh, chairman of the Yemen Gulf of Aden Ports Corporation, told Arab News that the case was in court, without giving further details.

But, according to two local government officials familiar with knowledge of the case, seaport authorities are demanding that a local trader who imported the materials pay hundreds of thousands of dollars in fees for storing the urea.

"The seaport authorities seek a

financial settlement with the trader," one of the officials, who requested anonymity, told Arab News. "The materials have expired and no longer pose a threat to anyone."

### HIGHLIGHT

The investigation followed a media report about ammonium nitrate gathering dust at the port that could cause a massive explosion, similar to the one that ravaged Beirut on Aug. 4.

The Saudi-led Arab coalition and the internationally recognized government have asked local traders to get permission before importing urea fertilizer, widely

seen as an explosive material that could be used by the Houthis for military purposes.

Last month, a busted arms ring that had supplied the Houthis with weapons from Iran confessed to importing tons of urea fertilizer for the rebels.

There has been fighting between government forces and the Houthis in the northern provinces of Jof and Marib and the western province of Hodeidah for the second consecutive week, leaving dozens dead on both sides.

Yemen's Defense Ministry said on Friday that coalition warplanes targeted a gathering of Houthi fighters in Marib, killing dozens of rebels and destroying vehicles. The rebels had been heading to

battlefields in the province as reinforcement.

Coalition warplanes also hit Houthi military forces and equipment in Marib's Serwah district.

Army troops and allied tribesmen on Friday announced seizing control of new areas in Khab and Shaf district in Jof, days after securing a strategic military base and neighboring areas.

Backed by coalition air support, government troops in Jof have been pushing forward to recapture Hazem, the provincial capital that fell to the Houthis in March.

Fighting subsided in Hodeidah on Saturday, days after government forces foiled Houthi attacks in Hays and Al-Durhimi districts and in contested districts in Hodeida city.

### UNSETTLING

# Israeli-Palestinian tensions escalate ahead of settlement expansion

Israeli campaigning group Peace Now calls on top Israeli ministers to veto the settlements plans

Daoud Kuttub Amman

Tensions are rising in the occupied territories as the date for the approval of thousands of new Jewish settlement units nears.

Peace Now, an Israeli campaigning group, announced that 4,430 settlement units are set to be approved on Oct. 14 by the Israeli Army's Civil Administration's Higher Planning Council.

Peace Now said in a statement: "Instead of taking advantage of the agreements with the Gulf states and promoting peace with the Palestinians, he (Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu) is distorting Israel's priorities and catering to a fringe minority for these settlement units approvals that will continue to harm future prospects for peace."

It called on top Israeli ministers to veto the plans.

"By doing so, Israel will be signaling to the world its bi-partisan support for the end to the concept of a two-state solution and a Palestinian state — the paradigm that until now has largely shielded Israel from formal pressure over its 53-year occupation. The settlement enterprise is not in Israel's national or security interest and is a strategic mistake at the international level," Peace Now concluded.

Khalil Toufikji, director of the Jerusalem-based Arab Studies Society, told Arab News that the new Israeli move sends troubling messages to all sides.

"By looking at the location of the new units, it is a clear message to Palestinians that the Israeli occupiers have no plans towards the two-state solution," Toufikji



A girl is pictured behind a hole in her destroyed family's house in Gaza City. Israel plan to approve more settlements ignite tension among the Palestinians. AFP

said, adding that Israel continues to unilaterally draw borders deep into Palestinian occupied territories.

"The planned new units in Bitar Elite and the Gush Etzion block

are within the greater Jerusalem area. Also, new units are targeting the Jordan Valley and the south Hebron areas, all areas that Israel is targeting for annexation," he said.

### Palestinians detained

Meanwhile, the Palestinian Prisoners Club has announced that Israeli troops arrested 21 Palestinians from different West Bank locations.

Tensions are also on the rise in Israeli prisons as Maher Al-Akhras, who has been detained under administrative orders without charge or trial, has entered his 77th

day of a hunger strike. Protesters in Gaza called for his release. Khaled Batash, a member of the politburo of Islamic Jihad, warned Israel against harming Al-Akhras or any other prisoner.

Prisoners belonging to the Popular Front have threatened to start an open-ended hunger strike on Sunday if Israeli prison authorities fail to address their grievances about conditions.

Instead of taking advantage of the agreements with the Gulf states and promoting peace with the Palestinians, he (PM Netanyahu) is distorting Israel's priorities and catering to a fringe minority for these settlement units' approvals that will continue to harm future prospects for peace.

Peace Now

In Jerusalem, Israeli police prevented thousands of worshippers from accessing Al-Aqsa Mosque. Vigilante settlers were filmed attacking homes and torching Palestinian farms and groves as the olive-picking season begins.

The Israeli Army commander of the West Bank issued 63 separate military orders barring Palestinians from reaching some 3,000 dunums of olives because they are "close" to Jewish settlements. Only a handful of farmers with rare permits were allowed to participate.

### MEETING MAHMOUD

## Ron Lauder meets with Abbas ahead of Palestinian, US elections

Daoud Kuttub Amman

American billionaire Ron Lauder made an unannounced visit to Ramallah to meet with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas.

Lauder, who is the head of the World Jewish Congress, arrived on a Jordanian helicopter and held a long meeting with the Palestinian president before returning to Jordan.

Hussein Sheikh, a senior member of the Fatah Central Committee, confirmed Lauder's visit via Twitter.

A source in the president's office told Arab News that the



World Jewish Congress chief Ronald Lauder met with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas in Ramallah on Saturday. Photo/Supplied

meeting focused on Palestinian-Israeli talks and the upcoming Palestinian elections, set to benefit the Palestine Liberation Organization. The source claimed that Abbas said the Palestinian position is independent and will not be connected to any political axis.

Abbas has offered to attend an international conference early in 2021 and has regularly refused any negotiations based on the peace plan promoted by US President Donald Trump.

Lauder was known to have been close with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Trump.

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## News Middle East



## FAST FACTS

• There have been tensions between Egypt and Turkey since the late Egyptian President Mohammed Morsi was ousted in 2013.

• The strengthening of Egyptian-Russian ties is a source of concern for Ankara, whose relationship with Moscow has deteriorated.

Russian President Vladimir Putin, left, and Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi listen to explanations during their visit to the Black Sea Fleet's guided missile cruiser Moskva in the seaport of Sochi, Russia, AFP

## ON THE MOVE

## Egypt has spent \$38.2bn developing Sinai, report says

Mohammed Abu Zaid Cairo

Coinciding with the 47th anniversary of the Oct. 6 war in 1973, the Egyptian government has issued a report on the most important development projects implemented by the state in Sinai since 2014.

About 600 billion Egyptian pounds (\$38.2 billion) has been spent on development, reconstruction and construction work, according to the report.

The Egyptian Cabinet's media center confirmed that Egypt views development in Sinai as a national security issue, and the state's strategy is based on the implementation of development, construction, service and investment projects there.

The report highlighted examples of the most important projects that have been implemented, including urban

## SPEEDREAD

Egypt 'views development in Sinai as a national security issue.' The state's strategy is based on the implementation of development, construction, service and investment projects there.

development and the provision of adequate housing for Sinai residents. The government has established 46,949 housing units, built 2,290 Bedouin homes and constructed 500 housing units to develop the Ruwaizat area.

The report reviewed the size of the achievements in new cities. It said that the new city of Ismailia includes 52,019 housing units while Salam Misr City, East Port Said includes 4,340 housing units. The number of units in the tourist area is 4,889.

The New Rafah City includes 10,016 residential units and 400 Bedouin homes, in addition to services and facilities.

The report highlighted the establishment of a road network with a total length of 2,400 km and the completion of four tunnels under the Suez Canal to connect Sinai with the cities of the canal.

## TARGETING TURKEY

# Egypt to conduct naval drills with Russia in Black Sea

Analysts see the move as a message to Turkey against its regional interventions

Mohammed Al-Shamasa Cairo

For the first time, Egypt will participate in joint naval drills with Russia in the Black Sea before the end of 2020, the official Russian news agency TASS reported.

To reach the Black Sea, Egypt's vessels will pass through Turkey's Bosphorus Strait. There have been tensions between the two countries since the late Egyptian President Mohammed Morsi was ousted in 2013.

In the Russian city of

Novorossiysk, delegations from the Russian and Egyptian navies "held a three-day conference on preparing and holding the joint exercise Bridge of Friendship —2020," TASS reported.

During the exercises, the navies, with the support of aircraft, will train to defend sea lanes against various threats.

The exercises will include maneuvers to deploy troops and return supplies at sea, and search suspicious ships.

The navies will conduct training in all types of defense at sea, launching missiles and artillery

using shipborne weapons.

TASS reported that the exercises aim to enhance naval cooperation in a way that serves security and stability at sea, and to exchange experience in fighting various threats in busy shipping lanes.

Turkey has said it intends to conduct military drills in the Black Sea on Oct. 13-16. Video footage showed the Turkish military's transfer of Russian S-400 air defense systems to Samsun province on the Black Sea coast.

Mohamed Soliman, a researcher at the Washington-based Middle East Institute for Political Studies,

said this is the first time that Egypt will send military vessels to the Black Sea. He added that this sends a message to Turkey.

This view was echoed by Egyptian military expert Nabil Muharram, who said Cairo wants to send a message that its navy is present to create balance in the region and is ready to defend Egypt's interests. Muharram added that Egypt's navy has had strong relations with Russia's since the 1950s.

Ayman Salama, a member of the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs, said his country's participation in the drills comes at an

important time amid tensions in the Mediterranean due to Turkish efforts to control energy resources.

He added that the strengthening of Egyptian-Russian strategic relations is a source of concern for Ankara, whose relationship with Moscow has deteriorated due to Turkish interventions in Libya and the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict.

Moussa Mostafa Moussa, head of Egypt's Al-Ghad Party and a former presidential candidate, said Russia wants to send a strong message to Ankara against its interference in Kyrgyzstan and the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict.

## ILL-FATED VOYAGE

## Aid group says Libyan militia is holding hostage 60 migrants

AP Cairo

A Libyan armed group is holding hostage at least 60 migrants, including two dozen children, in "appalling" conditions after abducting them over two weeks ago, an aid group said on Saturday.

Masked militiamen abducted the migrants on Sept. 28 from the town of Al-Ajaylat, around 80 km west of the capital, Tripoli, according to Medecins Sans Frontieres. The statement said that the armed group initially took hostage around 350 migrants, mainly from West Africa, but that most of the migrants managed to escape while some others were released.

The aid group said that it had notified the Libyan government's agency for combatting illegal migration two days after the abduction, and later visited the warehouse where the migrants were held.

"We found over 350 women,



Migrants crossing the Sahara Desert into Libya in a truck in Niger. Reuters

children, and men sleeping on the ground in appalling living conditions without access to water, showers, or toilets," said Guillaume Baret, MSF's head of

mission in Libya.

The militia stole valuable items and identification documents from the migrants, before taking them to a warehouse guarded by armed men

in the nearby coastal city of Sabratha, the biggest launching point for the mainly African migrants who make the dangerous voyage across the Mediterranean Sea, the group said.

The Switzerland-based organization, also known as Doctors Without Borders, said that the remaining hostages are being held by the militia at a former military base.

Two Sabratha residents and one migrant said most of the armed men belong to a militia known as Al-Ammu, which the UN Panel of Experts on Libya identified in 2017 as main facilitators of human trafficking. The migrant said the militiamen are likely seeking ransom from families of the held migrants, or to sell them to other traffickers.

Al-Ammu and another militia, called the Brigade 48, are headed by two brothers from the area's large Al-Dahashi family. Both militias are affiliated with the Tripoli-based government.

## WAR ON VIRUS

## Tehran to impose fines for virus breaches as COVID-19 toll soars

AFP, Reuters Tehran

Iran is to start imposing fines for breaches of health regulations in the capital, President Hassan Rouhani announced on Saturday, after daily coronavirus infections hit a record high this week.

Mask wearing has become mandatory in public and violators will be fined, said Rouhani, as the country battles a third wave of coronavirus infections.

Iran has previously held back from using fines to enforce mask wearing in public and other health protocols, but they will now be imposed in the capital Tehran, Rouhani told a televised meeting of the country's coronavirus taskforce.

The police, the Basij paramilitary force and health inspectors will have powers to impose the fines, and offenders will have two weeks to make payment into a Health Ministry account, Rouhani said in a

televised speech during the weekly coronavirus taskforce meeting.

Breaches punishable by a fine include refusal to quarantine while sick and failure to wear a mask in a public space or require a customer to do so.

Fines range from 500,000 rials (\$1.60) for not wearing a mask to a maximum of 10 million (\$32.80) for businesses not observing health protocols.

The fines represent a not insignificant sum for Iranians who have endured a deep recession since Washington reimposed crippling economic sanctions in 2018.

The minimum monthly wage stands at around 18 million rials, worth less than \$60 following a sharp fall in the value of the currency.

Iran's daily death toll from the novel coronavirus hit a record high of 239 on Wednesday. Daily infections reached a new high of 4,392 the following day.





British Prime Minister Boris Johnson will make a statement to parliament on Monday about potential new lockdown restrictions.



**Ardern woos voters** New Zealand's Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern takes pictures with supporters during an election campaign event in Auckland. Recent surveys have pointed to a victory for her Labour Party.

Reuters

STRUGGLE

# WHO highlights Rohingya mental health issues

Past trauma and COVID-19 adding to refugees' problems in Bangladesh

Shehab Sumon Dhaka

**More than 20 percent of Bangladesh's Rohingya refugees are struggling with mental health issues, a grim result of the abuse and trauma suffered in Myanmar, an official from the World Health Organization (WHO) said on Saturday.**

The statistics were shared on World Mental Health Day, which is marked on Oct. 10 every year, and seeks to highlight the plight of nearly a million Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar, the world's largest refugee camp.

According to data from the Ministry of Health and shared by the WHO, there were 14,819 consultations for mental health conditions registered by the district health

department among the Rohingya in 2019.

From January to now the figure has jumped to nearly 20,000.

Most cases were addressed by health care centers at the camps, where Rohingya patients were given counseling and treatment.

"In the aftermath of a crisis, one person in five (22 percent) is estimated to have depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, bipolar disorder or schizophrenia," WHO spokesperson Catalin Bercau told Arab News.

"The psychosocial and social impacts of emergencies may be acute in the short term, but they can also undermine the long-term mental health and psychosocial well-being of the affected populations."

The Rohingya have endured decades of abuse and trauma in Myanmar, beginning in the 1970s when hundreds of thousands

**They took away my two younger brothers who never returned. I can't sleep at night. My memories in Rakhine haunt me. I have no words to console my parents over the irreparable losses of their sons.**

A Rohingya refugee youth carries relief materials at a refugee camp in Ukha. AFP



sought refuge in Bangladesh.

Between 1989 and 1991 an additional 250,000 fled when a military crackdown followed a popular uprising and Burma was renamed Myanmar. In 1992, Bangladesh and Myanmar agreed on a repatriation deal that led to thousands of Rohingya returning to Rakhine state.

The exodus to Bangladesh resumed a few years ago.

"Our houses were burnt down by the military," 42-year-old refugee Mostafa Ahmed told Arab News.

"They took away my two younger brothers who never returned. I can't sleep at night. My memories in Rakhine haunt me. I have no words to console my parents over the irreparable losses of their sons."

MILITARY PARADE

## North Korea shows off giant new ICBMs

AFP Pyongyang

North Korea showed off a gigantic new intercontinental ballistic missile on Saturday that analysts described as the largest of its kind in the world, as the nuclear-armed country defied the coronavirus threat with thousands of maskless troops taking part in a military parade.

The ICBM, carried on a transporter-erector-launcher with no fewer than 11 axes, rolled through Kim Il Sung square as leader Kim Jong Un watched from a rostrum, footage from state broadcaster KCTV showed.

It was the "largest road-mobile liquid-fueled missile anywhere" tweeted Ankit Panda of the Federation of American Scientists.

Sanjay Kumar New Delhi

Days after China issued an "unprecedented" advisory asking Indian media not to cover Taiwan's National Day on Saturday, an official from the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) posted posters in front of the Chinese Embassy in New Delhi congratulating Taipei on the occasion.

"The poster was in reaction to the Chinese guidelines issued to the media. Who is China to dictate to the Indian media?" Tajinder Pal Singh Bagga, a BJP spokesperson, told Arab News.

"If China thinks it can dictate terms to India, then such a befitting reply was needed. India is a democracy and not a dictatorial communist nation like China, and

here people have a voice, and they do what they want to do," he said.

Delhi police removed Bagga's posters soon after they went viral on social media.

However, the police's spokesperson refused to comment on the "routine" move when contacted by Arab News on Saturday.

**People in India have a voice, and they do what they want to do.**

It follows a strongly worded letter by China on Wednesday after several media houses published advertisements to mark Taiwan's National Day on Oct. 10.

"All countries that have diplomatic relations with China should firmly honor their commitment

to the One China policy, which is also the long-standing official position of the Indian government," excerpts from the Chinese Embassy's letter said.

The letter urged that Taiwan not be referred to as a "country" or as the "Republic of China," or its leader as "president," and added: "We hope Indian media can stick to the Indian government's position on the Taiwan question and not violate the One China principle."

Bagga, however, said that China's warning was not directed at the media but India itself.

"The letter to the media does not mean media; it means India. The poster was a kind of protest, not as a member of a party but as an individual who loves India."

# Briefs

THE BEST OF THE REST

**Khabarovsk rally**

## Police detain protesters in Russian city

Police in a far eastern Russian city detained several dozen protesters on Saturday, the first such crackdown since rallies against the arrest of the provincial governor started three months ago.

Khabarovsk Gov. Sergei Furgal was arrested on July 9 on suspicion of involvement in murders and taken to jail in Moscow. Furgal, a former businessman, denied the charges, which his supporters say are a vendetta by his rivals.

Since his arrest thousands of demonstrators have regularly rallied in Khabarovsk, a city of 600,000 near the border with China, with attendance peaking on weekends. **AP**

**Slower pace**

## India's COVID-19 cases approach 7 million

India's confirmed coronavirus cases are nearing 7 million with another 73,272 reported in the past 24 hours.

The Health Ministry on Saturday also reported 926 additional deaths, taking total fatalities to 107,416. The deaths remained below 1,000 for the seventh straight day.

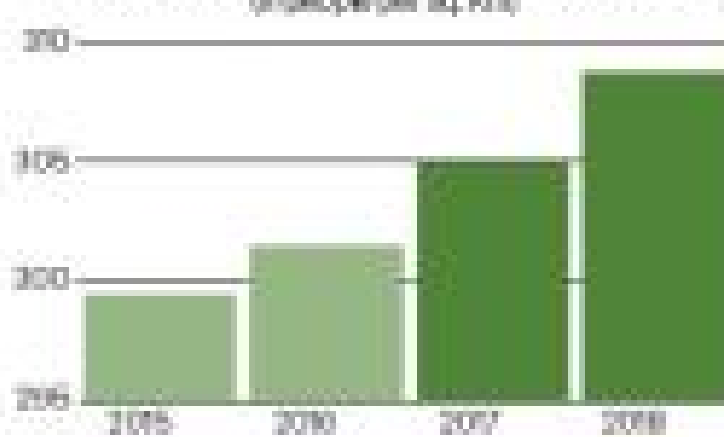
India is seeing a slower pace of coronavirus spread since mid-September, when the daily infections touched a record of 97,894 cases.

The average was more than 70,000 cases daily so far this month, while the recovery rate has exceeded 85 percent.

Health experts have warned that congregations during major festivals later this month and in November have the potential for the virus to spread. **AP**

## The Day's FIGURES

**POPULATION DENSITY OF VIETNAM**  
(In people per sq. km)



Source: Statista

## What We Are Reading Today

FROM AROUND THE WEB & IN PRINT

### War: How Conflict Shaped Us

MARGARET MACMILLAN

War: How Conflict Shaped Us is a historical study of the effects of war on many societal levels.

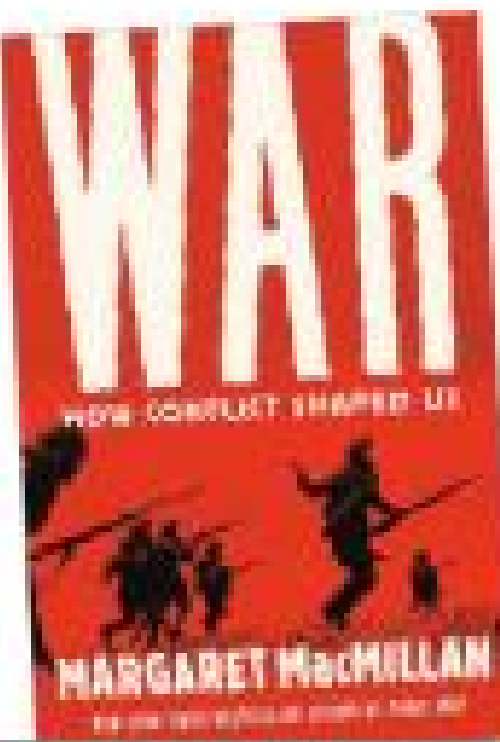
The internationally renowned historian and bestselling author of *Paris 1919*, Margaret MacMillan, contemplates the existence of war. Why it occurs, and what it says about human nature.

"Drawing on lessons from classical history as well as analysis of modern warfare from all parts of the globe, MacMillan reveals the many faces of war — the way it shapes our past, our future, our views of the world, and our very conception of ourselves," said a review in *goodreads.com*. It said that

MacMillan "looks at the ways in which war has shaped human history and how, in turn, changes in political organization, technology, or ideologies have affected how and why we fight."

MacMillan is a Canadian historian and professor at the University of Oxford.

She is the former provost of Trinity College and professor of history at the University of Toronto and previously at Ryerson University. A leading expert on history and international relations, MacMillan is a commentator in the media.



**Philippines security**

## Women planning suicide attack arrested

Philippine forces on Saturday captured a suspected Indonesian would-be suicide bomber who the army believes was involved in a "very imminent" plot to attack a southern town, officials said.

Army troops and police arrested Rezky Fantasia Rullie with two Filipino women, who were suspected to be the wives of Abu Sayyaf militants, in a house in southern Jolo town in Sulu province where they found an explosive vest and bomb components, the military's Western Mindanao Command said.

The military also announced that Rullie's husband Andi Baso, who is wanted in the Philippines and Indonesia for his alleged involvement in bomb attacks, had been killed in an Aug. 29 clash near Sulu's Patikul town. **AP**

**Al-Qaeda terror**

## Malian politician details 'moral isolation'

Malian politician Soumaila Cisse's captors kept hostages constantly on the move in the inhospitable desert, he told French television, describing his six months with Al-Qaeda-linked militants as "near permanent physical and moral isolation."

His interview with TV5 Monde came as Swiss authorities confirmed that another hostage held by the same group was dead.

The militants freed Cisse in the past week along with French hostage Sophie Petronin and Italians Nicola Chiacchio and the Rev. Pierluigi Maccalli days after Mali's government released nearly 200 jailed extremists in an apparent exchange.

Cisse, 70, who was abducted while campaigning in northern Mali for reelection as a parliament member, said his captors moved them by motorcycle, boat, even camel. **AP**



الليل أخفى للويل  
أكنم بن صيفي

YOUR DAILY ARABIC PROVERB  
*Night is the best concealment of woe.*

Aktham Ibn Saifi  
(A pre-Islamic Arab sage and notable)

# Opinion

## Tehran's warmongering is a last, desperate throw of the dice

BARIA ALAMUDDIN



Baria Alamuddin is an award-winning journalist and broadcaster in the Middle East and the UK. She is editor of the Media Services Syndicate and has interviewed numerous heads of state.

**Y**ou don't need to be an international affairs mastermind to realize that President Donald Trump's tweeted announcement about withdrawing all US troops from Afghanistan by Christmas is dictated purely by electoral considerations. Observers warn this will weaken leverage for negotiation while surrendering Afghanistan to the Taliban.

Experts are similarly bemused by the motivations behind America's threat to evacuate its Baghdad embassy and bomb militant bases if Iran-backed paramilitaries aren't reined in. Like Trump's previous threats to withdraw from Syria, is this simply a temper tantrum, or an empty threat, or is there more to it?

In both Iraq and Afghanistan, a US withdrawal would trigger the exodus of other Western troops and diplomats, undermining the abilities of both governments to keep extremists at bay. Iran and the Taliban would celebrate such evacuations as unmitigated victories, incentivizing them to upscale their war of attrition against women and civilization.

Iranian leaders aren't the only ones considering provocations to coincide with US elections, while seeking to exploit the vacuum of America's "lame duck" period before the late-January presidential swearing in. Russia, China and Iran have invested substantially in cyber campaigns to subvert the democratic process. The Middle East's foremost political culture, Benjamin Netanyahu, will also look to exploit the Trump administration's dying moments to seize any morsels of strategic advantage.

Throughout the region Tehran has been discreetly putting assets in place, preparing to

destabilize the situation to its advantage when the moment is right. Instead of preparing for negotiation and compromise, Iran is readying its transnational proxies for war.

Hezbollah has blocked all prospects of creating a technocratic government capable of implementing reforms necessary to rescue Lebanon from financial catastrophe. This refusal to compromise suggests that Hezbollah and Iran have decided that political implosion and armed confrontation are unavoidable, so they are simply playing for time while preparing to exploit the ensuing anarchy.

Iran has meanwhile recruited over 11,000 fighters throughout eastern and southern Syria, along with its use of Yemen's Houthis to undermine GCC-wide security, including daily rocket attacks on Saudi Arabia. In eastern Afghanistan, Iran has intensively recruited Shiite Hazari militias, seeking to dominate the post-US withdrawal phase. Iran has recently been working to establish new paramilitary entities in Venezuela and other parts of Latin America, facilitating its role in the global narcotics trade and opening new fronts for terrorism and targeting the US.

Fulfilling a comparable role in Iraq, Kata'ib Hezbollah (KH) has been vigorously launching missile strikes against US targets, while also overseeing medium-range Iranian missiles at its bases in Syria and Iraq with the capacity to target states throughout the region. When Iran this year unveiled two new medium-range missiles, they were named after KH's founders, Abu Mahdi Al-Muhandis and Qasim Soleimani.

KH has vigorously sought to undermine Prime Minister Mustafa Al-Kadhimi. When in August Kadhimi called for all paramilitary weapons

to be brought under the state's authority, the commander of KH's security division issued a message immediately afterwards threatening America, Israel and the Gulf states that KH would "fight all of you, everywhere."

KH exploits its control of the Hashd Al-Shaabi security directorate to expand its intelligence capacities as a clandestine state within a state. KH controls an extensive network of bases and territories, such as its vast stronghold in Jurf Al-Sakhar. Its dominance of the Syria-Iraq border affords lucrative smuggling opportunities, alongside KH's growing portfolio of economic activities. In recent days Kadhimi has sought to evict KH from Baghdad airport and close down its offices in the capital, setting the stage for a new bout of confrontation.

Recent comments from a senior Iraqi army officer illustrate how the Iraqi state is recognizing that this pandemic of paramilitary requires radical solutions: "The only solution to this crisis, of two states and two armies, is a military solution. First we close Baghdad, issue an ultimatum for Hashd units to either join regular forces or we fight you. It will cause a bloodbath, but better to have two weeks of war than to keep postponing the confrontation." Senior US officials privately confided similar conclusions to me — that the Hashd can be constrained only through military confrontation — "with our help."

Tehran's readiness to countenance force is a symptom of growing weakness: Desperate shortages of finance; the collapse in popular support for these proxy groups; and a perfect storm of political, economic and public health crises. New sanctions against Iran's banking sector may further jolt the regime

toward desperate measures, in the hope that throwing all the cards up in the air in Iraq and Lebanon produces a favorable transformation in circumstances.

Barack Obama repeatedly dissuaded Netanyahu from seeking to militarily eliminate Tehran's nuclear program. Given the commencement of Iran's uranium enrichment activities and its belligerent regional posture, if an incoming Biden administration fails to offer rapid miracle remedies to these strategic threats, Israel may take matters into its own hands — particularly if Lebanon's political outlook further deteriorates.

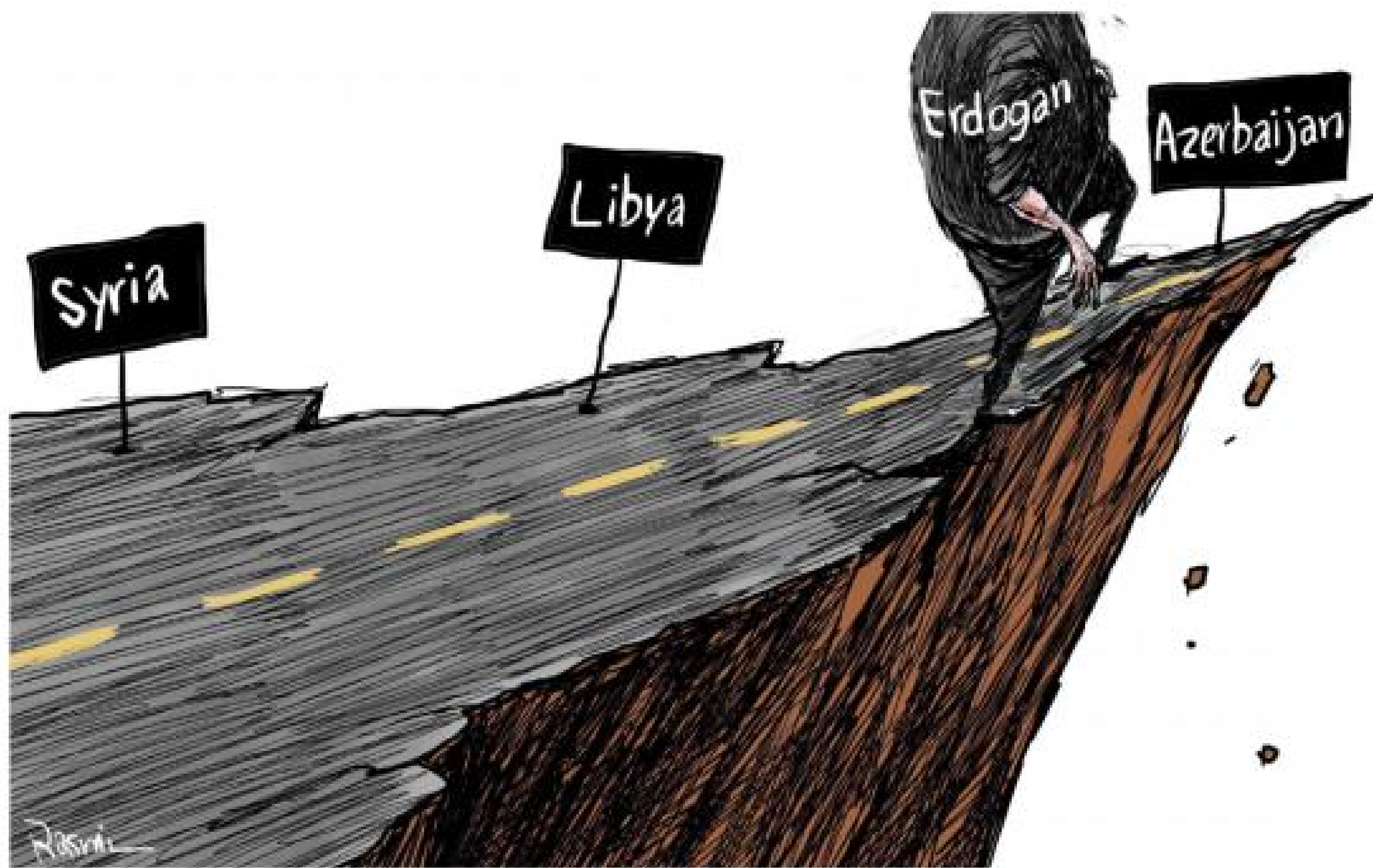
Preventing regionalized conflict requires decisive measures to neutralize this scorched earth strategy that KH and Hezbollah have been preparing for: Intensified efforts toward a technocratic nonsectarian government to rescue Lebanon; offering unlimited support to Kadhimi to cut the Hashd down to size; and renewed conflict-resolution initiatives in Yemen and Syria. Ratcheted-up sanctionary pressures must coerce Tehran to choose between meaningful concessions or being squeezed out of existence.

Iran is losing on all fronts. Its aggressive attempts to regain the initiative are no more than last, desperate throws of the dice. In contrast with Trump's cowardly instincts to cut and run at the worst possible moment, an incoming US administration must work with allies to capitalize on Iran's fundamental weaknesses.

Chronic instability in Syria, Iraq, Yemen and Lebanon has a single common denominator — Iran. The Arab region can know peace only when these fragile states are allowed to control their own sovereignty and destinies.

**Ratcheted-up sanctionary pressures must coerce Tehran to choose between meaningful concessions or being squeezed out of existence**

COURTESY: AHMAD BAHMANI/SHIRAZ AL-JABAR



**Without underestimating the physical harm to both Israelis and Palestinians from five years of bloodshed, the psychological damage is just as enduring**

## 20 years ago, a fatal blow to Middle East peace

YOSSI MEKELBERG



Yossi Mekelberg is professor of international relations at Regent's University London, where he is head of the International Relations and Social Sciences Program. Twitter: @YMekelberg

**I**t would be simplistic to attribute the demise of the Oslo peace process to only one cause, but the centrality of the Second Intifada to this catastrophic outcome can hardly be disputed. This Palestinian uprising began 20 years ago last month, and it is worth reflecting on how the promise of the 1993 Oslo Accords to be the beginning of the end of the protracted conflict between the Israelis and Palestinians was to turn so sour in a matter of seven years.

Twenty years on, both societies are still licking their wounds. Without underestimating the physical harm to both Israelis and Palestinians from five years of bloodshed, the psychological damage is just as enduring. Had the Second Intifada never happened, it is safe to say that the master-inciter against the peace process, Benjamin Netanyahu, would never have been returned to power, let alone remained in power for so long. Hamas would probably not have won the 2006 parliamentary elections in Gaza, and the separation barrier would never have been built.

Ariel Sharon's visit to the Al-Aqsa compound on Sept. 28, 2000, was a deliberate provocation that triggered a seismic explosion that led to the deaths of 4,228 Palestinians and 1,024 Israelis, but the uprising had been in the making for some time. Moreover, it invoked

two diametrically opposed narratives that confirmed the worst stereotyped images that Israelis and Palestinians had of each other, undermining the fragile trust built during the early Oslo years and leaving it in tatters.

For Israelis, the eruption of a second Palestinian uprising was a manifestation of their deepest fears in the form of exploding buses, restaurants and bars, and other indiscriminate atrocities carried out by suicide bombers. This spread terror among Israeli civilians, evoking the most negative image of the Palestinians fostered by decades of conflict. The vast majority of Palestinians were not involved in the uprising, but were on the receiving end of Israel's disproportionate, indiscriminate and brutal response to the suicide bombings, in which more than half of Palestinian casualties were civilians or children. This only exacerbated the negative image of Israel as a ruthless occupier and not a partner for peace. Israel was not only confronting the suicide bombers and those who sent them, but was engaged in a widespread operation of collective punishment — of mass arrests and holding people in custody without trial for years, of house demolitions, and the constant imposition of closures and lockdowns that together with an extensive network of checkpoints made movement under Israeli occupation

almost impossible and liable to have severe consequences.

That breakdown of trust has never been restored and will linger for considerably longer. After all, the Second Intifada didn't happen in a vacuum, but soon after the Camp David peace summit between Israel's Prime Minister Ehud Barak and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat, orchestrated by US President Bill Clinton, failed spectacularly. All the evidence available to us today confirms that Arafat was not behind the outbreak of the Second Intifada, but also that he did nothing to stop it and was instead carried away with his own rhetoric in supporting what would become destructive to the peace process and to his own people. It was also Barak who, in shifting all the blame on Arafat for the collapse of Camp David and for the PLO leader's rejection of what Barak described as the most generous and far-reaching proposals tabled by any Israeli leader, imprinted in the minds of Israelis the simplistic image of a courageous Israeli leader ready to take risks for peace facing a rejectionist Palestinian counterpart who would rather support terrorism. This played into the hands of people such as Sharon, who would by March of the following year become prime minister, and Netanyahu, who rode back to

power on the myth of having no Palestinian peace partner.

Ironically, it was the Second Intifada that was behind Sharon's decision to disengage from the Gaza Strip and evacuate the Jewish settlements, including four in the West Bank. However, this later contributed to another favorite Israeli misperception of the Palestinians, as a result of Hamas taking over Gaza soon after the Israeli evacuation, and of Israel's final withdrawal from Lebanon a number of years earlier — that when Israeli is "generous" and evacuates land (conveniently forgetting that it is occupied land in the first place) its neighbors retaliate with violence against the "vulnerable" Jewish state.

Eventually, the combination of the Second Intifada, the rise of Hamas, the divisions between it and Fatah and the dominance of the right in Israel, led to the marginalization of the peace discourse in both societies, while the horrific violence and the uncompromising positions led to an unholy blend of a sense of victimhood; a blame culture; extreme distrust; seeing the worse in each other; rigidity in approach; and populist authoritarian leaderships. In other words, all the ingredients that have made peace between the two peoples no more than a remote possibility.



Opinion

Boris Johnson’s passage to India

ANDREW HAMMOND

Much attention was lavished on the “quad” meeting last week of the US, Australia, Japan and, perhaps most notably, India. But the increasing integration of New Delhi into Western partnerships, one of the most significant geopolitical developments of recent times, is by no means limited to Asia-Pacific and the Americas.

There has also been a significant recent shift toward India by key European nations, including the UK, as tensions have grown with China, particularly since the COVID-19 outbreak.

Fruitful as the EU-India dialogue could now prove, however, it is perhaps the UK of all European countries that is looking to enhance ties at the fastest clip. London and New Delhi have a unique relationship that dates back to at least the British Empire, and both UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi attach high importance to it — not least because of the million-and-a-half Indian diaspora population in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Britain has at least two reasons to want the relationship with India to be as warm as possible. The first is the cooling of ties between China and the UK, which has been more significant than with many other European countries — in part because of the UK’s historical ties with Hong Kong. The second reason is Brexit, with Johnson wanting UK companies to gain stronger access to the Indian market of about 1.3 billion consumers through a new UK-India trade deal. The strength of the economic relationship is underlined by the fact that the UK is one of the biggest G20



employers and investors in India, which is also one of largest sources of foreign investment in the UK.

There are several elements to the economic relationship that Johnson wants to emphasize in a post-Brexit trade deal. The first is stronger cooperation in defense manufacturing as part of a wider security and defense dialogue. The second is encouraging further international investment, via the City of London, to finance Indian infrastructure. This will build on announcements made during Modi’s UK trip over the sale on the London Stock Exchange of rupee-denominated offshore “masala bonds” to finance investment in infrastructure, including housing and railways.

The third is technology, given the significant investment in Indian telecoms and technology investments by UK-headquartered companies. This is also a priority for Modi, and during his UK visit he helped set up the India-UK Tech Partnership comprising young CEOs from the two countries.

Despite differences between India and the UK on the details of a new post-Brexit trade deal, what is striking is how much economics has come to dominate the relationship. In so doing, some traditional irritants have been sidelined, including human rights.

For the foreseeable future, irritants in UK-Indian relations look likely to continue to be overridden by the growing appetite for greater economic collaboration, as London offsets cooling relations with Beijing with warmer ties with New Delhi.

Andrew Hammond is an Associate at LSE IDEAS at the London School of Economics

Prince Bandar sets record straight on Saudi support for Palestinians

DR. MOHAMMED AL-SULAMI

A few weeks ago, I wrote here about the Palestinian cause and the Arabs, especially in Saudi Arabia, who have supported it since the beginning of the Israeli occupation.

I received some comments on social media accusing me of prejudice against the Palestinian leadership, and suggesting that the article came across as an emotional reaction to recent Palestinian statements critical of Arabian Gulf countries, especially the UAE and Saudi Arabia.

An interview with Prince Bandar bin Sultan, the former Saudi ambassador to Washington and former secretary-general of the Saudi National Security Council, was broadcast in three parts on Al-Arabiya TV news channel this week. It clarified many of the facts that Saudi citizens, especially the younger generation, might not know about Saudi Arabia’s support of Palestine, starting with the Kingdom’s founder, King Abdal Aziz, and continuing until the reign of King Salman.

Prince Bandar also reviewed Saudi Arabia’s position on Palestinian refugees, including the need for them to remain on their land and for camps for the displaced and refugees to be built on Palestinian territory. But Saudi Arabia’s long-held strategic vision, which aims to connect Palestinian citizens to their land even in the most difficult of circumstances, was ignored.

The results of building Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon and Jordan were raging internal civil wars in Lebanon, and Palestinian refugee uprisings that aimed to overthrow the Jordanian state and occupy the country.

Successive Palestinian leaderships went beyond that to support Saddam Hussein in 1990 and congratulate him on Iraq’s occupation of Kuwait. Now, they stand with Turkey and Iran against Arab countries, even though the number of Arabs between the two regimes have killed in seven years exceeds the number of those killed by Israel in seven decades.

The other subject that occupied a significant amount of time during the interview was the Saudi position on the reconciliation of Palestinian factions. Prince Bandar discussed the work of the Kingdom’s negotiation team, led by Prince Muqrin, to bridge the gap between the Palestinian Authority delegation, led by Mahmoud Abbas, and the Hamas delegation, led by Khaled Meshaal.



These negotiations took place at the royal palace in Makkah, just meters from the Grand Mosque, and continued for nearly two days. A formula was agreed to resolve the disagreements between the delegations, which was signed in the presence of King Abdullah. The two delegations then swore to God before the Holy Kaaba to adhere to the terms of the agreement.

However, the Palestinian sides returned to their old ways and broke the deal and the covenant after only a few weeks. Prince Bandar said that the Palestinians would ask Saudi Arabia for financial assistance and advice, and when the Kingdom agreed to provide both, the Palestinians would take the money and go against the advice.

Not only did the prince explain the facts and chain of events in a calm and composed manner, and in coherent language full of respect and tact, he also set up a website, and associated social media accounts, to provide access to important documents that support the information he presented in the interview. This is an important development in efforts to communicate with the audience and learn the reactions of followers.

The conclusion that everyone who watched the three parts of the interview with Prince Bandar will have reached is that the Palestinian cause has been plagued by Palestinian leaders who failed to invest in successive opportunities to build their independent state. Instead, they sought the wrong choices at home and abroad, and failed to learn from history and the mistakes that have been repeated since 1948.

The facts presented in the interview emphasized the honorable stance of Saudi Arabia on the Palestinian cause, despite the jabs and disappointments from the Palestinian leaderships, and sections of the Palestinian people, over those decades.

It can also be concluded from the interview that Saudi Arabia will continue to support the Palestinian cause because it is convinced that it is a just cause, even though its advocates have been failures. This Saudi support is for Palestine and its people, not the warring leaderships whose actions have allowed the Israeli occupation to endure.

In conclusion, I would repeat my previous call for a younger Palestinian leadership that cares more about their land and people than their own personal interests.

Dr. Mohammed Al-Sulami is head of the International Institute for Iranian Studies (Hoasani).  
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How Palestinian leaders squandered Saudi support for their cause

DR. HAMDAN AL-SHEHRI

Prince Bandar bin Sultan, a former Saudi ambassador to Washington and former secretary-general of the Saudi National Security Council, clarified the history of the Palestinian cause during his interview with the Al-Arabiya TV news channel last week. He set the record straight and showed clearly that while the Palestinian cause is just, its leaders are failures.

His political analysis and historical account of the Palestinian position was aimed first at Saudi citizens, in order that they understand their country’s political positions taken and sacrifices made for the sake of the Palestinian cause over many decades. It also aimed to correct the course of the Palestinian leadership, which recently has been indecisive. As a result, they have lost many friends and allies, with only some wicked and opportunist parties remaining.

Prince Bandar pointed to a number of accumulated errors made by the Palestinian leadership throughout their history that did not benefit their cause. Saudi Arabia presented many initiatives in an effort to convince US administrations under Presidents Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan to recognize the Palestinian Authority and deal with it diplomatically.

Prince Bandar detailed the mentality of the Palestinian leadership that we are dealing with today, saying: “Whenever they asked for advice we would stand by them, and we justified their mistakes to the world, even though we knew they were wrong.”

He also revealed a more recent development that is dangerous for the Palestinian cause: Palestinian leaders have renounced their relationship with Arab brothers who have provided them with support and assistance for 70 years. They have chosen new allies without taking into consideration those allies’ goals and expansion projects in the region.



The Palestinian leadership has joined forces with parties that are the most harmful to their cause, most notably Iran and Turkey. Iran uses the Palestinian cause, and the repercussions of its interventions can be seen in Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and Yemen. As for Turkey, and its dreams for the return of the Ottoman caliphate, its actions can be seen in Iraq, Syria, Qatar, Libya, Cyprus and the eastern Mediterranean.

The accusation of treason made against Gulf leaders by the Palestinian leadership is nothing new, but it escalated last month after Bahrain and the UAE signed an agreement to normalize relations with Israel, even though there are existing agreements between Israel and Egypt, Jordan and the Palestinians themselves. The prince noted that Lebanon has also sought to demarcate its borders with Israel as part of a new peace agreement.

However, the impertinence shown to the Gulf states has reached a new high. “The lowly and impudent talk,” is how Prince Bandar described the language the Palestinian leadership used when reacting to Bahrain and the UAE signing the peace agreement with Israel.

It also upset Iran and Qatar, and consequently there has been a propaganda war waged against Bahrain and the UAE. Iranian news channels and the Qatari Al-Jazeera took it upon themselves to twist and blur the truth and falsify facts, even though everyone knows that Bahrain and the UAE support Palestinian rights — primarily, the two-state solution from the 1994 Oslo Accords, with East Jerusalem as the capital.

The failure of the Palestinian Authority to achieve a political process that helps and benefits the Palestinian people in any way led the authority to choose to avoid finding a solution when the recent peace agreement with Israel was signed. Instead, they turned to parties that oppose Arab states and threaten their security, such as Turkey. It is a step that underscores their real failure.

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If you look at my experience and what I've done, it's been about building businesses and making investments. It's not just about harvesting money.

**Sabah Al-Binali**  
Head of OurCrowd



# Interview

**SABAH AL-BINALI**  
HEAD OF OURCROWD

## The investment logic of the Israel-UAE entente

Sabah Al-Binali on how a Dubai family business hooked up with OurCrowd, a \$1.5 billion-dollar Israeli firm

**Frank Kane**

Illustration by Luis Grafena

**S**abah Al-Binali has a reputation in the Arab world as a straight-talking deal-doer, with a long record of high-profile transactions in the UAE and Saudi Arabia on his CV. But his latest venture could be just about the most significant of the lot.

Al-Binali, a native of Abu Dhabi but with a solid family lineage in Saudi Arabia, was named head of Gulf region business for OurCrowd, a \$1.5 billion Israeli venture capital firm, which has linked up with Al Naboodah, one of the best-known family business names in the region.

"If you look at my experience and what I've done in life, it's been about building businesses and making investments — creating value. It's not just been about harvesting money," he told Arab News.

The OurCrowd-Al Naboodah link-up could not have been possible just a few short weeks ago. It is one of the first fruits of the normalization of relations between the UAE and Israel under the Abraham Accord, and the biggest so far in the financial sector.

An investment fund has been set up under the deal, initially with \$100 million of capital injected by Al Naboodah and some other Gulf entrepreneurs. Al Naboodah's business development unit, Phoenix Capital, will seek to create a two-way street in investment business between Israel and the UAE, and with OurCrowd's 220 portfolio companies around the world.

"I think it says something that one of the first firms Al Naboodah looked to was OurCrowd. It's a testament that the language of business is global. Both countries have been dealing with the world before — it's not as if this is the first time that a market has opened from the UAE to the rest of the world.

"The entrepreneurial and business mentality is strong in both countries and once the political normalization happened, you saw how fast things can happen, because both sides are very experienced at striking cross-border deals," Al-Binali said.

He believes there are many opportunities for mutually profitable investment relations between the Gulf and Israel. "On all facets of investment, on business development, on research and development, on innovation and on trade, these opportunities exist both in Israel and the UAE. Both countries can be both the origin and destination of the investment," he added. The eventual size of the fund could reach "multiples" of the initial \$100 million, he said.

There are some fundamental synergies between the UAE and Israel that make the connection compelling. "The UAE and GCC governments have created great infrastructure for foreign firms to expand into the region. The Israeli government created a 'startup

nation' with a leading edge in global technology. It is a natural match," he added.

He is only a few days into the job, which was agreed within a month of the Israeli-UAE entente, and understandably there is much detailed work to do on where investment funds are directed. But already there are three main channels of focus.

One is into OurCrowd's big international portfolio. "OurCrowd is a global platform — 40 percent of its investments are outside of Israel, in the US, Australia and Singapore. One of the largest recent unicorns was in Singapore," he said.

Then there is business expansion by OurCrowd's current and future portfolio companies. "These are companies that want to expand operationally into the UAE, Bahrain and other countries if and when they normalize.

"It makes a lot of sense — there is no corporate income tax here in the UAE, while there is lots of tax in Israel. Our work and residence laws are very welcoming and open. We're a hospitable nation that has experienced welcoming people from all over the world for decades. So that's an easy one," Al-Binali said.

"The third one is to back

pointed out, it is not just about weapons of war.

"Cyber technology doesn't have to be part of the defense sector. It can be used by the financial sector or the telecoms companies. We're not necessarily talking about the sale of weapons or arms, we're talking about technology", he said.

Drone technology is another example of multiple applications. "It can be used in terms of national security, but it can also

be used for the maintenance of pipelines and geological surveying. There are lots of uses of drones that go beyond the military.

"Small drones can give civil defense an instant view of what's going on in a large fire in a building. These technologies can be used in the military but can also be adapted to the civilian sector," he said.

OurCrowd was founded by

### BIO

#### Born

• Abu Dhabi 1970

#### Education

• Graduate Princeton University, New Jersey  
• Doctorate Columbia University, New York

#### Career

• Head of treasury, Union National Bank  
• Managing director, Saudi Swiss Securities  
• Chairman, Zawya  
• Board director, Credit Suisse Saudi Arabia  
• CEO, Saffar Capital  
• Board director, Al Awaal International Securities  
• Vice chairman, Gulf Finance  
• Chief investment officer, Shuaa Capital  
• Vice chairman, The National Investor  
• Chairman and CEO, Universal Strategy  
• Head of Gulf region, OurCrowd.

American-Israeli entrepreneur Jonathan Medved seven years ago, with a distinct technology edge. It lists Virgin Hyperloop One, the fast-transit technology being developed in the US, but it also has big plans in the Middle East, with one of its portfolio companies boasting an interest valued at \$3.8 million.

Al Naboodah is one of the oldest family businesses in the UAE, with the traditional range of business interests in construction, real estate, logistics and transport. "In the investment world and the business world, Al Naboodah is very well known. Anybody wanting to know who to do business with in Dubai or the UAE would have put Al Naboodah on their list. They have deep contacts across the world," Al-Binali said.

How does Israeli business culture compare and contrast with that of the UAE?

"It's similar in that it's built on relationships and trust, and person-to-person contact — backed by legal paperwork of course — but you have that same initial contact culture. I call it Middle East-ism. In terms of communications style, I'd compare Israelis with Russians, who I've experienced before. The language is much more direct.

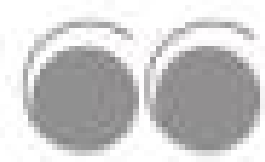
"But the Israelis understand us because they've dealt with a lot of other countries that have the same culture, and I understand the Israelis' communications style. It's similar to Russians, and quite similar to New Yorkers," he said.

Al Naboodah also has an office in Riyadh and has done a lot of business in Saudi Arabia, and while Al-Binali believes it is too early to talk about a rapprochement between the Kingdom and Israel, he is sure there is plenty of business opportunity there too.

"We cannot talk in concrete terms until Saudi Arabia decides whether or if it wants to normalize. But I can say we'd see the same speed of business building that we've seen here, because the Saudis have the same characteristics.

"Saudi government institutions are worldly, they're used to dealing with companies from around the world. Saudi business families are also very global. The same elements that make me see the first initial steps to success in the UAE-Israel partnership exist in Saudi too — except that the Kingdom has a much larger economy.

"If and when relations are normalized, from a business perspective, I can see tremendous value creation in Saudi and Israel, but also for the UAE and Bahrain. The more the GCC is seen as a big common market, the more interest there will be," he said. "Some of my business friends in New York are telling me they will deploy into anything between Israel and the UAE. They see this as a virgin business route that can pay huge dividends," he added.



**The same elements that make me see the first steps to success in the UAE-Israel partnership exist in Saudi, too.**

startups and entrepreneurs in the UAE, Bahrain and other places where things are normalized. You can see we're looking at all opportunities and I'm sure there will be many of them," he added.

Al-Binali reeled off the potential sectors for the new fund. He sees technology as an enabler in all sorts of areas: Medical, agriculture, national security including cyber, and financial technology. "Fintech in particular, because Israel has technology and the UAE is a financial hub," he explained.

As an example of business "going the other way," he cited DP World's recent deal with Bank Leumi to develop port logistics in the country, but there are many other potential areas too.

In hospitality and tourism, he sees a big potential market in Western Christian travelers who want to undertake a Middle East tour through Jerusalem and Dubai, for example.

The defense business is complicated by the international laws and treaties covering the trade in arms, but, as Al-Binali





Business News

A guest checks in at The Pierre in New York City, part of a new local and last-minute clientele keeping the lights on at the city's most luxurious hotels now that the coronavirus has chased off the international jet set. AFP



HOSPITALITY

Bereft of jet set, NY hotels welcome last-minute locals

Nearby residents are booking luxury 'staycations' as downturn takes a bite out of Big Apple profits

AFP New York

John Farrell and his wife booked a \$1,000 room in the morning and were in New York hours later for their one-night stay.

The couple is part of a new local and last-minute clientele keeping the lights on at the city's most luxurious hotels now that the coronavirus has chased off the international jet set.

The yellow taxis and limousines that used to pile in front of swanky hotel The Pierre are gone. So are the crowds of foreigners mingling in the lobby. The Central Park hotel once hosted galas and welcomed celebrities — everyone from Audrey Hepburn and Elizabeth Taylor to, more recently, Lady Gaga.

But with the coronavirus pandemic in full swing it is a shadow of its former self. Following six months of closure and the travel industry's near collapse due to COVID-19, it reopened

in mid-September to smaller crowds and fewer members of the glitterati.

"The hotel, it's kind of like the streets; it's lacking the hustle and bustle and the presence of people," said Farrell, a 38-year-old construction entrepreneur who drove two hours from the suburbs to get there.

Usually this time of year the city's hotels are packed, with an average price of \$300 per night.

The busy season starts with the US Open and UN General Assembly, said The Pierre's general manager Francois-Olivier Luigi.

Then comes "every convention you can possibly have, fundraising galas, the fall season for the weddings, and then its Thanksgiving all the way to Christmas and New Year's Eve," he said.

The Pierre, which was taken over by India's Taj Hotels in 2005, is normally "non-stop," Luigi said. Apart from its 189 rooms, it also holds 80 apartments owned by wealthy individuals.

In addition to the missing foreign

FASTFACT

700

Despite help from the federal government, including small business loans, some 200 out of New York's 700 hotels are closed.

tourists, who represented nearly a quarter of its pre-pandemic visitors, Americans are also gone, deterred by New York state's strict coronavirus measures.

Since June, any visitor coming from US states where the COVID test positivity rate exceeds 10 percent — about 30 states currently — are required to isolate for 14 days.

Instead of tourists from Europe and California, nearby residents are booking luxury "staycations" — arriving by car for short stays of 24 or 48 hours, often while visiting relatives nearby, Luigi said.

Even with rigorous distancing and disinfection protocols in place, the hotel's occupancy has been capped at 25 percent, with more than half of its 400 workers unemployed, Luigi said. But he sees no reason to throw in the towel any time soon: "The Pierre has been around for 90 years and it will be around for another 90," he said.

Not all hotels have been so lucky.

Despite help from the federal government, including small business loans, some 200 out of New York's 700 hotels are closed. About 140 are operating as living quarters for first responders, infected COVID patients who cannot isolate at home and the homeless, said Vijay Dandapani, president and CEO of the Hotel Association of New York City, which represents some 300 hotels.

Hotels still welcoming "real" visitors are only 10 percent booked on average, he said, and some 25,000 workers in the sector are unemployed.

European hotels are "enjoying

some levels of return of travel, whereas we have nothing," he said.

The tourism downturn has been brutal in the Big Apple, where hotels have sprouted like mushrooms in recent years, not only in Manhattan but also in areas such as Brooklyn and Queens.

For years tourism has seemed to have the Midas touch, luring investors into the sector: In 2018 New York notched a record-breaking 65 million tourist visits. One year later, the tourism industry generated \$3.1 billion in taxes, Dandapani said.

The boom meant the creation of so many hotel rooms over the past 10 years that the "market was already showing some sign of slowing," said Ramya Murali, a hotel industry analyst at Deloitte.

"New York was the first market to go into very significant travel restriction," she said, which has only been compounded by the fact that authorities are "on the conservative end of reopening."

WEEKLY ENERGY RECAP

Strikes and storms

Faisal Faeq

Crude oil prices recovered to above the \$40 barrier for both benchmarks after sharp falls a week earlier. Brent crude advanced to \$42.85 per barrel while WTI gained to \$40.60 per barrel.

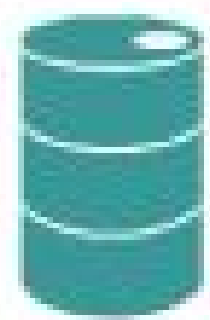
It represented a substantial uplift in an otherwise tight trading range environment.

The Brent/WTI price spread rose to \$2.25 per barrel, which means that both benchmarks are moving in parallel momentum.

Hurricane Delta led to a huge outage of about 90 percent of production (or about 5 million barrels per day of medium sour crude oil) from the US Gulf of Mexico. This was the main contributor to the rise in prices over the week.

Although latest data from the EIA showed that US crude oil production hit a nine-week high of 11 million barrels per day (bpd), that may not have yet reflected the shutdown of offshore oil platforms. This type of crude oil is mostly used for middle distillate refined

Hurricane Delta led to an outage of about 90 percent of production, the main contributor to price rises.



petroleum products such as diesel and Jet kerosene. As long as travel by road and air remains impacted by the coronavirus, refining margins for such products also remain under pressure.

The next test will come as refineries prepare to process crude for heating fuel as the market awaits signs of whether a severe or mild winter is coming.

Though the global oil market in general and the US oil market in particular have already factored in such output shutdowns and reduced refinery runs, the bigger worry is the growing uncertainty around the second wave of the coronavirus that has forced some countries to consider reverting to either full or partial lockdowns.

The likely fallout for air travel, which is already in a parlous state and accounts for almost 8 percent of global oil demand, is a concern.

An oil industry strike in Norway also helped to buoy prices, however it is unlikely to figure next week after a pay deal was reached.

Faisal Faeq is an energy and oil marketing adviser. He was formerly with OPEC and Saudi Aramco. Twitter: @faisalfaeq

COURTS

Judge will not force App Store to let Fortnite return

AFP San Francisco

A federal judge has denied the latest bid by Epic Games to force Fortnite back into the App Store while its lawsuit against Apple heads for trial next year.

The two firms are fighting over whether Apple's tight control of the App Store, and its 30 percent cut of revenue, counts as monopolistic behavior.

US District Court Judge Yvonne Gonzalez Rogers, who had previously rejected a similar request by Epic, rejected the battle royale game maker's motion for an injunction ordering Apple to return Fortnite to the App Store immediately.

"Epic Games has never adequately explained its rush, other than its disdain for the

situation," Rogers said in a ruling denying an injunction ahead of trial. "The current predicament is of its own making."

Apple pulled Fortnite

from its online mobile apps marketplace on Aug. 13 after Epic released an update that dodges revenue sharing with the iPhone maker. In her latest ruling,

the judge again compared any loss of business suffered by Epic due to Fortnite's eviction by Apple to a "self-inflicted wound."

Due to the legal row, Fortnite fans using iPhones or other Apple devices no longer have access to the latest game updates, including the new season released at the end of August.

Rogers expressed empathy for Fortnite lovers unable to get the game on Apple mobile devices.

"This is especially so during these continued difficult times that is the COVID-19 pandemic era, where gaming and virtual worlds are both social and safe," Rogers said in the ruling.

"However, there is significant



Fortnite has been pulled from Apple's online mobile apps store. Supplied

FASTFACT

Fortnite is an online video game developed in 2017.

public interest in requiring parties to adhere to their contractual agreements or in resolving business disputes through the normal course."

Rogers pointed out that Epic could get Fortnite back in the App Store by using Apple's payment system for transactions.

Apple does not allow users of its popular devices to download apps from anywhere but its App Store, and developers have to use Apple's payment system, which takes its cut. Epic is accusing Apple of being "a monopolist" due to its tight grip on the App Store.

The judge said at a recent hearing that she did not expect a trial over the dispute to start until July of next year, at the earliest, given her calendar.

The legal battle comes as Apple puts priority on selling digital content and subscription services to the one billion-plus people around the world using devices powered by its iOS mobile operating software.

Major app developers including Epic and streaming music giant Spotify recently formed a coalition to press for new terms with the major online marketplaces operated by Apple and Google.

Google runs a Play Store for apps tailored for devices powered by its Android software and also takes a commission, but people are free to get apps from other online venues.



## Business News



Up to 30 million people, including Syrian refugees, above, are at risk of starvation from war and the pandemic, according to WFP chief David Beasley, below. AFP

FOOD

# WFP chief seeks millions from donors for food

David Beasley's plea comes as UN agency awarded Nobel Peace Prize on Friday

AP United Nations

Even before the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), World Food Programme (WFP) chief David Beasley was warning the world would face its worst humanitarian crisis in 2020 since the Second World War.

That was due to wars in Syria, Yemen and elsewhere, locust swarms in Africa, frequent natural disasters, and economic crises including in Lebanon, Congo, Sudan and Ethiopia. Then came COVID-19 which quickly became a pandemic, escalating the need for food — and UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres says it is still not under control.

Beasley, who caught COVID-19 in April, has spent the months since he recovered reaching out to world leaders and visiting stricken countries with a new warning:

Millions of people are closer to starvation because of the deadly combination of conflict, climate change and the pandemic.

He said the WFP and its partners were going all out to reach as many as 138 million people this year, "the biggest scale-up in our history."

Beasley urged donors, including governments and institutions, to help, and he made a special



appeal to the more than 2,000 billionaires in the world, with a combined net worth of \$8 trillion, to open their bank accounts.

The awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize on Friday to the UN food agency was not just a tribute to its work in this COVID-ravaged year, but as the Nobel committee made clear it was also a plea for unity and multi-lateral cooperation to tackle global challenges as the WFP has done.

Beasley called the award "a humbling, moving recognition of the work of WFP staff who lay their lives on the line every day to bring

food and assistance for close to 100 million hungry children, women and men across the world — people whose lives are often brutally torn apart by instability, insecurity and conflict."

He also paid tribute to the agency's government, organizations and private sector partners.

"Every one of the 690 million

## FASTFACT

# 30m

Some 30 million people rely solely on the WFP for food to survive.

hungry people in the world today has the right to live peacefully and without hunger," Beasley said.

While the food crisis is mainly the result of conflict, Beasley said in April that he raised the prospect of a hunger pandemic because of the economic impact of COVID-19.

He told the UN Security Council

last month that 30 million people who rely solely on the WFP for food would die without help, and that the WFP needed \$4.9 billion to feed them for a year.

"We're doing just about all we can do to stop the dam from bursting," Beasley said. "But, without the resources we need, a wave of hunger and famine still threatens to sweep across the globe. It will overwhelm nations ... already weakened by years of conflict and instability."

The WFP's logistics operation is key to delivering food to tens of millions, and lockdowns and closed borders have created immense difficulties for the agency.

Beasley has stressed containment measures needed to be balanced with keeping supply chains open, having expressed concern over shutdowns impeding food and medical deliveries.

"There is a grave danger that many more people will die from the broader economic and social consequences of COVID-19 than from the virus itself, especially in Africa," he previously stated.

## AGRICULTURE

# Argentina gives OK to drought-resistant GMO wheat

Reuters Buenos Aires

Argentina has become the first country in the world to approve the use of drought-resistant genetically modified (GMO) wheat, prompting fierce criticism by the country's massive export agriculture industry.

Bioceres' HB4 wheat is resistant to drought and tolerates the herbicide glufosinate sodium, a combination the company says can help boost yields on dry years. But the government said the product cannot be sold before Brazil, Argentina's biggest wheat buyer, approves its importation.

Last year, 45 percent of the 11.3 million tons of wheat exported by Argentina went to neighboring Brazil, which has not commented on the prospects of it approving the purchase of HB4 wheat.

Many farm groups in Argentina objected to the government's approval of the product, over



Argentina is the world's fourth largest exporter of wheat, but farmers fear the approval of GMO crops could hamper sales and tarnish its reputation. AFP

## FASTFACT

# 45%

Last year, 45 percent of the 11.3 million tons of wheat exported by Argentina went to neighboring Brazil.

concerns it could prove a stigma for exporters.

"Not only are wheat and flour exports put at risk, but also pellets, starch, gluten, baked goods, noodles and all the products (that require additional processing)," said a statement signed by regional farmers' associations, traders, and the influential Chamber of Cereal Exporters (CEC).

No other countries have yet approved the importation of GMO

wheat, leaving Argentine farmers with little incentive to plant it. Environmental groups have warned that not enough is yet known about GMO crops, treated with weed killers like glufosinate sodium, for them to be safely consumed by humans.

A green light from Brazil would not trigger Bioceres to launch the new technology before getting approval from other markets, CEO Federico Trucco told Reuters.

Argentine farming associations warned national and international companies were already requesting assurances the wheat they purchase does not have genetic modifications.

"The damage that would occur to the Argentine wheat market would be irreparable and irreversible," the group said.

The HB4 wheat variety was developed by Trifall Genetics, a joint venture between Bioceres and France's Flormond Desprez.

## BizBriefs

THE BEST OF THE REST

### E-commerce

## Rubio: US should delay IPO of China's Ant Group

Senator Marco Rubio, who has successfully urged the Trump administration to pursue investigations of Chinese companies, called on Friday for the US to consider options to delay an initial public offering of China's Ant Group, the fintech arm of e-commerce giant Alibaba.

"It's outrageous that Wall Street is rewarding the Chinese Communist Party's blatant crackdown on Hong Kong's freedom and autonomy by orchestrating Ant Group's IPO on the Hong Kong and Shanghai stock exchanges," Rubio, a Republican, said in a statement.

"The Administration should take a serious look at the options ... to delay Ant Group's IPO." The Hong Kong leg of the IPO, part of a dual listing with Shanghai, is being sponsored by China International Capital Corp, Citigroup, JPMorgan and Morgan Stanley. **Reuters**

### M&A

## Fenway Sports to go public through RedBall merger

Boston Red Sox owner John Henry is in talks with RedBall Acquisition Corp. to take his famed sports holding company Fenway Sports Group (FSG) public, a source familiar with the matter told Reuters.

The deal being discussed would merge FSG with RedBall Acquisition Corp. and will value the owner of Liverpool Football Club at around \$8 billion including debt, the source said, asking not to be identified.

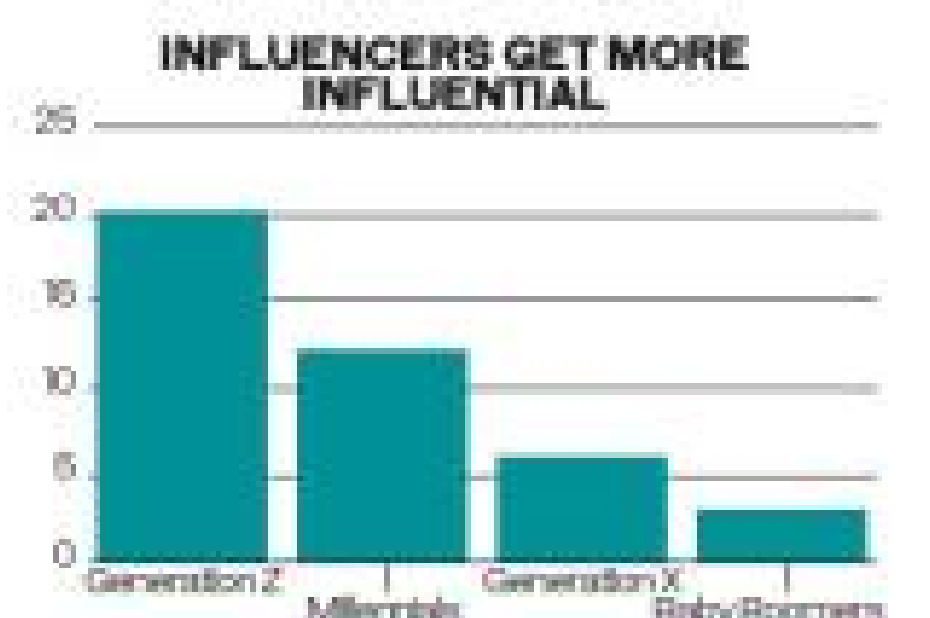
The talks were reported earlier by the Wall Street Journal, which said the discussions are in the early stage and could still fall apart.

The paper added RedBall, which raised \$575 million in August to buy businesses in sports and sports-related media and data analytics, plans to raise an additional \$1 billion to buy a stake in FSG that will not exceed 25 percent. **Reuters**

## Chart of THE DAY

Retailers should become more reliant on influencers as younger generations gravitate towards short-form video content.

Source: Bank of America Merrill Lynch



## Gadget Watch

TECH TIPS FOR THE SHORT OF TIME



## Kokoon ANC sleep headphones

These noise-cancelling headphones are so soft, you won't even notice you are wearing them, which is sort of the point: They will help you nod off to sleep with podcasts and soundscapes that can be tailored to whatever works for you. From about \$500.

### Economy

## Irish budget deficit set to hit 6% of GDP this year

Ireland's budget deficit is set to hit 6.1 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) this year, Finance Minister Paschal Donohoe said on Friday, a narrower than forecast shortfall likely to give him room for more generous measures in Tuesday's budget.

The government will look to support those hit hardest by coronavirus disease (COVID-19) restrictions in the budget for 2021, helped by state tax revenues holding up better than expected, and Ireland's big export sector limiting damage.

The finance ministry estimated early in the pandemic that a big fall in tax receipts and a huge increase in spending could lead to a deficit of €23-30 billion (\$27.2-35.4 billion) or up to 10 percent of GDP.

Donohoe said the deficit would reach €21 billion, provided current restrictions were not tightened. **Reuters**

### Aviation

## Lessors oppose Malaysia Airlines restructuring

A group of leasing companies has rejected a restructuring plan put forward by Malaysia Airlines, bringing the state carrier closer to a showdown over its future.

Lessors claiming to represent 70 percent of the airplanes and engines leased to the airline have called the plan "inappropriate and fatally flawed" and pledged to challenge it, according to a letter from a London law firm seen by Reuters.

However, some leasing companies have endorsed the plan, an anonymous source said.

Law firm Clifford Chance, which sent the letter on behalf of the lessors, did not respond to a request for comment.

In an email to Reuters, Malaysia Aviation Group, the airline's parent company, said on Saturday it was "pleased" with the level of support it had received from its lessors. **Reuters**





The new TAMM features reflect our commitment to delivering more seamless digital experiences for Abu Dhabi residents and citizens.

Mohamed Al-Askar

DG of the Abu Dhabi Digital Authority



W Muscat, a resort situated on the upbeat Shattl Al-Qurum beachfront, offers an insider access to what is up and coming in the city. It has 279 luxury hotel rooms and suites.

TRAVEL ATTRACTIONS

# Marriott Bonvoy’s ‘Week of Wonders’ offers discounts

Recent research from the Institute for Applied Positive Research shows 97 percent of people surveyed said having a trip planned made them happy. In appreciation of travelers’ aspirations, Marriott Bonvoy has kicked off the “Week of Wonders” from Oct. 8 to 13. The celebration is aimed at bringing members joy and happiness by encouraging travel and providing an opportunity to experience the pleasures of travel in their own homes. Each day this week will feature a different “wonder” with themes such as inspiration, comfort, discovery, rejuvenation and delight. These “wonders” will include great travel offers globally at renowned brands that are part of the Marriott Bonvoy portfolio,

including The Ritz-Carlton, St. Regis, W Hotels and Autograph Collection.

“We are all yearning for the time when we can freely travel again and explore the world,” said David Flueck, senior vice president, Global Loyalty, Marriott International. “With ‘Week of Wonders,’ we are bringing our best offers, content and experiences across the entire Marriott Bonvoy portfolio to inspire travelers to dream of travel or recreate their favorite travel experiences at home.”

**Inspiration:** Marriott Bonvoy is premiering several new original short films, where viewers will feel inspired watching life-changing journeys. Additionally, even as

## HIGHLIGHT

For those across the Middle East looking for a spontaneous getaway and rejuvenation, Marriott Bonvoy members can enjoy savings of 25% and non-members savings of 15% on participating properties.

sports stadiums stand empty, passionate fans who travel to watch their teams play can still feel a part of the action knowing there will be a seat waiting for them in the future. Manchester United fans can elevate their match experience at home by having their names appear on the pitchside advertising boards during a live match at Old

Trafford, the Theatre of Dreams.

**Comfort:** Travelers can rekindle memorable trips and dream about future journeys by taking home the comforts of travel with 30 percent off Marriott Bonvoy Boutiques on all merchandise including brand signature items like The Westin Heavenly Bed, The Ritz-Carlton Fragrance Collection, and others.

**Discovery:** Members can discover more of the Marriott Bonvoy portfolio by being able to redeem points for up to 33 percent less at more than 7,000 participating hotels and resorts worldwide for stays until Nov. 13. All redemption pricing for participating hotels will be in off-peak rates including:

- UAE — W Dubai — The Palm and Al-Wathba, a Luxury Collection Desert Resort & Spa, Abu Dhabi
- Saudi Arabia — Assila Jeddah, a Luxury Collection Hotel and Marriott Riyadh Diplomatic Quarter
- Oman — Al-Bustan Palace, a Ritz-Carlton Hotel and W Muscat
- Bahrain — The Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain and Westin City Center Bahrain
- Jordan — W Amman and The St. Regis Amman

**Rejuvenation:** For those across the Middle East looking for a spontaneous getaway and rejuvenation, Marriott Bonvoy members can enjoy savings of 25 percent and non-members savings of 15 percent on participating properties.

WORKPLACE EFFICIENCY

## NeckDoctor launches ergonomic solutions for laptop

NeckDoctor, an ergonomic monitor arm company, has launched two new products in the region. NeckDoctor for Laptops, a portable ergonomic laptop stand desk workstation, and NeckDoctor for Laptops-L, a height-adjustable ergonomic laptop standing desk workstation, offer high-quality solutions for office and home to prevent improper sitting postures that strain the muscles and connecting tissues around the neck, head, back, spine and shoulder.

NeckDoctor founder and CEO Tarun K. Balani said: “Sedentaryness begins with redesigning our workspace and rethinking how we function within that space. Thus, the first step toward solving the sit or stand dilemma is to develop a healthy, balanced approach, combining periods of seated work with periods of standing work through the introduction of a sit-stand paradigm with the help of sit-stand workstations. NeckDoctor allows the user to easily switch between seated work and standing work, while remaining at the same desk.

Encouraging users to stand more and sit less helps prevent an inactive lifestyle giving a boost to energy, mood and sleep quality that comes from increased activity.”

The absence of practicing ergonomics can damage our well-being. Sitting all day in an office results in illnesses caused by a sedentary lifestyle such as obesity, diabetes, heart ailments, strained neck and sore shoulders. Employees who suffer from consistent pain and health issues result in inefficiency at work, loss of hours and productivity, all of which affect organization-

al growth and revenue in the long term. Alternating between seated work and standing work has been shown to benefit both human health and work productivity. Studies have shown that varying periods of sitting work with periods of standing work helps measurably reduce pain and fatigue complaints in the work environment.

All products are fully certified and strength tested. NeckDoctor for Laptops retails at SR699 (\$386) + VAT while NeckDoctor for Laptops-L is priced at SR1,299 + VAT.

“Everyone is looking for a solution and a promise, we offer both. We understand the importance and future of ergonomics in a world where technology has become a way of life. The human body and improving your workplace posture naturally is our prime focus.

With the rise in laptop usage, the use of technology extends beyond the office with working from home trending in these pandemic times. Prolonged use and an improper posture is harmful to the spine. The human body needs ergonomic solutions and products that are pain relief, natural, medicine free, doctor free and even surgery free,” added Balani.



NeckDoctor for Laptops is a portable ergonomic laptop stand desk workstation.

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

## TAMM enhances user experience for Abu Dhabi residents & citizens

The Abu Dhabi Government Services ecosystem or TAMM has announced new features for some of its services on the TAMM platform, which will provide more ease and convenience for users when completing digital government tasks through the integrated platform.

Among the new features users can benefit from are acquiring attested school certificates and grade reports, finding the perfect school for children, getting career advice, viewing and comparing business licenses, marriage procedures, completing inheritance documents, and making use of social support services.

Abu Dhabi residents and citizens can download the app or visit the website and enjoy these features from any location. The TAMM app is available on the Google Play Store and the Apple App Store.

The new features on TAMM represent another step forward in accelerating the pace and impact of digital transformation across the emirate. The introduction of these features comes under the supervision of the Higher Committee of the Digital Government and is aligned with its efforts in activating a digital transformation governance framework in Abu Dhabi.

Mohamed Al-Askar, director

general of the Abu Dhabi Digital Authority, said: “As we continue to move forward in our journey of providing innovative digital solutions through collaborations with Abu Dhabi government entities, the new features for ‘TAMM Journey’ services reflect our commitment to delivering more seamless digital experiences for Abu Dhabi residents and citizens.

“With smartphones widely used on a daily basis, it is appropriate

## FASTFACT

The new features on TAMM represent another step forward in accelerating the pace and impact of digital transformation across the emirate

to introduce these features for the first time on TAMM, which is the essential go-to platform for all government needs. We understand the importance of improving the quality of life for everyone and through these new features, parents, students, business owners, entrepreneurs and members of society can navigate, access and complete a number of services at any location without even moving out of their homes.”

## ANBA Briefs

### Positive Outlook

#### Brazilian-Arab trade poised to grow: Hannun

Brazilian-Arab trade is poised to increase, Arab Brazilian Chamber of Commerce (ABCC) president Rubens Hannun has said. He was speaking during a webinar titled “Managing Differences: The Core Challenge to a Global Strategy in the Context of the Arab Countries,” Hannun lectured on the subject to students from the Higher School of Advertising and Marketing (ESPM).

Questioned about the impact of the pandemic on Brazilian-Arab trade, he said that sales have increased when it comes to items such as food. “Brazil hasn’t stopped supplying food to Arab countries at all. This leads to very high confidence levels.

“The building of good relations in trade has helped speed up various joint initiatives. This trade could pick up greatly. COVID-19 ended up fast-tracking agreements with the Arab countries. We are about to sign many of them during the upcoming Economic Forum Brazil and Arab Countries,” he said, referencing the event the ABCC will host in an innovative virtual format from Oct. 19 to 22.

### Exports

#### Jordan, Libya purchased more poultry from Brazil

Poultry exports from Brazil were up 1.3 percent in shipped volume year-to-date through September from a year ago, the Brazilian Animal Protein Association (ABPA) reported. Sales to Arab countries such as Jordan and Libya increased.

Year-to-date through September, 3.17 million tons of poultry products were exported from Brazil. The export revenue was down 12.1 percent to \$4.6 billion. In September, shipped volume was down 2.3 percent to 345,000 tons, while the revenue was down 18.4 percent to \$479 million.

Year-to-date, China was the leading importer, up 28 percent to 514,000 tons. The exports to Libya were up 79 percent to 46,000 tons and Jordan, 35 percent to 46,000 tons. Exports to Russia, Singapore, Vietnam and South Korea also increased.

### Virtual Festival

#### Cultural fest to feature event on Arab immigration

The 34th National Festival of Diverse Cultures (Fenadi) will be hosted by União das Etnias de Ijuí (Ueti), Unijuí and the City Hall of Ijuí, Rio Grande do Sul. The event will take place in virtual form for the first time this year. It will run from Oct. 12 to 19, featuring lectures and virtual events streaming free on the Ueti YouTube channel. The purpose of Fenadi is to share the cultural diversity of Ijuí with the world, and to celebrate the lives and unity of different peoples.

Attractions will include the webinar “Arab Ethnicity — Arab-Brazilian Immigration and Emigration,” on Tuesday. Arab Brazilian Chamber of Commerce (ABCC) cultural director Sílvia Antibas, who won the 2019 UNESCO Prize for Arab Culture, will discuss the history of Arab immigration to Brazil and the cultural work of the ABCC.

Sourced from ANBA



AC Milan striker Zlatan Ibrahimovic has been given the all-clear to return to action after testing negative for coronavirus.



## Sport News

TENNIS

# Iga Swiatek beats Sofia Kenin to win maiden Grand Slam

Polish teenager is youngest women's French Open winner since Monica Seles 28 years ago

AFP Paris

**Polish teenager Iga Swiatek won her country's first ever Grand Slam singles title on Saturday as she defeated American fourth seed Sofia Kenin 6-4, 6-1 to become the youngest women's French Open champion since 1992.**

The 19-year-old Swiatek, at 54 the lowest-ranked woman to capture the Roland Garros title in the modern era, is the ninth first-time major champion in the past 14 Grand Slams.

"Maybe it just had to be like that, another underdog had to win a Grand Slam. In women's tennis right now it's crazy," said Swiatek, who will rise to 17th in the world after her victory.

"I don't know what's going on. It's overwhelming for me, it's crazy."

"Two years ago I won a junior Grand Slam (at Wimbledon) and now I'm here," she added. "It feels like such a short time."

Swiatek is the youngest women's French Open winner since Monica Seles 28 years ago.

She eclipsed the run of compatriot Jadwiga Jedzejewska — the

most outstanding Polish player of the interwar period — who finished runner-up at Roland Garros in 1939.

Swiatek was only the second Polish woman to reach a Grand Slam final in the Open era after Agnieszka Radwanska at Wimbledon in 2012. She had never previously been beyond the last 16.

Australian Open champion Kenin, 21, was attempting to become the first woman to capture two Slams in the same year since Angelique Kerber in 2016.

Swiatek, whose only previous tour-level final came at Lugano last year, dispelled any initial fear of nerves as she won 12 of the first 15 points to surge 3-0 ahead.

However, Kenin has made a habit of fighting through tough situations in



**Two years ago I won a junior Grand Slam (at Wimbledon) and now I'm here.**

Iga Swiatek

Paris and broke back when Swiatek served an untimely double fault allowing the American to level at 3-all.

Swiatek, who bludgeoned her way through to the championship match, conceding just 23 games in six rounds, secured a precious hold before Kenin lost her serve for the second time.

Serving for the first set at 5-3, Swiatek dumped a tame backhand into the net on set point and Kenin immediately broke back, ripping a blistering backhand return.

Kenin's resilience has been a staple of her success but she

cracked again to present Swiatek with two more set points at 4-5, promptly dragging a backhand wide to hand the Pole the opening set.

The sixth-ranked Kenin, trying to become the first woman to capture two Slams in the same season since Angelique Kerber in 2016, broke to begin the second set.

But an undeterred Swiatek responded the following game, smacking a backhand down the line to break once more before holding with ease to go 2-1 up.

Kenin subsequently called for a medical timeout to receive treatment on her taped left thigh, but she could not slow the momentum of her opponent as Swiatek broke for a fifth time.

Swiatek won the next eight points to storm to the cusp of the title at 5-1, securing a historic triumph with a powerful cross-court forehand on her first match point.



IPL IN ABU DHABI

## Kolkata Knight Riders snatch sensational 2-run win against Kings XI Punjab

AP Abu Dhabi

Kolkata Knight Riders pulled off a sensational two-run win against scrappy Kings XI Punjab in the Indian Premier League on Saturday.

Needing six runs to tie the scores off Sunil Narine's last ball, Glenn Maxwell's hit over the covers landed just inside the boundary as Punjab fell two runs short at 162-5.

Kolkata had earlier recovered well from a slow start through captain Dinesh Karthik's flashy 29-ball knock of 58 runs to post 164-6.

Punjab were cruising at 136-1, needing just 29 runs off the last four overs. But Kolkata stormed back as fast bowler Prasidh Krishna took 3-29 and Narine 2-28 to hand Punjab its fifth consecutive loss.

"Prasidh is special, the way he came back and bowled in the second spell shows how good he is," said Karthik, who won the toss and opted to bat first.

"Sunil Narine stands up for us a lot of the time. He is calm, he is always looking to find the best way to contribute to the team."

Halfway through the league stage, Punjab has only a solitary victory from seven games and is at the bottom of the table. Kolkata is in the upper half.

Captain Lokesh Rahul and Mayank Agarwal, who made 56, gave Punjab a solid start of 114 runs but once Krishna provided the opening in the 15th over by dismissing Agarwal, Punjab's

brittle top-order batting lineup yet again slipped against some quality bowling.

Krishna took the game away from Punjab in the 19th over by claiming two wickets, including the crucial dismissal of Rahul, who top-scored with 74 off 58 balls after getting dropped in only the second over by Andre Russell.

"I have no answers, we just need to keep coming harder in the next seven games," said Rahul, who has been the lone batting star for Punjab with three half-centuries and a century.

**Sunil Narine is always looking to find the best way to contribute to the team.**

Dinesh Karthik

Captain of Kolkata Knight Riders

"I don't think we were satisfied at any stage in the chase. You are satisfied only when you win the game. Toward the end, we kept losing wickets, and couldn't get us over the line."

Kolkata struggled to be 60-2 after 10 overs before Karthik ensured he had enough runs on the board to defend by hitting eight fours and two sixes.

Karthik dominated the 82-run, fourth-wicket stand with Shubman Gill, who made a defiant 57 off 47 balls before both were run out in the death overs.



Glenn Maxwell's hit over the covers landed just inside the boundary as Kings XI Punjab fell two runs short at 162-5. Supplied

FORMULA ONE

## 'Spot on' Bottas edges Hamilton to take pole at Eifel GP

AFP Nurburgring

Valtteri Bottas produced a blistering track record on his final qualifying lap on Saturday to edge Mercedes teammate Lewis Hamilton and claim pole position for the Eifel Grand Prix.

Bottas clocked a best lap of one minute and 25.269 seconds to beat the championship leader by two-tenths of a second in very

cold conditions following only one practice session after Friday's running was canceled due to fog.

It was Bottas's third pole this year and the 14th of his career, a feat that he hopes can help him keep alive his championship challenge. After winning in Russia two weeks ago he lies 44 points behind Hamilton.

The two "black arrows" were pushed all the way by Red Bull's

Max Verstappen, who lost grip on his final run and wound up third ahead of Charles Leclerc of Ferrari and Alex Albon in the second Red Bull car.

"It is such a nice feeling when you do it on the last lap — my last lap was spot on," said Bottas.

"It's been pretty tricky with short practice and these conditions getting the tires in the sweet spot, that was one of the bigger things today."

The chilly autumn weather has shaped practice and qualifying. Friday's practice sessions were wiped out by fog and rain.

"I believe I can win," said Bottas. Hamilton, who needs just one victory to equal Michael Schumacher's record of 91 Grand Prix victories, had to settle for second on the grid.

"Valtteri is two-tenths ahead and he did a good job, so

congratulations to him," he said. "There is plenty of time for me to regain ..."

Daniel Ricciardo was sixth ahead of his Renault teammate Esteban Ocon, Lando Norris of McLaren, Sergio Perez of Racing Point and Carlos Sainz in the second McLaren.

Shortly before qualifying, Racing Point announced that Nico Hulkenberg would step in for Lance Stroll who was "unwell."

## Sport Briefs

THE BEST OF THE REST



Cycling race

**Giro contender Yates tests positive for virus**

British rider Alex Dowsett made a solo break from a long range escape group to win the eighth stage of the Giro d'Italia as Portugal's Joao Almeida retained the leader's pink jersey.

Simon Yates withdrew before the start of the stage after becoming the first rider to test positive for coronavirus at a Grand Tour.

Yates was 21st in the overall standings ahead of Saturday's stage in Puglia with overall victory still potentially within his grasp. Yates tested positive after developing a slight fever on Friday, team doctor Matteo Beltemacchi said. **AFP**

Golf

**DeChambeau loses lead despite eagles**

Bryson DeChambeau defended the skill of his long-driving attack style after firing two eagles but falling from the lead of the PGA Shriners Hospitals for Children Open.

DeChambeau, who won his first major title in last month's US Open at Winged Foot, followed an opening 62 with a four-under par 67 in Friday's second round to stand one stroke back.

Scotland's Martin Laird and Americans Austin Cook, Brian Harman, Peter Malnati and Patrick Cantlay shared the lead on 14-under 128 after 36 holes on TPC at Summerlin in suburban Las Vegas.

Sixth-ranked DeChambeau drove the green 373 yards at the par-4 seventh and holed a 26-foot eagle putt. The 27-year-old American eagled the par-5 16th after a 367-yard drive and pitch to 10 feet. **AFP**

European Champion

**Euro 2020: Southgate fears changes to format**

England manager Gareth Southgate said the format of next year's European Championship might have to be modified for it to take place successfully amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

Euro 2020, initially scheduled from June 12 to July 12 this year in 12 cities across the continent, was pushed back to 2021 due to the coronavirus pandemic that shut down soccer in March.

London's Wembley Stadium is set to host six matches, including the semifinals and finals, and Southgate said England would have no problem stepping in if it was decided to cut the number of host nations. **Reuters**

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Tom Cruise delighted Italian fans on Friday when he drove through the streets of Rome in a yellow Fiat while filming scenes for the seventh 'Mission Impossible' film.



# Finally

## TheSix

### Love local

Bloomingdale's has launched Love Local, an in-store and online pop-up available in Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Kuwait until Oct. 28, which celebrates 14 local ready-to-wear, jewelry and accessories designers. Here are a few.



#### Silsal

Founded by Samar Halayeb, the UAE-based homeware brand specializes in porcelain home accessories and tableware. The label often collaborates with Middle Eastern fashion brands on special collections, including Zayan the Label and Dee by Dalla.



#### Okhtein

The brand, which means "two-sisters," was launched in 2013 by Aya and Mounaz Abdelraouf and has since gone on to reach astronomical heights in its success, finding fans in Beyonce, Kylie Jenner, Kourtney Kardashian and more.



#### Madiyah Al-Sharqi

The designer launched her eponymous label in 2012. Her outfits have been worn by US-Colombian actress Sofia Vergara, reality TV star Khloe Kardashian and Bollywood actress Priyanka Chopra Jones.



#### Bouguessa

The French-Algerian designer, who is based in Dubai, is known for her contemporary abayas and capes.



#### L'Atelier Nawbar

One of Lebanon's esteemed fine jewelry houses, the brand's vibrant pieces have been worn by the likes of Queen Rania of Jordan and Oscar-winning actress Lupita Nyong'o.



#### L'Afshar

The Dubai-based handbag brand founded by Lilian Afshar is known for its petite, handmade lucite clutches and handbags.

CLOSE UP

# Halima Aden gets cozy in St. John Fall campaign

Arab News Dubai

**Luxury US label St. John seems keen to tap into a younger audience with its latest collection — and they are relying on some serious star power to do just that.**

Over the weekend, 23-year-old model Halima Aden took to Instagram to share a flurry of campaign photos taken for the fashion house, in which she is seen posing in an ensemble from the Fall collection.

"Ready for the world in my @stjohnknits as we celebrate the launch of their new Fall collection," the hijab-wearing model captioned one of the posts.

Founded in 1962, the label is best known for its classic wool

and rayon yarn knits and Aden showed off a prime example to her 1.2 million Instagram followers on Friday.

The model opted for a high collar, ankle-length knitted dress in a sophisticated shade of cream. The sleek look featured puffed, wrist-length sleeves and was belted at the waist with a thin gold strap. Aden paired the winter-ready look with a matching knotted turban and kept her makeup pared down, smoky

Right: Halima Aden has had a busy couple of months fronting campaigns for various fashion houses. File/AFP

Below: Luxury US label St. John tapped Halima Aden to show off its latest line. Instagram



and perfect for the fall season.

Sold exclusively online, the new line is a limited-edition capsule collection by former Dior designer Zoe Turner. Turner upped the ante with exaggerated lengths and dramatic drapes while remaining faithful to the fashion house's core brand pillars — quality fabrics and expert craftsmanship.

"Feeling the power and elegance of femininity with @stjohnknits," Aden posted on Instagram Stories on Friday.

It has been a busy few weeks for the model, who was recently unveiled as one of the faces of Tommy Hilfiger's Fall 2020 global campaign. The US-Somali beauty appears in the new ad campaign alongside a diverse cast of other top models, including Dilone, Alton Mason, Soo Joo Park and more.

Aden made her runway debut at Kanye West's Yeerzy Season 3 show during New York Fashion Week in 2017. She went on to become the first Muslim woman wearing a hijab to grace the cover

### FASTFACTS

● Founded in 1962, the label is best known for its wool and rayon yarn knits.

● Sold exclusively online, the new line is a limited-edition capsule collection by former Dior designer Zoe Turner.

of several publications, including British Vogue, and has walked in various fashion weeks in New York, London and Paris. Aden has also appeared in a number of ad campaigns for prestigious brands, such as Fenty Beauty and Nike.

Aden, who grew up in a Kenyan refugee camp before immigrating to the United States with her family aged six, was also appointed as the new Chief Coconut Officer for the coconut water brand Vita Coco's Vita Coco Project, an initiative founded in 2014 which helps to build the communities they source their coconuts from.

IT'S A DATE

## Gigi Hadid shares snaps of life as new mother

Arab News Dubai

Supermodel Gigi Hadid shared a behind-the-scenes photo of her first at-home date night with partner Zayn Malik almost three weeks after the birth of their daughter.

On Thursday, the 25-year-old took to Instagram Stories to share snaps of a meal she cooked up — Half Baked Harvest's recipe of browned sage butter chicken piccata and mushroom pasta, which she "highly recommend(s)" — for the evening in.

The model shared a few clips of the dinner, before revealing she missed her little one, who was in another room being looked after by Hadid's mother.

"Mom and dad's first date night," she wrote, adding, "she's in the other room w/ith) oma but miss her."



Mindy Kaling

SURPRISE REVEAL

## Mindy Kaling announces birth of baby boy

Arab News Dubai

US comedian and actress Mindy Kaling revealed she welcomed her second child — a baby boy named Spencer — on Sept. 3.

Kaling made the surprise announcement on "The Late Show with Stephen Colbert" and said she didn't want to share news of her pregnancy earlier due to the difficulties many people around the world are facing in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Saying 'my son' feels very formal," Kaling told Colbert, whereas "saying 'my daughter' feels contemporary and of the moment. But saying 'a son' feels so old-timey."

And how did her two-year-old daughter, Katherine, react to her new sibling? Kaling said she was "very ambivalent at first, I would say, to be generous. She was really worried about her toys getting taken," but, "she's a huge fan, now that she's met him."

INTERVIEW

## New works 'inspired by Dubai,' Spanish artist says

Rawna Talas Dubai

After a quiet period due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Dubai's cultural scene is slowly picking up again. This week welcomed the sixth edition of World Art Dubai, branded as "the region's largest affordable retail art fair," which showcased more than 3,000 artworks by contemporary artists from the UAE and abroad.

Among the participating exhibitors this year was Spanish artist Jose Carlos Villarejo Garcia, who previously took part in Sharjah's Islamic Art Festival. As he explained to Arab News in an

interview, showing his artistry to Dubai audiences is particularly special to him. "It is my first time in Dubai and my first time as part of World Art Dubai," he said. "For me, it is a great opportunity to share my art with Dubai. I feel very happy and very close to Arab culture."

Having familiarized himself with the culture of the UAE, Garcia shared that his recent works were inspired by certain visual elements, such as colors and clothing materials, seen around Dubai. "I was inspired by the everyday things and houses of Dubai," he said.

Born in the Andalusian city of

Córdoba in 1980, Garcia specializes in an intricate and ancient form of art known as Islamic Guadameci (gilt leatherwork), which features vibrant juxtapositions of colors and golden and silver leaves, rendering geometrical, repeating patterns on tanned sheepskin or ram leather. According

Jose Carlos Villarejo Garcia brought his work to World Art Dubai. Supplied



to Garcia, this technique was further enhanced under Arab rule in Spain by the Umayyad dynasty during the 10th century, "turning craftsmanship to art."

"In my city of Córdoba," he explained, "many of the customs from our Arab past are lived and maintained: the food, the decoration, the crafts, the friendliness and hospitality.

Many cultural aspects have been transmitted from generation to generation. My art is a technique that I learned from my ancestors. I grew up in a family of artists. My guadamecies take us to the most luxurious and splendorous period of the Arabs in Córdoba."

Given the attention to detail required to execute guadameciés, creating them is a lengthy process; it can take up to two years to complete one artwork. It requires the customization of tools, dedication and confidence to pursue this kind of art. As Garcia says: "The most important thing is to know your form of art."