

## WEATHER

Cold and cloudy weather is forecast with a chance of rain.

TODAY 5° 2° | TUE 8° 3° | WED 7° 4°

**CELEBRATING MOTHERS ON THEIR SPECIAL DAY**  
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**HRH Crown Prince Hussein attends the opening of the first National Youth Dialogue Conference, which aims to address key issues concerning young people, and to open new dialogue channels between the youth, the government, and the private sector. (Photo: Royal Court)**

## Crown Prince attends opening of National Youth Dialogue Conference

**AMMAN (JNews)** – HRH Crown Prince Hussein on Sunday attended the opening of the first National Youth Dialogue Conference, organized by the Senate's Youth Dialogue Initiative Committee, a Royal Court statement said.

The conference, held at the Dead Sea, aims to address key issues concerning young people, and to open new dialogue channels between the youth, the government, and the private sector in order to overcome challenges faced by youth in various fields.

Discussions covered a number of topics related to youth empowerment, including bolstering their role and capitalizing on their abilities, as well as stepping up their participation and engagement in all aspects of political life.

Senate President Faisal Fayez

said the conference aims to put forward a comprehensive action plan to empower young Jordanians.

For her part, the chair of the Senate's Youth Dialogue Initiative Committee, Senator Rabiha Dabbas, said the committee was formed in line with public outreach efforts to emphasize young people's role in the nation's progress.

Speaking on behalf of the young participants, lawyer Ruba Al-Zyoud stressed the need to establish new platforms to invest in youth by providing them with opportunities, skills, and knowledge.

House Speaker Abdul Karim Doghmi and Youth Minister Mohammad Salameh Al-Nabulsi attended the conference's opening ceremony.

# King visits IEC, checks on preparations for Tuesday's local elections

**AMMAN (JNews)** – His Majesty King Abdullah on Sunday visited the Independent Election Commission (IEC) and checked on preparations for the municipal and governorate council elections slated for Tuesday, a Royal Court statement said.

At a meeting with the IEC chief commissioner and board of commissioners, King Abdullah commended the IEC's measures and preparations for the upcoming elections, as the commission marks its 10th anniversary, highlighting its role in developing electoral processes in Jordan.

His Majesty stressed the need to encourage participation in elections, especially among women and youth, pointing to the IEC's role in political modernization, as the recent constitutional amendments moved the political parties' portfolio from the government to the IEC.

Calling for zero tolerance towards any violations that could affect the integrity and transparency of the elections, the King urged maintaining cooperation among all the concerned state entities to ensure a smooth electoral process.

In addition, His Majesty called for maintaining open communication channels with the media to ensure the swift and accurate flow of information.

The King listened to a briefing by IEC Chief Commissioner Khaled Kalaideh on the logistical and training preparations taken for the elections,



**His Majesty King Abdullah visits the Independent Election Commission, checks on preparations for Tuesday's governorate and municipal council elections, and urges zero tolerance towards any violations that could affect the integrity of the polls. (Photo: Royal Court)**

as well as the adoption of new technology to aid in counting and sorting, and means to facilitate the participation of the elderly and persons with disabilities.

On the occasion of the IEC's 10th anniversary, the chief commissioner highlighted a number of milestones, including the establishment of the Jordan Electoral Institute, which of-

## King checks on health of Saudi monarch

**AMMAN (JNews)** – His Majesty King Abdullah, in a phone call on Sunday, checked on the health of Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud of Saudi Arabia, after undergoing medical check-ups, according to a Royal Court statement.

King Abdullah wished King Salman continued good health and wellbeing.

fers a higher diploma in election policies and management, and has received two classes of students, half of whom are members of political parties.

Kalaideh added that Amman hosts the permanent headquarters of the Organization of Arab Electoral Management Bodies.

During the visit, the King also toured some of the commission's facilities, including the IEC's information center, a simulation hall for the voting and sorting processes, and the political parties unit.

# Bread prices will not be raised, regardless of global events – Shamali

**AMMAN (JNews)** – Minister of Industry, Trade, and Supply Yousef Al-Shamali said on Sunday that the price of bread will not be raised no matter how high the price of wheat goes, according to local media outlets.

He said that Jordan is the only Arab country that has enough stocks of wheat and barley to last for more than a year.

"Every kilogram of bread is currently subsidized by 130 fils, and there will be no change in bread prices for the Jordanian citizen, regardless of global prices," according to Shamali.

Shamali made this affirmation at a meeting of the Lower House Economy and Investment Committee Sunday, headed by Chairman Khair Abu Sa'ilek. Also attending was the head of the Amman Chamber of Commerce and the General Association for Foodstuffs Mer-

chants, Khalil Al-Haj Tawfiq, alongside representatives of the private sector and committee members.

Abu Sa'ilek underlined the need to abolish the sales tax on basic commodities that are not tax-exempt, open the door for imports to everyone, support the National Aid Fund, as well as reduce interest rates on loans granted to traders and importers through financing counters supervised by the Central Bank of Jordan.

He said that the current global price hikes will have a positive effect on potash and phosphate exports, which means a rise in the government's tax revenues. He urged the government to allocate these revenues to citizens with limited income to help them meet their needs amid a rising rate of inflation.

Members of the committee asked that importers be supported through soft-interest loans that help them carry

out their duties to the fullest, and for interest rates imposed on loans to be reduced, stressing at the same time the importance of achieving and securing stock and food security in the Kingdom.

Shamali confirmed that prices of most basic materials have been increasing globally since August 2020, mainly due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

He said that vegetable oils prices witnessed sharp price increases, affected by the climate change in the countries of origin and the fact that China and India imported very large quantities, which also drove prices up.

Shamali denied that the reason for these rises was the war in Ukraine. He attributed the rise in prices to the decision by many countries, such as Egypt, Algeria, and Malaysia, to ban exports of basic goods and raw materials.

Shamali also confirmed the availability

of a safe stock of wheat and barley, sufficient for a period of 18 months, which ensure that the price of bread will not rise, despite the rise in wheat prices globally.

He also said that it is the government that imports these two types of grain, since the Kingdom's annual production of wheat reaches 30,000 tonnes, enough for only 10 days for the population, which consumes 90,000 tonnes per month.

Shamali said that other basic materials are imported through the private sector, and are exempt from sales tax, such as sugar, oils, rice, and legumes.

According to him, a recommendation will be submitted to the Cabinet to reduce the tax on a number of basic materials that are not tax exempt, stressing that everyone should be allowed to import, without exception.

# NCHR follows up on detained activists' cases, circumstances

**AMMAN (JNews)** – The National Center for Human Rights (NCHR) is following up on cases of detained activists, Commissioner-General Aladdin Armouti announced, according to the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

In a press statement on Sunday, Armouti said that NCHR received detainees' families several times and listened to the details of their cases. The center also received the activists' defense lawyers who apprised it of the legal circumstances and reasons for the arrest.

A specialized team from the NCHR visited some detainees' families at home and recorded their complaints related to the arrests, as well as the places and conditions of their detention in Jordan's reform centers, Armouti said, adding that the center will continue such visits to check the economic impact the arrest of activists has on their families.

He stressed that NCHR will monitor and follow up the activists' cases in a way that guarantees justice in accordance with the Constitution and laws in force.

# Prices of vegetables go up, farmers blame mainly frost

By Razan Abdelhadi

**AMMAN** – Director-General of the Jordanian Farmers Union Mahmoud Al-Oran said that the sector is passing through difficult circumstances, particularly because of the impact frost had on most crops.

Oran said the current season is one of the harshest for the sector, both for agriculturalists and animal breeders, and that frost repeatedly affected different parts of the Kingdom, including the northern and central Jordan Valley.

He pointed out that "spring frost" is considered one of the most dangerous types of frost, and as a result of it, quantities of vegetables delivered to the central market may decrease, and there will be "scarcity".

"The tomato crops at this time of past

years reached up to about 1,000 tonnes, and now only about 300 tonnes are yielded; it is also the case with eggplant and other types of vegetables," Oran said.

He urged citizens not to binge buy vegetables, especially during the holy month of Ramadan, as all kinds of vegetables are still available.

Farmer Mahmoud Al-Enezi told *Jordan News* that farmers are passing through difficult conditions, and warned that the prices will continue to go up if the situation remains as it is.

Enezi added that the farmers' inability to produce more is one of the most prominent reasons for the rise in prices of vegetables.

"The Ministry of Agriculture should support the sector financially, to help us, farmers, to stand on our feet again," he said, adding that frost is not the only reason vegetable prices could go up.

"Farmers are going through hard times, at all levels, and another rise in the prices of vegetables and fruits could be expected if the situation remains as it is, especially in light of the shrinking of our agricultural lands and the global increase in prices of agricultural inputs," he added.

People have complained about the prices of many types of vegetables, such as cucumbers and tomatoes, in the past few days; many said that prices of vegetables that are more often used should not rise, especially since a significant number of citizens who cannot afford to buy meat live on vegetables.

Youssef Abdin, a citizen, told *Jordan News* that prices vary from one place to another, "but I noticed an increase in the prices of some types of vegetables these days. I believe that the government should tighten its control over the pricing of many items, which is now monop-

olized by some traders who play with the prices".

Abdin stressed that "citizens' consumption of vegetables increases in the holy month of Ramadan, and prices should be dropped in light of the hard economic conditions we are facing".

He stressed that the frost that affected so many crops will affect the quantity and quality of production, stressing that "the ministry should inspect the damages and compensate the affected farmers to enable them to continue their production".

Ministry of Industry, Trade, and Supply Spokesman Yanal Barmawi told *Jordan News* that the higher prices of some vegetables, witnessed recently, are due to fewer supplies "because of the frost that affected the crops and reduced the quantity of produce".

He, however, said prices are expected to go down again in the upcoming days.

# Dairy factory owners critical of rise in fresh cow milk

**AMMAN (JNews)** – Owners of small and medium sized dairy factories have complained about the high price of fresh cow milk in the local market, criticizing the unjustified rise in prices despite the availability of a fodder stock that can last for a year, according to Khaberni News.

The factory owners said that the increase in fresh cow's milk will significantly affect other materials such as pastries, cake and items with milk ingredients, adding that they will protest the hike, a decision that will further affect the sector.

The Union of Cow Breeders and Fresh Milk Producers Associations decided on Saturday to raise the price of fresh milk to 55 piasters per kilogram. The union will hold a press conference in the presence of stakeholders to clarify the reasons for this rise at a later time.

## BRIEFS

**Royal directives: JD100 to be paid to beneficiaries from NAF's monthly aid program**

**AMMAN (JNews)** – In implementation of His Majesty King Abdullah II's directives, the Cabinet, in its session held Sunday, headed by Prime Minister Bisher Al-Khasawneh, decided to disburse JD100 to families benefiting from the Monthly Cash Assistance Program provided by the National Aid Fund (NAF).

The Council of Ministers directed the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Social Development to disburse the newly-announced cash aid "immediately", and make the necessary financial arrangements to secure the funds within the general budget.

A total of 107,000 households will benefit from this Royal cash grant, with an overall amount of nearly JD11 million, according to the NAF's data.

**5,000 observers for local elections**

**AMMAN (JNews)** – A member of the Board of Commissioners of the Independent Election Commission (IEC), Jihad Momani, announced on Saturday that there are about 5,000 observers for the local elections scheduled on Tuesday.

Momani indicated the participation of about 5,000 local and international observers, including more than 100 international observers.

"There are no loopholes in the electoral process," he said, adding that 777 electoral violations have been registered so far and that all the violations were corrected and that no case was referred to the Public Prosecutor.

**Banks to close on Tuesday for local elections**

**AMMAN (JNews)** – The Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) announced in a circular on Sunday that banks will be closed on Tuesday due to the elections of governorate and municipal councils, Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

The decision aims at enabling employees of banks to exercise their right and participate in the elections.

**Jordan condemns Houthi attacks on Saudi Arabia**

**AMMAN (JNews)** – The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates on Sunday condemned repeated assaults by the Houthi militia on Saudi Arabia, Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

A ballistic missile, armed drones, and cruise missiles were fired on Saudi lands on Saturday night and Sunday morning, but were destroyed by air defenses.

Ministry's spokesperson Haitham Abu Al-Foul stressed Jordan's denunciation of such "cowardly terrorist attacks" and the targeting of civilian institutions, reaffirming the Kingdom's rejection of violence and terrorism, and support against what threatens Saudi Arabia's security.

**Jordan takes part in ARABOSAI meeting in Doha**

**AMMAN (JNews)** – The 63rd meeting of the Executive Council of the Arab Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions (ARABOSAI) on Sunday began activities in the Qatari capital, Doha, which will run to Monday, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

Audit Bureau chief, Assem Haddad, is heading Jordan's delegation to the two-day event, which will also see participation of heads of Arab audit institutions, which are ARABOSAI members.

On its inaugural day, the participants went over the council's reports and reviewed efforts to follow up on its development initiatives, according to the organization's statement, announcing its next meeting will be held in Saudi Arabia.

ARABOSAI is an independent, permanent, non-political regional professional organization that aims to promote good governance and transparency, in addition to ensuring accountability and combating corruption.



By order of His Majesty King Abdullah to establish the "Endowment of King Abdullah II Ibn al-Hussein/ The Complete Chair for the Study of The Thought of the Nuclear Imam", at the Grand Mosque of Salt and the University of Islamic Sciences/Faculty of Shaff'i Jurisprudence. (Photo: Royal Court)

## King attends launch of waqf to study Imam Al Nawawi's work

**AMMAN (JNews)** – Upon Royal directives, the "King Abdullah II Ibn Al Hussein Waqf for the Integral Chair for the Study of Imam Al-Nawawi's Work" was launched on Sunday, according to a Royal Court statement.

At the launch ceremony, held at Al Husseiniya Palace, His Majesty King Abdullah signed the official papers for the Islamic endowment.

The JD2 million waqf is aimed at shedding light on Imam Al Nawawi's

work by establishing a scholarly chair dedicated to studying his legacy and writings at Al-Salt Grand Mosque and at the World Islamic Sciences and Education University (WISE).

HRH Prince Ghazi bin Muhammad, His Majesty's chief adviser for religious and cultural affairs and personal envoy, along with a number of Islamic scholars, witnessed the signing.

Over the past years, three waqf

chairs had been established, upon Royal directives, to study the works of Imams Al Ghazali at the University of Jerusalem and Al-Aqsa Mosque, Al Razi at the University of Jordan, WISE University, and the King Hussein bin Talal Mosque, and Al-Suyuti at Al-Husseini Grand Mosque.

Royal Hashemite Court Chief Yousef Issawi and Director of the Office of His Majesty Jafar Hassan attended the launch.

## Jordanian-Romanian Economic Forum seeks to boost investments

**AMMAN (JNews)** – The Jordanian-Romanian Economic Forum (JREF) is slated to kick off Monday, which is jointly organized by the Jordanian Businessmen Association (JBA), the Romanian Embassy in Amman, and the Romanian-Jordanian Economic Cooperation Association.

According to a JBA statement on Sunday, the forum will introduce the Romanian private sector to the most important investment opportunities, incentives, and advantages

offered by Jordan's various free and development zones, in addition to the exemptions provided by the Jordanian Investment Law.

During the forum's sessions, the two countries' businesspeople and investors will hold discussions on the agricultural, foodstuffs, transport, and trade sectors, as well as water purification solutions, security and protection companies' supplies, Dead Sea products and marble industry.

The Romanian delegation will vis-

it the Al Muwaqar Industrial Estate (MIE) and the King Hussein Business Park (KHBP), in addition to discussing the possibility to establish joint investment projects and build strategic partnerships in the targeted economic sectors, according to the statement.

In addition, a joint Jordanian-Romanian business council will be launched, with the aim of strengthening the two countries' business communities' investment and trade relations, the statement announced.

## PM honors winners of King Abdullah II Award for Creativity

**AMMAN (JNews)** – Prime Minister Bisher Al-Khasawneh on Sunday patronized a ceremony honoring winners of the 10th edition of the King Abdullah II Award for Creativity 2019/2020, according to the Jordan News Agency Petra.

The biennial award, sponsored by the Greater Amman Municipality (GAM), is the only Jordanian prize with an Arab outreach. The winners were announced in May 2021, and they included Egyptian novelist Isam Yousef whose novel "¼ Gram (Quarter of a Gram)" bagged the award for the literature and arts category which was themed "Narcotics: Response and Solutions".

In the Arab city category, which was themed "City Identity: Preservation and Development," the award went to Walid bin Muhammad bin Uqla Al-Humaiddi, Saudi Arabia, in appreciation of the Asir region's municipality's efforts to preserve the identity of cities and

urban communities in that south-western part of Saudi Arabia.

Meanwhile, the jury decided to withhold the prize in the science category "Unconventional Sources of Water", "for the nominations' lack of originality, ... or applicability".

Chairman of the Award's Board of Trustees, former Prime Minister Abdel Raouf Al-Rawabdeh, said that the award is one of His Majesty King Abdullah's initiatives to honor creative Jordanians and Arabs in three categories: literature and arts, science, and Arab city.

GAM Mayor Yousef Shawarbeh said the municipality launched the award about 20 years ago in implementation of the visions of His Majesty the King to support creativity and innovators, pointing out that the award encourages the introduction of integrated and comprehensive solutions that contribute to national development and ensuring an optimal use of resources.

## JFDA confiscates expired dietary supplements

**AMMAN (JNews)** – The monitoring and inspection teams of Jordan Food and Drug Administration (JFDA), in cooperation with the Public Security Directorate (PSD) and the Jordan Customs Department (JCD), seized a total of 12 tonnes of expired dietary supplements and vitamin preparations, in an apartment in the capital, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

In a statement on Sunday, JFDA Director, Nizar Mheidat, said all the

expired products, which were stored in bad conditions, were confiscated to be then properly disposed of, adding that the JFDA will start taking all necessary measures against those involved.

JFDA's workers carry out periodic monitoring and inspection campaigns, aimed to check on conformity of pharmaceutical and food materials, medical supplies and other substances with the approved terms and requirements, according to Mheidat.

## NARC, Water Ministry, Oxford discuss cooperation

**BAQA'A (JNews)** – The National Agricultural Research Center (NARC), the Ministry of Water and Irrigation, and the British University of Oxford discussed cooperation and exchange of expertise on Sunday, NARC Director-General Nizar Haddad was quoted by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, as saying.

Since its establishment, NARC has been committed to adopting modern technologies and finding new resources by leveraging the outcomes of scientific research and working alongside national and international partners, Haddad said, adding that the center is also committed to benefiting from the University of Oxford's expertise in

supporting and developing scientific research.

Ministry Secretary-General Jihad Mahamid commended NARC's leading role in research and agriculture, stressing that scientific research calls for expanding partnerships and combining theory with practice.

During the meeting, Mahamid presented the challenges facing the water sector, which are increased demand, fewer water sources, and increased energy, operational and maintenance costs, and challenges such as climate change, which has had a major negative impact on the annual rainfall average over the past few years.

## Cabinet extends measures to enhance strategic food stockpile

**AMMAN (JNews)** – The Council of Ministers decided on Sunday to extend the measures taken at the end of last year, with the aim of enhancing the strategic food stockpile and providing support to the private sector, which contributes to reducing costs that would reflect on the stability of prices of basic commodities and foodstuffs, and facilitating the flow of its arrival.

The measures include reducing inspection fees on imported foodstuffs by 30 percent for a period of

six months, starting from 1 April, and extending the exemption period for storing containers from six days to 14 days for a period of six months as well.

The procedures also include reducing inspection fees in yard (4) for containers by JD15 per container for basic materials for a period of six months, starting from April 1 and inspection fees for a container with a capacity of 40 feet to become JD60 instead of JD75, and for a container with a capacity of 20 feet to JD50 instead of JD65.

## World Bank transfers \$48m to Jordanians affected by COVID-19

**AMMAN (JNews)** – The World Bank has transferred an additional \$48 million as part of the emergency financial transfer project geared towards the monthly financial aid program for Jordanian families and workers who have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, according to 9 local media outlet.

With the new payment, the total amount of money transferred by the World Bank stands at around \$360 million since the approval of this project in June 2020.

In June 25, 2020, the World Bank approved the first phase of the project, worth of \$374 million, to assist around 270,000 families in need in Jordan.

In June 2021, the bank approved an additional financial support of \$290 million, amounting to a grand total of \$664 million through the National Aid Fund.



(File Photo: Ameer Khalifeh/ JNews)

### COVID-19 SUMMARY WEEKLY

#### Jordan records 9,135 new cases, positivity rate of 12.08%

**AMMAN (JNews)** – Jordan recorded 9,135 new COVID-19 cases and 44 new deaths according to the weekly report published by the Ministry of Health, bringing the total death toll to 14,003 and the total number of cases to 1,689,314.

During the week of March 12, till March 18, Amman recorded 4,429 cases, while Zarqa recorded 809 cases. Irbid registered 1,097 cases, Balqa 581 cases, Karak recorded 537 cases, Jerash recorded 225 cases, and Tafleeh recorded 207 cases. Madaba

registered 261 cases, Aqaba 218, Ramtha 105, and Ajloun 149 according to the Health Ministry's data.

The ministry said in a statement that 428 hospitalized COVID-19 patients had recovered and were discharged from hospitals, while 344 new patients were admitted.

The number of active COVID-19 cases in the Kingdom stands at around 6,459 according to the ministry. Out of 75,641 COVID-19 tests conducted, 12.08 percent of them came back positive.

## Women make up 52.7% of registered voters for Tuesday's elections – IEC

**AMMAN (JNews)** – The "Eye on Women" program, which monitors elections from a gender perspective completed last Thursday its preparations to monitor the elections of municipal councils, the Greater Amman Municipality (GAM) Council, and governorate councils scheduled to take place on Tuesday, according to Khaberni News.

The program, which is run by the Association of the Jordanian Women's Solidarity Institute "Tadamon", has pointed to latest figures received from the Independent Election Commission (IEC), which confirm that the number of registered voters is 4.648 million, including

2.447 million women, or 52.7 percent of the total voters.

Meanwhile, the number of candidates contesting the elections has reached 4,820, including 867 women, or 18 percent of the total candidates. The IEC said that 1,048 candidates are running for provincial councils, including 157 women, or 15 percent, and 17 women are running for (GAM) Council of 111 candidates. Not a single woman is running for the presidency of the municipalities.

The program aims to identify nuances of the electoral process, as well as to identify the reasons why women do not reach decision-making

positions in all fields. It also aims at identifying the means of bringing women to decision-making positions by liberating them from fear by developing their skills and empowering them by expanding people's knowledge regarding political participation, and ensuring the integrity of the elections.

The program considers that motivating women is an important step for their political empowerment, despite the need for a higher representation of women in the government, parliament, political parties, professional unions, and other leadership positions so that their participation becomes effective.

# Gov't should look for non-traditional ways to combat inflation – experts

By Sarah Abu-Sa'ad

**AMMAN** – Economists believe that the government is unable to combat inflation using its traditional tools in the backdrop of rising prices of commodities and in light of global events. Despite having used three traditional tools: fixing the prices of fuel derivatives, placing a ceiling on the prices of basic commodities and maintaining subsidy on some, the government will continue to face challenges, namely a growing budget deficit.

Economic writer Saleemeh Al-Darawi told *Jordan News* that the government does not possess any tools to confront the increase in commodity prices "as the factors

behind the hike are external, and not local".

"Fixed fuel prices, although one solution, will cost the budget in excess of JD25 million each month, so in total the cost would amount to JD100 million over three to four months," said Darawi.

However, Darawi suggested a few other measures, although intricate, for the government's use; to increase wages, which is a difficult option in light of budget deficiency, high debt, slow economic growth, and the decline in revenues, "also bearing in mind that the general budget was drafted without the provision of a salary increase."

Darawi said that the only realistic solution the government could come up is to offer citizens a one-

time financial aid package to assist people in addressing inflation rates. "This one is the best of the worst options that governments have; favorable for the people but risky for the government's budget."

Economic and investment specialist Wajdi Makhamreh doubts the government's ability to confront inflation with its traditional tools because Jordan depends on "imported inflation".

Makhamreh told *Jordan News* that some of the government's tools would provide solutions in the short run, but in the end, there will be a huge rise in inflation rates, "which we started to witness now due to the Russia-Ukraine war."

Makhamreh recommends a free-market competition based on

supply and demand as a way to determine prices. He also advocates that consumers alter their shopping habits and culture, through opting for cheaper substitutes since it is "difficult to increase people's salaries because the government is broke."

Political economy specialist Zayyan Zawaneh told *Jordan News* that the government could take several actions to contain the hike in prices, suggesting prolonged fixed fuel prices; further elaboration to citizens on the new electric tariff to help them avoid heightened bills; strict control over the market to combat any unjustified price hikes and monitoring wholesalers' stockpiles to prevent monopolies and greed.

Zawaneh also suggested that the government reinforce the role of the Civil Service Consumer Corporation and the Military Consumer Establishment to make available a bigger variety of inexpensive and affordable commodities.

Additionally, Zawaneh proposed "work from home", as well as imposing a traffic system of odd and even car license numbers on alternating days, and car-pooling as some of the solutions that would cut down on fuel consumption and save people money.

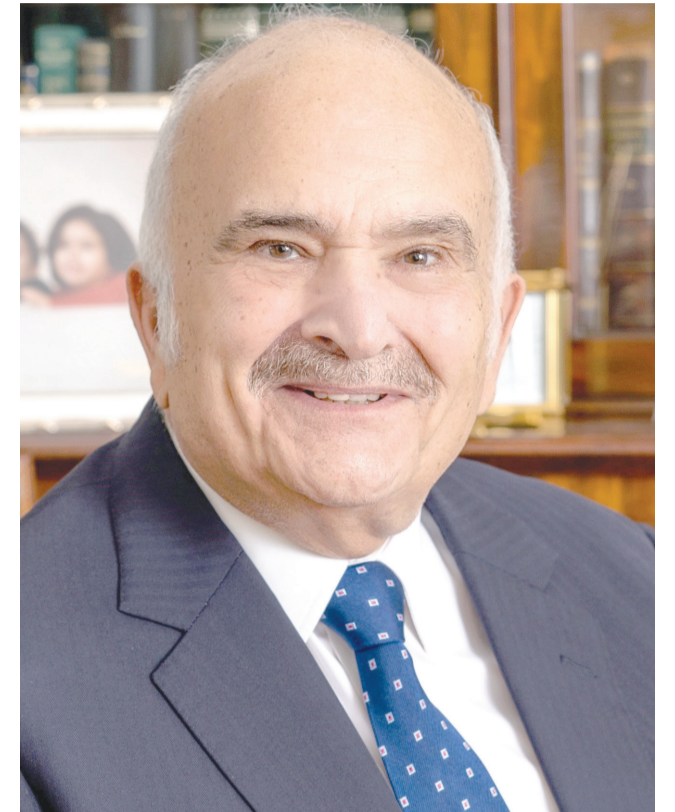
"I expect that the government will be facing a budget deficit of JD200-250 if it did not take any step to implement any of these contingency measures," Zawaneh said.

According to Ammon, replacing cars with even or odd numbers on the road was first applied in 1991 due to the First Gulf War and in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.



(Photo: Shutterstock)

## Prince Hassan celebrates his 75th birthday



**HRH Prince Hassan bin Talal celebrated Sunday his 75th birthday. He has tirelessly promoted the cause of peace for decades and spent a lifetime in the service of the people of Jordan. In recognition, His Majesty King Abdullah bestowed the Order of the State Centennial on Prince Hassan in November 2021. Prince Hassan has ceaselessly called for a balance among progress, peacemaking, and care for the environment, so that humankind may exist harmoniously and sustainably in our shared world. Prince Hassan was born on March 20, 1947, to Their Majesties King Talal and Queen Zein El Sharaf. He has been married to HRH Princess Sarvath for 53 years. They have four children: a son, HRH Prince Rashid, and three daughters, TRH Princesses Rahma, Sumaya, and Badiya, and nine grandchildren. (Photo: JNews)**

### SPONSORED CONTENT

## Whoever she is, there's a KIA for mom

**AMMAN** – What do families need from a car? Well, like any car owners, they expect reliability, the highest levels of safety, and good value. But to fit in with a family's versatile needs, those clever and considerable little touches and extras that make riding in a car so much nicer could turn the daily drudge of driving the family around town into something so much more enjoyable.

Not only do KIA's cars come with a 5-year warranty, a high safety rating, and exceptional value, they are also increasingly known for including those nice-to-have extras as a standard. Excellent infotainment systems to keep everyone in the car happy, USB charging ports accessible to all passengers, and of course comfortable interiors that make the journey so much more relaxing.

Since she'll be the one driving the family car the most, let's consider the options from the perspective of moms at different stages of the family life cycle.

#### Young mom with a baby

As a new mom getting to grips with how to cope, the ability to get out and about and meet family and friends to share the joy of a baby, means that a car is something for getting around easily. For everyday practicality, KIA Sonet is hard to beat. Perfect for the smaller family unit and the mom on the go, who won't need to bring everything along, and prefers something nimble and economical. For the drive to baby music and swimming class, to the family doctor for a checkup, or on the supermarket and nursery run, ISOFIX fittings (the safest and most convenient way to attach a

baby seat) mean not waking the baby when they arrive.

#### Mom on the go

For the active family, always on the go, KIA Seltos is the dream car. With a spacious interior and more than enough room for all the things kids need (backpacks, instruments, sports equipment, and more), while still being small enough to zip through traffic. The higher position of the driver in an SUV gives good visibility, and side steps help little ones climb in while ISOFIX fittings make it straightforward to install any combination of child seats to make their ride safer and more comfortable. The state-of-the-art entertainment system and connectivity allows mom to take and make calls safely and keep the backseat karaoke going (with extra USB ports for charging gadgets in the back). KIA Seltos is fantastic for the school run, but weekend family adventures is where the car's roominess and comfort really pays off – plus.

#### Growing family

As the family grows KIA Sorento is ideal. The seven-seater mid-size SUV is flexible and practical for larger families, with enough seats for everyone and their friends. With a growing family, the weekly shop grows too and the back two rows in the Sorento fold completely flat to accommodate any size shopping trip. The powered tailgate opens automatically when the key is within range, and the opening height can even adjust – no longer will shorter moms struggle to reach once all that shopping has been stowed away. The panoramic sunroof allows a fresh breeze in, but not

traffic fumes, while built-in window blinds make it easy to block out the sun for naps in the passenger rows. Advanced Driver Assistance Features have been thoughtfully included to make the ride less stressful, because every mom knows that a car full of kids is distracting enough and all help is welcome.

#### Mom with teenagers on the move

Once the children are older and need more room, it's time for an upgrade, and the KIA Telluride offers everything mom has come to expect from a KIA but with added luxury. The company's largest SUV has eight comfortable seats and a third row with plenty of legroom even for tall teens. Passengers have reclining seats, diffused air roof vents, cup holders and USB charge ports conveniently located. While the driver gets the luxuries expected from a premium car, including wireless phone charging and a top-end entertainment and guidance system. The exceptional safety and assistance features (including front and rear collision-avoidance and parking guidance) also help ease the worry as the teenagers begin learning how to drive, and reassurance when they begin taking their friends out on their own. (And when they start looking for their first car, KIA has several options well worth considering.)

In the end, buying a car is a big decision and the choice is personal. But KIA's impressive range of cars includes options to make the daily life of any mom, at any stage in her family's development, that much more convenient and relaxing, even fun.



## Jordanian women partake in WikiGap initiative for gender-equal internet

**AMMAN (JNews)** – More than 100 Jordanian women signed up to participate in a Wikipedia edit-a-thon that aims to increase women's on-line presence and participation in editing woman-centered articles on the user-generated encyclopedia, according to the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

The WikiGap initiative, started by Sweden five years ago, brings together a group of volunteers to write articles on Wikipedia that specifically highlight prominent and influential women as the world celebrates Women's History Month this March.

"Equal opportunity has not been achieved yet, especially not on the Internet," said Sweden's Ambassador to Jordan Alexandra Rydmark on Sunday.

"Throughout history, there has not been any written record about

women who have made great contributions to the world, and I am very proud that we are now taking concrete actions to change that," she added.

Mary Kawar, former minister and participant in the initiative, called for furthering gender equality efforts to enable women to have the same opportunities and resources as their male counterparts.

Canadian Ambassador Donica Pottie said that the WikiGap has, so far, resulted in the editing of more than 50,000 articles, which scored more than 100 million views, making women's achievements more visible on the Internet.

"We hope that this (initiative) inspires more young women to pursue their dreams by making women's achievements more visible online," she said, adding that Canada is proud to partner with Sweden,

the United Nations Women and Jordanian organizations for this important initiative.

"The gender gap in the digital space is very wide," said Aisha Mukhtar, the United Nations Women Deputy Representative.

"By strengthening women's representation via the Internet, WikiGap ensures that women's voices and their history are documented and celebrated," Mukhtar said, adding "as women's contributions are being highlighted on Wikipedia, we are now one step closer to creating a gender-equal internet."

Partners involved in the initiative are the embassies of Sweden and Canada, UN Women in Jordan, HeForShe Arabia movement, Wikipedia of the Arab Mashreq, Jordan Open Source Association, Khawarizmi Technical College, and the American Center of Research.

### SPONSORED CONTENT

## Amman Arab University signs strategic partnership agreement

**AMMAN** – As part of Amman Arab University's (AAU) endeavor to build relationships and partnerships with international institutions and organizations, the AAU signed a strategic partnership agreement with the Regional Network for Social Responsibility. The agreement covers five main areas: social responsibility, sustainable development, business ethics, and institutional volunteering and community service.

Under the agreement the AAU will represent the network in Jordan while the network will represent the university in the Kingdom of Bahrain in the areas of the subject matter of the agreement. The two parties will cooperate in preparing a set of professional diplomas in the field of social responsibility and sustainable development, holding conferences, forums and training courses, and studying the development of academic specializations in the main areas of the agreement. In addition, the two parties will cooperate in marketing memberships of the regional network for social responsibility for institutions and people in Jordan.

The agreement was signed on behalf of the University by its president, professor Mohamad



Al-Widyan, and on behalf of the network, its chairman, Dr Youssef Abdel Ghaffar, in the presence of the vice-chairman of the network's board of directors, Dr Ali Al-Ibrahim, and from the university, the social responsibility advisor, Basam Al-Bashayrah, and the director of the Department of Media and Public Relations, Wadah Mismar.

This agreement comes within the framework of the university's plan and the Department of Social Responsibility to implement local and international standards for social responsibility practices. The department's mission is: "Provid-

ing educational, training, research, social and economic programs, projects and initiatives that promote sustainable development through joint cooperation with various community institutions."

It is worth-mentioning that the Regional Network for Social Responsibility is an international, non-profit professional organization that was established in 2007 and headquartered in the Kingdom of Bahrain. It is a member of the United Nations Organization and has branches, offices, and representative agreements inside and outside many Arab countries.

# Saudi Aramco reports profit surge on day sites hit by Yemen rebels

**RIYADH (AFP)** — Oil giant Saudi Aramco on Sunday reported a 124 percent net profit surge for last year, in results released hours after its facilities were hit by Yemeni rebel drone and missile strikes.

As the world economy started to rebound from the COVID-19 pandemic, "Aramco's net income increased by 124 percent to \$100 billion in 2021, compared to \$49.0 billion in 2020," the company said.

The results followed news of the overnight attacks by Yemen's Iran-backed Houthi rebels, which caused no reported casualties but hit targets including Aramco facilities and a water desalination plant.

The attacks "led to a temporary reduction in the refinery's production, which will be compensated for from the inventory," said the Saudi energy ministry in a statement on state media, without providing numbers.

The Saudi-led military coalition which backs Yemen's government said it intercepted and destroyed ballistic missiles and drones launched towards Jizan and other areas in the kingdom, causing "damage" to several sites.

Initial investigations indicate the militia used Iranian cruise missiles that targeted Al-Shaqeeq desalination plant and Aramco's Jizan bulk



Visitors stop at the Aramco exhibition section at the Misk Global Forum on innovation and technology held in the Saudi capital Riyadh, on November 13, 2019. (Photo: AFP)

plant," it said in a statement.

Targets included a Dhahran Al-Janoob power station, an Aramco gas plant in Yanbu and a gas station in Khamis Mushait, it said.

The Houthis confirmed they had launched the drone and missile attacks targeting a number of "vital and important" sites, including Aramco facilities.

In 2019, Houthi-claimed aerial assaults on two Aramco facilities in eastern Saudi Arabia temporarily knocked out half of the kingdom's crude production.

The Saudi energy ministry said in its statement the attacks had targeted a gas plant and the YASREF refinery, which produces 400,000 barrels per day according to its website, in the Yanbu Industrial City on the Red Sea.

## 'Geopolitical factors'

The kingdom, one of the world's top crude exporters, has been under pressure to raise output as Russia's invasion of Ukraine and subsequent sanctions against Moscow have roiled global energy markets.

Oil-rich Gulf countries, including Saudi Arabia, have so far resisted the pressure, stressing their commitment to the OPEC+ alliance of oil producers led by Riyadh and Moscow.

Aramco president and CEO Amin Nasser cautioned that the company's outlook remained uncertain due in part to "geopolitical factors".

Alluding to the effect price spikes have had on consumers, he noted that "energy security is paramount for billions of people".

"We continue to make progress on increasing our crude oil production capacity, executing our gas expansion program and increasing our liquids to chemicals capacity," Nasser added.

On the latest results, for 2021, he acknowledged that "economic con-

ditions have improved considerably".

The oil giant had in 2019 achieved a net income of \$88.2 billion before the pandemic hit global markets, resulting in huge losses for the energy and aviation sectors, among others.

A strong rebound last year saw demand for oil increase and prices recover from their 2020 lows.

Brent crude has repeatedly spiked above \$100 per barrel lately, driven by supply concerns centered on Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Saudi Aramco also said capital expenditure in 2021 was up 18 percent on 2020 at \$31.9 billion, a figure it expected to raise to approximately \$40 billion-50 billion this year, before further growth.

Saudi Arabia has sought both to open up and diversify its oil-reliant economy, especially since Mohammed bin Salman's appointment as crown prince in 2017.

Aramco floated 17 percent of its shares on the Saudi bourse in December 2019, generating \$29.4 billion in the world's biggest initial public offering.

In February, the kingdom shifted four percent of Aramco shares, worth \$80 billion, to the country's sovereign wealth fund — a move seen as a possible prelude to further opening up the oil giant.

## Turkey says Russia, Ukraine 'close to agreement'

**ISTANBUL, Turkey (AFP)** — Turkey on Sunday said Russia and Ukraine made progress on their negotiations to halt the invasion and the two warring sides were close to an agreement.

"Of course, it is not an easy thing to come to terms with while the war is going on, while civilians are killed, but we would like to say that momentum is still gained," Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said in live comments from the southern Turkish province of Antalya.

"We see that the parties are close to an agreement."

Cavusoglu this week visited Russia and Ukraine as Turkey, which has strong bonds with the two sides, has tried to position itself as a mediator.

Ankara hosted the foreign ministers of Russia and Ukraine in Antalya last week.

Cavusoglu said Turkey was in contact with the negotiating teams from the two countries but he refused to divulge the details of the talks as "we play an honest mediator and facilitator role."

In an interview with daily Hurriyet, presidential spokesman Ibrahim Kalin said the sides were negotiating six points: Ukraine's neutrality, disarmament and security guarantees, the so-called "de-Nazification", removal of obstacles on the use of the Russian language in Ukraine, the status of the breakaway Donbass region and the status of Crimea annexed by Russia in 2014.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has repeatedly appealed for peace, urging Russia to accept "meaningful" talks for an end to the invasion.

"This is the time to meet, to talk, time for renewing territorial integrity and fairness for Ukraine," he said, in his latest video posted on social media on Saturday.

Turkey said it was ready to host a meeting between Zelensky and Russian President Vladimir Putin.

"We are working day and night for peace," Cavusoglu said on Sunday.

## Thousands of Tunisians protest against Saied, his poll on reforms

**TUNIS (AFP)** — More than 2,000 Tunisians rallied on Sunday, the country's independence day, against President Kais Saied and a project he launched to gauge public opinion on proposed constitutional reforms.

Protesters in the capital shouted "the people want to overthrow the president" and "no to consultations".

The demonstration was organized by the Islamist-inspired Ennahdha party and a movement named "Citizens Against the Coup" — in reference to a power grab by Saied last year.

Many of the demonstrators were people who had voted for Saied, among them blogger and rights activist Mounira Bouazizi.

"I thought that he believed in democracy and the gains of the revolution, but he did the complete opposite," she told AFP.

Mohammed, a retiree, echoed her, saying: "We cannot call this a democratic process. Today, the people are divided between pro- and anti-Kais Saied. This harms freedoms and democracy."

Sunday's rally was the latest in a series of demonstrations in the North African country since Saied seized a host of powers after dismissing the government and freezing parliament on July 25.

Critics have dubbed the move a "coup" and rights groups have warned that the country — seen as the only democracy to emerge from the Arab Spring protests — is sliding towards autocracy.

Demonstrators marched on parliament in the Bardo neighborhood of Tunis, many waving national flags, but a large police deployment blocked their path.

"We will not accept the results of the consultation, this farce against the people," Samira Chaouachi, the vice president in the frozen parliament, told the crowd.

Sunday marked the final day of an online poll launched by Saied in January in a



Tunisian protesters try to remove metallic barriers installed by security forces, during a demonstration against their president, not far from the Tunisian parliament headquarters, in Tunis, on March 20, 2022. (Photo: AFP)

process to help rewrite the country's constitution, with the results set to be presented to a committee of experts.

So far only 508,000 people, about seven percent of the seven million eligible voters, have taken part, according to official statistics.

A referendum on the constitutional reforms, which Saied hopes will bolster his authority, is scheduled for July, exactly a year after his power grab, with parliamentary elections scheduled for December.

"Our condolences for the constitution, President Saied," demonstrators chanted Sunday, mocking the low turnout.

Saied had blamed the low turnout on "technical obstacles" and "attempts by the old system to abort this experiment" — in an apparent reference to his arch rivals

Ennahdha.

"We want early presidential and legislative elections," said Ennahdha member Yamina Zoghlami.

"We are in the midst of a political crisis and we must have a political dialogue to save the country," she added, warning of a "Lebanese scenario" in the North African country.

Tunisia, like Lebanon, has been in the throes of an economic downturn and is seeking a bailout from the International Monetary Fund, amid rising prices and inflation.

Demonstrators also called for the release of the former head of the bar association, Abderrazek Kilani, arrested in early March on the orders of a military court on charges of "disturbing public order with the intent to

obstruct the application of the law".

Kilani is a member of the defense committee for former justice minister and senior Ennahdha figure Nouredine Bhiri, who has been under house arrest since December.

Earlier in March, 13 international rights groups called on Tunisia to scrap a draft law that would restrict freedoms gained by civil society during the 2011 revolution.

The leaked draft law could permit authorities to dissolve civil society groups at will without going through the courts, the rights groups said.

In a speech in February, Saied had accused civil society groups of serving foreign interests and trying to meddle in Tunisian politics, saying he would move to ban all foreign funding for such groups.

## Deadly attacks on women rise sharply in Iraqi Kurdistan

**SULAIMANIYAH, Iraq (AFP)** — A woman burned alive by her husband, others shot dead by a father or a teenage brother — bloody violence against women has spiked in northern Iraq's Kurdish region.

The autonomous area, keen on projecting an image of a relative haven of stability and tolerance in war-battered Iraq, has seen a sharp rise in femicide, killings motivated by gender.

"In the past two months, there has been an increase in femicide compared to the previous year," said Hiwa Karim Jwamir of the Kurdish General Directorate for Combating Violence Against Women.

In the first two months of 2022, 11 women were killed in autonomous Iraqi Kurdistan, most of them shot, said the official based in Sulaimaniyah.

Forty-five women were killed in 2021, up from 25 the previous year, said Jwamir.

On a Friday before dawn, a 15-year-old teenager was fatally wounded by six bullets fired by her father in the village of Soran. The man told police his daughter "went out with two boys late at night", according to a domestic violence unit

which also records so-called "honor killings".

Across Iraq, gender-based violence rose 125 percent to over 22,000 cases between 2020 and 2021, says the UN children's agency UNICEF, which has also pointed to "a worrisome increase in depression and suicide among women and girls".

Last December, a 16-year-old girl was disfigured with acid in Baghdad by an adult who wanted to marry her but had been rejected.

For years, activists have denounced violence against women and forced marriages in Iraq, which remains a conservative and patriarchal society.

"Cases of violence against women are on the rise," said long-time Kurdistan activist Bahar Munzir, director of local group the People's Development Organization.

"Most of the women who are killed are victims of a family member."

### Doused in gasoline

A few days before International Women's Day on March 8, the body of a 20-year-old woman was found on the side of the road in Erbil, the



Iraqi Kurds with their mouth plastered shut hold posters showing abused women as they protest to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women in the northern Kurdish city of Sulaimaniyah on November 25, 2008. (Photo: AFP)

capital of Kurdistan.

Maria Sami, the victim, was known on social networks for her feminist speeches.

The following day, on March 9, Kirkuk police announced the arrest of the killer, her 18-year-old brother.

While he was still on the run, he spoke by phone to a Kurdish television channel and tried to justify the killing by charging his sister had failed to obey the family.

In February, mother-of-two Shinyar Huner Rafiq died in hospital, five

days after being admitted with serious burns.

"Her husband had come home one evening in a state of intoxication," Shinyar's father, Huner Rafiq, told AFP.

"He doused her body in gasoline and set it on fire."

After the father reported the killing, police arrested the husband.

"Before dying, Shinyar told us the facts," said the bereaved father. "We recorded it, and we submitted the video to the investigators."

Kurdistan's Prime Minister Masrour Barzani denounced the "horrific case", saying he was "deeply troubled" by the spate of violent attacks against women.

"The government must impose the heaviest possible penalty on perpetrators," he said in a statement. "There is no honor in honor killings."

"I'm determined to protect every woman, girl and child from abuse ... This scourge must end."

### Climate of impunity

In early February, Dohuk police said they had found the corpse of Doski Azad, a 23-year-old transgender woman who had been ostracized

by family members.

An arrest warrant was issued to find the suspected murderer: the victim's brother, who had in recent years been living in Europe.

He had called his family to inform them of his crime and of where the body was, according to police.

The murder was condemned by the UN mission in Iraq, and the consulates of Western countries in Erbil.

The news provoked a torrent of hatred online — against the victim, even though some voices defended minorities' rights.

In June 2011, Kurdistan passed a law criminalizing domestic violence and female genital mutilation.

The law, which threatens life in prison for "honor" crimes, was hailed by NGOs as a major step forward.

But the law's enforcement is hampered by a climate of impunity and a common fear of speaking out.

"When a woman is killed, the procedures of the security services are not the same as when it's a man, the trial is not the same," said Munzir, the activist.

"Some cases don't even make it to court. They are subject to tribal resolution between the man's family and that of his wife, the victim."

# 'Dire' humanitarian situation in besieged Ukraine cities

**KYIV (AFP)** – The humanitarian situation was deteriorating in besieged Ukrainian cities under relentless Russian bombardment on Sunday, as Kyiv called on Moscow's ally Beijing to "condemn Russian barbarism".

In an apparent escalation of the conflict, Moscow on Saturday claimed it had used hypersonic missiles in Ukraine in what would be the first combat use of the next-generation weapons.

Thousands of people have been evacuated from besieged cities but Russian shelling was blocking efforts to deliver humanitarian supplies, President Volodymyr Zelensky said Sunday.

Aid agencies have warned they are struggling to reach hundreds of thousands of people trapped by the invading Russian forces.

A total of 6,623 people were evacuated on Saturday along humanitarian corridors, including 4,000 from the devastated southern city of Mariupol, Zelensky said in his latest video address.

Russia said Saturday its forces had broken through the defenses of the besieged port and were now inside the war-torn city, which has been under relentless bombardment.

Zelensky said the siege of Mariupol would go down in history as a war crime.

"To do such a thing to a peaceful city, what the occupiers have done, this is a terror that will be remembered even in the next century," he said.

Russian shelling also heavily damaged the Azovstal metallurgical plant in Mariupol, one of the largest in Europe, Ukrainian officials said.

"The economic losses for Ukraine are immense," tweeted lawmaker Lesia Vasylenko, who posted a video showing thick columns of smoke rising from an industrial complex.

In Mariupol, rescuers were still searching for hundreds of people trapped under the wreckage of a bombed theatre where more than 1,000 people had been seeking shelter when it was struck on Wednesday.

## Dire situation

Aid agencies are struggling to reach people trapped in cities ringed by Russian forces,



Local residents retrieve what is left in their destroyed apartments, located in a five-story residential building that partially collapsed after shelling the day before, in Kyiv on March 20, 2022. (Photo: AFP)

the UN's World Food Program said Saturday, including hundreds of thousands of women and children.

"The challenge is to get to the cities that are encircled or about to be encircled," emergency coordinator Jakob Kern told AFP, describing the situation as "dire".

More than 3.3 million refugees have fled Ukraine, but many people have remained trapped, including "hundreds of thousands of women and children. They cannot come out and we cannot reach them," he added.

In western Ukraine, Russia claimed Saturday it had used Kinzhal (Dagger) hypersonic missiles to destroy an arms depot.

Military analyst Pavel Felgenhauer howev-

er suggested the use of the missiles would change little on the ground.

"Fundamentally this does not change anything on the battlefield, but it gives a certain psychological and propaganda effect to scare everyone," he told AFP.

Despite their progress entering the center of Mariupol, Russian forces have met fierce resistance and been stalled outside Kyiv and several other cities in the east, making them vulnerable to Ukrainian attacks against supply lines.

## Appeal for peace

Zelensky on Saturday again appealed for peace, urging Russia to accept "meaning-

ful" talks.

"This is the time to meet, to talk, time for renewing territorial integrity and fairness for Ukraine," he said in a video posted on social media.

But as in previous negotiations there appeared to be little progress in reaching a ceasefire.

Russia carried out air raids on the southern city of Mykolaiv in quick succession Saturday, Vitaly Kim, head of the regional administration, said, a day after a deadly strike on a military barracks there.

Less than 100km to the southeast, Ukraine claimed that a Russian general had been killed by strikes on an airfield outside

Kherson, just north of Crimea. Ukraine said he was the fifth top-ranking officer killed since the invasion began on February 24.

## Appeals to China

With no apparent progress in talks with Moscow, Ukraine called on Beijing to join the West in condemning the Russian invasion, which it has so far refused.

China could play an important role in global security, top Zelensky advisor Mikhailo Podolyak tweeted Saturday, "if it makes a right decision to support the civilized countries' coalition and condemn Russian barbarism."

US President Joe Biden warned his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping on Friday of "consequences" for any financial or military aid for Russia, a move that could turn the standoff into a global confrontation.

Xi said the war was "in no one's interest," but showed no sign of giving in to the pressure to join Western condemnation of Russia.

In New Delhi, Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida on Saturday urged India to take a tougher line on Russia's invasion.

But his counterpart Narendra Modi made no direct mention of Ukraine and their joint written statement afterwards called only "for an immediate cessation of violence".

Australia meanwhile Sunday announced more sanctions against Russia, immediately banning all exports of alumina and bauxite while pledging more weapons and humanitarian assistance for Ukraine.

The export ban aims to impact aluminum production in Russia, which relies on Australia for 20 percent of its alumina.

Putin so far appears undeterred by threats and sanctions, holding a triumphalist rally in Moscow on Friday to mark eight years since Russia's seizure of Crimea, saying his goal in Ukraine was "to rid these people from their suffering and genocide."

Russia wants Ukraine to disarm and disavow all Western alliances, in particular to renounce joining NATO or to seek closer integration with the European Union — steps that Kyiv says would turn it into a vassal state of Moscow.

## China locks down millions more as COVID spreads

**BEIJING (AFP)** – China on Sunday imposed stay-at-home orders on millions more people in the country's northeast as it battles its biggest COVID-19 outbreak in two years.

The country has largely kept the virus at bay since it brought to heel its initial outbreak in 2020 using targeted lockdowns, mass testing and travel restrictions.

But the Omicron strain has broken through its defenses in recent months and taken hold in multiple cities.

Jilin, the second-biggest city in Jilin province, will lock down about 4.5 million inhabitants for three days from Monday night, local authorities announced.

More than 4,000 new infections were reported across China on Sunday — with two-thirds in Jilin province, which borders Russia and North Korea.

Changchun, Jilin province's capital, said Saturday it would also tighten restrictions for three days.

Since March 11, Changchun's nine million people have only been allowed out once every two days to buy food.

The new measures mean only medical personnel and other anti-epidemic workers will be authorized to leave their homes.

But restrictions are being eased in the southern tech hub of Shenzhen, which locked down its 17.5 million residents a week ago.

Public transport will resume fully from Monday, alongside some administrative and business activities, local health authorities said Sunday.

Non-essential businesses will remain closed however and the downtown Futian

business district is still under strict anti-COVID measures.

Shenzhen is home to some of China's biggest tech firms, meaning any curbs on businesses come at a significant economic cost.

China on Saturday recorded its first two deaths from COVID in more than a year.

Tens of millions of people are currently in lockdown in other regions and authorities are rushing to create hospital beds, fearing the outbreak could put the healthcare system under strain.

Jilin province has built eight temporary hospitals and two quarantine centers.

East of the capital Beijing, the city of Tangshan banned traffic for 24 hours on Sunday in an effort to slow the virus' spread — and will test all its 7.7 million people.

## Russia says has again fired hypersonic missiles in Ukraine

**MOSCOW (AFP)** – Russia said Sunday it has again fired its newest Kinzhal hypersonic missiles in Ukraine, destroying a fuel storage site in the country's south.

The Russian defense ministry also said it killed more than 100 members of Ukrainian special forces and "foreign mercenaries" when it targeted a training center in the town of Ovruch in northern Ukraine with sea-based missiles.

"Kinzhal aviation missile systems with hypersonic ballistic missiles destroyed a large storage site for fuels and lubricants of the Ukrainian armed forces near the settlement of Kostyantynivka in the Mykolaiv region," the defence ministry said.

The ministry said the base had been used for the main supplies of fuel for Ukrainian armored vehicles in the country's south.

The Kinzhal (Dagger) hypersonic missiles were fired from airspace over Russian-controlled Crimea, the ministry said, adding that Kalibr cruise missiles

launched from the Caspian Sea had also targeted the depot.

On Saturday, Russia said it had used the Kinzhal hypersonic missiles to destroy an underground missile and ammunition storage site in western Ukraine close to the border with NATO member Romania.

The Ukrainian armed forces confirmed to AFP on Saturday that the depot had been targeted but said they had "no information of the type of missile."

Russian analysts said the use Friday of the Kinzhal hypersonic missiles in Delyatyn, a village in the foothills of the Carpathian mountains, was the first combat use of such weapons in the world.

The Russian defense ministry said that it also used long-range precision weapons against other facilities in Ukraine on Saturday evening and early Sunday.

Russian forces fired the Kalibr missiles from the Black Sea to target a plant in the northern city of Nizhyn used to repair armored vehicles, the ministry said.



(Photo: Pixabay)

## Antarctica hits record temperatures, say experts

**PARIS (AFP)** – Eastern Antarctica has recorded exceptionally high temperatures this week, more than 30°C above normal, say experts.

The Concordia research base at Dome C of the Antarctic, which is at an altitude of 3,000m, on Friday registered a record -115°C, Etienne Kapikian, a meteorologist from France-Meteo tweeted.

Normally, temperatures fall with the end of the southern summer, but the Dumont d'Urville station on Antarctica registered record temperatures for March with 4.9°C, at a time of year when normally temperatures are already sub-zero.

Gaetan Heymes of France Meteo described the unseasonably mild weather

as a "historic event".

And geoscientist Jonathan Wille wrote on Twitter: "And there it is, Concordia broke its all-time record temperature by 15°C."

"This is when temperatures should be rapidly falling since the summer solstice in December."

"This is a Pacific Northwest 2021 heat wave kind of event," he added. "Never supposed to happen."

The unprecedented temperatures come after the National Snow and Ice Data Center in the US said Antarctica's sea ice fell below 2 million square kilometers in late February for the first time since 1979.



ASE Weekly Report  
20 March 2022

### NEWS AND UPDATES

• S&P Global Ratings affirmed its 'B+/B' long- and short-term foreign and local currency sovereign credit ratings on Jordan with a stable outlook. *S&P Global Ratings*

• Total assets of licensed banks in Jordan dropped by 0.4% in January 2022 to amount to JD 60.82 billion, compared to JD 61.06 billion recorded at the end of 2021. *CBI*

• Jordan's income from tourism increased by 196.5% during the first two months of 2022 to amount to USD 462.3 million compared to the same period of last year. *Al Rai Newspaper*

• Queen Alia International Airport passenger numbers stood 768,777 in the first two months of 2022, representing an increase of 164.6% compared to the same period of 2021. *Al Rai Newspaper*

Regional Markets	Index	WTD	MoM	YTD
Amman SE (ASE)	2,233.1	1.8%	3.3%	5.4%
Dubai FM (DFM)	3,350.1	-1.5%	0.7%	4.8%
Abu Dhabi SE (ADX)	9,606.5	-0.3%	4.9%	13.2%
Saudi SE (TASI)	12,769.2	0.7%	2.3%	13.2%
Kuwait SE (KSE)	8,694.1	-0.7%	5.1%	13.8%
Qatar SE (QSE)	13,397.6	-1.7%	5.2%	15.2%
Bahrain SE (BAX)	1,965.1	-4.3%	2.1%	9.3%
Muscat SM (MSM)	4,315.8	-0.3%	5.5%	4.5%

• Source: ASE

Sector Indices	Value Traded (JOD)	No. of Shares	Close	Change
Financial	13,140,845	11,655,348	2,667.6	0.5%
Banks	5,957,837	2,413,717	4,029.9	0.8%
Insurance	451,803	468,651	2,047.2	0.4%
Diversified Fin.	1,623,501	2,398,030	1,304.8	-1.8%
Real Estate	5,107,704	6,374,950	1,570.5	-1.5%
Services	10,905,616	7,081,571	1,362.2	2.2%
Industrial	14,258,275	2,052,619	4,292.4	5.0%

• Source: ASE

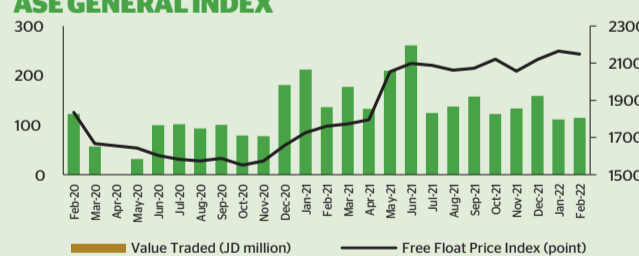
Market Breadth	Gainers	Losers	Unchanged
50	65	18	

• Source: ASE

Top Gainers	Price	Change
The Arab Potash Comprehensive Land Development and Investment	1.68	8.4%
Real Estate Development	0.69	7.8%

• Source: ASE

### ASE GENERAL INDEX



Top Losers	Price	Change
Arab Investors Union Company for Real Estates Developing	0.58	-15.9%
High Performance Real Estate Investments	0.42	-14.3%
Al-Tajamout for Catering and Housing	0.34	-12.8%

• Source: ASE

Most Active	Price	Number of Shares Traded
High Performance Real Estate Investments	0.42	1,439,807
Jordan Telecom	2.23	1,342,623
Jordan Petroleum Refinery	3.74	1,137,436

• Source: ASE

Top Value Traded	Price Traded	Value
(JOD)		
Jordan Phosphate Mines	24.32	12,719,831
Jordan Petroleum Refinery	3.74	4,188,516
Jordan Telecom	2.23	2,975,672

• Source: ASE

Trading by Investor Type (13 - 17 March 2022)	Buy	Sell
Retail	84%	83%
Institutional	16%	17%

• Source: SDC

Trading by Nationality (13 - 17 March 2022)	Buy	Sell
Jordanian	89.7%	86.6%
Arab	10.0%	12.9%
International	0.3%	0.5%

• Source: SDC



(Photo: JNews)

## Shifting global dynamics



AMER AL-SABAILEH

THE GLOBAL impact of the Russian war in Ukraine has effectively become a continuation of the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, which have affected the world and created common challenges that countries must face.

The world is beginning to see the domino effect of commodity and supply chain issues as a result of the Russian invasion, similar to that at the beginning of the pandemic a couple years ago. This new instability is creating new realities for many countries, with social, economic, and security issues to manage in addition to more basic issues, such as food supply.

The invasion of Ukraine also has an impact on global politics. While there is a clear sharp position for the US and its allies in the EU and NATO, some pro-American countries have not really followed the US line. This is particularly so in Gulf countries like Saudi Arabia and the UAE who are looking for a chance to renegotiate their positions with the Biden administration.

The resulting oil crisis and their ongoing relations with Russia have offered a chance to send a clear message to the US about the need to find new ground of understanding with the Democratic administration, which, according to these countries, neglected their interests when conducting the nuclear deal with Iran a few years ago, and the war in Yemen, and undervalued their roles in the region, especially that of the UAE, with its regional peace plan and the Abrahamic accord.

Other countries, like Egypt, which appeared undecided at the beginning of the invasion had to take a clearer position after a call from G7 ambassadors in Cairo who asked them to stand by international law and UN principles. It resulted in a clear Egyptian position in the UN General Assembly emergency session, voting in favor of the UN resolution condemning the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

Another active player is Turkey, which seemed to be in a very strong position in this crisis as a NATO member and a strong ally of Ukraine, as well as a strategic competitor to Russia. It could also be time for Turkey to restore relations with the US and the EU, particularly with eastern Mediterranean countries like Greece, to play a fundamental role in the future gas supplies from the Mediterranean. It could also be one of the drivers of the recent Israeli-Turkish rapprochement.

This is also a very interesting time for Iran, which is eager to seize the moment to restore the nuclear deal and return as a major player in the global oil market.

However, the pressure on Russia through sanctions and isolation could have serious impact on territories where Russia has influence, such as Syria. For a country like Jordan, the risk of destabilization or chaos should be a priority to manage, especially since militias and non-state actors could play a significant role soon as they attempt to use the changes and chaos to launch activities in new territories.

The Ukraine war may become protracted, and any longer-term open conflict is likely to attract terrorist, criminal groups, and militias to operate under the cover of war. Conflicts often become proxy wars so the Middle East could also become a place for different protagonists and their contradictory positions in the Ukraine.

For Russia, this could easily go down the same path as it did in Afghanistan many years ago, particularly since most of the countries surrounding Russia have recently shown signs of destabilization, increasing the risk of expanding the zone of conflict and create more troubles for Russia at its borders.

**Amer Al-Sabaileh is a Jordanian university professor and geopolitical expert. He is a leading columnist in national, regional, and international media, offers consultancies to think tanks and speaks at international conferences on Middle East politics and developments.**



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PUBLISHER & CHAIRMAN  
Mohamed K. Alayyan

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF  
Osama Al Sharif



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• Advertising and editorial offices: 59 Zaal Abu Tayeh Street  
• P.O.Box 1995, Amman, 11821, Jordan, Telephone: +962-6-5544025  
• Website: www.jordannews.jo, Email: editor@jordannews.jo

# Unlocking Jordan's rail



FARES BRAIZAT

WHAT IS the problem of and what is the solution for the Jordan rail project? This is being asked by many for very different reasons because rail is essential for all economic activities and subsequent social mobility.

Despite the strategic importance of the rail network for the economic growth and development of the country, the project has been accumulating stacks of papers and resultant broken promises, with no tangible results. More of the same is no longer acceptable.

Although the Jordanian Investment Fund Law No. 16 of the year 2016 stipulated exclusive rights for the Fund to develop the rail, no tangible results are visible yet. The rationale for this exclusivity was to bypass all "perceived obstacles" and to "fast track" the construction of the national rail network with Saudi-Jordanian investment. The Saudi Jordanian Investment Fund Company (SJIF), which was established in 2017 under the articles of this law which is supposed to invest in infrastructure projects, including the rail, has not done so yet despite being operational for the past five years. Nothing was "fast tracked".

Since the investment clouds have not rained rails so far, we probably need to think of seeding other clouds to complement or replace the exist-

ing ones. For whatever reasons, SJIF moved on to other investments and it is not clear whether it will continue with the Aqaba-Maan (then Amman) stretch of the rail network.

In 2019, the US, the EU, Australia, Japan, and Canada contributed a total of \$2,393,673 to Jordan. This money was spent on a variety of import-

ant projects, some of which were agreed upon with the government of Jordan, while others were driven by donors' agenda and priorities, which may be important, but are not necessarily priorities for Jordan.

By all measures, the national rail remains one of the most important projects, if not the most important, for the sustainable revival of the economy, economic development, equitable distribution of opportunities, women economic empowerment, environmental protection, and competitiveness.

It is about time that a donor fund for the construction of the Jordan rail be formed jointly with a consortium of rail companies of major donor countries such as the US, Germany, France, and Japan. The government of Jordan, based on its priorities, would reallocate donor funds per priority to the "Jordan Rail Fund". This will be the most significant economic empowerment project for Jordan, with meaningful, direct and positive impact on people's lives.

Our biggest challenge today is economic, and at its core are the astronomical unemployment figures. The rail network project would help alleviate this pressure and preserve social cohesion.

The writer is chairman of NAMA Strategic Intelligence Solutions. fares@namasis.com

... The national rail remains one of the most important projects, if not the most important, for the sustainable revival of the economy, economic development, equitable distribution of opportunities, women economic empowerment, environmental protection, and competitiveness.



(Photo: Shutterstock)

## The Russia-Ukraine war is threatening Turkey's economy

ALEXANDRA DE CRAMER

AS RUSSIA'S invasion of Ukraine grinds on, its impacts are already being felt far beyond Ukraine's borders. In Turkey, the war has cast a shadow over President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's economic ambitions, which include reining in soaring interest rates, boosting exports, spurring growth, and creating jobs.

Turkey's ties with Russia and Ukraine have long benefited the Turkish economy, but now they have become liabilities.

Once viewed as having the potential to be a major food producer, Turkey today imports most of what it eats. As inflation rates climb, this dependence on buying from abroad is bankrupting consumers.

The Turkish Statistical Institute (TUIK) recorded a 16.4 percent increase in the consumer price index during the first two months of 2022, while Turkey's Inflation Research Group (ENAGrup), which tracks price trends, estimates that consumer goods and services spiked nearly 124 percent between February 2021 and February 2022.

The rising cost of wheat is particularly problematic. In 2019, Turkey became the third-largest wheat importer in the world, and today it imports almost 20 tonnes annually. According to the Turkish Grain Board, the price of wheat per tonne has surged to \$517, up from \$262 last March, the most it has in 14 years. As a result, the price of bread is 120 percent higher than three years ago. And because Turkey imports 65 percent of its wheat from Russia and 13 percent from Ukraine, these prices are only going to worsen.

The war in Ukraine has also led Turks to panic buy sunflower oil, which Turkey imports in abundance (it is the world's largest importer of this commodity). Again, Russia and Ukraine are the key sources, accounting for 70 percent of Turkey's imports. In the last week alone, the price has

jumped to \$2,000/tonne from \$1,400/tonne, and fears are rising that the country will soon run out of the essential cooking oil. Ankara is trying to solve the problem by subsidizing the planting of sunflowers this growing season, but it remains unclear how much of Turkey's needs can be met domestically.

Finally, fuel prices are skyrocketing, as they are in many countries. Six months ago, the average price for a liter of gasoline was 776 lira (about \$0.53). Today it is nearly triple that. Some 4,000 service stations are on the verge of shutting down as customers stay away from the pump. If things continue like this for much longer, more than 50,000 people connected with the oil and gas industry could be out of work.

As Turks line up for bread across the country, inflation fears are dominating Turkish society.

"Everything is getting expensive, from your food to your bread, from your shirt down to the socks you wear," one participant in Istanbul's subsidized bread program recently told Al-Jazeera.

The sentiment is nearly universal. A February 2022 report from the Gezi Research Institute found that 71 percent of Turks say that the country's teetering economy is their biggest concern and that an economic crisis is looming.

Unfortunately, the government's mitigation strategy is obfuscation. Despite the lira losing 44 percent of its value against the dollar in 2021, the government insists Turkey's economy grew 11 percent last year. But as economist Fatih Ozatay has suggested, official numbers are almost certainly tampered with; the actual percentage is likely closer to four percent. Yet even if Turkey's economy did grow anywhere close to double digits last year, 2022 will be another story. As Simone Kaslowski, president of the Turkish Industry and Business Association, notes, "the war between Russia and Ukraine has increased the [eco-

nomic] risks for Turkey".

One reason is Turkey's exposure to the Russian and Ukrainian markets. Currently, there are more than 700 Turkish companies in Ukraine with more than \$4.5 billion worth of investment. One of them is Anadolu Efes, Europe's fifth-largest brewer, which has 11 facilities in Russia and three in Ukraine. All of them have temporarily shut down.

The ready-to-wear clothing manufacturers based in Istanbul's Laleli district have also been hurt. Orders by companies in Russia and Ukraine make up 40 percent of the district's \$3 billion in annual trade volume. Sales have come to a standstill since the war started.

Unlike its Western counterparts, Turkey has fewer options to bring Russia to the table. While Europe shuts its doors to Russian airlines in retaliation for the Kremlin's actions, Turkey remains reliant on Russian holiday makers. Russians do not need a visa to enter Turkey and can stay in the country for 90 days every six months. There are already roughly 30,000 Russians living in Antalya, and the Russian-Turkish Business Association estimates there have been as many as 100,000 marriages between Russians and Turks in recent years.

These family ties translate into new cash flowing into the housing market, especially in Istanbul. According to TUIK, in December 2021, Russians were among the top foreign buyers of homes in Turkey. Already a popular Russian tourist destination, Turkey could become an important safe-haven for those escaping Russian authoritarianism.

As the smoke of Russia's war machine continues to engulf Ukraine, Europe is on edge for what comes next. But in Turkey, the war has already arrived. The sooner that Ankara concedes to this reality, the more ammunition Turks will have to weather the economic storm.

The writer is a journalist based in Istanbul. She reported on the Arab Spring from Beirut as a Middle East correspondent for Milliyet newspaper. Her work ranges from current affairs to culture, and has been featured in Monocle, Courier Magazine, Maison Francaise and Istanbul Art News.



# Celebrating mothers on their special day



Maysoon Haymour



Ala' Sinan



Dina Al-Bashir

By Heba Elayyan

TODAY MARKS Mother's Day, an occasion Jordan celebrates on March 21 every year. It is one special time to celebrate all mothers who raise their children, who work and make a difference to their society, and who are active advocates for the rights of all women.

**Claiming success in their endeavors**

Maysoon Haymour, mother to one child and interior designer says "success means that I continue to enjoy doing what I am most passionate about in life, which is design, and at the same time to be able to create and maintain a deep connection with my daughter".

"Being successful means that you are functional in both roles; being a mother and being an employee," according to Dina Al-Bashir, mother of two children, lawyer, an MP, a member of the Lower House Legal Committee, and the youngest woman elected as assistant in the House permanent office.

Success to Ala' Sinan, single mother of three and director of the Office of Fundraising and Grants at Al-Hussein Technical University, is "reaching what I want as a mother, and a director".

Sinan believes that work has a positive impact on mothers and children, as it is a

way to pursue a passion, build a career path and relationships, and improve the family's financial status.

There may be differing opinions on whether it is more beneficial to children to be raised by a working mother or a stay-at-home mother, and while there is no clear answer to that, it is undoubtful that mothers do what they see fit to better the lives of their children.

According to Sinan, "children of working mothers are more successful in terms of educational attainment and in terms of their personalities; they are more social, active and strategists".

According to Bashir, "working has no negative effects, as it teaches how to respect time and organize your life affairs in a more thoughtful way". She believes that children of working mothers are more aware of what it means for women to leave home to work and be active members of society, which leads to changing the society's ideas about women.

Success may not come easy; in Bashir's case, the biggest challenge is balancing the roles "as I have a difficult position that requires reviewing laws and attending sessions", while as a mother, she needs to "care for my children in terms of health and study".

Sinan said: "At the beginning of the pandemic, I lost a job because one of the requirements was to work from the office for eight hours, and I could not leave the

children alone."

"Women who left the labor market during the pandemic did not return, unlike men, and the female economic participation rate decreased by 0.4 percent during the third quarter of 2021," according to Jordan Labor Watch.

Department of Statistics (DoS) figures show that the unemployment rate among women during the third quarter of 2021 reached 30.8 percent, compared to 21.2 percent for men.

According to Reem Aslan, chief technical advisor at International Labor Organization Regional Office for Arab States, the unemployment rate has increased due to working mothers' low wages: "Some of them see that withdrawing from the labor market and staying with their kids is better than working for a wage that will not be able to cover the cost of transportation, nurseries, or even of schools."

There are other reasons that drive women to withdraw from the labor market, according to Aslan: the wage gap between men and women, and the length of paid vacations.

According to Sinan, "during my 16 years of working, the length of paid vacation was never enough; the 14 days given a working mother are usually used to take care of the children".

The gap in salaries of men and women is one other challenge women face, in Jordan and worldwide, Sinan said, adding

that "our community sees the man as someone having greater responsibilities than women. But what about single mothers?"

Jordan ranked 131st out of 156 countries in the Global Gender Gap Index in 2021 (133rd in economic participation and opportunity, 153rd in labor force participation, 56th in wage equality for similar work), Aslan said, adding that a 2018 DoS report estimated the gender pay gap at 12.9 percent in the public sector, and at 7.7 percent in the private sector.

Discriminations of different sorts do not deter most women. In Haymour's case, "the only challenge I faced was the guilt feeling that came with being a mother. The constant worrying that you are not doing enough or giving enough".

"It is challenging at first, but every time my daughter is proud of my work or of what I do, I remind myself that I am setting a good example for her."

"Every challenge that you overcome is a success because it affects you and changes your personality, and makes you a stronger person", Bashir said.

According to Sinan, "a woman's desire to succeed drives her to success. I believe that the support of those around you is a secondary thing, and yes, we can balance our roles because God Almighty created women able to do two jobs at the same time simply, all they need is planning and high coordination".



Children with OCD experience thoughts which are called obsessions and their behaviours in response to those thoughts are called compulsions. (Photo: Shutterstock)

## EDUCATION

# OCD in children: Debunking myths

By Jude Hashem

Sometimes children might do things that do not make a lot of sense, and that is because they may occasionally have thoughts they feel like they should do something about. For example, they might insist on wearing a certain "lucky" shirt, otherwise their day would be filled with bad luck.

However for some children, these thoughts and the resulting actions are persistent and no matter how hard they try, they cannot make them go away. If so, then that may be the case of a child with obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD).

### What is OCD?

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, children with (OCD) experience "unwanted thoughts, and the behaviors they feel they must do because of the thoughts, happen frequently, take up a lot of time (more than an hour a day), interfere with their activities, or make them very upset".

Children with OCD experience thoughts that are called obsessions and their behaviors in response to those thoughts are called compulsions.

For any thought, image, or idea to be considered an obsession, it must be unwanted, persistent, and extremely distressing and worrying for those experiencing it. As for compulsions, they must be done repeatedly in an attempt to relieve the anxiety experienced as a result of these upsetting and intrusive thoughts.

OCD remains a wildly misunderstood psychiatric disorder; even its classification has changed over the years, as we begin to understand more about it. During the previous edition of the DSM (the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders), it fell under the class of anxiety disorders due to

the severe levels of anxiety it can bring, as well as the compulsions or rituals performed as an attempt to relieve such anxiety. However under the fifth and latest edition of the DSM, it now falls under its own class of "obsessive-compulsive and related disorders".

There are many myths surrounding OCD in children, and the longer they prevail, the more difficult it is to battle this difficult disorder. Therefore it is vital to debunk some of these myths and update our knowledge on OCD in order to be able to be of service to those who have it, and not add to their anxieties. Here are some myths surrounding OCD in children:

### 'OCD is not that common in children'

According to Jeff Szymanski, one of the world's leading authorities on OCD and the executive director of the International OCD Foundation, at least one in every 200 children and adolescents has OCD. He even suggests that the age of onset can be as young as 4 years old. To put it in perspective, that is the same number of children with diabetes, and no one considers diabetes to be rare. Moreover, in half of the adults with OCD, the onset came before the age of 15.

There are no reported studies focused on OCD in Jordanian children, which only goes to prove how far behind we are in its research and, consequently, treatment.

Proper support for children with OCD should start with investing in regional and national research, and having available statistics that accurately reflect the reality of OCD in our region.

### 'OCD is a result of childhood trauma'

Some people believe that a child who develops OCD had to have grown up in a dysfunctional and/or abusive home, or that he experienced some kind of major trauma that resulted in them developing OCD. The truth is that what happens to you in your childhood plays an insignificant role in hav-

ing OCD.

While the cause of OCD is not yet known, research suggests that it may be a combination of brain problems and genetics. Most researchers believe that OCD tends to run in families. Studies have shown that people with OCD lack a chemical called serotonin in their brain.

### 'OCD is all about being a neat freak and wanting things clean'

While it is true that obsessions with cleanliness are common in children with OCD, researchers argue that a cleanliness complex can also be a personality trait that one has control over. The only way for cleanliness to be classified as OCD is if it results in absolute debilitating and unrelenting anxiety that disrupts daily functioning. The same goes for wanting things to look neat. Not every child with OCD experiences obsessions and compulsions with tidiness and cleanliness.

Some other common obsessions that children with OCD may experience are: fear of sickness, with some developing specific obsessions related to the death of their parents, preoccupation with order and symmetry, violent images and unwanted thoughts of causing harm to others or themselves, trouble with any thought that may go against their personal and religious beliefs, and spending long periods touching things and thinking about numbers and sequences.

Some common compulsions can range from repeated handwashing, hoarding, counting and recounting, repeating after others, asking the same questions over and over again, making rude or obscene gestures, or checking and rechecking to make sure that the door is locked.

### 'COVID-19 is causing OCD in children'

Although difficult to believe by some, and much like stress, COVID-19 has not been a cause for OCD in children. What the pan-

demical did cause, however, was an exacerbation of existing symptoms in children and adolescents with OCD.

The first recorded study to look at the immediate effects of COVID-19 on children and adolescents with OCD found that in both distributed groups, one with children newly diagnosed and the other with children who have had a diagnosis for years, participants experienced a "worsening of their OCD, anxiety, and depressive symptoms".

### 'We are all a bit OCD at times, it is not that big of a deal'

This myth about OCD may be one of the most harmful. Belittling or disregarding the experience of people, specifically children, with OCD can lead to catastrophic results. OCD is classified as a disorder for a reason, and the brains of children who have it have been proven to be wired differently. It is not a character trait or some trending personality quirk; it cannot be "switched off", and millions of children around the world have their lives and their development continuously disrupted because of it.

### 'There is a test that can detect OCD'

Unfortunately there are no known tests that can detect OCD. The only way to obtain an official diagnosis is through a licensed child psychiatrist. The process of diagnosis happens through a full mental health evaluation of the child and through making sure that the child is in fact experiencing persistent and involuntary obsessions and compulsions that are severe and disruptive to their daily living. The main criterion is for rituals or activities such as handwashing or checking that the door is locked to take up more than an hour every day.

Adults with OCD, in most scenarios, can at least realize that their actions are not normal to a certain extent, but that is much harder in the case of children who do not realize how irrational and abnormal their thoughts and actions are. When those around them

do not understand their need to perform such rituals to rid themselves of such thoughts, their levels of anxiety worsens and they feel misunderstood and even unsafe in their environment.

### 'You cannot treat OCD'

While there is no known cure for OCD, different treatments are available and have shown promising results. Treatment will of course differ depending on the child's age, symptoms, and other factors concerning their general health. The first line of treatment recommended by professionals is therapy using cognitive and behavioral methods that focus on the child identifying and understanding their fears. Then they focus on behavioural methods that aim to teach the child how to cope with those fears and as a result learn to better resolve them. The therapist will, for example, set rules or set a limit to the number of times and the length of time that a child may wash his/her hands.

Exposure therapy is a psychological treatment in which the child must face their fears. It is preferable for exposure therapy to be done by a professional therapist. You must never attempt to do exposure therapy on a child without the supervision of a mental health professional. Therapists will sometimes give specific instructions to a child's parents or caregivers on how to continue with exposure therapy at home.

Another available treatment option is medication, such as selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs), to help boost serotonin levels in the brain.

It is important to know that the earlier the intervention the more likely you can play a key role in easing the symptoms and enhancing normal development. Understanding that this is a debilitating illness, especially for children, and keeping open channels of communication with your child will significantly improve the quality of their day-to-day living.

WHEELS

# Chinese electric cars flood the Jordanian market despite issues

Official brands disavow responsibility for providing after-sales services

By Mohammad Zaro



Chinese electric cars gained popularity due to aggressive Chinese trade offices' social media promotion campaigns, but also because their wholesale prices or prices that come with special offers are significantly lower than normal prices.

The discounted prices at Chinese trade offices can be attributed to several reasons. One is the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on car sales in the Chinese market; another is the fact that these cars were not successful in the Chinese market for design or performance reasons. This may account for Chinese trade offices' increased urgency to liquidate the vehicles at discounted prices by re-exporting them to car dealers worldwide, including Jordan.

Car traders in the Amman and Zarqa free zones would not want to miss this profitable opportunity, especially considering the sizable profits they can make by providing electric cars at competitive prices — prices much lower than those of other types of new electric cars available in the local market.

The Chinese electric cars include brands like German Volkswagen and American Ford that were developed and manufactured for the Chinese market in cooperation with major state-owned auto manufacturing Chinese companies such as SAIC and FAW.

But because these electric cars are manufactured and intended for the Chinese market exclusively, the official dealerships in Jordan, on behalf of the global manufacturing companies for both Volk-

swagen and Ford, publicly announced that they are under no obligation to provide after-sales services or original spare parts for them.

And since these cars do not have a manufacturer warranty outside China, Jordanian agents cannot order spare parts. They are not even allowed to obtain special tools or computer software necessary to perform check-ups or update the systems of those new cars, especially batteries, which need to be updated periodically.

Local traders seem to have found a makeshift solution to the warranty problem. They reached agreements with local maintenance centers, which service all cars and offer commercial spare parts. However, according to car service experts, these guarantees, no matter how wide their contractual coverage, will fall short compared to the real factory warranty, especially in terms of car battery, which constitutes almost half of the cars value.

Moreover, most local insurance companies are reluctant to provide comprehensive insurance coverage for new electric cars imported from China due to the absence of maintenance and repair services and original spare parts from authorized dealers. So, buyers considering buying insurance policies for these cars must understand and expect body parts shortage issues and delays in fixing their vehicles if an accident occurs.

Despite this, demand for these cars remains strong. But will the sales momentum continue once buyers realize the importance of having a manufacturer warranty, or will the expected growth of an "eco-system" of alternative services with used and new parts ease these issues?

More importantly, will public authorities concerned with consumer rights and trade regulations take charge of this unregulated market situation and set rules that would protect consumers? Time will tell.



(Photo: Car Sale Base)

However, according to car service experts, these guarantees, no matter how wide their contractual coverage, will fall short compared to the real factory warranty, especially in terms of car battery, which constitutes almost half of the cars value.



(Photo: Wikipedia)

## For car designers, EVs offer a blank canvas

(NYT) — The internal combustion engine is exiting stage left. Although it provided great transportation and performance thrills for many years, it will no longer play a leading role. In its place under the hood will be, well, very little.

Ready or not, the curtain is going up on electric vehicles (EVs) and most of their mechanical components don't sit where fossil-fuel engines once performed. Electric motors — far smaller than gasoline engines — are mounted between the wheels. A large transmission no longer gobbles up passenger space. No drive shaft is needed, thus no tunnel in the middle of the floor. The rear seat doesn't have to be positioned to provide room for a fuel tank.

The EV's power source — the battery — is heavy and large but of minimal height. Situated within the area protected by the wheels, it serves as part of the chassis — a structural member. Nearly all the parameters of vehicle packaging have changed.

Given a new and radically different platform on which to build vehicles, designers are rethinking their approach; the sheet metal that adorned gas-guzzlers can be a misfit here.

"A lot of us are still petrol heads, but there's something exciting about the way cars are evolving," said Dominic Najafi, chief exterior designer for Jaguar, which makes the I-Pace electric SUV. "We cherish the classic cars, but we welcome the future car."

To make a profit, the automakers must sell a lot of EVs, and maintaining two vehicle categories long-term would appear to be financially unsound. Although conventional vehicles will remain in production for a decade or more, no one interviewed for this article mentioned new designs for the old guard.

"One has to think about EV design in a somewhat different way," said Bob Boniface, Buick's director of global design. "It's a more efficient form of transportation, so there is an expectation that styling aesthetics re-

flect that. Traditional grille shapes change due to different cooling requirements; aerodynamic devices and surfacing become more prominent."

How that translates to the road will be revealed this summer when Buick joins the electric crowd. Like other new General Motors EVs, its model will be created on the Ultium modular platform.

Kai Langer, design chief for BMW, sees electrification as an opportunity for designers. "With combustion engines, there was a mandated configuration," he said. "In this new world, you have different options."

The size and weight of the battery compel it to be placed low and between the wheels, Langer said. That allows for a flat floor. The cowl — a structural element between engine compartment and passenger area — can be moved toward the front, increasing interior space.

"From a design standpoint, there's not really a downside to electrification," said Dave Marek, executive creative director for

Acura. He added that his design team was focused on how an automobile relates to the occupants.

"Electrification allows you to embrace the senses more fully," Marek said. "I think the customer expects some electrification inside. Maybe in the form of mood lighting."

Marc Lichte, Audi's head of design, relishes the opportunities that electrification provides. "It is our enabler to design the most attractive Audis ever," he said, explaining that short overhangs, made possible by the absence of engine and fuel tank, are an aesthetic advantage. The longer wheelbase required to accommodate a battery is attractive, he added, and so are the large wheels needed to support the weight of the battery.

"Cars with combustion engines had a different character," Lichte said. "They were making a sound."

A traditional automotive etymology is based on animals roaring and combustion engines screaming, he added.

"The styling of ICE cars took inspiration from predators. Holes were needed for breathing; cars became ever more aggressive," he said. "They were so aggressive they became comic characters. To apply that language and philosophy to electric cars would not make sense at all."

Although some EV designers want their vehicles to be seen as radically new and different with only a nod to the past, Ford views its electrification mission somewhat differently, bringing its legacy models into the future.

"Our strategy has been to electrify our popular nameplates," said Chris Walter, design manager for Ford's Mustang Mach-E. "The understanding is that people don't want it to look like a science project."

Yet, Walter agrees that the short front

overhang and longer wheelbase are loved by designers, so although Ford EV designs echo the past, its electrics will take advantage of the opportunity to stretch out.

Most legacy automakers strive to preserve styling cues that represent their brand. For Ford and the Mustang Mach-E, it's a pronounced rear haunch. And given the sales success of Ford's F-150 pickup truck, the electric F-150 Lightning must respect that heritage.

Tesla's Cybertruck looks like a science project. With triangular styling that, according to the automaker, will be teamed with outstanding ability, the truck could help make revolutionary EV styling acceptable — if it ever comes to market. Originally slated for a 2020 introduction, it has faced numerous delays.

Some designers see the past as a design resource but draw limits. "Legacy, heritage and pedigree are important," Boniface said, "but that doesn't mean we're going to go back and make our cars look like modern versions of previous vehicles. I think that's wrong for our brand. One thing we will take from our past is a spirit of optimism."

He continued: "Buick was Harley Earl's playground in the postwar era. It was the Jet Age. Buick embraced technology. It embraced forward-thinking and optimism about the future. That was the 1950s paradigm. We are still embracing technology and optimism. That's what our brand is about."

Audi sought to preserve what it calls the single-frame design of its traditional front fascia but said the look would progress.

BMW's designers aim to maintain elements of their classic front-end styling as well. Langer said eliminating that look would be "like asking an artist to start drawing people without noses."

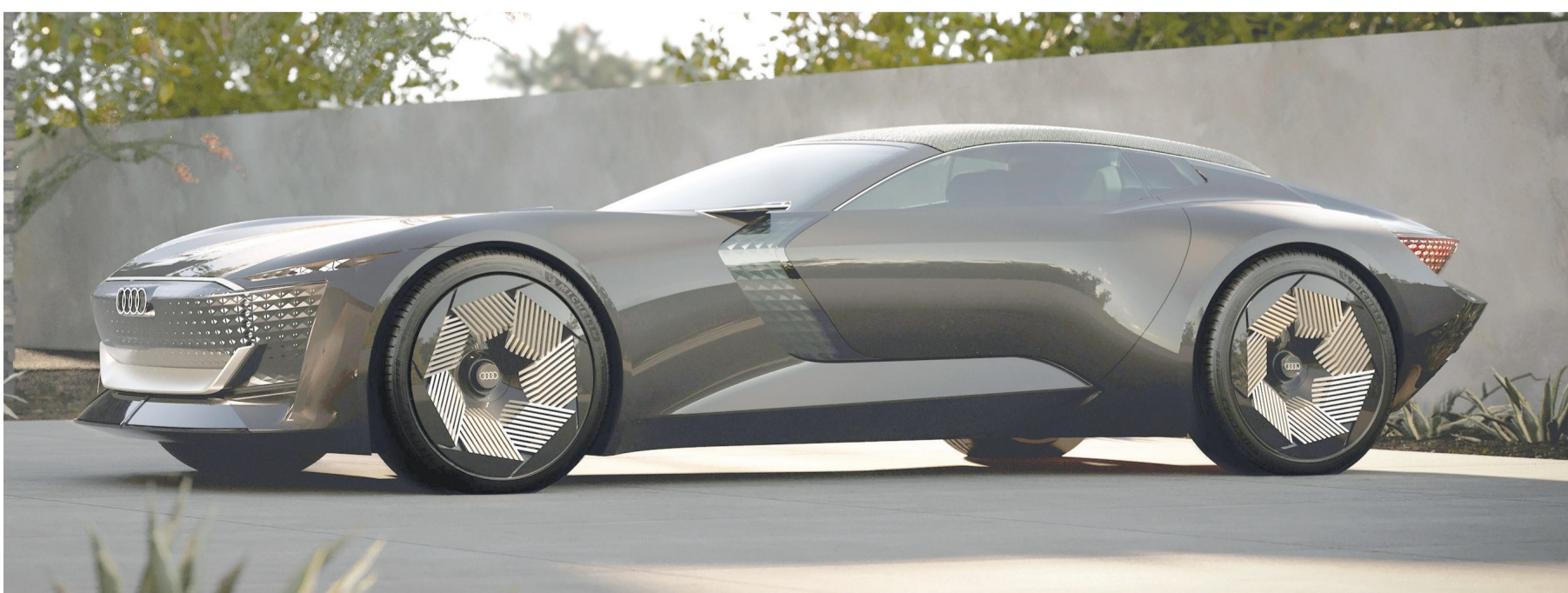
With no history of fossil-fuel vehicles to color its thinking, upstart EV maker Lucid is not bound to tradition. Its Lucid Air lacks even a hint of the large grille and gaping front air intakes typical of luxury cars. One might say it was drawn without a nose.

"It is an advantage to not have to create a legacy front end," said Derek Jenkins, senior vice president of design and brand for Lucid.

"A lot of us are still petrol heads, but there's something exciting about the way cars are evolving."



The Lucid Air at Bear Mountain State Park in New York on December 28, 2021.



An undated photo provided by Audi shows the company's Skysphere concept car, which highlights the short overhangs, long wheelbase and large wheels extolled by Marc Lichte, Audi's design chief. (Photos: NYTimes)

"The styling of ICE cars took inspiration from predators. Holes were needed for breathing; cars became ever more aggressive."

# Love is in the air, so is dander

(NYT) — Twixie and Cowboy, both 2-year-old Brussels griffons, got married in December at the bride Twixie's backyard. She wore an appliqued lace bodice with a ruffle of layered tulle at the waist. The groom donned a handmade silk-cotton tuxedo and top hat.

In front of a makeshift chapel set up for the occasion, a ceremony was led by Sam Palmetier, whose Brussels griffon, Grinch, attended and is a friend of the couple. Fig, another Brussels griffon, served as a flower girl.

Later, four-legged guests enjoyed a meal of puppy chow, as well as a puppuccino bar and activities including a ball pit.

The nuptials cost about \$25,000. Twixie's owner, Tara Helwig, 37, a fitness coach in Dallas, and Cowboy's owner, Makayla Wilson, 22, an epidemiology data analyst in Phoenix, split the bill.

The two and their canines met at a Brussels griffon hangout in February 2021. The dogs soon became "boyfriend and girlfriend," said Helwig, who started planning the wedding with Wilson after the owners and their pets visited each others' homes.

Of the 40 Brussels griffons invited, 37 attended. "It just turned out to be way grander than anticipated," Helwig said.

Wilson, who handled the guest list, said that she and Helwig intended to throw "the most epic dog wedding."

"We were not just going to do a photoshoot," she added. "We wanted to do more than that."

Celebrating a union of two animals, or even an animal and a human is not a new concept. But as



Twixie (the bride) and Cowboy, both Brussels Griffons, at their wedding at Twixie's home in Dallas, on December 4, 2021. (Photos: NYTimes)



the pandemic forced many human couples to put ceremonies on hold, more people began to "think outside the box and write their own rules, and that's especially true when it comes to pet weddings," said Hannah Nowack, an editor at the wedding planning and registry website The Knot.

Last June, employees of Village

Pet Supplies & Gifts in Luzerne, Pennsylvania, hosted the "Holy Catrimony" of Toby and Noelle, two local cats, at the store. Noelle's owner, Melissa Sulima, an attorney in Pittston, Pennsylvania, had the idea after her cat became enamored with Toby, who lives at Village Pet Supplies, in videos that were shared on its Facebook page.

Following a string of successful in-person dates, every human who witnessed their chemistry agreed that the cats belonged together, "and it just exploded from there," said Sulima, 42, who adopted Noelle in 2019 from Rescue Warriors Cat Rescue in West Pittston, Pennsylvania.

The couple was wheeled into

their wedding on June 19 inside a red wagon. Noelle wore a dress handmade by a co-founder of Rescue Warriors, and an employee at Village Pet Supplies led a ceremony that included reciting both cats' vows. Afterward, cupcakes and cider were served to the 40 human guests.

"They had it decorated beautiful-

ly," Sulima said of the venue. "I was blown away." She added that the two felines were only married for six months: Last December, Noelle died suddenly of complications from hyperthyroidism; she was thought to be around seven-years-old.

Despite efforts to find another companion for Toby, who is 10, Sulima believes he will never remarry. "Toby is Noelle's husband 'til the day he passes," she said.

To attend the cats' nuptials, human guests were asked to donate \$15 to Rescue Warriors.

As with any wedding, experts say that anyone organizing a ceremony for pets or animals should prioritize the needs of the couple.

"If they don't like to be dressed up or they find crowds of strangers stressful, it's better to skip the wedding dresses, the guest list, and anything else that would make them uncomfortable," Ingrid Newkirk, the president of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, said in a statement.

In considering their needs, others note not to discount companionship. Ellie Laks, the founder of animal sanctuary The Gentle Barn, staged a wedding between two cows, Dudley and Destiny, at its facility in Christiana, Tennessee, in 2016. Laks, 54, compared their relationship to "a storybook" romance, explaining that, if animals could talk, many may choose to say 'I do' for the same reasons as humans.

"Humans and animals have the same desire for love and friendship, the same ability to feel sadness, happiness, and fear, and the same need for a good life," she said.

## GAMES & HOROSCOPES

21/03/2022 ©2022 TRIBUNE CONTENT AGENCY, LLC

### HOROSCOPES BY MAGI HELENA



**ARIES**  
The sky is not falling, although you may feel compelled to rush in to hold it up. Be grateful for people who are willing to forgive any impulsiveness and brighten your life. Cooperation solves most pending issues.

**CANCER**  
Familiarity can breed contempt. Something can be tasty or pleasing but overexposure can cause an allergy or sensitivity. Take a gentle break from anyone or anything that is getting too overwhelming.

**LIBRA**  
Your financial situation may seem dismal if you only focus on the downside. Your job or work, however, may offer you the ways and means to get yourself right side up. Listen to helpful advice from coworkers or mentors.

**CAPRICORN**  
A combination of congenial connections and a wise assessment of your prospects can put you in the driver's seat. You may resent interruptions when you are focused on achieving long-term financial security.

**TAURUS**  
The loudest voice usually gets attention, but this does not mean it deserves to be heard. You may enjoy vibing in group settings, but some people may want more than their fair share of focus. Remain tolerant of interruptions.

**LEO**  
Misunderstandings can arise if you do not pay attention to the latest policies and rules. Listen to what people are telling you so that you fix an error or mistake that has been pointed out. Be prepared for unexpected reactions.

**SCORPIO**  
You may fear that someone has "lost that loving feeling." Remain understanding and tolerant of someone's eccentricities during any brief downturn in your harmony. Restore peace by being forgiving, fair and generous.

**AQUARIUS**  
Don't get backed into a corner by fear. Your reaction to invitations or kindnesses may be lessened if you are worrying about criticism and disapproval. Love and validate yourself, then choose a course that is best for all.

**GEMINI**  
This is a good time to clear the air with a friend or to foster forgiveness with a loved one. Erase someone's worries by explaining how their doubts are unfounded. Offering good advice can be deeply rewarding.

**VIRGO**  
Mental agility could help you get any job or agreement off the ground. Your excellent communication skills can make other people comprehend the mutual benefits. A partner should be happy to listen to your ideas.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
Focus on relevant issues and activities. You can enrich your life by hanging out with unusual people in professional or social settings. It may be easy to act on new concepts to make your family life more fulfilling and comfortable.

**PISCES**  
Making other people feel comfortable and welcome is a talent that is accentuated under these stars. You can offer valuable guidance to a younger person or use good taste to make a difference in someone's life.

### GOREN BRIDGE BY BOB JONES

#### COUP EN PASSANT

North-South vulnerable, West deals

**NORTH**  
♠ K Q 7  
♥ J 7 2  
♦ K Q 4  
♣ A K 7 5

**WEST**  
♠ 6  
♥ A K Q 10 8 6 3  
♦ 7 5  
♣ Q 10 9

**EAST**  
♠ J 9 5 4 3  
♥ 5 4  
♦ J 10 8  
♣ J 4 2

**SOUTH**  
♠ A 10 8 2  
♥ 9  
♦ A 9 6 3 2  
♣ 8 6 3

The bidding:  
SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST  
4♥ Dbl Pass 4♠

All pass

Opening lead: Ace of ♥

A double of a high-level pre-empt is not a penalty double, but it is not strictly for takeout either. It shows "cards" — a good hand. It does not promise to defeat the contract, but it

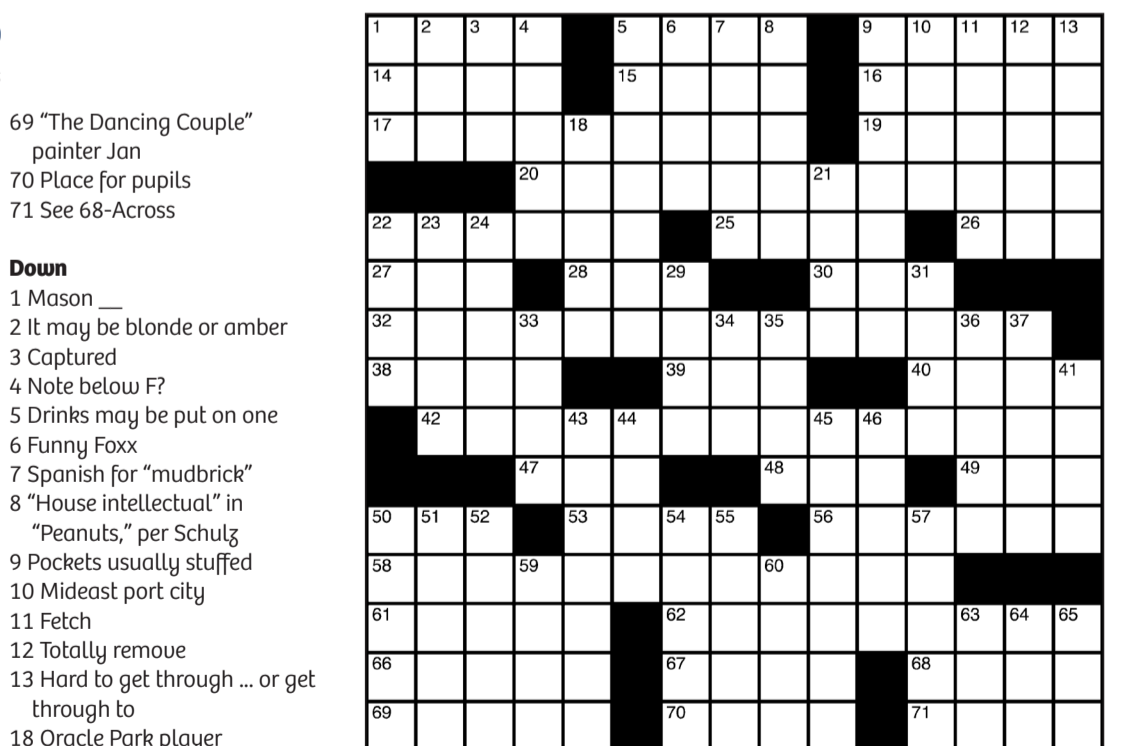
shows enough defense to think that a successful defense is likely. Partner, with a weak hand, is free to pass. Partner of the doubler should only bid when he has some useful offensive values and thinks his side might achieve a better score by declaring.

South, holding two aces, could have passed the double and been sure of getting a plus score. He bid, however, in the hope of achieving a bigger plus score. South ruffed the heart continuation at trick two, cashed the ace of spades, and led a spade to dummy's king. The 5-1 trump split was a disappointment, but not a surprise. After some thought, South realized that he could make his contract if East started with at least three diamonds and at least two clubs — both likely on the auction.

South cashed the ace and king of clubs, followed by three top diamonds ending in his hand. He ruffed a diamond with dummy's queen of trumps. East still had three spades to the jack and South's only trump was the singleton 10. South led a heart from dummy and could not be prevented from scoring his 10 of trumps "en passant" for his tenth trick. Making four! Nicely played.

### CROSSWORD BY JOYCE NICHOLS LEWIS AND RICH NORRIS

- Across**  
1 Goes on and on  
5 Like storytelling  
9 Continued violently  
14 Spiky succulent  
15 Half a salon job  
16 Prize  
17 Failed to honor  
19 Like some diets  
20 Psychiatry?  
22 Like a pin?  
25 Hockey great Phil, to fans  
26 Golfer's support  
27 L.A. commuter org.  
28 Remind over and over  
30 Neighbor of Greece: Abbr.  
32 A noble title and entrée into high society?  
38 Father  
39 Jimmy Eat World genre  
40 Re/B artist India\_\_\_  
42 Passion of a well-trained city dog?  
47 Alternative to email  
48 German grandpa  
49 '60s war zone  
50 Speaker in a typical Swiftly  
53 Craft brew choices  
56 How Mona Lisa smiles  
58 Blue plumage, say?  
61 Many pop soloists  
62 Settings for hiking and running  
66 In again  
67 Comfort  
68 With 71-Across, possible result of my gain ... and what four long answers have undergone?
- Down**  
1 Mason \_\_\_  
2 It may be blonde or amber  
3 Captured  
4 Note below F?  
5 Drinks may be put on one  
6 Funny Foxx  
7 Spanish for "mudbrick"  
8 "House intellectual" in "Peanuts," per Schulz  
9 Pockets usually stuffed  
10 Mideast port city  
11 Fetch  
12 Totally remove  
13 Hard to get through ... or get through to  
18 Oracle Park player  
21 Places for 15-Acrosses  
22 Old Ramblers, briefly  
23 Stiff-upper-lip type  
24 Tiny Pacific nation  
29 Scottish lowland  
31 "Sons of," in temple names  
33 Indoor ball brand  
34 Lifesaver, briefly  
35 Carnaby Street's district  
36 Johnson successor  
37 Scratching post material  
41 Part of EGOT  
43 Abandons in a crisis  
44 Fairly large fair  
45 Silver linings  
46 Medina resident  
50 Makeup of a long Russian

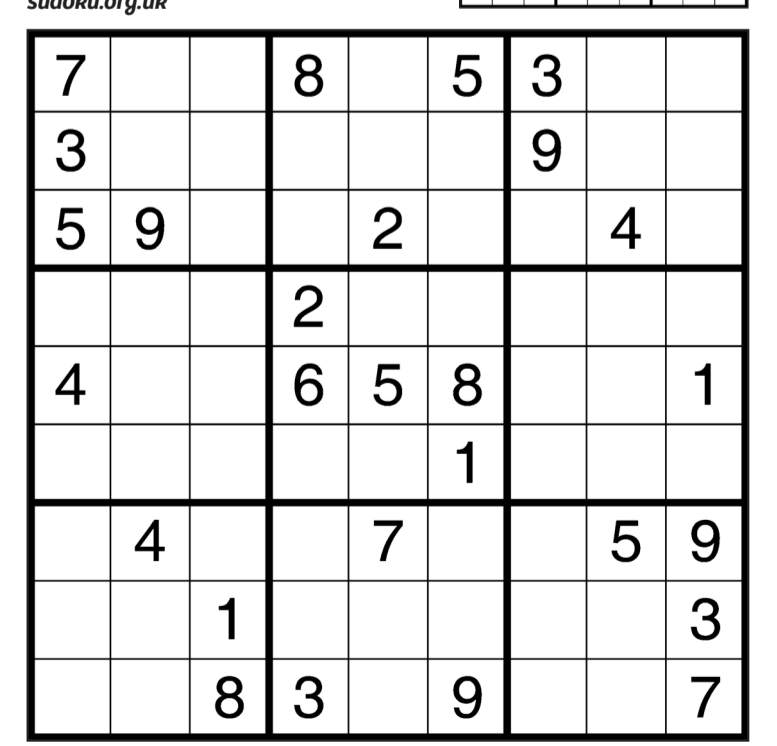


line  
51 Parliament newcomer?  
52 Photo finish  
54 "What a shame!"  
55 Surf feature  
57 New Hampshire state mineral  
59 Stories to pass on  
60 Hike  
63 Castle queenside, in chess notation  
64 Xi preceders  
65 Prom gp.

### SUDOKU

LEVEL 1 2 3 4

Complete the grid so each row, column and 3-by-3 box (in bold borders) contains every digit, 1 to 9. For strategies on how to solve Sudoku, please visit [sudoku.org.uk](http://sudoku.org.uk)



Yesterday's Solution

5	1	3	2	7	4	8	9	6
2	9	8	3	5	6	1	7	4
4	6	7	1	8	9	2	5	3
7	2	9	4	3	5	6	1	8
3	4	5	8	6	1	7	2	9
1	8	6	9	2	7	4	3	5
8	3	1	6	9	2	5	4	7
6	5	2	7	4	3	9	8	1
9	7	4	5	1	8	3	6	2

Yesterday's Solution

Z	E	T	A	S	C	I	T	E	I	P	A	D
E	C	O	L	I	A	V	O	N	C	A	S	E
S	H	A	L	T	J	A	N	E	E	R	S	E
T	O	D	O	P	U	N	K	R	O	C	K	E
S	T	E	R	N	G	Y	R	A	T	E		
J	E	T	S	K	I	S	T	Y	L	E		
O	X	O	E	M	P	T	Y	A	G	E	E	
S	P	O	T	P	E	E	P	S	M	O	T	A
H	O	L	E	S	W	E	E	P	T	L	R	
S	H	E	L	V	E	E	A	R	F	U	L	
P	H	A	R	T	H	A	I	R	S	W	A	B
A	T	R	A	R	A	J	A	S	T	I	N	E
S	H	E	L	E	L	A	N	H	E	N	N	A
M	A	D	E	T	E	X	T	E	D	G	E	D

# Worley secures 'emotional' giant slalom title

**MÉRIBEL, France (AFP)** — French veteran Tessa Worley secured an 'emotional' giant slalom World Cup title on Sunday after a nerve-racking fourth place in front of her home fans.

Federica Brignone won the last race of the women's World Cup season and Worley came fourth to grab the title as Mikaela Shiffrin blew a big lead on the second leg.

"It's the emotions, a moment in France in front of my public, it's what an athlete dreams of, you can't do much better. There is a very strong emotional side today," said the 32-year-old Worley after her second giant slalom title.

Swede Sara Hector entered the race leading the event standings by five points from Worley with American Shiffrin in touch in third.

"It was an incredible scenario," said Worley.

Shiffrin dominated the first run to lead Brignone by a huge 0.82sec. Worley was eighth at 1.60sec and Hector, battling injury, a distant 13th.

Hector again struggled in the second run, but Worley delivered what turned out to be the fastest second-run time to briefly grab the lead.

"After the first round I was disappointed because I felt that it was getting away from me. I had to give it my all in this second round, and

also that fate was in my favor," she said.

Because she had so much time to make up, Worley's combined time was quickly overtaken by later skiers.

As Shiffrin leapt out of the starting gate for the final run of the women's season, Worley was fourth. If the American collected the 100 points for a victory, she would take the title by four points from Worley.

But Shiffrin seemed to opt for a defensive approach and failed to build up speed, losing large chunks of time at each split. She ended up posting the slowest time of any of the 24 skiers to finish the second run.

Brignone won by 0.31sec from compatriot Marta Bassino. Slovak Petra Vlhova was third at 0.37. Hector was 14th.

**'Thrilling race'**

Worley missed the podium as she finished fourth, 0.45sec behind Brignone, but she collected the small globe and red bib as she became giant slalom champion for a second time.

"I knew it was going to be a thrilling race but I didn't imagine it to be this exciting," she said.

"I had a lot of dreams last night, a lot of possible scenarios, but it was still different from everything I had imagined."



France's Tessa Worley celebrates on podium her small Globe after winning the Women's Giant slalom season during the FIS Alpine Ski World Cup finals 2021/2022 in Meribel, French Alps, on March 20, 2022. (Photo: AFP)

## BRIEFS



(Photo: Amjad Al-Taweel/JNews)

### CFI Premier League second-leg matches begin on Monday

By Khaled Al-Omeri

**AMMAN** — On Monday, the second-leg matches of the CFI Basketball Premier League will begin with two matches for the fifth and penultimate round, where Al-Wehdat will face Al-Jubeiha at 5pm followed by a match between the Orthodox Club and Al-Ahli, also dubbed "El-Clasico", at 7pm, at Prince

Hamzah Hall. Al-Wehdat currently leads the standings, with 25 points, followed by the Orthodox Club coming in second with 24 points, Al-Ahli third with 23 points, and Al-Jubeiha fourth with 18 points.

The second stage of the matches are held in a two-legged ties system and will conclude on Friday. The final stage will take place from April 15-29.



(Photo: Jordan Olympic Committee)

### 'Hope and Ambition' Taekwondo Championship concludes

By Khaled Al-Omeri

**AMMAN** — The Hope and Ambition Taekwondo Championship, which was held at Prince Rashid Bin Al-Hassan Hall in Hussein Youth City, concluded on Sunday.

The championship was organized by the Taekwondo Humanitarian Foundation in cooperation with the Jordanian Taekwondo Federation and saw the participation of more than 200 male and female players of

three different age groups from refugee camps in the Kingdom. The tournament — which was held for the first time in Jordan — attracted refugee players mainly from the Zaatar and Azraq camps, as well as refugees from different regions of the Kingdom.

The tournament aimed to empower refugee players in the Kingdom by including them events by different Taekwondo federations and encouraging them to invest their energies into sports.

# Atletico dig in again to edge past struggling Rayo

**VALLECAS, Spain (AFP)** — Joao Felix's superb pass set up Koke's winner as Atletico Madrid jumped to third in La Liga on Saturday with a 1-0 win over Rayo Vallecano.

With Barcelona playing Real Madrid in the Clasico on Sunday, Atletico took advantage at Vallecas, their fifth consecutive victory giving them some breathing space in the fight for the top four.

They had to see out the last nine minutes with 10 men after Angel Correa, on as a substitute, was sent off. But just as they did against Manchester United on Tuesday in the Champions League, Atletico dug in and held on.

They now have a five-point lead over Real Betis in fifth and sit three ahead of Barcelona in fourth, even if Betis have one game in hand and Barca two.

Diego Simeone's side certainly head into the international break with momentum for the run-in, after rounding off an excellent seven days that began with victory against Cadiz before knocking out United.

The draw on Friday ensured the reward for that result will be a meeting with Manchester City in the last eight and while Atletico will be clear underdogs against the reigning Premier League champions, they are also building form

and confidence at just the right time.

"I think we have found the key, we have increased the intensity, the team is playing better and that's reflected in the results," said Koke.

"We have grown together," added Simeone.

Felix has been key, this his seventh goal or assist in his last seven matches, the 22-year-old repaying Simeone's faith while Luis Suarez again started on the bench.

This was the sixth consecutive

game Suarez has been named as a substitute and, with the quicker, more agile pairing of Felix and Antoine Griezmann up front, Atletico have hit their stride.

Rayo stay 12th, after making it 10 league games without a victory. They were in contention for the European spots only a few weeks ago but now sit just eight points above the relegation places.

Felix was at the heart of the decisive moment in the 49th minute as Koke collected on the edge of the area and played inside to the Portuguese.

As Rayo's defense turned to Felix, nobody spotted Koke continuing his run, except the forward, who slid the ball through first time for Koke to curl in the finish.

Griezmann should have made it two but was denied by a close-range save from Stole Dimitrievski and Atletico were almost undone when Oscar Valentin's driven cross found Randy Nteka free five yards out. Somehow Nteka skewed over.

Correa was sent off in the 85th minute for what appeared to be an altercation with Rayo's Alejandro Catena and Rayo went close in injury-time, after Dimitrievski was sent up for a corner. The ball dropped loose for Ivan Balliu and he shot low, but straight at Jan Oblak.



Rayo Vallecano's Spanish midfielder Mario Suarez (left) fights for the ball with Atletico Madrid's Uruguayan forward Luis Suarez during the Spanish League football match between Rayo Vallecano de Madrid and Club Atletico de Madrid at the Vallecas stadium in Madrid on March 19, 2022. (Photo: AFP)

## JORDAN NEWS

### SCOREBOARD

BASKETBALL				
• USA: NBA				
M. Timberwolves	138	34	3438	32
Milwaukee Bucks	119	28	2826	37
Charlotte Hornets	129	35	2641	27
Dallas Mavericks	108	24	2828	28
Cleveland Cavaliers	113	28	2727	31
Detroit Pistons	109	27	3321	28
Washington Wizards	127	26	3235	34
Los Angeles Lakers	119	36	3132	20

HOCKEY				
• USA: NHL				
Arizona Coyotes	1	0	1	0
Pittsburgh Penguins	4	0	1	3
C. Blue Jackets	5	2	1	2
St. Louis Blues	4	1	1	2
Montreal Canadiens	5	1	3	1
Ottawa Senators	1	1	0	0
Nashville Predators	6	1	2	3
Toronto Maple Leafs	3	0	1	2
Tampa Bay Lightning	1	1	0	0
New York Rangers	2	0	1	1
Seattle Kraken	4	0	0	4
Detroit Red Wings	2	0	0	2
Vancouver Canucks	2	0	0	2
Calgary Flames	5	3	1	1

# LeBron passes Malone tally but Lakers slump

**LOS ANGELES, United States (AFP)** — LeBron James moved into second place on the NBA's all-time regular-season points scoring rankings on Saturday but could not prevent the Los Angeles Lakers from slumping to defeat against the Washington Wizards.

James produced a typically virtuoso performance to finish with 38 points and 10 rebounds at the Wizards' Capital One Arena.

That was enough to power James past Karl Malone into second place in the regular season scorers rankings with 36,947 points.

But it did not stop the Lakers from sliding to a jarring 127-119 loss against a Wizards side which had been on a six-game losing streak.

"Just to be a part of this league for as many years as I've been a part of it, to be linked with some of the greatest to ever play this game, guys I've watched or studied, or read about, or inspired to be like, I'm just lost for words for it," James said of his scoring achievement.

"It's an honor for myself, for my friends and family to live these moments, for anyone who's shared my jour-

ney."

James — who holds the NBA's outright scoring record for regular season and playoff games — started the game needing just 20 points to surpass Malone's regular-season total of 36,928.

James wasted no time in hunting down Malone's benchmark, rapidly reaching double figures before moving to 16 points with back-to-back three-pointers early in the second quarter.

The four-time NBA champion then added another three-pointer to tie Malone, before finally taking sole possession of second place with a two-point layup with just over five minutes left in the second quarter.

The Washington crowd gave James an ovation after he reached the milestone, with the Lakers star saluting fans as he basked in the applause.

James' points haul leaves him within range of Kareem Abdul-Jabbar's all-time record of 38,387 points.

But James' celebratory moment was diminished after the Lakers suffered another fourth-quarter collapse to allow the Wizards to claim victory.

The Wizards out-

scored the Lakers 34-20 in the final period, completing a comeback from a 16-point deficit to grab the win.

Kristaps Porzingis led the Washington comeback with 16 points in the fourth quarter, part of an overall tally of 27 points.

Lakers coach Frank Vogel saluted James' scoring achievement despite the loss.

"It's bittersweet but I think it's important to separate it," Vogel said.

"We can't get caught up in the pain of this loss, and have to recognize what an incredible feat this was."

"LeBron just attacked the game tonight. Just a signature performance in a game where he passes one of the greats."

James said he was unable to let his scoring moment eclipse the sting of defeat.

"At the end of the day all I care about is wins and losses," he said. "I'm sure someday I'll be able to look back at this moment, but right now I can't separate it."

"We had a great opportunity to pick up some more momentum, and played well enough to win this game through 36 minutes, but in the last quarter we let it go."

Towns kept up his scoring streak with 25 points as the Minnesota Timberwolves took advantage of the injury absence of Giannis Antetokounmpo to rout the Milwaukee Bucks 138-119.

Towns, who has averaged just under 40 points a game in three appearances this week after a monster 60-point outing on Monday, was six-of-12 from the field, with 11 rebounds and five assists at Minnesota's Target Center.

The 26-year-old's form has helped the Timberwolves to a four-game winning streak, victories which keep the club firmly in the hunt for an automatic playoff berth.

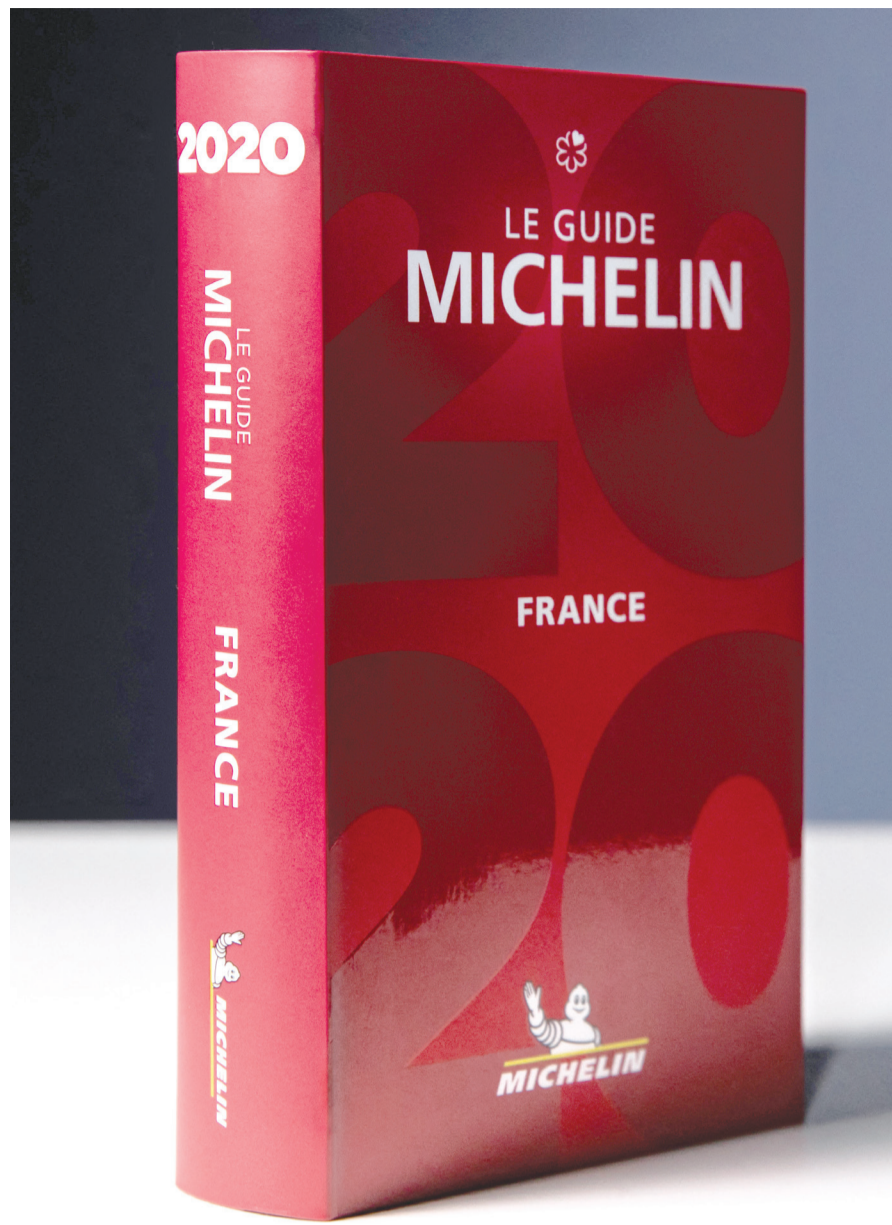
Saturday's win leaves the Timberwolves in seventh place in the Western Conference standings, level with sixth-placed Denver with 42 wins.

The reigning NBA champion Bucks meanwhile dropped to third in the Eastern Conference standings at 44-27.

In Charlotte, Luka Doncic erupted for 37 points but it could not prevent the Dallas Mavericks slumping to an upset 129-108 blowout against the Hornets.

Miles Bridges led the Hornets scorers with 23 points, part of a balanced offensive effort that saw no fewer than seven Charlotte players post double-digit points totals.

MORE SPORTS ONLINE  
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The 2020's Michelin Red Guide, the oldest European hotels and restaurants reference guide. (Photo: AFP)

# Michelin Guide returns to celebrate 'resilient' French food scene

**PARIS (AFP)** — The Michelin Guide launches its 2022 edition on Tuesday, vowing to celebrate the diversity of French cooking and the industry's resilience after two challenging years caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Expected each year with apprehension by chefs and gourmets, the famous red book is being unveiled in Cognac in southwest France, the first time in its 122 years the ceremony has taken place outside Paris.

"The 2022 edition is a very fine vintage which reflects the diversity of cuisines that can be found in France," the guide's director Gwendal Poullennec told AFP.

"But it will also make room for a new generation of chefs who have taken the risk of embarking on this journey in spite of the challenging context," he said.

"Despite the crisis, the profession has shown great resilience. It was an opportunity for professionals to reinvent themselves, to go further, and that's what we want to support."

Last year's ceremony, in the midst of a months-long shutdown caused by the pandemic, was a low-key affair with only one chef — Alexandre Mazzia — promoted to three stars, the highest distinction.

While Poullennec said the judges' criteria remained the same, there was an increased focus on more minimalist, sustainably sourced restaurants that have come to dominate the food scene.

## Remaining relevant

Controversies have long swirled around the guidebook and the pressure it places on chefs.

In 2020, Michelin shocked foodies by downgrading the Auberge du Pont de Colombes — the oldest three-starred restaurant in the world — following the death of legendary chef, Paul Bocuse.

again wants to see a Michelin inspector in his restaurants.

Poullennec said demotions were vital if the guidebook was to "remain relevant to customers."

Overall, however, the French food scene is in top form.

After a long period during which French restaurants were accused of growing stale and lazy, the past 15 years have seen an influx of young chefs more open to global influences and new approaches, said Paris-based food writer Lindsey Tramuta.

The Michelin Guide has sometimes struggled to keep up, she added.

"When you have something as structured as Michelin, it is very tricky to incorporate all the things that are happening in the food scene — things that are high-caliber, but maybe aren't as formal," she said, adding that female chefs remained poorly represented.

"But Michelin is still very important for chefs and owners. If it motivates their kitchen staff and team, and brings more diners and curiosity, then it has value."

Created in 1900 by tire manufacturers Andre and Edouard Michelin as a guide for motorists, it now has editions across Europe, Asia, North, and South America.

In March, it announced it was suspending operations in Russia due to the war, just a few months after launching its first guide in Moscow.

**"When you have something as structured as Michelin, it is very tricky to incorporate all the things that are happening in the food scene — things that are high-caliber, but maybe aren't as formal."**

A year earlier, Marc Veyrat became the first to sue the guidebook, after losing the third star of his Alps restaurant La Maison des Bois just a year after it was awarded. He lost the case and said he never

# Can scent be democratized?

**(NYT)** — On a recent evening, masked students sat around stainless-steel tables in the scent lab at the Institute for Art and Olfaction (IAO) in Los Angeles' Chinatown, pipettes at the ready. The LED glow from shelves that hold nearly 400 bottles of perfumers' materials cast a backlit-bar vibe over the first in-person studio class since the latest COVID-19 spike. An aromatic cocktail of norlimbanol, vanillin, and myrrh suffused the atmosphere, permeating even a KF94.

Saskia Wilson-Brown, the instructor, passed around paper scent strips that had been dipped into a solution of perfumers' alcohol and a synthetic version of sandalwood. Masks were gently peeled away for careful sniffing. General impressions were: "Woody," "Creamy," "I smell Tootsie Roll!"

Dublin's SMARTlab, studying power, access, and perfume. "The balance of power is off in perfume, and it's off in the world. Tweak one space, and maybe that's a model for tweaking another."

This September is the institute's 10th anniversary, and a month-long celebration is planned: workshops, lectures, exhibits, and other scent-related events, including a dance performance by the collective Volta, which may be loosely inspired by the top, middle, and base notes of perfume structure.

"My favorite thing about the institute is, who's going to walk through those doors?" Wilson-Brown said. "It's going to be some poet guy, a Beverly Hills lady. Everyone has an interest in scent for some reason."

## The power of smell

One of the resonant ripple effects of COVID-19, an illness whose symptoms include anosmia (the partial or full loss of smell), may be a deeper appreciation for the olfactory neurons that are connected to our brains.

Humans have 400 types of scent receptors. We can distinguish between molecules that are different by a single carbon atom.

Yet "there's been this philosophical idea that scent is a primitive sense, and that's been systematically dismantled as well in the last couple of years," Wilson-Brown said. "When we found out the coronavirus affected smell, it became a big conversation for people, which is interesting because I also thought COVID-19 was for sure the thing that would put us under."

Instead, the institute flourished. Demand and virtual capacity soared for Zoom lectures and studio courses (for which students bought scent materials in advance). People joined from all over the world, across all time zones, to connect to their senses, said Ashley Kessler, a perfumer and the IAO's director of education. "All this grounding life-affirmingness that just sitting and smelling can bring to you — it was fundamentally like therapy for all of us."

The IAO has accomplished something extraordinary, said Andreas Keller, 49, who opened Olfactory Art Keller, a commercial gallery dedicated to contemporary aromatic art, last year in lower Manhattan. "Saskia brought together a community, and she has done so beautifully. If it hadn't been for COVID, this might have remained very local. It has an international presence."

Today, the IAO offers an increasing mix

of digital and in-person classes; shares an open-source fragrance database (which includes formulas, material resources, and even an exhaustive list of scratch-and-sniff books); fosters partnerships with other cultural institutions, like the Hammer and J. Paul Getty museums in Los Angeles; and produces a podcast, an experimental scent summit, and an annual awards ceremony, considered the Oscars of independent perfumery. It has also helped inspire experiential dinners with fragrance pairings, scented zines, and synesthetic musical scores in Los Angeles and beyond.

"Adding to ways of thinking about intelligence through the body, scent plays a key role, much more than we realize," Anicka Yi, an artist known for exploring aromas to orient our view of the world, wrote in an email. Her recent exhibit in London filled the Tate Modern's Turbine Hall with floating mechanical aerobes and a "scentscape" representing the history of London's Bankside area from the 14th to 20th centuries. "The IAO is contributing to the discourse by bringing the experience of smell through philosophers, artists, chemists, anthropologists."

By chipping away at barriers, the institute is helping reshape the practice of perfumery, often characterized by elitism and a Eurocentric perspective. To encourage outsider scent culture, Wilson-Brown's definition of perfume is intentionally loose, as in not constricted to what one buys in a bottle. It's "a conscious combination of aromatics for a predetermined result," she said. "A chef could be in some way a perfumer if she combines materials for their aroma, or a florist. The advantage of this definition is that it's inclusive."

Having reached the decade milestone — longer than many for-profit businesses are able to stay afloat — Wilson-Brown is determined to keep asking questions. "We can talk about how perfume is awesome, then what?" she said. "What's the context? How does it impact society? How does it impact relationships?"



Inside the Institute for Art and Olfaction in Los Angeles, on February 24, 2022.

**"Adding to ways of thinking about intelligence through the body, scent plays a key role, much more than we realize."**

Wilson-Brown, who founded the non-profit organization, said: "These molecules, like us, contain multitudes."

The institute is in a bodega-size storefront among the revolving art galleries and curio importers on lantern-strung Chung King Road. Though the setting is very DIY — a chockablock classroom, gallery, lab, and library — it's a headquarters for olfactory experimentation and offers access to hands-on education, much of which was traditionally available only to professional perfumers.

But that setting befits the disrupter ethos of Wilson-Brown, 43, a Cuban and British American artist who grew in California and Paris. She formerly worked at Current TV, the liberal network founded by Al Gore and others, and one of her core values at the institute is to democratize scent.

"We're not solving the world's problems here, but it's rooted in this idea of fixing injustice," said Wilson-Brown, who is also a doctoral candidate at University College



Minetta Rogers, director of operations at the Institute for Art and Olfaction, in Los Angeles, on February 24, 2022. (Photos: NYTimes)



US actress Marlee Matlin and US actor Troy Kotsur arrive for the 33rd Annual Producers Guild Awards at the Fairmont Century Plaza in Los Angeles on March 19, 2022. (Photo: AFP)

# 'CODA' bags key prize before Oscars as Spielberg honors Lucas

**LOS ANGELES, United States (AFP)** — Hollywood's producers named "CODA," a heartwarming indie drama about a deaf family, the year's best film at their annual gala Saturday, throwing the race for next weekend's Oscars wide open.

"CODA," which cast deaf actors in several lead roles, follows teenage Ruby — who can hear — as she juggles pursuing her musical ambitions with her family's dependence on her to communicate.

The movie, released by Apple TV+, is now best-placed to vie with Netflix's Western "The Power of the Dog," the presumed Academy Award frontrunner.

"I have always been drawn to stories that are filled with humanity," said producer Philippe Rousselet, accepting the award.

"And in a world where we see the lack of it every day, I'll take this tonight — this award — as a sign that there's still hope."

The Producers Guild Awards, taking place with Oscars voting now underway, have correctly predicted 11 of the past 14 winners of the best picture Academy Award.

"Encanto" won the PGA's best animated film, strengthening its own Oscars bid before voting ends Tuesday.

"Summer of Soul" — musician Questlove's first movie, about the huge "Black Woodstock" festival that took place in 1969 Harlem — racked up another best documentary win.

The Academy Awards take place in Hollywood on March 27.

"In music, coda means the end of a movement. But our film is the beginning of one," said "CODA" actress Marlee Matlin.

"It's a wonderful thing that audiences have embraced our movie and it's wonderful to be making history," she said, before it took the night's top prize.

## Spielberg honors Lucas

Earlier in the night, Steven Spielberg praised "my brother" George Lucas as he presented the "Star Wars" creator with the PGA's career achievement award.

"George and I met as two of the most

nerdy film junkies in California... Across all the years we competed against each other, we propped each other up, we cheered each other on. We made each other better," said Spielberg.

Lucas told the audience he was most proud of his work to usher in "digital cinema," which has largely replaced traditional celluloid reels, and has accelerated 3D and computer effects which dominate many superhero blockbusters today.

But Lucas recognized that some of his peers including Spielberg, Martin Scorsese, and Christopher Nolan have still not fully joined the digital revolution and believe that traditional film still offers a richer aesthetic.

**"I have always been drawn to stories that are filled with humanity."**

"There's a whole group of them — everybody around is like 'Oh, digital, that's not movies, that's something else!'" he said, as Spielberg laughed off-stage.

Lucas shared the Milestone Award with Kathleen Kennedy, his heir at Lucasfilm, which is now owned by Disney.

## TV prizes

Saturday's PGAs, voted on by 8,000-odd producers, honored film as well as television, with HBO's "Succession" winning the top drama prize.

"Ted Lasso" continued its comedy awards sweep, "Mare of Easttown" took limited series, and Peter Jackson's "The Beatles: Get Back" won the non-fiction prize.