

News in brief

◆ **The United Arab Emirates has connected the second unit of its Barakah nuclear power plant to the national power grid**, state news agency WAM said yesterday. The plant in the Al Dhafrah region of Abu Dhabi, one of the seven emirates making up the UAE and the nation's capital, is the first nuclear power station in the Arab world and part of the Gulf oil producer's efforts to diversify its energy mix. The unit has produced its first megawatt of electricity free of carbon emissions, the statement said. Barakah's Unit 1 was connected to the national power grid in August 2020.



UAE connects second Barakah nuclear power unit to national grid

◆ **Qatar warned yesterday it would not take responsibility for Kabul airport without "clear" agreements with all involved, including the Taliban, about its operations.** "We need to make sure that everything is addressed very clearly otherwise... we are not able to take any responsibility of the airport (if) all these things are not addressed," Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani said at a press briefing. "Right now the status is still (under) negotiation."

Qatar won't take 'responsibility' for Kabul airport without Taliban agreement



responsibility of the airport (if) all these things are not addressed," Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani said at a press briefing. "Right now the status is still (under) negotiation."

◆ **The Taliban are investigating the accounts of former high-ranking Afghan government members to check for ill-gotten gains**, officials said yesterday. The investigation may lead to the freezing of assets and accounts of former civil servants, ministers and lawmakers, an official at Da Afghanistan Bank told AFP, asking not to be named. A manager of a private bank confirmed a team of "Taliban auditors" had been deployed to the organisation to check the accounts of selected former government officials.

Taliban probing bank accounts linked to Afghan ex-officials



◆ **Egypt yesterday reopened to tourists the 4,700-year-old southern Djoser at the tomb of King Djoser** after a 15-year renovation. The tomb, south of Cairo, lies near the Third Dynasty pharaoh's famous Step Pyramid, Egypt's earliest large-scale stone structure, which itself was closed for restoration until March 2020. The southern tomb, built between 2667 BC and 2648 BC, is thought to have been built for symbolic reasons, or perhaps to hold Djoser's internal organs, said Mostafa Waziri, secretary-general of Egypt's Supreme Council of Antiquities.



Egypt reopens ancient King Djoser's southern tomb to tourists

COVID-19 cases in s.east China more than

● **59 new local cases reported in Fujian province**

● **Preliminary tests show Delta variant in some early cases**

● **Outbreak spread south from Putian to Xiamen**

● **Travel restrictions imposed to limit spread**

Reuters | Beijing

New local COVID-19 infections more than doubled in China's southeastern

province of Fujian, health authorities said yesterday, prompting officials to quickly roll out measures including travel restrictions to halt the spread of the virus.

The National Health Commission said 59 new locally transmitted cases were reported for Sept. 13, up from 22 infections a day earlier. All of them were in Fujian, a province bordered by Zhejiang to the north and Guangdong to the south.

In just four days, a total of 102 community infections have been reported in three Fujian cities, including Xiamen, a tourist and transport hub with a population of 5 million.

The infections come ahead of the week-long National Day holiday starting on Oct. 1, a major tourist season. The last domestic

outbreak in late July to August disrupted travel, hitting the tourism, hospitality and transportation sectors.

China's air passenger traffic plunged 51.5% in August from a year earlier, data released yesterday showed, highlighting the vulnerability of Chinese airlines to repeated outbreaks even though COVID-19 is largely under control in the country.

Fujian's outbreak began in Putian, a city of 3.2 million, with the first case reported on Sept. 10. Preliminary tests on samples from some Putian cases showed patients had contracted the highly transmissible Delta variant.

The outbreak has since spread south to Xiamen, which reported 32 new cases of community transmission for Sept. 13 com-

pared with just one infection a day earlier.

"The Putian government is a big client of ours," said a staff at a Xiamen building survey firm, declining to be named.

"About half of our company went to Putian last week. They are now isolated at home, while the rest have gone to do their Covid tests."

LOCKDOWN

Like Putian, Xiamen has locked down some areas of higher virus risk, cut offline classes at kindergartens, primary schools and high schools, closed public venues such as cinemas, gyms and bars, and told residents not to leave the city for non-essential reasons.

The first patient in the Xiamen cluster was a close contact of a

Bangladesh signs OIC Women Organisation statute



The signing of the Statute of the Women Development Organisation

TDT | Manama

The Secretary General of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), Dr Yousef Al-Othaimen, yesterday at his office in Jeddah received the Ambassador of Bangladesh to Saudi Arabia, Dr Mohamed Javed Patwary.

In this meeting, the Bangladeshi Ambassador put his signature on behalf of his country

to the Statute of the Women Development Organisation (WDO), an OIC specialised entity.

The two parties discussed bilateral relations and explored avenues of greater cooperation between the OIC and Bangladesh. For his part, the Secretary General commended Bangladesh for its active engagement with the OIC in its efforts to promote joint Islamic action.

Taliban deny minister, Mul

● **The denials follow days of rumours that supporters of Baradar had clashed with those of Sirajuddin Haqqani**

● **Taliban released video footage purportedly showing Baradar at meetings**

● **Mullah Haibatullah Akhundzada, has also not been seen in public since the Taliban seized Kabul on Aug. 15**

Reuters

The Taliban have denied that one of their top leaders has been killed in a



Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, the Taliban's delegation members attend the Afghan pea

shootout with rivals, following rumours about internal splits in the movement nearly a month after its lightning victory over the Western-backed government in Kabul.

Sulail Shaheen, a Taliban spokesman, said Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, former head of the Taliban political office who was

COVID-19 Countries worst affected

Country	Total cases	Total deaths	Global tally
1 USA	42,140,103	680,274	226,219,435
2 India	33,289,579	443,247	
3 Brazil	21,006,424	587,138	
4 UK	7,256,559	134,261	4,655,158
5 Russia	7,176,085	194,249	202,884,185
6 France	6,907,133	115,603	
7 Turkey	6,682,864	60,117	New cases
8 Iran	5,340,656	115,167	
9 Argentina	5,226,831	113,640	+123,346
10 Colombia	4,931,563	125,687	
11 Spain	4,915,265	85,393	New deaths
12 Italy	4,609,205	129,955	
13 Indonesia	4,174,216	139,415	+2,665
14 Germany	4,095,371	93,250	

Middle East

Country	Total cases	new cases	Total deaths	New Deaths	Total recovered	Active cases
Egypt	293,448		16,885		247,125	29,438
Saudi Arabia	546,067		8,628		535,144	2,295
UAE	730,135	+617	2,066	+2	721,367	6,702
Kuwait	410,842		2,432		407,262	1,148
Oman	303,223	+60	4,090	+1	293,414	5,719
Qatar	234,773		604		232,269	1,900

Figures as of closing

Israeli survey finds about 1 in 10 kids have lingering COVID symptoms

Reuters | Jerusalem

About one in 10 children had symptoms that remained after recovering from COVID-19, though that number dropped by more than half as the months passed, a Health Ministry survey showed on Monday.

Severe illness from the novel coronavirus is most common among adults, but there is a lack of data on the virus' impact on youths, who are far less prone to serious complications, the ministry said.

It carried out a phone survey in June among 13,834 parents of children aged 3-18 who had recovered from COVID-19, asking if their kids had lingering symptoms, including breathing issues, lethargy and loss of smell and taste.

The ministry said 11.2% of children had some symptoms after recovery. The figure declined to 1.8%-4.6% at six months from acute disease, with older kids suffering more.

The ministry did not make mention of vaccines or their impact. The survey was conducted around the time 12-15



A father carries his son while they make their way to Arazim Elementary School as students return to school after the summer break, less than a month into a coronavirus disease (COVID-19) vaccine booster drive, near the school in Tel Aviv, Israel

year-old Israelis were just becoming eligible to be vaccinated.

Israel allowed 16-18-year-olds to get the vaccination months earlier.

A recent British survey has found that as many as one in seven children may have symptoms linked to the coronavirus months after testing positive for COVID-19.

Over 50s to get booster shot saved more than 100,000

● **Booster shot recommended for all Britons over 50**

● **Third shot also eyed for vulnerable and some health staff**

● **Winter "could be bumpy at times", health official says**

Reuters | London

COVID-19 vaccines have saved more than 112,000 lives and averted 24 million cases of the disease, British officials said on Tuesday as they recommended all vulnerable people, frontline



Chair of the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation Shien Lim attends a media briefing on COVID

health staff and those aged over 50 be offered a booster shot.

The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation's rec-