

News in brief

◆ **Saudi affirmed its confidence in Tunisia's leadership, saying it stands with everything that supports the security and stability of Tunisia, the Saudi state news agency (SPA) reported on Tuesday.** The kingdom also said it respects everything related to Tunisian internal affairs and considers it a sovereign matter, SPA added. "Saudi Arabia affirms its confidence in the Tunisian leadership to overcome these circumstances and to achieve a decent life and prosperity for the brotherly Tunisian people."



Saudi affirms its confidence in Tunisian leadership

◆ **An Israeli soldier killed a Palestinian in the occupied West Bank on Tuesday,** the Palestinian health ministry said, and the army said he had approached troops with an iron bar in his hand. Some local residents described the man slain at the entrance to Beita village near the city of Nablus as a 41-year-old

Israeli troops kill Palestinian in West Bank, officials say

plumber who was heading home from work when he was shot dead. There were no disturbances there at the time, the locals said. An Israeli military spokeswoman said the Palestinian, carrying an iron bar, had "advanced rapidly" toward troops despite them firing warning shots in the air.

◆ **Thai volunteers yesterday turned a cargo warehouse at Bangkok's Don Muang Airport into a 1,800-bed field hospital for COVID-19 patients with less severe symptoms,** as the country deals with its biggest outbreak to date. The Southeast Asian nation reported a daily record of 16,533 new cases, plus 133 new deaths on Wednesday, bringing the total accumulated cases to

Thailand builds COVID-19 hospital in Bangkok airport



◆ **Iran's COVID-19 cases hit a record high for the second time in as many days on Tuesday,** rising to almost 35,000, as the health minister warned there was little hope of



Iran's daily new COVID-19 cases hit two consecutive record highs

improvement unless the public followed health precautions, state TV reported. The epicentre of the pandemic in the Middle East, Iran reported 34,951 new cases on Tuesday, after registering a record 31,814 cases on Monday in a fifth wave blamed on the highly transmissible Delta variant. Deaths rose by 357 to 89,479 on Tuesday. "If health protocols are followed as they are now, we will not have much hope of getting out of the (high risk) 'red' situation," Health Minister Saeed Namaki told state TV. Officials say less than 40% of Iranians wear masks and follow other precautions. State television broadcast scenes from burials of COVID-19 victims with crying relatives appealing to the public to follow safety precautions.

COVID-19 Countries worst affected

	Country	Total cases	Total deaths	Global tally
1	USA	35,353,923	627,351	196,210,343
2	India	31,490,153	422,175	Deaths
3	Brazil	19,749,073	551,906	4,197,201
4	Russia	6,195,232	156,178	Recovered:
5	France	6,026,115	111,695	177,836,489
6	UK	5,745,526	129,303	New cases
7	Turkey	5,638,178	51,048	+4,831
8	Argentina	4,875,927	104,352	New deaths
9	Colombia	4,747,775	119,482	+267,412
10	Spain	4,368,453	81,323	
11	Italy	4,330,739	128,010	
12	Iran	3,792,014	89,782	
13	Germany	3,767,531	92,083	
14	Indonesia	3,287,727	88,659	

Middle East

Figures as of closing

Country	Total cases	new cases	Total deaths	New Deaths	Total recovered	Active cases
Egypt	284,090		16,498		228,624	38,968
Saudi Arabia	522,108	+1,334	8,200	+11	502,528	11,380
UAE	674,724		1,929		652,180	20,615
Kuwait	394,538		2,298		378,810	13,430
Oman	295,535	+518	3,802	+14	277,632	14,101
Qatar	225,747	+225	601	+1	223,376	1,770

Kuwait bans unvaccinated citizens from travelling abroad



A Kuwaiti passenger holding his luggage walks by the police and civil aviation personnel upon his arrival from Amman at Kuwait Airport

Reuters | Cairo

Kuwait on Tuesday said only citizens who have been vaccinated for the coronavirus will be allowed to travel abroad starting on Aug. 1.

A government statement said the rule excepted children under age of 16, those with a health ministry certificate saying they cannot be vaccinated, and pregnant women who have a pregnancy proof certificate from authorities.

Also on Tuesday, the civil aviation authority said that all arrivals in Kuwait must have a negative COVID-19 PCR test before they board their flights and must not be showing any symptoms.

All arrivals will have to be home quarantined for seven days unless they take a COVID-19 PCR test inside Kuwait that comes out negative.

The Kuwaiti government on Monday eased some coronavirus related restrictions and resumed all activities except for gatherings which include conferences, weddings, and social events.

US envoy back in Gulf to push Yemen truce as battles spread



A Yemeni government fighter fires a vehicle-mounted weapon at a frontline position during fighting against Houthi fighters in Marib, Yemen

Reuters | Dubai

Senior US diplomats are holding talks in the Gulf region in a renewed push for a ceasefire in Yemen as fierce ground battles spread and the Iran-aligned Houthi group resumed cross-border attacks on Saudi Arabia after a brief lull over holidays.

US special envoy for Yemen Tim Lenderking arrived in Saudi Arabia on Tuesday following a visit by Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman to Oman, amid stalled efforts for a breakthrough in ending more than six years of war.

The Saudi-led coalition that backs Yemen's recognised government and the Houthis have been at odds over a United Nations-led proposal for a nationwide truce and the lifting of a coalition blockade to ease a dire humanitarian crisis.

Meanwhile battles are raging in Yemen's gas-rich Marib region, the government's last northern stronghold, and in al-Bayda governorate. The coalition said late on Tuesday it destroyed four Houthi ballistic missiles and two drones launched towards Jizan in southern Saudi Arabia.

Fighting has spread to al-Bayda as Houthi forces try

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The Houthi movement holds most big urban centres after ousting the government from the capital, Sanaa, in late 2014, which prompted the coalition to intervene months later

to advance towards the southern oil-producing Shabwa region, local and military sources said. Coalition air strikes have so far repelled Houthi advances.

Lenderking will discuss "growing consequences" of the Marib offensive that is triggering instability elsewhere and the "urgent need" for Riyadh and the Saudi-backed government to facilitate fuel imports to northern Yemen, the State Department said.

The Houthis have insisted sea and air restrictions on areas they control be removed before any ceasefire talks, while the coalition wants a simultaneous deal.

India a

● **First visit to India since joining US President Joe Biden's administration**

● **Blinken announces \$25 million from the US government, through @USAID, to support India's COVID-19 vaccination programme**

● **Blinken met his Indian counterpart, Foreign Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, and other officials**

● **The two sides also discussed supplies of COVID-19 vaccines and the human rights records of both countries**

TDT | agencies

The US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, who is on his first visit to India since joining US President Joe Biden's administration, welcomed yesterday India's emergence as a leading global power amid discussions over deepening the US-India Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership.

"India is one of our most valued partners, and the US welcomes India's emergence as a leading global power," Blinken said in a tweet after meeting his Indian counterpart, Foreign Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar.

Blinken said he had a collaborative discussion with Jaishankar, "on many areas of cooperation, including efforts to support peace and stability in Afghanistan."

"Had a warm discussion with @DrSJaishankar on deepening the US-India Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership, including strengthening Indo-Pacific cooperation bilaterally and through the Quad. I look forward to work-

No happy anniversary fo



Israa Seblani, a Lebanese doctor and the bride who was caught up in the last year's Beirut port blast during a wedding photoshoot, poses for a picture with her husband Ahmad Subeih, at the same square where they were for their photoshoot in the moment of August 4 explosion, in Beirut, Lebanon July 24, 2021.

visible today.

"I still don't have a photo of my

wedding day at home," Seblani, 30, said, back in the same square



Screen grabs from video taken during their nuptials, just like they did.

"It was a disaster for the Lebanese people. I can't see parents