

Ynet-News, Nov 08, 2021 – Monday

==== **Ynet changed visual appearance of their News site Nov 8, 2021** ====

Only the Headlines are displayed, Not the brief Content as before

11.07.21 – Su- - - News

Morocco to consider purchase of Israel's Iron Dome to defend Western Sahara

11.07.21 – Su- - - News Placed in Nov 08 spot – Monday

Israel evacuates diplomat families from Ethiopia as fighting escalates north

11.07.21 – Su- - - News

Israel rejects reopening East Jerusalem US consulate to support Palestine

11.05.21 – Fr- - - News Placed in Nov 07 spot – Sunday

Israel terror label stops Finnish charity funneling aid to one of six Palestine militants

11.05.21 – Fr- - - News Placed in Nov 05 spot – Friday

Knesset three-day plenary session approves 2022 budget \$146 billion

11.04.21 – Th- - - News Placed in Nov 06 spot – Saturday

Hungary courts use Pegasus spyware on opposition lawyers, politicians & journalists

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Saudi Arabia normalization with Israel requires peace progress with Palestine

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Thomas Nides of Minnesota confirmed as US ambassador to Israel

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Black Shadow hackers leak medical records of 290,000 Israeli patients

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Bennett uses climate summit to talk Iran and COVID with world leaders

10.28.21 – Th- - - News Placed in Oct 29 spot – Friday

Bennett predicts government would collapse before Lapid becomes PM, report says

10.28.21 – Th- - - News Placed in Oct 28 spot – Thursday

US & 12 European states urge Israel to stop West Bank settlement expansion

11.03.21 – We- - - News Placed in Nov 03 spot – Wednesday & Nov 29 spot – Monday

Iran nuclear talks in Vienna to resume Nov. 29, aiming at removal of sanctions

10.19.21 – Tu- - - News Placed in Oct 19 spot – Tuesday

Tremor 5.8 rattles Israel originating from island of Karpathos, Greece

10.19.21 – Tu- - - News Placed in Oct 18 spot – Monday
80% Algeria, Iraq, Lebanon, Sudan below poverty; Economy up 0.1% from April

10.20.21 – We- - - News Placed in Oct 21 spot – Thursday
Resident doctors end strike, deal reduces work shifts from 26 to 18 hours

10.19.21
US Press Secretary Psaki jokes about supply chain crunch & food shortages
White House Tuesday afternoon

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This allow more space for Photo Adds

11.07.21
Morocco to consider purchase of Israel's Iron Dome to defend Western Sahara

11.07.21
Morocco said to consider purchase of Israel's Iron Dome
Rabat reportedly intends to use the Israeli defensive system to defend against Polisario Front militants in Western Sahara, as well as other 'civil and military zones of a sensitive nature'
i24NEWS| Published: 11.07.21, 15:20

Morocco is considering a purchase of Israel's Iron Dome missile defense system, a Moroccan online news site reported on Sunday.

According to the report, Morocco intended to use the Israeli defensive system to defend against the Polisario Front in Western Sahara, as well as other "civil and military zones of a sensitive nature."

The Moroccan army has been fighting the Polisario for decades, and is now also in a military confrontation with neighboring Algeria — a supporter of the insurgent group — which cut its diplomatic ties with Rabat last August.

Last week Algeria accused Morocco of killing three Algerian civilians in Polisario-held territory of Western Sahara, a claim denied by the kingdom.

11.07.21

Israel evacuates diplomat families from Ethiopia as fighting escalates north

11.07.21

Israel evacuates diplomats' families from Ethiopia as fighting escalates

Foreign Ministry issues severe travel warning to East African country, urging Israelis to avoid visiting and those present to return immediately; Aliyah minister calls on Bennett to fast-track immigration to Israel of Ethiopian Jews

i24NEWS| Published: 11.07.21, 14:54

Israel's Foreign Ministry has begun evacuating several families of diplomats in Ethiopia, Walla! News site revealed on Saturday evening, as the fighting between government forces and Tigrayan rebels continued to escalate.

Ministry spokesman Lior Hayat, however, clarified that Israeli diplomats were continuing their work in the embassy in Addis Ababa, "but aside from the uncertainty and a possible deterioration of the situation, some families return to Israel."

The Foreign Ministry has also recommended that Israeli citizens avoid visiting the East African country, which has been at war for a year against the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) in the north of the country.

"The Foreign Ministry recommends that Israeli citizens residing in Ethiopia end their stay in the country due to civil unrest, disruption of movement and access to communications (...) and possibly even departures by plane," the press release stated.

11.07.21

Israel rejects reopening East Jerusalem US consulate to support Palestine

11.07.21

Palestinians, Israel spar over U.S. mission in Jerusalem

PA slams Bennett's comments that 'there was no room in Jerusalem for another American mission', rejects Lapid's proposal to open diplomatic mission in Ramallah instead

Associated Press| Published: 11.07.21, 13:31

The Palestinians on Sunday slammed Israel for rejecting the promised reopening of the U.S. consulate in Jerusalem, a move that would restore Washington's main diplomatic mission for the Palestinians in the contested city.

Prime Minister Naftali Bennett said late Saturday there was no room in Jerusalem for another American mission.

The Trump administration shuttered the U.S. Jerusalem consulate, an office that for years served as the de facto embassy to the Palestinians. Secretary of State Antony Blinken has pledged to reopen it, a move that Israel says would challenge its sovereignty over the city. The reopening could help mend U.S. ties with the Palestinians ruptured under Trump.

In a statement, the Palestinian Foreign Ministry said it views the reopening of the consulate as part of the international community's commitments to ending Israel's decades-long control of territories the Palestinians seek for their future state. "East Jerusalem is an inseparable part of the occupied Palestinian territory and is the capital of the state of Palestine. Israel, as the occupying power, does not have the right to veto the U.S. administration's decision," the statement said. Asked about the consulate at a press conference, Bennett repeated Israel's position on Jerusalem.

11.05.21

Israel terror label stops Finnish charity funneling aid to one of six Palestine militants

11.05.21

Finnish charity cuts ties with Palestinian NGO after Israel slaps terror label

Director says his organization had seen no evidence its funding had been misused, but Israeli designation had made it impossible to maintain ties with the group, citing concerns about possible banking sanctions

Reuters| Published: 11.05.21, 22:09

A Finnish Christian missionary group has cut ties with a Palestinian children's rights NGO which Israel labeled a terrorist organization, the charity's executive director said, citing concerns about possible banking sanctions.

Defense for Children International-Palestine (DCIP) is one of six Palestinian groups Israel accused of funneling donor aid to militants. It rejects the charge and says it has asked the missionary society Felm to reconsider cutting funds.

Israel says the six accused groups have close ties to the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), which has carried out deadly attacks on Israelis and is on U.S. and EU terrorism blacklists.

Felm executive director Rolf Steffansson said his organization had seen no evidence its funding had been misused.

"We have actively monitored the use of the money and it has been used for work advancing children's rights," Steffansson, whose organization provided DCIP with 30,000 euros annually from 2015 to 2021, told Reuters.

But the Israeli designation had made it impossible to maintain ties with the group, Steffansson added.

11.05.21

Knesset three-day plenary session approves 2022 budget \$146 billion

11.05.21

Knesset approves 2022 budget, ending long-standing stalemate

At the end of an intensive **three-day plenary session**, parliament fully **approves** biennial **budget**, further shoring up government's stability; PM: We've put Israel back on track
Reuters, Moran Azulay | Published: **11.05.21**, 09:52

The Knesset approved a 2022 national budget on Friday by a **vote of 59 to 56**, giving a greater measure of **fiscal stability** to Prime Minister Naftali Bennett's cross-partisan coalition government.

The **\$146 billion spending package** was ratified after the Knesset passed on Thursday a belated 2021 budget ahead of a deadline which, **if unmet, could have triggered a snap election**.

"We've put Israel back on track," Bennett said on Twitter.

Foreign Minister and Alternate Prime Minister Yair Lapid, who also celebrated his 58th birthday, rejoiced at the occasion.

"We took responsibility, we kept our promise. We **passed the '21-'22 budget** for the State of Israel and all of Israel's citizens," he said.

Some on the opposition, however, voiced their frustration after the coalition came on top following a months-long political battle.

11.04.21

Hungary courts use Pegasus spyware on opposition lawyers, politicians & journalists

11.04.21

Hungarian official admits government bought, used Pegasus spyware

Parliamentary panel chair becomes first to **openly acknowledged** government's use of **Israeli-made malware** in **spying on lawyers**, opposition politician **and** government-**critical** **journalists**

Associated Press | Published: **11.04.21**, 20:47

A senior official in **Hungary's** governing party **acknowledged** for the first time on Thursday that the government purchased a powerful **spyware** tool, which was allegedly **used to target journalists**, businesspeople **and** an **opposition** politician.

Lajos Kosa, chairman of parliament's Committee on Defense and Law Enforcement, confirmed to journalists following a closed committee session that Hungary's Interior Ministry had bought the military-grade spyware Pegasus, produced by Israel-based NSO Group.

It was the first time a Hungarian official openly acknowledged the government's use of the malware, which **infiltrates phones to collect personal and location data and can surreptitiously control the phone's microphones and cameras.**

An investigation by a global media consortium published in July said that Pegasus was used in Hungary to infiltrate the digital devices of a range of targets — including at least **10 lawyers**, **one opposition politician** and **several** government-**critical** **journalists.**

Subsequent investigations by Hungarian investigative journalism outlet Direkt36 have suggested that at least two publishers of government-critical media, as well as a former state secretary, were also targeted with the software.

Kosa, a vice-president of Hungary's governing Fidesz party, insisted that Hungary's security services and Interior Ministry had acted legally in every case of surveillance, receiving permission either from courts or the Ministry of Justice.

11.04.21

Saudi Arabia normalization with Israel requires peace progress with Palestine

11.04.21

Jewish-American delegation visits Saudi Arabia to advance normalization with Israel
Jewish-American businessman Phil Rosen, a close associate of Netanyahu, says Riyadh ready to join Abraham accords 'within months or year', claims kingdom admires Israeli ability to defend itself against Iran

Itamar Eichner | Published: 11.04.21, 12:26

A delegation of some 20 American Jewish leaders visited Saudi Arabia recently, and met with senior officials in the kingdom, including at least six government ministers and senior representatives of the Saudi royal house.

The group visited Riyadh at the invitation of the Saudis and with the blessing of the Biden administration, following a visit to the United Arab Emirates aimed at strengthening ties after it signed a deal to normalize ties with Israel last year.

"The Saudis are preparing their citizens for normalization with Israel," claimed Jewish-American businessman Phil Rosen, a member of the delegation. "They see Israel as a regional power and admire its ability defend itself," against Iran, a common foe.

"I would not be surprised if we see normalization between Saudi Arabia and Israel in the coming months or year," he added.

Rosen, a personal friend of Opposition Leader Benjamin Netanyahu, said the kingdom is taking various "small steps" towards normalization, among them allowing Israeli flights to use Saudi airspace.

He also claims Riyadh has been holding covert talks with Washington about joining the Abraham Accords, and that without the kingdom's blessings, the UAE and Bahrain would have not signed the agreement.

The Abraham Accords formalizing diplomatic ties between Israel and the two Gulf nations were forged by the Trump administration, and signed in September, 2020 at the White House.

Morocco and Sudan later joined the agreement.

Asked if the Saudis are not conditioning normalization with Israel on a breakthrough that could resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Rosen said: "In my opinion, the Saudi's will not condition normalizations on peace with the Palestinians. They are waiting for the right moment," he said.

Saudi Arabia, at least in its official statements, has repeatedly stated that it will not normalize its relations with Israel without progress in peace talks with the Palestinians.

11.04.21

Thomas Nides of Minnesota confirmed as US ambassador to Israel

11.04.21

Senate confirms new U.S. ambassador to Israel

Thomas Nides confirmed for position after Republicans block Democrats from fast-tracking nomination; banker-turned-diplomat previously served as deputy secretary of state for management and resources under Hillary Clinton

Associated Press| Published: 11.04.21, 07:59

The Senate has confirmed Thomas R. Nides of Minnesota to serve as the next U.S. ambassador to Israel, early on Thursday, by a voice vote in the Senate, which is evenly split between Democrats and Republicans.

Nides is the managing director and vice-chairman of Morgan Stanley. He previously served as deputy secretary of state for management and resources under Hillary Clinton from 2011 to 2013.

Nides nomination was among dozens of State Department positions that GOP senators were blocking from a swift confirmation through holds. Without the holds, the nominees can be confirmed through a voice vote, a process taking only minutes that can be used so long as no senator objects. Democrats renewed their effort to bring his nomination up for a vote Wednesday night, one day after another such effort had failed.

Israeli Ambassador to the U.S. Gilad Erdan, his counterpart, congratulated Nides on Twitter. "I'm sure that you will further strengthen the special bond between Israel & the U.S."

Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., said Nides "cares very much about strengthening the U.S.-Israel relationship, so this will be a good day for that relationship."

11.03.21

Black Shadow hackers leak medical records of 290,000 Israeli patients

11.03.21

Black Shadow hackers leak medical records of 290,000 Israeli patients

Following release of LGBTQ dating website database, Iran-linked group publishes Machon Mor's directory that includes information on treatments and appointments; second group claims breach of several Israeli engineering companies

i24NEWS| Published: 11.03.21, 08:52

The Iran-linked Black Shadow hacking group on Tuesday night leaked what claimed was the full database of Machon Mor medical institute, including **medical records of some 290,000 patients**.

The database **includes information regarding medical tests and treatments**, and the leak comes mere hours after the group also hacked the entire online database of popular LGBTQ dating site Araf, which is hosted by the Israeli internet company Cyberserve. The hackers have been demanding ransom since Saturday's attack, and have already released information belonging to users of Israeli LGBT dating app Araf.

Black Shadow released the database after **Cyberserve refused to pay** and the 48-hour **ultimatum** to pay \$1 million **elapsed, announcing the leak in broken English** on instant messaging app Telegram.

"48 hours ended! Nobody send us money. This is not the end, we have more plan." Screenshots showing alleged negotiations were also published, although Cyberserve denied this.

11.02.21

Bennett uses climate summit to talk Iran and COVID with world leaders

11.02.21

Bennett uses climate summit to talk Iran and COVID with world leaders

In-depth: **PM appeared** to have used COP26 to discuss regional threats - except for the Palestinian issue - and allegedly had 'excellent meetings' **with world leaders**, including **Bennett, Johnson** and **Biden**, claiming Israel is now better perceived around the world
Itamar Eichner | Published: **11.02.21**, 11:25

Prime Minister Naftali Bennett joined world leaders in a reception at the COP26 **summit in Glasgow late on Monday**. It was an opportunity to exchange views on the climate crisis, but also on the coronavirus pandemic and more importantly regional threats.

Bennett told the leaders about Israel's success in ending the fourth COVID wave in the country after a rapid rollout of the vaccine booster campaign.

The prime minister **also** apparently **discussed the Iranian nuclear threat** with his counterparts, telling them that Tehran was making headways in uranium enrichment and is **more advanced** in its efforts than ever before. Bennett said an **international intervention** to slow Iran's progression was **needed**.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict, however, was not raised in those discussions.

The Prime Minister's Office said in a statement that **Bennett** attended a **reception** hosted **by British Crown Prince Charles**. "The prime minister met with a number of world leaders, including U.S. President Joe Biden, UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta, Prince William and his wife Kate Middleton and Prince Charles **as well as other leaders**."

10.28.21

Bennett predicts government would collapse before Lapid becomes PM, report says

10.28.21

Bennett predicts government would collapse before Lapid becomes PM, report says
'I estimate that the rotation will not happen,' premier quoted as saying; his office confirms he made the remarks but insists that he will honor the power-sharing deal nonetheless
|24NEWS| Published: 10.28.21, 23:06

Prime Minister Naftali Bennett privately delivered comments predicting that his government would not last long enough for Foreign Minister Yair Lapid to become prime minister, according to reports published Thursday by Hebrew-language media.

"I estimate that the rotation will not happen," Bennett was quoted by Israel's Channel 12. "There is a considerable chance that the government will dissolve between the budget and the time of the change of power, for various reasons."

He reportedly made the remarks at a closed meeting.

When asked about the report, Bennett's office confirmed that the prime minister made the remarks but insists that the premier will honor the previously agreed upon power-sharing deal nonetheless.

"The partnership with Alternate Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Yair Lapid is based on mutual trust and fairness," the Prime Minister's Office detailed, according to Channel 12.

10.28.21

US & 12 European states urge Israel to stop West Bank settlement expansion

10.28.21

European states urge Israel to stop settlement expansion

Joint statement by 11 foreign ministries comes after Defense Ministry's planning forum approves tenders for some 3,000 new settler houses in the West Bank, a move that has drawn strong U.S. criticism

Reuters| Updated: 10.28.21, 15:54

Germany, along with other 11 European countries, urged Israel on Thursday to reverse its decision to advance plans to construct around 3,000 settlement units in the West Bank.

In a joint statement by the foreign ministries of Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Spain and Sweden, the countries said they opposed settlement expansion across the West Bank.

"We call on both parties to build on steps taken in recent months to improve cooperation and reduce tensions," the European governments said.

Israel moved forward on Wednesday with plans to build some 3,000 homes for Jewish settlers in the West Bank, defying the strongest criticism to date of such projects from the administration of U.S. President Joe Biden.

An Israeli defense official said a planning forum of COGAT — Israel's liaison office with the Palestinians — gave preliminary approval for plans to build 1,344 housing units and its final go-ahead for projects to construct 1,800 homes.

A senior U.S. State Department official said Secretary of State Antony **Blinken** had **discussed the issue with Defense Minister Benny Gantz** on Tuesday.

Their phone call was first reported by the Axios news website, which cited Israeli officials as saying the chief U.S. diplomat voiced American opposition to the settlement plan.

Israel captured the West Bank in the 1967 Six-Day War, where some 440,000 settlers live among 3 million Palestinians, and cites biblical, historical and political links to the area in **maintaining that Jews have a right to live there**. **Palestinians seek a future state** in the West Bank and Gaza Strip with East Jerusalem as its capital.

4 Comments

Ilan Toren

On one hand the **US and EU approve of Arab building** but **Jewish building horrifies them**. There is a word for such hypocrisy: **antisemitism**

Rafael Lege

any normal nation is opposed to it of course, US , Europe and Russia. colonization has to be stopped

Dave Tuchis

Israel should ask them where they were during the Holocaust.

Harold Neale

Israel never understands words only but it will when the **11 European nations tell her 'YOU BUILD SETTLEMENTS ON PALESTIAN LANDS WE WILL STOP TRADDING WITH YOU**. This rule should have been used 54 years ago,

Sam Tayar

Give up little boy. You lost 54 years ago (and many other times).

Dave Tuchis

There's no such thing as "tradding" or "Palestian" lands. Israel **conquered the West Bank in a defensive war**, emphasis on "defensive", and **by law they get to keep it**.

11.03.21

Iran nuclear talks in Vienna to resume Nov. 29, aiming at removal of sanctions

11.03.21

Iran nuclear talks with world powers to resume Nov. 29, Iranian official says

Chief Iranian negotiator Ali Bagheri Kani posted on Twitter that he had agreed on resumption of talks with EU envoy Enrique Mora; U.S. hopes Tehran ready to 'negotiate in good faith'

Reuters, Ynet | Updated: 11.03.21, 22:38

Nuclear talks between world powers and Iran will resume on November 29, An Iranian negotiators said on Wednesday.

Ali Bagheri Kani, Iran's top nuclear negotiator said that he had agreed on the resumption of talks with European Union envoy Enrique Mora.

"In a phone call with @enriquemora, we agreed to start the negotiations aiming at removal of unlawful & inhumane sanctions on 29 November in Vienna," Bagheri Kani wrote in a tweet.

The United States said U.S. Special Envoy for Iran Robert Malley will be heading the U.S. delegation in Iran nuclear talks and said Washington hoped that Tehran returns to talks ready to negotiate and in good faith.

Speaking at a news briefing, State Department spokesperson Ned Price said Washington still believed that it remains possible to quickly reach and implement an understanding on a mutual return to compliance with the JCPOA.

An unnamed official in Jerusalem said that Iran will continue to stall for time and has no intention of returning to the deal. He added that U.S. sanctioning Iranian officials and show of force by B-1 bomber over Israel on its way to the Persian Gulf prompted Tehran to resume negotiations.

In April, Tehran and six powers started to discuss ways to salvage the nuclear pact, which has eroded since 2018 when then-President Donald Trump withdrew the United States from it and reimposed sanctions on Iran, prompting Tehran to breach various limits on uranium enrichment set by the pact.

But the talks have been on hold since the election of Iran's hardline President Ebrahim Raisi in June, who is expected to take a tough approach when the talks resume in Vienna.

10.19.21

Tremor 5.8 rattles Israel originating from island of Karpathos, Greece

10.19.21

5.8 magnitude earthquake rattles Israel

Many Israelis report feeling tremors across the country, including in Tel Aviv, Haifa and Jerusalem; Geological Survey says epicenter appears to be the eastern Mediterranean, off the Greek island of Karpathos

Ynet| Published: 10.19.21, 10:23

A 5.8 magnitude earthquake rattled most parts of Israel on Tuesday mornings in shock waves that made their way from Cyprus and Greece, where the tremor originated.

According to the Euro-Med Seismological Centre (EMSC), the quake occurred at 5:32 GMT, with its origin point located about 139 km (86.3 miles) east south east of the island of Karpathos in Greece. The magnitude of that earthquake appeared to be 6.0. Many Israelis across the country reported feeling the tremor, including in Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Beer Sheva and Haifa, among others.

The quake was reportedly also felt in some parts of Egypt.

Saar, who lives in Tel Aviv, said: "I sat on the couch and felt for a few seconds as if it was moving from side to side."

Yair, who lives in Bat Yam, said: "The bed rocked as if someone was moving it. It became stronger and then weakened until it stopped."

Cyprus and Greece are both earthquake-prone zones, but strong tremors are not common. The highest recorded in recent years was a 6.3 magnitude earthquake in 1996 near Cyprus, but it caused little damage.

Back in January, many Israelis reported feeling a 5.3-magnitude earthquake that occurred in Cyprus, approximately 224 kilometers (140 miles) northwest of the northern city of Nahariya.

10.20.21

Resident doctors end strike, deal reduces work shifts from 26 to 18 hours

10.20.21

Resident end strike, reach deal with government

Following prolonged protests and a mass resignation of hundreds of doctors in residents, the deal struck reduces work shifts from 26 to 18 hours in all hospitals by 2025; 'We won,' says labor representative

Adir Yanko| Updated: 10.20.21, 21:34

Hundreds of resident doctors rescinded their resignation after they accepted a new offer proposed by Health Minister Nitzan Horowitz, that will effectively reduce their long working hours.

More than 2,500 medical residents submitted their resignation to the Health Ministry last week, in protest of the 26-hour shifts they were forced to work because of a shortage of trained physicians and hospital requirements.

The new agreement will see the **working hours of residents cut to 18 hour shifts**, initially in ten hospitals located far from the center of the country - as of March 2022. By November 2022, two additional as-of-yet undecided hospitals in the center of Israel, will be added.

10.19.21

80% Algeria, Iraq, Lebanon, Sudan below poverty; Economy up 0.1% from April

10.19.21

Social unrest threatens Mideast economic recovery, IMF warns

Countries like **Algeria, Iraq, Lebanon, Sudan** have been witnessing recent protests by thousands of **angry citizens demanding better jobs** and services — with all experiencing rapidly rising inflation, unemployment and poverty

AFP| Published: **10.19.21**, 16:33

The **Middle East and North Africa** are on track for a recovery, but rising social unrest is threatening the "fragile" progress of low-income economies, the International Monetary Fund said Tuesday.

The MENA region, which includes **Arab countries** and Iran, saw real GDP growth shrink by 3.2 percent in 2020 due to weak oil prices and sweeping lockdowns to halt the spread of the coronavirus.

But with rapid vaccination campaigns, especially in oil-rich Gulf nations, the IMF predicted **GDP growth** would rise to 4.1 percent this year, **up 0.1 of a percentage point from its last projection in April.**

"The region is going through recovery in 2021. Since the beginning of the year, we see progress in the economic performance," said Jihad Azour, director for the Middle East and Central Asia at the IMF.

But "this recovery is not the same in all countries. It is uncertain and uneven because of the divergence in vaccination... and geopolitical developments", he told AFP.

The IMF said in a report that while the prospects for oil-exporting economies improved with **higher oil prices**, **low-income** and crisis-hit countries were witnessing "**fragile**" recoveries.

It warned of "a rise in social unrest" in 2021 that "could pick up further due to repeated infection waves, dire economic conditions, high unemployment and food prices".

Algeria, Iraq, Lebanon, Sudan and other countries have been witnessing protests in recent months by thousands of angry citizens demanding better jobs and services.

Increasing inequities

Unemployment increased in MENA last year by 1.4 percent to reach 11.6 percent, a rise exceeding that seen during the global financial crisis and the 2014-15 oil price shock, the IMF said.

The IMF warned of the **longer-term** risk of an **uneven recovery**, which could lead to a "permanent widening of existing wealth, income, and social gaps and, ultimately, weaker growth and less inclusive societies".

About seven million more people in the region are estimated to have entered extreme poverty during 2020-21 compared with pre-crisis projections, according to the IMF.

Meanwhile, inflation in the region is projected to increase to 12.9 percent in 2021 from 10.4 last year, with higher food and energy prices in some countries, before subsiding to 8.8 percent in 2022.

"Inequities are increasing. The low-skilled, the young, women, and migrant workers have been affected the most by the pandemic, as have smaller firms, particularly those in contact-sensitive sectors," said the report.

According to the **international lender**, the corporate sector has recovered to pre-pandemic levels, but smaller firms and those in "contact-sensitive sectors" are lagging behind.

"Fifteen to 25 percent of firms may need to be restructured or liquidated," it added.

In Lebanon, the continuing drop in the value of the currency has dashed hopes that the government formed last month can stem an economic **crisis that the World Bank brands as one of the worst since the mid-19th century.**

Nearly **80 percent of Lebanon's** population lives **below the poverty line.**

"The Fund has already started technical discussions with the authorities... to develop what would be in fact that the framework within which the fund can help Lebanon," said Azour, a former Lebanese finance minister.

10.19.21

**US Press Secretary Psaki jokes about supply chain crunch & food shortages
White House Tuesday afternoon**

10.19.21

**Press Secretary Psaki made jokes about supply chain crunch & food shortages
White House Tuesday afternoon**

10.19.21

White House Tuesday afternoon

Speaking to reporters at the White House Tuesday afternoon, Press Secretary Jen **Psaki** was asked about why the **Biden administration was caught unprepared** to handle the current **supply chain crunch**, especially given experts and business leaders have been warning about it for months.

In response, Psaki made jokes about items not getting delivered in a timely fashion.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, the vast majority of Americans who were hospitalized or died from Wuhan coronavirus were overweight or obese.

An overwhelming majority of people who have been hospitalized, needed a ventilator or died from Covid-19 have been overweight or obese, the CDC said in a new study Monday.

Among 148,494 adults who received a Covid-19 diagnosis during an emergency department or inpatient visit at 238 U.S. hospitals from March to December, 71,491 were hospitalized. Of those who were admitted, 27.8% were overweight and 50.2% were obese, according to the CDC report. Overweight is defined as having a body mass index of 25 or more, while obesity is defined as having a BMI of 30 or more.

The agency found the risk for hospitalizations, ICU admissions and deaths was lowest among individuals with BMIs under 25. The risk of severe illness “sharply increased,” however, as BMIs rose, particularly among people 65 and older, the agency said.

Just over 42% of the U.S. population was considered obese in 2018, according to the agency’s most recent statistics.

But it isn't just treadmills that aren't getting delivered. Americans are seeing food shortages, school cafeterias are running low and grocery store shelves are empty.