

Britain

Policy chief Mirza resigns

Johnson ends week of scandal in 'weak' spot

LONDON, Feb 5, (AP): This was the week British Prime Minister Boris Johnson hoped to get a grip on his government after weeks of scandal. By Friday, he was struggling to hang on after a scathing report on lockdown-breaching parties and the departure of several top aides.

Johnson was rocked Thursday by the resignation of his policy chief, **Munira Mirza**, a trusted adviser who worked with him for more than a decade. Mirza stood by the prime minister amid "partygate" revelations that Johnson and his staff broke the rules they had imposed on the country. But she said Johnson's "scurrilous accusation" this week that an opposition leader had failed to stop a notorious pedophile was the final straw.

"This was not the normal cut-and-thrust of politics; it was an inappropriate and partisan reference to a horrendous case of child sex abuse," Mirza wrote in a resignation letter, which was published by The Spectator magazine.

After Mirza quit, Johnson's office announced the departure of three more top staffers: chief of staff Dan Rosenfield, communications director Jack Doyle and principal private secretary Martin Reynolds. Elena Narozanski, who worked in Mirza's policy unit, resigned Friday.

Reassure

Johnson tried to reassure staff that he remained in control by quoting the wise monkey Rafiki from "The Lion King," telling a meeting: "Change is good" even if it is difficult.

Conservative lawmakers loyal to Johnson depicted the departures as part of a planned overhaul to restore order to his 10 Downing Street office.

"The prime minister was absolutely clear on Monday that there would be changes at the top

of No. 10 and that is what he has delivered," Energy Minister Greg Hands said. "This is the prime minister taking charge."

Others weren't so sure. The prime minister's grip on power has been shaken by public anger at revelations that his staff held "bring your own booze" office parties, birthday celebrations and "wine time Fridays" at times in 2020 and 2021 while millions in Britain were barred from meeting with friends and family because of COVID-19 restrictions.

Investigated

A total of 16 parties have been investigated by a senior civil servant, Sue Gray, with a dozen of them also under investigation by the Metropolitan Police.

On Monday, Gray released an interim report looking at the four parties police are not probing. She found that "failures of leadership and judgment" allowed events to occur that "should not have been allowed to take place" and described a Downing Street operation marked by excessive drinking and dysfunctional dynamics.

Johnson apologized and pledged to fix the problems in his office, though he didn't admit personal wrongdoing.

Rosenfield, Doyle and especially Reynolds - who sent 100 government staff an invitation to a BYOB garden party in May 2020 - were always likely to be ousted as part of Johnson's post-"partygate" shakeup.

But Mirza's departure was a major blow. In her resignation letter, she said Johnson had not heeded her advice to apologize for accusing Labour Party leader Keir Starmer in the House of Commons on Monday of "failing to prosecute Jimmy Savile" when Starmer was the U.K.'s director of public prosecutions. Savile was a long-time presenter of youth television shows who was exposed after his death in 2011 as a sexual predator who had abused hundreds of children.

Starmer said the accusation was "a ridiculous slur peddled by right-wing trolls." A 2013 report found that Starmer hadn't been involved in decisions about whether Savile should be prosecuted.



Mirza

Europe

Chancellor to visit Kiev: German Chancellor Olaf Scholz will visit Kiev and Moscow in mid-February to discuss the Ukrainian border issue.

Chancellor Scholz will be heading to Kyiv on February 14. "In addition to (discussing) bilateral relations, the focus will also be on international issues, including security issues," Scholz's spokesman Wolfgang Buechner told reporters.

Meanwhile, Schulz's visit to the Ukrainian and Russian capitals came after a meeting he held with US President Joe Biden in Washington. (KUNA)

Rescue teams find 4 bodies: Rescue teams in Iceland located the bodies of all four occupants of a small plane that crashed into a lake while carrying tourists from the United States, the Netherlands and Belgium on a sight-seeing trip.

The Cessna 172 was discovered in Lake Thingvallavatn, Iceland's second-largest, at around 11 p.m. local time on Friday, the Icelandic Coast Guard said in a statement. The aircraft was found in a portion of the lake about 30 miles (50 kilometers) east of Reykjavik.

More than 1,000 members of Iceland's Search and Rescue organization, along with boats, divers and two Icelandic Coast Guard helicopters, had combed the Thingvellir National Park area in harsh winter weather for the plane.

The Cessna 172 plane took off from the domestic airport in Iceland's capital, Reykjavik, on Thursday, for a scheduled two-hour sightseeing tour. (AP)

Death toll rises to nine: Authorities in Austria warned Saturday of "considerable" risk of avalanches in the west of the country after nine people were killed within 24 hours.

Police said eight people died in three separate incidents in the states of Vorarlberg and Tyrol on Friday. In one avalanche near the Austrian-Swiss border, four Swedish citizens and their Austrian guide were killed.

On Saturday, Tyrol authorities reported the death of one person in near the village of Schmirn in an avalanche and a second person was missing.

Officials warned skiers and snowshoosers drawn to the Alps amid good weather that even slight tremors could trigger a snow slide. (AP)

Spain drops masks outdoors: Spain will end a mandate to wear masks outdoors next week, reversing a late December order against an unprecedented surge of coronavirus infections fueled by a highly contagious mutation, Health Minister Carolina Darias said. After confirming that contagion lev-

els have peaked, the Spanish Cabinet will end the mandate next Tuesday and the government expects the changes to be adopted from Thursday, Feb. 10, Darias told Cadena SER radio on Fri-

day. Mask wearing will remain mandatory in indoor public spaces, including public transportation, and outdoors whenever citizens can't keep a safe distance of 1.5 meters between them.

The outdoor mandate, adopted on Dec. 22 as many were preparing to reunite with loved ones on Christmas, was the government's main response to the spread of omicron. (AP)

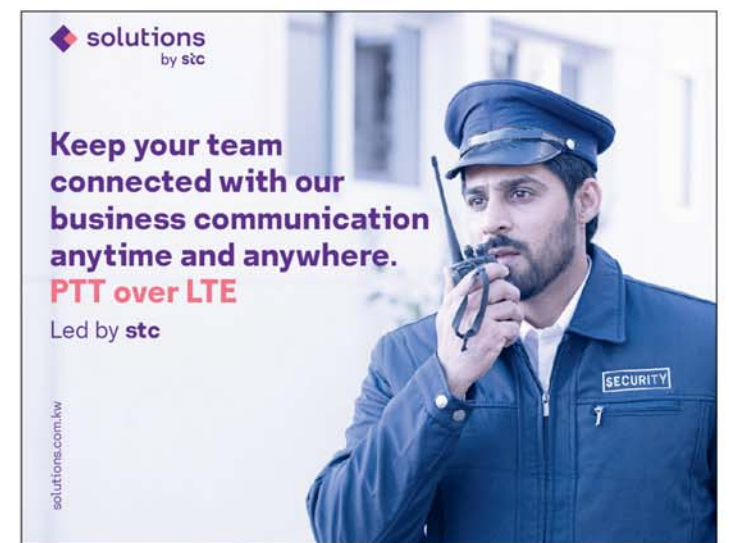
An efficient and cost-effective tool to maintain effective group communication to streamline productivity

solutions by stc introduces 'Business Communication', an innovative PTT solution for Corporate Customers

solutions by stc, the specialized business arm of Kuwait Telecommunications Company - stc, introduced its latest collaboration tool 'Business Communication', a new communication service designed to assist corporate customers in enabling their work teams to stay connected regardless of their location. Business Communication, offered in collaboration with Telo Systems, is a push-to-talk (PTT) over LTE solution that provides group communication as long as the user is connected to the internet.

In a statement, solutions by stc revealed that the service will provide corporate users with unlimited range as long as the PTT enabled device maintains data connectivity, increasing work productivity over a seamless and cost-effective communication channel. Upon adopting the solution, businesses will be able to create groups to manage internal communication through a designated dispatcher using a special software. Additional services under the Business Communication tool include GPS and route history tracking, worker security, emergency notification, and a command center to manage all aspects of the communication channel.

The PTT service is compatible with a number of select rugged devices offered by solutions by stc, ranging from basic to advanced models to suit each customer's requirements. Considering the demand for efficient collaboration tools, Business Communication can



Keep your team connected with our business communication anytime and anywhere. PTT over LTE Led by stc

easily be implemented on any business model that requires a secure and cost-effective solution to maintain reliable communication channels amongst workers. solutions by stc commented that the new service aims to enhance the communication and collaboration tools available to its current corporate customers and future prospects. The Company also stated that it is proud to partner with Telo Systems, a specialized manufacturer of innovative broadband PTT and 4G handheld radios, further expanding its existing product line with this exceptional solution that will be offered at competitive prices. Customers incorporating the technology into their business models through solutions by stc will also gain access to around-the-clock support to ensure that all functions are operating efficiently and in line with the customer's

requirements.

Following its strategy to offer a wide range of solutions under one roof, solutions by stc takes great strides to introduce new products that cater to the Company's growing and diverse customer base. These include a range of connectivity solutions such as fixed or wireless services, 5G technology led by stc, as well as ICT, IoT, AI, and other IT products and services. solutions by stc will continue to introduce pioneering technology enabled solutions based on the latest innovations in this digital era, serving as the preferred gateway to its customers through digital transformation.

To find out more about solutions by stc, visit www.solutions.com.kw, send an email to business@solutions.com.kw with your inquiry.

At the IKEA Pop-Up in 360

"Together under one tent"- IKEA way of honoring the togetherness culture of Kuwait



In the month of the Kuwait National Celebrations, IKEA joins in by honoring the togetherness culture and heritage of Kuwait with the latest Pop-Up today in 360. The IKEA Pop-Up will host family and group activities as part of its festive calendar, bringing the Kuwaiti culture closer through food, music, and creativity.

Inspired by its vision "to create a better everyday life for the many people", IKEA Kuwait opens a new Pop-Up to provide both outdoor solutions and entertaining experiences that are rooted in Kuwaiti traditional and cultural labels. The IKEA Pop-Up reflects Kuwait's stunning sand dunes, cityscape, and desert lands through 3 tents that feature IKEA's flexible outdoor solutions, the HEMBJUDEN Ramadan collection, and many inspiring accessories.

"The series of lockdowns in the past two years made people more appreciative of Kuwait's miraculous desert lands and outdoor spaces. The country enjoys heavenly landscapes of nature and sand dunes that people in Kuwait can explore and treat themselves after long periods of lockdowns. With our home furnishing knowledge, our beautiful, flexible, and affordable home furnishing solutions, we aim to inspire the people of Kuwait to create the tent of their dreams."



stated Asma El Achhab, IKEA Kuwait Marketing Activity Leader.

The IKEA Pop-Up welcomes; visitors who are open to new adventures and experiences in nature, families who want to set-up outdoor tents for special gatherings and occasions such as Ramadan iftars, and anyone who wants

to make use of their outdoor spaces and have a makeover at their rooftops, backyards, or even their walk-in basements.

There will also be a 2-weeks' family and group activity on February 10, 2022, for those who like to create and display an artwork for Kuwait National and Liberation days. The 'Art for Kuwait' activity will provide small groups a chance to come together and translate their own feelings for Kuwait through their personalized artwork.

"We are pleased to welcome all our visitors to come and enjoy the Pop-Up at 360 and safely re-experience the spirit of connection, unity, and coziness under IKEA's togetherness tents. The tents strictly follow all the COVID19 safety requirements and recommendations from the authorities to ensure an enjoyable and safe experience to all the visitors of the IKEA Pop-Up," pointed Mohammad



Jalloul, IKEA Kuwait Marketing Manager.

Visitors can visit the IKEA Pop-Up in 360 ground floor, main atrium until March 4, 2022. IKEA is inviting all the people of Kuwait to further enjoy an exciting shopping experience; IKEA The Avenues, IKEA 360 Planning Studio and IKEA The Assima Mall.

