

Charles denies any wrongdoing over donations

Prince Charles' office has denied there was any wrongdoing in the heir to the British throne accepting bags full of cash as charity donations from a Qatari politician.

The Sunday Times said the prince was given a total of 3 million euros (\$3.2 million) by Sheikh Hamad bin Jassim bin Jaber Al Thani, the former prime minister of Qatar. It said the money was handed over to Charles at private meetings between 2011 and 2015 - on one occasion in a suitcase,

and on another in shopping bags from London's Fortnum & Mason department store.

The newspaper said the money was deposited into the accounts of the Prince of Wales's Charitable Fund. It did not allege that anything illegal was done.

Charles' office, Clarence House, said in a statement that the donations "were passed immediately to one of the prince's charities who carried out the appropriate governance and have

assured us that all the correct processes were followed."

The prince's charitable fund told the newspaper it had verified "that the donor was a legitimate and verified counterparty ... and our auditors signed off on the donation after a specific enquiry during the audit. There was no failure of governance."

Qatar's government communications office did not immediately respond to a request for comment. (AP)

Austria freezes Russians' assets

Austrian authorities have frozen financial and property assets belonging to Russian businessmen and investors with affiliations with the Russian leadership, the country's ministry of interior declared on Monday.

The Austrian radio-television network, citing the national security apparatuses, said the frozen funds and assets amount to euro 1.5 billion, noting that Russian businessmen will be barred from trade with their country.

This campaign is being executed in line with sanctions that have been adopted by the European Union against Moscow, said

the Interior Minister Gerhard Karner in remarks broadcast by the news network.

Meanwhile, Chancellor Karl Nehammer affirmed, "We have been applying the European Union curbs on Russia literally."

Austrian Ministry of Interior revealed that up to 1,175 Russian individuals and 101 companies have been sanctioned throughout Europe.

The seized funds are estimated at euro 10 billion. Moreover, transactions valued at euro 196 billion have been suspended. (KUNA)

EU calls scrapping parts of trade deal illegal

UK presses on with Brexit rules rewrite

LONDON, June 27, (AP): Britain is ramping up a feud with the European Union by pressing on with a plan to rip up parts of the post-Brexit trade deal it signed with the bloc.

Legislation that rewrites trade rules for Northern Ireland is scheduled to get its first major House of Commons debate on Monday, the first step on what could be a rocky journey through Parliament.

The legislation, if approved by lawmakers, would remove checks on goods entering Northern Ireland from the rest of the UK, thereby scrapping parts of a trade treaty that Prime Minister Boris Johnson signed before Britain left the EU in 2020.

Johnson said he thought the plan could be approved "fairly rapidly" if Parliament cooperates, and that the measures could become law by the end of the year.

Balance

"What we are trying to do is fix something that I think is very important to our country, which is the balance of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement," Johnson told reporters at the Group of Seven summit in Germany.

The British government says the rules are burdening businesses and undermining peace in Northern Ireland. It argues the unilateral move is justified under international law because of the "genuinely exceptional situation."

Northern Ireland Secretary Brandon Lewis said Sunday that the aim was to "fix," rather than throw out, the trade agreement, known as the Northern Ireland Protocol.

Johnson's opponents, however,

say the move is illegal and will shred Britain's international reputation. It is also causing concern among some of the prime minister's fellow Conservatives, already worried about Johnson's judgment - and popularity - following a series of ethics scandals and two special election defeats.

But Johnson said Monday that questions about his leadership were no longer relevant.

"We settled that a couple of weeks ago," he told reporters in Germany, referring to his survival in a no-confidence vote three weeks ago.

The EU has threatened to retaliate against the UK if it goes ahead with its plan to rewrite the rules of the post-Brexit deal, raising the specter of a trade war between the two major economic partners.

Irish foreign affairs minister Simon Coveney said he was "hugely disappointed" that the U.K. government is still pursuing its "unlawful" approach to the Northern Ireland Protocol.

"This is not the way to find sustainable solutions to the genuine concerns of people and business in Northern Ireland and only adds to uncertainty," he said.

Treated

The bloc's ambassador to Britain, Joao Vale de Almeida, said Britain's plan was "illegal because it is a breach of international law, a breach of EU law, UK law and international law."

"It is a treaty that we signed, ratified and even went through a general election in this country," he told Times Radio.

Northern Ireland is the only part of the UK that shares a border with an EU country, Ireland. When Britain left the European Union and its borderless free-trade zone, the two sides agreed to keep the Irish land bor-

der free of customs posts and other checks because an open border is a key pillar of the peace process that ended decades of violence in Northern Ireland.

Instead, to protect the EU's single market, there are checks on some goods, such as meat and eggs, entering Northern Ireland from the rest of the UK.

Johnson's Conservative government claims overzealous EU implementation means the rules are not working as expected and are causing a political crisis in Northern Ireland.

Barriers

"You have got one tradition, one community, that feels that things really aren't working in a way that they like or understand - you've got unnecessary barriers to trade between Great Britain and Northern Ireland," Johnson said.

"All we are saying is you can get rid of those whilst not in any way endangering the EU single market," he said.

British unionists there say the checks are fraying the bonds between Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK, seen by some unionists as a threat to their British identity. Northern Ireland's main unionist party is blocking the formation of a new power-sharing government in Belfast, saying it won't take part until the Brexit trade rules are scrapped.

"I want to see the reestablishment of the Northern Ireland Assembly and the Executive, and the protocol is getting in the way of that," Lewis told Sky News. "We have got to resolve that. That's what this legislation will do."

"Ultimately, we want to do this by agreement with the EU," he added. "But to do that, they need to show some flexibility and actually come and negotiate in a flexible way."



Demonstrators protest outside Hillsborough Castle, ahead of a visit by British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, in Hillsborough, Northern Ireland, Monday, May 16, 2022. Britain is pressing on with a plan to rip up parts of the post-Brexit trade deal it signed with the bloc European Union. Legislation that rewrites trade rules for Northern Ireland is scheduled to get its first major House of Commons debate on Monday, June 27. (AP)

Previous govt blamed

Australia emissions rose in 2021: data

CANBERRA, Australia, June 27, (AP): Australia's new government on Monday blamed the previous administration's inaction on climate change for an increase in the nation's greenhouse gas emissions last year.

Australia emitted 488 million metric tons (538 million U.S. tons) of carbon dioxide and equivalent gases in the last calendar year, up 0.8%, or 4.1 million metric tons (4.5 million U.S. tons), from 2020, according to the government's National Greenhouse Gas Inventory update for the December quarter released on Monday.

Factors that caused the increase included a 4% rise in transport emissions as pandemic travel restrictions eased and 4.2% more agricultural emissions as rain ended years of drought across large swathes of southeast Australia.

Climate Change Minister Chris Bowen, whose center-left Labor Party came to power at elections last month, accused the previous conservative coalition of relying on COVID-19 and drought to achieve emission reductions toward the end of its nine years in power.

"With the resumption of more normal economic activity, continuing recovery from drought and increases in manu-

facturing and resources sector activity, the previous government caps off its record of denial and delay by increasing emissions on the way out," Bowen said in a statement.

Labor was elected on a promise to reduce Australia's emissions by 43% below 2005 levels by 2030.

The former government had a less ambitious target of a 26% to 28% cut by the end of the decade.

Some minor parties and independent lawmakers are calling for stronger action to limit global warming to less than 2 degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit).

By the end of last year, Australia had achieved a 21.4% reduction, according to the latest data released Monday.

Opposition spokesperson on climate change Ted O'Brien said Australia's emissions were now lower than any time when Labor was last in government from 2007 until 2013.

O'Brien challenged the new government to deliver cheaper power and to beat its target while delivering economic growth. Tim Baxter, a senior researcher at the Climate Council think tank, expected Australia's emissions to rise further this year before the new government's more effective policies showed results.

KFH Celebrates Graduates of Harvard Executive Development Program



Kuwait Finance House (KFH) honored the graduates of Harvard Executive Development Program, titled "Leading in a World Transformed" in a ceremony held at KFH headquarters. The program is part of (Kafu'a) initiative launched by the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) in collaboration with the Kuwaiti banks and organized by the Institute of Banking Studies (IBS).

In collaboration with Harvard Business School, 12 employees from the middle and executive management at KFH have participated in the two-week intensive training program delivered by experts in finance, innovation management and product development.

The program focused on two primary themes: financial markets strategy and leadership, equipping participants with concepts and tools for successful leadership in a rapidly changing financial landscape. This included cutting-edge technologies and understanding how to compete with FinTech disruptors, an integrated set of practical, simulation, and analytical experiences, in addition to examinations that demonstrate the importance of leadership and management in formulating and implementing a strategy to address challenges.

The second theme focused on the importance of digital transformation in the financial sector and the approach that will impact the performance, innovation, organization

Al Omar:
Making leaders is a pivotal pillar of a more sustainable growth model

culture and the participation in generating creative ideas.

Group Chief HR Officer, Zeyad Abdullah Al Omar congratulated the employees on completing the program successfully, stressing the importance of its being reflected in their performance and in polishing their job skills in order to boost productivity, facilitate procedures, contribute to the structure of services and products, as well as developing work mechanisms that are suited to the continuous change in the banking industry in light of the accelerating technology adoption.

Al Omar added that KFH is going ahead with its innovation and digital transformation initiatives, all of which require elites, competencies and talents that are capable of carrying on with innovation and creativity and keeping up with all developments in the banking industry, while making use of technological applications and their tools, such as Artificial Intelligence and Blockchain and others to take KFH to new levels that would enhance its local and global standing.

Al Omar pointed out that KFH spares no effort in investing in talent development out of the belief in its importance in enhancing customer experience through initiatives that contribute to meeting the aspirations of

Over 86 of KFH employees, the largest number in the banking sector, have participated in Harvard program so far

customers according to the highest standards of quality and security. He explained that enriching employees' know-how and pursuing the approach of leader-making are pivotal foundations for establishing a more sustainable growth model in the future.

Al Omar pointed out that KFH invests in its human resources as they are most prominent asset in the success equation as well as being the present and the future of KFH, adding that ongoing education is highly important and contributes to maintaining KFH leadership.

He stressed that it is important for every manager who passed the training program to share the scientific experiences and achievements they gained with their work team. He pointed out the vital role of such sharing in improving the work environment through the sharing of knowledge.

Since 2011, KFH has been keen to participate in the "Harvard Executive Development Program", with the number of participating employees exceeding 86. It is the largest number in the banking sector and a testimony to the Bank's leadership in investing in its employees.

7,400 sqm facility to act as exclusive e-fulfillment center Lulu Hypermarket Opens New Logistics Center at Agility Logistics Park in Doha



Agility, a supply chain services, infrastructure, and innovation company, announced today that Lulu Hypermarket, a major retailer in Kuwait, has inaugurated its new fulfillment center at the Agility Logistics Park (ALP) in Doha.

The new 7,400 sqm logistics center will act as an exclusive e-fulfillment center and as the logistics hub for the company's growing e-commerce activity in Kuwait. The new facility includes the latest in smart warehousing technologies such as automated sorting and storage, which organizes all products based on their categories, from fresh and frozen foods to other non-grocery products.

Nader Sakeen, CEO of ALP Kuwait and GCC, said: "We're pleased to welcome Lulu Hypermarket at their new facility at ALP in Doha. The state-of-the-art facility has been built-to-suit meeting Lulu's standards and requirements, and the advanced design gives them the chance to store more goods in less space. In Kuwait, ALP works with companies of all sizes, from SMEs to multinationals - we know how to deliver warehouses that mean everyone's needs."

The new logistics hub at the ALP in Doha will strengthen Lulu Hypermarket's operations with

safe, convenient, and faster service. The logistics hub will allow the retailer to organize orders and deliver them to customer's quicker. Lulu Hypermarket will also utilize its fleet, which is custom-made and fitted with three temperature-controlled compartments for frozen, chilled and ambient requirements to preserve the freshness as well as food safety standards.

In Doha, the Agility Logistics Parks features built-up, international-standard warehousing and logistics facilities that serve leading multinationals, government as well as small and medium-sized businesses operating in Kuwait.

ALP provides its customers with ready-built warehouses; built-to-suit warehouses; shared facilities; and open storage, laydown, and truck and car-staging yards. The logistics park also includes ambient and air-conditioned warehouses; freezers and chillers; concrete paving container-yard storage; and racked warehouses. Agility's warehouses meet international environmental standards and feature eco-friendly construction materials, using energy-efficient roof and side-insulated panels, wind-driven roof fans, skylights for natural lighting, along with LED and energy-saving light fittings.