



Sweden calls for vigilance abroad after desecrations

Groups 'planning'

COPENHAGEN, Aug 14, (AP): A senior Swedish official said Monday Swedes abroad and businesses linked to Sweden "should observe increased vigilance and caution," following recent Holy Quran burnings in the country and protests in the Muslim world.

Henrik Landerholm, Sweden's National Security Adviser, said there are signs of "a heightened threat" to the country and to Swedish interests abroad, adding the security situation has worsened.

In a statement, Landerholm said that "representatives of terrorist groups have called for attacks against Sweden. States and other actors have helped amplify such messages." He said extremists who previously considered Sweden a "legitimate target" now consider it a "priority." The statement did not identify those involved.

Landerholm said there also were "indications" that groups are planning other acts against Swedish interests abroad, and cited the storming of Sweden's Embassy in Baghdad last month and an attempted attack on the diplomatic mission in Beirut last week.

The Swedish government and relevant authorities "are monitoring developments, taking a variety of measures and working closely with international partners to protect Swedes and Swedish interests abroad and to counteract the hate messages being spread about Sweden," he said.

This month, Sweden stepped up border controls and identity checks at crossing points.

A recent string of public Quran desecrations by a handful of anti-Islam activists in Sweden - and more recently in neighboring Denmark -- has sparked angry demonstrations in Muslim countries.

Sweden does not have a law specifically prohibiting the burning or desecration of the Holy Quran or other religious texts. Like many Western countries, it doesn't have any blasphemy laws; Sweden's were abandoned in the 1970s.

Opinion

'Shulamy ... Shulam', with 'Kalila and Dimna' thieves

By Ahmed Al-Jarallah, Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

ILLEGAL money and people's rights are opposites. Hypocrisy cannot cover the truth with the husks of rhetorics.

Therefore, whoever committed a crime of this kind or had robbed ordinary people either ended up in prison or was afflicted with various diseases or was exiled, facing the repercussions of the sins that are prohibited by all religions, and criminalized by the laws of all countries.

Such a person also becomes an outcast in the eyes of the people and lives in misery.

The aforementioned ending is a quick one, whereas a painful ending is for those who are tormented by their sins for a long time.

That is why when Almighty Allah forbade committing sins, He put murder and theft first, because they are the two sources of corruption for all people.

In this regard, it is possible to look at all the corrupt, irrespective of whether they are in Lebanon where they plundered people's rights and deposits, but have become exposed today after announcing the criminal audit report, or in Iraq where the gang of leaders looted over USD 200 billion within a period of 20 years but how they are seen today in the eyes of the Iraqis, or in Kuwait and some Gulf countries where some committed the crime of plundering public money but how their end was and where they are today.

In this regard, I read a story in the book "Kalila wa Dimna" in which is a lesson for those who covet the money of others, and the repercussions of such a sin. This story currently applies to many corrupt people who loot public money and are thieves of rights.

Once upon a time, a gang of thieves appeared on the roof of a rich and pious man, who is known for his kindness and generosity to people. They were not that stealth in their movement, which awakened the man from his sleep. He immediately alerted his wife about the presence of the thieves.

Thinking about how to handle the situation, the man whispered to his wife to initiate a conversation with him loudly and ask him about how he managed to amass his wealth. He also asked his wife to keep repeating that question even after he forbids her from asking it.

The wife went along with what her husband asked her to do, and the two made sure that their conversation was audible to the thieves who were on the roof of the house, and were ready to sneak in and steal.

The wife asked him from where he got his wealth but he refused to tell her, but she kept on insisting until the man agreed to divulge his "secret".

He said to her, "I amassed this wealth through theft."

"How did you manage to do that?" asked the wife.

He replied, "I did it using a magical chant. Whenever I used it, all the wealth came to me without any struggle, and without leaving a trace on the scene."

By now the thieves were eager to know the magical chant that would simplify their work and make it safer.

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Day by Day

UNLIKE many countries around the world where an official spokesperson promptly rectifies state news and communicates the truth, Kuwait stands apart without an established official spokesperson.

Recent events highlighted this absence, as specious news regarding His Highness the Amir, may he be blessed with continued health, being admitted to the hospital in a critical state circulated across the nation. The people were caught up in a whirlwind of confusion, rumors, and well-wishing prayers for his recovery.

However, the denial of these claims only surfaced three to four days later, adding to the turmoil.

Time and again, the necessity of having a designated individual to swiftly address misinformation and inaccuracies within the state's communication has been emphasized. Rather than solely focusing on tracking down the sources and propagators of such unfounded rumors, it's evident that the state requires a dedicated figure to promptly rectify news and misconceptions.

... Yet tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar

Gunman hits Iran shrine

Nine Baha'is held for smuggling

TEHRAN, Aug 14, (AP): A gunman opened fire Sunday night at a prominent shrine in southern Iran, killing one person and wounding eight others in an attack that followed another assault there months earlier, authorities said.

Officials offered no immediate motive for the attack in the city of Shiraz at Shah Cheragh, which

draws Shiite pilgrims to its domed mosque and the tomb of a prominent member of the faith from its earliest days.

However, Iran has faced attacks in the past from the Sunni extremists of the Islamic State group, who view Shiites as heretics. Iran also faces lingering unrest and economic turmoil amid tensions with the West.

Iran's state-run IRNA news agency quoted Ismail Qezelsofla, a deputy governor for security in the country's Fars province, as offering the casualty toll.

Fars province Gov. Mohammad Hadi Imanieh told Iranian state television that a single gunman carried out the attack and later was detained by security forces. He did not offer any motive for the attack in his brief comments.

Footage after the attack showed security forces surround one entrance to the then-deserted courtyard of Shah Cheragh at sunset. Ambulances later took away the wounded as security forces and government officials reached the shrine.

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Destroyed homes and cars are shown, Sunday, Aug. 13, 2023, in Lahaina, Hawaii. Hawaii officials urged tourists to avoid traveling to Maui as many hotels prepare to house evacuees and first responders on the island where a wildfire demolished a historic town and killed dozens. Inset: Attendees embrace during a church service at King's Cathedral in Kahului on the island of Maui, Hawaii Sunday, Aug. 13, 2023. The church has been converted into an emergency shelter and destruction center since the devastating wildfires that affected multiple regions on the island. (AP)

Obama promotes telethon

Maui estimates loss of \$5.6bn ... toll 96

Newswatch

NEW DELHI: Heavy monsoon rains triggered floods and landslides in India's Himalayan region, leaving at least 33 people dead and many others trapped, officials told local media on Monday.

Torrential downpours that began over the weekend in the mountainous Himachal Pradesh state have flooded roads and washed away homes as scores of rescuers work to help those trapped under piles of debris.

A cloudburst in the state's Solan district on Sunday night killed nine people in the area, and 12 people died following two landslides in Shimla, the state's capital, authorities told the Press Trust of India news agency. (AP)

KYIV: Russia launched three waves of nighttime air attacks against the southern Ukraine port city of Odesa, officials said Monday, though the Ukrainian air force said it intercepted all 15 incoming Shahed drones and eight Kalibr missiles.

Falling debris from the interceptions damaged the dormitory of an educational facility in the city, a residential building and a supermarket, Odesa Gov. Oleh Kiper said.

Two employees of the supermarket were hospitalized, Kiper said. Video showed a huge blaze at the supermarket during the night and, the next day, the large building's charred and mangled wreckage. (AP)

CAIRO: In a rare televised speech Monday, the head of Sudan's military accused the rival paramilitary force of committing war crimes as all-out civil war threatens to engulf the northeast African country.

Sudan was plunged into chaos in April when months of simmering tensions between the military, led by Gen. Abdel Fattah Burhan, and the Rapid Support Forces, commanded by Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, exploded into open fighting in Khartoum and elsewhere.

In a speech broadcast on Sudan TV, Burhan accused the

RSF and Dagalo of committing violations under the falsehood of promising to restore democracy.

"How can you bring about democracy by committing war crimes?" he said, in a speech celebrating Sudan's annual armed forces day. (AP)

BERLIN: Germany's foreign minister was waiting in Abu Dhabi on Monday after a technical problem on her government plane - the latest in a succession of such incidents - forced it to return to the airport rather than continue to Australia.

Annalena Baerbock was due to arrive in Canberra on Monday night at the start of a visit to Australia, New Zealand and Fiji. But her German air force Airbus A340 had to return to Abu Dhabi after a refueling stop because of "a mechanical problem with the landing flaps," ministry spokesman Sebastian Fischer wrote on X, formerly known as Twitter.

The pilot noticed the problem minutes after the plane took off from Abu Dhabi, and the plane landed again safely two hours later after dumping some 80 tons of fuel, German news agency dpa reported. (AP)



Minister for Foreign Affairs Annalena Baerbock walks through the airport of the airbase after her arrival from New York, in Bonn, Germany, July 18, 2023. (AP)

Ruble now at 'lowest level'

LONDON, Aug 14, (AP): The Russian ruble on Monday reached its lowest value since the early weeks of the war in Ukraine as Moscow increases military spending and Western sanctions weigh on its energy exports.

It led Russia's central bank to announce it will hold an emergency meeting Tuesday to review its key interest rate, opening the possibility of an increase in borrowing costs that would support the flagging ruble.

The Russian currency passed 101 rubles to the dollar, continuing a more than 25% decline in its value since the beginning of the year and hitting the lowest level in almost 17 months. The ruble recovered slightly after the central bank's announcement.

The meeting was set after President Vladimir Putin's economic adviser, Maksim Oreshkin, blamed the weak ruble on "loose monetary policy" in an op-ed Monday for state news agency Tass. He said a strong ruble is in the interest of the Russian economy and that a weak currency "complicates economic restructuring and negatively affects people's real incomes."

Oreshkin said Russia's central bank has "all the tools necessary" to stabilize the situation and said he expected normalization shortly.

Bank deputy director Alexei Zabolotkin told reporters Friday that it is adhering to a floating exchange rate because "it allows the economy to effectively adapt to changing external conditions."

Analysts say the weakening of the ruble is being driven by increased defense spending - leading imports to rise - and falling exports, particularly in the oil and natural gas sector. Importing more and exporting less means a smaller trade surplus, which typically weighs on a country's currency.

The Russian economy is now "working on different types of state orders related to the war, such as textile enterprises, pharmaceuticals and the food industry," said Alexandra Prokopenko, nonresident scholar at the Carnegie Russia Eurasia Center and a former Russian central bank official.

LAHAINA, Hawaii, Aug 14, (AP): The Maui Police Department updated the number of confirmed deaths to 96 around 9 p.m. Sunday, Maui County said in a statement.

In a video update released earlier on Sunday, Hawaii Gov. Josh Green said more than 2,700 structures were destroyed in Lahaina and "an estimated value of \$5.6 billion has gone away."

Green said the response has been "comprehensive" in the past several days: "We are bringing the full force of government to try to do all we can to alleviate suffering."

FEMA is overseeing the federal response in Hawaii with 416 personnel including FEMA Administrator Deanne Criswell.

"We've had a lot of time to discuss how we will ultimately rebuild Lahaina and support Maui," Green said.

Green said President Joe Biden has "authorized the full force of the federal government in support of us."

A federal urban search and rescue team will be accompanied by 20 dogs that can locate the places where people have perished.

"I will tell you this, as a physician, it is a harrowing sight in Maui," Green said. "When those providers, the police and this division, do come across scenes in houses or businesses it is very difficult for them because they know, ultimately, they will be sharing with our people that there have been more fatalities. I do expect the numbers to rise."

Meanwhile, former US president Barack Obama has appeared in a video promoting a live telethon on Monday to raise funds for the American Red Cross of Hawaii in support of its relief effort for wildfire victims.

Malama Maui, hosted by KHON-TV, is scheduled to be held from 5 a.m. to 10 a.m. on the local news station.

"As someone who grew up in Hawaii, someone who has taken my family to enjoy the incredible beauty of that island and the hospitality of the people of Lahaina, we now find ourselves mourning the lives that are lost," Obama said.

He noted "thoughts and prayers are not enough" and asked the public to help the Red Cross and Malama Maui "pro-

vide direct support to people who are desperately in need."

"If all of us, the Ohana, pull together and do as much as we can to give back to an island and a town and people who have given us so much, I'm absolutely confident that Lahaina and Maui and those families are going to be able to rebuild," Obama said.

The KHON website provided a phone number and a Red Cross link to make donations.

The Catholic bishop of the Diocese of Honolulu celebrated Mass on Sunday at a church in Kapalua - just up the road from fire-ravaged Lahaina - and urged those reeling from the wildfire not to give up hope.

"How could this be a good, loving God allowing such things to happen?" the Most Rev. Clarence "Larry" Silva asked. "We need to wrestle with that. The worst thing we can do is to give God the silent treatment. If we are angry with God we should tell him so. He can take it. He will still love us."

During the Mass, Silva read a message from Pope Francis that he was praying for those who lost loved ones, homes and livelihoods - as well as for first responders.

After the service, Silva declared "God loves us in tragedies and good times" and urged those present "to share that faith with others who may lose it or don't have it so that they can go on and they don't give up hope."

Several parishioners from Maria Lanakila Catholic Church in Lahaina attended the Mass, about 10 miles (16 kilometers) from the epicenter of the destruction.

Taufa Samisoni was present. His uncle, aunt, cousin and cousin's 7-year-old son all died. Samisoni's wife Katalina cited a Bible reading from Sunday's Mass about how Jesus' apostle Peter walked on water because of faith - and she would rely on faith to cope. "If Peter can walk on water, yes we can. We will get to the shore," she said, her voice quivering.

The Lahaina church survived the fire even though the adjoining Catholic school burned. Administrators are exploring potentially holding classes for the 200 students in hotel ballrooms and conference rooms.

Prayer Timings

Fajr	03:50	Asr	15:28
Sunrise ..	05:15	Maghrib ..	18:30
Zohr	11:53	Isha	19:53

Local

Expected weather for the next 24 hours:

By Day: Hot and humid specially over coastal areas with light to moderate freshening at times southeasterly wind with speeds of 12-40 km/h.

Weather

By Night: Hot to rather hot and humid specially over coastal areas with light to moderate southeasterly wind to light variable wind with speeds of 08-30 km/h.

Station	Max Exp	Min Rec
Kuwait City	46	36

Kuwait Airport	46	30
Abdaly	47	34
Jahra	48	34
Salmiyah	37	34
Ahmadi	39	35
Nuwaisib	44	30
Wafra	47	31

BIOMETRIC/FINGERPRINT APPOINTMENT: <https://meta.e.gov.kw/En/>



Young Kuwaiti citizens recall the heritage of their forefathers as they sail out to the sea in hunt for pearls.

KUNA photo

HH Amir congratulates Pakistan

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 14, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent Monday a congratulatory cable to the President of Pakistan Dr. Arif Alvi on his country's Independence Day.

His Highness the Amir wished president Alvi good health and his country and people progress and prosperity.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent

Monday a congratulatory cable to the President of Pakistan Dr. Arif Alvi on his country's Independence Day.

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His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent Monday a congratulatory cable to the President of Pakistan Dr. Arif Alvi on his country's Independence Day.

'House help crisis to worsen'

'Need to find solution on war-footing'

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 14: Given the ongoing halt by the majority of nations sending domestic workers to Kuwait, the crisis in this sector persists both generally and specifically in women's employment, have an impact on all labor recruitment agencies at this current juncture, reports Al-Rai daily.

It's worth noting that while the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and Jordan have overcome this crisis years ago by adhering to their recruitment laws, while Kuwait's laws, which are regarded as among the world's best in labor rights, have not yielded the same results.

Specialist in domestic labor affairs, Bassam Al-Shammari outlined to Al-Rai the unique advantages of Kuwaiti labor laws, setting them apart from neighboring countries. These advantages include three distinct provisions – a one-month paid leave after 11 months of work; end-of-service remuneration equivalent to one month's salary per year of service and double wages for domestic workers for any additional hours worked beyond regular working hours. Al-Shammari referred to these three additions as "unfavorable for employers" as they are not provided for in the Civil Labor Law.

He further explained that the failure to fully enforce laws related to the employment sector led to the incorporation of these provisions, which in turn increased the burden on employers and discouraged some from seeking new workers.

Al-Shammari revealed that the number of domestic workers increased to approximately 780,000 in the first half of 2023 compared to about 613,000 in 2022.

This increase is largely attributed to the recruitment of male workers (cooks, drivers, etc.) who face fewer challenges in hiring compared to female workers.

However, the full impact of the situation will become clearer after December 2023, as contracts for female workers are nearly suspended and a significant portion of existing contracts for female workers will begin expiring, intensifying the crisis.

He called upon relevant authorities to swiftly find solutions and mediate between government agencies to resolve conflicts that may exacerbate challenges and harm all parties involved amid the current circumstances faced by the domestic labor sector.

Cultural

Al-Shammari stressed the necessity of promoting cultural awareness about employment laws among the stakeholders, including sponsors, workers, recruitment agency owners, and personnel in government bodies focused on civil and domestic employment while at the same time emphasizing the importance of learning from neighboring countries' experiences, particularly Bahrain's model, which closely resembles Kuwait's.

He also called the government to sign agreements with countries exporting domestic workers, aligning with plans to adjust demographics and labor needs without relying solely on one country and exploring new countries with suitable labor export levels in line with Kuwaiti family dynamics is crucial.

He also called on the government to work on signing memorandums with countries that export domestic workers in line with the plan to adjust the demographics and their needs, not to rely on a specific country, and to search for new countries that export workers at an acceptable level commensurate with the nature of the Kuwaiti family.

Al-Shammari proposed seven measures that would enable Kuwait to keep pace with neighboring countries in this thorny file – correct activation of memorandums of understanding concluded with labor-exporting countries; establishing an approved mechanism for resolving labor disputes regarding dues; final clearance is a prerequisite before leaving the country (clearance); facilitating transfer procedures in case the worker wants to work for another sponsor and not leave; reconsidering reports of absenteeism and not activating the report until 60 days have elapsed from its date; activating the role of the shelter center to eliminate labor shelters in embassies and untangling the competencies between government agencies in the matter of domestic workers.

Al-Shammari said, "It has been noticed recently that it is difficult to find educated domestic workers, and there is a decline in the cultural level of the workers, and it is now difficult to find workers who can speak English," stressing that this decline in the quality of the recruited workers will have social effects on the Kuwaiti family.



KUNA photo

Acting General Manager of the Sabah Al-Ahmad Center for Giftedness and Creativity, Riad Al-Sharaf.

Summer training program ends

AI to help youths get jobs

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 14, (KUNA): Riyad Al-Sharaf, the Acting Director General of the Sabah Al-Ahmad Center for Giftedness and Creativity, has affirmed that the center has a primary objective of guiding young individuals and enhancing their abilities by applying concepts of artificial intelligence to cater to the diverse requirements of the job market.

Al-Sharaf made this statement in a press release on the occasion of concluding this year's summer training program. This program saw the participation of 40 students, both male and female, from high schools, institutes, and universities. The training was conducted in collaboration with the Public Authority for Manpower and spanned a duration of four weeks.

Elaborating further, Al-Sharaf highlighted that this program offers a distinctive opportunity for talented young individuals to

nurture their potential and improve the skills of the nation's workforce.

It does so by providing specialized practical training, thoughtfully designed to equip participants with tools and knowledge that will contribute to enhancing their academic and practical performance.

He went on to explain that the center's aim is to attract local talents, provide them with qualifications, and hone their skills and capabilities in the fields of artificial intelligence, technical industries, technological sectors, and applied sciences.

Additionally, the program's objective is to train students in developing projects using science and technology, preparing them for the demands of the job market. Al-Sharaf expressed his appreciation for the partnership between the center and the Public Authority for Manpower.

Power use up despite temp fall

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 14: The electric gauge entered the orange zone during peak hours, despite the maximum temperatures falling to 45 degrees Celsius and the demand staying below the 16,000 MW limit, reports Al-Anba daily.

Sources well-versed in the Ministry of Electricity and Water (MEW) revealed that the gauge's shift to the orange zone stemmed from a reduction in reserve capacity, which dwindled to 1,000 megawatts Sunday. This indicates that the current safe output of power stations is capped at 17,000 megawatts, even though the total installed capacity across the nation's power plants surpasses 18,500 megawatts.

These sources pointed out that the decrease in reserves is attributed to several production units being offline in various power stations, either due to maintenance or a temporary removal to ease their load after a period of stable electricity consumption nationwide.

The sources emphasized that there's currently no immediate concern about produc-

tion falling short of meeting consumption demands. The operational units are capable of supplying the required energy to the country, with last month's peak reaching 16,940 megawatts, surpassing the ministry's projected figure of 16,800 megawatts.

Reiterating their call for prudent energy use, the sources advocated for measures that would alleviate strain on production units and the power grid, safeguarding both public funds and citizens' budgets.

On Sunday, the demand reached 15,900 MW, marking the commencement of a countdown to a potential rise in demand if temperatures continue to drop. The sources emphasized the pivotal role played by climatic conditions and weather elements in the upswing of demand and pressure on the power network.

In an unrelated context, the sources underscored the ministry's readiness to accommodate the upcoming school season. They highlighted that all Kuwaiti schools have access to electricity and water services.



Al-Shammari



Decrease in number of admissions to medical colleges is disappointing, says Dr. Adel Al-Hunayan.

Plan to hike number of seats

Fall in med college admissions

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 14: Former director of the Center for Medical Sciences at Kuwait University Dr. Adel Al-Hunayan said the decline in the number of admissions to medical colleges this year was disappointing, reports Al-Qabas daily.

He stressed that the increase in the number of students in high school must be matched by the provision of education opportunities that are compatible with these numbers and commensurate with the needs of the development plan.

In a press statement, Dr. Al-Hunayan said the Medical Sciences Center is planning to double the number of admissions in the faculties of medicine, dentistry, and pharmacy. He highlighted a tendency to open the nursing department as well in order to meet the needs of the ambitious development plan in building and constructing new hospitals and health buildings.

Dr. Al-Hunayan revealed that the plan aimed at a gradual increase in the number of seats in medical colleges, adding that the admission process started last year.

He indicated that the goal was to reach 300 admission seats in the College of Medicine, 120 in dentistry and 250 in pharmacy, affirming that the teaching staff is available for these numbers, and only thing that remains is to provide classrooms with the cooperation of Abdullah Al-Salem University by making use of the old buildings of Kuwait University.

Dr. Al-Hunayan said, "More than 40 years have passed since the Faculty of Medicine accepted the first batch. The numbers of accepted students are still low due to which we must start planning to gradually increase these numbers to reach the required numbers that we aspire to.

One of the old buildings of Kuwait University colleges can be used to teach the four-year lectures of basic medical sciences. The buildings of the medical colleges in Jabriya can be used for clinical teaching. If planning is not done from now on, the university will not be able to provide the needs of the medical labor market in the country."

In addition, Dr. Al-Hunayan stated that the

Get it online: Mol

Maid absence docu

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 14: The Ministry of Interior has announced the inclusion of the online issuance of more than six months absence permit for domestic workers sponsored by citizens on the unified government application – Sahel, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The ministry's Public Relations and Security Media Department disclosed in a press statement that this is part of the ongoing efforts of the security institution to ease procedures for citizens. It affirmed that the Human Resources and Information Technology Sector at the Information Systems General Department, in coordination with the Residence Affairs General Department, activated the online issuance of more than six months absence permit for domestic workers sponsored by citizens.

The ministry explained that the citizen can issue an absence permit for the domestic worker for a period not exceeding the expiry of the residency in order to avoid canceling the residency of the worker if he is outside the country for more than six months.

For queries, please contact through email: Infogdis@moi.gov.kw.

file of harmonizing the outputs of higher education with the needs of the labor market needs to be sifted, especially in the field of medical specialties due to the country's urgent need for the outputs of these specializations.

He stressed the importance of hiring Kuwait University's medical graduates in local hospitals, as they graduate with full knowledge of the local medical environment, insisting that the medical body is in dire need of Kuwaiti cadres.

diwaniya ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

'Need solution to radical economic, financial orientation'

"THE Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Oil and Investment's statement regarding the deficit and the necessity of borrowing presents a stark contrast to certain populist deputies' proposals for extensive financial increases, including interest payments on prohibited loans from public funds," columnist **Ahmed Baqer** wrote for *Al-Jarida* daily.

"This divergence has brought forth a critical question: Is Kuwait genuinely in need of borrowing, or does it boast a thriving surplus economy capable of covering these demands? Is this discrepancy rooted in a lack of trust among these deputies regarding government figures concerning the budget and oil revenue? Alternatively, could it stem from the deputies' lack of understanding of budget details, deficit projections, or the broader economic landscape? Might this disagreement arise from the MPs' discontent with government corruption and wastage?"



Ahmed Baqer

"These deputies' propositions seem to fuel popular demands for benefits, exemptions, and concessions. The MPs might be striving to align with public pressure to bolster their election prospects, even if these stances contradict income and budget statistics. It's worth noting that a minority of deputies have taken a divergent approach.

"Representative Abdul-Wahhab Al-Issa has advocated for economic reform, critiqued the sale of leave entitlements, and warned against depleting the generational reserve, displaying a more realistic perspective. Similarly, Representative Fahd Al-Masoud highlighted the dangers of increased expenditure without securing supplementary income, a sentiment shared by several others.

"Given the complexity of the issue, I believe it is imperative for the deputies to convene within the pertinent committee, fostering open dialogue and transparency. They should uphold their oath to serve the people by candidly discussing the implications of this matter. Seeking the expertise of economic specialists, both domestic and international, and consulting senior Kuwaiti officials are crucial.

"Through this process, the deputies might discover that the budget deficit is genuine and not a fabrication by the government. Furthermore, they might realize that solely relying on one revenue source cannot sustain future expenses in the face of anticipated population growth and needs.

"A comprehensive examination would likely reveal that the proper course involves exploring non-oil income streams to fund both current and investment expenditures, particularly in light of a growing number of graduates. The prevailing employment practices, shaped by electoral considerations, might be inadvertently encouraging disguised unemployment and excessive administrative bodies.

"It is critical to recognize that the ultimate goal of the state is to improve citizens' lives. Reflecting on past experiences, such as the allocation of billions in donations and rewards, yields little impact.

"Scrutinizing the origin of the generational reserve underscores its purpose: to safeguard against post-oil uncertainties and potential crises. Dipping into it now could compromise the rights of future generations and the nation's long-term stability; contemplating the hazards of indiscriminate current spending reveals that economic reform takes precedence over other matters.

"While addressing corruption is crucial, it should not justify fruitless expenditure. The representatives should reflect on nations that ventured into borrowing without enacting transformative reforms, leading to instability and poverty. Thus, a careful consideration of the minister's perspective, aligned with comprehensive financial and economic evaluation, is warranted.

"To conclude, both the deputies and the government are bound by their oath to navigate this journey guided by Islamic principles and supported by empirical evidence. By drawing upon global experiences, they can ascertain that the financial and economic situation is fragile.

"Persevering in this trajectory risks severe consequences. Prioritizing economic reform, halting superfluous proposals, and encouraging productive, sustainable practices in the public and private sectors are essential. Protecting the generational reserve from depletion and opposing borrowing legislation, alongside confronting wastage and corruption, are indispensable. Their findings should be communicated to the Kuwaiti people with unwavering honesty and integrity."

Also:

"To begin with, if the government is genuinely committed to restructuring the governmental framework, it should focus on a comprehensive strategy involving the reduction, consolidation, and elimination of redundant agencies. Their functions and expertise could be integrated into relevant ministries, as many of them might have previously operated under the scope of these ministries. Alongside this, an overhaul of organizational and functional structures should be undertaken as part of this restructuring initiative," columnist **Abdullah Al-Abd Al-Jader** wrote for *Al-Anba* daily.

"Ensuring the quality and success of this endeavor, as well as addressing the issue of bureaucratic expansion, necessitates rectifying the situation where certain government bodies, equipped with independent budgets, have modified their organizational and functional structures without adhering to the mandates of the Civil Service Council.

"Coordination with the administrative development division within the Civil Service Bureau is imperative to align their modernized structures with established procedures, regulations, and decisions from the Council of Ministers and the Civil Service Council.

"The imperative lies in initiating the restructuring of the public sector without delay. This undertaking is vital due to the ballooning of the government machinery, which has consequently exerted an adverse impact on the state's budget through unwarranted expenditures.

"This is particularly pertinent since the government is advocating austerity measures and expense reduction to address the budget deficit, which, as per official statements, has been exacerbated by the proliferation of governmental entities, many of which are non-essential and unproductive. These entities primarily contribute to salary disbursements, bonuses, and benefits, without yielding substantial productivity.

"Furthermore, instances of redundant competencies and overlapping functions among different governmental entities are rampant. Some entities remain relatively obscure, escaping the attention of both the National Assembly and the media. Remarkably, the tally of government entities, including ministries, agencies, institutions, and councils, has surged to around 100 in a nation with a population of approximately 4.667 million, including Kuwaiti citizens and residents.

"Additionally, the Civil Service Bureau, in early 2022, proposed the establishment of a Center for Government Training and Selection. This initiative seeks to enhance the caliber of governmental operations, foster transparency, and ensure impartiality in appointments. The Center will target roles across the public sector, encompassing supervisory and leadership positions.

"The implementation will unfold in two phases, with the first phase focusing on supervisory and leadership roles. Initially, ministerial candidates will undergo training for leadership positions. However, the ultimate objective is to develop a pipeline of future leaders by involving department managers, nominated by their respective authorities, in the preparation process for potential leadership roles.

"The Center will equip prospective 'supervisory' staff with a comprehensive curriculum. This curriculum will span topics such as computer proficiency, legal workshops, conflict of interest management, tendering processes, budget formulation, financial disclosure, media engagement, anti-financial and administrative corruption strategies, corporate governance, and other pertinent courses.

"This intensive training aims to aptly equip employees for supervisory roles, culminating in the issuance of certificates validating their successful course completion and their readiness for their designated positions.

For the government to effectively embark on these two outlined proposals, it's imperative to enlist the expertise of proficient Kuwaiti national talents. These skilled individuals would be instrumental in executing these initiatives, ensuring their alignment with intended objectives and feasibility."

— Compiled by **Mai Elsoukary**

Other Voices

Education reforms a far cry!

By **Ahmad Al-Sarraf**

Representative Abdul Hadi Al-Ajami, a former history teacher at Kuwait University, complained on the Council's podium about the low number of students accepted to study in the Faculty of Medicine, despite the application of many "outstanding students".

He wondered, perhaps out of lack of understanding, why 1,000 students were not accepted annually, for example? He added that the doctor's working hours in the Faculty of Medicine do not exceed three hours annually, and yet he receives large sums of money from the university, the Ministry of Health, and his private clinic!



alsarraf

He also asked, often with bad intentions, the reason for the large increase in the number of teachers to students? He demanded that the professors of the Faculty of Medicine resign if they were unable to accept a thousand students every year, and that they be replaced, perhaps with a similar quality, by those who accept larger numbers of students to study in the faculty!

I do not know Representative Abdul Hadi Al-Ajami, the Rapporteur of the Education Committee, and I know almost nothing about medicine, but my ignorance did not prevent me from doubting what was stated by the representative, as he does not always mention the truth, and I have previously addressed, in more than one article, his historical fallacies, before he and others are elected members of the Council's most important committees, and the least useful one, which is the Education Committee.

I resorted to my questions to a number of professors who could be trusted, who took over the teaching, or who were in charge of the deanship in the College of Medicine, and their answers were shocking, as it became clear from them that none of the remarks mentioned by the representative Al-Ajami are correct, but rather they are all most likely intended.

Teaching history, or any other subject, almost without exception, is not the same as teaching medicine. The prestigious medical colleges, which Al-Khaleejia follows, rely on strict academic standards and requirements that cannot be tampered with, and losing them forced the Ministry of Higher Education, under pressure from the Ministry of Health, to stop sending medical students to Egypt and Jordan, and this is the subject of another article.

A history teacher, for example, with respect to him and his subject, will not be bothered if it becomes clear to him that the number of attendees to his lectures exceeds one hundred or even five hundred. But you can't imagine that happening in the study of medicine. Its curriculum is developing and changing every day, at a time when there is no significant change, for example, in the subject of history.

All modern medical colleges, including Kuwait, have been forced to abandon teaching medicine in the old way. Rather, the doctor has become obligated, in order to know the disease, to be familiar with anatomy, pathology, internal medicine and surgery, since the first years of study, and this cannot be done in large groups, but with eight students for one faculty member.

Also, the limited size and number of study facilities, such as the morgue, classroom and hospital beds, makes it very difficult what the Faculty of Medicine can accept each year. Accepting 100 new students requires providing 500 new hospital beds.

Knowing that those who tried to prey on professors in the Faculty of Medicine, who are known for their honesty and competence, by accusing them of receiving large sums of money for three hours of work per year, the real hours of teaching are much, much more than that, and any employee in the Faculty of Medicine knows that, so how is it absent from those who consider himself a professor and a legislator?

The deputy fell into grave fallacies, and what he declared was nothing more than an emotional populist speech, in order to tell the parents of those whose children were not accepted to the Faculty of Medicine that the Education Committee had done what it had to, and the blame rests with the teaching staff in the Faculty of Medicine.

The deputy should have been careful, as the issue was not in the number but in the quality, and his words are evidence of either his intentional taking advantage of others, or his lack of understanding of how to teach medicine and its complexities compared to the rest of the disciplines.

The presence of Mr. Representative, and others, in the Parliamentary Education Committee is the best evidence that reforming education to keep pace with the requirements of the times and progress for the future is very far from us. He should have asked the government to expand the opening of more than one medical college, and to build teaching hospitals to serve them, instead of spreading rumors and accusations that have nothing to do with the truth!

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Heat piles on food smugglers

Arrests made as tons of subsidized items seized

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 14: The concerned authorities in the country are continuing their war against gangs that deplete subsidized food commodities, within the framework of daily follow-up to monitor the movement of goods leaving the country, irrespective of whether it is related to individuals or companies, and in light of seeking to take more stringent punitive measures against smugglers and those who help them or facilitate smuggling operations, reports Al-Qabas daily.

Every month, the General Administration of Customs confiscates several tons of food supplies and returns them to the Supply Department of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. They are seized from containers that are exported abroad as personal belongings or transported through cars, trucks, and others.

After the high frequency of smuggling attempts, and the spread of video clips on social media showing the sale of products, which are subsidized and provided by the state to its citizens and some groups abroad either in Iraq, Egypt or Jordan, the General Administration of Criminal Investigations, under the direct supervision and instructions of the Minister of Interior Sheikh Talal Al-Khaled, intensified steps to apprehend those who smuggle food supplies, from within the 92 sales centers in the country's various branches.

Through the security personnel who were distributed in all governorates to monitor the work of supply selling points, the administration last week was able to seize three expatriates, and completed the investigation with another group that facilitates the process of smuggling supplies and storing them in other locations, in preparation for selling or exporting them abroad.

Discovered

It was discovered that the two groups were able to smuggle and prepare supply materials such as rice, flour, oil and milk for export in quantities exceeding ten tons. They devised different ways to smuggle them abroad such as by wrapping them in other product packages to delude the concerned authorities in the country. The last seizure of smuggled supplies was on August 10 when the Ministry of Interior announced the arrest of an expatriate in possession of five tons of state-subsidized supplies, which he stole and tried to smuggle out of the country.

In a press statement, the ministry stated that the Criminal Investigation Department's Capital Investigation Department arrested the expatriate who had been selling these items in the markets after repacking them in bags bearing different brand names.

The suspect was referred to the concerned authorities along with the seized items. He is being investigated to find his accomplices and others who facilitated the theft.

The ministry expressed appreciation to the Criminal Security Sector for their sincere efforts in confronting all types of crime, apprehending violators and outlaws, and striking with an iron fist anyone who tampers with the security and safety of citizens.

According to a security source, there is an intensification of efforts to monitor workers in the supply branches and investigate the methods of removing and smuggling supply materials from them. All the accused in these cases are apprehended, and investigations with the arrested persons will be carried out to uncover information related to the case.

A customs source said all food items inside personal shipments are being verified, even if they are packed in different packages, adding that if they are confirmed to be food supplies and in commercial quantities, they will be confiscated.

A report issued by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry revealed that 61,000 ration cards were canceled during the months of April and May, in addition to the cancellation of 5,891 other cards. The report explained that the volume of individuals benefiting from the cumulative ration as of the end of May reached 2.3 million people with 257,900 cards.

The value of subsidized materials spent on basic materials during the aforementioned two months amounted to KD 26.8 million, with an increase of eight percent, while milk and nutrients witnessed a decrease of 44 percent.

Meanwhile, the Union of Workers in the Cooperative Sector called for the employment of Kuwaitis in branches as observers and supervisors in order to eliminate part of the problem of supply smuggling.



Some of the subsidized food items set for smuggling abroad.

Expat deported, 20 juveniles held

Duo caught selling foreign liquor

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 14: Cooperation and coordination between the criminal security sector and the public security sector resulted in the arrest of an Indian for trading in imported alcohol. Police have also seized his Egyptian accomplice. This happened during an ambush in the Sabah Al-Salem area which resulted in the CID men seizing 206 bottles of imported alcohol, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to a security source, the arrest came following a tip-off from a police agent that the Indian was selling imported alcohol in the suburb of Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governorate, following which a trap was set for the man by personnel from the Sabah Al-Salem police station and sent a police agent to buy 6 bottles of alcohol and caught the man red-handed. After the arrest the man guided police to the hideout where

he had stored the booze.

On the other hand, the Ahmadi Security Directorate's backup patrolmen arrested 9 Asians for running two local wine factories, and seized barrels full of raw material, manufacturing materials, and retail and distillation tools from two camps.

Meanwhile, the statistics issued by the General Traffic Department headed by Major General Yousef Al-Khadda said 27,222 traffic violations were issued and 20 juveniles were arrested for driving without a license from Aug 5 to Aug 11 and an expatriate was administratively deported for driving without a license, reports Al-Anba daily.

During the campaign traffic patrols also impounded 295 vehicles and 29 motorcycles, seized, four vehicles reported stolen, arrested 22 violators of residence law and referred them to the concerned authorities.



HAPPY Independence DAY

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Virus said causes most viral infections among children

'MoH keen to supply more quantities of rota-virus vaccines'

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 14: The health sources said the Ministry of Health is keen to provide all kinds of vaccines intended for children from birth until they reach an advanced age, indicating that the ministry is in the process of supplying additional quantities of anti-rotavirus vaccines that were added to the vaccination schedule in the third quarter of 2017, saying the vaccine protects against this virus, which causes most viral infections among children, reports Al-Qabas daily.

Rota-virus causes diarrhea, vomiting and fever in infants and young children who are infected, usually between 6 and 32 weeks of age. The sources indicated that the cost of the vaccines amounts to 396 thousand dinars, and they are currently available in government centers, while the other quantities will be distributed upon their arrival to preventive centers and hospitals, to vaccinate the largest segment of children, at the age of two, four and 6 months.

The sources added, the vaccinations are

effective at a rate of up to 85% during the first and second years of the child, and in the event of infection with the disease, it is less severe if the child has taken the vaccine in earlier stages.

The sources stated that the vaccination is given by putting drops in the mouth, and it is sometimes delayed, especially for cases that suffer from inflammation of the stomach and intestines, or cases of severe immunodeficiency, or in the event of allergic reactions after taking a previous dose of the vaccine.

Kuwait most affordable city in world to live in, shows survey

'Abu Dhabi secures 2nd spot, Riyadh takes third position'

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 14: A survey conducted by Workyard Research has revealed that Kuwait ranks as the most affordable city globally to live in, with an average monthly income per person of \$6,199 and living costs of \$752.70. This places Kuwait as the city where residents can retain a substantial portion of their earnings after covering basic expenses, reports Al-Rai daily.

Interestingly, despite higher wages, New York emerged as the least affordable city to live in due to its high cost of living.

Abu Dhabi secured the second spot in the list of most affordable cities, combining high

income with low living costs. The average monthly income per capita in Abu Dhabi was \$7,154, with living expenses amounting to about \$873.10.

Riyadh secured the third position in terms of affordability, boasting an average monthly income of \$6,245 and living costs of \$814.90.

Dubai and Sharjah followed in fourth and fifth places, respectively, with average monthly incomes of \$7,118 and \$5,229, while living expenses were \$1,007 and \$741.30 respectively. Oslo comes next with an average monthly income of approximately \$7,543 and living costs of about \$1,121.50.

Workyard's experts analyzed data from 20 cities to assess the balance between income and living costs, including rent, food, and utilities.

The data was drawn from government sources and compared the average monthly income with the average monthly living expenses for 2023.

This survey highlights cities that offer op-

portunities for individuals seeking a high-income lifestyle with relatively low living costs.

Workyard Research underlined that the data underscores significant variations in the income-to-living-cost balance across different cities worldwide.

Outside the Middle East, Melbourne, Australia, stands as a favorable location for a good monthly income and reasonable living expenses, with an average monthly income of \$7,312 and living costs of approximately \$1,079.20.

London and San Francisco claimed the eighth and ninth positions on the list, boasting monthly incomes of \$8,411 and \$9,249, respectively, along with living costs of \$1,260.80 and \$1,440.10 per month.

The survey highlighted that New York City faces the most challenging balance between income and living costs.

While individuals there earn about \$4,205 per month, they spend \$1,448 on living expenses.



A group photo from the event.

Al-Rai photo

'Achievement significant'

Namaa Charitable Society obtains 'ISO 9001:2015' Certificate: official

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 14: Today, on Monday, Namaa Charitable Society for Social Reform proudly received the "ISO 9001:2015 Certificate," signifying a significant achievement for the organization, reports Al-Rai daily.

Saad Al-Otaibi, the CEO of Namaa Charity, shared that the journey towards attaining the esteemed "ISO" certificate comprised multiple rigorous phases. He highlighted that the successful acquisition of this certificate, after undergoing meticulous evaluation, underscores Namaa Charity's remarkable capabilities and exceptional efficiency in executing its mandates and delivering its services and philanthropic initiatives.

Al-Otaibi reiterated Namaa Charity's unwavering commitment to supporting the nation's pursuit of its overarching developmental strategies. He emphasized the orga-

nization's continual dedication to adhering to the highest standards of excellence, while implementing optimal practices and maintaining a rigorous level of quality and accountability within the realm of humanitarian endeavors. This commitment, he stated, not only aims to realize strategic objectives but also aims to enhance the satisfaction of beneficiaries, donors, and partners.

Furthermore, Al-Otaibi pointed out that Namaa Charity has invested substantial efforts in staying abreast of technological advancements within the realm of information technology. This proactive approach ensures that the organization is consistently equipped to confront challenges and offer the most effective technical solutions. He elaborated on the substantial progress and transformative shifts witnessed by Namaa Charity over the preceding years.

'SMEs fund needs some amendments'

Marafi says if solutions are not found some may end up in jail

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 14: A member of the Parliamentary Business Environment and Small Enterprises Committee, Dawood Marafi, has emphasized on the significance of the proposed amendment to the National Fund for Small and Medium Enterprises Development Law, highlighting its role in safeguarding entrepreneurs, reports Al-Rai daily.

In the meantime, he has given suggestions how to brighten the business landscape while stressing at the same time that he doesn't receive funding from the fund and has no personal interest; rather, recognizes the "existing challenges" faced by people on the ground, stressing the potential consequences of not amending the law, including the potential dispersal of families. If solutions are not found some young people may go to prison, and people will be afraid of initiatives

He told "On the Agenda" program, that his rationale for rejecting the state's general budget and the government's action plan. His rejection stemmed from the way the program was presented, lacking the anticipated alignment with the overall government agenda before budget discussions.

He went on to say, "The unfortunate aspect is that the government introduced the budget in this manner without integrating it with the government's action plan." He noted that the government should be accountable based on the action plan it put forward over a four-year period. Thus, his rejection of the budget followed naturally from the misalignment," and underlined that his role isn't solely about rejecting proposals; rather, he aims to course-correct. According to him, the government's action plan should intricately link with the budget and its aspects. He found deficiencies in the plan, which led to his rejection.

'Shulamy ...

Continued from Page 1

The man continued, "I used to go out at night with my gang, and as soon as we were on top of the house from where we wanted to steal, I as their leader would stand facing the moon, and then I would recite "Shulamy... Shulam" seven times while extending my arms towards the moonlight. After that, I would descend down stealthily, and everything that I want to steal comes to me without anyone feeling my presence. We would then leave the scene as if we were never there."

The thieves on the roof were elated by the information they had received from the rich man. All that was remaining was to wait for the man and his wife to fall asleep again.

Their leader then stood up and faced the moonlight, saying "Shulamy... Shulam," seven times. When he went down the house, he saw the rich man waiting for him with a club and the latter asked him, "Who are you?"

The thief said, "I am the one who has been betrayed easily by his credulity, and is now reaping the fruits of his error."

It is not smart to loot public money, not even ordinary people's money. It is also not wise for any official to consider corruption as the easiest way to gain wealth. He must instead render himself accountable to the people, the law and Almighty Allah.

Gunman hits

Continued from Page 1

Shah Cheragh is one of Iran's top five Shiite shrines. It draws pilgrims to Shiraz, which is some 675 kilometers (420 miles) south of Iran's capital, Tehran.

No group immediately claimed responsibility for the attack.

The attack Sunday night comes after an October 2022 attack on the same shrine killed 13 people and wounded dozens of others. The Islamic State group claimed the assault, which Iran said had been carried out by a man from Tajikistan, who later died in a hospital after succumbing to injuries he suffered while being detained by security forces.

Iran has backed Syria's embattled Bashar Assad during his country's civil war. It also fought Islamic State fighters both there and in Iraq.

The worst assault from Islamic State militants in Iran came in a June 2017 attack that killed at least 18 people and wounded more than 50 in Tehran as its gunmen stormed parliament and Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's mausoleum. Khomeini led the 1979 Islamic

Revolution that toppled the Western-backed shah to become Iran's first supreme leader until his death in 1989.

Meanwhile, Iran's intelligence ministry arrested nine members of the Baha'i faith on charges of smuggling medicine and financial wrongdoing, state media reported on Monday.

State IRAN newspaper said the arrested people, mostly members of one family, had roles in smuggling medicine through a network of dozens of pharmacies. It said they bribed medics to send clients to the pharmacies and were involved in money laundering and tax evasion.

Iran bans the Baha'i religion, which was founded in the 1860s by a Persian nobleman considered a prophet by his followers, and from time to time has arrested and proscribed members of the faith on spying and security charges.

Muslims consider the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) the highest and last prophet. In 2013, Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, who has final say on all state matters, urged Iranians to avoid all dealings with the Baha'i. Khamenei's fatwa, or religious order, supported similar fatwas in the past by other clerics.

In 2022, authorities arrested several members of the faith on spying charges.

The Baha'i say they've been persecuted by Shiite clerics in Iran since their religion's founding - something that's grown more intense since the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

In other news, a record number of people registered to become candidates in Iran's parliamentary elections scheduled for March, the Interior Ministry said Monday.

The elections will be the first since nationwide protests rocked the country last year. Nearly 49,000 people filed paperwork seeking to run as candidates during a one-week registration period that ended on Sunday, the ministry website said.

That number is more than three times the 16,000 registrations filed in the last election in 2020, when voter turnout was its lowest since 1979, with just over 42% of eligible voters casting ballots.

There were no details on the registration of prominent political figures or pro-reform groups. The increase in filings was seen as a result of an easy online registration process.

Some 14% of submissions were from women, an increase from 12% in 2020. About 250 current members of the 290-seat parliament also registered.

Authorities in the coming weeks will verify the documents filed by would-be candidates. The monthlong vetting process will conclude in late October when verified hopefuls will be allowed to apply for candidacy. Each candidate must be approved by the Guardian Council, a 12-member clerical body, half of whom are directly appointed by the supreme leader.

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Other Voices

India remains committed and keen to strengthen ties with Kuwait

Message of HE Ambassador Dr Adarsh Swaika on the occasion of the 77th Independence Day of India

On this very special and joyous occasion of the 77th Independence Day of India, I extend my warm greetings and felicitations to all Indian nationals and persons of Indian origin in the friendly State of Kuwait.

"I would also like to take this opportunity to express my deep appreciation and profound gratitude to all well-wishers and friends of India in Kuwait, particularly to the leadership, the Government and the people of the State of Kuwait, for their steadfast commitment to the close and friendly relations between India and Kuwait and also for their support to the Indian community. I would like to reiterate India's commitment and keenness to further strengthen and expand the long-standing and time-tested partnership with the State of Kuwait.

"This year is the 77th year of India's Independence. It is a significant milestone in our quest to build a new, resurgent and self-sufficient India, an Aatmanirbhar Bharat. Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi has declared the Amrit Kaal: Vision 2047 – an aspirational goal of India to become a

developed nation by 2047 by laying a 25 year road-map for India@100. It is incumbent upon all Indian nationals to work assiduously to achieve this objective.

"Modi also launched Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav (AKAM) in March 2021, an initiative of the Government of India to celebrate and commemorate 75 years of independence and the glorious history of its people, culture and achievements, through a series of events in India and abroad. This Independence Day will mark the culmination of the 2 year plus celebrations of AKAM, as part of which the Embassy of India in Kuwait, has also been organizing a large number of events. I take this opportunity to thank all our partner associations and stakeholders in partaking in AKAM celebrations.

"Today, as we celebrate our Independence Day, we feel proud of India's many achievements. Equitable development has been the corner stone of various socio-economic policies in independent India. Democracy, pluralism and unity in diversity are the traditional cultural ethos of Indian society. India believes in its ancient philosophy of 'Sarvadhama Sambhava' (equality of destination of paths) and 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' (the world is a family). These beliefs also guide our foreign policy.



Dr Adarsh Swaika, Indian Ambassador

"India today is a land of billion opportunities. Our collective resolve has ensured that the Indian economy has forged ahead in these challenging times. India's IT sector is delivering digital solutions across the globe. India's unicorn club continues to grow and is home to the third largest number of unicorns in the world. India's start-up space is buzzing with unprecedented enthusiasm and activity on the back of creativity, imagination and technology breakthroughs.

"Not only is India today among the top five economies globally; it has

made tremendous strides in science and technology; is one of the leading centers of innovation and Information Technology globally; is the 'Pharmacy of the World'; has world class production and manufacturing capabilities; is a leading global partner to address new age challenges facing the humanity, be it climate change or building resilient and reliable supply chains to ensure food and health security.

"There has never been a better time to invest in India than now, as modernization of India's physical and digital infrastructure got an unprecedented momentum. India is moving ahead with the spirit of 'Make in India, Make for the World' as its youth is fully geared up to take the economy to newer heights.

"The massive business friendly reforms and policies have contributed in unleashing the true potential of the country. India has jumped 79 positions in rank over the last 5 years in the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business; featured in top 3 improvers list consecutively for 3 years and is among the top 5 economies for ease of starting a new business; jumped 41 positions from 2015 in the Global Innovation Index.

"Today, we are on the right track to build an Aatmanirbhar Bharat (Self-Reliant India), which envisages a merger of the local with the global.

No wonder that India is rightfully being considered the key driver of a post COVID-19 global growth recovery.

"In the international arena, India has been playing a significant role in contributing to world peace, stability and prosperity. It is spear-heading many global bodies at a time of complex geo-political uncertainties. India completed its 2-year tenure in the United Nations Security Council as a non-permanent member in December last year during which it brought many positive issues on the agenda of the United Nations. It has successfully taken forward the Presidency of the SCO culminating in the Summit in July this year.

"It looks forward to host the Summit of G-20 countries next month in New Delhi when world leaders will come together to deliberate on current global issues. India believes that dialogue and diplomacy remains the only way to resolve disputes and conflicts. India places an undeterred faith and belief in multilateral approach and has always taken the lead on issues of global importance such as fight against cross-border terrorism, climate change, energy security, food security, and the reform of multilateral institutions, including the UN Security Council.

"At the bilateral front, we continue

to make steady progress in multi-faceted engagement with the State of Kuwait. After the pandemic-induced gap, the momentum of bilateral contacts at various levels have resumed with convening of meetings of institutional mechanisms. Bilateral trade and investments with Kuwait have continued to grow. Indian culture in its myriad forms finds good resonance with our Kuwaiti friends. Our people to people contacts are the building blocks of the bilateral relations with the State of Kuwait.

"The Embassy places highest priority to the welfare and well-being of the large and vibrant Indian Community in Kuwait. The Embassy continues to be a 'Home Away from Home' for all Indian citizens. I thank all the community associations, professional bodies and cultural groups as well as media representatives for joining hands with the Embassy for not only contributing to the welfare of the community but also undertaking activities that contribute to the strengthening of bilateral relations with the State of Kuwait.

"Once again, on this joyous and proud occasion of the 77th Independence Day of India, I wish every Indian in Kuwait and all friends of India in Kuwait good health and happiness," he concluded.

Service offered through fiber network

Thousands of residential units to benefit from new internet speed

Website lists of 139K items OK'd in co-ops

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 14: The President of the Federation of Consumer Cooperative Societies, Abdel Wahhab Al-Faris, announced the launch of a website that includes more than 139,000 approved items in cooperative societies to enable everyone to know the real cost of various items in the cooperatives, explaining that the site allows everyone to view the approved items and whoever finds a discrepancy in the price can complain to the Consumer Protection Department, reports Al-Anba daily.

Al-Faris said that the Union of Cooperative Societies is fighting inflated prices and artificial increases in cooperatives, in order to protect the middle and working class. He went on to say, "We are not fighting the merchant who is a citizen, but our priorities are to stabilize prices.

He indicated that the Federation of Cooperative Societies conducts periodic inspection rounds on the societies to monitor any product that is not approved by the federation, and "we urge the coops not to sell the goods until they are entered in the system officially.

"We also circulate periodically to the coops to adhere to the federation's circulars and ministerial decisions to maintain market prices, we also urge alternative and parallel markets to sell items at the union price in order to fight high prices.

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 14: The Communications and Information Technology Regulatory Authority (CITRA) has disclosed that the recently unveiled internet speed enhancement service is currently benefiting regions that are linked to the optical fiber network, reports Al-Jarida daily. In its initial phase, this service encompasses 28 areas, notably including "Salwa, Rumaithiya, Al-Bida'a, Salmiya, Ras Al-Salmiya, Kuwait City, and Al-Fintas Agricultural," reports Al-Jarida daily. This deployment is part of a two-phase rollout.

In the subsequent phase, a total of 34 areas will be integrated, encompassing "Jaber Al-Ahmad, Al-Naseem, Al-Ardiya Industrial, Amghara Industrial, South Al-Sabahiya, Al-Mangaf, Bayan, Mishref, Mubarak Al-Abdullah, the coastal strip, Al-Maseelah, Al-Mahboula, Al-Aqila, Northwest Sulai-bikhat, and Al-Qusour."

This phase aims to cover around 122,000 residential units, equivalent to 55 percent of Kuwait's population across its various governorates.

Notably, the existing areas that lack optical fiber connectivity will remain without access to this service until they are incorporated into the optical fiber network. As per the disclosed information, the project's third phase is presently in the preparatory stage and is expected to be finalized by 2027, adhering to the schedule outlined in the national development plan. This upcoming phase targets providing 110,000 subscriptions within 64 areas, encompassing both established and newly developed regions.

The sources emphasized the distinct advantages of the optical fiber network compared to wireless networks. They highlighted the stability of internet speed on the optical network as opposed to the variable and often unstable speeds observed in wireless networks.

Solution awarded with highest possible 'AAA' rating

Kaspersky EDR Expert demonstrated absolute 'efficiency' on APT protection

DUBAI, Aug 14: For the second year in a row, Kaspersky Endpoint Detection and Response (EDR) Expert has

earned the maximum possible points of "The Total Accuracy Rating" in the Enterprise Advanced Security test of

EDR solutions conducted by SE Labs. The Global Endpoint Detection and Response Market is still growing, expected to reach a global size of \$7.1 billion by 2028. As the number of threats increase and attacks themselves become more sophisticated, it is important for companies to have reliable detection and response solutions to protect their business environment across all devices.

Independent security testing organization SE Labs ran sixteen full chain attacks based on four different advanced persistent threats (APTs) – Turla, Ke3chang, Kimsuky and ThreatGroup3390 against six market leading EDR products to assess their detection abilities. These attacks were based on real attackers' behavior and each product was examined at different stages: from penetration and permission escalation, till propagation through corporate network and data exfiltration.

Kaspersky EDR Expert managed to detect each of the sixteen attacks, across all stages, receiving a 'Total Accuracy Rating' of 100% gaining the maximum possible 1188 points. This score came from the product's 'Detection Accuracy' and 'Legitimate Accuracy' ratings, meaning that it not only identified each stage of attacks, but it also avoided generating any false positives. The Kaspersky solution was awarded with the highest possible 'AAA' rating.

"Independent tests let us control the quality of our solutions and confirm the company's success in keeping up with the evolving threat landscape. We are excited to receive recognition from SE Labs regarding Kaspersky EDR Expert's superior capabilities. It proves that we are moving in the right direction", comments Alexander Liskin, Head of Threat Research at Kaspersky.

CMA, CITRA sign agreement on services for blocking and unblocking electronic content

Effort aims at implementing best practices on a global scale

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 14, (KUNA): The Capital Markets Authority (CMA) and the Communications and Information Technology Regulatory Authority (CITRA) have entered into a collaborative agreement concerning the management of electronic content, including blocking and unblocking services, as well as the exchange of expertise and information between the two entities.

In a joint press release issued on Monday, the two organizations emphasized that this agreement marks the initiation of a cooperative effort aimed at promoting shared awareness and implementing best practices on a global scale. This is especially crucial due to the swift and continuous evolution of information sources via the Internet, which, while being accessible to all, can sometimes contain undesirable, suspicious, or misleading content.

The press release outlined that the agreement's significance is heightened by the parallel advancement of electronic phishing, deceptive practices, impersonation, and fraudulent activities associated with the online landscape. Consequently, the development of a regulatory framework is imperative to safeguard network



KUNA photo Chairman of the Board of Commissioners of the Capital Markets Authority, Executive Director, Dr. Ahmed Al-Mulhim, and on behalf of the Communications and Information Technology Regulatory Authority, Chairman of the Board, Omar Al-Omar.

users from the potential risks linked with its usage.

The Capital Markets Authority's core mission and objectives revolve around the protection of participants engaged in securities activities, risk reduction, adherence to regulations, and the cultivation of principles such as responsibility, integrity, and transparency. These aspirations coincide with the mandate of the Communications and Information Technology Regulatory Authority (CITRA), which operates as a supervisory body focused on safeguarding user and service provider interests, as well as regulating communication networks based on guidelines that ensure transparency and fair competition within Kuwait's technology and communication landscape.

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The Guest Show poster

TGS presents Maha Hassan

This week, The Guest Show (TGS) is very pleased to present one of our own - Maha Hassan, one of Kuwait's leading radio jockeys.

Maha has been ruling Kuwait's airwaves for a long time. She joined FM 99.7 as a young rookie, trained under pros and soon was on the driving seat herself.

Presenting on Radio for years at a stretch is tough business and Maha never lost the plot. With time, she also be-

gan to play an important role in mentoring local music bands that mushroomed all over Kuwait. The local music scene was changing, and Maha had a prominent role to play in that.

Here in this episode, Maha Hassan speaks to Chaitali B. Roy about what it means to be a radio jockey, her early years, the changes in Kuwait's broadcasting scene. It is an episode filled with laughter and good memories. Do tune in.

Gold down

Gold prices fell down to USD 1,914 an ounce by the end of last week's trading, stabilizing to the monthly lowest of USD 1,920 per ounce backed by the dollar's strong performance and US treasury bonds revenue.

A report by Kuwaiti-based Company Dar Al-Sabaak on Sunday contributed the fall to the greenback's strength amidst doubts in global market towards the US Federal Reserve, especially after the

recent release of US economy interest rate data.

Federal Reserve officials affirmed that keeping inflation prices under control requires more work, which reflected on prices of precious metals resulting in prices to fall.

As to the local market, the report pointed that price of a 24-carat gram of gold amounted to KD 19.085, while a 21-carat gram was KD 17.500 and silver at KD 270 per kilogram.

Amazon is rolling out a new generative AI feature that summarizes product reviews for customers. The feature, which the company began testing earlier this year, is designed to help shoppers determine at a glance what other customers said about a product before they spend time reading through individual reviews. It will pick out common themes and summarize them in a short paragraph on the product detail page.

The company wrote in a blog post published Monday that the AI-generated reviews are now available to a subset of

mobile shoppers in the U.S. across a "broad" selection of products. And it may be expanded to more shoppers and additional categories of products in the "coming months" based on customer feedback, said Vaughn Schermerhorn, Amazon's director of community shopping. The Seattle-based company has been looking for ways to integrate more artificial intelligence into its product offerings as the generative AI race heats up among tech companies. Amazon hasn't released its own high-profile AI chatbot or imaging tool. Instead, it's been

focusing on services that will allow developers to build their own generative AI tools on its cloud infrastructure AWS.

Earlier this year, Amazon CEO Andy Jassy said in his letter to shareholders that generative AI will be a "big deal" for the company. He also said during an earnings call with investors last week that "every single one" of Amazon's businesses currently has multiple generative AI initiatives underway, including its devices unit, which works on products like the voice assistant Alexa.

Amazon is rolling out a generative AI feature

Market Movements

14-08-2023

	Change	Closing pts		Change	Closing pts
PAKISTAN	-	KSE 100	+1.26	48,442.58	
EGYPT	-	EGX 30	+0.23	17,897.50	
UAE	-	DFM	-0.14	4,058.79	
JAPAN	-	Nikkei	-1.27	32,059.91	
PHILIPPINES	-	PSEi	-1.20	6,329.19	
SAUDI	-	Tadawul	-0.45	11,493.82	

Business

COP28 UAE Presidency to convene world-leading economists in UAE to drive progress on the reform of international finance

ABU DHABI, UAE, Aug 14, (PR Newswire): The COP28 Presidency has announced that it will convene the Independent High-Level Expert Group (IHLEG) on Climate Finance in the UAE this week to drive progress on steps to reform international finance ahead of COP28.

The two-day meeting from 15-16 August, held at the Abu Dhabi Global Markets (ADGM), will bring together world-leading economists, private sector leaders, the COP28 Presidency and UN Climate Change High-Level Champions.

The IHLEG develops and presents policy options and recommendations to enable the public and private investment necessary for delivery of the ambitions of the Paris Climate Agreement. It is chaired by Dr. Vera Songwe and Professor Lord Nicholas Stern, and Dr Amar Bhattacharya serves as executive secretary.

The discussions are designed to prepare the ground for COP28 and ensure that the two-week summit delivers tangible action on reform of international finance.

The IHLEG will evaluate progress on the climate finance landscape and the develop a roadmap of actions needed up to, and during, COP28 and beyond to COP29 and COP30. The ultimate goal of IHLEG is to advance a holistic financial framework for resource mobilization to deliver an equitable and efficient climate finance system, as set out in the Paris Agreement and Glasgow Pact, and start its implementation.

The IHLEG will build the action agenda that emerged from the Paris Summit, as well as on the ongoing work on MDB reform at G20. The group will also explore overcoming geopolitical constraints and identifying gaps and barriers that may necessitate targeted interventions.

The meeting will be attended by His Excellency Ahmed Jasim Al Zaabi, Chairman of Abu Dhabi Department of Economic Development (ADDED) and Abu Dhabi Global Market (ADGM); Lord Nicholas Stern and Dr Vera Songwe, co-chairs of the IHLEG, and Amar Bhattacharya, executive secretary of the IHLEG, Kristalina Georgieva, Managing Director of the IMF, senior representatives from the World Bank as well as other economists from

across the world.

Commenting on the significance of the IHLEG meeting His Excellency Ahmed Jasim Al Zaabi, Chairman of the ADDED and ADGM said, "We are proud to host the Independent High Level Expert Group meeting in Abu Dhabi this year and collaborate with global experts in forging a path towards a greener, more sustainable future that focusses on 'Climate Finance'. Concrete actions by Abu Dhabi and its entities such as ADDED and ADGM are defining the new architecture for financing sustainability. Our goal is simple and direct - to drive capital towards projects that advance the transition to a net-zero future."

IHLEG will launch a final report on this matter at COP28 and will establish an engagement plan of actions with crucial stakeholders involved in executing the roadmap during the conference.

The COP28 UAE Presidency has named 'fixing climate finance' one of its four priority action pillars for COP28, alongside fast-tracking the energy transition, ensuring full inclusivity, addressing lives and livelihoods.

WS drifts 'higher' ahead of big week for retailers



A person walks in front of an electronic stock board showing Japan's Nikkei 225 index at a securities firm Monday, Aug. 14, 2023, in Tokyo. Asian stock markets tumbled Monday after mixed U.S. economic data revived worries the Federal Reserve might hike interest rates again. (AP)

Global markets mixed

NEW YORK, Aug 14, (AP): Wall Street was drifting higher Monday ahead of a week of reports showing how strong U.S. shoppers remain, amid hopes their spending can keep the economy out of a recession.

The S&P 500 was up 0.4% in midday trading after flipping an early loss. The Dow Jones Industrial Average was edging up by 8 points, or less than 0.1%, at 35,289, as of noon Eastern time, and the Nasdaq composite was 0.6% higher.

U.S. Steel jumped to one of the market's bigger gains, up 30.7%. It said over the weekend that it rejected a buyout offer from Cleveland-Cliffs and that it's heard multiple offers.

Cleveland-Cliffs rose 8.5% after it said it offered more than \$7 billion in cash and stock for the steelmaker and that it's ready to move on the offer immediately.

On the losing end of Wall Street was Nikola, which sank 9.3%. The zero-emission truck company recalled more than 200 of its electric vehicles after an investigation indicated a problem with a component in the battery pack could be the cause of a prior fire. It earlier suggested foul play could be at play in the truck fire at its headquarters.

Across the rest of the market, trading was relatively quiet. The S&P 500 has retrenched by 2.3% in August after soaring 19.5% through the first seven months of the year. Critics have been saying such a pullback was due, arguing Wall Street too quickly and forcefully latched onto the belief that inflation would continue to cool and the economy would avoid a recession.

A bulwark keeping the economy afloat has been strong spending by U.S. consumers, which has been propped up by a remarkably resilient job market.

On Tuesday, the U.S. government will give the latest monthly update on sales at retailers across the country. Economists say it's one of the week's most important reports, and they expect it to show growth accelerated to 0.4% in July from 0.2% in June.

Several big retailers are also on the schedule this week to show how much profit they made from April through June. Home Depot, Target, TJX and Walmart will all be reporting this week, as earnings reporting season for the spring hits its tail end.

Inflation has been moderating since hitting a peak last summer, but it remains high and is denting Americans of all incomes.

Conditions may be getting only tougher in upcoming months, as rising interest rates make credit-card and other payments more expensive. Student loan payments will also weigh on consumers, and many have been spending down savings that had been built up during the pandemic.

Economists at Deutsche Bank say their expectations for a stumble in consumer spending during the last three months of the year are a reason they're forecasting a mild recession lasting through the first half of next year. They, though, also say the resilience of U.S. consumers so far has raised the probability of no recession.

The week's other big economic highlight will be Wednesday's release of the minutes from the Federal Reserve's last meeting. At that meeting, the central bank raised its main interest rate to the highest level in more than two decades. It was the Fed's 11th increase in 17 months as it tries to corral the worst inflation since the 1980s.

The hope on Wall Street is that will prove to be the final hike of this cycle and that the next move for the Fed will be to cut rates. That would provide some relief because high rates work to lower inflation by bluntly slowing the entire economy and hurting prices for stocks and other investments.

Traders broadly expect the Fed to hold rates steady at its next meeting in a little more than a month, according to data from CME Group. They also have some bets saying the Fed will begin cutting rates early next year.

That could prove to be too optimistic, according to David Mericle, economist at Goldman Sachs.

He's forecasting rate cuts could begin in the spring of 2024, from April through June, as the Fed waits for inflation and the pressure pushing upward on it to fall enough. One potential hiccup could be that the Fed does not want rate cuts to boost prices for stocks and other investments too much.

Mericle said he still sees less of a risk of a recession than the market generally.

In the bond market, the yield on the 10-year Treasury was holding steady at 4.16% after giving up an earlier gain. It helps set rates for mortgages and other important loans.

The two-year Treasury yield, which moves more on expectations for the Fed, rose to 4.93% from 4.90% late Friday.

Global

Global stock markets were mixed Monday after stronger U.S. inflation revived worries the Federal Reserve might hike interest rates again.

Shanghai, London and Tokyo declined. Paris, Frankfurt and Wall Street futures rose. Oil prices fell.

Wall Street's benchmark S&P 500

index slipped Friday after government data showed producer price inflation accelerated in July. Earlier data showed consumer prices also rose faster in July.

"Setbacks to optimistic expectations are hard to ignore," said Tan Boon Heng of Mizuho Bank in a report. "The data need to provide reasons (for the Federal Reserve) not to hike."

In early trading, the FTSE 100 in London lost less than 0.1% to 7,517.92. The CAC 40 in Paris advanced 0.4% to 7,366.42 and the DAX in Frankfurt gained 0.5% to 15,911.02.

Asia

In Asia, the Shanghai Composite Index fell 0.3% to 3,178.42 and the Nikkei 225 in Tokyo shed 1.3% to 32,059.91. The Hang Seng in Hong Kong sank 1.6% to 18,773.55.

The Kospi in South Korea retreated 0.8% to 2,570.87 and Sydney's S&P-ASX 200 was 0.9% lower at 7,277.00.

India's Sensex lost less than 0.1% to 65,283.59. New Zealand and Southeast Asian markets also declined.

Oil

In energy markets, benchmark U.S. crude lost 31 cents to \$82.88 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. The contract rose 37 cents on Friday to \$83.19. Brent crude, the price basis for international oil trading, fell 41 cents to \$86.40 per barrel in London. It advanced 41 cents on Friday to \$86.81 a barrel.

Currencies

The dollar fell to 144.88 yen from Friday's 144.97 yen. The euro gained to \$1.0955 from \$1.0951.

Ellison to testify against Bankman-Fried

FTX founder returns to New York as prosecutors want him 'incarcerated'

NEW YORK, Aug 14, (AP): FTX founder Sam Bankman-Fried is returning Friday for a court hearing that could decide whether the fallen cryptocurrency wiz must go to jail while he awaits trial.

Prosecutors have asked a judge to revoke Bankman-Fried's bail, claiming he tried to harass a key witness in his fraud case. His lawyers insist he shouldn't be jailed for trying to protect his reputation against a barrage of unfavorable news stories.

The 31-year-old has been under house arrest at his parents' home in Palo Alto, California, since his December extradition from the Bahamas on charges that he defrauded investors in his businesses and illegally diverted millions of dollars' worth of cryptocurrency from customers using his FTX exchange.

Bankman-Fried's \$250 million bail package severely restricts his internet and phone usage.

Two weeks ago, prosecutors surprised Bankman-Fried's attorneys by demanding his incarceration, saying he violated those rules by giving The New York Times the private writings of Caroline Ellison, his former girlfriend and the ex-CEO of Alameda Research, a cryptocurrency trading hedge fund that was one of his businesses.

Prosecutors maintained he was trying to sully her reputation and influence prospective jurors who might be summoned for his October trial.

Ellison pleaded guilty in December to criminal charges carrying a potential penalty of 110 years in prison. She has agreed to testify against Bankman-Fried as part of a deal that could lead to a more lenient sentence.

Bankman-Fried's lawyers argued he probably failed in a quest to defend his reputation because the article cast Ellison in a sympathetic light. They also said prosecutors exaggerated the role Bankman-Fried had in the article.

They said prosecutors were trying to get their client locked up by offering evidence consisting of "innuendo, speculation, and scant facts."

Since prosecutors made their detention request, U.S. District Judge Lewis A. Kaplan has imposed a gag order barring public comments by people participating in the trial, including Bankman-Fried.

David McCraw, a lawyer for the Times, has written to the judge, noting the First Amendment implications of any blanket gag order, as well as public interest in Ellison and her cryptocurrency trading firm.

Ellison confessed to a central role in a scheme defrauding investors of billions of dollars that went undetected, McCraw said.

"It is not surprising that the public wants to know more about who she is and what she did and that news organizations would seek to provide to the public timely, pertinent, and fairly reported information about her, as The Times did in its story," McCraw said.

Cummins & Chevron announce MoU on strategic collaboration

COLUMBUS, Ind. & SAN RAMON, Calif. Aug 14, (Business Wire): Cummins Inc. (NYSE: CMI) and Chevron U.S.A. Inc., a subsidiary of Chevron Corporation (NYSE: CVX), announced a memorandum of understanding to leverage complementary positioning in hydrogen, natural gas, and other lower carbon fuel value chains. The announcement expands the two companies' previous strategic collaboration on hydrogen and renewable natural gas and is expected to encompass other liquid renewable fuels, such as renewable gasoline blends, biodiesel and renewable diesel. This collaboration is intended to encourage commercial and industrial adoption in North America.

At Cummins, we are working to bring our Destination Zero strategy to life, and we recognize we can't do this alone," explained Jennifer Rumsey, President and CEO, Cummins Inc. "Through Accelera by Cummins we have leading zero-emissions technologies for commercial and industrial applications, and we continue to offer a broad portfolio of engine-based solutions that reduce greenhouse gas and other emissions today. By collaborating strategically with Chevron, we plan to improve access to fuel and infrastructure for our customers, helping grow the availability of alternative and renewable fuels while reducing emissions."

"Achieving a lower carbon future that serves all people requires ambitious innovations and pragmatic solutions that deliver measurable results," said Chevron's President of Americas Products Andy Walz. "Collaborations like this one with Cummins are intended to make energy and global supply chains more affordable and reliable while helping commercial fleets who use our products and Cummins' equipment to advance a lower carbon world. No one company or industry can go it alone - together with Cummins, we aim to deliver progress today."

Cummins and Chevron each have contributed to the research, development and global deployment of alternative fuels innovation, systems and tech-

nologies and will work together on enabling the commercial development at scale of alternative fuels production, transportation and delivery systems for industrial and commercial markets, with target consumption by transportation vehicles of the type manufactured by Cummins. Workstreams in the new collaboration focus on hydrogen, natural gas, and other alternative lower carbon intensity fuels such as renewable gasoline blend, biodiesel, renewable diesel, compressed natural gas, and other liquid renewables to expand commercial adoption.

Chevron is one of the world's leading integrated energy companies. We believe affordable, reliable and ever-cleaner energy is essential to enabling human progress. Chevron produces crude oil and natural gas; manufactures transportation fuels, lubricants, petrochemicals and additives; and develops technologies that enhance our business and the industry. We aim to grow our traditional oil and gas business, lower the carbon intensity of our operations and grow new lower carbon businesses in renewable fuels, hydrogen, carbon capture, offsets and other emerging technologies. More information about Chevron is available at www.chevron.com.

Cummins Inc., a global power technology leader, is a corporation of complementary business segments that design, manufacture, distribute and service a broad portfolio of power solutions. The company's products range from internal combustion, electric and hybrid integrated power solutions to components including filtration, after-treatment, turbochargers, fuel systems, controls systems, air handling systems, automated transmissions, electric power generation systems, microgrid controls, batteries, electrolyzers and fuel cell products. Headquartered in Columbus, Indiana (U.S.), since its founding in 1919, Cummins employs approximately 73,600 people committed to powering a more prosperous world through three global corporate responsibility priorities critical to healthy communities: education, environment and equality of opportunity.

Total operating income amounted to KD 35.4m

KIB records 88% growth in net profit to reach KD 6m in H1'23

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 14: KIB Chairman Sheikh Mohammed Jarrah Al Sabah has revealed the Bank's financial results for the first half of the year, ending on 30 June 2023. During this period, the Bank achieved almost KD 6 million of net profit attributable to shareholders, with earnings per share (EPS) standing at 2.87 fils (i.e. 88% growth). Total operating income amounted to KD 35.4 million, which grew 14% compared to the first six months of 2022.

Announcing the Bank's results, Al-Jarrah pointed to the Bank's solid financial foundation and resilient business model, which are vital for navigating the banking landscape with confidence, clarity, and agility. He said: "KIB's FY2023 first-half financial results are a testament to our track record of good performance, competitive advantages, and unwavering commitment to provide the 'best' banking experience to our customers and the most significant value to our shareholders, in line with our slogan's promise of being a 'Bank for Life.'"

Delving into the Bank's interim financial statement for H1 2023, Al-Jarrah disclosed that KIB's financing portfolio was KD 2.47 billion as at 30 June 2023. In addition, Al-Jarrah noted that KIB's investment securities portfolio "focused on high quality Sukuk" stood at KD 308 million, compared to almost KD 298 million for the same period in 2022, an increase of 4%.

On his part, KIB's Vice Chairman and CEO Raed Bukhamseen stated that depositors' accounts amounted to almost KD 1.89 billion at the end of 30 June 2023. In addition, the shareholder equity, stood at almost KD 314 million (i.e. 28% growth) due to the successful completion of the KIB's capital increase during H1 2023. Bukhamseen further af-



Sheikh Mohammed Jarrah Al Sabah



Raed Bukhamseen

firming that KIB continued to successfully maintain adequate levels of Basel III total capital adequacy ratio, which was 19.8% at the end of H1 2023.

In his statement, Bukhamseen said: "Fueled by a transformative, innovative-focused strategy, the Bank has been marching ahead in its mission to achieve additional progress by seeking to offer unrivaled customer experience, keeping pace with the trends reshaping the banking industry, and investing in digital infrastructure to stay competitive and relevant."

NREC announces a net loss of KD 3.8m for H1/2023

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 14: National Real Estate Company (NREC) reported its financial and operational results for the periods ended June 30, 2023. The Company announced a net loss attributable to the owners of the Parent Company of KD 3.8 million and a loss per share of 2.15 fils in H1 2023, compared to a net profit of KD 5.4 million and an EPS of 3.06 fils in H1 2022.

The Company's operating revenue came in at KD 6.7 million for the 6-months period ended June 30, 2023, a decrease of 53% compared to the same period in 2022. Total assets stood at KD 606 million as of June 30, 2023.

For Q2 2023, the Company reported a net loss of KD 1.6 million, or a loss per share of 0.88 fils, and an operating revenue of KD 2.7 million.

Opening of Snow Abu Dhabi at Reem Mall

NREC Vice Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Faisal Jamil Sultan Al-Essa, said: "In the sec-



Faisal Jamil Sultan Al-Essa

ond quarter of 2023, the eagerly anticipated Snow Abu Dhabi at Reem Mall opened its doors to visitors."

"The introduction of Snow Abu Dhabi reaffirms our commitment to delivering innovative and enchanting family experiences across the MENA region."

Sultan added: "The combined impact of Snow Abu Dhabi and the mall's attractions will assured-

ly cultivate a lively and flourishing environment, drawing more visitors and enhancing Abu Dhabi's tourism industry as a whole."

Snow Abu Dhabi spans 9,732 SQM inside Reem Mall, incorporating an Enchanted Forest for immersive storytelling in a frosty world. The attraction boasts 20 rides including the Crystal Carousel and Polar Express Train. Guests can enjoy year-round activities like sledding, carousels, and zip-lining. The experience is enhanced by three F&B outlets offering snacks amid real snow.

Short-term focus

"We remain focused on our goal of divesting certain assets, proceeds of which will be used towards the reduction of a major part of the Company's debt obligations", said Sultan.

Established in 1973 and listed in Bursa Kuwait, National Real Estate Company (NREC) is a real estate investment, development and property manager based in the Middle East and North Africa. The Company's portfolio comprises a mix of retail, commercial and residential properties in the region.

Financial Highlights for the Periods Ended June 30, 2023 (Million KD)

Item	Q2 2023	Q2 2022	Variance (%)	H1 2023	H1 2022	Variance (%)
Revenue	2.7	5.9	-55%	6.7	14.2	-53%
Net Revenue	1.5	3.5	-58%	4.1	7.1	-42%
EBITDA	1.1	4.9	-77%	1.3	9.9	-87%
Net Profit (Loss)	(1.6)	2.1	-173%	(3.8)	5.4	-171%
EPS (fils)	-0.88	1.21	-173%	-2.15	3.06	-171%

Bukhamseen also shed light on notable achievements that defined the second quarter (Q2) of 2023, saying that the period was distinguished by a successful capital increase, in line with the Bank's modernization of its business model to achieve further development and sustainable growth. During the month of June, KIB completed the subscription process to increase its capital by offering 428,571,429 shares, at a value of KD 60 million. The Bank's paid-up capital increased by 34.98% to reach KD 165.4 million. The rights issue, which commenced on 30th May until 13th June, was

oversubscribed by 687%, reflecting shareholder and investor confidence in KIB's dynamic strategy and forward-looking vision.

Furthermore, Bukhamseen and Al-Jarrah discussed KIB's dynamic digital transformation journey and its successful strides to date, pointing to the Bank's three new, advanced digital platforms that were launched during Q2 2023 – the all-new and revamped Corporate Online Banking platform; the newly introduced, first-of-its-kind KIB Aqari platform; and the upgraded and improved KIB Mobile application. They said that the

unveiling of these three pioneering platforms, born out of the relentless efforts of the KIB Digital Factory, marks a new era in Kuwait's digital revolution and gives impetus to the development of advanced digital offerings for all customers across different segments. In addition, they highlighted the Bank's continuous contribution to the Central Bank of Kuwait's Let's Be Aware "Diraya" campaign, launched to raise financial and banking awareness across society.

By concluding their statements, both Bukhamseen and Al-Jar-

rah lauded the efforts of KIB's Board of Directors and its Executive Management to improve the Bank's operational environment by pursuing an all-inclusive, long-term approach across all aspects of the business and their continuous support and guidance to continue strengthening the Bank's financial position and meeting its ESG requirements. They also expressed their gratitude to the supervisory role of the Central Bank of Kuwait and its permanent support, and to the Capital Markets Authority for its role in supporting an attractive and competitive investment environment in the State of Kuwait.



Zain KON Conclusion 2023

KON ceremony held at AUK

Zain joins in celebrating future entrepreneurs

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 14: Zain recently joined in awarding the winning projects of the KON Social Entrepreneurship Program's eighth season during the ceremony held at the American University in Kuwait (AUK). The renowned youth empowerment program was organized by the leading non-profit LOYAC in collaboration with Babson College in Boston, and Zain has supported the program under its long-term, 19-year partnership with LOYAC.

During the event, Ammar Alastad, Zain's representative in the KON judges panel, praised the bright students for their hard work and teamwork spirit to transform their ambitious ideas into profitable, sustainable projects. The students showed outstanding dedication to achieve KON's goals, which are well aligned with Zain's social sustainability strategy towards empowering the youth and fostering innovation and entrepreneurship. Alastad also joined in recognizing one of the four winning teams on-stage.

Zain continued to support the eighth season of this unique educational program in line with its strong belief in the high value it presented to the local entrepreneurial community. The company continues to witness great enthusiasm and curiosity from hundreds of eager young people who participate in the program every year to make the most out of their summer vacation by learning new business skills, growing their talents, and fulfilling their future dreams.

During this year's program, the Zain Innovation Campus (ZINC) hosted a special session for KON students about the essentials of public speaking and



Zain KON Conclusion 2023

business pitching, giving them invaluable insights on how to pitch their businesses to investors to finance their projects and turn their ideas into profitable and sustainable startups. The session was attended by nearly 50 students.

KON targeted students of 12-16 years and empowered them to learn the essentials of entrepreneurship and business, gain insights on social and environmental challenges faced by today's businesses, and learn how to plan and develop their own projects.

The program also guided students into making their own case studies of the market and specifying their target audience, while introducing them to successful experiences from local entrepreneurs. KON came in collaboration with Babson College in Boston, one of the most prestigious entrepreneurship colleges in the United States and the number one

institution in the world for entrepreneurship education.

Zain and LOYAC's strategic partnership extends to 19 years of successful programs and initiatives that empowered thousands of ambitious Kuwaiti youth in business, volunteering, and academic projects. Zain considers this a great achievement that truly reflects the strength and resilience of the collaboration ecosystem between the private sector and non-profit organizations in empowering Kuwaiti youth.

LOYAC is a non-profit organization established in Kuwait in 2002 with the aim of empowering the youth to become impactful leaders in the society, offering a broad range of unique programs that fall under a model integrating community, professional, and life empowerments. LOYAC operates in Kuwait, Lebanon, Yemen, and Jordan, and has empowered over 3.5 million young people since its inception.

Ooredoo Kuwait new 400Mbps speed is successfully launched

Powered by FASTtelco

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 14: Ooredoo Kuwait has officially rolled out its highly anticipated 400Mbps speed, heralding a transformative era in the telecommunications landscape to meet the escalating demands of customers. Demonstrating an unwavering dedication to driving digital transformation and fostering a smart ecosystem, Ooredoo Kuwait, the leading telecommunication company, proudly introduces the groundbreaking 400Mbps speeds in Kuwait through its subsidiary, FASTtelco.

Setting a remarkable precedent, Ooredoo Kuwait stands as the trailblazer, poised to usher in innovative digital services that will provide fiber internet speeds of up to 400 megabits per second (Mbps) in residential areas covered by the fiber service. This momentous development marks a distinct paradigm shift within the telecommunications industry, catering to the surging demand for high-speed connectivity from customers.

Endorsements

Having secured the essential regulatory endorsements, Ooredoo Kuwait is delivering this high-speed capability to its esteemed customers. It's important to note that this initiative is impeccably aligned with the Ministry of Communications' strategic endeavor, involving the replacement of outdated ONT devices in vital areas such as Al Bida'a, Rumaythiya, Salwa, and Salmiya, with cutting-edge devices engineered to support these elevated speeds.

This strategic move underscores a broader commitment to enhancing infrastructure and establishing a resilient fiber optic network that raises Kuwait's speed standards to global benchmarks.

The vanguard internet technology introduced is meticulously designed to cater to the discerning needs of customers seeking unparalleled speed and performance through fiber optics. Significantly



MAX 2

impervious to electrical interference and surrounding electromagnetic fields, this technology is particularly suited for deployment in areas situated near high-voltage power lines. Its remarkable capability to seamlessly transmit over 10,000 megabytes per second across extensive distances without signal disruption underscores its technological prowess.

Further amplifying the customer experience, Ooredoo Kuwait, in collaboration with Huawei, has launched the Fiber+ service. Representing a pioneering evolution in fiber optic solutions, Fiber+ redefines internet coverage within residential spaces. A unique feature of this technology is its compatibility with both fiber internet and 5G fixed subscriptions, a groundbreaking approach that ensures consistent coverage and reliable speed through discreet installations.

Ooredoo Kuwait's tireless commitment to innovation is validated through rigorous testing and seamless implementation, ensuring the highest standards of efficiency and quality. Additionally, the company introduces Voice Over WiFi, an exceptional internet and phone service that ensures uninterrupted speed, even in traditionally challenging spaces like basements. This comprehensive coverage extends throughout homes, effortlessly supporting over 300 devices simultaneously while maintaining optimal speeds. The service's hallmark attributes of impressive speeds, seamless synchronization, and minimal latency culminate in an unparalleled customer experience.

In reflecting on the company's ethos, Naser Al-Abdullah, Director Marketing Communication and Social Media at Ooredoo Kuwait, affirms that enhancing the digital customer experience remains the bedrock of the company's priori-

ties. The modern world's appetite for swift, efficient services is met through dedicated efforts, strategic collaborations, and adaptable approaches that prioritize customer contentment. Recognizing the irreplaceable value of seamless, high-speed connections in daily transactions and activities, he underscores the paradigm-shifting potential of fiber optic lines, which boast unrivaled quality and resilience against environmental factors. He emphasizes that this technology, with its exceptional speed and reliability, caters to a diverse range of customer needs, including avid gamers seeking low-latency experiences. Additionally, Ooredoo Kuwait extends its commitment to seamless connectivity through high-speed ProPing subscriptions, assuring the lowest ping rate in Kuwait and delivering an unparalleled gaming experience for esports professionals.

The Fiber Services are available in the following areas:

■ Hawalli Governorate: Bayan, Hateen, Mishref, Mubarak Al-Abdullah, Al-Salam, Shuhada, Siddeeq, Az-Zahraa, Maidan Hawalli, Rumaythiya, Salwa, Al Bida'a, some blocks in Salmiya.

■ Mubarak Al Kaber Governorate: Al Adan, Abu Fatira, Fnaitees, Al Messilah, Al Fintas, Mubarak Al Kaber, Al Qurain, Al Qusour, Sabah Al-Salem.

■ Ahmadi Governorate: Al Ahmadi, Dahiyat Fahad Al-Ahmad, Sabah Al Ahmad Sea City, Khiran Residential, Mahboula, Mangaf, Al-Sabahiya, Sabah Al-Ahmad, Fahaeel, Abu Halifa.

■ Al-Asimah Governorate: Jaber Al-Ahmad, Nahdha, Northwest Sulaiyikhat, Al-Qairawan

■ Farwaniya Governorate: Abdullah Al Mubarak, Ishbiliya, Sabah Al Nasser.

■ Al Jahra Governorate: Al-Nasem, Saad Al Abdullah, Al Waha.



Abdulaziz Saud Al-Bakhait – Area Manager of the Retail Banking Group.

Warba announces the winners of weekly 'Al Sunbula' draw

Warba Bank - the best bank in corporate banking services and investment banking services in Kuwait - announced the winners of the Sunbula weekly draws. Warba Bank will continue to hold draws for ten weekly winners for Al Sunbula account, in the presence of a representative of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and Warba Bank employees.

As for the lucky clients of the Sunbula weekly draw, each of the 10 lucky winners received KD 1,000, and the

winners are: MshariSunt Al-Daihani, Ayman Ahmed Suleiman Salem, Saud Abdullah Al-Mutairi, Nadia Saadoun Al-Mutawa, Abdullah Salem Ghanem Al-Mutairi, Fahd RadhimanDweyaan Al-Shibli, BaqsaNafeaRabdi Al-Saeedi, Mohammad Al-SammanMorsi, Badr Nasser Abdulaziz Al-Mandeel, and Ahmed Msabeh Abdullah Al-Azmi.

The Sunbula account is the ideal choice for all those wishing to save money and achieve appropriate financial returns on their balances at the

same time, in addition to the opportunity to win cash prizes throughout the year.

Regarding the conditions, Mr. Abdulaziz Saud Al-Bakhait - Area Manager of the Retail Banking Group said: "KD 100 is now required to enter the weekly Al Sunbula draws and the major draws. The customer still gets one chance for every KD 10 in the account, and the chances are calculated according to the lowest balance in the account during the month. Therefore,

the amount must have passed a full month in the account to qualify for the weekly draw, and two full months for the major draws to calculate the chances. There are no restrictions or limits for withdrawals and deposits, the higher the deposited amount, the greater the client's chances of winning.

Warba Bank launched its latest banking solutions service, "Customer Onboarding", in accordance with the terms of its ambitious five-year strategy.

Part of its 'Rising Branch' Program

ABK recognizes Mansouriya branch's exceptional performance

Agility reports KD 60.5 million EBITDA, 63.4% growth for second quarter 2023

Revenue grows 136.8% to KD 327.8 million

	Q2 2023 (Million KD)	Q2 2022 (Million KD)	Variance (%)	1H 2023 (Million KD)	1H 2022 (Million KD)	Variance (%)
Revenue	327.8	138.4	136.8%	648.4	270.5	139.7%
Net Revenue	199.8	72.0	177.3%	386.9	139.2	177.9%
EBITDA	60.5	37.0	63.4%	120.9	70.9	70.4%
Net Profit	14.2	16.1	-11.7%	29.4	28.8	2.3%
EPS (filis)	5.55	6.35	-12.6%	11.55	11.41	1.2%

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 14: Agility, a long-term investor and operator in supply chain services, infrastructure, and innovation, today reported second quarter 2023 earnings of KD 14.2 million, or 5.55 filis per share, a decrease of 11.7% over the same period in 2022. Net profit this quarter was impacted by higher interest rate expenses resulting from a general increase in interest rates in addition to an increase in debt required to finance the company's acquisitions last year. Agility's EBITDA increased 63.4% to KD 60.5 million and revenue grew 136.8% to KD 327.8 million.

Agility Controlled Businesses
Agility's controlled businesses are the businesses the company controls and operates and whose performance is consolidated and reported through Agility's profit and loss statement. In Q2, the combined EBITDA of our controlled businesses was KD 61.2 million on revenue of KD 327.8 million, increases of 54% and 136.8%, respectively, over Q2 2022.

Performance of the company's controlled businesses is reported under three groups:

Aviation Services
Menzies Aviation's revenue was KD 162.2 million and EBITDA KD 21.9 million in Q2 2023, an increase of 861.8% and 367.2% over the same period last year when Agility was reporting solely on NAS's results. These Q2, 2023 results include the results of Menzies Aviation that was acquired in Q3 of 2022 in addition to those of the legacy National Aviation Services (NAS) business, now combined under "Menzies Aviation". The combined entity's EBITDA margin is 13.5% today.

Menzies Aviation results have strengthened with the post-pandemic aviation industry recovery, which has included growth in flight volumes. Volumes in most geographies have fully recovered, except for East Asia, where lockdown restrictions were strictest, and volumes are now slowly growing. Menzies has a number of new operations that it has launched or acquired: Jamaica, Panama, Atlanta, Milan, Montreal and others.

The integration of NAS with Menzies is now complete and the synergies, both operational and financial, are being realized.

Fuel Logistics
Tristar's Q2 consolidated revenue grew 76.2% vs. Q2 a year earlier and EBITDA increased 33.5%. This growth is driven mainly by the momentum of our Maritime and Fuel Farms segments. Tristar's addition of HG Storage International also contributed to this growth. The results of this quarter reflect Tristar's continued operational improvement and demonstrate the effectiveness of their diversified portfolio.

Other Controlled Businesses
As a group, Agility's other controlled businesses reported EBITDA of KD 23 million and revenue of KD 82.1 million, increases of 1% and 9%, respectively, over Q2 2022.

The main contributors were:
Agility Logistics Parks (ALP) reported 7.8% second-quarter revenue growth. ALP Kuwait performed well but still faces a challenge to future operations at certain facilities situated on land leased from the Kuwaiti government. Elsewhere, ALP is continuing to pursue its growth strategy by increasing and optimizing its existing land bank, developing new projects, and looking to acquire additional land, especially in the Middle East and Africa.

United Projects for Aviation Services Company (UPAC) reported a 1.2% increase in revenue for Q2. The increase was primarily attributable to a rebound in airport services and parking and the beginning of the summer holiday season for travel.

UPAC is a co-investor in Abu Dhabi's \$1.3 billion Reem Mall on Reem Island. The mall officially opened to the public on Feb. 16, 2023, with more than 110 units currently trading; and almost 50% of GLA com-

mitted. UPAC expects a gradual opening by more tenants over the coming months. The mall is the region's first, fully integrated omnichannel retail ecosystem with digital, e-commerce, and logistics capabilities. It brings together all consumer and retail services to ensure a seamless customer experience.

Global Clearinghouse Systems (GCS). At GCS, Agility's customs-modernization and ports operation company, second-quarter revenue grew 6.3% vs. the same period in 2022. GCS is focused on delivering optimal efficiency and services to its customers.

Agility's Investments
Agility holds non-controlling minority stakes in a number of businesses, both listed and non-listed. In Q2, the carrying value of those stakes was roughly KD 1.7 billion. Agility has seen an improvement in global equity markets, positively impacting our investment value.

Agility has entered into multi-year, funded equity collar agreements with several banks to protect the value of the DSV investment which is the biggest investment in this segment.

Recap of Agility Q2 2023 Financial Performance

Agility's net profit stood at KD 14.2 million and EPS was 5.55 filis.

Agility's EBITDA increased 63.4% to KD 60.5 million.

Agility's revenue increased 136.8% to KD 327.8 million and net revenue increased 177.3%.

Agility enjoys a healthy balance sheet with KD 3.7 billion in assets. Net debt stood at KD 881.5 million as of June 30, 2023 (this excludes lease obligations). Reported operating cash flow was KD 89.7 million for the six months of 2023, an increase of 268.2%.

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 14: As a leading financial institution, Al Ahli Bank Kuwait (ABK) is committed to continuously improving its employee reward mechanism to drive performance excellence.

The Bank remains steadfast in its goal to provide the necessary resources for success, enabling professional development.

As such, and to encourage healthy competition, ABK launched its 'Rising Branch' program. Through quarterly evaluations, this initiative rewards branch employees who consistently meet designated criteria, with an emphasis on delivering exemplary service. This strategic focus aligns with ABK's dedication to achieving excellence in the banking sector.

Moreover, this form of appreciation is designed to further develop their skills, elevate overall branch performance, and strengthen the Bank's position in the local banking sector. Such initiatives reflect ABK's unwavering commitment to fostering a strong work culture across all branches.

By implementing innovative incentive programs, ABK aims to enhance productivity and effectively cater to customer needs to attract them to conduct their financial and banking transactions with ABK.

In recognition of this exceptional achievement, Loai Muqames, CEO-Kuwait at ABK, visited Mansouriya branch to congratulate employees where he said, "The branch has achieved the esteemed title of 'Six-Star Branch' for the third time, setting an exemplary benchmark for the entire organization."

He continued, "ABK is proud to celebrate the remarkable accomplishments of Mansouriya branch and remains dedicated to nurturing a work environment that rewards excellence and encourages continuous growth and development. By recognizing staff's efforts, we strive to deliver unmatched quality service."

These visits aim to empower to continue to surpass expectations and remain determined to achieve the Bank's goals. As such, Johair Marafi, Acting General Manager of Retail Banking at ABK, emphasized the critical role of appreciating and rewarding staff for their outstanding performance. She highlighted, "Recognition fosters a strong culture which, in turn, enhances overall service, ultimately driving satisfaction and strengthening the Bank's competitive position in the market."

Discussing the importance of the program, Marafi continued, "ABK acknowledges the power of a motivated workforce. This program, designed to nurture talent and recognize potential, not only serves as a means to appreciate the hard work and dedication of branch employees, but also fosters a work environment where individuals can thrive."

The Kuwait CEO concluded by emphasizing the great importance of training and honing capabilities to navigate the ever-evolving banking industry. He said, "To this end, we ensure to provide the opportunity



Loai Muqames CEO – Kuwait at ABK



Ms. Johair Marafi Acting General Manager of Retail Banking at ABK.

to participate in various courses and workshops across sectors. By continually enhancing their skills and knowledge, employees are encouraged to perform at their best and drive continuous improvement within the Bank."

Since its establishment in 1967, ABK has progressed to become one of the leading Kuwaiti banks in the region that offers a wide array of personal, corporate, and private banking products and services. ABK also provides a broad range of local, regional, and global investment solutions and services through its subsidiary, ABK Capital.

Across the region, the Bank offers individuals and corporates the convenience of comprehensive banking and financial services in the Egyptian market through ABK-Egypt's network of 44 branches.

This is in addition to ABK's three branches located in Dubai, Abu Dhabi, and Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC) in the United Arab Emirates, servicing both Kuwaiti and Emirati individual and corporate clients.

For more information about ABK, please follow the Bank's Instagram account @abk_kuwait, visit eahli.com, contact Ahlan Ahli 1 899 899 or visit one of the Bank's branches across Kuwait.

Rovanperä once again dominates the roads

TOYOTA GAZOO Racing clinches victory at Rally Estonia

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 14: The TOYOTA GAZOO Racing (TGR) World Rally Team (WRT) recently secured yet another impressive victory this season for its GR YARIS Rally1 Hybrid Electric vehicle in the 2023 FIA World Rally Championship (WRC) at Rally Estonia. Kalle Rovanperä once again dominated the roads in the No. 69 Toyota GR YARIS Rally1 Hybrid Electric vehicle, taking home top podium position for the TOYOTA GAZOO Racing World Rally Team (TGR-WRT) for the third year in a row. Rovanperä's peerless performance has extended his lead in the FIA World Rally Championship, while Toyota has increased its manufacturers' championship lead to 57 points.

Guided by co-driver Jonne Haltunen, Rovanperä once again maneuvered his No. 69 GR YARIS Rally1 Hybrid Electric vehicle across some of the fastest roads in the WRC. He held a narrow lead despite having to run first on the loose gravel stages and was unbeatable thereafter as he pulled clear of the competition.

He recorded a remarkable run of 13 consecutive stage wins in the last two days of the rally including the rally-ending Power Stage, becoming the first driver to have such a streak of fastest times on a WRC round in 15 years.

Quickest in the final leg of the race by two seconds, he secured his second win of the season by 52.7s overall and claimed the maximum 30 points to increase his standings lead to 55 points. The victory is his 10th in the WRC in the two years since he became its youngest-ever winner at Rally Estonia 2021.

Akio Toyoda, TGR-WRT Chairman, commented: "Kalle, Jonne, congratulations on your victory, and three consecutive wins at Rally Estonia! Two years ago, it was Estonia where Kalle, 20 years old at the time, became the youngest WRC winner. Until then, the youngest winner record was held by Jari-Matti, at 22 years old. And

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 14: Coinciding with the 40 years anniversary since its establishment in 1983, Al Mulla Industries Co., a subsidiary of Al Mulla Group and a trusted market leader and initiator of best practices in Kuwait's steel products manufacturing, transport refrigeration, air duct and air movement solutions, as well as other related market sectors, recently organized a Transport Solutions Expo at Kuwait's International Fairground in Mishref, Kuwait. The one-day event comes as part of the company's constant efforts of promoting its robust

Transport Solutions that are designed, customized, and manufactured at Al Mulla Industries' factory in Kuwait in accordance with the highest quality control standards that conform to both local and international specifications.

The Al Mulla Industries' Transport Solutions Expo presented a unique opportunity for visitors to the different sections of the Expo witness firsthand the company's diverse range of products reflecting its manufacturing capabilities, and transport solutions, and receive valuable information from our well-trained professionals about various heavy and

light Transport Solutions, both rigid-body/chassis mounted and trailers, such as reefer boxes, trailers, vans, and other vehicles fitted with cooling units, tail-lifts, among other steel production capabilities of the company. The exhibition also included displays of the wide range of Cooling Units of our Global Partners, Carrier Transcold, across a range of vehicles from vans to Trucks.

Commenting on the event, the Managing Director of Trading and Manufacturing & Financial Services at Al Mulla Group Mr. Hormuzda Davar said: "We are proud to showcase today our multifaceted range of products and services at the Kuwait International Fairground, which reflects our long history of over four decades of delivering excellence in the steel products manufacturing and transport refrigeration solutions by Al Mulla Industries." He added, "I am certain that our clients and visitors to the fairground will have an unparalleled experience in witnessing firsthand the exceptional capabilities of Al Mulla Industries to customize, manufacture and deliver a wide array of solutions in various steel and commercial transport manufacturing sectors that would not just meet their expectations, but rather exceed them as part of our unnegotiable commitment to innovation, excellence and professionalism, which form the core principles of Al Mulla Group. Our mission, especially for our customers needing solutions for transport of their commercial cargo in regulated temperatures, is to ensure maximum cooling efficiency during peak summer temperatures and minimal down time, through offering the right cooling solution tailor made to the customer needs, and then continuous preventive maintenance."

now, 22-year-old Kalle has already won 10 WRC events. I would also like to congratulate him for becoming the youngest double-digit winner. The next WRC round is held in our home-

town, Jyväskylä, Finland. I will head to Finland fully prepared for the team to carry the good momentum from Kenya and Estonia into the next round. We need to win. We will win!"



One of the drivers in action.



Employees who took part in 'Rising Branch' program.



One of the products.

BUSINESS

airliner returns after 'emergency incident'

A commercial airline flight from Australia to Malaysia returned to Sydney on Monday after an emergency incident, officials and media reported.

Malaysia Airlines flight MH122 left Sydney Airport at 1:40 p.m. for an eight-hour flight to Kuala Lumpur and landed back on the runway at 3:47 p.m., Nine News reported.

Someone purporting to be on board tweeted that a person was "threatening staff and passengers," Nine reported.

It said a passenger holding a backpack had threatened to "blow the plane up." Crew had

checked the backpack and found no explosives, it added.

Australian Federal Police said in a statement they were responding to an "emergency incident" at the airport, but provided no other details.

The plane was parked on the end of a runway hours later with emergency vehicles nearby, Nine reported.

Sydney Airport said it was supporting "emergency agencies in the management of an incident."

"The airport is operational with flights arriving and departing," an airport statement said. (AP)

Canadian Ghost Ship wins COTY award

The Royal Canadian Mint is delighted that its 2022 5 oz. Pure Silver Coin – Canadian Ghost Ship has won the Coin of the Year (COTY) Award in the Most Innovative category. Under this annual awards program, the Mint competes with global industry peers for the world's most prestigious recognition of excellence in coin design and manufacturing. This latest endorsement of the Mint's talent and innovation adds to a growing list of previous Coin of the Year awards.

"The Mint is proud to have many award-winning coins to its name and earning a Coin of the Year award is a tremendous world-wide recognition of our innovation and manufacturing excellence," said Marie Lemay, President and CEO of the Royal Canadian Mint. "As tireless innovators, we are always looking for new and exciting ways to bring stories of Canada to life and it is very gratifying to see the black light-activated colour technology on

our Canadian Ghost ship silver coin impress our industry peers as much as it does our customers."

The dramatic artwork of artist Neil Hamelin illustrates the tale of the ghost ship, a haunting apparition of a three-masted ship whose sails appear to be ablaze. Fishermen of old on Canada's east coast claim to have seen the vision and set out to sea in a rescue attempt, only to have the mysterious ship suddenly vanish. (AP)

UAE-based startup aims to sustainably solve 'last mile' logistics problems through EVs

Dubai Int'l Chamber helps drive ONE MOTO's expansion into Latin America

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates, Aug 14: Dubai International Chamber, one of three chambers operating under Dubai Chambers, has played a key role in driving the growth of another international business success story. The chamber has helped propel ONE MOTO – a Dubai-based company that aims to sustainably solve 'last mile' logistics problems through its range of innovative Electric Vehicles (EVs) – into several markets across Latin America.

Dubai International Chamber successfully established a connection between ONE MOTO and Santiago Motors in Chile to broker a new nationwide sales deal for the ambitious UAE start-up, which will see the Chilean automotive company sell ONE MOTO's electric vehicles across its national sales network.

Mohammad Ali Rashed Lootah, President and CEO of Dubai Chambers, commented: "We are pleased to assist this sustainable, hi-tech company

in accessing new markets. Our work in Latin America underlines the importance of this dynamic region, and we look forward to continuing to leverage the exciting opportunities available for the mutual benefit of all stakeholders."

The chamber is now supporting ONE MOTO's plans to expand into seven additional LATAM markets. This growth will also contribute towards achieving ONE MOTO founder Adam Ridgway's personal philanthropic goal of creating one million

jobs across the region.

Ridgway, who launched the company to help decarbonise mobility in both the commercial and personal sectors, commented: "The greatest asset we've had in our arsenal of support has been Dubai Chambers. The time offered, together with unwavering encouragement and expert guidance has enabled us to expand into 12 territories within just two years of operation."

Dubai International Chambers cur-

rently operates four international representative offices in Latin America. This network is continuing to grow following the launch of the 'Dubai Global' initiative, which aims to establish 50 representative offices for



Lootah

Dubai in five continents by 2030.

Dubai International Chamber, one of three chambers operating under the umbrella of Dubai Chambers, was established to promote Dubai as a global business hub, attract multinational companies, and expand the emirate's trade ties with promising markets. The chamber has a mandate to meet His Highness Sheikh Mohammed's ambition to increase Dubai's foreign trade from AED 1.4 trillion to AED 2 trillion by 2026.



Members of the Congress of South Africa Trade Unions take part in an unemployment protest march in Johannesburg, Thursday, July 6, 2023. South Africa's official unemployment rate of 33% is the highest in the world, and economists say it's even higher at 42% if you count those who have given up looking for work and have dropped off unemployment systems. (AP)

Anger rises with millions jobless

Unemployment in South Africa 'ticking time bomb'

JOHANNESBURG, Aug 14, (AP): As Lebohang Mphuthi works amid the chaos of boisterous children during a lunch break at the Omar H.S. Ebrahim elementary school in South Africa - the kids are pushing, shoving and spilling food everywhere - she can't help but think how this is as far from her dream job as it can get.

Four years after graduating with a degree in analytical chemistry, the only work the 26-year-old has found is as a student assistant at a public school in Pretoria. Her responsibilities include handing out meals to the children and limiting the chaos as best she can.

Mphuthi's story mirrors those of so many young South African graduates sitting at home jobless or trying to make ends meet doing fairly menial jobs in a country with a 33% official unemployment rate. It's a figure badly at odds with the status of a nation meant to embody the aspirations of Africa and the developing world.

"It is demotivating and frustrating," Mphuthi said of her battle to make progress. "You ask yourself, if we who studied are struggling to find jobs, then what about these ones who are still at school?"

In a South African context, Mphuthi might be considered lucky with the \$215 she earns a month.

Analysts say the official unemployment number doesn't even count those who have given up on finding work and dropped off the grid and that a more accurate assessment would be that nearly 42% of South Africa's working-age population is unemployed.

South Africa has the highest unemployment rate in the world, according to the World Bank, outstripping Gaza and the West Bank, Djibouti and Kosovo.

When it comes to youth unemployment, the rate is 61% of 15- to 24-year-olds, according to official statistics, and a staggering 71% if you again count those who are no longer trying.

Population

Isobel Frye, executive director of the Social Policy Initiative in South Africa, which researches poverty and unemployment, said it equates to 24 million adults out of a population of 60 million who are either unemployed or not involved in any economic activity and barely surviving.

A United Nations report on unemployment in South Africa that was delivered to Deputy President Paul Mashatile last month described the situation as a "ticking time bomb."

"We have to ask ourselves why this was allowed to happen," Frye said.

South Africa's GDP needs to grow by 6% a year to start creating enough jobs just for the 700,000 people who enter the workforce every year, according to Duma Gqubule, a financial analyst who has advised the South African government.

South Africa's growth hasn't approached that much-needed figure for more than a decade. Its economy - which grew by 2% last year - is expected to grow by less than 1% this year and between 1% and 2% for the next five years.

Gqubule and Frye believe there are policies that would ease unemploy-

ment but have expressed exasperation that the problem isn't a top priority for everyone from the government to private businesses and every South African given the country's massive problems, including poverty, inequality and an epidemic of violent crime.

"People just don't want to talk about this crisis," Gqubule said when he appeared on national television to reflect on the U.N. report.

The U.N. report didn't come as a surprise. Unemployment was high 30 years ago and has been trending up. The COVID-19 pandemic ripped jobs away from more than 2 million South Africans in a devastating blow, according to government statistics. However, there were warning signs long before that.

The pandemic didn't cause 46-year-old Themba Khumalo's problems. He lost his job as a machine operator in 2017 and now tries to support his wife and two children by collecting metal and plastic containers anywhere he can find them to sell in bulk for recycling.

Benefits

"There are too many guys sitting at home without work," Khumalo said as he crushed some metal cans with his worn-out work boots in the backyard of his home on the outskirts of Johannesburg. He shakes his head at the insufficiency of the monthly \$18 he receives in unemployment benefits. His one bright note is that neighbors often leave empty food cans outside his house for him to recycle.

One of the government's policies to combat unemployment is helping young entrepreneurs start businesses. Pearl Pillay of the Youth Lab think-tank, which focuses on improving opportunities for young people, said new businesses aren't getting off the ground.

"Yet that is kind of our fix-all solution to unemployment," Pillay said.

In the Johannesburg township of Soweto, Mthibedi Mohoje's internet cafe is almost always busy as it mainly caters to people who need their computers to apply for jobs. Unemployed Thato Sengoatsi, 25, spends a lot of time there.

Sengoatsi and school assistant Mphuthi are among South Africa's "Born Free" generation - born after the apartheid system of racial segregation ended in 1994 and who have only known a free South Africa. Their lives started in the dawn of democracy when Nelson Mandela was president and hope filled the air.

But unemployment has cast its shadow on the future of millions of South Africa's Black majority in 2023. Sengoatsi didn't live through apartheid, but he knows bringing it down promised something.

"The generation that came before us protested ... so that we could have a better life. But we are not getting that life, and we cannot hide that fact," Sengoatsi said.

There's clear desperation. When the premier of the economic hub province of Gauteng announced last month that he was offering jobs for 6,000 unemployed young people, more than 40,000 waited in the winter cold to apply. More than 30,000 were set for rejection.

Argentines vote in primary election that will gauge yearning for change

Country suffering one of world's worst inflation rates

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina, Aug 14, (AP): Argentines were voting Sunday in a primary election that will act as a bellwether ahead of October general elections and give a hint at how eager citizens are for a change in a country that is suffering one of the world's worst inflation rates.

The primary will determine who will be the presidential candidate in the main center-right opposition coalition in which Buenos Aires Mayor Horacio Rodríguez Larreta is facing off against former Security Minister Patricia Bullrich.

Whoever comes out on top will almost certainly be running against Economy Minister Sergio Massa, who is facing a leftist challenger to become the candidate of the ruling coalition. Center-left President Alberto Fernández decided not to run for reelection as he suffers from rock-bottom approval ratings amid annual inflation of more than 100%, rising poverty and a rapidly depreciating currency.

The primary will also finally give a firm answer on how much traction upstart right-wing populist candidate Javier Milei has gained with voters. An admirer of former US President Donald Trump, Milei has attracted voters with an anti-establishment message that has particularly resonated with the young.

There were delays in the voting in some polling locations in the capital amid difficulties in the use of new electronic voting machines that were used to select candidates for mayor and other local positions. A judge in charge of the electoral process criticized what she characterized as the "degree of improvisation" and said the voting time could be extended as a result.

In the run-up to Sunday's vote, the campaign had been largely dominated by the sometimes-bitter contest between Bullrich and Larreta. Pollsters say the winner of this race will have a strong chance of becoming president amid general anger at the government due to the country's economic malaise.

Asked about what the pre-primary discussions could mean for the coalition, Larreta assured journalists there



Demonstrators march to protest against government policies, demanding higher salaries amid annual inflation of more than 100%, rising poverty and a rapidly depreciating currency, in Buenos Aires, Argentina, April 19, 2023. (AP)

would be unity after Sunday's vote. "Always together," Larreta said. "Yesterday, today, tomorrow, always together."

Former President Mauricio Macri (2015-2019), a leader in the main opposition coalition, called on Argentines to cast their ballot Sunday "to leave behind an era that has brought us so much harm and sadness."

The primaries are taking place with an undercurrent of concern over how the vote could impact the economy. Four years ago, an unexpectedly strong showing by now-President Fernández led to a sharp depreciation of the currency as markets saw the primary results indicating that business-friendly Macri was on his way out.

After casting his ballot Sunday, Massa told journalists the Economy Ministry had been working on the issue.

"On Friday, from noon until the afternoon, and yesterday, back at the

Economy Ministry, we worked with the team so that the week and the markets, in some way, do not influence people's everyday lives," Massa said.

Once results start coming in, particular attention will be paid for signs that the main center-right opposition could win the presidential election outright and avoid a second round runoff in November.

After casting his ballot, Fernández made clear he expects the presidential race won't be over quickly.

Process

"We have started an electoral process that will likely conclude in November," Fernández, who has been largely absent from the campaign, said. His vice president, Cristina Fernández, who was the country's president from 2007 to 2015, has also kept a low profile during the campaign so far.

The discussions in the run-up to Sunday's vote were largely domi-

nated by the economy, but crime suddenly took center stage in the final days of campaigning after the killing of an 11-year-old girl during a snatch-and-grab robbery in a Buenos Aires suburb Wednesday. There also was outrage in Buenos Aires following the death of a leftist political activist, who suffered a heart attack while being detained by police during a protest Thursday.

Many in Buenos Aires expressed anger at politicians and said they had little faith things would change.

"Whoever rises, things will remain the same," said Jennifer Marín, a retail worker.

Political leaders pushed the citizenry to cast a ballot amid concerns participation could be lower than normal amid a lack of enthusiasm. Although voting is mandatory, the fine for failing to cast a ballot is largely symbolic. Recent national elections have seen a participation rate of around 70%.

Firms postponing or shifting investment from China

Law firm splits with Chinese partner citing data rules

BEIJING, Aug 14, (AP): One of the world's biggest law firms has said it is separating from the Chinese firm that was part of its global network for eight years, citing changes in cybersecurity and other rules that have rattled foreign companies.

The decision by Dentons follows warnings by business groups that

global companies are postponing or shifting investment away from China due to concern about an expanded anti-espionage law, tighter controls on business, a data security crackdown and raids on foreign consulting firms.

Dentons said it was separating from Beijing Dacheng Law Offices due to changes in cybersecurity and data pro-

tection but gave no details. Dentons said in a statement Dacheng will be a "separate, standalone firm" that is its "preferred law firm" for clients with needs in China.

Dacheng joined the Dentons network in 2015. Dentons, which says it has more than 10,000 lawyers in some 80 countries, added the Chinese characters for Dacheng to its logo used worldwide.

The arrangement was unusual in China because it made Dacheng part of an integrated international network, unlike other foreign firms that have contractual relationships with Chinese affiliates that remain separate entities.

Such an arrangement might conflict with China's data controls by giving foreign lawyers or firms abroad access to information, according to Lester Ross, the partner in charge of the Beijing office of Washington law firm WilmerHale.

"I suspect that this would have made it very difficult for such firms to continue to operate through such structure," Ross said in an email.

The ruling Communist Party has tightened restrictions on the handling and protection of data about Chinese citizens and companies and what can be sent abroad.

The ruling party launched a data-security crackdown on Chinese tech companies in 2020. Consulting firm

Bain & Co. said in April its staff in Shanghai were questioned by police. A corporate due diligence firm, Mintz Group, said its Beijing office was raided and five employees detained.

Unease about tighter controls has hampered efforts by Chinese leader Xi Jinping's government to revive foreign investor interest following the lifting in December of anti-virus controls that blocked most travel into and out of China.

The British Chamber of Commerce in China appealed in May for "greater clarity" on data restrictions in the auto and other industries.

Foreign law firms can operate representative offices in China, but legal representation must be done by Chinese firms, which are tightly controlled by the ruling party. Since 2012, lawyers have been required to give an oath of loyalty to the Communist Party. Every firm must have a party committee.

"The presence of the party makes it hard to integrate the cultures and governance of foreign and Chinese firms," said James Zimmerman, a partner in the Beijing office of Perkins Coie and a former chairman of the American Chamber of Commerce in China, in an email.

"In my view, this is the key reason it's incompatible to have a true merger between a foreign and Chinese law firm," Zimmerman said.



Police officers patrol past visitors seeking information at a special exhibition of legal services during the China International Fair for Trade in Services (CIFTIS) at the Shougang venue in Beijing on Sept. 1, 2022. One of the world's biggest law firms said on Aug. 10, 2023 it is separating from the Chinese firm that was part of its global network for eight years, citing changes in cybersecurity and other rules that have rattled foreign companies. (AP)

The Conversation

Childhood trauma a global health problem

Trauma-focused therapy helps Ukrainian kids besieged by war

By Zlatina Kostova

UMass Chan Medical School

The Conversation is an independent and nonprofit source of news, analysis and commentary from academic experts.

Childhood trauma is a global health problem. Every year, up to 1 billion children worldwide experience some form of emotional, physical or sexual abuse. More than two-thirds of children report at least one traumatic event by age 16.

Without early intervention, these experiences may deeply infiltrate the minds of children, who may reenact their original trauma by entering toxic relationships that repeat the dynamics of parental abuse. Or they might engage in high-risk behaviors, including unsafe sexual relationships, delinquency or substance abuse.

Childhood trauma can lead to guilt, shame, anxiety, depression and even suicide. Its effects often last well beyond childhood and affect physical and mental health into adulthood.

I am a clinical psychologist and director of training at the nonprofit Lifeline for Kids, a center for childhood trauma at UMass Chan Medical School. I have been participating in a project that treats Ukrainian children and families affected by the war since March 2022.

The project is being carried out by German researchers in collaboration with several organizations. Through this program – called Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Ukraine – I provide online training and consultation calls to the Ukrainian therapists who are treating children who have been directly affected. This experience has impressed upon me the great importance of the power of intervening directly during ongoing trauma and early enough in a person's life to help heal the wounds of complex adversities.

Ukraine project
During the first tragic months of the war, my job was to educate therapists about this form of treatment so that they could counsel the war-impacted children and their families.

Given that they were still exposed to an ongoing threat in Ukraine, it was critical to help the children differentiate between a real danger and what was only a reminder of their trauma. So the therapist would teach them relaxation skills to manage the stress from hearing sirens or being evacuated to a new location.

Our team of international trainers also addressed secondary trauma – in this case, the traumatic stress that mental health care providers are experiencing.

Initial results show that more than 130 clinicians were trained in trauma-focused cognitive behavioral therapy. In turn, they collected data from more than 140 children and caregivers. The therapists rated their overall satisfaction with the training as high.

Different brain architecture
Although events like wars, pandemics and school violence are some of the most obvious reasons for trauma, approximately three-quarters of reported cases of child abuse – such as sexual abuse – are committed by family members or other people who are part of the victim's "circle of trust."

Children experiencing complex trauma – whether parental abuse or the crossfire of war – develop a biology that is very different from their nontraumatized peers. Studies show that trauma leaves marks not only on the brain but also on other parts of the body.

Chronic stress leads to ongoing activation of the stress response system, which activates neural connections in-

involved in fear, anxiety and impulsive reactions.

Even in the absence of a real threat, the fight-flight-freeze response – located in the amygdala, or the primitive, instinctual and survival-oriented part of the brain – remains constantly activated. Something as simple as a change in someone's facial expression can activate the fear circuits.

The chronic stress response leads to the release of the hormones cortisol and adrenaline, which then has downstream effects on other systems. This can lead to suppression of the immune system and small shifts in how a person's underlying genetics respond to their environment. In addition, other brain regions that are less important for survival – such as problem-solving, learning and memorizing – are less developed in children who have experienced trauma.

But there can be another, more positive reaction to stress, which involves asking for help and support from safe people. That's why the presence of supportive adults, along with acquisition of new coping skills, can blunt the impact of trauma. Ultimately, it is the buffering, not the suffering, that determines how a child reacts to trauma.

Children are resilient. With appropriate treatment and support from caregivers and professionals, they can heal and thrive.

Storytelling heals
Cognitive behavioral therapy is effective for many mental health conditions. It is a form of talk therapy based on the understanding that psychological problems come from unhelpful or inaccurate ways of thinking; these thoughts then affect our emotions and behaviors.

Trauma-focused cognitive behavioral therapy differs in several ways. First, it helps the child recognize how past trauma affects their view of themselves and their behavior. For example, a female adolescent who was sexually abused may be triggered by a male friend who comes physically close to her.

The therapy also uses a well-established technique called trauma narration. Here, the child narrates the traumatic experiences that happened to them. It can be spoken, written or expressed in a drawing, poem or song.

With the therapist's help, the child identifies the distorted thoughts that negatively affect their views of themselves, others and the future: "It was my fault that I was sexually abused; I cannot trust anyone; I will be broken forever."

The therapist then helps the child shift their perspective and incorporate the trauma in their life story in a way that is no longer overwhelming, harmful and shameful.

When this happens, trauma-related symptoms such as hypervigilance, repetitive thoughts and avoidance significantly decrease. Instead of seeing themselves as broken, damaged and unlovable, these children recognize their resiliency and strength.

One example: An 8-year-old boy who saw his mother die from cancer was having severe nightmares. The thought of sickness or death terrified him. He was refusing to go outside his home, was emotionally withdrawn and didn't want to see friends.

But after receiving trauma-focused cognitive behavioral therapy, he could express his emotions over his mother's death. He was no longer afraid at night and his nightmares decreased. He formed new friendships.

The therapy typically requires from eight to 25 sessions, depending on the number of traumatic experiences and the complexity of the symptoms.

DurAVR new heart valve shows promise for patients with severe aortic stenosis

BRISBANE, Australia, Aug 14: Anteris Technologies Ltd. (Anteris or the Company) (ASX: AVR, OTC: ANTTY) reported that DurAVR™ Transcatheter Heart Valve (THV), a new class of biomimetic valve and the world's only biomimetic, single-piece transcatheter aortic valve, was used to successfully treat patients as part of the DurAVR™ THV Early Feasibility Study (EFS or the Study) in the United States. The EFS is an essential step towards receiving FDA approval in the US and commercialization of this innovative medical technology.

Dr. Azeem Latib, Director of Interventional Cardiology, Director of Structural Heart Interventions at Montefiore Health System, New York, and Study National Principal Investigator (IC), performed the first group of US DurAVR™ THV procedures.

The first group of severe aortic stenosis patients treated with DurAVR™ THV had intraoperatively, post-implant EAOs of 2.2cm2, and average mean gradients of 4mmHg.

Progress

Dr. Latib commented: "Having previously traveled to Europe with Anteris to implant patients with DurAVR™ THV, I am delighted to note that the post-procedure patient outcomes seen in US patients at my center corroborate with data reported from previous cohorts. The ability to use this device with such excellent hemodynamic results, as well as ease of use, is incredible progress in the treatment of patients with severe aortic stenosis. We look forward to many more cases in the near future."

The EFS Study is evaluating the safety and feasibility of DurAVR™ THV in the treatment of subjects with symptomatic severe native aortic stenosis (AS). Enrolling ≥15 subjects at 7 Heart Valve Centers of Excellence within the United States. Dr. Mike Reardon, Chair of Cardiovascular Research at the Houston Methodist DeBakey Hospital, is the Study Chair. This is an FDA-designated category B study and approved by CMS for reimbursement.



Anteris Technologies DurAVR™ Transcatheter Heart Valve.

Caregivers are critical

The No. 1 factor for healing from trauma is the presence of a safe, nurturing and predictable caregiver – a parent, grandparent, social worker, pastor or coach.

One of the most powerful moments in treatment is when the child – with the support of the therapist – shares the narrative with the caregiver or another significant adult in the child's life.

Anteris evaluates safety of innovative tech

'LEM-mR203 is an advanced mRNA vaccine candidate'

Lemonex gets approval for clinical trial of mRNA shot with nano-drug delivery tech

SEOUL, South Korea, Aug 14: Lemonex Inc., a biotechnology company developing innovative messenger RNA (mRNA) and siRNA therapeutics based on a novel nanoparticle drug delivery system has announced in August that an Investigational New Drug (IND) application has been approved by the Ministry of Food and Drug Safety (MFDS) for mRNA vaccine LEM-mR203 with its nano-drug delivery technology, DegradaBALL® on 21st of July.

LEM-mR203 is the first mRNA vaccine candidate to which Lemonex's proprietary drug delivery platform technology, DegradaBALL (DegradaBALL-mRNA system), is applied. This clinical trial is for Covid-19, and safety and immunogenicity will be evaluated in healthy adults at Seoul National University Hospital, Korea.

In terms of timely and effective pandemic response, mRNA vaccines have an advantage over antigen protein vaccines because they can be developed more rapidly. However, effective delivery of mRNA in the body requires drug delivery technology. The LNP that is currently applied to existing mRNA vaccines has shown limitations, such as safety concerns including anaphylaxis, myocarditis, and pericarditis, as well as the need for an ultra-low-temperature cold chain. Therefore, there is a need for next-generation drug delivery technology. The

drug delivery technology of DegradaBALL developed by Lemonex may address these issues, suggesting a more advanced DDS technology for mRNA vaccines and therapeutics.

Advanced

An official from Lemonex said, "LEM-mR203 is an advanced mRNA vaccine candidate harnessing DegradaBALL technology that can complement the limitations of LNP." "We confirmed the safety and tolerability of DegradaBALL in healthy adults by successfully finishing the phase 1 clinical trial of LEM-S401 (siRNA therapy with DegradaBALL, DegradaBALL-siRNA system). IND approval of LEM-mR203 phase I clinical trial once again proved the value of the DegradaBALL technology for mRNA vaccine that improved and supplemented the limitations of LNP."

Another official from the company said, "mRNA vaccines and therapies will be playing an increasingly important role. However, current mRNA vaccines employing LNP pose challenges when it comes to storage, packaging, and transportation due to their formulation instability. In addition, the complicated mRNA encapsulation process should be performed immediately after mRNA synthesis in a dedicated facility, which requires further improvement for better encapsulation efficiency." "However, unlike LNP,

DegradBALL can be pre-produced even before mRNA synthesis and stored in stock at room temperature. DegradaBALL can stabilize mRNA formulation, extend the shelf-life of the final formulation, reduce the risk of mRNA damage, and eliminate the necessity of ultra-cold chain for mRNA vaccine supply.

Currently, Lemonex is developing various competitive new drug candidates based on the DegradaBALL drug delivery platform. siRNA gene therapy LEM-S401: Successfully completed the phase 1 clinical trial in healthy human, Dual-acting RNA immuno-oncology drug LEM-S403: Production of clinical samples for clinical entry after completion of the GLP-tox studies, cytokine IL-2 therapy BALLkine-2: Completed preclinical PoC. In addition, Lemonex is strengthening its global network by signing MOUs with the International Vaccine Institute (IVI) and the mRNA vaccine technology transfer hub, the initiative supported by WHO.

In addition, Lemonex presented its DegradaBALL platform technology at the 2018 mRNA Health Conference and received an invitation to the Global Vaccine Immune Research Forum (GVIRF) hosted by the WHO, NIH, and the Bill Melinda Gates Foundation this year. Currently, the company is preparing for an IPO to list on the KOSDAQ market and seeking pre-IPO fundraising.

The primary endpoint of this Study at 30 days post-implantation will assess safety and device feasibility. This US EFS Study data will pave the way for a pivotal registration trial.

Wayne Paterson, CEO of Anteris Technologies, commented: "The successful treatment of these patients in the United States is yet another important milestone on our path to commercialization of the DurAVR™ THV system. The patients enrolled at Montefiore Hospital in New York this week add to our body of evidence that supports the use case of DurAVR™ THV and its clinical superiority and validates the reproducibility of our data and the stellar performance to date. Today's patients had excellent outcomes with intraoperative mean gradients of 4mmHg. This further supports the case that DurAVR™ is both clinically viable and will be an important

product for the treatment of aortic stenosis in the future, giving patients and physicians alternatives to current therapies."

Eli Lilly's diabetes treatment Mounjaro, which is widely used for weight loss, raked in nearly \$1 billion in second-quarter sales, or more than \$200 million above what Wall Street had expected.

Shares of the drugmaker soared 17% to an all-time-high after Lilly said mounjaro sales swelled more than 70% since the first quarter to \$980 million. Almost all of that came from the US, and the company said significant demand was leading to delays in filling orders for some doses.

Analysts expected the drug to bring in about \$740 million during the quarter, according to FactSet.

These sessions give an opportunity for the caregiver to praise the child and acknowledge the strength it took to create and share their narrative.

Clinical studies have shown that trauma-focused cognitive behavioral therapy works for children and young adults from ages 3 to 21 across all geographic, ethnic, gender, religious and socioeconomic settings. It works for a Ukrainian teenager victimized by war

– or for an abused child living in a US suburb.

Studies on this form of psychotherapy consistently show that patients have less anxiety, depression and post-traumatic stress disorder than patients who have undergone other forms of treatment. Children become more resilient and the benefits of therapy last longer.

Trauma-focused cognitive behavio-

ral therapy helps children change their story from a broken one to a heroic one.

As a 16-year-old girl told me: "This therapy has completely changed my life for better. I now wake up everyday without having this weight of shame and depression hanging on me. I can finally live my life without feeling like I'm going to break down at any second." (AP)

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Peru's social media sensation Tamayo fuses Quechua, K-pop

LIMA, Peru, Aug 14, (AP) — What happens when you take Quechua, the most widely spoken Indigenous language in the Americas, and fuse it with K-pop, the global musical sensation with roots in South Korea?

Ask Lenin Tamayo, who has become a social media phenomenon with "Q-pop" and released his first digital album this week.

Tamayo grew up listening to his mother, a Peruvian folk artist who sings in Spanish and Quechua, a language shared by 10 million speakers in countries including Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, Brazil, Bolivia, Argentina and Chile. As a teenager, K-pop became his passion and helped him find a group of like-minded female classmates who helped fight the bullying he says he faced at school for his Indigenous looks.

Now himself a musician, the 23-year-old Tamayo has fused those chapters, mixing Spanish and Quechua lyrics with K-pop beats to create Q-pop (in which the "Q" stands for "Quechua"). He's amassed more than 4.4 million likes on his TikTok account and released five digital singles online.

Making music in his native language "helps embrace the roots but, without being oblivious to modernity and globalization," he told The Associated Press in a recent interview.

For Tamayo, the K-pop aesthetic helped influence a personal style where he mixes his own choreography and a way of acting that helps reinforce a key message: Love and freedom.

"Love to unite people and the freedom to be oneself, because it's all about embracing existence and seeking a full, full, real life, with depth," he says.

After completing his psychology studies at the Universidad Nacion-

al Mayor de San Marcos, Tamayo could not picture himself practicing that profession. He wanted to be a singer, and he wanted his music to mix his passions.

"Why can't I transfer this K-pop experience to Andean music?" Tamayo said while practicing dance steps at his home in a Lima suburb.

Tamayo is the only child of Yolanda Pinares, a talented contemporary Andean music singer who taught him the importance of showing his Quechua identity in a country where racism "is covered up," he says. When he was a child, he says he was bullied at school for being shy and for having a thin complexion, long eyes, straight black hair, and sharp cheekbones.

Indigenous

These traits, he believes, are somewhat similar between Andean youth and South Korean singers, something that has helped K-pop become popular even in remote villages and on the outskirts of Lima, where millions of people with Indigenous roots live.

"Art is a vehicle to move consciences and generate change," said Tamayo, who this week released "Amaru," his debut album in digital format. "Amaru" means snake in Quechua, a word that is tied to the history, lyrics, music, mythology of the Incas and modern sounds.

In a preview video for "Amaru," policemen are seen beating protesters carrying a Peruvian flag and then chasing a woman who escapes through an Andean forest. The scene evokes a fresh memory of the recent citizen protests demanding the resignation of President Dina Boluarte that have left 67 dead, the majority of whom are of Indig-

enous origin.

Like thousands of Peruvians, Tamayo participated in the protests at the beginning of the year in the capital.

"It's very important to make this type of music because it allows you to generate change and generate hope in young people," he said.

Also:

SEOUL, South Korea: A day after a powerful tropical storm flooded dozens of homes and turned streets into muddy rivers, South Korea threw a huge K-Pop concert in Seoul for 40,000 Scouts whose global Jamboree was disrupted by the weather.

Friday's concert at a wet soccer stadium featured various performers, including girl groups NewJeans and Ive. The show was quickly put together by government officials as the closing event of the World Scout Jamboree. It came as the country began to clean up and make repairs in the aftermath of the storm, Khanun, which pounded the country's southern and eastern regions with intense rains and winds that forced thousands to evacuate and left at least one person dead after making landfall early Thursday.

Khanun had weakened by the time it arrived in the densely populated Seoul metropolitan area Thursday night, and it blew into North Korea early Friday as a tropical depression.

The Jamboree was held at a coastal campsite before Khanun forced mass relocation efforts to house the Scouts in university dormitories, government and corporate training centers and hotels in the greater Seoul region and nearby areas.

Music

Variety



Robbie Robertson speaks during a press conference for 'Once Were Brothers: Robbie Robertson and The Band' on day one of the Toronto International Film Festival on Thursday, Sept. 5, 2019, in Toronto. Robertson, the lead guitarist and songwriter for The Band, whose classics include 'The Weight,' 'Up on Cripple Creek' and 'The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down,' has died on Aug. 9, at 80, according to a statement from his manager. (AP)

Music

Features

ARABO TIMES

TUESDAY, AUGUST 15, 2023

LOS ANGELES: "Barbie" has legs. Director **Greta Gerwig's** film phenomenon remained a runaway No. 1 at the box office in its fourth week, bringing in \$33.7 million, according to studio estimates Sunday.

The **Margot Robbie**-led and produced film from Warner Bros, still in 4,137 theaters, refused to drop off as most box-office toppers have this year, surpassing \$500 million in **North America** overall a week after it crossed the \$1 billion mark globally - a record for a female director.

The second half of the "Barbenheimer" duo, "Oppenheimer," returned to the No. 2 spot in its own fourth week after a week at No. 3 overall. The **Christopher Nolan**-directed film from Universal Pictures brought in \$18.8 million from 3,761 locations for an overall domestic total of \$264.3 million.

The top pair had thin competition. The week's only major wide release, Universal's "The Last Voyage of the Demeter," finished fifth with a \$6.5 million opening weekend.

"Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: Mutant Mayhem," in its second week, earned \$15.6 million domestically for third place, and the **Jason Statham** shark sequel, "Meg 2: The Trench," brought in \$12.7 million, dropping from second to fifth in its second week in theaters. Like the previous film, it follows a group of scientists who must outrun and outsmart the titular Megalodons when a malevolent mining operation threatens their mission and forces them into a high-stakes battle for survival.

"Barbie" is poised to become 2023's top film. Its \$526.3 million domestic total and \$1.18 billion global bankroll currently sits second behind "The Super Mario Bros. Movie," which earned \$574.2 million North America, and \$1.358 billion globally in the spring. It's also the second-highest grossing film in the history of "Warner Bros.," behind only 2011's "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 2."

The sustained performance of the Mattel movie continues to flip the script on what had been a weak year in theaters, with major

'This film should be played loud!' Revisit 'The Last Waltz' with Robertson

By Scott Bauer

'This film should be played loud!'

Those words, emblazoned across the screen at the start of the seminal rock documentary "The Last Waltz," made quite an impression on me as a teenager first discovering The Band and Robbie Robertson.

Born too late to experience the music when it was first released - I was 6 when "The Last Waltz" came out in 1978 - I got hooked on Robertson and The Band thanks to my older brother. He recorded their greatest hits from vinyl onto a TDK D-90 cassette and I was on the bus.

When my friends were listening to Van Halen and Michael Jackson in the early 1980s, I was listening to The Band and Bob Dylan. I first saw "The Last Waltz" when it aired on public TV, my only option in the pre-internet and even pre-VCR (at least for my family) entertainment stone age.

The film drew me in immediately, first with those words ordering me to crank it up and then the music. One after another: Muddy Waters. Neil Young. Eric Clapton. Van Morrison. Dylan.

The Band, minus Robertson, who died last week at 80, was the first concert I ever saw at age 13 in 1985. They reformed after "The Last Waltz" and toured for years, but never again with Robertson. When I saw them, they opened for Crosby, Stills and Nash. The crowd cheered so loud for The Band, they came back for an encore. "That never happens," I remember my brother telling me.

Little could I have imagined that 17 years later I would get the chance to interview Robertson for The Associated Press. It was a dream assignment: write a story about "The Last Waltz" being released on - wait for it - DVD for the first time. Yes, that was a big enough deal to warrant an entire story - perhaps nudged along by me.

"This movie's about the music," Robertson told me in his signature, raspy voice. "We are never, ever

going to see these kind of people all together at one time again. I really want to focus on that. I want to do it beautifully."

I asked him about the demise of The Band and why he called it quits so early.

"I always loved playing music with those guys," Robertson said. "I always loved making records. But it just ran its course. And I felt that we had a wonderful experience and had the opportunity to make some kind of a contribution to music. I'm very grateful for what we were able to do."

History

I also didn't miss the chance to ask Robertson about the most famous heckle in rock history that he, of course, was there for. It was in 1966 when Robertson and what would soon become The Band were backing Dylan on his infamous tour of Europe where he played electric for the first time. An audience member shouts, "Judas!" at Dylan.

"I don't believe you," Dylan snarled in response. "You're a liar!"

Then someone on stage, maybe Dylan, perhaps Robertson, calls on the band to "play ...

loud." What follows is the most incendiary version of "Like a Rolling Stone" Dylan likely ever performed.

I asked Robertson if he remembered who encouraged the band to kick it up a notch, a long-debated question among Dylanologists.

With a slight pause, briefly getting my hopes up, he said flatly, "No, I don't."

In my mind I was shouting "I don't believe you! You're a liar!" But I held it together.

Momentarily crushed that a rock history scoop eluded me, I pressed on for his memories of that night.

"I don't remember if that was me or one of us just kind of lashing out. I don't know," he said. "By the time we got to this part of that tour we had been booed all over United States and Canada and Aus-

tralia and all over Europe. It wasn't like our skins hadn't gotten a little thicker and we hadn't built some character by then."

He said he had the CD of the concert at home, but he hadn't bothered to open it.

How cool is that?

No one is more cool than Robertson in "The Last Waltz."

Filed on Thanksgiving in 1976, viewing the film has become a bit of an annual holiday tradition for many. In Madison where I live and in other cities across the country, musicians gather every year to recreate the concert live Thanksgiving week. And many fans, myself included, play the movie every year around the holiday. It's my musical comfort food.

But now, with Robertson's death, the last remaining original member of The Band is Garth Hudson, the multi-instrumentalist who famously made the other members pay him as a music teacher in order to make his move into the rock world more respectable to his family. Many of the others who graced the stage that night are long gone. But the music. Oh man, the music never dies. If anything, with each passing year, and each death, it somehow becomes more alive, more present, more powerful and more moving.

"This film should be played loud!"

No problem.

Also:

LOS ANGELES: Hip-hop's 50th anniversary will be celebrated by Netflix with the four-part docuseries "Ladies First: A Story of Women in Hip-Hop." Each episode will feature a mix of classic MCs including **Queen Latifah, Sha Rock, Remy Ma, Yo-Yo, Roxanne Shante, MC Lyte, Da Brat, Monie Love, Bahamadia** and **Rah Digga** mixed with some of the hottest artists of today, such as **Latto, Saweetie, Coi Leray, Chika, Rapsody, Kash Doll** and **Tierra Whack**, as well as commentary from journalists, record label executives and stylists. It starts Wednesday. (AP)

sequels underperforming including "Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny" and "Mission: Impossible - Dead Reckoning Part I," which remained in the top 10 this week with \$4.7 million.

"Barbie" is as hot a commodity as it was in its first week. It's just ensconced at the No. 1 spot, and I don't know if it's



Washington



Statham

going anywhere soon," said **Paul Dergarabedian**, senior media analyst for Comscore. "And Oppenheimer right there with it. They're just drafting off each other in this box office NASCAR race."

The midsummer "Barbenheimer" put the industry-wide summer total ahead of 2022. It was lagging

behind just a month ago.

"If you think of what 'Barbie' and 'Oppenheimer' together - just those two movies - have contributed in these weekends at the box office, it's really a staggering number," Dergarabedian said.

All movies combined this summer have earned \$3.63 billion in North America. With significant

releases remaining in August, including DC Comics' "Blue Beetle," "Oppenheimer" together - just the video game adaptation "Gran Turismo," and the **Denzel Washington** sequel "The Equalizer 3," the box office has a chance of reaching the \$4 billion that was considered a domestic benchmark for a strong summer before the pandemic. (AP)

People & Places

Books

'Disobedient' inspiring

Thrilling crime saga in 'Dead and Gone'

'Dead and Gone,' by Joanna Schaffhausen (Minotaur)

A private eye named Sam Tran is dead, hanged from a tree in a local cemetery, and Chicago P.D. Detective Annalisa Vega catches the case. Tran was once on the job himself, but as it turns out, that's not the only reason the case is fraught.

Vega figures the death is most likely related to a case Tran had been working on, of which there were three. Two are cold cases: A young woman had hired him to discover what happened to her mother, who disappeared more than 30 years ago; and a man had hired him to figure out who killed his cheating wife and her lover in a motel room more than 20 years ago.

However, the third case makes things more than a little awkward for Vega. Her brother Vincent had hired Tran to catch a mysterious stalker who had been harassing his daughter Quinn and other female students on their college campus. Unsurprisingly, Vega's first priority is protecting Quinn. This proves problematic since the college is located outside of the Chicago P.D.s jurisdiction.



Schaffhausen

Meanwhile, Det. Vega and her partner Nick Carelli, who also happens to be her ex-husband, are frequently distracted by the need to catch the Chicken Bandit, a violent creep in a chicken mask who is on a convenience-store robbery spree.

'Dead and Gone' is Joanna Schaffhausen's eighth crime novel — and the third featuring Vega. In it, the author keeps readers guessing by offering a multitude of suspects for the stalking case, both cold cases, and the murder of Tran. Eventually she brings all four to a successful conclusion. For good measure, she and her partner nail the Chicken Bandit as well.

Readers of this fine series already know that Vega is not trusted by her colleagues because she once turned in her own father, a retired Chicago cop, for covering up a long-ago murder by another family member. As in every Schaffhausen novel, the suspenseful plot is combined with a thoughtful treatment of family tensions and the toll police work takes on a dedicated officer. The characters, including the many stalking suspects, are well drawn, and the prose is tight and vivid.

By the end of the story, Vega is mentally exhausted, doubting whether she is cut out for police work. This leaves readers wondering what the author has in mind for her next.

□ □ □

'Disobedient' by Elizabeth Fremantle (Pegasus Books)

Artemisia Gentileschi's painting skills quickly surpass her father's, but society dictates that as a woman, she must stay home and protect her virtue. Art — with its unsavory types and naked models — isn't exactly fit for a good Roman Catholic girl. And when her painting tutor attacks her, it sets off a cascade of seemingly insurmountable problems and impossible choices.

Author Elizabeth Fremantle deftly paints Artemisia's painful but inspiring story in her latest biographical fiction, 'Disobedient.' Having already established herself as a writer who champions powerful female leads, Fremantle fleshes out the 17th-century artist who defied the limits placed upon her and became one of the best painters of the Baroque period.

The book starts off with a magical rendition of Artemisia's childhood, the day she witnesses a beheading. It's thrilling and wonderful to see the world from the eyes of 6-year-old Artemisia to open the story before pivoting to 1611 Rome.

This is the year Artemisia gains her first commissions. It's also when renowned painter Agostino Tassi rapes her.

And be warned: The scene is truly horrific. The chapter is heartpoundingly tense, sickening, nightmarish. Each word rings disturbingly true, Artemisia's thoughts tragically relatable — at first of how to escape or fight, then of how to cope. Beyond the trauma of the assault, Artemisia faces backlash from the community. Her tarnished reputation could spell ruin for her aging father and her young brothers. Marrying her attacker might be the only way to remedy the situation.

'Disobedient' plows forward with an unstoppable force. It would be easy to dry out a historical fiction like this into arid oblivion, or to saturate it beyond fancy and into falsity, but Fremantle strikes an excellent balance that feels like you're actually there, watching the Gentileschi family's real struggles and triumphs play out.

The attention to detail — so necessary in a narrative filled with painters — is absolutely engrossing and doesn't let you forget for a moment that this is 17th-century Rome. And the clever chapter names, many with double meanings, share the dark humor of the main character.

'Disobedient' proves the perfect title for the book, which rings the motif repeatedly, layering meaning onto the word like oils on canvas until it takes a dynamic shape and an entirely new image emerges.

In Fremantle's version of the story, the women of the paintings are not merely things to be ogled at; their stories are told in translated interludes. The paintings are evaluated through a feminist lens that acknowledges the artist's experiences and the effect those must have had on their works.

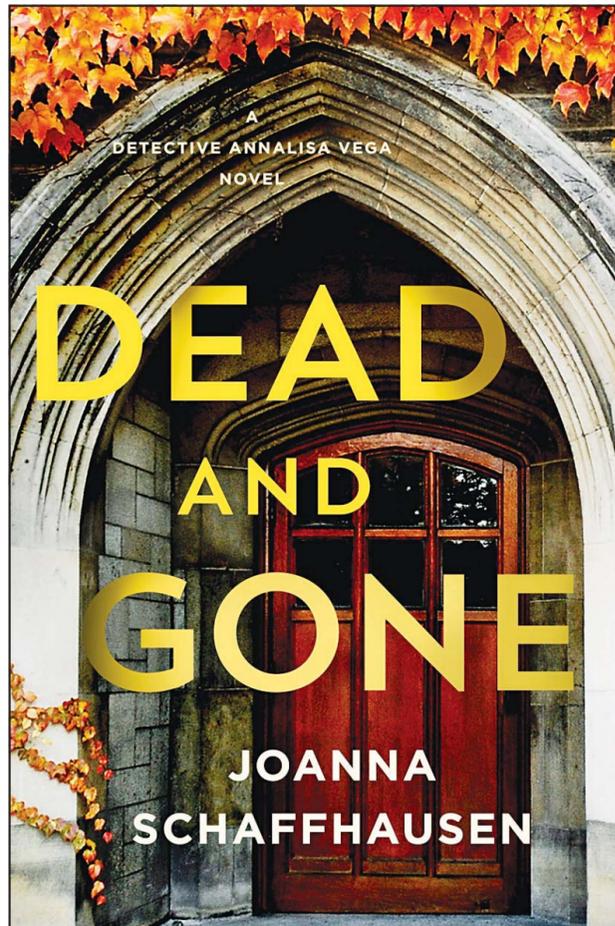
'Disobedient' was everything I'd hoped for and so much more. Fremantle has immense talent and tells the story of an amazing and inspiring woman with wit and certainty.

Also:

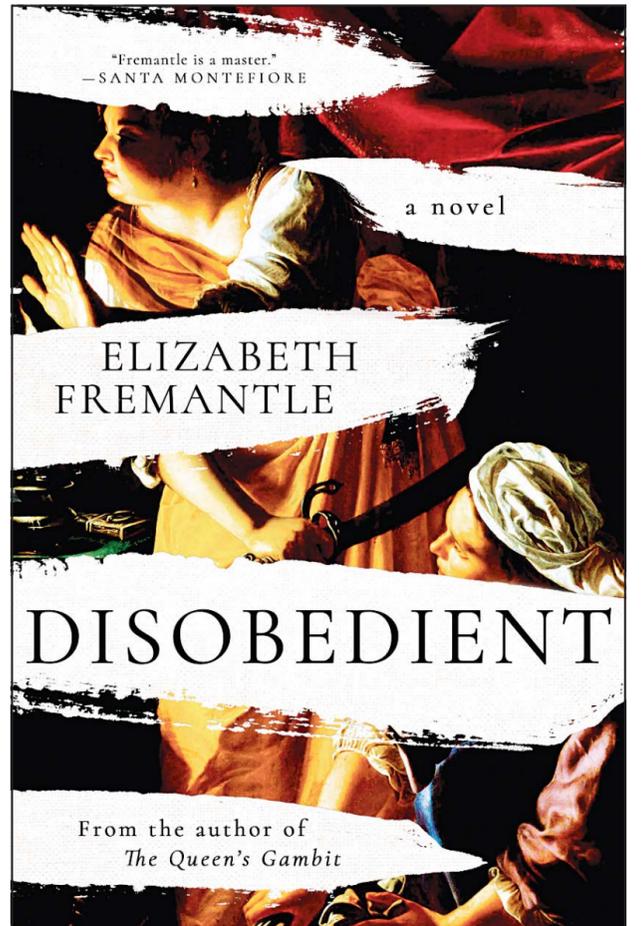
NEW YORK: With apologies to Nathaniel Hawthorne and admirers of 'The Scarlet Letter,' Dav Pilkey has a shameless name for the next installment of his multi-million selling 'Dog Man' children's books series about a canine superhero: 'Dog Man: The Scarlet Shedder,' to be published March 19.

Woof. 'Dog Man started out as a character I created when I was in second grade, but the series has evolved into a love letter to my parents,' Pilkey said in a statement released Thursday by Scholastic. 'Looking back as a kid growing up with dyslexia and ADHD, my parents, who were my best advocates, let me choose whatever books I wanted to read - with no judgment. Their support and love was life-changing and helped me to become the reader, author, and illustrator that I am today.'

Previous 'Dog Man' titles, or pet names, include 'Dog Man: A Tale of Two Kitties,' 'Dog Man: Lord of the Fleas' and 'Dog Man: For Whom the Ball Rolls.' Pilkey's series has been adapted into a stage musical and a film version is planned. (AP)



This cover image released by Minotaur shows 'Dead and Gone' by Joanna Schaffhausen. (AP)



This cover image released by Pegasus Books shows 'Disobedient' by Elizabeth Fremantle. (AP)



This image provided by Reprise Records shows the cover of Neil Young's record 'Chrome Dreams,' featuring artwork by Ronnie Wood. (AP)



Groeneveld



Capella

Variety

JAKARTA, Indonesia: The Miss Universe Organization has cut its ties with its Indonesian franchisee and will cancel an upcoming pageant in Malaysia after contestants complained to police, accusing local organizers of sexual harassment.

The New York-based organization said in a statement late Saturday it had decided to sever ties with PT Capella Swastika Karya, and its National Director, Poppy Capella.

Six contestants of a Miss Universe Indonesia pageant recently filed complaints with police, accusing local organizers of asking them to strip to their underwear for "body checks" for scars or cellulite, in a room with about two dozen people present, including men. Five of the contestants said they were then photographed.

"In light of what we have learned took place at Miss Universe Indonesia, it has become clear that this franchise has not lived up to our brand standards and ethics," the Miss Universe Organization said on the social media site X, formerly known as Twitter.

The organization also said it would be cancelling this year's Miss Universe Malaysia as the Indonesian franchisee also holds the license for the pageant. It said it would make arrangements for the Indonesia 2023 title holder to compete in Miss Universe pageant to be held in El Salvador late this year.

The Miss Universe Indonesia pageant was held from July 29 to Aug. 3 to choose Indonesia's representative to the 2023 Miss Universe contest, and was won by Fabienne Nicole Groeneveld.

PT Capella Swastika Karya is an Indonesian beauty company which took over the license for Miss Universe Indonesia in March from Yayasan Putri Indonesia or YPI, an Indonesian foundation that held the license for 30 years.

The company founder, Poppy Capella, denied her involvement in the physical examination during the contest and said that she is against any kind of "violence and sexual harassment."

"I, as the National Director and as the owner of the Miss Universe Indonesia license, was not involved at all and have never known, ordered, requested or allowed anyone who played a role and participated in the Miss Universe Indonesia 2023 process to commit violence or sexual harassment through body checking," she posted on social media late Saturday.

Hengki Haryadi, the Jakarta police director for general crimes, said Sunday

Music

Petras makes Eurodance-pop in major-label debut

'Dreams' captures Young in his prime

LOS ANGELES, Aug. 14, (AP) — Neil Young is captured in his mid-1970s prime with "Chrome Dreams," yet another "lost" - or "unreleased" - album officially seeing the light of day as Young originally envisioned nearly half a century ago.

Young, 77, has been delving into his vast archive in recent years to release live albums and studio recordings that were previously slated for release, but for one reason or another never got out.

The long-bootlegged collection of 12 songs, all recorded between 1974 and 1976 and first compiled for a release in 1977, gained legendary status as it sat in the vault. Young even managed to release a titular sequel, "Chrome Dreams II" in 2007, before he got around to putting out the original.

It's impossible 46 years later to know how "Chrome Dreams" would have altered the Neil Young career narrative had it been released when planned. Certainly, "Chrome Dreams" is a stunning collection, highlighted by beloved Young songs "Powderfinger," "Pocahontas" and "Like a Hurricane."

In fact, all of the songs on the album have already been released in one version or another, just not in this 1977 sequence.

There are variations here being heard for the first time, but for diehard fans hoping to hear radically different versions of the songs they've long been familiar with, "Chrome Dreams" doesn't offer much.

"Pocahontas" is the same version that was released in 1979 on "Rust Never Sleeps," just minus the overdubs. "Like a Hurricane" is the same version released in 1977 on "American Stars 'n Bars." The version of "Powderfinger" on "Chrome Dreams" is the original, which was previously

released in 2017. Young first released another version of the song in 1979 on "Rust Never Sleeps."

Two other tracks, "Sedan Delivery" and "Hold Back the Tears," have lyrics not included in the later released versions.

While there's not a lot that's new, "Chrome Dreams" succeeds in bringing together yet another tantalizing lost "what if" release from Young's vast catalog.

Better late than never, and surely worth the wait: Fifteen years after launching her music career, the German singer Kim Petras has released a glossy, full-length major-label debut, filled with Eurodance and trance-informed pop music.

Not to say that the delay was her fault, or that she hasn't been hard at work. This year, Petras became the first openly trans artists to win in a major category at the Grammy Awards for her playfully sacrilegious collaboration with Sam Smith, "Unholy," in the best pop duo/group performance category. The same song, re-released as a bonus track on "Feed the Beast," went No. 1 on the Billboard Hot 100, making her the first trans artist ever occupy the top spot.

So why the postponement? In 2021, after signing to major label Republic Records, Petras recorded a debut LP titled "Problematic" — but it was scrapped, and ultimately, leaked. In the interim, she reimagined herself a student of Eurodance and '90s house music. The lead single "Alone," featuring a punchy verse from rapper Nicki Minaj, is the exemplar: She samples the 1999 Alice Deejay hit "Better Off Alone," appealing to Y2K cultural nostalgia for vocal trance and neon nightlife.

Throughout "Feed the Beast," Petras demonstrates a deep understanding of the many nuances of hi-hat-heavy, club-ready anthems. Even the slow burn "Thousand Pieces" is recorded over a trap beat, a far cry from, say, the industrial-noise-pop of "brrr." As Petras sings on "uhoh," "Everything I drop is a banger."

At the center of "Feed the Beast" are two sex-positive synth-pop stompers: "Sex Talk" and "Hit It From The Back," tracks that strike like an R-rated take on Katy Perry's "Teenage Dream" era — up-tempo pop tunes meant to earworm their way into the listener's heart and transgress in equal measure.

The influence of Perry appears again on the campy "Coconuts," a summery ode to her chest. That's likely because much of "Feed the Beast" was produced by Dr. Luke, as was the case with "Teenage Dream."

It is worth noting that Luke's long-standing legal battle with singer Kesha over allegations of rape and, in turn, allegations of defamation finally settled in court last week following nearly a decade of lawsuits and countersuits. According to Vulture, in 2022, Petras tweeted in response to a fan asking her to "stop defending Dr. Luke" by writing, "I have nothing to say or be ashamed of at all." She deleted the tweets.

Beyond those complications, and for all the fun and flirtiness of "Feed the Beast," there is a subtle restraint. Electric songs ripe for the dance floor burn bright and fast — a sprint, not a marathon — and lack the kind of edge listeners have come to expect from Petras. Where are the explicit, breathy harmonies of 2022's "Slut Pop" EP? The Madonna-worship of "Broken" from 2021's "Do Me"? Her entertaining hedonism persists, to be sure, but how long will it resonate?

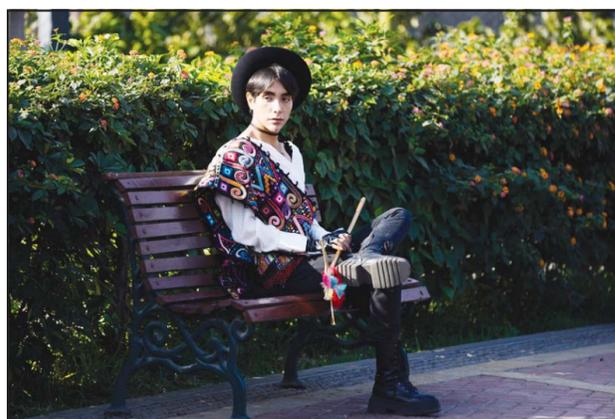
that during a Miss Universe Indonesia pageant held in the capital, Jakarta, from July 29 to Aug. 3, the victims were forced to remove their clothes and were photographed for physical examination in a hotel ballroom. (AP)

TUCSON, Ariz: Like a scene out of a horror movie, Michelle Lespron

returned to her Tucson, Arizona, home to find a snake had set up camp in her toilet.

"I'd been gone for four days and was looking forward to using my own restroom in peace. I lifted up the lid and he or she was curled up," Lespron told The Associated Press. "Thank God the lid was closed."

The hiss-sterical encounter happened



Peruvian singer Lenin Tamayo takes a break while recording a music video in downtown Lima, Peru, Thursday, Aug. 3. With his fusion of K-pop and Andean culture, the 23-year-old composer is known as the inventor of Quechua pop or Q-pop, writing songs in Spanish and Quechua. (AP) — Details Page 11

July 15. But Lespron has been getting messages from family, friends and even people she went to high school with since Rattlesnake Solutions, a Phoenix-based company that removed the snake, recently posted an employee's video.

The 20-second video shows the snake being pulled out of the toilet bowl and then hissing straight at the camera.

"Everybody has the same reaction: Oh my god that's my worst nightmare," she said.

Other people thought it was a prank video and the snake was a prop. "Even my law partner was like 'Ha ha. Nice gag,'" Lespron, a personal injury attorney, said.

Lespron says her father tried to wrangle the snake that same night but it slithered away. So, she called Rattlesnake Solutions the next morning.

It took the handler - who Lespron calls "my hero" - three tries to get the black and pink coachwhip snake firmly in his grasp. He was able to wrestle the snake with one hand while capturing it all on his cellphone with the other.

The handler later released the snake, which measured between 3 feet (1 meter) and 4 feet (1.2 meters) long, in a natural habitat elsewhere.

Bryan Hughes, the owner of Rattlesnake Solutions, said it wasn't the first time his staff have seen a coachwhip snake in a home though it's rare to find reptiles in residences.

Fortunately for Lespron, the species is non-venomous. Still, she was taking no chances. (AP)

Climate

Race to save reefs

Record ocean warming harming Fla coral reef

LAYTON, Fla., Aug 14, (AP): Steps away from the warming waters of Florida Bay, marine biologist **Emily Becker** removed covers from the dozens of water-filled tanks under her watchful eye. Nestled in seawater carefully maintained at about 85 degrees Fahrenheit (29 degrees Celsius) lay hundreds of pieces of coral - some a sickly white from the bleaching that threatens to kill them, others recovered to a healthy bright iodine in color.

As Becker looked over the coral, crews of reef rescue groups arrived in trucks carrying more - brought up by divers in a massive effort aimed at saving the coral from an ocean that is cooking it alive.



Becker

"People jumped into action really quickly, as best as they could," Becker said, wiping sweat from her brow.

Up and down the chain of islands that form the Florida Keys, coral rescue groups and government and academic institutions have mobilized to save the coral from a historic bleaching event that experts say threatens the viability of the third-largest reef tract in the world. They've been working long days and weekends in blistering heat for weeks to get as many specimens as they can onto land amid reports of some reef tracts experiencing near total mortality.

In mid-July, water surface temperatures averaged about 91 degrees (33 Celsius) off the lower Florida Keys, well above the average of 85 degrees (29.5 Celsius), according to National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration reports.

The hot water resulted in nearly 100% bleaching along portions of the reef, causing the corals to lose their zooxanthellae, the algae that gives them color and nourishment. If they don't recover their zooxanthellae, they will ultimately die.

"We're already seeing not just bleaching, but actual coral death out on the reef because the temperatures were so hot," said Cynthia Lewis, director of the Keys Marine Lab, a research institute on the island of Long Key, some 100 miles (160 kilometers) south of Miami, where rescue groups have already brought more than 1,500 pieces of coral. "And we can't afford to lose more of our reef."

Bleaching

Coral bleaching occurs naturally when waters warm significantly, including in 2016 in the Keys. But Lewis said the current situation is urgent for coral, which is vital to Florida's economy, coastal protection and marine life.

The corals "don't have a lot of time," she said. "They're literally sitting, stewing in the water out there in these hot, hot temperatures."

A string of recent overcast and rainy days helped drop water temperatures slightly. But it will likely be late October or November before the coral samples can be returned to the reef, Lewis said.

What's at stake?

The Florida Coral Reef is the world's third-largest, extending about 350 miles (563 kilometers) from the Dry Tortugas in the Gulf of Mexico to St. Lucie Inlet, some 115 miles (185 kilometers) north of Miami.

The reef is a first line of defense against erosion and flooding from hurricanes and tropical storms, Lewis said. It helps support commercial fishing and a thriving tourism industry, from snorkeling and scuba diving to recreational fishing. And they nurture "such an amazing amount of diversity and life" in the ocean around them, she said.

"In a normal situation, they're like the rainforests of the ocean," Lewis said. "They're incredibly important."

The world's oceans have been record-setting hot since April, with scientists citing climate change from the burning of coal, oil and natural gas along with a boost from El Nino, a natural warming of parts of the Pacific that changes weather worldwide and generally heats the planet.

The bleaching occurred rapidly as the water temperature rose in July.

"We got kicked in the teeth because if happened so fast in the Lower Keys. I mean, within a week," said Michael Echevarria, president of the nonprofit Reef Renewal USA.

Reef Renewal was among those who initially worked to move endangered coral into land-based facilities. More recently, they've worked to save coral in several of their own underwater nurseries in shallower water by moving them to deeper, cooler water, where they hang pieces of coral from tree-like structures.

Reef Renewal founder Ken Nedimyer called the coral bleaching "hard to watch and hard to experience" and said his group knew that coral stress would increase under climate change, but didn't think it would come so soon.

"There's a lot of people that think this isn't real, that climate change is not real, and that the world is not warming up. And I don't care what they say, it's real. I'm living it right now and I've lived down here and done this for a long time," he said. "And I've never seen this."

Stressed

Back at the Keys Marine Lab in Layton, the collected pieces of coral are placed in cooling trays set up on tables that hold between 40 and 400 gallons of seawater. The 85-degree water (29 degrees Celsius) makes for "much happier coral," Becker said.

"We've seen some coral that have been really stressed offshore, come back into our tables and recover already," she said. "They're already getting color back. So that's really encouraging to see that."

The work goes beyond saving the coral. Becker and others are studying different types of coral to see which ones survive temperature stress and disease better, hoping to "build a better reef with more resilient corals," she said. Scientists from the University of Miami have established a restoration research site off of Key Biscayne to do such work.

Jamison Gove, co-author of a new article in Nature about how Hawaii coral reefs weathered a 2015 marine heat wave that pushed ocean temperatures to their highest levels in 120 years of record-keeping, said his research suggests some corals off Florida may survive better than others depending on the health of local fish populations and runoff from land.

The Honolulu-based research oceanographer with NOAA said reefs that rebounded best after Hawaii's heat wave were those that had both the most fish and the least exposure to sewage from cesspools and septic systems.

But he said local management measures won't save reefs if people don't cut greenhouse gas emissions.

The effort to save Florida's coral is appreciated by Jennifer Cullen, manager of Rain Barrel Village, a souvenir shop in nearby Islamorada.

"I'm worried about the coral. I'm worried about tourism, worried about stronger hurricanes, because we've already had Hurricane Irma, which was devastating for the Keys and tourism," Cullen said. "It was a very long recovery, and I don't know how much more of that we can take."



University of Miami Rosenstiel School of Marine, Atmospheric, and Earth Science senior research associate Dalton Hesley cements coral fragments to the reef, Friday, Aug. 4, on Paradise Reef near Key Biscayne, Fla. Scientists from the University of Miami Rosenstiel School of Marine, Atmospheric, and Earth Science established a new restoration research site there to identify and better understand the heat tolerance of certain coral species and genotypes during bleaching events. (AP)



This March 16, 2023, photo provided by the city of Reedley, Calif., shows a biolab warehouse where a city inspector found three Chinese women wearing lab coats, plastic gloves and blue surgical masks. The lab, owned by Prestige Biotech Inc., a company registered in Las Vegas, produced pregnancy and COVID-19 tests, and had been operating in Reedley without registering with the city since October 2022, officials said. (AP)



DeSantis



Cook

Discovery

Rescued walrus calf dies: A walrus calf found on its own miles from the ocean on Alaska's North Slope last week and who received cuddles as part of his care after being rescued died on Friday.

"While often rewarding, wildlife rescue is inherently unpredictable and comes with it the possibility of great loss. For those that dedicate their lives to animal care, this is the hardest part of the job," the Alaska SeaLife Center, the nonprofit research facility and public aquarium that was caring for him, said in a statement online.

The Pacific walrus calf, taken in by the center on Aug 1 after being found by oil field workers a day earlier, was struggling with a number of health issues, such as nutrient malabsorption. In the day before his death, he faced other complications, such as hypoglycemia and gastrointestinal problems, the center said.

"Though our animal care teams worked tirelessly to provide round-the-clock critical care treatments, never leaving his side, the calf ultimately succumbed to his condition," the center said. A necropsy is planned.

The brown, wrinkly-skinned baby was believed to be about one-month old. The center last week said that in an effort to mimic the near-constant care a calf would get from its mom, the walrus was receiving "round the clock 'cuddling'" to keep him calm and to aid in his development. (AP)

3 hunters dead: A Texas sheriff said that three hunters from Florida died in an underground tank filled with sewer gas after one of them apparently tried rescuing their dog after it fell into the hole, followed by the other two jumping in to save them.

The bodies of two men and a woman, as well as the dog, were pulled from the tank in a cornfield on the rural outskirts of Austin. Bastrop County Sheriff **Maurice Cook** said the hole was a cistern with an opening roughly 4 feet (1.2 meters) wide and containing 8 feet (2.4 meters) of water, as well as hydrogen sulfide gas.

He said the chain of events started early Wednesday in the middle of the night with one of the men apparently getting into the cistern to rescue the dog, which he described as a bloodhound. Clothing and boots belonging to the other two hunters were found near the hole, suggesting they removed them before also jumping in, Cook said.

The Conversation

Heart disease accounts for 32% of global deaths

'Ghost hearts' work to solve organ shortage

By Doris Taylor

University of New Hampshire

The Conversation is an independent and nonprofit source of news, analysis and commentary from academic experts.

Heat disease is the leading cause of death worldwide. The World Health Organization estimates that 17.9 million people lose their lives to it each year, accounting for 32% of global deaths.

Doris Taylor is a scientist working in regenerative medicine and tissue engineering. Her work has focused on creating personalized functioning human hearts in a lab that could rule out the need for donors. Taylor has dubbed these hearts "ghost hearts."

In March, Taylor spoke at the 2023 Imagine Solutions Conference in Naples, Florida, about the ghost heart and her journey to creating it. Below are edited answers to questions from The Conversation. Taylor is also featured on Guy Kawasaki's Remarkable People podcast.

Currently, patients in need of a heart transplant need to join a waitlist, and hearts become available when someone else has died. Because there are not enough hearts to go around, only the very sick are put on the waitlist. The U.S. transplants about 11 hearts a day, and on a given day there are more than 3,000 people waiting for a heart.

Even when organs are successfully transplanted, it isn't a Hollywood fairy-tale ending. A person receiving an organ transplant essentially trades one disease for other medical complications and diseases. Toxic drugs necessary to prevent rejection can cause high blood pressure, diabetes, cancer and kidney failure. These are serious medical issues that also affect people emotionally, financially and physically.

About 18% of people die in the first year after a transplant. The ghost heart is a heart whose cells have been removed. All that remains is the heart framework, or scaffolding. It's called a ghost heart because removing the cells causes the heart to turn from red to white. A human heart wouldn't work as a scaffold because so few are available to work with.

So my team and I went with the next best thing: a pig heart. Pig hearts are similar to human hearts in terms of their size and structure. Both have four chambers - two atria and two ventricles - responsible for pumping blood. And structures from pig hearts such as valves have been used in humans safely.

To remove the cells, the pig heart is gently washed through its blood vessels with a mild detergent to remove the cells. This process is called perfusion decellularization. The cell-free heart can then be seeded with new cells - in this case, a patient's cells - thus forming a personalized heart.

If you lined up the cells needed for an average-size 350-gram human heart, they would stretch for 41,000 miles. Stacked on top of one another, they would amount to 2 billion lines of cells, or enough to fill seven movie screens. But heart cells don't divide. If they did, hearts could likely repair themselves.

Method

Stem cells, on the other hand, do divide. They can also form into specialized cells - in this case, heart cells. Nobel Prize laureate Dr. Shinya Yamanaka discovered a method to make stem cells out of blood or skin cells from an adult. My team and I employed this method to obtain stem cells, then grew those cells into billions. After that, the team used chemicals to "differentiate" them into heart cells. We employed this method to obtain billions and billions of heart cells.

The first time I saw heart cells beating in a dish it was life-changing. But while the cells are alive and beat, they are not a heart. To be a heart, these cells need to be placed into a form that lets them become a unified organ, to mature and to be able to pump blood. In a human body, this happens during development; we had to reproduce that capacity in the lab.

Let me be clear: Any heart is better than no heart. And xenotransplantation - the process by which nonhuman animal organs are transplanted into humans - opened doors for all scientists in this field.

The patient received a pig heart that had been gene-edited. Human genes were added, and some pig genes were removed, but the heart still essentially comprised pig cells within a pig scaffold. As a result, the individual had to take anti-rejection drugs that suppressed the immune system. And, unbeknownst to doctors, the heart was carrying a pig virus that ultimately killed the patient two months following the transplant.

avoided with the ghost heart. My team removes the pig cellular material from the scaffold, leaving only the protein structure and blood vessel channels behind. The proteins are so similar to human scaffold proteins they that don't appear to cause rejection.

My team and I have encountered two major hurdles. The first is the time and cost it takes to grow the cells.

The second is enabling the heart to mature once the cells are delivered into it - all while maintaining sterility in the absence of any antibiotics. My lab and our partners have had to essentially recreate the heart outside of the body and build the equivalent of an artificial human body that provides food, temperature control, oxygen and other nutrients as well as a blood pressure and artificial blood flow - we call it a biocradle - in which to place the heart. We have to train the immature heart cells to work together even as we are coaxing them to grow strong enough to pump blood; figure out how to feed them and get oxygen to them without lungs; and keep them sterile without an immune system. It's a huge endeavor.

I liken it to a symphony in which each section has to come in at just the right time to create a beautiful, complex song - but if one piece isn't ready, the whole thing falls apart. My job is to be the conductor.

Today, organ donation is lagging behind need. Scientists are aiming to change that by increasing the number of donors, making more organs available by rejuvenating those that can't be used and by building new technology - as my team and I are doing with the ghost heart. But it's more than supply and demand. Access is not equal. In fact, organ transplant is a huge health inequity issue. Today, the organ transplant system fails people of color. For example, African Americans have a higher rate of heart failure but are less likely to receive hearts.

As science evolves, scientists have the opportunity to make organs accessible and to deliver organs that don't require expensive toxic drugs. I look forward to that day and work daily to help create it.

Most people know months to years in advance that they need a transplant. In general, the current wait for a heart is about a year for white Americans but longer for African Americans, while the data for Latinos and Asians is less clear. (AP)

I believe these sorts of problems are

He said authorities believe the hunters were overcome by hydrogen sulfide gas in the hole and sank to the bottom.

"There was no cover. This was just an open hole in the middle of a cornfield," Cook said.



In this photo provided by the Alaska SeaLife Center, a Pacific walrus pup rests his head on the lap of a staff member after being admitted to the center's Wildlife Response Program in Seward, Alaska, on Aug. 1. A walrus calf found on its own miles from the ocean on Alaska's North Slope last week and who received cuddles as part of his care after being rescued died on Friday, Aug. 11. (AP)

The victims were identified as Delyvs Garcia, 37; Denise Martinez, 26; and Noel Vigil-Benitez, 45. All were from Florida. Governor of Florida is **Ron DeSantis**. (AP)

Man cited for animal neglect: A man was cited for animal neglect after his dog died from heat-related issues while on a hike in north Phoenix, according to authorities.

Phoenix police didn't immediately release the name of the 29-year-old man, but said he was "issued a citation in lieu of detention" for neglect of animals.

They said the hiker called 911 around 11 a.m. Wednesday to say he and his two dogs were experiencing heat-related issues on the Priestewa Peak mountain trail.

Phoenix Fire Department crews located the hiker some 300 yards from the trailhead and said one of the man's dogs was dead at the scene.

Firefighters were able to cool down the other dog, who also was in heat distress but survived the hike in triple-digit weather.

In 2016, the city of Phoenix enacted a ban on taking dogs on city hiking trails when temperatures are above 100 degrees (37.8 degrees Celsius). The penalty can include jail time and fines up to \$2,500. (AP)

Elliott, pole-winner Suarez complete podium

McDowell dominates Brickyard 200 for 2nd NASCAR crown jewel victory

INDIANAPOLIS, Aug. 14, (AP) — Michael McDowell knelt down at Indianapolis Motor Speedway's yard of bricks and delivered the sweetest kisses of his racing career Sunday.

The 38-year-old Arizona driver became a Brickyard champ — and a member of an elite club.

McDowell inherited the lead on Lap 53 and never trailed again as he drove the most dominant race of his career, beating Chase Elliott to the yard of bricks by 0.937 seconds for his second NASCAR crown jewel victory while securing a playoff spot. Pole-winner Daniel Suarez was third.

McDowell's only other win was the 2021 Daytona 500.

"That's a big deal," he said when asked about his second playoff appearance in three years. "When we won the Daytona 500, that was one of the coolest moments we ever had. We cherry pick the races, my family comes to the ones we think we can win, and we thought we could win this one." As a result, McDowell's wife and children also celebrated by kissing the bricks after his 453rd career Cup start. They weren't at Daytona for his first win.

While his first win came by navigating traffic following a crash at Daytona, there was no doubt Sunday. McDowell won the first stage, finished behind only Denny Hamlin in Stage 2 and closed it out by leading a career-high 54 laps to give Front Row Motor-

sports its fourth Cup win.

McDowell's victory put him on the short list of Cup drivers to reach victory lane at Daytona and Indy, a list that includes names such as the late Dale Earnhardt, Jeff Gordon, Kevin Harvick, Jimmie Johnson and Dale Jarrett, who introduced the kissing tradition.

And on the annual crossover weekend with the IndyCar Series, McDowell also fittingly joined two of IndyCar's greatest drivers on the list — Mario Andretti and A.J. Foyt, the only winners of the Daytona 500 and Indianapolis 500.

CAR RACING

The significance struck McDowell almost immediately as he finished the 82-lap race on Indy's 14-turn, 2.439-mile road course.

"We did it, we won Indy," he shouted into the radio. "We had the fastest car. I don't know if it was dominant, but it felt dominant." Elliott, the 2020 series champion, spent the final 20 laps trying to chase McDowell. He trimmed the deficit from nearly three seconds to less than one but couldn't close enough to mount a charge.

So he settled for a runner-up finish that gave him some extra points — but not the playoff-clinching win. He'll have two more chances to as the regular season winds to a close.

Suarez also spent most of the after-

noon up front in a race that had only one yellow flag and 77 laps of green flag racing. He finished 5.75 seconds behind McDowell, the byproduct of a hose getting caught underneath the car's left front tire during a pit stop.

Defending champion Tyler Reddick and Alex Bowman, who also is fighting to make the playoffs, finished fourth and fifth.

Shane van Gisbergen finished 10th in his second career start, failing to become the first Cup driver to win his first two career starts. Van Gisbergen won in his NASCAR debut in the inaugural Chicago race last month but had a more challenging weekend running his first oval in Friday's truck race and contending with a field of drivers who have years of data regarding Indy's course.

"Oh, it's aggressive," the New Zealander said. "It was fine. I really enjoyed it. You make a move on someone and that gives you the room and then they expect it back, so really cool." McDowell felt the same way for a very different reason.

"After winning the Daytona 500, there aren't many things that can top that but this was a close second," he said. "To have it all come together, it's super special." Kyle Larson's late-night arrival after winning the Knoxville Nationals sprint car race Saturday in Iowa, didn't make any difference to the 2021 series champ. He still made it to a scheduled news conference before noon to unveil



Michael McDowell poses with the trophy after winning the NASCAR Cup Series auto race at Indianapolis Motor Speedway in Indianapolis. (AP)

Arrow McLaren's No. 17 car for next May's Indianapolis 500.

Larson is scheduled to attempt the

double and the two cars will feature familiar colors — the traditional blue-and-white paint scheme with a touch

of papaya for the 600-mile Charlotte race and papaya, blue and white for the McLaren team.

Mullins robs homer in 9th, goes deep in 10th as Orioles 'hold off' Mariners

Mets avoid falling into last place in NL East

SEATTLE, Aug. 14, (AP) — Cedric Mullins robbed Ty France of a homer in the ninth inning and hit a two-run homer in the 10th, and the AL-best Baltimore Orioles beat the Seattle Mariners in extra innings for the second straight day, 5-3 on Sunday.

Mullins, who entered in the sixth as a defensive replacement, leaped and reached over the wall in center field to snag France's deep drive off Mike Baumann.



Mullins

Two pitches later, Dominic Canzone hit a 96 mph fastball from Baumann 402 feet to right to tie the game at 3-3.

In the 10th, Mullins hit a long drive just outside the right-field foul pole on a 2-1 pitch from Trent Thornton (0-1) and then, two pitches later, sent a drive over the wall in right to score automatic runner Gunnar Henderson.

Mets 7, Braves 6

In New York, Rafael Ortega had two hits during a six-run fifth inning, and New York beat majors-best Atlanta to avoid falling into last place in the NL East.

The Mets were outscored 3-3 in the first three games of the series.

Kodai Senga (9-6) allowed three runs and whiffed seven in six innings.

Matt Olson pulled the Braves within a run with his major league-leading 43rd homer, a two-run shot in the eighth. Drew Smith got the final out of the eighth and Adam Ottavino worked the ninth for his seventh save.

Marlins 8, Yankees 7

In Miami, Jake Burger's game-ending single capped a five-run, ninth-inning comeback against Clay Holmes and Tommy Kahnle, giving Miami the win over struggling New York.

BASEBALL

The Yankees, who led 7-1 in the sixth inning behind ace Gerrit Cole, dropped five games back of the AL's last wild card berth and are on track to miss the playoffs for the first time since 2016. New York is 3-8-1 in its last 12 series and has lost six straight rubber games of three-game series.

Burger, who had three hits, cut the deficit to 7-2 with an RBI single in the sixth off Cole.

Holmes (4-3), who had given up three runs in 35 games since May 6, allowed Yuli Gurriel's double leading off the ninth. Nick Fortes singled. Jazz Chisholm Jr. walked and Josh Bell hit a one-hopper that bounced off Holmes' glove and went to the third-base side. The reliever gloved the ball and rushed a throw past first for an error as Gurriel and Fortes scored.

Luis Arraez's triple made it 7-7. Kahnle relieved and walked Bryan De La Cruz. Burger then lined a single to left.

Twins 3, Phillies 0

In Philadelphia, Sonny Gray tossed two-hit ball over six shutout innings, reliever Caleb Thielbar pitched out of a bases-loaded jam in the seventh and Jordan Luplow homered to lead Minnesota past Philadelphia.

The AL Central leaders bounced back from a 13-2 loss in the series opener to win the last two games. Gray (6-5) struck out seven and pitched into the sixth inning in his eighth straight start.

Emilio Pagan retired the last two



Washington Nationals starting pitcher Trevor Williams delivers during the first inning of a baseball game against the Oakland Athletics in Washington. (AP)

batters in the eighth and Jhoan Durán worked the ninth for his 21st save.

Angels 2, Astros 1

In Houston, Shohei Ohtani hit his AL-leading 41st homer and Los Angeles beat Houston to avoid a three-game sweep.

Ohtani's first home run since Aug. 3 put the Angels up 2-0 in the sixth inning.

Chase Silseth (4-1) allowed four hits and struck out five in five scoreless innings. Carlos Estévez struck out two in the ninth for his 25th save.

Giants 3, Rangers 2, 10 Innings

In San Francisco, Patrick Bailey hit a two-run homer in the 10th inning and San Francisco overcame a blown save by All-Star Camilo Doval, beating Texas to stop a four-game skid.

The Giants, who struck out a season-high 17 times, had lost six of seven.

Logan Webb was within one out of his second shutout this season when J.P. Martinez doubled on his 107th and final pitch. Martinez was running on Doval's second pitch and scored from second when Ezequiel Duran grounded to shortstop and beat Brandon Crawford's throw for an infield hit.

Duran started the 10th as the automatic runner, advanced on a bloop single by Josh Smith and scored on a balk by Doval (4-3), who blew a save for the fourth time in 37 chances.

Nationals 8, Athletics 7

In Washington, Jeter Downs capped a six-run ninth with an RBI single, and Washington rallied past Oakland to complete a three-game sweep.

Washington has won eight of 11 overall and 12 of its last 14 at home. Rookie Zack Gelof homered twice for majors-worst Oakland, which fell 52 games under .500 (33-85) for the first time since going 54-108 in 1979. The A's were swept for the 16th time this year.

Oakland closer Trevor May loaded the bases with one out in the ninth before allowing Stone Garrett's RBI single and Ildemaro Vargas' sacrifice fly. May exited after walking Riley Adams to reload the bases, and Kirby Sneed (1-1) entered and walked pinch-hitter

Dominic Smith to force in a run that made it 7-5.

Alex Call then hit a sharp grounder that shortstop Nick Allen booted for an error, allowing two runs to score. Downs floated a base hit to center to cap the unlikely comeback.

Blue Jays 11, Cubs 4

In Toronto, Daulton Varsho homered and had five RBIs, Hyun Jin Ryu pitched five innings to win for the first time since returning from elbow surgery, and Toronto beat Chicago to avoid a three-game sweep.

Whit Merrifield had four hits, Vladimir Guerrero Jr. had two hits and two RBIs and Brandon Belt reached base four times as the Blue Jays snapped a three-game skid.

The Cubs lost for the seventh time in 25 games. Varsho hit a three-run home run off Jameson Taillon (7-7) in Toronto's five-run second inning, then added a two-run single off righty Hayden Wesneski in the fourth.

Dodgers 8, Rockies 3

In Los Angeles, Julio Urias matched his career high with 12 strikeouts over seven innings of four-hit ball, and Miguel Rojas homered and drove in four runs as Los Angeles won its sea-

son-high eighth straight and completed a four-game sweep of Colorado.

Mookie Betts broke it open with a two-run double in the sixth for the Dodgers, who have won 12 of 13 to surge 8 1/2 games ahead of San Francisco in the race for their 10th NL West title in 11 seasons. Rojas matched his season high in RBIs by driving in one run in each of his four plate appearances.

Red Sox 6, Tigers 3

In Boston, Adam Duvall had four RBIs that included a three-run homer, Justin Turner added a solo shot Boston beat Detroit.

Trevor Story went 4 for 4 with three doubles and two stolen bases for Boston. Connor Wong had an RBI triple and Duvall added a run-scoring single.

Boston scored six runs over five innings against former Red Sox lefty Eduardo Rodriguez (8-6).

Brewers 7, White Sox 3

In Chicago, Carlos Santana hit a three-run homer, Freddy Peralta pitched six scoreless innings, and Milwaukee completed a three-game sweep of Chicago.

The Brewers pushed their NL Central lead to 3 1/2 games over the Chicago Cubs.



Minnesota Twins' Jordan Luplow hits a home run during the first inning of a baseball game against the Philadelphia Phillies in Philadelphia. (AP)

More transfer business eyed

Bayern have Kane but need goalkeeper ahead of season

DUESSELDORF, Germany, Aug. 14, (AP) — Even though Bayern Munich landed the Bundesliga's record signing in England captain Harry Kane, there's still a big hole in the squad.

Kane has taken on the No. 9 shirt previously worn by Robert Lewandowski. That comes with the expectation of scoring goals by the dozen. The transfer fee — which could reportedly hit more than 100 million euros (\$110 million) — adds to the pressure.

"I feel that responsibility. Whenever a club spends a huge amount of money on you, you feel like you have a responsibility to repay that," Kane said at his presentation on Sunday.

Kane's time at Bayern started with a shock the day before when the team lost to Leipzig 3-0 in the German Super Cup — a largely ceremonial game between league and cup champions. Bayern coach Thomas Tuchel lambasted his players — not including Kane — saying they played "as if we'd done nothing" in the four weeks of pre-season.

Kane fills the gap that Lewandowski left at Bayern, but the search goes on for a goalkeeper, since Manuel Neuer could miss the entire first half of the season. He broke his leg skiing in December and underwent more surgery this month. Bayern chief executive Jan-Christian Dreesen admitted Sunday that the club had tried and failed to sign Kepa Arrizabalaga from Chelsea.

SOCCER

The 37-year-old Neuer hasn't played since last year's World Cup. Bayern had backup Sven Ulreich in goal for the loss to Leipzig.

The question is whether any new goalkeeper is planned as a stop-gap like the signing of Yann Sommer in January — he has since been sold to Inter Milan — or a more permanent replacement. Signing someone like David de Gea, a free agent since leaving Manchester United, could mean relegating Neuer to the bench permanently.

Tuchel also indicated that the squad needs a defensive midfielder. That could potentially mean even more transfer business at Bayern before the window closes on Sept. 1.

Besides Kane, new signings include defender Kim Min-jae from Italian champion Napoli, who made his debut as a substitute in the Super Cup. Full-back Raphaël Guerreiro from Dortmund and midfielder Konrad Laimer from Leipzig have both arrived on free transfers, and defender Lucas Hernández left for Paris Saint-Germain.

Kane is hoping to succeed where another big-name signing from the Premier League failed. Sadio Mané left Bayern earlier this month for Saudi Arabia after a single disappointing season following his arrival from Liverpool.

Last season at Bayern started with then-coach Julian Nagelsmann trying to do without a direct replacement for Lewandowski after the Polish striker departed for Barcelona following eight years and 344 goals for the club.

Nagelsmann tried to use Mané as part of a flexible forward line alongside the likes of Leroy Sané, Serge Gnabry and Kingsley Coman, but eventually resorted to deploying Eric Maxim Choupo-Moting in a more standard center-forward role — Lewandowski-era tactics without Lewandowski.

When Nagelsmann was ousted in March, Tuchel was focused on the short term ahead of the expected overhaul in the offseason. Tuchel says players like Sané, Gnabry and Coman remain key to his plans.

"After the loss of Robert Lewandowski there was a shift of responsibility on their shoulders to score, maybe everyone expected them to score suddenly double figures, which did not happen from various reasons. There's never one reason in football, there are a lot of reasons," Tuchel said of them during Bayern's pre-season tour of Singapore.

"In general I'm happy because the work ethic is good, I'm happy because the quality is anyway good but the work ethic is top and they work hard for the team. All of them are team players, all of them are reliable."

Muddling through for another season is not good enough for Bayern, and dropping the Bundesliga title to Dortmund would be a seismic shock in German soccer.

SPORTS

Vu wins Women's British Open for 'second' major title of 2023

American takes No. 1 ranking

WALTON-ON-THE-HILL, England, Aug 14, (AP): Lilia Vu was already smiling when her long, snaking birdie putt dropped into the cup on the 18th green, confirming her - not that it was ever in doubt - as the Women's British Open champion and a two-time major winner.

The 25-year-old Californian has plenty to smile about.

A first PGA Tour win. Two major championships. No. 1 ranking in the world.

How that's for a breakthrough season?

"It sounds almost unreal," Vu said. With accurate driving and relentless reliability on the greens, Vu took any potential drama out of the final round of the year's last major by staying largely out of trouble at Walton Heath and shooting 5-under 67 for a six-stroke victory on Sunday.

She began the day tied for the lead with popular home hope Charley Hull, with 11 players within five shots of them. By the time she teed off on No. 11, Vu led by five after seeing all of her rivals - including top-ranked Nelly Korda - falter one by one.

Hull, roared on by the locals on a course located just 30 minutes from where she grew up, holed out from a greenside bunker for eagle at the par-5 11th to trim the lead to three shots.

Vu responded with an approach to 3 feet for birdie at No. 12 and was never threatened down the stretch.

She walked down No. 18 leading by five shots and, after rolling in a sixth birdie of her round, she was drenched in champagne by fellow players.

Vu won an LPGA event in Thailand in February, then the Chevron Championship in a playoff two months later. Since then, she has missed the cut in four of her six stroke-play events, saying she struggled to deal with a change in expectations as a major champion.

"How I felt afterward," she said, "honestly I was thinking those two wins were a fluke."

Now, she is the first female player to win two majors in the same year since Jin Young Ko in 2019, and the first American woman since Juli Inkster in 1999.

From being outside the top 100 midway through 2022, her first year back on the LPGA Tour, she became Monday the fourth American to top the women's ranking since it was introduced in 2006.

And heading into next month's Solheim Cup, what a year this has been for U.S. players. Three of the five women's majors have been won by American - Allisen Corpuz won the Women's U.S. Open title at Pebble Beach - and that's not happened since 2014.

GOLF

Vu finished on 14-under 274 for the tournament, a great score on a heathland course southwest of London that provided a tough test for the world's best, mainly because of the thick heather running beside the fairways.

She had five bogeys all week. The only one Sunday came at the par-5 No. 15 when she drove into the heather for the only time in the round and then found a bunker with her third shot.

"It just comes down to not thinking about winning, just playing one shot at a time," Vu said. "This golf course forces you to do that. It really tests you. That was my only goal. To drive the ball well and give myself

chances for birdie."

Hull couldn't deliver a first major title in front of fans who backed her passionately - and fairly, according to Vu. She shot 73 and was runner-up for the second time in the last three majors.

"She played unbelievable, really," Hull said of the champion.

Hull couldn't keep the pressure on after the eagle at No. 11, buckling with bogeys on Nos. 15 and 17 - the latter after a protester walked onto the green and opened a canister filled with purple spray. There was no disruption to play as the protester was escorted away.

"It's just annoying because this is my fourth second-place finish of the year and second second-place finish in a major," Hull said. "But I really feel like next year will be my time for me."

What promised to be an exciting final round, given the state of the leaderboard at the end of play Saturday, turned into a procession.

Korda, who will lose her No. 1 ranking to Vu, started five off the leaders, bogeyed the second hole, and wound up shooting 74 to finish 12 strokes back.

Linn Grant, the highly rated Swede, faded with a 76 and was tied with Korda in 11th place.

Former two-time winner Jiyai Shin shot 70 and was alone in third place, one stroke behind Hull.



Angel Yin of the US plays a shot during day four of the 2023 AIG Women's Open at Walton Heath, in Surrey, England. (AP)

'It feels like a new team'

Mel & Michigan State hope to bounce back from lost season

WASHINGTON, Aug 14, (AP): Mel Tucker is among the highest-paid coaches in college football, cashing in on a surprising season two years ago at Michigan State.

The school is hoping to get a better return on its investment this season.

The Spartans were 5-7 in 2022, losing their last two games to fall short of being bowl-eligible, and a melee in the Michigan Stadium tunnel marred the entire year.

"Often times you have to get kicked in the face before you can be great," Tucker said. "We have a chip on our shoulder. No one was happy with the way the season unfolded, especially there the last couple games. It was very disappointing. We're just hungry."

Tucker inherited a shaky program when he replaced the retired Mark Dantonio and it showed during a 2-5, pandemic-shortened season and in the following NFL draft when the program didn't have one player selected for the first time in 80 years.

"That goes to show you the state of the depth and talent in the program," Tucker said.

FOOTBALL

With the help of breakout star running back Kenneth Walker, the Spartans won 11 games in 2021. Tucker was given a raise by rich boosters during that season in the hopes he would stay and not go to LSU or the NFL. His 10-year, \$95 million contract drew widespread attention.

No one expected him to sustain that level of success, but losing seven games and having players suspended for a postgame brawl at Michigan Stadium was certainly unexpected.

Tucker said an NFL scout who recently watched the team practice marveled at the level of talent within the program relative to previous teams.

"We have competition at every single position," Tucker said. "No doubt, it's the most talent we've had top to bottom on our roster."

The Spartans are also confident that they're more cohesive, taking advantage of team-building activities facilitated by an outside firm and opportunities the players put together themselves.

"It feels like a new team," quarterback Katin Hauser said. "New energy."

Payton Thorne, a two-year starter, transferred to Auburn last spring after Tucker made it very clear the quarterback job

was up for grabs.

Noah Kim and Houser are competing to take the first snap. Kim threw one touchdown in three games last season in his third year of college, and Houser threw two passes in one game last year as a highly touted freshman from California.

All-Big Ten linebacker Cal Halady leads the defense after making a conference-high 10 tackles per game last year and finishing with 120, the most by a player at the school since All-America linebacker Greg Jones in 2009.

Khary Crump, the defensive back who swung his helmet at a Michigan player after last year's game, has been reinstated. He is practicing while serving his Big Ten-issued, eight-game suspension this year.

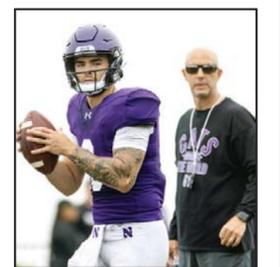
Crump was one of seven Spartans on the team suspended and charged, but he was the only one on the team that faced a felony. That charge was later dismissed in an agreement to plead guilty to misdemeanors.

"He stayed the course," Tucker said. "He's supported by his teammates and by the coaching staff."

Tucker bristled at Big Ten media day when asked if the rivalry with the Wolverines should be reigned in.

"I don't know how you do that," he said. "There's not a day that's gone by that I haven't heard something about that game."

Michigan State's first four games are at home, starting with a Friday night game on Sept. 1 against Central Michigan and including a Sept. 16 matchup with Washington. The Spartans host Michigan on Oct. 21, play at Ohio State on Nov. 11 and face Penn State on Nov. 25 at Ford Field in Detroit.



Northwestern quarterback Brendan Sullivan (6) throws in front of offensive coordinator Mike Bajakian during football practice at Hutcheson Field in Evanston, Ill. Northwestern athletic director Derrick Gragg criticized assistant football coaches and staff members for wearing shirts supporting fired coach Pat Fitzgerald at practice. (AP)



Lilia Vu of the US celebrates victory with the trophy on day four of the 2023 AIG Women's Open at Walton Heath, in Surrey, England. (AP)

'Great unity within the team at the World Cup'

Spain's turmoil is in the past as La Roja face Sweden

AUCKLAND, New Zealand, Aug 14, (AP): Spain is just one win away from the Women's World Cup final, less than a year after more than a dozen players staged a mutiny and stepped away from the team.

La Roja will face Sweden in a semifinal match on Tuesday at Auckland's Eden Park, with the winner advancing to play either England or co-host Australia in the championship match.

It is just the third time Spain has played in the tournament and the furthest it has advanced. La Roja reached the knockout round four years ago in France but they were eliminated by the eventual champion U.S. team. The only other time Spain has reached the final four at a major tournament was the 1997 Euros.

Spain's success this time comes despite a turbulent recent history. Last September, 15 players signed letters that said they were withdrawing from the national team to protect their emotional health and called on the Spanish federation to commit to a more professional environment. The players insisted they did not ask for coach Jorge Vilda's dismissal.

Jennifer Hermoso was not among the those who protested but she did support her colleagues on a social me-

Spain secured a spot in the semifinals with a 2-1 quarterfinal win in extra time over 2019 runner-up Netherlands. Two-time Ballon d'Or winner Alexia Putellas went on as a substitute again as she continued to return from an ACL tear just sustained before the European Championship last July.

She also appeared as a substitute in six matches for club Barcelona in the Champions League, lifting the trophy as captain after a 3-2 victory over Wolfsburg in June.

Putellas, who has 28 goals in 102 appearances for Spain, is considered among the best players in the world and has led Spain's climb on the national stage. Vilda said the team is pleased with her recovery.

"Alexia is ready for anything," Vilda said.

Spain, No. 6 in the FIFA global rankings, was considered among the favorites going into the tournament despite the turmoil last fall. Hermoso, Aitana Bonmati and Alba Redondo lead the team with three goals apiece.

The Swedes advanced by knocking off previously undefeated Japan 2-1 in the quarterfinals. Japan won the 2011

World Cup title and was last remaining past champion left in the tournament.

Before that, Sweden eliminated the two-time defending champion United States on penalties in the Round of 16 for the Americans' earliest exit ever.

The Swedes were runners-up at the World Cup in 2003 and they've finished in third place three times, but they've never won soccer's biggest trophy. Two years ago Sweden lost to Canada in the gold-medal match at the Tokyo Olympics.

Sweden coach Peter Gerhardtsson said forward Sofia Jakobsson had "mild symptoms of an illness" but he hoped to have her available for the match.

Spain and Sweden have never met in the Women's World Cup - Spain didn't even qualify for the first six tournaments - but played to a 1-1 draw last October in a friendly in Cordoba, Spain.

Patty Mills and his Boomers teammates knew who deserved prime time billing, so they rescheduled their game and will keep watching Australia's historic run at the Women's World Cup.

It's fair to say Matildas fervor has reached fever-pitch across Australia, which is co-hosting the tournament

with New Zealand.

The Boomers, Australia's men's basketball team, are preparing for their World Cup later this month and had a warmup game against Brazil planned for Wednesday night. As soon as they realized it would clash with the Matildas' semifinal against England, they moved their game forward by more than two hours so they could watch the women's soccer.

"The Matildas have really captured the nation this World Cup," Mills, the Boomers captain and Atlanta Hawks guard, said Monday. "The way the ladies play with so much heart and passion has been so inspiring to witness."

"Just like the rest of the country, our Boomers team have been locked in for each game, watching it as a team."

They're not the only ones. Times for elite-level Australian rules football matches were adjusted last Saturday so players, staff and supporters could catch some of the Matildas' dramatic penalty shootout win over fifth-ranked France in the quarterfinals in Brisbane.

The main nightly news program was pushed back by the host broadcaster nationally because of the game, which became the highest-rating program on Australian TV this year.

It seems almost everyone in Australia wants to watch the Matildas, either on TV, or in dedicated fan zones in the host cities that have attracted tens of thousands of people, or in pubs and clubs from the state capitals to tiny Outback communities.

Australia's round of 16 win over Denmark had the highest-rating television audience in Australia in 2023 - for all of five days.

The quarterfinal win last weekend drew almost 5 million viewers for the free-to-air TV rights holder, excluding public screenings and paid streaming. That's the most for a sports event since Lleyton Hewitt reached the final of the Australian Open tennis championship in 2005, and more than the grand finals in Australia's dominant football codes, Aussie rules and rugby league, in 20 years.



Spain's head coach Jorge Vilda (center), stands on the field during a training session ahead of the FIFA Women's World Cup semifinal soccer match between Sweden and Spain in Auckland, New Zealand. (AP)

SOCCER

dia post. On Monday the Barcelona forward shrugged off a question about the conflict.

"I'm here today, I'm very happy," Hermoso said. "I hope to continue making history with my team."

Vilda, who has coached La Roja since 2015, was ultimately backed by the federation in the conflict. In the run-up to the World Cup, there appeared to be at least some reconciliation: Three of the 15 players who stepped down were on the roster.

Vilda maintains there is "great unity" within the team at the World Cup.

Captain Ivana Andres said the players have a "very good relationship with our coach."

SOCCER

Real sign Kepa on loan from Chelsea

MADRID, Aug 14, (AP): Real Madrid has signed goalkeeper Kepa Arrizabalaga on loan from Chelsea to help make up for the absence of the injured Thibaut Courtois, the Spanish club said Monday.

Kepa's signing comes four days after Courtois tore a ligament in his left knee during training. The injury will sideline the Belgian international for most of the season.

Kepa arrives on a contract until the end of the season and will join a squad that already included Ukrainian Andriy Lunin, a reserve to Courtois who on Saturday started in the 2-0 win at Athletic Bilbao in the team's Spanish league opener.

It wasn't immediately clear if Spanish international Kepa would arrive as a starter. Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti previously said he had full confidence in the 24-year-old Lunin, who is entering his fourth season with the club.

Kepa had been in talks to join Bayern Munich but the deal fell through after Madrid showed interest in signing the 28-year-old

player. Bayern chief executive Jan-Christian Dreesen said Sunday the German club had hoped to bring Kepa in for Manuel Neuer, who hasn't played since the World Cup after breaking his leg while skiing on vacation.

Kepa became the world's most expensive goalkeeper when he was signed by Chelsea in 2018 for 80 million euros (then \$93 million). He arrived then to replace Courtois, who was leaving for Madrid.

The 31-year-old Courtois has been a pillar of Madrid's success since he left Chelsea. He helped win the Champions League in 2022, the Spanish league in 2020 and 2022, and last season's Copa del Rey.

Madrid on Saturday also lost defender Éder Militão because of a serious knee injury sustained in the opener in Bilbao.



Barcelona's Robert Lewandowski (left), and Getafe's Portu challenge for the ball during the Spanish La Liga soccer match between Getafe and FC Barcelona at the Coliseum Alfonso Perez. (AP)

Sports

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Barca open title defense with draw at Getafe

Raphinha sent off

MADRID, Aug 14, (AP): There was a lot of complaining but no celebrating for Barcelona as it began the defense of its Spanish league title.

Barcelona couldn't overcome Raphinha's first-half red card for elbowing an opponent, and then didn't get a VAR decision to go its way late in the game, in a 0-0 draw at Getafe in their league opener.

"If this is the product that the Spanish league wants to sell, then it's an embarrassment," said Barcelona coach Xavi, who himself was sent off in the 70th for arguing with officials over a foul not being called.

Raphinha was sent off after hitting Getafe defender Gastón Álvarez on the head with his right elbow while fighting for position in attack in the 42nd minute. Barcelona played a man down until Getafe had Jaime Mata sent off with a second yellow card for a foul on Ronald Araujo in the 57th.

Barcelona had more reason to complain when it thought it had a penalty kick after Araujo was fouled inside the area nearly 10 minutes into stoppage time, but video review determined that there was a handball by Barcelona midfielder Gavi in the buildup.

SOCCER

"That handball didn't exist," Xavi said. "They had said that only the very clear handballs would be called, and that's not what happened. It was very unfair." The match marked the debut of new Barcelona midfielder İlkay Gundogan after his move from Manchester City in the offseason.

Real Madrid won 2-0 at Athletic Bilbao on Saturday, while Atletico Madrid starts its campaign against Granada on Monday.

Rafa Benitez's stint with Celta Vigo began with a 2-0 home loss to Osasuna.

Celta conceded a goal in each half to make it a losing debut for the veteran coach after taking over the squad in the offseason.

Celta had only one attempt on target at Balaídos stadium in Vigo. Rubén García and Moi Gómez scored for Osasuna, which finished seventh last season and earned a spot in the Europa Conference League.

"When you face a team that qualified to a European competition and has kept the core of its squad, you noticed that we are still missing a few things," Benitez said. "We will try to make up for that with hard work and, if possible, by adding to the squad through transfers." Benitez last coached Everton in England and previously was at the helm of Real Madrid, Liverpool, Inter Milan, Chelsea and Napoli. He won the Champions League with Liverpool in 2005.

Benitez had a stint in China before taking over Everton and after coaching Newcastle. He took over a Celta team that finished 13th last season in the Spanish league.

Substitute Willian José scored five minutes into stoppage time as Real Betis beat Villarreal 2-1 in a matchup of two teams that narrowly missed out on a Champions League berth last season and are aiming to repeat their strong campaigns.

Manuel Pellegrini's Betis opened the scoring with a goal from Ayoze Pérez in the 20th before the hosts equalized with Jorge Cuenca in the 61st. José's late winner came with a header from the middle of the area.

Former Madrid player Isco made his debut with Betis.



After an impressive second-place finish in the French league last season, Lens opened the new campaign by losing 3-2 at Brest after leading 2-0.

The northern side was in command thanks to goals from forward Florian Sotoca and defender Deiver Machado, but Brest replied with a penalty from Romain Del Castillo just before halftime.

After defender Kenny Lala equalized in the 56th, Del Castillo scored



Getafe's Juanmi Latasa, (right), and Barcelona's Alejandro Balde challenge for the ball during the Spanish La Liga soccer match between Getafe and FC Barcelona at the Coliseum Alfonso Perez. (AP)



First place Belgium's Lotte Kopecky shows her gold medal on the podium following the Women's Elite Road Race during day eleven of the 2023 UCI Cycling World Championships in Glasgow, Britain. (AP)

with another penalty in the 87th.

Lens finished only one point behind champion Paris Saint-Germain last season, but sold club top scorer Lois Openda to German club Leipzig and midfielder captain Seko Fofana to Saudi Arabian club Al-Nassr.

Elsewhere, striker Wissam Ben Yedder scored twice as Monaco won 4-2 at Clermont and Danish defender Rasmus Nicolaisen grabbed a stoppage-time winner for Toulouse in a 2-1 win at Nantes.

Winger Ibrahim Salah came off the bench to score two late goals as Rennes routed promoted Metz 5-1 at home. Forwards Arnaut Kalimuendo, Amine Gouiri and Jeremy Doku had all scored for Rennes, before Salah replaced Doku in the 84th.

Nigerian striker Akor Adams netted both goals for Montpellier in a 2-2 home draw with promoted Le Havre, which equalized in stoppage time through winger Samuel Grandsir.

TENNIS

tennis players in the Arab world.

Eight elite players from Lebanon, Egypt, Kuwait, Tunisia, Jordan and Syria partook in the tournament.

Kuwait's Al-Abdullah 'finishes' 3rd in Arab tennis tournament

BEIRUT, Aug 14, (KUNA): Kuwaiti tennis player Bader Al-Abdullah on Sunday came third in the Arab men's tennis tournament organized by the Lebanese Tennis Federation at Broumana Sports Club.

Al-Abdullah made this achievement after defeating the Egyptian player Mohamad Gomaa in straight straights 6-4, 6-2. He also won the Best Sportsmanship Cup in the tournament.

Tunisian player Moez Al-Sharqi was ranked first after beating the

Lebanese player Hadi Habib in the final match, 6-4, 7-6.

Al-Abdullah told Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) that his participation in the Arab tournament gave him the opportunity to play with the best

Mahieu leads French sweep of BMX racing podium

Kopecky makes it a trifecta of gold medals at worlds

GLASGOW, Aug 14, (AP): Lotte Kopecky made it a trifecta of gold medals at the cycling world championships.

After winning the points and elimination races during the track portion of the 11-day event, the Belgian standout shook free from a powerhouse breakaway and rode solo to the finish of the women's road race in Glasgow, Scotland. Kopecky was far enough ahead of Demi Vollerling and Cecilie Ludwig that she had time to sit up and celebrate as she crossed the finish line.

"I thought after those two on the track, I was like, 'Yeah, it's almost impossible to win again on Sunday,'" Kopecky said, fighting back tears. "Becoming a three-time world champ in just seven days - it's too crazy for words."

Vollerling, who was trying to follow in the footsteps of recent Dutch champions Annemiek van Vleuten and Anna van der Breggen, had to settle for the silver medal. Ludwig lost their heads-up sprint and finished with bronze.

Kopecky had to be wondering whether she ever would win one of the world's premier women's road races.

The 27-year-old from Flanders, who has won stages at the Tour de France Femmes and the Giro Donne, was fourth in the road race at the Tokyo Olympics two years ago. And last year,

CYCLING

Kopecky was second to van Vleuten at the world championships, losing in a tight sprint to the finish over the seaside course south of Sydney, Australia.

Now, she will wear the rainbow colors when she heads to the Paris Olympics next summer.

"We're a big cycling nation, but in the women's part of cycling, Belgium - we always came a little bit behind," Kopecky said, "but I'm very proud we now showed we're a team that can win the biggest races."

In the other medals decided on the final day of cycling's world championships, Romain Mahieu led a French sweep of the BMX racing podium alongside silver medalist Arthur Pilard and Joris Daudet, while Bethany Shriever of Britain won the women's BMX race ahead of Laura Smulders of the Netherlands and bronze medalist Alise Willoughby of the U.S.

The women's road race began near Loch Lomond and covered 154 kilometers (95 miles) to Glasgow. Early clouds and wet roads gave way to bright sunshine, making for perfect conditions as the peloton wound its way toward the downtown finish line.

Elise Chabbey was the first to attack, going solo about 60 kilometers from

Neymar set to complete move to Saudi Pro League

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia, Aug 14, (AP): Neymar is set to complete a move to the Saudi Pro League after Al Hilal agreed a reported 90 million euros (\$98 million) transfer fee with Paris Saint-Germain on Monday.

The fee would be a record for the league, backed by the oil-rich state, in its spending spree on high-end soccer talent.

Al Hilal could finally seal a statement signing to match Al Nassr, its city rival in Riyadh, which lured Cristiano Ronaldo in January. Recent offers to Lionel Messi and Kylian Mbappé, teammates of Neymar last season at French champion PSG, were not accepted.

Neymar has reportedly been offered a two-year contract expected to pay the 31-year-old Brazil star an annual salary of about \$100 million. That would be around half of the 38-year-old Ronaldo's reported salary.

Neymar and PSG agreed last week he could leave although his widely reported preference, like Messi several weeks ago, was on returning to their former club Barcelona.

Barcelona's troubled finances make such deals tough and Messi instead chose Major League Soccer's Inter Miami in June.

Al Hilal is one of four storied Saudi clubs effectively nationalized by the sovereign wealth Public Investment Fund (PIF), which claims assets of about \$700 billion. They include the LIV Golf series that challenged the PGA Tour before the two organizations agreed to join forces.

SOCCER

PIF is chaired by Saudi crown prince Mohammed bin Salman, whose ambitions in global sports have become a signature policy.

Neymar's signing was making progress on the day of the season-opening league game for Al Hilal, a record 18-time national champion.

the finish. But the Swiss rider's daring move was eventually brought back by the heavy hitters behind her, including Vollerling, the newly crowned Tour de France Femmes winner and perhaps the favorite to win the final event of Scotland's world championships.

Vollerling then attacked and Kopecky went with her, but their move ended abruptly when the Dutch rider appeared to cramp up - Vollerling began flexing her leg in the saddle, trying to work it out, while dropping slightly off the pace.

Kopecky then attacked along with Ludwig, and the two went clear of a group that included Vollerling, Marlen Reusser, Christina Schweinberger and Lizzie Deignan. The duo quickly opened enough of a gap that it looked as if it would be a two-woman race to the finish, only for Kopecky to attack Ludwig with about 6 kilometers to go on a sharp uphill climb.

The Belgian sped through a series of tight 90-degree bends, pedaling hard after each one, on the way to the finish line.

"I mean, it's already been an amazing year," Kopecky said, "and in some ways a very hard year. And it's just - I don't know what keeps me pushing. I don't know what I was thinking. But it really means a lot to me. And yeah, it's kind of a dream come true."

Not a dream that Kopecky has had since she was little, though. The dream came much later.

"When I was a little girl I just wanted to be competitive in cycling," Kopecky said. "I never knew I would be this good."



France's Romain Mahieu wins The Men's Elite Final during day eleven of the 2023 UCI Cycling World Championships at the Glasgow BMX Centre, Glasgow, Britain. (AP)