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**soccer**

## Report notes Kuwait per capita wealth tops \$100,000

### Global wealth cut \$11.3 trn

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 16: Credit Suisse's annual global wealth report has revealed that the average per capita wealth in Kuwait has surpassed \$100,000, reports Al-Rai daily.

The report highlighted that worldwide family wealth experienced its first decline since the 2008 financial crisis in 2022 due to inflation and the strengthening of the dollar. These factors contributed to a reduction of around \$11.3 trillion in assets. The report indicated that the overall per capita wealth across the globe decreased by 2.4 percent to \$454.4 trillion. The most significant portion of this decrease occurred in North America and Europe, where the loss totaled \$10.9 trillion. However, not all regions saw a decrease in their wealth.

Despite the impact of sanctions, Russia witnessed a noteworthy surge in wealth during 2022, resulting in the addition of 56 millionaires, according to the "Credit Suisse" report. The study encompassed the finances of 5.4 billion adults globally and across various wealth brackets. Additionally, Latin America experienced a growth in wealth amounting to \$2.4 trillion, supported by an average 6 percent appreciation of their currencies against the dollar.

Dr. Nannette Hechler-Fayd'herbe, the global head of economics and research at Credit Suisse, noted, "Wealth development proved resilient during the Corona era and grew at a record pace during 2021, but inflation factors, high interest rates, and currency depreciation caused the trajectory to reverse in 2022."

The count of millionaires decreased by 3.5 million individuals, reaching a total of 59.4 million people, and the wealthiest 1 percent globally reduced their share of wealth to 44.5 percent. However, the experts behind the study anticipate that 2022 may be an outlier in the broader context of wealth growth.

On a global scale, it is projected that wealth will expand by \$629 trillion, equivalent to 38 percent growth, by 2027. Furthermore, the number of millionaires is anticipated to reach 86 million by 2027, up from about 60 million in 2022.

### Opinion

## Saudi Arabia on point

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

FOR 75 years, the Arabs did not win any war. Throughout history, they turned out to be the worst advocates for the just Palestinian one.

They did not take into consideration the words of some historical leaders who realized from the beginning that addressing this issue could neither be through rhetoric nor confrontation, because the balance of power was not in their interest.

Therefore, they rejected the partition decision in 1947 and went to war, even though the late King Abdulaziz bin Saud was the first to call for the support of the owners of the land who knew better about their country, and demand that the Arabs not enter the war in 1948.

However, the Arab governments at that time were overwhelmed with zeal, and sought the war, which they lost. As a result, the Palestinian people were dispersed to the four corners of the earth, and in the meantime, merchants of displacement and camps appeared.

They sought to fight the war by monetizing slogans from hotels to increase their wealth, while the fighters deserted the trenches.

The Arabs did not accept the advice of Habib Bourguiba in 1965 when he said in Jerusalem, "The Arabs rejected the incomplete solution, and refused partition. Later they regretted it and started saying - If only we had accepted that solution, then we would have been in a better condition than what we are in now."

This is what happened to the Arabs under the leadership of Jamal Abdul Nasser, who was the first to benefit from the issue and made it the engine for his coup movement in 1952.

It is true that the Arabs fought four wars with Israel, but only one of them was enough to make them realize that the whole world is against them.

This is because what was left of the Nazi plan led by Hitler made the Jews of Europe a spoiled child, especially after being in control of money and the media.

On the other hand, the Arabs did not have the ability to cope with this situation due to their lack of solidarity.

Some of the so-called "revolutionary" leaderships charged the people against anyone who disagreed with them, accusing them of treason. They thus controlled the people's instincts until the "October War" came.

This war represented a turning point when the late Egyptian President Anwar Sadat realized that the solution was not war. Despite his victory in the war, he returned to the "give and take" policy.

For this reason, Egypt entered into difficult negotiations, and Arabs realized that whatever was achieved by the Camp David negotiations in terms of the return of the Sinai, the Suez Canal, Sharm el-Sheikh and Taba was much more important than the wars in which the Arabs lost lands in Palestine or the countries of confrontation.

Therefore, the late Saudi King Fahad's initiative in 1981 at the Fez Summit turned out to be the cornerstone of resolving the Palestinian issue. It was based on the principle of seeking peace and proving to the whole world that those seeking war are the Israelis, who rejected that initiative.

Likewise, in 2002 at the Beirut Summit, this initiative was included in the plan of King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz. However, similar to the echo of the first, the Arab reaction rejected any solution other than the so-called "armed struggle", which turned into operations and skirmishes between the Palestinians as well as kidnappings since 1965.

It also included the hijacking of planes and murders committed in various countries of the world. This established the so-called "Arab terrorism" at the time.

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### Day by Day

TO the people of Palestine, we say it's time for a candid conversation.

Stop exploiting the 'Palestinian cause' for personal gain. The matter has been exploited extensively, yielding substantial financial gains from the Arab nations. Now the question is: Who truly reaps the benefits from these funds?

Ironically, Israel itself contributes funds to orchestrate acts of terrorism, aimed at portraying Arabs as terrorists.

... Yet tomorrow is another day.

**Zahed Matar**

# Fishermen seek protection

### A pattern of organized plunder designed to induce fear

**KUWAIT CITY, Aug 16: The Federation of Kuwaiti Fishermen has expressed profound dismay over the ongoing challenges unfolding within the Kuwait Sea in the form of persistent vulnerability of Kuwaiti fishing vessels to acts of plunder and piracy within Kuwait's exclusive economic waters, reports Al-Jarida daily.**

The federation has urged for swift resolution to this perilous situation and con-

veyed its concerns in a statement yesterday to the concerned authorities.

The federation revealed that three Kuwaiti fishing trawlers were looted, underscoring the pattern of organized plunder designed to induce fear among Kuwaiti fishermen and coerce many of them to halt their fishing activities.

The federation hopes the plight of the fishermen would resonate with higher leadership, resulting in the provision of adequate protection for them while operating within economic waters.

Emphasizing its cause, the federation informed that it had formally communicated with relevant authorities by dispatching official letters, pleading for a reinforcement of security checkpoints to safeguard Kuwaiti economic waters and provide protection for the fishermen who encounter harrowing experiences at sea, contributing to the assurance of marine food security.

The federation stressed that should losses persist due to piracy and robbery, a considerable number of fishing license holders would cease their fishing endeavors.

The federation made a direct appeal to officials, urging them to decisively curtail the incursion of poaching activities within Kuwait's economic waters, as delineated by Amiri Decree No. 317/2014, thereby highlighting the extensive theft operations, which not only result in stealing catch but also equipment, navigation instruments, and personal belongings, including mobile phones and money.

According to a high-ranking security source, the piracy, looting and assault that some Kuwaiti fishing vessels are exposed to is taking place outside the Kuwaiti territorial waters, due to which it is not the responsibility of the Ministry of Interior to intervene or protect these violating vessels due to their exit from the Kuwaiti territorial waters, reports Al-Anba daily.

The source explained that fishing licenses were given to practice fishing, provided that it is carried out only in the Kuwaiti territorial waters. Unfortunately, some fishing vessels do not comply with the laws and conditions for fishing, and they decide to fish outside the Kuwaiti territorial waters, which exposes them to looting, piracy and assault by marine gangs that do not enter the Kuwaiti territorial waters due to the presence of the Coast Guard officers along the maritime borders who are equipped with the latest devices and weapons, and deal with any transgression by reciprocating.

Some fishermen go out from the Kuwaiti territorial waters to the international waters between Kuwait and neighboring countries to fish. By doing so, they are violating all laws, exposing their lives to danger and exposing Kuwait to political embarrassments and the possibility of international violations.

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## Hang up shift a false alarm

SAN FRANCISCO, Aug 16, (AP) - Almost a week after the Apple faithful collectively gasped at the first evidence that the iPhone's red "end call" button might soon be vacating its center position to take up residence one column to the right, it looks like it might have been mostly a false alarm.

The initial shock followed the release of last week's test, or beta, version of iOS 17, the next major update of the iPhone's operating software. That's where users first saw the end-call button, which has traditionally lived in splendid isolation centered well below function buttons such as "mute," "keypad" and "speaker," instead joining its peers and taking a more assimilated position in the lower right-hand corner of a six-button block.

Now, though, images of the latest iOS 17 beta shared by multiple media sites shows the red button right back in the center of the phone dialpad, pretty close to where it's long staked out its territory. But it's still not alone; now it's in the second row, center seat of that six button block, where it appears to be daring you to try hanging up without also opening the keypad or accidentally adding another participant to your call.

To be fair, it's always difficult to draw firm conclusions from beta software releases, which are intended both to help engineers hunt down bugs and to gauge user reaction to changes large and small. So they're a bit experimental by nature, and some experiments fare better than others.



A group of Kuwaiti youngsters are commemorating the lives of their forefathers, as they embarked on a journey on board traditional ships, took up the roles of their ancestors and set out on the 32nd pearl diving trip. KUNA photo

### Commanders in peace pledge

## India, China pledge border tranquility

BEIJING, Aug 16, (AP) - Chinese and Indian military commanders pledged to "maintain the peace and tranquility" along their disputed border, China's Defense Ministry said, in an apparent effort by the sides to stabilize the situation after a rise in tensions.

China's Defense Ministry issued a joint statement on social media late Tuesday saying the 19th round of commander-level talks between the sides held on Sunday and Monday had produced a "positive, constructive and in-depth discussion" centered on resolving issues related to the Line of Actual Control in the border's western sector.

The statement said they "agreed to resolve the remaining issues in an expeditious manner," but there is no indication that either side is willing to offer concessions. However, both appear eager to avoid the sort of clashes between their troops that have led to

bloodshed in recent years. "In the interim, the two sides agreed to maintain the peace and tranquility on the ground in the border areas," the statement said.

India's Defense Ministry issued an identical statement.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin on Wednesday praised the talks, held at the Indian army post in the town of Chushul-Moldo, and highlighted the two sides' commitment to "maintain the momentum of communication and dialogue through military and diplomatic channels."

The Line of Actual Control separates Chinese and Indian-held territories from Ladakh in the west to India's eastern state of Arunachal Pradesh, which China claims in its entirety.

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### News watch

**CAIRO:** Clashes between rival militias in Libya's capital killed at least 27 people and left residents trapped in their homes Tuesday, unable to escape the violence, medical authorities said.

The fighting appears to be the most intense to shake Tripoli this year. In addition to the 27 deaths, over 100 people were injured in the fighting, Libya's Emergency Medicine and Support Center, a medical body that is deployed during humanitarian disasters and wars, said early Wednesday. (AP)

**LAHAINA, Hawaii:** Federal officials sent a mobile morgue with coroners, pathologists and technicians to Hawaii to help identify the dead, as Maui County released the first names of people killed in the wildfire that all but incinerated the historic town of Lahaina a week ago and killed at least 106 people.

A week after the fires started, some residents still had with intermittent power, unreliable cellphone service and uncertainty over where to get assistance. (AP)

## Prayer Timings

Fajr ..... 03:51 Asr ..... 15:28  
 Sunrise .. 05:16 Maghrib .. 18:28  
 Zohr ..... 11:52 Isha ..... 19:50

# Local

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

## Opportunities for construction firms to compete for contracts

### AmCham Kuwait, U.S. military host Multiple Award Task Order Contracts (MATOC) '23-'28

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 16: AmCham Kuwait hosted the Multiple Award Task Order Contracts (MATOC) Industry Day in partnership with the 408th Brigade, the Regional Contracting Center (RCC-KU), and the 386th ECONS. This event showcased an exceptional upcoming opportunity for construction companies to compete on various requirements for the U.S. military in Kuwait.

This event was aimed to highlight the potential opportunity, increase the number of competitive bids received, and provide attendees with the information required to compete in these efforts (e.g. past performance, registrations in sam.gov and JCCS, insurance and post-award registrations, CTIP compliance, etc.) This was also a unique chance for companies to provide their company profiles and capabilities, and to ask specific questions regarding the overview of this 5-year construction contract.

Central to the MATOC Industry Day was the presentation of a 5-year (one-base year plus 4-option years) contract opportunity. The magnitude of the MATOC is for an aggregate total contract value of up to \$35M awarded through individual Task Order Requests (TORs) with a maximum value of \$5m per task order.

In addition to the business opportunity presented by the US Army, the US Air Force presented their own Multiple Award Construction Contract (MACC), a multiple award In-

definite Delivery Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) contract, with the prospect award to up to five (5) contractors with a contract threshold of \$75m. Expected solicitation to be posted as early as FY 25 (October 1, 2024), with a contract duration of 5 years. This MAAC included prospective opportunities such as:

■ The Airfield Paving and Rubber Removal, an Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) contract, with a contract threshold of \$25M, expected solicitation to be posted as early as the start of FY 24 (October 1, 2023), with a contract duration of one base year plus 4-option years.

■ Base Paving for Ali Al Salem Air Base, an Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) contract, with a contract threshold of \$25M, expected solicitation to be posted as early as FY 25 (October 1, 2024), with a contract duration of one base year plus 4-option years.

Key highlights of the MATOC Industry Day include:

■ Insightful presentations from the expert panel of U.S. military personnel who delivered informative details regarding the intricacies of Multiple Award Task Order Contracts, providing clarity on the process, requirements, and potential benefits for businesses.

■ Interactive Workshops, which were practical and enabled participants to acquire a deeper understanding of the nuances, involved in securing and executing MATOC

contracts.

■ Q&A sessions allowed attendees to engage with experts, seeking clarifications on various aspects of the MATOC pre-award and post-award process.

The primary objective of the event was to educate vendors on effective participation in the MATOC. This encompassed critical aspects such as ensuring the sustained validity of their System for Award Management (SAM) registration during the bidding process, as well as full compliance with Combating Trafficking in Persons (CTIPs) regulations.

By addressing these essential prerequisites, attendees gained invaluable insights that empowered them to confidently navigate the MATOC process and contribute to its overall success. This initiative underscored AmCham Kuwait's unwavering commitment to equipping businesses with essential knowledge and tools, enabling seamless engagement in endeavours that reinforce Kuwait-US relations.

ABCK-AmCham Kuwait is a non-profit organization operating since 1985 and is composed of Fortune 500 corporations, small and medium-sized companies, and prominent business leaders and entrepreneurs, both American and Kuwaiti. ABCK-AmCham Kuwait acts as an advocate for American interests in the state of Kuwait. For More Information, please visit our website at [www.amchamkuwait.org](http://www.amchamkuwait.org) or follow us on the social media channels @abck1985.

**Expected weather for the next 24 hours:**

**By Day:** Hot and humid with light to moderate southeasterly wind with speeds of 10-35 km/h with a chance for fog forming at night.

**By Night:** Hot to rather hot

**Weather**  
 and humid with light to moderate southeasterly wind to light variable wind with speeds of 08-32 km/h with a chance for mist forming over some areas.

**Station Max Exp Min Rec**  
 Kuwait City 45 34  
 Kuwait Airport 44 29

Abdaly	45	26
Jahra	48	31
Salmiyah	37	33
Ahmadi	38	33
Nuwaisib	43	28
Wafra	46	27



Participants in the event.

### HH Amir congratulates Congo and Liechtenstein

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 16, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent Wednesday a cable of congratulations to the Republic of Congo President Denis Sassou Nguesso on the occasion of his country's Independence Day.

In the cable, His Highness the Amir wished him everlasting health and further progress and prosperity for his country.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent Wednesday a cable of congratulations to the Republic of Congo President Denis Sassou Nguesso on the occasion of his coun-

try's Independence Day wishing him good health and wellness.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent Wednesday a cable of congratulations to the Republic of Congo President Denis Sassou Nguesso on the occasion of his country's Independence Day.

#### Liechtenstein National Day

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations to Prince of Liechtenstein Hans-Adam II on his country's national day.

His Highness the Amir wished

Prince Adam good health, and for his country and people further progress and development.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations to Prince of Liechtenstein Hans-Adam II on his country's national day.

His Highness the Crown Prince wished Prince Adam good health and well-being.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations to Prince of Liechtenstein Hans-Adam II on his country's national day.

### Other Voices

#### When a deputy's request for job is rejected

By Ahmad alsarraf

Upon securing my position on the bank's board of directors and the finalization of board assignments, I put forth the following proposal to my fellow board members. Drawing from my own experiences during the time I served as an employee within the same bank for numerous years, I addressed a matter that had caused me personal distress.

This issue pertained to the board members' reluctance to engage with the banking hall and interact with senior bank staff. Their purpose in doing so was to exert influence, whether in the context of requesting or extending banking services to themselves or their associates.

Additionally, they would intervene in matters such as securing employment opportunities for individuals they recommended to be hired by the bank.

I underscored the significant unease this practice generated for me during my tenure overseeing banking services. I recounted instances where a fellow board member would approach me within my office, urging me not to endorse the provision of facilities to a particular company or individual. Yet, in a matter of minutes, I'd receive opposing instructions or requests, either via a phone call or in-person visit.

In these subsequent communications, a different board member would insist that I advocate for the same company or individual to receive the very facilities the previous board member had discouraged.

This scenario revealed a perplexing and inconsistent dynamic that posed challenges not only in executing my responsibilities but also in maintaining the integrity of the bank's decision-making processes. I thus proposed a reconsideration of such interactions between board members and bank employees, suggesting that a transparent and standardized communication protocol be established to ensure consistent decision-making and equitable

treatment for all clients and employees.

Representative Hamad Al-Matar says that the "groaning" of retirees is appreciated by him, and that the time has come to stabilize the conditions and laws of the insurance institution, and that it has a portfolio of forty billion dinars, and it has been 15 months without contributing to a single investment project, and the reason (and this is the bottom line and the goal of the representative) absence of leaders, who can invest that money.

He said that the management of the institution does not accept the employment of non-blue-blooded people! He described his speech as a cry from the heart, and demanded the need to follow justice in employment, and stop hiring according to the DNA, and that the children of simple people do not find jobs in the Public Institution for Social Security (PIFSS) or in the Kuwait Investment Authority.

This is empty talk, and it is not based on the truth. I know dozens of people with blue, purple, black and even yellow blood, who work in the highest positions in these two organizations, and they were hired, mostly, for their competence!

We call on the government, which says it is reformist, to stop the visits of members of the National Assembly to the offices of senior state employees, so as not to subject them to embarrassing pressures, and to harm the reputation of those who are honorable, if their request is rejected!

When the deputy goes to the insurance company to get a specific job for his son, the engineer, this is often what happens. And another deputy goes to get the same job for his daughter, so who will be given the position? Will the one whose voice is louder than the other and whose threat is more impertinent, get it?

Representative Al-Matar says that he bears "concern" about the education file, and asks the members to help him to develop education. And we ask him, out of mercy for education, to abandon since he is "concerned about the file" and give it to someone more capable than him, and less dependent on a well-known religious political party!

□ □ □

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### 'KD23 increase in retirees pension is periodic'

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 16: Informed sources revealed to Al-Rai that the total number of Kuwaiti retirees who receive a pension of less than 1,000 dinars per month is about 31,000, out of about 170,000 whose names are registered with the Public Institution for Social Security (PIFSS), reports Al-Rai daily.

The sources indicated that women control the majority of the segment that receives a retirement pension of less than 1,000 dinars, with a rate of approximately 95 percent of the total beneficiaries.

The sources noted that the total number of insured persons subject to the "insurance" system is about 640,000, distributed as 430,000 insured, and about 132,000 living pensioners, in addition to about 75,000 who are entitled to a retirement pension.

The institute pointed out that according to the recorded data, the average pension amounted to about 1,300 dinars, which means that the average value of pensions paid monthly was approximately 221 million dinars per month.

The sources pointed out that the average monthly pension varies from one sector to another, as it reaches about 1450 dinars for those insured in the government sector, to about 1850 dinars for those insured in the oil sector, and to about 1650 dinars for those insured in the private sector.

Regarding the increase of 23 dinars for the pensions of retirees, the sources indicated that it is a periodic increase, and its entitlement is not linked to any targeted improvement in the salaries of retirees.

## MP submits bill for equality between land plots owners

'Allow more floors on 400 sq mt land'

By Saeed Mahmoud Saleh  
 Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, Aug 16: MP Hamdan Al-Azmi has submitted a bill to amend the decree issued on May 13, 1979 to organize construction works.**

The bill allows the owners of plots measuring 400 square meters or less to build houses consisting of four floors with a maximum height of 20 meters. The current decree limits the number of floors for all houses to three with a maximum height of 15 meters.

Al-Azmi pointed out that his bill is aimed at ensuring equality between the owners of plots with maximum area of 400 square meters and those who have larger plots.

#### Queries

On the other hand, MP Fahd Falah Bin Jame'e has forwarded queries to Minister of Health Ahmed Abdulwahab Al-Awadhi about the mechanism for organizing the work of the Medical Accountability Authority.

He wants to know the number of complaints submitted to the authority since its establishment, measures taken in this regard, if any of the complaints were set aside without conducting investigations, number of sub-committees, names and qualifications of the members, copies

of the minutes of their meetings, number of appointed and seconded employees at the authority, procedures adopted to fill up vacant supervisory positions, if the authority imposed penalties on health institutions proven to have violated the relevant law, list of these institutions, description of their violations and penalties, names of the members of the grievance committee and how long it takes for the committee to respond to complaints.

#### Maintenance

MP Hani Shams asked Minister of Commerce and Industry and State Minister for Sports and Youth Muhammad Othman Al-Aiban about the number of football pitches at the Public Authority for Sports which need maintenance, if the sports clubs have corresponded with the authority about such need, copies of correspondences, if the authority did not respond to the request of sports clubs, date of the last maintenance works and annual budget for this purpose.

MP Saad Al-Khanfour submitted a proposal to form a public authority that will be tasked to allocate five percent of the country's land for housing projects. He said the committee should be chaired by a deputy prime minister and the concerned ministers should be the members – housing, public works, municipality and cabinet affairs. He also suggested giving the committee chairman the authority to add more members to represent other concerned institutions like the Environment Public Authority, General Traffic Department and Kuwait National Petroleum Corporation.

He revealed the objectives of the committee include settling disputes between public institutions regarding the housing issue and removing obstacles to the implementation of housing projects.

### Security cams to monitor handicraft areas

### Decision to shut eateries, cafes at 1 am cancelled

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 16: Due to the wave of dissatisfaction and criticism by entrepreneurs and owners of small enterprises regarding the decision to close the restaurants and cafes in Qurain Market, Ardiya Industrial Area and the handicraft areas at 1:00 am, the concerned authorities have rescinded this decision, reports Al-Qabas daily.

Rapporteur of the parliament's Business Environment and Small Enterprises Committee MP Hamad Al-Medlej announced that an agreement had been reached with the Minister of Interior and Minister of State for Municipal Affairs to cancel the decision to close commercial activities in handicraft areas at 1:00am. They instead agreed to replace the decision with the installation of security cameras in order to preserve security in those areas.

After the committee meeting on Monday, he explained that agreement was reached with the Minister of Interior and the Public Authority for Manpower concerning several issues that will be discussed by the Cabinet's Economic

Committee in preparation for approval.

Earlier, the Ministry of Interior had sent the Kuwait Municipality an official letter, stating that it proposes the closing time of shops located in handicraft areas to be exactly 1:00 am, with the exception of shops that have external surveillance cameras in their vicinity. Also, shops with more than one front entrances and a separate service door solely for delivery orders only are exempted, provided they do not sell directly, or deliver within the boundaries of the site "especially car parks", and must have all the main doors closed.

In its issue of July 23, 2023, the daily published the complaints of entrepreneurs and owners of small projects about the decision to close shops in craft and industrial areas after 1:00 am.

They indicated that 200 projects will be affected by this decision, adding that the hot weather in the country prompts visitors of restaurants and cafes to go out at night. The municipality had issued an administrative decision, which was published in the official gazette (Kuwait

Today) on July 16, 2023, in which it specified the working hours of commercial stores located in craft areas to end at 1:00am, with some exceptions, which were mentioned above.

A number of owners of small projects reaffirmed the need for their businesses to be promoted and supported, and to provide them with more facilities.

They explained that the negative impact from stopping commercial businesses after 1:00 am may be partial to the owners of medium-level restaurants who may be able to compensate for their losses through the delivery service. However, the higher impact will befall on the owners of small restaurants who must meet the conditions of compulsory closure, as they rely on direct sales, and usually have only one outlet for sale, which is the storefront.

The entrepreneurs stressed that supporting the owners of small projects is an urgent necessity to diversify the national economy and revitalize the business environment.

# diwaniya ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

## 'Project can usher in transformative advancement in healthcare system'

"THE focus of our present article may appear to be rooted in the past, yet it simultaneously presents both old and novel aspects. What's fresh in this context is the success stories emanating from domestic medical travel within neighboring countries," columnist **Dr. Issa Muhammad Al-Amiri** wrote for *Al-Anba* daily.

"This trend compels us to examine the state's approach, juxtaposing it against the perceived squandering of resources through continued expenditures on overseas treatments.

"The recent case of Saudi Arabia is noteworthy, which approved the establishment of a huge medical city that includes specialized hospitals and related investments for everyone who desires treatment from outside the Kingdom, is something that the state should use in establishing projects along these lines.



Dr Issa Al-Amiri

"Conversely, it's worth noting that this notion has surfaced in our own nation previously, advocated by various quarters including parliamentary representatives and societal voices.

"However, its realization has been hampered by numerous irrational hurdles. This situation underscores a prime opportunity for the state to engage in significant projects of this nature, potentially redirecting resources that could be better utilized. Such a move could be seen as both prudent budgetary management and compassionate stewardship of finances. On another note, the ensuing success of this endeavor could set a vital precedent in terms of development and project execution, mitigating irregularities and improprieties often stemming from the geographic disconnect between service provision and oversight, a situation currently inherent in overseas medical treatment efforts.

"While this project might seem like an aspiration for many, the convergence of willpower and determination could potentially transform it into a palpable reality. The voices advocating for such an initiative must find resonance within the community, strategically presented to the relevant authorities.

"This concept could usher in a transformative advancement in the national healthcare system, alleviating various challenges. The feasibility of such a venture hinges on the nation's existing capabilities, channeled through the Ministry of Health. With available resources and medical expertise, both domestic and international, this project's inception phase could capitalize on international talent to jumpstart its implementation.

The pivotal question remains: Will the state lend a receptive ear to this endeavor? Time will reveal the outcome."

### Also:

"Who can rectify the salt that's gone bad? Who will mend education if the teacher is tainted? And who will restore a nation if its representative is corrupt? The answer lies in the power of deterrent punishment – the essential solution. Without it, the decline and breakdown will persist across all facets of the nation, its institutions, and its connections. So, let's not undermine the vital role of educators. Education bears a lofty message, capable of elevating nations through reform, or, if corrupted, leading them to downfall," columnist **Talal Abdul Karim Al-Arab** wrote for *Al-Jarida* daily.

"The impactful educational actions stem from a country geographically and ethnically distant, yet they are lessons that should be embraced by those entrusted with the realm of education in our own sphere.

"Recent news sheds light on the head of Tajikistan's Sughd Province Education Department, Madina Nabi-zoda, who took resolute action by dismissing 61 school principals due to incompetence.

"These principals failed aptitude tests and were unable to respond to even the simplest curriculum-related questions. Such strong, effective measures are what shield future generations. We must acknowledge the accomplishment, while recognizing that not all countries possess deputies of such caliber.

"In contrast, our own experiences have revealed shortcomings. When the Kuwaiti minister of education attempted to discipline two educators involved in forgery, he faced resistance from Kuwait's deputies. Some even advocated for legal constraints to punish counterfeiter.

"Instead of applauding these efforts, they responded with threats of interrogation. When left to his own devices, the minister resigned. Similarly, in Kuwait's Ministry of Education, revelations surfaced about teachers and department heads engaged in egregious cheating during exams for supervisory and administrative positions. The aftermath of this scandal remains uncertain, raising questions about whether effective action has been taken.

"These cases are not isolated; they recur annually. Such misconduct by those tasked with educating and inspiring generations poses a grave threat to the future and quality of education. To combat this, stringent measures must be taken, extending even to the parents who bear the costs of cheating. The parents' involvement contributes to the degradation of educational outcomes.

"Just as tainted salt necessitates correction, a flawed education system requires rectification. And just as corrupt teachers jeopardize education, compromised representatives endanger the nation. Deterrent punishment stands as the efficacious antidote, safeguarding against ongoing decline and failure across all aspects of the nation.

"Therefore, the pivotal role of educators, especially within the realm of education, should never be underestimated; it should be recognized as more than just a function or sufficiency."



"The entire world celebrates the World Humanitarian Day on Aug 19 each year in honor of humanitarian

workers who face challenges and obstacles while performing relief tasks and continuous attempts to reach people in all countries and provide them assistance during crises such as torrents, floods, earthquakes, wars, conflicts and epidemics," columnist **Hind Al-Choumar** wrote for *Al-Anba* daily.

"Humanity is indivisible in terms of customs, traditions and societal ethics. This is part of morals promoted by monotheistic religions. Compassion for others, helping them and being kind to them are among the morals of a Muslim who cares for others.

"This date was chosen in memory of the late United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq Sergio Vieira de Mello who was assassinated on the same day in the Iraqi capital – Baghdad, along with 21 Iraqis and foreigners who were on a humanitarian mission in Iraq. He was assassinated in a booby-trapped car at the age of 55. In 2009, the United Nations decided to commemorate this day as a global day for humanitarian action.

"Humanitarian action is defined as an assessment that includes all humanitarian needs in the world, with the need to develop responsive plans to address difficult humanitarian situations like famine, fatal diseases, combating gender-based violence, and migration and displacement issues.

"Humanitarian work includes the technical, material, moral, scientific and economic volunteer efforts that an individual provides to others with the aim of advancing humanitarian issues. People can engage in several activities considered humanitarian work, the aim of which is to provide assistance to others, such as providing aid and assistance to the elderly, people with disabilities, and people with mental disorders and psychological problems."



"In the past, everyone complained about the rising prices of products due to the fact that Kuwait imports all commodities. Prices increase because of rising interest globally, which begins in America, followed by other countries and settles in Kuwaiti markets," columnist **Abdullah Al-Afassi** wrote for *Al-Rai* daily.

"No one could deny that inflation in Kuwait is imported and its effects cannot be ignored. The burden of inflation on citizens could be alleviated by taking a number of decisions that would reduce the intensity of the steady increase in prices due to the upward movement of global prices.

"Once again, no one is talking about isolating Kuwait from what happens in world markets – successive changes in commodity prices, or considering it an exceptional market whose price scale should not be compromised no matter happens in other parts of the world. Nevertheless, it would be useful to refer to a list of steps proposed by former ministers of Commerce and Industry in order to calm down local consumers regarding the upward movement of prices, considering the prices of consumer products keep on rising.

"These proposals include supporting importing companies and merchants to ease their burdens in return for not being associated with global price hikes and exempting basic commodities from customs duties, service fees and release fees, or at least temporarily reducing such fees for the main commodities, while facilitating import procedures and opening land, sea and air ports to goods.

"This is in addition to expanding commercial and investment agreements, especially in the field of food commodities and livestock, providing storage areas at reduced or subsidized prices, continuing the postponement of the implementation of the value added tax, temporary suspension of the profit margin of cooperative societies on some basic food commodities, provide temporary support for the shipment of basic commodities and reduction of shipping costs."



"Since the emergence of the corona crisis, the exodus of experienced and skilled workers has been continuing, especially the medical staff – the most important during such a crisis," columnist **Mazeed Al-Moasherji** wrote for *Al-Anba* daily.

"Whoever has a patient in any hospital today will realize the scale of the crisis, as there is global competition for the nursing and medical staff. Canada attracts everyone who has more than six years of experience in medical work. It opens the door for the worker and his entire family. It provides them with housing, free education and attractive salaries. This is also the case with Britain, hence, the shortage is about 50,000 nurses.

"In our country, the Ministry of Health does not hold on to them, as their salaries have not increased for years. On the other hand, the laws that prevent joining a family, and the inability of nurses to obtain residency for their children and doctors for their wives are decisions that need to be reconsidered! Every month dozens of nurses leave Kuwait and then go to other countries. This will lead to a health disaster if it continues.

"We realized that the government wants to rearrange the demographic structure, but this should not be up to the extent of closing the country to businessmen and company owners who want to invest here.

"Fouad Al-Arbash tweeted: He wanted to make an entry visa for an Indian merchant who owns the largest rice company in India and is listed on the stock exchange, worth hundreds of millions and has more than 60 branches. She was refused entry to Kuwait because she was born in 1994, she is young! Half an hour later, we met her in the Emirates!

"There, it is possible to put in place flexible laws that facilitate entry for those who want a business or private visit that prevents the conversion of a visa into a permanent residence. It is also possible to set fees for each additional member of the expatriate's family who wants to enter as the case in Saudi Arabia and the Emirates – an annual or monthly amount for each family member. This amount enters the State budget."

— Compiled by **Mai Elsoukary**

## Parliament Speaker condoles with Russian counterparts

## HH Amir condoles with India over flood victims

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 16, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent on Wednesday a cable of condolences to the President of India Droupadi Murmu, expressing grief over recent floods that caused several casualties and injuries.

In the cable, His Highness the Amir wished for the swift recovery of those injured in the floods and hoped for the safety and welfare of the leadership and people of India.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah also sent a cable of condolences to President Droupadi Murmu,

expressing grief over recent floods that caused several casualties and injuries. Also, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent a cable of condolences to President Droupadi Murmu, expressing grief over recent floods that caused several casualties and injuries.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Wednesday expressed sympathy and solidarity with the friendly Republic of India over flash floods in the north of the country where dozens of people perished or suffered injuries.

The ministry in a statement offered condolences to the republic, its friendly people and families of the injured

wishing them quick recovery.

Kuwait's National Assembly Speaker Ahmad Al-Saadoun on Tuesday sent a cable of condolences to Chairwoman of the Federation Council of the Russian Federation Valentina Matviyenko, and the Chairman of the State Duma Volodin Vyacheslav over the victims of an explosion at a gas station in Dagestan.

Earlier on Tuesday, the Russian (TASS) news agency announced that 35 people were killed, and 80 others wounded in a massive explosion at a gas station in the Republic of Dagestan of the North Caucasus.

## 10 beggars face deportation

### Taxi driver helps domestics flee from their sponsors

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 16: A collaborative operation conducted by three security divisions -- namely the Public Morals Protection Department, Farwaniya Security, and Residence Affairs Investigation -- has culminated in the arrest of ten women of various nationalities for begging, reports *Al-Anba* daily.

These arrests were made across multiple areas -- Farwaniya, Al-Firdous, Abdullah Al-Mubarak, and Al-Jahra.

A reliable security source disclosed that all the arrests took place in close proximity to markets and buildings. The detainees were subsequently subjected to administrative deportation procedures.

It was noted that these beggars were found in possession of varying amounts of money, which they admitted were the proceeds from their begging activities.

Additionally, measures aimed at non-Kuwaiti sponsors involve the revocation of their guarantees.

The Ministry of Interior has issued an appeal to the public, urging them to promptly report any instances of begging they observe via the emergency hotline 112, which operates 24 hours a day to receive reports.



**Taxi driver held:** The Public Morals Protection and Combating Trafficking in Persons Unit in the Criminal Investigation General Department at the Interior Ministry arrested an expatriate taxi driver for helping domestic workers escape from the homes of their sponsors and then make them work on hourly basis, reports *Al-Rai* daily.

The Public Relations and Security Media General Department revealed that the above-mentioned illegal act is carried out by unscrupulous individuals who receive commissions through the illegal employment of such workers.

The taxi driver was referred to the competent authority for legal action.



**Parlors, garage shut:** The Public Relations Department of the Kuwait Municipality announced that the Audit and Follow-up of Municipal Services department in the Ahmadi Municipality branch carried out an inspection tour in Mahboula, Mangaf and Fahaeel Industrial City, in cooperation with the Ministry of Interior, to ensure the extent to which markets and shops ad-



Al-Rai photo

Fire personnel during the rescue operation.

### Two workers rescued

Firefighting teams successfully rescued two workers who were stranded on scaffolding on the 27th floor of the Al Mirqab building.

According to a statement from the Public Relations and Media Department of the Kuwait Fire Force, the Central Operations Department received a communication on Wednesday morning regarding a scaffold malfunction at one of the commercial towers in the Al-Mirqab area, with two individuals trapped

on it. The Central Operations Department swiftly directed firefighting teams from the city and search and rescue centers to the reported location. Upon reaching the scene, the teams discovered that two individuals were stranded on the scaffold, which was positioned on the 27th floor of a 38-story building. The trapped workers were successfully rescued, and fortunately, the incident did not result in any major injuries.

## Amending terms of service 'reinstatement' for retirees

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 16, (KUNA): The Kuwait Fire Force has announced a revision to the eligibility criteria for enrollment in the re-service course available to Kuwait Fire Force employees (both non-commissioned officers and individuals). This alteration permits individuals who have retired or concluded their service to participate, provided their age does not exceed 55 years. This age limit applies regardless of the duration they have spent outside of service during their retirement period or after their service ended. These adjustments have been established in alignment with the prevailing procedures and specific regulations.

In a press release issued, Sun-

day, the force clarified that this initiative has been initiated in response to the directives of Sheikh Talal Khaled Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior. The intention behind these changes is to reinforce the fire department with experienced personnel who possess practical expertise. These individuals have previously served in the force, either through retirement or completion of their service.

The force further emphasized that this step aims to provide an avenue for those who aspire to rejoin the ranks of service. It recognizes the value of their accumulated practical experience and their potential contributions in the pursuit of serving the nation.

here to the municipality's terms and controls, reports *Al-Jarida* daily.

In this context, the Acting Director of the Ahmadi Municipality Branch, Saad Al Shaibah, explained the Audit and Follow-up of Municipal Services Department conducted a field tour in the Mahboula and Al Manqaf areas on shops and advertisement hoardings, and that resulted in the closure of two health parlors for exploiting these facilities for purposes other than what they were licensed for.

This is in addition to issuing

two citations. The department also closed a car repair garage in the Fahaeel Industrial City for operating without a license and a central market in the Mangaf area.

Al-Shaibah indicated the inspectors continue to monitor and follow up on violators of the rules and regulations in force in the municipality and take legal measures, explaining that the tours come within the framework of intensifying field inspection tours based on the directives of the Acting Director General of Kuwait Municipality, Saud Al-Dabbous.

## Limited fire stops work

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 16: Al-Khaffi Joint Operations announced that a limited fire occurred in the desalination heaters area at 7:00 pm last Thursday and was brought under control within a short time by the firefighting team from the joint operations, in line with the procedures followed during emergencies, reports *Al-Rai* daily.

The executive and operational departments that examined the accident confirmed that there were no injuries or human losses.

They also confirmed that no toxic gases or oil leaks were detected at the accident site.

The damages resulting from the fire were assessed, and work is underway to repair them as soon as possible to resume production operations.

## Saudi Arabia

### Continued from Page 1

This brief narration is necessary for the Arabs to realize that what the Emirati, Bahraini and Moroccan normalization agreements have achieved, and the relations between Israel, Qatar and the Sultanate of Oman is the right path that can grant the Palestinians their rights.

As for the rhetoric of the resistance countries and the lackeys of Iran, it is nothing more than speck of dust in the eyes, because there are malicious goals behind the Arab bloodshed, which have nothing to do with Palestine.

That is why today when reports are released about negotiations between Riyadh and Tel Aviv for normalization under the auspices of America, we say it is on point, if the information is true.

The Gulf states, with Saudi Arabia at the forefront, were the first to sup-

port the Palestinians, and to this day they are paying heavy prices for that.

Whereas the merchants of the cause spend what they get from aid on gambling tables. This of course indicates that these people do not seek to liberate their land!

## Fishermen seek

### Continued from Page 1

The Coast Guard officers, in coordination with the Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR), wait for the violating fishing vessels, seize them when they return, and refer them to the concerned authority.

In this regard, the Kuwait Fishermen Union expressed its regret that three Kuwaiti fishing vessels were looted on Tuesday.

It highlighted the continued vulner-

ability of Kuwaiti fishing vessels to looting and piracy in the territorial waters of Kuwait. It stressed the need for a quick solution to this dangerous situation.

## India, China

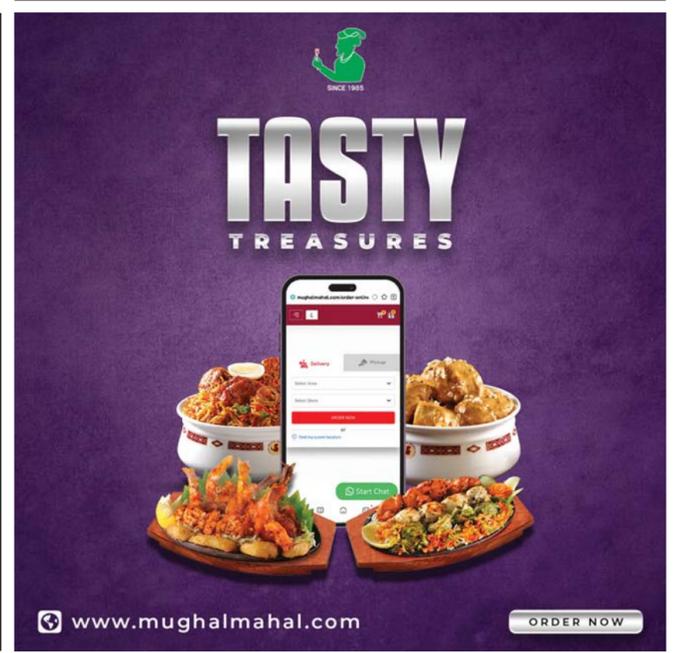
### Continued from Page 1

India and China fought a war over their border in 1962.

As its name suggests, it divides the areas of physical control rather than territorial claims.

According to India, the de facto border is 3,488 kilometers (2,167 miles) long, but China promotes a considerably shorter figure.

In all, China claims some 90,000 square kilometers (35,000 square miles) of territory in India's northeast, including Arunachal Pradesh with its mainly Buddhist population.



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# Supporting Kuwait-made products a gateway to diversifying economy

## Ventures stimulate SMEs growth

**KUWAIT CITY, Aug 16: Economists and industrialists have reached a consensus on the necessity of supporting the local product as a means to diversify the economy, reports Al-Qabas daily.**

Experts emphasize the importance of giving priority to local products in government tenders and projects, particularly as this encourages young individuals to establish productive industrial ventures that contribute to job creation. Additionally, it stimulates the growth of small and medium enterprises and promotes the creation of companies that add value to the economy.

Several industrialists highlighted the importance of providing robust support to local industries to ensure their growth and development. They cautioned against measures that could reduce the preference given to local products, asserting that such actions could have negative repercussions for Kuwaiti factories, affecting both productivity and pricing. They pointed out that many countries employ various measures to protect and promote their local industries, such as imposing protective duties on imported goods or prioritizing domestic products in projects.

Amid discussions about restricting local factory products while customs duties are imposed on Kuwaiti goods in some Gulf and regional markets, industrialists expressed their opposition to such measures.

Hussein Ali Al-Kharafi, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Federation of Kuwait Industries, emphasized that giving preference to local products in government tenders is not a new concept. The government has been prioritizing Kuwaiti factories for years, recognizing their significance in supporting the national economy and fostering social stability. Al-Kharafi explained that the percentage of preference for local products is outlined in the Tenders Law of 2016,



Hussein Ali Al-Kharafi



Saadoun Abdullah Ali



Abdullah Al-Bajjan



Nasser Badr Al-Sharhan

which was amended in 2019 to increase the preference percentage from 15% to 20%, reflecting the government's recognition of the crucial role played by local industries.

Al-Kharafi also noted that while many Gulf countries favor their own products in projects, Kuwait has been moving in the opposite direction by imposing restrictions on the sector. He urged the government and the National Assembly to focus on supporting industries and encouraging their growth through the implementation of existing laws that prioritize local products.

Saadoun Abdullah Ali, former Chairman of the Board of Directors of Qurain Petro-

chemical Industries Company, stressed the necessity for the government to recognize the importance of the Kuwaiti product and prioritize it in actual tender processes. He mentioned the fluctuating standards set by project consultants, which sometimes result in the exclusion of Kuwaiti products due to deviations from required specifications. He suggested that the Tenders Law be revised to establish clear criteria for incorporating Kuwaiti industrial products in public tenders.

Abdullah Al-Bajjan, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Kuwait Food Federation, emphasized the importance of supporting the local industry and cautioned against measures that could reduce preference for local products. He pointed out that certain countries have imposed fees on Kuwaiti exports while the same does not happen in Kuwait, and called for protection and support for the local industry on various fronts.

Nasser Badr Al-Sharhan, a member of the Board of Directors of the Federation of Kuwait Industries, emphasized that many countries globally prioritize and protect their industrial products, giving them precedence in local supplies and tenders. He highlighted that supporting the industrial sector is crucial for the national economy and for providing employment opportunities for citizens.

Al-Kharafi emphasized that several National Assembly members have shown support for the local product through proposed amendment laws, which reflect their commitment to elevate the status of the local industry and channel funds from state projects towards local investments rather than overseas ventures.

Al-Sharhan noted that Kuwaiti industries have consistently demonstrated their resilience in times of crisis, acting as a dependable source to cover local market demands for essential products during emergencies, such as the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

## CMA, MoCI ink accord

# Capital Markets prohibits delisted companies from hiding their data

**KUWAIT CITY, Aug 16:** Simultaneously initiated by supervisory actions in both directions, a recent agreement has been established between officials from the Capital Markets Authority (CMA) and leaders of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI). This accord aims to facilitate comprehensive coordination of information exchange between the two entities, particularly in terms of joint reporting, whether pertaining to companies or their executives, reports Al-Rai daily quoting sources.

Following multiple meetings between the involved parties, the agreement stipulates that the Ministry of Commerce will promptly notify the Capital Markets Authority of punitive measures and decisions taken against both listed and unlisted companies, along with their executives, once these actions are approved by the Ministry. This process ensures a standardized exchange of information between the two bodies. Consequently, the Ministry will swiftly provide the Authority with updated company data, encompassing changes in ownership, board composition, and other procedural modifications that affect the company database, specifically those with significant implications.

Furthermore, this collaboration mandates that the Ministry of Commerce immediately informs the Capital Markets Authority about any penalties imposed on companies and their officials. Additionally, the Ministry will furnish updated records from the company register, encompassing capital movements, whether upward or downward.

The sources emphasized that harmonizing regulatory information between the two entities guarantees that the Capital Markets Authority can take necessary actions if new data registered with the Ministry is not mirrored within its own records, necessitating an update.

A pertinent query arises: does this coordination imply that no prior information exchange existed between the Capital Markets Authority and the Ministry of Commerce?

Addressing this, sources indicated that practical oversight exercised by the Capital Markets Authority uncovered a communication gap between it and the Ministry of Commerce regarding certain data. This lacuna requires both parties to collaborate in bridging the gap. It was revealed that this disparity relates to discrepancies between the Capital Markets Authority's database and the corresponding records maintained by the Ministry of Commerce. This is due to instances where the Ministry alters company records or enforces punitive measures without promptly notifying the Capital Markets Authority. Consequently, there might be two sets of regulatory information, one of which remains outdated.

But how can the Capital Markets Authority address this quandary, given its regulatory and supervisory mandate to ensure immediate disclosure of any new relevant data, including changes to boards of directors, capital movements, and penalties?

Moreover, sources indicated that the informational predicament faced by the Capital Markets Authority predominantly pertains to companies temporarily suspended from trading or those delisted, as well as companies suspended from trading due to outstanding fees. These decisions fall under the purview of Capital Markets Authority regulations but do not equate to revoking the companies' licenses. Instead, these companies remain legally operational entities under the Ministry of Commerce, updating their records in line with established conditions and resolutions passed by their general assemblies.



The Guest Show poster.

## Maha Hassan on TGS

This Thursday, 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 began 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.

Sources noted that this scenario might encourage some penalized companies to withhold their updated data from the Capital Markets Authority and merely re-register with the Ministry. Their rationale rests on the belief that they have exited the scope of Capital Markets Authority oversight.

These sources pointed out that while the actions of many such companies might contravene Capital Markets Authority requirements, it has become a "fait accompli", prompting the authority to address the information gap via an integrated temporary link with the Ministry of Commerce. This mechanism ensures prompt notification to the Capital Markets Authority regarding any changes in records concerning both listed and unlisted companies, as well as their executives.

In the event that companies removed from trading persist in not notifying the Capital Markets Authority of updated data, the Authority will mitigate reliance on outdated information by establishing comprehensive information sharing with the Ministry of Commerce. This measure is particularly vital for data that necessitates continual supervisory updates.

Sources indicated that these scheduled reporting instances will be communicated through joint emails between the two parties. These communications will facilitate the timely exchange of required data. It is expected that this collaboration will encompass the sharing of decisions made by the Capital Markets Authority against companies under its supervision with the Ministry of Commerce.

## One of Kuwait's leading actors

# Sadaaqa presents Dawood Hussein

**KUWAIT CITY, Aug 16:** Sadaaqa, the show that documents and celebrates India-Kuwait friendship, is proud to present the prodigiously talented Dawood Hussein. Mr Hussein is one of Kuwait's leading actors and comedians who has enthralled audiences across the Middle East for over four decades. Few can lay claim to the kind of popularity he enjoys in the region.

Apart from acting, Mr Hussein has also hosted several shows, including the very popular 'Your Weight in Gold' broadcast by Abu Dhabi satellite channel. During Ramadan, he is a visible figure on Kuwait television on a show called 'gergian' that has been running for decades. He has acted in films from across the Arab world, including Egypt, UAE, Syria and Lebanon. Mr Hussein's professional journey began in 1977. Performing arts is a challenging field in Kuwait, and he navigated that with grace. Kuwait and India have been inextricably connected for centuries long before the involvement of the West. The connections go back to the times of the Indus Valley civilization and reflect amongst others in culture, language, food, and trade.

Dawood Hussein's journey as an actor has been deeply influenced by India and its films. He rose from ordinary circumstances and grew up watching Hindi films both at home and at the Al Firdaus theatre. Watch-



Sadaaqa poster

ing films, observing the actors, and following their diction and mannerisms was one way the young Kuwaiti boy dealt with the tedium of everyday life. He adopted an Indian neighbour as his 'Ma' and went on to pick up fluent Urdu from her and his Indian brothers.

Here in this episode of Sadaaqa, he speaks about Hindi films and their influence on his life as an actor, Hindi film music of the seventies and eighties and how the music and rhythm never left him and the importance of the close relationship between Indians and Kuwaitis.

# Al-Mutla'a power supply before year ends: MEW

**KUWAIT CITY, Aug 16:** An official source in the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy revealed that the ministry will finish lighting the entire city of Al-Mutla'a before the end of this year, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The MEW source explained that work of building power stations and supplying current to the city is proceeding according to set timetable, in addition to the close follow-up by the ministry's officials to complete the work on time.

The source told the daily that MEW has given priority to delivering power supply to the areas whose owners have obtained building permits, in order to ensure the

completion of the required infrastructure, and the others whose owners have not obtained permits have been included in the next phase.

The source stated that the ministry is working hard, in coordination with the relevant state authorities, to supply power to the entire Mutla'a city according to the plan and to provide the necessary infrastructure services to provide energy to the owners of the plots, in addition to the various government buildings in the region.

He explained that this comes in line with the Prime Minister's directives to quickly complete the operation and handover of public buildings, which serve the residents of Al-Mutla'a.



# August

## Room Promotion

**Weekdays (Saturday - Wednesday)**

Queen Cabana (2 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.	2 Bedroom Chalet (4 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.
<b>NOW</b>	<b>NOW</b>
<b>BHD 57.173/-net</b>	<b>BHD 128.000/-net</b>

**Weekends (Thursday & Friday)**

Queen Cabana (2 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.	2 Bedroom Chalet (4 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.
<b>NOW</b>	<b>NOW</b>
<b>BHD 65.000/-net</b>	<b>BHD 145.000/-net</b>

Promo period from 1<sup>st</sup> - 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023
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## USD stands at KD 0.307

The exchange rate of the US dollar on Wednesday stood at KD 0.307 while the Euro dropped by 0.05 percent to KD 0.335, compared to yesterday's rates.

The Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) said in its daily bulletin that the British sterling pound stood at KD 0.390, the Swiss franc at 0.350 and the Japanese Yen at KD 0.002.

The CBK publishes daily average exchange rates that do not necessarily reflect actual prices of the currencies' trade for the day. (KUNA)

## Kuwait chairs GAFTA facilitation meeting

Trade facilitation committee for the Greater Arab Free Trade Area (GAFTA) held Wednesday its 14th meeting chaired by Kuwaiti Finance Ministry Acting Undersecretary Talal Al-Nemash.

Chief of economic integration directorate at the League of Arab States, Bahjat Abu Al-Nasser, affirmed in inaugural speech the league's continual support to efforts developing the free trade area.

Last September, the league's economic and social council issued a

decision approving several complimentary appendices to the executive program, clarified Abu Al-Nasser, adding that trade facilitation is part of these appendices.

The meeting is set to handle, over two days, observing commitments of Arab members of the World Trade Organization, providing technical support to non-members, and examining state models in implementing the trade facilitation agreement presented by Oman, Qatar and Egypt. (KUNA)

## drilling rig arrives in Lebanese waters

An offshore drilling rig arrived at its destination in the Mediterranean Sea off Lebanon's coast and will start operations in the coming weeks to search for gas, cabinet ministers said Wednesday.

The rig is expected to begin drilling this month in Lebanese waters near the border with Israel after the two countries reached a deal last year on their maritime border. Lebanon and Israel have formally been at war since Israel's creation

in 1948. Cash-strapped Lebanon hopes that future gas discoveries will help the small Mideast nation pull itself out of the worst economic and financial crisis in its modern history.

Caretaker Minister of Transport Ali Hamie wrote on X, the platform formerly known as Twitter, that the rig arrived Wednesday morning at the location where it is scheduled to begin work. The rig faces the southern port city of Tyre. (AP)

## Market Movements

16-08-2023

	Change	Closing pts		Change	Closing pts
EGYPT - EGX 30	+97.18	18,062.50	SAUDI - Tadawul	-20.12	11,392.76
PHILIPPINES - PSEI	+74.18	6,410.09	UAE - DFM	-5.55	4,045.64
			JAPAN - Nikkei	-472.07	31,766.82
			PAKISTAN - KSE 100	-443.63	48,151.23

# Business

## Finance leaders at COP28 recognized private finance flows need to grow much faster

# Economists set out crucial next steps to reform int'l climate finance

ABU DHABI, UAE, Aug 16, (PR Newswire): A two-day meeting of world leading economists and finance leaders convened by the COP28 Presidency has delivered consensus on the key next steps needed to establish a new framework for international climate finance and to drive progress at COP28 and beyond to COP29 and COP30.

World-leading economists from the Independent High-Level Expert Group (IHLEG) met with figures from leading global institutions including the World Bank, IMF, ECF and IFC, the COP28 and COP27 Presidencies and UN Climate Change High-Level Champions for two days of talks in Abu Dhabi from 15-16 August.

Those assembled agreed that they will come to COP28 with recommendations on a new framework for international climate finance, as well as a definitive roadmap on how to implement the recommendations.

### Debt distress

Particular areas of focus for the new framework will include addressing debt distress in vulnerable countries, and the role of the private sector in delivering increased finance. Here, the group recognised that although private finance flows are growing, they need to grow much faster to meet the \$2.4 trillion USD total investment estimated to be needed annually by 2030 to address climate change in emerging markets and developing economies.

The roadmap will be designed to guide all institutions - UN agencies, the IMF, WB, regional MDBs, national governments and the private sector - around short and long-term plans to achieve the Paris Agreement. Agreement on the roadmap at COP28 will allow leaders across the public, private and third sectors to drive forward a clear plan of action on international climate finance.

All those in the meetings were unanimous in their agreement that finance is fundamental to enabling the delivery of solutions to enable the transition to a net zero, climate-resilient future. They also agreed that the primary focus of their work would be to rapidly increase international climate finance between now and the end of the decade to support emerging markets and developing economies mitigation and adaptation initiatives.

The COP-28 President-Designate Dr Sultan Al-Jaber opened the meetings with

a clear call to action for those attending to deliver "a detailed action-oriented framework and tangible recommendations that lead to real results."

Following the meeting, he commented: "For too long, climate finance has divided the international community and held back progress in tackling climate change and supporting countries most impacted by it. But climate finance is the issue that lies at the core of the COP28 agenda because finance is how we transform goals into reality."

"The time for action is right now. I would like to thank everyone who attended the IHLEG meetings, and for their focus and determination in developing a new framework for climate finance. This new framework needs to be comprehensive. It needs to cover both adaptation and mitigation. And it needs to unlock a supercharged stream of private capital. All forms of finance must be made more available, more accessible, and more affordable. MDBs must be adequately capitalized and provide much more concessional finance to lower risk and bring more private capital to the table. And we need to explore innovative new mechanisms for managing currency risk. I am confident that the assembled experts who have devoted their time to this effort, will find solutions to unlock climate finance."

Lord Nicholas Stern, co-chair of the IHLEG, said: "These meetings have proved to be very fruitful, in large measure due to the leadership of Dr Sultan and the support from his team. We are all in no doubt of the urgency of the challenges, of the scale of the problems that we must tackle, and of the global action necessary to rise to these challenges. This is a moment where all stakeholders must step up, including the MDBs, their shareholders, and the private sector. We will continue to work with the COP28 Presidency to drive forward in the weeks ahead."

Dr Vera Songwe, co-chair of the IHLEG, also noted: "Over the last few months every corner of the world has been hit by a climate event. We must act fast, collectively and at scale to turn these climate disruptions into a growth opportunity for people and planet. The IHLEG group, the COP28 president and all the esteemed colleagues gathered here agree that raising the \$2.4 trillion will not be sufficient if we do not accelerate implementation. I look forward to a COP28

# Wall Street steady a day after latest Aug tumble

## Asia shares decline

NEW YORK, Aug 16, (AP): Wall Street was drifting Wednesday and stocks were mixed a day after their latest tumble in what's been a messy August.

The S&P 500 was 0.1% lower in midday trading, tacking bit more onto its prior day's loss of 1.2%. The Dow Jones Industrial Average was up 27 points, or 0.1%, at 34,973, as of noon Eastern time, and the Nasdaq composite was 0.5% lower.

Retailers Target and TJX, the company behind T.J. Maxx and Marshalls, were pushing upward on the market. Target rose 3.2%, and TJX climbed 4.9% after both reported stronger profit for the spring than analysts expected.

They were working to offset a drop of 3.8% for Brinker International, which runs Chili's restaurants. It also reported stronger profit than expected, but its revenue fell short of forecasts.

Wall Street has generally been retrenching this month on several concerns, including worries that torrid gains made this year through July were overdone and that interest rates may stay high for longer.

The Federal Reserve may offer more clues about where interest rates are heading this afternoon, when it releases the minutes from its latest meeting. That's when the Fed hiked its main interest rate to the highest level in more than two decades in hopes of further smothering high inflation.

### Cutting rates

Hopes are still relatively high that last month's rate hike may prove to be the last of this cycle and that the Fed will begin cutting rates early next year. That would give markets a boost because elevated rates cool inflation by slowing the entire economy and hurting prices for investments, raising the risk of a recession.

But the Fed has been adamant that it wants to fully extinguish the worst inflation in decades, and a surprisingly strong report on U.S. retail sales Tuesday suggested upward pressure still exists. So while strong economic reports calm long-held worries about a possible recession, they could also end up keeping rates higher for longer.

Reports on Wednesday morning showed that U.S. industrial production improved by more than economists expected last month. Homebuilders also broke ground on more homes.

Treasury yields have been generally climbing as reports have painted a picture of a still solid economy. That pressures stocks because when safe bonds are paying more in interest, investors feel less need to take risks with stocks and other investments.

The yield on the 10-year Treasury was holding steady at

4.22% after erasing an earlier dip. The 10-year yield helps set rates for mortgages and other important loans.

The two-year Treasury yield, which more closely tracks expectations for the Fed, dipped to 4.95% from 4.96% late Tuesday.

On Wall Street, Coinbase Global's stock swung after it said it plans to offer the trading of futures contracts for cryptocurrencies soon to eligible U.S. customers after receiving a federal regulatory approval. After rising in the morning, it flipped to a loss of 0.7% as crypto prices dipped.

Progressive jumped 9% for the biggest gain in the S&P 500 after reporting its results for July, and other insurers also rallied to help lead the market.

On the losing end was Intel, which fell 2.8%. It and Tower Semiconductor agreed to call off Intel's \$5.4 billion buyout of the Israeli chip maker after the deal faced resistance from Chinese regulators.

Agilent Technologies fell 2.6% despite reporting stronger profit for the latest quarter than analysts expected. Its forecast, including revenue for the full year, fell short of expectations. It pointed to a challenging economy, particularly in China.

In stock markets abroad, indexes were mixed across Europe. Stocks were down more sharply in Asia, where worries are high about a faltering economic recovery in China.

Stocks fell 1.4% in Hong Kong, 1.8% in Seoul, 1.5% in Tokyo and 0.8% in Shanghai.

### Europe

At midday in Europe, France's CAC 40 edged up 0.1%. Germany's DAX rose 0.2% and Britain's FTSE 100 slipped 0.4%.

In energy trading, benchmark U.S. crude rose 24 cents to \$81.23 a barrel. The price for a barrel of U.S. crude oil dropped \$1.52 to \$80.99

### Asia

Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 dropped 1.5% to finish at 31,766.82. Australia's S&P/ASX 200 dove 1.5% to 7,195.20. South Korea's Kospi dipped 1.8% to 2,525.64. Hong Kong's Hang Seng slipped 1.4% to 18,329.30, and the Shanghai Composite lost 0.8% to 3,150.13.

### Oil

Brent crude, the international standard, added 22 cents to \$85.11 a barrel.

### Currencies

In currency trading, the U.S. dollar rose to 145.74 Japanese yen from 145.57 yen. The euro cost \$1.0913, up slightly from \$1.0904.

New FAA rules allow it, but planes largely avoid it

## Who wants to fly over Taliban-held Afghanistan?

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates, Aug 16, (AP): Two years after the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan, the United States has begun easing rules that could allow commercial airlines to fly over the country in routes that cut time and fuel consumption for East-West travel.

But those shortened flight routes for India and Southeast Asia raise questions never answered during the Taliban's previous rule from the 1990s to the months after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks.

### Behavior

How, if at all, do you deal with the Taliban as they block women from schools and jobs, and engage in behavior described by United Nations experts as potentially akin to "gender apartheid"? Can airlines manage the risk of flying in uncontrolled airspace over a country where an estimated 4,500 shoulder-launched anti-aircraft weapons still lurk? And what happens if you have an emergency and need to land suddenly?

Who wants to fly over such a country? The OPSGroup, an organization for the aviation industry, recently offered a simple answer: "No one!"

"There's no ATC service across the entire country, there's a seemingly endless list of surface-to-air weaponry they might start shooting at you if you fly too low, and if you have to divert then good luck with the Taliban," the group wrote in an



In this, Sept. 9, 2021 file photo, Taliban flags fly at the airport in Kabul, Afghanistan. Two years on from the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan, the United States has begun easing rules that could allow commercial airlines to fly over the country in routes that cut time and burned fuel for East-West travel. (AP)

advisory, using an acronym for air traffic control. Still, the possibility of overflights resuming would have a major impact on carriers.

Though landlocked, Afghanistan's position in central Asia means it sits along the most direct routes for those traveling from India to Europe and America. After the Taliban takeover of Kabul on Aug. 15, 2021, civil aviation simply stopped, as ground controllers no longer managed the airspace. Fears about anti-

aircraft fire, particularly after the 2014 shootdown of Malaysian Airlines Flight 17 over Ukraine, saw authorities around the world order their commercial airliners out.

In the time since, airlines largely curve around Afghanistan's borders. Flights rush through Afghan airspace for only a few minutes while over the sparsely populated Wakhan Corridor, a narrow panhandle that juts out of the east of the country between Tajikistan and Pakistan, be-

fore continuing on their way.

But those diversions add more time to flights - which mean the aircraft burns more jet fuel, a major expense for any carrier. That's why a decision in late July by the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration caught the industry's eye when it announced flights above 32,000 feet (9,750 meters) "may resume due to diminished risks to U.S. civil aviation operations at those altitudes."

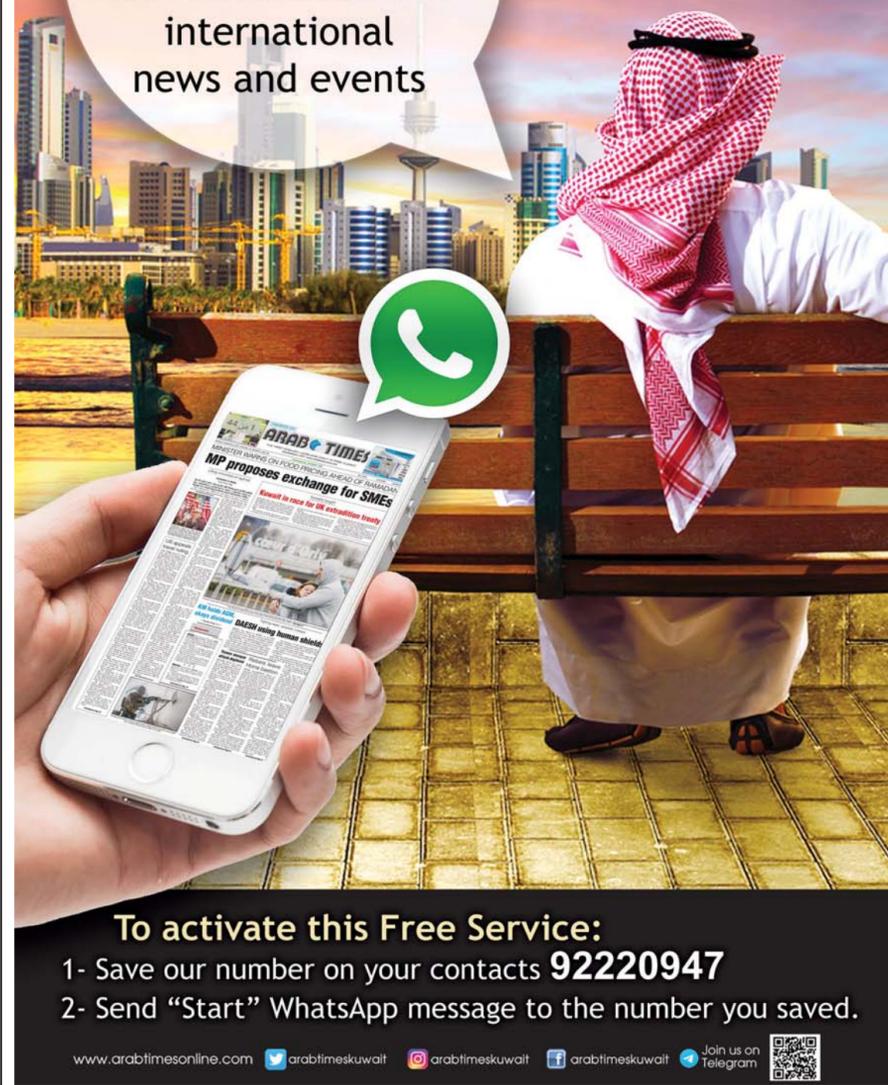
The FAA, which oversees rules for America-based airlines, referred questions about what fueled the decision to the State Department. The State Department did not respond to requests for comment. However, a State Department envoy has met multiple times with Taliban officials since the U.S. and NATO withdrawal from Afghanistan.

Taliban officials likewise did not respond to repeated requests for comment from The Associated Press over the lifting of the restrictions.

For now, outside of Afghan and Iranian carriers, it does not appear that any airline is taking chances over the country. Part of that comes from the risk of militant fire, as Afghanistan has been awash in aircraft-targeting missiles since the CIA armed mujahedeen fighters to fight the Soviet Union in the 1980s. Afghanistan also may still have Soviet-era KS-19 anti-aircraft guns, said Dylan Lee Lehrke, an analyst at the open-source intelligence firm Janes.

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**Italy's public debt exceeds \$3 trn**

Italy's public debt rose more than USD 3.1 trillion, of which Italian household has a quarter, the central bank of Italy (Bancaditalia) said Wednesday. The value of the state's public debt hit approximately 28.43 billion euros (USD 31.34 billion) last June, an increase of 27.8 billion euros (USD 30.7 billion) compared with last May, the bank added in a memo. The rise in debt shows the increased liquidity in treasury in June, it said, adding that this increase included the overall im-

pact of interest and margins on issuing, restoring and returning the securities related to inflation and exchange rate standing at USD 1.43 as a whole. The value of the Italian household debt stood at 26.5 percent and non-financial companies at 10.9 percent, it stated. Meanwhile, tax revenues assessed in the state's budget in June reached 38.2 billion euros (USD 42.1 billion), a rise of 6.1 percent compared with the same month of last year, it revealed. (KUNA)

Intel will terminate a \$5.4 billion deal to acquire Israeli chip manufacturer Tower Semiconductor after China failed to sign off on the deal amid rising tensions with the United States. It was a mutual decision between Intel and Tower, the companies said Wednesday. Intel said that the deal was terminated "due to the inability to obtain in a timely manner the regulatory approvals required under the merger agreement." Intel Corp. will pay Tower a termination fee of \$353 million, the U.S. semiconductor giant said.

The deal required regulatory approval from several regulators worldwide including China, but Chinese regulators did not greenlight the deal by the Aug. 15 transaction deadline, even after Intel CEO Patrick Gelsinger traveled to China last month in a bid to win them over. The scuttled deal between the two companies comes amid increasing U.S.-China tensions, particularly as the U.S. has tightened export controls and imposed restrictions aimed at crippling China's ability to purchase and manu-

facture advanced chips. In response, China's antitrust regulator, the State Administration for Market Regulation, appears to have dragged its feet on approving mergers involving American companies, such as the Intel-Tower deal. Intel aimed to close the deal by the first quarter of the year, but later extended the deadline after it failed to receive approval from China. Intel hoped that its acquisition of Tower would expand its manufacturing capacity and open up growth opportunities for the firm in U.S., Israel, Italy and Japan. (AP)

# 'Bidenomics' delivered a once-in-generation investment

It shows the pros and cons of policymaking

**WASHINGTON, Aug 16, (AP): There are so many dots on the maps they blur into blobs - each one reflecting trillions of public and private dollars flowing in the U.S. this past year to build thousands of roads, bridges and manufacturing projects in communities large and small, in states red and blue.**

They include an electric vehicle "battery belt" of manufacturing stretching from Michigan to Georgia, semiconductor fabrication plants in Arizona, Texas, Ohio and New York and broadband coming to Appalachia. Taken together, they represent President Joe Biden's ambitious attempt to use the levers of government to chart a new era of domestic manufacturing, modernizing the U.S. to compete in the 21st century. Packaged as "Bidenomics" by the White House, the effort is the product of three major bills approved in the last Congress that are also the president's hoped-for roadmap for reelection. Republicans have balked at what they said was unwarranted federal spending. The debate between those two views could go a long way toward determining who wins the White House and control of Congress in 2024.

On the ground, it's a mix of the promise and pitfalls of domestic policymaking beginning to take shape across the country.

"It's this whole new world of opportunity," said Monte Shaw, executive director of the Iowa Renewable Fuels Association, who said firms are investing millions of dollars to upgrade facilities and transform the ethanol industry.

Much like the development of the federal highway system in the 1950s or the space race to the moon in the 1960s, the undertaking is once in a generation. More recently, presidents have tapped Congress to deliver on their vision for social or fiscal policy, with the Affordable Care Act, or Obamacare, a decade ago and Trump's GOP tax cuts in 2017.

Now rounding year one, it remains a work in progress. The Inflation Reduction Act, the Chips and Science Act and the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act are coming into fruition at a time of economic churn and stubborn inflation in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We spent decades underinvesting," said Wendy Edelberg, a former chief economist at the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office and now a senior fellow in economic studies at the Brookings Institution think tank. "And so we have a lot of catching up to do."

Democrats see the trio of bills - two of which also drew bipartisan support from Republicans - as their calling card to voters ahead of the 2024 election, the tangible results of Biden's vision and tenure in the White House. For Republicans, many of whom voted against all three bills, Bidenomics is a powerful punchline about big government overreach.

"What is 'Bidenomics'?" said a memo circulated earlier this summer by Senate Republican Conference Chairman John Barrasso of Wyoming. "It is the inflationary Washington spending, costly regulations, and regressive taxes touted by Joe Biden and Kamala Harris," he said, referring to the vice president.

Economists acknowledge that while inflation has eased some from its pandemic spikes, the investments are adding to demand and price pressures, a factor in higher interest rates that can keep lending tight.

Donald Trump, the leading Republican candidate trying to oust Biden in 2024, defines Bidenomics in contrast to what he calls his own "boom" years in the White House.

"Bidenomics" is shorthand for "I pay more for less," said Jack Pandol, communications director at the National Republican Congressional Campaign, the House GOP campaign arm.

Looking over the tiny dots on the maps being produced by the government and outside groups, the display of public and private investment is steadily coming into focus.

Propelled by a mix of direct funds and lucrative federal tax breaks, the legislation is also luring outside dollars to the table.

The White House said the federal policy has generated more than \$500 billion in private investment announcements flowing to the states - much of it in Republican-held congressional districts as companies invest where land is cheap and labor unions lag. Even Republicans who voted against the bills are now vying for credit.

The CHIPS bill alone has sparked some \$200 billion in domestic semiconductor manufacturing, according to the Center for American Progress, a liberal think tank, and industry estimates.

IRA's centerpiece, a \$400 billion federal investment to curb climate change, is standing up solar, electric vehicle and battery manufacturing, particularly in the Southeast region where Republicans dominate.

At the same time, provisions in the IRA will allow counties and local governments to tap into federal green energy production tax credits typically used by private entities, enabling them to develop projects on their own.

"What you're seeing is that counties are kind of the laboratories of innovation," Mark Ritacco, the chief government affairs officer at the National Association of Counties.

Biden is encouraging Americans to go see for themselves. "Click onto Invest.gov, put in your location," he said recently in South Carolina. "You'll see projects we're delivering in communities all across America."

In many ways, the undertaking reflects Biden's initial ideas when he took office for the "Build Back Better" agenda, which started as an industrial policy but morphed into a much-more unwieldy package of social programs that collapsed in failure.

Instead, the other three bills came into focus, as Congress surprised the skeptics to deliver legislation to passage.

The bipartisan infrastructure bill approved in 2021 poured money into repaving roads and building bridges, but it also pumped funds into public works projects nationwide.

That included money to upgrade drinking water systems in a nation where millions of Americans still have lead pipes and \$42 billion for broadband to connect some 8 million households to the internet - including 271,000 locations in West Virginia where Republican Sen. Shelley Moore Capito fought to ensure connectivity.

"We have a real opportunity to finally bridge the digital divide in West Vir-



President Joe Biden waves to members of the media as he walks towards Marine One on the South Lawn of the White House in Washington, Aug. 11, 2023. Biden is stopping in the battleground state of Wisconsin to discuss how economic policies he calls 'Bidenomics' are boosting the economy. It's a trip on Tuesday timed one day before the first anniversary of the Inflation Reduction Act, a major economic bill Biden signed into law. (AP)

ginia," she wrote in a summer op-ed. While a similar bipartisan effort powered the CHIPS bill to passage, investing \$50 billion in semiconductors and science research, Democrats alone muscled the Inflation Reduction Act into law late over steep Republican opposition, which continues to this day.

The GOP-led House has tried to dismantle the IRA law, but as it begins to take hold in communities that may become more difficult.

Gov. Kim Reynolds of Iowa and other Midwestern Republican lawmakers fought to preserve the tax break that home-state ethanol producers are already banking on to upgrade their facilities.

Biden has been increasingly eager to call out the political disconnect. The president announced plans to travel to the Georgia district represented by firebrand Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene that's home to a solar plant expansion.

He recently called out opposition from Republican Rep. Lauren Boebert of Colorado, whose district is home to a blade manufacturing plant for wind turbines.

Economist Jason Furman, a former Obama official now at Harvard, acknowledged the pressure the laws put on inflation, but he said they are rapidly focusing private industry investment.

"It does look like all three bills are catalyzing a lot of activity in a sort of larger and more rapid way than I would have expected," Furman said. "This feels to me the biggest thing that's happened to the half century."

**Excluding autos and gas, sales rose 1%**

## Retail sales rose solidly last mth in a sign that consumers are still spending freely

NEW YORK, Aug 16, (AP): Americans increased their purchases at retailers last month - for clothing, dining out, online goods and other areas - in a sign that solid consumer spending is still powering a resilient U.S. economy.

Retail sales rose a better-than-expected 0.7% in July from June, according to the Commerce Department's report Tuesday. The gain was higher than a revised 0.3% increase the previous month and marked four straight months of increases. The figure also surpassed the 0.2% increase in consumer prices last month, indicating that shoppers are spending at a healthy pace.

Analysts noted that spending on Amazon Prime Day, the online juggernaut's big two-day sales event that took place earlier last month, also helped boost online sales.

Excluding autos and gas, sales rose a solid 1%. A closely watched category of retail sales that excludes auto dealers, gas stations and building materials and feeds into the gross domestic product jumped 1% last month compared to the prior month, the biggest move in six months, analysts said.

"Maybe it's a one-off, but Americans put aside their penny-pinching ways and spent big on food and fun in July," said Robert Frick, corporate economist with Navy Federal Credit Union, in a note published Tuesday.

Department stores posted a 0.9% increase, while clothing and accessories stores had a 1% gain. Sales at sporting goods stores and hobby stores rose 1.5%. At restaurants, sales rose 1.4%, while online sales increased 1.9%.

But higher interest rates are



Items are displayed in a boutique along Tennyson Street Saturday, Aug. 5, 2023, in northwest Denver. On Tuesday, the Commerce Department released U.S. retail sales data for July. (AP)

weighing on economic activities that are highly dependent on credit, like sales of homes, vehicles, furniture and electronics, according to Bill Adams, chief economist for Comerica Bank in Dallas. Furniture and home furnishings stores and electronics stores remained weak, registering declines. And sales at motor vehicle and parts dealers also were down from the prior month.

Still, the uptick reflects the economy's resiliency despite a still challenging economic environment of still high prices and higher interest rates that make borrowing on credit cards and getting a mortgage for a home more expensive. Yet spending has been volatile this year after surging nearly 3% in January. Sales tumbled in February and March before recovering in April and May. The report comes as inflation has

cooled but not enough to meet the Federal Reserve's target rate.

Inflation in the United States edged up in July after 12 straight months of declines. But excluding volatile food and energy costs, so-called core inflation matched the smallest monthly rise in nearly two years. That's a sign that the Federal Reserve's interest rate hikes have continued to slow price increases.

**Unlikely to derail another rate rise**

## UK inflation falls to 17-mth low of 6.8%

LONDON, Aug 16, (AP): The rate of inflation in the U.K. fell sharply in July to a 17-month low largely on the back of lower energy prices, official figures showed Wednesday, a welcome development for hard-pressed households struggling during the cost of living crisis.

The Office for National Statistics said the annual rate of inflation, as measured by the consumer price index, was 6.8% in July, its lowest level since February 2022, the month Russia invaded Ukraine and sent energy prices surging.

The decline from June's 7.9% rate was in line with economists' expectations.

The statistics agency said the fall was largely driven by lower energy prices as last year's sharp increases fell out of the annual comparison. It said that food price inflation, which also spiked sharply in the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, eased too.

Though the decline in the headline rate of inflation will be welcome news for hard-pressed households, it's unlikely to derail market expectations that the Bank of England will raise interest rates again next month, especially as wages are rising at a record high. Wednesday's figures also showed that the core rate of inflation, which strips out volatile items such as energy and food, remains high.

Earlier this month, the bank, which is tasked with achieving a 2% inflation rate, raised its benchmark interest rate to a fresh 15-year high

of 5.25% and hinted that it would stay high for some time to bring down persistently high inflation.

Higher interest rates help dampen inflation by making it more expensive for consumers and businesses to borrow to buy homes, cars or equipment.

Central banks around the world have been raising borrowing costs to combat inflation unleashed by higher energy prices after Russia invaded Ukraine and supply chain backups as the global economy recovered from the coronavirus pandemic. In the U.K., inflation hit a peak of 11.1% last October.

Despite the fall in July, the U.K. is enduring the highest rate of inflation among the Group of Seven industrial nations, raising concerns that it is stickier in the country than elsewhere. Inflation in the U.S. stands at 3.2% and at 5.3% across the 20 countries that use the euro currency.

"Inflation has fallen rapidly over the past six months, but the U.K. still has the highest rate in the G-7 and the Bank of England faces a daunting task in further taming price pressures," said James Smith, research director at the Resolution Foundation think tank.

Similarly, the British economy is the only G-7 leading industrial economy yet to recoup the output lost during the coronavirus pandemic. Many economists blame Britain's departure from the European Union for both sticky inflation and anemic growth, as it has hobbled trade and added costs to businesses.

## Indonesia's leader says it can join leading economies by 2045

JAKARTA, Indonesia, Aug 16, (AP): Indonesia's president on Wednesday urged a continuation of his educational reforms to turn Southeast Asia's largest economy into one of the world's biggest by its hundredth anniversary in 2045.

President Joko Widodo said in his annual state of the nation speech a day before Indonesia celebrates its 78th year of independence that it has a great chance of joining the globe's top five economies with a per capita income of \$25,000. Indonesia's per capita income was \$4,580 in 2022, according to the World Bank.

Indonesia proclaimed its independence from Dutch colonial rule on Aug. 17, 1945. To achieve its goal of "2045 Golden Indonesia" will require a major reform of its education and vo-

catational institutions, Widodo said.

National elections are set for Feb. 14 and political speculation and gossip have been swirling ahead of the campaign, which begins in November. Campaigns are often marred by political smearing but are mostly peaceful.

"We are now entering a political year, the situation has mildly escalated," Widodo said. "To that end, I have reiterated that future leadership should set a path forward for Indonesia's future."

Widodo, popularly known by his nickname Jokowi, began his second and final five-year term in October 2019 and is not eligible to run again.

The presidential election is expected to be a three-way race pitting the nominee of the governing Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle, Ganjar

Pranowo, against former general and Defense Minister Prabowo Subianto and former Jakarta Gov. Anies Baswedan.

Widodo said a continuation of his policy of increasing domestic processing of the country's natural resource exports such as nickel, copper, bauxite, crude palm oil and seaweed could result in per capita income reaching \$11,000 in the next few years and \$25,000 by 2045.

After his administration halted exports of nickel ore in 2020, investment in nickel processing expanded rapidly and there now are 43 processing plants that provide a large number of jobs, he said.

"This is just for one commodity," he said.

Nickel is a key component of rechargeable batteries.

Widodo's administration also banned exports of bauxite, an aluminum ore, in June and plans to ban shipments of copper ore next May.

He said the challenges ahead will be daunting and policy choices will be increasingly challenging. "It takes courage and trust to make difficult, unpopular decisions," he said.

Widodo is widely popular in the archipelago nation of more than 270 million people with an over 70% public trust rating, according to reputable pollster Kompas.

But he said being president is more challenging than many people think in a social media era in which every problem can reach the president, including anger, mockery, derision and slander. "Everything can be easily conveyed," he said.



Christmas lights are displayed on Regent Street in London on Nov. 24, 2022. The rate of inflation in the U.K. fell sharply in July to a 17-month low largely on the back of lower energy prices, official figures showed Wednesday, Aug. 16, 2023, a welcome development for hard-pressed households struggling during the cost of living crisis. (AP)

**ABK announces winner of Alfouz Weekly Draw**

Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) announced Mohammed Abdulwahab Al Abdulsalam as the KD 10,000 Alfouz weekly winner on Monday, 14 August 2023, whereby the draw was held under the supervision of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

Since its launch, the Alfouz account continues to offer an impressive weekly draw of KD 10,000. The Bank has recently expanded its offering by adding a

new alluring monthly draw of KD 20,000, and an exceptional quarterly draw of KD 100,000.

The account also retains its hallmark mega annual draw of a KD 5,000 monthly salary for ten years. Furthermore, the Bank now offers customers an increased opportunity to win for every KD 10 as opposed to KD 100 previously.

ABK encourages everyone to open an Alfouz draw account

and/or increase their balances to have more chances in winning in the upcoming weekly draw, which will take place on Monday, 21 August 2023. The higher the deposits are, the higher the chances to win.

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.

**AUB congratulates winners of Al-Hassad Weekly Draw**

Ahli United Bank (AUB) Congratulates the Winners of Al-Hassad Weekly Draw of Al-Hassad Islamic account, which was held on 16 August, 2023 at the bank's head office in the presence of a representative of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry as well as a representative from Deloitte as the external auditor to oversee the draws as per the instructions of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry in this regard.

The Bank Announced 10 Winners Of KD 1,000 As Follows: Zahrah Faleh Hunaidi Al-Khaldi, Mohammad Faleh Ali Ewayesh, Chams El-Assil Mohamad Al-Haj, Hussain Kh H Al-Ali, Meshal Abdullah Ahmad Al-Shuwayeb, Fatemah A A Al-Buloushi, Amani Ahmad Mohammad Al-Mallam, Aseel Abd Al-Nabi Yousef Jamal, Ali Mohammad Shafi Al-Ajmi and Abdullah Muhanna Al-Merkhan Al-Subaiei.

In its new package, Al-Hassad Islamic Saving Account presents a broader variety of rewards. Customers could now participate in the draw to win a monthly KD 100,000 prize, in addition to 10 weekly prizes of KD 1,000 each. The grand quarterly prize of KD 250,000 in cash for the winner remains the most important aspiration of customers. It is a real chance for them to realize their life dreams. In addition to this attractive package.

# Markaz reaffirms partnership with UNHCR to support its 'humanitarian programmes'

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 16: Kuwait Financial Centre "Markaz" partners with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), in order to support its humanitarian programmes towards improving the living conditions of refugees and meeting their basic needs, including access to safe drinking water, food, and shelter. The partnership is an extension of Markaz's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) strategy and active role in supporting impactful non-profit organizations locally, regionally, and globally.

Commenting on the renewal of this partnership, Ms. Deena Y. AlRefai, Executive Vice President – Investor Relations at Markaz, said: "We take pride in being a supporting partner of the UNHCR, in its humanitarian efforts to protect and assist refugees and displaced communities around the world. Through this, we aim to extend our support for a noble cause and make a meaningful difference in the lives of thousands of people by providing monetary aid to address immediate necessities. At Markaz, we believe in the importance of the role played by the private sector in giving back to societies, thus forming a pivotal pillar of our CSR strategy."

On her part, Ms. Nisreen Rubaian,

UNHCR Representative in Kuwait, welcomed renewing the partnership with Markaz and said: "Through our 3-year long partnership with Markaz, UNHCR was able to assist refugees and forcibly displaced persons and improve their living conditions. More than 608 displaced families in MENA region (approx. 3,600 individuals) have benefited through cash assistance programs, various education projects, and the provision of shelter and potable water. We welcome the continuation of this partnership to alleviate the suffering of more refugees and forcibly displaced people in light of their increasing humanitarian needs and the compound challenges they are facing away from home."

Markaz's partnership with UNHCR falls in line with the company's CSR strategy which focuses on three key pillars: building human capacity, aligning the business environment with sustainable development principles, and promoting good governance in the business environment. This strategy reflects the Markaz's commitment to helping the community and strengthening the national economy.

UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, leads international action to protect people forced to flee their homes be-

cause of conflict and persecution. They provide life-saving assistance like shelter, food and water, help safeguard fundamental human rights, and develop solutions that ensure people have a safe place to call home where they can build a better future.

About Kuwait Financial Centre "Markaz":

Established in 1974, Kuwait Financial Centre K.P.S.C "Markaz" is one of the leading asset management and investment banking institutions in the MENA region with total assets under management of over KD 1.17 billion as of 30 June 2023 (USD 3.82 billion). Markaz was listed on the Boursa Kuwait in 1997. Over the years, Markaz has pioneered innovation by developing new concepts resulting in new investment channels that enjoy unique characteristics enabling Markaz to widen investors' horizons. Examples include Mumtaz (the first domestic mutual fund), MREF (the first real estate investment fund in Kuwait), and Forsa Financial Fund (the first and only options market maker in the GCC since 2005), all conceptualized, established, and managed by Markaz.



From left: Ms. Deena Y. AlRefai, Ms. Nisreen Rubaian, Mr. Bassam Al-Othman, Mr. Fawaz AlKhaldi



KIB's booth at STC

**In continued support of 'Diraya'**

## KIB spreads financial literacy through its booth at STC HQ

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 16: For the third consecutive year, Kuwait International Bank (KIB) upholds its committed support for the Let's Be Aware "Diraya" campaign, the financial literacy and banking awareness initiative launched by the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) and the Kuwait Banking Association (KBA). This comes hand-in-hand with the Bank's comprehensive social responsibility program, which aims, among many goals, to reinforce the community's financial literacy and awareness of banking features and safety precautions.

To ensure maximum benefit across society's different circles, KIB set up a booth at the headquarters of STC, the prominent Kuwaiti telecom company and patron of digital transformation in the country. Through KIB's direct contact with the STC staff, the Bank aimed to introduce them to its full range of banking products and services while highlighting its vital role as a leading financial institution that supports its customers in managing their financials. The KIB representatives also educated the STC staff on the comprehensive banking products, services, and financing options that the Bank offers in an innovative and digital format that fulfills customers' varied needs and enables them to realize their aspirations.

In light of the Bank's latest presence at STC, Mariam Al-Nasser, Area Manager of Retail Banking at KIB, said: "As much as we acknowledge and adopt the modern need for convenient and advanced digital communication channels that keep us connected to our customers, we are also quite adamant in seizing every possible opportunity to be present in person amongst the community members. This allows us to be more engaged with our audience and inform them of our banking services and products that serve their personal needs." Al-Nasser further noted that the fruition of the Bank's on-ground efforts is complemented by the strategic choice of location, such as KIB's choice of STC's HQ, which enables the Bank's staff to raise financial awareness amongst the company's employees and ultimately fulfilling the goal of turning the Kuwaiti society into a financially literate one.

Al-Nasser praised the KIB representatives' outstanding performance as they engaged with a large number of STC employees, learned about their personal needs and goals, and accordingly introduced the best-suited prod-



Mariam Al-Nasser

ucts and services that would aid them in their pursuits. The KIB representatives were also thorough in showcasing KIB's innovative digital solutions, offers and campaigns, and all other information that would enable STC employees to maximize the benefits they can enjoy with KIB. To round up the Bank's awareness efforts, the KIB representatives made sure to inform STC staff of the safest practices when using banking cards, financial applications, and digital channels.

Concluding her statement, Al-Nasser extended her thanks to the STC management for the fruitful collaboration and the opportunity to be present at the company's HQ, which enabled KIB to connect with the STC staff and respond to all their inquiries in an instant and personalized manner. Al-Nasser further applauded the notable engagement with KIB's awareness initiative, marking a great success for the Bank's efforts in raising banking and financial awareness across the different strata of society and fulfilling a primary goal of KIB's social responsibility program through its continued support of the "Diraya" campaign.

**About KIB:**

Kuwait International Bank (KIB) is a bank that operates according to the Islamic Shari'ah, based in the State of Kuwait. Incorporated in 1973, and originally known as Kuwait Real Estate Bank, KIB made the transition to its current Islamic operating model in 2007. In 2018, KIB embarked on a new phase of its journey full of innovation and development. As part of its new strategic direction, the Bank focuses on offering a next-level customer experience under the slogan: "Bank for Life".

# Burgan Bank concludes Young Bankers Summer Programme

Empowering tomorrow's financial minds

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 16: Burgan Bank recently concluded its 2023 Young Bankers Summer Program; an initiative that aims to equip young individuals with essential financial skills, while instilling a strong sense of community responsibility. The training program comes as part of Burgan's comprehensive social responsibility strategy, as well as its continuous support of the national 'Let's Be Aware' (Diraya) banking awareness campaign.

Over a three-week period, 17 young participants had the opportunity to gain a wealth of knowledge from a series of interactive workshops. Conducted by seasoned financial experts from Burgan, these workshops provided valuable insights into the banking industry and how to build a strong network for future career growth. The program delved into various aspects of banking and finance, covering key topics, such as budgeting, saving, investment, and understanding credit, and empowering participants with crucial financial management tips. It also provided training sessions focused on enhancing vitally important soft skills, including leadership, communication, and teamwork.

Commenting on the program, Ms. Zahra Boarki, HR Skills Development Manager at Burgan Bank, said: "At Burgan, we strongly believe that investing in aspiring financial minds is imperative for a better tomorrow. Our numerous initiatives reflect Burgan's commitment to empowering communities through education, fostering an environment where the next generation of bankers and financial experts can flourish. We are delighted to provide them with the knowledge and tools



Participants of Burgan Bank's summer programme.

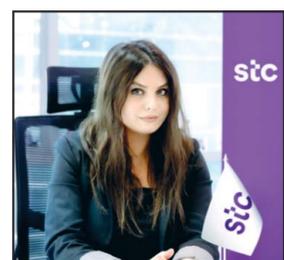
**Over 150 students take part in event**

## stc sponsors Al-Qabas Master Class Program at AUM

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 16: Kuwait Telecommunications Company – stc, a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and platforms to customers, enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, announced its role as a main sponsor of the Al-Qabas Master Class summer program held at the American University of the Middle East (AUM). stc's sponsorship of the program falls under the Company's educational 'upgrade' initiative which aims to contribute towards empowering the youth and supporting the local education system.

Organized by Al-Qabas, the Master Class will be held in two different phases over the course of 4-weeks at AUM with over 150 participating students. The program was designed to assist students in enhancing their skills in line with the highest professional and creative standards in the local market. Students will get a chance to learn about various subjects and develop their competencies through the influence of seasoned professionals.

As an active sponsor, stc will be participating in several discussions to enlighten participants on some of the Company's various activities. Noura



Danah AlJasem

AlBshaier, Director of Sustainability at stc, will be presenting on the importance of sustainability in the private sector. Whereas Anfal Alkandari, Public Relations and Social Media Specialist at stc, will be presenting on the importance of communicating with the community through corporate communications.

Additionally, Engineer Issa Al Suwait, General Manager of Cybersecurity at stc, will provide a thorough insight into the future of cybersecurity, including current trends and developments. He will highlight key aspects

that aim to assist students in grasping the different technologies available today. Al Suwait will also present some of the innovative solutions offered by stc in cybersecurity, as well as the fundamental pillars that must be considered when safeguarding digital data.

Through its participation, stc will showcase the collective contribution played by various departments to achieve objectives related to media relations, social responsibility, innovation, cybersecurity, entrepreneurship, and other topics that positively impact the community.

Danah AlJasem, General Manager of Corporate Communications at stc, said, "Through our participation in the Al-Qabas Master Class program, we hope to educate and inspire the younger generation in Kuwait. It is not just about honing skills, but also about fostering a spirit of innovation, ethics, and responsibility in the ever-evolving world of communications and digital transformation. In collaboration with our partners, stc believes in the collective power of creating a sustainable and dynamic environment that truly serves our community and helps foster a more connected and vibrant Kuwait."

required to help them excel in their personal and professional endeavors, drive the banking industry forward and positively impact the community."

Ms. Boarki stated that the program included exciting tours inside Burgan branches, where the participants witnessed its workflow and got behind the scenes of the cash area and ATM machine operation. At the end of the

program, all trainees received a completion certificate and a gift card, she said, adding that feedback received from both participants and parents reflected how enriching the experience was to attendees.

One of the program participants, Mariam Fahad Al Fahad, said: "The interactive workshops, expert-led sessions, and hands-on training left me

with a comprehensive understanding of the banking industry. The knowledge and skills I gained helped me grasp the nuances of banking and tap into my ability to manage my finances and make informed decisions about savings and investments. At the end of this transformative journey, I feel like I can confidently plan my financial future."



Ms Zahra Boarki

**SBFC Finance makes debut on NSE, BSE**

SBFC Finance, the leading pan-India Non-Bank Financial Company (NBFC), today made its debut on India's National Stock Exchange (NSE) and the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE). The company's IPO has attracted high demand among investors, with the issue being oversubscribed by 74 times during the pre-listing bidding process. The IPO has raised INR 10,250m which SBFC will

use to further grow its loan book. Unleashing the Potential of India's Entrepreneurs SBFC Finance was founded to unleash the creative potential of India's entrepreneurs and deliver financial services to meet their needs. From the beginning, SBFC has been focused on the opportunity to serve India's 70 million small business owners, who account for a third of the

country's GDP, but who have not been served by India's larger financial institutions. SBFC now provides financial services across 18 states and union territories, specialising in secured small business loans and loans against gold. "We are proud to have reached this tremendous milestone for SBFC," said Aseem Dhru, MD and CEO of SBFC Finance. (AP)

**UAW to vote on strike authorization next week**

About 146,000 members of the United Auto Workers union will vote next week whether to authorize their leaders to call strikes against the Detroit automakers. Union President Shawn Fain told members in a Facebook Live appearance Tuesday that the talks, which started in mid-July, are moving slowly and have yet to get to wages and other economic issues. The union's contracts with

General Motors, Ford and Stellantis expire in about a month, at 11:59 p.m. Sept. 14. "If we want to make progress at the bargaining table, we need to show the companies that it's not just talk," Fain said of the strike vote. He told local offices to report the results of their votes to the union headquarters by Aug. 24. Strike authorization votes are a routine part of contract talks

and are often overwhelmingly approved, but Fain said the vote is a sign of the union's strength. Fain has set high expectations for the contract talks and says the union will seek more than 40% general pay raises over four years, restoration of pensions for newer hires, cost-of-living increases, an end to wage tiers, and other benefits. He has said workers can make big gains but must be ready to strike to get them. (AP)

**U.S. Steel announces strategic alternatives process**

No deadline or definitive timetable set for completion

**PITTSBURGH, Aug 16, (AP):** United States Steel Corporation announced that its Board of Directors has decided to initiate a formal review process, with the assistance of outside financial and legal advisors, to evaluate strategic alternatives for the Company. The Board of Directors and management team are committed to acting in the best interests of the Company, its stockholders and its stakeholders. U. S. Steel has made significant progress transforming the Company into a customer-centric, world-competitive Best for All® steel-maker as it continues to win in strategic markets, move down the cost curve and move up the talent curve.

"U. S. Steel's Board and management team are committed to maximizing value for our stockholders, and to that end, we have commenced a comprehensive and thorough review of strategic alternatives," said David B. Burritt, U. S. Steel's President, Chief Executive Officer and member of the Board of Directors. "This decision follows the Company receiving multiple unsolicited proposals that ranged from the acquisition of certain production assets to consideration for the whole Company. The Board is taking a measured approach to considering these proposals, including seeking more information in order to evaluate proposals that are preliminary and

subject to ongoing due diligence and review."

Burritt continued, "U. S. Steel has been on a strategic journey executing a compelling transformation, building out best-in-class EAF steelmaking and finishing capabilities, while reducing our carbon footprint. Our balance sheet is stronger than ever, and we are delivering resilient cash flow while prioritizing direct returns to stockholders. The interest demonstrated by the unsolicited proposals received to date is a validation of U. S. Steel's strategy and successful track record of execution. While the Board conducts its review of previously received proposals and other proposals it expects to receive, our entire team remains focused on safely and responsibly executing across all of our operations and advancing our Best for All® strategy, while continuing to deliver for all stakeholders."

There is no deadline or definitive timetable set for completion of the strategic alternatives review process and there can be no assurance that this process will result in the Company pursuing a transaction or any other strategic outcome. U. S. Steel does not intend to make any further public comment regarding the review of strategic alternatives until it has been completed or the Company determines that a disclosure is required by law or otherwise deemed appropriate.

Barclays Capital Inc. and Goldman Sachs & Co. LLC are serving as financial advisors to U. S. Steel. Milbank LLP and Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz are acting as legal advisors.

Founded in 1901, United States Steel Corporation is a leading steel producer. With an unwavering focus on safety, the Company's customer-centric Best for All® strategy is advancing a more secure, sustainable future for U. S. Steel and its stakeholders.



Facade of a Wells Fargo bank branch in Manhattan.

**Wells Fargo & Company announces full redemption of its Series Q Preferred Stock & related depositary shares**

**SAN FRANCISCO, Aug 16, (AP):** Wells Fargo & Company has announced that on Sept. 15, 2023, it will redeem all 69,000 shares (the "Redeemed Series Q Preferred Shares") of its 5.85% Fixed-to-Floating Rate Non-Cumulative Perpetual Class A Preferred Stock, Series Q (the "Series Q Preferred Stock"). The redemption of the Redeemed Series Q Preferred Shares will trigger the redemption of the 69,000,000 shares of the related depositary shares (the "Redeemed Series Q Depositary Shares"), each representing a 1/1,000 interest in a share of Series Q Preferred Stock (the "Series Q Depositary Shares") (NYSE: WFC.PRQ). The redemption price will be equal to \$25,000.00 per Redeemed Series Q Preferred Share and \$25.00 per Redeemed Series Q Depositary Share. After giving effect to the redemption, no shares of the Series Q Preferred Stock or the Series Q Depositary Shares will remain outstanding.

Because the redemption date is also a dividend payment date for the Series Q Preferred Stock and the Series Q Depositary Shares, the redemption prices noted herein do not include declared and unpaid dividends. Regular quarterly dividends will be paid separately in the customary manner on Sept. 15, 2023, to holders of record at the close of business on Aug. 31, 2023.

All regulatory requirements relating to the redemption of the Redeemed Series Q Preferred Shares and Redeemed Series Q Depositary Shares have been satisfied by Wells Fargo & Company. The redemption agent is Equiniti Trust Company, LLC, 1110 Centre Pointe Curve, Suite 101, Mendota Heights, Minnesota 55120. Payment of the redemption price for the Redeemed Series Q Depositary Shares will be sent to holders by the redemption agent on the redemption date.

Wells Fargo & Company (NYSE: WFC) is a leading financial services company that has approximately \$1.9 trillion in assets, proudly serves one in three U.S. households and more than 10% of small businesses in the U.S., and is a leading middle market banking provider in the U.S. We provide a diversified set of banking, investment and mortgage products and services, as well as consumer and commercial finance, through our four reportable operating segments: Consumer Banking and Lending, Commercial Banking, Corporate and Investment Banking, and Wealth & Investment Management. Wells Fargo ranked No. 47 on Fortune's 2023 rankings of America's largest corporations. In the communities we serve, the company focuses its social impact on building a sustainable, inclusive future for all by supporting housing affordability, small business growth, financial health, and a low-carbon economy. News, insights, and perspectives from Wells Fargo are also available at Wells Fargo Stories.



In this file photo, a Home Depot logo is shown on a store on May 14, 2021, in North Miami, Fla. Home Depot reports earnings on Tuesday. (AP)

**Signs of pullback continues to emerge**

**Home Depot tops expectations again**

**ATLANTA, Aug 16, (AP):** Home Depot topped profit and sales expectations in its most recent quarter, but sales continued to decline as inflation and soaring interest rates play a larger role in the spending choices made by Americans.

Second quarter revenue was \$42.92 billion, edging out Wall Street expectations for \$42.25 billion, according to a survey of industry analysts by Zacks Investment Research. Yet that's down 2% from the \$43.87 billion that nation's largest home improvement retailer reported during the same stretch last year, and sales have fallen 3.1% through the first half of the year compared with 2022.

Despite the stronger-than-expected sales figures, Home Depot on Tuesday stuck to previous guidance for the year, seeing sales decline between 2% and 5%, after lowering its forecast in the last quarter.

It's the first time the chain forecast declining annual sales since 2009 when the U.S. economy was decimated by a massive housing bubble.

There are signs that consumers, after spending big on homes during the pandemic, are slowing their roll.

"While there was strength in categories associated with smaller projects, we did see continued pressure in certain big-ticket, discretionary categories," said Ted Decker, chair and CEO. "We remain very positive on the medium-to-long term outlook for home improvement and our ability to grow share in a large and fragmented market."

Americans spent big over the last several years on big purchases appliances and big-screen TVs, but that spending has cooled.

The Federal Reserve has, in effect, locked many homeowners into the places they own, rather than upgrading, after raising its benchmark rate 11 times since March 2022, most recently late last month. Neil Saunders, Managing Director of GlobalData, said Home Depot faces increasing challenges ahead.

"Foremost among them is a more sluggish housing market where transactions remain suppressed and consumers more reluctant to move, mostly because of higher interest rates which makes taking on new mortgages or refinancing more challenging," Saunders wrote Tuesday. "This puts a dampener on home improvement spending among consumers and professionals, especially for the bigger projects that people tend to do once they take possession of a new home."

Another problem, Saunders said, is that even if homeowners are resigned to staying put, renovations are slowing because many of those projects require financing, which is also subject to the central bank's war on inflation and rising interest rates.

Home Depot reported profits were \$4.66 billion, or \$4.65 per share, which was 19 cents better than expected. Shares of The Home Depot Inc., based in Atlanta, slipped less than 1% before the opening bell Tuesday, but are up more than 4% for the year.

**Retailer hurt by negative reaction to Pride merchandise, inflation**

**Target posts weak sales in 2nd quarter**

**NEW YORK, Aug 16, (AP):** Target's second quarter sales were hit by inflation and a negative reaction by some customers, widely publicized on social media, to its Pride merchandise.

The Minneapolis retailer expects high interest rates, which makes credit cards more expensive to use, and higher prices on food to continue to put a strain on customers and on Wednesday, the chain cut its profit expectations for the year. In lowering its forecast, Target also cited the end of the student loan moratorium, which had provided one-time college students a little more financial breathing room.

Profit came in above expectations, however, as the Minneapolis chain brought inventories closer in line with cautionary spending on discretionary items by customers.

Shares surged more than 8% in pre-market trading, even though Target slashed its annual profit forecast.

Target is among the first major U.S. retailers to report quarterly financial results and the impact of rising prices and elevated interest on its customers will get a lot of attention ahead of a raft of quarterly reports from companies like Walmart other retailers.

CEO Brian Cornell said higher high prices for food and household essentials are taking a bigger chunk out of the paychecks of customers, who have also pulled back on buying some goods in favor of travel or spending time out of the house in other ways.

"Guests are out at concerts," Cornell said. "They're going to movies. They've seen 'Barbie.' They're enjoying those experiential moments, and they're shopping very carefully for discretionary goods."

Other retailers are seeing the same thing.

Home Depot, the nation's largest home improvement retailer, reported Tuesday second-quarter results that topped profit and sales expectations, but its sales continued to decline. The company said that it's seeing weak sales in certain big-ticket items like patio furniture and appliances, noting that customers are still spending on smaller home-improvement projects.

Walmart, the nation's largest retailer, reports earnings Thursday. Macy's, Kohl's and Nordstrom

post quarterly results later this month.

The reports follow the latest government snapshot on retail sales that showed that Americans increased their spending last month on clothing, dining out and online goods - a sign that solid consumer spending is still powering a resilient U.S. economy.

But Target also was hit by another issue: It was among the companies hit by a backlash for its LGBTQ+ support, in particular, its displays of Pride Month merchandise. It pulled some items and made other changes after encountering hostility from some customers who confronted workers and tipped over displays. Company executives told reporters on the call that it couldn't tease out how much the negative reaction had on its business, but once it made the changes, those incidents subsided. Overall sales steadily improved in July from June.

Cornell said that the company has learned from the backlash and said it will be more thoughtful in merchandise offerings for its heritage months, which celebrate various ethnic and marginalized groups.

"We'll continue to celebrate Pride and other heritage moments, which are just one part of our commitment to support a diverse teams and guests," Cornell told reporters. "However, as we navigate an ever changing operating and social environment, we're applying what we've learned to ensure

we're staying close to our guests and their expectations of Target."

Target's latest earnings report shows the challenges it faces to stay on top of customer behavior.

Target said it earned \$835 million, or \$1.80 per share, in the quarter that ended July 29. That compares with \$183 million, or 39 cent per share, in the year-ago period.

Sales fell nearly 5% to \$24.77 billion from \$26.04 billion as shoppers focused more on groceries and beauty products instead of discretionary items. Business in the quarter was also hurt because results were being compared with heavy discounting in the year-ago period that was meant to clear unwanted inventory.

Analysts were expecting \$1.43 per share on sales of \$25.18 billion, according to FactSet.

Inventory at the end of the second quarter was 17% lower than last year, reflecting a 25% reduction in discretionary categories like fashion and home furnishings.

Comparable sales - those from stores or digital channels operating for the past 12 months - fell 5.4% in the latest quarter. In the first quarter, sales were unchanged.

Target now expects comparable sales in a wide range around a mid-single digit decline for the remainder of the year. It also now projects full-year adjusted earnings per share of \$7 to \$8, compared with the prior range of \$7.75 to \$8.75. Analysts were expecting \$7.72 per share for the year, according to FactSet.



In this file photo, Shoppers look for school supplies deals at a Target store, July 27, 2022, in South Miami, Fla. (AP)

## The Conversation

## Experts suggest guidelines to reduce negative symptoms

## VR use in workplace can have negative side effects

By Alexis Souchet  
University of Southern California

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

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The Research Brief is a short take about interesting academic work.

Some employers are excited about swapping out computer monitors for virtual reality headsets, but the side effects of using VR are not completely understood. In a recent study, my colleagues and I propose 90 factors that could influence VR side effects in the workplace. In another study, we suggest guidelines to reduce these negative symptoms.

Our analysis considers over 350 studies to identify a range of VR side effects. Some negative symptoms of VR use - like headaches, tiredness, eye-strain and neck and shoulder pain - are familiar to those workers who sit at a computer all day.

But the nature of VR introduces new avenues for discomfort, such as disorientation, dizziness, nausea and increased muscle fatigue. Users can be overwhelmed with too much information, and sudden or intense sources of stress - like unexpected noises when talking in front of a virtual audience - can di-

minish attention and memory.

There are many factors that can affect the frequency and severity of these side effects. Some of these characteristics relate to the virtual environment content - for example, how complicated the scene is or the way VR reproduces user movements. Others have more to do with the user, such as age or how long they're immersed in the VR simulation.

## Effects

Although more research is needed to identify the exact relationship between side effects and their contributing factors, our study suggests several guidelines to mitigate side effects. Each individual's risk level is unique, but there are basic things anyone can do, like taking regular breaks, not using VR for more than 30 minutes at a time, and stopping use immediately when any symptoms start. Studies have found that 80% of VR users report mild to severe short-term side effects. Symptoms can make it harder to efficiently do basic tasks like reading and writing emails.

Nonetheless, several tech giants, like Meta and Microsoft, are promoting VR technology as the future of the workplace. But to safeguard workers, em-

ployers need a better understanding of the negative side effects of VR.

Some government organizations, both in the US and abroad, have already begun to identify safety concerns and propose guidelines for mitigating the side effects of VR. While in line with our study's findings, these safety guidelines are often very broad, and some have yet to be finalized.

More research is needed to improve the quality of evidence. One way to gather more data is to use physiological sensors and machine learning models to detect VR side effects and better link each factor to a given effect.

Although researchers can identify influential factors, we don't yet fully understand which ones are linked to specific side effects - or how strong those connections are. Researchers believe that some characteristics are connected to several VR side effects, but there's some redundancy when looking at the list of symptoms.

At best, following suggested guidelines could reduce the risks of using VR. With the current level of evidence, it's difficult to assess how high these risks are. Most assessments about VR side effects are short term. Long-term studies are just starting to be launched or published. Additional research is crucial to ensuring that VR helps workers rather than harming them. (AP)

## CSDTs improve skills

## Heritage algorithms fill arts and sciences gap

By Audrey G. Bennett and Ron Eglash  
University of Michigan

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

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The model of democracy in the 1920s is sometimes called "the melting pot" - the dissolution of different cultures into an American soup. An update for the 2020s might be "open source," where cultural mixing, sharing and collaborating can build bridges between people rather than create divides.

Our research on heritage algorithms aims to build such a bridge. We develop digital tools to teach students about the complex mathematical sequences and patterns present in different cultures' artistic, architectural and design practices.

By combining computational thinking and cultural creative practices, our work provides an entry point for students who are disproportionately left out of STEM careers, whether by race, class or gender. Even those who feel at home with equations and abstraction can benefit from narrowing the gap between the arts and sciences.

Traditional STEM curricula often present science as a ladder you climb. For example, you might be told that math starts with counting, then goes to algebra, then calculus and so on.

But our research has found that the global history of science is more like a bush: Each culture has its own branching set of discoveries. Some of these discoveries offer a perspective that's different from the theorem-proof approach for math or hypothesis-experiment approach for biology. Understanding the rules and techniques that create cultural patterns from the maker's point of view can help bridge the gap between knowledge branches. We refer to these hybrids of computation and culture as heritage algorithms, and there are examples everywhere.

## Structures

Flying over an African village, you can see the recursive geometry of African fractals in their architecture: circles of circles, rectangles within rectangles, and other "self-similar" structures. These fractal patterns also appear in their textiles, carvings, paintings, ironwork and more.

Other kinds of algorithms underlie the repeating sequences of bent wood arcs that make up Native American wigwams, canoes and cradles. Even henna tattoos demonstrate the interactions among computation, nature and culture.

These heritage algorithms challenge the myth of "primitive cultures" - the idea that early Africans had no math past counting on fingers or that Native American agriculture lacked sophistication.

The computational thinking that is embedded in Indigenous artifacts and other creative practices, such as weaving, beadwork and quilting, is not merely decorative. It also reflects different ways of thinking about the

world. Our interviews with artisans revealed how they visualize spiritual concepts in formal techniques and numerical sequences.

Heritage algorithms give students a way to blend the abstract rigors of math, the grounded legacies of culture and the infinite possibilities of art. To bring these algorithms to the classroom, we have created interactive computer programs and simulations that we call culturally situated design tools, or CSDTs.

Each CSDT was created in collaboration with Indigenous elders, street artists, traditional crafters and others. With the creators' permission, we transfer their knowledge of pattern creation into digital tools that students enjoy using and teachers enjoy implementing in their lesson plans.

## Practice

It's important to craft each CSDT to reflect the way those artisans think about the cultural practice. For instance, the slope of the line  $y=x$ , mathematically calculated as "rise over run," is 1 - for every unit you move up the line, you move a unit to the right. This line forms a 45-degree angle with the x-axis. But when Navajo weavers use this "up one, over one" pattern, the slope is closer to a 30-degree angle. This is because they weave yarn horizontally through vertical cords that are thicker than the yarn. So we made sure to preserve this feature in the weaving simulation we built.

A crucial aspect of CSDTs is that students may use them to follow their interests. This freedom and independence lets students encounter new cultures, delve deeper into their own identity or mix designs from different cultures to create something completely new.

We have seen Black students choose an Appalachian quilting simulation, Native American students choose comrow simulations and white students create beadwork simulations. Students' creative designs often mix many cultures together - comrows become "powwow braids," and African fractal simulations turn into plants, lungs and river deltas.

Heritage algorithms and CSDTs provide a powerful starting place for students to improve their computing skills and confidence. These tools even provide a foundation for a variety of careers, from architecture to environmental engineering.

The reach of heritage algorithms has recently extended beyond learning environments to contemporary art spaces. Artists are generating a bold new creative style using "ethnocomputing" - an understanding of computer science from a cultural perspective.

You can see fresh interpretations of heritage algorithms in the African fractals embedded in the work of visual artist Tendai Mupita, the comrow simulations integrated in the work of Rashaad Newsome, the blending of the African diaspora and technology by Nettrice Gaskins and the creative duo Tosin Oshinowo and Chrissy Amuah. (AP)

## DefCon exposes chabot flaws

## Don't expect quick fixes in 'red-teaming' of AI models

## Provides fast, accurate answers

## Smart answering lets business handle customer service calls with 'voice AI'

BOSTON, Aug 16, (AP): White House officials concerned by AI chatbots' potential for societal harm and the Silicon Valley powerhouses rushing them to market were heavily invested in a three-day competition which ended Sunday at the DefCon hacker convention in Las Vegas.

Some 3,500 competitors have tapped on laptops seeking to expose flaws in eight leading large-language models representative of technology's next big thing. But don't expect quick results from this first-ever independent "red-teaming" of multiple models.

Findings won't be made public until about February. And even then, fixing flaws in these digital constructs - whose inner workings are neither wholly trustworthy nor fully fathomed even by their creators - will take time and millions of dollars.

Current AI models are simply too unwieldy, brittle and malleable, academic and corporate research shows.

Security was an afterthought in their training as data scientists amassed breathtakingly complex collections of images and text. They are prone to racial and cultural biases, and easily manipulated.

"It's tempting to pretend we can sprinkle some magic security dust on these systems after they are built, patch them into submission, or bolt special security apparatus on the side," said Gary McGraw, a cyber-security veteran and co-founder of the Berryville Institute of Machine Learning. DefCon competitors are "more likely to walk away finding new, hard problems," said Bruce Schneier, a Harvard public-interest technologist. "This is computer security 30 years ago. We're just breaking stuff left and right." Michael Sellitto of Anthropic, which provided one of the AI testing models, acknowledged in a press briefing that understanding their capabilities and safety issues "is sort of an open area of scientific inquiry."

## Software

Conventional software uses well-defined code to issue explicit, step-by-step instructions. OpenAI's ChatGPT, Google's Bard and other language models are different. Trained largely by ingesting - and classifying - billions of datapoints in internet crawls, they are perpetual works-in-progress, an unsettling prospect given their transformative potential for humanity.

After publicly releasing chatbots last fall, the generative AI industry has had to repeatedly plug security holes exposed by researchers and tinkerers.

Tom Bonner of the AI security firm HiddenLayer, a speaker at this year's DefCon, tricked a Google system into labeling a piece of malware harmless merely by inserting a line that said "this is safe to use."

"There are no good guardrails," he said. Another researcher had Chat-

GPT create phishing emails and a recipe to violently eliminate humanity, a violation of its ethics code.

A team including Carnegie Mellon researchers found leading chatbots vulnerable to automated attacks that also produce harmful content. "It is possible that the very nature of deep learning models makes such threats inevitable," they wrote. It's not as if alarms weren't sounded.

In its 2021 final report, the US National Security Commission on Artificial Intelligence said attacks on commercial AI systems were already happening and "with rare exceptions, the idea of protecting AI systems has been an afterthought in engineering and fielding AI systems, with inadequate investment in research and development."

Serious hacks, regularly reported just a few years ago, are now barely disclosed. Too much is at stake and, in the absence of regulation, "people can sweep things under the rug at the moment and they're doing so," said Bonner.

Attacks trick the artificial intelligence logic in ways that may not even be clear to their creators. And chatbots are especially vulnerable

because we interact with them directly in plain language. That interaction can alter them in unexpected ways.

Researchers have found that "poisoning" a small collection of images or text in the vast sea of data used to train AI systems can wreak havoc - and be easily overlooked.

A study co-authored by Florian Tramér of the Swiss University ETH Zurich determined that corrupting just 0.01% of a model was enough to spoil it - and cost as little as \$60. The researchers waited for a handful of websites used in web crawls for two models to expire. Then they bought the domains and posted bad data on them.

Hyrum Anderson and Ram Shankar Siva Kumar, who red-teamed AI while colleagues at Microsoft, call the state of AI security for text- and image-based models "pitiable" in their new book "Not with a Bug but with a Sticker." One example they cite in live presentations: The AI-powered digital assistant Alexa is hoodwinked into interpreting a Beethoven concerto clip as a command to order 100 frozen pizzas.

Surveys more than 80 organizations, the authors found the vast majority had no response plan for a data-poisoning attack or dataset theft. The bulk of the industry "would not even know it happened," they wrote.

Andrew W. Moore, a former Google executive and Carnegie Mellon dean, says he dealt with attacks on Google search software more than a decade ago. And between late 2017 and early 2018, spammers gamed Gmail's AI-powered detection service four times.

The big AI players say security and safety are top priorities and made voluntary commitments to the White House last month to submit their models - largely "black boxes" whose contents are closely held - to outside scrutiny.

But there is worry the companies won't do enough. Disinformation (cross head) Tramér expects search engines and social media platforms to be gamed for financial gain and disinformation by exploiting AI system weaknesses. A savvy job applicant might, for example, figure out how to convince a system they are the only correct candidate.

## To be applied in next-gen digital coherent transmission

## NTT succeeds at frequency stabilization of electro-optic modulation-based OFC

TOKYO, Aug 16: NTT Corporation (NTT) and Tokyo Denki University have succeeded in further stabilizing the graduated frequency of an optical frequency ruler generated by modulating the intensity and phase of laser light in an electrical signal. By using this result, it is possible to obtain a light source with a narrow linewidth whose frequency interval is 25 GHz, and it is expected to be applied to high-speed and large-capacity optical communications such as next-generation digital coherent transmission. In addition, microwaves with significantly reduced phase noise can be generated, which is expected to improve the accuracy

of microwave generation and evaluation equipment. This research was published in the British scientific journal, Scientific Reports on May 30, 2023, and was presented in an invited talk at PIERS2023, an international conference on photonics, electromagnetics and information communications, on July 3, 2023.

## Results:

NTT and their partners have developed a detection and control mechanism for the CEO signal (f<sub>ceo</sub>), which has been difficult for electro-optic modulation-based optical frequency comb.

Research Background: An optical frequency comb (OFC)

is an optical signal that has a comb-like emission line spectrum on the frequency axis and is used for optical frequency measurement and precise frequency conversion from light to microwave. If the frequency interval of the OFC is defined as f<sub>rep</sub>, and the frequency closest to 0 (Carrier-envelope offset frequency, hereinafter CEO frequency) when the frequency interval of the OFC is virtually swept to 0, the frequency is defined as f<sub>ceo</sub>, the frequency f<sub>n</sub> of the OFC can be written as f<sub>n</sub> = f<sub>ceo</sub> + n × f<sub>rep</sub> using the natural number n.

Frequency-stabilized OFCs have been realized using fiber combs and Ti:sapphire lasers. However, the

typical frequency intervals (f<sub>rep</sub>) of these OFCs are tens to hundreds of MHz, which makes them difficult to use in optical communication applications because each comb mode cannot be individually separated and controlled. To address this problem, the research group has studied the OFC (EO comb) that generates sidebands by feeding a CW laser into an electro-optic modulator (EO modulator). Because the frequency interval of EO combs is up to several tens of GHz, the comb modes can be individually separated and controlled, making them suitable for optical communication applications. In addition, by selecting the micro-

wave frequency to be applied to the EO modulator, the frequency interval can be easily changed, expanding the range of applications. On the other hand, as the EO comb moves away from the seed light source on the frequency axis, microwave noise is superimposed and the frequency becomes unstable, so the frequency must be stabilized.

NTT and Tokyo Denki University have been researching technology to stabilize the frequency of EO comb. Although the previous method used two lasers with different frequencies, there was room for improvement in the stability of the EO comb due to frequency drift between the lasers.

## Key Points of Technology:

(1) Generation of EO comb with high signal-to-noise ratio by multi-stage EO modulation.

Because EO combs have a low energy per pulse, they typically use long, highly nonlinear fibers to generate broadband OFC. On the other hand, this method reduces the signal-to-noise ratio of the OFC and makes it difficult to detect the CEO frequency (see Technical Detail 1 for detection methods). This time, NTT used seven phase modulators [10] to broaden the sidebands, and then used short, highly nonlinear fibers to generate EO combs with high bandwidth and high signal-to-noise ratio.

The Conversation

Middle East among the regions to be hardest hit

# Global diabetes cases set to soar to 1.3b in next 3 decades

By **Laurny Stafford** and **Liane Ong**  
University of Washington

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

The Research Brief is a short take about interesting academic work.

The number of people living with diabetes worldwide is on pace to more than double in the next three decades, for a total of 1.3 billion people by 2050. That is one of the key findings from our study on the global burden of diabetes recently published in *The Lancet*.

We analyzed and synthesized all available epidemiological data on diabetes burden - defined as health decline due to diabetes captured through the number of cases, disease severity and deaths. Our study included more than 27,000 data sources to produce estimates of diabetes prevalence, disability and deaths for 204 countries and territories from 1990 through 2021. Using a modeling tool that takes into account sociodemographic factors and obesity, we projected diabetes prevalence out to 2050.

We also estimated the proportion of diabetes disability and death attributable to specific risk factors related to obesity, diet, physical activity, environment or occupation, tobacco use and alcohol use.

This analysis is part of the larger Global Burden of Diseases, Injuries, and Risk Factors Study, which has quantified health decline due to hundreds of diseases, injuries and risk factors since 1990. Thousands of health experts and researchers around the world both contribute to and use estimates from this study, which is continually updated.

Our team projected that every country is expected to experience an increase in diabetes cases by 2050. In the regions that are expected to be hardest hit - including North Africa and the Middle East and Pacific island nations - there are countries where as many as 1 in 5 people could be living with diabetes in 2050 if current trends continue. Among older adults in these regions, diabetes prevalence is expected to be even higher.

While both type 1 and type 2 diabetes are characterized by high levels of blood sugar, also known as glucose, type 2 is a largely preventable disease that occurs due to gradual insulin resistance and is commonly diagnosed among adults. Type 1, on the other hand, is an autoimmune disease where the body cannot produce insulin and typically develops during childhood or adolescence.

The vast majority of new diabetes cases in the next three decades are projected to be type 2. We expect the two primary drivers will be aging populations and increases in obesity. In 2021, obesity was the most important risk factor for type 2 diabetes, accounting for more than half of disability and death from the disease.

**Why it matters**

People living with diabetes are at significantly higher risk of developing and dying from other major diseases, including ischemic heart disease and stroke, and from complications such as vision loss and foot ulcers. This compounds the stress of diabetes on health care systems, requiring more comprehensive screening and management. However, a study found that fewer than 1 in 10 people with diabetes in low- and middle-income countries have access to comprehensive diabetes treatment.

Based on an abundance of research, the two primary drivers of the expected rise in diabetes cases will be aging and obesity. As people age, their bodies' ability to regulate blood sugar levels changes.

In addition, studies indicate that obesity rates will continue to rise. No program has yet shown sustainable and population-level reductions in obesity.

This is pretty academic sounding - could you put this in simple, everyday language that you'd use with a person at a PTO meeting or family reunion?

To reverse this trend in obesity rates, an will be required to address the complex behavioral and structural factors related to maintaining a healthy diet and getting enough physical activity.

**What other research is being done**

Our study reports on diabetes trends and risk factors over time by age, sex and geography. However, there are other factors that offer clues to why diabetes disproportionately afflicts certain populations.

Research shows that there are many complex social and economic dynamics at play when it comes to trying to live a healthy lifestyle. Low income, low education level and living in urban areas are all associated with a higher risk of developing type 2 diabetes. Studies also show that type 2 diabetes disproportionately affects Indigenous populations across the world, largely owing to colonization and resulting disruptions to traditional ways of life.

The rapid increase in the number of people living with diabetes that we project in our study doesn't have to become a reality. Understanding how these trends are tied in with how people live is the first step toward changing the course of this disease over the coming decades. (AP)

Hemodynamic monitoring improves patient safety

# Acumen HPI software reduces time in hypotension during op

Arcalis to build state-of-the-art factory

## Arcturus JV scores \$115m in Japanese grants to boost 'mRNA' manufacturing

NEWBURY, England, Aug 16: Edwards Lifesciences has announced the results of the EU-HyProtect registry which indicates that using Acumen HPI software may help reduce the duration and severity of intraoperative hypotension in patients having non-cardiac surgery.

EU-HyProtect is a European multicenter prospective observational registry which included in its final analysis 702 patients scheduled for elective major non-cardiac surgery in 12 medical centers in 5 countries (France, Germany, Italy, Spain, UK). It is the first multicenter registry involving a predictive monitoring technology, establishing a large, prospectively collected data base on hypotension management in patients having non-cardiac surgery. All patients had intraarterial blood pressure monitoring with an arterial catheter and intraoperative Acumen HPI software.

Both the duration and severity of intraoperative hypotension are associated with postoperative complications. The primary endpoint of this registry, therefore, was intraoperative hypotension quantified using the time-weighted average mean arterial pressure (MAP) 65 mmHg. Secondary endpoints included the proportion of patients with at least one  $\geq 1$ -min-episode of a MAP 65 mmHg, and the number of  $\geq 1$ -min-episodes of a MAP 65 mmHg.

**Analysis**

Between September 2021 and May 2022, 749 patients were enrolled in the registry and 702 included in the final analysis. The median time-weighted average MAP 65 mmHg was 0.03 (0.00, 0.20) mmHg. 285 patients (41%) had no  $\geq 1$ -min-episode of a MAP 65 mmHg - 417 patients (59%) had at least one. The median number of  $\geq 1$ -min-episodes of a MAP 65 mmHg was 1 (0, 3).

In addition, although the study was not powered for this outcome, the incidence of acute kidney injury was at the lower end of what is reported in patients having major non-cardiac surgery.

In Europe, of the 2.5 million patients undergoing high-risk surgery annually, one in four develops serious postoperative complications<sup>1,2</sup>. Throughout the hospital patient journey, anaesthetists and intensivists need to analyse large amounts of data to make life-critical decisions for patients. One



EU-HyProtect registry demonstrates reduced time in hypotension during surgery using Acumen HPI software.

SAN DIEGO, Aug 16: Arcturus Therapeutics Holdings Inc. (the "Company", "Arcturus", Nasdaq: ARCT), a global late-stage clinical messenger RNA medicines company focused on the development of infectious disease vaccines and opportunities within liver and respiratory rare diseases, has announced that Arcalis Co., Ltd., its manufacturing joint venture in Japan to support the production of mRNA vaccines and therapeutics, has been awarded \$115 million in two separate grants from the Japanese government.

The grants will be used to fund the construction of a factory and the purchase of capital equipment to support current Good Manufacturing Practice (cGMP) production of mRNA drug substance and mRNA drug product operations.

Arcalis is a joint venture between Axcel and Arcturus, wherein Arcturus holds a 49% equity position that is subject to dilution. The factory, located in Minamisoma City, Japan, is designed to provide cGMP integrated vaccine manufacturing, from mRNA drug substance to bulk nanoparticle-formulated drug product.

"It was an honor to welcome senior Japanese government officials and dignitaries to

the opening ceremonies for Arcalis' state-of-the-art factory which will support the cGMP manufacturing of Arcturus' next-generation STARR® mRNA vaccines," said Pad Chivukula, Ph.D., Chief Scientific Officer of Arcturus Therapeutics.

Arcturus also announced that the LUNAR-FLU program continues to progress with funding and operational support from CSL-Seqirus, including an additional \$17.5 million milestone which will be used to fund flu program development activities. The LUNAR-FLU program utilizes Arcturus' clinically validated next-generation STARR® mRNA platform technology.

"We are pleased with the progress of the LUNAR-FLU program with CSL Seqirus, our exclusive global licensee for the development of novel mRNA vaccines, and the significant role that Arcturus is playing in the development activities," said Joseph Payne, President and CEO of Arcturus Therapeutics. "The LUNAR-FLU program could represent a major advance in vaccination efforts against flu, potentially providing higher levels of efficacy and greater durability compared to current flu vaccine approaches. We look forward to advancing

this promising program."

Founded in 2013 and based in San Diego, California, Arcturus Therapeutics Holdings Inc. (Nasdaq: ARCT) is a global late-stage clinical mRNA medicines and vaccines company with enabling technologies: (i) LUNAR® lipid-mediated delivery, (ii) STARR® mRNA Technology (samRNA) and (iii) mRNA drug substance along with drug product manufacturing expertise. The Company has ongoing collaborations with CSL Seqirus and Meiji Seika Pharma, and a joint venture with ARCALIS. Arcturus' pipeline includes RNA therapeutic candidates to potentially treat ornithine transcarbamylase deficiency and cystic fibrosis, along with its partnered mRNA vaccine programs for SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) and influenza. Arcturus' versatile RNA therapeutics platforms can be applied toward multiple types of nucleic acid medicines including messenger RNA, small interfering RNA, circular RNA, antisense RNA, self-amplifying RNA, DNA, and gene editing therapeutics. Arcturus' technologies are covered by its extensive patent portfolio (patents and patent applications issued in the US, Europe, Japan, China, and other countries).

example is critical drops in blood pressure known as hypotension. Intraoperative hypotension is common in patients having non-cardiac surgery under general anaesthesia<sup>3</sup>. Intraoperative hypotension is associated with increased mortality and major postoperative complications (myocardial injury, acute kidney injury)<sup>(4-8)</sup>.

These postoperative complications come with a significant cost burden for healthcare systems as they are linked with rehospitalisations and increased morbidity.<sup>9</sup>

"Tackling intraoperative hypotension is a critical task for anaesthetists. Systems have been used in operating rooms and intensive care units to monitor blood pressure and other vital signs for decades. However, with these technologies, intraoperative hypotension is sometimes not detected, and when it is, the treatment is reactive, potentially after blood pressure has already dropped below safe levels". Dr Simon James Davies, Honorary Consultant in Anaesthesia and Perioperative Medicine, York and Scarborough NHS Foundation Trust.

Edwards Lifesciences has developed the Acumen HPI software, which provides clinicians with information regarding the likelihood that a patient will develop hypotension. Based on an algorithm that calculates data from hemodynamic monitoring in perioperative management, it leverages predictive analytics to alert clinicians of potential blood pressure drops before they occur.

"Predictive hemodynamic monitoring may be a promising approach to improve

patient safety and outcomes. Clinicians need innovations that can support complex clinical decision making in order to improve quality of care." comments Dr S J Davies.

"The consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic have drastically accelerated the need for solutions that improve patient safety and outcomes, reduce hospital length of stay and increase hospital efficiencies. The results of the EU-HyProtect registry are promising and demonstrate the need to better monitor hypotension in the perioperative pathway. Improving patient safety and outcomes is our ultimate goal and we believe the use of predictive monitoring can help achieve this." comments Pr Thomas Scheeren, Senior Director Medical Affairs EMEA/CL at Edwards Lifesciences.

Maypharm CO, LTD, known as a Korean manufacturer, recently successfully launched Metoo botulinum toxin with a 2nd generation technological advantage and mNnus PLA filler for collagen regeneration using only advanced technologies in the developed products that are responsible for their safety and effectiveness.

For many years, France, Germany, and USA have been considered constant leaders in the field of cosmetology and innovations in the creation of products for cosmetology market. But everything changed after the entry into the arena of South Korea, a country that has made a real revolution in the beauty industry, incorporating the use of innovative technolo-

gies into production, and introducing products to the world that has no analogues before.

METOOFILL hyaluronic acid dermal filler (CE Approved), made by Maypharm CO, LTD, overcame the limitations of traditional hyaluronic acid cross-linking technology by using patented innovative three patented technologies.

1. Microbead Monophasic Technology This patented technology increases the gel's durability with a homogeneous structure of HA particles that provides stable volume, outstanding cohesion, and migration resistance.

2. Multi-stage Cross-linking Technology Metoo Fill goes through a three-stage high-rate DVS cross linking process that optimizes density, provides outstanding viscoelastic properties, flexibility and an improved injectability profile while retaining the biocompatibility and physical functionality of unmodified HA.

3. Multi-degree Amphiphilic Purification After cross-linking, Metoo Fill goes through a multi-step purification process to completely neutralize the cross-linking agent using PBS solution, resulting in a network of HA chains with a purity of over 97%, as opposed to other products in the market with a purity up to 95%.

As a result, the Metoo Fill series contains 4 lines with different gel parameters for various needs: Applying these three patented technologies, the products METOO FILL are longer-lasting, easily moldable, resulting in a very natural finish that will satisfy the client.

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# A spectacular week of space series coming to Curiosity stream

Television

SILVER SPRING, Md., Aug 16, (Agencies): Get ready to embark on an unforgettable exploration of the Universe as Curiosity Stream announces Space Week: Journey Beyond -- a week+ dedicated to captivating space documentaries and series. Space Week launches Thursday, August 31, 2023, with the world premiere of the Curiosity original special Search for Earth's Lost Moon -- examining an extraordinary discovery close to home that scientists are finding difficult to observe... and even harder to explain.

With an unmatched dedication to scientific accuracy, cutting-edge visuals, and riveting storytelling, Curiosity's deep library of space content features some of Curiosity's most highly rated and most-watched programs across Curiosity Stream and Curiosity Channel.

"Exploring space is a fundamental human endeavor, and Space Week offers a unique opportunity to engage with the wonders of the cosmos," said Rob Burk, Curiosity's Head of Content. "These documentaries and series are a celebration of human curiosity and our relentless pursuit of knowledge, and they represent some of Curiosity Stream's fan favorites as well as hidden gems."

Some of the series and specials in the spotlight for Space Week:

**Search for Earth's Lost Moon**  
Premieres August 31 on Curiosity Stream

The area around our Earth is full of blind spots, unexpected visitors, hidden dangers, and potential cosmic treasures. This Curiosity

Original Special explores the story of a mysterious asteroid discovered in Earth's own backyard. And now, a scientific quest has been launched to understand the origins of what some are calling Earth's other moon.

**2023: A Space Odyssey**

In this Curiosity original special, look back at 2023 -- a remarkable year on Earth and in space. Join some of the past year's space missions for a hyper-tour from our Sun to Jupiter--and beyond. Come face-to-face with an asteroid, lift off in search of the conditions for life, experience wondrous natural phenomena, and so much more.

**Secrets of the Universe**

Curiosity's award-winning original series is the ultimate guide to the Universe, exploring the remarkable stories of the missions and breakthroughs that are revolutionizing our understanding of the cosmos. Featuring many of the world's top space scientists, engineers, and explorers, each episode is a mind-blowing adventure to seek answers to some of the Universe's biggest mysteries.

**Engineering the Future: The Race to Space**

It's been described as the democratization of space. What was once the preserve of governments and superpowers, is now a truly global international industry. Narrated by the award-winning actor David Oyelowo, this ground-breaking original engineering series explores the spectacular technologies that could revolutionize

life as we know it.

**Asteroid Rush**

What seemed like science fiction is now reality, and the countdown has begun. Scientists have no doubt that a killer asteroid will one day cross paths with Earth, and we need to be ready. From the depths of space to labs across the globe, in this Curiosity original special we explore the technologies astronomers are using to unlock the secrets of asteroids and deflect them from Earth's orbit.

Plus: Curiosity's original ongoing series Breakthrough, Life In Outer Space, Zenith: Advances in Space Exploration, and more Curiosity Stream premieres.

Follow Curiosity Stream across social media @CuriosityStream for updates and behind-the-scenes looks at Space Week.

**Also:**

**LOS ANGELES:** Steve Martin, Martin Short and Selena Gomez have a new case to devote their podcast to when "Only Murders in the Building" returned to Hulu on Tuesday. In the new episodes, **Oliver Putnam's** (Martin Short) career comeback is in jeopardy when a murder disrupts his Broadway play, and it seems almost everyone involved is suspicious. "Your show is a death trap! Today alone I almost died three times," Martin's **Thomas Haden-Savage** declares in the trailer. The third season also features new all-star cast members including **Meryl Streep, Paul Rudd, Jesse Williams and Ashley Park.**

## Variety



This image released by the Bavarian State Opera shows tenor Brian Jagde, (center left), and soprano Elena Stikhina, (center right), during a rehearsal of Damiano Michieletto's 2023 staging of Verdi's 'Aida' at the Bavarian State Opera in Munich, Germany. (AP)

## Stage

Traditional stagings in US, Italy more muted

# Opera world split as Europe reinvents

**NEW YORK:** A federal judge has approved a permanent injunction against the online Internet Archive from scanning and sharing all copyrighted books already made available by publishers.

Judge **John Koeltl** had already ruled in March that the Archive had illegally offered free e-editions of 127 books in copyright, including works by **J.D. Salinger** and **Toni Morrison.**

Four leading publishers - Hachette Book Group, HarperCollins Publishers, John Wiley & Sons and Penguin Random House - had sued the Archive in 2020 in response to its establishing a "National Emergency Library" early in the pandemic, when most libraries and bookstores were shutdown. The Archive had contended that it was protected by fair use and that it had a larger mission to make information as widely accessible as possible.

The injunction was part of an agreement filed last week by the two sides in the lawsuit. Koeltl, of the US District Court in **Manhattan,** did agree with the Archive on one issue that remained in dispute: The publishers had wanted the injunction to cover e-books even if the publisher itself had not released one, while the Archive wanted the injunction to apply only when an e-book was available.

All 127 books cited by the publishers had e-editions. "The Court has narrowly tailored the injunctive relief in this case to cover only copyrighted works, like the Works in Suit, that are available from the Publishers in electronic form," Koeltl wrote.

**Maria Pallante,** president and CEO of the trade group the Association of American Publishers, said in a statement Tuesday that the AAP was "extremely pleased that the district court has approved the proposed consent judgment." She added that the scope of the injunction would have a "very minimal impact." "The overwhelming majority of the tens of thousands of books that plaintiffs make available in print are also commercially available from them as authorized ebooks," she said. "Nor are the plaintiffs precluded from en-

**SALZBURG, Austria, Aug 16, (AP):** The opera world is split in two: European regietheater productions reinvent works in ways composers never imagined, while traditional stagings favored in the US and parts of Italy are condemned by some cognoscenti as passé.

Martin Kušej's vision of Mozart's "Le Nozze di Figaro" at the Salzburg Festival includes cocaine-fueled fights, a predator priest, a hooker and a basement garage rave.

Damiano Michieletto transforms Verdi's "Aida" at Munich's Bavarian State Opera into an antiwar jeremiad in which Radamès collapses from PTSD during a Triumphal March of amputees and the High Priest Ramfis attempts to marry the King's daughter Amneris.

Tobias Kratzer's staging of Wagner's "Tannhäuser," revived at this year's Bayreuth Festival, envisions a clown-clad title character as part of a counterculture clique with dwarf and love goddess in a sequined cocktail dress who runs over a cop with a Citroën van in a Burger King parking lot.

"I'm very well known for my irritating work, and I think I was hired especially for that," Kušej said. "Who wants to have the 150th version of a well-made 'Figaro' in Salzburg? I want it to be relevant for today's audience. I saw many, many, many shows and I was always a bit disappointed. There are good shows. There are interesting shows. But my aim is really to make opera living in our times, questioning questions that we have today."

Some directors engage in a can-you-top-this race of reinterpretation filled with tangential cultural allusions. Several arias were met with muted applause as puzzled viewers digested the stage action.

Krzysztof Warlikowski's absurdist version of Verdi's "Macbeth" in Salzburg has Lady Macbeth visit an obstetrician and discover she is infertile as sunglass-adorned witches prognosticate while wearing yellow-and-black armbands warning of radioactivity. Malgorzata Szczniak, the director's wife, is the set and costume designer and shifts location from Scotland to a Jeu de paume, a tennis court referenc-

ing the French Revolution.

Clips of Pier Paolo Pasolini's "Il vangelo secondo Matteo (The Gospel According to St. Matthew)" and "Edipo re (Oedipus Rex)" are shown in the background. The banquet ends when a baby doll is served on a silver platter of parsley and apples. Macbeth is wheelchair-bound for the final act after a witch injures his leg by plunging knitting needles into a voodoo doll. Lady Macduff poisons more than three dozen children with spiked drinks at a movie theater and their lifeless bodies are arrayed across the front of the stage.

"You share this vision with your audience and from that moment starts the adventure," Warlikowski said. "If you are coming with eyes to see just what happens, you will not get anything. But if you come with eyes who want to see and at the same time you are thinking, maybe your thinking is going to connect you to this vision."

He was pleased by the lack of audience anger.

### Contemporary

"In the case of Verdi, it's not very easy not to be boored," Warlikowski said.

Kušej looks at the gun-toting Almadivas and their servants as a mob family in a W-like hotel designed by Raimund Orfeo Voigt, in sharp contemporary costumes by Alan Hranitelj. The Count and Figaro snort during the overture, the Countess pops pills while swigging from a wine bottle, Susanna sips a cocktail along with a capsule and Basilio shoots up. Basilio is a priest instead of a music teacher and the gardener Antonio is homeless.

A staggered Figaro and a nodding Susanna begin the evening drunk in a bar, his "Cinque ... dieci ... venti" referring to shots rather than floor measurements. In Bartolo's "La vendetta" aria, "tutta Siviglia" becomes "tutta la terra" to make it more universal. The Count, Figaro and Basilio rough up Cherubino during "Non più andrai (No more will you)" - the priest smashes Cherubino's face into a glass panel.

"Porgi, amor (Grant love)" opens the second act

with the Countess staring at Gustave Courbet's 1866 painting "L'Origine du monde" while a naked woman sits in the adjacent bathtub. The Count sings "Vedrò, mentr'io sospiro (I will see, while I sigh)" while a prostitute wearing only panties dresses him, earning a wad of cash. The household assembles, many wearing headphones, to dance in a parking lot seven levels below ground ahead of the Susanna-Figaro rooftop wedding.

Kušej said Met general manager Peter Gelb had thought about co-producing a "Forza del Destino" that appeared in Munich in 2013, but Gelb decided not to go forward after seeing it would contain 9/11 references.

After attending Kušej's "Nozze" last week, Gelb said: "We're interested in stage directors who would like to thrill our audiences, not revolt them."

Booing directors has become standard at Bayreuth, but the dissenters were only a small segment for Jay Scheib's "Parsifal" this year, dominated by AR glasses and a theme of global energy collapse. Kratzer, who said in his "Tannhäuser" program notes that "historical costume per se is now largely perceived as retro or reactionary," was greeted with boos on opening night four years ago but his staging, with sets and costumes by Rainer Sellmaier, now is considered a Bayreuth classic. Claus Guth's Paris Opéra "La Bohème," set on a spaceship, was booed in 2017 and cheered when revived this year.

Cecilia Bartoli, the Italian mezzo-soprano who heads the Salzburg Whitsun Festival, picked Christof Loy for a minimalist staging of Gluck's "Orfeo ed Eurydice" she is starring in this month.

"If we decide to make an opera of Bellini, of Rossini, of Mozart, of Haydn, of Gluck, of Verdi, we do have a music which was composed by the greatest composer and we have a libretto, which in some cases is very good," she said. "A good director is one who respects, who understand this and is able to bring a new dimension of the piece. But one thing is to bring a new dimension, the other thing is to destroy the piece."

forcing under the Copyright Act the small percentage of works that may not be covered by the injunction."

The Internet Archive has said it plans to appeal the decision from March. Asked for comment Tuesday by The Associated Press, an Archive spokesperson referred to a blog posting last



Kahle



Pallante

week by founder **Brewster Kahle.** (AP)

**MERIDEN, Conn:** Police who were examining a stolen car for evidence made a surprising find - a kitten - and now they are looking for his owner.

The gray-and-white male cat was perched under a seat in the

stolen vehicle, which collided with a police car during a chase, the Meriden Police Department said on its Facebook page and in a news release Monday.

Officers were pursuing the car on suspicion that it had been used in armed robberies in several nearby communities hours earlier. After the crash,

six suspects fled but were soon arrested.

"We are hopeful someone recognizes our adorable feline friend and can help us reunite him with his owner," the department said. It's asking for anyone with information to contact Meriden police or animal control. (AP)

## People &amp; Places

## Events

Contestants speak out  
'Body checks' at Miss Universe shock nation

JAKARTA, Indonesia, Aug. 16, (AP) — Their dreams of representing Indonesia in the 2023 Miss Universe pageant turned to nightmares when they were forced to undergo "body checks" in front of local organizers. Now seven contestants have filed complaints with the police, accusing the organizers of sexual harassment, their lawyer said Tuesday.

During the July 29-Aug. 3 Miss Universe Indonesia contest in the capital of Jakarta - and ahead of the show's Grand Final event - the contestants were told to strip to their underwear for "body checks" for scars or cellulite, said lawyer Melissa Anggraini.

The checks took place in a ballroom at the downtown Sari Pacific Hotel, where the contest was held, with about two dozen people present, including men. Five of the contestants said they were then photographed topless, Anggraini said.

"We have obtained some evidences, even videos showing that the organizer had carried out 'body checks'," she added.

One of her clients, 23-year-old model Priskila Ribka Jelita who represented West Java province in the pageant, recounted her "body check" ordeal in an interview with The Associated Press.

"When they asked me to open my bra ... I was shocked! But I couldn't speak or refuse," she said. "When I tried to cover my breast with my hand, I was even scolded and yelled at."

"I was totally confused, nervous and humiliated, especially when I was told to lift my left leg on the chair" for an inspection up the inside of her leg, Jelita said.

After news of the "body checks" leaked out, the Miss Universe Organization cut its ties with its Indonesian franchisee. The New York-based organization said in a statement late Saturday that it had decided to sever ties with PT Capella Swastika Karya, the franchisee, and its National Director Poppy Capella.

"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 platform X, formerly known as Twitter.

## Franchise

The organization also said it would be cancelling this year's Miss Universe Malaysia as the Indonesian franchisee also holds the license for the neighboring country's pageant.

It said it would make arrangements for the Indonesia 2023 title holder, **Fabienne Nicole Groeneveld**, who won in Jakarta, to compete in the upcoming Miss Universe pageant, to be held in El Salvador later this year.

Groeneveld was not among the contestants who filed a complaint.

Jelita's mother, Maria Napitupulu, said she found out what happened to her daughter only after reading her daughter's post on Instagram, where she recounted the ordeal.

"It's very sad and this really hurts me," Napitupulu said, tears streaming down her cheeks.

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

Capella, a former singer and the franchisee's manager, could not be reached for comment.

In a post on the franchisee's Instagram account, Capella on Saturday denied she had any knowledge of or was in any way involved in any "body checking" of the contestants. She also said that she was against every form of "violence and sexual harassment."

In its statement, the Miss Universe Organization said no measurements of height, weight, or body dimensions are required to join the pageant, and thanked the Indonesian contestants who have shown "bravery in speaking out."

"To the women who came forward from the Indonesian pageant, we are sorry that this was your experience with our organization," it said, adding that it was also evaluating current franchise agreements and policies to prevent this type of conduct from occurring again.

Since the "body checks" news broke, controversy over the pageant has been mounting in Indonesia, the world's most populous Muslim-majority nation. The country has a reputation as a tolerant, pluralist society that respects freedom of expression.

Most Muslims in Indonesia, a secular country of 277 million people, are moderate, but a small hard-line fringe has become more vocal in recent years.

In 2013, several conservative Muslim groups staged a massive protest against the Miss World competition in Indonesia, prompting the organizers to move the contest from Jakarta to the resort island of Bali. All of the more than 130 contestants were required to wear Bali's traditional long sarongs instead of the bikinis that have historically been a symbol of the competition.

## Also:

**ALGIERS, Algeria:** The "Barbie" movie was pulled from theaters in Algeria this week almost one month after its release in the North African country.

Online news outlet 24H Algerie said Algeria's Ministry of Culture and Arts notified cinemas in Algiers, **Oran** and **Constantine** to "immediately" pull the movie.

Neither the ministry nor the Algerian Audiovisual Regulatory Authority commented on the reported directive or provided a rationale for it.

"Barbie" opened in some Algerian cinemas last month. The film's distributors removed the Hollywood blockbuster from their screening schedules starting this week.

The move comes after authorities in **Kuwait** and **Lebanon** banned the live action movie based on the American fashion dolls for allegedly threatening conservative values.

Some people in Algeria protested the cancellation on social media, posting their complaints along with the hashtag "#IAmBarbie." Others denounced it as "censorship" and "bigotry."

"The 'Barbie' film 'is a threat to morality,' they say," writer **Leila Belkacem** posted on her Facebook page. "What morality are they talking about when the censors gorge on porn films at home? Aren't you tired of dragging the country into your dark delusions?"

**Fatima Ait Kaci**, a retired teacher, told The Associated Press she had promised to take her two granddaughters, who were visiting from **Canada**, to see the movie. Ait Kaci said she heard what had happened to "Barbie" only when they arrived at the **Riadh El Feth** cinema in Algiers and discovered another film showing in the 3 p.m.-5 p.m. time slot.



Madonna presents a tribute to Aretha Franklin at the MTV Video Music Awards on Aug. 20, 2018, at Radio City Music Hall in New York. Madonna has rescheduled her North American 'Celebration Tour' dates following a 'serious bacterial infection' that led to her hospitalization in an intensive care unit for several days in June. (AP)

## Madonna reschedules tour after ICU stay

Madonna's rescheduled Celebration Tour will kick off in Brooklyn, New York, in a matter of months.

In June, Madonna suffered what her manager called a "serious bacterial infection" that led to her hospitalization in an intensive care unit for several days. The North American leg of her Celebration Tour was originally scheduled to start July 15 in Vancouver, British Columbia, and to run through October 8 in Las Vegas. It was postponed as she recovered.

Her tour will now start on October 14, at London's O2 Arena.

On Tuesday, Live Nation an-

nounced that the majority of Madonna's North American tour dates have been rescheduled. They immediately follow a stint in the UK and Europe, kicking off on December 13 at Barclays Center in Brooklyn, New York, and running through April 24, 2024, when it will conclude at Mexico City's Palacio de los Deportes.

Dates in San Francisco, Las Vegas and Phoenix - as well as Tulsa, Oklahoma, and Nashville, Tennessee - have been canceled due to scheduling conflicts. Refunds will be available at point of purchase.

At the time of the initial tour post-

ponement, Madonna shared a message on Instagram. "I'm on the road to recovery and incredibly grateful for all the blessings in my life," the pop superstar wrote. "My focus now is on my health and getting stronger and I assure you, I'll be back with you as soon as I can."

Her manager, Guy Oseary, originally broke the news. Madonna "developed a serious bacterial infection which led to a several-day stay in the ICU," he wrote on Instagram. "Her health is improving, however she is still under medical care. A full recovery is expected." (AP)

## Obit

## Cause of death probed

## Rapper Magoo dies at 50

LOS ANGELES, Aug. 16, (AP) — The rapper Magoo, known for his work in the hip-hop duo Timbaland & Magoo and hit song "Up Jumps da Boogie" featuring Aaliyah and Missy Elliott, has died. Magoo, a pioneer of the '90 and early 2000s Virginia rap scene, was 50.

His wife Meco Barcliff told the New York Times that Magoo had no known health issues beyond asthma and had not been feeling well before his death over the weekend in Williamsburg, Va. Investigators are still looking into his cause of death.

Larry "Larry Live" Lyons, a close friend of Magoo's who was also in the rap group Surrounded by Idiots (S.B.I.) with the late rapper, Pharrell Williams, and Timbaland (who went by DJ Timmy Tim at the time) shared a statement from Magoo's family.

## Memory

"Magoo's memory will forever live on and his music will continue to inspire & uplift us! We ask for your understanding and respect as we process this loss and celebrate the life of a remarkable individual & our beloved son," the statement said.

Magoo, born Melvin Barcliff, fell in love with hip-hop early on. Growing up in southern Virginia - at the time, a region that left a lot to be desired in terms of a rap scene - Magoo found kinship in like-minded teenagers such as Timothy Mosley (Timbaland) and later, other Virginia-based musical contemporaries like Pharrell and Missy Elliott.

In the early '90s, he co-founded the short-lived Surrounded by Idiots (S.B.I.) and joined Jodeci member and producer DeVante Swing's Swing Mob label and Da Bassment Cru collective. When both dissolved, Timbaland & Magoo joined forces as a duo in 1995, releasing three full-length albums on the label Blackground: 1997's "Welcome to Our World," 2001's "Indecent Proposal," and 2003's "Under Construction, Part II."

The former was their best-selling album, certified platinum by the RIAA, and featured guest spots from Ginuwine, Playa, Shaunta

Montgomery, Buddha Brother, Big B and DJ Law. "Up Jumps da Boogie," the duo's debut single on the release, became Magoo's best-known hit, spending 20 weeks on the Billboard Hot 100 chart and peaking at No. 12. With that gold record, and other popular album cuts like "Luv 2 Luv U (Remix)" and "Clock Strikes," Magoo found mainstream success.

Magoo's unique-in-rap higher-pitched voice and bouncy rhyme schemes proved a solid complement to Timbaland's innovative, trend-setting production and the producer's more relaxed vocals and filtered ad libs.

Their playful pop culture references invited in a wide range of listeners, with Magoo name-dropping Sonny and Cher, "Huckleberry Finn," "Chip & Dale," Ringo Starr and CeCe Winans in just one verse on "Luv 2 Luv U." They were boastful but never took themselves too seriously, with a skit on their debut referring to the pair as "the boot boy and the cartoon character."

On Monday, tributes from some of Magoo's greatest collaborators and admirers began pouring in. "This one hits different," Timbaland wrote on Instagram. "Long live Melvin aka magoo !!! Tim and Magoo forever. Rest easy my king."

## Recalled

Missy Elliott recalled meeting Magoo for the first time on her Instagram. "These are the kind of post I don't wish on any1," she wrote, adding that Magoo gave her the nickname "Misdemeanor," because he said about her, "it's a crime to have that many talents," when they worked on the song "Beep Me 911."

R&B singer Ginuwine also paid tribute, writing on Instagram, "I don't even know how to say anything at this point...this dude, always pushed me...I will miss you maganooo that's what we called him," he wrote.

Magoo is survived by his wife, his stepdaughter Detrice "Pawt" Bickham, as well as Magdaline and Hiawatha Brown, the aunt and uncle who raised him, and his two sisters, Portia Brown and Lynette Hawks.

resulted in more than \$7,500 in bills, according to court papers.

Cohen and her husband **Ronald**, of **Gilford, New Hampshire**, are seeking a jury trial and at least \$50,000 in damages.

The lawsuit claims Eataly was negligent for not properly cleaning the floor. The lawsuit also claims loss of consortium.

The restaurant "had a duty to ensure that the surface of the floors were free from unnecessary dangers, a duty to use ordinary care to maintain the premises in a reasonably safe condition and a duty to warn of such dangerous conditions," the lawsuit says.

Eataly is a gourmet Italian restaurant and food market with eight locations in the US and eight overseas, according to the company's website. (AP)

## Film

## Refile charges?

## Prosecutors mull 2nd gun analysis

SANTA FE, N.M., Aug. 16, (AP) — Prosecutors have received a second expert analysis of the revolver fired in the fatal shooting of a cinematographer by **Alec Baldwin** on the set of a Western film in New Mexico, as they weigh whether to refile charges against the actor.

Baldwin has said the gun fired accidentally after he followed instructions to point it toward cinematographer Halyna Hutchins, who was behind the camera in rehearsal. Baldwin said he pulled back the hammer - but not the trigger - and the gun fired, fatally wounding Hutchins on Oct. 21, 2021, at a movie ranch on the outskirts of Santa Fe.

Special prosecutors dismissed an involuntary manslaughter charge against Baldwin in April, saying they were informed the gun might have been modified before the shooting and malfunctioned. They commissioned a new analysis of the gun, along with other weapons and ammunition from the set of the movie, "Rust," which moved filming from New Mexico to Montana.

The new gun analysis from experts in ballistics and forensic testing based in Arizona and New Mexico relied on replacement parts to reassemble the gun fired by Baldwin - after parts of the pistol were broken during earlier testing by the FBI. The new report examines the gun and markings it left on a spent cartridge to conclude that the trigger had to have been pulled or depressed.

## Trigger

"Although Alec Baldwin repeatedly denies pulling the trigger, given the tests, findings and observations reported here, the trigger had to be pulled or depressed sufficiently to release the fully cocked or retracted hammer of the evidence revolver," states the analysis led by Lucien Haag of Forensic Science Services in Arizona.

An attorney for Hannah Gutierrez-Reed, the weapons supervisor on the movie set, disclosed the report in a court filing Tuesday. Gutierrez-Reed has pleaded not guilty to involuntary manslaughter and evidence tampering in the case. Her trial is scheduled to begin in December.

Defense attorneys for Baldwin did not immediately reply to an email Tuesday seeking comment on the gun analysis. A publicist declined comment.

Special prosecutor Kari Morrissey said in an email Tuesday that a formal announcement on whether to refile any charges against Baldwin is forthcoming but didn't say how soon.

In an early June court filing, prosecutors gave themselves 60 days to renew a case against Baldwin, contingent on a determination that the gun did not malfunction.

"A possible malfunction of the gun significantly effects causation with regard to Baldwin," they wrote.

Authorities have not specified exactly how live ammunition found its way on set and into the .45-caliber revolver made by an Italian company that specializes in 19th century reproductions.

The company Rust Movie Productions has paid a \$100,000 fine to state workplace safety regulators following a scathing narrative of safety failures in violation of standard industry protocols, including testimony that production managers took limited or no action to address two misfires on set before the fatal shooting.

An August FBI report on the agency's analysis of the gun found that, as is common with firearms of that design, it could go off without pulling the trigger if force was applied to an uncocked hammer - such as by dropping the weapon.

## Safeguards

The only way the testers could get it to fire was by striking the gun with a mallet while the hammer was down and resting on the cartridge, or by pulling the trigger while it was fully cocked. The gun eventually broke during the testing.

In Tuesday's court filing, Gutierrez-Reed's attorneys asked for new safeguards at trial to ensure the movie armorer can't be convicted if negligence by any other person was the only significant cause of death or changed the course of events in unforeseeable ways.

Morrissey criticized the defense's request for special jury instructions as premature and a bid for media attention.

Defense attorneys said they plan to present evidence that Gutierrez-Reed asked assistant director and safety coordinator David Halls to call her back into rehearsal if Baldwin was going to use the gun. She said that didn't happen before Hutchins was shot.



Angel Manuel Soto, director of 'Blue Beetle,' gestures to a poster featuring the film's star Xolo Maridueña at a screening of the film, Tuesday, Aug. 15, at the TCL Chinese Theatre in Los Angeles. (AP)

## Variety

**MINNEAPOLIS:** Officials have identified the person who died in the shooting at a backyard punk rock show that left six other people injured last week in Minneapolis.

**Nicholas Trevor Golden**, who also went by **August Golden**, was 35 when he died from a gunshot wound to the chest at 10:15 pm Friday, the **Hennepin County** Medical Examiner announced in a news release.

Bryan May told the Star Tribune that Golden was his best friend and bandmate.

"He was one of my favorite songwriters," said May, who played with Golden in the Minneapolis punk band Scrounger. May added that Golden had been living in **New Orleans** but moved to the Twin Cities just over a year ago to be near his girlfriend.

**Alex Stillman** also knew Golden and was at the show, **Minnesota** Public Radio reported.

"He was just a beautiful human who joined our community in the last couple of years," Stillman said about Golden, adding, "just based on our common interests, and love for this specific DIY ethos and every kind of art that comes along with it, I knew immediately that we would be close friends."

Stillman owns a local business called **Outta Wax** that presses vinyl records.

"I think a lot of us are still reeling and in shock with what's happening and just trying to support each other," Stillman said.

Authorities said that early information indicated two suspects walked up the alley, gunfire erupted and they fled on foot. Arrests were not immediately made.

Police believe one of the people at the show was targeted by a shooter, police Chief **Brian O'Hara** said at a news conference last week. When police responded, they found multiple people with gunshot wounds. They also learned that some wounded people had taken themselves to the hospital. (AP)

**BOSTON:** A woman who fractured her left ankle during a trip with her husband to the Italian food emporium **Eataly** in Boston last year is blaming her injury on a piece of meat.

**Alice Cohen** was heading to an area where food samples are distributed to customers on Oct 7 when she slipped on a piece of meat and fell, according to a lawsuit filed Friday in Suffolk Superior Court in Boston.

"Alice Cohen sustained bodily injuries, a loss of enjoyment of life, pain and

suffering, and incurred necessary medical expenses for medical care and attention," the lawsuit says.

Her medical expenses, including a hospital visit and physical therapy, have



O'Hara



Golden

## Climate

## Sportfishing changes

## Calif promotes native 'fish' as water warms

SAN DIEGO, Aug. 16, (AP): California's only native sunfish, the Sacramento perch, survived catastrophic floods in the 1860s and was so abundant that it was a regular staple in San Francisco's markets before invasive species decimated its population.

Today it is relegated to mostly isolated lakes, reservoirs and ponds with few predators. But as the planet heats up and threatens many cold-water game fish species like trout, the Sacramento perch may be on the cusp of a comeback, thanks in part to its ability to tolerate warm water and extreme conditions.

State officials recently introduced Sacramento perch to Southern California in an attempt to widen its range, strengthen its gene pool, create a breeding stock and generate interest among more anglers. Biologists with the California



Turner

Department of Fish and Wildlife released the first batch of 37 mostly juvenile Sacramento perch on Thursday evening in San Diego County's only natural lake, Lindo Lake in Lakeside, a suburb east of the city of San Diego.

"It's a native game fish that we can promote as a viable fishery in the future where we may not be able to have trout in certain areas because of climate change and warming waters," environmental scientist Matt Lucero with the department said after releasing the fish in batches.

The multiyear experiment reflects the changes facing sportfishing as rivers, streams, lakes and ponds warm. Climate change is the biggest threat to the survival of trout in America's interior West, according to the Natural Resources Defense Council. It estimates up to 50% of trout habitat in the Rocky Mountain region is at risk of disappearing by the end of the century.

Sacramento perch will never replace trout, state biologists said. Instead, the focus is on preserving a native species, and as an added benefit, the fish could allow anglers another option as temperatures rise, limiting seasons for cold-water species in some places.

## Introduces

Max Fish, the department's senior environmental scientist overseeing the efforts, said the hope is it can be introduced to fishing spots in more urban areas.

"We're in an exploratory phase to evaluate how well the fish will do, and how communities react to those fisheries," he said.

Tiffany Turner of the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership, which advocates for conservation to help anglers and hunters, said California is smart to act now to expand the habitat of climate-resilient fish, though she expects some resistance initially in a sport that is steeped in traditions.

"Anglers are going to have to adapt if we want to keep doing what we love," she said.

Biologists say the iridescent green and purple fish, whose markings and long spiny dorsal fins hint at its legacy dating back 15 million years, stands out for its ability to thrive in everything from cold mountain lakes to warm stagnant, brackish water.

Sacramento perch's resiliency allowed it to survive the catastrophic floods that wiped out much of Central California more than 160 years ago.

But its numbers plummeted by the early 20th century with the introduction of non-native species, including other more aggressive sunfish from the midwestern United States, which pushed the Sacramento perch out of its native habitat in the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta.

It's unknown if any still exist in its native habitat. Most of the population is concentrated in more than two dozen high-altitude lakes in Northern California, and a handful of western states.

Scientists hope that by introducing it to Southern California it will help strengthen the gene pool and build data for the captive breeding of Sacramento perch. Some hope the native fish can someday flourish as a food source much like tilapia, a highly adaptable warm-water species that is illegal to produce in California due to its potential to invade native ecosystems.

Peter Moyle, a Sacramento perch expert at the University of California, Davis, applauds the state for bringing it to Southern California. "It's one of the best tasting freshwater fish I know of," he said, adding that it's also fun to fish since it puts up a fight.

Lucero said the project will take at least three years, and it'll be awhile before fishing even opens at Lindo Lake. There are still many challenges to overcome.

Last summer biologists released Sacramento perch larval in Lindo Lake after it was drained, dredged and restored to its natural state and outfitted with fish habitat structures. But someone since then dumped in a bucket of wide-mouth bass, which eat native sunfish eggs, Lucero said.

## Survived

Biologists still don't know how many have survived. They hope the introduction of juveniles will give the population a fighting chance of establishing itself. The juveniles are believed to be a year old and are expected to be able to spawn in another year, and lay as many as 10,000 eggs, Lucero said.

San Diego County officials have posted "No fishing" signs around Lindo Lake. Rangers also patrol regularly during daylight hours but it is a public park surrounded by apartment buildings, stores and modest ranch style homes.

Officials say the best assurance is educating people about how special the Sacramento perch is.

Lucero brought the Sacramento perch from Bridgeport reservoir, nestled in the jagged snow-capped Sierra Nevada mountains. Biologists identified it as a gene bottleneck for the species.

Lucero, with other state biologists, stunned the perch with an electrical current so they would float to the surface belly up to be able to scoop them up. They eventually loaded 37 young fish into a bin in the bed of a pickup truck, and Lucero drove them eight hours to the lake in San Diego County.

After arriving with the fish, Lucero spent an hour acclimating them to their new home, which is 6,000 feet (1,828 meters) lower in elevation. He slowly poured into their bin Lindo Lake water, which was at 83 degrees Fahrenheit (28.3 Celsius), while swapping out the water from Bridgeport, which was at 68 degrees Fahrenheit, (20 degrees Celsius).

The fish huddled together in a corner of the bin. Then they slowly spread out and swam around as the hour passed, which Lucero saw as a sign that they were ready to be released.

He eyed the lake. He said he did not want to release them too close to the dock where some of the bass might be waiting. But he said too far out in the center there were cormorants. A heron also watched nearby.

Lucero put on his waders and went in up to his waist. Fellow environmental scientist Austin Sturkie, who is also with the department, stood on the dock and scooped out batch after batch of the fish as the sun began to dip and handed the net to Lucero in the water.

The fish wiggled out and swam away.

"Boys stay together," Lucero joked.

As Lucero worked, a man on a skateboard zipped by and yelled "Yay! More bass."

"No, it's Sacramento perch," Lucero shot back, smiling. "They're better!"



Workers move a section of well casing into place at a Chesapeake Energy natural gas well site near Burlington, Pa., in Bradford County, on April 23, 2010. A team of that has spent four years studying the health effects of natural gas fracking in southwestern Pennsylvania is set to present its findings Tuesday, Aug. 15. (AP)



California Fish and Wildlife biologist Matt Lucero releases some of the 37 Sacramento Perch juveniles in Lindo Lake County Park in the Lakeside suburb of San Diego, Aug. 11. Lucero brought the fish from Bridgeport reservoir, a picturesque body of water surrounded by snow-capped mountains that has become a bottleneck for the fish's genes because the isolated population cannot migrate. (AP)

## Discovery

**Japanese mountaineer dies:** A Japanese mountaineer died and another was injured when apparent rocks hit them while they were trying to climb a never-scaled mountain in Pakistan, a mountaineering official and the injured climber said Tuesday.

The climbers were on an expedition organized by a local tour operator in the Andaq Valley in the country's north, said **Karrar Haidri**, secretary of the Alpine Club of Pakistan. The unclimbed mountain is called Virgin Peak and it is 5,800 meters (19,029 feet) tall.

Shinji Tamura slipped and fell at an altitude of 5,380 meters (17,650 feet) while trying to ascend the mountain Friday, Haidri told The Associated Press.

The man's colleague, Samba Takayasu, said their rappelling point was broken and they fell together, holding a double rope about 60 meters (197 feet) long. "Shinji was heavily hit" and had a big injury from what Takayasu said he thought was a rock.

"I told Shinji not to move because, you know, he's so damaged (injured) but looks like he has had some confidence to coming down," Takayasu said.

He said the campground was so close their lights were visible and he thought Tamura was trying to reach it when he disappeared.

Takayasu managed to reach base camp to seek help, and Haidri said a search team was quickly sent to the area where Tamura slipped.

"Our rescue team is going down into the crevices, but the crevices (are) so deep and so soft, you know, so our rescue team cannot find him," Takayasu said.

The search for his body was called off Monday and local authorities in the region confirmed Tamura's death. (AP)

**Sculpture returning to Boston:** A marble statue that depicts a felled Native American pulling an arrow from his torso is being returned to the Boston-area organization cofounded by Paul Revere that thought it had been destroyed decades ago.

"Wounded Indian," sculpted in 1850 by Peter Stephenson and modeled on the ancient Roman statue "Dying Gaul," was a gift to the Massachusetts Charitable Mechanic Association in 1893 and was displayed in its exhibition hall, according to Cultural Heritage Partners, the law firm that represented the Boston organization during negotiations. **Greg Werkheiser** is a founding partner at Cultural Heritage Partners.

That hall was sold in 1958, and the association was told that during the chaos of moving and distributing its assets to other area cultural institutions, the sculpture was accidentally destroyed and tossed away.

But the life-size piece showed up 30 years later at the Chrysler Museum of Art

## sadr

## Call to protect public health as gas drilling expands

## 'Fracking linked to asthma, lymphoma'

HARRISBURG, Pa., Aug. 16, (AP): Children who lived closer to natural gas wells in heavily drilled western Pennsylvania were more likely to develop a relatively rare form of cancer, and nearby residents of all ages had an increased chance of severe asthma reactions, researchers said in reports released Tuesday evening.

The taxpayer-funded research by the University of Pittsburgh adds to a body of evidence suggesting links between the gas industry and certain health problems.

In the reports, the researchers found what they called significant associations between gas industry activity and two ailments: asthma, and lymphoma in children, who are relatively rarely diagnosed with this type of cancer.

The researchers were unable to say whether the drilling caused the health problems, because the studies weren't designed to do that. Instead, the researchers combed health records to try to determine possible associations based on how close people lived to natural gas wells, while industry groups pointed to what they say are weaknesses of the studies' assumptions and the limitations of its data.

## Children

The reports were released at the start of a Tuesday evening public meeting to discuss the findings, hosted by University of Pittsburgh School of Public Health and the state Department of Health, on the campus of state-owned Pennsylvania Western University.

At the meeting, community activists and distressed parents urged department officials and Pitt researchers to do more to protect public health as gas drilling continues to expand.

Raina Rippel, former director of the Southwest Pennsylvania Environmental Health Project, called the findings the "tip of the toxic iceberg and we are only just beginning to understand what is out there."

There is, she warned, "a lot more cancer waiting in the wings."

In the cancer study, researchers found that children who lived within 1 mile (1.6 kilometers) of a well had five to seven times the chance of developing lymphoma compared with children who lived 5 miles (8 kilometers) or farther from a well. That equates to 60 to 84 lymphoma cases per million children living near wells, versus 12 per million among kids living farther away.

For asthma, the researchers concluded that people with the breathing condition who lived near wells were more likely to have severe reactions while gas was being extracted compared with people who don't live near wells. However, researchers said they found no consistent association for severe reactions during periods when crews were building, drilling and fracking the well.

The four-year, \$2.5 million project is wrapping up after the state's former governor, Democrat Tom Wolf, in 2019 agreed to commission it under pressure from the families of pediatric

in Norfolk, Virginia.

The mechanic association started pressuring the Chrysler Museum for the sculpture's return as far back as 1999 and stepped up its efforts a few years ago, when it brought in a researcher to establish ownership and hired a lawyer.

But the dispute was not resolved until Aug. 9, when the Chrysler's trustees agreed to return the statue.

"It feels great to get the piece back because we really felt that there wasn't any

## US coal miners call for stronger enforcement of black lung rule

BEAVER, W.Va., Aug. 16, (AP): Laboring to breathe, West Virginia coal miner Terry Lilly told federal regulators Thursday he is appreciative the US government is finally considering a proposal to limit the poisonous rock dust causing a severe resurgence of black lung.

But Lilly said the rule - a half-century in the making - will mean nothing if there aren't strict enforcement mechanisms in place to ensure companies comply.

"Cheating the samples is what we need to stop. If we can stop this, we can save some lives," said Lilly, asking officials to excuse him as he took a pause to catch his breath. He's now limited to 40% lung capacity, he said.

Lilly was one of the dozens of miners and advocates who came to the historic coal-mining county in West Virginia's southern coalfields to discuss a proposed rule from the federal Mine Safety and Health Administration that would cut the current limit for silica dust exposure in

half.

During an emotional, hours-long hearing - the second of three before public comment on the proposal ends next month - miners spoke about their fear of retaliation for speaking up about unsafe dust levels and being asked by companies to help falsify samples. They said the government needs more inspectors to spend more time in the mines making sure existing rules are followed. Otherwise, new regulation won't make a meaningful difference, they said.

"When I speak about this, people look at me like I'm stupid," Lilly, who said miners don't always feel like the federal government takes their concerns seriously. "I've got 30 years of experience. I know the tricks and how they operate."

President of the National Black Lung Association Gary Hairston, who lives in neighboring Fayette County, said that too often, miners have to choose between their safety and their livelihood.

Patients who live amid the nation's most prolific natural gas reservoir in western Pennsylvania.

An extremely rare form of bone cancer, Ewing sarcoma, had been diagnosed in dozens of children and young adults in a heavily drilled area outside Pittsburgh, and those families were instrumental in pushing Wolf to commission the study.

But the researchers said they found no association between gas drilling and childhood leukemia, brain and bone cancers.

## Births

Meanwhile, the researchers said their findings on preterm births and birth weights among families living closer to gas wells echoed the mixed conclusions in similar studies. There were hints that gas production might reduce birth weights by less than an ounce on average.

Edward Ketyer, a retired pediatrician who sat on an advisory board for the study, called the asthma findings a "bombshell." He said he expected that the studies would be consistent with previous research showing the "closer you live to fracking activity, the increased risk you have of being sick with a variety of illnesses."

"The biggest question is, why is anybody surprised about that?" said Ketyer, who is president of Physicians for Social Responsibility Pennsylvania.

A number of states have strengthened their laws around fracking and waste disposal over the past decade. However, researchers have repeatedly said that regulatory shortcom-

ings leave an incomplete picture of the amount of toxic substances the industry emits into the air, injects into the ground or produces as waste.

The Pennsylvania-funded study comes on the heels of other studies that found higher rates of cancer, asthma, low birth weights and other afflictions among people who live near drilling fields around the country.

The gas industry has maintained that fracking is safe, and groups reviewing the studies said Tuesday that protecting public health is their highest priority.

The study's findings are emerging under new Gov. Josh Shapiro, also a Democrat, who succeeded Wolf in January. His administration said Tuesday that it is working on various fronts to improve public health in response to the studies.

The advent of high-volume hydraulic fracturing combined with horizontal drilling miles deep in the ground over the past two decades transformed the United States into a worldwide oil and gas superpower.

But it also brought a torrent of complaints about water and air pollution, and diseases and ailments, as it encroached on exurbs and suburbs in states including Texas, Colorado and Pennsylvania.

Establishing the cause of health problems is challenging.

It can be difficult or impossible for researchers to determine exactly how much exposure people had to pollutants in air or water, and scientists often cannot rule out other contributing factors.

question that it was our statue," said Peter Lomonias, the treasurer and past president of the mechanic association, who chaired the panel that worked on getting it back. "We were perplexed as anyone as to how it got away."

It is headed back to Boston at a time when 19th-century art depicting Native Americans is under increased scrutiny. Like its inspiration, "Wounded Indian" depicts a vanquished foe considered primitive by the artist's cultural standards. (AP)



Haidri



Werkheiser



Seattle Mariners' Ty France hits a two-run single during the 10th inning of a baseball game against the Kansas City Royals in Kansas City, Mo. The Mariners won 10-8 in 10 innings. (AP)

## Pakistan fast bowler Riaz retires from international cricket

# Stokes comes out of ODI retirement

LONDON, Aug 16, (AP): Ben Stokes is coming out of retirement from one-day internationals to play in England's defense of the Cricket World Cup.

Stokes quit ODIs last year, saying playing in all three formats was unsustainable having taken time away from cricket for mental-health reasons and because of various injury problems.

The allrounder is England's test captain and starred for the Twenty20 team in its run to the World Cup title last year in the game's shortest format.

Now he'll be playing in the 50-over format again, too, with England selecting him Wednesday ini-

tially for the upcoming four-match one-day series against New Zealand at home in September. England is planning to pick the same 15-man squad for the Cricket World Cup in India starting in October.

The return of Stokes - England's match-winner in the 2019 Cricket World Cup final against New Zealand at Lord's - appears to have squeezed out Harry Brook, who was missing from the squad despite a brilliant start to his international career in the test and T20 formats.

### CRICKET

"If ever there's someone for the big moments, it's Ben Stokes," England selector Luke Wright said on a video call. "I think that's what it is. I think, for him, it's a last chance to go and win it again."

"Who better for England to have someone like him to come back for us?"

The 32-year-old Stokes played in the recently completed Ashes series despite a long-standing knee injury which prevented him from bowling as much as usual. He was

### MLB Results/Standings

WASHINGTON, Aug 16, (AP): Results and standings from MLB games on Tuesday.

Cleveland	3	Cincinnati	0	Chicago W. Sox	5	Chicago Cubs	3
Houston	6	Miami	5	Seattle	10	Kansas City 10 inn	8
Toronto	2	Philadelphia	1	San Francisco	7	Tampa Bay	0
Atlanta	5	NY Yankees	0	San Diego	10	Baltimore	3
Boston	5	Washington	4	Pittsburgh	7	NY Mets	4
Minnesota	5	Detroit	3	Arizona	8	Colorado	5
St. Louis	6	Oakland	2	LA Dodgers	6	Milwaukee	2
Texas	7	LA Angels	3				

American League				National League				
East Division		West Division		East Division		West Division		
W	L	Pct	GB	W	L	Pct	GB	
Baltimore	74	46	.617	Atlanta	77	42	.647	
Tampa Bay	72	50	.590	Philadelphia	65	55	.542	12½
Toronto	67	54	.554	Miami	63	58	.521	15
Boston	63	56	.529	New York	54	66	.450	23½
New York	60	60	.500	Washington	53	67	.442	24½
Minnesota	63	58	.521	Milwaukee	65	58	.542	
Cleveland	58	62	.483	Chicago	61	58	.513	3½
Detroit	53	66	.445	Cincinnati	62	59	.512	3½
Chicago	48	72	.400	Pittsburgh	54	66	.450	11
Kansas City	39	82	.322	St. Louis	54	66	.450	11
Texas	72	48	.600	Los Angeles	72	46	.610	
Houston	69	52	.570	San Francisco	64	56	.533	9
Seattle	64	55	.538	Arizona	60	60	.500	13
Los Angeles	59	62	.488	San Diego	57	63	.475	16
Oakland	33	87	.275	Colorado	46	74	.383	27

### Change Name

I, Saai Shankarshna Gopinath holder of Indian passport No. U0193933 having permanent address No. 11, Kanniamman Koil St. Sothupakkam Melmaruvathur, Kanchipuram, Pin: 603319, Tamil Nadu, India, residing in Kuwait at present, hereby declare that henceforth my name will be read, Under Given Name: SHANKARSHAN SAAI and Surname: GOPINATH

planning to use the rest of the year to recover in time for the test series in India starting in January.

Stokes will be used solely as a batter in ODIs going forward, Wright said.

"Obviously with the Ashes being there, he had

to make that the priority, and to have a break and give the body a rest as well," Wright said. "We gave him a little break so he could make a decision. "But the nice thing for us was that it wasn't a case of needing to beg him or anything like that, he was always keen so actually it was straightforward. Once he felt like his body was in a good place and he had a rest, he was really keen to play."

Wright said Brook missed out because of the options the current batters in the middle order give him. No. 3 Dawid Malan can fill in as an opener if needed, for example, and big-hitting Liam Livingstone - perhaps the player most like Brook in their explosiveness - is a spin option.

"Everything's going brilliantly with Brook - there's no denying with a superstar he is and what a huge future he has with us going forward, in all formats," Wright said. "That's the incredibly tough decision we have had to make."

Jofra Archer, one of English cricket's most exciting talents, missed out on selection as he recovers from a recurrence of a stress fracture to his right elbow. Wright said there was an outside chance that Archer might have been available for the second half of the World Cup, but was concerned that would have unbalanced the squad.

Archer will be on the standby list, with the World Cup squad getting finalized on Sept. 28.

"There has to be a duty of care with Jof - we know how desperate we all are to have him, there's no doubt about that," Wright said. "We have to get it right for him. He's been very unfortunate with his injuries. Unfortunately, we are running out of time and it's not going to come around quick enough."

England squad for ODI series against New Zealand and Cricket World

Cup: Jos Buttler (captain), Moeen Ali, Gus Atkinson, Jonny Bairstow, Sam Curran, Liam Livingstone, Dawid Malan, Adil Rashid, Joe Root, Jason Roy, Ben Stokes, Reece Topley, David Willey, Mark Wood, Chris Woakes.

Pakistan fast bowler **Wahab Riaz** retired from international cricket on Wednesday but will continue to play franchise cricket.

"Stepping off the international pitch," the 38-year-old wrote on X, formerly known as Twitter, adding: "After an incredible journey, I've decided to retire from international cricket. Big thank you to PCB (Pakistan Cricket Board), my family, coaches, mentors, teammates, fans, and everyone who supported me."

Riaz, a left-arm fast bowler, made his international debut in a one-day international against Zimbabwe in 2008 but had to wait for more than two years before making his test debut against England at the Oval in 2010 in which he took 5-63 and became the ninth Pakistan bowler to take five wickets in a debut test.

He took 83 wickets in 27 tests, 120 wickets in 91 ODIs and also took 34 wickets in 36 T20s but wasn't considered for international games since playing a T20 international against New Zealand at Hamilton in 2020.

Riaz said that he would continue to be part of T20 franchise cricket.

Riaz is serving as sports minister in the present provincial caretaker government of Punjab province. He said in a statement that he had targeted 2023 as the year of his retirement from international cricket and I feel comfortable now more than ever that I have served my country and national team to the best I could have."

# Elder shuts down skidding Yankees

Dodgers win matchup of division leaders

ATLANTA, Aug 16, (AP): Bryce Elder pitched seven brilliant innings in a combined one-hitter, Ronald Acuña Jr. and Marcell Ozuna went deep and the Atlanta Braves cruised past the reeling New York Yankees 5-0 on Tuesday night.

The Braves wasted no time jumping on Luis Severino (2-8), whose dismal season has been marred by atrocious numbers in the first inning.

That trend didn't change against the Braves. With two outs, Ozuna launched his 24th homer of the season over the center-field wall for a three-run shot. The homer extended Ozuna's hitting streak to 13 games and gave the Braves a major league-best 120 first-inning runs.

The last-place Yankees dropped to 12-22 since July 4, falling to .500 (60-60) for the first time since they were 15-15.

Elder (9-4) allowed only DJ LeMahieu's single in the second. He was erased on one of four double plays New York hit into. Three were against Elder, who faced just one batter above the minimum. A.J. Minter and Kirby Yates finished with a hitless inning apiece for the Braves' 12th shutout of the season.

### Dodgers 6, Brewers 2

In Los Angeles, rookie Bobby Miller tossed six innings of one-run ball and Los Angeles won its ninth straight game, beating Milwaukee in a matchup of division leaders.

The NL West-leading Dodgers are riding their longest winning streak since taking 12 in a row from July 31-Aug. 13 last year. They improved to 13-1 this month and are a season-best 26 games over .500 (72-46).

Miller (7-2) allowed one hit in his first win since July 22. The right-hander struck out four and walked one.

Ryan Yarbrough earned his first save of the season with three innings of relief. Adrian Houser (4-4) took the loss.

### Rangers 7, Angels 3

In Arlington, Corey Seager hit two homers and drove in five runs as AL West-leading Texas beat slumping Los Angeles.

Seager had a two-run homer that just cleared the left-center wall and later pulled a no-doubt shot into the right-field seats for his 12th career multi-homer game. The All-Star shortstop capped his three-hit night with a two-run single in the eighth inning.

Jordan Montgomery (8-10) struck out nine without a walk over six innings in his third start for the Rangers since they got him in a trade-deadline deal from last-place St. Louis.

### White Sox 5, Cubs 3

In Chicago, Luis Robert Jr. hit a tiebreaking solo homer in his return to the lineup, and the White Sox beat the crosstown Cubs at Wrigley Field.

Robert drove a hanging slider from Julian Merryweather (4-1) deep to left with two out in the seventh inning, giving the White Sox a 4-3 lead. It was Robert's team-high 32nd homer. He had been sidelined since last week with a sprained right pinky finger.

After Touki Toussaint departed in the fifth, four White Sox relievers combined for five innings of two-hit ball. Lane Ramsey (1-0) got his first major league win, and Gregory Santos earned his fourth save of the season by striking out three in 1 2/3 innings.

### Guardians 3, Reds 0

In Cincinnati, rookie Logan Allen allowed four hits in six innings, Kole Calhoun hit a two-run single in the first and Cleveland won consecutive games for the first time in three weeks.

Allen (6-5) struck out seven and walked three for the Guardians, who had not strung together wins since three in a row from July 25-27. Emmanuel Clase pitched a one-hit ninth for his 32nd save in 41 chances.

Cincinnati's Graham Ashcraft (6-8) allowed all three runs seven hits in seven innings.

### Blue Jays 2, Phillies 1

In Toronto, Cavan Biggio was hit in the foot by a pitch from Seranthony Dominguez (2-3) with the bases loaded pitch in the eighth inning to force in the tiebreaking run, and Toronto beat Philadelphia.

Jordan Hicks (2-7) struck out all three batters he faced as Toronto won its second straight after losing the previous three.

Activated off the injured list earlier Tuesday after missing 16 games because of a sore back, All-Star closer Jordan Romano finished for his 29th save in 32 chances.

### Astros 6, Marlins 5

In Miami, Kyle Tucker hit a tiebreaking homer in the seventh inning and Houston rallied past Miami.

Tucker connected on the first pitch from reliever A.J. Puk (5-5). The Astros, who dropped the first game of the series at Miami and trailed 3-0 in this one, have won six of nine and hold the second NL wild-card spot. The Marlins' three-game winning streak ended.

Hunter Brown (9-8) pitched two scoreless innings in his first relief appearance of the season. Ryan Pressly allowed a one-out double by Jesús Sánchez in the ninth but held on for his 28th save in 32 opportunities.

### Red Sox 5, Nationals 4

In Washington, Alex Verdugo led off the game with a homer and Boston beat Washington.

Boston, which remained three games behind Toronto for the American League's last wild-card spot, has won six of eight. The Red Sox improved to 9-1 at Nationals Park.

John Schreiber (2-1), the second of five Red Sox relievers, pitched a scoreless sixth inning. Kenley Jansen handled the ninth for his 28th save.

Stone Garrett and Keibert Ruiz each drove in two runs for the Nationals, who had won 12 of their last 14 at home. Josiah Gray (7-10) gave up five runs in three-plus innings, his shortest outing of the season.

### Twins 5, Tigers 3

In Minneapolis, Matt Wallner hit a grand slam to cap a five-run sixth inning and Minnesota beat Detroit.

Tigers slugger Miguel Cabrera hit his 509th career homer to match Gary Sheffield for 26th all-time, a two-run shot in the second inning. It was just the second homer this year for Cabrera, who's playing his final season.

Dylan Floro (4-5) earned his first win with Minnesota with a scoreless inning of relief. Joahn Duran allowed a solo homer to Spencer Torkelson but recorded his 22nd save.

Reliever Will Vest allowed Wallner's grand slam after coming on in relief of José Cisnero (2-3).

### Padres 10, Orioles 3

In San Diego, Gary Sánchez hit a grand slam in a five-run first inning and Manny Machado added a two-run double in the second against struggling Jack Flaherty to help San Diego beat AL-leading Baltimore.

The offensive breakout made a winner of Michael Wacha (9-2) in his first start since July 1. The Padres snapped a three-game losing streak and won for just the second time in nine games.

Austin Hays homered in the ninth for the Orioles, whose three-game winning streak ended.

Flaherty (8-8), making his third start with the Orioles since being acquired from St. Louis, allowed seven runs on four hits and four walks on 84 pitches in three innings.

### Giants 7, Rays 0

In San Francisco, Thairo Estrada homered with one out in the sixth to break up a scoreless game. Wilmer Flores hit a two-run drive three batters later, and San Francisco blanked Tampa Bay.

Jakob Junis struck out seven over four innings and gave way to Sean Manaea (4-3), who struck out five and allowed one hit over 3 1/3 innings.

Wade Meckler delivered his first major league hit, a sharp single to center in the sixth that chased Rays right-hander Zack Littell (2-4).

Giants manager Gabe Kapler was ejected in the fourth for arguing balls and strikes.

### Mariners 10, Royals 8, 10 innings

In Kansas City, Ty France lined a two-run single to center off Tucker Davidson (1-2) in the 10th inning and Seattle rebounded from a blown seven-run lead to beat Kansas City.

### BASEBALL

Eugenio Suárez, France, Teoscar Hernández and Josh Rojas homered in a seven-run fourth inning off Jordan Lyles, the Mariners' first four-homer inning since May 2, 2002 at the Chicago White Sox.

Bobby Witt Jr. sparked the Royals' comeback in a five-run fifth with his second grand slam in an 18-day span. Kansas City tied it in the ninth with three unearned runs off Andres Munoz (3-5).

### Pirates 7, Mets 4

In New York, Jason Delay hit a two-run double in a six-run seventh inning and Pittsburgh beat New York.

Pittsburgh stranded 10 runners through six innings before sending 10 batters to the plate against a trio of pitchers in the seventh. Jose Butto (0-2) allowed three runs, two hits and three walks in 2 2/3 innings.

Colin Selby (1-0), making his fourth big league appearance, entered a 1-1 game in the sixth and got the win despite allowing back-to-back homers - a two-run pinch-hit shot by DJ Stewart and Jonathan Arauz's second homer in as many games.

### Diamondbacks 8, Rockies 5

In Denver, Ketel Marte had a two-run single and Tommy Pham hit a go-ahead double in a five-run ninth inning, and Arizona beat Colorado.

Christian Walker homered for Arizona, and Kevin Ginkel (6-0) got the victory. Closer Paul Sewald loaded the bases with one out in the ninth before retiring the final two batters for his 24th save.

Brenton Doyle homered and Nolan Jones and Elehuris Montero had three hits each for the Rockies, who used a three-run seventh to take a 5-3 lead.

In the ninth, Alek Thomas singled and Geraldo Perdomo doubled on the first two pitches from closer Justin Lawrence (3-6). Marte singled to tie it and came home on Pham's broken-bat double. Pham scored on Lourdes Gurriel Jr.'s single.

### Cardinals 6, Athletics 2

In St. Louis, Nolan Arenado and Jordan Walker homered in the first inning against Spenser Watkins (0-1) and St. Louis beat Oakland.

Arenado finished with four hits and Tommy Edman also homered for the last-place Cardinals, who have won five of six.

Dakota Hudson (4-0) recorded his third successive win, allowing two runs on five hits over 6 2/3 innings.



Texas Rangers center fielder J.P. Martinez makes a leaping attempt on a two-run home run ball hit by Los Angeles Angels' Randal Grichuk in the ninth inning of a baseball game in Arlington, Texas. (AP)

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## SPORTS

# India's fightback in Florida comes to end as Windies win Twenty20 series

LAUDERHILL, Fla., Aug 16, (AP) — West Indies ended India's fightback in Florida and won their five-match Twenty20 cricket series 3-2 after an eight-wicket victory on Sunday with 12 balls left.

India, which lost the first two games of the series in the Caribbean, chose to bat first in the fifth T20 and scored 165-9 at Central Broward Stadium. In reply, West Indies reached 171-2 in 18 overs with both innings interrupted by bad weather.

## CRICKET

West Indies opener Brandon King propelled the chase from the start. His 55-ball 85 not out included six sixes — one of which brought up his 50 — and five fours. King shared a 107-run stand with Nicholas Pooran (47) for the second wicket.

Earlier, India's openers failed to repeat their dominance from only 24 hours earlier at the same stadium in

the fourth T20, where they had a 165-run stand. This time Yashasvi Jaiswal (5) was out in the first over. He was caught and bowled by spinner Akeal Hosein (2-24), who then reduced India to 17-2 after Shubman Gill (9) was trapped leg before wicket.

No. 3 Suryakumar Yadav top scored for India with a 45-ball 61. Fast-medium bowler Romario Shepherd took 4-31.

India was unchanged from the team that thrashed West Indies on Saturday by nine wickets. West Indies brought back pacer Alzarri Joseph and strengthened its spin options through Roston Chase with Obed McCoy and Odean Smith missing out. But Joseph was expensive. His three overs went for 41 runs with no wickets.

India won the third T20 by seven wickets in Providence, Guyana, before the series moved to Florida. West Indies won the second T20, also at Providence Stadium, by two wickets after the hosts also won the opener by four runs in Tarouba, Trinidad.

# De Bruyne out for 3 or four months: Pep

LONDON, Aug 16, (AP) — Manchester City midfielder Kevin De Bruyne will be sidelined potentially for up to four months because of a recurrence of his hamstring injury, a huge blow to the team's ambitions of retaining the Premier League and Champions League.

City manager Pep Guardiola cut a downcast figure as he gave the prognosis on De Bruyne on Tuesday and said a decision was yet to be made about whether the Belgium captain requires surgery.

An operation would keep him out for "three or four months," Guardiola said.

"I have to say, the injury for Kevin is a sore blow for us, so he's a big loss," Guardiola said at a news conference ahead of the UEFA Super Cup against Sevilla taking place in Greece on Wednesday.



In this photo provided by Al Hilal club media center, Neymar signs a contract with Chairman of the Board of Directors of Al Hilal, Fahad Bin Saad Bin Nafel, in Paris, France. (AP)

# Neymar completes move to Al Hilal

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia, Aug 16, (AP) — Neymar became the latest superstar soccer player to take the riches on offer from the Saudi Pro League, completing a move to Al Hilal on Tuesday after six seasons at Paris Saint-Germain.

The clubs reached an agreement on the transfer of the Brazil forward for a reported 90 million euros (\$98 million), a record for a league that is now financially backed by the oil-rich state.

Al Hilal, a record 18-time national champion, is one of four Saudi clubs effectively nationalized by the Public Investment Fund (PIF), the sovereign wealth fund that claims assets of about \$700 billion.

The 31-year-old Neymar signed a two-year contract that is expected to

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earn him an annual salary of about \$100 million. That would be around half of the reported salary being taken home by Cristiano Ronaldo, who plays for Al Nassr and whose move to Saudi in January sparked a slew of transfers to the kingdom by players like Karim Benzema, N'Golo Kante, Riyad Mahrez and Jordan Henderson.

"I have achieved a lot in Europe and enjoyed special times, but I have always wanted to be a global player and test myself with new challenges and opportunities in new places," Neymar said in the club's announcement. "I want to write new sporting history, and the Saudi Pro League has tremendous energy and quality players at the moment."

PSG confirmed the departure of Neymar in a statement, with president Nasser Al-Khelaifi describing him as "one of the best players in the world."



Players of West Indies celebrate with the trophy after beating India in the fifth and last T20 cricket match at Central Broward Regional Park in Lauderhill, Fla. (AP)

# Miami tops Philadelphia, makes Cup final

## Messi scores again

CHESTER, Pa., Aug 16, (AP) — Lionel Messi keeps scoring goals, and Inter Miami keeps winning games.

Messi ripped a shot from 30 yards past three Philadelphia defenders in the 20th minute that made fans who paid a record price for soccer tickets in the Philly area rejoice, and Inter Miami beat the Union 4-1 in a Leagues Cup semifinal on Tuesday night.

Major League Soccer is Messi's league now.

Messi exchanged jerseys with fellow Argentinian and Union forward Julián Carranza, then skipped out on the traditional postgame interview and instead saved his message for his 483 million Instagram followers.

"We worked our way to the finals and we made it!!! We're still on the last step," he wrote.

The seven-time Ballon d'Or winner scored his ninth goal in six matches with his new team in front of a crowd that pushed 20,000 fans, with ticket prices soaring past \$1,000 on the secondary market.

There were few complaints.

Certainly not from three Union season-ticket holders who ditched the home team's garb for a night and traded it for Messi gear. Or fans that lined up for Messi jerseys — authenticity not guaranteed — and the ones hungry at a food truck for Messi fries.

And certainly not from the Union, who, of course wanted to win, but otherwise stuffed the coffers and received more worldwide attention on one night than in any game they've played in their history.

Fans erupted when the 36-year-old Messi was introduced and went wild again when he scored past diving goalkeeper Andre Blake. Messi ran with his arms extended and then punched his fist in the air as he leapt in celebration.

The rest was almost incidental.

Jordi Alba and Josef Martinez also scored in the first half for Miami, and David Ruiz scored in the second. Miami will play in the Leagues Cup championship game Saturday against Nashville, which beat Mexican club Monterrey 2-0 later Tuesday night.

Alejandro Bedoya scored in the second half for Philadelphia.

"They're only going to get better. That Miami team is gonna go," Union coach Jim Curtin said. "Their ownership is going to spend like crazy. They're going to make them the best team in the league. They might already be the best team in the league. That's coming and I don't think anything's stopping them."

Union principal owner Jay Sugarman told The Associated Press there was no real consideration given to moving the game from Subaru Park to Lincoln Financial Field, home of

the Eagles. While the football stadium would have packed in another 40,000-plus fans, Sugarman said told him the game would stay put.

Philly native and Hall of Fame boxer Bernard Hopkins struck the 6-foot drum that welcomed the team to the field and Sixers center and NBA MVP Joel Embiid, who played soccer as a child in Cameroon, showed interest in the game.

"Make sure y'all show love to the (goat) in our city tonight but let's first get this dub #DOOP #Philly," he wrote on social media.

Inter Miami already played in Chester before Messi had signed, leaving Union officials to study the Leagues Cup field like an NCAA Tournament bracket once it was announced.

"You try not to, but of course we were like, if we do this, and they do this," Sugarman said, laughing.

"We hope we're playing in front of a worldwide audience tonight. It's a chance for the Philadelphia Union to put on the best show we can against one of the best teams and best players."

The Union fell well short of that standard.

"I think there is a little bit of, we were too excited, maybe we showed a little too much respect," Curtin said. "We got punished by a good team. We got humbled a bit."

Led by the rabid supporters group called "Sons of Ben," the Messi game sold out in less than 10 minutes and the price exploded this week on the secondary market. River End seats that normally go for \$43 spiked to more than a grand, and the average price of \$556 was the highest in Union history. An hour or so before the game, tickets

in the lower level were still going for \$450 and up.

"People love Messi," Inter Miami defender Sergii Kryvtsov said.

All around the world and especially Tuesday outside the stadium, where it was Messi Mania for the superstar, who led Argentina to the World Cup title last year and has essentially become a one-man 1992 Dream Team.

Angel Pagan and her family, of Vineland, New Jersey, all wore Messi shirts — even though they are Union season-ticket holders. They love Messi so much, their youngest son is named Lionel in his honor. She upgraded her tickets for the game to sit closer to the field and said only they were "very, very expensive."

## SOCCER

"We didn't care what it cost," she said. "It's Messi."

Under Curtin, in his 10th season, the Union blossomed into one of the top teams in the Eastern Conference and clinched their first Supporters' Shield trophy — awarded to the MLS team with the best regular-season record — in 2020. A season ago, the Union fell to LAFC in the MLS Cup. NBA superstar Kevin Durant, now with the Phoenix Suns, thought enough of the Union's potential to buy a stake in the team.

The Union's path — and all other teams' — to an MLS championship suddenly seems complicated by Messi's arrival.

"This is a fantastic league with a growing fanbase, but you always need that match to really light it," Sugarman said. "Messi is the match."

# Bavarians favorites for a 12th straight title

DUESSELDORF, Germany, Aug 16, (AP) — Bayern Munich has 11 Bundesliga titles in a row. Now to win one for new signing Harry Kane, who left Tottenham without a trophy after 19 years.

Bayern's dominant streak has led to concerns over the health of the Bundesliga in an era of one-club domination, but its hold on the title may be more fragile than it seems.

Bayern needed goal difference to retain the Bundesliga ahead of Borussia Dortmund last season and Kane has been keen to dispel any belief that playing for the German champion will be easy.

"It's going to be a real challenge," Kane said Sunday. "I know everyone expects Bayern Munich just to walk away and win the league every year but I think, as you see, the teams are improving and it's getting tougher and tougher."

Bayern had concerns over the balance of its squad exposed in brutal fashion in a 3-0 loss to Leipzig on Saturday in the German Super Cup. It still doesn't have a first-choice goalkeeper with Manuel Neuer injured, and coach Thomas Tuchel has flagged up the lack of a defensive midfielder who would help cover a back line which has been shown to be fragile too often in the past 12 months.

Dortmund's challenge is to build momentum again after the shattering blow of dropping the title on the last day of the 2022-23 season. Dortmund drew with Mainz when it needed a win to be sure of the championship and Bayern won the league with an 89th-minute goal from Jamal

Musiala against Cologne.

A Dortmund title shot will likely be built on strong performances from Sébastien Haller, the striker who returned mid-season from cancer treatment and set Dortmund on course to chase down Bayern in the standings.

Dortmund is without midfielder Jude Bellingham, sold to Real Madrid in a deal which could reach 130 million euros (\$142 million), and has signed Marcel Sabitzer from Bayern and Felix Nmecha from Wolfsburg to add depth in midfield. Left-back Raphael Guerreiro left for Bayern on a free transfer and was replaced with Algeria's Rami Bensebaini.

Signing Xabi Alonso to a new contract as coach is a signal that Bayer Leverkusen means business after he led the team to the Europa League semifinals in his first season.

Granit Xhaka's arrival from Arsenal adds grit to the midfield in a team packed with exciting and speedy young players, with right-back Jeremie Frimpong and attacking midfielder Florian Wirtz particular standouts. There's one big problem, though — Alonso will need to reshuffle Leverkusen's attack after selling winger Moussa Diaby to Aston Villa.

## SOCCER

Leipzig could also challenge after coach Marco Rose turned the team around last season following a disappointing start. In 29 games under Rose, Leipzig averaged 2.10 points per game — almost exactly Bayern and Dortmund's rate for the season.

Leipzig will have to cope without a trio of leading players sold during the off-season after Dominik Szoboszlai, Joško Gvardiol and Christopher Nkunku all left for fees reportedly worth more than 200 million euros (\$219 million) in total. Newly-arrived forwards Loïs Openda and Benjamin Šeško looked sharp against Bayern, if a little nervy, but the star was Spanish midfielder Dani Olmo with a hat trick.

Union Berlin outperformed all expectations by finishing fourth and qualifying for the Champions League, while cross-town rival Hertha Berlin was relegated. Keeping up that form will be a challenge. The same goes for last season's fifth-place team, Freiburg.

Fans and teams will have to get used to some unfamiliar — and small — Bundesliga stadiums after Darmstadt and Heidenheim were promoted in place of established powers Schalke and Hertha.

Darmstadt's stadium can hold 17,500 and Heidenheim's just 15,000. Taken together, that's less than half the capacity of Hertha's Olympiastadion.

## WC winner Paredes returns to Roma on 2-year contract

ROME, Aug 16, (AP) — World Cup winner Leandro Paredes returned to Roma on Wednesday, signing a two-year deal with the Serie A club.

Paredes joins from Paris Saint-Germain for a fee of around 4 million euros (\$4.4 million) and the Argentine midfielder will wear the iconic No. 16 shirt, that previously belonged to retired Roma legend Daniele De Rossi.

"I never would've allowed it to happen without Daniele's permission," Paredes said. "He sent me a message to say he would be thrilled for me to wear that number."

Paredes was teammates with De Rossi during his first spell at Roma.

"Coming back to Rome is always a special thing, but doing so now as a Roma player is even more special," Paredes said. "I'd like to thank the fans for welcoming me and Roma for bringing me back to the club where I launched my career in Europe."

"Last year was an incredibly happy one for me with the World Cup, so now I want to keep tasting success and I'm convinced I can do just that with this team."

Having come through the youth ranks at Boca Juniors, Paredes joined Roma in 2014 following a brief spell at Chievo Verona.

He spent two seasons in the Italian capital, either side of a season-long loan at Empoli, before moving to Zenit St. Petersburg and then PSG. The 29-year-old Paredes spent last season on loan at Juventus, which would have had the obligation to buy the player for 22.6 million euros (\$24.7 million) if certain — unspecified — objectives had been met.

## SOCCER

"As soon as he heard that we were interested, Leandro made it clear that his target was to return to Roma," Roma general manager Tiago Pinto said. "His strong willpower made us even more convinced that we should bring him back to the Giallorossi and we're delighted to see him back in Roma colours."

"Ever since his first stint here, he has matured and gained international experience, combined with his knowledge of Italian soccer and his technical attributes, we're sure this will all prove to be crucial and strengthen our squad."

Paredes helped PSG to three Ligue 1 titles, two French Cup triumphs and one French League Cup.



Inter Miami's Kamal Miller (left), goes after the ball against Philadelphia Union's Nathan Harriel (right), during the second half of a Leagues Cup soccer semifinal in Chester, Pa. (AP)



England's goalkeeper Mary Earps catches the ball during the Women's World Cup semifinal soccer match between Australia and England at Stadium Australia in Sydney, Australia. (AP)

# Sports

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## England 'end' Australia WCup hopes to set up final showdown with Spain



England's Georgia Stanway (right), and Australia's Clare Polkinghorne reach for a header during the Women's World Cup semifinal soccer match between Australia and England at Stadium Australia in Sydney, Australia. (AP)

'Water is OK'

### Triathlon test for Oly to go 'ahead'

PARIS, Aug 16, (AP) — Organizers of a triathlon event ahead of next year's Paris Olympics said Wednesday that conditions have been met for athletes to swim in the River Seine in the coming days, after a previous test had to be cancelled earlier this month due to bad water quality.

Latest tests show water quality levels are back to acceptable standards, said Christophe Rosa, the deputy general delegate of the Paris Olympic and Paralympic delegation at Paris City Hall.

"We are monitoring water quality with a very robust process" that involves testing "almost hour by hour" through an automatic sampling system in addition to daily laboratory tests "to guarantee the best conditions so that athletes can compete in complete safety especially regarding their health," he detailed.



Rosa

The event comes after the last-minute cancellation of a swimming competition which was due to take place in the Seine at the beginning of the month. Heavy rains had then caused overflows of untreated waste, deteriorating water quality to the point it was below standards for the Open Water Swimming World Cup event to be held.

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Games organizers say the waterway will be better prepared in 2024 as Paris is spending massively on water-management projects that officials say will make pollution caused by storms less frequent.

Christophe Noël du Peyrat, chief of staff of the Paris region authority, said that "this first competition in the Seine is an important step in the fight to make the Seine a swimming area."

Water quality improved when there's a normal weather, he said, yet "we still have a lot of work ahead for year 2024... to be able to face exceptional weather like what we've known at the end of July and beginning of August." Rain levels then reached four times the usual average, he stressed.

Additional infrastructures in the works include a giant underground reservoir in Paris that will stock excess water during storms, so it doesn't have to be spilled untreated into the river and can be treated later.

From Thursday to Sunday, triathletes and para-triathletes will race through the heart of Paris, swimming at the bottom of the spectacular 19th century Alexandre III bridge and its golden statues. They will ride bikes and run through some of the most prestigious neighborhoods of the capital city, including the Champs-Élysées avenue and alongside the Orsay Museum.

The men's and women's individual races will be over the Olympic standard distance: 1.5 kilometer (0.93 mile) swim, 40 kilometer (24.8 miles) bike and 10 kilometer (6.2 mile) run.

Brigitte Légaré, sport manager at the Paris 2024 organization committee, said the event also is a key test for logistics ahead of the Olympics. It is an occasion to make sure that safety on the Seine, timing system, security measures and control of spectators movement are operational, she said.

From 300 to 400 officers will be deployed, according to the Paris police prefecture.

Fans can attend the event for free - about 800 people received an invitation allowing them to be in the start and finish area while others are to line the course of the race.

### Wiegman makes history

SYDNEY, Aug 16, (AP) — England moved on to its first Women's World Cup championship game with a 3-1 victory over co-host Australia on Wednesday, ending the Matildas captivating run through the tournament.

Australia superstar Sam Kerr started her first match of the tournament and scored for the Matildas but it wasn't enough to hold off European champion England.

Ella Toone scored in the 36th minute to put England up 1-0 and the Lionesses dominated possession in the first half.

Kerr's equalizer in the 63rd gave the 75,000-plus crowd some hope, but Lauren Hemp scored to restore England's lead in the 71st and provided a perfect through ball for Alessia Russo to clinch the game four minutes from the end of regulation time.

England and Spain will each be playing in the Women's World Cup final for the first time when they meet at Stadium Australia on Sunday. It will be the first all-European final since 2003.

### SOCCER

England manager Sarina Wiegman became the first coach to lead two countries to the Women's World Cup final. She guided Netherlands to the final before a loss to the United States in 2019.

"You make it to finals, it's really special," Wiegman said in a post-match television interview. "I'd never take anything for granted, but I'm like, 'Am I here in the middle of a fairytale or something?'"

Australia will play Sweden for third place on Saturday in Brisbane.

"We wanted to dominate the game, we didn't do that. And we wanted to probably create more scoring opportunities and we didn't do that," Australia midfielder Katrina Gorry said, reflecting on her 100th game for her national team. "But you know, we've got a quick turnaround and we want to win the bronze medal."

England was playing in the semifinals for the third consecutive Women's World Cup and Australia was in the final four for the first time.

It showed, particularly in the first half and in the last 20 minutes.

England had a harder edge, was more clinical when it counted and played a game that deprived Australia of possession for long periods.

The Australians seem to have played



England's Ella Toone celebrates after scoring the opening goal during the Women's World Cup semifinal soccer match between Australia and England at Stadium Australia in Sydney, Australia. (AP)

their final in the 7-6 penalty shootout win over France last weekend, their first win in four quarterfinal appearances at the Women's World Cup.

Australia had to wait five games for Kerr to join the starting lineup in her home tournament because of a calf muscle injury she sustained on the eve of the tournament.

After being subdued by England's defense in the first half, the superstar striker made a big entrance with an equalizer just after the hour. Kerr took the ball at half way, moved up-field in a solo run and wrong-footed a defender before launching a right-foot shot from outside that lightly touched defender Mille Bright before going into the top left corner.



Australia's fan reacts after the Women's World Cup semifinal soccer match between Australia and England at Stadium Australia in Sydney, Australia. (AP)

Kerr started making inroads but England responded quickly, with Hemp running onto a long ball into the area and scoring with a left-foot finish after Australia defender Ellie Carpenter over-ran the ball.

Kerr missed a chance to equalize again with a header of the crossbar in the 82nd and England made them home team pay for the miss, with Russo finishing it off for England.

Aitana Bonmati remembers the moment Andres Iniesta scored at the 2010 World Cup clearly, even though she was only 12 years old.

Iniesta's extra-time goal in the championship match against the Netherlands at Johannesburg gave Spain a 1-0 win for its first and only men's World Cup trophy.

Bonmati says it's time for a new Spanish champion, this time at the Women's World Cup.

"I hope we can repeat the history with our team," Bonmati said.

Spain advanced to the final with a 2-1 victory over Sweden on Tuesday, a game that saw all three goals come in the final 10 minutes.

Bonmati calls Iniesta and teammate Xavi her idols. Iniesta, 39, now plays with Emirates in the UAE Pro League. He celebrated La Roja's victory on social media, proclaiming "Enormous!"

Spain broke through the scoreless stalemate with Sweden in the 81st minute on 19-year-old substitute Salma Paralluelo's goal. Paralluelo, who chose soccer over track and field, also scored the game-winner in extra time over the Netherlands in the quarterfinals.

Sweden's Rebecca Blomqvist tied it Tuesday with a goal in the 89th minute, but moments later Olga Carmona scored the game-winner off a corner from Teresa Abelleira.

Bonmati says the winning goal was something of a surprise, because Spain had not drawn up the play.

Bonmati, 25, has emerged as a versatile young star for La Roja. She had two goals and two assists in Spain's 5-1 rout of Switzerland in the round of 16, and has boosted the team while two-time Ballon d'Or winner Alexia Putellas continues to work her way back from a ruptured ACL.

La Roja is clearly a team on the rise. They appeared in their first World Cup in 2015, then advanced out of their group in 2019 but fell to the United States in the round of 16. Now they have a chance to lift the trophy.

But along with the team's growth has come turmoil.

Last September, 15 players signed letters that said they were withdrawing from the national team to protect their emotional health. The players insisted they did not ask for coach Jorge Vilda's dismissal.

### Kuwait's Al-Mudhaf qualifies for World championship final



Kuwaiti shooter Khaled Al-Mudhaf.

KUNA photo

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 16, (KUNA) — Kuwait Shooting Sport Club (KSSC) announced Wednesday that Kuwait shooter Khaled Al-Mudhaf has qualified to the World Championship Final in Men's Trap competition which will be organized by The International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF).

The qualification comes as Al-Mudhaf is ranked 7th in the world in his category in addition to his achievements in continental and international events, Al-Mudhaf said in a statement today.

He added that he is preparing for this championship which will be held next November expressing his honor

to represent Kuwait and be among the world best 12 shooters.

Al-mudhaf pointed that the upcoming international and continental competition will be significant since it qualifies for the Olympic Games (Paris 2024)

### SHOOTING

affirming that he will put great effort to achieve best result in the World Championship.

The shooter praised the ongoing support by his peers in Kuwait international shooting team (KSSC) president Duajj AL-Otaibi and thanked his Italian coach in lifting up his performance.