



tennis

Page 16



International business payme

soccer
Pages 14 & 16

TUESDAY, JULY 4, 2023 / ZUL HIJAH 16, 1444 AH

emergency number 112

NO. 18330

16 PAGES

150 FILS

Israeli incursion on Jenin kills 8

Call to stop 'crimes'

Iran urged to begin talks on demarcation

JENIN, West Bank, July 3, (Agencies): Israel struck targets in a militant stronghold in the occupied West Bank with drones early Monday and deployed hundreds of troops in the area, in an incursion that resembled the wide-scale military operations carried out during the second Palestinian uprising two decades ago.

Troops remained inside the Jenin refugee camp at midday Monday, pushing ahead with the largest operation in the area during more than a year of fighting. It came at a time of growing domestic pressure for a tough response to a series of attacks on Israeli settlers, including a shooting attack last month that killed four Israelis.

Black smoke rose from the crowded streets of the camp, exchanges of fire rang out and the buzzing of drones could be heard overhead as the military pressed on. Residents said electricity was cut off in some parts and military bulldozers plowed through narrow streets, damaging buildings as they cleared the way for Israeli forces.

Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant said the operation was "proceeding as planned," but gave no indication when the incursion would end. Fighting was continuing at midday, some 14 hours after Israel entered the camp.

Lt. Col. Richard Hecht, an army spokesman, said a brigade-size force - roughly 2,000 soldiers - was taking part in the operation, and that military drones had carried out a series of strikes to clear the way for the ground forces.

Although Israel has carried out isolated airstrikes in the West Bank in recent weeks, Hecht said Monday's series of strikes was an escalation unseen since 2006 - the end of the Palestinian uprising.

Smoke billowed from within the crowded camp, with mosque minarets in the backdrop. Ambulances raced toward a hospital where the wounded were brought in on stretchers.

Meanwhile, Palestinian Prime Minister Mohammad Shtayyeh said Monday that President Mahmoud Abbas, the leadership and the government are following up with the friendly countries to stop the Israeli aggression on the city (Jenin) and its camp.

Continued on Page 4

Opinion

This is what history has for us... is anyone taking admonitions?!

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

DURING the reign of Umayyad Caliph Hisham bin Abdul-Malik, the state reached the height of its expansion, and was considered in the ancient world as one of the greatest and most powerful states.

At the same time, it was showing reasons for its weakness and demise through the hands of some members of the ruling house for various reasons, including poor choices, and chaos in governance in a bid to overcome the crisis facing the members of that house.

Therefore, its demise happened when the rulers did not manage the decision well, and saw that they could quell the internal opposition among them by the power of concessions.

Indications of the demise of the Umayyad Dynasty began when Yazid bin Abdul-Malik felt he was close to death, and entrusted his brother Hisham with the rule, but under the condition that his son Al-Walid bin Yazid, who was then ten years old, would be the crown prince.

This arrangement turned out to be the first nail in the coffin of a strong dynasty because the upbringing of Al-Walid involved a lot of entertainment and promiscuity, and he was unaware about the difficult task entrusted to him.

On the other hand, the state was facing many problems such as the uprising ignited by some members of the ruling house, especially in the last three decades of its life, and the conspiracies that were hatched in the hope of winning power and the presidency of the state.

After that, when Hisham discovered that his nephew was highly promiscuous and did not care about the matter of governance, he wanted to depose him and install his son Salama as the crown prince, but the latter was not better than the first, and the relationship between the uncle and his nephew deteriorated.

Al-Walid fled to the desert and stayed there until Hisham died. He assumed power as a young man, and the first thing he did was confiscate his uncle's wealth. He then began to harass his cousins, imprison them, humiliate them, and confiscate their money. He also kept some of them under house arrest. After that he indulged in a life of fun and promiscuity, and did not give much attention to the governance of the state.

The affairs of the state were rapidly deteriorating at that time, leading his cousin Yazid bin Al-Walid to take advantage of the situation. He rebelled against him and took power, and wanted to follow the biography of Omar bin Al-Aziz. He thus decreased the salaries of the soldiers, and began enriching his people, and within 13 months of his rule, opposition spread among the people, and the resentment increased against him. However, fate caught up with him as he was struck by an incurable disease that took his life.

In all of this, propaganda, or the so-called "electronic flies", i.e. poets and mouthpieces, were working on marketing to whoever pays the most, while the Abbasid call was at its strongest. It was working systematically to exploit mistakes in the house of Umayyad rule, especially the struggle for the leadership of the state between the sons of cousins, the last of which was the revolution launched by Marwan, nicknamed "The Donkey", against his cousin Ibrahim bin Al-Walid.

All of this made the Abbasids seek strength, gather the people around them, and finally win power after the Battle of Zab, which revealed the extent of the abuse of power. The members of the ruling house dispersed from what the conditions of the states would turn out to be, and it is not confined to the Umayyad state only, as the European kingdoms in the past witnessed similar scenarios.

Some of the royal and ruling houses benefited from the lessons, and worked to reform their conditions from the inside, and were able to continue to this day, while others ignored due to which their demise was quick.

The closest example of sowing the causes of weakness within ruling houses from the inside was the French Empire, which fell by the power of hunger and resentment towards the royal family when it let its greed and whims take precedence over the people who were in the end the shield of the state.

This is what history has for us ... Is there anyone to take admonitions?!

Email: ahmed@aljarallah.com

Follow me on:



ahmedaljarallah@gmail.com

Durra offshore field marine area part of Kuwait's territory: MoFA

KUWAIT CITY, July 3, (KUNA): The marine area where Al-Durra offshore field lies is part of State of Kuwait's sea territories, and its natural resources therein are shared between Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, said an official source of the Kuwaiti Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Monday.

It is only the State of Kuwait and Saudi Arabia that have exclusive rights to the natural resource of Al-Durra field, the source said in a press release.

The source reiterated Kuwait's call on the Iranian side to start negotiations over the demarcation of the

marine boundary between Kuwait and Saudi Arabia on the one hand and the Iranian side on the other hand.

Kuwait on Monday "categorically and totally" rejects purported Iranian procedures around the Al-Durra offshore gas field in the neutral zone joining the country with Gulf Arab neighbor Saudi Arabia.

"We categorically and totally reject Iran's planned activities around the premises of the Durra offshore gas field," Minister of Oil Dr. Saad Al-Barrak said in a statement, emphasizing that only Kuwait and Saudi

Arabia own "exclusive rights" to the field.

Kuwait was "surprised" by Tehran's plans and intentions, which "contravene the basic principles of international relations," the minister underlined.

A Kuwaiti foreign ministry source had earlier urged the Iranian side to start negotiations over the demarcation of the marine boundary between Kuwait and Saudi Arabia on one hand and Tehran on the other.

The gas field, shared by Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, has the potential capacity to churn out more than 80,000 barrels per day of condensates.



Smoke rises during an Israeli military raid of the militant stronghold of Jenin in the occupied West Bank, Monday, July 3, 2023. Israeli drones struck targets in a militant stronghold in the occupied West Bank early Monday and hundreds of troops were deployed in the area. Palestinian health officials said at least eight Palestinians were killed. (AP)

Macron meeting Tuesday with mayors of 220 towns

Show of solidarity as French rioting appears to ease

News watch

RIYADH: The Saudi Foreign Ministry on Sunday summoned Sweden's envoy to Riyadh, informing her that the Kingdom unequivocally rejects the burning of a copy of the Holy Quran by an extremist outside a mosque in the Swedish capital, Stockholm.

In a press statement, the ministry said called for a halt to any act that runs counter to the international efforts to promote values of tolerance and moderation.

On Thursday, the ministry condemned the Quran burning, stressing that "these hateful and repeated acts cannot be accepted with any justification, as they clearly incite hatred, exclusion, and racism, and directly contradict international efforts seeking to spread the values of tolerance, moderation, and rejection of extremism, and undermine the necessary mutual respect for relations between peoples and states". (KUNA)

JERUSALEM: Israel will buy 25 F-35 aircraft from the United States, the Israeli Defense Ministry announced Sunday, in a deal that increases Israel's arsenal of the stealth fighter jets by 50%.

The F-35 is the world's most advanced fighter jet, and Israel is the only country in the Middle East to fly them. The \$3 billion purchase, which increases the Israeli fleet of F-35 jets from 50 to 75, is set to be finalized in the coming months, the ministry said.

It said the deal would be financed through American military aid to Israel and that the maker of the plane, Lockheed Martin, and the maker of its engine, Pratt & Whitney, had committed to involving Israeli companies in the production process.

"The new agreement will ensure the continuation of cooperation between American companies and Israeli defense industries in the production of aircraft parts," the statement read. (AP)



A supporter of the Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr holds the Quran, the Muslim holy book, in response to the burning of a copy of the Quran in Sweden, during a rally in Basra, Iraq, Sunday, July 2, 2023. (AP)

CAIRO: The Sudanese army called Monday on young people and anyone else capable of fighting to enlist at the nearest military command for battle against rival paramilitary force.

Sudan descended into chaos after fighting erupted on Apr. 15 between the military, led by Gen. Abdel Fattah Burhan, and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces, commanded by Gen. Mohammed Hamdan Dagalou. Since then, over 3,000 people have been killed, the country's Health Ministry said, while about 2.5 million people have been displaced, according to the U.N. The true death toll is believed to be much higher.

"The commanders of the military divisions and regions have been instructed to receive and equip the fighters, and they must go to the nearest military command or unit," the army said Monday morning on their official Facebook page.

Monday's call to arms comes just days after Burhan made a near-identical appeal during a televised speech, asking Sudan's youth and those capable of fighting to support the army, either from "their place of residence or by joining the military movement."

It remained unclear if Monday's call to arms was a forced conscription. (AP)

NANTERRE, France, July 3, (AP): Crowds gathered at town halls across France Monday to show solidarity with local governments targeted in six nights of unrest touched off by the police shooting of a 17-year-old.

The riots, which seemed to be easing overnight into Monday, were driven by a teenage backlash in the suburbs and urban housing projects against a French state that many young people with immigrant roots say routinely discriminates against them. In all, 99 town halls have been attacked in the violence, along with other public buildings, according to the Interior Ministry.

French President Emmanuel Macron was meeting Tuesday with mayors of 220 towns from across the country. Across France, 34 buildings were attacked overnight - many of them linked to the government - along with 297 vehicles.

There has been little in the way of organized protests beyond a march last week for Nahel, the teenager of Algerian descent who was killed on Tuesday in the Paris suburb of Nanterre. Instead, the anger has manifested with young people targeting police and both sides using increasingly aggressive tactics.

The anger has descended into attacks against symbols of the state, widespread arson and nighttime looting. About 45,000 officers were deployed nationwide against violence that the mayor of Nanterre, Patrick Jarry, said hurt young people above all.

"We want justice for Nahel and that the calls for an end of the violence expressed by his grandmother and mother be respected," said Jarry, speaking in front of his city hall, which escaped attack.

A car loaded with incendiaries struck the home of the mayor of the Paris suburb of L'Hay-les-Roses over the weekend, an unusually personal attack that authorities said would be prosecuted as an attempted homicide. The attack prompted an outpouring of support for local governments in

many towns where the city hall is often literally central to public life.

L'Hay-les-Roses Mayor Vincent Jeanbrun said his wife and one of his children were injured and criticized the government for doing too little, too late - and said blaming social media or parents was papering over a bigger problem.

"The base ingredients are still there. For several years now, all summer long, explosives go off that keep people from sleeping, that make them crazy," he told BFM television on Monday. "We are powerless summer after summer."

In all, according to the Interior Ministry, there were 157 arrests overnight out of a total of 3,354 since last Tuesday, and two law enforcement stations were attacked, among other damage.

The interior minister said the average age of those arrested was 17 and that children as young as 12 or 13 had been detained for attacking law enforcement and setting fires.

In the Paris suburb of Clichy-sous-Bois, where a fire also struck the town hall, residents over the weekend said anger had simmered for years and many said the government had done little to help them.

"Young people are afraid to die by the hands of police. They are hopeless. They are bored and they need something to distract them so they don't hang out in the streets," said Samba Seck, 39.

Macron has blamed social media for the spread of the unrest and called on parents to take responsibility for their teenagers. Justice Minister Eric Dupond-Moretti told France Inter radio that parents who abdicated that responsibility, "either through disinterest or deliberately," would be prosecuted.

A 24-year-old firefighter died of a heart attack while responding to a blaze in an underground garage that spread to the apartment building above, according to Paris police. The cause of the fire was under investigation, police said in a statement.



OPINION OTHER VOICES

Forcibly conscripted even as Syria fighting subsides

Recruitment of children by armed groups rises

A 13-year-old Kurdish girl went missing on her way home from a school exam last month, after being approached by a man from an armed group. Her parents immediately feared the worst - that she had been persuaded to join the group and was taken to one of its training camps.

The girl, Peyal Aqil, was with friends when she encountered the man who turned out to be a recruiter for a group known as the Revolutionary Youth. She followed him to one of the group's centers in the city of Qamishli in northeast Syria. Her friends waited for her outside, but she never emerged.

Peyal's mother, Hamrin Alouji, said she and her husband complained to local authorities, to no avail.

The group later said Peyal joined willingly, a claim rejected by Alouji. "We consider that at this age, she cannot give consent, even if she was convinced" by the group's program, Alouji said, sitting for an interview in her daughter's room, filled with stuffed animals and school texts.

Armed groups have recruited children throughout the past 12 years of conflict and civil war in Syria. A new United Nations report on children in armed conflict, released Tuesday, says the use of child soldiers in Syria is growing, even as fighting in most parts of Syria is winding down.

The number of children recruited by armed groups in Syria has risen steadily over the past three years - from 813 in 2020 to 1,296 in 2021 and 1,696 in 2022, the U.N. says.

Among those allegedly recruiting children is a U.S. ally in the battle against Islamic State extremists - the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces, according to the U.N. In 2022, the U.N. attributed more than a third of the cases, or 637, to the SDF and associated groups in northeast Syria.

The report also said the U.N. had confirmed 611 recruitment cases by the Turkish-backed Syrian National Army, which has clashed with the SDF in the past, and 383 by the al-Qaida-linked Hayat Tahrir al Sham in

northwest Syria. The report cited 25 cases of child recruitment by Syrian government forces and pro-government militias.

Children are being recruited across Syria, said Bassam Alahmad, executive director of Syrians for Truth and Justice, an independent civil society organization.

In some cases, children are forcibly conscripted, he said. In others, minors sign up because they or their families need the salary. Some join for ideological reasons, or because of family and tribal loyalties. In some cases, children are sent out of Syria to fight as mercenaries in other conflicts.

Attempts to end such recruitment have been complicated by the patchwork of armed groups operating in each part of Syria.

In 2019, the SDF signed an agreement with the U.N. promising to end the enlistment of children younger than 18 and set up a number of child protection offices in its area. The U.S. State Department defended its ally in a statement, saying, that the SDF "is the only armed actor in Syria to respond to the UN's call to end the use of child soldiers."

Nodem Shero, a spokesperson for one of the child protection offices run by the SDF-affiliated local administration, acknowledged that children continue to be recruited in areas under SDF control.

However, the complaint mechanism is working, she said. Her office received 20 complaints in the first five months of the year, she said. Four minors were found in the SDF armed forces and were returned to their families. The others were not with the SDF, she said.

In some cases, she said, parents assume their children have been taken by the SDF when they are actually with another group.

Alahmad said recruitment by the group decreased after the 2019 agreement, but that the SDF has not intervened as other groups in its area continue to target children.

Among them is the Revolutionary Youth, a group linked to the Kurd-

istan Worker's Party, or PKK, a Kurdish separatist movement banned in Turkey. The Revolutionary Youth is licensed by the the local government linked to the SDF - although both groups denied any connection beyond that.

The U.N. report attributed 10 cases to the Revolutionary Youth in 2022, but others say the numbers are higher. In a January report, Alahmad's group said Revolutionary Youth was responsible for 45 of 49 child recruitment cases it documented in northeastern Syria in 2022.

Alahmad said the SDF-affiliated administration is looking the other way. He called on it to "assume its responsibilities in order to stop these operations."

An official with the Revolutionary Youth acknowledged that the group recruits minors but denied that it forcibly conscripts them. "We do not kidnap anyone, and we do not force anyone to join us," he said, speaking on condition of anonymity in line with his group's rules.

"They themselves come to us and tell us their intention to join the service of the nation," he said. "We do not take minors if they are indecisive or unsure."

Minors are not immediately sent to armed service, he said. Rather, they initially take part in educational training courses and other activities, after which "they are sent to the mountain if they want," he said, referring to the PKK's headquarters in the Qandil mountains of northern Iraq.

Asked about Peyal, he said the girl had complained of being unhappy at home and that her parents forced her to wear the hijab.

Alouji said her daughter had given no signs of being unhappy at home, and the night before her disappearance had said she planned to study to be a lawyer.

A month after her May 21 disappearance, Peyal came home. She had run away from one of the group's training camps, her mother said. (AP)



The classmates of 15-year-old Sadeel Naghniyeh carry her body during her funeral in the West Bank Jenin refugee camp Wednesday, June 21, 2023. The death of a 15-year-old girl who was killed by suspected Israeli fire during an Israeli military raid on June 19, is renewing scrutiny of Israel's record of causing civilian deaths during a more than yearlong crackdown on militants in the occupied West Bank. (AP)

Israeli killing sparks condemnation

Palestinian girl's death casts light on civilian casualties

At the funeral for Sadeel Naghniyeh, 15, her closest friends hoisted her dead body over their small shoulders. Wearing their school uniforms - tight black hijabs and oversized striped shirts - they staggered through the Palestinian refugee camp, crying and choking out the Islamic funeral prayers.

The tribute by the schoolgirls was a striking departure from the stream of funerals that have become a grim routine in this flashpoint West Bank town. The death of Sadeel - killed by suspected Israeli fire when a raid into the northern Jenin refugee camp ignited the territory's fiercest Israeli-Palestinian fighting in years - drew attention to the rising number of children killed in the heightened violence and the extraordinary risks they face.

Typically in Palestinian funerals, older men - relatives and friends - drape the dead in the flags of militant groups. Sadeel's eighth-grade classmates wrapped her in the uniform she would no longer wear.

"She was only a child. She had ambitions to become a nurse and save lives," her father, Ghassan Naghniyeh, 46, said from his vine-covered driveway where Sadeel was shot. "They killed my daughter and they killed her dreams."

Witness accounts and surveillance videos suggest there were no clashes at that time on her street and that the fighting between Palestinian militants and Israeli forces was unfolding some 650 meters (700 yards) west of her home.

The killing of Sadeel - one of 12 Palestinians under the age of 16 killed by Israeli fire in the West Bank this year, according to a tally by The Associated Press - has sparked condemnation from rights groups and renewed scrutiny of the military's record of causing civilian casualties.

The army launched a widespread campaign into Palestinian towns last year in response to a wave of Palestinian attacks inside Israel.

So far this year, nearly 140 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli fire in the West Bank, according to the AP's count, almost half of them affiliated with militant groups. The army says that number is much higher. But civilians have also been killed, including a 2-year-old boy earlier this month and a 15-year-old boy in last week's same Jenin camp raid. His death is also under military review.

"We're not just talking about Sadeel's death, we're talking about daily killings and no accountability that could serve as a way to prevent Israel from killing more civilians in the future," said Shawan Jabarin, director of Al Haq, a Palestinian human rights group.

The Israeli army often accuses Palestinian militants of endangering civilians by using residential areas for cover. It gave no explanation for Sadeel's death, saying the circumstances are "under examination."

Sadeel's family believes the bullet that killed her likely came from an Israeli army jeep rumbling down their quiet street that morning, according to surveillance footage. Two motorists, a woman in her 30s and a young man, were wounded when they came under fire from the same jeep, neighbors said.

The last video taken on Sadeel's phone shows a similar military jeep moving along a dusty road some 200 meters (yards) from where she stood. It remains unclear whether it was the same jeep. Minutes after she posted the clip to Telegram, she was lying in her driveway, brain-dead. Two days later, she died.

The Israeli military declined to answer multiple questions about the military vehicles. Without mentioning Sadeel, the army said its arrest

operation had sparked a "massive exchange of fire with terrorists" and that Israeli forces had opened fire on gunmen and those throwing explosive devices.

Israeli military raids have been met regularly with Palestinian gunfire and rippled into bloody battles. Israel contends the intensified military activities are a counterterrorism effort and has focused its operations on the hometowns of assailants - particularly the city of Jenin and its adjacent refugee camp.

The camp has reemerged as a stronghold of Palestinian militancy two decades after Israel invaded the camp with tanks and helicopters, flattening homes. The effects of that 2002 battle, among the biggest of the second Palestinian uprising, linger.

"The martyrs from that battle are still dead. The prisoners are still in prison," said Mohammed Shehata, the general manager of the Freedom Theater, which was co-founded by a famous militant and offers drama classes for young Palestinians in the camp. "And now, the young people fighting today's battles will pass their pain onto the next generation."

Sadeel, who lived just behind the theater, could often be found there, watching auditions, joking with foreign volunteers and playing improv games in its summer camp, Shehata said. He shared a video of a younger Sadeel singing with other kids, making her hands into a heart shape as she pranced.

But the conflict never went away. It sliced through her home. Residents say on the outskirts of the camp, rooftops in Sadeel's neighborhood afforded Israeli snipers a good vantage point. Multiple bullet holes from past raids pierce her father's parked white Kia.

Continued on Page 3

editor's choice



Prayer Timings

Fajr	03:18	Asr	15:26
Sunrise ..	04:53	Maghrib ..	18:51
Zohr	11:52	Isha	20:23

Local

Expected weather for the next 24 hours:

By Day: Very hot with light to moderate freshening at times northwesterly wind with speeds of 15-50 km/h causing rising dust.

Weather

By Night: Hot to rather hot with light to moderate northwesterly wind with speeds of 15-35 km/h.

Station
Kuwait City
Kuwait Airport

Max Exp
47
46

Min Rec
34
33

Abdaly	46	27
Jahra	47	31
Salmiyah	41	34
Ahmadi	43	34
Nuwaisib	44	30
Wafra	46	27

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

Other Voices

Stay in spotlight ... or else

By Ahmad alsarraf

Some seek to stay in the lime-light at any cost, even if the method is devoid of taste, and at the expense of the truth!

A scholar known for collecting charity from naive people mocked the tragic death of the Titan submarine passengers. He said neither the huge wealth of the passengers nor the rescue attempts could save them from their tragic fate.

The tweet is mean and rude. His tweet was clearly despicable!

Another scholar through a tweet criticized the lack of reaction

from the liberals to the recent incident – burning a copy of the Holy Quran in Sweden.

Another scholar, famous for his strong opposition to those participating in the 'one-man one-vote election', the so-called opposition, did not prevent him from contesting the elections, and supporting their election, so he became like someone who claims not to drink alcohol, but nominates so-and-so to drink it (!).

This brother tweeted, objecting the "liberals" must remain silent on the incident of tearing and burning the Qur'an in Sweden (deleting the tweet from now on), since he described himself as a liberal, and his protest undoubtedly represents them, and that is enough! I do not know what prevented him from calling for a demonstration against that disgraceful act.

That scholar inquired in his tweet, what if a Muslim man set fire to a copy of the Holy book of other religions. His enquiry is rejected and it aims at gaining the support of the crowds. The issue is deeper than individual actions committed by someone here or an extremist there.

Before judging others' attacks on our symbols and sanctities, did we ask ourselves if we were really that religious? Or do we treat others with real humanity? Or are we even human with ourselves? Don't many families refuse to marry their daughters to those who follow other sects, whether Sunni or Shiite? If we are so hostile to each other, and we who belong to the same religion, then what is the depth of the enmity in our souls against the Christian,



alsarraf

the Jew, the Buddhist and the Hindu, let alone the followers of the beliefs of sacred icons?

We cannot ask the other to be "understanding and humane" with our sanctities, if we are unable to be humane with our sanctities, or theirs.

For hundreds of years, "Hagia Sophia" was a Byzantine church, then the Ottomans occupied Constantinople and changed the religion of the city's people and its name to Istanbul, and converted the church into a mosque in 1453.

After the fall of the Ottoman Empire, the mosque turned into a museum. In order to win the sympathy and votes of the Turkish voters, Erdogan recently allowed prayers in the Hagia Sophia, and we did not find demonstrations blocking the streets of European cities in protest against his behavior, but rather some polite criticism, one of which was, coincidentally, from the President of Sweden. We also welcomed, with obvious pleasure, the return of the right to pray in a former church.

Muslims never stopped converting dozens or hundreds of non-Islamic places of worship into mosques after their occupation of any city, and among the most famous examples, other than Hagia Sophia, is the Great Mosque of Cordoba in Spain, and the Babri Mosque in India, which was demolished by the Hindus, because it was built on the ruins of a Hindu temple, and the Jerusalem Church in Homs, Syria, and the Magian fire temples, and the Ibn Tulun Mosque in Egypt, which was built in the ninth century on the site of a Coptic church, and the Great Mosque in Algeria, which was a church.

Add to the list the "Cristo de la Luz" mosque in Toledo, Spain, which was built in the tenth century, and was converted into a church, and is now a mosque again, and is known by the same name!

I am not calling for tolerance of those who insult the feelings of others, but I am interested in understanding the situation better. There is no doubt that they committed a sin, rather a crime, but we inevitably did, for centuries, not offending them, but rather verbally assaulting them and all their sanctities, all because some people believed that this is our right, as we are the owners of the saved group, and we are entitled to what no one else is entitled to!



e-mail: a.alsarraf@alqabas.com.kw



Pilgrims to the Sacred House of God throw stones at the Jamarat on the second day of Tashreeq.

KUNA photo

Last batch of 2,000 pilgrims return home

The Kuwait International Airport received the last batch of about 2,000 returning pilgrims from the Holy Land after performing the Hajj rituals aboard 15 flights coming from Jeddah and Madinah, reports Al-Qabas daily.

The daily added, the operators at the airport and the Directorate-General of Civil Aviation raised the level of services to facilitate the entry of pilgrims as the airport witnessed a flurry of activity since the return of pilgrims coincided with the Eid Al-Adha holidays as most people who had

travelled abroad to spend their holidays also returned home.

The pilgrims thanked the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques for the great efforts exerted by various agencies in the Kingdom to serve the guests of God.

The pilgrims also thanked the Kuwait International Airport authorities for the significant arrangements that were made to receive them on their return from the pilgrimage.

Blasphemy law revision eyed

Price hike during Eid queried

By Saeed Mahmoud Saleh
Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 3: The parliamentary Legislative and Legal Affairs Committee on Monday discussed the proposal to amend the Constitutional Court Law.

Present at the meeting were Minister of Justice and State Minister for Housing Affairs Faleh Abdullah Eid Al-Raqabah, as well as academicians from the College of Law at Kuwait University and Kuwait International Law School.

The proposed amendment states that appeals against decrees of necessity and parliamentary elections should be filed and judged within 10 days of submission (before the elections).

Rapporteur of the committee MP Muhammad Al-Sayer affirmed that the panel is keen on hearing the opinions of all concerned parties to guarantee the legality of the proposal and immediate completion of reports.

Meanwhile, MPs Fares Al-Otaibi, Abdullah Al-Anbai, Mubarak Al-Hajraf, Jarrah Al-Fawzan and Soud Al-Asfour have submitted a bill on amending Parliament Election Law No. 35/1962. The bill stipulates the cancellation of the second clause of Article Two: "Whoever is convicted of offending God, Prophets (Peace be Upon Them) or the Amiri entity is disqualified from running for the parliamentary elections and voting." The bill adds a clause on assigning the Election Affairs General Department at the Ministry of Interior to include citizens, who reached 18 years old, on the voters list based on the address in their civil identification cards; in addition to including citizens who were disqualified as per the deleted clause. The bill specifies a period of one week, starting from the publication of the law in

Kuwait Gazette, for the Election Affairs General Department to implement it.

MP Muhammad Al-Regaib and several of his colleagues submitted a proposal to allocate a part of the upcoming session for deliberation on the burning of a copy of the Holy Quran in Sweden. He disclosed that the discussion will focus on political and economic steps that should be taken regarding the incident. He added the proposal is in line with their commitment to religious principles.

On the other hand, MP Mubarak Al-Tasha asked Minister of Commerce and Industry and State Minister for Youth Affairs Muhammad Othman Al-Aiban if the Ministry of Commerce and Industry noticed the increase of prices in some restaurants and commodities during the Eid Al-Adha holiday. If yes, he requested for a list of restaurants and shopping malls, which increased the prices of their products and the delivery fees. He wants to know the action taken against these establishments.

Al-Tasha also inquired if the ministry conducted studies to compare the prices in Kuwait and other Gulf countries. If yes, he demanded for copies of these studies.

Moreover, Parliament Speaker Ahmad Al-Sa'adoun sent cables to Speaker of the House of Representatives in Belarus Vladimir Andreichenko and Speaker of the National Assembly Natalya Kochanova to greet them on the National Day of their country.

EV chargers in co-ops

KUWAIT CITY, July 3: The Capital Governorate Committee of the Municipal Council, chaired by Fahd Al-Abd Al-Jader, is examining the letter submitted by the Public Utilities Management Company to look into the activities of Al-Safat Square cafés, and the two proposals submitted by member Al-Abd Al-Jader to convert a road to a service street in the Al-Rawdah area, Plot 3 branching from the Maghreb Highway, and the development of a secondary street in the Yarmouk region, Plot 3, reports Al-Jarida daily.

In this regard the committee will hold its meeting next Sunday, to discuss the letter of the Council Chairman regarding the allocation of land for the oil complex in the Shuwaikh area.

The committee is also considering the letter submitted by the Union of Cooperative Societies regarding the Mishref, Al-Rawdah, Al-Adailiya, Al-Khalidiya and Al-Shamiya Cooperative Societies, about the Council's decision to install electric car chargers, tire repair and oil change in cooperative societies.

Kuwait Amir congratulates Belarus

KUWAIT CITY, July 3, (KUNA) : His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent on Monday a cable of congratulations to the President of Belarus Aleksandr Lukashenko on his country's National Day.

His Highness the Amir wished the president lasting good health and his country and its people more progress and prosperity.

Crown Prince

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

Sabah sent on Monday a cable of congratulations to the President of Belarus Aleksandr Lukashenko on his country's National Day.

His Highness the Crown Prince wished the president lasting good health.

Prime Minister

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent on Monday a cable of congratulations to the President of Belarus Aleksandr Lukashenko on his country's National Day.

'Price chaos widespread'

'Activate consumer protection law'

KUWAIT CITY, July 3: The government will extend the rule of law to the artificial price increase, expecting that legislation in this regard will be prepared over the next few days calling it a government priority, reports Al-Rai daily.

In this regard the Ministry of Commerce and Industry said it is continuing in its efforts to limit the artificial hike in prices of commodities after the parliamentarians called on the government to activate the role of consumer protection and all concerned agencies to rein in the price chaos which has become widespread.

The sources explained the government has taken into account deficiencies and loopholes to protect the consumer, so that the legislation will be leave no room for manipulation of the law and regulations.

MP Ahmed Lari referred to the decision of the Ministry of Commerce to absolutely prevent an increase in food prices, which was issued during the "Corona" pandemic, indicating that the implementation of such a decision would limit the increase in prices.

MP Majed Al-Mutairi called for the need for the actual application of the Consumer Protection Law, in order to ensure that some do not manipulate prices.

MP Shuaib Shaaban told Al-Rai that the Consumer Protection Department is required to activate its role and control prices, calling for imposing strict and strict control over the markets, punishing transgressors, and applying the law to the fullest.

MP Badr Nashmi demanded the need for the Ministry of Commerce to follow up on the artificial price increase, and in order for the Ministry not to be unable to control the artificial price increases, "we have submitted a proposal to amend the Consumer Protection Law 39/2014 to prevent the increase in prices of goods and services without controls and foundations set by the Ministry of Commerce.

MP Badr Sayyar Al-Shammari said the increase in commodity prices by some companies leads us to intensive control work, and therefore everyone should shoulder their responsibilities.

Palestinian girl's

Continued from Page 2

Two of her uncles were Palestinian militants killed as teenagers in the second uprising. Another two remain in Israeli prison.

Sadeel's profile picture on Facebook is a black-and-white photo of an unidentified girl wearing an abaya and holding up a rifle. "Oh God, I end my life according to your will," she wrote several months ago. Transfixed by Israeli and Palestinian attacks, killings and clashes each day, Sadeel could hardly focus in school, her father said.

Israeli officials say incitement on social media drives Palestinian youth toward militancy. But her uncle, Nidal Naghniyeh, described Sadeel's praise for militants as the inevitable outcome of life in Jenin refugee camp.

"Sadeel had nothing else around her but death and destruction," he said. "So what does she think about? What does she dream of? Death."

When Israeli military vehicles and drones swarmed the camp last week, Palestinian militants ambushed the forces with gunfire and powerful explosives, prompting the Israeli military to dispatch helicopter gunships to help evacuate its stranded soldiers. Seven Palestinians were killed.

The raid started with a familiar scene. The camp sirens wailed. Militants fired into the air to warn residents about the incursion. Naghniyeh and his wife ushered Sadeel and their four sons toward the back of the house. They shut all the windows.

But Sadeel was restless around 8 a.m. and asked her father if she could spend the day next door with her twin cousins, Sara and Yara.

Naghniyeh agreed, considering it a safe and much-needed distraction. Minutes after she disappeared down the stairs, he heard his 9-year-old son, Hamoudi, shrieking.

In the driveway, Naghniyeh cradled Sadeel's limp body and felt blood at the back of her head. He knew his only daughter was gone.

"Whoever shot her would have seen her," he said. "Did they not see she was small?" (AP)

HH Crown Prince meets HH Premier & ministers

KUWAIT CITY, July 3, (KUNA): His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received on Monday at Bayan Palace, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. His Highness the Crown Prince also met with First Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Talal Khalid Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

Afterwards, His Highness the Crown Prince received Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Ahmad Fahad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. His Highness the Crown Prince then met with Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs, Minister of State for National Assembly Affairs Essa Ahmad Al-Kandari.

Meanwhile, Kuwaiti Information Minister Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi on Sunday praised the success of Hajj season.

In a press statement, Al-Mutairi, also minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, appreciated the tireless efforts of the Kuwaiti Hajj mission and agencies to facilitate the spiritual journey and rituals for pilgrims.

He admired the impeccable organization of the religious journey and coordination between Kuwaiti agencies and relevant Saudi authorities in serving pilgrims. He congratulated the pilgrims for the completion of their Hajj journey: the fifth pillar of Islam.

Minister Al-Mutairi thanked the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for the great efforts and tremendous services it offered to pilgrims.

Earlier, on Thursday, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received a phone call from Saudi Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammad bin Salman bin Abdulaziz who expressed greetings to His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on the occasion of Eid Al-Adha.

Zour refinery fire: The Kuwait Integrated Petroleum Industries Company (KIPIC) said Sunday that firefighters extinguished a fire that broke out earlier at Unit No. 12 of the Al-Zour Refinery.

In a post on its Twitter account, KIPIC confirmed that the blaze did not result in any casualties, and cooling of the unit has begun.

It added that production and export operations have not been affected, adding that the relevant emergency health, safety, security and environment measures were activated to deal with the accident.

Get ready for a Royal Feast

Use code **EID15** for Special Discount

www.mughalmahal.com | @mughalmahalkuwait

LOCAL

Education Ministry starts 1st phase of unified central admission portal

Integrated system to improve applications in higher education institutions

KUWAIT CITY, July 3: The Ministry of Education said it has launched the first phase of the unified central admission portal to improve the performance of electronic services and develop the infrastructure and informatics in higher education institutions, reports Al-Qabas daily.

Minister of Education, Dr. Hamad Al-Adwani, told KUNA, Sunday, that the ministry is moving forward with this by launching an integrated program of applications that would contribute to the implementation of an integrated digital registration system under the name of the central admission portal for all institutions of higher education.

He added that the aforementioned unified electronic system includes the Kuwait University, internal and external educational missions, and the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training, so that a qualified student who has completed his studies in high school or its equivalent can submit one electronic application to join various higher education institutions.

Modern technology

He explained that the first phase of the unified central admission portal will be launched this year with the aim of enhancing and improving the quality of services provided by higher education institutions, which comes within the framework of supporting the goals of the smart government in benefiting from modern technology to reach electronic transformation in order to achieve the vision of the state.

He stated that the automated system organizes the procedures for submitting



KUNA photo
Dr. Hamad Al-Adwani, Minister of Education

applications for study seats, while ensuring that there is no overlap and conflict between applications, and ensuring that the conditions for admission rules approved by each entity are met.

Al-Adwani indicated that the seats are sorted electronically, intelligently, accurately and at a high speed through electronic connectivity and coordination between higher education institutions and the concerned authorities, which are the ministries of Education and Interior and the Public Authority for Civil Information, as well as the Civil Service Commission, the Public Authority for Manpower and the Public Institution for Social Security (PIFSS).

He pointed out that the central admission portal will be launched as a first stage, starting from this year gradually within subsequent stages to complete the entire

infrastructure and the advanced digital within the ministry's approach towards digital transformation.

The Minister of Education pointed out that this has become an inevitable necessity in light of the general orientation of the state in all its institutions and the provision of services to facilitate those wishing to register in higher education institutions.

Meanwhile, the Secretary-General of the Council of Public Universities, Dr. Adel Al-Manea, said that, based on the directives of Minister Adwani, work has begun to implement the first phase of the central admission portal between the Kuwait University and Abdullah Al-Salem University, where graduates of the general secondary stage and its equivalent can submit applications for enrollment in these two universities starting from the July 15 to July 26 through the unified electronic portal of the two universities (<http://portal.ku.edu.kw/admission>).

Al-Manea explained that the method of selecting specializations for applicants for admission to the two universities will appear for each student according to his average and according to the results of admission tests, if any, and depends on the extent to which the applicant fulfills the conditions, as the advanced student is allowed to choose all majors available to him, whether from the Kuwait University or Abdullah Al-Salem University.

He added that admission will be made for one major at one university only according to the equivalent average and according to the selection priorities submitted by the student and the absorptive capacity of each major.

He pointed out the need for students to familiarize themselves with the admission requirements of both the above-mentioned universities through the website of each university to know the conditions required to be met for them to register.



THE GUEST SHOW
CHAITALI B ROY

Radio Kuwait International English Station

Guest:
Dr Fatemah Almosawi
Behavioural Geneticist,
Social Entrepreneur, and Talent Coach
Director:
Anees Backer
Listen on EPISODE 130
06/07/2023 @ 10am & 10pm
93.3fm and 963am

The Guest Show poster.

TGS presents Dr Fatemah Almosawi

The Guest Show (TGS) is honored to present Dr Fatemah Almosawi, an extraordinary Kuwaiti woman who is also known as 'the dreammaker'.

Dr Fatemah has invested years in study & research. She has done her Masters in Behavioural Science from the London School of Economics, and a master's in bioinformatics. She also has a PhD in Genetics from King's College, London.

After returning to Kuwait, Dr Fatemah embarked on a journey of self-dis-

covery which enabled her to spot and nature talent, become a solution provider and to create a safe space that encourages creatives and helps promote thinking out of the box. Through her work as a social entrepreneur, and with her company Al Passion she has touched many lives.

In this episode of The Guest Show, she speaks to Chaitali B Roy about the different hats she wears, the need for passion as motivation and her work as a social entrepreneur and a lot more.

Summer jobs for Kuwaiti students

MoE intends to employ secondary school students in July and August

KUWAIT CITY, July 3: The Ministry of Education intends to employ secondary school students in July and August in order to encourage them to use their spare time wisely, reports Al-Anba daily quoting sources from the educational sector.

Sources affirmed that the ministry is working hard to implement this project in coordination with the Public Authority for Manpower (PAM). Sources said the ministry will recruit students, who will serve as public relations staff in its building in South Surra. Sources explained this move aims to encourage the students to spend their leisure time in worthwhile activities, boost their self confidence and teach them how to be independent. Sources added the salary will range from KD150 to KD200.

Meanwhile, The Public Authority for Youth announced the launch of the "Job Opportunity" program as part of the summer activities, which will provide temporary job opportunities for secondary school Kuwaiti students of both genders during the summer vacation, reports Al-Anba daily.

In a press statement, Acting Deputy Director General of the Youth Projects Sector Nasser Al-Sheikh said summer job opportunities for students will be in a number of professional jobs that help them hone their skills and engage them in the job community, with the cooperation of a number of government agencies.

He explained that the program, which

will be held in the months of July and August, is the first of the summer activities of the authority. It aims to activate its role in investing the youth's time during this period in a way that will benefit them by developing their skills, increasing their confidence, and diversifying their experiences at an early age through job work experience that will benefit the student and society.

The program aspires to introduce young people to the atmosphere and nature of work in various disciplines, and to learn directly from workers with expertise and skills.

The authority set comfortable and sufficient working hours for students such that they do not exceed four hours per day, and the number of working days do not exceed five days a week, with a total of 20 hours per week. It also allocated a reward of up to KD 150 (about USD 500) per month for participating students.

Al-Sheikh stressed that the program is the result of the work of the joint committee, which included the Ministry of Social Affairs, Ministry of Education and the Public Authority for Manpower, alongside the Public Authority for Youth.

He expressed his pride in this constructive cooperation that works to serve young people. Al-Sheikh called on those wishing to participate in the program to register on the Public Authority for Youth's website www.youth.gov.kw.



Sacrifice animals slaughtered to be given to thousands of needy Palestinian families in the Gaza Strip.

KUNA photo

Kuwaiti charities funded sacrifice project

Sacrifice animals distributed to Palestinian families

GAZA, July 3, (KUNA): Palestine's Al-We'am Charitable Society handed out tens of sacrifice animals, funded by a number of Kuwaiti charities, to thousands of Palestinian families.

Speaking to KUNA in a statement, head of the society Mohammad Abu Marie said the sacrifice project was carried out this

year and funded by some Kuwaiti charities topped with the International Islamic Charity Organization (IICO), the International Mercy Association, and the Namaa and Development charities in Kuwait.

Tens of sacrifice animals funded by Kuwaiti philanthropists were slaughtered to be given to thousands of needy Palestinian

families in the Gaza Strip, he added.

Kuwait and its national institutions are among the first countries, which respond rapidly to relief calls launched by Gaza's institutions, in light of the soaring prices of sacrifice, he noted. Abu Marie thanked Kuwait, His Highness the Amir, the government and Kuwaitis for this support.

Israeli incursion

Continued from Page 1

During a government meeting, Shtayeh added that the crimes in Jenin, Nablus and Gaza would not bring security to Israel as long as it attacked Palestinian people.

The prime minister also stressed that the Palestinian people would confront this aggression, calling on the international community to stop these crimes, confront the settlers, and impose all possible sanctions against Israel.

Lynn Hastings, the U.N. humanitarian coordinator in the Palestinian areas, said on Twitter that she was "alarmed by scale of Israeli forces operation," noting the airstrikes in a densely populated refugee camp. She said the U.N. was mobilizing humanitarian aid.

According to the official Palestinian news agency Wafa, the military blocked roads within the camp, took over houses and buildings and set up snipers on rooftops. The tactics signaled the operation could drag on for some time.

"There are bulldozers destroying the streets, snipers are inside and on roofs of houses, drones are hitting

houses and Palestinians are killed in the streets," said Jamal Huweil, a political activist in the camp, predicting the operation would fail.

"They can destroy the refugee camp but will fail again because the only solution is the political solution in which a Palestinian state is established and the occupation ends," he said.

The Palestinian Health Ministry said at least eight Palestinians were killed and 50 people were wounded - 10 critically.

In a separate incident, a 21-year-old Palestinian was killed by Israeli fire near the West Bank city of Ramallah, the ministry said.

"Our Palestinian people will not kneel, will not surrender, will not raise the white flag, and will remain steadfast on their land in the face of this brutal aggression," said Palestinian presidential spokesman Nabil Abu Rudeineh.

The Jenin camp and an adjacent town of the same name have been a flashpoint as Israeli-Palestinian violence escalated since spring 2022.

Israel's foreign minister, Eli Cohen, accused arch-enemy Iran of being behind the violence by funding Palestinian militant groups.

"Due to the funds they receive from

Iran, the Jenin camp has become a center for terrorist activity," he told foreign journalists, adding that the operation would be conducted in a "targeted manner" to avoid civilian casualties.

Palestinians reject such claims, saying the violence is a natural response to 56 years of occupation since Israel captured the West Bank in the 1967 Mideast war.

Secretary General of the Arab League Ahmad Abul-Gheit condemned Monday the Israeli occupation aggression on Jenin, north of the occupied West Bank, which left several Palestinians dead or injured.

"The Israeli military operation is completely condemnable as bombarding cities and camps and demolishing Palestinian houses and road is a collective punishment and revenge that would only lead to aggravating the situation," Abul-Gheit said on his twitter account.

He called upon peace advocates in the world to immediately intervene to halt this "criminal act".

Palestinian Ministry of Health announced earlier Monday that the death toll of the Israeli occupation aggression on Jenin had risen to seven deaths.

The Arab Parliament on Monday emphatically condemned the Israeli

occupation aggression on the Palestinian Jenin refugee camp, which left several young Palestinians dead or injured, and led to wide-scale arrests.

The parliament said, in a press release, that the Israeli occupation action is considered to be a "war crime committed against a disarmed people", calling on the international community and the United Nations (UN) to immediately provide international protection for the Palestinian people.

"What the Israeli occupation forces are doing (at Jenin refugee camp) is a systematic and considered aggression aiming at intimidating and terrifying the Palestinian people in a bid to muzzle the voice of the right and impose the fait accompli by military force," it added.

The parliament underlined that some Arab, regional and international action should be taken in order to halt this aggression and bring the Israeli military and its commanders to accountability for their crimes against the disarmed Palestinian people.

Egypt strongly condemned the Israeli occupation aggression on Jenin in occupied West Bank that resulted in the deaths and injuries.

Egyptian Foreign Ministry affirmed in a statement its rejection of these

recurring aggressions and incursions against innocent civilians and the arbitrary and excessive use of force, calling it a blatant breach of international law.

The statement further warned of the dangers of the continuous Israeli escalation, its augmentation of the suffering of Palestinian people, adding that this violence undermines efforts aiming to ease tensions.

It called on all active parties to intervene and put an end to these breaches, and provide the Palestinian people with the necessary protection.

Jenin has long been a bastion for armed struggle against Israel and was a major friction point in the last Palestinian uprising.

In 2002, days after a Palestinian suicide bombing during a large Passover gathering killed 30 people, Israeli troops launched a massive operation in the Jenin camp. For eight days and nights they fought militants street by street, using armored bulldozers to destroy rows of homes, many of which had been booby-trapped.

Monday's raid came two weeks after another violent confrontation in Jenin and after the military said a pair of rockets were fired from the area last week. The rockets exploded shortly after launch, causing no damage in Is-

rael, but marked an escalation that has raised concerns in Israel.

But there also may have been political considerations at play. Leading members of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's far-right government, which is dominated by West Bank settlers and their supporters, have been calling for a broader military response to the ongoing violence in the area.

"Proud of our heroes on all fronts and this morning especially of our soldiers operating in Jenin," tweeted National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir, an ultranationalist who recently called for Israel to kill "thousands" of militants if necessary. "Praying for their success."

Israeli military experts said they expected the operation to wrap up quickly - within hours or a day or two. Prolonged violence and heavy casualties would risk attracting increased international criticism and drawing militants from the Gaza Strip or even Lebanon into the fighting.

"From the Israeli point of view, the intent and interest are to end this very limited operation ASAP and to make sure it does not become a regional event," said Giora Eiland, a retired Israeli general and former national security adviser.

diwaniya ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

'Other Gulf states precede us ... will the reform train take off?'

"WILL the train move and set off towards reform? This is the question for which we don't have the answer. It is known that reform has stalled for many years, and our brothers in the Gulf countries preceded us in development," columnist **Yacoub Yousef Al-Omar** wrote for **Al-Qabas** daily.

"We do not know whether this Parliament will be like its predecessors, and we hope it will not be! Because we are accustomed every time and in every National Assembly to hear the same thing that this council will be reformist and the new government will also be reformist and they will solve the many and chronic problems in the country, but we are surprised by the dissolution of the council and the reason is the lack of harmony between the council and the government and the result is disappointing to the people since reform cannot take place without the government and the council being in complete harmony.

"The council is a legislative body and the government is an executive body, and reform cannot take place without the cooperation between the government and the council.

"I hope that this will not be the case, and if the government boycotted attending the council sessions, then the council cannot hold the sessions without the government, and this is what happened in the previous council and finally led to the dissolution in a very short time.

"This did not please the citizens because they were banking on those whom they had elected to solve the problems of the country and the citizens, but they as usual were disappointed, because the previous councils also were dissolved before completing their term of four years.

"The previous council was dissolved for lack of cooperation because some of the loud-mouthed members who unfortunately were experts in creating crisis, and the citizen has always hoped for good in any new council that was formed, because he saw that the country suffers from many chronic problems topped by health and to add insult to injury many medicines are unavailable in the pharmacies.

"The other problem that the country suffers from is education, as it lags behind our neighbors in the Gulf countries. Everyone knows about exam answers sold to students.

"Add to this problem the potholes in the streets that damage the vehicles of citizens, as well as the torrential rains that flood our streets and turn them into rivers the water-filled basements, cause great damage to the furniture inside the houses.

"The new problem that has appeared in the country is unemployment for new graduates, where young people remain unemployed for several years, although we are a small number of people and the percentage of expatriates is more than citizens.

"We often hear from officials that Kuwaiti youth must take the place of the expatriates but in reality nothing has happened in this area. Yes, for all these chronic problems, the citizen wants a quick solution.

"Finally, we hope that this council will cooperate with the government, and that the government will also cooperate with the council, by solving the problems of the country and the people, and this is how it is supposed to be.

"Perhaps this council may be the cause of the dissolution, and we do not wish to tell the people of Kuwait not to rejoice in the new democratic wedding. Divorce may be imminent. We hope that this will not happen, but God knows best."

Also:

"We refer to the UNCITRAL Legislative Guide on Public-Private Partnerships of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law, the relevant partnership frameworks of the Arab Monetary Fund - Economic De-

partment, and Law No 116 of 2014 on partnership between the public and private sectors, the importance of devoting work to government to invest in the national human capital in the labor market in the private sector, in order to strengthen common rules and foundations aimed at achieving the vision and plans of sustainable development of the United Nations in conjunction with the international labor force towards the 2030 agenda," columnist Attorney **Nasser Al-Mahyani** wrote for **Annahar** daily.

"In this regard, it should be noted that the governments in the Gulf Cooperation Council countries tend to work to support citizens in the private sector in order to realize the strategic government goals in attracting the attention of graduates to engage in the labor market in the private sector, which has reflected positively on the overall sustainable development plans in the sisterly countries which have provided unprecedented privileges topmost of which is the job guarantee and protection, distinguished salaries and incentives, which led to the success of those governments and among them is the sisterly State of Qatar, for example but not limited to the great investment made by the Qatari government in the national cadres, the most important of which are the Qatari law which provides job guarantees and protection for workers in the private sector in addition to creating an atmosphere of job security in the labor market in the same sector.

"Add to this the job privileges in the private sector included speed in promotion and taking leadership positions more than in the government sector and also the salary rate for a newly graduated university employee which starts from 18,000 and reaches 35,000 upon appointment.

"Also an employee in the private sector gets two main benefits: health insurance and a housing allowance.

"The law guarantees bearing the expenses of educating children in private schools; the employee shall receive training, qualification and acquisition of experience; the law guarantees the right of an employee in the private sector to receive a scholarship at the expense of the entity in which he works and the percentage of Qatarization in the private sector has been raised from 60% to 80%.

"With the start of the countdown to the upcoming government action program, and the rising wave of news about the government's serious directions to correct the course in various levels, including the approval of the strategic alternative project and raising the ceiling of financial support for salaries in various jobs to include the public and private sectors, including support for national employment, in the hope of stimulating the labor market in the private sector and attracting the attention of graduates, especially with the successful government initiative witnessed by the cooperative sector in opening the door for appointment to supervisory positions in cooperative societies, which is evident with the positive government steps in injecting incentive initiatives to work in the private sector, so the government side must revive the labor market in the private sector through a new package of initiatives.

"These include providing distinguished and incentive salaries that are higher than what is provided and what will be provided to the public sector; allowing job and study to be combined at the employee's own expense, specifically for postgraduate studies that are based on research and dissertations and do not require attendance.

"This is in addition to adoption of the approval by the Qatari government in terms of privileges for workers in the private sector, leading to what further enhances the work of Kuwaiti national cadres; inclusion of workers in the private sector and their families in the wellness card as health insurance, in addition to providing a housing allowance."

"A new parliament was launched that carries the aspirations of an entire people. It seems to be pursued by demands inherited from its predecessors that

did not achieve the aspirations of citizens and left everyone unnoticed, making everybody wait for a decision or a step forward. This is what happened to some of the previous demands," columnist **Mishari Al-Mutairi** wrote for **Al-Anba** daily.

"Despite what happened in the past, the 2023 Parliament came with a slightly different character. The general atmosphere and the surrounding factors call for optimism, especially in light of the presence of the government of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, and members of his government who are known for their competence.

"I know that the current legislature is under tremendous public pressure. It is not a secret to the members of our parliament that ennui prevails among the citizens as a result of political 'procrastination'.

"Therefore, the citizens are waiting for the Parliament to avoid recurrence of the previous disruption. The responsibility on the shoulders of the lawmakers are not limited to the interrogation of ministers, as it depends on the final outcome of their achievements, which will be reflected on the lives of citizens.

"Although the beginning of the current Parliament was not bad and the committees were formed quietly amid the agreement among lawmakers, we hope there will be no divisions that may affect the performance of lawmakers in the future, especially in terms of cooperation between them, considering the impact on the entire pace of work.

"How I wish our lawmakers will realize that divisions and disagreements, regardless of their intensity, have only one end - disruption of work in the interest of the people. This, in turn, leads to the dissolution of the Parliament, so we enter a vicious circle where there is no way out, unless there is cooperation and distancing from disagreements, sit-ins and conflicts that destroy homelands."

□ □ □

"The most important requirement for operating and activating institutions or establishments in the State is the availability of manpower to manage and operate facilities or institutions, as the State does not want to be affected by the cessation of these entities. What if that facility is related with the call to worship God and praying on time?" columnist **Hamad Badr Al-Uzaina** wrote for **Al-Anba** daily.

"Every year, mosques suffer from severe shortage of muezzins, and sometimes imams, because the existing number does not cover their needs. Sometimes, most of them go on annual vacation during summer. Thus, the worshippers take turns in calling for prayer or leading the worshippers. Has the ministry lost muezzins or imams? What could be the reasons?"

"Most of those who carry out this task are volunteers or outsiders, not employees of the Ministry of Awqaf. It is strange that the Ministry of Awqaf, which is considered one of the most important ministries based on the principle of advocacy and urging citizens to adhere to religion, has no plan to address this problem that everyone suffers from, particularly in residential areas, in addition to not distinguishing between such jobs, which are not less important than education-related jobs and others.

"My point of view is that these jobs are considered one of the pillars of society, as they are not based on the call to prayer and leading the prayer only, as religious lessons permeate these mosques and sometimes the memorization of the Qur'an and other activities. This is in addition to advocacy meetings concerning generations and raising societal issues, especially since the world has become more open. It has been permeated with a lot of strife and delving into worldly pleasures.

"Hence, we send a message to the Minister of Awqaf and those concerned with mosque affairs, to look into this problem and lay down a plan to provide sufficient number of muezzins and imams, in addition to their material and in-kind needs."

— Compiled by **Mai Elsoukary**

'Those who passed earlier may retake test'

Tests for jobs in SAB to be held again after summer offs: official

KUWAIT CITY, July 3: The State Audit Bureau announced its intention to cancel the tests held for those who did not pass to fill the vacant law-related positions in the bureau and to repeat it for all applicants who had previously sat for the tests during the period from May 29 to June 13, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

In a press statement, the Undersecretary of the State Audit Bureau **Yousef Al-Mazrouei** said that the test will be repeated after the summer vacation for the complainants and non-complainants in accordance with the approved academic curriculum, in addition to those who postponed based on official excuses to ensure that all candidates are available to take the test.

He indicated that those who passed the previous test have the right to retake the test if they wish to raise the passing score or keep the previous test result.

Al-Mazrouei affirmed the bureau's keenness to do justice to all candidates, and to achieve fairness and justice for all applicants to fill vacant positions, as it has adopted the mechanism of contracting with a specialized academic authority since 2017 to prepare application tests, so that there are not less than 600 questions, with 40 questions for each applicant.

He explained that the adoption of the submission test mechanism aimed to ensure the diversity of questions and not leakage. The formulation of the test happened without the intervention of specialists in the bureau and without allowing any of the bureau's employees to view the questions, in order to achieve the highest levels of impartiality and confidentiality.



Yousef Al-Mazrouei

The re-testing, after the results of the report was submitted in coordination with the contracting party, came in compliance with the principle of transparency in dealing with the technical problems raised in the media, which were limited to the reality of the grievances submitted as questions and terms outside the scope of the approved curriculum, in addition to the presence of questions that bear more than one answer.

The approved mechanism for appointment is based on three basic items, which are passing the test, which consists of 40 points, with a score of 70 percent (28 points out of 40), having average academic qualification, for which is 40 points, and the personal interview, which is 20 points. Preference is given to those with the highest scores in accordance with grades approved in the budget and actual need.

'Ranks 851-900 globally'

KU advances in global QS ranking

KUWAIT CITY, July 3: In confirmation of what was published by **Al-Qabas**, the Kuwait University raised its position in the QS World University Rankings for the year 2024, and ranked 851-900 in the world, according to what the institution announced last Tuesday, reports **Al-Qabas** daily.

In a statement issued last Thursday, the university confirmed that the results of the QS World University Rankings (2024), which was announced in Dubai (United Arab Emirates) during the QS World Forum, showed that Kuwait University ranked 851-900 out of a total of 2,963 international universities, indicating it has made progress in the world rankings of universities over the past year.

The university stated that it was keen throughout its past career to be the first institution with clear and specific future visions and strategies, so it drew its plans within a sustainable institutional framework that aspires to enhance quality, innovation, sustainability and distinguished presence.

accurate measurement indicators that contribute to identifying gaps compared to the desired goals and results.

The university indicated that participation in international rankings is the result of organized and diligent institutional work according to a specific strategic vision and plan. Therefore, the classification is considered an outcome, not an end, measured annually within performance indicators to be used as a catalyst for development and upgrading. The goal remains to prepare and build national capacities to build a sustainable economy based on knowledge.

The university stated that this progress is the result of the efforts of the current university administration in preparing and entering data and providing it to the institution and its continuous follow-up with classification institutions, in addition to benefiting from previous experiences; To be a manifestation of the university's keenness to promote a culture of quality and apply its standards in all academic, research and administrative practices to ensure the achievement of excellence in the outputs of higher education, scientific research and community services, and the administrative, financial and technical quality of the university.

'Municipality keen to remove encroachments on govt land'

Bid to tighten control over violators of cleanliness law

KUWAIT CITY, July 3: The Kuwait Municipality says it is determined to get rid of encroachments on government land particularly along the public beaches in the southern region (chalets area) since some owners of chalets have made the beaches their private property, reports **Al-Rai** daily.

The daily quoting Municipality sources said the public beaches in the south will be open to citizens within two weeks.

In this regard, the Acting Director General of the Municipality, Eng. Saud Al-Dabbous, has instructed the Violations Removal Team in the Ahmadi Governorate Municipality Branch to monitor the closed passages leading to the public beaches, especially those located between the chalets.

He added, blocking the access to beaches is considered an explicit violation of the law, and an encroachment on state property, stressing that the municipality will not allow the closure of any public beach and converting it into a private property.

He pointed out that municipal teams are working in other regions in conjunction with the southern region, and there will be continuous campaigns in the coming weeks, with an emphasis on monitoring and follow-up later after removal.

Intervention

The head of the rapid intervention team in the Hawalli Municipality branch, Ibrahim Al-Sabaan, told **Al-Rai** that the team will start from today, coinciding with the campaign that the teams are carrying out in Al-Ahmadi Governorate, to open the closed passages and outlets of the beaches belonging to the Hawalli Governorate, and will tour some chalets to issue warnings to remove their violations



KUNA photo

Kuwait's FM Sheikh Salem Al-Sabah during the talks with Hungarian Minister Marton Nagy.

FM, Hungarian minister discuss more co-operation

Kuwait's Foreign Minister Sheikh Salem Al-Sabah held talks on Monday with Hungarian Minister for Economic Development Marton Nagy, focusing on

economic and investment cooperation.

The talks, which are part of the Kuwaiti top diplomat's wider European tour, also revolved

around common endeavors in the field of clean energy and renewables, according to a foreign ministry statement. (KUNA)

and encroachments on state property.

The head of the Emergency and Rapid Intervention Team in the Capital Governorate Municipality and the Rapporteur of the Committee for Reducing the Phenomenon of Singles Housing in Private and Model Housing Areas, Zaid Al-Enezi, announced the field teams in all governorates will resume their campaigns today, according to the committee's work plan to eliminate the phenomenon of bachelors living in private housing areas.

Meanwhile, member of the Municipal Council, Engineer Sharifa Al-Shalfan, has submitted a proposal consisting of six main demands to maintain the cleanliness of Kuwait's beaches,

reports **Al-Rai** daily.

She said beaches in Kuwait are important public recreational facilities and the increasing population has negatively affected these places because of their irresponsible behavior by disposing waste in places other than those designated for it."

According to the proposal cooperation and coordination must be made with the Ministry of Finance to determine the mechanisms for cleaning public beaches; cleaning must include all concrete and rock barriers separating the sea from land, putting a number of containers commensurate with the need in all public beaches and determining sites for collecting the waste after it has been removed from the beaches, in preparation for

transporting it to places of treatment, or backfilling by the Kuwait Municipality.

This is in addition to increasing the number of signs on all public beaches clearly mentioning the penalties for violating the cleanliness law and coordinating with the Environment Public Authority to tighten control over violators of the law.

Al-Shalfan stressed the need to coordinate with other parties for the success of the proposal, and to work on any measures aimed at achieving the desired goal, and to ensure intensified control over cleaning companies and obliging them to clean all public beaches in the country periodically, while ensuring their commitment to cleaning beaches using the designated mechanisms.

The Conversation

Words reveal rich history of language

English dialects make themselves heard in genes

By Yakov Pichkar and Nicole Creanza
Vanderbilt University

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

If you need to hit a nail, what tool do you ask for? If you say “hammer,” do you pronounce the “r”? Do you drop the “h”?

Different people pronounce the same English words in different ways. People learn which words to use and how to pronounce them as they’re learning to talk with family, friends and others in their community, so geographic patterns in these pronunciations can persist over time.

In England, pairs of words that mean similar things, like “sight” and “vision” or “yes” and “aye,” can reveal a rich history of language that is intertwined with the history of the place itself. Such words have their origins in migrations and conquests that took place during the Middle Ages. New words would sometimes coexist and sometimes displace one another.

Cultural evolution researchers like us know that it’s not just mountain ranges or oceans that can be barriers to interaction. Different people can share their technology, cuisines and ideas, but some tend to interact more often with those who share cultural similarities, a behavior called homophily.

This can be seen most clearly when cultural traditions lead people to marry people from the same community. Populations that tend to marry within their group because of social or economic forces, including religious traditions and social stratification, have smaller gene pools, leading them to be more genetically similar to one another.

In addition to groups with distinctive marital practices, researchers have found relationships between genes and culture when studying groups that are from different ethnicities or different regions of the world. These similarities between genes and culture don’t imply that certain genetic variants are exclusive to these groups, or that genetics causes certain cultures to arise. Rather, the same people might be more likely to share genetics and language because of a common history, especially because of significant geographic or social barriers between groups.

Can smaller things, like the different dialects between neighboring villages, shape the genetic landscape of populations? In our new study, we combined ge-

netic and linguistic data sampled in England to study the effects of culture on genetics at smaller geographic scales than generally studied.

We examined this relationship between cultural and genetic variation across England. In places where people move often, the small correlations between language and genes can be lost because of how rapidly they change. Since Great Britain is an island, few people entered its rural population between the times of the Norman conquest in 1066 and the end of the 19th century, making it ideal for our analysis.

Ideally, we could use a unified data set capturing information about the genetics and dialects of people living in a region. Unfortunately, no such data exists. Instead, we used data from two separate studies of people from approximately the same time and place. For our research, we focused on where the data sets overlapped in England.

For linguistic data, we relied on the Survey of English Dialects. Between 1950 and 1961, interviewers visited over 300 mostly rural places and asked people hundreds of questions about their daily lives. Their answers recorded the phrases, terms and sounds of local dialects of English. Each of these words can carry clues about where, or with whom, a person grew up.

Investigation

The genetic data we used came from the People of the British Isles project, an academic investigation of how much Britain’s historical events of conquest, war and migration are reflected in British genetics. The project sequenced DNA from more than 2,000 people in Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Researchers genotyped people whose grandparents who were born within 50 miles (80 kilometers) of each other, were largely rural, and were born in the late 19th century.

The People of the British Isles project found that most genotypes were not local to any one part of Great Britain but were evenly distributed. However, the historical movements of people to Great Britain left genetic marks: Compared with people in the rest of Great Britain, the genetics of those from the south of England were slightly more similar to those in France — a result of the Norman conquest a millennium ago — and the genetics of people in the former Danelaw were slightly more similar to modern Danes — because of the settling of the region by Vikings and, later, Danes. These events resulted in groups of people with somewhat similar

genetics, a phenomenon referred to as genetic clustering.

We used features from the Survey of English Dialects to measure where neighboring towns spoke the most differently, which occurs at the borders between dialects. When people from neighboring towns speak the same dialect, we expect features of their language, such as whether the “r” is pronounced at the ends of words, to be similar. Conversely, if nearby towns speak different dialects, their language features will be more different.

Many of these dialect boundaries have long histories, such as that separating the English of the North from that of the South of England. Over time, dialects can persist in similar locations if geographic or cultural barriers influence how often and with whom people interact.

We found greater genetic differences at the borders between dialects. Our results suggest that language, or some other aspect of culture, has limited how people interacted to some degree over the past thousand years. By limiting how often people started families with those from neighboring groups, cultural differences have maintained genetic evidence of the Norman conquest and other events from the Middle Ages.

This is the first time that information about linguistic dialects has been compared with modern genetic data within a population, particularly at such a granular level. Notably, people speaking different dialects have no obvious reason to avoid marrying one another, as would be expected from groups with specific marriage customs. Nevertheless, we find that even small-scale language differences, or other aspects of culture associated with these differences, can leave an impression on genes via people’s mating behaviors.

Even though people outside of Britain may think of a general “British accent,” the subtle differences among dialects seem to have parallels with the genetics of the region. This is in spite of the fact that the languages brought by people coming to England have since mixed and merged to produce the modern English language and today’s dialects.

The data used in our study represents the genetic landscape and dialects of the late 19th century; both have changed significantly since then. After the introduction of radio and television, dialects became more influenced by the cities around them. As a result, features of many English dialects in England, such as the pronunciation of “r” at the ends of syllables, have become much less common. (AP)

The Conversation

Acculturation & ethnic identity

3 misconceptions about immigration in America

By April Nisan Ilkmen
Adler University

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

The US is — and long has been — a pluralistic society that contains large immigrant communities.

Yet migration is an actively debated but poorly understood topic, and much of the conventional thinking and political rhetoric about migration are based on myths, rather than facts.

For these reasons, migration policies and strategies for easing acculturation — which refers to the psychological process of assimilating to a new culture — usually end up being ineffective.

I often work with immigrant populations in my job as a family therapist and as an acculturation scholar.

Here are a few of the most common misconceptions I come across in my work.

The US is home to more international migrants than any other country, and more than the next four countries — Germany, Saudi Arabia, Russia and the United Kingdom — combined, according to 2020 data from the UN Population Division. While the US population represents about 5% of the total world population, close to 20% of all global migrants reside there.

An overwhelming number of these immigrants are learning English, despite public perception to the contrary.

Immigrants and their children learn English today at the same rate as Italians, Germans and Eastern Europeans who emigrated in the early 19th century.

Education

According to US Census data, immigrant adults report having better English skills the longer they’ve lived in the US. And from 2009 to 2019, the percentage who could speak English “very well” increased from 57% to 62% among first-generation immigrants.

Contrary to popular belief that immigrants moving to the US have minimal education, many of them are well educated.

Over the past five years, 48% of arriving immigrants have been classified as highly skilled — that is, they have a bachelor’s degree or graduate degree. By comparison, only 33% of those born in the US hold a bachelor’s degree or higher.

Moreover, the pursuit of higher education is valued and encouraged in immigrant communities, particularly those that arrived from collectivist societies, which are commonplace in the countries of South Asia. Immigrants from these places tend to prioritize the virtue of the learning process and the joy that comes from attaining an educational milestone.

That doesn’t mean highly educated immigrants can easily slide into high-paying jobs. Many of them find themselves working in menial jobs that don’t require a degree, and underemployment among highly educated immigrants remains a key issue in the US today.

For decades, acculturation studies have highlighted the importance of immigrants’ embracing American culture. Policymakers, therapists and educators who offered services to immigrants adhered to a narrow understanding of acculturation, which encouraged immigrants to adapt to their host country by severing themselves from the culture of their homelands.

Then, in 1987, psychologist John Berry proposed an acculturation model outlining new strategies.

According to Berry, immigrants should strive to retain elements of their original cultural identity while also adopting a new cultural identity that folds in American culture and values.

Today, Berry’s model is the most commonly used to understand acculturation.

However, although the model acknowledges that acculturation strategies may evolve over time, it doesn’t take into account the emerging forms of transnational immigration, which refers to immigrants who live in another country but also maintain strong ties to their home country.

Culture

Technological advances have made it far easier for immigrants to maintain ties with their original culture. There are also US cities, neighborhoods and towns where immigrant communities are the demographic majority — places like Hialeah, Florida, where Cubans and Cuban Americans make up 73% of the population, and parts of the Detroit metro area, which has growing numbers of Indian immigrants.

For immigrants living in these “immigrant islands,” there’s less of an obligation to undergo a transformative process of acculturation, whether it’s by Americanizing foreign names or not teaching children their home country’s language.

Still, many immigrants nonetheless feel pressured to downplay their backgrounds. While conducting interviews with members of the Turkish community in Chicago, I spoke with many people who admitted that they weren’t comfortable flaunting their Turkish culture. This didn’t surprise me. Immigrants are often exposed to new sets of prejudices and biases, and they fear not being able to access services such as medical care and education.

This fear reinforces the urge to assimilate into the dominant culture’s values — which, in America, includes individualist principles like independence — and suppress their own cultural values, such as being family-oriented. It’s essentially a strategy of self-protection.

In my work, I found that immigrants who engaged in what’s called “cultural innocuousness” — behaving in ways that may soften their ethnic and cultural expression — had the hardest time adapting to their new home.

For those reasons, it is crucial for social workers, therapists, teachers and policymakers who work with immigrant families to focus on the tensions among acculturation, ethnic identity and well-being. (AP)



Photos from the event.

Scholars and Khateeb deliver insightful speeches

IMA conducts Arafat Day programs in Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, July 3: IMA Kuwait conducted a series of events and programs known as Arafat Day Gatherings successfully between June 23 to June 26 in various mosques of Kuwait, commemorating the holy month of Dhul Hijjah, also known as the Month of Sacrifice and Hajj.

The Arafat Day Gatherings were held in different mosques in Kuwait, located in Khaitan, Farwaniya, Abbasiya, Salmiya, Mahboula, and Fahaheel areas, attended by hundreds of people. Separate arrangements were made to accommodate families and to provide them a comfortable environment during the programs.

Different renowned scholars and Khateeb in Kuwait graced these gatherings and delivered their insightful speeches on a range of different topics related to the significance of the first ten days of DhulHijjah, Arafat Day, the purpose of sacrifices, the objectives and message of Hajj and Qurbani (sacrifice), the message of Eid Al-Adha, and the farewell sermon of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

Maulana Waleed Umri, one of the renowned Khateeb in Kuwait, while delivering his speech

in Fahaheel during the Friday Urdu Khutba, highlighted the virtues of sacrifices in Islam through the life of Prophet Ibrahim (AS).

Message

Sharafudin Soofi, another key note speaker and Khateeb while addressing a gathering in Maryam Masjid in Mahboula discussed in details about the legacy and life of Ibrahim (AS) highlighting that Prophet Ibrahim (AS) is a complete role model for the whole human beings all around the world, followed by a session of a question and answers session moderated by IMA President Maulana Mohammad Umar Falahi.

Nisar Ahmed, a motivational speaker addressed two different Arafat Day gatherings held in Masjid Al Mailem Khaitan and Yousuf Al Adsani in Maliya in two different dates, emphasizing the virtues of the first ten days of DhulHijjah and Arafat Day, as well as the message of Hajj and Qurbani.

Masood Shahab and Khurshid Ahmed Falahi, another two noted Khateeb and speakers delivered their thought-provoking speeches, addressing a remarkable gatherings at Masjid Bilqis-Abbasiya

and Masjid Al Mailem-Farwaniya Police Station at roundabout respectively. Both speakers enlightened the audience on the significance and the importance of the Arafat Day in Islam.

IMA Kuwait organized separate Kids Islamic programs simultaneously in different mosques of Kuwait, ensuring an inclusive and engaging experience for young attendees. At the end of each gathering, dinner packets were served, fostering a sense of community and togetherness.

IMA Kuwait extends its gratitude to the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, Kuwait, for their patronage and support in organizing these impactful events.

IMA Kuwait is an Indian socio-religious organization that operates under the patronage of the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Kuwait. IMA always focusses to provide platform for enhancement of expatriates living in Kuwait for their spiritual & social aspect through various programs & social gatherings. It looks forward for organizing various beneficial programs in future, considering the occasions and requirements of expatriates in general and specifically Indian community.

US consumer confidence jumps to highest level since early '22

The American consumer's confidence jumped in June to its highest level in 18 months as a strong labor market continues to buoy the U.S. economy. The Conference Board reported Tuesday that its consumer confidence index rose to 109.7 in June from 102.5 in May. That's the highest the reading has been since January of 2022 and much higher than economists had forecast.

The business research group's present situation index - which measures consumers' assessment of current business and labor market conditions - rose to 155.3 from 148.9 in May. The board's expectations index - a measure

of consumers' six-month outlook for income, business and labor conditions - climbed to 79.3 this month from 71.5 in May.

A reading under 80 often signals a recession in the coming year. The Conference Board noted that reading has come in below 80 every month but one since February of 2022.

The board said that consumers' fears of a recession declined in June, with 69.3% of respondents saying a recession is somewhat or very likely in the next 12 months, down from 73.2% in May.

Consumer spending, which makes up about 70% of U.S. economic activity, has held up well

despite the Federal Reserve raising interest rates in its effort to cool the economy and bring down persistent, four-decade high inflation. At its last meeting, the Fed elected not to increase its benchmark borrowing rate after raising it 10 straight times over 15 months.

Last month, the government reported that consumer spending jumped 0.8% from March to April, the biggest increase since January. Much of the increase was driven by spending on new cars, which soared 6.2%. The latest consumer spending report, which includes an important measure of inflation that the Fed monitors closely, comes out Friday. (AP)



Shirts sit stacked on a sales table at a Costco warehouse Thursday, June 22, 2023, in Colorado Springs, Colo. On Tuesday, the Conference Board reports on U.S. consumer confidence for June. (AP)

Market Movements

03-07-2023

Change Closing pts

	Change	Closing pts
UAE - DFM	+2.28	3,878.52
JAPAN - Nikkei	+1.70	33,753.33
PAKISTAN - KSE 100	+6.24	43,903.29
PHILIPPINES - PSEI	+0.64	6,508.21
SAUDI - Tadawul	+0.45	11,545.13
EGYPT - EGX 30	+2.18	17,665.29

Business

S&P GCC composite index up by 3.1% in June

GCC and global markets were positive on account of Fed pausing interest rate hike

KUWAIT CITY, July 3: Kuwait Financial Centre "Markaz" released its Monthly Market Review report for the month of June 2023. Kuwait's All Share Index witnessed an increase in June, posting a monthly gain of 3.4%. Among Boursa Kuwait's sectoral indices, the Consumer staples sector gained the most at 22.3%, while the Technology sector lost 2.1% for the month. Among Premier Market stocks, Mezzan Holding Co and Heavy Engineering Industries and Shipbuilding Co (HEISCO) gained the most for the month, rising by 25.4% and 17.7% respectively. Boubyan Petrochemical Co fell by 7.5% and the Commercial Real Estate Co fell by 2.5% during the month.

Kuwait consumer price inflation (CPI) rose by 3.69% y-o-y and 0.15% m-o-m in May primarily driven by the increase in Food & Beverage and Clothing & Footwear segment. Kuwait's credit growth has slowed down, falling from 7.7% in December 2022 to 2.7% in May 2023 on y-o-y basis. Retail credit growth fell to 5.3% y-o-y during the month. Moody's Investor Service maintained a positive outlook on Kuwait's banking sector and expects the growth of bank credit to be 3% in 2023, supported by government's planned spending on new infrastructure projects.

Regionally, GCC Markets have been positive, with S&P GCC composite index up 3.1% for the month. All equity indices, except Qatar and Bahrain, ended positive for the month. Dubai and Saudi Arabia equity indices gained 6.0% and 4.0% respectively for the month followed by Abu Dhabi at 1.5%. Emirates NBD and Emaar properties were the top gainers among the blue chips in Dubai, rising by 8.8% and 4.2%

during the month. Emaar properties' gains were driven by S&P's rating upgrade of Emaar properties to 'BBB' from 'BBB-'. In Saudi Arabia, Banque Saudi Fransi stock gained by 4.8% while the ACWA Power Co jumped by 11.8% on account of its share repurchase. Qatar and Bahrain equity indices decreased by 0.8% and 0.3% over the month, respectively.

Developed markets' performance was positive in June with the MSCI World index and S&P 500 indices gaining 5.9% and 6.5% respectively. Investor's confidence in the global markets was reassured when the federal debt limit in the United States was suspended till 2025 and the Federal Reserve paused its interest rate hike. U.S. consumer price inflation (CPI) slowed to 4% y-o-y in May, down from 4.9% y-o-y in April. Inflation has been cooling down consistently for eleven straight months. The U.S. core personal consumption expenditures (PCE) price index increased 0.1% in May, but down from 0.4% gain in April. However, the Federal Reserve anticipates two further rate hikes of 25 bps each before the end of 2023. The European Central Bank (ECB) raised its policy rate by 25 bps during the month to 3.5%, touching a 22-year high and is expected to further hike the rates in the next two monthly meetings. CPI in the Eurozone eased in June to 5.5% y-o-y from 6.1% y-o-y in the previous month, according to Eurostat. Nonetheless, the core CPI (excluding energy and food) rose 5.4% y-o-y in June, up from 5.3% in May. On an unexpected note, the Bank of England (BoE) also raised its interest rate by 50 bps to 5%, the highest since 2008. The U.K.'s CPI remained unchanged at 8.7% y-o-y in May compared to

April 2023, still well above the 2% target of the Central Bank. The Hamburg Commercial Bank (HCOB) Eurozone Composite PMI, published by S&P, decelerated to a five-month low of 50.3 in June, down from 52.8 in May. The MSCI EM index gained 3.2% during the month.

Oil prices traded within a narrow range during the month and settled at USD 74.9 per barrel, a monthly gain of 3.1%. The spurt in oil prices at the end of June was triggered by a higher-than-expected decline in U.S. crude storage, indicating an increase in U.S. demand. Earlier this month, OPEC+ announced that its supply cuts of 3.66 million barrels per day (mbpd) will be continued till the year end of 2023 while it has agreed to further reduce the supply cuts by 1.4 mbpd from 2024 onwards. Saudi Arabia will be voluntarily reducing oil production by 1 million barrels per day (bpd) with effect from July 2023. Gold prices fell 2.2% in June to 1,919.6 \$/oz due to the hawkish stance of the Federal Reserve.

Investor sentiment in the upcoming month is expected to remain cautious despite the Fed pausing rate hikes as widely anticipated. Indications from the Fed indicate that we have not reached terminal rates yet, with a pivot in 2023 remaining highly unlikely. However, the gradual cooldown in U.S. inflation remains a positive sign. OPEC+ and Saudi Arabia have shown their intent to balance oil supply depending on demand to ensure a floor for oil prices at around the USD 70/bbl. mark for the rest of 2023. Stability in oil prices is expected to bode well for GCC equity markets, which are expected to remain resilient in the near term.

After a raucous 1st half of 2023, WS is still wondering if recession is in the cards

NEW YORK, July 3, (AP): Halfway into 2023, little on Wall Street has gone according to plan.

Earlier this year, many investors thought the U.S. economy would be falling into a recession by now, the Federal Reserve would have to start cutting interest rates and a strong economic recovery for China would provide a cushion for the global economy.

None of those things has happened. In the meantime, the U.S. stock market has rallied roughly 14% to touch its highest level since April 2022.

As Wall Street looks toward the back half of 2023 and beyond, it's stuck in a sort of purgatory. Many investors are still preparing for an upcoming recession, but they keep pushing out their predictions by another few months. Until more clarity arrives on whether a downturn will indeed arrive, markets could be in for a shaky path.

Here's a look at the arguments for the upside and downside:

Stocks can keep going
Despite piles of predictions for a recession, the U.S. economy keeps chugging along. The job market has remained remarkably solid, helping consumers feel confident and willing to spend. That's offset weakness in such industries as banking and manufacturing caused by high interest rates.

The Federal Reserve has hiked interest rates at a blistering pace to slow the economy in order to undercut high inflation. But the end of those hikes appears to be nearing as inflation has slowed since last summer. The Fed has suggested only one or two more increases may be on the way this year.

An economy that avoids a recession would support corporate profits, which are the lifeblood of the stock market. It could also broaden out the market's gains.

A big concern this year has been how much of the S&P 500's rise is tied to a handful of big stocks, particularly those benefiting from the artificial-intelligence boom. So far this year, the biggest 15 companies in the S&P 500 have gone up 34%, while the median company is up just 1%, according to Goldman Sachs.

Some broadening out may have already begun, with the smallest stocks in the Russell 2000 index up more than the S&P 500 through the first four weeks of June.

Plus, more money is sitting on the sidelines in cash that could get invested, which offers potential fuel for the stock market. Nearly \$2 trillion is in retail money-market funds held by the general public, not including \$3.44

trillion more held by institutions. That's up 11% in just four months, according to the Investment Company Institute.

Stocks are in trouble
Yes, the economy has avoided a recession because of a strong job market. But that's often one of the last things to crack under the pressure of higher rates.

A pattern usually occurs in such cycles: In the last nine rate-hike campaigns by the Fed, seven have resulted in a recession, according to Darrell Cronk, president of Wells Fargo Investment Institute. He's still expecting a downturn to hit in the second half of 2023 or early 2024, even if it's "the most predicted and longest anticipated recession in recent memory."

Even if the Fed soon stops hiking rates, it has pledged to keep them high to drive inflation down to its 2% goal. That could take a while with inflation still 4% last month, as measured by the consumer price index, and it's hard for investors to predict what might break if rates remain high for a long period of time.

The Fed has pulled its benchmark rate up by a mammoth 5 percentage points from virtually zero at the start of last year, which has already helped cause several U.S. bank failures.

"There is a path higher for stocks, but it is a narrow one and comes with risks: Economic growth can neither be so strong as to force the Federal Reserve into further hikes, nor so weak as to drive fears of a recession," according to strategists at UBS.

If the Fed can't manage its narrow path, a recession could pull profits sharply lower. That would hit stocks doubly hard because critics say they already look pricey compared with how much profit companies are producing.

A drop in profits is one reason Morgan Stanley Wealth Management says the S&P 500 could be lower in mid 2024 than it is now in its base case scenario.

Either way, at least yields are higher

Whether stocks go up or down, investors can take some solace in that bonds are paying more in interest than a year ago.

That could provide more income and more protection for those who hold a mixed set of stocks and bonds in their portfolios, as many experts recommend. A 10-year Treasury recently offered a yield of 3.76%, up from roughly 1.50% at the start of last year.

Wall St 'drifts' higher ahead of July 4th holiday in the US

Asian shares rise on optimism over Wall Street rally

NEW YORK, July 3, (AP): Stocks drifted higher Monday as momentum slowed on Wall Street following a powerful rally to start the year. The S&P 500 edged up 0.1%, rising to its highest level since April 2022. The Dow rose less than 0.1%. The Nasdaq composite rose 0.2%. Tesla rose after it said the number of vehicles it delivered during the spring surged from a year earlier. Much of the rest of the market was quieter. The U.S. stock market closed at 1:00 p.m. Eastern time and will remain shut Tuesday in observance of Independence Day.

The S&P 500 was virtually unchanged in midday trading, hanging close to its highest level since April 2022. The Dow Jones Industrial Average was up 9 points, or less than 0.1%, at 34,416, as of 11:10 a.m. Eastern time, while the Nasdaq composite was basically flat.

Tesla was one of the stronger stocks in the market, rising 7.4%. The company said over the weekend that the number of vehicles it delivered during the spring surged by 83% from a year earlier. That was more than analysts expected, though cuts to prices may have driven some of the gains. Investors will see how much the discounts hit profits when Tesla reports its earnings on July 19.

Rivian, another electric-vehicle company, jumped 14.3% after it also said its deliveries for the spring topped analysts' expectations.

On the losing end of Wall Street was Apple, which slipped 1% after becoming the first U.S. stock to finish a trading day with a total value of more than \$3 trillion.

Much of the rest of the market was relatively quiet following a rally where the S&P 500 climbed in six of the last seven weeks to send the index up nearly



A pedestrian passes by the Hong Kong Stock Exchange electronic screen in Hong Kong, Monday, July 3, 2023. Asian shares were mostly higher Monday after a rally on Wall Street driven by reports that showed inflation abating, assuaging fears over the threat of a recession. (AP)

16% for the first half of the year.

Trading in the U.S. stock market will end at 1 p.m. Eastern time and remain closed Tuesday in observance of Independence Day.

The market's gains so far this year have come as the U.S. economy has defied many predictions for a recession. The job market in particular has remained solid despite much higher interest rates meant to undercut inflation.

One area of the economy that has faltered is manufacturing, and a report on Monday showed it contracted in June for an eighth straight month. The reading from the Institute for Supply Management was worse than economists expected.

"Manufacturing is stuck in the mud and it looks like more rain is coming," said Brian Jacobsen, chief economist at Annex Wealth Management. "The only solace in the ISM report was that inflationary pressures are absent, but that's little comfort when earnings continue to be at risk."

Traders nevertheless hope that strength in other areas of the economy will keep it out of a recession, which would support corporate profits. A report later this week will go a long way toward underscoring or weakening that argument.

On Friday, the U.S. government

will report its latest monthly update on hiring across the economy, as well as how much wages are rising for workers. It's one of the last big pieces of data left before the Federal Reserve meets next on interest rate policy.

The Fed has already hiked rates by a mammoth 5 percentage points from virtually zero early last year in hopes of getting inflation under control. But it's hinted that it may be nearing the end of the increases, which would mean less added pressure on the economy and financial markets. Much of Wall Street expects it to raise rates on July 26.

The hope among traders is that will be the Fed's final increase of the cycle. The Fed, meanwhile, has hinted that it could perhaps raise rates twice more this year.

Other than Friday's jobs report, the other big piece of data that could change the Fed's thinking before its next meeting are likely the latest updates on monthly inflation.

In the bond market, yields swung following the weaker-than-expected data on manufacturing. The yield on the 10-year Treasury recovered from an initial drop to remain steady at 3.84%. It helps set rates for mortgages and other important loans.

The two-year yield, which moves more on expectations for the Fed, also

pared losses to hold steady at 4.90%.

Europe

Germany's DAX added 0.3% to 16,187.06. In Paris, the CAC 40 edged up 0.1% to 7,406.82 and Britain's FTSE 100 rose 0.3% to 7,553.25.

Inflation in Europe slid again in June, with the annual rate at 5.5%, down from 6.1% in May in the 20 countries that use the euro currency, the European Union statistics agency Eurostat reported.

That's an improvement but not enough to offer much relief to shoppers grumbling over price tags or to stop more interest rate hikes that will raise the cost of borrowing across the economy.

Asia

Asian shares were mostly higher Monday after a rally on Wall Street driven by reports that showed inflation abating, alleviating fears over the threat of a recession.

Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 rose 1.7% to 33,753.33 in afternoon trading. Australia's S&P/ASX 200 added 0.6% to 7,248.10. South Korea's KOSPI jumped 1.4% to 2,599.62. Hong Kong's Hang Seng surged 2.1% to 19,305.10, while the Shanghai Composite gained 1.3% to 3,242.41.

"Asia gets the new half kicked off amid a growing sense of optimism, with low volatility buoying markets on the back of a surprisingly strong run of U.S. economic data, wiping the slate clean of recession concerns," Stephen Innes, managing partner at SPI Asset Management, said in a report.

The quarterly "tankan report" of business sentiment compiled by the Bank of Japan showed an improvement for the fifth consecutive quarter, from June last year, with the main indicator number rising by 3 points to plus 23.

Oil

In energy trading, benchmark U.S. crude fell 28 cents to \$70.36 a barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. Brent crude, the international standard, lost 25 cents to \$75.16 a barrel.

Currencies

In currency trading, the U.S. dollar rose to 144.70 Japanese yen from 144.30 yen. The euro cost \$1.0891, down from \$1.0924.

Tax credits, broader adoption drive sales

Tesla sales jump 83 percent from a year ago

Detroit, July 3, (AP): Tesla's second-quarter deliveries rose 83% from a year ago after the company cut prices several times on its four electric vehicle models and buyers took advantage of U.S. government tax credits.

The Austin, Texas, producer of EV, solar panels and batteries said Sunday

that it sold a record 466,140 vehicles worldwide from April through June, nearly doubling the 254,695 it sold during the same period a year earlier. The vast majority of the sales were Tesla's popular Model 3 and Model Y versions.

But the price cuts, both for special orders and on existing inventory, raised

questions from analysts who expect the cuts to reduce Tesla's profit margins when it announces second-quarter earnings on July 19.

Tesla's sales were better than Wall Street expectations. Analysts polled by data provider FactSet expected deliveries of 445,000 for the quarter.

The company produced 479,700 vehicles from April through June, about 13,000 more than it sold, indicating that inventories may be building. The second-quarter sales bring Tesla to nearly 900,000 vehicles for the first half of this year. The company sold 422,875 vehicles from January through March.



A NYSE sign is seen on the floor at the New York Stock Exchange in New York, Wednesday, June 15, 2022. Wall Street's performance in the second half of 2023 will likely depend on whether the economy falls into a recession. (AP)

BUSINESS



Unsold 2023 Gladiator pickup trucks sit in a long row at a Jeep dealership Sunday, June 18, 2023, in Englewood, Colo. On Thursday, the Commerce Department issues its third and final estimate of how the U.S. economy performed in the first quarter of 2023. (AP)

US economic growth last quarter revised up sharply

Showing surprising resilience in the face of higher interest rates, the U.S. economy grew at a 2% annual pace from January through March as consumers spent at the fastest pace in nearly two years.

Thursday's revised figure from the Commerce Department sharply upgraded its assessment of first-quarter growth from its previous estimate of a 1.3% annual rate.

Despite the uptick, the government's third and final report on January-March economic growth still marked a deceleration from the 2.6% annual rate from October through December and the 3.2% growth from July through September. The economy has been slowed by the Federal Reserve's aggressive drive to tame inflation through a series of interest rate hikes beginning early last year.

Yet Thursday's report on the nation's gross domestic product - the total output of goods and services - showed why the economy has so far managed to defy expectations of a coming recession: Consumers continue to spend despite ever-

rising borrowing costs. Their spending, which fuels about 70% of the economy, rose at a 4.2% annual rate in the January-March quarter, the most since April-June 2021.

A surge in petroleum and other exports also contributed to the upgraded estimate of growth during the first quarter. The economy managed to expand at a decent pace even though a cutback in business inventories shaved 2.1 percentage points off the quarter's growth rate. (AP)

Agreement seen as sign of warming ties

Finance ministers of Japan, S. Korea agree to resume currency swap deal

TOKYO, July 3, (AP) - Japan and South Korea agreed Thursday to revive a currency swap agreement for times of crisis, in the latest sign of warming ties as the countries work to smooth over historical antagonisms.

Japanese Finance Minister Shunichi Suzuki announced the agreement after meeting with his South Korean counterpart, Choo Kyungho. It was the first time the two countries have held annual financial talks in seven years, though Suzuki and Choo also met in South Korea in May.

Suzuki told reporters that the 3-year currency swap agreement would help reinforce trust in the financial stability of the two countries as a fallback in an emergency. But he emphasized that Japan is fully prepared to deal with fluctuations in the Japanese yen, which has weakened sharply against the U.S. dollar in the past year.

The \$10 billion swap arrangement expired in 2015 and had not been renewed. Largely symbolic, it allows the South Korean and Japanese central banks to exchange currencies for each country's reserves of U.S. dollars to provide extra liquidity, or cash supplies, in case of a crisis.

The two major Asian economies, both U.S. allies, have recently mended ties as they contend with challenges posed by China and North Korea, despite tensions over issues left over from Japan's 35-year occupation of the Korean Peninsula before and during World War II.

From July 21, Japan plans to reinstate South Korea as a preferred nation with fast-track trade status. That will essentially end a four-year trade dispute that began in 2019 when Japan removed South Korea from its "white list" of countries given fast-track approvals in trade as ties deteriorated over



In this photo provided by Japan's Finance Ministry, Japanese Finance Minister Shunichi Suzuki, (left), and South Korea's Economy and Finance Minister Choo Kyungho shake hands as they pose for a photo before their meeting at the finance ministry in Tokyo, Thursday, June 29, 2023. (AP)

compensation for Japanese wartime actions.

Japan's tightening of trade controls against Seoul was in apparent retaliation for South Korean court rulings in 2018 that ordered Japanese companies to compensate Korean workers for abusive treatment and forced labor during World War II.

Japan also tightened export controls on key chemicals used by South Korean companies to make semiconductors and displays, prompting South Korea to file a complaint with the World Trade Organization and remove Japan from its own list of countries with preferred trade status.

South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida met in March in the first formal summit between the two countries since 2015.

Japan colonized the Korean Peninsula between 1910 and 1945, imposing Japanese names and language on Koreans and conscripting many into forced labor or prostitution in military brothels before and during World War II. Japan gave \$800 million to South Korea's then-military-backed government under a 1965 accord to normalize relations which was mainly used on economic development projects driven by major South Korean companies. A semi-government fund set up by Tokyo offered compensation to former "comfort women" when the government apologized in 1995, but many South Koreans believe the Japanese government should take more direct responsibility for the occupation.

The two sides also have a longstanding territorial dispute over a group of islands controlled by South Korea but claimed by Japan.

Biden eager to run for re-election on the economy – 'Bidenomics'

Voters have their doubts

WASHINGTON, July 3, (AP) - President Joe Biden is eager to take full political ownership of the U.S. economy - a reflection of the White House belief that inflation is fading, job growth is solid and voters need to know about it.

But polling has consistently shown the economy to be a weak spot for Biden's reelection hopes. Just 33% approve of his leadership on the issue, according to a May survey by the Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs.

For much of his presidency, Biden has blamed high gasoline prices, painfully rising food costs and other cost-of-living expenses on the pandemic and the war in Ukraine. He said those two factors were beyond his control as inflation hit a 40-year high last summer and crushed the his approval ratings.

In a Chicago speech on Wednesday, Biden will begin a new effort to actively convince a worried public that the U.S. economy is not heading for recession but actually thriving because of his leadership. For him, there's a happy confluence of the coming 2024 reelection campaign and a favorable turn in recent economic data, leading the White House to believe that public messaging about "Bidenomics" will help to rally Democratic voters going into next year.

The message is not a new one, though the White House believes it bears repeating so that it soaks in. White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said at Monday's news briefing that the president's upcoming remarks would be a "cornerstone" speech and part of a larger administration-wide effort.

"It's a vision about growing the economy from the middle out and the bottom up - you hear us say that over and over again, because we believe that trickle-down economics does not work," Jean-Pierre said. "We have the data to prove it."

Indeed, the rate of inflation has fallen over the past year while the job market has remained solid, a combination that seemed unlikely to many economic analysts who expected efforts to bring down inflation would cause layoffs and a recession. Goldman Sachs has put the odds of a recession in the next 12 months at 25%, down from its previous estimate of 35%.

Consumer prices rose at an annual pace of 4% in May, down from 9.1% last June. That's still higher than the Federal Reserve's 2% target, indicating that inflation remains a challenge. But employers added a robust 339,000 jobs last month in a sign that the economy appears poised to keep growing. And the inflation-adjusted annual increase in what people earn each hour turned positive in May, one of the main indicators that White House officials had been looking at for proof the economy was helping workers.

Biden's GOP rivals have said that the president has broken the U.S. economy. They've tip-toed around the healthy 3.7% unemployment rate and focused instead on prices at the gas pump, grocery bills, the debt tied to Biden's \$1.9 trillion in pandemic relief and the administration's focus on shifting away from fossil fuels in order to combat climate change.

"I will stop Joe Biden's inflation nightmare, save the U.S. economy,"



Participants in the 'Arise' event

Need to see business turnaround

KPMG Kuwait concludes 'Arise' event

KUWAIT CITY, July 3: KPMG in Kuwait successfully conducted its event 'Arise - Turnaround and Restructuring in turbulent times' at the Four Seasons Hotel, Kuwait. The hybrid event aimed to unite organizations and experts alike to facilitate open discussions around turnaround and restructuring strategies, preventing and/or overcoming insolvency, and stakeholder management.

Opening the event, Dr. Rasheed Al-Qenae, Managing Partner, KPMG in Kuwait, said, "Recent times have been challenging and turning around your business under such circumstances can be overwhelming. Kuwait may have recovered from the pandemic-led economic slowdown but concerns related to global inflation, supply chain challenges and shortage of skilled talent continue to loom in the market."

Through this event, we wanted to bring together experienced professionals and provide a platform to have conversations on how turnaround strategies can be developed and evaluated, the practical aspects related to Kuwait's Bankruptcy Law, and how banks and corporates can work together in situations of financial distress. I am hopeful that this event will offer organizations in Kuwait a holistic view

of how they can overcome said barriers when faced with a crisis and achieve tangible growth."

The event was kickstarted by Bruce Matthews, Partner - Deal Advisory, KPMG Lower Gulf, and Head of KPMG's Turnaround and Restructuring Practice in the region. Bruce addressed the audience on how they can achieve a business turnaround and highlighted that while turnaround and restructuring strategies are paramount for the restoration of an underperforming business, they are not seen in a positive light as should be the case, especially considering that such strategies can prove to be impactful for stable businesses too.

Bruce was later joined by Imran Shaik, Director - Deal Advisory, KPMG in Kuwait. The duo engaged in a dialog on how organizations can evaluate their business ecosystem, assess their current state, prioritize the pain points and arrive at the necessary considerations based on that.

Commenting on the session, Imran said, "The environment in which businesses operate is becoming increasingly complex and volatile. Rapidly evolving technologies, unstable geopolitical climate and changing regulatory policies as well as factors such as strategy,

processes and people issues can create business disruption. When a company finds its performance deteriorating from a growth, profitability, liquidity or solvency perspective, it needs to carry out a rapid diagnostic assessment to identify the root causes and accordingly develop a turnaround plan to revive the business and work toward its long-term sustainability."

In the following session, Tarek Yehya, Partner - Meysan Partners, elucidated concerns pertaining to the Bankruptcy Law in Kuwait and presented some of the key protections and procedures necessary for organizations in the event of financial distress. Tarek emphasized that as uncertainty becomes more foreseeable, it is important for organizations to familiarize themselves with Kuwait's insolvency structure and educate themselves on the nitty-gritty of the Bankruptcy Law.

The highlight of the event was a panel discussion among Abdullah Al-Shatti, Chief Executive Officer of A'ayan Leasing and Investment, Sunny Bhatia, Group Chief Financial Officer of KIPCO Group, Mahmood Helal, Deputy General Manager for Credit Risk at Kuwait Finance House, and Bruce Matthews from KPMG.

better than the president himself does.

Biden aides see 'Bidenomics' as an expansive framing to a host of the president's policies for easy public consumption, tying together a diverse set of initiatives meant to boost the nation's global competitiveness with programs meant to strengthen the middle class at home.

The president is betting that targeted government investments can catapult the economy forward and help workers. During his first two years when Democrats controlled the House, Biden followed up on his pandemic relief by pushing through a bipartisan infrastructure building bill, funding for computer chip plants and tax breaks to encourage the use of renewable energy.

This approach goes back to Biden's own blue collar identity that surfaces in his speeches: the Scranton, Pennsylvania kid whose family at times just eked by financially.



Biden

said former President Donald Trump, the Republican frontrunner, in a speech to evangelical Christians last weekend.

"You would think that with these economic problems with inflation, you may want to tap into more domestic energy," Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis said in an Iowa speech. "But no, Biden is deliberately trying to kneecap our energy production and he's trying to force Americans into electric vehicles, which will make us more reliant on China, who provides most of the materials for the batteries."

Part of Biden's challenge is that confidence in his economic leadership has waned. In March 2021 just after his round of pandemic relief became law, 60% of U.S. adults approved of how the president was handling the economy, according to an AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs poll. Since then, that figure has essentially halved.

Still, there are signs that people's views of the economy are improving. The University of Michigan's survey of consumer sentiment showed that Democrats, Republicans and unaffiliated voters generally feel better

Travel-tech company raises \$33m

Growth for growth: utu 'expansion' to harness booming Mideast Travel

DUBAI, UAE, July 3, (PR Newswire) - utu, a travel technology company transforming the customer experience in tax-free shopping, has closed a deal of US\$33 million in combined transaction value. The deal, comprising of an acquisition and a funding round, consists of both a portion of new funding, with SC Ventures participating, and the roll-over of earlier funding from Singapore-based investors, marking a major milestone in scaling up the brand's endeavours to transform tax-free shopping experiences worldwide. Using the Covid hiatus to establish key partnerships with global airlines such as Emirates, Etihad Airways and Qatar Airways, along with hotel chains and retail brands, utu will use the funds to further expand rewards opportunities for tax-free shopping.

In May 2023, the UN World Tourism Organisation published data showing that the Middle East was the first region in the world to reach and exceed pre-pandemic travel levels during Q1 of 2023, surpassing 2019 figures by 15%. With growth of internal resources to meet this external growth in the region and beyond, utu, co-founded by travel retail and VAT refund veteran Asad Jumabhoy, is poised to disrupt the travel shopping industry by re-engineering the tax refund process, reaching more travellers.

Re-engineering tax-free shopping with Middle East rewards partners

Rather than competing with existing players, utu collaborates with refund and travel industry partners, enhancing refund value through innovative B2B and B2C solutions. With a re-engineered approach that links payments, rewards, and shopping, utu introduces new value for tourist shoppers, retailers, VAT refund operators and the entire tax-free shopping value chain.

In the Middle East, this value chain extends to major airlines, specifically their frequent flyer programs. With Emirates Skywards, Etihad Guest, and the Qatar Airways Privilege Club as rewards partners, utu allows users to earn miles with VAT refunds with increased value and to choose among several top

regional carriers' rewards programs. It also partners with Accor, Europe's largest hospitality brand.

Asad Jumabhoy, co-founder and CEO of utu, commented: "The cross-border travel market is ripe for a technology-driven transformation, with tax-free shopping presenting vast untapped potential. By enhancing the value of VAT and GST refunds for travellers, we've reimagined the cross-border retail experience and devised a technology-based business model unlocking previously inaccessible value. This strategy benefits all stakeholders while also enabling governments to compliantly recycle VAT refunds within their borders."

In re-engineering the refund process, utu offers users two primary value-centric benefits when they opt to receive tax refunds via their utu Tax Free Card. Firstly, travellers can gain up to 40% more value by opting for frequent flyer miles or hotel points over cash refunds. Secondly, utu can issue an immediate store voucher equivalent to up to 120% of the VAT or GST paid during overseas shopping.

Accelerating availability of utu worldwide

The CardsPal acquisition equips utu with a digital marketplace, a unique promotions engine, a self-service merchant registration portal, and more. This technology will expedite utu's rollout in major tax-free shopping markets like the UAE alongside some 50 countries offering VAT and GST refunds. Additionally, utu is developing plans to integrate CardsPal's hyper-localised retail experience into an improved pay-with-points offer more value.

Gautam Jain, Member, at SC Ventures said: "CardsPal is a great example of why we at SC Ventures believe in the power of innovation and support our employees to have transformational impact. Through SC Ventures' Intrapreneurship Program, CardsPal grew to become a substantial business with award winning UX. We look forward to utu's continued success scaling its products across the globe using CardsPal's technology."

Synopsis, Golden Electronics collaborate

SUNNYVALE, Calif./AMMAN, Jordan, July 3, (PR Newswire) - Synopsis, Inc. (Nasdaq: SNPS) and Golden Electronics, an IC development services company based in Amman, are collaborating to increase the number of industry-ready chip design engineers in Jordan. The collaboration is in the form of a very large-scale integration (VLSI) talent acceleration initiative built on Golden Electronics' acquisition of multiple licenses for Synopsis' leading electronic design automation (EDA) software, educational design kits and microelectronics curriculum.

Lack of access to industry-grade design tools for microelectronic design is a common issue facing university students and recent engineering graduates in Jordan. This drew the attention of Synopsis Academic & Research Alliances (SARA), a team dedicated to bridging academia and industry to build the next generation of semiconductor design talent. The resultant collaboration with Golden Electronics enables it to build a pipeline of skilled engineers, helping the company expand its engineering base in Jordan by engaging university students and recent engineering graduates, and upgrading their microelectronics design skills.

"There is incredible worldwide demand for skilled engineers capable of developing state-of-the-art integrated circuits (ICs), and Synopsis has a track record of fostering talent development in emerging technology centers," said Robert Li, sales vice president of Synopsis Taiwan and South

Asia. "The opportunity to work with Golden Electronics is an exact fit with our talent and ecosystem nurture strategy and we expect to see them making major progress in increasing the pool of skilled microelectronics engineers in Jordan."

"Golden Electronics is at the forefront of IC development in Jordan," said Khaldoon Abugharbieh, CEO of Golden Electronics. "We welcome this key initiative with an industry leader like Synopsis. It provides Golden Electronics with Synopsis industry-grade tools and vital access to the company's educational design kits and microelectronics curriculum. The combination of technology and teaching materials will allow us to extend our outreach across Jordanian universities and upgrade the skills of engineering students and graduates. As Golden Electronics prepares to scale up, a robust pipeline of skilled microelectronics engineers is key."

About Golden Electronics Founded in 2012, Golden Electronics is the premier company in Jordan that specializes in IC design services. Leveraging the experience and discipline of a team of top-notch engineers, the company has built a track record of flawless execution and on-time delivery of high-quality IP. For more information, please visit the Golden Electronics website at <https://golden-electronics.com>.

About Synopsis Synopsis, Inc. (Nasdaq: SNPS) is the Silicon to Software™ partner for innovative companies developing the electronic products and software applications we rely on every day.

AAW opens its 14th INTERSPORT Store in Al Andalus Mall

Ali Abdulwahab Al Mutawa Commercial Co (AAW) celebrated the grand opening of its 14th "INTERSPORT" store in Kuwait, located in the newly launched Al Andalus Mall in Hawally. The ceremony took place on May 31, 2023, and was attended by INTERSPORT's CEO, Mr Steve Evers, as well as AAW's Management team, including Mr Faisal Al Mutawa, and Mr Khalid Faisal Al Mutawa.

Spanning over 810 sqm, the brand-new two-level store offers an extensive range of athletic footwear, apparel, and accessories, catering to various sports categories including running,

training, football, swimming, racket sports, and more. Additionally, the store includes dedicated sections for lifestyle products, children's items, and the customization of football sports jerseys.

INTERSPORT made its debut in Kuwait in 2015. Since then, the brand has established a strong reputation in the sports sector by providing exceptional and high-quality products, catering to both professionals and amateurs customers.

INTERSPORT currently operates 14 stores strategically located across Kuwait. The store

locations include Murouj, The Avenues, Al Bairaqa Mall, Rafa Nadal Academy, Sultan Salmiya, Manara Mall, The Assima Mall, Al Tital Complex, Bnaider (Road 264), Souq Sharq, The Walk Mall, Al Andalus Mall in Hawally, SVN Beach Resort, and the newly opened Al Khiran Mall. Additionally, INTERSPORT offers an online store accessible through www.intersport.com.kw. The newly launched Al Andalus store is open seven days a week, from 10:00 AM to 11:00 PM.

Al Andalus Mall in Hawally is a recently developed mixed-use project in Kuwait.



A photo of the ribbon cutting ceremony of 14th INTERSPORT Store opening in Al Andalus Mall.

Investing in employees is one of KIB's top priorities: Al Darmi

KIB celebrates graduating employees at IBS ceremony

KUWAIT CITY, July 3: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) celebrated the graduation of another group of employees who successfully completed the accredited programs from the London Institute of Banking and Finance (LlBF), in partnership with the Institute of Banking Studies (IBS).

The completed programs covered numerous fields, including credit management, advanced credit management, branch management, assistance branch management, risk management, and investment basics. KIB's graduates were celebrated at the ceremony organized by the Institute for the 2021/2022 class after having obtained their accredited certificates.

Congratulating the Bank's graduates, General Manager of Human Resources at KIB Feras Al Darmi said: "We are very proud of our employees who successfully completed these professional training courses. This indicates an advanced level of achievement and high potential for further development and progress. Our graduates are a true embodiment of KIB's core values of excellence and commitment, and we appreciate their trust in the Bank as a provider of modern career development opportunities."



A photo of KIB's new IBS graduates with bank officials.

Al Darmi further added: "We at KIB believe that investing in employees is one of the Bank's top priorities and strategies, aiming to meet the

current and future needs of a trained workforce that holds advanced professional certificates in the various fields of banking. To this end, we

look forward to a bright future for our employees who are promising. We are confident that they will continue taking leadership in developing their

skills and obtaining other certificates required to succeed in their careers and, in turn, enrich the banking business. Indeed, this is part of our strat-

egy to build future leaders." The HR General Manager emphasized KIB's ability to expand and grow, depending mainly on highly qualified manpower, which is what the Bank seeks to achieve by doing its best to maintain its high professional level and good reputation through training, developing and motivating its employees continuously.

KIB's developments and achievements in recent years, Al Darmi pointed out, stem from its belief in Kuwaiti skills, which is considered the main pillar in everything the Bank has achieved. He emphasized KIB's constant commitment to training a new generation of bank leaders and qualifying them to enter the labor market with confidence and strength. He also praised the Institute of Banking Studies' prominent role in qualifying Kuwaiti youth capabilities by providing the banking sector with the training required to fill positions with professional and proficient employees.

Concluding his remarks, Al Darmi extended his thanks to the Institute's Director General Rana Al-Nibari and its team for organizing the celebration and expressed his appreciation for the effort to provide training support to the banking sector.



Al Mulla Automobiles awarded the 'Best Customer Retention Growth'.

'Best Customer Retention Growth'

Al Mulla Automobiles honored at 2022 Mercedes-Benz awards

KUWAIT CITY, July 3: Al Mulla Automobiles, a member of Al Mulla Group and the sole authorized distributor of Mercedes-Benz in Kuwait, has been recently awarded the 'Best Customer Retention Growth' in the 2022 Mercedes-Benz Overseas General Distributor Awards for its outstanding efforts and achievements resulting in high customer retention year on year. The award ceremony, held in Oslo, Norway, included Mercedes-Benz general distributor network across the Middle East, Africa and Central Eastern Europe.

This award is another indication of Al Mulla Automobiles' vision to achieve a leading position in the automotive industry in Kuwait as well as to becoming the benchmark Mercedes-Benz distributor in the region.

Commenting on the award, Mr. Steve Brown, Director, Al Mulla Automobiles- Mercedes-Benz Kuwait, stated: "On behalf of all our Aftersales team and associates at Al Mulla Automobiles we are delighted to receive the 'Best Customer Retention Growth' award. This is a testament to our team's dedication, outstanding effort and performance. In addition to their commitment to consistently deliver the highest satisfaction and quality of workmanship while providing our renowned best-in-class service to our clients and customers. We look forward to continuing to strive to enhance our

overall performance and customer experience."

Mr. Rouven Klein, General Manager, Aftersales Development at Al Mulla Automobiles- Mercedes-Benz Kuwait, stated: "We are delighted to receive this valuable regional and international recognition for the performance of our team. This was only made possible thanks to the contributions and dedication of all our employees, operational units and management. To receive the 'Best Customer Retention Growth' across all General Distributor markets in the Middle East, Africa and Central Eastern Europe is a great recognition of the efforts of our team in the Al Mulla Automobiles Aftersales department."

This is a continuation of the award-winning achievements by Al Mulla Automobiles. In 2019, the company was awarded 1st prize in the 2019 Mercedes-Benz General Distributor 'Awards for passenger vehicles'. Also, in 2021, the company was awarded 'Best People Development Award' for its dedication to employee training and development.

For the latest news related to Mercedes-Benz Kuwait passenger cars and vehicles, please call or WhatsApp our Customer Service on 1-887-888, follow us on Instagram @mercedesbenzkuwait or visit our website at www.mercedes-benz-mena.com/kuwait.

each of whom received 1,000 Kuwaiti dinars. The Winners are: Mr. Saqer Adel Ali Al-Osami, Mr. Ahmed Khalil Ibrahim Al-Khulafi, Mr. Majid Saud Nasser Al-Husseini, Mr. Misfer Ibrahim Al-Ajmi, Ms. Malak



Al Mutawa

Bader Faisal Al-Awadhi, Mr. Mohammad Saad Jazaa Al-Rajhi, Mr. Khaled Mutlaq Ali Al-Otaibi, and Mr. Mishaal Mubarak Dakhil Al-Rashidi, Ms. Fatima Abdi Biniya Al-Orf, and Mr. Abdullmohsen Ghazi Al-Mutairi.

Meanwhile, the Sunbula account is the perfect choice for all those who wish to save money and achieve great financial returns on their balances at the same time; in addition to multiple opportunities to win cash prizes throughout the year.

With regards to the conditions for

Bank ensures quality, continuity and security

AUB receives its 'ISO 9001:2015' certification for IT infrastructure

KUWAIT CITY, July 3: Ahli United Bank (AUB) announced the renewal of its prestigious ISO 9001:2015 certification for Information Technology Infrastructure for the second year in a row. This achievement reaffirms the bank's leadership and excellence in the field of Information technology, demonstrating its ability to adhere to the highest standards of IT services to ensure quality, continuity, and security for all its banking operations and the services it provides to customers. The ISO 9001:2015 certification is an internationally recognized quality management standard, developed and published by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO).

On this occasion, Ms. Jehad Al-Humaidhi; Chief Executive Officer and Board Member of Ahli United Bank said, "The bank's attainment of this prestigious certification confirms that the advancement of banking technologies is a strategic priority. Information technology has become the backbone of banking operations and management in the current era. She emphasized that obtaining the ISO 9001:2015 certification for the second year in a row adds to the bank's achievements and underscores its success in implementing best practices in information technology. It also recognizes the bank's efforts in working within an advanced digital environment."

"We continue our efforts in the field of information technology aiming to apply the highest quality standards in the banking services and products we provide to our customers. Hence, I would like to express my gratitude to the Information Technology Department for their significant contributions and effective role in our attainment of this globally recognized certification", Al-Humaidhi added.

On his part, General Manager of Information Technology at AUB Mr. Abdullah Jaragh said: "Ahli United

Company presents gifts

Zain welcomes returning Hajj pilgrims

KUWAIT CITY, July 3: In a step to share the spiritual moments of these blessed days, Zain joined in welcoming returning pilgrims at Kuwait International Airport to congratulate them on their safe return from the holy Hajj journey. The initiative came in collaboration with the Directorate General of Civil Aviation and was attended by DGCA Operations Department Manager Mansour Al Hashemi.

Zain's team was present at the Arrivals Hall in Kuwait International Airport to share this special occasion with returning pilgrims and their families as soon as the first flights arrived from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The company presented gifts that were specially prepared for the pilgrims to congratulate them on completing their sacred duty, a step that sprung from Zain's social responsibility to join in celebrating the community's most joyful occasions.

Zain thanked the Civil Aviation team for supporting and facilitating this initiative, which enabled the company's team to interact with the returning pilgrims and their families with utmost ease. Zain also took this opportunity to express its gratitude to the DGCA and other government entities who exert tremendous efforts



Zain welcomes pilgrims 2023.

to serve travelers during the summer season, which witnesses heavy traffic at the airport, especially this year as it coincided with Hajj season.

Zain recently announced a new collaboration with the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs to present its annual complimentary roaming promotion for the Hajj season, where the company offered its top roaming plan for free to all postpaid and prepaid customers who were registered in Kuwait's certified Hajj campaigns. With this initiative, the company kept pilgrims in touch with their loved ones at no cost by allowing them to enjoy

internet and voice calls at Hajj locations in Saudi Arabia.

Zain presents this initiative every year to keep customers who travel to the Sacred House connected to each other and to their loved ones for free during Hajj season. The company continuously offers services that are tailored to match its customers' expectations and needs during their travels, and to keep them connected to their loved ones and businesses with more convenience and around the clock, especially during the most cherished occasions and seasons like Hajj.

Bank truly deserves this prestigious certification after undergoing a rigorous evaluation process conducted by an independent panel. This reiterates the bank's commitment to delivering high-quality work through a state-of-the-art technological infrastructure that effectively meets the requirements of its customers. It also reflects the bank's success in adopting and implementing the best international practices and standards, as well as its continuous pursuit of development to keep pace with the latest advance-

ments in information technology. These efforts significantly contribute to achieving the bank's goals and strategies with the highest levels of efficiency."

"The renewal of the ISO 9001:2015 certification is a testament to the continuous success of the bank's digitization agenda and its ongoing commitment to continuously enhance its applications and technological infrastructure. This reinforces our dedication to enhancing the speed, agility, and operational efficiency of our information technol-

ogy systems, as well as delivering the best digital innovations to customers", Jaragh emphasized.

Jaragh further added that within the continuous growth of the importance of information technology and reliance on its applications and infrastructure through accredited channels, AUB pursues its efforts to achieve its strategic goals in digital innovation. This is accomplished by adhering to the highest quality standards to provide our customers with exceptional service and user-friendly innovative products.

Bank supports youth projects

Warba Bank announces winners of Sunbula account weekly draw

KUWAIT CITY, July 3: Warba Bank - the best bank in banking services for the corporate sector and banking services for the investment sector in Kuwait - announced the winners of the weekly Sunbula draw. The Bank will continue to make weekly draws for 10 winners for the Sunbula account in the presence of a representative of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and Warba Bank employees.

As for the lucky customers for the weekly Sunbula draw, 10 winners were chosen from Warba Bank's customers,

winning the Sunbula, Mr. Ahmed M. Almutawa Area Manager Retail Banking Group states: "Only 100 KD is required to enter the weekly Sunbula draws and other major draws, whereby the customer still gets one chance per every 10 KD in the account, and the chances are calculated according to the lowest balance in the account during a month. Therefore, a full month must have passed in the account to qualify for the weekly draw, and two full months for the major draws to calculate the opportunities. There are no restrictions or

limits for withdrawal and deposit, the higher the deposited amount, the greater the customer's chances of winning".

Notably, Warba Bank launched its latest Customer Onboarding banking solution in accordance with the terms of its ambitious five-year strategy, this will enable non-Warba Bank customers to apply for opening an account in an easy digital way through the bank's website without the need to visit any of the bank's branches, and within only five minutes - through the new and unique automated system used to en-

able this service - new customers will be able to complete the request to open an account at any time and any place.

It is worth mentioning that Warba Bank has achieved remarkable success in a short period, pioneering Islamic digital banking services for individuals and prioritizing customer convenience. Alongside its social role and support for Kuwaiti youth projects, Warba Bank ranks among the top 50 banks in the Middle East in terms of market value for 2023, according to Forbes Middle East classification.

PharmaJet Tropis is now the exclusive intradermal delivery system for two novel Covid-19 vaccines in India. It has been used for millions of injections in multiple immunization campaigns worldwide.



Tropis intradermal delivery system authorized for 2 nucleic acid vaccines

PharmaJet®, a company engineering precision delivery systems that overcome challenges of nucleic acid vaccine delivery, has announced that its Tropis® System is now the exclusive intradermal delivery system for two authorized novel Covid-19 vaccines:

1. The previously announced world's first plasmid DNA Covid-19 vaccine for administration in humans from Zydus Lifesciences (ZyCoV-D), is exclusively delivered with Tropis based on pre-clinical and clinical study results that showed increased immune response of the vaccine translating into clinical

effectiveness of ZyCoV-D.

2. The world's first self-amplifying mRNA-based Omicron-specific Covid-19 booster vaccine from Gennova Biopharmaceuticals (GEMCOVAC-OM) to achieve emergency use authorization, allows a low dose of the first room temperature stable mRNA vaccine.

Tropis ID has already been used for millions of injections in multiple immunization campaigns worldwide. Data has repeatedly shown improved immunogenicity for nucleic acid vaccines and therapeutics compared to

needle and syringe and electroporation delivery. This improved immunogenicity translated into efficacy demonstrated for the DNA vaccine ZyCoV-D and to non-inferior immune response to COVISHIELD for the GEMCOVAC-OM samRNA vaccine.

Chris Cappello, President, and CEO, PharmaJet added, "This marks an important milestone for PharmaJet in that we now have two commercially available nucleic acid-based vaccines in India being exclusively delivered with the Tropis Precision Delivery System™." (AP)

Alarming levels of illicit cigs consumption in EU: KPMG

LAUSANNE, Switzerland, July 3: Philip Morris International Inc. (PMI) (NYSE: PM) warned about increasing rates of illicit cigarette consumption in the European Union (EU), which are depriving governments of billions in tax revenues and eroding tobacco control policies. PMI calls for a reassessment of policy choices that may be contributing to the year-over-year growth of the illicit market in the region and for innovative approaches that can help drive millions away from continued smoking to be considered.

The 2022 KPMG annual study on illicit cigarette consumption in the EU, UK, Norway, Switzerland, Moldova and Ukraine, commissioned by Philip Morris Products SA, reveals that 35.8 billion illicit cigarettes were consumed across the EU alone, causing governments the loss of an estimated 11.3 billion euros in tax revenue – 8.5% more than in 2021. The growth of the illicit market in the EU was partly driven by the continued rise of counterfeit consumption, which reached its highest level ever recorded. Notably, the vast majority of counterfeits (61.5%) were consumed in France.

"Some countries unwilling to embrace innovation and make better alternatives to cigarettes available to adult smokers who would otherwise continue smoking continue to rely on policies that have contributed to the current state of illicit trade. The cost of ignoring the negative impact of illicit cigarettes on adult smokers, and on public health, is too high to turn a blind eye to," stated Gregoire Verdeaux, senior vice president of External Affairs, PMI. "It has truly become a 'made in the EU' problem, as fake cigarettes are being manufactured, distributed, sold, and consumed in countries within the EU, undermining efforts to reduce and eliminate cigarette smoking—and public health goals altogether."

maintaining markets in the study declined by 7.5%, largely due to decreases in Greece, the Netherlands, Portugal, and Romania. Particularly, in countries like Poland and Romania, illicit consumption reached the lowest-ever incidence since KPMG began publishing its annual studies.

"Effective policymaking, fiscal calendars, deterrent penalties, and impactful enforcement are enabling several EU member states to experience a decline in the consumption of illicit cigarettes," said Massimo Andolina, president Europe region at PMI. "In other countries, it is unfortunate to witness the legal market shifting toward one that is run by criminal networks, which attest to the failure of disproportionate tax increases, and regulatory frameworks that do not contemplate the principle of risk differentiation. The KPMG report should serve as a wake-up call for regulators and policymakers in the EU to consider that millions of consumers are relying on the black market to continue smoking."

Trend

Moldova and Ukraine were included in the KPMG report for the first time. The 2022 findings placed Ukraine as the second-largest market in Europe for illicit cigarette consumption, with 7.4 billion cigarettes, behind France's 16.9 billion. The share of illicit cigarettes in Ukraine has followed an increasing trend since 2018 – in 2022, one out of five cigarettes consumed stemmed from the illicit market. The third-largest illicit market in Europe is the UK, with 5.9 billion illicit cigarettes, on the rise since 2020.

"In these times of economic hardship, with inflation putting extra pressure on consumer purchasing power, we need robust law enforcement, comprehensive regulatory approaches and forward-thinking policies that can help improve the lives of millions of adults who continue to smoke," noted Verdeaux. "This includes the adoption of differentiated policies on alternatives to cigarettes, including access to information about better alternatives, and smoke-free products that are available and affordable for all. No one should be left behind."

For PMI, eliminating the illicit tobacco trade has been a long-standing priority. We rely on the latest technology to secure our supply chain and protect our products, while implementing preventive and protective measures to fight illicit trade and working with public and private sectors to advance efforts against this global issue. PMI continues to support relevant regulations like the FCTC Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products and the EU Tobacco Products Directives' tracking-and-tracing provisions.

The KPMG report estimates the size and scale of illicit cigarette consumption, known as counterfeit & contraband (C&C), which includes illicit whites. The annual study defines these in its glossary as follows:

■ **Contraband:** "Genuine products that have been either bought in a lower-tax country and exceed legal border limits or acquired without taxes for export purposes to be illegally re-sold (for financial profit) in a higher priced market."

■ **Counterfeit:** "Cigarettes that are illegally manufactured and sold by a party other than the original trademark owner."

Raids

According to interviews with law enforcement agencies included in the KPMG report, the production and distribution of counterfeit cigarettes within EU borders is increasing, with criminal organizations centering their activities toward higher-taxed and higher-priced EU member states and gaining larger profits. Countries such as Belgium, Denmark, France, and Germany are witnessing a growth in cigarette seizures and raids on clandestine manufacturing operations.

"The KPMG report clearly shows how the growth of the illicit cigarette market poses an existential threat to the industry's sustainability and transformation in Europe. We can observe how the illicit cigarette problem in the EU has become highly concentrated in a handful of countries, where governments have not embraced innovative approaches to effectively deter millions from continued smoking," added Verdeaux. "Traditional tobacco control policies are simply not enough. Aggressive fiscal policies, prohibitionist approaches, and lack of deterrence in countries like France and Belgium are only benefitting criminals and pushing adult smokers toward the black market."

Despite the overall illicit consumption increase, the KPMG study notes that the majority of EU members – 21 out of 27 countries – experienced a stable or declining share of illicit cigarette consumption in 2022. Excluding France, overall illicit consumption in the re-

PMI calls for a reassessment of policy choices

Berlin Heals completes financing round for ongoing CE-study

DeBogy technology reduces bacteria, deadly infection in medical implants

FARMINGTON, Conn., July 3: DeBogy Molecular Inc, a biotech startup that specializes in antimicrobial surface modification, has announced that the study results of their antibacterial compound on medical implants have been published in the prestigious Journal of Orthopedic Research. The study affirms the effectiveness and safety of the DeBogy technology to kill dangerous bacteria that proliferates on the surface of a medical implant following surgery.

"With more than 15 years of development behind us, we are extremely proud to have our proprietary innovation recognized in the Journal of Orthopedic Research."

Surgical site infections resulting from bacterial biofilm on the surface of a medical implant represent one of the most serious complications that can follow orthopedic surgery or the implantation of a medical device. Implant-related infections account for over half of the 2 million healthcare-associated infections annually in the U.S., at a cost of over \$27 billion dollars.

Surgery

The Journal of Orthopedic Research reports on a landmark in vivo study that shows bacterial biofilm in animals using DeBogy-treated implants was reduced by 99.9% vs the control group, 7 days following surgery. Infection in the surrounding tissue in animals using DeBogy-treated implants was reduced by 99.8%. Overall, the animals with DeBogy-treated implants were found to be healthier vs the control group, with measurable decreases in inflammation, fibrosis, vascularization, and necrosis.

"The promise of a new antibacterial technology that can fight infection without antibiotics, chemicals, or temporary coatings is truly transformational," said Wayne Gattinella, CEO of DeBogy Molecular. "The possibilities of the DeBogy platform to improve the quality of life and reduce the cost of care for millions of people are enormous."

"The DeBogy technology has the potential to revolutionize the way we prevent and treat surgical site infection," said Dr Houssam Bouloussa, spine surgeon and cofounder, DeBogy Molecular. "With more than 15 years of development behind us, we are extremely proud to have our proprietary innovation recognized in the Journal of Orthopedic Research."

The report is published in the June 2023 issue of the Journal of Orthopedic Research. The Journal of Orthopedic Research is a peer-reviewed medical publication of the Orthopaedic Research Society (ORS). The journal is the forum for the rapid publication of high quality

Osteoarthritis cripples 1 in 7 American adults

Tumoroid Culture Medium to accelerate development of novel cancer therapies

CARLSBAD, Calif., July 3: Thermo Fisher Scientific, the world leader in serving science, has announced the launch of the Gibco™ OncoPro™ Tumoroid Culture Medium Kit*, the first commercially available culture medium specifically developed for the expansion of patient-derived tumoroids, or cancer organoids, from multiple cancer indications.

While cancer remains a leading cause of death globally, hurdles remain in bringing new cancer therapies to patients, with up to 97% of drug candidates failing in clinical trials. More closely resembling donor tissue than traditional 2D cell models, patient-derived tumoroids – cultures of tumor cells derived from individual patients – hold promise in helping improve clinical trial success rates by enabling researchers to better model disease and predict patient response to therapeutics in vitro. Yet use of tumoroids in cancer research has been limited due to challenging culture requirements and a lack of commercially available media systems. Thermo Fisher's new off-the-shelf, modular tumoroid culture medium kit is designed to make complex cancer models more accessible to researchers.

"Cancer's unpredictable nature presents a significant scientific and clinical challenge for future discoveries and in delivering life-saving treatments to patients," said Brian Douglass, vice president and general manager, cell biology at Thermo Fisher Scientific. "Globally, millions of patients and their families still await a cure for cancer despite the decades of advances in research, diagnostics and treatments aimed at helping lower cancer mortality. We developed the new OncoPro



OncoPro Tumoroid Culture Medium Kit.

Tumoroid Culture Medium Kit so the scientific community can take greater advantage of tumoroid models to help bring drug candidates to market faster and more cost-effectively."

Thermo Fisher is dedicated to supporting scientists as they elucidate tumoroid workflows and protocols. In addition to democratizing this workflow through the OncoPro Tumoroid Media system, Tumoroid Assay Development Services support outsourced screening and characterization. Customers may also leverage 7 unique OncoPro Tumoroid Cell Lines, representing four different cancer indications including colorectal, lung, endometrial and breast. To improve ease of use, the OncoPro Tumoroid Culture Medium Kit includes a scalable, automation-compatible suspension culture method.

Also:
ALEXANDRIA, Va: Osteoarthritis

(OA) cripples 1 in 7 American adults. That's more than 32 million people – including tech entrepreneur and non-profit Angry@Arthritis founder **Steve O'Keeffe**.

O'Keeffe commented on the announcement of the Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health's (ARPA-H) new Novel Innovations for Tissue Regeneration in Osteoarthritis (NITRO) program – America's moonshot to cure OA.

"Right now, the only FDA-approved treatment is to cut out and replace OA joints with synthetics that limit mobility and break down in 10-15 years. That's unacceptable, and yet every year Americans get 2.5 million of these replacements because it's our only option. We're thrilled ARPA-H announced an OA moonshot to find out if we can help our joints heal themselves. This is huge news, and we're going to do all we can to actively support this breakthrough program."

reports of new information on the full spectrum of orthopedic research, including life sciences, engineering, translational, and clinical studies.

DeBogy Molecular Inc is a biotechnology company dedicated to surface modification innovation. Founded in 2019 after more than 15 years of research and development, our proprietary IP can modify molecular surface structures to electrostatically destroy virus, bacteria, and fungus on contact. The DeBogy platform is effective across a wide range of materials for

industries that include medical, consumer health, textiles, and industrial manufacturing. Our goal is to ensure a safe, secure, germ-free environment.

Also:
ZUG, Switzerland: Berlin Heals Holding AG, a MedTech startup, has developed a breakthrough method and a product for the therapy of heart failure. The product - an electronic device called C-MIC - has already successfully been tested in patients in a pilot study and is currently undergoing CE cer-

tification procedures. In this context, the company has successfully raised another CHF 6 million from investors in a recently executed financing round. Consequently, the advancement of the CE procedures and the preparations for the FDA regulated studies for the approval of its patented technology for the therapy of dilated cardiomyopathy have made massive progress.

This funding comes at a point when the company has already recruited roughly 60% of the required CE-patients.

MEDICAL CLASSIFIEDS

Take care of your health

To advertise in this page please call: (+965) 24813566 Ext.: 513 or E-mail: advt@arabtimesonline.com

CITY CLINIC GROUP
A CARING MISSION

EVERY DAY 7.00 AM - 10.00 PM
GYNAECOLOGY SPECIALISTS

City Clinic Int'l - Fohaheel
Dr. Sarita Hari
(MBBS, MD, MRCOG)
Obstetrics & Gynaecology
6070 6812 2391 5593

City Clinic - Mahboula
Dr. Susan Sheeba
(MBBS, MD, MRCOG)
Obstetrics & Gynaecology
222 199 12 222 199 13

City Clinic - Khaitan
Dr. Ambily.T.Kumaran
(MBBS, MD, DGO, FRCOG)
Obstetrics & Gynaecology
1880020

f /cityclinicgroup info@cityclinicwt.com www.cityclinicwt.com

We Accept all Major Insurance Cards Home collection services available

مركز شفاء الجزيرة الطبي
SHIFA AL JAZEERA MEDICAL CENTRE
Farwania

One of the most reliable Orthopaedic departments in Kuwait!

Dr. Chandra Shekar Reddy, Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon is an expert in the diagnosis and treatment of wide variety of musculoskeletal conditions from minor injuries to complex disorders:

- Back Pain ● Neck Pain ● Heel Pain
- Multiple Joint Pain ● Fractures ● Arthritis
- Fibromyalgia ● Disc herniation
- Entrapment Syndromes
- Ligament Injuries ● Frozen Shoulder
- Rotator Cuff Injuries ● Tendinitis
- Shoulder Impingement ● Tenosynovitis

Dr. Chandra Shekar Reddy
MBBS, MS
Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon

Phone: 24 734 000, Hotline: 60 749 749
Behind Maghateer Commercial Complex & Opp. Police station, Farwaniya

'It's a lifestyle that ... keep growing'

Dupri salutes 50 years of hip-hop at Essence Festival

NEW ORLEANS, July 3, (AP) — Known as a rapper, super producer and music mogul, Jermaine Dupri is astonished that 30 years have passed since he founded his label, So So Def. That milestone comes as Dupri leads a celebration of 50 years of hip-hop on Saturday at the Essence Festival of Culture in New Orleans.

Missy Elliott, the first woman in hip-hop to be inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, was to headline the night inside the Superdome, but Dupri is curating a center stage segment that lets everyone know "The South Got Something To Say."

"Atlanta's dominance in rap is an unheard of force," Dupri said in an interview with The Associated Press. "And I think we have to recognize that."

Dupri, for the first time, brings together a group of artists - Big Boi, T.I., Ludacris, Gucci Mane and Lil Jon - all on one stage.

"I'm just trying to represent my city the best way that I feel I can," Dupri said when asked what festival fans can expect. "It's about the unity, having this much power on stage together at one time, man! We all have had shows together but not as one unit. This is almost like the super friends coming together. Be excited. We have like an hour of nonstop hits coming." Dupri notes that the festival usually skewed its concert series talent toward an older hip-hop demographic through artists whose shows were considered "clean."

"I remember performing there a few years back and we were told we cursed too much on the show, that we had too much profanity for the audience. That was the last time Frankie Beverly and Maze performed

so you can imagine the audience was in the 40- to 70-year-old demographic," he said. "This is the first time Essence is showcasing hip-hop at this level. I asked them if they are prepared for us to do a real, uncensored show and they said they're ready. I hope you all are too."

Dupri said he plans to reflect the genre's lifestyle as well as the music during this one-night-only experience.

"I've asked Karl Kani to dress me for this event so I can feel as nostalgic as possible. I want to make sure I have all the elements or at least try to capture all of them, including the fashion, the dances, the emcees, the DJs and be a true B-Boy," he said.

Dupri said he understands why people are still questioning whether hip-hop is here to stay.

Performance

"I think people have always felt that hip-hop was lesser than the music that came before, like R&B and rock. I think a lot of times when hip hop artists don't take the performance aspect as serious as they should I can see why. That's what creates that conversation. That's why I'm taking this show as serious as possible," he said. "Hip-hop comes with so many different layers. You've got Pharrell as men's creative director for Louis Vuitton, Future as creative director for Lanvin. That's indicative of what hip hop does and how it infects the human race and the places we live in. It's hard to think it would ever go away. It's a lifestyle that will continue to keep growing."

"Once I was infected with this as a kid, you realize it's not going

anywhere. I started in 1984, an era of music that was addictive as I could ever imagine crack was."

Dupri described the longevity of his career as "amazing."

"It's almost unbelievable," he said. "I remember thinking back then whether I would even last a year. When Kris Kross came out, I asked myself how long would this group be around. When So So Def celebrated 25 years, it felt like we were celebrating 100. To get past that, that 25th, is just amazing."

Dupri said he's proud of the work he's done and the artists he's been able to find and mentor along the way, including Da Brat and Bow Wow and more recently, Latto and J.I The Prince - products of his talent competition show, "The Rap Game."

"When I see how far these artists are and those that came from my show, I wonder do people realize how far ahead of the game I am," he said. "This is a very competitive space we live in. True statement. The world met this girl (Latto) on a TV show and we chose her as the first winner. Does that mean JD knew or saw something way before the rest of the world? Yes. Now, we have nothing to do with her success to date, but she's still a branch from the JD tree, from me keeping my ear to the streets and being able to spot talent."

"The majority of artists I find, usually are someone no one wants to sign at the time. This was not something I wanted to do at first," he added. "But God put me here to work with younger talent and artists and create a space to see them win. All it does when I see their success is it feels like a graduation to me. I'm proud to see that."

Music

Variety



This image released by Universal Pictures shows Ruby Gillman, voiced by Lana Condor, in DreamWorks Animation's 'Ruby Gillman Teenage Kraken.' (AP)

Film

Film's heart is push-pull of mothers and daughters

A sea monster celebrated in 'Ruby Gillman'

By Mark Kennedy

When landlubbers have gotten it all wrong: Kraken aren't terrible monsters from the sea who destroy our sailing ships and munch on our sailors. They're kind and helpful. It's the mermaids who are the real demons.

That's the upside-down premise to DreamWorks Animation's sweet "Ruby Gillman, Teenage Kraken," a tale of generational sisterhood with the message to not hide your difference. (Oh, and slaughtering mermaids is perfectly OK.)

The movie centers on Ruby Gillman, a young kraken hiding in plain sight in the human town of Oceanside. She's blue, likes math, has a retainer and four long fingers that look like hot dogs. But she and her family have been passing. If anyone asks questions, they say they're Canadian and that seems to work. "Let's all have a very human day," is their morning mantra.

But 15-year-old Ruby (voiced with real tenderness by Lana Condor) is on a collision course with her mom (Toni Collette) when the subject of prom is debated. This year, it will be held on a party boat and any kind of water splashed on Ruby will turn her into a massive iridescent Kraken. Mom (Toni Collette) says she can't go, despite Ruby's pleas. (Even kraken parents just don't understand.)

Prom soon becomes the least of Ruby's problems when she connects with her heritage and learns she's a royal kraken, one of the last of her kind. Her estranged and formidable grandmother (voiced nicely by a real human queen, Jane Fonda) urges her to ditch the humans and reclaim her crown. "You can never outswim your destiny."

Ruby, who likes wearing turtlenecks but has no nose, is torn between the humans above - a potential cute boyfriend, her slightly weird friends and social media - and her heritage and power. Watching her swim, unfurling her arms and legs, glowing with bioluminescence and testing her strength, is a joy. "Being in the ocean is better than I ever could have imagined," she says.

Director Kirk DeMico keeps things moving at a hectic, pressurized pace on land and lets things float and swoosh in the sea. The animation really shines when it comes to water, whether the roiling ocean or a puddle-filled pier.

A fun soundtrack includes songs by BLACKPINK,

Sigrid, The Linda Lindas, Mimi Webb, Fitz and The Tantrums, RAYE and Yeah Yeah Yeahs. There's even Christopher Cross' "Ride Like the Wind" for the old folks.

The script by Pam Brady, Brian C. Brown and Elliott DiGuseppi isn't airtight, with some bits that make little sense - why does Ruby become a giant Kraken in the library? Does she later become one just being angry, like the Hulk? - but its heart is in the right place and their story of generations being truthful to each other is a good one.

Message

The arrival in Oceanside of a mermaid - gorgeous, sweet and popular - complicates Ruby's life even more. Mermaids, she's been told for years, are selfish, narcissistic and dishonest, but this mermaid, Chelsea, (Annie Murphy) takes a liking to Ruby - "Super-seagirl bestie!" - and they share their woes of hiding among humans. Maybe they can team up to stop the kraken-mermaid feud once and for all?

At the film's heart is the push-pull of mothers and daughters - the elder sometimes lying to be protective, the younger rebelling at all the rules. In one of the film's most touching moments, Ruby as a giant Kraken towers over her mother, who gently soothes this massive creature. The final message - no more lying, no more hiding - is well earned.

There's also a push-pull in the script - between a small story of belonging and embracing outsiders, and an out-sized war between sea creatures that includes Godzilla-like stomping around and eye lasers. It's a hard balance to find but the filmmakers have done enough.

"Ruby Gillman" has echoes of last year's "Turning Red," also a coming-of-age story of a girl coming to terms with her familial and personal history. There's also a whiff of "Luca," an Italian-set animated fairy tale about two young sea monsters exploring an unknown surface world as humans. So "Ruby Gillman" gets some points docked for originality, but gets full marks for prompting young ones to go home and battle their Little Mermaid dolls.

"Ruby Gillman, Teenage Kraken," a DreamWorks Animation release in theaters Friday, is rated PG for "some action, rude humor and mature thematic ele-

ments." Running time: 91 minutes. Two and a half stars out of four.

Also:

SANTA FE, N.M.: Special prosecutors in the shooting death of a cinematographer on the set of the Alec Baldwin film "Rust" asked Friday to shield the name of a witness from public disclosure as they pursue charges against a movie weapons specialist.

Prosecutors said in court filings that the witness is prepared to testify that film set armorer Hannah Gutierrez-Reed handed off a small bag of narcotics to the witness after returning from an interview at a police station. But they said the witness worries about being harassed by media and blacklisted by the industry.

Gutierrez-Reed is fighting charges of involuntary manslaughter and evidence tampering as the sole remaining defendant in the case after prosecutors dropped an involuntary manslaughter charge against Baldwin in April. Prosecutors can still refile charges against him, however.

Baldwin was pointing a gun at cinematographer Halyna Hutchins during a rehearsal when it went off, killed her and injured director Joel Souza on Oct. 21, 2021.

In a new court filing, prosecutors Kari Morrissey and Jason Lewis said the testimony about a drug transfer will support allegations that Gutierrez-Reed attempted to prevent law enforcement from obtaining evidence related to the handling of the firearm prior to the shooting.

The witness is afraid that if they testify, they could be shut out by the film industry "for coming forward with information about the defendant," the court filing said. "They wish to keep their identity from the public for as long as possible."

The evidence tampering charge was filed last week against Gutierrez-Reed. Prosecutors have alleged that she was drinking and smoking marijuana in the evenings during the filming of "Rust" and was likely hungover on the day a live bullet was loaded into the gun Baldwin used.

Gutierrez-Reed's attorney Jason Bowles has called the move "retaliatory and vindictive" and an example of "character assassination" by prosecutors with a weak case. (AP)

LOS ANGELES: Indiana Jones, and executives at the Walt Disney Co and Lucasfilm, made a somewhat dispiriting discovery this weekend. Moviegoers didn't rush to the theater in significant numbers to see "Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny" and say goodbye to Harrison Ford as the iconic archaeologist.

The film, reportedly budgeted north of \$250 million, came in on the lower end of projections with \$60 million in ticket sales from 4,600 North American theaters, according to studio estimates Sunday.

Including \$70 million from international showings in 52 markets, "Dial of Destiny" celebrated a \$130 million global opening. It easily earned the No. 1 title but was not the high-rolling sendoff for one of modern cinema's most iconic actor/character pairings that anyone hoped. Disney is projecting that it will make \$82 million domestically through the fourth of July holiday and \$152 million globally.

"Dial of Destiny" is the long-delayed fifth installment in the Steven Spielberg/George Lucas-created adventure series that began in 1981, and the first Spielberg himself hasn't directed. Veteran James Mangold stepped in to take the reins overseeing the Spielberg-approved script, which finds an older Dr. Jones retiring from his university job and swept up on a new adventure with his goddaughter Helena (Phoebe Waller-Brige).

"It's impressive that a franchise that's over 40 years old is No. 1 at the box office. But there's no question there were higher hopes for the debut of this movie," said Paul Dergarabedian, the senior media analyst for Comscore. "This is Indiana Jones. This is a summer movie icon."

The film made its splashy premiere at the Cannes Film Festival in May, with a fitting celebration of Ford, who has said this was his last time playing the character.

But then it was hit with lukewarm reviews. This was an unexpected and unwelcome hurdle, considering it was coming after the maligned fourth film, 2008's "Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull." Another contributing snag was that a significant portion of the target audience, older viewers, don't tend to buy many tickets on opening weekend for big blockbusters. But

even "Crystal Skull," budgeted at a reported \$185 million, managed to gross over \$790 million.

"Sometimes reviews don't matter, but the sentiment coming out of Cannes was very powerful," Dergarabedian said. "It set off a narrative where people were already feeling disappointed and they hadn't even seen it."



Lucas



Spielberg

Second place went to "Spider-Man: Across the Spider-Verse" with \$11.5 million, bringing its domestic total to around \$340 million. "Elemental" landed in third place with \$11.3 million.

Aside from "Dial of Destiny," the weekend's other main new opener was the animated "Ruby Gillman, Teenage Kraken," which debuted in

sixth place with \$5.2 million.

"Dial of Destiny's" underwhelming debut comes just a few weeks after both Warner Bros.' "The Flash" and Disney/Pixar's "Elemental" had lackluster openings in North America. "Elemental," like Indy 5, also premiered at Cannes to middling reception. And yet, "Elemental" in its three

weeks in theaters has held on much better than "The Flash," which plummeted again to \$5 million, bringing its domestic total to \$99.3 million. Disney also saw similarly promising holds with "The Little Mermaid," now at over \$280 million domestically and "Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 3" which has grossed over \$345 million. (AP)

Features

ARABO TIMES

TUESDAY, JULY 4, 2023

People & Places

People

Roxbury history

Miller's old studio awaiting next act

ROXBURY, Conn., July 3, (AP) — After breakfast each morning, renowned playwright **Arthur Miller** would walk up a grassy slope to his creative sanctuary, a modest 300-square-foot studio with a small deck overlooking a stream and woods on his beloved Connecticut property.

From 1958 until his death in 2005 at age 89, it was where the Pulitzer Prize-winning writer crafted and revised numerous plays, social commentary, personal journals, his autobiography and other materials, including screenplays for the films "The Misfits" (1961) and "The Crucible" (1996). Considered one of nation's greatest playwrights, Miller was known for his dramas with strong moral and personal responsibility that often laid bare the failings of the American dream.



Miller

Today, the view from the studio is less inspiring.

Unbeknownst to many locals, for the last five years, the shingled, one-room structure has been tucked away behind the Roxbury, Connecticut, town hall - next to a rusted dumpster and snow plows in a nondescript parking lot, awaiting an uncertain next act.

"It's a piece of Roxbury history. And we can't let it disappear," said Marc Olivieri, a former neighbor of Miller's and a builder who moved the studio to its current location, which was supposed to be temporary.

A group working with Miller's daughter, writer and filmmaker Rebecca Miller, has been trying to raise \$1 million to renovate the structure and move it to the grounds of a local public library.

They also hope to offer related programming, which Olivieri, a board member for the nonprofit Arthur Miller Writing Studio, insists is the most important part of the project.

"Ideas and ideals are essential to maintaining the moral direction of this country," Olivieri wrote in an email. "Writers like Miller provide the stories that color these ideas."

Community

Roxbury is a quiet, bucolic community of 2,200 that is about 87 miles (140 km) northeast of New York City, and has long been a home to famous writers, artists and performers - including the late Broadway lyricist and composer Stephen Sondheim, the late author Frank McCourt and William Styron and the late sculptor Alexander Calder.

In the late 1950s, Hollywood legend Marilyn Monroe, Miller's second wife, lived there too.

"A lot of these people go there because it's not New York. It's out of the way. It's quiet and people don't make a fuss about them," said Sarah Griswold, board president of the Arthur Miller Writing Studio. "There's no real commemoration or acknowledgment of the creativity that lives in these hills."

The group, which is partnering with other Arthur Miller organizations, hopes future visitors to the studio will learn about the playwright's work and activism, as well as attend workshops on writing, theater and topics he cared about, such as mass incarceration. There are plans to eventually host writer residencies and an online repository.

But the group has so far raised less than \$20,000 through its GoFundMe site and is now under pressure to step up fundraising efforts due to planned improvements to the highway department's parking lot.

The studio, which Miller helped design and which still has the mismatched, linoleum floor tiles he laid himself, was the playwright's second writing spot in Roxbury. He wrote "Death of a Salesman" (1949) at a cabin he built at a previous home.

The newer studio wound up in its current spot after Rebecca Miller sold her father's second property. Figuring the new owners might tear down the small outbuilding, she turned to the town for help and paid to have it shored up and moved temporarily.

Rebecca Miller, who said she set aside proceeds from the house sale to contribute toward the \$1 million goal, is donating the studio to the town.

"It could go all sorts of places, but I really wanted it to belong to Roxbury because Roxbury was really his home for such a long time," she said. "And so I thought it was kind of beautiful that it would belong to the town ultimately."

But fundraising has been challenging. "You can have a poetic idea, but then to actually make this happen is another thing entirely," she said. "I do feel that there is money in the community," she said. "Once people realize that others are giving, I think there will be more of a sense of people giving. And I think there is starting to be a groundswell of support."

Rebecca Miller salvaged the modest furnishings from the studio, including a daybed, a pot-belly wood stove and an old metal office chair that her father, a jack-of-all-trades, insisted on fixing rather than replacing. Once the building is renovated, the items will be arranged just like the playwright left them.

Black-and-white photographs taken by Magnum photographer Inge Morath - Rebecca Miller's mother and Arthur Miller's third wife - document the playwright at work over the decades in the 14-by-20-foot space. The images will be used as a guide.

Manuscript

Arthur Miller progressed from working at a desk he made from a wooden door to eventually a third desk he built with heavy plywood to hold his early computer equipment and a printer.

Wearing his signature dark-rimmed glasses, he's seen in a 1997 photo sitting back and reading over a manuscript, surrounded by dark wood paneling. Nearby, there's an open dictionary and a typewriter. A radio and reference books sit on some shelves.

In another photo, taken 25 years earlier, a serious-looking Miller poses, crossed legs, with a pipe in his mouth. A photo from 1963 shows him meeting in the studio with director Elia Kazan and producer Robert Whitehead, who worked together on the play "After the Fall," which ran on Broadway for 208 performances.

The writer's literary assistant in the last decade of his life, Julia Bolus - also director of the Arthur Miller Trust and a Writing Studio board member - remembers the studio well. She said they worked there together in the afternoons after Miller was done writing for the day.

"For almost half a century, it was his central space and his one private space," said Bolus, who is working on a project to publish Miller's journals. "The door was always open to his family, but people did give him ... that morning time to himself."



Erino Yumiki, a Japanese guitarist and songwriter, attends the opening ceremony of Fender's Tokyo store Thursday, June 29, 2023. Fender, the guitar of choice for some of the world's biggest stars from Jimi Hendrix to Eric Clapton, is opening what it calls its 'first flagship store' in its 77-year history. (AP)

Music

US guitar maker banking on regional growth

Fender opens flagship store in Tokyo

TOKYO, July 3, (AP) — Fender, the guitar of choice for some of the world's biggest stars from Jimi Hendrix to Eric Clapton, is opening what it calls its "first flagship store" in its 77-year history.

The American guitar manufacturer has chosen for its location Tokyo's Harajuku, a hot spot for Japanese youngsters who love animation, outlandish fashion and, of course, American music. The store was unveiled to reporters Thursday ahead of its official opening Friday.

Asia-Pacific is on track to become the biggest music market in the world by 2030, and more stores are planned for the region, Fender says. The company's revenue in Japan has recorded double-digit percentage growth each year since 2015.

"I've played various brands, but what I like about the Fender is its power to help you play at more than 100% of your ability, letting you become aware of your potential and take up new challenges," said Erino Yumiki, a guitarist, songwriter and one of the world's many Fender artists.

"Sometimes music gets me down, but music has also saved me. The music I have encountered through my life is who I am," said Yumiki, who owns about a dozen Fender guitars.

Although Tokyo already has many new and used guitar shops, the flagship store is designed to serve as a kind of museum-cum-amusement park for Fender lovers.

Fender says the social restrictions during the coronavirus pandemic set off a guitar boom. Its revenue in the COVID-19 years ballooned from \$500 million to nearly \$1 billion.

Some 30 million people picked up an electric or acoustic guitar for the first time during those years, and even if one in 10 keeps playing - as surveys show the statistics to be - it's still solid revenue, says Fender Musical Instruments Corp. Chief Executive Andy Mooney.

Mooney, who plays guitar in a band, knows a thing or two about marketing, having worked at Nike for 20 years

and shaping the Michael Jordan campaign. That was followed by 11 years at Disney, where he oversaw consumer products.

Mooney said the redefinition of sneaker retailing that happened at Nike is exactly what Fender is going through now.

The three-story store in Harajuku is filled with Fender guitars, basses and amplifiers, including some exclusive products. The basement has a concert space and coffee shop.

Musical newcomers find some stores intimidating but the Tokyo store will be friendly, Fender says, with most salesclerks being women.

There's a clothing area called "F Is For Fender." And the top floor is devoted to a shop for custom-made guitars, where so-called "master builders" in the US will make guitars to order.

Instrument

"The aging population has the time and the money to really get these custom-made instruments they've always wanted to buy for most of their lives but couldn't afford when they were younger," said Mooney, noting the potential appeal to the whole spectrum of the Japanese population, not just the youngsters usually associated with guitar-playing.

Yumiki, Miyavi - who acted in Angelina Jolie's "Unbroken" - and about a dozen other Japanese star guitarists took the stage on Thursday, strumming together in the guitars' equivalent of a drumroll, to celebrate the store's opening.

Fender makes guitars in Japan, including Stratocasters, which have earned a reputation for quality. The made-in-Japan guitars will be on sale alongside those made in the US and Mexico. The more affordable guitars sell for about 110,000 yen (\$760).

The popularity of guitars is also being fueled by greater consumption of guitar-related content online, such as on TikTok, drawing in amateurs who play guitar as a hobby.

Fender President for Asia-Pacific Edward Cole says the tens of millions of tourists expected to flock to Japan every

year are also being targeted, as are the brand-savvy consumers of Japan.

Fender wants to position itself with its new store as Chanel, Apple and other major international brands did in Tokyo, he added.

"We want people to come in here, and we want them to fall in love with the idea of playing music," he said.

Also:

NEW YORK: Billy Joel is finally moving out of his monthly perch at **Madison Square Garden**. The singer-songwriter says he will conclude his residency in July 2024 with his 150th lifetime performance at the venue.

"It's hard to believe we've been able to do this for 10 years," Joel said at a news conference Thursday. "I'm now 74. I'll be 75 next year. It seems like a nice number."

The record-breaking residency began in January 2014 with Joel playing one show every month at the Garden for, as he said at the time, "as long as the demand continues."

In January 2015, Joel broke his own record of the "most consecutive performances by an artist" with the 13th show of the residency and a new banner was raised to the Garden's rafters.

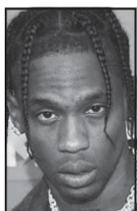
In July 2015, with his 65th lifetime show, Joel broke another record for the "most lifetime performances by an artist," for which another banner was raised. Both of Joel's banners continue to hang at the Garden.

"There's only one thing that's more New York than Billy Joel - and that's a Billy Joel concert at MSG," said New York City Mayor Eric Adams. "For more than 50 years, Billy's music has defined our city and brought us together. On behalf of 8.5 million New Yorkers, congratulations, Billy, on a historic run of sold-out shows at MSG, and thank you for a lifetime of bringing joy to us all."

Joel has had 33 Top 40 hits, including three No. 1s - "It's Still Rock and Roll to Me," "We Didn't Start the Fire" and "Tell Her About It" - and four No. 1 albums - "52nd Street," "Glass Houses," "Storm Front" and "River of Dreams."



Cast members America Ferrera, Margot Robbie and director Greta Gerwig, (from left to right), pose for the media prior to a news conference of the movie 'Barbie,' in Seoul, South Korea, Monday, July 3. The film is to be released in the country on July 19. (AP)



Scott



Big Pokey

Variety

HOUSTON: Family and friends gathered at the funeral over the weekend for Houston rapper **Big Pokey**, an original member of the pioneering group Screwed Up Click.

Pokey, who was born **Milton Powell**, died June 18 at the age of 48 after collapsing at a performance in **Beaumont**, located east of Houston. Those attending his service Saturday at Fountain of Praise church in Houston included Mayor **Sylvester Turner**, Congresswoman **Sheila Jackson Lee** and rappers **Paul Wall**, **Trae Tha Truth** and **Slim Thug**, the Houston Chronicle reported.

Pokey was known for **Texas** and Gulf Coast hits such as "Ball N' Parlay," "Who Dat Talking Down," and a verse on DJ Screw's nearly 36-minute freestyle known as "June 27th." He was also featured on Megan Thee Stallion's 2022 "Southside Royalty Freestyle."

Nationally, Pokey was most known for a featured appearance on Wall's 2005 debut hit song, "Sittin' Sidewayz." The chorus was sampled from Pokey's verse on "June 27th."

Pokey, who grew up in Houston, began garnering local fame in the late 1990s as an original member of the Screwed Up Click, a friend group-turned-rap collective led by DJ Screw, who developed a slowed, pitched-down music style known as "chopped and screwed," which became synonymous with Houston.

Pokey released his debut album, "Hardest Pit in the Litter" in 1999 and "Da Game 2000" the following year. (AP)

HOUSTON: A Texas grand jury declined to indict rap superstar **Travis Scott** in a criminal investigation of a deadly crowd surge at the 2021 Astroworld festival, where some spectators were packed so tightly they could not move their arms or even breathe, his attorney and prosecutors said Thursday.

Lawyer **Kent Schaffer** confirmed that the **Harris County** grand jury had met and decided not to indict his client on any criminal charges stemming from the concert.

"He never encouraged people to do anything that resulted in other people being hurt," Schaffer said, adding that the decision is "a great relief."

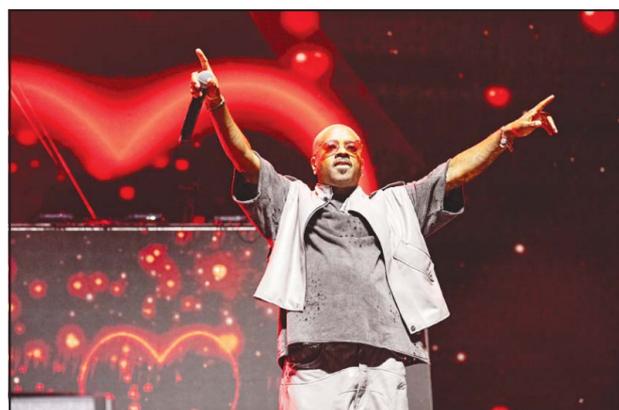
Circumstances of the deaths limited what charges prosecutors were able to present

before the grand jury, eliminating potential counts such as murder, manslaughter and criminally negligent homicide, said Alycia Harvey, an assistant district attorney with the Harris County District Attorney's Office. That left prosecutors to focus on possible counts of endangering a child in connec-

tion with the deaths of the two youngest concertgoers, ages 9 and 14, she added.

"The grand jury ... found that no crime did occur, that no single individual was criminally responsible," Harris County District Attorney **Kim Ogg** said.

The Nov. 5, 2021, crowd surge in



Jermaine Dupri performs at the Essence Festival on Saturday, July 1, at the Caesars Superdome in New Orleans. (AP) — **Details Page 11**

Houston killed 10 young festivalgoers who ranged in age from 9 to 27. The official cause of death was compression asphyxia, which an expert likened to being crushed by a car.

Roughly 300 people were injured and treated at the scene, and 25 were taken to hospitals.

Houston police and federal officials have been investigating whether Scott, concert promoter Live Nation and others had sufficient safety measures in place.

During a news conference Thursday afternoon after the grand jury's decision, police presented various details from their investigation including a timeline of events during Scott's performance, the location at the concert site where the deaths occurred and video showing areas where crowds of people collapsed on each other.

But Police Chief **Troy Finner** declined to say what the overall conclusion of his agency's investigation was or whether police should have stopped the concert sooner. Finner said police plan to make the more than 1,000-page report in the case public so people can read all the information investigators reviewed.

"The chief of police is not going to get up here and point fingers at anybody. I respect the grand jury's decision. I simply want people to read the offense report, read the entire investigation and everybody will see, very, very complicated," Finner said. (AP)

Health

Sterilized insects

Calif deploys 'drone' to fight mosquitoes

IRVINE, Calif., July 3, (AP): A drone flies over a peaceful Southern California marsh and unleashes a rain of larvae-killing bacterial spore pellets. Its target: a surging population of mosquitoes that can spread diseases to humans.

The drone is the latest technology deployed by the Orange County Mosquito and Vector Control District to attack mosquito development in marshes, large ponds and parks.

Mosquitoes grow into larvae from eggs laid in water, making proliferation of the biting bugs a major concern after California's extraordinarily rainy winter.

"There's quite a bit more mosquitoes due to the rain," said John Savage, who recently operated the drone at San Joaquin Marsh Reserve near the University of California, Irvine. "You can see out here almost every single marsh pond is full of water."



Lesser

The district sprawling over more than 800 square miles (2,070 square kilometers) south of Los Angeles is reporting that traps are capturing three times the 15-year average number of mosquitoes.

"I would call it a huge spike," said Kiet Nguyen, a vector ecologist for the district.

Common methods of applying anti-mosquito treatments involve use of backpack sprayers, trucks, airplanes and helicopters. The drone allows more precise treatments and avoids the need to trample through sensitive lands, according to the district.

"We're always looking for advancements in technology -- what can get the job (done) more efficient, more beneficial to the team and less invasive," Nguyen said.

The drone is flown higher than all nesting birds and allows access to places that can't be reached by a person with a backpack sprayer or trucks, Nguyen said.

Nguyen said the drone is able to treat 1 acre (0.4 hectares) of land in under two minutes, a task that would take more than an hour of hiking by a worker with a backpack.

As Savage finished a recent morning flight, a nearby great egret was undisturbed as it searched the tall grasses for food.

Studies

"We've done studies where we watched the birds," said Savage. "And the birds usually come right back after the drone passes over. So if anything, it's better for the environment."

The anti-mosquito treatment is not harmful to other wildlife.

"The mosquito larvae are filter feeders, so they feed on the bacteria," Savage said. "It enters their gut and it's a growth regulator. So essentially -- if you guys have seen the movie 'Alien' - it blows their stomach out."

According to the district, the drone operators must have a Federal Aviation Administration remote pilot license as well as a California Department of Pesticide Regulation unmanned aircraft vector control technician license.

The Orange County district, which acquired its drone several years ago, does not use it in neighborhoods. Similarly, Santa Clara County Vector Control uses a drone to control mosquito larvae in nonresidential areas along San Francisco Bay.

Mosquito-borne diseases have long been recognized as a public health threat, and the concern is rising.

The European Union's disease prevention authority warned this month that warming caused by climate change is raising the risk of mosquito-borne viral diseases. And this week, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported five cases of malaria spread by mosquitoes in Florida and Texas, marking the first local spread in 20 years.

The Florida Department of Health has issued a statewide mosquito-borne illness advisory after four locally contracted cases of malaria were reported along the Gulf Coast south of Tampa.

On Monday, a health alert issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention also noted that another case has been detected in Texas, marking the first time there has been a local spread of malaria in the United States in 20 years.

The four residents in Sarasota County received treatment and have recovered, according to the state's Department of Health advisory. Malaria, caused by a parasite that spreads through bites from Anopheles mosquitoes, causes fever, chills, sweats, nausea and vomiting, and headaches. It is not spread person to person.

It's the threat of the mosquito-borne illness that concerns Kathleen Gibson-Dee, who lives on Terra Ceia Island, which is about 20 miles (32 kilometers) north of Sarasota County.

Even though no malaria cases have been reported in Manatee County, where Terra Ceia is located, Gibson-Dee said that she's now routinely using bug repellent while working in her garden.

"I don't go out without it," she told The Associated Press on Tuesday. "And we don't go out in the evening because you can see clouds and clouds of bugs now. They may not all be mosquitoes, but there's certainly mosquitos out there."

Another resident, Tom Lyons, says news of the malaria cases "makes me take mosquito protection a little more seriously."

The mosquito population thrives in Terra Ceia because "it's an island surrounded by a lot of shallow water and mangroves, and ideal places for mosquitoes," Lyons said.

Officials in Manatee County have ramped up efforts to control the mosquito population.

Chris Lesser, director of the Manatee County mosquito control district, said they're primarily using helicopters to combat the mosquito population because they cover between 15,000 and 20,000 acres (6070 to 8082 hectares) in one night. A truck can only cover around 1,000 acres (404 hectares) a night, he said.

"We really want to focus on killing the adult mosquito before they have the opportunity to feed on one person that may be infected with malaria and then transmit that disease to a second person," Lesser said.

He said the time frame for when a mosquito can become infected to when it can transmit the disease to a person is about 14 days.

Also:

NICOSIA, Cyprus: Cyprus is battling an influx of disease-carrying mosquitoes by bringing in hundreds of thousands of the insects after being sterilized through radiation.

The battle is primarily focused on eradicating the *Aedes aegypti* variety of mosquito that has been found in large numbers in the island nation's coastal town of Larnaca.

Cyprus' Environmental Health Services head Herodotos Herodotou told The Associated Press on Wednesday that the *Aedes aegypti* has been specifically targeted to prevent its potential migration to continental Europe.

The effort is also targeting the *Aedes albopictus* mosquito on the island, which is more common in Europe.

Both varieties can transmit to humans dangerous diseases such as dengue, Zika and yellow fever, as well as West Nile virus.

Herodotou said that his service collects and dispatches both varieties of mosquitos - both eggs and grown insects - to laboratories in Italy and Austria where they're bred and separated into male and female.

The male mosquitos are then sterilized by being exposed to ionizing radiation at the International Atomic Energy Agency headquarters in Vienna.

About 100,000 mosquitos are then brought back to the island every week so that they can be released at specific locations and times for breeding after they are fed. The mating won't produce any offspring and as a result, the mosquito population diminishes.



Medical charges sent to David White, who after kidney surgery got hit with a lot of extra charges, are seen at his home in Temple Hills, Md., Monday, June 26, 2023. A startling invoice that arrived in the mail may not be what you wind up paying. Errors or slow insurance payments may have inflated the total. Even if it's accurate, financial aid or other assistance might help pare it. (AP)

Health

Biden has started using CPAP machine for sleep apnea

Attack big medical bill with a plan

NEW YORK, July 3, (AP): An enormous medical bill can trigger a wave of panic, but try to resist.

That startling invoice that arrived in the mail may not be what you wind up paying. Errors or slow insurance payments may have inflated the total. Even if it's accurate, financial aid or other assistance might help pare it.

Sometimes a simple phone call clears up a problem. Other times, reinforcements are necessary.

Debt experts say patients should attack medical bills with a plan. Here are key steps to take.

Don't stash the bill in a pile of mail and hope it goes away, but don't rush to pay it without first understanding the amount.

"Especially if it's a really high bill, consider it like an opening offer," says Caitlin Donovan, a spokesperson for the nonprofit Patient Advocate Foundation, which helps critically or chronically ill patients deal with debt and insurance problems.

Medical bills can be rife with errors. They also may have been sent before insurance coverage was sorted out.

Donovan recommends comparing the bill with your insurer's explanation of benefits. That's a document the insurer sends that explains how your coverage will apply to the care you received. It can give you a sense for what you may still owe based on your deductible or the plan's out-of-pocket maximum.

Explanation

If something looks weird, call both the insurer and hospital for an explanation.

Someone at the hospital may have mistakenly entered the wrong code for the care you received or duplicated it. Request an itemized bill from the hospital to see if that happened.

But be aware that those bills also can be hard to interpret or contain errors that have little to do with the charge, Donovan said.

The No Surprises Act debuted last year and offers a layer of protection. Patients should check to make sure their care provider is following that law.

It prevents doctors or hospitals in many situations from billing insured patients higher rates when the care providers are not in their insurer's coverage network.

The law offers protection for most emergency care by basically requiring that patients receive in-network coverage with no additional billing from the provider. It also protects patients from huge bills for lab work or an out-of-network anesthesiologist when the patient was treated at an in-network hospital.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services has established a "No Surprises Help Desk" for people who have questions about whether their bill complies with the law. They can call (800) 985-3059 or submit a complaint online.

There are a host of for-profit and nonprofit organizations that can help people navigate medical bills.

The Patient Advocate Foundation helped David White recoup more than \$2,000 he paid for routine lab work after his kidney transplant.

Older Americans can get RSV shot this fall after consulting doc: CDC

NEW YORK, July 3, (AP): Americans 60 and older can get a new RSV vaccine but should discuss it with their doctor first, US health officials recommended Thursday.

The newly approved vaccines are expected to be ready in the fall, a time when flu shots and updated COVID-19 shots also will be available. Those eligible for the RSV vaccine should talk with their doctor to see if it is right for them, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said in a statement.

The CDC said adults with chronic heart or lung disease, weakened immune systems and those living in long-term care facilities are at higher risk for the respiratory infection. RSV, or respiratory syncytial virus, is a common cause of cold-like symptoms but it can be dangerous for infants and the elderly. A surge last year filled hospitals with wheezing children. There's no vaccine yet for kids, but one for pregnant women to prevent illness in infants may be coming too, pending approval from the Food and Drug Administration.

On Thursday, Dr. Rochelle Walensky, the outgoing CDC director, signed off on a recommendation

made last week by an advisory panel of outside experts for a single dose of the vaccines made by Pfizer and GSK. The FDA approved the shots last month for adults 60 and older.

The CDC panel initially considered a stronger recommendation that everyone 65 and older get the shot. But they weakened their endorsement after several members had questions about how well it works in the feeblest of patients, whether boosters will be needed and be effective, and the cost.

Drugmaker GSK told the panel that its RSV vaccine would be between \$200 and \$295. Pfizer has not disclosed a price. The vaccines may hold up over multiple seasons and it's not yet clear whether boosters will be recommended.

Others wanted a stronger endorsement for those 65 and older. Asking people to consult their doctor "is an absolute impediment" to getting more people vaccinated and an extra burden on health care providers, Robert Blancato, executive director of the National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs, said Thursday.

Many hospitals don't do a great job letting patients know about available help, said Marcelline White, executive director of Economic Action Maryland, a non-profit that helps people in that state apply for financial assistance.

"The onus is on the patient to apply for the assistance and do the work," she said.

Ask for a discount if no financial assistance is available.

Also:

WASHINGTON: President Joe Biden in recent weeks has started using a continuous positive airway pressure, or CPAP, machine at night to help with sleep apnea, the White House said Wednesday. The revelation comes after indents from the mask were visible on the president's face as he departed the White House.

The president has disclosed since 2008 a history with sleep apnea, a potentially serious but common condition in which breathing can stop and start in the night. Biden used the machine Tuesday night, White House officials said. The imprint lines on his face were apparent when he left Wednesday morning for a speech in Chicago.

A CPAP machine is a motorized device that pumps air through a mask to open a sleeper's airway. About 5 million Americans have tried them.

While his history with the condition has long been disclosed, it didn't come up during his most recent physical in February. When he was vice president, doctors noted Biden had an irregular heartbeat probably linked to apnea.

The 80-year-old president is running for reelection and is the oldest person ever to hold the nation's highest office.



In this photo provided by Andrew Jensen, an aphid feeds on a native flowering plant called 'prairie smoke' (Geum triflorum) in Idaho near Slate Creek in the Nez-Perce National Forest on May 25, 2013. The species name is Macrosiphum euphorbiae, also known as 'potato aphid,' which is native to the US and Canada. As if the smoke and haze sweeping in from fires in Canada weren't enough, some parts of New York City are swarming with aphids. (AP)

Ecology

Orca calf spotted in pod: A baby orca has apparently been born to an endangered killer whale population in the Pacific Northwest, scientists reported.

The Center for Whale Research announced the baby orca Friday on Facebook, saying the organization received photos showing what appears to be a new calf in L pod, part of the population known as the southern resident orcas, near Tofino, British Columbia.

The baby looks to be more than three weeks old and would be the first new calf in the pod since L125 was born in 2021.

Researchers with the center will need to conduct on-the-water encounters with the group to determine the calf's mother, assess the baby's health and assign it an alphanumeric designation.

"We hope to see this calf in our study area very soon!" the group said.

"We're always kind of cautiously optimistic with these new babies, because the mortality rate in the first year is quite high," Michael Weiss, research director for the Center for Whale Research, told The Seattle Times. "But we're hopeful - it's good to have another L pod kid."

The southern residents are struggling to survive multiple threats including a lack of adequate Chinook salmon in their foraging range, pollution and underwater noise that makes it harder for them to hunt.

If confirmed, the new calf would bring the total number of southern residents to 74.

That's one of the lowest population counts since 1974, when 71 orcas were counted following a live-capture fishery in the 1960s, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

The population peaked at 98 in 1995, but declined to 80 whales in 2001.

The southern residents live in matriarchal families split into three pods, designated J, K and L. They typically stay along the western coastal islands of Canada and Washington in the Salish Sea, and along the Oregon coast.

As apex predators, they occupy an important role in the ecosystem at the top of the food chain.

The southern residents were listed as endangered under the Endangered Species Act in 2005, and a recovery plan was finished in 2008.

In 2015 they were one of NOAA's "Species in the Spotlight," an effort to raise awareness and save "the most highly at-risk marine species." (AP)

Ailing elephant returns home: An ailing elephant that Thailand had presented to Sri Lanka more than two decades ago returned to his native land for medical treatment Sunday following allegations that the animal was badly abused while living at a Buddhist temple.

The male elephant, known in Sri Lanka as Muthu Raja, or Pearly King, and as Sak Surin, or Mighty Surin, in Thailand, was flown directly from the South Asian island nation's capital to Chiang Mai province in northern Thailand on a Russian Ilyushin IL-76 cargo plane.

A six-person team, including two veterinarians and four mahouts, or professional elephant trainers, accompanied the elephant

on the flight, which took about six hours.

A special container was built to hold the 275-centimeter- (9-foot-) tall, 4-ton pachyderm. Several mahouts went to Sri Lanka in advance to accustom the animal to being caged so he wouldn't panic during the trip to Thailand.

Video footage of his arrival in Chiang Mai showed the elephant conscious and appearing calm.

Thai Environment Minister Varawut



Weiss



Varawut

Silpa-archa was at the airport and said the elephant landed in perfect condition. He said earlier that Thailand spent at least 19 million baht (\$540,000) for the animal's repatriation.

The pachyderm could be heard trumpeting from inside the container that was loaded onto a truck's flatbed trailer to transport him to the government's Thai Elephant Conservation Center in nearby Lampang province, where he will be quarantined for at least 30 days and stay for rehabilitation. (AP)

SPORTS

Sabally scores 27 points with 15 rebounds, Wings beat Mystics

Howard hits 6 3s, scores career-high 43 as Dream rout Sparks

COLLEGE PARK, Ga., July 3. (AP): Rhyne Howard hit six 3-pointers and scored a career-high 43 points - one shy of Atlanta's single-game franchise record - on 14-of-20 shooting to help Dream set their single-game scoring record and the beat the Los Angeles Sparks 112-84 Sunday.

Allisha Gray scored 15 points and Nia Coffey 13 for the Dream. Atlanta (7-8), which has won back-to-back games following a three-game skid, set a season high for points in a game and topped the 100-point plateau for the second time this season.

Howard made 9 of 12 from the field and scored 25 points before halftime - a franchise record for points in the first half and the most points scored by a WNBA player in a half this season.

Nneka Ogwumike led Los Angeles (7-10) with 25 points. Dearica Hamby scored 18 with eight rebounds, Azura Stevens added 13 points and nine boards, and Zia Cooke scored 11 points.

Howard's 40-point performance was the fifth in the WNBA season, single-season record. The previous high was three (2006, '08, '15).

Wings 89, Mystics 72

In Arlington, Satou Sabally and Teaira McCowan each had a double-double, Arike Ogunbowale scored all her 17 points in the second half and the Dallas Wings beat the short-handed Washington Mystics.

Sabally scored 27 points with 15 rebounds and McCowan added 10 and 11 boards. Natasha Howard scored 13 points for Dallas (8-8). Sabally has 11 double-doubles this season.

BASKETBALL

second most in the WNBA.

Elena Delle Donne (ankle), Shakira Austin (hip), and Kristi Toliver (foot) did not play Washington (9-7).

McCowan scored inside to make it 33-31 with 1:38 left in the first half and the Wings led the rest of the way. Ogunbowale scored 14 points in the third quarter as Dallas outscored the Mystics 30-16 to take control for good.

Ariel Atkins led Washington with 18 points, 15 in the first half. Brittney Sykes scored 15 points and Tianna Hawkins added 10 points and 10 rebounds.

The Mystics have lost three of their last four games following a three-game win streak.

Sky 89, Fever 87

In Indianapolis, Courtney Williams hit the go-ahead jumper with 18.1 seconds to play and finished with a season-high 28 points with eight assists to help the Chicago Sky beat the Indiana Fever.

Elizabeth Williams added 17 points, nine rebounds and six assists for Chicago (8-9). Marina Mabrey also had 17 points and six assists, and Kahleah Copper scored 15 points on 6-of-10 shooting.

Enre Vatansever, named Chicago's interim coach and general manager Saturday, won his first game at the helm for the Sky. Vatansever took over for James Wade, who joined the coaching staff of the NBA's Toronto Raptors.

Courtney Williams hit a 3-pointer to give Chicago a five-point lead with about 2 1/2 minutes to play. Aliyah Boston stole a pass and then assisted on a basket inside by NaLyssa Smith and, after Copper missed a 3-point shot on the other end, Smith made a 3-pointer to make it 87-all with 1:07 remaining. Neither team scored again until Williams hit the winning fade-away.

Indiana's Maya Caldwell missed a clean look at a potential tying 3-pointer from the right corner with about two seconds left and, after the ball went out of bounds off the Sky, Kelsey Mitchell missed another at the buzzer.

Smith led Indiana (5-11) with 27 points, on 11-of-16 shooting, and eight rebounds. Mitchell added a season-high 26 points.

Liberty 81, Storm 66

In Seattle, Breanna Stewart had 20 points, eight rebounds and six assists, Courtney Vandersloot added 18 points and 12 assists and the New York Liberty beat the Seattle Storm.

Vandersloot had her fifth double-double, and her seventh game with at least 10 assists, this season. Sabrina Ionescu scored 13 points and Betnijah Laney finished with 10 for New York (11-4).

Stewart made to mid-range jumpers and then assisted on a 3-pointer by Ionescu that made it 7-0 and the Liberty never trailed. Marine Johannes hit a 3 to close the first quarter and another to open the second that stretched the lead to 15 points and Ionescu made a 3-pointer about 2 1/2 minutes into the second half that gave New York its biggest lead of the game at 49-27.

Bridges signs qualifying offer

Sabonis, Clarkson get extension deals done with Kings and Jazz

WASHINGTON, July 3. (AP): All-NBA center Domantas Sabonis wasn't a free agent this summer. And he won't be for the next few summers, either.

Sabonis has agreed to a four-year contract extension with the Sacramento Kings, one that will keep him signed through the 2027-28 season, a person with knowledge of the talks confirmed Sunday.

The extension includes a raise on his salary for this coming season to nearly \$31 million, and his salary for the four subsequent years will average about \$47 million, said the person, who spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because the team has not announced the signing.

The total value of the deal is about \$217 million. ESPN first reported the agreement on Saturday night, and The Sacramento Bee

season for the first time since 2006 and has the entirety of its starting five - Sabonis, De'Aaron Fox, Kevin Huerter, Harrison Barnes and Keegan Murray - coming back.

Sabonis is a three-time All-Star who averaged 19.1 points and a league-high 12.3 rebounds per game this past season, earning the All-NBA nod for the first time.

Utah was finalizing an extension for guard Jordan Clarkson on Sunday as well, a second person told the AP on condition of anonymity because it had not been signed. It will have a total value of \$55 million over the next three years, the person said; Clarkson had opted into a contract that would have paid him \$14.3 million this coming season and now will average about \$18.3 million over three years.

Clarkson averaged a career-high 20.8 points for the Jazz this past season, and the extension will push his on-court earnings well past \$100 million for his career.

Also Sunday, Miles Bridges is returning to the Charlotte Hornets after a year, but without the huge contract that appeared likely before a domestic violence charge.

Bridges signed a \$7.9 million qualifying offer from Charlotte on Sunday, according to a person familiar with the situation. The person spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because the deal has not yet been announced.

ESPN was first to report the deal.

Bridges missed all of last season after he was charged with domestic violence in July 2022.

He pleaded no contest last November and is serving three years of probation. The NBA gave Bridges a 30-game suspension earlier this offseason, but added that because Bridges missed the entirety of last season that 20 of those games are considered already served.

He will miss the first 10 games of this season.

Bridges was coming off a career season in 2021-22 when he averaged a team-high 20.2 points and 7.0 rebounds and appeared on the verge of signing a multiyear contract worth more than \$100 million last summer.

By signing the qualifying offer, the 25-year-old Bridges would become eligible to become an unrestricted free agent after next season. The Hornets recently selected Brandon Miller from Alabama with the No. 2 pick in the NBA draft and he plays the same position as Bridges.

Eric Gordon agreed to a contract with the Phoenix Suns, a source told AP after the agreement was first reported by The Athletic. Gordon is a career 37% shooter from 3-point range, and is entering his 16th NBA season.

BASKETBALL

subsequently confirmed it as well. It was part of a big-spending start to free agency this summer: Counting free agent deals that have been struck, signings of this year's rookie class and extensions, NBA teams have combined to hand out more than \$3 billion in contract value since Friday night.

Sabonis would have been in line to hit the free agent market in the summer of 2024, but the Kings ensured that won't be happening. He's a huge part of the Kings' current surge; the team made the playoffs this past



In this Friday, April 28, 2023 file photo, Sacramento Kings center Domantas Sabonis dribbles the ball against the Golden State Warriors during the first half of Game 6 in the first round of the NBA basketball playoffs in San Francisco. (AP)

Seven players going to first WC

Simon wins place in Australia's World Cup squad

MELBOURNE, Australia, July 3. (AP): Kyah Simon hasn't played since October when she tore knee ligaments. Alanna Kennedy has struggled with injuries since her last international appearance in September.

Both have been named to play for co-host Australia at the FIFA Women's World Cup.

Coach Tony Gustavsson and captain Sam Kerr named the Matildas squad of 23 Monday at the end of a training camp on Australia's Gold Coast at which the injured pair were given every possible opportunity to prove their fitness.

The preliminary squad of 29 was pared down for Monday's announcement, meaning heartbreak for six players. Among those to miss out was midfielder Chloe Logarzo who underwent a knee reconstruction and hasn't played since January.

The squad includes seven players going to their first World Cup, while Clare Polkinghorne and Lydia Williams will be at their

fifth. "To announce this 23 players has been very exciting and also challenging," said Gustavsson, who was an assistant coach for the United States at their World Cup triumphs in 2015 and 2019, and who will now try to lead Australia to victory on their home turf.

"As we're celebrating the ones selected I also want to acknowledge the ones not selected. It was tough. They are still with us and they are still preparing in the background and they will always, always be part of the Matilda family."

Chelsea star Kerr said she was "very honored" to be named to captain Australia in its first home World Cup.

"Anytime you get chosen for a World Cup whether it's your first or your third or fourth it's an amazing feeling, something you can never ever take

itive game since.

"The two-and-a-half year investment in the roster was that we wanted to ensure we build some depth in all positions which this team has struggled with in the past, especially in major tournaments," Gustavsson said.

"If you look at the roster now, we have eight backs which means we have two backs in every position, right back, left back and four center backs.

Among the young contingent, Clare Hunt played her first match for Australia against Czechia earlier this year in the absence of players such as Kennedy and has been a cornerstone of the defense ever since.

Australia is drawn in Group B at the 32-team tournament with Ireland, Nigeria and Canada. Ranked 10 in the world, it is seen as almost a certainty to reach the round of 16 and, with home support and advantage, possible further.

Squad

Australia squad: Goalkeepers: Mackenzie Arnold, Teagan Micah, Lydia Williams. Defenders: Ellie Carpenter, Steph Catley, Charlotte Grant, Clare Hunt, Alanna Kennedy, Aivi Luik, Courtney Nevin, Clare Polkinghorne. Midfielders: Alex Chidiac, Kyra Cooney-Cross, Katrina Gorry, Emily van Egmond, Clare Wheeler, Tameka Yallop. Forwards: Caitlin Foord, Mary Fowler, Sam Kerr, Hayley Raso, Kyah Simon, Cortnee Vine.

Fowler ends 4-year drought



Rickie Fowler holds the winner's trophy after winning on the first play-off hole on the 18th green during the final round of the Rocket Mortgage Classic golf tournament at Detroit Country Club in Detroit. (AP)

Langer breaks Champions' victory record

DETROIT, July 3. (AP): Rickie Fowler tilted his head back, exhaled and smiled.

He finally did it, holding on for a win after so many have slipped away.

Refusing to crumble and collapse again, Fowler made a 12-foot birdie putt on the first play-off hole of the Rocket Mortgage Classic and outlasted Collin Morikawa and Adam Hadwin on Sunday, two weeks after squandering a chance at the U.S. Open.

Fowler ended a career-long, 96-start championship drought after missing out on two chances to win in June, closing with a 75 at the U.S. Open to tie for fifth and with a 69 last week at the Travelers Championship to drop into a tie for 13th.

Followed all day by a sea of orange at Detroit Golf Club, Fowler was knocked down on the leaderboard by a near record-setting round from Morikawa. He responded on his 72nd hole of the tournament with an approach from 145 feet that left him with a 3-foot birdie putt to pull into a three-way tie with Morikawa and Hadwin at 24 under.

Fowler hit an errant tee shot way right in the playoff and after a drop, his approach from 184 landed 12 feet from the cup. Morikawa was inches long on his approach and instead of having the ball spin back to the hole, it bounced into the rough.

Hadwin missed a 22-foot putt and Morikawa's chip, opening the door for Fowler to close out the tournament before thunderstorms rolled over Detroit.

Even though Morikawa was disappointed in coming up short on a victory he has been shooting for since winning the 2021 British Open, he was happy for Fowler.

Morikawa's 8-under round put him one shot back from the course record of 63. Hadwin shot a 67 and Fowler a 68.

Fowler had a share of the 54-hole lead last month at Los Angeles Country Club with an opportunity to win his first major and was at least a co-leader after three rounds in one tournament in each of the previous two years.

Before his breakthrough in Detroit, he had won just two of the 10 times he was the third-round leader or co-leader.

The 34-year-old Fowler physically and mentally did what was needed to earn his sixth PGA Tour victory and his first since

winning the 2019 Waste Management Phoenix Open.

The fan favorite Fowler, a long-time ambassador for Rocket Mortgage, was cheered with chants of "Rick-ie! Rick-ie!" as clusters of people gathered around the 18th green hoping he would win it.

While Fowler faltered, going 10 straight holes settling for pars on a relatively easy course, Morikawa had four birdies on both the front and back nine. Morikawa made a 10-foot putt at No. 12, his fourth birdie in a six-hole stretch that put him within a shot of Fowler, and his 9-footer for birdie at No. 14 pulled him into a tie with Fowler at 23 under.

Monday qualifier Peter Kuest (65), Lucas Glover (65) and Taylor Moore (67) were tied for fourth at 21 under. Kuest, who started the week ranked 789th in the world, did well enough to earn a spot in this week's John Deere Classic in Illinois.

Play was suspended Saturday for 1 hour, 42 minutes because of lightning and the schedule for the final round was adjusted due to inclement weather in the forecast. The leaders teed off Sunday morning about 5 hours before the original schedule with threesomes starting on both the front and back nine.

Bernhard Langer won the U.S. Senior Open on Sunday at SentryWorld to break the PGA Tour Champions' career victory record.

Pushing his record as the oldest winner on the 50-and-over tour to 65 years, 10 months, 5 days, the German star broke a tie with Hale Irwin for the victory mark with No. 46.

Seven strokes ahead on the back nine, Langer bogeyed the fi-

nal three holes for 1-under 70 and a two-stroke victory over home-state favorite Steve Stricker on the tree-lined course with thick rough.

Langer finished at 7-under 277, with only eight players breaking par for the week. He shattered the tournament age record set by Allen Doyle in 2006 at Prairie Dunes at 57 years, 11 months, 14 days.

Also the 2010 U.S. Senior Open winner at Sahalee outside Seattle, Langer extended his record for senior major victories to 12. He won the Chubb Classic in Florida in February to tie Irwin.

Stricker - from Madison, 100 miles to the south - birdied three of the last five holes for a 69. He won the first two senior majors of the year and took his hometown Madison event three weeks ago

GOLF

for his fourth Champions victory of the season.

Fellow Madison player Jerry Kelly was third at 4 under after a 71.

Talor Gooch won his third LIV Golf League title of the year, making a curling 15-foot birdie putt on the 18th hole at Valderrama for a 4-under 67 and a one-shot victory over Bryson DeChambeau.

Gooch won \$4 million. Along with victories in Australia and Singapore, the former Oklahoma State player now has earned \$13,376,583 in eight LIV events this year.

Gooch finished at 12 under to become the first player with three victories in the Saudi-funded rival league. DeChambeau closed with a 69.



Bernhard Langer putts on the 12th green during the final round of the U.S. Senior Open golf tournament in Stevens Point, Wisconsin. (AP)

Daniel Hillier won the British Masters for his first European tour title and a spot in the British Open, making two late eagles in a two-shot victory.

Hillier shot a 6-under 66 at The Belfry to finish at 10 under. The New Zealander ran in a 40-foot eagle putt on par-5 15th, made birdie from a fairway bunker on the 16th and holed a 6-footer for eagle on the par-5 17th.

England's Oliver Wilson (71) and American Gunner Wiebe (66) tied for second.

Paul Barjon shot a 6-under 65 for a one-stroke victory in the Korn Ferry Tour's Memorial Health Championship.

Barjon birdied five of the first seven holes, added birdies on the two back-nine par 5s and made only one bogey. The 30-year-old Frenchman finished at 26-under 258 at Panther Creek for his second career Korn Ferry Tour victory.

Jackson Suber was second after a 62. Tom Whitney was another stroke back after a 63-61 weekend.

Je Kruger of South Africa closed with a 5-under 67 and won the Shigeo Nagashima Invitational Sega Sammy Cup by two shots over Anthony Quayle (64) and Naoyoku Kataoka (67) on the Japan Golf Tour. It was Kruger's seventh win worldwide and second in Japan.

Darren Fichardt of South Africa closed with a 5-under 67 for a two-shot victory over Oliver Farr in Le Vaudreuil Golf Challenge in France on the Challenge Tour.

Former Notre Dame player Davis Lamb won the ATB Classic for his first PGA Tour Canada victory. He closed with 2-under 70 for a three-stroke victory at Northern Bear in Sherwood Park, Alberta.

American Chandler Blanchet won the PGA Tour Latinoamerica Championship with a par on the third hole of a playoff at Quintana Roo, Mexico.

Carmen Alonso of Spain shot a 4-under 68 to claim a one-shot victory over Johanna Gustavsson in the Ladies Open in Finland on the Ladies European Tour.

Kokona Sakura closed with a 4-under 68 and beat Shiho Kuwaki in a playoff to capture the Shiseido Ladies Open on the Japan LPGA.

Change Name

I, have changed my name
MAINUDDIN ABDULLA KHOT
(old name) to MOINUDDIN
ABDULLA KHOT. (new name).
Address: At Post - Gushan
apartment khed, Tal - khed, Dist -
Ratanagiri - Maharashtra State -
415709

Sign
MAINUDDIN ABDULLA KHOT
(old name)

for granted and I never will," she said. "But to do it on home soil is a once in a lifetime opportunity.

"Every time I talk about it I get very emotional because I can't believe in 20 days time we're going to be hosting a Women's World Cup. When I first started playing for the Matildas I could never have dreamt of this."

Simon seemed likely to miss a second consecutive World Cup through injury. She tore her anterior cruciate ligament when playing for Tottenham in October and hasn't played a competi-

SOCCER

Streaking Braves complete sweep of Marlins

Ohtani, Trout homer in same game for 30th time to lead Angels past D-backs

ATLANTA, July 3, (AP): Spencer Strider knew better than to panic when facing an early two-run deficit.

With the Atlanta Braves' bats backing him, Strider had good reason to remain confident on the mound.

Ozzie Albies' two-run homer in the fifth gave Atlanta the lead and the Braves charged back to beat the Miami Marlins 6-3 on Sunday for their 16th win in 17 games.

"It just gives you confidence you don't have to be perfect," Strider said of the Braves' offense, which outscored the Marlins 29-7 in the three-game sweep.

The Braves won their eighth straight to extend their lead over second-place Miami in the NL East to nine games. Atlanta has won 10 in a row at home and 23 of 26 overall.

BASEBALL

Travis d'Arnaud's two-run homer off Andrew Nardi in the eighth extended Atlanta's lead to three runs.

Luis Arráez drove in two runs with two hits, lifting his batting average to .389. Arráez gave Miami a 2-0 lead with a double that drove in Jonathan Davis in the second inning. Arráez added a run-scoring single in the seventh to trim the Braves' lead to 4-3.

Strider (10-2) stuck out nine while allowing six hits and three runs, two earned, in 6 2/3 innings. Raisel Iglesias pitched a perfect ninth for his 14th save in 16 chances.

The Braves' 23-3 stretch includes nine straight series wins against such teams as Cincinnati, Minnesota, Arizona and the New York Mets. The Marlins were coming off a sweep of Boston before falling to 1-9 this season against Atlanta.

Angels 5, Diamondbacks 2

In Anaheim, Shohei Ohtani and Mike Trout went deep in the same game for the 30th time, Mickey Moniak provided the go-ahead homer and the Los Angeles Angels beat the Arizona Diamondbacks 5-2 despite 12 strikeouts by Zac Gallen.

Reid Detmers (2-5) struck out nine and allowed two runs in six innings. It is the fifth straight game the left-hander has fanned at least eight and allowed two or fewer runs. He's the first Angels pitcher to do that since Nolan Ryan in 1972-73.

Carlos Estévez pitched the ninth for his 21st save.

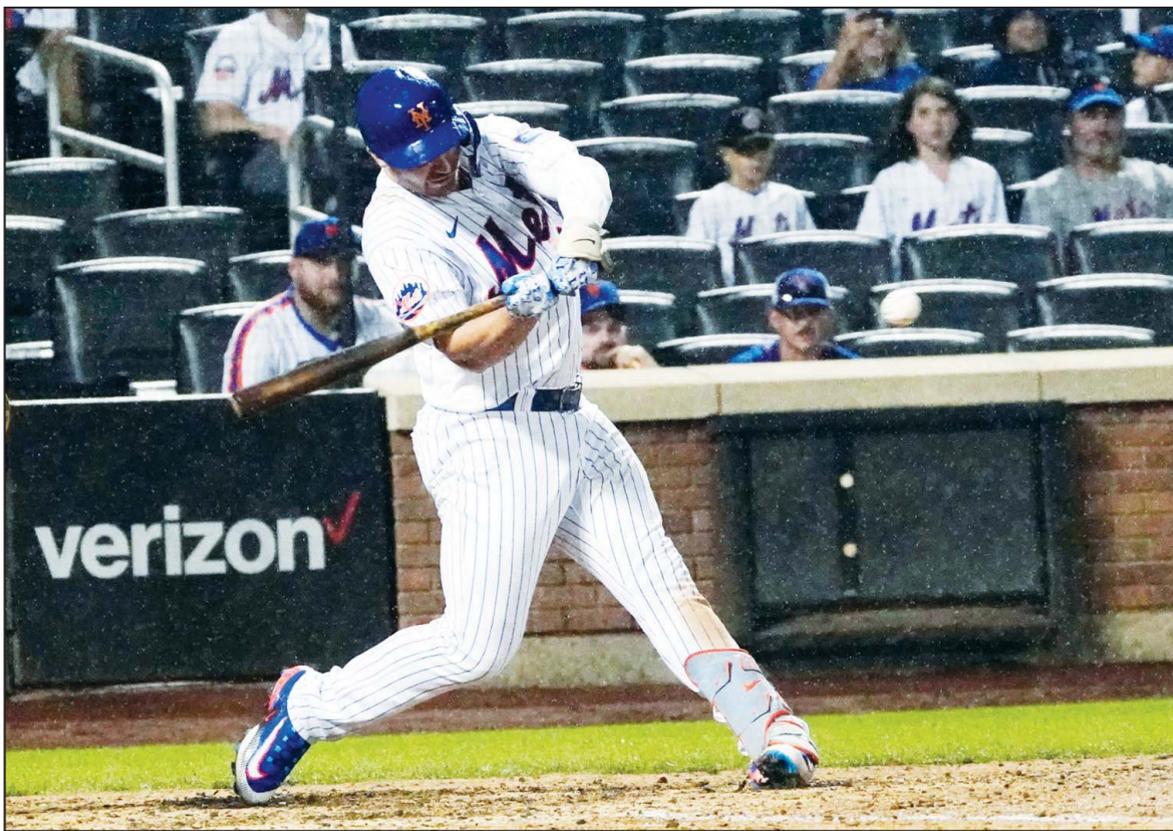
Baez, Marisnick hit grand slams, Tigers go deep 5 times to beat Rockies 14-9.

Carson Kelly homered for the Diamondbacks, who were held to four hits.

Mets 8, Giants 4

In New York, Pete Alonso hit a two-run homer in the rain, hours after making his third All-Star team, and New York beat San Francisco for its first series win in a month.

Mark Canha also connected for his first homer since June 1 and Tommy Pham added an RBI double after being moved up to the second spot in New York's lineup for the first time this



New York Mets' Pete Alonso hits a home run during the eighth inning of a baseball game against the San Francisco Giants in New York. (AP)

year. The struggling Mets (38-46) won a series for the first time since sweeping Philadelphia at home from May 30 to June 1.

Cardinals 5, Yankees 1

In St. Louis, Jordan Montgomery beat New York for the second time since they traded him last summer, pitching St. Louis past Gerrit Cole and the Yankees, who completed a disappointing 3-3 trip.

On a day Yankees manager Aaron Boone was ejected for the fifth time this season, Montgomery (6-7) allowed an unearned run, two hits and three walks in 6 2/3 innings. He held New York hitless until Gleyber Torres doubled with two outs in the sixth.

With the Cardinals ahead 2-1, Brendan Donovan hit a two-run homer in the seventh off Jimmy Cordero.

Royals 9, Dodgers 1

In Kansas City, Nicky Lopez matched a career high with four RBIs, Maikel Garcia and Bobby Witt Jr. drove in two runs apiece, and Kansas City beat Los Angeles to finally wrap up a series win.

The Royals had been winless in their past 12 series to tie the second-longest stretch in franchise history.

Brady Singer (5-7) allowed one run on three hits and four walks over seven innings.

Reds 4, Padres 3

In Cincinnati, pinch-hitter Tyler Stephenson broke an eighth-inning tie



Chicago White Sox pitcher starting Touki Toussaint delivers against the Oakland Athletics during the first inning of a baseball game in Oakland, Calif. (AP)

with a two-run homer that sent Cincinnati past San Diego.

Spencer Steer also had a two-run homer and rookie Andrew Abbott struck out a career-high 12 in 7 2/3 innings as the Reds remained tied with Milwaukee atop the NL Central.

Red Sox 5, Blue Jays 4

In Toronto, Alex Verdugo hit a tie-breaking home run in the ninth inning

and Boston beat Toronto to complete a three-game sweep.

Verdugo's sixth home run came on the first pitch thrown by Blue Jays closer Jordan Romano (3-4). Verdugo stood at home plate to admire his 415-foot drive into the stands behind the visitor's bullpen in right field.

Tigers 14, Rockies 9

In Denver, Javier Baez and Jake Marisnick each hit a grand slam and Detroit went deep five times to beat Colorado.

It was the first time the Tigers hit two grand slams in a game since May 15, 2009, when Brandon Inge and Ryan Raburn cleared the bases against Oakland.

Nationals 5, Phillies 4

In Philadelphia, Stone Garrett hit a grand slam, Jeimer Candelario added a solo shot and reliever Kyle Finnegan pitched out of late-inning jams that helped Washington beat Philadelphia.

The Nationals took two of three from the defending National League champions and finished a solid 6-3 on a nine-game, 10-day road trip. The worst team in the NL East, they won series against Seattle and San Diego on the trip and have won seven of 11 overall.

Orioles 2, Twins 1

In Baltimore, Minnesota closer Jhoan Duran forced in the tiebreaking run when he hit rookie Jordan Westburg with a pitch in the eighth inning, enabling Baltimore to stop a four-game skid.

The Orioles had gone 20 straight innings without a run and were poised to be swept for the first time this season before coming back from a 1-0 deficit in the eighth.

Mariners 7, Rays 6

In Seattle, José Caballero was hit by a pitch from Jason Adam (2-2) to force in the tiebreaking run, and Seattle erased an early five-run deficit in a win over Tampa Bay.

Eugenio Suárez and Tom Murphy homered for the Mariners (40-42), who took two of three games from the top team in the American League. Seattle's bullpen held the Rays without a hit over the final three innings. Andrés Muñoz (1-1) got the win and Paul Sewald earned his ninth save.

Guardians 8, Cubs 6, 10 innings

In Chicago, Josh Naylor hit a two-run single in the 10th inning and Cleveland regrouped to beat Chicago after All-Star closer Emmanuel Clase blew a four-run lead in the ninth.

Aaron Civale pitched three-hit ball over six innings after the start of the game was delayed nearly two hours by rain. Andrés Giménez homered in the third and scored the go-ahead run in the 10th.

White Sox 8, Athletics 7

In Oakland, Jake Burger hit his 18th home run of the season and Chicago avoided a three-game sweep.

Zach Remillard added a two-run single and Eloy Jiménez had a pair of RBI singles as the White Sox finished

MLB Results/Standings

WASHINGTON, July 3, (AP): Results and standings from the MLB games on Sunday.

Baltimore	2	Minnesota	1
Boston	5	Toronto	4
Kansas City	9	LA Dodgers	1
St. Louis	5	NY Yankees	1
Houston	5	Texas	3
Detroit	14	Colorado	9
LA Angels	5	Arizona	2
Seattle	7	Tampa Bay	6
Chicago W. Sox	8	Oakland	7
Cleveland	8	Chicago Cubs	10 inn 6
Washington	5	Philadelphia	4
Atlanta	6	Miami	3
Cincinnati	4	San Diego	3
Milwaukee	6	Pittsburgh	3
NY Mets	8	San Francisco	4

American League

East Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Tampa Bay	57	30	.655	—
Baltimore	49	33	.598	5-1/2
New York	46	38	.548	9-1/2
Toronto	45	40	.529	11
Boston	43	42	.506	13

Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Minnesota	42	43	.494	—
Cleveland	41	42	.494	—
Detroit	37	46	.446	4
Chicago	37	49	.430	5-1/2
Kansas City	25	59	.298	16-1/2

West Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Texas	50	34	.595	—
Houston	46	38	.548	4
Los Angeles	45	41	.523	6
Seattle	40	42	.488	9
Oakland	23	63	.267	28

National League

East Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Atlanta	56	27	.675	—
Miami	48	37	.565	9
Philadelphia	44	39	.530	12
New York	38	46	.452	18-1/2
Washington	34	49	.410	22

Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Cincinnati	45	39	.536	—
Milwaukee	45	39	.536	—
Pittsburgh	39	44	.470	5-1/2
Chicago	38	44	.463	6
St. Louis	35	48	.422	9-1/2

West Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Arizona	50	35	.588	—
Los Angeles	46	37	.554	3
San Francisco	46	38	.548	3-1/2
San Diego	38	46	.452	11-1/2
Colorado	33	53	.384	17-1/2

a seven-game trip 3-4.

Brent Rooker homered for Oakland hours after being named an All-Star.

Astros 5, Rangers 3

In Arlington, Chas McCormick lined a tiebreaking triple with two outs and the bases loaded in the eighth inning, and Houston hung on to beat Texas.

McCormick's opposite-field hit over a racing Adolis García into the right-field corner came an inning after Aroldis Chapman made his Texas debut with two strikeouts in a scoreless inning.

Brewers 6, Pirates 3

In Pittsburgh, William Contreras hit a go-ahead, three-run homer in the third inning, and Milwaukee beat Pittsburgh to win its third straight series.

Colon Rea (5-4) won his second straight start, allowing two runs and five hits in a season-high 6 2/3 innings. With runners on second and third in the fifth, he retired Andrew McCutchen on an inning-ending groundout.

Elvis Peguero allowed Josh Palacios' RBI double in the eighth, and Devin Williams retired three straight batters for his 17th save in 18 chances.

Alex on track for 2nd title in 3 seasons

Palou wins 3rd straight IndyCar race

LEXINGTON, Ohio, July 3, (AP): Alex Palou refused to acknowledge his dominance of IndyCar in the days leading up to Sunday's race at Mid-Ohio.

He found it hard to stick with that refrain after a third straight win.

Palou executed perfect strategy with a fast car to beat Chip Ganassi Racing teammate Scott Dixon by a wide margin, giving him four wins in his last five races and a massive lead in points as he chases a second title in three seasons.

Palou began his dominating run on the road course at Indianapolis, and he captured the pole in the Indy 500 and was in contention there until an issue on pit road led to a fourth-place finish. He followed with wins on the streets of Detroit and at Road America before giving the Ganassi team its record-tying 12th win at Mid-Ohio.

"I think maybe we're starting to honestly," Palou said of his dominance. "But it's really tight. It's about putting everything together. We've been able to do this quite often this year. Hopefully we'll be able to keep it together. We haven't been fastest in practice or qualifying, but we have been in the races and that's where it matters."

Dixon, the last driver to win three straight IndyCar races, finished second to move into second in the title chase - albeit 110 points back. Will Power was surprised to finish third because he lost track of where he was in the running order, while Christian Lundgaard finished fourth and Scott McLaughlin rounded out the top five.

"Second place is great, but unfortunately the man we're chasing finished first," said Dixon, the six-time series champion who opened the 2020 season with three straight wins. "But huge congrats to Alex and the 10 crew. They're doing a hell of a job this year."

Palou's stiffest competition at the road course in Lexington, Ohio, came from pole sitter Colton Herta, who led after a yellow flag on the opening lap through the first round of pit stops in a race that otherwise went green the rest of the way.

Herta had trouble on his final stop, though, crossing himself up on entry. It appeared as if he tried to push the

button for speed control and it failed to engage, but regardless, the pass-through penalty took him out of contention. He finished 11th.

Graham Rahal, who started alongside Herta on the front row, has struggled this season but was poised to have a big day for Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing. Then he also had a problem during a pit stop, where his left rear did not get on cleanly, and that cost him several seconds and ultimately relegated him to a seventh-place finish.

AUTO RACING

"We win as a team, we lose as a team. I thought the car should have been further forward today, but it's a quick reminder we have to be better in every phase of the program," said Rahal, who won at Mid-Ohio in 2015 and considers it his home track.

"Look," he said, "I'm disappointed. That's a fact. It's going to sting to think about it over the next couple of weeks, but we just have to continue to improve in every aspect of the game, and that is what it is."

Pato O'Ward was the biggest char-



Alex Palou raises the first-place trophy in victory lane after winning an IndyCar auto race at Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course in Lexington, Ohio. (AP)

ger during a race that nearly went green-to-checkers. He spun in qualifying and had to start 25th, but his Arrow McLaren car picked its way through the field and wound up finishing eighth.

"We didn't get help from anybody - no yellows, no nothing," O'Ward said, "and I kind of saw the leaders were struggling with the lappers a bit. I was like: 'Dude, it's not your day. Get out of the way.' That has to be looked at by IndyCar."

Several drivers took umbrage with rookie Benjamin Pedersen, who was not on the lead lap but refused to allow anybody to get around him cleanly. That included McLaughlin and Alexander Rossi, who wasted valuable time trapped behind him.

"Yeah, I just said he's not going to make any friends if he holds people up," said McLaughlin, who had words with Pedersen on pit road afterward. "He isn't even in our race. He's in a race of his own. But it is what it is."

Marcus Ericsson, who began the day second in points, didn't even make it through the first lap before a collision with Felix Rosenqvist sent him to the pits with damage. Rosenqvist appeared to give Ericsson plenty of room through one of the opening turns, but the Chip Ganassi Racing driver went wide and right over the right side of his Arrow McLaren.

"I just couldn't get the car stopped and obviously ran into Felix," Ericsson said. "I feel really bad for ruining Felix's day. That was definitely not my intention and I feel bad for the crew. But that was definitely not my intention."

Conor Daly was hanging around Mid-Ohio this weekend when he got a call from Meyer Shank Racing to drive for Simon Pagenaud, who was not cleared to race Sunday after a terrifying wreck the previous day. Pagenaud's brakes failed him and he rolled seven times through a gravel trap, though he managed to climb from the car unharmed.

Daly, who parted ways with Ed Carpenter Racing a few weeks ago, started last on the 27-car grid and finished 20th.

Haley, Elliott complete podium

Shane wins his NASCAR Cup Series debut in memorable finish to series' first street race

CHICAGO, July 3, (AP): When Shane van Gisbergen got the call from Justin Marks, it reignited his interest in the NASCAR Cup Series. He studied the races, the drivers and the cars.

Turns out he is a pretty good student.

Van Gisbergen won his Cup Series debut on a rainy Sunday in downtown Chicago, chasing down Justin Haley and Chase Elliott in a memorable finish to the series' first street race.

After passing Elliott, van Gisbergen duelled with Haley in the final laps before the three-time Supercars champion moved in front for good. Haley held on for second, and Elliott was third.

"The racing, the battles were really fun," van Gisbergen said. "But everyone was respectful and clean. It was really cool."

The 34-year-old van Gisbergen, a New Zealand native, became the first driver to win his Cup Series debut since Johnny Rutherford in the second qualifying race at Daytona in 1963.

He got a chance to drive the No. 91 Chevrolet in Chicago as part of Trackhouse Racing's Project 91. Trackhouse is owned by Marks, and the goal for the Project 91 program is to give international drivers a shot at NASCAR.

"This was a shower idea," Marks said. "I mean it was me thinking I'm a huge fan of all different kinds of motorsports and I've raced in all different kinds of motorsports. I wanted to bring my love global motorsport to NASCAR."

CAR RACING

When van Gisbergen was credited with leading Lap 25, it was the first lap led for Project 91 in three starts. He became the sixth driver born outside the United States to win a NASCAR Cup Series race, joining Marcos Ambrose, Mario Andretti, Juan Pablo Montoya, Earl Ross and Daniel Suárez.

"He's going to go home and tell all his friends how bad we are," Elliott cracked.

Van Gisbergen won his first Supercars championship in 2016 and added two more the past two years. He was helped in his NASCAR debut by Darian Grubb, who was the crew chief for Tony Stewart when he won the Cup Series championship in 2011.

Trackhouse Racing also won last weekend's Cup Series race with Ross Chastain at Nashville Superspeedway.

"I was a big Tony Stewart fan, so working with Darian was pretty special," van Gisbergen said.

Kyle Larson finished fourth in Chicago, followed by Kyle Busch and Austin Cindric. Christopher Bell won the two stages and led a race-high 37 laps, but faded to 18th. The race was scheduled for 100 laps and 220 miles, but it was shortened because of fading sunlight after the start was delayed for more 90 minutes because of a historic rainfall that flooded the course. The last half of the Xfinity Race,



Shane Van Gisbergen celebrates after winning a NASCAR Cup Series auto race at the Grant Park 220 in Chicago. (AP)

set to resume after it was suspended Saturday because of lightning, was canceled.

Right before the scheduled start, as the rain persisted, pole-sitter Denny Hamlin took to Twitter to lobby for a delay, and Noah Gragson posted video of one of his tires floating on pit road. NASCAR then decided to allow the drivers to return to their haulers.

Steve O'Donnell's NASCAR's chief operating officer, said they never planned to start at that point.

"What we wanted to do was get all the things that needed to happen to be able to fire the engines and get us going taken care of," he said. "So that when we knew hey, the track is ready to go, you know we're not going through the anthem and driver introductions and those sort of things."

The weather eventually cleared up, but there were puddles on the course when the race began. Even as it started to dry out - and teams started breaking out their slick tires - water splashed everywhere whenever a driver slid into a tire barrier.

"Certainly added a dynamic to the race that isn't super uncommon," Elliott said. "We've been through that scenario before. But it was adding that to an already kind of new and different atmosphere and different circuit was a little odd."

Gragson, Busch and Joey Logano all visited the rows of tires in Turn 6. Hamlin and Elliott got into the tire pack in Turn 2. Ricky Stenhouse Jr. was hit by Bubba Wallace and got stuck in the tire barrier in Turn 1 late in the race.

There also was a massive pileup on the 50th lap involving 14 cars turning on East Jackson Drive from Michigan Avenue, clogging the course and almost assuredly drawing a smile from regular Chicago drivers familiar with the area.

"It definitely was a first-class event. I obviously enjoyed it and hope we come back tomorrow," Haley said. "I don't know about the back half of the grid, but yeah, very cool. Glad to be a part of it."



United States defender Bryan Reynolds kicks the ball past Trinidad and Tobago midfielder Joevin Jones during the first half of a CONCACAF Gold Cup soccer match in Charlotte, N.C. (AP)

Sports

Latest sports scores at — <http://sports.arabtimesonline.com>

Dominant US advance to Gold Cup quarters

Qatar pip Mexico 1-0, and both nations qualify

CHARLOTTE, N.C., July 3, (AP): Jesús Ferreira became the first American to score international hat tricks in consecutive games, and the United States advanced to the CONCACAF Gold Cup quarterfinals with a 6-0 rout of Trinidad and Tobago on Sunday night.

Ferreira scored in the 14th and 38th minutes against 101st-ranked Trinidad, then converted a penalty kick in the third minute of first-half stoppage time.

Cade Cowell scored in the 66th, four minutes after entering, and Gianluca Busio in the 79th - the first international goal for both. Brandon Vázquez added his third goal in the fifth minute of stoppage time as the No. 11 Americans won by six goals for the second straight game.

A 22-year-old son of former Colombian midfielder David Ferreira, Jesús Ferreira joined Landon Donovan as the only Americans with three hat tricks. Twelve of Ferreira's 14 international goals have been against Caribbean nations, including four against Grenada in June 2022 and three versus St. Kitts and Nevis on Wednesday.

SOCCER

"When I see his movement and his confidence in the penalty box, you can tell that the game has slowed down for him," U.S. interim coach B.J. Callaghan said. "All of the work that he's doing, leading our line defensively, dropping down, helping buildup play, for me he's having a really complete tournament."

The U.S. won Group A on goal difference over Jamaica and advanced to a quarterfinal at Cincinnati on July 9 against Canada, Guatemala or Guadeloupe. The Americans have 40 wins, one loss and five draws in the Gold Cup group stage.

The U.S. won its group for the 16th time in 17 Gold Cups, along with a second-place finish to Panama in 2011. Before a crowd of 40,243, the Americans outshot T&T by 23-9.

Trinidad was eliminated, finishing with a win over St. Kitts and a pair of losses. The Soca Warriors denied the U.S. a trip to the 2018 World Cup with a victory at home.

Ferreira put the U.S. ahead in the 14th minute. Cristian Roldan shuffled the ball to DeJuan Jones, who cut back to Fer-



Qatar defender Ahmed Suhail (left), and Mexico forward Roberto Alvarado jump to head the ball during the second half of a CONCACAF Gold Cup soccer match in Santa Clara, Calif. (AP)

reira. He settled the ball and poked the ball in from near the penalty spot.

Ferreira doubled the lead in the 38th when goalkeeper Marvin Phillip palmed his initial shot and Ferreira put the rebound in off a leg of defender Sheldon Bateau.

Guatemalan referee Mario Escobar awarded the penalty kick when Alvin Jones pulled down Djordje Mihailovic, and Ferreira sent his kick to Phillips'

left. Goalkeeper Matt Turner, defender Miles Robinson and Roldan were inserted into the starting lineup in place of Sean Johnson, Matt Miazga and Cowell.

Midfielder Alan Soñora missed the game because of a strained right hamstring and will be replaced on the roster. Midfielder Aidan Morris was allowed to leave camp for what the U.S.

Soccer Federation said were personal reasons.

Jamaica, which drew 1-1 with the U.S., advanced with a 5-0 win over St. Kitts at Santa Clara, California. The Reggae Boyz went ahead on an own goal by goalkeeper Julani Archibald, then got goals from Jonathan Russell, DiShon Bernard, Daniel Johnson and Cory Burke.

Qatar advanced to the quarterfinals of the CONCACAF Gold Cup with a

1-0 win Sunday night over a Mexican team that already clinched advancement.

Hazem Shehata scored his first international goal on a 10-yard header from Musaab Khidir's cross in the 27th minute, Qatar's only shot of the match.

Qatar last year became the first host to go 0-3 at a World Cup, losing to Ecuador, Senegal and the Netherlands.

No. 14 Mexico, which opened with

wins over Honduras and Haiti under interim coach Jaime Lozano, won Group B.

No. 58 Qatar, in the Gold Cup as an invited guest, finished with four points, ahead of Honduras on goal difference, and also will play one of those four nations as part of a quarterfinal double-header. The Qataris are coached by Carlos Queiroz, who led Iran at last year's World Cup.

Vingegaard stays in sixth spot

Philipsen 'wins' third stage of Tour, Yates keeps overall lead

BAYONNE, France, July 3, (AP): Belgian cyclist Jasper Philipsen won the third stage of the Tour de France in a bunched sprint on Monday, while Adam Yates of Britain kept the race leader's yellow jersey.

The 25-year-old Philipsen, who won two stages in last year's race, was expected to lead to the front by his Alpecin-Deceuninck teammate Mathieu van der Poel and comfortably held off German rider Phil Bauhaus and Australian Caleb Ewan as they dashed to the line.

Danish sprinter Fabio Jakobsen was fourth ahead of Belgian stand-out Wout van Aert, who failed to overtake Philipsen on the right in the last 50 meters and backed off near a crash barrier.

They all clocked 4 hours, 43 minutes, 15 seconds on the 193-kilometer (120-mile) route from Amorebieta-Etxano in Spain's Basque country to Bayonne in France.

The main contenders for the overall win arrived safely.

Yates maintained his six-second lead over two-time Tour winner Tadej Pogacar of Slovenia and his twin brother Simon Yates in third. Defending champion Jonas Vingegaard of Denmark stayed in sixth spot heading into Tuesday's fourth stage.

Monday's trek rolled serenely past the Zenaruzza monastery and through hilly countryside under reposing blue skies, before crossing over into France.

American Neilson Powless and French veteran Laurent Pichon set off early on a breakaway, but others did not follow and took it rather easy in terms of speed. Pogacar punctured his rear tire, but smiled as he easily made his way back to the peloton.

Powless gave a thumbs up to the crowd and a peace sign to the television camera alongside him after being the first to reach the top of the Cote de Millou - one of four small climbs on an otherwise flat route passing by quaint fishing villages on the Atlantic coast.

French rider Victor Lafay, the win-



Belgium's Jasper Philipsen (left), celebrates as he crosses the finish line ahead of second placed Germany's Phil Bauhaus (right), to win the third stage of the Tour de France cycling race over 187.5 kilometers (116.5 miles) with start in Morebieta Etxano, Spain and finish in Bayonne, France. (AP)

ner of Sunday's second stage, gave chase briefly to gain some points in the quest for the green jersey awarded each year for best sprinter.

CYCLING

Powless pumped his right fist after completing the fourth climb and, having collected all the day's points counting toward the best climber's polka-dot jersey, he then dropped off the pace.

That left the 36-year-old Pichon alone in front as he passed two imposing French chateaux and zoomed past the famed port of Saint-Jean-de-Luz.

But with his head down and his lead evaporating, Pichon had no time to take in any of those sights and he was caught with 37 kilometers (23 miles) to go.

The large pack - featuring a dozen contenders for the stage win - then stepped up the pace considerably as each team prepared their sprinters for the shootout.

Rublev eliminates Purcell

Djokovic, Swiatek win on Day 1 at Wimbledon

WIMBLEDON, England, July 3, (AP): Novak Djokovic and Iga Swiatek advanced with straight-set victories Monday despite a rain delay as Wimbledon got started.

It is the year's third major tournament - and Djokovic won the first two: the Australian Open in January and the French Open in June. That puts him halfway to the first calendar-year Grand Slam in men's tennis since 1969. He came close to the feat in 2021, falling just one victory short when he lost in the final of the U.S. Open.

He seeks a fifth consecutive title at the All England Club and eighth overall, which both would tie records for men.

Djokovic's title at Roland Garros was his 23rd at a Slam event, breaking a tie with Rafael Nadal for the men's mark in that category.

Djokovic, the No. 2 seed, beat Pedro Cachin 6-3, 6-3, 7-6 (4) after a rain delay that lasted more than an hour. Groundskeepers used leaf blowers to dry the grass.

"It was definitely frustrating, of course, for all the crowd. For us players, we both wanted to play but the conditions were not great, obviously still slippery," Djokovic said of the delay.

The 36-year-old Serb used a towel to help dry some wet spots: "I normally come out with rackets, not with towels."

Swiatek, who owns four major titles but hasn't been past the fourth round at the All England Club, beat Zhu Lin of China 6-1, 6-3 at No. 1 Court, winning the final two games after the roof was closed following a rain delay.

Swiatek said she feels better prepared for the grass-court major this year following her title at the French Open.

"After Roland Garros," she said on court, "I really took some time to just appreciate what happened. Last year, when I won Roland Garros, it was my second Grand Slam so it still felt, like, overwhelming, but this time I really

could just focus on celebrating and actually getting back to work with more peace in my head and I try to be open minded for the grass season and I think it's working. Hopefully I'm going to be able keep that mindset."

Barbora Strycova, a semifinalist in 2019, became the first winner of this year's tournament by beating Maryna Zanevska 6-1, 7-5. On the men's side, seventh-seeded Andrey Rublev beat Max Purcell 6-3, 7-5, 6-4 on No. 3 Court.

When Victoria Azarenka walked into Court 15 on Monday morning for her first Wimbledon match in two years, she was greeted by polite clapping. When the two-time Grand Slam champion from Belarus finished off a three-set victory more than 2 1/2 hours later, Azarenka shook her racket with her right hand and pumped her left fist, then offered a wave to the spectators who were applauding warmly.

Unlike her opponent, Yuan Yue, whose nationality was noted on the scoreboard alongside her name, Azarenka had no country listed there. That's because players from Rus-

sia and Belarus are back competing at Wimbledon a year after they were barred by the All England Club because of the invasion of Ukraine - and, in a sort of half-measure adopted by some other sports, are deemed "neutral" athletes who officially do not represent any nation.

The war that began in February 2022 when Russia invaded Ukraine with help from Belarus continues, but Wimbledon's organizers announced in March they would lift their ban - about which Azarenka said in an interview that, in the big picture, "I'm not sure that it made any difference."

TENNIS

While other players have flags to the left of their names on the oversized, manually-operated brackets on the outside wall of Centre Court, the Russians and Belarusians do not. Nor are the countries noted on official schedules or results issued by the All England Club, nor as part of graphics on TV broadcasts of matches. The Club

did not allow Wimbledon to be aired on television in Russia or Belarus.

Azarenka and all other entrants from those two countries needed to - and did - sign a declaration agreeing to three stipulations: They wouldn't be representing Russia or Belarus; they wouldn't accept funding from those governments or companies operated by them; they wouldn't express support for the invasion of Ukraine or the leaders of Russia or Belarus.

"It was a difficult decision, as we said when we made it earlier in the year," All England Club CEO Sally Bolton said Monday about the reversal in policy. "We took a lot of time to think carefully about the decision we made and the impact that would have in the same way as we did last year. We think it's the right decision for The Championships this year."

Liudmila Samsonova, a Russian who was seeded 15th in the women's field, said after being eliminated by Ana Bogdan of Romania 7-6 (1), 7-6 (4) on Monday: "Last year was tough to accept. But this year, when they said that we were able to play, it was amazing."

If there were questions about how Russians and Belarusians might be received upon their return, the earliest indications on Day 1 were that there was nothing out of the ordinary.

No protests. No boos. No shouts in support of Ukraine - or against the returning players. (Russian and Belarusian flags were not allowed to be brought into the tournament grounds.)

"Just like I never left, honestly. It feels good to be playing here," Azarenka said after beating Yuan 6-4, 5-7, 6-4. "For me, personally, I experienced very good treatment. ... Today, to hear people say, 'Let's go, Vika!' and cheering me on was also why I play, to play in front of the crowd, to put on a good show."

Russians who won Monday included No. 7 seed Andrey Rublev and unseeded Aslan Karatsev among the men, and No. 12 Veronika Kudermetova among the women.



Serbia's Novak Djokovic returns to Argentina's Pedro Cachin during their first round men's singles match on day one of the Wimbledon tennis championships in London. (AP)