

NEW U.K. SANCTIONS ON IRAN ENTITIES, INDIVIDUALS UN clash on Iran enrichment, drones



In this image from video released by the U.S. Air Force, Russian military SU-34 and SU-35 aircraft release flares in the flight path of a U.S. Air Force MQ-9 Reaper drone, (lower left), on Thursday, July 6, 2023, over Syria. Russian fighter jets have 'harassed' American drones over Syria for the third day in a row this week, the U.S. military said. Tension between Russian and U.S. troops is not uncommon in

Syria as both countries conduct patrols on the ground as well as overflights. Syria's 12-year conflict has left half a million people dead and over 1 million wounded. The U.S. military said in a statement that Friday's encounter lasted for about two hours during which three MQ-9 drones were 'once again harassed' by Russian fighter aircraft while flying over Syria. (AP)

Kill, kidnap attempts rise

UNITED NATIONS, July 8, (Agencies): The United States and its Western allies clashed with Russia and Iran at the U.N. Security Council on Thursday over Tehran's advancing uranium enrichment and its reported supply of combat drones to Moscow being used to attack Ukraine.

The sharp exchanges came at the council's semi-annual meeting on implementation of its resolution endorsing the 2015 nuclear deal between Iran and six major countries known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, which the U.S. under then-President Donald Trump left in 2018.

At the start of the meeting, Russia's U.N. Ambassador Vassily Nebenzia accused Britain, which hold the council presidency, of seeking to hold "an openly politicized show" by inviting Ukraine to take part in the meeting when it is not part of the JCPOA. He demanded a procedural vote on its participation.

U.S. deputy ambassador Robert Wood countered, accusing both Iran and Russia of participating in the transfer of drones used in Ukraine without prior Security Council approval in violation of the 2015 resolution.

"This is a matter of life or death for the Ukrainian people," Wood said. "It would be unconscionable to deny Ukraine the opportunity to speak at this meeting when it is experiencing the devastating effects of Iran's violation of resolution 2231 firsthand."

Britain's U.N. Ambassador Barbara Woodward, who was chairing the council meeting, then called for a vote on whether Ukraine could participate. Twelve members voted "yes," while China and Russia voted "no" and Mozambique abstained.

In other news, UK Foreign Secretary James Cleverly announced plans for a new sanctions regime to hold Iran to account for its "hostile and destabilising behaviour around the world."

He outlined, in a press release on Thursday, new action in response to Iran's "threats to the UK and our partners, including a new sanctions regime which will give the UK greater powers to target Iran's key decision makers."

"Iran has increased its efforts to kill or kidnap individuals perceived to be enemies of the regime outside of Iran, including in the UK, the statement reads.

"Since the start of 2022, the UK has responded to more than 15 credible threats to kill or kidnap British or UK-based individuals by the Iranian regime.

"The regime has publicly called for the killing or capture of these individuals and in some cases detained and harassed the individual's families in Iran.

"The Iranian intelligence services have developed close

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NewsWatch

ABU DHABI: The UAE's National Centre of Meteorology recorded an earthquake measured 3.2 magnitude on the Richter scale in **Fujairah's Dadna** without any effects on population.

The National Seismic Network, affiliated to the National Centre of Meteorology, detected the quake at 10.51 am local time in Dadna, the center said in a statement.

It added that the quake was slightly felt by residents in the north. (KUNA)

ISTANBUL: Turkish President **Recep Tayyip Erdogan** affirmed early Saturday that **Ukraine** deserves the membership of NATO.

This came in a joint press conference with Ukrainian Presi-

dent **Volodymyr Zelenskyy**, who arrived in **Turkey** as part of a European tour.

Erdogan also said that **Turkiye** is the country making the "most efforts" to end the Russian-Ukrainian war through negotiations in accordance with the foundations of international law.

The Turkish president expressed his desire for extending the grain deal, which is set to expire on July 17.

Erdogan shed light on an upcoming visit by Russian President **Vladimir Putin** to **Turkiye** next month, saying that it will be an opportunity to discuss the exchange of prisoners (between **Russia** and **Ukraine**) face to face again. (KUNA)

BRUSSELS: The European Union Friday expressed fears that

the violence in Israeli-occupied **West Bank** will continue unless there is a clear perspective for a political process to succeed.

"What we are witnessing in the West Bank, in the occupied **Palestine** .. it all just shows that the violence is just being repeated. There is a cycle of violence which has not stopped," EU lead spokesperson for foreign affairs **Peter Stano** told the European Commission's daily news conference today.

"Despite many calls by the EU, by the international community the violence continues and this will be happening unless there is a clear, credible perspective for a political process," he stressed.

Stano noted that the EU has a special representative for the **Middle East Peace Process** through whom the EU is conducting most of the outreach with the partners in the region. (KUNA)



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Prayer Timings

Fajr	03:20	Asr	15:27
Sunrise ..	04:55	Maghrib ..	18:51
Zohr	11:53	Isha	20:22

Local

Expected weather for the next 24 hours:
By Day: Very hot and relatively humid over coastal areas with light to moderate northeasterly wind to northwesterly wind with speeds of 08-38 km/h.

Weather

By Night: Hot to rather hot and relatively humid over coastal areas with light to moderate northeasterly wind to light variable wind with speeds of 06-30 km/h.

Kuwait Airport	48	32
Abdaly	48	30
Jahra	50	34
Salmiyah	45	36
Ahmadi	42	38
Nuwaisib	46	33
Wafra	49	31

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

Most seizures in issues of debt

Highest ever, travel ban imposed on 20,939 persons in '23 1st quarter

KUWAIT CITY, July 8: In an indication of the increase in judicial claims of all kinds, statistics issued by the Statistics and Research Department of the Ministry of Justice for the first quarter of this year revealed that the number of procedures related to travel ban amounted to 20,939, which is the largest number in terms of procedures of the ruling execution departments, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The statistics explained that the total procedures implemented in the various execution departments in all governorates during the month of April alone amounted to 538,958, which are distributed as follows: Capital 142,851, Hawally 86,226, Ahmadi 76,485, Jahra 65,134, Mubarak Al-Kabeer 64,492, Farwaniya 102,569, then the airport by 1,201.

The procedures for requesting executive seizure of what the debtor owes to others

accounted for the largest number of procedures, amounting to 32.3 percent, followed by the procedures for the minutes of executive attachment of what belonged to the debtor with others by 15.4 percent. The procedures for opening a file to adjust alimony constituted the least number of procedures, which is 0.01 percent.

In terms of the branches, the statistics indicated that the procedures of the Capital branch represented the largest number in April, with 26.5 percent, followed by the procedures of the Farwaniya branch by 19 percent, and then the procedures of the Hawally and Ahmadi branches with 16 percent and 14.2 percent respectively. It was followed by the procedures of the Jahra and Mubarak Al-Kabeer branches with 12.1 percent and 12 percent respectively, and finally the airport branch with 0.2 percent.

By comparing the procedures of the execution departments during the month of April 2023 with the same month in the previous year, the following seems clear:

The total number of procedures in April increased by 61.6 percent compared to the corresponding month of the year 2022 due to an increase in the number of procedures in most branches, with the highest increase in the Farwaniya branch reaching 130.9 percent, followed by the Mubarak Al-Kabeer branch with 106.5 percent, then Jahra branch with 60.7 percent, the Capital and Ahmadi branches with 45.7 percent and 44.9 percent respectively and finally the Hawally branch with 35.3 percent. A decrease was only witnessed in the airport branch by 58.2 percent during this month compared to the corresponding month the previous year.

'Grant equal salary to all'

Assembly to meet on Tuesday

By Saeed Mahmoud Saleh
Arab Times Staff



Bedour Al-Sumait

Ma'ali Al-Asousi

Maha Al-Baghli

Leading posts in gov't: Al-Asousi

Women role in society hailed

KUWAIT CITY, July 8, (KUNA): Kuwait's women have been playing, throughout history, their leading and effective role in the country's development in all fields.

They have overcome challenges and achieved outstanding successes that enabled them to get leadership regionally and internationally.

They proceeded with their role in building society until they obtained their political rights on May 16, 2005, when they ran for, and elect, the National Assembly in 2006 for the first time.

In 2008, some 27 women ran for the National Assembly election which helped them gain some experience to get some seats in the National Assembly election in 2009.

Dr. Ma'asouma Al-Mubarak, Dr. Salwa Al-Jassar, Dr. Aseel Al-Awadhi and Dr. Rola Dashti won in the 2009 parliament election that was a great event in Kuwait.

Kuwait's females have spared no efforts to participate in building the society to the extent that they made up 59 percent of the country's workforce, the highest rate globally.

Speaking to KUNA, Maha Al-Baghli,

Municipality Council member, said that Kuwait's women managed to join all fields and get leading posts in the private and public sectors.

Meanwhile, Ma'ali Al-Asousi, an advisor of humanitarian action, said Kuwait's women have a key role in the society and effective contributions to voluntary and humanitarian action, the recent efforts were their participation in combating the coronavirus.

Economic and political freedom helped Kuwait's women obtain the most leading posts in the State, she said.

For her part, Alia Jowhar, a media person, stressed the significant role of Kuwait's women in enriching literature in the Arab world.

She referred to several contributions of Kuwait's women in media, despite challenges to prove their excellence and be effective in varied media outlets.

Finally, Bedour Al-Sumait, head of business and professional women federation, said the country's leadership has backed and encouraged women to practice their effective role and achieve comprehensive development.

KUWAIT CITY, July 8: The National Assembly will hold its ordinary session on Tuesday to discuss the following:

- Approval of minutes number 1495 for the inaugural session held on June 20;
- Resignation of State Audit Bureau (SAB) Chairman Faisal Al-Shaya;
- Amiri speech delivered by HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah in the inaugural session and referring it to the concerned parliamentary committee to prepare the response to the speech;
- Incoming letters;
- Complaints and petitions;
- Proposal to allocate part of the upcoming session to discuss the burning of a copy of the Holy Quran in Sweden and take a decision on the step in this regard;
- Proposal to allocate part of the upcoming session to discuss measures taken by the government regarding the increasing prices of some commodities;
- Proposal to allocate part of the upcoming session to discuss the position of the government on the strategic alternative to the salary scale;
- Proposal to look into the criteria and measures taken by the government to fill up vacant senior positions;
- Proposal to form a temporary committee to follow up the problems of those residing in southern areas including Sabah Al-Ahmad, Wafra and Khairan residential areas;
- Proposal to form a temporary committee for cyber-crimes and artificial intelligence (AI);
- Report of the Health, Social and Labor Affairs Committee on the bill to replace the word 'servant' with 'domestic labor' wherever it is mentioned in the relevant laws;
- Report of the Financial and Economic Affairs Committee on the Exports Bill;
- Report of the Financial and Economic Affairs Committee on the Government Sukuk Bill;
- Reports of the Foreign Affairs Committee on the cooperation between Kuwait and other countries like Turkey, Ukraine and Morocco.

Meanwhile, MP Marzouq Al-Ghanim has submitted a proposal to increase the allowance for higher education students up to KD300 per month. He suggested that the allowance for excellent students should be increased to KD 350 for those under class B, KD400 for class A1 and KD450 for class A.

MPs Shuaib Al-Muwaizri, Shuaib Shaaban, Abdullah Fehad, Osama Al-Zaid and Soud Al-Asfour have proposed obligating banks to refund the interest illegally collected from clients since 1992.

MPs Shuaib Al-Muwaizri, Shuaib Shaaban, Abdullah Fehad, Hamad Al-Medlej and Soud Al-Asfour have submitted a bill to amend Civil Service Law number 15/1979 on granting equal salaries to employees with the same job scale in different institutions; in addition to specifying the minimum salary at KD1,000.

Kuwait last among GCC on 'cost of living' index

KUWAIT CITY, July 8: Numbeo, one of the largest databases covering cost of living prices in the world, ranked Kuwait as the cheapest Gulf country on the cost of living index for the first half of 2023, and ranked 14th in the Arab world on the same index, reports Al-Rai daily.

Every half year, Nambio issues the cost of living index, which is a relative index that measures consumer prices in 139 countries, including prices for groceries, restaurants, transportation and utilities, while the index does not include accommodation expenses such as rent or mortgage.

At the level of the most expensive Arab cities, Dubai came first, followed by Al-Khobar, then Abu Dhabi, Doha, Manama, Beirut, Riyadh, followed by Ramallah, Jeddah, Muscat, Sharjah, Dammam, then Amman and Kuwait.

On the other hand, Kuwait ranked fourth in the Arab world and second in the Gulf, after Amman, Beirut and Dubai, in the crowding index during the first six months of 2023.

Nambio stated that the average time it takes an individual in Kuwait to move his car from one place to another within a city or region takes 34.7 minutes, while in Dubai, for example, it takes 36.6 minutes, and Istanbul 51.8 minutes.

In the quality of living index for the first half of 2023, Kuwait ranked last in the Gulf and seventh in the Arab world, while Muscat came first, followed by Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Doha, Jeddah and Riyadh.

The quality of living index measures the general quality of life in a city or country, and takes into account various factors that affect an individual's quality of life, including purchasing power, pollution levels, housing affordability, cost of living, safety, health care quality, travel times and climatic conditions.



Sheikh Talal Fahad Al-Sabah, chairman of Kuwait Football Association (KFA), poses during a joint press conference with FIFA President Sepp Blatter in Kuwait City to announce the inauguration of the Goal Project One institute for children, part of the 1Goal campaign that seizes the power of football to ensure that education for all is a lasting impact of the 2010 FIFA World Cup. (AP)

Pledge to 'open new chapter' in sports

Leadership congrats Sheikh Talal on Asia Olympic Council top post

KUALA LUMPUR, July 8, (KUNA): The new chairman of the Asian Olympic Council Sheikh Talal Al-Fahad Al-Sabah has pledged after his election to open a new chapter in the history of the Asian Olympic sports.

"A page was folded today and a new one was opened," said the eminent Kuwait sports personality as he addressed the second general assembly of the council, held in the Thai capital, Bangkok. He won the eminent seat with 24 votes against 20 his contender, Hussein Al-Musallam, secretary of the Kuwaiti Olympic Committee.

Sheikh Talal Al-Fahad proposed to name Al-Musallam as his honorary deputy considering his long service and noticeable contributions to developing the Olympic sports in Asia. His proposal was unanimously approved.

HH Amir congratulates
His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations on Saturday to Sheikh Talal Al-Fahad Al-Sabah for being elected as President of the Asian Olympic Council.

His Highness noted that Sheikh Talal's achievements and contributions to the sports field are highly appreciated, wishing him the best of luck in the new position.

HH Crown Prince congratulates
His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations on Saturday to Sheikh Talal Al-Fahad Al-Sabah for being elected as President of the Asian Olympic Council.

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HH PM congratulates
His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations on Saturday to Sheikh Talal Al-Fahad Al-Sabah for being elected as President of the Asian Olympic Council.

DM congratulates
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Ahmad Fahad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah has addressed a cable of congratulations to Sheikh Talal Al-Fahad Al-Sabah on his election as President of the Asian Olympic Council.

The Kuwaiti Army General Staff Command said in a statement that Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad wished success for Sheikh Talal and expressed hopes he would be able to elevate level of Asian sports and make more accomplishments in the post service.

IM congratulates
First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Talal Khaled Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah on Saturday addressed a cable of congratulations to Sheikh Talal Al-Fahad Al-Sabah on his election as President of the Asian Olympic Council.

A MoI statement quoted the interior minister as saying, "your winning of the international sports post came in appreciation for your accomplishments and the busy sports march."

He prayed to His Almighty to guide Sheikh Talal Al-Fahad to success for lifting the Kuwaiti Flag aloft at regional and international quarters under the sagacious leadership of Their Highnesses, the Amir and the Crown Prince.

All kinds of docus forged: Mol

Filipino gang held in fraud case

KUWAIT CITY, July 8: (KUNA): The Ministry of Interior has busted a gang counterfeiting official documents for the Philippine community in the country.

The ministry said in a statement that the counterfeiter had been apprehended upon guidelines by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Talal Khaled Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah to clamp down on any violators of the country's laws.

Personnel of the MoI department of combating counterfeiting succeeded, in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Philippine embassy, in holding 33 Filipinos who issued fraudulent documents for members of the community -- such as study certificates, marriage contracts and driving permits.

They have been referred to the relevant authorities for further legal procedures against them.

Assets undeclared: According to a recent report by the Kuwait Anti-Corruption Authority (Nazaha), its audit committees inquired about balances, accounts, securities, and the movement of accounts and local banks for 515 who are covered by financial disclosure statements. About 5,253 leaders and individuals who are required to submit their financial disclosure statements to Nazaha failed to do so in the last six years - between 2017 and 2022. They were referred to the Public Prosecution, reports Al-Qabas daily.

The report explained that the number of those who failed to submit declarations in the last three years represented

six times more than those registered from 2017 to 2019.

The files of those who defaulted were referred to the Public Prosecution, but it was noted that they recorded an increase during the last three years, as 1,426 failed to submit their declarations in 2022, 1,038 in 2021, and 2,062 in 2020.

In this context, the total declarations submitted during the first three months of this year amounted to approximately 3,350. The total declarations received by Nazaha since the approval of its executive regulations six years ago amounted to 33,347 declarations, of which 51 percent submitted their declarations for the first time, 11,000 were covered with the declarations until March, and 5,232 left office.

The audit committees inquired about 430 balances and movements of local bank accounts belonging to those subject to financial disclosure, with the aim of examining the elements of ownership of securities through the Kuwait Clearing Company.

The committees also inquired about the balances and movement of accounts for 85 securities covered by the financial disclosure statement through the Kuwait Investigations Unit of the National Committee for Combating Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing. All the required data were received.

Nazaha, through the initiative to review and enhance accountability in state-owned companies, is working in partnership with the State Audit Bureau to strengthen efforts to implement a guide for auditing the application of governance rules in this type of company.

Other Voices

Japanese Shiro, stubborn goat

By Ahmad alsarraf

The Japanese, Shiro Oguni, was visiting a shelter for elderly people with memory impairment or memory loss. He was saddened by their psychological condition, their complete isolation from society and everyone's neglect of them, and the harsh loneliness that shrouded the hearts of the shelter's inmates.

Then, he got a unique idea to run a restaurant and hire them as waiters and waitresses. He cared to serve tasty food to attract the customers in addition to the humanitarian factor that is to hire elderly suffering dementia.

Dementia is the case which makes the elderly forgetful because of many reasons including some suffering from chronic diseases. As for Alzheimer's, it is one of the most common types of dementia, and it is characterized by a gradual decline in memory and the deterioration of mental and executive functions in particular, and it occurs as a result of the formation of abnormal deposits in the brain that affect neurons.

The restaurant project succeeded, commercially and humanely, in a way that exceeded the expectations of its owner, although 37% of the customers' orders were contrary to what they asked for, and that was the source of laughter for both parties, which made the project special, but 99% of its visitors came out happy with the experience, the distinctive food, with promises to come back.

Civilization is not a religion, a fancy car, an ornate temple with high ceilings, wide streets, huge schools, organized

and complex educational structures characterized by advanced technology, excellent infrastructure, implementation of governance, and cultural development among the population. Humanly, this is what we are missing, with great regret, in our societies.

The story of the restaurant reminded me of an old anecdote that I touched on years ago about a couple who always complained of poor memory, and that was the reason for their disagreement a lot over small matters.

They, on the advice of their children, visited a number of doctors, and performed various blood tests and examinations, but they did not seem to worry much, and the last mental health consultant advised them to accept the matter as it was, and to try to write down what they had to do, to avoid being forgetful.

They returned from the doctor's office, and on the evening of that day the man told his wife that he wanted to prepare himself a tomatoes and cheddar cheese sandwich, and he asked her if she wanted him to prepare the same for her, and she said she would love to have one but with cucumber and white cheese!

She told him to write her request on a piece of paper so that he remembers what she wanted, but he repeated the request and promised her that he would not forget, because he did not yet suffer from dementia, but she insisted on her request, and he also insisted on his position and left the room angry.

He returned after a short absence, carrying a plate containing a tomato sandwich with cheddar cheese, and another plate containing two fried eggs, and placed it in front of her. She nodded in acceptance, saying; but you forgot to add the fries and ketchup, like I asked you to!

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alsarraf

diwaniya ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

Drop in crime rate as Mol efforts bear fruit

New security plans prove successful

KUWAIT CITY, July 8: It seems that the plans for security deployment and rounding up lawbreakers in the country, which were being implemented by the Ministry of Interior for some time, are bearing fruit, reports Al-Qabas daily.

94 illegals nabbed

Clear all fines before leaving country: Mol

KUWAIT CITY, July 8: Personnel from the General Administration of Residence Affairs Investigation have arrested 94 violators of the residence and labor laws during campaigns in Farwaniya, Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh, Mahboula, Khaitan and Al-Ahmadi, reports Al-Rai daily.

Those arrested are of various nationalities and the Public Relations and Security Media Department of the Ministry of Interior stated the arrested persons were referred to the competent authorities to take legal action against them.

On the other hand, the Public Morals Protection Department of the Criminal Investigation Department has taken into custody a gang of 8 people comprising different nationalities from Mahboula for practicing acts contrary to public morals.

The daily added the gang was operating via the social media and were involved in flesh trade.

'Clear all fines': The Ministry of Interior has announced that vehicles owned by expatriates will be allowed to leave the country only after the full payment of traffic fines, if any, reports Al-Qabas daily.

In a press statement, the Public Relations and Security Media Department in the ministry affirmed that this is in compliance with the directive of First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Talal Khaled Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah to strictly implement the traffic regulations and require expatriates to pay traffic fines, if any, before leaving the country.

2 in murder probe: The Public Prosecution has referred a citizen and an expatriate to the Criminal Court for the abduction, illegal detention and premeditated murder of Mubarak Ali Al-Rashidi, as well as the possession of drugs for trading and personal consumption, reports Al-Qabas daily.

The prosecution started investigations since the victim was reported missing, in cooperation with various State agencies like the Criminal Security Sector at the Ministry of Interior and judicial authorities in Egypt.

4,034 cars seized: The General Traffic Department in the Interior Ministry said a total of 4,034 vehicles and bicycles were confiscated during the first half of this year due to various traffic violations, reports Al-Rai daily.

The semi-annual statistics of the department showed that 2,494 vehicles and 1,540 bicycles were confiscated within the abovementioned period.

Umrah for Bedouins: The Hajj Administration in the Ministry of Awqaf has asked the Saudi Ministry of Hajj to allow Bedouins to perform Umrah, reports Al-Qabas daily quoting sources.

Sources said the administration is waiting for the response of the Saudi authorities, hoping for the establishment of mechanisms and conditions for Bedouins to perform Umrah.

and investigations in all the serious communications it receives.

Al-Daihani explained that the authority appreciates the role played by whistleblowers in helping it obtain the necessary information about incidents related to corruption. At the same time, it is committed to providing the highest levels of protection and confidentiality necessary for them, as imposed by the law and the executive regulations.

The communication reception desk welcomes all individuals at the Nazaha headquarters, gate No. 7, to provide the information they have on incidents related to corruption, which will be handled with the utmost seriousness and confidentiality.

Regarding the crimes of illegal gain, Al-Daihani said, "The crime of illegal gain is one of the new corruption crimes that are not stipulated in the Penal Code or complementary laws. The criminalization of this act coincided with the development of modern means that are used to commit crimes against public funds or abuse of office to gain individual interest.

The goal is to set penalties that are enough to deter anyone who tempts to loot public money or tamper with the integrity of the public office, so that it affects every act committed inside or outside the country.

The proof of this crime happens by vetting committees in the authority that are specialized in analyzing the data of the financial disclosure statement of the subject, as for this purpose, it may make a number of inquiries about the components of the financial disclosure and exercise its powers to view bank accounts of the one who shifts the burden of proving the sources of funds that are not commensurate with his resources.

Whenever he is unable to justify the increase in the elements of his financial liability or the decrease in his obligations due to his assumption of a job capacity, he is considered to have committed the crime of illegal gain. The penalties for this reach imprisonment for a period less than five years, confiscation of the illegitimate gain, and a fine equivalent to the value of the confiscated funds as well as dismissal from public office."

The security plans, which were recently implemented in the country and were based on the development of the field and informational security monitoring system, contributed to the rapid discovery of many crimes. It imposed a disciplined security reality according to which the percentage of serious criminal offenses decreased by 20 percent from January 2023 to May 2023, compared to the same period in 2022.

According to informed security sources, this visible decrease in serious criminal crimes, which are classified as "disturbing crimes" such as premeditated murder, robbery and armed robbery, is the result of the great efforts exerted by the security services with the aim of strengthening security and stability in the country.

The security leaders and personnel, on their various capacities, have demonstrated a distinct ability in dealing positively with challenges and the accelerating changes. With a solid security doctrine, governed by legal controls, they have been able to advance their national message.

The sources revealed an estimated 20 percent decrease in serious criminal offenses in the country during the period from January 2023 to the end of May, compared to the same period in 2022.

This decrease in the occurrence of such serious crimes, which are classified by security authorities as "disturbing crimes" such as premeditated murder, armed robbery, theft of bank customers, robbery with violence, impersonation of police officers, burglaries and use of firearms, comes as an inevitable result of the efforts exerted by the security services in the country during this period.

The huge seizures of narcotics, psychotropic substances and liquor bottles, and the clampdown on drug dealers, smugglers and pushers are among the main reasons that led to a decrease in serious crimes.

Among the reasons are also the wide and intensive security deployment, the continuous security campaigns, the arrest of residency violators, those wanted by the security forces, and fugitives, the tightening of security control over the land, air and sea ports, and the expansion of the circle of receiving information.

The sources praised the development of the field and informational security monitoring system, affirming that it contributed to the speedy detection of many crimes recently. They also praised the efforts exerted by the police officers, especially those working in the field.

They highlighted that one of the most prominent positive factors that emerged recently is the great cooperation between the security sectors and relevant authorities such as the General Administration of Customs, the Public Authority for Manpower, and other parties.

The sources affirmed that the success of the police in discovering some of the crimes that occurred recently happened because of the use of modern and sophisticated methods to entrap criminals, and working as much as possible to prevent crime before it occurs, as well as using modern technology to combat crimes.

798,000 traffic violations: According to the half yearly statistics issued by the General Traffic Department, the number of direct traffic violations recorded during the first half of this year amounted to 798 thousand, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The number of traffic accidents recorded during the first half of this year was 37 thousand. These accidents were dealt with by the patrol officers of the General Traffic Department and the supporting security agencies.

On the other hand, in implementation of the decisions of the ministers of Interior from the Gulf Cooperation Council and based on the strategy of the Ministry of Interior to complete the development of the bilateral electronic link system with the aim of exchanging data between Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates, a third meeting was held on Tuesday at the headquarters of the General Administration of Information Systems to discuss the stage of the bilateral traffic link proposals, the exchange of fingerprints of the deportees, and the development of the networking system between the two countries. The meeting was held in the presence of a number of representatives of the Human Resources and Information Technology sectors, the traffic sector, the criminal security sector, and the general administration for following up the affairs of ministerial councils and committees, as well as in the presence of a number of security leaders within the Emirati delegation.

The meeting aimed at completing the linking of all other traffic and security services, which contribute to linking the traffic and security system among the GCC countries.

49 corruption reports received: The Acting Head of the communications reception office at the Kuwait Anti-Corruption Authority (Nazaha) Fahad Al-Daihani revealed that Nazaha received 49 reports of corruption incidents this year, some of which are currently under formal and substantive studies, and some others are subject to investigation procedures, reports Al-Rai Daily.

In an exclusive press statement, Al-Daihani said, "The authority has referred six corruption reports this year to the competent authorities."

He highlighted Nazaha's intention to continue efforts and procedures for examining and collecting inferences

PAAAFR workers in funds scandal

KUWAIT CITY, July 8: Kuwait Anti-Corruption Authority (Nazaha) has referred an official at the Public Authority for Agriculture Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR) and other individuals to the Public Prosecution for misappropriating public money by forging official documents, reports Al-Jarida daily.

These crimes are punishable by law as per articles 10 and 14 of law number 1/1993; articles 257, 259 and 260 of the amended Penal Code number 16/1960 and Article 22 of law number 2/2016 on the establishment of the authority.

Meanwhile, Assistant Foreign Affairs Minister for Arab World Affairs Ambassador Ahmed Al-Bakrm has handed over to Egyptian Ambassador to Kuwait Osama Shaltout the request of the country to take legal action against the person behind the burning of the Kuwaiti flag in a video clip that went viral on social media.

'End justifies means ... reading of political scenario in Kuwait'

"FIVE years ago, and before that another three, I wrote about the beginning of new-old political alliances, and it was a monitoring and follow-up of those soft political harbingers, which hide under their shadows -- an alliance between allies on the one hand and rivals on the other, alliances imposed by a new political reality in the past eight years, which got rid of the traditional political forces, in successive stages since 2003, with two parallel paths, the first representing the straw that broke the back of the political currents and forces, with a qualitative breakthrough -- this time -- for their leaders through the policy of carrots and sticks, benefiting from the disappearance of the generation of traditional leaders, and the rise of the generation of leaders who seek personal gains and glory," columnist Dr. Mohamad Al-Meqatei wrote for Al-Jarida daily.



Al-Meqatei

"The second is the elitist and artificial regression that has been inflated by the rising leadership, despite its shallow formation, the decline of its national and principled positions, and its rush to look for crumbs from under the bargaining table, and this has been largely achieved.

"This coincided with the continuation of the old and new individual leaders, who have flexibility similar to the agility of a butterfly when it comes to its colors, disguise, and pretending contrary to the truth, in order to preserve their continuity and survival, which was the case for those leaders, who maintained their continued political presence, and revolved in the orbit of all stages with a remarkable change to dress gracefully.

"It simulates the changes of the political scene, at times it wears the clothes of the opposition, and at other wears the garb of loyalty, the third invisibility, the fourth wisdom and good luck, and sometimes in the victim and the orphan, so they get what they want.

"After the end of the tactical hibernation stage, voluntary or forced or both at the same time, its return or political presence began to follow, including those people who thought they had retired from public life, theorizing, mobilizing and opening understandings.

"I spotted early in my previous articles, these changes, so whoever believed or considered people to be rivals, at some point, it was apparent that they would return as allies, a departure from all expectations and analyses, which missed the softness of the bear and the gracefulness of the coloration of those personalities. It is clear in all of this that political pragmatism is the political style that has proven its success through the persistence of its personalities in all stages of political work, especially since 1985.

"The end justifies the means, which governs and directs that understood pragmatism. Literature, treatises and terminology have been used to express the agility of pragmatism.

"Politics in Kuwait and the smoothness of its approach, the last of which was called "politics is the art of the possible", and despite the validity of the principle and the soundness of its content, it was used and employed poorly, so it became a pretext to justify political Machiavellianism and interest pragmatism, and the public interest was dissipated unheeded, and the papers of national and moral principles and values were blown away by the winds of change.

"In order to achieve the aim, until all considerations were lost and mixed, and began to openly adopt these trends, which represent a political apostasy in the national and even parliamentary action, and the employment of this path will be exacerbated, as the private interest and gains at the expense of the country have become the goal, and faces and personalities that we thought were destined to fade. The national will not change and will not be accepted for bargaining, so our bet on it went unheeded.

"In the same context, other terms appeared to justify the thought and principles of the end justifying the means, and the term national reconciliation was used in reverse for the same purpose. We also have the terms exchange of roles, the jurisprudence of the stage, the soft side, reform from within, and political flexibility, all of which appear to justify the behaviors and paths of political apostasy.

"In its shadow is a state of jumping into the political scene, so staying in this scene, even if it was through devices to revive the national sense, is the worm, and the national sense and the practices associated with it from these personalities and their suspicious and changing alliances have become artificial and complex manifestations that quickly discover their falsity, in front of unacceptable national issues bargain."

Also:

"The warnings that came from the national drug prevention project "Ghiras" should be taken very seriously given the dangerous nature, as Kuwait is classified as a target country and a consumer of drugs, after it was for a short time a transit point," columnist Dr. Issa Mohammad Al Omairi wrote for Al-Anba daily.

"Away from the numbers, levels, and statistics related to this scourge in our beloved country, we can briefly review some of its numbers, as statistics show there are about 20,000 drug addicts in Kuwait, which is a very dangerous figure for a small country, and therefore we must pause and look carefully at these figures, and the efforts exerted by the state in this regard and must pay tribute to the concerned authorities so that they increase their role and be more stringent with traffickers and consumers. Also, the state is required to deal with this issue according to its size since the issue is much bigger than what we see and hear.

Therefore, we stress the maximization of the role in combating everything that would limit the effect of this devastating scourge, whether going after the merchants of death or those who use, promote and distribute it etc. It is undoubtedly a difficult task but in this case, the state's efforts must include the use of international expertise and strengthen its cooperation by concluding agreements with several countries to combat this phenomenon.

"Also, the state must tighten and toughen the pen-

alties, as is the case in some countries that have enacted death laws for anyone related to this scourge, whether close or far, abusers, addicts, and so on.

"On the other hand, we say that the efforts in this country must be joint among the community and the family itself in terms of raising awareness and warning of the dangers of this scourge, and moreover, what some have called for is the necessity of conducting an addiction test or drug abuse test for some of the activities that take place in the country, such as during marriage or applying for a job and so on.

"These things undoubtedly contribute to greatly limiting its spread. Also, the state must closely examine new arrivals to see if they abuse or show traces of abuse, which is important in curbing this scourge."

□ □ □

"Prices have increased without any reason, other than the greed and desire of some to empty the pockets of citizens and expatriates. Some greedy people have resorted to the most heinous exploitation of others, sucking their blood. How did these people become 'vampires', desiring the blood of others?" columnist Adel Al-Mezaal wrote for Al-Anba daily.

"Where is price control? Where are the trade teams and their pillars, especially the consumer protection?! Why do they let these people eat the flesh of others? Will we remain captives and dependent on every importer who sets prices that suit him and satisfies his greed, without regard for the people's purchasing power?"

"Who will save us from such greedy people who do not fear God and His Messenger? They they did not find anyone that forbids them and hold them accountable. Why?!"

"For example, cooperative societies were established to provide the daily needs of every citizen and expatriate at the lowest price and without much profit. But why do some cooperatives allow unscrupulous companies to increase prices and provide them with space to display their products? If only the cooperatives stopped dealing with such companies, and have not provided them with the opportunity to market or offer their products, we would have closed the window through which these companies look at the consumer who has no one to protect him. Why do you deal with the exploiters of people, companies and prices?"

"This also applies to other markets. Is it possible that the price of fish had been increasing insanely until it reached the level that no one could believe? God blessed us with a beautiful sea, yet the price of fish is like this?!"

"Likewise, the price of meat keeps on increasing. These exorbitant prices have been emptying people's pockets, in addition to the fact that the prices of plane tickets have doubled."

□ □ □

"This is an invitation and advice to the esteemed members of the National Assembly -- to codify priorities in the current round, as they have only six or seven sessions, that is, if quorum is achieved and the government attends," columnist Yousif Hajji wrote for Annahar daily.

"This means limited discussion of the issues raised, in light of the increase in priorities. I believe that the priorities they announced, which keep on increasing daily, need dozens of sessions to discuss and approve them.

"Citizens want a real and tangible achievement in order to trust the Assembly during the next stage. The government's statement bodes well -- that it will extend a hand of cooperation with the current legislature.

"This is why we ask the MPs to refrain from expanding the space for populist issues and demands. They should meet with the government through the specialized committees before raising any issue or demand, and to find out whether the government can discuss these issues and approve them. It is better than wasting time and effort, without any real and tangible achievement in the end.

"We hope the MPs will meet among themselves and coordinate their priorities. They have to determine what is important and the most important. We noticed that every lawmaker has a priority and a populist proposal, wanting to include it to the list of priorities.

"Some demands and proposals are impossible. It is difficult for the government to agree on them, hence, the need for discussions and meetings, while referral to the specialized committees must be postponed.

"On issues that the government expressed interest and willingness to cooperate with the Assembly to approve them, these must be put forward, discussed and approved in the next sessions."

□ □ □

"Does every big and small step really need direct instructions from His Excellency the Minister?" columnist Iqbal Al-Ahmad wrote for Al-Qabas daily.

"Is it very important and necessary that no one in any position in the ministry should speak or say anything about any achievement, except after he precedes his words with...under the directives of His Excellency the Minister and Undersecretary so and so...? Is it necessary that any presentation of the efforts of the interior men in any field comes with this introduction?"

"Yes, the Minister of Interior is in charge of laying down a general strategy aimed at accomplishing the tasks of the ministry. He is thanked for it, but is it not necessary for every interior man of various military ranks to inform us whether he did the job alone or as a task force under the directive of His Excellency the Minister?"

"Everyone is talking about this...It would have been good to hear from the decision-making officials or whoever issues such instructions in the ministry, if any.

"I am almost certain that this policy was an act of diligence on the part of one of the public relations officials -- to publicize the activities and achievements of the ministry.

"This trend may be a form of 'courtship' or distinction, but it seems to have continued and become a norm for all interior ministers."

— Compiled by Mai Elsoukary



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PAM launches new electronic services for domestic workers

'Domestic worker can file two types of complaints'

KUWAIT CITY, July 8: The Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) has launched new electronic services through the "electronic forms" portal for domestic worker disputes, which includes nine types of complaints, reports Al-Qabas daily.

It is now possible for a domestic worker to file two types of complaints - the first against the employer, and the second against the

recruitment agency.

In addition, an informed source explained that PAM has provided an electronic form for domestic workers, which will enable them to submit a complaint, either related to "claiming late salaries, financial dues, receiving documents, leaving the country or transferring". The form also allows workers to register a complaint with the recruitment office, irrespective of whether it is related to final cancellation of travel, human trafficking, illegal employment, or dealing with a refund.

The authority maintains the right of the employer by giving him the right

to file complaints with the recruitment office, irrespective of whether his claim is related to final cancellation of travel, refund of the value of the deportation ticket, or refund of the recruitment amount. He will also have the right to complain about the worker if the latter escapes from work or does not have the desire to perform his duties.

Through the portal, a domestic worker can apply for a residence extension if he had registered a previous complaint. It is also possible to issue a clearance certificate for the domestic worker through electronic forms.



KUNA photo

Acting Director of KU, Dr Fahd Al-Rashidi, with representatives of the Public Relations and Media Department and the Deanship of Admission and Registration at the end of the campaign.

Official's appointment: Minister of Commerce and Industry and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Muhammad Othman Al-Aiban has appointed Assistant Undersecretary for Technical Support and Planning Affairs Nasser Maher Al-Mutawa as Undersecretary of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry in addition to his current tasks, effective July 4, reports Al-Qabas daily.

Earlier, the minister referred acting Undersecretary Muhammad Al-Enezi for retirement. Al-Enezi assumed the position in mid-July 2021, in addition to his work as Assistant Undersecretary for the Price Control and Consumer Protection Sector.

5,000 people benefit from 'Your Choice Builds a Nation'

Acting Director of Kuwait University, Dr. Fahd Al-Rashidi, confirmed that nearly five thousand people benefited from the campaign "Your Choice Builds a Nation", during which student counseling was provided with the participation of the Deanship of Admission and Registration and the Department of Public Relations and Media.

Al-Rashidi said in a press statement today, Saturday, that Kuwait University concluded the day before yesterday the indicative admission campaign organized by the Department of Public Relations and Information in cooperation with the Deanship of Admission and Registration under the "Your Choice Builds a Nation".

He added that the campaign, which was launched

on July 2, aimed at introducing high school graduates to the admission and registration requirements and answering all their inquiries.

He praised the efforts of those in charge of the university's pavilion during the campaign period, noting that the pavilion was visited by the Minister of Education, Dr. Hamad Al-Adwani, and the Secretary-General of the Council of Public Universities, Dr. Adel Al-Manea.

He stressed that the process of counseling, guidance, and knowledge and information benefit regarding Kuwait University continues, whether through social media or by attending personally to the headquarters of the Deanship of Admission and Registration or the Deanship of Student Affairs in Sabah Al-Salem University City. (KUNA)

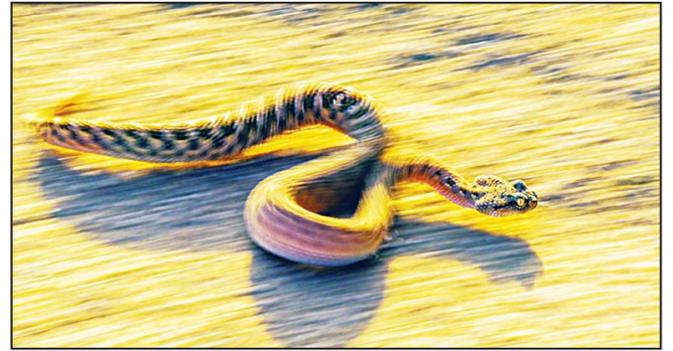
His Highness Amir congratulates Solomon Islands on National Day

KUWAIT CITY, July 8, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations on Friday to Governor-General of the Solomon Islands Sir David Vunagi, on his country's National Day.

His Highness wished Sir Vunagi a long healthy life and more development and prosperity for Solomon Islands.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations to Governor-General Sir Vunagi, on his country's national day.

Also, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations to Governor-General Sir Vunagi, on his country's National Day.



Award-winning photo

'The Dominator' and 'Escape'

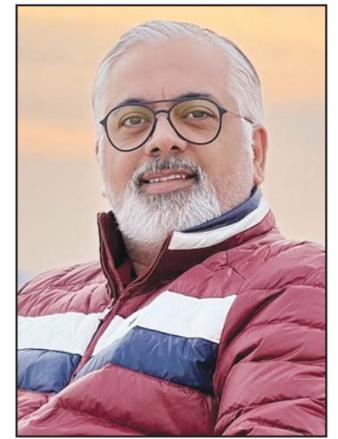
Kuwaiti photographer wins 2 awards in Italy

KUWAIT CITY, July 8: In a new achievement confirming the Kuwaiti presence in the field of nature photography in the world, Kuwaiti photographer Muhammad Murad won two awards, in the international "Oasis" competition for nature photography, in the Ruero region of northern Italy, reports Al-Qabas daily.

The Italian Society for Natural Tourism stated that the international jury chose the 100 most beautiful photos for the year 2022 from among 25,000 shots, by photographers from 69 countries competing for the competition, in its fifteenth year.

The society explained that Murad won the "Referees' Choice" award in the "Birds" section competition for his picture "The Dominator", and he also won the "Honorable Mention" award in the "Other Animals" section competition for his picture "Escape", among the award winners, which is considered an "Oscar" for nature photography.

In a statement to KUNA, Murad expressed his great pride as a Kuwaiti artist in this important appreciation, which enriches his creative experience, and adds a new



Muhammad Murad

medal to his busy career, which confirms the Kuwaiti presence in the field of nature photography in the world.

Top actress Amal Abbas dies

KUWAIT CITY, July 8: Prominent actress Amal Abbas died on Friday morning after battling an undisclosed illness, reports Al-Qabas daily.

Abbas, who was 63 years old, started her career in 1984 through

the 'Cinderella Operetta'. Her work with Abdul Hussein Abdel-Rida and Khaled Al-Nafisi in the series, 'Al-Hayala', catapulted her to stardom and it left an indelible mark in her acting career.

'Tumors removed successfully'

73 clinics providing health care services for children – ministry

KUWAIT CITY, July 8: The Ministry of Health said there are 73 child health care clinics in primary health care centers across all governorates in Kuwait, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The ministry said in a press statement that these are integrated clinics that provide both preventive and curative care for children under the age of five.

The ministry explained one of the most important services offered by these clinics is to monitor and track a child's physical growth, mental and cognitive development, and conducting medical examinations as and when needed.

The ministry added, the clinics also provide vaccinations as per the national vaccination program, health education services for parents, support for breastfeeding, and nutritional evaluation.

Moreover, these clinics provide screening services for common diseases that affect children during these stages, such as obesity, hearing and visual problems, congenital hip dislocation, developmental delay and autism disorder spectrum and provides indicative

safety tips to reduce children's accidents.

Meanwhile, the head of the Obstetrics and Gynecology Department of the Jahra Hospital, Dr. Hanan Al-Husseini, revealed a total of 15 surgical procedures were successfully conducted to remove gynecological tumors, reports Al-Anba daily.

These operations were carried out using the advanced and modern endoscopy technology.

During a workshop, Dr. Al-Husseini said this procedure was carried out during the visit Dr. Martin Fruga from Britain, who specializes in microlaparoscopic surgery.

He added, 15 gynecological operations were performed, which were classified as difficult cases. These cases included the removal of the uterus and fibrosis, as well as cases of endometriosis.

The department said it is committed to staying up-to-date with the latest advancements and offering top-notch medical equipment in the fields of obstetrics and gynecology, especially as it is currently undergoing a significant transformation in its services.

UN clash

Continued from Page 1

relationships with organized criminal gangs in UK and across Europe to expand the capability of its networks. The UK will not tolerate such threats," according to the statement.

The United States, Britain, France and Ukraine have urged U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres to send investigators to Ukraine to examine debris from drones used in Russia's attacks, insisting that resolution 2231 gives him a mandate to open an investigation.

Russia insists he has no such authority and Nebenzia warned the U.N. Secretariat against taking any such action. Iran's U.N. Ambassador Amir Saeid Irvani added that any U.N. findings "based on such illegal activities is null and void."

U.N. political chief Rosemary DiCarlo said in her briefing to the council that France, Germany, Ukraine, the U.K. and U.S. had written letters concerning alleged transfers of drones from Iran to Russia and had provided photographs and their analyses of the recovered drones.

"The Secretariat continues to examine the available information," DiCarlo said, giving no indication of when or if a U.N. investigation would take place.

Ukraine's U.N. Ambassador Sergiy Kyslytsya told the council that more than 1,000 drone launches over Ukraine had been recorded and

that analysis by Ukrainian and international experts confirmed their Iranian origin.

Russia's Nebenzia accused Ukraine and the West of fomenting misinformation and dismissed the evidence as comical.

France, Germany and the UK, which are parties to the JCPOA, said in a joint statement that Iran has also been in violation of its nuclear commitments under the 2015 deal for four years.

They pointed to the International Atomic Energy Agency's reports that Iran's total stockpiles of enriched uranium are now 21 times the amount permitted under the 2015 nuclear deal - and the IAEA's detection in January of uranium particles enriched to 83.7%, which is almost at weapons-grade levels of 90%. Any stockpile of uranium at that level could be quickly used to produce an atomic bomb if Iran chooses.

The 2015 nuclear deal limited Tehran's uranium stockpile to 300 kilograms (661 pounds) and enrichment to 3.67% - enough to fuel a nuclear power plant. But following the U.S. withdrawal, Tehran escalated its nuclear program and has been producing uranium enriched to 60% purity - a level for which nonproliferation experts already say Tehran has no civilian use.

Iran informed the IAEA that "unintended fluctuations" in enrichment levels may have occurred accounting for the particles enriched to 83.7%, and Irvani, the Iranian ambassador, and Russia's Nebenzia both said the issue has been resolved.

July Room Promotion

Weekdays (Saturday - Wednesday)	
Queen Cabana (2 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.	2 Bedroom Chalet (4 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.
NOW	NOW
BHD 61.000/-net	BHD 136.198/-net
Weekdays (Saturday - Wednesday)	
Queen Cabana (2 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.	2 Bedroom Chalet (4 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.
NOW	NOW
BHD 69.000/-net	BHD 153.222/-net

Promo period from 4th – 31st July 2023 Terms & conditions apply*

Univ forced to open 2nd slot for registration

5,285 students register to study at Abdullah Al-Salem University

KUWAIT CITY, July 8: While Abdullah Al-Salem University is preparing to embark on its first academic year as a new academic institution in the country, the university is conducting admission tests and the number of those who registered for the admission tests in the first phase reached 5,285, which forced the university to open a second slot for registration, reports Al-Qabas daily.

Member of the founding board of directors of the university and head of the planning and strategy committee, Dr. Fawaz Al-Enezi, said the second three-day slot for registration opened on Friday and will close the window on Sunday (tomorrow).

According to the conditions, the minimum rates for admission to the university are 85% for students in the literary section and 80% for students in the scientific section, while the required rates for students with special needs are 80% for the literary section and 75% for the scientific section.

Al-Enezi told Al-Qabas that the university, which aspires to be among the most advanced and developed universities in the world, has adopted international tests for admission in English and mathematics, by adopting the IELTS test or its equivalent, provided that the student obtains 5 degrees as a minimum, and the accuplacer test for mathematics and the condition that the student obtains 238 degree as a minimum for admission.

The university starts with 3 colleges: "Engineering and Energy", "Computer and Systems" and "Entrepreneurship", which includes 10 different majors. A differential rate is calculated for accepted students according to the college they will enroll in.

Al-Enezi explained that the differential average for the student applying for "Engineering and Energy" or "Computer and Systems" is by specifying a criterion of 65% for the high school average, 20% for the mathematics test, and 15% for the English

language test. 70% for the high school average, 15% for mathematics, and 15% for "English".

He said that the admission tests are carried out under the supervision and follow-up of a specialized international company, stressing the university's keenness to ensure excellence.

Al-Enezi indicated that the nucleus of central admission in the country was launched through the launch of a joint screen between Kuwait University and Abdullah Al-Salem University to register students this year, indicating that the period for submitting applications for admission will be from 15 to 26 July, and the student can specify his/her desires simultaneously in the two universities and on one registration platform. If he/she fulfills the admission requirements, indicating that high school graduates of this year and last year are allowed to apply at Abdullah Al-Salem University.

He stressed that after completing the exams and registering the students, they will be compared according to the differential average, as the highest 600 students with the average will be selected, pointing to the mandate of the Council of Public Universities and the Minister of Education to increase the seats, in case of need.

He said that the university's academic programs are "dynamic and flexible, responding to the requirements of the labor market," pointing to "a plan to open the way for students to open their own businesses before graduation. Businesses at the university, in addition to the university owning companies that are expected to be established in accordance with the law.

Al-Enezi revealed that the attendance of students at Abdullah Al-Salem University will be in its location in Al-Khalidiyah area (formerly the College of Engineering and Sciences at Kuwait University), pointing out that they will move and benefit from the university campus in Shuwaikh in the next academic year.

KU to enroll Kuwaiti students who quit from foreign studies program

KUWAIT CITY, July 8: Kuwait University has decided to exempt Kuwaiti students, who withdrew from the foreign studies program of the Ministry of Higher Education, from the condition that the date of obtaining the secondary school certificate should not exceed two years to enroll at the university, provided the period of withdrawal does not exceed one year, reports Al-Rai daily.

Acting Dean of Admissions and Registration at the university

Dr Rawa Al-Jarallah confirmed in a press statement that the Public Universities Council has adopted the decision.

Al-Jarallah affirmed this decision is in the interest of the students who faced some problems and obstacles to the completion of their studies. "In this manner, Kuwait University is a guarantee for them to acquire quality education that serves their country and for them to help in the country's development after graduation," Al-Jarallah added.

Kuwait to invest more than \$300 bln in energy in the long term until 2040

OPEC chief lauds Kuwait's participation in symposium

KUWAIT CITY, July 8: Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Oil and Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment Dr. Saad Al-Barrak has revealed Kuwait will invest more than \$300 billion in energy in the long term until 2040, reports Al-Rai daily.

On the sidelines of the eighth international symposium of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), which was held in Vienna over two days, Al-Barrak said in a statement to Kuwait TV and KUNA that "the world needs today 500 billion dollars annually to invest in the field of energy, while it invested only 300 billion dollars in 2022."

He added, this shows there is a gap estimated at more than 40 percent, which creates difficulties in the global energy market. He called for a further increase in the volume of investment in the energy market to protect it from price fluctuations and achieve stability in the global economy.

He pointed to the importance of the role played by Kuwait, the founding member of OPEC, in the field of energy since the founding of the organization on September 14, 1960, and its contribution to strengthening the stability of global oil markets. He noted that Kuwait made many sacrifices in order to control and determine production levels according to market needs, and prevent price fluctuations.

In statements to the Emirates News Agency, WAM, Al-Barrak affirmed Kuwait's readiness to cooperate with the brothers in the UAE for the success of its hosting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 28), which is the most important climate and environmental event hosted by the region.

Commitment

He stressed Kuwait's commitment to achieving zero carbon emissions by 2050, noting that it aims to invest in alternative and environmentally friendly energy, in order to enhance its position as a global energy center.

On the other hand, the official Iranian news agency "IRNA" reported that Iranian Energy Minister Javad Oji met his Saudi counterpart, Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman, on the sidelines of the "OPEC" conference in Vienna, noting that the two sides discussed bilateral issues between the two countries, including investment in the oil sector and exploring the possibility of joint investment in oil and gas.

The agency stated that "the topics of discussion also included issues such as hydrocarbon trade and the development of common areas."

Meanwhile, Secretary-General of OPEC Haitham Al Ghais spoke highly of Kuwait's active participation in the eighth Vienna energy symposium currently organized by the bloc.

Speaking to KUNA on Thursday, Al-Gais praised participation of Kuwait's Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Oil and Minister of State for Economic and Investment Affairs Saad Al-Barrak in the symposium and its ministerial session, which focused on raising output capacity through increasing investment.

Al-Gais further expressed gratitude to the Ministry of Information for its effective partaking to cover this



KUNA photo
Kuwait's Deputy Prime Minister and Oil Minister Dr. Saad Al-Barrak with the delegation of the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation.

Kuwait emissions associated with oil extraction lowest globally – KPC CEO

VIENNA, July 8, (KUNA): Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) CEO Sheikh Nawaf Saud Al-Nasser Al-Sabah said Wednesday that carbon dioxide emissions associated with the extraction and production of Kuwaiti oil are the lowest globally.

Sheikh Nawaf said in a joint statement to KUNA and Kuwait TV, during his participation in the international symposium on energy, organized by OPEC, that this is evidence of the quality of Kuwaiti oil and the accuracy of the operations of KPC and its subsidiaries.

He pointed out the importance of KPC's attendance of the OPEC International Seminar, to outline KPC's expertise in regards to these dis-

tinguished capabilities in oil extraction.

Kuwaiti oil is one of the foundations of global oil in worldwide energy transformation, he underlined. He also stated that Kuwait would play a significant role amidst its Gulf oil-producing peers in the global energy transition over the coming decades, in securing clean energy for international markets.

KPC has already started implementing its plan to reach carbon neutrality, which is expected to be completed by 2050, and Kuwait is committed to the goal under United Nations guidance, he added. This falls within a well-thought out plan currently being implemented by the Gulf country, he clarified.

international event organized by OPEC every three years. He stressed the importance of the seminar, which gathered together energy decision-makers from varied countries all over the world to discuss the best ways to address challenges facing this sector.

OPEC periodical data underlines the necessity of energy investment worth USD 12 trillion as of now and until 2045 that includes exploration, production, refining, petrochemicals, and transport and shipping, Al Ghais said.

OPEC encourages investment, which has great importance, he added, noting that OPEC member states play their role in this regard. Global economy will have doubled and population will have increased by 1.5 billion by 2045, he made clear.



Al Ghais

OPEC chief warned against energy poverty facing millions who do not have the simplest methods of energy and electricity.

Consequently, he stressed the significance of investment to meet demands for energy supplies at reasonable prices.

He referred to OPEC oil ministers' meeting held on the sidelines of the symposium, adding that it was an opportunity to maintain communication amongst OPEC and non-OPEC member states.

Al Ghais indicated that the seminar featured a large number totaling 950 participants who stressed their interest in energy.

All agree that energy crisis can not be addressed by only one solution, he said, signaling that the world is talking about gradual transformation in energy use.

He finally criticized those who said that oil producers are responsible for environment pollution.

He proved that there are some OPEC members, which pay much attention to reduce emission in oil output and refining.

Provision of services and activities to inmates will be expanded

Human rights committee raises observations about social welfare homes

KUWAIT CITY, July 8: The Complaints and Grievances Committee of the National Bureau for Human Rights made seven observations on the progress of work in the Juvenile Welfare Department. It recommended that officials should review these observations in order to raise the level of efficiency of the work and workers, provide a safe and supportive work environment for employees and inmates alike, and improve the rate of application of human rights in all social welfare homes, reports Aljarida daily.

This was highlighted during a visit by the committee's delegation to the Juvenile Welfare Department a few weeks ago. The delegation was received by the Director of the Juvenile Welfare Department Dr. Jassim Al-Kandari and a number of its officials.

The visit was aimed at implementing paragraph 9 of article 6 of the bureau establishment law, which stipulates "follow-up of the various institutions, detention centers, and care homes through periodic or surprise field visits and issuance of reports on their conditions."

The delegation also visited the social welfare home for boys, where they toured the observation house and met six inmates of ages between 14 and 16 years. They also spoke to 12 inmates of the placement homes who have been sentenced in various criminal cases. They observed the vocational and rehabilitative activities provided by the administration to them such as carpentry, printing, mechanics, computer and agricultural workshops, in addition to the recreational activities, mosques and schools.

The delegation also visited the correctional house, which receives those of ages between 18 and 21 years who have been sentenced by additional judicial rulings and are placed there in preparation for their transfer to the Central Prison.

They also visited the social welfare home for girls where six inmates were staying, identified the reasons for their placement and observed the activities offered to them.

After the tour ended, the committee delegation held a meeting with Dr. Jassim Al-Kandari, who stated that the total number of inmates of both genders in the social welfare homes is 39.

It was highlighted that the department is in the process of moving to a new building in the next few months, where the provision of services and activities to inmates will be expanded.

The committee made a number of observations on the workflow in the department, most notably the nature of the work in the Juvenile Welfare Department, which is considered un-



KUNA photo
Charitable organizations distribute sacrifices to poor families during the Eid days.

Bonds of solidarity

IICO distributes 11K sacrifices to 440K beneficiaries in 25 nations

KUWAIT CITY, July 8, (KUNA): The International Islamic Charitable Organization (IICO) announced on Thursday the distribution of 11,000 sacrifices to 440,000 beneficiaries in 25 countries, in cooperation with 53 charitable organizations and seven volunteer teams, during the blessed Eid Al-Adha day.

The authority said in a press statement that the sacrificial meat contributed to enhancing the food security of the children of poor families during the Eid days, stressing its endeavor to strengthen the bonds of solidarity and love between the people of Kuwait and Muslims in the world.

It stated that it had monitored, through the field reports received from field partners, the success of the project in enhancing food security for the children of poor families in the poorest countries, areas of displacement and countries of asylum, orphans and their mothers, widows, the disabled and the wounded as a result of disasters.

attractive for the job specializations required to work in it, such as psychological researchers, social workers, behavior observers, and other specializations required for work.

They also commented on the weak activation of systems to protect employees from violent behavior that can

sometimes be expected from inmates or their families, and the lack of specialized police to guard social welfare institutions of both genders, as the administration was forced to contract with private security companies that were distributed to the buildings of the Social Welfare Department.

Ministry keen to ward off suspicions or doubts

Fact-finding cmte to probe 2 tenders floated for a new passenger terminal

KUWAIT CITY, July 8: Minister of Public Works, Dr. Amani Boughmaz, has issued a decision to form a "fact-finding" committee on the background of the tender that was floated for the construction, development and maintenance of roads and intersections, to serve the new passenger terminal at Kuwait Airport on Al-Maqva Road, reports Al-Rai daily.

The tender includes the construction, furnishing and maintenance of Package No. 3 for parking lots, aircraft runways and service buildings, in the building itself.

The decision specifies the terms of reference of the committee with four main tasks, represented in reviewing all papers and documents related to the two aforementioned tenders, to ensure the integrity and correctness of the procedures taken by the Public Authority for Roads and Land Transport and the Ministry of Works in this regard.

The committee will also look into the technical reports issued by the committees, examine the complaints from the bidders and the responses given by the Ministry of Works and the Public Authority for Roads and Land Transport (PART), to those complaints and the extent to which they meet the contractual and legal aspects.

The minister's decision to form the committee confirms her keenness to ward off any suspicions or doubts in the course of the procedures for issuing and awarding the two tenders, which enhances the concept of transparency that Boqmaz is keen to pursue in all issues related to the ministry's projects confirming the ministry's commitment to honor the findings and recommendations of the committee.

The decision gave the committee the freedom to set the system it deems appropriate to carry out its work, so that it can address all the sectors, departments and relevant authorities, summon and hear the statements of those it deems necessary for its

MEW operates four main power plants for Al-Mutlaa

KUWAIT CITY, July 8, (KUNA): The Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy (MEW) announced Wednesday the operating of four main power plants to supply electricity to 3,265 plots of land in some parts of Al-Mutlaa neighborhood, in coordination with the Public Authority For Housing Welfare.

In a news statement, the ministry said that it is

MPW to float tender for project in August

KUWAIT CITY, July 8: The Al-Anba has learned that the Ministry of Public Works is expected to announce a project to include programs, designs and projects in the sanitary engineering sector during August.

The sources added that the project aims to contract with international companies specialized in project management to coordinate with the concerned authorities in projects to overcome any administrative, financial or technical obstacles that may impede the progress of business and provide alternatives and solutions to the problems of design, supervision, implementation and project management.

The sources pointed out that one of the objectives of the project, which will be floated soon, is to provide technical support to avoid any obstacles and difficulties resulting in change orders, claims or project delays, to review the timetables for the implementation of contracts, to determine the reasons for delay, if any, and to develop the administrative systems for the project management sector according to international standards and the professional development of the sector through training and transfer of expertise.

The sources pointed out that the duration of the project contract is 60 months.

work from inside or outside the ministry, and review and request documents related to the subject of the committee.

The decision also specified two weeks from the date of the first meeting of the committee to submit its special report, including the results and recommendations.

ready to receive applications of the owners of the plots of land who want to get electricity.

The statement referred to keenness of Minister Dr. Jassem Al-Ostad on providing the plots of land with electricity, calling on the others to complete their applicants via the ministry's website to get electricity. Delivering electricity to the above-mentioned areas is done within three phases, it noted.



A sign stands in front of new homes under construction site in Northbrook, Ill., Thursday, May 5, 2022. On Thursday, Freddie Mac reports on this week's average U.S. mortgage rates. (AP)

average long-term US mortgage rate climbs to 6.81% this week

The average long-term U.S. mortgage rate climbed to a new high for the year this week, pushing up borrowing costs for homebuyers already facing heightened competition in a housing market short on homes.

The average rate on the benchmark 30-year home loan rose to 6.81% from 6.71% last week, mortgage buyer Freddie Mac said Thursday. A year ago, the rate averaged 5.30%.

It's the second consecutive week of higher rates, lifting the average rate to its

highest level since it surged to 7.08% in early November. High rates can add hundreds of dollars a month in costs for borrowers, limiting how much they can afford in a market already unaffordable to many Americans.

"These high rates combined with low inventory continue to price many potential homebuyers out of the market," said Sam Khater, Freddie Mac's chief economist.

The latest uptick in mortgage rates follows a sharp upward move in the 10-year Treasury yield, which climbed above 4%

this week for the first time since early March. More surprisingly hot jobs data Thursday pushed yields on the 10-year Treasury to 4.05% from 3.94% late Wednesday, which will influence mortgage rates and other important loans.

Mortgage rates don't necessarily mirror the Fed's rate increases, but tend to track the yield on the 10-year Treasury note. Investors' expectations for future inflation, global demand for U.S. Treasuries and what the Fed does with interest rates can influence rates on home loans. (AP)

Market Movements 07-07-2023

	Change	Closing pts		Change	Closing pts				
UAE	-	DFM	+0.97	3,962.42	JAPAN	-	Nikkei	-1.17	32,388.42
PAKISTAN	-	KSE 100	+0.17	44,284.92	PHILIPPINES	-	PSEi	-1.47	6,379.03
SAUDI	-	Tadawul	+0.05	11,597.91	EGYPT	-	EGX 30	-1.60	17,102.30

Business

President says his policies add jobs in GOP states

Biden makes economic case in deep-red South Carolina

WEST COLUMBIA, S.C., July 8, (AP) — Making his case for 2024, President Joe Biden declared in deep-red South Carolina on Thursday that Republican-led states are gaining factory jobs because of economic measures he pushed through Congress despite stiff GOP opposition.

In a nod toward next year's elections, Biden argued that government investments in computer chips, batteries and electric vehicles will help the U.S. out-compete China and that his agenda has delivered in ways that former President Donald Trump could not.

"I didn't get much help from the other team, but that didn't stop us from getting it done," the president said, speaking in a state that he lost by nearly 12 percentage points in 2020. "Every Republican member of Congress voted against the Inflation Reduction Act."

White House officials maintain that if Republicans had their way, South Carolina, like many other Republican-controlled states, would have lost out on billions of dollars in investments and thousands of jobs.

However, GOP lawmakers counter that Biden's initiatives have fueled higher inflation and thus have left people worse off.

Biden's visit showcased a new clean energy manufacturing partnership between solar firm Enphase Energy and manufacturer Flex Ltd. that is projected to create 600 jobs in the state and 1,200 more throughout the country. Enphase, which is making a \$60 million investment to open six new manufacturing lines, including two in South Carolina, is benefitting from tax incentives included in Biden's Inflation Reduction Act that passed last August.

The trip also showed an increasing partnership between the administration and technology companies. These relationships complicate GOP criticism that Democratic policies have hurt businesses, as some corporate leaders say that White House initiatives are helping them.

But the Biden administration also faces a balancing act as it simultaneously

talks up union labor at projects and other initiatives that some companies say could drive up costs.

Enphase President and CEO Badri Kothandaraman thanked Biden for signing into law last year's legislation, which he said "provides incentives for domestic manufacturing of energy products that not only increase the overall supply and demand in the U.S. but also accelerated domestic production to cater to that increased demand."

The White House has repeatedly castigated Republicans for voting against the legislation and for efforts to claw back tax incentives it contained, arguing that the efforts would hurt their own constituents.

"I made a commitment that I'd be president for all Americans," Biden said. "I've kept my promise. In fact, some analyses have said that laws I've signed are going to do more to help red America than blue America. That's OK with me, because we're all Americans."

The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office initially estimated that the law would reduce deficits by \$238 billion over 10 years. It contains about \$400 billion worth of spending and tax incentives related to clean energy and the environment, but the popularity of the climate-related tax breaks suggests that spending will be higher than initially forecast and possibly reduce the estimated deficit savings.

Republican Rep. Joe Wilson, who represents an area that will benefit from Enphase's new investment, took to Twitter after the law was approved on a party-line vote to say it passed to "the detriment of American families," calling it a "waste" of money. Wilson also voted in April to overturn the clean energy tax credits in the legislation that incentivized the Enphase investment.

The White House also took note of another South Carolina Republican, Rep. Nancy Mace, who congratulated the Charleston Area Regional Transportation Authority for winning nearly \$26 million to build and repair clean energy transporta-

tion projects under the \$1 trillion infrastructure legislation. She voted against the bill.

Sen. Tim Scott, who is running for the 2024 GOP presidential nomination, also voted against the infrastructure bill, saying it included "reckless spending on unrelated pet projects."

In a Thursday interview with Fox News, the South Carolina senator said that Biden has triggered higher gasoline, food and utilities prices as overall inflation has largely outpaced wage growth.

"We've done better, we can do better," Scott said.

The visit to South Carolina - a state that hasn't supported a Democrat in a general presidential election since Jimmy Carter in 1976 - comes less than a week after Trump, the leading contender for the 2024 Republican nomination, visited the small town of Pickens for a rally that drew tens of thousands of people.

Biden criticized Trump as a policy lightweight whose multiple declarations of an "infrastructure week" never produced the promised investments, while Biden steered a bipartisan deal on infrastructure through Congress.

But for all his optimism, Biden has seen his public approval rating - and public sentiment about his handling of the economy - dragged down by stubborn inflation that hit a 40-year high last summer.

Still, White House officials are embracing ownership of the economy, arguing that legislative action during the first two years of the Democratic administration has kept the economy strong in the face of headwinds caused by the war in Ukraine and the coronavirus pandemic. Biden also argues that his legislative wins have set the scene for further growth if voters give him four more years and that he's committed to work with areas that oppose him politically.

South Carolina, which has a low 3.1% unemployment rate, has seen \$11 billion in new investment in manufacturing and clean energy since the start of the Biden administration, according to a White House tally.

Production cuts not helping in improving the oil prices!

By Kamel Al-Harami
Independent Oil Analyst

WHILE more OPEC+ production cuts are coming into effect, more crude oils are entering the market from various sources. This is not helping the oil price reach the unannounced target level of \$80 per barrel.

USA, Canada, Brazil and Norway are pushing the crude oil production, especially the US producers who are earning as much as possible for their barrels, regardless of the price level being \$45 or \$75 and above, as they are free and not committed to any budget constraints, unlike the OPEC+ producers.



Al-Harami

In addition, Iran is pushing its production to the highest level with export rate reaching about 1.8 million barrels to China, Venezuela, Syria, African and Latin American countries, along with transshipment in the middle of the sea to unknown destinations. Iran's production rate is reaching close to three million barrels per day, the highest since 2018, with the USA administration doing some sort of eye blinding. This is in contrast to OPEC's desire and its efforts with its members to curtail crude oil production, particularly with Russia to commit its production level, as agreed with OPEC+. It cannot do so, as it faces boycott from G7 and a forced price level of \$60 per barrel for its Ural crude oil. It per-

haps can seek support and sympathy, if it does not strictly adhere to their commitment.

With OPEC's volunteer oil cuts not impacting oil prices, despite its efforts, the economic situation falls into the demand situation, with China being the main player to move the oil price to a level of \$80 per barrel. Even though it has today edged up to \$77, it is not enough for OPEC producers, as most of its members need a level of \$80 and above to breakeven with the annual budget. Otherwise, they have to cut down on their spendings and cancel infrastructure projects.

It seems like a nonstop hidden dilemma between OPEC+ producers and other oil producers that can run their upstream efficiently every day and try to minimize cost by finding ways and means to become more cost effective, and upgrade on their earnings as well as have a free hand to do so.

This is unlike OPEC+, which relies on others' know-how and technology without much rewards for the operators, which raises concerns for the owners. If we are not in command of our wells and the latest technology, our costs will always be much higher than others.

It will be a hard task for the oil price to hit the desired level of \$80, but OPEC+ members are fully committed to sticking to their quotas by every barrel, and full sort of uplift in oil demand, hoping for China to witness some sort of economic pickup. Otherwise, there will be a hard struggle for oil price today and next year with more oils coming into the markets, despite the ongoing war in Ukraine and the boycott of Russian oils.

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W. St drifts after jobs report comes in warm but hopefully not too hot

Asian shares fall as strong US data dash hopes for an end to rate hikes

NEW YORK, July 8, (AP) — Wall Street drifted to a mixed finish Friday after data suggested the U.S. job market is still warm enough to keep the economy growing but maybe not so hot that it stokes inflation much higher.

The S&P 500 lost 12.64 points, or 0.3%, to 4,398.95, though slightly more stocks within the index rose than fell. The Dow Jones Industrial Average gave up 187.38, or 0.6%, to 33,734.88, and the Nasdaq composite edged down by 18.33, or 0.1%, to 13,660.72.

A lot is riding on whether the economy can navigate the narrow pathway to avoid a long-predicted recession. It needs to keep growing despite much higher interest rates instituted by the Federal Reserve to bring down inflation. But it can't grow so quickly that the Fed feels pressure to brake much harder on the economy to prevent inflation from spiraling higher.

Friday's report showed U.S. employers added 209,000 jobs last month, a slowdown from May's hiring of 306,000. Perhaps more importantly, it wasn't far off economists' expectations. That's unlike a report from Thursday, which sent stocks dropping after it suggested U.S. hiring could be much stronger than expected.

Besides the slowdown in overall hiring, some numbers underneath the report's surface also showed some loosening in the job market. More people are working part-time because their hours have been cut, for example, said Brian Jacobsen, chief economist at Annex Wealth Management.

"The job market is healthy, for now, but it's not red hot," he said.

That could keep the Federal Reserve on the course it's been hinting at recently: perhaps two more increases this year before the Fed holds rates at a high level to ensure inflation returns to its 2% target. The wide assumption on Wall Street is the Fed will hike rates at



A person looks at an electronic stock board showing Japan's Nikkei 225 index at a securities firm Friday, July 7, 2023, in Tokyo. Asian shares slipped Friday after another decline on Wall Street, where hopes for an end to interest rate hikes have been dashed by strong economic data. (AP)

its next meeting in three weeks. Treasury yields were mixed following the much anticipated jobs data. The 10-year Treasury yield rose to 4.05% from 4.03% late Thursday. It helps set rates for mortgages and other important loans.

The two-year yield, which moves more on expectations for the Fed, fell to 4.94% from 5.00%.

Some concerning signals for inflation were also still embedded in the report.

Wage growth held steady last month, instead of slowing as economists expected, for example. While workers would rather have the 4.4% gain in average hourly earnings from a year earlier than the 4.2% that was predicted, Wall Street's fear is the Fed will see too-strong wage growth as keeping upward pressure on inflation.

Yields are already around their highest levels since March, which was when high rates helped trigger three failures in the U.S. banking system that rattled confidence across financial markets. High rates have also caused pain in other areas of the economy, from manufacturing to housing.

Stocks in the energy industry were

among Wall Street's strongest Friday as the price of oil rallied. Oilfield services provider Schlumberger jumped 8.6%. Halliburton climbed 7.8% and Marathon Oil rose 4.3%.

The higher crude prices also helped stocks of solar companies, which got an added boost after First Solar announced a \$1 billion credit facility from a group of banks. It's building factories and other expansions, and First Solar shares gained 3.3%.

Stocks of smaller companies also rose more than the rest of the market. Not only do investors see them as moving more closely with the strength of the U.S. economy than big multinational companies, smaller stocks are also viewed as more dependent on lower interest rates. The Russell 2000 index of smaller stocks rose 1.2%.

On the losing side of Wall Street was Levi Strauss, which tumbled 7.7% despite reporting slightly stronger profit for the latest quarter than analysts expected. It cut its forecasted range for earnings for the full year, as its U.S. wholesale business remains under pressure.

Costco Wholesale fell 2.3% after reporting its growth in sales slowed in

June from May.

Higher yields helped pull the S&P 500 to a loss of 1.2% for the week. That's its second losing week in the last eight.

Europe

In Europe at midday, Germany's DAX and the CAC 40 each advanced 0.5%. Britain's FTSE 100 lost 0.2%.

In Asian trading, Tokyo's Nikkei 225 shed 1.2% to 32,388.42 and the Hang Seng in Hong Kong dropped 0.9% to 18,365.70. The Shanghai Composite index lost 0.3% to 3,196.61, while Australia's S&P/ASX 200 sank 1.7% to 7,042.30.

India's Sensex sank 0.6% and Bangkok's SET index was little changed.

Asia

Asian shares slipped Friday after another decline on Wall Street, where hopes for an end to interest rate hikes were again shaken by strong jobs data.

U.S. futures fell and oil prices were higher.

Investors were watching for updates from U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen's visit to Beijing, where she was meeting with senior Chinese officials to try to soothe antagonisms over a host of issues and promote global financial stability.

Tokyo's Nikkei 225 shed 1.2% to 32,388.42 and the Hang Seng in Hong Kong dropped 0.8% to 18,384.17. The Shanghai Composite index lost 0.3% to 3,197.42, while Australia's S&P/ASX 200 sank 1.7% to 7,042.30.

India's Sensex sank 0.6% and Bangkok's SET index lost 0.3%.

Oil

In other trading Friday, U.S. benchmark crude oil added 33 cents to \$72.13 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. It gained 1 cent to \$71.80 on Thursday.

Brent crude, the pricing basis for international trading, picked up 33 cents to \$76.85 per barrel.

Currencies

The dollar slipped to 143.39 Japanese yen from 144.06 yen. The euro rose to \$1.0889 from \$1.0890.

Bahrain secures 'a record' \$1.95 billion in FDI inflows

MANAMA, Bahrain, July 8, (PR Newswire) — Securing a new record, Bahrain's Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows increased by USD 1.95 billion in 2022 while global FDI fell by 12%, according to the latest World Investment Report (WIR 2023) by the United Nations Conference of Trade and Development (UNCTAD).

Commenting on this achievement, H.E. Khalid Humaidan, Chief Executive of Bahrain Economic Development Board, said: "This milestone achievement of almost USD 2 billion in FDI inflows reflects the robust level of investor confidence in Bahrain's value proposition, encouraging local and international investments that are backed by a highly skilled workforce and best value operating costs serving as a gateway to the region."

The Chief Executive added: "This record increase in FDI inflows is supported by Team Bahrain's swift agility in successfully driving in solid investments and securing value-adding projects across priority sectors. I am confident in our ability to maintain a strong pipeline of investments in 2023 and beyond."

Bahrain has made laudable progress in diversifying its economy, growing opportunities for local and internation-

al businesses and maintaining steady investor confidence, as well as consistently increasing the Kingdom's FDI inflows.

While economic diversification efforts have long been underway in Bahrain, the Economic Recovery Plan (ERP) formed in 2021 embraced a focused development plan with an overarching aim of enhancing Bahrain's competitiveness on an international level by reprioritising the economy and underscoring strategies across high value sectors.

To ensure the Kingdom remains an attractive destination for investment, Bahrain has recently launched the Golden License as well as continues to maintain an ongoing commitment to streamline commercial procedures on a regulatory front, further boosting Bahrain's business-friendly environment.

The full version of the UNCTAD World Investment Report 2023 report is accessible at the following website <https://unctad.org/publications>

About Bahrain Economic Development Board (Bahrain EDB)

Bahrain EDB is an investment promotion agency with the overall responsibility of attracting investment into the Kingdom and supporting initiatives that enhance the investment climate.

BEIJING, July 8, (AP) — Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen appealed to China on Saturday for cooperation on climate change and other global challenges and not to let disagreements about trade and other irritants derail relations.

In a meeting with her Chinese counterpart, Vice Premier He Lifeng, Yellen defended U.S. restrictions on technology exports that rattle Beijing. She said the two governments shouldn't let such disagreements disrupt thriving economic and financial relations.

She also face important global challenges, such as debt distress in emerging markets and developing countries and climate change," Yellen said. "We have a duty to both our own economies and to other countries to cooperate."

Yellen is one of a series of U.S. officials who are due to visit Beijing as part of efforts to revive relations that are at their lowest level in decades due to disputes over technology, security, and Taiwan

among other issues.

Yellen has received a warm welcome from leaders including Premier Li Qiang, the No. 2 figure in the ruling Communist Party, though they gave no sign they will change policies that irritate Washington and other governments.

Treasury officials said the goal of the trip was to encourage communication and no agreements on big disputes were expected. They said Yellen wasn't scheduled to meet Chinese leader Xi Jinping.

Beijing broke off climate discussions with Washington last August in retaliation for a visit by then-Speaker Nancy Pelosi of the House of Representatives to Taiwan, the self-ruled island democracy claimed by China as part of its territory.

President Joe Biden's climate envoy, John Kerry, is due to become the next senior U.S. official to visit China next week. China and the United States are the world's top emitters of climate-changing carbon. He, who is Xi's top economic adviser and the

chief Chinese envoy to the United States on trade and financial issues, said the two governments should return to an agreement reached last November by Biden and Xi to improve relations.

"The two countries should act with a sense of responsibility for history, for the people and for the world," the vice premier said. He added that the United States should "adopt a rational and pragmatic attitude and work with China to stay committed to the common understandings" by Xi and Biden.

China, which has lent billions of dollars to governments in Asia and Africa under Xi's Belt and Road Initiative to build ports and other infrastructure, signed on an agreement last month to reduce the debts of Zambia in southern Africa. Treasury officials earlier pointed to that as an area where cooperation produced results. Also Saturday, Yellen met with the incoming governor of China's central bank, Pan Gongsheng, and people who work in China's climate-related finance industry.

US Treasury Secretary meets with Chinese counterpart

Yellen appeals to China for coop on climate, other global challenges

S. Korea, UAE to expedite investment projects

South Korea and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) vowed Friday to make joint efforts to push for their agreed-upon joint projects and investment plans in energy, the arms industry and the overall economic and trade fields without a hitch, Yonhap News Agency reported. The consensus was reached during a meeting between South Korean Industry Minister

Lee Chang-yang and the UAE's Minister of Economy Abdullah bin Touq Al-Marri in Seoul, the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy said.

The two ministers confirmed that the two nations are working together to implement business deals and cooperation agreements that they signed in January, and agreed to strive further to draw tangible results in trade

promotion, advanced technologies and the energy sector, among other fields, according to the report.

During and after the January summit between President Yoon Suk Yeol and UAE President Mohamed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, the two sides signed 45 memorandums of understanding, two deals and a letter of intent worth \$6.1 billion combined. (KUNA)

Ant Group fined \$985 million by Chinese regulators

Chinese regulators are fining Ant Group 7.123 billion yuan (\$985 million) for violating regulations in its payments and financial services, an indicator that over two years of scrutiny and crackdown on the firm that led it to scrap its planned public listing may have come to an end.

The People's Bank of China imposed the fine on Friday, stating that Ant had violated laws and regulations related to corporate

governance, financial consumer protection, participation in business activities of banking and insurance institutions, payment and settlement business, and attending to anti-money laundering obligations. The fine comes over two years after regulators pulled the plug on Ant Group's \$34.5 billion IPO - which would have been the biggest of its time - in 2020. Since then, the company had been ordered to revamp its

business and behave more like a financial holding company, as well as rectify unfair competition in its payments business. "We will comply with the terms of the penalty in all earnestness and sincerity and continue to further enhance our compliance governance," Ant Group said in a statement. The move is widely seen as wrapping up Beijing's probe into the firm and to allow Ant to revive its initial public offering. (AP)

ABK relaunches Alfouz Draw Account with more draws, bigger prizes, and higher chances to win

KUWAIT CITY, July 8: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) continues its journey to elevate the customer banking experience with the release of an enhanced version of its Alfouz draw account under the slogan 'Alfouz gives you more, higher chances, more draws.'

The revered Alfouz account continues to offer an impressive weekly draw of KD 10,000, coupled with a new alluring monthly draw of KD 20,000, and an exceptional quarterly draw of KD 100,000. The account also retains its hallmark mega annual draw of KD 5,000 monthly salary for ten years. Furthermore, the Bank now offers customers an increased opportunity to win for every KD 10 as opposed to KD 100 previously.

To be eligible for the draws, customers are simply required to deposit a minimum of KD 100 in their Alfouz account and retain the amount throughout the draw period. The more customers save, the higher their chance of winning.

On this occasion, Loai Muqames, CEO-Kuwait at ABK, said, "The relaunch of Alfouz account reflects the Bank's ongoing commitment to enriching customer experience. It also reflects our determination to develop our products in line with the most recent banking sector developments."

Muqames added that ABK continuously works towards rewarding its customers as a form of appreciation for the great trust they place in the products and services provided by the Bank. He confirmed that the coming period will witness the introduction of new banking solutions and products that contribute to attracting new customers to enjoy simpler banking with ABK.

Johair Marafi, Acting General Manager of Retail Banking at ABK, expressed her satisfaction with the successful trajectory of the product, which has an ever-increasing, loyal customer base. She said, "The Bank endeavors to reciprocate the unwavering support of our esteemed customers by providing more attractive winning opportunities and more significant cash prizes. Our efforts are therefore a reflection of our appreciation of our devoted clientele."

Marafi reiterated that ABK places the utmost importance on providing customers with value-added opportunities. She continued, "For those who have yet to open an Alfouz account, ABK warmly welcomes you to join our growing community of satisfied customers. With the relaunch of the account, along with our array of other products and services, I am confident



Loai Muqames, CEO - Kuwait at ABK



Johair Marafi, Acting General Manager of Retail Banking at ABK



ABK Alfouz relaunch flyer

that ABK will continue to exceed expectations and help customers achieve their financial goals."

Since its introduction to the Kuwaiti market in October 2021, Alfouz has become a game-changer in the lives of many customers who have achieved financial stability by winning KD 10,000 in the weekly draws. Open to all residents of Kuwait who meet the qualifying criteria, Alfouz account has

attracted widespread attention with an even bigger incentive of the possibility of winning the grand prize of KD 5,000 per month for ten years.

Marafi concluded by inviting customers to follow the Bank's social media accounts to remain up to date with the latest marketing initiatives, and to benefit from the current promotional campaigns, and offers throughout the year.

Since the establishment of ABK in 1967, it has progressed to become one of the leading Kuwaiti banks in the region today known for offering a simpler banking experience. The Bank offers personal, corporate, and private banking of which includes a wide array of products and services. ABK also provides a broad range of local, regional, and global investment solutions and services through its subsidiary, ABK

Capital. Enjoying equal stability and strength, the Bank also offers the convenience of banking across the region, servicing other markets in Egypt and the UAE.

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

Al-Hassad

More draws and annual returns

Weekly K.D. 10,000	Quarterly K.D. 250,000	Monthly K.D. 100,000
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AUB's Al Hassad campaign visual

Be optimistic of winning

AUB announces winner of KD 250,000 in 'Al-Hassad' grand quarterly draw

KUWAIT CITY, 8: Ahli United Bank (AUB) announced Yousef Naser A Al-Muaili as the winner of KD 250,000 in the grand quarterly draw from Al-Hassad Islamic program, which was held on Wednesday, 5 July, 2023 at the bank's head office in the presence of a representative of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry as well as a representative from Deloitte as the external auditor to oversee the draws as per the instructions of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry in this regard.

On this occasion Mr. Amresh Nandkeolyar, Head of Marketing and Product Development, Retail at AUB congratulated the winner, wishing him all the best. Mr. Nandkeolyar expressed his hope that all the bank's customers will be lucky in the upcoming draws. He also expressed his happiness with the valued trust of the customers in the Bank.

Assured

Nandkeolyar assured that AUB is keen since the beginning of launching Al-Hassad Islamic prizes program to offer a host of exclusive prizes to contribute to making the aspiration and dreams of its clients true, and to enhance the culture of savings, stressing that the Bank is committed to providing state-of-the-art banking solutions, which are in line with the client's different requirements.

In its new package, Al-Hassad Islamic Saving Account presents a broader variety of rewards. Customers could now participate in the draw to win a monthly KD 100,000 prize, in addition to 10 weekly prizes of KD 1,000 each. The grand quarterly prize of KD 250,000

in cash for the winner remains the most important aspiration of customers. It is a real chance for them to realize their life dreams. In addition to this attractive package, there will be the annual expected profits based on a Wakala contract that increases the attractiveness of the Al-Hassad Islamic Saving Account to customers.

Provides

Al-Hassad Account provides a suite of unique features, including the simplest and easiest savings program and a unique account-opening feature online with all ease with an instant deposit option.

To be eligible to participate in the draw, the customer should have a minimum balance of KD 100, whereby the customer has two chances to participate, with up to 30,000 chances per draw, in addition to rewarding annual profits. Every KD 50 invested entitles the customer to one chance in the draws, provided that to maintain his balance for at least fifteen days before the draw date. The longer the customer keeps his balance the bigger the chances of participation in the draw with every KD 50 in the account. Draws are held every Wednesday based on the draw scheme. On religious and national holidays, the draw is postponed to the next business day.

For more information on Ahli United Bank's products and services, customers are invited to visit any of the bank's branches, dial the customer services "Hayakom" on 181 2000, or log on to the Bank's website at www.ahliunited.com.kw

Shell CEO calls it 'irresponsible' to cut oil & gas production now

World economy still dependent on fossil fuels

LONDON, July 8, (AP): The head of global energy giant Shell says it would be "irresponsible" to cut oil and gas production at a time when the world economy is still dependent on fossil fuels.

In an interview with the BBC released Thursday, Shell CEO Wael Sawan also refused to rule out moving the company's headquarters and stock market listing from Britain to the United States.

"The reality is, the energy system of today continues to desperately need oil and gas," Sawan said. "And before we are able to let go of that, we need to make sure that we have developed the energy systems of the future - and we are not yet, collectively, moving at the pace (required) for that to happen."

The comments conflict with the recommendations of climate scientists and U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, who has called on the fossil fuel industry to "drive, not obstruct" the transition to renewable energy. Burning fossil fuels is the biggest source of the carbon emissions blamed for global warming.

Even Sultan al-Jaber - who is head of Abu Dhabi National Oil Co., one of the world's largest oil producers, as well as president of this year's U.N. climate talks - urged the oil and gas industry to reach net zero greenhouse gas emissions by or before 2050.

Guterres has said achieving the U.N.'s goal of limiting global temperature increases to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels was still possible, but only if countries accelerate their efforts to cut carbon emissions.

"Investing in new fossil fuels infrastructure is moral and economic madness," Guterres said in April. "Such investments will soon be stranded assets - a blot on the landscape and a blight on investment portfolios."

Sawan said he disagreed with that position. "I think what would be dangerous and irresponsible is actually cutting out the oil and gas production so that the cost of living - as we saw just last year - starts to shoot up again," he told the BBC.

Sawan added that the transition to renewable energy must be "globally responsible," so that it doesn't favor one part of the world over another.

As energy prices soared last year following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, wealthy countries bought up much of the world's supply of liquefied natural gas, taking it away from places like Bangladesh and Pakistan, where children were forced to study by candlelight, he said.

Sawan took over as Shell's chief executive in January. Under his predecessor, Ben van Beurden, the company set a target of eliminating net carbon emissions from both its operations and the products it sells by 2050.

Sawan also took aim at the British government's shifting tax and energy policies, saying they risked making the

George Soros' OSF to lay off 40 pct of staff under son's new leadership

NEW YORK, July 8, (AP): Several human rights organizations are concerned about Open Society Foundations plans to lay off 40% of their global staff - the nonprofit's second major cut in three years - as billionaire investor George Soros hands over leadership to his son.

"We are most concerned for social justice movements, which now have to wait for the impact on their sustainability," said Kellea Miller, executive director of the Human Rights Funders Network. "In the field of philanthropy, decisions at the top can have an outsized ripple effect on those enacting change."

Open Society Foundations, the umbrella organization for Soros' charitable work, said its board of directors "approved significant changes to the Foundations' operating model." The layoffs will comply with local regulations, the foundations said, but they have not said where or when they will take place.

"This will involve some difficult decisions," said Mark Arena, a spokesperson for the Open Society Foundations. "We anticipate that implementing the proposed new model would involve the redesign and retooling of our existing operations, and a substantial reduction in headcount of no less than 40% globally."

In 2021, the foundations offered buyouts to dozens of employees and sought to streamline their internal structures while maintaining roughly the same level of grant funding. The foundations say they currently employ around 800 staff members and maintain offices in more than 20 countries.

Kenneth Roth, the former longtime leader of investigative advocacy nonprofit Human Rights Watch, which was a major recipient of OSF funding, said he has no reason to think the OSF layoffs will mean a decline in support for human rights work. It may mean OSF makes fewer, larger grants in the future because the staffing decline makes it harder to handle multiple smaller grants.

According to The Human Rights Funders Network, which researches funding on human rights, OSF was the sector's third largest funder in 2019, the most recent year it has analyzed.

"We also consider the humanity of those losing jobs at OSF," Miller said. "This is not nominal, and it also means that movements that have longstanding relationships with program officers there now have to rebuild their access

U.K. a less attractive place to invest.

The U.K. last year introduced a temporary tax on the windfall profits of energy companies after Shell and British rival BP reported record earnings due to soaring gas and oil prices. That lifted the tax on profits from U.K. as-



George Soros, founder and chairman of the Open Society Foundations. (AP)

and wait for transparency about the implications."

Earlier this month, the foundation announced that Soros was handing over control of his foundations to his 37-year-old son, Alex, who was elected head of OSF's board in December.

The change to a "new model" is meant to maximize the foundations' grantmaking dollars, the OSF statement said, and "create a culture of 'strategic opportunism.'" The lack of details about the new plan, however, could provide fodder to those who see Soros as having undue power. Soros' public profile began to change, experts say, began when he supported John Kerry's run against then President George W. Bush. Then, Victor Orban, now Hungary's prime minister, demonized him as a shadowy figure seeking to undermine Europe's predominantly Christian majority through supporting migration, among other issues.

Conspiracies

Republicans in the U.S. have seized on similar conspiracies about Soros, who is Jewish and a survivor of the Holocaust.

"Can you ever explain what you're really doing to somebody who believes that a Jewish billionaire is bringing in migrants?" asked Emily Tamkin, a reporter and author of the book "The Influence of George Soros." "Is there anything you can say that can make that person believe that you're not a negative and nefarious force in society? I don't think there is, and I definitely don't think there is for political actors who are convinced that this is a useful device for them."

Alex Soros told the Wall Street Journal, which first reported he would succeed his father at the helm of OSF, that he would be "more political," but hasn't elaborated further.

In the early years of the founda-

tions' work, George Soros praised it for being fluid and flexible and empowering staff in countries to run their own projects, said Tamkin.

"(He) contrasted that to these big foundations in New York City with the professional staff and how they were removed from what was actually happening and the people they were actually trying to help," she said. "I think in some ways, philosophically, perhaps people within OSF making this decision see this as a return to form."

Tamkin said it remains to be seen, "whether reducing staff allows that return to flexibility and empowering of people on the ground, or if really the bureaucratic center remains the bureaucratic center just with fewer people."

OSF is perhaps most famous for its work supporting dissident movements in Soviet countries, including Soros' native Hungary. It continues to pour funds into Central European University, which Soros founded in the early 1990s in Budapest. It was forced to relocate to Austria after Hungary's parliament passed a new law governing universities with foreign accreditations.

Also among the largest recipients of OSF's funding is Bard College, which received a \$500 million gift in 2021. Alex Soros is a member of the college's board of trustees.

According to data from the nonprofit Candid, the largest organizations OSF currently funds in Europe, outside of the local independent branches of its foundation, include the human rights campaigner Global Witness, policy group European Council on Foreign Relations and the advocacy group Roma Education Fund. The fund said it was aware of the layoff announcement and credited OSF as being the biggest private donor for Roma-led organizations across Europe. Global Witness said it was grateful for OSF's support.

As a part of what it's calling a new model, OSF may be holding more funds in reserve, Roth said.

"It sounds as if they're going to reserve some percentage of funds, not commit them in advance to grantees and just have significant capital ready to invest when big opportunities or big challenges emerge," Roth said.

In his view, George Soros has always been quick to respond to new problems.

a future move. "I would never rule out anything that could potentially create the right circumstances for the company and its shareholders," he said. "Ultimately, I am in the service of shareholder value."

Burgan Bank awards winner of its Kanz semi-annual draw with KD 500,000 cash prize

Burgan Bank announced the lucky winner of the Kanz semi-annual draw during a special ceremony held at the Bank's headquarters. The winner, Mr. Taiyab Ali Nazar Hussain who walked home with a cash prize of KD 500,000 was announced in the presence of the representative of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, alongside members of the Burgan Bank management team and an external auditor. Commenting on the draw, Mr.

Nasser Mohammad Al-Qaisi, Chief Retail Banking Officer at Burgan Bank, said: "We are proud to announce the lucky semi-annual draw winner in the second year of our Kanz account. We extend our heartfelt congratulations to Mr. Taiyab Ali Nazar Hussain and we would also like to remind our customers that the winning is not over yet. There is still plenty of chances to win valuable cash prizes in our future draws, especially in our Kanz annual draw

which offers the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to become a millionaire." He added: "As part of our comprehensive social responsibility program, we continue to showcase the importance of fostering the culture of saving in Kuwait. To this end, our regular Kanz winner announcements, whether monthly, semi-annually, or annually, serve as a reminder to all segments of society about the many benefits of saving with Burgan Bank. Every individual

has the chance to save more and to get rewarded in return for their savings. After all, we live by our motto 'Driven by You' and continue to push boundaries to deliver an elevated banking experience that lives up to customer expectations and fulfills their financial aspirations." It serves to note that Burgan Bank revamped the Kanz draw account earlier this year, narrowing it down to two major annual draws and regular monthly draws

throughout the year. This dual saving and draw account can help customers build a solid financial foundation to safeguard today and tomorrow for themselves and their loved ones. Further enriched with new benefits and even higher prizes, the Kanz account grants an ultimate lucky winner the grand annual prize of KD 1,500,000 and one semi-annual draw winner the prize of KD 500,000, while 20 winners will each get KD 2,000 cash-

prize in the monthly draw. To be eligible to enter Burgan Bank's upcoming draws, any individual can open a Kanz account in Kuwaiti Dinar or in any other major currencies (USD, EURO, and GBP) with a minimum balance of KD 200, or equivalent. All Kanz customers must maintain the balance for at least one month before the semi-annual draw date, seven days before the monthly draw and until December 31st for the annual draw.

In adherence to its strategy for adopting latest technological advancements in banking sector

KIB launches three new digital banking platforms with unique and comprehensive benefits

KUWAIT CITY, July 8: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) revealed three new, advanced digital platforms in a press conference attended by a select group of the bank's top managers and employees from across departments. This comes as part of KIB's dedicated strategy for elevating its customers' experience regardless of their market segment, whether the served customers are retail, corporate, or real estate. For corporate customers, the Bank presents its all-new and revamped Corporate Online Banking platform. Meanwhile, real estate customers can enjoy customized services that address their needs using the newly-introduced, first-of-its-kind KIB Aqari platform. As for retail customers, they can now enjoy an on-the-go, easy-to-manage banking experience with the upgraded and improved KIB Mobile application. With the unveiling of these three new and improved platforms, KIB confirms its commitment to offering its customers a technologically advanced experience by constantly keeping abreast of the latest in digital banking technologies and adopting innovative solutions that address customers' varied and constantly evolving needs.

turns users' transactions and shopping purchases into redeemable points that can be exchanged for a wide range of gifts, including electronics, coupons, travel tickets, and so much more.

On his part, Hesham Al-Mubarak, Wholesale Banking General Manager at KIB, commented on KIB's revamped Corporate Online Banking platform, saying: "We have all been eagerly waiting for the upgrade of this platform, which marks a quantum leap in the field of corporate banking services. Among its multiple benefits, the KIB Corporate Online Banking platform contributes to saving customers' precious time and effort through its comprehensive suite of innovative, simplified, and easy-to-use services. Similar to many previous KIB innovations, this platform is proof of the Bank's unwavering commitment to its corporate customers whom we continuously strive to provide with the most efficient, most trusted, and best-tailored banking experience. With the launch of every novel, state-of-the-art platform, KIB takes yet another step closer to innovations that raise the bar for the entire sector and that answer to the corporate customers' needs and aspirations in a brand-new way."

Al-Mubarak clarified that KIB's Corporate Online Banking platform is designed to enable the Bank's corporate customers to manage all of their employees' banking operations as well as control the finest financial details with ease and precision. This is made possible thanks to the platform's various features, including platform personalization, which allows users to customize the platform based on their roles and responsibilities within their organization, giving them access only to the tools and features that assist them in their day-to-day operations for focused efforts and higher productivity. The platform also allows customers to place and redirect requests to designated team members, which ensures a more streamlined process with minimal to no delays.

Other remarkable features include the platform's tracking dashboard, which allows users to track all of their bank interactions in one place, in addition to the POS dashboard, through which customers can get a holistic, birds-eye view of their business's financial operations as carried out using point-of-sale (POS), MasterCard, Visa, or KNet. The platform also allows customers to enjoy ultimate privacy and security while reviewing confidential data, thanks to the "Hide Amount" feature. Last but not least, the platform offers customers an advanced salary portal that enables them to streamline their business's payroll system for an all-around smooth experience.

Meanwhile, Jassem Al-Abdulhadi, General Manager of the Real Estate Department at KIB, commented on the newly-launched digital platform, KIB Aqari, saying: "Time and time again, KIB proves its ability to surpass all expectations. And here we are today, celebrating a first-of-its-kind achievement in the world of digital banking products and services, confirming KIB's market leadership and forward-looking culture that continues to grow toward sustainable development. It serves to note that KIB's driving values and strategic vision also play a huge role in its ability to remain abreast of the market's fast-paced technological advancements and to adapt new trends to the local market's unique needs."

Al-Abdulhadi described KIB Aqari as a one-stop-shop for real estate-related needs, whereby customers can enjoy a wide range of real estate services and innovative solutions. Among the multiple outstanding features available on KIB Aqari are the appraisal request and follow-up features, now available digitally for the first time in Kuwait. The platform also enables customers to verify KIB appraisal reports by simply scanning a QR code. Other real estate-specific features include automated rent collection and late payments tracking, in addition to other services that add a unique layer of convenience to customers' real estate management experiences.

It serves to note that KIB strives to continue offering its customers an unparalleled digital banking experience that responds to their unique needs, empowering them to succeed and aspire for bigger dreams. As a 'Bank for Life', KIB proceeds with confidence toward a future of innovations and technological advancements, as guided by the bank's encompassing strategy that puts the customer at the heart of all considerations and decisions, big or small, guaranteeing noteworthy achievements for the bank and its clients alike.

Reflecting on the new and upgraded platforms, Mohamed Atef El-Shareef, General Manager of the Digital Transformation and Innovation Department at KIB, expressed a genuine sense of pride in the achievements that grew from the KIB Digital Factory. Since its inception, the Digital Factory has been dedicated to the innovation of new, pioneering digital banking services that are designed in accordance with the latest technologies and leading systems with the sole purpose of meeting the needs of all KIB customers, whether retail or corporate.

On this note, El-Shareef commented: "What we are witnessing today is a strategic turning point and a huge leap forward in the realm of digital banking services. It is an honor to see many years of shared dedication and effort culminate in such remarkable success, driving us to continue dedicating our efforts and best talents to advancing our digital offerings that serve KIB's overarching digital transformation strategy."

In addition, El-Shareef attributed this achievement to the joint efforts between KIB's departments in support of the bank's strategic digital plan that aims to provide the best digital solutions for all customers across all segments. He also thanked the Bank's Board of Directors and the executive staff for supporting this initiative and placing great confidence in the work team, which, in turn, contributed to this notable achievement.

Commenting on the launch of the upgraded KIB Mobile application for retail customers, Othman Tafweq, Retail Banking Department General Manager at KIB, said: "We are proud of this unique banking initiative that reflects KIB's essence as a 'Bank for Life' and its commitment to adopting the latest advancements and innovations in the world of retail banking products and services. This, of course, comes as an extension to the Bank's dedicated digital transformation strategy and overall comprehensive strategy for providing customers with an outstanding, integrated banking experience."

Tafweq further noted that the revamped KIB Mobile application brings KIB retail customers an elevated portable online banking experience that allows them to remain updated with their financing details and installments schedule, as well as manage their accounts, cards, and investments – all in one place. Tafweq also mentioned a number of services and benefits that avail the KIB Mobile application users, including direct access to their wallet, tools that enable them to make quick yet smart decisions, in addition to banking transfers, payment fulfillment, and beneficiary list management.

More benefits are available on KIB Mobile, such as KIBPay, which allows customers to request payments, top up their accounts, and split bills with unparalleled ease. As soon as customers sign up for their KIB Mobile account, they can instantly benefit from Kuwait's top digital rewards program, which

solutions by stc wins groundbreaking 'Smart Parking' agreement with PUMC



A group photo of the executive management of solutions by stc and the Public Utilities Department.

'A solid step in implementing PUMC's digital transformation strategy'

KUWAIT CITY, July 8: solutions by stc, the specialized business arm of Kuwait Telecommunications Company – stc, announced that it has won the tender to provide the Public Utilities Management Company (PUMC) with a comprehensive ticketless parking management solution throughout its various parking locations across Kuwait. The signing ceremony took place at solutions by stc's main headquarters in the presence of the Chief Executive Officer of solutions by stc, Mohammed N. Al-Nusif, and Chairman of the PUMC, Dr. Mohammed Al-Abduljader.

solutions by stc indicated in a statement that the project involves the installation of a state-of-the-art end-to-end smart Parking Management System, in collaboration with its partners. This important step signifies a significant milestone in accelerating the development and operation of truly smart parking solutions in Kuwait. As part of solutions by stc's strategic plans to expand these solutions, this project aims to transform the company into an inclusive digital telecommunications provider, ultimately fostering the nation's digital transformation and driving progress in the country.

Moreover, the solutions by stc team will collaborate closely with PUMC to implement the comprehensive smart parking system, enhancing the overall experience for visitors and tenants. This system will enable users to effortlessly locate available parking spaces and streamline payments through a mobile app, while smart parking readers facilitate ticketless entry and exit. Enhanced security measures, allow PUMC to remotely monitor all parking locations, and the communication solutions offer quick connections to PUMC's customer service team for remote staff and visitors. With all branches connected to the head office, PUMC can maintain real-time visibility into parking usage and revenue, while cloud solutions ensure easy access and backup in the event of any incidents.

Al-Nusif commented, "This project will exemplify our unwavering commitment to delivering innovative and advanced solutions tai-

Gulf Bank launches Points, Cash & Summer Splash campaign

KUWAIT CITY, July 8: As part of its keenness to reward its customers, Gulf Bank has launched the "Points, Cash and Summer Splash" campaign for all credit and prepaid cardholders, enabling customers to accumulate more points for their purchases and expenditures during the summer – locally and internationally – in addition to chances to win cash prizes up to KD 20,000.

The campaign remains ongoing from July 1, 2023, until September 15, 2023, and winners will be selected over three draws: One grand prize winner of KD 20,000, 25 winners of KD 1,000 each, and 24 winners of KD 500 each.

Chances of winning are open to all individual Gulf Bank credit and prepaid cardholders. Every customer earns one chance to enter the draw for every KD 10 spent in Kuwait, and three chances for every KD 10 spent internationally, during the campaign period.

Additionally, customers can earn double chances for transactions made using digital wallets such as Google Pay, Apple Pay and Samsung Pay – noting that a minimum spend of KD 100 during the campaign period is required in order to qualify for the



Assistant General Manager of Consumer Banking – Mohammed Taqi

Gulf Bank's Assistant General Manager of Consumer Banking, Mr. Mohammed Taqi, said: "Gulf Bank is keen to reward its customers and meet their aspirations and requirements, by providing them with the best services and products, and with an outstanding customer experience." Taqi further mentioned that Gulf

Bank's credit cards carry many advantages that customers can benefit from, including offers across various sectors such as restaurants, hotels, travel and tourism, entertainment, health and beauty, car rentals, and others.

Gulf Bank's vision is to be the leading Kuwaiti Bank of the Future. The Bank is constantly engaging and empowering its employees as part of an inclusive and diversified workplace in recognition of every employee's role in delivering customer excellence and serving the community at large. With its extensive network of branches and innovative digital services, Gulf Bank is able to give its customers the choice of how and where to conduct their banking transactions, all while ensuring a simple and seamless banking experience.

Gulf Bank is committed to maintaining robust developments in sustainability at environmental, social and governance levels through diverse sustainability initiatives, strategically selected to benefit the Bank both internally and externally. Gulf Bank supports Kuwait Vision 2035 "New Kuwait" and works with various parties to achieve it.

lored to the ever-evolving needs of our customers. Our partnership with PUMC is a source of great value, and we eagerly anticipate providing a best-in-class Parking Management solution that sets the benchmark in the industry. Throughout the past several years, we have ventured into new dimensions to support the ever-evolving digital transformation strategies of our valued customers. Stemming from our deep understanding of each customers' diverse requirements, we partnered with some of the leading entities in the region and the world, to provide an exceptional and value adding experience."

Al-Nusif added, "At solutions by stc, our vision is to evolve the market by introducing cutting-edge, comprehensive solutions that not only address the immediate needs of our clients but also propel the nation's digital transformation forward. By collaborating with PUMC and our partners, we're excited to redefine the parking experience in Kuwait, showcasing our commitment to innovation and progress. This project aligns with our mission to be the region's leading ICT provider, delivering unparalleled digital solutions that foster growth and enhance the lives of our customers and communities."

Dr. Mohammed Al-Abduljader, Chairman of PUMC, reiterated the company's commitment to playing a significant role in executing Kuwait's developmental strategy. A central element of this strategy

revolves around digital transformation, a cornerstone of Kuwait's 2035 vision. The country is eager to incorporate smart, digital technologies to advance its services and optimize operational efficiency.

Al-Abduljader said, "We are steadfast in our journey towards implementing our digital transformation strategy, keeping in line with Kuwait's 2035 vision. Our goal is to develop a sophisticated and modernized infrastructure that can embrace the global cutting-edge solutions and innovative concepts that are available today. Our partnership with solutions by stc marks the commencement of our strategic digital transformation journey. Through this journey, we aim to



The Chief Executive Officer of Solutions by stc, Muhammad Nizar Al-Nusif, and the Chairman of the Public Utilities Board of Directors, Dr. Muhammad Al-Abduljader.

progressively enhance our efforts to maximize the impact of this strategy across all fronts, which includes executing our company's strategic plan."

Through his role, Engineer Saleh Alothman, CEO of PUMC, revealed that the newly signed contract with solutions by stc follows years of dedicated collaborations and coordination between the two entities. He emphasized the Company's continuous commitment to enhancing the experience of its customers, a dynamic that aligns with the broader strategic objectives of Kuwait as a whole.

Alothman said, "The digital solutions available today enable us to deliver exceptional service to our customers. We have been working on projects that meet evolving customer needs such as the implementation of ticketless smart Parking Management solutions, paying for parking through mobile apps, as well as others. By partnering with solutions by stc, we plan to introduce an array of innovative concepts and approaches to smart parking in Kuwait, while ensuring a seamless experience for our customers. This experience will cover their journey from as soon as they enter the parking lot up until they exit the structure.

"To find out more about solutions by stc, visit www.solutions.com.kw, send an email to business@ solutions.com.kw with your inquiry or contact solutions by stc at 155.



Officials pose for a group photo after the launch of new platforms.

The Conversation

Photography serves as helpful lens

Generative AI is a minefield for copyright law

By Robert Mahari, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Jessica Field, Harvard Law School, and Ziv Epstein, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)

In 2022, an AI-generated work of art won the Colorado State Fair's art competition. The artist, Jason Allen, had used Midjourney – a generative AI system trained on art scraped from the internet – to create the piece. The process was far from fully automated: Allen went through some 900 iterations over 80 hours to create and refine his submission.

Yet his use of AI to win the art competition triggered a heated backlash online, with one Twitter user claiming, "We're watching the death of artistry unfold right before our eyes."

As generative AI art tools like Midjourney and Stable Diffusion have been thrust into the limelight, so too have questions about ownership and authorship.

These tools' generative ability is the result of training them with scores of prior artworks, from which the AI learns how to create artistic outputs.

Should the artists whose art was scraped to train the models be compensated? Who owns the images that AI systems produce? Is the process of fine-tuning prompts for generative AI a form of authentic creative expression?

On one hand, technophiles rave over work like Allen's. But on the other, many working artists consider the use of their art to train AI to be exploitative.

We're part of a team of 14 experts across disciplines that just published a paper on generative AI in Science magazine. In it, we explore how advances in AI will affect creative work, aesthetics and the media. One of the key questions that emerged has to do with US copyright laws, and whether they can adequately deal with the unique challenges of generative AI.

Existing

Copyright laws were created to promote the arts and creative thinking. But the rise of generative AI has complicated existing notions of authorship.

Generative AI might seem unprecedented, but history can act as a guide.

Take the emergence of photography in the 1800s. Before its invention, artists could only try to portray the world through drawing, painting or sculpture. Suddenly, reality could be captured in a flash using a camera and chemicals.

As with generative AI, many argued that photography lacked artistic merit. In 1884, the US Supreme Court weighed in on the issue and found that cameras served as tools that an artist could use to give an idea visible form; the "masterminds" behind the cameras, the court ruled, should own the photographs they create.

From then on, photography evolved into its own art form and even sparked new abstract artistic movements.

Unlike inanimate cameras, AI possesses capabilities – like the ability to convert basic instructions into impressive artistic works – that make it prone to anthropomorphization. Even the term "artificial intelligence" encourages people to think that these systems have humanlike intent or even self-awareness.

Wonder

This led some people to wonder whether AI systems can be "owners." But the U.S. Copyright Office has stated unequivocally that only humans can hold copyrights.

So who can claim ownership of images produced by AI? Is it the artists whose images were used to train the systems? The users who type in prompts to create images? Or the people who build the AI systems?

While artists draw obliquely from past works that have educated and inspired them in order to create, generative AI relies on training data to produce outputs.

This training data consists of prior artworks, many of which are protected by copyright law and which have been collected without artists' knowledge or consent. Using art in this way might violate copyright law even before the AI generates a new work.

For Jason Allen to create his award-winning art, Midjourney was trained on 100 million prior works.

Was that a form of infringement? Or was it a new form of "fair use," a legal doctrine that permits the unlicensed use of protected works if they're sufficiently transformed into something new?

While AI systems do not contain literal copies of the training data, they do sometimes manage to recreate works from the training data, complicating this legal analysis.

Will contemporary copyright law favor end users and companies over the artists whose content is in the training data?

To mitigate this concern, some scholars propose new regulations to protect and compensate artists whose work is used for training. These proposals include a right for artists to opt out of their data's being used for generative AI or a way to automatically compensate artists when their work is used to train an AI.

Training data, however, is only part of the process. Frequently, artists who

use generative AI tools go through many rounds of revision to refine their prompts, which suggests a degree of originality.

Answering the question of who should own the outputs requires looking into the contributions of all those involved in the generative AI supply chain.

The legal analysis is easier when an output is different from works in the training data. In this case, whoever prompted the AI to produce the output appears to be the default owner.

However, copyright law requires meaningful creative input – a standard satisfied by clicking the shutter button on a camera. It remains unclear how courts will decide what this means for the use of generative AI. Is composing and refining a prompt enough?

Matters are more complicated when outputs resemble works in the training data. If the resemblance is based only on general style or content, it is unlikely to violate copyright, because style is not copyrightable.

The illustrator Hollie Mengert encountered this issue firsthand when her unique style was mimicked by generative AI engines in a way that did not capture what, in her eyes, made her work unique. Meanwhile, the singer Grimes embraced the tech, "open-sourcing" her voice and encouraging fans to create songs in her style using generative AI.

Output

If an output contains major elements from a work in the training data, it might infringe on that work's copyright. Recently, the Supreme Court ruled that Andy Warhol's drawing of a photograph was not permitted by fair use. That means that using AI to just change the style of a work – say, from a photo to an illustration – is not enough to claim ownership over the modified output.

While copyright law tends to favor an all-or-nothing approach, scholars at Harvard Law School have proposed new models of joint ownership that allow artists to gain some rights in outputs that resemble their works.

In many ways, generative AI is yet another creative tool that allows a new group of people access to image-making, just like cameras, paintbrushes or Adobe Photoshop. But a key difference is this new set of tools relies explicitly on training data, and therefore creative contributions cannot easily be traced back to a single artist.

The ways in which existing laws are interpreted or reformed – and whether generative AI is appropriately treated as the tool it is – will have real consequences for the future of creative expression. (AP)

The Conversation

Efforts hit speed limit

Digital future may rely on ultrafast computers

By Mohammed Hassan
University of Arizona

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



If you've ever wished you had a faster phone, computer or internet connection, you've encountered the personal experience of hitting a limit of technology. But there might be help on the way.

Over the past several decades, scientists and engineers like me have worked to develop faster transistors, the electronic components underlying modern electronic and digital communications technologies. These efforts have been based on a category of materials called semiconductors that have special electrical properties. Silicon is perhaps the best known example of this type of material.

But about a decade ago, scientific efforts hit the speed limit of semiconductor-based transistors. Researchers simply can't make electrons move faster through these materials. One way engineers are trying to address the speed limits inherent in moving a current through silicon is to design shorter physical circuits – essentially giving electrons less distance to travel. Increasing the computing power of a chip comes down to increasing the number of transistors. However, even if researchers are able to get transistors to be very small, they won't be fast enough for the faster processing and data transfer speeds people and businesses will need.

My research group's work aims to develop faster ways to move data, using ultrafast laser pulses in free space and optical fiber. The laser light travels through optical fiber with almost no loss and with a very low level of noise.

Published

In our most recent study, published in February 2023 in Science Advances, we took a step toward that, demonstrating that it's possible to use laser-based systems equipped with optical transistors, which depend on photons rather than voltage to move electrons, and to transfer information much more quickly than current systems – and do so more effectively than previously reported optical switches.

At their most fundamental level, digital transmissions involve a signal switching on and off to represent ones and zeros. Electronic transistors use voltage to send this signal: When the voltage induces the electrons to flow through the system, they signal a 1; when there are no electrons flowing, that signals a 0. This requires a source to emit the electrons and a receiver to

detect them.

Our system of ultrafast optical data transmission is based on light rather than voltage. Our research group is one of many working with optical communication at the transistor level – the building blocks of modern processors – to get around the current limitations with silicon.

Our system controls reflected light to transmit information. When light shines on a piece of glass, most of it passes through, though a little bit might reflect. That is what you experience as glare when driving toward sunlight or looking through a window.

Transmitted

We use two laser beams transmitted from two sources passing through the same piece of glass. One beam is constant, but its transmission through the glass is controlled by the second beam. By using the second beam to shift the properties of the glass from transparent to reflective, we can start and stop the transmission of the constant beam, switching the optical signal from on to off and back again very quickly.

With this method, we can switch the glass properties much more quickly than current systems can send electrons. So we can send many more on and off signals – zeros and ones – in less time.

Our study took the first step to transmitting data 1 million times faster than if we had used the typical electronics. With electrons, the maximum speed for transmitting data is a nanosecond, one-billionth of a second, which is very fast. But the optical switch we constructed was able to transmit data a million times faster, which took just a few hundred attoseconds.

We were also able to transmit those signals securely so that an attacker who tried to intercept or modify the messages would fail or be detected.

Using a laser beam to carry a signal, and adjusting its signal intensity with glass controlled by another laser beam, means the information can travel not only more quickly but also much greater distances.

For instance, the James Webb Space Telescope recently transmitted stunning images from far out in space. These pictures were transferred as data from the telescope to the base station on Earth at a rate of one "on" or "off" every 35 nanoseconds using optical communications.

A laser system like the one we're developing could speed up the transfer rate a billionfold, allowing faster and clearer exploration of deep space, more quickly revealing the universe's secrets. And someday computers themselves might run on light. (AP)

Tens of millions sign up for text version of IG

What's Threads? All questions about Meta's new Twitter rival, answered

NEW YORK, July 8, (AP) — Threads, a text-based app built by Meta to rival Twitter, is live.

The app, billed as the text version of Meta's photo-sharing platform Instagram, became available Wednesday night to users in more than 100 countries – including the US, Britain, Australia, Canada and Japan. Despite some early glitches, 30 million people had signed up before noon on Thursday, Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg said on Threads.

New arrivals to the platform include celebrities like Oprah, pop star Shakira and chef Gordon Ramsay – as well as corporate accounts from Taco Bell, Netflix, Spotify, the Washington Post and other media outlets.

Threads, which Meta says provides "a new, separate space for real-time updates and public conversations," arrives at a time when many are looking for Twitter alternatives to escape Elon Musk's raucous oversight of the platform since acquiring it last year for \$44 billion. But Meta's new app has also raised data privacy concerns, and is notably unavailable in the European Union.

Here's what you need to know about Threads.

Threads is now available for download in Apple and Google Android app stores for people in more than 100 countries.

Threads was built by the Instagram team, so Instagram users can log into Threads through their Instagram account. Your username and verification status will carry over, according to the platform, but you will also have options to customize other areas of your profile – including whether or not you want to follow the same people that you do on Instagram.

Because Threads and Instagram are so closely linked, it's also important to be cautious of account deletion. According to Threads' supplemental privacy policy, you can deactivate your profile at any time, "but your Threads profile can only be deleted by deleting your Instagram account."

Accounts

For now, only Instagram users can create Threads accounts. If you want to access Threads, you will have to sign up for Instagram first.

While this may receive some pushback, VP and research director at Forrester Mike Proulx said making Threads an extension of Instagram was a smart move on Meta's part.

"It's piquing (user) curiosity," Proulx said, noting that Instagram users are getting alerts about their followers joining Threads – causing more and more people to sign up. "That's one of the reasons why Threads got over 10 million people to sign up in just a seven hour period" after launching.

Still, Proulx added, maintaining momentum and continuing to capture user attention past the initial curiosity bump will be crucial down the line – noting "the long term nature of threads is what's going to ultimately predict its success or failure."

Threads' microblogging experience is very similar to Twitter. Users can repost, reply to or quote a thread, for example, and can see the number of likes and replies that a post has received. "Threads" can run up to 500 characters – compared with Twitter's 280-character threshold – and can include links, photos and videos up to five minutes long.

In early replies on Threads, Zucker-

Twitter threatens legal action against Meta

'Clone' or competitor? Lawyers and users compare Twitter and Threads

NEW YORK, July 8, (AP) — Just how similar is Instagram's chatty new app, Threads, to Twitter?

In a cease-and-desist letter earlier this week, Twitter threatened legal action against Instagram parent company Meta over the new text-based app Threads, which it called a "copycat."

Threads has drawn tens of millions of users since launching as the latest rival to Elon Musk's social media platform.

Threads creators pushed back on the accusations, and legal experts note that much is still unknown. For now, "it's sort of a big question mark," Jacob Noti-Victor, an associate professor at Yeshiva University's Cardozo Law School who specializes in intellectual property, told The Associated Press.

The people starting to explore Threads, however, are already making their own observations.

"People are calling it a Twitter clone but I think there are some key product differences," said Alexandra Popken, Twitter's former head of trust and safety operations.

One difference, she thinks, will likely be the people who use it. At Threads, "you're essentially taking your audience from Instagram and putting this into a new text-based app, whereas Twitter is a kind of a niche audience for politicians, celebrities and news junkies," she said.

Yet even though Threads makers have said they aren't particularly interested in making it a politics forum, it's likely to attract journalists and politicians, among others, looking for a Twitter alternative.

Instagram's CEO, Adam Mosseri, said Threads isn't aiming to replace Twitter.

"The goal is to create a public square for communities on Instagram that never really embraced Twitter and for communities on Twitter (and other platforms) that are interested in a less angry place for conversations, but not all of Twitter," he said.

Politics and hard news will inevitably show up on Threads, he acknowledged, "but we're not going to do any-

berg said making the app "a friendly place" will be a key to success – adding that that was "one reason why Twitter never succeeded as much as I think it should have, and we want to do it differently."

According to a letter obtained by Semafor on Thursday, Twitter has threatened legal action against Meta over Threads. In the letter, which was addressed to Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg and dated Wednesday, Alex Spiro, an attorney representing Twitter, accused Meta of unlawfully using Twitter's trade secrets and other intellectual property by hiring former Twitter employees to create a "copycat" app.

Meta spokesperson Andy Stone responded to the report of Spiro's letter on Thursday afternoon, writing, "no one on the Threads engineering team is a former Twitter employee."



This photo, taken in New York on July 5, shows the logo for Meta's new app Threads, (right), and that of Twitter. In a cease-and-desist letter earlier this week, Twitter threatened legal action against Instagram parent company Meta over the new text-based app, Threads. (AP)

thing to encourage those verticals."

In a Wednesday letter addressed to Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg, Alex Spiro, an attorney representing Twitter, accused Meta of unlawfully using Twitter's trade secrets and other intellectual property by hiring former Twitter employees to create a "copycat" app.

Possibility

In a reply to a tweet about the possibility of legal action against Meta, Musk wrote: "Competition is fine, cheating is not."

Meta spokesperson Andy Stone responded in a Threads post Thursday that "no one on the Threads engineering team is a former Twitter employee."

From Spiro's letter, which was first obtained by news outlet Semafor on Thursday, Noti-Victor said it's hard to tell what the trade secrets referred to might be.

Spiro says ex-Twitter employees "improperly retained" company documents and electronic devices – pointing to ongoing confidentiality obligations. There was no explicit reference,

Musk hasn't directly tweeted about the possibility of legal action, but he has replied to several snarky takes on the Threads launch. The Twitter owner responded to one tweet suggesting that Meta's app was built largely through the use of the copy and paste function, with a laughing emoji.

Commented

Twitter CEO Linda Yaccarino has also not publicly commented on Wednesday's letter, but seemingly appeared to address Threads' launch in a Thursday tweet – writing that "the Twitter community can never be duplicated."

The similarities of Meta's new text-based app suggests that the company is working to directly challenge Twitter. The tumultuous ownership has resulted in a series of unpopular changes that have turned off users and advertisers,

however, to a breach of any binding agreement in the letter, and most non-compete clauses, for example, are prohibited in California.

In addition, despite Threads' similarities to Twitter, "just the idea of creating a social media platform involving text (is) certainly not something that would be a trade secret," Noti-Victor added.

He is skeptical of intellectual property violations for similar reasons, noting that companies "can't patent something that's obvious" or copyright a general idea for a social media platform. Copyright can protect source code and the text of a website, but Noti-Victor said he doesn't see that reproduced in Threads.

Experts add that companies in Silicon Valley are constantly making products or services inspired by competitors' versions.

"The industry has a storied past of borrowing ideas from each other," said Popken, adding that Threads and other platforms such as Mastodon and Bluesky are "trying to capitalize on what is demand for a suitable, safer alternative to Twitter."

Threads is the latest Twitter rival to emerge in this landscape following Bluesky, Mastodon and Spill.

According to Meta, Threads will use the same safety measures deployed on Instagram – which includes enforcing Instagram's community guidelines and providing tools to control who can mention or reply to users.

Content warnings – on search queries ranging from conspiracy theory groups to misinformation about COVID-19 vaccinations – also appear to be similar to Instagram.

Threads could collect a wide range of personal information – including health, financial, contacts, browsing and search history, location data, purchases and "sensitive info," according to its data privacy disclosure on the App Store.

Blue Earth announces reader reproducibility results from Phase 3 Lighthouse trial

Posluma can help identify location of prostate cancer

MONROE TOWNSHIP, N.J., July 8: Blue Earth Diagnostics, a Bracco company and recognized leader in the development and commercialization of innovative PET radiopharmaceuticals, has announced inter- and intra-reader reproducibility results from its Phase 3 LIGHTHOUSE trial of Posluma® (flotufolastat F 18) injection (formerly referred to as 18F-rhPSMA-7.3) in newly diagnosed prostate cancer. Results showed high inter-reader agreement across all 3 trained, blinded readers. The inter-reader agreement for Posluma PET/CT in 352 evaluable scans was ≥95% across pair-wise inter-reader comparisons. Overall intra-reader agreement was ≥96% for each reader. Recently approved by the US FDA, Posluma is indicated for positron emission tomography (PET) of prostate-specific membrane antigen (PSMA) positive lesions in men with prostate cancer with suspected metastasis who are candidates for initial definitive therapy or with suspected recurrence based on elevated serum prostate-specific antigen (PSA) level. The results were reported in an oral presentation at the 2023 Society of Nuclear Medicine and Molecular Imaging (SNMMI) Annual Meeting.

ers who received identical training was assessed for 352 evaluable PET scans; in addition, regional agreement was assessed for the prostate/prostate bed, pelvic lymph nodes, and other (extra-pelvic) sites (lymph nodes outside pelvis, soft tissue/parenchyma, and bones). Intra-reader agreement was based on a sample of 70 (20%) randomly selected scans and consisted of re-reads 4 weeks following the initial reads. The overall inter-reader agreement for Posluma PET/CT in 352 evaluable scans was ≥95% across pair-wise, inter-reader comparisons, with the highest agreement seen in the prostate/prostate bed region (also ≥95%). Overall intra-reader agreement was ≥96% for each reader. It should also be noted that the interpretation of Posluma PET in patients with suspected prostate cancer recurrence may differ depending on imaging readers, particularly in the prostate/prostate bed region.

The Lighthouse Phase 3 clinical trial (NC04186819) was a prospective, Phase 3, multi-center, single-arm, imaging study conducted in the United States and Europe to evaluate the safety and diagnostic performance of Posluma PET in men with newly diagnosed prostate cancer. Results for the co-primary endpoints of efficacy and safety for the LIGHTHOUSE trial were previously presented at the 23rd Annual Scientific Meeting in Urologic Oncology (SUO) in December 2021 and at the ASCO Genitourinary Cancers Symposium (ASCO GU) in February 2023.

The findings were discussed in an oral presentation at SNMMI 2023 on June 27, 2023, "Inter- and intra-reader reproducibility of 18F-rhPSMA-7.3 PET interpretation in patients with newly diagnosed prostate cancer: Results from a phase 3, prospective, multicenter study (LIGHTHOUSE)," by Phillip H. Kuo, MD, Ph.D., Departments of Medical Imaging, Medicine, and Biomedical Engineering. "Effective staging in primary disease – determining its presence and whether it may have metastasized – is critical to establishing optimal clinical management strategies for patients. Conventional imaging techniques are limited in the information they may provide, so the demonstrated performance of PSMA-PET imaging fits an important unmet need. As well, reliable and consistent interpretation of PET imaging is foundational to informed decision-making and has the potential to substantially impact patient care. These findings from the LIGHTHOUSE study showed high reader agreement in interpreting Posluma PET/CT scans among a patient population of men with unfavorable intermediate- to very high-risk prostate cancer prior to initial therapy. The high reproducibility of reader results across all regions is clinically valuable, with the potential to influence patient management prior to surgery for patients with newly diagnosed disease."

Attaches

Radiohybrid Prostate-Specific Membrane Antigen (rhPSMA) compounds consist of a radiohybrid ("rh") Prostate-Specific Membrane Antigen-targeted receptor ligand which attaches to and is internalized by prostate cancer cells, and they may be radiolabeled with imaging isotopes for PET imaging, or with therapeutic isotopes for therapeutic use – providing the potential for creating a true theranostic technology. Radiohybrid technology and rhPSMA originated from the Technical University of Munich, Germany. Blue Earth Diagnostics acquired exclusive, worldwide rights to rhPSMA diagnostic imaging technology from Scintomics GmbH in 2018, and therapeutic rights in 2020, and sublicensed the therapeutic application to its sister company Blue Earth Therapeutics. Blue Earth Diagnostics received US Food and Drug Administration approval for its radiohybrid PET diagnostic imaging product for use in prostate cancer in 2023. rhPSMA compounds for potential therapeutic use are investigational and have not received regulatory approval.

Posluma® (flotufolastat F 18) injection (formerly referred to as 18F-rhPSMA-7.3) is an optimized, targeted radiohybrid diagnostic imaging agent indicated for positron emission tomography (PET) of prostate-specific membrane antigen (PSMA) positive lesions in men with prostate cancer with suspected metastasis who are candidates for initial definitive therapy or with suspected recurrence based on elevated serum prostate-specific antigen (PSA) level. Precision PET imaging with Posluma can help identify the location and extent of prostate cancer, providing clinically valuable information to guide patient management.

Designing

"We are pleased to present these reader interpretation results from the Phase 3 Lighthouse trial at SNMMI's 2023 Annual Meeting," said David E. Gauden, D.Phil., Chief Executive Officer of Blue Earth Diagnostics. "In designing the Posluma image interpretation training, we drew upon Blue Earth Diagnostics' proven expertise and experience in designing PET image interpretation programs and training for our first commercialized product, Axumin® (fluciclovine F 18). Newly FDA-approved Posluma represents a new class of purposely engineered, high-affinity PSMA-targeted PET radiopharmaceuticals based on novel radiohybrid technology. It is labeled with the radioisotope 18F to provide readily available patient access and leverage the high image quality of 18F-labeled PSMA PET imaging to facilitate detection of disease. In a post-hoc Phase 3 analysis, as well as in preclinical and Phase 1 studies, Posluma demonstrated low urinary bladder activity, providing the potential for enhanced image evaluation in the prostate and regions near the ureters for patients with prostate cancer."

The findings presented at SNMMI discussed inter- and intra-reader agreement for the interpretation of Posluma PET scans. Overall agreement between three blinded read-

Study shows TAK-755 more effective than plasma-based therapy for cTTP

Hope for patients with rare blood clotting disorder

OSAKA, Japan & CAMBRIDGE, Mass, July 8: Takeda (TSE: 4502/NYSE:TAK) has presented favorable interim results from a global pivotal Phase 3 randomized, controlled, open-label, crossover trial evaluating the safety and efficacy of TAK-755 (recombinant ADAMTS13) replacement therapy for the prophylactic treatment of congenital thrombotic thrombocytopenic purpura (cTTP), and pharmacokinetics (PK) characteristics of TAK-755, as well as long-term data on TAK-755 prophylaxis from a Phase 3b continuation study.

cTTP is an ultra-rare, chronic and debilitating blood clotting disorder caused by a deficiency in ADAMTS13 enzyme. Clinical presentation of cTTP lies on a spectrum of severity ranging from severe acute TTP events to chronic, recurring TTP manifestations (e.g., thrombocytopenia, hemolytic activity, headache, abdominal pain). Acute TTP events have a mortality rate of >90%, if left untreated. These studies were designed to evaluate the clinical benefit of TAK-755 in patients with cTTP across multiple clinically relevant endpoints and based on the totality of the evidence provided by efficacy, PK, safety and tolerability data. Both acute and subacute TTP events, including TTP-related organ-specific signs and symptoms were evaluated.

In the pivotal trial, no patient had an acute TTP event while receiving TAK-755 prophylactic treatment. TAK-755 also reduced the incidence of thrombocytopenia by 60%, as compared to plasma-based therapy (for the rate ratio = 0.40 TAK-755/plasma-based therapy with 95% Confidence Interval 0.3 to 0.7). Thrombocytopenia, an important marker of disease activity, was the most frequently observed TTP manifestation. In addition, the results show that TAK-755 demonstrated a favorable safety and tolerability profile, with a potential safety advantage over plasma-based therapies. In the pivotal trial, treatment-emergent adverse events (TEAEs) were reported in 10.3% of patients ages 12-68 receiving TAK-755 compared to 50% of patients receiving plasma-based therapy. (Presentation Number: OC 14.1)

"These findings suggest that recombinant ADAMTS13 is a promising innovative investigational treatment for patients with cTTP," said Marie Scully, M.D., Department of Haematology, University College London Hospitals, London, United Kingdom. "Given the high burden of illness these patients experience, complicated by unpredictable acute episodes and multiple disease-related complications, this is a much-needed option, supported through a first-of-its-kind clinical trial."

Infusion

PK characteristics of ADAMTS13 after a single infusion (0-168 hours) were evaluated and compared to plasma-based therapy in 36 cTTP patients aged 12 and older. Patients receiving TAK-755 achieved a five-fold increase in their ADAMTS13 activity levels compared to those receiving plasma-based therapy (Cmax 100% activity for TAK-755 vs. 19% activity for plasma-based therapy) and lower variability (23.8% vs. 56% coefficient of variation [CV], respectively).

"People with cTTP face life-threatening events and debilitating

KIYA-Predict utilizes primary human tumor tissues

Kiyatec and XenoSTART collaborate to help reduce drug development costs

GREENVILLE, S.C., July 8: Kiyatec, the leader in clinically correlated functional precision oncology, and XenoSTART, the worldwide leader in patient derived xenograft model development, have formally announced their ongoing collaboration to help biopharma more rapidly assess efficacy with XenoSTART's Patient Derived Xenograft (XPDX) models, using Kiyatec's ex vivo 3D spheroid screening platform. This collaboration using Kiyatec's ex vivo spheroid platform aligns with XenoSTART's initiatives to deliver advanced in vivo mouse models to save time and expedite the drug development process.

While Kiyatec's proprietary spheroid platform successfully utilizes primary human tumor tissues and their tumor microenvironments (TME) for therapeutic efficacy measurements, the platform has been shown to also deliver highly correlative results utilizing tissues from XenoSTART's extensive XPDX library. This research strategy takes advantage of the company's ability to properly dissociate and characterize XPDX tissues and accurately determine therapeutic efficacy in relation to in vivo outcomes. Kiyatec and XenoSTART have demonstrated a strong correlation between the ex vivo, platform generated results and the in

vivo preclinical outcomes. "Kiyatec is very excited to continue our ongoing relationship with XenoSTART to help biopharma identify the correct in vivo models for their programs. This initiative will serve to reduce drug development costs as well as time as these assays can be run in a matter of weeks, not months. We are extremely happy to be using the best models available, as this plays a crucial role in correlating efficacy correctly," said Tessa DesRochers, Kiyatec's Chief Scientific Officer.

Programs

Kiyatec and XenoSTART will both be presenting data at the upcoming 11th annual Tumor Models Summit in Boston, MA on July 12th, 2023. Each company will be showcasing their model and platform developments, highlighting applications, and discussing use by industry.

"The combined capabilities of Kiyatec and XenoSTART unlock exciting possibilities in the preclinical oncology drug development space. XenoSTART's growing repository of 2500+ clinically annotated XPDX models paired with Kiyatec's novel ex-vivo platforms provide the fastest, most cost-effective means to confirm preclinical efficacy and help identify a target popu-

lation for clinical development," said Michael Wick, XenoSTART's Chief Scientific Officer.

Entering into this collaboration with XenoSTART continues to strengthen Kiyatec's commitment to supporting biopharma's translational oncology programs, and ultimately provide further validation as a global leader in functional precision medicine within the translational oncology drug discovery space.

XenoSTART, founded in 2007, is a translational research organization focused on creating relevant preclinical cancer models. XenoSTART's xenograft models represent each cancer type and disease stage and are established from patients at our domestic and international cancer centers.

The XenoSTART Patient-Derived Xenograft (XPDX) platform includes over 2,500 models annotated with each donor patient's cancer treatment and outcome data and characterized using IHC, DNA/RNA sequencing, and relevant in vivo drug efficacy. XenoSTART's models are clinically annotated and include patient treatment history and outcome and are characterized through genomic profiling, histologic analysis, and in vivo drug sensitivity to relevant standards of care.

symptoms, and have no approved treatment for the disease," said Daniel Curran, M.D., Head, Rare Genetics & Hematology Therapeutic Area Unit at Takeda. "We are encouraged by what these positive results mean for people living with this rare disorder, and we look forward to continuing to advance this program for patients who may benefit from treatment with TAK-755."

Takeda also presented an interim analysis of the Phase 3b continuation study, evaluating the safety and efficacy of long-term TAK-755 prophylaxis in 29 patients with cTTP (mean ± SD age: 40.4 ± 12.1; 62% female; median [range] duration of treatment 0.7 [0-1.4] years). Results demonstrated a consistently favorable safety profile with TAK-755 prophylaxis and no development of neutralizing antibodies. Zero acute TTP events occurred during TAK-755 prophylaxis, and the incidence rates of subacute TTP events and TTP manifestations were comparable to those with TAK-755 prophylaxis in the pivotal study.

TAK-755 is an investigational therapy that has not been approved by the US Food & Drug Administration (FDA), European Medicines Agency (EMA) or other Regulatory authorities. The FDA has accepted and granted Priority Review for Takeda's Biologics License Application (BLA) for TAK-755 for the treatment of cTTP.

TAK-755 is the first and only recombinant ADAMTS13 protein in development. It provides targeted therapy to address an unmet medical need in

patients with thrombotic thrombocytopenic purpura (TTP), by replacing the missing or deficient ADAMTS13 enzyme.

The TAK-755 cTTP clinical development program includes one first-in-human, Phase 1 study, 281101 (NCT02216084), and two ongoing Phase 3 studies: a pivotal Phase 3 study, Study 281102 (NCT03393975), and one Phase 3b continuation study, Study TAK-755-3002 (NCT04683003). TAK-755 is also being investigated in immune-mediated TTP (iTTP) and sickle cell disease, with Phase 2b (NCT05714969) and Phase 1 (NCT03997760) trials ongoing, respectively, with the Phase 1 trial due to provide data in 2023.6,7

Treatment

TAK-755 was granted Orphan Drug Designation (ODD) by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for the treatment (ODA-08-2622) and prevention (ODA-08-2652) of TTP including its congenital, acquired idiopathic and secondary forms; and by the European Medicines Agency (EMA) and Japan's Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW) for the treatment of TTP (EU/3/08/588). The FDA has also granted TAK-755 Fast Track Designation (FTD) for the treatment, prevention and routine prophylaxis of acute episodes of TTP in patients with congenital ADAMTS13 deficiency and granted its Biologics License Application (BLA) Priority Review.

cTTP is an ultra-rare, chronic and debilitating blood clotting disorder associ-

ated with life-threatening acute episodes and long-term chronic symptoms.8,9 cTTP is a sub-type of TTP that has an estimated prevalence of 1 cases/million, with cTTP accounting for ≤5% of patients with TTP. It develops due to deficiency in ADAMTS13 enzyme, a von Willebrand factor (VWF) cleaving protease, which results in the accumulation of ultra-large VWF multimers in the blood.8 The accumulation of ultra-large VWF multimers leads to uncontrolled platelet aggregation and adhesion. This can lead to abnormal clotting in the small blood vessels of the body and is associated with hemolytic anemia and low platelet levels (thrombocytopenia).

cTTP has both acute and chronic manifestations (including stroke and cardiovascular disease) and is associated with a significant disease burden. Patients' quality of life and lifespan are significantly reduced compared to the general population, due to serious, ongoing widespread organ damage and other co-morbidities resulting from an ADAMTS13-deficient state. TAK-755 (recombinant ADAMTS13) is a novel investigational therapeutic approach for cTTP.

There are no medications specifically approved by regulatory authorities for routine prophylactic treatment of cTTP. Current treatment centers around plasma-based therapy, either by infusion or plasma exchange. Plasma-based therapy is time consuming and can be associated with severe treatment complications. These can include treatment-limiting volume overload and allergic reactions.

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Television

Knoxville on the art of pranking, adjusting to life after stunts

LOS ANGELES, July 8, (AP): Johnny Knoxville is no stranger to head injuries. In the decades since he rose to fame as the daredevil ringleader of "Jackass," he has had more than a dozen concussions - that he knows of. But his most recent one was different.

Now, by doctor's orders, he has to get creative to chase that adrenaline fix through safer means. His latest attempt is with his "Jackass Forever" co-star Eric Andre and Oscar nominee Gabourey Sidibe on their new series, "The Prank Panel," which premieres Sunday on ABC. Doing work tame enough to be on network television has been a major, but necessary, lifestyle adjustment for the 52-year-old thrill-seeking stuntman.

He suffered serious brain injuries after getting rammed by a bull for the fourth and final "Jackass" film, which was released in 2022. That led to nearly a year of depression and mental health struggles - a turn of events that made him permanently swear off those kinds of stunts despite his love of doing them.

"I think I got a little addicted to it, to the point where, you know, I scrambled my brains," he said. "I can do little stunts where if I, you know, break a hand or an ankle or whatever, no one cares about that. I just can't - no more concussions for me."

Knoxville isn't quite sure what it is about stunts that is so gratifying - is it the attention people give him or the thrill of pulling it off?

"It's complicated," he said, pensively. "Being with everyone, all my friends around and, you know, it's just a real moment. But don't make me start romanticizing it."

So, for now, "The Prank Panel" will have to suffice. It's a kind of spoof on reality competition shows, where people come on and pitch ideas for pranks to the three hosts. If either Knoxville, Andre or Sidibe - billed on the series as the "world's greatest pranksters" - is convinced of the idea's merits, the hopeful prankster will get money, resources and help from their sponsor to execute the caper on an unsuspecting victim.

Knoxville, shown in the trailer hitting Andre between the legs, said he was pleasantly surprised when his attempts to push boundaries on the network show were met with purportedly little resistance.

"I didn't worry about me being more buttoned up. They can beep my words and cut around when I'm really naughty. But I was just more concerned about what we could get away with on ABC," he recalled. "In hindsight, we got away with a lot more than I thought we were able to."

Objectives

The show even signed off on a prank that resulted in Knoxville being sued by a handyman who said he was subjected to a "terrifying ordeal" after being hired for a job listed on TaskRabbit. Knoxville's publicist interjected when he was asked to elaborate but not before he jokingly asked, "Which lawsuit?"

The art of the prank can take on many forms and objectives. There are some who have garnered recognition for their social or political commentary - à la Sacha Baron Cohen's "Borat" - or there are pranks

that are meant to make the victim its champion: Think the recent cult series "Jury Duty," which sought to construct a hero's journey for the one being tricked.

But as Knoxville refined his theory of pranking over the years - a vital component of the "Jackass" franchise - his intentions crystallized into a simple aspiration: He just wants to be shocking.

"I like to confuse more than anything else. I don't want to make someone look stupid," he explained. "I just want to create a really bizarre situation where they're like, 'What is happening?'"

That approach has made him and the rest of the "Jackass" stars immune, in a lot of ways, to the complaints that some comedians have expressed about political correctness or cancel culture.

"Some might find it distasteful, and some may find it over the line, but it's not like anything that is going to truly upset anyone," he said. "But I know in other areas of comedy it's a little dicier these days."

In addition to realizing he has to restrain himself with stunts and physical comedy, Knoxville said his experience with having a long-term brain injury has also made him aware of the importance of mental health more broadly, something he is candid about with the hopes that it will help others.

"Having gone through it, it opens your eyes," he said. "For anyone out there suffering from depression or intrusive thoughts, just know that your brain is literally playing tricks on you. And if you seek the help of a psychiatrist, doctors, you can turn it around."

Variety



This image released by Lionsgate shows Stephanie Hsu as Kat, (from left), Sabrina Wu as Deadeye, Ashley Park as Audrey, and Sherry Cola as Lolo in a scene from 'Joy Ride.' (AP)

Film

A cheerfully gross-out comedy

'Joy Ride' soars with its terrific cast

By Jocelyn Noveck

If you're like me, there comes a moment of truth in raunchy film comedies when you decide whether to fully join in the fun - or ride it out on the fence.

It often comes in a key early comic scene. Can they pull it off? If so you'll be putty in their hands for two hours, ready to chuckle along no matter how gross it gets (think of that bridal dress fitting in "Bridesmaids.") If not, you'll shuffle uncomfortably on the sidelines, feeling rather like a prude.

In first-time director Adele Lim's ebullient, chaotic, nothing's-too-gross-if-it's funny road comedy "Joy Ride," that moment came for me when watching Ashley Park swallow a disgusting concoction in a drinking contest, pretending all's fine as her insides erupt. Expert comic chops cannot be faked. Park had me from that guzzle (and cemented it later with her Gollum impression.)

Yet the impressive thing about "Joy Ride," a comedy that more than earns its R rating - folks is that there are some moments for each of the superb quartet of actors that make this film buzz along.

Park, playing an ambitious and uptight lawyer, has the trickiest job, being funny while remaining the narrative center, and tasked with making us not only laugh but cry. But each of her co-stars - comic Sherry Cola as a cheerfully profane, struggling artist, Sabrina Wu as her awkward, K-pop obsessed cousin, and a fabulous Stephanie Hsu as a soap opera diva - pulls their weight in comedy gold. A viewer's gross-out tolerance may vary; what unites is the laughter. Funny how simple it is when that works.

We first meet Audrey as a child in suburban Washington state, the adopted daughter of white parents who delightedly welcome Lolo, from a Chinese family, as a playmate for their daughter. When the bolder Lolo makes mincemeat of a white racist bully in the park, the girls launch a lifelong friendship.

Back to the present. Audrey, a lawyer so competitive she demolishes her boss at squash (he keeps

claiming he's "an ally" while tossing off racially insensitive asides), is living in the same hometown - not for nothing is it called White Hills - and Lolo is nearby. Audrey's boss promises a big promotion and a move to Los Angeles if she can seal an important deal in Beijing.

Problem is, Audrey doesn't speak Mandarin, so she enlists Lolo as a translator. As far as Lolo's concerned, Audrey's problems run deeper than her lack of language; she lacks any connection to her Asian roots. What a perfect time, Lolo thinks, for Audrey to make inroads. Maybe she can even find her birth mother.

Outlandish

In Beijing, Audrey survives a brutal night of competitive drinking with her potential client, who likes her until he finds out she has little connection to China. Suddenly, in an effort to save the big deal, Audrey and company are off on a road trip to find Audrey's birth mother. This includes Deadeye, Lolo's cousin, and Kat, Audrey's former college roommate, now a very sexually frustrated soap star. Hsu, after her breakout performance in "Everything Everywhere All at Once," shows huge comic potential here.

The plot - outlandish and sometimes contrived as it is - offers plenty of room for comic possibility. And more. Screenwriters Cherry Chevapravatdumrong and Teresa Hsiao explore themes of identity, assimilation and anti-Asian racism both overt and casual - and within the Asian community itself.

When, for example, the foursome hops on a train, they search for a compartment with people who seem "safe." Audrey rejects a number of Chinese travelers but settles happily in with a blonde American woman - who turns out to be a drug dealer. The scene involves hiding copious amounts of cocaine in ungodly places, but also reflects on Audrey's subconscious racism.

Kicked off the train in the middle of the countryside but rescued by a basketball team (yeah, just go with it), the foursome has a ridiculously raunchy

night (sorry for overusing the word, but "raunch" says it so well) before getting marooned again. The comic energy reaches its apotheosis in a K-pop number whose lyrics we cannot repeat here. The group has been forced to disguise itself as a band so they can get to Korea without passports. (Why? Too complicated.) Their song is so overtly sexual you might find yourself blushing - except, as usual, the laughter is what wins out.

Even when the above-mentioned X-rated tattoo is staring you in the face. Which it is.

And then we pivot, dramatically, when Audrey's trip to see her birth mom has an unexpected result. And suddenly, the laughter turns to tears. I know those were sniffles I heard at my screening, and not just mine. How did THAT happen, we wonder.

Well, it's easy: Park earned it. They all did.

"Joy Ride," a Lionsgate release, has been rated R by the Motion Picture Association of America "for strong and crude sexual content, language throughout, drug content and brief graphic nudity." Running time: 95 minutes. Three stars out of four.

MPAA definition of R: Restricted. Under 17 requires accompanying parent or adult guardian.

Also:

LOS ANGELES: Wes Anderson's stylish and star-studded "Asteroid City" is coming to premium video on demand (VOD) on Tuesday. This outing is a whimsically constructed play-within-a-play that's set in the American midcentury Desert West at a junior stargazer convention, bringing together several kid geniuses, their parents, including Scarlett Johansson's Marilyn-esque movie star and Jason Schwartzman's widowed war photographer, scientists, military types, some singing cowboys and a very special cameo from Jeff Goldblum. I wrote in my review that it is very, very Wes Anderson and also a return to form. It'll also still be available in theaters around the country for anyone still hoping to catch it on the big screen. (AP)

COLFAX, Iowa: An Iowa man may be well on his way to an official world record - for pencils.

Aaron Bartholmey of Colfax has been collecting wooden advertising pencils since he was a child. Now, he claims to own more than 70,000. That's substantially more than the Guinness World Record for the largest pencil collection - 24,000, held by Emilio Arenas from Uruguay since 2020.

Bartholmey told KCCI-TV that his most treasured pencils are those from his hometown, noting that in many instances the pencils "are the only place where there is any record of that business still, and I think it's just a neat way to preserve history."

Last weekend, two counters from the American Pencil Collectors Society were at the Colfax Historical Society to count Bartholmey's pencils. Now, he's waiting to hear if the count is approved by Guinness, which estimated the review process could take up to three months. (AP)

PONTIAC, Mich: Five years after her death, the final wishes of music superstar Aretha Franklin are still unsettled. An unusual trial begins Monday to determine which of two handwritten wills, including one found in couch cushions, will guide how her estate is handled.

The Queen of Soul, who had four sons, did not have a formal, typewritten will in place, despite years of health problems and efforts to get one done. But under Michigan law, it's still possible to treat other documents - with scribbles, scratch-outs and hard-to-read passages - as her commands.

The dispute is pitting a son against other sons. Ted White II believes papers dated in 2010 should mainly control the estate, while Kecalf Franklin and Edward Franklin favor a 2014 document. Both were discovered in Franklin's suburban Detroit home, months after her death from pancreatic cancer in 2018 at age 76.

"Does it surprise me that someone passed away before they had their ducks in a row? The answer is never," said Pat Simasko, who specializes in wills and estates and teaches elder law at Michigan State University College of Law.

"This can be settled any time, on the steps, halfway through trial," he said. "And hopefully it will be. Going to a jury trial is a war."

Here's a look at the case: Franklin was a global star for decades, known especially for hits like "Think," "I Say a Little Prayer" and "Respect." She was



Bartholmey



Franklin

treated like royalty in death, her body transported in a 1940 Cadillac hearse to a Detroit museum where thousands of people visited in August 2018.

"She was the people's diva," sociologist Michael Eric Dyson said at the time.

It was immediately known that Franklin had died without a will,

which meant her four sons likely would share assets worth millions, including real estate in suburban Detroit, furs, gowns, jewelry and future royalties from her works. A niece, Sabrina Owens, agreed to be personal representative or executor.

"My advice? Go slow, be careful and be smart," Franklin's

friend, businessman Ron Moten, told the sons at the funeral.

Months later, in spring 2019, the estate was turned upside down. Owens reported that a handwritten will dated 2010 was found in a cabinet and another handwritten will, dated 2014, was discovered inside a notebook under cushions at Franklin's home. (AP)

People & Places

Television

Stars 'Running Wild'

Grylls goes into the wild with celebrities

NEW YORK, July 8, (AP) - For his latest role, Bradley Cooper leapt onto a hovering helicopter, rappelled down a 400-foot cliff and pulled himself across a 100-foot ravine in one of the harshest climates in North America.

His reward wasn't an Oscar nomination or a big box office hit. It was a hug from adventurer **Bear Grylls** and some words of encouragement.

"He smashed it," Grylls says. Cooper is one of several celebrities - including Benedict Cumberbatch, Cynthia Erivo, Russell Brand, Troy Kotsur, Rita Ora, Daveed Diggs and Tatiana Maslany - who put their survival skills to the test in a new season of Nat Geo's "Running Wild with Bear Grylls: The Challenge," premiering Sunday.

"I'm really proud of this season. We've had incredible guests who pushed the boundaries in terms of terrain and the challenge," Grylls told The Associated Press. "When there's real tough weather with fun people, it's often really compelling TV."

The series pairs Grylls with a celebrity for 48 hours in a harsh environment. The first day, Grylls teaches key skills - climbing techniques, water-finding tips and fire-setting, among them - and then the guest must do them alone the second day.

Kotsur, who won an Oscar for "CODA," was tested in the Scottish Highlands, descending 2,500 feet (760 meters) across eight miles (13 kilometers) of harsh terrain and freezing rivers, including a 150-foot (45-meter) rappel down a waterfall. Because Kotsur is deaf, the two men used rope tugs to communicate. Kotsur's reward: haggis, a Scottish delicacy in which organ meat is put inside a sheep's stomach and cooked.

Diggs, a city kid, finds himself in the inhospitable Great Basin Desert in Nevada.

"I don't know how this is going to go and that's why I'm doing it," he says. Diggs learns how to use anchor points, track a target and make a signal fire. His dinner is a tarantula.

Unpredictable

"It's not what I was hoping for, I'm not going to lie to you," Diggs says.

Grylls told the AP the best guests are always those who come with a willingness to go with it, not to look good.

"The wild is so unpredictable and stuff is always happening. You can't look cool all the time in the wild," he said.

The show is not just about survival. Grylls' guests usually open up and show a different side. Ora talks about her ties to Kosovo, Cooper seems unfazed eating mule deer tongue and Cumberbatch reveals stories about his grandfather. Over a campfire, Grylls goes deeper than many TV interviewers.

"It's as much about the stars and their own personal journeys and struggles and battles as it is about the adventure and the places," he says. "I think that combination works well because it doesn't feel like a performance, like a chat show does, where you're dressed up and made up and you get three minutes."

Cumberbatch is taken to the Isle of Skye, where his grandfather trained as a submariner. He learns how to use climbing talons and how to tie an Italian hitch knot.

"It's not the same as doing a stunt on a Marvel film. It's a lot more real," Cumberbatch says. His meal is seaweed and limpets - "Definitely al dente," he jokes - and his bed is a wet field.

Ora arrives at the Valley of Fire in Nevada following a 15,000-foot (4,570-meter) skydive, learns a chimney climb, butchers a dead pigeon, sacrifices her lip balm to make a fire and uses a sock to soak up water. She and Grylls even dance on a rock ledge, casting their shadows tall.

Adventure

"The wild strips us all bare, doesn't it?" Grylls told the AP. "It's like a grape when you squeeze us, you see what we're made of. And that's always the appealing part of 'Running Wild' - getting to know the real people."

One commonality among the guests is that viewers will often hear it was the celebrity's parents who instilled in them a sense of adventure and testing themselves.

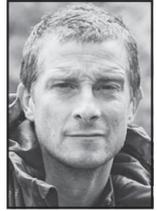
"It's a reminder just how important parenting is," Grylls said. "Almost invariably when I ask stars, 'Where does it come from?' they go, 'Oh, my dad was amazing when I was really struggling at school.' Or, 'My mum was just such inspiration holding down three jobs.'"

"Running Wild with Bear Grylls" is only one of several shows the adventurer is juggling. On TBS this year, he debuted "I Survived Bear Grylls," a competition series that bridges the survival and game show genres by having regular contestants recreate some of Grylls' stunts - like digging through poop or drinking urine. Younger fans can also enjoy "You vs. Wild," an interactive Netflix show that asks viewers to choose how Grylls will make it out of the wilderness alive.

"I'm not going to be doing these shows forever but hopefully having an adventurous spirit and knowing the value of great friends and the power of a never-give-up attitude in the world - hopefully those things will keep going," the 49-year-old said.

He seems to have tapped into something deep in the human DNA - a need to be able to start a fire, use tools and master the wild. But Grylls thinks it's more than that.

"I really believe it's a state of mind. We don't have to be in the wild to live an adventurous life," he said. "It's how we live our life, how we approach our work, our relationships, our dreams, our aspirations, our interactions with people. Are we leaning on the adventure side? Are we always pushing the boundaries, taking a few risks?"



Grylls



Taylor Swift performs during the opener of her Eras tour in Glendale, Ariz., on March 17, 2023. Swift released 'Speak Now (Taylor's Version),' Swift re-recorded her sophomore country album, 'Speak Now,' and has 22 songs, including six that were written during the album's original era, but not recorded until recently. (AP)

Music

Singer takes control of her own songs

'Speak Now (Taylor's Version)' is here

LOS ANGELES, July 8, (AP) - In 2010, newly anointed as a Grammy winner, Taylor Swift released "Speak Now," her third studio album and her first without a single songwriting collaboration.

Her 2006 self-titled debut and 2008's "Fearless" had inspired both acclaim and criticism for her bold bridges and keen lyricism - these are masterful country-pop songs, critics argued, but surely a teen idol wasn't responsible for them. Swift proved her detractors wrong on "Speak Now," an album that arrived just before her pivot from country's youngest hope to pop's freshest voice.

The album served as a close document of her nascent fame and future career ambitions, and now, 13 years on, it's back. "Speak Now (Taylor's Version)," released Friday, is the third release of the six albums Swift plans to re-record. The Taylor's Version albums, instigated by music manager Scooter Braun's sale of her early catalog, represent Swift's effort to control her own songs and how they're used - a fitting ethos for "Speak Now," a record built exclusively of her own voice.

In preparation for "Speak Now (Taylor's Version)," The Associated Press reached out to Taylor Swift scholars to discuss all the ways listeners can and should think about the release.

Before "Speak Now" became "Speak Now," the working title was "Enchanted," named after the power ballad of the same name. The mythology (folklore, anyone?) behind the shift is that Swift's label president at the time, Big Machine Records CEO Scott Borchetta, told her to move on from whimsy and fairytale iconography - she was entering her 20s and this LP warranted a more mature title.

Transition creates an interesting framework for thinking about this album: Written largely between the ages of 18 and 20, released when she turned 21, "Speak Now" is a collection of songs on a precipice - of adulthood, of fame, of declaring ownership but still concerned with the subject matters that concern a young adult. There are crushes ("Superman," "Sparks Fly") and bittersweet breakups ("Back to December," "If This Was a Movie"), alike.

"You hear a youngness when you listen to these songs," says musicologist Lily Hirsch, author of "Can't Stop the Grrrls: Confronting Sexist Labels in Music from Ariana Grande to Yoko Ono." "It's all about these romantic relationships. The world hinges on all of that, which is so typical of that age. So, it is interesting hear the re-recordings bring a more mature voice to those earlier preoccupations."

Elizabeth Scala teaches a course on Taylor Swift's songbook at the University of Texas at Austin as an introduction to literary studies and research methods.

"I think 'Speak Now' is still in the vein of 'I don't have enough life experience at my ripe age of 18 to give you a fully autobiographical anything, but I'm going to use what I read and what I know from other people,'" she says of the songs' lyrical content, which still manage to "make really beautiful, coherent things out of the messiness and inaccuracy of our memories."

Coming a year after Kanye West interrupted her acceptance speech at the 2009 MTV Video Music Awards, "Speak Now" is the moment in Swift's career where she began to use her celebrity as a mirror to her interior life.

"Mean," a takedown of a rock critic, becomes a banjo-led treatise on antagonism of any kind; the blues-y "Dear John" centers on a young woman's tumultuous relationship with an older man.

Confronting

"Insults are everywhere in music, and men don't get the same flak for it," Hirsch says, in reference to "Dear John" and "Mean." "There's this idea that women especially are supposed to take the high road, turn the other cheek and all of that, and men can get away with the low road, and they certainly do in music. It's a kind of double standard. Women are labeled 'catty' when confronting bad behavior, like in 'Dear John.'"

A common pastime among Swift fans is to unearth the identities of her songs' subjects. But, to Scala, "the most boring way to think about Taylor Swift is in terms of her biography."

At a recent stop of her Eras Tour in Minneapolis, Swift seemed to agree, playing "Dear John" live for the first time in 11 years after delivering this introduction:

"I'm 33 years old. I don't care about anything that happened to me when I was 19 except the songs I wrote and the memories we made together. So what I'm trying to tell you is, I'm not putting this album out so you should feel the need to defend me on the internet against someone you think I might have written a song about 14 billion years ago."

Scala sees a throughline between this album and its successors, with "Dear John" as a precursor to "All Too Well" and "Mean" as prescient to "Blank Space," a song that parodies how she's been portrayed in the media.

Much online chatter surrounding the re-recording of "Speak Now" has centered on "Better Than Revenge," a pop-punk song that takes aim at another woman instead of the man that wronged them both. It takes both sonic and thematic cues from Paramore's 2007 pop-rock hit "Misery Business," a similar song about the same subject. (In fact, on "Speak Now (Taylor's Version)," Paramore singer Hayley

Williams lends vocals to a "vault" song, "Castles Crumbling.")

In the original chorus of "Better Than Revenge," Swift sings, "She's an actress / She's better known for the things she does on the mattress," a rare lyrical misstep in a career underscored by poetic turns of phrases (in the opener "Mine," she sings "You made a rebel of a careless man's careful daughter"). In her 2023 "Better Than Revenge" version, the lyric becomes "He was a moth to the flame / She was holding the matches."

"If we think about 2010, slut-shaming rhetoric certainly existed in movies and shows. She's certainly not the only one who has done this at that time," Hirsch argues, quick to point out that Swift has also been the target of sexist vitriol.

Swift's alteration of the song in her re-recording follows a lineage of other pop stars doing the same. Lizzo and Beyoncé recently changed lyrics to songs deemed offensive. Weird Al no longer performs his Michael Jackson parodies. And because Swift hasn't performed "Better Than Revenge" live for well over a decade, she hasn't needed to confront this particular song, in this particular way.

"We are willing to replace the old version with Taylor's Versions because they are exact replicas, as much as they can be," Scala argues. "If she does something different, it becomes a different song." A different song, this time, owned by Swift.

"From a literary historian's point of view, when you first hear 'Speak Now,' you could only look at her career up to that point: It meant something in her creative timeline," says Scala. "And now we have the rest of her career to compare it to, so it's hard to listen to the record the same way. You can compare it to the older recording, but it's deeper and richer."

Technology has changed from 2010. So has Swift: Her voice has matured, no longer possessing the sweet self-restraint that colored her earliest releases.

Each release comes with a few "From the Vault" tracks, unreleased songs from each album's period reimagined for the current moment. They, too, give a fuller picture.

Beyond all of the music and cultural considerations, the fact is: Taylor Swift is re-recording this album to own her work, like she is doing with so many of her records - but this is the only album in her discography that is entirely self-penned, the one celebrated for its dismissals of exploitative male characters and poetic embrace of girlhood.

In fact, it's hard not to think of "Could've, Would've, Should've" from her 2022 LP, "Midnights," where Swift sings "Give me back my girlhood, it was mine first," as a self-reflection of her "Speak Now" self.



British singer Chris Martin of British band Coldplay performs at Parken Stadium in Copenhagen, Denmark, Wednesday July 5. The concert is part of the Music of the Spheres World Tour. (AP)

Variety

LAS VEGAS: No charges will be filed following a brief investigation of the altercation involving pop star **Britney Spears**, San Antonio Spurs rookie **Victor Wembanyama** and a member of the player's security team, Las Vegas police said Friday after determining she inadvertently "hit herself in the face."

Spears said she was struck by a security guard as she tried to approach Wembanyama near a restaurant in a Las Vegas casino complex on Wednesday night. Wembanyama said a person, who he later found out was Spears, grabbed him from behind.

The Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department said Spears had actually struck herself when someone pushed her hand off Wembanyama as she reached up to tap the No. 1 overall pick.

In its investigation, which is now over, police determined that the security guard did not willfully or unlawfully use force or violence against Spears. No arrests were made and no one was cited, the report said.

In the report, police said surveillance footage of the event "showed Britney going to tap the Spurs player on the shoulder. When she touched the player (redacted) pushes her hand off of the player without looking which causes Britney's hand to hit herself in the face."

Spears filed a police report after the incident outside the restaurant, alleging battery. On Friday, she posted a reaction to Instagram with a caption that said "Either way I'm still a huge fan of the NBA player ... it's not his fault his security hit me."

Wembanyama was making his NBA Summer League debut for the Spurs in Las Vegas on Friday night. The 7-foot-3 French teen was the No. 1 pick in last month's NBA draft and is entering the league with as much acclaim as anyone since LeBron James in 2003.

The altercation happened Wednesday night, Spears said she recognized Wembanyama at another hotel earlier in the evening and when seeing him again entering a restaurant at the Aria Resort & Casino she "decided to approach him and congratulate him on his success."

Spears said Thursday, "His security then back handed me in the face without looking back, in front of a crowd. Nearly knocking me down and causing my glasses off my face." (AP)

LONDON: A man who says **Kevin Spacey** subjected him to a torrent of verbal abuse and grabbed him to a torrent of sexual assault, indecent assault and causing a person to engage in penetrative sexual activity without consent. He denies all the allegations, and his lawyer has suggested the accusers are looking for payouts from Spacey.

The third alleged victim to testify said that Spacey, smelling strongly of alcohol, peppered him with a "machine-gun" torrent of crude verbal abuse before grabbing



Spacey



Spears

like a cobra backstage at a London theater during a charity event in the early 2000s.

During cross-examination, Spacey's attorney, **Patrick Gibbs**, alleged that many parts of the accuser's story were "completely untrue."

He said the incident left him feeling "degraded" and "like I was worthless." The man denied the lawyer's suggestion that he had sought to "monetize" his meeting with Spacey. (AP)

Health

Medicare coverage

FDA fully approves Alz's drug Leqembi

WASHINGTON, July 8, (AP) — US officials granted full approval to a closely watched Alzheimer's drug on Thursday, clearing the way for Medicare and other insurance plans to begin covering the treatment for people with the brain-robbing disease.

The Food and Drug Administration endorsed the IV drug, Leqembi, for patients with mild dementia and other symptoms caused by early Alzheimer's disease. It's the first medicine that's been convincingly shown to modestly slow the cognitive decline caused by Alzheimer's.

Japanese drugmaker Eisai received conditional approval from the FDA in January based on early results suggesting Leqembi worked by clearing a sticky brain plaque linked to the disease.



Buracchio

The FDA confirmed those results by reviewing data from a larger, 1,800-patient study in which the drug slowed memory and thinking decline by about five months in those who got the treatment, compared to those who got a dummy drug.

"This confirmatory study verified that it is a safe and effective treatment for patients with Alzheimer's disease," said FDA's neurology drug director, **Dr. Teresa Buracchio**, in a statement.

The drug's prescribing information will carry the most serious type of warning, indicating that Leqembi can cause brain swelling and bleeding, side effects that can be dangerous in rare cases. The label notes that those problems are seen with other plaque-targeting Alzheimer's drugs.

The process of converting a drug to full FDA approval usually attracts little attention. But Alzheimer's patients and advocates have been lobbying the federal government for months after Medicare officials announced last year they wouldn't pay for routine use of drugs like Leqembi until they receive FDA's full approval.

There were concerns that the cost of new plaque-targeting Alzheimer's drugs could overwhelm the program's finances, which provide care for 60 million seniors. Leqembi is priced at about \$26,500 for a year's supply of IVs every two weeks.

Safety

The vast majority of Americans with Alzheimer's get their health coverage through Medicare. And private insurers have followed its lead by withholding coverage for Leqembi and a similar drug, Aduhelm, until they receive FDA's full endorsement. An FDA decision on full approval for Aduhelm is still years away.

Medicare administrator, Chiquita Brooks-LaSure, said in a statement Thursday the program will begin paying for the drug now that it has full FDA approval. But the government is also setting extra requirements, including enrollment in a federal registry to track the drug's real-world safety and effectiveness.

Medicare "will cover this medication broadly while continuing to gather data that will help us understand how the drug works," Brooks-LaSure said.

Some Medicare patients could be responsible for paying the standard 20% of the cost of Leqembi, though the amount will vary depending on their plans and other coverage details.

Hospitals and medical clinics have cautioned that it may take time to get people started on the drug.

Doctors need to confirm that patients have the brain plaque targeted by Leqembi before prescribing it. Nurses need to be trained to administer the drug and patients must be monitored with repeated brain scans to check for swelling or bleeding. The imaging and administration services carry extra costs for hospitals beyond the drug itself.

Eisai has told investors that about 100,000 Americans could be diagnosed and eligible to receive Leqembi by 2026. The drug is co-marketed with Cambridge, Massachusetts-based Biogen.

"We want to ensure that appropriate patients only are the ones that get this product," said Alexander Scott, a vice president with Eisai.

Eisai studied the drug in people with early or mild disease who were evaluated using a scale measuring memory, thinking and other basic skills. After 18 months, those who got Leqembi declined more slowly - a difference of less than half a point on the scale - than participants who received a dummy infusion. Some Alzheimer's experts say that delay is likely too subtle for patients or their families to notice.

But federal health advisers said the difference could still be meaningful and recommended that FDA fully approve the drug at a public meeting in June.



Human remains are at the center of tangled litigation involving a major regional health care system and the company contracted to dispose of its medical waste.

Monarch Waste Technologies sued Sanford Health and the subsidiary responsible for delivering the health care system's medical waste, Healthcare Environmental Services, saying the latter "brazenly" deposited a human torso hidden in a plastic container to Monarch's facility in March. Monarch discovered the remains four days later after an employee "noticed a rotten and putrid smell," according to the company's complaint.

Monarch rejected the remains and notified North Dakota's Department of Environmental Quality, which is investigating. An agency spokeswoman declined to comment during an active investigation.

The Texas-based company also claims an employee of Sanford Health's subsidiary deliberately placed and then took photos of disorganized waste to suggest that Monarch had mismanaged medical waste, part of a scheme that would allow the subsidiary to end its contract with the facility.

Waste

"Put simply, this relationship has turned from a mutually beneficial, environmentally sound solution for the disposal of medical waste, and a potentially positive business relationship, to a made-for-television movie complete with decaying human remains and staged photographs," Monarch's complaint states.

In its response, Sanford Health has said the body part was "clearly tagged" as "human tissue for research," and "was the type of routine biological material inherent in a medical and teaching facility like Sanford that Monarch guaranteed it would safely and promptly dispose (of)."

Sanford described the body part as "a partial lower body research specimen used for resident education in hip replacement procedures." A Sanford spokesman described the remains as "the hips and thighs area" when asked for specifics by The Associated Press.

Monarch CEO and co-founder **David Cardenas** said in an interview that the remains are of a male's torso.

"You can clearly see it's a torso" in photos that Monarch took when it discovered the remains, Cardenas said.

He cited a state law that requires bodies to be buried or cremated after being dissected. He also attributed the situation to a "lack of training for people at the hospital level" who handle waste and related documentation.

Cardenas wouldn't elaborate on where the body part came from, but he said the manifest given to Monarch and attached to the remains indicated the location is not a teaching hospital.

"It's so far from a teaching hospital, it's ridiculous," he said. It's unclear what happened to the remains. Monarch's complaint says the body part "simply disappeared at some point."

Sanford Health's attorneys say Healthcare Environmental Services, which is countering Monarch and Cardenas, "never removed body parts" from Monarch's facility, and that Monarch "must have disposed of them."

The Sanford spokesman told the AP that "the specimen was in Monarch's possession when they locked Sanford out of their facilities."



This image provided by Eisai in January 2023 shows vials and packaging for their medication, Leqembi. On Thursday, July 6, US officials granted full approval to the closely watched Alzheimer's drug, clearing the way for Medicare and other insurance plans to begin covering the treatment for people with the brain-robbing disease. (AP)



This photo provided by the ATLAS research group of the University of Seville in July 2023 shows a rock crystal dagger with an ivory hilt and sheath discovered in a tomb in Valencia, Spain, dated between 3,200 and 2,200 years ago. When archaeologists first discovered the ornate tomb, they assumed it was for a man. But now they've determined the remains are those of a woman by analyzing tooth enamel, according to a study published Thursday, July 6, 2023, in the journal Scientific Reports. (AP)



Sanjuan



Thunberg

Discovery

Greta Thunberg charged: Swedish prosecutors have charged climate activist **Greta Thunberg** with disobedience to law enforcement in connection with a protest in Malmö last month.

Local newspaper Sydsvenskan reported Wednesday that Thunberg was detained with other activists after they stopped traffic in the oil terminal of the port in Malmö on June 19.

A short statement by Swedish prosecutors has said a "young woman" was charged with disobedience because she "refused to comply with police orders to leave the scene" during the protest. The statement didn't identify the woman, but Swedish Prosecution Authority spokeswoman Anika Collin confirmed that it was Thunberg.

Sydsvenskan said the 20-year-old Swedish activist will be called to trial at the end of July. Prosecutor Charlotte Ottosen told the paper that the crime of disobedience is typically punishable with fines.

Thunberg's media team didn't immediately answer a request for comment.

Thunberg inspired a global youth movement demanding stronger efforts to fight climate change after staging weekly protests outside the Swedish Parliament starting in 2018. (AP)

Artifacts back in Kenya: The Illinois State Museum has returned nearly 40 sacred artifacts to Kenya so they can go back to their rightful owners.

Museum officials said in a statement that they have completed transferring 37 wooden statues to the National Museums of Kenya so they can be returned to Mijikenda communities. The statues are considered sacred and are believed to carry the spirits of deceased male Mijikenda elders.

The Illinois State Museum said the statues were removed from Mijikenda villages and sacred sites in the 1980s, acquired by art collectors and later transferred to the museum as part of its African collection. Museum staff discovered in 2006 that one of the statues had been stolen and returned it to its owner.

The Illinois State Museum's curator of anthropology, Brooke Morgan, plans to visit Kenya this month and meet with Mijikenda elders to learn more about efforts to protect statues and restore them to their communities. (AP)

Lavish tomb belonged to woman: When archaeologists first discovered the 5,000-year-old ornate tomb in Spain, they assumed it was for a man. It held a rock crystal dagger, ivory tusks and other lavish items. But now they've determined the remains are those of a woman, and all it took was two teeth.

The researchers used a new method of

The Conversation

Aging is complicated

'Why no 2 people age the same way'

By Ellen Quarles
University of Michigan

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

You likely know someone who seems to age slowly, appearing years younger than their birth date suggests. And you likely have seen the opposite - someone whose body and mind seem much more ravaged by time than others. Why do some people seem to glide through their golden years and others physiologically struggle in midlife?

I have worked in the field of aging for all of my scientific career, and I teach the cellular and molecular biology of aging at the University of Michigan. Aging research doesn't tend to be about finding the one cure that fixes all that may ail you in old age. Instead, the last decade or two of work points to aging as a multi-factorial process - and no single intervention can stop it all.

There are many different definitions of aging, but scientists generally agree upon some common features: Aging is a time-dependent process that results in increased vulnerability to disease, injury and death. This process is both intrinsic, when your own body causes new problems, and extrinsic, when environmental insults damage your tissues.

Your body is comprised of trillions of cells, and each one is not only responsible for one or more functions specific to the tissue it resides in, but must also do all the work of keeping itself alive. This includes metabolizing nutrients, getting rid of waste, exchanging signals with other cells and adapting to stress.

The trouble is that every single process and component in each of your cells can be interrupted or damaged. So your cells spend a lot of energy each day preventing, recognizing and fixing those problems.

Aging can be thought of as a gradual loss of the ability to maintain homeostasis - a state of balance among body systems - either by not being able to prevent or recognize damage and poor function, or by not adequately or rapidly fixing problems as they occur. Aging results from a combination of these issues. Decades of research has shown that nearly every cellular process becomes more impaired with age.

Most research on cellular aging focuses on studying how DNA and pro-

teins change with age. Scientists are also beginning to address the potential roles many other important biomolecules in the cell play in aging as well.

One of the cell's chief jobs is to maintain its DNA - the instruction manual a cell's machinery needs to produce specific proteins. DNA maintenance involves protecting against, and accurately repairing, damage to genetic material and the molecules binding to it.

Proteins are the workers of the cell. They perform chemical reactions, provide structural support, send and receive messages, hold and release energy, and much more. If the protein is damaged, the cell uses mechanisms involving special proteins that either attempt to fix the broken protein or send it off for recycling. Similar mechanisms tuck proteins out of the way or destroy them when they are no longer needed. That way, its components can be used later to build a new protein.

Function

The cross-talk between the components inside cells, cells as a whole, organs and the environment is a complex and ever-changing network of information.

When all processes involved in creating and maintaining DNA and protein function are working normally, the different compartments within a cell serving specialized roles - called organelles - can maintain the cell's health and function. For an organ to work well, the majority of the cells that make it up need to function well. And for a whole organism to survive and thrive, all of the organs in its body need to work well.

Aging can lead to dysfunction at any of these levels, from the sub-cellular to the organismal. Maybe a gene encoding an important protein for DNA repair has become damaged, and now all of the other genes in the cell are more likely to be repaired incorrectly. Or perhaps the cell's recycling systems are unable to degrade dysfunctional components anymore. Even the communication systems between cells, tissues and organs can become compromised, leaving the organism less able to respond to changes within the body.

Random chance can lead to a growing burden of molecular and cellular damage that is progressively less well-repaired over time. As this damage accumulates, the systems that are meant to fix it are accruing damage as well.

This leads to a cycle of increasing wear and tear as cells age.

The interdependence of life's cellular processes is a double-edged sword: Sufficiently damage one process, and all the other processes that interact with or depend on it become impaired. However, this interconnection also means that bolstering one highly interconnected process could improve related functions as well. In fact, this is how the most successful anti-aging interventions work.

There is no silver bullet to stop aging, but certain interventions do seem to slow aging in the laboratory. While there are ongoing clinical trials investigating different approaches in people, most existing data comes from animals like nematodes, flies, mice and non-human primates.

One of the best studied interventions is caloric restriction, which involves reducing the amount of calories an animal would normally eat without depriving them of necessary nutrients. An FDA-approved drug used in organ transplantation and some cancer treatments called rapamycin seems to work by using at least a subset of the same pathways that calorie restriction activates in the cell. Both affect signaling hubs that direct the cell to preserve the biomolecules it has rather than growing and building new biomolecules. Over time, this cellular version of "reduce, reuse, recycle" removes damaged components and leaves behind a higher proportion of functional components.

Other interventions include changing the levels of certain metabolites, selectively destroying senescent cells that have stopped dividing, changing the gut microbiome and behavioral modifications.

What all of these interventions have in common is that they affect core processes that are critical for cellular homeostasis, often become dysregulated or dysfunctional with age and are connected to other cellular maintenance systems. Often, these processes are the central drivers for mechanisms that protect DNA and proteins in the body.

There is no single cause of aging. No two people age the same way, and indeed, neither do any two cells. There are countless ways for your basic biology to go wrong over time, and these add up to create a unique network of aging-related factors for each person that make finding a one-size-fits-all anti-aging treatment extremely challenging. (AP)

determining sex that analyzes tooth enamel.

This technique, developed about five years ago, is more reliable than analyzing skeletal remains in poor condition, according to their study published Thursday in the jour-

nal Scientific Reports.

Most details about the life of the "Ivory Lady," as researchers dubbed her, remain a mystery but there are some clues.

"She was buried alone in a tomb with



Panda Yuan Zai, the first giant panda born in Taiwan, checks out a birthday cake to mark its 10-year birthday on Thursday, July 6, at the Taipei Zoo in Taiwan. (AP)

very special artifacts," said **Leonardo Garcia Sanjuan**, a co-author and archaeologist at the University of Seville in Spain. "That shows that she was a special person."

The tomb is located a few miles west of Seville, near Spain's southern coast, and was excavated in 2008. Archaeologists thought it contained a young man based on an examination of the poorly preserved bones and the fact that several precious items found in the tomb - including ostrich eggshells and amber along with the tusks and dagger - indicated that the individual held a high social status.

The new technique detects differences in the chemistry of tooth enamel between males and females and can be used even when full DNA is not available.

"This research provides one more piece of evidence questioning old historical narratives," said Alison Beach, an historian at the University of St. Andrews in Scotland, who was not involved in the study. It shows that "it's not exclusively true that men have always been the most revered or held the most authority."

Marta Cintas-Pena, a co-author and archaeologist at the University of Seville, maintains a database of Copper Age burials found at 21 different archaeological sites on the Iberian Peninsula, which includes Spain and Portugal. It currently has records for 1,723 individuals. (AP)

Racing Louisville hold off Current

Bright leads Orlando Pride to victory over OL Reign

WASHINGTON, July 8, (AP) — Mesiah Bright scored to lead the Orlando Pride to a 1-0 win over the visiting OL Reign on Friday night in the National Women's Soccer League.

Bright sprinted into the box, beat her defender, and headed in a cross from Julie Doyle in the 16th minute. Bright leads all rookies with four goals in the NWSL this season.

The Reign, who entered the match with the second-most goals in the league, to five shots - their fewest this season.

Orlando (6-8-1) finished with 16 shots, beating Reign for just the second time in 15 games.

For the second week, OL Reign was without eight players who are preparing for the World Cup with their national teams. Orlando was missing two.

SOCCER

Goalkeeper Phallon Tullis-Joyce made six saves for the Reign (7-5-3).

Racing Louisville 2, Current 1

Paige Monaghan scored just at the start of the second half, leading Racing Louisville to the home win over Kansas City.

Michelle Cooper scored in the seventh minute to give the Current an early lead. Elli Pikkujamsa tied the game in the 20th, scoring off a rebound.

At the start of the second half, Monaghan dribbled up the field and unleashed a shot from the top of the box that found the right corner. Rook-

ie Kayla Fischer earned her first assist.

Subbing into the match in the 81st minute, Racing's Nadia Nadim got her first minutes of the season after tearing her ACL last fall. Alex Lopera entered for Current for her action since April 1 due to injury.

Adrianna Franch made seven saves for the Current. Racing defender Abby Erceg came up with consecutive blocks in the 93rd minute to help preserve the win.

Louisville (4-4-7) was without five players who are heading to the

World Cup. Wang Shuang played in the match before joining China for the tournament. Racing had 26 shots compared to just six for Kansas City (5-10-0), which was missing two World Cup-bound players.

Red Stars 1, Dash 0

Rookie Penelope Hocking scored on her first touch as Chicago won at Houston's Shell Energy Stadium.

It was a defensive battle in the first half, with both teams managing just three shots.

In the 69th minute, Cari Roccaro's

shot from distance deflected off Bianca St-Georges and fell to Hocking, who scored from close range just a minute after subbing in.

It was Hocking's first game back after missing the last six games with a leg injury.

Houston (4-5-6) hasn't scored since June 11, and has just 10 goals in 15 games. The club has five players heading to the World Cup.

The Red Stars (5-9-1), who won their second straight one-goal game, were missing two World Cup-bound players.



Portland Trail Blazers' Scoot Henderson (left), and Houston Rockets' Nate Hinton scramble for the ball during the first half of an NBA summer league basketball game in Las Vegas. Rockets won 100-99. (AP)

Lillard still waiting

Hawks agree to 4-year extension with Murray

ATLANTA, July 8, (AP) — The Atlanta Hawks have agreed to a four-year, \$120 million contract extension with guard Dejounte Murray, a person with knowledge of the deal told The Associated Press on Friday.

The deal preserves his Hawks backcourt pairing with Trae Young and keeps Murray on the roster for five years, through the 2027-28 season, according to the person who spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity because the extension has not been announced.

Murray hinted at the agreement on his Twitter account when he posted late Thursday "ATLANTA. Been Locked In From The Moment Y'all Accepted Me" and added "LOYALTY OVER EVERYTHING Let's Goooooooooooooooooo!!!!!!"

The Hawks helped to clear cap space for the extension on June 26, when they traded forward John Collins to the Utah Jazz for veteran forward Rudy Gay and a conditional 2026 second-round draft pick. Collins is guaranteed \$25.3 million in the 2023-24 season. Gay, 36, is due approximately \$6.5 million.

On Friday night, the Hawks officially announced the Collins trade, which creates a \$25.3 million trade exception for Atlanta. The exception, currently the largest in the NBA, can be used to acquire a player in a future deal within a year.

"Being able to create financial flexibility moving forward was a major priority for us," Hawks general manager Landry Fields said in a statement released by the team. "The added flexibility will give us greater optionality as we look at opportunities to improve our team."

The extension was especially important for the Hawks following their significant commitment to Murray. On June 29, 2022, the Hawks traded Danilo Gallinari and three first-round picks to the San Antonio Spurs for Murray.

Murray, 26, averaged 20.5 points and 6.1 assists for the Hawks last season, creating the high-scoring backcourt duo with Young that was expected. Even so, the Hawks suffered another first-round loss in the playoffs following their mid-season firing of coach Nate McMillan and the hiring of Quin Snyder as his replacement.

The Hawks finished 41-41, again unable to regain the promising form they showed when they advanced to the 2021 Eastern Conference finals.

Damian Lillard's position has not and will not change: The seven-time All-Star wants to be traded to the Miami Heat.

Lillard's agent, Aaron Goodwin, confirmed that stance Thursday and said he hopes that the Portland Trail Blazers - the team that Lillard has spent the entirety of his 11-year NBA career with - can engage with the Heat on steps toward a deal in the coming days, especially with virtually everyone from the NBA gathering in Las Vegas for Summer League that started on Friday.

BASKETBALL

The Trail Blazers publicly revealed this past weekend that Lillard had asked for a trade, an announcement that ended weeks of speculation about his future in Portland. Lillard had told the team that he wanted a chance to contend for a title; the Blazers have won only four playoff series in his 11 seasons and missed the playoffs in each of the last two years by wide margins.

"I'm hopeful that at least talks will initiate since they're all going to be in one place," Goodwin said. "That's my hope."

It will obviously take a significant package of players and picks to make any trade happen. Lillard will make almost \$46 million this coming season and could make as much as \$216 million over the next four years if he exercises his option for the 2026-27 season.

"The solution comes in Miami actually having a chance to sit down and talk with Portland," Goodwin said. "I think if they can ever sit down and get in a room, there could be a deal to be made."

Lillard averaged 32.2 points this past season, has averaged at least 24 points in each of the last eight seasons, and has an offensive ignitability that few players in the NBA possess.

He became just the seventh player in NBA history to score more than 70 points in a game when he finished with 71 against the Houston Rockets on Feb. 26. The other names on that list: Walt Chamberlain (who did it five times), Kobe Bryant, David Thompson, David Robinson, Elgin Baylor and Donovan Mitchell.

All six of the other players on that list were between 23 and 28 when they had their games of 71 points or more; Lillard was 32, a clear indicator that - even after 11 NBA seasons - he's far from past his prime.

The Heat are the reigning Eastern Conference champions, have been to the NBA Finals twice in the last four years and have been in the East finals three times in that span.

Wings hand Aces second loss of season

Lynx overcome Mercury for 5th straight win

DALLAS, July 8, (AP) — Natasha Howard made two free throws with less than a second to play and the Dallas Wings handed the Las Vegas Aces just their second loss, pulling out an 80-78 win before a sell-out crowd on Friday night.

Getting the ball with 14.2 seconds remaining, the Wings grabbed three offensive rebounds after Satou Sabally missed the initial shot from the right wing.

Teaira McCowan had the first two rebounds but A'ja Wilson blocked her first shot and McCowan missed the second, but Howard was there for the rebound with 0.4 on the clock.

Las Vegas tried a lob under the basket after a timeout but the clock started before a player touched the ball. Given a second chance, the ball was inbounded to Jackie Young but she had to take a dribble and the clock ran out before her shot swished through and the Aces' nine-game winning streak was over.

Arike Ogunbowale scored 21 points for the Wings (9-9) and Howard and McCowan both had double-doubles.

BASKETBALL

Howard had 16 points and 11 rebounds while McCowan had 14 and 12 for her third straight. Crystal Dangerfield added 14 points and Sabally 10 with five rebounds, five assists and five steals. The Dallas bench only had five points.

Wilson and Kelsey Plum both had 21 points for the Aces (16-2). Chelsea Gray added 14, Young 12 and Candace Parker 10. Only two reserves played for Las Vegas and neither scored.

Las Vegas led 40-39 at the half and surged to an 11-point lead as Dallas had turnover issues in the third quarter. But the Wings battled back in the game that featured 10 ties and 10 lead changes. McCowan's putback with 6:30 to play tied the game at 71 and her layup at 5:01 made it 73-71.

Gray hit a jumper from the foul line that tied the game at 78 with a minute to go. Both teams then missed long 3-point attempts before the wild finish.

The Aces were 10 of 26 from 3-point range but had 17 turnovers and were outrebounded 36-25.

Lynx 75, Mercury 64

In Minneapolis, Napheesa Collier led a balanced attack with 12 points and 12 rebounds in Minnesota's win over Phoenix.

Bridget Carleton had 11 points and Kayla McBride, Diamond Miller and Nikolina Milic added 10 points apiece for the Lynx. Dorka Juhasz finished with 10 rebounds. The Lynx, who won their fifth straight, and are 9-9 after opening the season with six straight losses.

Michaela Oneywre scored 21 points and Brittney Griner added 12 for Phoenix (3-14), which has lost nine of its last 10 games.

Mystics 96, Fever 88

In Washington, Brittney Sykes scored 29 points and Ariel Atkins had her first double-double in Washington's win over Indiana.

Atkins had 26 points and 11 rebounds for the short-handed Mystics (10-7), who played eight players with four starters injured. Queen Egbo had three points in 15 minutes against her former team after being acquired on a trade on Tuesday.

Lexie Hull had a career-high 20 points for the Fever (5-13), who lost their sixth-straight. Nalyssa Smith added 19 points, Kelsey Mitchell had 18 and Aliyah Boston 12.

Dream 82, Sky68

In Chicago, Alisha Gray scored 21 points and Atlanta beat Chicago to run its winning streak to four games.

Rhyné Howard scored 17 points for the Dream (9-8). Cheyenne Parker and Danielle Robinson each scored 14.

Kahleah Copper scored 16 points for Chicago (8-10), which is 1-1 under new coach/general manager Emre Vatansever, who replaced James Wade on Saturday. Marina Mabrey added 14 points.

Meanwhile, WNBA stars Breanna Stewart and Napheesa Collier are starting a new women's basketball league to give top players another option to play in the U.S. in the offseason once the league's prioritization rules go into effect next year.

The new league, which is called Unrivaled, will run from January through March and have 30 of the top women's players playing on six teams. Instead of the traditional 5-on-5 game, the teams will play 3-on-3 and 1-on-1 at a custom-built sound stage in Miami.

The league was first reported by ESPN.

"We remain committed to the WNBA, however there's a problem that exists, which is players having to choose whether to play overseas to maximize earnings in the winter or stay home with family. We've decided to create our own solution," Collier tweeted.

The hope is to raise enough funding to pay players roughly what they make during the WNBA season to help offset the money they'd be losing out on by not playing overseas in the offseason. The maximum base salary for WNBA players is just over \$230,000. Players like Stewart have earned more than a million dollars playing overseas in the past.

"Every initial player will receive equity ownership within the league and earn salaries that are competitive to the WNBA," Collier said. "We do plan on expanding."

Collier said the new league will play on shortened full courts with more spacing, more scoring and shorter games.

The prioritization rules were part of the collective bargaining agreement that was ratified in 2020 and requires players to return from their international teams by the start of WNBA training camps or else not be able to play in the league's season. Overseas seasons often run through the middle of May, conflicting with the WNBA calendar.

Unrivaled would join Athletes Unlimited as a domestic off-season option for women's basketball players. AU has 44 players in its league and is set to begin its third season next year.

"I think the future is bright," said Megan Perry, who was announced Thursday as AU's head of sport. "The more opportunities they have to play the better it is. I don't think we could be anything but excited about the new opportunities that exist domestically for women's basketball. You look at the overall landscape of women's basketball in the global community - it's good for the game and speaks to the demand that exists. There's room for everyone at the table."

Both Stewart and Collier have played overseas in their careers. Collier stopped after giving birth to her first child last year. Stewart's wife, Marta Xargay, is expecting their second child in the fall.

"Stewie & I both have daughters. It's our responsibility to show them & every young girl that looks up to us that sometimes you don't have to wait your turn," Collier tweeted. "You can either beg for a seat at the table or you can build your own table. We're building our own table."

Banda answers Popp in 112th minute as Zambia stun Germany

FÜRTH, Germany, July 8, (AP) — Zambia captain Barbara Banda scored in the 12th minute of injury time to negate Alexandra Popp's equalizer two minutes before and deal Germany a 3-2 defeat in their last game before the Women's World Cup.

Popp, the Germany captain, thought she salvaged at least a draw on Friday when she scored in the 110th minute, the second of two injury time goals for the home team.

But Banda made the most of a poor throw-in from Klara Bühl when she raced clear and let fly with a chip over Germany goalkeeper Merle Frohms from about 20 meters for the winner.

It was the outstanding Banda's second goal, the first set up by Racheal Kundananji in the 48th minute after a German play-

er lost possession. Kundananji capitalized on another mistake to score Zambia's second in the 54th.

"We conceded three goals on counterattacks, it was definitely too simple, it can't happen to us like that," Popp said. "And up front we wasted too many chances."

The win over the two-time champion will boost Zambia's confidence ahead of its World Cup debut.

SOCCER

Bruce Mwape's team plays Costa Rica, Japan and Spain in Group C.

While Germany was dominant for much of the game, the speedy Banda was always a threat, and the home team really looked like scoring only after Kundananji's goal.

Germany midfielder

Lina Magull hit the post, Zambia keeper Catherine Musonda deflected Sjoeko Nüsken's header against the post, Sydney Lohmann missed a great opportunity

and Carolin Simon hit the crossbar before Lea Schüller finally scored with a header to Simon's corner in the first minute of injury time.

Popp got the home fans going again when she scored the equalizer, only to be undone by yet another German mistake. "We need to minimize

mistakes," Germany coach Martina Voss-Tecklenburg said.

Meanwhile, Former France captain Amandine Henry will miss the Women's World Cup after she was injured in training.

Defender Aissatou Toukara was summoned on Friday to join the 23-women France squad as a replacement.

The French Football Federation said Henry underwent medical tests that revealed a muscle lesion in the midfielder's left calf.

The World Cup, co-hosted by Australia and New Zealand, kicks off on July 20.

Toukara, a reserve player in Herve Renard's squad, had not left her teammates and traveled to Ireland this week for a warm-up game.

France will leave for Australia on Saturday.



Lina Magull from Germany (left), fights for the ball with Agness Museesa from Zambia (center), during the women's international soccer match between Germany and Zambia at Sportpark Ronhof Thomas Sommer in Furth, Germany. (AP)

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Murphy homers as red-hot Braves edge Rays

Cubs shut out Yankees

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla., July 8, (AP): On a night when they were held to just two hits, the red-hot Atlanta Braves kept on winning.

With right-hander Charlie Morton pitching into the seventh inning and Sean Murphy extending a power surge that has seen Atlanta homer in 24 straight outings, the MLB-best Braves began a weekend series between teams with the top two records in baseball with a 2-1 victory over the Tampa Bay Rays on Friday night.

Murphy backed Morton (9-6) with a two-run homer as Atlanta won for the 19th time in 21 games to improve its record to 59-28.

The AL-best Rays (57-34) have lost a season-high six straight, although that wasn't the lone reason for concern after starting pitcher Tyler Glasnow (2-3) left in the sixth inning due to cramping in his hands and legs.

Glasnow, who hasn't won since June 14 and is 0-3 over his last four starts, allowed two runs - one earned - and two hits while walking one and striking out eight.

Murphy went deep in the fourth inning after Atlanta's first baserunner, Matt Olson, reached on an error. The drive to right-center wiped out a 1-0 lead the Rays took on Wander Franco's homer off Morton in the first.

Atlanta, which leads the majors with 167 homers, has homered in 24 straight games dating to June 11. That's the longest active streak in the majors and second-longest in the franchise's modern era behind a 25-gamer in 1998.

Morton, who was 18-8 with a 3.33 ERA in 42 starts over two seasons with Tampa Bay, pitched at Tropicana Field for the first time since leaving the Rays after helping the team reach the World Series in 2020.



Murphy

BASEBALL

The 39-year-old right-hander allowed one run and four hits Atlanta turned to its bullpen with one out in the seventh. A.J. Minter, Nick Anderson and Raisel Iglesias, who worked the ninth for his 16th save in 18 opportunities, finished the six-hitter.

The Braves, meanwhile, were limited to two hits as Ronald Acuña Jr. (16 games) and Marcell Ozuna (15) saw long hitting streaks end.

Glasnow departed after giving up a single to Olson with two outs in the sixth. He struck out six straight at one point, including all four batters he faced in the second inning, which was prolonged when Ozuna fanned on a wild pitch that allowed him to reach base.

Cash said Glasnow has experienced cramping before during his career, including during his last win at Oakland on June 14.

Glasnow said the problem is not dehydration and that he expects to make his next scheduled start.

Brewers 7, Reds 3

In Milwaukee, Joey Wiemer and Willy Adames each hit a two-run homer and Corbin Burnes allowed three hits in six innings as Milwaukee beat NL Central-leading Cincinnati in a matchup of the division's top teams.

The Brewers moved within a game of the Reds, whose five-game winning streak ended.

Burnes (7-5) walked four and struck out six.

Joey Votto hit a two-run homer for Cincinnati, which had won 20 of its last 24. Rookie Andrew Abbott (4-1) took his first loss, allowing six runs in 4 1/3 innings.

Cubs 3, Yankees 0

In Chicago, Jameson Taillon made a triumphant return to Yankee Stadium, allowing one hit in eight innings to outpitch Carlos Rodón in the All-Star's injury-delayed Yankees debut as Chicago got its first-ever victory in the Bronx.

Taillon (3-6) limited New York to one single and a pair of walks. The former Yankee struck out four, set his season high for innings and didn't allow a runner past first base in his first victory since June 13.

Cody Bellinger hit his ninth home run for the Cubs, who had been 0-12 at Yankee Stadium old and new.

Adbert Alzolay finished a two-hitter for his sixth save in seven chances.

Rodón (0-1) allowed two runs and four hits in 5 1/3 innings with two walks and two strikeouts.

Mets 7, Padres 5, 10 innings

In San Diego, Jeff McNeil doubled in Starling Marte with the go-ahead run on the first pitch of the 10th inning and New York beat San Diego to extend its winning streak to a season-high six games.

McNeil's grounder off rookie Tom Cosgrove (1-2) went just inside the line past diving first baseman Jake Cronenworth and into right field to bring in Marte, the automatic runner. Francisco Alvarez followed with his fourth straight single to score McNeil, the 2022 NL batting champion.

The Mets added on with a two-run single by Francisco Lindor, who had three hits and three RBIs as he followed up his first career five-hit game the night before. Lindor homered off Yu Darvish in the third to pull the Mets to 3-2. Drew Smith (4-3) pitched the ninth for the win.

MLB Results/Standings

WASHINGTON, July 8, (AP): Results and standings from the MLB games on Friday.

Atlanta	2	Tampa Bay	1
Cleveland	3	Kansas City	0
Chicago Cubs	3	NY Yankees	0
Boston	7	Oakland	3
Toronto	12	Detroit	2
Texas	7	Washington	2
Seattle	10	Houston	1
Baltimore	3	Minnesota 10 inn	1
Chicago W. Sox	8	St. Louis	7
LA Dodgers	11	LA Angels	4
Philadelphia	4	Miami	3
Milwaukee	7	Cincinnati	3
Arizona	7	Pittsburgh	3
Colorado	5	San Francisco	2
NY Mets	7	San Diego 10 inn	5

American League

East Division				
W	L	Pct	GB	
Tampa Bay	57	34	.626	—
Baltimore	52	35	.598	3
Toronto	49	40	.551	7
New York	48	41	.539	8
Boston	46	43	.517	10

Central Division				
W	L	Pct	GB	
Minnesota	45	44	.506	—
Cleveland	44	44	.500	-1/2
Detroit	38	49	.437	6
Chicago	38	52	.422	7-1/2
Kansas City	25	64	.281	20

West Division				
W	L	Pct	GB	
Texas	52	37	.584	—
Houston	49	40	.551	3
Seattle	44	43	.506	7
Los Angeles	45	45	.500	7-1/2
Oakland	25	65	.278	27-1/2

National League

East Division				
W	L	Pct	GB	
Atlanta	59	28	.678	—
Miami	51	39	.567	9-1/2
Philadelphia	48	39	.552	11
New York	42	46	.477	17-1/2
Washington	34	54	.386	25-1/2

Central Division				
W	L	Pct	GB	
Cincinnati	49	40	.551	—
Milwaukee	48	41	.539	1
Chicago	41	46	.471	7
Pittsburgh	40	48	.455	8-1/2
St. Louis	36	52	.409	12-1/2

West Division				
W	L	Pct	GB	
Arizona	51	38	.573	—
Los Angeles	50	38	.568	-1/2
San Francisco	47	41	.534	3-1/2
San Diego	41	47	.466	9-1/2
Colorado	34	55	.382	17

Manny Machado hit a two-run homer for the Padres in the 10th, his 13th.

Blue Jays 12, Tigers 2

In Detroit, Alek Manoah worked six solid innings in his first start since being recalled from the minors and Toronto beat Detroit.

Whit Merrifield homered and drove in four runs for the Blue Jays.

Manoah (2-7) won for the first time since April 5, allowing one run on five hits. He struck out eight without walking a batter while ending an 11-start winless streak.

Alex Faedo (1-5) allowed seven runs in 3 2/3 innings in his return from a finger injury.

Phillies 4, Marlins 3

In Miami, Pinch-hitter Cristian Pache hit a two-run homer with two outs in the ninth inning as Philadelphia rallied past Miami.

The Phillies tied a franchise record set in 1976 with their 13th straight road victory.

Miami had a 3-1 lead entering the ninth before J.T. Realmuto hit a lead-off single against reliever A.J. Puk (4-3) and advanced on a wild pitch. Alec Bohm hit a one-out double that scored Realmuto. Puk struck out pinch-hitter Josh Harrison but then gave up Pache's drive.

Jeff Hoffman (2-1) worked two innings of relief and Craig Kimbrel pitched a scoreless ninth for his 14 save.

MLB batting leader Luis Arraez had a two-out single in the seventh and his average is .386.

Orioles 3, Twins 1, 10 innings

In Minneapolis, Ramón Urias drove in the automatic runner for Baltimore with a first-pitch double off Minnesota closer Jhoan Duran (2-4) in the 10th inning.

Orioles All-Star closer Félix Bautista (4-1) pitched two hitless innings with three strikeouts.

Cedric Mullins made a leaping catch to thwart a three-run homer by Byron Buxton in the fourth inning and drove in the game's first run in the sixth for the Orioles. Aaron Hicks added a sacrifice fly in the 10th.

Cole Irvin took a shutout into the seventh inning, when the Twins' Kyle Farmer chased him with a one-out double. Willi Castro drove in Farmer with a single off Mike Baumann.

White Sox 8, Cardinals 7

In St. Louis, All-Star Luis Robert Jr. tied the game with his 26th homer of the season and Chicago rallied past St. Louis after Cardinals starter Jordan Montgomery left with an injury.

Nolan Arenado hit a pair of two-run homers for St. Louis, which took a 5-0 lead in the third and led 5-1 in the fifth when Montgomery departed abruptly.

Chicago scored five runs in the sixth off two St. Louis relievers. Arenado put the Cardinals back ahead with his homer in the seventh off Keynon Middleton (2-0). In the bottom half, Kyle Leary (0-1) gave up Robert's blast and departed with the bases loaded. Chris Stratton came on and walked Zach Remillard to put the White Sox ahead to stay.

Jake Burger homered and drove in three runs for Chicago, and Remillard finished with three RBIs. Kendall Graveman worked around a single and walk in the ninth for his seventh save.

Diamondbacks 7, Pirates 3

In Phoenix, Lourdes Gurriel Jr. hit a three-run homer and fellow All-Star Zac Gallen pitched seven strong innings as Arizona beat Pittsburgh.

NL West-leading Arizona snapped a four-game losing streak. All-Star rookie Corbin Carroll went 2 for 5 with two stolen bases, his 25th and 26th of the season.



Texas Rangers starting pitcher Cody Bradford throws during the first inning of a baseball game against the Washington Nationals in Washington. (AP)



In this Sunday, May 14, 2023 photo, Brighton's head coach Roberto De Zerbi gives instructions during the English Premier League soccer match between Arsenal and Brighton and Hove Albion at Emirates stadium in London. (AP)

Gurriel also had two doubles and drove in four runs, three of them on his 15th homer in the third inning off Rich Hill (7-9).

Gallen (11-3) gave up one run in seven innings, matching Tampa Bay's Shane Bieber for the major league lead in victories and lowering his ERA to 3.05.

Guardians 3, Royals 0

In Cleveland, Aaron Civale (3-2) struck out a season-high nine over seven innings and Josh Bell hit a two-run homer off Daniel Lynch (2-4) as Cleveland beat Kansas City.

Civale allowed two hits and did not walk a batter while throwing 100 pitches, 70 for strikes. Trevor Stephan worked the eighth and Emmanuel Clase picked up his 25th save, wrapping up the two-hitter that lasted 1 hour, 51 minutes, the shortest nine-inning game in the history of Progressive Field.

Cleveland (44-44) won its second straight and improved to .500 for the first time since April 28, when it was 13-13.

Mariners 10, Astros 1

In Houston, Luis Castillo threw seven strong innings, Mike Ford had a bases-clearing double during a nine-run fourth, and Seattle beat Houston.

Kolten Wong drove in two runs in the fourth, starting the scoring with an RBI single and concluding it with a two-out double.

Julio Rodríguez hit a two-run single to chase Houston starter Hunter Brown (6-6).

Ford had a solo homer in the ninth against Houston outfielder Bligh Madris and finished with three hits and four RBIs.

Castillo (6-6) yielded one unearned run on five hits with three strikeouts.

Dodgers 11, Angels 4

In Los Angeles, Mookie Betts hit a pair of solo homers and drove in four runs, fellow All-Star Freddie Freeman went deep, and the host Dodgers beat their Los Angeles rivals.

J.D. Martinez and Will Smith also homered for the Dodgers. Tony Gonsolin (5-3) allowed four runs and seven hits in 6 1/3 innings.

Angels All-Star Shohei Ohtani was 1 for 3 with a run scored, a walk and a strikeout. The Angels lost their ninth in a row in the Freeway Series, their longest skid in the rivalry.

Griffin Canning (6-4) gave up four runs and five hits in 2 2/3 innings.

Rockies 5, Giants 2

In San Francisco, Ezequiel Tovar hit a go-ahead three-run homer in the seventh to help Austin Gomber win his third straight start, and Colorado ended an 11-game losing streak to San Francisco.

Clubs prohibited from exchanging players

UEFA clears Brighton, Toulouse & Aston Villa for European entry but limits future transfer deals

GENEVA, July 8, (AP): Under threat of losing European competition places, Brighton, Toulouse and Aston Villa were cleared by UEFA to play next season despite their owners having ties to other clubs that qualified, including AC Milan.

However, UEFA also prohibited the partner clubs - Brighton and Union Saint-Gilloise; Toulouse and Milan; Villa and Vitória Guimarães - from exchanging players via sales or loans through the end of the summer transfer window next year.

UEFA drafted rules on multi-club ownership 25 years ago to protect the integrity of its competitions when the teams could be drawn to play each

Tovar connected off Tyler Rogers for his ninth homer. Taylor Rogers (4-3), who preceded Tyler Rogers, was the loser.

Brandon Crawford hit a tying two-run homer in the sixth - the NL-leading 20th surrendered by Gomer (7-7), who allowed just those two runs on five hits over six innings.

Ryan McMahon hit a two-run homer in the first for the Rockies, who snapped a four-game skid. After Jake Bird and Justin Lawrence each pitched a scoreless inning of relief, Daniel Bard finished for his first save.

Rangers 7, Nationals 2

In Washington, Adolis García and Corey Seager homered, rookie Cody Bradford earned his first major league victory, and Texas beat Washington.

Texas is assured of entering the All-Star break with at least a share of the AL West lead.

Joey Menezes hit two homers for last-place Washington, which has lost five in a row and has dropped 15 of 16 at Nationals Park since June 3.

Bradford (1-1) worked five innings and allowed Menezes' homer in the first. Trevor Williams (5-5) took the loss, allowing four runs in six innings.

Red Sox 7, Athletics 2

In Boston, Yu Chang hit a bases-loaded single in a five-run second inning in his return from the injured list, leading Boston past Oakland.

Nick Pivetta (5-5) struck out eight and allowed four hits and a walk in five innings.

Sam Long (0-1) was lifted after allowing the first three baserunners to reach in the second.

other during the season. UEFA-appointed investigators evaluated three cases in recent weeks.

UEFA noted the "significant changes by the clubs and their related investors" to comply with the rules that "substantially restrict the investors' influence and decision-making power over more than one club."

"The clubs will not transfer players to each other, whether permanently or on loan, directly or indirectly, until September 2024," UEFA said in a statement.

That would prevent the kind of loan move that Japan forward Kaoru Mitoma made between Brighton and Union for the 2021-22 season.

Also, UEFA ruled that "the clubs will not enter into any kind of cooperation, joint technical or commercial agreements. The clubs will not use any joint scouting or player database."

Brighton can now make its European debut in the Europa League in September after persuading UEFA's club finance panel that its owner Tony Bloom does not also have decisive influence at Union. The Belgian club is in the Europa League qualifying playoffs.

SOCCER

Union president Alex Muzio said in a statement "it became clear that certain changes needed to be made to the ownership structure" to comply with UEFA regulations. As a result, Muzio said he increased his investment to become Union's majority owner, with Bloom's ownership reduced to a minority stake.

French Cup winner Toulouse goes into the Europa League despite its ties to American investment firm RedBird Capital Partners, which also owns Champions League team Milan.

Aston Villa's American owners reduced their stake last week in Portuguese club Vitória and both teams will now enter qualifying rounds for the third-tier Europa Conference League.

In multi-club ownership cases, UEFA rules give priority to the team that placed higher in its domestic league last season. The lower-ranked team risked being removed.

Brighton was in jeopardy because it placed a club-best sixth in the Premier League while Union was third in the Belgian league. Aston Villa was seventh in England, Vitória was fifth in Portugal.

The multi-club rules were most famously tested in 2017 by Leipzig and Salzburg which UEFA let enter the Champions League together despite both being part of the Red Bull group. In that case, no transfer limits were imposed and the clubs have continued to trade often between each other.

The UEFA ruling on Friday ended the hopes of Tottenham, eighth in the Premier League, being upgraded to European competition.

The threat posed by multi-club ownership to integrity in soccer and the transfer market was flagged by UEFA researchers this year in their annual analysis of the industry. They identified more than 180 clubs worldwide in a multi-club structure and a trend driven by American investors.

The biggest project is Abu Dhabi-controlled City Football Group which includes Manchester City among five European teams in a 13-club global project. The new Champions League winner is the only one of those teams which qualifies for UEFA competitions.

Brighton's entry into the Europa League could be the most lucrative among the three clubs who were at risk.

Brighton should earn at least 15 million euros (\$16 million) in UEFA prize money with more on offer from win bonuses and advancing through the knockout rounds. In the 2021-22 season, Europa League winner Eintracht Frankfurt got 38 million euros (\$41 million) from UEFA.

Playing and winning in European competitions is also seen as key to developing a club's ambitions, attracting players and earning UEFA ranking points that ensure more prize money and better seeding in future seasons.

Villa, the 1982 European Cup winner, has not qualified for any UEFA competition for 13 years and not played in any group stage since 2008. Toulouse last played in the 2009-10 season.



Los Angeles Dodgers second baseman Mookie Betts attempts to get to a ball hit for a single by Los Angeles Angels' Matt Thaiss during the seventh inning of a baseball game in Los Angeles. (AP)



Red Bull driver Max Verstappen of the Netherlands steers his car during the qualifying session at the British Formula One Grand Prix at the Silverstone racetrack, Silverstone, England. (AP)

Sports

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Djokovic makes quick work of Wawrinka

Murray exits Wimbledon with uncertainty

WIMBLEDON, England, July 8, (AP): Novak Djokovic moved into the fourth round as he pursues some more significant numbers - a fifth consecutive title at Wimbledon; an eighth overall there; a 24th from all majors - by making quick work of Stan Wawrinka 6-3, 6-1, 7-6 (5). Djokovic trailed 5-3 in the closing tiebreaker before reeling off the last four points.

Andy Murray didn't know. As he was asked to dissect his loss to Stefanos Tsitsipas in the second round of Wimbledon - a rollicking five-setter that lasted more than 4 1/2 hours spread over two days before a packed Centre Court filled with thousands of his

TENNIS

closest and loudest friends - Murray started answers to question after question at his news conference Friday with some variation of that theme.

It was, likely, a verbal crutch, something used to gather his thoughts before offering a more complete response. It also embodied the uncertainty that seems to surround a former No. 1 player who owns three Grand Slam titles, two at the All England Club, but also is now 36 and with an artificial hip after two operations.

Was it harder to accept this 7-6 (3), 6-7 (2), 4-6, 7-6 (3), 6-4 defeat, given both how close it was and all he's been through? "I don't know, to be honest," Murray's reply began.

Did the match change because it was suspended Thursday at 10:40 p.m., right after he'd taken a two-sets-to-one lead, because rules prevent play after 11 p.m.? "I don't know, to be honest."

How frustrating was it that the contest was put on hold for nearly 18



Spain's Carlos Alcaraz returns to Chile's Nicolas Jarry in a men's singles match on day six of the Wimbledon tennis championships in London. (AP)

hours? "Well, you never know what would have happened."

Does the player ahead in that circumstance want to keep playing, while the player trailing prefers to stop? "I don't know."

Will he return to Wimbledon next year? "I don't know."

"I'm obviously very disappointed just now. You never know how many opportunities you're going to get to play here," Murray said. "The defeats, maybe feel a bit tougher. But, to be honest, every year that Wimbledon's not gone how I would like, it's been hard."

This was his second consecutive

exit in the second round at the site of three of his greatest triumphs: the 2012 Olympic gold medal and the 2013 and 2016 Wimbledon championships. His trophy a decade ago was the first for a British man at the All England Club in singles in 77 years.

Murray has not been past the third round at any major since getting to the 2017 quarterfinals at Wimbledon.

All in all, Friday was rough for the local fans: The other two British men left in the bracket, No. 12 Cam Norrie and wild-card entry Liam Broady, were sent home, too. Norrie was defeated by Chris Eubanks of the United States 6-3, 3-6, 6-2, 7-6 (3), and Broady lost

to No. 26 Denis Shapovalov of Canada 4-6, 6-2, 7-5, 7-5.

Iga Swiatek, made her way into the fourth round - she's never been further at the All England Club - as did No. 4 Jessica Pegula; No. 2 Aryna Sabalenka, two-time champion Petra Kvitova and 2022 runner-up Ons Jabeur moved into the third round. But No. 5 Caroline Garcia was a 7-6 (0), 4-6, 7-5 loser against No. 32 Marie Bouzkova.

Beatriz Haddad Maia, a 13th-seeded Brazilian who reached the semifinals at this year's French Open, beat Sorana Cirstea 6-2, 6-2 in the third round on No. 3 Court.

Two-time Wimbledon champion Petra Kvitova nearly made it in time, leading Natalija Stevanovic 6-3, 4-5 on No. 2 Court when the rain started. Kvitova needed only a few minutes after play resumed to complete the victory 6-3, 7-5.

Only Centre Court and No. 1 Court have roofs at the All England Club. Play in those two stadiums started as scheduled.

Top-seeded Carlos Alcaraz held off Nicolas Jarry 6-3, 6-7, 6-3, 7-5 in the third round.

On No. 1 Court, third-seeded Daniil Medvedev overcame Marton Fucsovics 4-6, 6-3, 6-4, 6-4.

Verstappen takes pole at British GP

SILVERSTONE, England, July 8, (AP): Lando Norris nearly delighted the British Grand Prix crowd with pole position. There was just one problem: Max Verstappen.

"It's always Max. He always ruins everything for everyone," Norris joked after the Dutch driver beat his time for his fifth pole position in a row on Saturday.

The British crowd roared in celebration when Norris briefly took over the top spot late in the qualifying session, before Verstappen went yet faster to take it back by .241 seconds.

The result may be routine in Formula One - Red Bull has taken pole in nine out of 10 races - but it followed a session of tension, another failure for Verstappen's teammate Sergio Pérez, and a moment of jeopardy for the Dutch driver himself.

MOTOR RACING

Verstappen made contact with the pit wall and broke his front wing while leaving his garage during a red-flag stoppage in the first part of qualifying. "I just understeered and it just didn't grip," he told the team over the radio.

Red Bull replaced the wing and checked there was no other damage before Verstappen continued, but he was at the back of a line of cars and worked his way through the field to set up for a fast lap, going side-by-side with old rival Lewis Hamilton on the way.

Pérez qualified 16th, out of the top 10 for the fifth race in a row and the sixth time this season.

Pérez lost out in a frantic end to the first part of qualifying as drivers had three minutes to set times on a drying and increasingly faster track after an earlier red flag for Kevin Magnussen's Haas breaking down.

Vingegaard keeps Tour yellow jersey

Pedersen wins mass sprint after Cavendish crashes

De Gea announces he is leaving Man Utd after 12 seasons

MANCHESTER, England, July 8, (AP): Veteran goalkeeper David de Gea has announced he is leaving Manchester United as a free agent after 12 seasons at Old Trafford.

The 32-year-old's contract with United expired at the end of June, with no new deal agreed despite talks that took place throughout the season.

De Gea joined United from Atletico Madrid in 2011 and made 545 appearances for the Premier League club which included 190 clean sheets - both club records for a keeper.

In a message on social media on Saturday, De Gea thanked United fans for their support but said: "Now, it's the right time to undertake a new challenge, to push myself again in new surroundings."

On its website, United said "Thank you David!" and called him a "record breaker." It said De Gea

"secured an array of trophies and personal accolades to cement his place as one of the greatest goalkeepers in the history of the club."

When De Gea's contract expired last Friday, United said they remained in talks with the Spain goalkeeper who won the Premier League, FA Cup, Europa League

and two League Cups with the club.

That followed reports that De Gea had signed a contract extension only for the club to withdraw that offer and come back with reduced terms.

United has been linked with a move for Inter Milan keeper Andre Onana.

"I would like to express my unwavering gratitude and appreciation for the love from the last 12 years," De Gea wrote. "We've achieved a

lot since my dear Sir Alex Ferguson brought me to this club."

He added: "Manchester will always be in my heart, Manchester has shaped me and will never leave me. We've seen it all."

United manager Erik ten Hag paid tribute to the departing De Gea, who won the Premier League's golden glove last season.

"It takes great quality and character to reach the level of even playing one game for Manchester United," Ten Hag said. "To do it 545 times over 12 years is a special achievement, particularly in the goalkeeping position where every game puts you in the spotlight."

"To have won Player of the Year awards from both the fans and his teammates, each on four occasions, shows the level of his performance and he will always be remembered as one of the very best goalkeepers in the history of the club."



Bronze medalist Abdulrahman Al-Azmi.

Al-Azmi claims bronze, Kuwait 4th medal, at Pan Arab Games

ALGIERS, July 8 (KUNA): Abdulrahman Al-Azmi clinched Kuwait's fourth medal at the Pan Arab Games on Thursday, taking a bronze after finishing third in the men's javelin throw with a distance of 70.83m covered.

Team Kuwait have accomplished two silver and two bronze medals thus far in the regional tournament hosted by the Algerian coastal city of Oran which began yesterday.

Abdelhadi Mohamed and Fatma Dahham together progressed from the badminton mixed doubles qualifiers to the

following round, beating a Tunisian duo. Yesterday, Yaqoub Al-Yoha and Issa Al-Zankawi won a silver medal each in the 110m hurdles race and

ATHLETICS

men's discus throw, respectively, with Madawi Al-Shemmari clinching the women's 100m sprint bronze.

Some 32 Kuwaitis, men and women, are competing in the event across six different disciplines.

CYCLING

Wout Van Aert completed the stage podium in third.

The stage was marred by several crashes, including the one that ruled Cavendish out of the race. The ace sprinter hit the ground with 64 kilometers (40 miles) left while riding at the back of the peloton.

The British rider had finished second in Friday's stage when Philipsen denied the rider known as the "Manx Missile" an outright record 35th Tour stage win. Cavendish equaled Eddy Merckx's record of 34 wins on the 2021 Tour, 13 years after his first success. Cavendish, who has never won the Tour, unlike five-time champion

spoke highly of the performance and medal win of the Kuwaiti athletes as a "national accomplishment" following a thrilling and strong competition.

He added that this achievement has capped the fervent effort, hard work and intensive training of the Kuwaiti national team.

Organized by the UAE Jiu-Jitsu Federation (UAEJFF) in collaboration with the Abu Dhabi Jiu-Jitsu Pro (AJP), the three-day championship featured thrilling competitions in the Kids, Infant, and Junior categories on the first day.

On the second day, the Youth, Teen, and Masters divisions took center stage, while the third and final day will witness fierce matches between Amateurs and Professionals.

Merckx, will retire at the end of the season.

Vingegaard spent the day well protected by his Jumbo-Visma teammates and kept his 25-second lead over two-time champion Tadej Pogacar in the

general classification. Jai Hindley remained in third place, 1 minute, 34 seconds off the pace.

The pulsating duel between Pogacar and Vingegaard is expected to resume during Sunday's ninth stage, which

finishes with a spectacular climb to Puy-de-Dôme, a famed volcanic crater in the Massif Central region of south-central France which last hosted a stage 35 years ago.

The mountain is part of the Tour lore and all cycling fans cherish the memorable duel to the summit between French rivals Jacques Anquetil and Raymond Poulidor back in 1964. Anquetil went on that year to become the first five-time Tour winner.

The first rest day follows in Clermont-Ferrand on July 10. With many riders interested in making the most of the flat profile of the first half of Stage 8 to break away, there was a flurry of attacks immediately after race director Christian Prudhomme waved the flag signaling the start.

But the peloton rode at full speed and thwarted the moves.

Veteran Belgian all-rounder Tim Declercq, a powerful rider usually excelling in chasing breakaways for the Soudal Quick-Step team, finally managed to get away from the bunch after 20 kilometers (12.5 miles), accompanied by Frenchmen Anthony Delaplace and Anthony Turgis.



Denmark's Mads Pedersen (left), sprints ahead of Belgium's Jasper Philipsen (right), to win during the eighth stage of the Tour de France cycling race over 201 kilometers (125 miles) with start in Libourne and finish in Limoges, France. (AP)