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MARRIAGE REINFORCES STRATEGIC BONDS WITH SAUDI ARABIA

Royal wedding highlights continuity

Opinion

Between Khrushchev and Ahmed bin Hanbal... and the hypocrisy of the ruler

By Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

AFFLICTION of weak states happens due to the wrong opinions that leaders get from unqualified advisors, and not from those who are devoid of personal intuition in striving for the supreme interest of the state.

As for the hypocrites who mostly incline on their personal interests, they will undoubtedly be the ones who pave the way to the collapse of the state. This is because they work according to the interests they aspire to, even if they remain silent when there is a crisis. They only see themselves, and hold lightly the trust that the leadership has given to them.

In this regard, there is a story about the former Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev. During the first meeting of the Central Committee after the death of Joseph Stalin, the new leader accused his predecessor of committing several atrocities and being a dictator known for his cruelty and tyranny, his non-acceptance of the opinions of others and his speed of getting rid of those who disagree with him or oppose him, irrespective of whether they are government officials or ordinary people.

After he finished delivering his accusatory speech, a slip of paper reached him on which was written - "Where were you when the crimes you alleged were taking place during the days of Stalin?"

The man read the question to the members of the Central Committee, and asked the questioner to stand up. After time passed, silence prevailed, and no one stood up. Khrushchev said with his usual sarcasm, "Whoever asks where I was when those terrible things were happening, I tell him that I was sitting in the chair you are sitting on at the moment. We are all equal, my dear." By this he meant that no one should ask him for something that they are unable to do.

There are many officials who are unable to speak the truth because they believe that this is what the ruler wants. From this point of view, Aristotle is attributed to saying, "I count him braver who overcomes his desires than him who conquers his enemies; for the hardest victory is the victory over self." In principle, it is for the welfare of the society, because it leads to the wellbeing of the individual.

In this regard, it is narrated by a ninth century Muslim jurist, Imam Ahmed bin Hanbal that when he was in prison, the warden came to him and said, "O Abu Abdullah, is the hadith about injustice and its enforcers true?" Imam Ahmed said, "Yes."

The warden asked, "Am I one of the enforcers of injustice?"

Imam Ahmad said, "The enforcers of justice are those who take your hair (the barber), wash your clothes, fix your food, and buy and sell from you. But you are among the oppressors themselves."

This is because aiding the oppressor is injustice itself, and the aide is more concerned about the leadership than the leaders themselves. That is why the people, prior to the great technological revolution, the spread of the media and social media, and the open spaces, were almost surrendering to their destinies and seeking help from their rulers despite the cruelty of the latter, either by silence or by accepting everything.

However, there are some exceptions, such as the French Revolution when injustice abounded and people starved to such an extent that they decided to end the rule, and the 1917 revolution in Russia. However, today with the current technology, the basements of the intelligence and security services are no longer useful in hiding people, or covering up a money scandal and corruption.

As for other countries, it is the will of the ruler and his endeavor to achieve the truth among the people, and the strength of his determination to stop the advisors at their limits, and not leave the affairs of the state or the institution to those suffering from shortsightedness, and lack of wisdom and discernment.

A ruler's awareness of what his people need is the way to the renaissance of his country and its economy. He makes the press and media platforms a supporting factor to expose the corrupt. This security is established, because sincere advice free from personal whims is given openly, and countries thus overcome their crises.

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Day by Day

THE Ministry of Commerce has suddenly realized that, for the past 40 years, it has literally 'mowed down' small merchants, citizens and others, for the very fact that they were required to have a furnished headquarters, an office, accountants and office boys to own a commercial license.

The ministry also required the Kuwait Municipality to ensure the fully furnished headquarters with clean toilets complete with toilet papers, really existed.

For forty years people suffered and the beneficiary was the landlord. As for the mowed down merchants they aspired to increase their income through legal means.

.... Yet, tomorrow is another day.

Zaher Matar

NewsWatch

KUWAIT CITY: The Public Authority for Civil Information on Thursday urged citizens and expatriates to shun phone calls by anonymous persons pretending to be PACI personnel and requesting personal data.

PACI does not request such data by phone, it said in statement. (KUNA)

KUWAIT CITY: The exchange rate of the US dollar stood at KD 0.307 as well as Euro to KD 0.328, compared to Wednesday's figures, said the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) on Thursday.

The exchange rate of the sterling was up 0.42 percent to KD 0.382, while the Swiss Franc fell by 0.25 to KD 0.337 and the Japanese yen remained unchanged at KD 0.002, the CBK said in its daily bulletin.

The currency exchange rates as declared by CBK reflect average rates, not actual trade. (KUNA)

DUBAI: Oman plans to launch a \$5 billion public investment fund to support plans to overhaul the economy in the Gulf Arab nation over the next two decades, state media reported Wednesday.

The Oman Future Fund will aim to increase economic activity and support the private sector as the country looks to reduce its reliance on oil. With a population of some 4.5 million, Oman is the second largest Gulf Arab nation after Saudi Arabia but has nowhere near its vast oil reserves.

Oman has long served as a regional mediator, maintaining close ties to the U.S. and other Gulf states as well as Iran. (AP)

OSLO: NATO on Thursday ramped up pressure on member nation Turkey to drop its objections to Sweden's membership as the military organization seeks to deal with the issue by the time U.S. President Joe Biden and his counterparts meet next month.

The 31-member alliance is also looking at boosting Ukraine's non-member status in NATO and preparing a framework for security commitments that it can offer once the war with Russia is over.

Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said NATO wants to bring Sweden into the fold by the time allied leaders meet in Lithuania on July 11-12. (AP)

BRUSSELS: The European Union's border and coast guard agency is collecting information from migrants that could end up identifying vulnerable people seeking sanctuary from persecution in their homelands, according to a report by the EU's data protection watchdog.

The European Data Protection Supervisor, or EDPS, also announced that it is launching an investigation into whether Frontex gathered information that it is not entitled to collect and illegally provided those details about migrants to the EU's police agency Europol.

Frontex said Thursday that it conducts "debriefing interviews" with migrants entering Europe without authorization "on a voluntary and anonymous basis." It said the interviews aim to collect information about migratory routes and cross-border crime and help to plan its operations. (AP)

BERLIN: German prosecutors said Thursday that they will examine objects that were found in a search in Portugal last week for clues regarding the disappearance of Madeleine McCann, but can't yet say whether they are linked to the British girl who went missing in 2007.

Investigators spent three days last week searching around a dam some 50 kilometers (30 miles) from the Praia da Luz resort in southern Portugal, where the 3-year-old girl was last seen 16 years ago. (AP)

ANKARA: Turkey's election board certified the results of the May 28 presidential runoff election on Thursday, confirming that Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who has been a dominant force in Turkish politics for the past two decades, has won a third term as president.

Ahmet Yener, the head of the Supreme Electoral Council said Erdogan won 52.18% of the votes, while main opposition party leader Kemal Kilicdaroglu garnered 47.82%.

"According to these results, it is understood that Recep Tayyip Erdogan has been elected president and the results were sent to the Official Gazette for publication," Yener announced. (AP)

BRUSSELS: The EU Council of Ministers Thursday approved the 27-member blocs accession to the Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, the so-called Istanbul Convention.

The Convention creates a legal framework to protect women against violence. It covers a broad range of measures, from data collection and awareness raising to legal measures on criminalising different forms of violence against women, said the Council in a statement.

"Violence against women is unacceptable and must end. These acts have no place in our societies. The Istanbul Convention is a landmark and a catalyst for action," commented Swedish Minister for Gender Equality Paulina Brandberg. (KUNA)

NEW DELHI: Nepal's prime minister held talks with his Indian counterpart on Thursday as India and its rival China bid for influence in the tiny Himalayan nation as part of a greater regional power struggle.

Pushpa Kamal Dahal met Narendra Modi in New Delhi during a four-day visit to India, his first trip abroad since taking office last December. After the meeting, the two prime ministers remotely inaugurated several projects, including a cargo railway line and two border checkpoints, and oversaw the signing of a slew of agreements. (AP)

CAIRO: The United States urged Sudan's warring sides on Thursday to return to cease-fire talks and make a concerted effort to abide by a lasting truce after peace efforts collapsed yet again.

The appeal from the U.S. State Department came after Sudan's military on Wednesday suspended its participation in the talks, hosted in Saudi Arabia, with a rival paramilitary force. (AP)

Kate, William surprise arrivals

AMMAN, June 1, (Agencies): The wedding of Jordan's crown prince to the scion of a prominent Saudi family began on Thursday in a palace celebration that drew massive crowds and a mood of excitement around the kingdom, while presenting the young Hashemite royal as a new player on the global stage.

The marriage of Crown Prince Hussein, 28, and Saudi architect Rajwa Alseif, 29, drew a star-studded VIP list headlined by Britain's Prince William and his wife Kate. Jordan's King Abdullah II and Queen Rania welcomed them and several other royals from around the world, as well as U.S. First Lady Jill Biden.

A senior Kuwaiti official on Thursday attended wedding of the

Jordanian Crown Prince Al-Hussein bin Abdullah II.

Sheikh Ahmad Al-Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, accompanied by his spouse, attended the wedding in his capacity as the Representative of both His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

Sheikh Ahmad Al-Abdullah is the head of His Highness the Crown Prince Diwan.

King Abdullah II and Queen Rania received the well wishers.

The bride, wearing an elegant white dress, arrived at Zahran Palace in a 1968 Rolls-Royce Phantom V custom-made for the late Queen Zein al-Sharaf, the crown prince's great grandmother. The crown prince arrived earlier in full ceremonial military uniform with a gold-hilted saber.

The families and their guests gathered in an open-air gazebo surrounded by landscaped gardens for a traditional Muslim wedding ceremony known as "katb al-kebab."

The celebrations hold deep significance for the region, emphasizing continuity in an Arab state prized for its longstanding stability and refreshing the monarchy's image. It even could help Jordan forge a strategic bond with its oil-rich neighbor, Saudi Arabia.

Crowds were gathering at huge screens set to livestream the wedding across the country, with many attendees waving flags and decked out in the white-and-red checkered scarves worn by Jordan's ruling family, the Hashemites.

At the ancient Roman amphitheater in the center of the capital, Amman, Jordanian singer Hussein Salman pumped up the crowds with congratulatory wedding ballads. The 6,000-seat theater was almost completely full, as families sang along and children, with "Celebrating Hussein" painted on their cheeks, clapped wildly.

"This is an important day because he is our future king," said Ahmad al-Masri, an 18-year-old attending with his family. "All of Jordan is watching."

On Thursday morning, Saudi wedding guests and tourists - the men wearing white dishdasha robes and the women in brightly colored abayas - filtered through the sleek marbled lobby of the Four Seasons Hotel in Amman. Noura Al Sudairi, an aunt of the bride, was wearing sweatpants and sneakers on her way to breakfast.

"We are all so excited, so happy about this union," she said. "Of course it's a beautiful thing for our families, and for the relationship between Jordan and Saudi Arabia."

Excitement over the nuptials - Jordan's biggest royal event in years - has been building in the capital of Amman, where congratulatory banners of Hussein and his beaming bride adorn buses and hang over winding hillside streets. Shops had competing displays of royal regalia. Royal watchers speculated about which dress designer Alseif would select - still an official secret.

"She looks like such a princess that I think she deserves him," Suhair Afaneh, a 37-year-old businesswoman, said of the bride, lingering in front of a portrait of Hussein in a dark suit. "But so what, I'll still be in love with him."

She contemplated buying Hussein's portrait to hang in her bedroom but her nieces persuaded her that her husband might not approve.

Jordan's 11 million citizens have watched the young crown prince rise in prominence in recent years, as he increasingly joined his father, Abdullah, in public appearances. Hussein has graduated from Georgetown University, joined the military and gained some global recognition speaking at the U.N. General Assembly. His wedding, experts say, marks his next crucial rite of passage.

"It's not just a marriage, it's the presentation of the future king of Jordan," said political analyst Amer Sabaileh. "The issue of the crown prince has been closed."



Jordan's Crown Prince Hussein and Saudi Rajwa Alseif wave to well-wishers during their wedding ceremonies in Amman, Jordan, Thursday, June 1, 2023. (AP)



Jordan's Crown Prince Hussein and Rajwa Alseif sit during the wedding ceremony in Amman, Jordan, Thursday, June 1, 2023. (AP)

Two IAEA inquiries resolved

Iran significantly ups uranium stockpile

VIENNA, June 1, (Agencies): Iran significantly increased its stockpile of enriched uranium in recent months, continuing its nuclear escalation, a confidential report by the UN nuclear watchdog said on Wednesday.

The agency, however, noted progress in its cooperation with Iran in a separate report saying it has decided to close the file on nuclear material at an undeclared site, an issue that has long exacerbated relations between the two parties.

The two confidential reports come days before the board of governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is due to meet to review progress in addressing the watchdog's remaining concerns.

The nuclear watchdog said in its quarterly report that Iran's estimated stockpile of enriched uranium had reached more than 23 times the limit set out in the landmark 2015 accord between Tehran and world powers.

As of 13 May, Iran's total enriched uranium stockpile was estimated at 4,744.5 kilograms (10,459 pounds).

The limit in the 2015 deal was 202.8 kilograms.

The report also said that Iran is continuing its enrichment of uranium to levels higher than the 3.67 percent limit in the deal.

Efforts to revive the Iran nuclear deal, which was left in tatters by the unilateral withdrawal

of the United States in 2018, have stalled since last summer.

The stockpile of uranium enriched up to 20 percent is now believed to be 470.9 kilograms, up 36.2 kg since the last report in February, while the amount enriched up to 60 percent stands at 114.1 kilograms, an increase of 26.6 kg.

Enrichment levels of around 90 percent are required for use in a nuclear weapon.

Meanwhile, Iran has resolved two outstanding inquiries from the International Atomic Energy Agency over highly enriched uranium particles and a site where man-made uranium was found, according to confidential reports seen Wednesday by The Associated Press.

The IAEA reports ease pressure slightly on Tehran, which has been escalating its program for years since the U.S. unilaterally withdrew from its nuclear deal with world powers in 2018. However, it continues to amass more uranium nearer than ever to weapons-grade level, worrying nonproliferation experts.

The two confidential quarterly reports by the Vienna-based IAEA, distributed to member states of the organization, said inspectors no longer had questions on uranium particles found to be enriched to 83.7% at its underground Fordo facility. That had sparked tensions over the last several months as uranium enriched to 90% is weapons-grade material.



People carry coffins of five members of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command, a Palestinian militant group, during their funeral in Damascus, Syria, June 1, 2023. The faction says an Israeli airstrike targeted one of their military bases early Wednesday, but the Israeli Defense Forces have denied that such airstrike occurred. (AP)



NEIGHBORS



Aerial view of the Arabian Oryx in the protected area.

UAE issues resolution

Protection a matter of policy

His Highness Sheikh Hamdan bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Ruler's Representative in Al Dhafra Region and Chairman of the Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi (EAD), has issued Resolution No. (3) of 2023 on the policy of protected areas in Abu Dhabi, in line with the vision and directives of His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the UAE, and in alignment with 2023 being declared the UAE's Year of Sustainability.

Abu Dhabi is a leader on the federal and regional levels in terms of establishing and managing natural reserves, which are the most effective tool for protecting biodiversity. The marine reserves in the emirate form 14 per cent of the total marine biome, while the terrestrial reserves make up 17 per cent of the total land area. The established protected natural reserves are forming the Sheikh Zayed Protected Areas Network.

The resolution stipulates the issuance of a policy for protected areas in Abu Dhabi, provided that EAD, in coordination with relevant authorities, follows up and implements the policy mechanisms according to its timeline.

Her Excellency Dr Shaikha Salem Al Dhaheri, Secretary General of EAD, said: "The issuance of the protected areas' policy in Abu Dhabi is a first in the UAE, and aims to strengthen and expand the network of protected areas in the emirate to keep pace with the rapid urbanisation and development efforts, climate change, and the increasing pressures and demand for natural resource and sustainable development."

Her Excellency said that the issuance of the policy this year is an important step towards implementing the vision of His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the UAE, for environmental sustainability and the protection of natural resources by ensuring the preservation of its biodiversity, important habitats and vital species, and through regulating the use of protected areas and ensure their integration in development plans.

Ahmed Al Hashemi, Executive Director of the Terrestrial and Marine Biodiversity Sector at EAD, said: "The protected areas' policy is based on international standards, which include principles of sustainable development, interactive management, community participation, clear governance, and scientific research to enrich decision-making. The policy's scope includes all types of current and future nature reserves, in both terrestrial and marine ecosystems including all national parks, wetlands and biosphere reserves.

"The policy also applies to areas located around the declared boundaries of natural reserves, as any activities or projects in these specific areas may affect the environmental elements of natural reserves. All projects and activities must be sustainable and may not impact those elements negatively, and need to obtain prior approval

from EAD, such as submitting an environmental licence application and conducting the required environmental studies."

More than 15 government, semi-government and private agencies have participated in the preparation and review of the policy to ensure its alignment with each of the relevant national and local policies, plans and strategies. This reiterates the vital role of protected areas in enhancing the quality of life, preserving natural resources and supporting the emirate's revenues, and enhancing bio-resilience and adaptability to climate change. Protected areas in Abu Dhabi offer promising investment opportunities that can contribute to the local economy, support the health and happiness of community members, and the emirate's global leadership in the fields of environmental sustainability, such as economic investment opportunities, ecotourism, scientific research, and innovation.

Implementing this policy will help achieve a number of strategic objectives, such as protecting and managing biodiversity and habitats and enhancing adaptability to climate change by maintaining terrestrial and marine ecosystems in good condition. This is in addition to promoting sustainable development through integrated planning of land use, and encouraging sustainable utilisation of natural resources and promoting access to nature. Also, the policy will provide ecosystem services for a better life for all, and link community health to a connection with nature.

Other goals also include preserving the cultural and natural heritage, providing opportunities for scientific research, innovation and education, and developing the innovation and environmental investment system. Similarly, the policy provides increased opportunities for ecotourism, preserving the aesthetic values provided by Abu Dhabi's landmarks and its terrestrial and marine landscapes. All of which will positively contribute to social and economic development as a result of effectively planned eco-tourism. The policy also aims to create effective planning, education and awareness initiatives, encouraging the public and private sectors to participate in the initiative and creating a sense of social responsibility to preserve biodiversity through joint projects and partnerships.

About Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi (EAD)

Established in 1996, the Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi (EAD) is committed to protecting and enhancing air quality, groundwater as well as the biodiversity of our desert and marine ecosystem. By partnering with other government entities, the private sector, NGOs and global environmental agencies, we embrace international best practice, innovation and hard work to institute effective policy measures. We seek to raise environmental awareness, facilitate sustainable development and ensure environmental issues remain one of the top priorities of our national agenda.



editor's choice



Prayer Timings

Fajr 03:16 Asr 15:20
 Sunrise .. 04:49 Maghrib .. 18:43
 Zohr 11:46 Isha 20:13

Local

Expected weather for the next 24 hours:

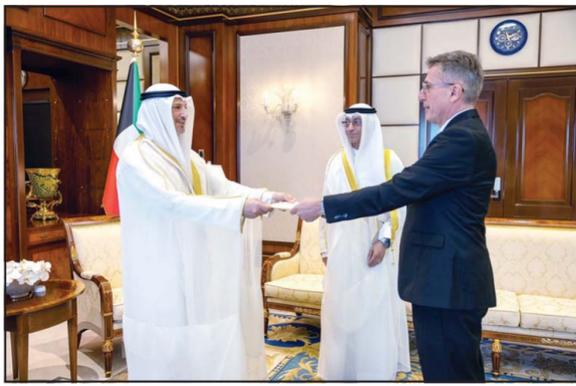
By Day: Hot and dusty with moderate to fresh strong at times northwesterly wind with speeds of 25-65 km/h.

By Night: Rather hot and part-

Weather

ly cloudy with light to moderate freshening at times northwesterly wind with speeds of 12-42 km/h with a chance for rising dust over open areas.	Kuwait Airport	42	32
	Abdaly	42	29
	Jahra	43	31
	Salmiyah	39	31
	Ahmadi	38	33
	Nuwaisib	41	27
	Wafra	43	26

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



Kosovan ambassador



Bahamas ambassador



Finland ambassador

Foreign Minister receives credentials of foreign ambassadors

Kuwait Foreign Minister Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah met on Thursday a number of Arab and foreign ambassadors who presented their credentials during several receptions.

The Foreign Minister received the credentials of the new Finnish, Ecuadorian, Bahamian, and Kosovan Ambassadors to Kuwait.

In the marathon receptions, the minister also received the official papers of the ambassadors representing Moldova, Barbados, Guatemala, Chile, Zambia, Slovenia, Denmark, Mexico and Nicaragua.

During the receptions, Sheikh Salem welcomed the diplomats and wished them luck on their upcoming ventures.

The meetings discussed the latest developments in the world and ways to enhance cooperation between Kuwait and aforementioned nations.

The Foreign Minister on Thursday received the credentials of Luxembourg's Ambassador in Kuwait Robert Lauer.

This came during the meeting held at the Foreign Ministry, with Sheikh Salem Al-Sabah wishing the new ambassador best of luck and closer relations between both friendly countries.

Foreign Minister Sheikh Salem on Wednesday received credentials of newly assigned Riyadh-based, non-resident ambassador of Equatorial Guinea to Kuwait at the ministry headquarters.

He wished the new envoy success in promoting the bilateral relations between the two friendly countries. The two sides also discussed issues in the African country.

The foreign minister also received credentials of the Cuba-based non-

resident ambassador of Antigua and Barbuda. Sheikh Salem Abdullah wished success for the new envoy and the two sides addressed latest developments in the ambassador's country.

Separately, Sheikh Salem hosted and received papers of the Riyadh-headquartered Ambassador of the Maldives, discussing the solid bilateral ties, in addition to receiving credentials of the Abu Dhabi-based Estonian ambassador to the State of Kuwait.

Later on, he received credentials of the ambassadors representing Mauritius, Ivory Coast, New Zealand, the Dominican, Guinea Bissau, Fiji, Tonga, Namibia, Ireland and Sweden.

In all these sessions, the minister wished the new envoys success and addressed issues in their home countries. (KUNA)

'Citizens edgy on present state'

40 quit race, tally stands at 207

By Saeed Mahmoud Saleh

Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, June 1: The period for the 2023 parliamentary election candidates to withdraw their candidates has ended, during which a total of 40 can-

didates opted out of the electoral race.

The total number of candidates in the election slated for June 6 now stands at 207.

Meanwhile, Fourth Constituency candidate Muhammad Al-Fajji said in a meeting he organized Wednesday evening that citizens are more worried about their present than their future.

Addressing his Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, he pointed out the corrupt are active in committing crimes and they have been rewarded with public tenders, instead of being punished. He said even His Highness the Crown Prince has been dragged into a dispute, indicating everyone is aware about the dispute between HH the Crown Prince and HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. He added the submission of decrees only to withdraw them later is a sign of dispute.

He affirmed his loyalty to the nation and the ruling family, asserting that "more power means more the accountability. Kuwait deserves better management. The leadership is in charge of public money and decision-making."

Former MP and Second Constituency candidate Hamad Saif Al-Harshani has stressed the need for cooperation with the government in the interest of citizens, not for personal interests.

He urged the voters to keep their distance from crises-making candidates, recalling the previous period which witnessed a lot of disputes that negatively affected achievements.

He affirmed that he is keen on fulfilling his commitments, asking the voters to be wary of candidates who make promises without accomplishments.

Fifth Constituency candidate Muhammad Metleq Al-Otaibi tackled the educational issue in his campaign. He said the Kuwaiti students in public schools are at a disadvantage in applying for overseas scholarship, because their final exams end 25 days after those enrolled in international schools.

He added that in many instances, the Ministry of Education forced the students to transfer to schools away from their homes under the pretext that their current schools will be demolished for safety reasons; only to find out later that these schools are rented to the private sector and reopened as international schools. He then vowed to prioritize this issue and other important matters if he wins in the election.

He also urged the next Council of Ministers to solve issues concerning the citizens; otherwise, it should resign.

Former MP and Fourth Constituency candidate Marzouq Al-Khalifa disclosed that his time in jail gave him a chance to witness bad conditions and violations against human rights. If he wins in the election, he will prioritize this issue and push for improving the citizens' standard of living.

Proposal

He affirmed support for women's rights, pointing out that he submitted a proposal to reduce the age condition for Kuwaiti housewives to receive social allowance from 55 to 45 years old. He said the disputes between the government and Parliament hindered the implementation of his proposal. He intends to resubmit this proposal, along with other bills like increasing the social allowance for Kuwaiti housewives from KD550 to KD700 per month.

He warned that the next government will face strong opposition in case it adopts the same attitude as its predecessors.

Former MP and First Constituency candidate Osama Al-Zaid conveyed a message to those eyeing the Prime Minister, National Assembly Speaker and Crown Prince positions; stressing the people will not allow anyone to use them as tools to occupy such vital posts. He added the people of Kuwait want solutions to their problems, instead of being used as tools for achieving personal goals.

Fifth Constituency candidate Fajd Falah bin Jame'e emphasized the need to reform the National Assembly by restructuring the constituencies to ensure justice for all. He pointed out that Kuwait consists of six governorates and it is unfair that four governorates have 20 MPs, while two governorates have 30 MPs. He called for the cancellation of the one-man one-vote system as it resulted in many disputes among members of one family, while encouraging tribalism and sectarianism. He argued such a system divided the nation and ripped the national fabric.

He also unveiled his plan to push for amendment of the law on disqualifying candidates convicted of offending crimes to be in line with the Constitution, particularly Article Two which states the Islamic Sharia is the main source of legislation. He said the law prevents honest and dedicated citizens from exercising their suffrage rights.

He intends to support bills on granting more freedoms to citizens, as long as they are in line with the Islamic Law and Kuwaiti customs and traditions.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Justice in coordination with other government departments has formed 759 electoral commissions for the forthcoming National Assembly elections, says Kuwait News Agency, KUNA.

These commissions will be stationed at 118 schools throughout Kuwait, said Hashem Al-Gallaf, the acting undersecretary in a statement on Thursday.

Up to 1,157 judges and prosecution attorneys would partake in the process, he said, adding that number of the electoral committees in the first constituency would be 93, in the second constituency 91, in the third 135, in the fourth 201 and in the fifth 239.

Al-Gallaf praised the noticeable efforts exerted by the government departments namely the ministries of interior and education in addition to the municipality for participating in the preparations for the elections.

Other Voices

Choice between him and her

By Ahmad alsarra

Former MP Ahmad Nabil Al-Fadhli (born in 1977), and contesting the National Assembly elections from the Second Constituency is considered one of the best and most prominent former representatives, and one of the few whose reputation was not tainted by any unacceptable "parliamentary" practices.

He holds a degree in administrative sciences from the Kuwait University. He worked for nearly twenty years in the private sector in the field of financial analysis and project management, and he was a Member of Parliament in the 2016 National Assembly for four years, during which his rhetorical abilities and advantages showed and proved his complete devotion to his work and his eagerness to attend committee meetings.

He also succeeded in presenting a set of proposals which got the nod, such as the abolition of prior censorship of publications. He also supported passing economic laws, including supporting small and medium enterprises, improving the business environment, and increasing the financing portfolio of the Industrial Bank of Kuwait to 150 million dinars, other than what is related to the National Project Fund.

He also submitted an amendment to the Law of Procedures to achieve justice in litigation by approving a petition for reconsideration of final judgments, and to appeal rulings in cases of cassation within 60 days instead of 30.

He also played a role in tightening penalties for spoiled food, amending the Public Authority for Agriculture Affairs and Fisheries Resources (PAAAFR) law, facilitating the procedures for establishing companies and amending their law in a way that contributes to the creation of commercial entities for young people, strong participation in issuing the public universities law, adopting the issue of exposing forged certificates.

He was also able, in his first parliamentary experience, to achieve achievements in the committees in which he worked and dust off the

policy of suppressing proposals and raising them to the agenda. He was a member of the Finance Committee, the Legislative Committee, the Priorities Committee, and the Business Environment Improvement Committee, in addition to membership in the Sports Committee. This is not His effective contribution to approving amendments to the Tenders Law to give preference to local products, and approving the Law on Protection from Domestic Violence.

He contributed in ratifying the bills to facilitate the establishment of companies aimed at enhancing the youth participation. He contributed in the issuance of the law of public sector universities, conducted a campaign against fake academic certificates, contributed in ratifying the law to grant women the health authority on her children and contributed in the issuance of the Shiite personal status law.

He did a good job through his participation in a number of Parliamentary committees including Committee of Financial and Economic Affairs, Committee of Legislative and Legal Affairs, Priorities Committee, Committee of Improving Business Environment and Committee of Youth Affairs.

He contributed in the amendment of the law on Central Agency for Public Tenders aimed at granting special advantages to national products and contributed in the issuance of the law on protection from family violence.

Ahmad Al Fadhli is capable of grilling those who target him on social media (e-files) who ignored his entire parliamentary achievements and focused on trivial and personal issues.

Perhaps the reason behind their attack is the fact that Al Fadhli showed distinguished performance in the parliament and managed to sideline talkative extremists.

He was strong in facing a number of MPs with loud voices and empty minds. He is fully aware of the National Assembly law and devoting full time to his parliamentary mission helped him a lot to succeed.

In the recent elections, I supported former Minister and MP Jenan Boushahri from the Third Constituency because Al Fadhli refrained from running for the elections in 2022. Boushahri is no less efficient than Al Fadhli.

□ □ □
 e-mail: a.alsarra@alqabas.com.kw



Peru's Ambassador to Kuwait Carlos Velasco.

Visa in two, three days: envoy

'Kuwaiti tourists welcome in Peru'

KUWAIT CITY, June 1: The Embassy of Peru in the State of Kuwait gave a gastronomic presentation at the embassy premises at Al Arabiya Tower. The presentation was given by the Ambassador's son, Chef Martin Velasco.

Chef Velasco, flew into Kuwait specially for the event from Bulgaria where he works and resides, to demonstrate in front of local media his culinary expertise.

The Spanish Ambassador to Kuwait Miguel Moro Aguilar and some Kuwaiti citizens were present on the occasion.

In statements on the sidelines of a lunch prepared by the chef, the Peruvian Ambassador to Kuwait, Carlos Velasco, said his country's government has submitted a proposal to exempt Kuwaitis from entry visas to visit his country, hoping that this proposal would be approved soon.

Velasco stressed that "one of the most important procedures of the embassy is to reinforce the proposal that "we presented to the Kuwaiti side and sign an agreement to exempt Kuwaitis from visas," and consultations have begun between the two sides.

The Peruvian envoy has called on the Kuwaitis to visit his country, which has an attractive nature, and pointed out that "the embassy has issued about 200 visas for Kuwaiti tourists during the past year," hoping "this number to increase during this summer."

He pointed out that "a visa is issued to a Kuwaiti within two to three days who hold American or Schengen visa." He added, "Kuwaiti tourists are welcome in his country," pointing out to a proposal from Peru to operate direct flights to Kuwait."

In answer to a question if the embassy plans to open a cultural center to teach Spanish, the official language of his country, the ambassador explained "there is no institute to teach Spanish in Kuwait, and "our talks with the Kuwaiti side on this matter has not been addressed."

Regarding health cooperation between the two sides, Velasco said: "There is no cooperation between us in the health field, and there is no way to recruit medical and nursing cadres, given that the law in our country does not allow us to do so."

He pointed out that "the trade exchange between the two countries does not rise to the required level of ambition and needs to be developed, although

Ties solid: envoy

China woos Kuwaitis

KUWAIT CITY, June 1: Chinese Ambassador to Kuwait Zhang Jianwei has affirmed the strength of Kuwaiti-Chinese relations in various fields; citing the coordinated efforts of both countries to further strengthen their ties, reports Al-Qabas daily.

Jianwei urged Kuwaitis to visit China, especially after lifting Corona restrictions in April. He said his country is known for its beautiful tourist destinations throughout the year, considering its huge size.

He disclosed the number of Kuwaitis visiting China doubled this year compared to the previous year, as the number of visas issued in the first quarter of this year reached 970; while last year's number totaled 630.

He added the standard processing period for a regular visit visa is four working days and three working days if the procedure is expedited, indicating the visa application is submitted online.

On the other hand, Jianwei confirmed that a Chinese cultural delegation will visit Kuwait in June to fortify cooperation on cultural and human resources matters between the two countries.

there are a large number of our products and commodities available in the Kuwaiti markets, including fruits and vegetables, and we aspire to improve the level of this type of exchange between the two countries to contribute to achieving food security."

He indicated that he seeks to meet Kuwaiti officials to present his country's experiences and to provide technical assistance in the agricultural field adding: "In the near future, we will have meetings with the Public Authority for Agriculture Affairs and Fisheries Resources (PAAAFR) to whom we have already presented our observations, and they in turn have expressed their interest in what can be done."



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'People can travel sans biometric fingerprint, to be done on arrival'

'Database collected for those 18 years old and above'

KUWAIT CITY, June 1: The Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior, Lieutenant General Anwar Al-Barjas, said the biometric fingerprint project provides a database for everyone who lives in Kuwait provided he/she is 18 years old and above, reports Al-Qabas daily.

In this regards the Public Relations and Security Media Department of the ministry said in a press release following an inspec-

tion tour by Lieutenant General Al-Barjas to a number of biometric fingerprint centers, to determine the level of performance, speed of completion, and facilitation and facilitation for citizens and residents that the work on new biometric fingerprint efficient and smooth.

Lieutenant General Al-Barjas conveyed to the employees of the General Department of Criminal Evidence, who are in charge of the project, the greetings and appreciation of the First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Interior and Acting Minister of Defense

Sheikh Talal Al-Khalid.

Lieutenant General Al-Barjas affirmed the keenness of Sheikh Talal Al-Khaled to harness all capabilities and overcoming all obstacles in front of citizens and residents to facilitate their obtaining a biometric fingerprint.

He explained, "There are no impediments to traveling without taking a biometric fingerprint," stressing that it is applied only during the return to the country.

He added that the General Department of Criminal Evidence has taken all measures to facilitate arrivals and its readiness to complete the fingerprint for them, expressing his thanks and appreciation to those in charge of implementing development and modernization plans in the security sectors and upgrading the level of services provided to the public.

About 3 weeks after its implementation at the ports, security sources confirmed that the new security system works efficiently and smoothly in the context of the development plan, noting the adoption of an integrated plan to keep pace with the momentum of summer travel and avoid overcrowding.



Kuwait's FM Sheikh Salem during the meeting with the ASEAN officials.

KUNA photo

Kuwait, ASEAN discuss enhancing cooperation

Kuwait's Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah met on Tuesday with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) officials to discuss various topics of common interests.

During the meeting, the foreign minister expressed Kuwait's interest to enhance cooperation

with ASEAN in various fields, including economic development.

Both sides also exchanged experiences in fields of security, culture, education, health, employment and many issues of common interest, as well as the latest regional and international developments. (KUNA)

diwaniya

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

'There is no democracy without accountability'

"DEMOCRACY literally means "rule by the people", and it is a form of government in which all qualified citizens participate through their representatives who are elected in general elections of the state, to propose, develop and introduce laws covering various aspects of life, in order to achieve the principles of freedom, justice, equality and a better future for all citizens," columnist **Faisal Muhammad bin Sabt** wrote for **Al-Qabas** daily.

"One of the main reasons that push peoples to demand democracy is that through it the state of law is established, and through it the oppression and corruption of politicians sitting in the chairs of power are confronted, most of whom only care about achieving their personal interests, plundering the country's resources, and enabling their followers to reach the highest positions in the state. With it, every citizen takes his undiminished right.

"This democracy and those were the goals of those who invented it decades ago, but power has a great magic over those who assume it, and its chair often plays with the heart of a person, making him a tyrant, except for those who show mercy.

"There is no doubt that absolute power is the path to the greatest corruption that we see in many countries.

"In order for democracy to be correct and beneficial to society, it must be accompanied by political accountability for each official according to his position.

"When a politician makes decisions on behalf of the people who elected him, the voters must have the ability to hold him accountable for his decisions, and for the fulfillment of the promises he made to his voters during his electoral campaign.

"Either reward him or punish him, for what is in the interest of the country. For true democracy, there is a need for transparency, which is an essential part of the democratic system, and enhances the people's confidence in their government and in their parliament, which voted for its members. This is democracy.

"As for what we see these days of absurdity, it has nothing to do with democracy, and it is nothing but a bad joke.

"Among the sayings of King Abdulaziz Al Saud, narrated by his special advisor: "I did not learn in school, but rather experiences taught me, and my mixing with men taught me and I heard a lot of news of the greats of history."

"He did not like the saying, "Sheikhs are meaner." He always said, "We are human beings." We make mistakes, and if we know better, then why do we ask and seek understanding? Is there anyone who remembers?"

Also:

"It is not surprising that many of us feel frustrated because of the unstable political scene that we have been living through over the years. No National Assembly completes its term, nor does the government continue," columnist **Asrar Hayat** wrote for **Al-Qabas** daily.

"In the best case, and if we are lucky, the government lasts a year, without change, while the parliament does not complete its term and either there is a solution or an end to this unfortunate scenario.

"Here, I do not intend to go into the details of this state of political instability, but this scene has led people to unprecedented frustration, and it may be somewhat justified, but how do we deal with it?"

"The frustration with the general situation, and the resentment that we all feel, came out of our desire for Kuwait to be a more beautiful, more developed country, and to grant the Kuwaiti citizen a decent life that provides the citizen with basic services such as education, health, and others to the fullest, and is balanced with the

huge budgets spent on them, except the state of frustration among some has developed to the point of their desire not to participate in the upcoming elections, which seems to be the greatest danger!

"Non-participation is negative participation, which will only lead us to more crises and political vortex, and will not contribute in any way to the stability of the political scene.

"Today, in our confrontation in the face of any negative appearance in Kuwait, we have no weapon other than our democracy, the foundations of which were established by the constitution that regulated the relationship between the authorities, and made the nation its source. Today, democracy is our weapon to rectify the situation, and rectify the political scene and the path that Kuwait must follow.

"Non-participation is negative participation. Today, if you choose not to vote next June 6, how can the fittest and most capable of fighting corruption arrive?!"

"Today, we need to be aware enough to realize that the beginning of political, economic, educational, health and other reforms begins with our ballot paper on June 6.

"Those whom we choose on election day will be the legislators and observers for the next four years, so how can we leave our right In choosing the reformer, the strong and the honest, and we choose not to participate?!"

"Do not give up your right to vote, for there are young faces, who offer visions of reform, and there are good programs, which guarantee at least the minimum level of political reform.

"Listen to them, compare, and then choose who deserves to carry your trust in achieving growth and prosperity for Kuwait.

"Participate, because participation is a right of your children. You must choose today the best one that will ensure that the country will not be lost, God forbid, due to conflicts and forces of corruption.

"It is your children's right to vote today for someone who guarantees the enactment of legislation for the development of Kuwait so that your children can enjoy the development that we experienced previously.

"Participation today is not an individual decision, but rather a homeland decision, a reform decision, a decision for the future of our children, and the June 6 polls will be a milestone in Kuwait's political history, believing in democracy and for the sake of Kuwait, cast your ballot.!"

"Last Saturday in Iraq, Iraqi Prime Minister Muhammad Al-Sudani announced the start of the road development project to connect Iraq, Iran, Syria, Jordan and the Gulf countries to Turkey, and from there to Europe, in order to form a 'pillar for a sustainable non-oil economy through the economic integration efforts among countries in the region,'" columnist **Sami Al-Nisf** wrote for **Annahar** daily.

"As mentioned in the speech of the active prime minister, the project is also capable of replacing hostility and destruction with development, reconstruction and promotion of common interests in preparation for the transition of countries in the region from conflicts and wars to the new Europe!"

"It is very strange that the other countries participating in the Baghdad conference were represented by the ministers of communications, transportation and ports, while Kuwait was represented by the Kuwaiti ambassador - with all due respect for this honorable person, considering the private plane flight from Kuwait to Baghdad does not exceed an hour.

"For your information, if Kuwait actively contributes and participates in the project, it is sufficient to solve even the Mubarak Port problem, which was stalled after spending billions on its construction to integrate with the Iraqi Al-Faw Port in the interest of the two brotherly countries, taking into consideration the détente in countries in the region..."

— Compiled by **Mai Elsoukary**

Committee to be formed

Interior investigates escape of 'African national' from airport

KUWAIT CITY, June 1: The Security Media Department announced that Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior Lieutenant General Anwar Abdul Latif Al-Barjas has ordered the formation of an immediate investigation committee to find out the circumstances of the escape of a person of African nationality, believed to be a Ghanaian, from the Kuwait International Airport, reports Al-Rai daily.

Earlier it was reported that a high level security alert was triggered after the African who arrived at Kuwait Airport went missing after it was discovered that he had been banned from entering the country. The suspect managed to escape

from the airport hotel while awaiting his scheduled return flight.

Upon his arrival in Kuwait, he proceeded to the passport counter where it was revealed through fingerprint analysis that he had previously been deported and barred from entering the country. As a result, he was handed over to the airport investigations team, who subsequently transferred him to the airport hotel in preparation for his deportation on a returning flight.

During his stay at the airport hotel, the man eluded the security personnel, ventured into the airport yard, and managed to breach the airport perimeter fence, gaining entry into the country.



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2030 Sustainable Development plan new opportunity to promote children's rights: Arab League

Kuwait spares no effort to protect children's rights: minister

KUWAIT CITY, June 1, (KUNA): Kuwait is ready to do everything required to protect and enhance the rights of children, the country's Social Affairs Minister Mai Al-Baghli said on Wednesday, citing a raft of legislative measures on the matter.

These measures include, but are not limited to, efforts aiming to protect children from violence and ensure their wellbeing and prosperity, the minister told pan-Arab talks on children's rights via video link.

Necessity

The Qatar-hosted talks shine light on the necessity of promoting children's rights as the key to future development.

Also:

CAIRO: Arab League Assistant Secretary-General for Media Affairs Ambassador **Haifa Abu Ghazaleh** said Wednesday that the 2030 Sustainable Development plan represents a "new opportunity" to address major development in the Arab world to promote the rights of all children.

This came in Abu Ghazaleh speech at the opening of the Sixth High-level



Minister of Social Affairs, Women's Affairs, and Childhood Mai Al-Baghli during the pan-Arab talks on children's rights via video link.

Arab Conference on Child Rights under the title an effective and sustainable development investment that guarantees the rights of the Arab child.

A large number of children do not

enjoy full and effective protection as a result of conflicts and humanitarian crises in a number of Arab countries despite the ratification of Child Rights Convention by all Arab countries, she

said. She stressed, investing in a child today means achieving peace, stability, security and democracy tomorrow.

This will not happen unless suffi-

Kuwaiti imports from Italy hit USD two bln last year – envoy

KUWAIT CITY, June 1, (KUNA): Kuwaiti imports from Italy surged to USD two billion in 2022, Rome's ambassador to the country Carlo Baldocci said on Tuesday, pointing out that Kuwait is among the top seven export destinations for Italian goods.

Addressing a visiting Italian trade delegation during talks with the Kuwaiti chamber of commerce, the ambassador said the

forementioned statistics are a testament to growing bilateral trade relations, hoping that the talks would help push these ties.

Underlining his side's commitment to bolster trade relations with Rome, Kuwaiti Chamber of Commerce and Industry deputy chief Fahad Al-Joan said that Italy has solidified its position as among Kuwait's most trusted trade partners over the past three decades.

cient investment is made in functional systems and mechanisms that ensure children's participation in decision-making that affects them at all stages of their growth and development and in line with their evolving capabilities, she said.

The conference aims to highlight the importance of the development agenda for children, as 2030 Sustainable Development Plan represents an opportunity to address the main development challenges in the Arab world with the aim of promoting the rights of all children.

Kuwait academic wins prestigious int'l award on cancer cell research

KUWAIT CITY, June 1, (KUNA): Kuwait's Dr. Laila Jaragh-Alhadad along with a joint research team of the Saudi Arabia's King Saud University have been chosen as winners of the ISSN International Research Awards (IIRAC) 2023, in India, the Kuwait University (KU) has announced.

In a press statement issued



KUNA photo Dr. Laila Jaragh-Alhadad

Monday, the KU said the award obtained by Alhadad, member of KU's Faculty of Science's Chemistry Department, and her team featuring Dr. Jamal Harisa and Fares Al-Enzi came after a "distinguished research on "design, synthesis, characterize and biologically evaluate anti-cancer agents that target small molecules which have essential roles elevating in cancer cell division".

These compounds were fully characterized chemically and physically in the Faculty of Science laboratories that were selected biologically on breast cancer cells to target proteins that increase growth in cells, namely heat shock 27, which is produced by cells when exposed to stress, and tubulin, which has a major role in cell division, according to the statement.

It pointed out that the results of the biological analysis showed that these compounds are known as anti-cancer as they inhibit the growth of breast cancer at a rate of less than 3.73 micromolar.



Representatives of official departments, associations with citizens registered in the initiative 'partners to employ'.

Training qualified disabled people for jobs are society real investment: PADA

Authority keen to increase employment of people with disabilities

KUWAIT CITY, June 1, (KUNA); The Director General of the Public Authority for Disability Affairs Dr. Bibi Al-Amiri confirmed Wednesday that training people with disabilities and their qualification for the labor market are a real investment in society with the entry of various job paths.

This came in Dr. Al-Amiri's statement to KUNA on the sidelines of the partners to employ campaign, the fourth batch organized by PADA in cooperation and strategic partnership with the Human Develop Institute.

Training

This includes training that ensures that the target segment gets the full rights and the duties through PADA's partnership with public benefit societies and others with the awareness of what the labor market needs and thus provide the skills due, she said.

She underscored PADA's keenness to increase the number of rates



Dr. Bibi Al-Amiri, Director General of Public Authority for Disability Affairs.



Awatuf Al-Salman, Director General of the Human Develop Institute.

seeks more cooperation with others with the aim of training and providing them with job opportunities.

In a similar statement to KUNA, Director General of the Human Develop Institute Awatuf Al-Salman said that the initiative, partners to employ, was launched since the previous years with the aim of measuring the integration of disabled people in the private sector.

Al-Salman emphasized that the celebration of graduates of the last batch of trainees shows success, indicating that the number of graduates was 74, 42 for the private sector and 32 in the government sector.

The employees of the initiative took the training associated with the job tasks in the private sector such as customer service, office management and information systems.

She revealed the launch of the fifth batch of the campaign aimed at employing people with disabilities will be through PADA's official website tomorrow and extended until the end of next July.

Meanwhile, the Deputy Director General for National Employment Affairs at the Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) Najat Al-Yousef confirmed to KUNA PAM's keenness to cooperate with all givers of job opportunities.



Dr. Bibi Al-Amiri, Director General of Public Authority for Disability Affairs.

of employment of people with different disabilities in the upcoming

years in the governmental and private sectors, explaining that it

Kuwait's 'humanitarian' contributions garner UN admiration - Ambassador

GENEVA, June 1, (KUNA): Kuwait's contributions towards humanitarian causes have received large-scale applause from top United Nations (UN) officials, the country's permanent representative to the UN Nasser Al-Heyn said on Wednesday.

The UN appreciates Kuwait's response to humanitarian crises,

which include the plight of refugees across large parts of the globe, the Kuwaiti diplomat was told during talks with UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi. Kuwait's "sage" approach in dealing with these crises makes it one of the UN's most indispensable partners, added the UN refugee chief.



KUNA photo Kuwaiti permanent representative at the UN and other international organizations Ambassador Nasser Al-Heyn and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi.

Two sides provide important platform to further deepen cooperation

First India-Kuwait UN/Multilateral consultations

KUWAIT CITY, June 1: The first UN/Multilateral Consultations between India and Kuwait were held in downtown Kuwait City on June 1, 2023, says a press release issued by the Embassy of India, Kuwait.

HE Abdulaziz Saud Mohammad Al-Jarallah, Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs for International Organizations led the Kuwait side, while the Indian delegation was led Prakash Gupta, Joint Secretary, UN-Political Division, along with HE Dr Adarsh Swaika, Ambassador of India to Kuwait.

Being the first such consultations on multilateral issues between the two sides, they provided an important platform to further deepen the cooperation in the United Nations and other inter-



A photo from the event

national organizations. Both sides had a fruitful exchange

of views on areas of mutual interest at multilateral fora, including coopera-

tion in the framework of Non-Aligned Movement and the G-77.

Cooperative Societies agree to provide sites for Al-Durra Co for new branches

KUWAIT CITY, June 1: Head of the Cooperative Societies Union Abdel Wahhab Al-Faris has revealed that the cooperatives agreed to provide sites for Al-Durra Labor Company in order to open four new branches in governorates for the benefit of citizens, reports Al-Qabas daily.

In a press statement, Al-Faris confirmed that the union will support Al-Durra Company and adhere to the directives of the Council of Ministers to ease the burdens of Kuwaiti families "by activating the role of Al-Durra Company in recruit-

ing skilled domestic workers at a reasonable cost and opening new markets in various countries."

He stressed that the union fully supports the current council and its executive management in their bid to rectify the conditions of Al-Durra Company, considering that its 60 percent investment in the company. He affirmed the union contributes to the company's transformation into a profitable entity, ensure its continuity, attract Kuwaiti competencies and optimal use of its financial resources.

UAE pledges \$2.7bn in industry offtake agreements

His Excellency Dr. Sultan Al Jaber, Minister of Industry and Advanced Technology, today announced \$2.7 billion in offtake agreements for the UAE's industrial sector in a move to boost local manufacturing, strengthen supply chains and attract international investors.

This press release features multimedia.

His Excellency Dr. Sultan Al Jaber UAE Minister of Industry

and Advanced Technology Addressing the second Make it in the Emirates Forum, HE Dr. Al Jaber said the new set of procurement opportunities would build on the previous forum's offtake agreements.

"One of the key achievements of last year's forum was several leading national companies announcing their intention to invest \$29.9 billion over the next decade to purchase 300 products

from local manufacturers," HE Dr. Al Jaber said.

"I am pleased to share with you that in the first year alone, 28 percent of these offtake agreements have been implemented, representing a total value of \$8.4 billion."

HE Dr. Al Jaber also announced plans for more than 30 new industrial projects, representing more than \$1.6 billion of investments. (Business Wire)

GWM expands global reach with TANK500 launched in UAE

On May 29, GWM launched TANK500 in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) market. The launch event was held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, attracting the attention and experience of a large number of GWM fans.

More than 140 guests attended the event, including VIP customers, and more than 70 influential media outlets and key opinion leaders (KOLs), all showering GWM TANK500 with high praise.

GWM TANK500 has won over consumers in the UAE with high-end luxury styling and powerful performance. GWM TANK300 was also unveiled, enhancing the brand awareness of GWM TANK among local consumers.

Mr. Gautam Arun, Product Director of GWM in the Middle East Region, demonstrated the ultimate experience of intelligence, luxury, and comfort. He also thoroughly analyzed the

strengths of the GWM TANK500 for the audience. "GWM vehicle possesses both urban and off-road attributes, owing to its advanced technology that provides an exceptional balance between performance and comfort," said Mr. Gautam Arun.

GWM TANK500 is a medium and large luxury off-road SUV that redefines a new category in the luxury off-road SUV market. (PR Newswire)

Market Movements

01-06-2023

	Change	Closing pts		Change	Closing pts		
UAE	- DFM	+0.15	3,582.12	PAKISTAN	- KSE 100	-0.16	41,273.72
JAPAN	- Nikkei	+0.84	31,148.01	PHILIPPINES	- PSEi	-0.72	6,430.58
SAUDI	- Tadawul	-0.01	11,014.95				
EGYPT	- EGX 30	+0.21	17,533.31				

Business

Global shares mostly rise after House approves debt ceiling deal

Wall Street rises with hopes for pause to rate hikes

NEW YORK, June 1, (AP) — Wall Street is rising Thursday with hopes that the Federal Reserve may soon take it easier on its hikes to interest rates.

The S&P 500 was 0.9% higher in midday trading after a suite of reports painted a split U.S. economy. The job market remains remarkably solid, but manufacturing is weakening and shoppers of all kinds are feeling more pressure. Altogether, investors saw the data pushing the Fed to refrain from hiking rates at its next meeting in two weeks, which would be the first time that's happened in more than a year.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average was up 200 points, or 0.6%, at 33,109, as of a little past noon Eastern time. The Nasdaq composite was leading the market with a 1% gain. It's full of technology companies and other high-growth stocks that tend to benefit most from lower rates.

One positive for the market came late Wednesday when the House of Representatives approved a deal to prevent a possibly catastrophic default on the U.S. government's debt. But that was what Wall Street expected, and only a trip-up for the deal before it gets signed by President Joe Biden would likely cause big waves for stocks.

Markets are more concerned about whether the economy will fall into a recession before inflation recedes enough to convince the Federal Reserve to take it easier on interest rates.

Reports on Thursday gave a clouded view. One said that fewer workers applied for unemployment benefits last week than expected, while another suggested employers increased their payrolls last month by more than forecast.

Both those are good news for workers and for the overall economy, which has been slowing under the weight of much higher interest rates. But a strong job market could also keep pressure up on inflation, pushing the Fed to keep rates high. A more comprehensive report on hiring will arrive Friday morning.

On the flip side, manufacturing is continuing to get hit hard, in part by higher interest rates. A report from the Institute for Supply Management said manufacturing shrank for a seventh straight month in May. The contraction was worse than both the prior month and what economists expected.

Following the reports, traders were largely betting on the Fed to hold rates steady at its next meeting in two weeks. That would be the first time in more than a year that it hasn't hiked rates, and it's something a Fed official a day earlier hinted may happen.

After that, traders are split on whether the Fed will follow up with another hike to rates at its next meeting in July. That's key because high rates work to lower inflation by

slowing the economy and hurting prices for stocks and other investments.

Tech and other high-growth stocks tend to get hit hardest by higher rates, and several Big Tech companies were leading the way higher on Wall Street.

Apple, Amazon and Meta Platforms all rose at least 1.5%, and their movements carry extra weight on the S&P 500 and other indexes because they're some of the most valuable on Wall Street.

So far, the economy has held up despite a long list of worries because of a still-strong job market and resilient spending by consumers. But reports from several retailers are showing shoppers feeling more pressure, all the way across the income spectrum.

Dollar General dropped 19.7% after it reported weaker profit and revenue for the latest quarter than analysts expected. It said the economic environment has been more challenging than it expected, and it cut its financial forecasts for the full year. It tends to cater to lower income households.

Macy's, which also owns Bloomingdale's stores, fell 1% after it slashed expectations for the year and fell short on sales and profit in the first quarter. It said shoppers began to pull back starting in March. That trend seems to be afflicting retailers across the spectrum.

Nordstrom rose 1.8% after reporting a surprise profit for the latest quarter. But it also said its customers, which include many upper-income households, were also feeling pressure.

"With the high-end customer, I guess we would say they're pretty resilient, but they're also cautious," CEO Erik Nordstrom told analysts in a conference call late Wednesday. "And we're seeing that really across the board, that caution."

Some of the enthusiasm surrounding Wall Street's frenzy around artificial intelligence also cooled.

C3.ai gave a forecast for revenue this upcoming fiscal year that failed to wow Wall Street like Nvidia's did last week. C3.ai said it expects to make between \$295 million and \$320 million, versus analysts' expectations of roughly \$317 million.

C3.ai tumbled 11.4%, though it's still up more than 210% so far this year. Nvidia rose 4.6%.

On the winning end was Hormel Foods, which rose 5% after reporting stronger profit for the latest quarter than expected. Its brands include Skippy, Spam and Applegate meats.

In the bond market, the yield on the 10-year Treasury fell to 3.61% from 3.65% late Wednesday. It helps set rates for mortgages and other loans that influence the economy's strength.

The two-year Treasury yield, which moves more on expectations for the Fed, fell to 4.36% from 4.40%.

Europe

France's CAC 40 gained 0.9% in early trading to 7,163.56, while Germany's DAX jumped 1.1% to 15,833.44. Britain's FTSE 100 edged up 0.7% to 7,495.59. U.S. shares were set to drift higher with Dow futures ending up nearly 0.1% to 32,994.00. S&P 500 futures rose 0.2% to 4,197.00. Oil prices rose.

Investor enthusiasm was muted by worries about the Chinese economy after disappointing recent data on a recovery in the world's second largest economy, and a key driver of regional growth.

Asia

Asian benchmarks were mostly higher Thursday after the United States House of Representatives approved a debt ceiling and budget cuts package, avoiding a default crisis.

But the enthusiasm was muted by worries about the Chinese economy after disappointing recent data on a recovery in the world's second largest economy, and a key driver of regional growth.

"Following recent disappointing economic data from China, the real economy levered stocks are likely to underperform. If economic data from China continues to miss expectations, more participants could start to forecast a lower China GDP for the quarters ahead," Anderson Alves at ActivTrades said.

Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 rose 0.8% to finish at 31,148.01. Australia's S&P/ASX 200 gained 0.3% to 7,110.80. South Korea's Kospi quickly lost early gains to dip 0.3% to 2,570.80. Hong Kong's Hang Seng added nearly 0.1% to 18,251.83, while the Shanghai Composite slipped less than 0.1% to 3,202.44.

If the debt deal also passes in the Senate, government checks will continue to go out and it would prevent financial upheaval at home and abroad ahead of the Monday deadline when the Treasury said the U.S. would run out of money to pay its debts.

Oil

In energy trading, benchmark U.S. crude rose 43 cents to \$68.52 a barrel. Brent crude, the international standard, fell 88 cents to \$72.66 a barrel.

Currencies

In currency trading, the U.S. dollar edged up to 139.67 Japanese yen from 139.29 yen. The euro fell to \$1.0683 from \$1.0692.

The Conversation

Incentives set the stage for jaw-jaw

House approval of debt deal a win for the political center

By Matt Harris

Park University

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



Talking with a friend about the debt ceiling negotiations, I mentioned that there were incentives for centrists in Congress to cobble together a deal. My friend said, incredulously, "Do we actually have centrists in Congress?"

Certainly, it is true that the country's two major parties have sorted and separated over the last 50 years. The average Democrat is more liberal and the average Republican more conservative than the average in the 1970s - or even 10 years ago.

But with the House vote on GOP Speaker Kevin McCarthy's deal with Democratic President Joe Biden to suspend the debt ceiling through Jan. 1, 2025, successful passage was undoubtedly carried by centrists. The middle may be shrinking, but it still exists, and it is critical in a closely divided Congress.

Why did the center carry such weight?

As a starting point, it helps to look at the spectrum of ideology within each party. There is significant ideological distance between, say, Barbara Lee, a liberal California Democrat, or the four progressive members of what's called "The Squad," and the two moderate Democrats, Jared Golden of Maine and Washington state's Marie Gluesenkamp Perez, who voted with Republicans in late May to overturn Biden's student debt relief policies.

Similarly, there is ideological space between Golden and Gluesenkamp Perez's fellow member of the moderate, bipartisan Problem Solvers Caucus, Don Bacon, a Republican from Nebraska, and Colorado Republican and conservative firebrand Lauren Boebert.

Within the Republican-controlled House, this left ample space for GOP defectors to vote against the debt ceiling compromise, but also yielded dozens of Democrats who voted in favor, in the final 314-117 bipartisan vote. The two-party division of Congress belies the fact that the ideological distance between moderates in either party is not that great.

Another explanation of the center's power in Congress now - and in the House debt ceiling vote - is the incentive that exists to be seen as a winning party. Being perceived by voters as a party that gets things done helps win elections - and centrists are often the ones whose votes are up for grabs, one way or another.

That said, there is an electoral cost for a party being too unified. On well-publicized votes on which party unity is enforced by party leaders, voters may come to see their representatives as too far from their own preferences. This is what some research has suggested happened to Democrats in the 2010 midterms with regard to the Affordable Care Act. Democrats had ferociously advocated for the legislation; as one scholarly study put it, they "paid a significant price at the polls" for that advocacy.

These incentives set the stage for the political wrangling over the debt ceiling. Speaker McCarthy had an incentive to pass legislation - to be seen as a winner. At the same time, there were Democratic House members who were driven by their own electoral prospects who wanted to be seen as moderate.

Josh Gottheimer, for example, who co-chairs the Problem Solvers caucus, is a Democrat from a moderate New Jersey district with just a narrow Democratic tilt. The bipartisan Problem Solvers Caucus proved critical to the bill's passage by providing Democratic votes to help the bill survive GOP defections.

Complicating this incentive structure is the currently divided U.S. government. If one party controlled Congress and the presidency, then it would be clear that that party would be blamed in the event the legislation didn't pass. But with a Democratic president and a GOP House, polling data shows an almost even split in terms of who would be blamed if a debt ceiling deal failed. Thus, both Democrats and Republicans had an incentive to get a deal done.

While there is some debate in political science over the power of presidential coattails, Democrats themselves may believe their future electoral fortunes are at least partially tied to that of President Biden, another incentive to support legislation he backs.

From here, the deal goes to the Senate, where moderates may be just as influential.

Given the smaller size of the upper chamber and the Democrats' narrow majority, the influence of individual senators is more pronounced. The deal already contains a victory for West Virginia's Joe Manchin, a Democrat looking at a brutal reelection fight in 2024. The bill contained approval for a natural gas pipeline project in his state that Manchin has championed.

US House 'approves' debt ceiling bill to avoid default



House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries, D-N.Y., joined from left by Rep. Ted Lieu D-Calif., the Democratic Caucus vice chair, Rep. Pete Aguilar, D-Calif., the Democratic Caucus chair, and Rep. Katherine Clark, D-Mass., the Democratic whip, talks to reporters about the closed-door meeting they had with fellow Democrats on the debt limit deal, at the Capitol in Washington, Wednesday, May 31, 2023. The agreement negotiated by Speaker of the House Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., and President Joe Biden, will be voted on in the House later tonight. (AP)

Biden-McCarthy deal now goes to Senate

WASHINGTON, June 1, (AP) — Veering away from a default crisis, the House overwhelmingly approved a debt ceiling and budget cuts package, sending the deal that President Joe Biden and Speaker Kevin McCarthy negotiated to the Senate for swift passage in a matter of days, before a fast-approaching deadline.

The hard-fought compromise pleased few, but lawmakers assessed it was better than the alternative - a devastating economic upheaval if Congress failed to act. Tensions ran high as hard-right Republicans refused the deal, but Biden and McCarthy assembled a bipartisan coalition to push to passage on a robust 314-117 vote late Wednesday.

"We did pretty dang good," McCarthy, R-Calif., said afterward.

Amid deep discontent from Republicans who said the spending restrictions did not go far enough, McCarthy said it is only a "first step."

Biden, watching the tally from Colorado Springs where

Thursday he is scheduled to deliver the commencement address at the U.S. Air Force Academy, phoned McCarthy and the other congressional leaders after the vote. In a statement, he called the outcome "good news for the American people and the American economy."

Washington is rushing after a long slog of debate to wrap up work on the package to ensure the government can keep paying its bills, and prevent financial upheaval at home and abroad. Next Monday is when the Treasury has said the U.S. would run short of money and risk a dangerous default.

Biden had been calling lawmakers directly to shore up backing. McCarthy worked to sell skeptical fellow Republicans, even fending off challenges to his leadership.

A similar bipartisan effort from Democrats and Republicans will be needed in the Senate to overcome objections.

Overall, the 99-page bill would make some inroads in curbing the nation's deficits as Republicans demanded, without rolling back Trump-era tax breaks as Biden wanted. To pass it, Biden and McCarthy counted on support from the political center, a rarity in divided Washington.

A compromise, the package restricts spending for the next two years, suspends the debt ceiling into Jan-

uary 2025 and changes some policies, including imposing new work requirements for older Americans receiving food aid and greenlighting an Appalachian natural gas line that many Democrats oppose. It bolsters funds for defense and veterans, and guts new money for Internal Revenue Service agents.

Raising the nation's debt limit, now \$31 trillion, ensures Treasury can borrow to pay already incurred U.S. debts.

Top GOP deal negotiator Rep. Garret Graves of Louisiana said Republicans were fighting for budget cuts after the past years of extra spending, first during the COVID-19 crisis and later with Biden's Inflation Reduction Act, with its historic investment to fight climate change paid for with revenues elsewhere.

But Republican Rep. Chip Roy, a member of the Freedom Caucus helping to lead the opposition, said, "My beef is that you cut a deal that shouldn't have been cut."

For weeks negotiators labored late into the night to strike the deal with the White House, and for days McCarthy has worked to build support among skeptics. At one point, aides wheeled in pizza at the Capitol the night before the vote as he walked Republicans through the details, fielded questions and encouraged them not to lose sight of the bill's budget savings.

US safety agency to require automatic emergency braking on new vehicles

WASHINGTON, June 1, (AP) — The U.S. government's auto safety agency plans to require that all new passenger cars and light trucks include potentially life-saving automatic emergency braking and meet stricter safety standards within three years.

Wednesday's announcement by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration represents the agency's latest move toward regulating electronic systems that take on certain tasks that drivers them-

selves have normally done. NHTSA has been reluctant in the past to impose such regulations, saying the technology will change during the time it takes to enact new rules.

Ann Carlson, the safety agency's chief counsel, says 90% of new passenger vehicles already include the braking technology under a voluntary program that automakers have approved. But she says NHTSA wants to make the braking systems more effective

at higher speeds and better at avoiding pedestrians, especially at night.

The regulation proposed by NHTSA will require, for example, that the systems allow vehicles to fully avoid other vehicles at up to 50 miles per hour if a driver should fail to react. If a driver brakes some but not enough to stop a collision, the system would have to avoid hitting another vehicle at up to 62 mph.

INVESTMENT STRATEGY & RESEARCH

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GCC Budget Update May 2023

Expansionary budgets in the GCC despite a cap on oil prices

GCC countries announced their budgeted spending for the year 2023 with elevated spending despite challenges on the revenue front. The aggregate budgeted expenditure in the GCC (excluding Bahrain) during the current fiscal year is estimated to be in line with last year levels at USD 487.1 Bn. Aggregate budgeted revenues are estimated at USD 473.6 Bn vs. USD 515.5 Bn in 2022, down by 8.1%. The decline in the revenue is mainly due to a fall in crude oil prices this year as compared to last year. In 2023, the budgeted oil price by most countries is above USD 60 per barrel, barring Oman which has based its budget on an oil price of USD 55 per barrel. The UAE did not disclose the oil price on which it has based its federal budget. The aggregate fiscal deficit for the GCC countries (excluding Bahrain) is expected to reach USD 13.5 Bn in 2023 as compared to a surplus of USD 27.9 Bn last year.

The governments in the region announced expansionary budgets for sectors such as health care, education and infrastructure and have also planned large scale infrastructure and construction spending. At the same time, main focus has been given to re-alignment of non-oil sectors in the economy and its contribution going forward.

At the country level, Saudi Arabia is expected to account for around 64.4% of the aggregate budgeted revenues during the year in the GCC. Kuwait and Qatar are expected to follow at 13.4% and 13.0%, respectively. In terms of spending Saudi Arabia is expected to account for 61.7% of the aggregate expenditure in the GCC this year. Meanwhile, the overall GCC project pipeline is expected to reach USD 110 Bn in new project awards, according to MEED projects, with almost all countries in GCC expected to see growth vs. last year barring Qatar.

Oil prices have remained volatile this year with strong support at USD 70/b and a resistance at USD 90/b levels. Brent crude spot averaged at USD 80.9 per barrel since the start of the year and is expected to average at USD 87.0 per barrel this year, according to Bloomberg consensus estimates. The volatility in oil prices came from several factors including elevated inflation levels, uncertain demand growth in China, the ongoing Russia/Ukraine conflict, the more recent US debt ceiling talks and OPEC+ cuts. In terms of budget balance, UAE is budgeted to breakeven while Saudi Arabia and Qatar are estimated to report a surplus ranging between USD 4 Bn - USD 8 Bn. Oman and Kuwait are expected to report deficits this year. It is expected that the actual deficit in 2023 may be significantly lower than the budgeted deficit due to the conservative estimate of budgeted oil prices. In light of increasing oil prices, several governments have also taken into account an increase in government subsidies and grants.

Kuwait

Kuwait parliament submitted 2023-2024 draft budget for deliberation and approval

Kuwait's Ministry of Finance unveiled the draft budget for 2023/2024 which forecasts a deficit for the tenth consecutive year. According to reports, the initial draft budget pointed to a deficit of around KWD 5.05 Bn for the next fiscal year; after calculating the expected profits of independent entities. The share of non-oil revenue in the budget is expected to increase by 9.9%.

According to the budget document, revenue is expected to reach KWD 19.5 Bn (USD 63.4 Bn) during the fiscal year 2023/2024 as compared to KWD 23.4 (USD 76.35 Bn) estimated for the fiscal year 2022/2023, down by 16.9%. The revenues are calculated with a budgeted crude oil price of USD 70/b. However, with current oil prices above the budgeted oil price, the actual revenues could be higher. Brent crude is expected to average at USD 87.0 per barrel for the year, according to Bloomberg estimates.

The budget assumes no transfers to the Future Generation Fund (FGF) for the current year and for 2023/2024 after a recent law said that there would be no transfers to the FGF in years of deficits. In terms of revenues, crude oil will continue to account for the bulk of the budgeted revenues in the fiscal year 2023/2024. The share of oil revenues to total revenues is expected to decline from 91.1% estimated for fiscal year 2022/2023 to 88.3% budgeted for the fiscal year 2023/2024, according to data from Kuwait's Ministry of Finance. This would imply non-oil revenue share of 11.7% for the fiscal year 2023/2024 as compared to 8.9% estimated for the previous fiscal year.

On the expenditure side, planned spending is expected to increase for the year. Total expenses in 2023/24 are budgeted to reach the highest level on record at KWD 26.3 Bn mainly led by an increase in salaries and subsidies this year. The share of salaries and subsidies in total expenditure is expected to increase from 74.7% in the last fiscal year to 79.3% in the fiscal year 2023/2024. In terms of y-o-y growth, the component is expected to show a growth of 18.6% which will more than offset the decline in capital expenditure and other expenses. Capital expenditure is budgeted to decline in the fiscal year 2023/2024 with planned spending of KWD 2.5 Bn as compared to KWD 2.9 Bn in 2022/2023, a y-o-y decline of 15.2%.

Higher than budgeted oil price to result in significant windfall

The budget for 2023/2024 is based on an oil price of USD 70/b while the budget for the previous fiscal year was based on an oil price of USD 80/b. However, according to the latest Kuwait Budget statement the breakeven price for the Kuwaiti crude to balance the budget would be USD 92.9/b.

Kuwait crude grade averaged at USD 97.05/b so far during this fiscal year (Apr-2022/Mar-2023) which is above the budget price of crude for the year. As a result, oil revenue for the next year is expected to be higher than the budgeted revenues and deficits are expected to be lower than the USD 6.8 Bn forecasted in the budget document based on the expected average of USD 87.0 per barrel this year, according to the Bloomberg estimates. The IMF projected real GDP growth for Kuwait to moderate in 2023 to 0.9% reflecting sluggish global demand and oil production curbs mandated by the OPEC+ agreement. For the year 2024, Kuwait is forecasted to grow by 10 bps to 2.7%. Given the scant trade and financial ties between both nations, direct negative spillovers from Russia's war in Ukraine have so far been contained. Moreover, Brent crude is expected to average at USD 84/b, USD 87.5/b and USD 90/b in calendar quarters Q2-2023, Q3-2023 and Q4-2023, according to Bloomberg estimates.

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia's budgeted revenue for fiscal year 2023 is estimated at SAR 1.13 Trillion (USD 301.3 Bn), compared to SAR 1.23 Trillion (USD 328.0 Bn) budgeted in the previous fiscal year, down by 8.4%. Oil Revenue is not disclosed in the latest Budget. The Kingdom maintained its earlier budgeted expenditure estimates of SAR 1.11 Trillion for 2023, slightly below the official estimates.

Budgeted capex is expected to increase to SAR 157 Bn in 2023, up from an estimated SAR 151 Bn this year on the back of increased spending on projects that were put on hold due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The two organizations both the Public Investment Fund and the National Development Fund are expected to make significant con-

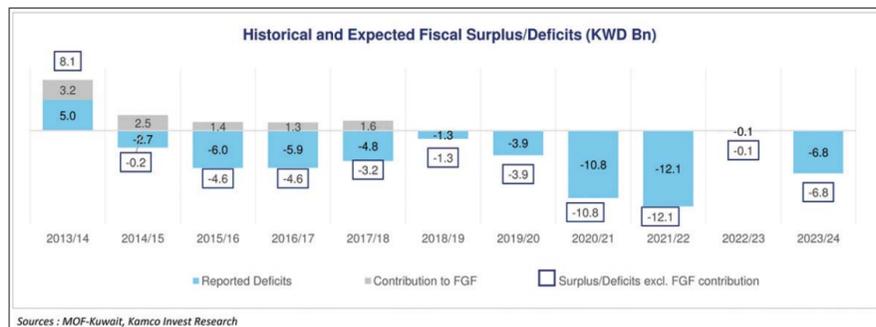
GCC Budget - 2023 (USD Bn)							
	Kuwait	Saudi Arabia	Qatar	Oman	UAE - Federal	GCC	YoY
Revenue	63.6	305.1	61.6	26.1	17.2	473.6	(8.1%)
Oil & Gas Revenue	56.1	NA	50.2	17.5	NA	NA	NA
Non - Oil	7.5	NA	11.3	8.7	NA	NA	NA
Expenditure	85.9	300.8	53.7	29.6	17.0	487.1	(0.1%)
Surplus/Deficit	(16.5)	4.3	7.8	(3.5)	0.1	(13.5)	(8.0%)
Budgeted Oil Price	70.0	66.8	65.0	55.0	NA		
Oil Revenue / Total Revenue	88.3%	NA	81.6%	66.9%	NA		
Non Oil Revenue / Total Revenue	11.7%	NA	18.4%	33.1%	NA		
Revenue / Total GCC Revenue*	13.4%	64.4%	13.0%	5.5%	3.6%		
Expenditure/ Total GCC Expenditure*	17.6%	61.7%	11.0%	6.1%	3.5%		
Nominal GDP (USD Bn)	172.6	996.4	234.0	110.8	519.0		
Budget Deficit % of Nominal GDP	(9.6%)	0.4%	3.3%	(3.2%)	0.03%		

* Nominal GDP according to IMF

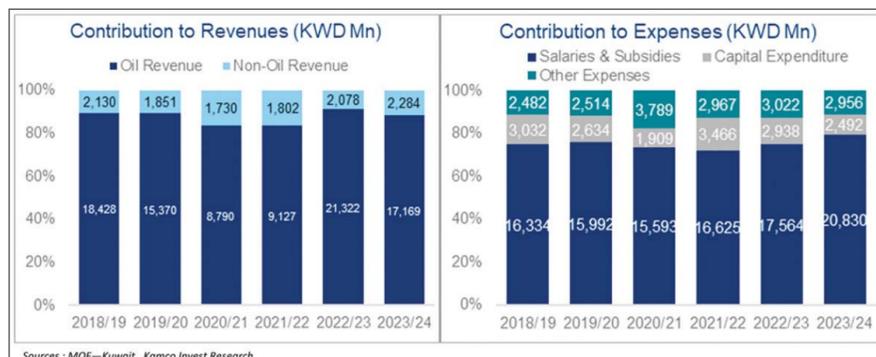
Sources : Respective Country MOF Website, IMF, Kamco Invest Research

Bahrain has been excluded due to the unavailability of the data.

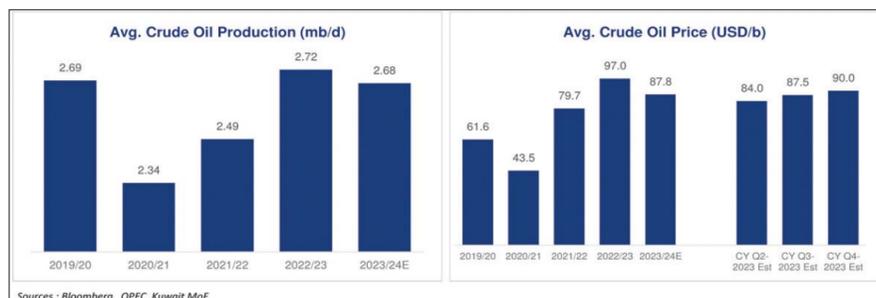
Note: Fiscal year for Kuwait—Apr-Mar



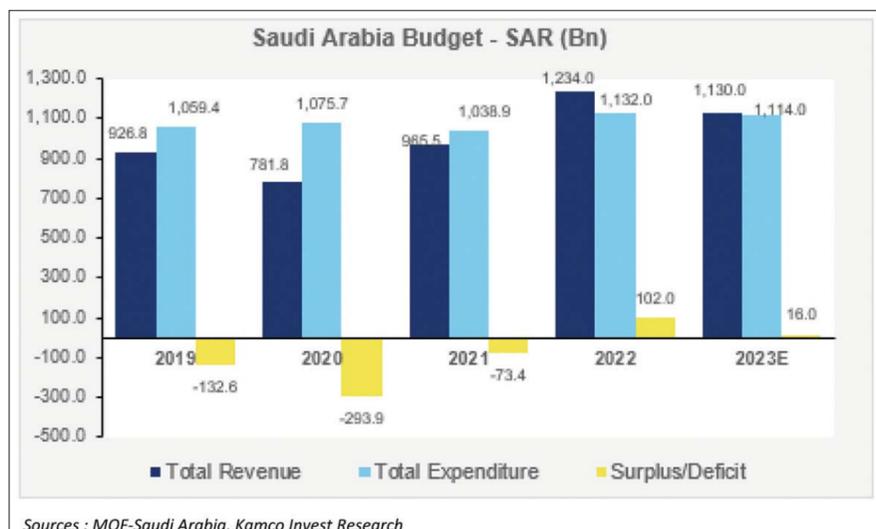
Sources : MOF-Kuwait, Kamco Invest Research



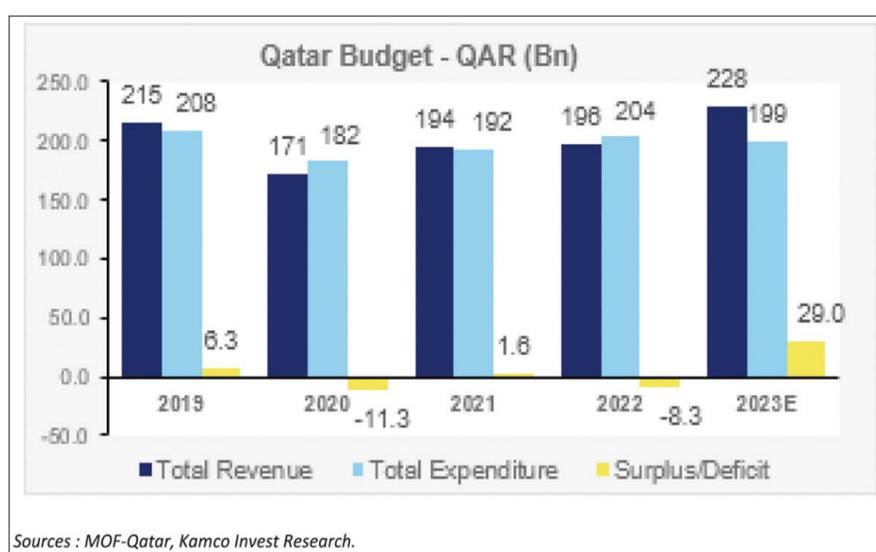
Sources : MOF—Kuwait, Kamco Invest Research.



Sources : Bloomberg, OPEC, Kuwait MOF



Sources : MOF-Saudi Arabia, Kamco Invest Research



Sources : MOF-Qatar, Kamco Invest Research.

tributions to deliver the "Giga projects". With the revenue of SAR 1.13 Trillion and spending of 1.114 Trillion, the projected budget surplus comes out to be SAR 16 Bn or 0.4% of GDP in 2023.

For the previous fiscal year, the gain in oil prices boosted the revenue and, as a result, the government revised its fiscal surplus estimate for 2022 to SAR 102 Bn (USD 27 Bn), corresponding to 2.6% of GDP, up from an earlier expectation of SAR 90 Bn, resulting in the first fiscal surplus since 2013.

By the end of 2023, the government's reserves are estimated to total SAR 399 Bn. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia main focus is to invest in key projects and programs connected to its Vision 2030 economic reform plan, which aims to diversify the economy and lessen its dependency on hydrocarbons. Vision 2030 intends to strengthen the kingdom's manufacturing, tourism, technology, and entertainment industries while also opening up capital markets to global investors.

In the Q1-2023, Saudi Arabia reported a deficit of SAR 2.91 Bn (USD 770 Mn), as government spending on salaries and efforts to diversify the economy surged. According to the Ministry of Finance, government revenue increased in the first quarter due to rising non-oil receipts, but was surpassed by an expenditure increase of about 30%. Due to reduced crude prices, oil income decreased by 3% to SAR 179 Bn in the Q1-2023. Non-oil revenues increased by 9% as a result of a 75% increase in tax revenue from income, profit, and capital gains.

The IMF increased its forecast for fiscal breakeven oil price required by Saudi Arabia to balance its budget in 2023 to more than USD 80 per barrel. However, the Kingdom did not reveal an oil price assumption in its budget. According to preliminary statistics issued by the General Authority for Statistics, the Saudi economy grew at a slower rate in Q1-2023, at 3.9% from 5.5% in the previous quarter, as the oil sector grew at its slowest rate in more than a year.

According to the recent report from SAMA, Saudi Arabia's foreign reserves plummeted to their lowest level in more than 13 years in April 2023, indicating that the country has yet to use last year's USD 326 Bn oil windfall to replenish the central bank's holdings. According to the central bank's monthly report, net foreign assets declined to SAR 1.54 Trillion (USD 410 Bn) in April 2023 and the fifth month in a row, the longest losing run since early 2019. Moreover, reserves have fallen by more than 44% from their peak in August 2014. The depletion has reached USD 42 Bn since November 2022.

Qatar

The budgeted revenue for fiscal year 2023 is estimated at QAR 228 Bn (USD 65 Bn), compared to QAR 196.0 Bn (USD 53.83 Bn) in the previous fiscal year, representing an increase of 16.3%. The budget is based on an oil price assumption of USD 65 per barrel for 2023 against USD 55 per barrel in the previous year.

Spending is expected to total QAR 199 Bn (USD 54.7 Bn), down by 2.6% from the budget plan for 2022 which coincided with finalizing costs of FIFA World Cup hosting. With revenue of QAR 228 Bn and spending's of QAR 199 Bn, the projected budget surplus comes out to be QAR 29 Bn for 2023, which is the highest in the last decade, and the surplus amount is expected to be transferred to the general reserve account in accordance with the provisions of the State Financial System.

The budget shows total oil and gas revenues for 2023 at QAR 186.0 Bn, up from QAR 154.0 Bn for 2022 representing an increase of 20.8%. On the other hand, the forecast for non-oil revenues for 2023, which was set at QAR 42.0 Bn in the budget for 2022, stayed the same. The state has prioritized to focus on the health and education sectors, with QAR 21.1 Bn allocated to the health sector, about 11% of the total expenditures, and QAR 18.0 Bn has been allocated for the education sector, nearly 9% of the total expenditures.

UAE

The UAE government approved the Federal budget for fiscal years 2023-2026, with a total expenditure of AED 252.3 Bn (USD 68.69 Bn). Total revenue for the period is expected to reach AED 255.7 Bn, slightly more than spending. Revenue is expected to climb by 11% in 2023, while spending will increase by slightly under 4%. Total revenue in 2023 is expected to be AED 63.6 Bn, with expenditure at AED 63.1 Bn. The country has budgeted to boost spending on the back of supportive oil prices and stronger economic growth.

The lion's share of the budget, AED 24.8 Bn or 39.3% of the total, is dedicated to social development program. Similarly, AED 23.9 Bn is allocated for Government Affairs sector, totaling 38% of the overall budget and AED 2.4 Bn or 3.8% is earmarked for the Infrastructure and Economic resources. In addition, AED 2.1 Bn or 3.4% were allocated to the Financial Investments sector and AED 9.8 Bn or 15.5% were allocated to other Federal expenses.

The Federal Budget 2023 focuses on developing social welfare, healthcare, and education, as well as bolstering the economic environment and investment infrastructure in the country. Last year, the cabinet approved a USD 79 Bn budget for the 2022-26 period, the largest five-year federal budget, with a strong focus on the development of sectors such as healthcare, education and pensions.

Oman

Oman announced its 2023 budget with a fiscal deficit of OMR 1.3 Bn (USD 3.38 Bn), or 3% of GDP. The 2023 budget sees revenues of OMR 10.05 Bn which is 5% lower than the budgeted revenues for 2022, and expenditures of OMR 11.35 Bn, 6.4% lower than the previous year's budget. The budget for 2023 is based on a crude oil price of USD 55 per barrel whereas the previous year's budget was based on a projected price of USD 50 per barrel.

However, based on preliminary results for 2022, revenues reached OMR 14.2 Bn where spending stood at OMR 13.1 Bn. This implies a decline of 29.4% in terms of revenues and a decline of 13.3% in expenditures based on budget statement for the year 2023.

Oil revenue is expected to reach OMR 5.32 Bn, representing an 18% increase compared to the budget of 2022. The country's oil revenue accounts for around 53% of overall state revenue. Comparatively, Gas revenue is anticipated to be OMR 1.4 Bn in this year's budget, accounting for 14% of overall state revenue.

On the other hand, Non-oil revenue for 2023 was estimated at OMR 3.33 Bn, a 0.3% decrease from the budget estimates for 2022. Non-oil revenue constitutes 33% of the overall State revenues. Expenditures in the 2023 are distributed as 35% for defense and security expenditures, 51% in expenditures of civil ministries and 14% in public debt service.

Two new items are included in this year's budget, which are projects with a developmental impact (worth OMR 200 Mn) and funding for the social protection system (with sum of OMR 384 Mn). Last year in 2022, the state of Oman posted its first budget surplus (OMR 1.15 Bn) since 2013 compared to the budgeted deficit of OMR 1.55 Bn. Higher oil prices boosted 2022 revenue to OMR 14.234 Bn.

German inflation slows to 6.1% in May, though food prices are still surging

German inflation eased to 6.1% in May following several months of declines, even as Europe's biggest economy registered another painful increase in food prices of nearly 15%.

Preliminary figures show that the annual inflation rate was lower than the 7.2% registered in April, the Federal Statistical Office said Wednesday. In February, it stood at 8.7%. Increases in energy prices, which drove inflation immediately after Russia's invasion of Ukraine last year, were much lower in May at 2.6% - in part because of

the sharp rises a year earlier and government efforts to offset their impact.

Those measures include the introduction of a ticket that allows people to use local and regional public transport across Germany for 49 euros (\$52.50) per month. That ticket has been available since May 1, and about 10 million people have bought it so far, according to the VDV group, an association of transport companies. Food prices now are driving inflation, although the annual increase in food costs was down to 14.9% in May from 22.3% in March.

On Tuesday, the statistics office said real wages in Germany were 2.3% lower in the first quarter than a year earlier, despite a 5.6% increase in nominal wages.

Last week, official data showed the German economy shrank in the first three months of this year, marking the second quarter of contraction that is one definition of recession.

Gross domestic product declined by 0.3% in the January-March period compared with the previous quarter. That follows a drop of 0.5% in the last quarter of 2022. (AP)



A hydrogen train passes a field of poppy flowers in the Taunus region near Frankfurt, Germany, Wednesday, May 31, 2023. (AP)

Company welcomes union officials

Zain renews strategic partnership with NUKS USA

KUWAIT CITY, June 1: Zain announces the renewal of its strategic partnership with the National Union of Kuwaiti Students in the United States of America (NUKS USA), continuing to support the union's long list of programs and social activities in both Kuwait and the US. The announcement comes to reinforce Zain's position as the top supporter of the biggest gathering of Ku-

waiti students abroad.

Waleed Al Khashti, Zain Kuwait's Chief Corporate Affairs and Relations Officer, welcomed NUKS USA officials at the company's headquarters in Shuwaikh during an official visit to discuss future collaboration opportunities and preparations for the new academic year. The union's team also outlined their upcoming plan for

special programs and activities to be held in and outside of Kuwait to serve new and current students, as well as fresh graduates.

For the past 20 years, Zain continued to be the top supporter of NUKS USA by participating in a plethora of community programs, including the annual conference in the US, the annual orientation session in Kuwait, the local NUKS USA office to guide

new students, academic sessions, cultural seminars, sports competitions, entertainment programs, workshops, and others. These programs and more witness wide positive reaction and participation from students every year.

Zain's support to NUKS USA comes in line with its pledge as a leading national company to provide bright and enthusiastic young Ku-

waitis with a great social experience, as well as listen to their ideas and experiences while they pursue their education abroad.

NUKS USA serves nearly 14,000 Kuwaiti students studying in the United States. The union aims, through its events and programs, to connect Kuwaiti students with each other on one level, and with their nation and the local community on

another. The union was publicized in the US and was granted the recognition of the United States government. The achievement is considered a proud milestone for Kuwait's youth and is a direct result of the great relations between the State of Kuwait and United States. Such a recognition is a clear reflection of the strategic relations between the two nations.

Europe sees significant inflation drop to 6.1 pct

Real relief for consumers to take months

FRANKFURT, Germany, June 1, (AP): Europe's inflation took a positive turn with a significant drop to 6.1%, but prices are still posing a pinch to shoppers who are yet to see real relief in what they pay for food and other necessities.

The annual figure in May eased from 7% in April for the 20 countries that use the euro currency, the European Union's statistical agency Eurostat said Thursday.

It was a welcome sign that the explosion in price increases - which peaked in record double digits last October - is heading in the right direction.

But economists warned that it will be many months before disgruntled consumers see more normal levels of inflation reflected on price tags in shops. While prices are rising more slowly, they are coming on top of already-high costs triggered by Russia's war in Ukraine and other factors.

Relief is far off for people like 76-year-old Brigitte Weinbeck, who was shopping this week at an open-air market in Cologne, Germany.

"I shop more consciously - for instance, I always make a

plan at the beginning of the week about what I'm going to cook and when and then I go shopping," she said. "Otherwise, you sometimes make impulse purchases."

The food bank at Berlin's St. Wilhelm Roman Catholic Church, meanwhile, has gone from serving 100-120 households before the war in Ukraine to 200.

"Now, there are people coming who are at the limit of their income," coordinator Christine Klar said. "They say the prices have risen so much now. And now they know, or heard, that they are entitled to use the food bank, so now they come."

Food prices in the eurozone rose by a painful 12.5% in May from a year earlier, but still eased from the 13.5% increase recorded in April.

Key to the lower overall inflation figure was energy prices, which fell 1.7% from a year ago following an increase of 2.4% a month ago.

Core inflation, which excludes volatile food and energy, fell to 5.3% from 5.6% in April. That figure is seen as the better indication of price pressures in the economy from demand for goods and higher wages. It's high enough that the European Central Bank is expected to approve another interest rate increase at its June 15 meeting.

Inflation fell in the three biggest economies where the euro is used: Germany to 6.1%, France to 5.1% and Italy to 7.6%. The decline was "broad based, with food, energy and core inflation all contributing to the easing," economist Rory Fennessy wrote at Oxford Economics.

Inflation took off in mid-2021 as fears that Russia might invade Ukraine sent natural gas and oil prices higher on fears of losing Russian supplies and as the global economy bounced back from the worst of the pandemic, straining supplies of parts and materials.

The energy and supply choke points have eased, but higher prices have kept spreading through the economy as workers demand better pay and companies find they can raise prices to cover increasing costs.

"Total inflation is rapidly declining, driven by such factors as lower energy prices and large base effects from 2022. In this context, it is important to bear in mind that the general price level is continuing to rise from an already high level," according to economists at SEB bank.



Zain NUKS USA 2023



Fahad Al Saad and Ahmad Marafi pose together after renewing the partnership

Cooperation strategic

KFH renews partnership with 'CODED Academy'

KUWAIT CITY, June 1: In line with its sustainability plans and digital transformation strategy, Kuwait Finance House (KFH) has renewed the strategic partnership with CODED Academy within the framework of social responsibility and keenness to support technological advancement, creativity, and innovation initiatives.

Public Relations and Event Management Manager at KFH, Fahad AlSaad said that KFH is determined to support innovation, creative initiatives, focus on youth, and nurture their talents. Therefore, KFH renewed the strategic partnership with CODED Academy, which began in 2018. He added that the partnership with CODED Academy contributes to the establishment of a generation capable of building and developing society in the future, especially since the present and future technological applications and AI programs have become a necessity, not an option in all aspects of life.

AlSaad pointed out that KFH in cooperation with CODED Academy will develop different programs that are of interest to the new generation and will be available to different age groups from primary to university stages.

Additionally, the programs aim to enhance environmental awareness by involving the concept of (Keep it Green) initiative in the Academy's programs, by training participants on designing programs in the field of sustainability and using recycled materials in workshops. He noted that KFH is characterized by a track-record of achievements and contributions in supporting technology, programming, entrepreneurship, and various applications projects for Kuwaiti youth, which have resulted in remarkable success.

CODED CEO, Ahmad Marafi explained that the renewal of the partnership with KFH would have a significant impact on the programs of CODED Academy, pointing out that CODED will offer new programs that are commensurate with the programming developments and provide trainees with the opportunity to experience new fields and different events.

Marafi praised KFH's support, expressing his confidence that such support will greatly impact youth education, development, innovation, and creativity for the benefit of the current generation, which is the pillar of the future.



The two sides pose together after signing the cooperation agreement.

Kuwait Ministry of Health and OEC of Pakistan extend agreement

Malik Muhammad Farooq, Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and Dr. Mostafa Ridha, Undersecretary, Ministry of Health, State of Kuwait signed the extension of Cooperation Agreement between the Kuwait Ministry of Health and Overseas Employment Corporation, Pakistan (OEC) today. The signing ceremony was attended by officers of the Embassy and Dr. Abdul Rahman Al-Mutairi, Assistant Undersecretary, Ministry of Health and senior official from Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kuwait.

The two sides reviewed the cooperation in the field of healthcare and agreed to further strengthen this cooperation. The Undersecretary acknowledged the positive role played by Pakistani professionals in the service delivery. He appreciated professionalism and dedication of the medical professionals, especially during the Covid-19

pandemic. Underscoring Pakistan's commitment to further deepening and broadening of ties, Ambassador Farooq stressed that the extension of the agreement was an important milestone in Pakistan-Kuwait relations.

The extension of cooperation agreement would institutionalize continuous cooperation through recruitment of Pakistani healthcare professionals in Kuwait, as per requirements of Ministry of Health of Kuwait on regular basis. This would also cement and foster bilateral cooperation in health sector between the two countries.

Pakistan and Kuwait had inked a G2G framework cooperation agreement on recruitment of healthcare professionals from Pakistan for Kuwait in July 2020. The signing of current extension of Cooperation Agreement is a manifestation of strong bilateral relations in the field of healthcare.

Impact likely small

UK hails trade deals with Australia, NZ

LONDON, June 1, (AP): The U.K. government hailed an era of cheaper Australian wine and New Zealand kiwi fruit as free-trade agreements with the two Southern Hemisphere nations took effect Wednesday.

U.K. Business and Trade Secretary Kemi Badenoch said that the start of the first all-new trade deals that Britain has

struck since it left the European Union marked "a historic moment."

Economists, however, said the economic effect would be limited. Trade expert David Henig called the new deals "a bit of a nothingburger."

The agreements remove tariffs on most goods, streamline some regulations and make it easier for Britons to work Down Under, and for Aussies and Kiwis to work in the U.K.

Britain marked the occasion by sending the Australian and New Zealand governments care packages of products it hopes will get an export boost, including Welsh whiskey, English gin, leather bags from the Cambridge Satchel Co. and Beano, a kids' comic book.

The U.K. says the deals will boost bilateral trade by 53% with Australia and 59% with New Zealand, though the overall volumes are relatively modest: Australia accounts for 0.9% of U.K. trade, and New Zealand for 0.2%.

Henig, director of the U.K. Trade Policy Project at the European Centre for International Political Economy, said that the deals "could make bits and pieces of difference. For individual companies it can make a difference."

But, he said, "the likeliest outcome is very little changes."

Many economists say no amount of new trade deals will make up for the economic hit of leaving the EU, which before Brexit accounted for about half of all U.K. trade. Britain's exit erected new trade barriers with the bloc, an economic behemoth of 27 countries and 500 million people.

Britain's independent Office for

Budget Responsibility estimates Brexit knocked 4% off U.K. gross domestic product. The new deals together are expected to bring an estimated boost to GDP of about 0.1% by 2035.

Some former U.K. government officials also say the deals are skewed towards Australia and New Zealand. Environment Secretary George Eustice, who was a member of the government when the deal was struck, said last year that "the U.K. gave away far too much for far too little in return."

British farmers, meanwhile, fear beef and lamb from the antipodean nations' large livestock industries will flood the British market under the deal's vastly increased quotas. The U.K. government insists the deals have "robust protections" for British farmers.

Sue Davies, head of consumer rights and food policy at U.K. consumer organization Which?, said the group's research suggested people want trade deals that prioritize "high food, product safety, data protection and environmental standards." "The success of trade agreements will be judged on what they deliver for ordinary people in their everyday lives, not just the export opportunities they provide."

The ability to strike new trade deals around the world was touted as a Brexit benefit by those who argued Britain would be better off outside the EU. But deals have been slow in coming, though the U.K. has rolled over several agreements that it had when it was part of the bloc, and is on course to join the trans-Pacific trade partnership that includes Japan, Canada and Vietnam.

Twitter may be worth one-third what Musk paid for it last fall

WASHINGTON, June 1, (AP): Twitter may now be worth one-third of what Elon Musk paid for the social media platform just seven months ago.

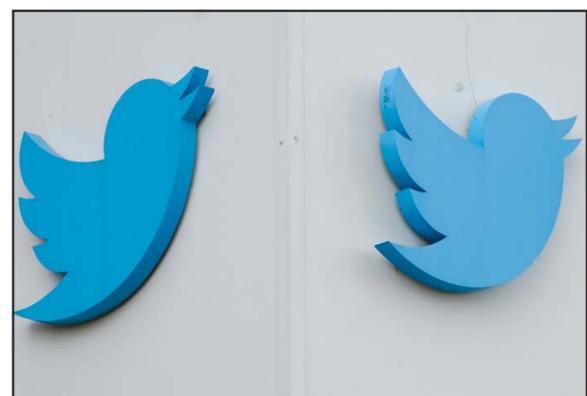
Financial services company Fidelity has reduced the market value of its equity stake in Twitter for a third time, now putting it at \$6.55 billion. That's down from the nearly \$20 billion Fidelity valued its stake at in October.

It is unclear how Fidelity came up with its valuation figures, but as a public company it's required to provide investors with updates on its holdings. Because Twitter is a private company now called X Holdings Corp., information about its finances can't be verified.

Musk took control of Twitter in October, after a protracted legal battle and months of uncertainty. The CEO of Tesla, who also owns SpaceX, bought Twitter for \$44 billion.

The billionaire financed the purchase with funds including loans from a group of banks. Musk has said the \$44 billion price tag for Twitter was too high but that the company had great potential.

By April Musk was telling the BBC that running Twitter has been "quite painful" but that the social media company is now roughly breaking even after he acquired it late last year. Musk predicted at the time that Twitter could become "cash flow positive" in the current quarter "if current trends continue."



Twitter logos hang outside the company's offices in San Francisco, Monday, Dec. 19, 2022. Twitter may now be worth one-third of what Elon Musk paid for the social media platform just seven months ago. (AP)

The Conversation

Expert explains how 'Picard' relate to cybersecurity?

Lessons from 'Star Trek' – sci-fi series illuminates today's threats

By Richard Forno

University of Maryland, Baltimore County

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



Society's understanding of technology and cybersecurity often is based on simple stereotypes and sensational portrayals in the entertainment media. I've written about how certain scenarios are entertaining but misleading. Think of black-clad teenage hackers prowling megacities challenging corporate villains. Or think of counter-intelligence specialists repositioning a satellite from the back of a surveillance van via a phone call.

But sometimes Hollywood gets it right by depicting reality in ways that both entertain and educate. And that's important, because whether it's a large company, government or your personal information, we all share many of the same cybersecurity threats and vulnerabilities. As a former cybersecurity industry practitioner and current cybersecurity researcher, I believe the final season of "Star Trek: Picard" is the latest example of entertainment media providing useful lessons about cybersecurity and the nature of the modern world.

So how does "Star Trek: Picard" relate to cybersecurity?

The show's protagonist is Jean-Luc Picard, a retired Starfleet admiral who commanded the starship Enterprise-D in a previous series. Starfleet is the military wing of the United Federation of Planets, of which Earth is a member. In Season 3, the final season, Picard's ultimate enemy, the Borg, returns to try conquering humanity again. The Borg is a cybernetic collective of half-human, half-machine "drones" led by a cyborg queen.

The Borg has partnered with other villains and worked for over a decade to deploy hidden agents able to compromise the DNA data contained in the software underpinning the transporter – a teleportation device used regularly

Artificial intelligence can help protect US military operations

WASHINGTON, June 1, (AP) — Josh Lospinoso's first cybersecurity startup was acquired in 2017 by Raytheon/Forcepoint. His second, Shift5, works with the US military, rail operators and airlines including JetBlue. A 2009 West Point grad and Rhodes Scholar, the 36-year-old former Army captain spent more than a decade authoring hacking tools for the National Security Agency and US Cyber Command.

Lospinoso recently told a Senate Armed Services subcommittee how artificial intelligence can help protect military operations. The CEO/programmer discussed the subject with The Associated Press as well how software vulnerabilities in weapons systems are a major threat to the US military. The interview has been edited for clarity and length.

Question: In your testimony, you described two principal threats to AI-enabled technologies: One is theft. That's self-explanatory. The other is data poisoning. Can you explain that?

by Starfleet personnel. Over many years, a certain subgroup of Starfleet personnel had their DNA altered by using the transporter.

Thus, in launching their final attack, the Borg is able to instantly activate thousands of "drones" to do its bidding in the form of altered, compromised Starfleet personnel. As Geordi La Forge, the Enterprise-D's engineer, notes, "They've been assimilating the entire fleet this whole time, without anyone ever knowing it."

The Borg's prolonged, stealthy infiltration of the federation is indicative of how today's most effective cyber-attackers work. While it's relatively easy to detect when hackers attempt to breach a system from the outside, experts worry about the effects of an enemy infiltrating critical systems from

Answer: One way to think about data poisoning is as digital disinformation. If adversaries are able to craft the data that AI-enabled technologies see, they can profoundly impact how that technology operates.

Q: Is data poisoning happening?
A: We are not seeing it broadly. But it has occurred. One of the best-known cases happened in 2016. Microsoft released a Twitter chatbot it named Tay that learned from conversations it had online. Malicious users conspired to tweet abusive, offensive language at it. Tay began to generate inflammatory content. Microsoft took it offline.

Q: AI isn't just chatbots. It has long been integral to cybersecurity, right?

A: AI is used in email filters to try to flag and segregate junk mail and phishing lures. Another example is endpoints, like the antivirus program on your laptop – or malware detection software that runs on networks. Of course, offensive hackers also use AI to try defeat those classification sys-

tems. That's called adversarial AI.
Q: Let's talk about military software systems. An alarming 2018 Government Accountability Office report said nearly all newly developed weapons systems had mission critical vulnerabilities. And the Pentagon is thinking about putting AI into such systems?

A: There are two issues here. First, we need to adequately secure existing weapons systems. This is a technical debt we have that is going to take a very long time to pay. Then there is a new frontier of securing AI algorithms – novel things that we would install. The GAO report didn't really talk about AI. So forget AI for a second. If these systems just stayed the way that they are, they're still profoundly vulnerable.

We are discussing pushing the envelope and adding AI-enabled capabilities for things like improved maintenance and operational intelligence. All great. But we're building on top of a house of cards. Many systems are decades old, retrofitted with digital technologies. Air-

craft, ground vehicles, space assets, submarines. They're now interconnected. We're swapping data in and out. The systems are porous, hard to upgrade, and could be attacked. Once an attacker gains access, it's game over.

Sometimes it's easier to build a new platform than to redesign existing systems' digital components. But there is a role for AI in securing these systems. AI can be used to defend if someone tries to compromise them.

Q: You testified that pausing AI research, as some have urged, would be a bad idea because it would favor China and other competitors. But you also have concerns about the headlong rush to AI products. Why?
A: I hate to sound fatalistic, but the so-called "burning-use" case seems to apply. A product rushed to market often catches fire (gets hacked, fails, does unintended damage). And we say, 'Boy, we should have built in security.' I expect the pace of AI development to accelerate, and we might not

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Here, the most well-intentioned plans for security were thwarted by enemies who used humanity's own technologies against them. In the real world, capabilities such as on-demand real-time software updates, ChatGPT and centrally administered systems sound enticing and offer conveniences, cost savings or new capabilities. However, the lesson here is that organizations should not put them into widespread use without carefully con-

sidering as many of the potential risks or vulnerabilities as practical.

But even then, technology alone can't protect humans from ourselves – after all, it's people who develop, design, select, administer and use technology, which means human flaws are present in these systems, too. Such failings frequently lead to a stream of high-profile cybersecurity incidents.

To counter the Borg's final assault on Earth, Picard's crew borrows its old starship, Enterprise-D, from a fleet museum. The rationale is that its ship is the only major combat vessel not connected to the Borg collective via Starfleet's compromised Fleet Formation protocol and therefore is able to operate independently during the crisis. As La Forge notes, "Something older, analog. Offline from the others."

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The Conversation

Interaction important

Bots are everywhere ... can human-robot collaborate?

By Ramana Vinjamuri

University of Maryland, Baltimore County

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



Robots are machines that can sense the environment and use that information to perform an action. You can find them nearly everywhere in industrialized societies today. There are household robots that vacuum floors and warehouse robots that pack and ship goods. Lab robots test hundreds of clinical samples a day. Education robots support teachers by acting as one-on-one tutors, assistants and discussion facilitators. And medical robotics composed of prosthetic limbs can enable someone to grasp and pick up objects with their thoughts.

Figuring out how humans and robots can collaborate to effectively carry out tasks together is a rapidly growing area of interest to the scientists and engineers that design robots as well as the people who will use them. For successful collaboration between humans and robots, communication is key.

Robots were originally designed to undertake repetitive and mundane tasks and operate exclusively in robot-only zones like factories. Robots have since advanced to work collaboratively with people with new ways to communicate with each other.

Cooperative control is one way to transmit information and messages between a robot and a person. It involves combining human abilities and decision making with robot speed, accuracy and strength to accomplish a task.

Interface

For example, robots in the agriculture industry can help farmers monitor and harvest crops. A human can control a semi-autonomous vineyard sprayer through a user interface, as opposed to manually spraying their crops or broadly spraying the entire field and risking pesticide overuse.

Robots can also support patients in physical therapy. Patients who had a stroke or spinal cord injury can use robots to practice hand grasping and assisted walking during rehabilitation.

Another form of communication, emotional intelligence perception, involves developing robots that adapt their behaviors based on social interactions with humans. In this approach, the robot detects a person's emotions when collaborating on a task, assesses their satisfaction, then modifies and improves its execution based on this feedback.

For example, if the robot detects that a physical therapy patient is dissatisfied with a specific rehabilitation activity, it could direct the patient to an alternate activity. Facial expression and body gesture recognition ability are important design considerations for this approach. Recent advances in machine learning can help robots decipher emotional body language and better interact with and perceive humans.

Questions like how to make robotic limbs feel more natural and capable of more complex functions like typing and playing musical instruments have yet to be answered.

Communicates

I am an electrical engineer who studies how the brain controls and communicates with other parts of the body, and my lab investigates in particular how the brain and hand coordinate signals between each other. Our goal is to design technologies like prosthetic and wearable robotic exoskeleton devices that could help improve function for individuals with stroke, spinal cord and traumatic brain injuries.

One approach is through brain-computer interfaces, which use brain signals to communicate between robots and humans. By accessing an individual's brain signals and providing targeted feedback, this technology can potentially improve recovery time in stroke rehabilitation. Brain-computer interfaces may also help restore some communication abilities and physical manipulation of the environment for patients with motor neuron disorders.

Effective integration of robots into human life requires balancing responsibility between people and robots, and designating clear roles for both in different environments.

As robots are increasingly working hand in hand with people, the ethical questions and challenges they pose cannot be ignored. Concerns surrounding privacy, bias and discrimination, security risks and robot morality need to be seriously investigated in order to create a more comfortable, safer and trustworthy world with robots for everyone. Scientists and engineers studying the "dark side" of human-robot interaction are developing guidelines to identify and prevent negative outcomes.

Human-robot interaction has the potential to affect every aspect of daily life. It is the collective responsibility of both the designers and the users to create a human-robot ecosystem that is safe and satisfactory for all. (AP)

By James Dawes

Macalester College

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The US military is intensifying its commitment to the development and use of autonomous weapons, as confirmed by an update to a Department of Defense directive. The update, released Jan. 25, 2023, is the first in a decade to focus on artificial intelligence autonomous weapons. It follows a related implementation plan released by NATO on Oct. 13, 2022, that is aimed at preserving the alliance's "technological edge" in what are sometimes called "killer robots."

Both announcements reflect a crucial lesson militaries around the world have learned from recent combat operations in Ukraine and Nagorno-Karabakh: Weaponized artificial intelligence is the future of warfare.

"We know that commanders are seeing a military value in loitering munitions in Ukraine," Richard Moyes, director of Article 36, a humanitarian organization focused on reducing harm from weapons, told me in an interview. These weapons, which are a cross between a bomb and a drone, can hover for extended periods while waiting for a target. For now, such semi-autonomous missiles are generally being operated with significant human control over key decisions, he said.

But as casualties mount in Ukraine, so does the pressure to achieve decisive battlefield advantages with fully autonomous weapons – robots that can choose, hunt down and attack their targets all on their own, without needing any human supervision.

Plans

A key Russian manufacturer announced plans to develop a new combat version of its Marker reconnaissance robot, an uncrewed ground vehicle, to augment existing forces in Ukraine. Fully autonomous drones are already being used to defend Ukrainian energy facilities from other drones.

Wahid Nawabi, CEO of the US defense contractor that manufactures the semi-autonomous Switchblade drone, said the technology is already within reach to convert these weapons to become fully autonomous.

Mykhailo Fedorov, Ukraine's digital transformation minister, has argued that fully autonomous weapons are the war's "logical and inevitable next step" and recently said that soldiers might see them on the battlefield in the next six months.

Proponents of fully autonomous weapons systems argue that the technology will keep soldiers out of harm's way by keeping them off the battle-

The Conversation

'Weaponized AI is future of warfare'

War in Ukraine accelerates drive toward killer robots across globe

Tense moment in the war

New \$300m aid package to Ukraine and include ammunition for drones

WASHINGTON, June 1, (AP) — A US military aid package for Ukraine that is expected to be announced this week will total up to \$300 million and will include additional munitions for drones, US officials said Tuesday. The drone ammunition comes after new attacks by unmanned aircraft targeted Moscow.

There has been no suggestion that US-made drones or munitions were used in the recent attacks on Moscow, and US officials have repeatedly said that Ukraine has agreed not to use any American-provided weapons for attacks on Russian soil. The Kremlin blamed Kyiv for Tuesday's attack, but Ukrainian officials had no direct comment.

Package

But the new aid package comes at a tense moment in the war. The latest drone attack on Moscow follows Russia's seizure of the eastern Ukrainian city of Bakhmut after a nine-month battle that killed tens of thousands of people. Ukraine is also showing signs that its long-awaited spring counteroffensive may already be underway.

The Russian Defense Ministry said five drones were shot down in Moscow and the systems of three others were jammed, causing them to veer off course. President Vladimir Putin called it a "terrorist" act by Kyiv.

A US defense official said the drone strikes would not affect the weapons aid packages the US is providing Ukraine, to include drone ammunition. The official said the U.S. has committed to supporting Ukraine in its effort to defend the country and Ukraine had committed to not using the systems

field. They will also allow for military decisions to be made at superhuman speed, allowing for radically improved defensive capabilities.

Currently, semi-autonomous weapons, like loitering munitions that track and detonate themselves on targets, require a "human in the loop." They can recommend actions but require their operators to initiate them.

By contrast, fully autonomous drones, like the so-called "drone hunters" now deployed in Ukraine, can track and disable incoming unmanned aerial vehicles day and night, with no need for operator intervention and faster than human-controlled weapons



Pallets of 155 mm shells ultimately bound for Ukraine are loaded by the 436th Aerial Port Squadron, April 29, 2022, at Dover Air Force Base, Del. US officials say a military aid package for Ukraine that is expected to be announced this week will total up to \$300 million, and will include additional munitions for drones. (AP)

inside Russia, so the aid would likely continue unchanged.

All of the US officials spoke on the condition of anonymity because the latest aid package has not yet been publicly announced.

US officials did not provide details on the drone munitions in the new aid package or specify which unmanned aircraft would use them. The Defense Department has given Ukraine a variety of unmanned aircraft over the last year, for both surveillance and attacks, including at least two versions of the Switchblade, a so-called kamikaze drone that can loiter in the air and then explode into a target.

Other more sophisticated drones can drop munitions, but the US has

systems.

Critics like The Campaign to Stop Killer Robots have been advocating for more than a decade to ban research and development of autonomous weapons systems. They point to a future where autonomous weapons systems are designed specifically to target humans, not just vehicles, infrastructure and other weapons. They argue that war-time decisions over life and death must remain in human hands. Turning them over to an algorithm amounts to the ultimate form of digital dehumanization.

Together with Human Rights Watch, The Campaign to Stop Killer Robots argues that autonomous weap-

ons systems lack the human judgment necessary to distinguish between civilians and legitimate military targets. They also lower the threshold to war by reducing the perceived risks, and they erode meaningful human control over what happens on the battlefield.

The organizations argue that the militaries investing most heavily in autonomous weapons systems, including the U.S., Russia, China, South Korea and the European Union, are launching the world into a costly and destabilizing new arms race. One consequence could be this dangerous new technology falling into the hands of terrorists and others outside of government control.

Every tech company and many non-tech companies have made almost a jarring pivot toward AI. Economic dislocations are coming. Business models are fundamentally going to change. Dislocations are already happening or are on the horizon – and business leaders are trying to not get caught flat-footed.

Q: What about the use of AI in military decision-making such as targeting?

A: I do not, categorically do not, think that artificial intelligence algorithms – the data that we're collecting – are ready for prime time for a lethal weapon system to be making decisions. We are just so far from that.

side under one unified automated command system. While intended to serve as an emergency capability, this system – called Fleet Formation – was quickly hijacked by the Borg as part of its attack on Earth. In essence, Starfleet created a Borg-like defense system that the Borg itself used to attack the federation.

Here, the most well-intentioned plans for security were thwarted by enemies who used humanity's own technologies against them. In the real world, capabilities such as on-demand real-time software updates, ChatGPT and centrally administered systems sound enticing and offer conveniences, cost savings or new capabilities. However, the lesson here is that organizations should not put them into widespread use without carefully con-

sidering as many of the potential risks or vulnerabilities as practical. But even then, technology alone can't protect humans from ourselves – after all, it's people who develop, design, select, administer and use technology, which means human flaws are present in these systems, too. Such failings frequently lead to a stream of high-profile cybersecurity incidents. To counter the Borg's final assault on Earth, Picard's crew borrows its old starship, Enterprise-D, from a fleet museum. The rationale is that its ship is the only major combat vessel not connected to the Borg collective via Starfleet's compromised Fleet Formation protocol and therefore is able to operate independently during the crisis. As La Forge notes, "Something older, analog. Offline from the others."

Disease progression risk or death reduced by 53%

Keytruda plus Lenvima demonstrates long-term survival benefit versus sunitinib for patients with advanced renal cell carcinoma

RAHWAY, NJ, June 1: Merck (NYSE: MRK), known as MSD outside of the United States and Canada, and Eisai have announced data from the final pre-specified overall survival (OS) analysis of the pivotal Phase 3 CLEAR (Study 307)/Keynote-581 trial investigating Keytruda, Merck's anti-PD-1 therapy, plus Lenvima, the orally available multiple receptor tyrosine kinase inhibitor discovered by Eisai, for the first-line treatment of patients with advanced renal cell carcinoma (RCC). These data will be presented on Monday, June 5 at 12:54 p.m. EDT during an oral abstract session at the 2023 American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) Annual Meeting (Abstract #4502). After four years of follow-up, Keytruda plus Lenvima maintained a clinically meaningful OS benefit versus sunitinib, reducing the risk of death by 21% (HR=0.79 [95% CI, 0.63-0.99]). The 24- and 36-month estimated OS rates were 80.4% and 66.4% for Keytruda plus Lenvima versus 69.6% and 60.2% for sunitinib, respectively. Results from the final pre-specified OS analysis were consistent with the superior results versus sunitinib from the primary OS analysis of the CLEAR/Keynote-581 trial.

Additionally, Keytruda plus Lenvima reduced the risk of disease progression or death by 53% (HR=0.47 [95% CI, 0.38-0.57]), with a median progression-free survival (PFS) of 23.9 months (95% CI, 20.8-27.7) versus 9.2 months (95% CI, 6.0-11.0) for sunitinib; the objective response rate (ORR) was 71.3% (95% CI, 66.6-76.0) with a complete response (CR) rate of 18.3% for Keytruda plus Lenvima versus an ORR of 36.7% (95% CI, 31.7-41.7) with a CR rate of 4.8% for sunitinib.

There were no new safety signals and the safety profile at the final OS analysis was consistent with the primary analysis. Grade ≥3 treatment-related adverse events (TRAE) occurred in 74.1% of patients who received Keytruda plus Lenvima versus 60.3% of patients who received sunitinib. The six most common TRAEs of any grade of patients in the Keytruda plus Lenvima arm were diarrhea (56.0%), hypertension (54.3%), hypothyroidism (44.9%), decreased appetite (35.5%), fatigue (34.1%) and stomatitis (32.7%). In the sunitinib arm, the six most common TRAEs of any grade were diarrhea (45.3%), hypertension (40.3%), stomatitis (37.4%), palmar-plantar erythrodysesthesia (36.2%), fatigue (32.9%) and nausea (28.2%).

Improvements

"Keytruda plus Lenvima continues to demonstrate durable clinical benefit as a first-line treatment for patients with advanced renal cell carcinoma, as shown by the clinically meaningful improvement in overall survival sustained with four years of follow up," said Dr. Thomas Hutson, DO, Pharm.D., FACP, Director of the Urologic Oncology Program and Co-chair of the Urologic Cancer Research and Treatment Center, Texas Oncology at Baylor Sammons Cancer Center. "Furthermore, these data also showed clinically meaningful improvements in median PFS and ORR compared to sunitinib. These findings reinforce the important role of Keytruda plus Lenvima as a first-line standard of care treatment option for patients with advanced renal cell carcinoma."

"Long-term follow up data from the CLEAR/KEYNOTE-581 trial show the responses to first-line use of Keytruda plus Lenvima were durable for many of these patients," said Dr. Gregory Lubiniecki, Vice President, Global Clinical Development, Merck Research Laboratories. "Through our joint clinical development program with Eisai, we're continuing to advance our research evaluating Keytruda plus Lenvima for other challenging cancers as we strive to help even more patients."

"At the final pre-specified analysis, Keytruda plus Lenvima continued to demonstrate clinically meaningful efficacy across PFS, ORR and OS, providing patients and their physicians with new information about treating people living with advanced renal cell carcinoma," said Corina Dutcus, M.D., Senior Vice President, Clinical Development, Oncology at Eisai Inc. "These results are a testament to our steadfast commitment to people living with advanced cancers, and we are grateful for the support from the patients, families and healthcare provider community for their participation in this research."

Keytruda plus Lenvima is approved in the US, the EU, Japan and other countries for the treatment of advanced RCC and certain types of advanced endometrial carcinoma. Lenvatinib is marketed as KISPLIXY® for advanced RCC in the EU. Merck and Eisai are studying the Keytruda plus Lenvima combination through the LEAP (Lenvatinib And Pembrolizumab) clinical pro-

gram in various tumor types, including but not limited to endometrial carcinoma, hepatocellular carcinoma, non-small cell lung cancer, RCC, head and neck cancer, gastric cancer and esophageal cancer across multiple clinical trials.

The Clear/Keynote-581 trial is a multicenter, randomized, open-label Phase 3 trial (ClinicalTrials.gov, NCT02811861) evaluating Lenvima in combination with Keytruda or in combination with everolimus versus sunitinib for the first-line treatment of patients with advanced RCC. The major efficacy outcome measures were PFS, as assessed by independent radiologic review (IRC) according to Response Evaluation Criteria in Solid Tumors version 1.1 (RECIST v1.1), and OS. Additional efficacy outcome measures included confirmed ORR as assessed by IRC, health-related quality of life (HRQoL) and safety.

Combination

The trial enrolled 1,069 patients who were randomized 1:1:1 to receive Keytruda (200 mg intravenously every three weeks for up to 24 months) plus Lenvima (20 mg orally once daily), or Lenvima (18 mg orally once daily) plus everolimus (5 mg orally once daily), or sunitinib (50 mg orally once daily for four weeks on treatment, followed by two weeks off treatment). Keytruda was administered for up to 35 cycles (approximately two years) or until protocol-specified discontinuation criteria were met. After completing two years of combination therapy, Lenvima may have been administered as a single agent until protocol-specified discontinuation criteria were met.

This final pre-specified OS analysis was event driven and was triggered by approximately 304 OS target events in the two treatment arms (149 events out of 355 patients for Keytruda plus Lenvima versus 159 events out of 357 patients for sunitinib).

The median duration of response was 26.7 months (95% CI, 22.8-34.6) for Keytruda plus Lenvima versus 14.7 months (95% CI, 9.4-18.2) for sunitinib.

Efficacy results were consistent across the pre-specified Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center (MSKCC) risk groups (favorable, intermediate and poor) and International Metastatic RCC Database Consortium (IMDC) risk groups. Across the pre-specified Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center (MSKCC) risk groups (favorable, intermediate and poor), OS and PFS were improved with Keytruda plus Lenvima versus sunitinib. Interpretation OS in favorable risk patients is limited by low number of events.

Fewer patients who were treated with Keytruda plus Lenvima received subsequent anti-cancer therapies (181 out of 355 patients, 51.0%) versus those who were treated with sunitinib (246 out of 357 patients, 68.9%), with 56 patients (15.8%) and 195 patients (54.6%) who went on to receive PD-1/PD-L1 checkpoint inhibitors, respectively. In an exploratory analysis using a 2-stage model, Keytruda plus Lenvima reduced the risk of death by 45% versus sunitinib when adjusted for subsequent anticancer medications (HR=0.55 [95% CI, 0.44-0.69]).

Worldwide, it is estimated there were more than 431,000 new cases of kidney cancer diagnosed and more than 179,000 deaths from the disease in 2020 [GLOBOCAN, 2020]. Renal cell carcinoma is by far the most common type of kidney cancer; about nine out of 10 kidney cancer diagnoses are RCC [ACS, 2020]. Renal cell carcinoma is about twice as common in men as in women [ACS, 2023]. Most cases of RCC are discovered incidentally during imaging tests for other abdominal diseases [American Family Physician, 2019]. Approximately 30% of patients with RCC will have metastatic disease at diagnosis [American Family Physician, 2019]. Survival is highly dependent on the stage at diagnosis, and the five-year survival rate is 15% for patients diagnosed with metastatic disease [ACS, 2023].

Keytruda is an anti-programmed death receptor-1 (PD-1) therapy that works by increasing the ability of the body's immune system to help detect and fight tumor cells. Keytruda is a humanized monoclonal antibody that blocks the interaction between PD-1 and its ligands, PD-L1 and PD-L2, thereby activating T lymphocytes which may affect both tumor cells and healthy cells.

Merck has the industry's largest immunology clinical research program. There are currently more than 1,600 trials studying Keytruda across a wide variety of cancers and treatment settings. The Keytruda clinical program seeks to understand the role of Keytruda across cancers and the factors that may predict a patient's likelihood of benefitting from treatment with Keytruda, including exploring several different biomarkers.

'New treatments required to improve survival outcomes'

Pembrolizumab/chemotherapy appears to improve survival in advanced mesothelioma

KINGSTON, Ontario, June 1: Merck (NYSE: MRK), known as MSD outside of the United States and Canada, and the Canadian Cancer Trials Group (CCTG) has announced that the Phase 2/3 CCTG IND.227/Keynote-483 trial evaluating Keytruda, Merck's anti-PD-1 therapy, in combination with chemotherapy met its primary endpoint of overall survival (OS) for the first-line treatment of patients with unresectable advanced or metastatic malignant pleural mesothelioma. IND.227 was sponsored by CCTG, in collaboration with investigators in Italy (co-sponsored by National Cancer Institute of Naples - NCIN), and France (co-sponsored by The French Cooperative Thoracic Intergroup - IFCT); Merck provided Keytruda and support for the trial. At the final analysis of the study, Keytruda plus chemotherapy showed a statistically significant and clinically meaningful improvement in OS compared to chemotherapy alone in these patients. The safety profile of Keytruda in combination with chemotherapy in this study was consistent with previously reported studies. Results will be presented at an upcoming medical meeting and discussed with regulatory authorities worldwide.

"Malignant pleural mesothelioma is a rapidly progressing cancer that develops in the lining of the lungs and has a poor prognosis," said Dr. Eliav Barr, senior vice president, head of global clinical development and chief medical officer, Merck Research Laboratories. "Patients are in need of new treatments that can improve survival outcomes, and these positive results support the potential of Keytruda in combination with chemotherapy as a first-line treatment for patients with the most common form of malignant mesothelioma."

"There have been few treatment advances for patients with malignant pleural mesothelioma, which can be challenging to treat through surgery and radiation alone," said Dr. Quincy Chu, CCTG's study chair of the IND.227 trial/Keynote-483 trial. "The results from the trial have the potential to make a difference for patients with this disease who have had limited treatment options available to them."

Combinations

Merck has an extensive clinical development program in lung cancer and is advancing multiple registration-enabling studies, with research directed at earlier stages of disease and novel combinations.

IND.227/Keynote-483 is a randomized, open-label, randomized Phase 2/3 trial (ClinicalTrials.gov, NCT02784171) sponsored and conducted by the Canadian Cancer Trials Group (CCTG) in collaboration with National Cancer Institute of Naples (NCIN) and Intergroupe Francophone de Cancérologie Thoracique (IFCT). Support for the trial was provided by Merck. The trial evaluated Keytruda in combination with chemotherapy for the treatment of patients with unresected advanced malignant pleural mesothelioma. The primary endpoint of the study is OS, and secondary endpoints include progression-free survival (PFS) and objective response rate (ORR) as assessed by blinded independent central review (BICR) per Response Evaluation Criteria in Solid Tumors (RECIST) v1.1 modified for mesothelioma, safety and quality of life. The Phase 3 part of the trial enrolled 440 patients who were randomized to receive:

- Keytruda (200 mg every three weeks for up to 35 cycles) in combination with pemetrexed (500 mg/m² every three weeks for six cycles) and cisplatin (75 mg/m² every three weeks for six cycles; carboplatin substitution was permitted), or
- Pemetrexed and cisplatin (carboplatin substitution was permitted) alone.

Malignant mesothelioma is a type of cancer that starts in the linings of certain parts

of the body, including the chest, abdomen, heart and testicles. Worldwide, it is estimated there were more than 30,000 new cases of malignant mesothelioma diagnosed and more than 26,000 deaths from the disease in 2020. Pleural mesothelioma, which develops in the lining of the lungs, is the most common form of malignant mesothelioma, accounting for about 75% of all cases. Malignant pleural mesothelioma often progresses rapidly, and the five-year survival rate is only 12%. Although incidence of malignant mesothelioma has gradually declined in the United States, continued use of and exposure to asbestos around the world has resulted in increasing global rates of this aggressive disease.

The Canadian Cancer Trials Group (CCTG) is a cancer clinical trials research cooperative that runs phase I-III trials to test anti-cancer and supportive therapies at over 85 hospitals and cancer centres across Canada. From their operations centre at Queen's University, CCTG has supported more than 600 trials enrolling 100,000 patients from 40 countries on 6 continents through a global network of 20,000 investigators and clinical trial staff. CCTG is a national program of the Canadian Cancer Society and their aim is to improve survival and quality of life for all people with cancer. CCTG IND.227 was supported by a grant from the Canadian Cancer Society (CCS) (707213).

Detect

Keytruda is an anti-programmed death receptor-1 (PD-1) therapy that works by increasing the ability of the body's immune system to help detect and fight tumor cells. Keytruda is a humanized monoclonal antibody that blocks the interaction between PD-1 and its ligands, PD-L1 and PD-L2, thereby activating T lymphocytes which may affect both tumor cells and healthy cells.

Merck has the industry's largest immunology clinical research program. There are currently more than 1,600 trials studying Keytruda across a wide variety of cancers and treatment settings. The Keytruda clinical program seeks to understand the role of Keytruda across cancers and the factors that may predict a patient's likelihood of benefitting from treatment with Keytruda, including exploring several different biomarkers.

Selected Keytruda® (pembrolizumab) Indications in the US.

Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer
Keytruda, in combination with pemetrexed and platinum chemotherapy, is indicated for the first-line treatment of patients with metastatic non-squamous non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC), with no EGFR or ALK genomic tumor aberrations.

Keytruda, in combination with carboplatin and either paclitaxel or paclitaxel protein-bound, is indicated for the first-line treatment of patients with metastatic squamous NSCLC.

Keytruda, as a single agent, is indicated for the first-line treatment of patients with NSCLC expressing PD-L1 [tumor proportion score (TPS) ≥1%] as determined by an FDA-approved test, with no EGFR or ALK genomic tumor aberrations, and is:

- stage III where patients are not candidates for surgical resection or definitive chemoradiation, or
- metastatic.

Keytruda, as a single agent, is indicated for the treatment of patients with metastatic NSCLC whose tumors express PD-L1 (TPS ≥1%) as determined by an FDA-approved test, with disease progression on or after platinum-containing chemotherapy. Patients with EGFR or ALK genomic tumor aberrations should have disease progression on FDA-approved therapy for these aberrations prior to receiving Keytruda.

Keytruda, as a single agent, is indicated as

adjuvant treatment following resection and platinum-based chemotherapy for adult patients with stage IB (T2a ≥4 cm), II, or IIIA NSCLC.

Keytruda is a monoclonal antibody that belongs to a class of drugs that bind to either the PD-1 or the PD-L1, blocking the PD-1/PD-L1 pathway, thereby removing inhibition of the immune response, potentially breaking peripheral tolerance and inducing immune-mediated adverse reactions. Immune-mediated adverse reactions, which may be severe or fatal, can occur in any organ system or tissue, can affect more than one body system simultaneously, and can occur at any time after starting treatment or after discontinuation of treatment. Important immune-mediated adverse reactions listed here may not include all possible severe and fatal immune-mediated adverse reactions.

Symptoms

Monitor patients closely for symptoms and signs that may be clinical manifestations of underlying immune-mediated adverse reactions. Early identification and management are essential to ensure safe use of anti-PD-1/PD-L1 treatments. Evaluate liver enzymes, creatinine, and thyroid function at baseline and periodically during treatment. For patients with TNBC treated with Keytruda in the neoadjuvant setting, monitor blood cortisol at baseline, prior to surgery, and as clinically indicated. In cases of suspected immune-mediated adverse reactions, initiate appropriate workup to exclude alternative etiologies, including infection. Institute medical management promptly, including specialty consultation as appropriate.

Withhold or permanently discontinue Keytruda depending on severity of the immune-mediated adverse reaction. In general, if Keytruda requires interruption or discontinuation, administer systemic corticosteroid therapy (1 to 2 mg/kg/day prednisone or equivalent) until improvement to Grade 1 or less. Upon improvement to Grade 1 or less, initiate corticosteroid taper and continue to taper over at least 1 month. Consider administration of other systemic immunosuppressants in patients whose adverse reactions are not controlled with corticosteroid therapy.

Keytruda can cause immune-mediated pneumonitis. The incidence is higher in patients who have received prior thoracic radiation. Immune-mediated pneumonitis occurred in 3.4% (94/2799) of patients receiving Keytruda, including fatal (0.1%), Grade 4 (0.3%), Grade 3 (0.9%), and Grade 2 (1.3%) reactions. Systemic corticosteroids were required in 67% (63/94) of patients. Pneumonitis led to permanent discontinuation of Keytruda in 1.3% (36) and withholding in 0.9% (26) of patients. All patients who were withheld/reinitiated Keytruda after symptom improvement; of these, 23% had recurrence. Pneumonitis resolved in 59% of the 94 patients.

Pneumonitis occurred in 8% (31/389) of adult patients with cHL receiving Keytruda as a single agent, including Grades 3-4 in 2.3% of patients. Patients received high-dose corticosteroids for a median duration of 10 days (range: 2 days to 53 months). Pneumonitis rates were similar in patients with and without prior thoracic radiation. Pneumonitis led to discontinuation of Keytruda in 5.4% (21) of patients. Of the patients who developed pneumonitis, 42% interrupted Keytruda, 68% discontinued Keytruda, and 77% had resolution.

Pneumonitis occurred in 41 (7%) patients, including fatal (0.2%), Grade 4 (0.3%), and Grade 3 (1%) adverse reactions. In adult patients who received adjuvant therapy for NSCLC, patients received high-dose corticosteroids for a median duration of 10 days (range: 1 day to 2.3 months). Pneumonitis led to discontinuation of Keytruda in 26 (4.5%) of patients.

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People

'That '70s Show' star Masterson convicted of 2 counts of rape

LOS ANGELES, June 1, (AP): "That '70s Show" star Danny Masterson was led out in handcuffs from a Los Angeles courtroom Wednesday and could get 30 years to life in prison after a jury found him guilty on two of three counts of rape at his second trial, in which the Church of Scientology played a central role.

Masterson's wife, actor and model Bijou Phillips, gasped when the verdict was read and wept as he was taken into custody, while a group of family and friends who sat stone-faced behind him throughout both trials.

The jury of seven women and five men reached the verdict after deliberating for seven days spread over two weeks. They could not reach a verdict on the third count, that alleged Masterson raped a longtime girlfriend. They had voted 8-4 in favor of conviction.

Masterson, 47, will be held without bail until he is sentenced. No sentencing date was set.

"I am experiencing a complex array of emotions - relief, exhaustion, strength, sadness - knowing that my abuser, Danny Masterson, will face accountability for his criminal behavior," one of the women, whom Masterson knew as a fellow member of the church and was convicted of raping at his home in 2003, said in a statement.

A second woman, a former girlfriend, whose count left the jury deadlocked, said in the statement: "While I'm encouraged that Danny Masterson will face some criminal punishment, I am devastated that he has dodged criminal accountability for his heinous conduct against me."

A spokesperson for Masterson declined to comment, but his attorneys will almost certainly appeal.

After a deadlocked jury led to a mistrial in December, prosecutors retried Masterson, saying he drugged and forcibly raped three women

in his Hollywood Hills home between 2001 and 2003. They said he used his prominence in the church - where all three women were also members at the time - to avoid consequences for decades.

"We want to express our gratitude to the three women who came forward and bravely shared their experiences," Los Angeles County District Attorney George Gascón said in a statement after the verdict Wednesday.

Masterson did not testify, and his lawyers called no witnesses. The defense argued that the acts were consensual, and attempted to discredit the women's stories by highlighting changes and inconsistencies over time, which they said showed signs of coordination between them.

"If you decide that a witness deliberately lied about something in this case," defense attorney Philip Cohen told jurors, going through their instructions in his closing argument, "You should consider not believing anything that witness says."

Tensions

Tensions ran high in the courtroom between current and former Scientologists, and even leaked into testimony, with the accusers saying on the stand that they felt intimidated by some members in the room.

Actor Leah Remini, a former member who has become the church's highest-profile critic, sat in on the trial at times, putting her arm around one of the accusers to comfort her during closing arguments.

Remini said on Twitter that the two guilty verdicts in the retrial are "a relief. The women who survived Danny Masterson's predation are heroes. For years, they and their families have faced vicious attacks and harassment from Scientology and Danny's well-funded legal team," she

posted. "Nevertheless, they soldiered on, determined to seek justice." The alleged harassment is the subject of a civil lawsuit filed by two of the accusers.

The Scientology statement said "there is not a scintilla of evidence supporting the scandalous allegations that the Church harassed the accusers."

Founded in 1953 by L. Ron Hubbard, the Church of Scientology has many members who work in Hollywood. The judge kept limits on how much prosecutors could talk about the church, and primarily allowed it to explain why the women took so long to go to authorities.

The women testified that when they reported Masterson to church officials, they were told they were not raped, were put through ethics programs themselves, and were warned against going to law enforcement to report a member of such high standing.

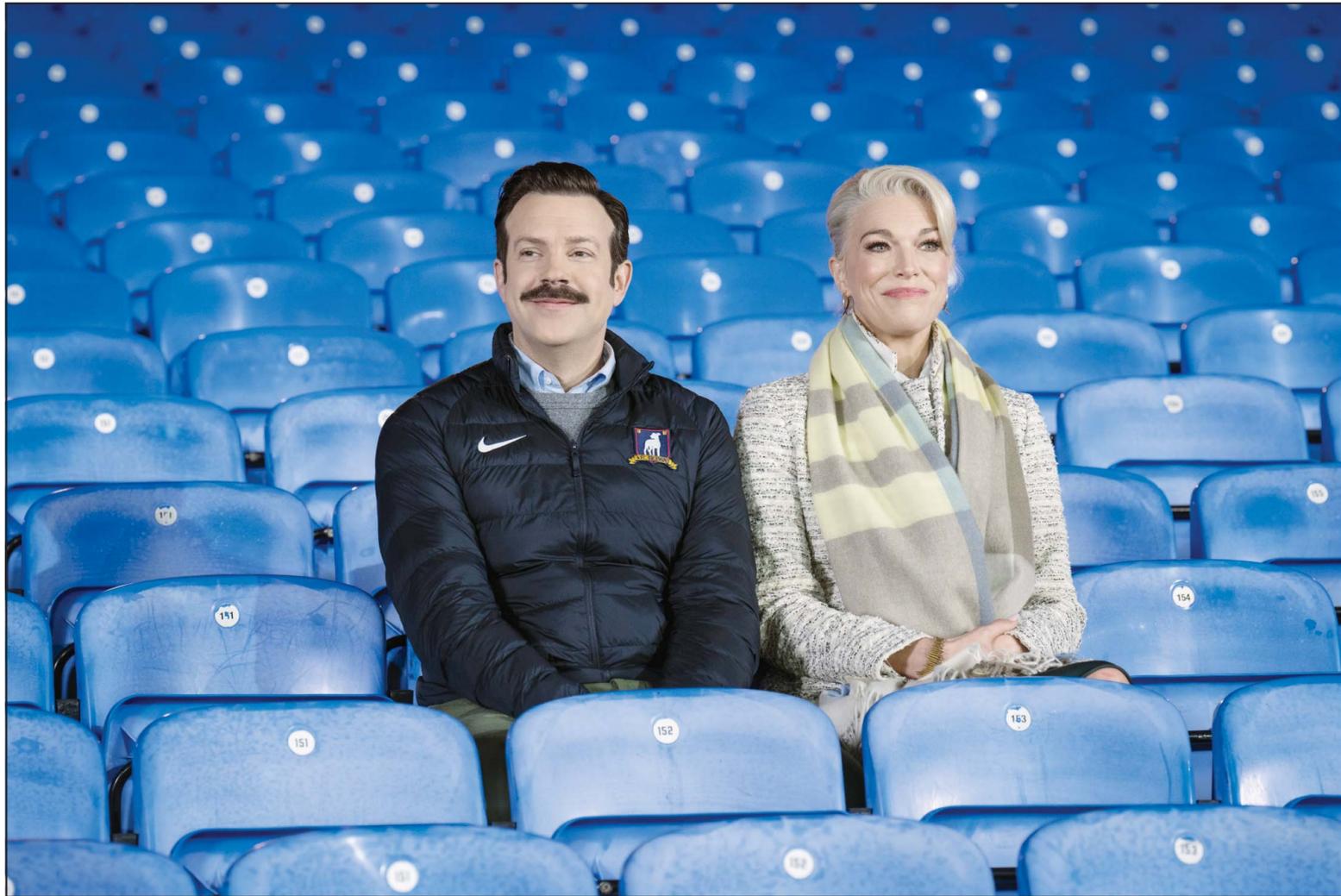
"They were raped, they were punished for it, and they were retaliated against," Deputy District Attorney Reinhold Mueller told jurors in his closing argument. "Scientology told them there's no justice for them."

The church called the "testimony and descriptions of Scientology beliefs" during the trial "uniformly false."

"The Church has no policy prohibiting or discouraging members from reporting criminal conduct of anyone - Scientologists or not - to law enforcement," the statement said.

Next week Olmedo will hold a hearing to determine how a lawyer who represents the Church of Scientology had evidence that the prosecution had shared with the defense. The evidence involved links that the lawyer accidentally included in an email to Mueller.

Variety



This image released by Apple TV shows Jason Sudeikis, (left), and Hannah Waddingham in a scene from the season three finale of 'Ted Lasso.' (AP)

Television

'Stuck' is a theme TV loves

'Ted Lasso' finale proved its whole point

NEW YORK, June 1, (AP): Roy Kent cries. Nate Shelley apologizes. Rebecca Welton lets her anger go. Trent Crimm finishes his book. Keeley Jones embraces her strength. And the kind-to-a-fault but often lost Ted Lasso finally - after three seasons, and arguably after nearly a lifetime - figures out exactly where he needs to be.

Criticized by some for losing its way in its third season, "Ted Lasso" ended up exactly on brand - by taking a sharply drawn crew of characters who had lost their ways and gotten stuck, and freeing them from shackles that were often of their own making. "Can people change?" Roy Kent (Brett Goldstein) wonders. The answer, after Wednesday, is a resounding "probably."

"Perfect is boring," Coach Beard (Brendan Hunt) says at one point in the season (and likely series) finale. And if there had been a travel guide to the three seasons of the Apple TV+ show, that quote might well have sat opposite the title page.

"Ted Lasso" has been a Whitman's Sampler of pandemic-era stuckness with a message that, whether it was delivered with a subtle glance or a giant narrative mallet, couldn't help but resonate in a post-pandemic landscape: The moments that have trapped you don't have to last forever.

It was difficult to find a show with more of a collection of people who were stuck - trapped in the amber of their own circumstances or choices. Keeley (Juno Temple) was stuck. Roy was stuck. Jamie (Phil Dunster) was stuck. Rebecca (Hannah Waddingham) was stuck. Trent, Colin and Sam (James Lance, Billy Harris and Toheeb Jimoh) were stuck. Nate (Nick Mohammed) was stuck. Even Sharon the sports psychologist (Sarah Niles) was, to some extent, stuck.

And of course Ted himself (Jason Sudeikis), a lost boy with a mustache and a plenitude of platitudes who had been stuck in the quicksand of grief for most of his life and, it turned out, needed a mission to get others unstuck to help him find his own way forward.

The character who's stuck in the mire is nothing new. It has been a useful and oft-used narrative engine from "It's a Wonderful Life" (1946) through "Groundhog Day" (1993) and beyond. But something more intense is happening lately. Take a tour across genres in the

American streaming landscape over the past, say, four years, and you'll find a surfeit of stuckness in pretty much every direction you look.

The Scarlet Witch in Marvel's "WandaVision"? Stuck. Nadia in "Russian Doll"? Stuck in strikingly different ways in seasons one and two. Alma in "Undone," Carmy in "The Bear" and "Mare of Easttown"? Stuck, stuck and stuck. Even some of streaming's most recent stars - "Severance," "Shrinking" and the recently concluded "Star Trek: Picard" - focus on central characters who are stuck by bad choices, trauma or a lost sense of purpose.

Supernatural

Then there are the shows about the very embodiment of stuckness: "Ghosts" and "School Spirits," both of which address the problem from the vantage point of people who have shuffled off the mortal coil but - even then - can't seem to figure out how to get where they're going.

"Ted Lasso" distilled this theme to the Nth degree without resorting to supernatural activity. This batch of humans was, viewed from a bit of a distance, an entire citadel of stuckness - albeit in varied ways.

Keeley was paralyzed by uncertainty, Roy by anger, Jamie by trauma and ego, Trent by expectations. Nate was being derailed by feelings of inadequacy and Colin by a fear of judgment. Sam was stuck by expectations familial and national. Rebecca was drowning in the scars of a partner's psychological abuse. Arguably the only main character not stuck was Leslie Higgins (Jeremy Swift), jazz virtuoso and dedicated family man - and the only character to understand all along that right here, right now was the place he wanted to be.

He had a leg up on many of us. The COVID-19 pandemic was, for a time, stuckness incarnate. "Ted Lasso" debuted right in the middle of it, on Aug. 14, 2020. Now, almost three years later, aren't we navigating through an entire generation coming of age amid an isolating pandemic and deep political fissures? Aren't there millions of folks across the republic locked in tiny, individual struggles to avoid getting stuck or - possibly even more daunting - trying to avoid staying that way?

The other elephant in the "Ted Lasso" room - one directly related to stuckness - is also something that in-

voled the British-American divide so often played for laughs on the show.

A few weeks back, the "Lasso" cast visited the White House to talk about mental health. At the time, Sudeikis said this: "We shouldn't be afraid to ask for help ourselves."

That suggests - no, proposes overtly - that going it alone, "American-style," isn't always plausible and that, as the poet John Donne put it so many centuries ago, "No man is an island entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main." The bringing together of so many different people from so many places - an international soccer team - provided the ideal canvas for the show's thesis. Turns out that varied points of view can produce better results. Go figure.

Those who say "Ted Lasso" was treacly and wandered a bit during the third season make legitimate points. Plot lines were dropped or overly compressed. Nuanced antiheroes were not this show's jam, and never did dark doings define the day. The only true villain - Rupert Mannion (Anthony Head) - was a mustache-twirler with a goatee (the mustache was, of course, already taken) and mostly a foil, a scheming island alone in a sea of sentimentality.

That was OK. Because if the show had a message for the stuck among us, it was this: Maybe, just maybe, rank sentimentality can get you unstuck. And more to the point, maybe you get unstuck by bringing a piece of yourself to everyone else. "The best we can do," Higgins says, "is to keep asking for help and accepting it when you can."

In the United States in 2023, that's still a harder message to sell than it should be. But it's more relevant than ever. Feelings get you stuck, but feelings also set you free. Effort can make you vulnerable, but effort matters.

"I just had to try," Rebecca tells Ted at one point in the finale. That's ultimately the answer to getting unstuck. And it points right back to the song we heard every week in the opening credits - the key, in the end, to unlocking the whole show.

"It might be all that you get. I guess this might well be it. But heaven knows I tried..."

in post-production, including the Pacino-starrer "Billy Knight."

Pacino's baby news follows close on the heels of longtime friend and fellow actor Robert De Niro's own. A representative for the 79-year-old actor confirmed earlier this month that De Niro had become a father for the seventh time, but few other details - in-



Alfallah

Pacino

cluding the identity of the mother - were released. (AP)

MILAN: Simone Bellotti, a long-time member of the Gucci design team, was named design director at Bally on Wednesday as the 172-year-old Swiss fashion house continues a process of rejuvenation.

Bellotti, a Milan native, will debut his first collection during Milan Fashion Week in September.

Bellotti joined 16 years at Gucci before joining Bally last October. He previously worked at Dolce & Gabbana, Bottega Veneta and Gianfranco Ferré where he learned Ferré's architectural approach to

fashion design.

Bellotti "brings with him a deep understanding of both ready-to-wear tailoring and accessories craftsmanship," Bally said in a statement, adding that while at Gucci Bellotti "developed his keen obsession with detail, interpreting archival references in innovative directions." (AP)

People & Places

Television

Triumph of efficiency

Spelling Bee finalists flex their knowledge

OXON HILL, Md., June 1, (AP): Confidence on the Scripps National Spelling Bee stage manifests itself in subtle ways, like spellers asking questions even though they know the answers.

Dev Shah, one of 11 spellers who made it through Wednesday's semifinals and will return Thursday to compete for the winner's trophy and more than \$50,000 in cash and prizes, was given the word "Perioeci" and quickly eliminated any suspense with his onstage banter.

"Does this come from the Greek 'peri,' meaning around?" Dev asked.

"Yes," said the Rev. Brian Sietsema, the bee's associate pronouncer.

Dev: "Does this come from the Greek 'oikos,' meaning house?"

Sietsema: "Yes."

Asked, and answered.

The finalists made their way unscathed through eight rounds - five spelling, three vocabulary - and Dev was one of a handful who never looked flustered.

The semifinals in particular were a triumph of efficiency for Scripps and its word selection panel, perhaps aided by a first-of-its-kind, pre-bee standardized test that allowed Scripps to assess the spellers' abilities. Of the 55 quarterfinalists, 33 were eliminated in the first spelling round of the semis. The word panel followed through on its plan to make the vocabulary questions more fair than last year's; only two were dinged on definitions. And then in the final spelling round of the semis, nine of the remaining 20 misspelled.

Given that nearly everyone who competes in the National Spelling Bee - even several recent champions - ultimately misses a word, the default posture for spellers is nervous, flustered, defensive. Even the most well-prepared kids know the bell could ring at any time.

Definitions

"It's very obvious when I don't know the word," said another finalist, 14-year-old Pranav Anandh of Glen Mills, Pennsylvania. "I'll panic a little. It takes me a second to get my head back together."

A handful of spellers have flashed some real swagger: 2021 champion Zaila Avant-garde and 2019 runner-up Simone Kaplan wowed audiences by reciting dictionary definitions nearly verbatim. In 2017, fourth-place finisher Shourav Dasari had a viral, mic-drop moment when he spelled "mogollon" in 5 seconds, turned around and strode back to his seat. Zaila, also a basketball prodigy, recently published a book, "It's Not Bragging If It's True."

Dev, a 14-year-old from Largo, Florida, flexes his knowledge so casually that it may escape notice.

Given the word "exhortation" in the quarterfinals, Dev asked, "Can I have all the alternate pronunciations?" In other words, he already knew the word had multiple alternate pronunciations.

"To be fair," Dev later told The Associated Press, "the word 'exhortation' isn't the rarest word out there. It wasn't that bad of a word. I'm not complaining."

Dev explained that he doesn't have a formulaic approach to asking questions. He will generally ask about a word's roots, definition and language of origin. If he repeats a question, he's seeking reassurance. "I never ask for a sentence, though. That's just me," Dev said. "It depends on the word, but a sentence is just a stalling tactic."

Scott Remer, who coaches six of the finalists - Dev, Pranav, Dhruv Subramanian, Shradha Rachamreddy, Arth Dalsania and Sarah Fernandes - instructs his pupils to pace themselves and ask any question that might be helpful.

"Generally speaking, the kids who ask more questions are the kids who know more, actually, which is maybe counterintuitive," Remer said.

Sometimes, spellers even perform a bit of rope-a-dope - Pranav and fellow finalist Charlotte Walsh said they sometimes intentionally ask about roots they doubt are part of a word, because the "no" answer can be just as helpful.

Sticking to a routine, even if the speller knows a word right away, can keep spellers relaxed and prevent flubs.

"There's a certain confidence that comes from having kind of a checklist. You're not floundering on stage. You know what you need to do, you know when you need to do it, and it is a procedure that you can follow to analyze the word and break it down methodically," Remer said. "I think that method really helps, especially when you're under pressure."

The other finalists were Surya Kapu - who also made the 2022 finals - Aryan Khedkar, Vikrant Chintanaboina and Tarini Nandakumar.

Although she was eliminated in the semifinals, 13-year-old Kavya Jakasaina of Jersey City, New Jersey, had the demeanor of a veteran speller - which she isn't. She only got serious about spelling after she lost her school bee last year.

"Rather than panicking and looking all nervous, I'd rather, even if it's my last word up there, at least manage it gracefully and proudly," Kavya said. "Spelling comes to me naturally, so I kind of feel at home here."

Head judge **Mary Brooks** took note while bidding Kavya farewell.

"Your word that advanced you into the (semi)finals was 'ethereal,'" Brooks said, "and it can also describe the graceful poise you've spelled with."

Also:

NEW YORK: Journalist **Lisa Ling**, who left CNN after her "This is Life" documentary series was canceled, has joined CBS News as a reporter, the network said on Wednesday.

Ling, who will be based in **Los Angeles**, will join CBS later this summer. She'll contribute stories across the network's platforms.

"This is Life" featured Ling's immersive storytelling on topics like motorcycle gangs, sex trafficking and gun violence. Last year, she did an HBO Max documentary series on Asian-American history and cuisine.

She also spent three years as a panelist on "The View," hosted "National Geographic Ultimate Explorer" and was executive producer and host of "Our America" on **Oprah Winfrey's OWN** network.

She started in journalism as a correspondent for Channel One News.

Ling is the latest in a string of hires by CBS News President **Neeraj Khemlani** over the past two years, including **Nate Burleson**, **Scott MacFarlane**, **Natalie Morales**, **Robert Costa** and **Cecilia Vega**.



Chef Aaron Verzosa poses for a portrait while demonstrating plating Tailor Made, a course in which diners disclose their hunger level from five to one, at Filipino American restaurant Archipelago, Wednesday, May 24, 2023, in Seattle. Verzosa is nominated for a 2023 James Beard Award in the Best Chef: Northwest and Pacific category. (AP)



Pastry chef Vince Bugtong holds a Crème Brûlée Tart, made of lemon custard, strawberry guava jam, macadamia coconut streusel and ube espuma, a purple yam foam, at Abaca restaurant in San Francisco, May 29, 2023. Three Filipino restaurants in three different areas of the US will be representing at this year's James Beard Awards, the culinary world's equivalent of the Oscars. The awards ceremony is next week in Chicago. (AP)

Variety

OMAHA, Neb: John Beasley, the veteran character actor who played a kindly school bus driver on the TV drama "Everwood" and appeared in dozens of films dating back to the 1980s, has died. He was 79.

Beasley died Tuesday after a "brief and unexpected illness" at a hospital in his hometown of Omaha, his manager, **Don Spradlin**, said.

Beasley played an assistant coach in the 1993 football film "Rudy" and a retired preacher in 1997's "The Apostle," co-starring and directed by Robert Duvall.

On TV, Beasley was the father of Cedric the Entertainer in the TV Land comedy "The Soul Man" and later starred for four seasons alongside Treat Williams in "The WB's" "Everwood."

Most recently, Beasley had small parts in the Showtime drama "Your Honor," with **Bryan Cranston**, and "The Mandalorian," a Star Wars offshoot on Disney+.

For more than a dozen years, he ran the John Beasley Theater and Workshop in Omaha, where he was born in 1943.

"To be a working artist is the highest calling, and I appreciate wherever it takes me," Beasley told the publication American Theatre last year.

He is survived by Judy, his wife of 58 years; two sons, **Michael** and **Tyrone**; and six grandchildren, including **Malik Beasley**, who plays for the Los Angeles Lakers.

The NBA veteran paid tribute to his grandfather on Instagram.

"To the man who put the Beasleys on the map," he wrote. (AP)

NEW YORK: Little Amal, a 12-foot (3.7-meter) puppet of a Syrian refugee, will journey across the **United States** this fall, visiting key places in America's history to raise awareness about immigration and migration.

The puppet of the 10-year-old girl will visit the US Capitol, Boston Common, Joshua Tree National Park and the Edmund Pettus Bridge among other sites during a trek which starts in **Boston** on Sept. 7 and ends Nov. 5 along the US-Mexico border.

Lifestyle

Multiple culinary Oscar nods amplify their stories

Filipino chefs earn James Beard love

Like a lot of chefs, Aaron Verzosa has been hustling the past three years to get Archipelago, his Filipino restaurant in Seattle, through the pandemic and its ripple effects. Getting a James Beard Award nomination was a validating moment.

"Being able to amplify and showcase stories about the Filipino American culture, the communities here, specifically in the Northwest, and really the immigrant story that my parents came with ... I was just very humbled to be able to have the opportunity to showcase what the sacrifice was and be able to represent the region in that way," said Verzosa, who is up for Best Chef: Northwest and Pacific.

In the culinary world, the awards are the equivalent of the Oscars. Three Filipino restaurants will be represented at the James Beard Foundation's annual awards ceremony, on June 5 in Chicago.

Abaca, in San Francisco, scored an Outstanding Pastry Chef or Baker nod for Vince Bugtong. And Kasama, in Chicago, earned a joint Best Chef: Great Lakes nomination for husband and wife Tim Flores and Genie Kwon. Last year, Kasama was nominated for Best New Restaurant and also became the first Michelin-starred Filipino restaurant. Past Filipino American winners include Tom Cunanan, who snagged Best Chef: Mid-Atlantic in 2019 for his now closed Washington, D.C., restaurant, Bad Saint.

Recognition

All this recognition is welcome praise for a cuisine that has historically been stifled by colonialism and a general lack of appreciation. These chefs are part of a younger generation giving voice to the Filipino American experience through the language of food.

Before joining Abaca in January, Bugtong said he was having an identity crisis as pastry chef for an Oakland cocktail bar. He wanted to do more Filipino-centric desserts, but at the same time felt he lacked authenticity. At Abaca, he said, chef and owner Francis Aug gave him the freedom to explore his culinary roots. He has since experimented with dishes from the Philippines' pre-Spanish days, like rice-based desserts, or kakanin in Tagalog.

"In the small amount of time that I've worked here, I definitely learned so much," Bugtong said.

He enjoys playing around with ingredients from the Philippines. For example, he wants to make a granita with

barako coffee, which is grown there, and pair it with muscovado jelly and leche flan ice cream. Leche flan is the Filipino version of creme caramel.

Bugtong doesn't worry about whether something is unconventional and outside the usual traditions of Filipino culture.

"My thought process when I come up with stuff is, 'Do I like it?'" he said. "Does it represent me as a Filipino American? Then the second thing that I think about is, 'Is this approachable to other people? Filipino or otherwise?' And then I think of a composition that makes it aesthetically beautiful."

Generation

In Seattle, Archipelago, named because the Philippines is comprised of 7,100 islands, has been dishing out a seasonal tasting menu since 2018. Verzosa and his wife, Amber Manuguid, wanted a "Pacific Northwest restaurant first and foremost." But there's a "Filipino American-ness" intrinsic to the meals too.

For instance, Verzosa might swap out tamarind for wild lingonberries. He does his own take on Filipino banana ketchup with sweeter tubers or root vegetables.

With only 12 seats in the restaurant, Verzosa chats with every patron.

"When we have Filipinos coming from the Philippines and we have Filipinos that are here from the US - whether they be first, second, all the way to fifth generation - there's a really beautiful way to connect with them differently," Verzosa said.

"I think the most important thing to realize is that there is absolutely - like anything - no one way to be Filipino."

Neither Verzosa nor Bugtong seriously considered a culinary career until after college. Verzosa grew up on a diet of PBS and Food Network cooking shows, as well as the cooking of his father, aunts and uncles.

"I would come home from school, be eating my dad's food and watching these shows," said Verzosa, who was originally headed to medical school. "At some point, he was like, 'Hey, listen, Aaron, if you love eating as much as you do, you need to learn how to love to cook.'"

Bugtong dropped plans to become a teacher and enrolled in a Bay Area culinary school in 2014. As a child, he hadn't demonstrated any passion for making things from scratch.

"I did stuff with Betty Crocker and thought I was badass, like substituting milk instead of water," Bugtong said, chuckling. "When I was a kid, I used

to put egg wash on Chips Ahoy! and bake them. They came out very gooey inside and crispy on the outside."

Filipinos have heard on and off for the last decade that their food is having a moment, about to be the next big thing in US cuisine. Its staples include steamed rice, meat, fish, and notes of sweet, salty and sour. Dishes like adobo (a meat braised in vinegar, soy sauce and garlic), lumpia (spring rolls) and pancit (fried noodles) are already part of the zeitgeist.

Yet Filipino restaurants make up only 1% of US restaurants serving Asian food, according to a Pew Research Center analysis released earlier this month.

There's no one explanation why other Asian cuisines like Chinese grabbed a bigger foothold in the restaurant industry.

Occupations

One reason is the "funneling" of early Filipino immigrants into particular occupations, according to Martin Manalansan IV, an American Studies professor at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities. In the 1920s and '30s, he said, they came to the US for agricultural work. After 1965, they worked mostly in more technical fields like nursing and engineering.

Many young Filipino Americans were discouraged from becoming chefs "because that was seen as very lowly, especially if your parents are nurses, doctors, engineers, whatever," Manalansan said.

In addition, Filipino food was often dismissed as a fusion of Chinese, Spanish and a dash of American. That perception annoys Manalansan because it doesn't recognize the creativity of Filipino culture.

"The late '90s foodie revolution was really ... about being adventurous and being called a 'foodie,' being into more 'exotic,' interesting cuisine," Manalansan said. "The Filipino cuisine was seen as kind of homey, kind of blasé."

Whether this year's James Beard love is a coincidence or not, Verzosa says it feels like there are more rising, accomplished Filipino chefs than ever.

"Over the last five, 10 years or so now, they're finally coming through and developing their own voice, and wanting to showcase their own families, their own communities, their own regions," Verzosa said.

"Having the craft and ability to make delicious food - obviously that needs to happen to tell those stories." (AP)



Cranston



Beasley

Houston, San Antonio and El Paso, as well as the **California** cities of **Los Angeles** and **San Diego**.

"Obviously there's a lot of specific points in our American history that we felt that we needed to address and that's the reason why we're starting in Boston," says **Enrico Dau Yang Wey**, lead puppeteer and co-associate artistic director. "The reason why we're finishing in San Diego is that there's just such a thin line between the United States and Mexico." (AP)

Health

'Sick workers' blamed 'Poison in every puff' on Canada's each cig

TORONTO, June 1, (AP) - Canada will soon become the first country in the world where warning labels must appear on individual cigarettes.

The move was first announced last year by Health Canada and is aimed at helping people quit the habit. The regulations take effect Aug. 1 and will be phased in. King-size cigarettes will be the first to feature the warnings and will be sold in stores by the end of July 2024, followed by regular-size cigarettes, and little cigars with tipping paper and tubes by the end of April 2025.

"This bold step will make health warning messages virtually unavoidable," Mental Health and Addictions Minister Carolyn Bennett said Wednesday.

The warnings - in English and French - include "poison in every puff," "tobacco smoke harms children" and "cigarettes cause impotence."

Health Canada said the strategy aims to reduce tobacco use below 5% by 2035. New regulations also strengthen health-related graphic images displayed on packages of tobacco.

Bennett's statement said tobacco use kills 48,000 Canadians every year.

Doug Roth, chief executive of the Heart & Stroke charity, said the bold measure will ensure that dangers to lung health cannot be missed.

The Canadian Cancer Society said the measure will reduce smoking and the appeal of cigarettes, thus preventing cancer and other diseases.

Rob Cunningham, senior policy analyst at the Canadian Cancer Society, said health messaging will be conveyed in every puff and during every smoke break. Canada, he added, will have the best tobacco health warning system in the world.

Tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship are banned in Canada and warnings on cigarette packs have existed since 1972.

In 2001, Canada became the first country to require tobacco companies to include picture warnings on the outside of cigarette packages and include inserts with health messages.

Eating disorders: In the midst of a surge in eating disorders across the country, Colorado's acting governor signed bills Tuesday that will create a state program dedicated to addressing the mental illness, limit the use of body mass index in determining treatment and restrict the sale of diet pills to minors.

Colorado and several other states tackling the issue are responding to the nearly 30 million Americans - roughly the population of Texas - who will struggle with an eating disorder, such as anorexia or bulimia, in their lifetime. More than 10,000 people will lose their life to the condition every year, according to data cited by the National Association of Anorexia Nervosa and Associated Disorders.

"Eating disorders are serious and have one of the highest mortality rates of any mental illness," Vincent Atchity, CEO of Mental Health Colorado, said in a statement on the bills. "We will save lives by removing barriers to care and helping those who are struggling (to) find healing."

The changes will take effect at different times, but roughly within a year.

One of the bills, signed by Colorado's Lieutenant Gov. Dianne Primavera in her capacity as acting governor, will largely ax the use of body mass index, or BMI, in determining the level of treatment for eating disorders, even though it remains an industry standard.

Proponents of the new law say the centuries old BMI - a calculation of someone's height and weight - is antiquated and flawed.

Eating disorders are not invariably linked to body weight or BMI, said Claire Engels, program coordinator for the Eating Disorder Foundation, which supported the bill. Instead, they center around eating habits, anxiety, depression, trauma and control. That means those with eating disorders who fall outside the BMI prescription struggle to get proper care or are expelled from treatment prematurely.

Instead, the law will compel health insurers to consider a patient's eating behaviors, heart rate or blood pressure among other criteria when determining treatment coverage.

The same law will also limit the sale of diet pills to minors after experts argued that they can exacerbate, or even instigate, eating disorders.

A second bill signed Tuesday will create a state program that will offer resources on eating disorders, administer a grant to research the mental illness, and raise awareness publicly and among students, parents and staff at schools.

The pandemic worsened the crisis by pushing some, especially teenagers, into isolation, filling hospital beds and further burdening the already overwhelmed treatment centers. Colorado is joined by a number of states, including California, New York and Texas, in considering bills to quell the problem this year.

Other proposals across the US include restricting social media algorithms from promoting potentially harmful content and including curriculum on eating disorders in middle and high schools.

Food poisoning: Food workers who showed up while sick or contagious were linked to about 40% of restaurant food poisoning outbreaks with a known cause between 2017 and 2019, federal health officials said Tuesday.

Norovirus and salmonella, germs that can cause severe illness, were the most common cause of 800 outbreaks, which encompassed 875 restaurants and were reported by 25 state and local health departments.

Investigators with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention called for better enforcement of "comprehensive food safety policies," which emphasize basic measures like hand washing and keep sick workers off the job.

Although 85% of restaurants said they had policies restricting staff from working while sick, only about 16% of the policies were detailed enough to require workers to notify managers and to stay home if they had any of the five key symptoms - including vomiting, diarrhea, and sore throat with fever.

About 44% of managers told the CDC their restaurants provided paid sick leave to workers. That's a problem, according to Mitzel Baum, the chief executive of stop Food-borne Illness, a nonprofit advocacy group.

She said it means workers are forced to choose between earning money or showing up sick - or there's social pressure not to leave fellow employees short-staffed.

"If there's a positive food safety culture, you're not penalized for illness," Baum said.

It can be hard for consumers to know when sick workers might be on the job, she said, but there are some signs to look for: "Is your server sniffing? Are they sneezing? How are they handling the utensils?"



Bennett



Saito Ene Ruka, (right), who said he has lost 100 cows due to drought, and his neighbour Kesoi Ole Tingoo, (left), who said she lost 40 cows, walk past animal carcasses at Ilangeruani village, near Lake Magadi, in Kenya, on Nov. 9, 2022. A new study says Earth has pushed past seven out of eight scientifically established safety limits and into "the danger zone," not just for an overheating planet that's losing its natural areas, but for well-being of people living on it. The study, published Wednesday, May 31, for the first time it includes measures of 'justice,' which is mostly about preventing harm for groups of people. (AP)

Science

World in danger zone in nearly all ecological ways: study

Earth is 'really quite sick now'

NEW YORK, June 1, (AP) - Earth has pushed past seven out of eight scientifically established safety limits and into "the danger zone," not just for an overheating planet that's losing its natural areas, but for the well-being of people living on it, according to a new study.

The study looks not just at guardrails for the planetary ecosystem but for the first time it includes measures of "justice," which is mostly about preventing harm for countries, ethnicities and genders.

The study by the international scientist group Earth Commission published in Wednesday's journal Nature looks at climate, air pollution, phosphorus and nitrogen contamination of water from fertilizer overuse, groundwater supplies, fresh surface water, the unbuilt natural environment and the overall natural and human-built environment. Only air pollution wasn't quite at the danger point globally.

Pollution

Air pollution is dangerous at local and regional levels, while climate was beyond the harmful levels for humans in groups but not quite past the safety guideline for the planet as a system, the study from the Swedish group said.

The study found "hotspots" of problem areas throughout Eastern Europe, South Asia, the Middle East, Southeast Asia, parts of Africa and much of Brazil, Mexico, China and some of the US West - much of it from climate change. About two-thirds of Earth don't meet the criteria for freshwater safety, scientists said as an example.

"We are in a danger zone for most of the Earth system boundaries," said study co-author Kristie Ebi, a professor of climate and public health at the University of Washington.

If planet Earth just got an annual checkup, similar to a person's physical, "our doctor would say that the Earth is really quite sick right now and it is sick in terms of many different areas or systems and this sickness is also affecting the people living on Earth," Earth Commission co-chair Joyeeta Gupta, a professor of environment at the University of Amsterdam, said at a press conference.

It's not a terminal diagnosis. The planet can recover if it changes, including its use of coal, oil and natural gas and the way it treats the land and water, the scientists said.

But "we are moving in the wrong direction on basically all of these," said study lead author Johan Rockstrom, director of the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research in Germany.

"This is a compelling and provocative paper - scientifically sound in methodology and important for identifying the dimensions in which the planet is nearing the edge of boundaries that would launch us into irre-

NASA talks UFOs with public ahead of the final report on unidentified flying objects

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla., June 1, (AP) - NASA held its first public meeting on UFOs on Wednesday a year after launching a study into unexplained sightings and insisted it's not hiding anything.

The space agency televised the four-hour hearing featuring an independent panel of experts who vowed to be transparent. The team includes 16 scientists and other experts selected by NASA including retired astronaut Scott Kelly, the first American to spend nearly a year in space.

"I want to emphasize this loud and proud: There is absolutely no convincing evidence for extraterrestrial life associated with" unidentified objects, NASA's Dan Evans said after the meeting.

Still, hundreds of questions from the public that poured in ahead of time were skeptical and veered into conspiracy theories.

NASA launched the study to probe what it calls UAPs - short for unexplained anomalous phenomena - in the sky, in space or under the sea.

Optical illusions can explain some of this, said Kelly, a former Navy fighter pilot. He recalled a Tomcat flight off Virginia Beach years ago during which his radar intercept officer in the back seat was convinced they'd flown past a UFO.

"It turns out it was Bart Simpson, a balloon," Kelly said. "And in my experience, the sensors kind of have the same issues as the people's eyeballs."

Evans pointed out that the livestream of the meeting led to considerable trolling. That comes on top of "online abuse" directed toward several committee members.

Harassment detracts from the scientific process and reinforces the stigma surrounding the topic, said Evans, adding that NASA security is dealing with it.

"It's precisely this rigorous, evidence-based approach that allows one to separate the fact from fiction," he said.

The group is looking at what unclassified information is available on the subject and how much more is needed to understand what's going on in the sky, according to astrophysicist David Spergel, the committee's chair who runs the Simons Foundation.

No secret military data are included, such as anything surrounding the suspected spy balloons from China spotted flying over the US earlier this year.

The meeting was held at at NASA headquarters in Washington with the public taking part remotely.

A final report is expected by the end of July.

versible states," Indy Burke, dean of the Yale School of the Environment said in an email. She wasn't part of the study.

The team of about 40 scientists created quantifiable boundaries for each environmental category, both for what's safe for the planet and for the point at which it becomes harmful for groups of people, which the researchers termed a justice issue.

Warming

Rockstrom said he thinks of those points as setting up "a safety fence" outside of which the risks become higher, but not necessarily fatal.

Rockstrom and other scientists have attempted in the past this type of holistic measuring of Earth's various interlocking ecosystems. The big difference in this attempt is that scientists also looked at local and regional levels and they added the element of justice.

The justice part includes fairness between young and old generations, different nations and even different species. Frequently, it applies to conditions that harm people more than the planet.

An example of that is climate change.

The report uses the same boundary of 1.5 degree Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) of warming since pre-industrial times that international

leaders agreed upon in the 2015 Paris climate agreement. The world has so far warmed about 1.1 degrees Celsius (2 degrees Fahrenheit), so it hasn't crossed that safety fence, Rockstrom and Gupta said, but that doesn't mean people aren't being hurt.

"What we are trying to show through our paper is that even at 1 degree Centigrade (1.8 degrees Fahrenheit) there is a huge amount of damage taking place," Gupta said, pointing to tens of millions of people exposed to extreme hot temperatures. The planetary safety guardrail of 1.5 degrees hasn't been breached, but the "just" boundary where people are hurt of 1 degree has been.

"Sustainability and justice are inseparable," said Stanford environmental studies chief Chris Field, who wasn't part of the research. He said he would want even more stringent boundaries. "Unsafe conditions do not need to cover a large fraction of Earth's area to be unacceptable, especially if the unsafe conditions are concentrated in and near poor and vulnerable communities."

Another outside expert, Dr. Lynn Goldman, an environment health professor and dean of George Washington University's public health school, said the study was "kind of bold," but she wasn't optimistic that it would result in much action.



This image provided by Health Canada shows the final wording of six separate warnings that will be printed directly on individual cigarettes as Canada becomes the first in the world to take that step aimed at helping people quit the habit. The regulations take effect Aug. 1 and will be phased in. King-size cigarettes will be the first to feature the warnings and will be sold in stores by the end of July 2024, followed by regular-size cigarettes, and little cigars with tipping paper and tubes by the end of April 2025. (AP)

Discovery

Marineland facing charges: Ontario has charged the Niagara Falls, Ontario, tourist attraction Marineland over the care of its black bears.

The Ministry of the Solicitor General said Wednesday charges were laid out on Tuesday.

"Marineland of Canada, Inc in Niagara Falls, Ontario, has been charged with three counts of failing to comply with an order related to the care of American Black Bears," said Brent Ross, a spokesperson for the ministry.

Ross said the charges have been laid under a section of the Provincial Animal Welfare Services Act that allows an inspector to issue an order to help animals that may be in distress. The facility must comply with the order or otherwise face charges.

The ministry declined to provide additional details. Marineland said it was working on providing comment.

Marineland has previously said it treats all its animals well and exceeds the standards of care as prescribed under the law.

The park houses an unknown number of black bears that live together in an enclosure with dens and water. Visitors can feed the bears popcorn. (AP)

Hawaii reopens 'beach': A young Hawaiian monk seal has weaned and relocated, allowing a stretch of a popular Hawaii beach to reopen Tuesday after it was made off-limits to protect the endangered pup while it nursed.

Hawaii officials last month cordoned off a large stretch of a popular Waikiki neighborhood beach to protect the seal mother, named Kaiwi, and her days-old pup, named Pualani. State conservation and resources enforcement officers kept around-the-clock watch.

The birth of an endangered seal at one of Hawaii's most popular tourism hubs highlighted the tension between protecting the islands' fragile ecosystems and maintaining access to the pristine white-sand beaches that attract millions of visitors each year.

Kaimana Beach is next to a mid-sized hotel and is a favorite swimming and sunbathing spot for locals and visitors. Starting six years ago, monk seals have occasionally given birth there, setting the stage for conflict between seal mothers and beachgoers.

Authorities took extra care after a California tourist got too close to a mother-pup pair last year, and was pulled underwater by the mother, leaving cuts on the 60-year-old visitor's face, arms and back. (AP)

Painting returns to Poland: A priceless 16th century Italian painting that was looted by Nazi Germany during World War II and discovered in Japan has been returned to Poland, authorities in Warsaw said Wednesday.

The "Madonna with Child" attributed to Alessandro Turchi, is the latest of some 600 looted artistic pieces that Poland has successfully repatriated. More than 66,000 so-called war losses remain unaccounted for. The painting was handed

over during a ceremony at Poland's Embassy in Tokyo Wednesday.

Culture Minister Piotr Gliński told reporters in Warsaw that the baroque painting was on the Nazis' list of the 521 most valuable pieces of art among the tens of thousands of artworks that they looted when they occupied Poland between 1939-45.

He said it was "not easy" to explain the history behind the looted works as well as the need for their return. But he said



Ross



Gliński

the "Madonna with Child" was returned following negotiations with the Japanese side and the "Mainichi Auction Inc. as well as the person who was in possession of the painting have decided to return it to Poland, without any costs."

Agata Modzelewska, head of the ministry's department for restitution of culture items, said the Polish side always stresses in negotiations that returning looted art is "the best moral and ethical gesture." (AP)

'Every sport has its own idea'

Olympic sports leaders meet amid uncertainty over Russians competing in Paris

Ohtani hits his longest homer, 459 feet, Angels top White Sox

Rays avoid first sweep of season

CHICAGO, June 1, (AP): Shohei Ohtani homered in consecutive innings, including a 459-foot drive that was the longest of his Major League Baseball career, and drove in four runs to lead the Los Angeles Angels over the Chicago White Sox 12-5 on Wednesday.

Mike Trout put the Angels ahead 2-0 with a 476-foot home run in the first that was four rows shy of clearing the left field bleachers. Taylor Ward hit also went deep as the Angels hit four two-run homers plus a solo shot.

Lance Lynn (4-6) allowed eight runs, eight hits and two walks while hitting two batters in four innings, raising his ERA to 6.55.

Rays 4, Cubs 3

In Chicago, Brandon Lowe and Jose Siri each hit two-run homers late in the game off Mark Leiter Jr. (1-1), Jalen Beeks got the final two outs after coming in with the bases loaded and Tampa Bay avoided its first sweep of the season.

BASEBALL

Seiya Suzuki chased Rays starter Zach Eflin with a leadoff double in the seventh and came around on a line-drive single to deep left by pinch hitter Trey Mancini against Colin Poche (4-1), putting Chicago on top 3-2. Mancini got thrown out trying to reach second base on the play, and the lead disappeared in a flash.

Eflin gave up three runs and four hits. He struck out five and walked one.

Cubs starter Justin Steele retired all nine batters before exiting with tightness in his left forearm. Hayden Wesneski pitched one-hit ball over 3 2/3 innings and exited to cheers after walking Manuel Margot with two outs in the seventh.

Tigers 3, Rangers 2

In Detroit, Jake Rogers hit a tie-breaking sacrifice fly in the sixth inning and Jake Marisnick followed with a run-scoring single in his Tigers debut, leading Detroit over Texas.

Marcus Semien extended his hitting streak to 20 games with a double in the third.

Will Vest (2-0) retired five straight batters. Alex Lange worked around Semien's one-out walk in a hitless ninth for his 10th save in 11 chances.

Rangers starter Dane Dunning (4-1) allowed three runs and seven hits in five-plus innings.

Guardians 12, Orioles 8

In Baltimore, Josh Naylor homered, had a career-high four hits and drove in six runs to highlight a rare power display by Cleveland.

Josh Bell and Gabriel Arias also went deep for the Guardians, who had gone 264 consecutive plate appearances without a long ball before Naylor went deep in the fourth inning. Cleveland notched season highs in runs and hits (17) while scoring in double figures for the first time in a nine-inning game.

Anthony Santander homered for Baltimore and Aaron Hicks had two hits and scored twice in his Orioles debut before leaving with muscle cramps. But Baltimore blew leads of 4-1 and 7-6 while dropping a second straight series for the first time in 2023.

Santander's two-run drive in the bottom half put the Orioles up 7-6 before the Guardians took control with a five-run fifth. After Cleveland loaded the bases against Mychal Givens (0-1), Naylor doubled in three runs and Arias homered to make it 11-7.

Mariners 1, Yankees 0, 10 innings

In Seattle, Cal Raleigh's single leading off the bottom of the 10th inning scored pinch-runner Jose Caballero to help Seattle avoid a three-game sweep and snap New York's four-game win streak.

Raleigh lined a 2-2 pitch from Ron Marinaccio (2-2) into right field and Caballero scored easily after starting the inning as the runner at second base.

Justin Topa (1-2) pitched around J.P. Crawford's error on DJ LeMahieu's grounder leading off the 10th inning as the Yankees failed to score with the bases loaded and one out.

George Kirby didn't factor in the decision but pitched one of the best games in his young career throwing eight shutout innings allowing only three hits.

New York starter Clarke Schmidt was nearly the equal of Kirby and thanks to the Yankees bullpen continued to match zeros on the scoreboard. Schmidt threw 5 2/3 innings giving up three hits and striking out seven before turning to the bullpen.

Twins 8, Astros 2

In Houston, rookie Louie Varland threw seven scoreless innings and Donovan Solano drove in a season-high four runs as Minnesota defeated Houston.

It was a career-long outing for the



Cincinnati Reds pitcher Luke Weaver delivers during the first inning of the team's baseball game against the Boston Red Sox at Fenway Park in Boston. (AP)

MLB Results/Standings

WASHINGTON, June 1, (AP): Results and standings from the MLB games on Wednesday.

Detroit	3	Texas	2	Minnesota	8	Houston	2
LA Angels	12	Chicago W. Sox	5	Pittsburgh	9	San Francisco	4
Tampa Bay	4	Chicago Cubs	3	Washington	10	LA Dodgers	1
Atlanta	4	Oakland	2	Miami	2	San Diego	1
Cleveland	12	Baltimore	8	NY Mets	4	Philadelphia	1
Milwaukee	4	Toronto	2	Arizona	6	Colorado	0
Cincinnati	5	Boston	4				

American League				National League					
East Division				East Division					
W	L	Pct	GB	W	L	Pct	GB		
Tampa Bay	40	18	.690	—	Atlanta	33	23	.589	—
Baltimore	35	21	.625	4	Miami	29	27	.518	4
New York	34	24	.586	6	New York	29	27	.518	4
Toronto	29	27	.518	10	Philadelphia	25	30	.455	7-1/2
Boston	28	27	.509	10-1/2	Washington	24	32	.429	9
Central Division				Central Division					
W	L	Pct	GB	W	L	Pct	GB		
Minnesota	29	27	.518	—	Milwaukee	29	26	.527	—
Detroit	26	28	.481	2	Pittsburgh	28	27	.509	1
Cleveland	25	30	.455	3-1/2	Cincinnati	26	29	.473	3
Chicago	23	35	.397	7	St. Louis	25	32	.439	5
Kansas City	17	39	.304	12	Chicago	24	31	.436	5
West Division				West Division					
W	L	Pct	GB	W	L	Pct	GB		
Texas	35	20	.636	—	Los Angeles	34	23	.596	—
Houston	32	23	.582	3	Arizona	33	23	.589	-1/2
Los Angeles	30	27	.526	6	San Francisco	28	500	5-1/2	
Seattle	29	27	.518	6-1/2	San Diego	25	30	.455	8
Oakland	12	46	.207	24-1/2	Colorado	24	33	.421	10

25-year-old Varland (3-1), who allowed four hits - all singles - and struck out five with a walk.

Houston rookie starter Hunter Brown (5-2) yielded six hits and a career-high five runs with eight strikeouts in 4 2/3 innings for his first loss since May 2.

Brown sailed through the first two innings, retiring the first six batters he faced with five strikeouts before running into trouble in the third.

Diamondbacks 6, Rockies 0

In Phoenix, Christian Walker hit his 100th career home run, Tommy Henry threw seven strong innings and Arizona won its fourth straight game.

Arizona improved to 33-23, the first time it has been 10 games over .500 since 2018.

Walker hit his milestone homer on a changeup from Peter Lambert in the fifth. It was Walker's 12th homer of the season and made it 6-0.

Corbin Carroll had RBI singles in both the first and second innings. Lourdes Gurriel Jr. added a two-run single in the first, and Pavin Smith added an RBI double in the second.

The early offense came against Colorado's Dineleno Lamet (1-2), who was making his first start of the season after coming off the injured list. The righty gave up five runs on seven hits over three innings, striking out four.

Braves 4, Athletics 2

In Oakland, Ozzie Albies hit a go-ahead, two-run homer in a three-run fifth inning, and Atlanta denied Oakland's bid for their first three-game winning streak this season.

Jared Shuster (2-2) allowed two runs, three hits and four walks in 5 1/3 innings to win consecutive decisions for the first time this season. Jesse Chavez, A.J. Minter, Nick Anderson and Raisel Iglesias combined to retire Oakland's last 11 batters, with Iglesias getting three outs for his fifth save in six chances.

James Kaprielian (0-6) has the most consecutive losing decisions for an Oakland pitcher at a season's start since Mike Mohler began 0-8 in 1997. Kaprielian gave up three runs and five hits in 4 2/3 innings.

Brewers 4, Blue Jays 2

In Toronto, Abraham Toro hit a two-run home run, Owen Miller had two hits and drove in a pair of runs in Milwaukee's win over Toronto.

Called up from Triple-A on Tuesday, Toro connected off Toronto's Alex Manoh in the second for his first hit with the Brewers, who are 24-10 this season when hitting at least one

home run.

Making his second start of the season, Brewers right-hander Julio Teheran (1-1) allowed an unearned run and four hits in six innings. He didn't have a walk or strikeout. Devin Williams earned his ninth save in nine chances.

Reds 5, Red Sox 4

In Boston, Spencer Steer hit a two-run homer to break a seventh-inning tie and Cincinnati took advantage of Rafael Devers' throwing error to come from behind and beat Boston.

Kevin Newman, Matt McLain and Nick Senzel had two hits apiece for the Reds, who have won five in a row, taking the first two of their three games in Boston to beat the Red Sox in a series for the first time since the 1975 World Series.

Ian Gibaut (5-1) pitched one inning of perfect relief for Cincinnati, which trailed 2-0 and 3-1 before scoring one in the sixth and three unearned runs off Josh Winckowski (2-1) in the seventh to take a 5-3 lead. Buck Farmer pitched the ninth, retiring Devers on a deep fly to center to end it and earn his first save.

Mets 4, Phillies 1

In New York, Mark Canha homered and drove in four runs to lead Carlos Carrasco and New York past the slumping Philadelphia.

Carrasco (2-2) pitched six efficient innings to win his second consecutive start. Canha hit a two-run homer in the third and a two-run single with two outs in the fourth off Aaron Nola (4-4).

Edmundo Sosa homered off Carrasco for the Phillies, who lost their third

straight and matched a season low at five games under .500. The defending National League champions went 5-14 against the Mets last season and have dropped the first two meetings between the division rivals this year, mustering only one run over two nights.

Brooks Raley struck out three in 1 1/3 innings for the Mets, retiring a scuffling Trea Turner with two runners on to end the seventh. Adam Ottavino got two outs and David Robertson earned his 10th save in 11 chances.

Marlins 2, Padres 1

In Miami, Jean Segura and Nick Fortes singled in runs against Josh Hader in the ninth inning, and Miami overcame Gary Sánchez's first home run for San Diego.

Hader (0-1) blew a save for the third time in 16 chances, opening the ninth with a five-pitch walk to Yuli Gurriel. Joey Wendle sacrificed and Segura singled to left field for his 500th career RBI.

Segura took second on the throw and stole third. With the infield in, Fortes singled down the right-field line, giving the Marlins their third walk-off win this season.

Steven Okert (2-0) struck out the side in a perfect ninth, finishing a two-hitter.

Pirates 9, Giants 4

In San Francisco, Bryan Reynolds drove in three runs and made a leaping catch against the wall, helping Pittsburgh climb back above .500.

Former Giants Andrew McCutchen and Connor Joe each went 3 for 4 with an RBI as the Pirates (28-27) won consecutive games after dropping below .500 for the first time since they were 1-2.

Mitch Keller (7-1) improved to 4-0 in his last five starts, allowing four runs and 10 hits in six innings with eight strikeouts. It was his seventh consecutive outing with at least eight strikeouts.

Alex Wood (1-1) allowed a season-high six runs, eight hits and three walks in 4 1/3 innings as the Giants fell back to .500 at 28-28.

Nationals 10, Dodgers 6

In Los Angeles, Luis García hit a tie-breaking three-run homer in the eighth inning, Keibert Ruiz added two more of Washington's five homers, and the Nationals avoided a series sweep.

García connected for a two-out, two-strike shut down the right field line off Brusdar Graterol (2-2) to put Washington up 8-5.

Ruiz, the former Dodgers prospect traded in a package for Max Scherzer and Trea Turner in 2021, homered in the second and ninth innings, giving him three in the last two games. Hunter Harvey pitched two innings for his third save. Patrick Corbin yielded seven hits and four walks over five bumpy innings for the Nationals.



Los Angeles Angels' Shohei Ohtani flies out off Chicago White Sox starting pitcher Lance Lynn as catcher Yasmani Grandal and home plate umpire James Hoye watch during the first inning of a baseball game in Chicago. (AP)

LAUSANNE, Switzerland, June 1, (AP): Complex questions about if - and how - Russian athletes could return to their competitions ahead of the 2024 Paris Olympics looked far from being resolved when sports governing bodies met Wednesday.

Different sports have varying sporting, political and logistical pressures, and there's a lack of clarity about how to define neutral status for Russian and Belarusian athletes that is mandatory for their return on the field of play.

"Every sport has its own idea. We are far in my opinion to have a common position, it is quite impossible," Francesco Ricci Bitti, president of the

Association of Summer Olympic International Federations (ASOIF) and a veteran of Olympic politics, said.

The ASOIF annual meeting came two months after the International Olympic Committee gave detailed advice on how individual athletes from Russia and its military ally Belarus could be reintegrated as neutral athletes, despite those countries' ongoing war on Ukraine.

Exactly how that neutrality is being defined is not very much clearer now as key qualification events start for the Olympics that open in July next year.

The IOC in March advised that some Russians and Belarusians could return in individual events but not team sports, if they had not actively supported the war in Ukraine, and are not contracted to "military or national security agencies."

The IOC also suggested ASOIF and the winter sports umbrella group, AIOWF, could oversee "creating a single independent panel" to run and "harmonize" the neutral status evaluations of hundreds of athletes, coaches and support staff.

That idea was dismissed "strongly and firmly," Ricci Bitti said, as a conflict of interest for his umbrella group. The Court of Arbitration for Sport is now involved in the process.

IOC president Thomas Bach briefly attended Wednesday and said some governing bodies of the 32-sport Paris program, who have ultimate control over their own events, had proven how Russian and Belarusians could continue to compete.

"You are doing so against the backdrop of the many traditional, I may say, naysayers who want to make people believe that it would never work," Bach said. He did not speak with reporters when leaving after his speech.

Bach and the IOC led calls within days of the invasion of Ukraine in February of last year to banish Russia from international sport, including to protect the security of athletes.

As the war continued and the 2024 Olympics approached, the IOC and Bach started to suggest it was discrimination to exclude all Russians and Belarusians. If approved to compete, the IOC said, Russian and Belarusians would not be allowed to use their flag, anthem or uniforms in national colors.

Various pressures on the Olympic sports to make the IOC policy work include the influence in sports and governments of Ukraine's European allies, and which countries are due to host key events.

OLYMPICS

In gymnastics, a top-tier Summer Games sport where Russians excel, a decision on reintegrating them was pushed back to at least July. World championships that are a key qualifier for Paris start Sept. 30 in Antwerp, Belgium.

On the sporting side, tennis does not want to class doubles and mixed doubles as team sports, Ricci Bitti said, testing the limits of the IOC guidance.

Track and field has taken the strongest stance by excluding all Russians while the International Judo Federation let some Russians compete in Qatar at its worlds this month, an event which was boycotted by Ukraine. The IJF's honorary president until last year was Vladimir Putin, who is an expert judoka.

The complicated situation in fencing - Bach's own sport where the long-time governing body president, Kremlin-connected billionaire Alisher Usmanov, stepped aside while under international sanctions - saw several Olympic champions from Russia denied neutral status this month.

They included the daughter of Russian Olympic Committee president Stanislav Pozdnyakov, who then criticized the neutral eligibility process as a "farce" and a "thinly veiled suspension." Pozdnyakov also warned of a Russian boycott of events.

Swimming awaits advice by September from a panel that includes athletes, World Aquatics executive director Brent Novicki said Wednesday. The 2024 world championships, in February in Qatar, can be a qualifying path for Paris.

"I'd imagine there's many people in the room today that are in a much more difficult situation," Novicki said.

Olympic sports officials are weighing their decisions while in Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, plus past and current Olympic medalists, continue to insist Russia must be excluded from Paris.

Paris mayor Anne Hidalgo also said there should be no Russian delegation at the Olympics if the war continues.

However, tennis fans in Paris turned on Ukrainian player Marta Kostyuk on Sunday at the French Open, booing her for refusing a post-match handshake with her Belarusian opponent Aryna Sabalenka. Roland Garros also will host the Olympic tennis tournaments next year.

Tennis and cycling have continued, since the war started, to let Russians and Belarusians compete as neutral individuals on their global tours.

"I think it's up to the fans to be able to express whatever they feel is appropriate," International Tennis Federation president David Haggerty said Wednesday. "At times there are tensions in the locker room but at times we see Russian and Ukrainian players perhaps playing doubles together."

Ultimately, the IOC can choose to bar Russia from its Olympics, and Bach said in March such a decision could be taken "at the appropriate time at its full discretion."



Bach



Basketball League champions Kuwait SC celebrate on the podium with officials.

KUNA photo

Kuwait SC crowned champions of basketball league '22-23

Kuwait SC defeated Kazma 104-85 in the final of 2022-2023 season of the Kuwaiti Division I Basketball League on Wednesday, thus claiming the title of the championship for the 14th time.

Throughout the game, hosted by Kuwait Basketball Association, Kuwait

SC put Kazma on the defensive and was able to win their third showdown running.

The champions maintained their advantage, ending the first half with a 53-38 lead, and then expanded their lead to 19 points at the end of the

game.

The result of the game put Kazma in the second place ahead of Qadsia who came third after beating Al-Jahra a couple of days ago. (KUNA)

Rybakina advances to third round in Paris, teen Andreeva wins again

Ruud qualifies as No. 20, Keys loses

PARIS, June 1, (AP): Elena Rybakina's comfort on clay improved as she eased into the third round at the French Open by beating another Czech teenager on Thursday.

The Wimbledon champion and No. 4 seed at Roland Garros beat 18-year-old Linda Noskova 6-3, 6-3 on Court Suzanne Lenglen.

"I cannot say that here it's easy for me. It's still every match getting better and better," Rybakina said on court. "It was a bit slippery for me today, I don't know why."

She ought to be feeling cosy on dirt after winning the Italian Open, but the 6-foot (1.8-meter) Kazakh is banking most of her confidence on her height advantage.

TENNIS

"This is my good weapon," she said, "but, at the same time, to move on clay it's not easy. It's always I need more to prepare and, of course, be more patient during the rallies."

The Australian Open runner-up hit 30 winners to Noskova's 16, though both players had 26 unforced errors. The Moscow-born Rybakina, who beat Brenda Fruhvirtova in the first round, will next face Sara Sorribes Tormo of Spain.

Teenager Mirra Andreeva's Grand Slam debut keeps getting better. The 16-year-old Russian beat Diane Parry of France 6-1, 6-2, to reach the third round and a possible matchup with Coco Gauff. Andreeva has dropped just six games through two rounds.

No. 20 Madison Keys committed a whopping 74 unforced errors in her 6-2, 4-6, 6-4 loss to fellow American player Kayla Day on Court Simonne Mathieu.

Day, who won the girls' title at the 2016 U.S. Open, is ranked 138th and came through qualifying to make her Roland Garros main-draw debut. She beat French wild card Kristina Mladenovic in the first round.

Injuries and the coronavirus pandemic stalled Day's career, she explained.

"I tore my quad. I fractured my foot. I tore both labrums in my hip. So it was just a lot of bad luck, one thing after another," Day said. "Every time I tried coming back, it just felt like something else would happen."

On the men's side, two-time major finalist Casper Ruud, the No. 4 seed, advanced to the third round after beating Italian player Giulio Zepieri 6-3, 6-2, 4-6, 7-5.

No. 18 Alex de Minaur of Australia lost to Tomas Martin Etcheverry of Argentina 6-3, 7-6 (2), 6-3.

Novak Djokovic refrained from any political messages at the French Open following a second-round victory that was a struggle for a set Wednesday night - hours after a government minister criticized the 22-time Grand Slam champion's comments about clashes in Kosovo as "not appropriate."

French Sports Minister Amelie Oudea-Castera warned Djokovic on Wednesday morning not to wade into such international issues again



Serbia's Novak Djokovic plays a shot against Hungary's Marton Fucsovics during their second round match of the French Open tennis tournament at the Roland Garros stadium in Paris. (AP)

during the Grand Slam tournament at Roland Garros.

Speaking on TV station France 2, Oudea-Castera said French Open tournament director Amelie Mauresmo encouraged Djokovic and his entourage to maintain "neutrality" on the field of play.

When his 7-6 (2), 6-0, 6-3 win against Marton Fucsovics ended Wednesday, Djokovic wrote on the lens of a TV camera - a custom at more and more tennis tournaments - and kept it simple, with an autograph and a smiley face. It was quite different from what happened after his first-round victory Monday, when Djokovic drew attention for writing in Serbian: "Kosovo is the heart of Serbia. Stop the violence" - a reference to clashes in northern Kosovo between ethnic Serbs and NATO-led peacekeepers.

Djokovic found plenty of tennis-related reasons to be bothered during the epic opening set against Fucsovics, whose only trip to a major quarterfinal ended with a loss to the 36-year-old from Serbia.

One issue was how hard, and how well, Fucsovics was walloping the ball early on. Another was how windy it was in the event's main stadium, rippling the players' shirts and whipping flags atop the arena until they twisted around their poles. That swirling air kicked up clay from the court, which led to another problem for Djokovic: shaky footing.

He would slip and slide and have trouble getting his feet planted properly. Djokovic asked the chair umpire for more clay to be added to the playing surface. Another complaint he had for the official was that breaks between games were being cut too short.

That set lasted an unusually long 1 1/2 hours but, as usual, it was Djokovic who was best when it mattered the most, dominating the tiebreaker.

During the changeover after that set, Djokovic changed shirts, and TV cameras zoomed in on an object about the size of a bottle cap that appeared to be taped to his chest. It was



Slovakia's Anna Karolina Schmiedlova plays a shot against Spain's Aliona Bolsova during their second round match of the French Open tennis tournament at the Roland Garros stadium in Paris. (AP)

not immediately clear what the item was.

A thrilling five-set victory took a toll on Gael Monfils, whose withdrawal from the French Open on Wednesday night handed No. 6 Holger Rune a walkover to the third round.

The 36-year-old Frenchman said he has a strained left wrist and can't continue.

He battled Sebastian Baez for nearly four hours on Court Philippe Chatrier before beating the Argentine 3-6, 6-3, 7-5, 1-6, 7-5 in a first-round match that ended at 12:18 a.m. local time Wednesday.

The victory was Monfils' first at tour level this year, as the veteran was coming back from heel surgery.

"Actually, physically, I'm quite fine. But I had the problem with my wrist that I cannot solve," he said. "The doctor says was not good to play with that type of injury. Yesterday was actually very risky, and then today definitely say I should stop."

Monfils reached the semifinals at the French Open in 2008 and made it to the quarterfinals on three other occasions.

Adventure in France has been bittersweet

Coach confirms Messi's last match for PSG this weekend

PARIS, June 1, (AP): Lionel Messi arrived two years ago wearing a T-shirt emblazoned with "Ici C'est Paris" (This Is Paris) - a favorite cry among Paris Saint-Germain fans - and to chants of "Messi! Messi! Messi!"

The soccer superstar will leave the team on Saturday not quite so revered.

The cheers have been replaced by jeers and boos in recent weeks at the Parc des Princes, where the World Cup winner will play his final game for the French league champion.

Christophe Galtier confirmed on Thursday that the looming end of the season is also the end of Messi's time at PSG.

Messi will bow out in their league finale against Clermont on Saturday. His contract expires at the end of June.

PSG recruited Messi in August 2021 with the ambition to finally win the Champions League. The team is still waiting.

Although PSG won its record-extending 11th French league title last weekend, it again exited Europe's top tournament in the round of 16.

Messi's adventure in France has been bittersweet. In spite of pretty good statistics, he has been embodying the team's shortcomings in the view of many PSG fans who have repeatedly

whistled his name sarcastically in recent weeks.

After struggling to adapt to the French league - the seven-time Ballon d'Or winner scored only six league goals in his first 26 games - Messi improved this season as he developed an efficient understanding with forward Kylian Mbappe.

In 31 league matches, the 35-year-old Messi has 16 goals and delivered as many assists. In all competitions, Messi netted 21 times and had 20 assists for PSG.

Despite Galtier's support, PSG's appreciation of Messi has not always



Messi

SOCCER

been so positive.

Last month, the club suspended him following an unauthorized trip to Saudi Arabia. Messi has a commercial contract with Saudi Arabia to promote tourism and has been linked with a lucrative move there at the end of the season.

There has also been talk of a return to Barcelona, where he spent the majority of his career, or to the United States to play in MLS.

Messi arrived at Barcelona at age 13 and left having won 35 titles. He helped the club win the four Champions Leagues, 10 Spanish leagues, and seven Copa del Reys.

Marseille coach Igor Tudor is leaving the club after just one season in charge.

Whitecaps rout Dynamo

Red Bulls pip Inter Miami, snap long winless skid on road

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla., June 1, (AP): Tom Barlow scored the lone goal of the match shortly after subbing in the second half and the New York Red Bulls snapped a 10-match winless streak on the road with a 1-0 victory over Inter Miami on Wednesday night.

Neither team scored until Barlow found the net for a second time this season - unassisted in the 52nd minute. It came just six minutes after he replaced Wikelman Carmona.

The Red Bulls (4-5-7) entered play with a 0-6-4 record in its previous 10 matches away from home. The win leaves them one shy of the club-record 11-match skid by the 2011 club.

Carlos Coronel had to make just one save to earn the clean sheet for the Red Bulls. Drake Callender stopped eight shots for Inter Miami.

New York improves to 5-2-0 in the series. Inter Miami (5-10-0) scored four goals in its two wins but just two goals in the five losses.

New York entered play having allowed just 123 shots through its first 15 matches - the lowest in the league since 2010. The Red Bulls outshot Inter Miami 18-6 with a 9-1 advantage in shots on goal.

Inter Miami, which has lost four straight, has seen the opening goal be the decisive goal in all 15 of its matches this season.

Pedro Vite scored in the first minute, Julian Gressel added two goals and the Vancouver Whitecaps roughed up the Houston Dynamo 6-2.

Vite scored his third goal of the season, using an assist from Brian White to give Vancouver (5-5-5) a very early lead.

Corey Baird scored the equalizer for Houston (5-6-3) seven minutes later.

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Adalberto Carrasquilla and Amine Bassi had assists on Baird's first goal this season. Bassi used an assist from Daniel Steres to score his sixth goal, giving the Dynamo a 2-1 lead in the 16th minute.

The lead lasted until Gressel took a pass from Ryan Gauld and scored two minutes later and it remained tied at 2 at halftime.

The Whitecaps grabbed the lead in the first minute of the second half on

White's sixth goal of the season, unassisted.

Gressel added his second score of the night and third of the season, unassisted in the 59th minute. Sebastian Berhalter scored unassisted in the 88th minute for his first goal this season to make it 5-2. Gauld completed the scoring in the fifth minute of stoppage time, using assists from Berhalter and Déiber Caicedo to score his first goal of the year.

Yoheli Takaoka finished with three saves for the Whitecaps. Steve Clark saved one shot for the Dynamo, who had not allowed multiple goals in any of their last eight matches. One more would have tied the club record set in 2016.

The Whitecaps improve to 9-0-3 all-time at home against Houston. Vancouver has the only road win in 22 meetings, a 2-1 victory in 2018. The Whitecaps are 22-6-6 at home since returning to BC Place in August of 2021. That ties Los Angeles FC for the most home wins over that span.

Jeremy Ebobisse scored out of the gates in the second half and Daniel de Sousa Brito made it stand up as the San Jose Earthquakes snapped a 14-match winless skid on the road with a 1-0 victory over the Seattle Sounders on Wednesday night.

Ebobisse ended a scoreless match when he took passes from Rodrigues and Cristian Espinoza in the 48th minute and scored his sixth goal of the season.

Daniel, as the Earthquakes goalkeeper prefers to be called, finished with eight saves to earn the clean sheet. Stefan Frei saved two shots for the Sounders, who have lost three of four at home after a 10-match unbeaten run.

The Earthquakes (6-5-4) beat Seattle (8-6-2) for a third straight time. San Jose's seven road wins in Seattle are the most by any opponent. The Earthquakes came into the match 0-10-4 in their previous 14 matches away from home.



Vancouver Whitecaps' Pedro Vite (right), and Houston Dynamo's Micael compete for a head ball during the first half of an MLS soccer match in Vancouver, British Columbia. (AP)



Norway's Casper Ruud plays a shot against Italy's Giulio Zeppieri during their second round match of the French Open tennis tournament at the Roland Garros stadium in Paris. Ruud won 6-3, 6-2, 4-6, 7-5. (AP) - See Page 15

Sports

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Sevilla win Europa League again



Sevilla's team captain Ivan Rakitic lifts the trophy after winning the Europa League final soccer match between Sevilla and Roma, at the Puskas Arena in Budapest, Hungary. (AP)

Hosts Argentina, England out

Montiel clinches another penalty shootout

Italy, Nigeria and Brazil advance to U-20 WC quarters

Buenos Aires, Argentina, June 1, (AP): Italy, Nigeria, Colombia and a 10-man Brazil lineup advanced to the quarterfinals of the Under-20 World Cup on Wednesday.

Host Argentina lost 2-0 to Nigeria in front of almost 30,000 fans in San Juan, ending an unlikely campaign for the home team. Italy eliminated England with a 2-1 victory thanks to a late goal from the spot.

Brazil thrashed Tunisia 4-1 despite being a player down for the entire second half, and Colombia topped Slovakia 5-1 with three of its goals scored in a four-minute span.

Nigeria will take on either Ecuador or South Korea in the next round. Brazil faces Israel in the quarterfinals, and Colombia will play Italy.

Argentina did not arrive at the U-20 World Cup as one of the favorites. The team coached by Javier Mascherano did not qualify initially and only got a spot at the tournament when it replaced Indonesia as host. Heavy home support after the senior team's World Cup title was expected to give the youngsters a boost.

But after Argentina wasted several opportunities throughout the match, the Nigerians punished them twice in the second half. A goal kick ended in a defensive mistake and a clear chance for Ibrahim Muhammad, who scored in the 61st minute.

Argentina continued to pressure, hitting the woodwork twice. A late Nigerian counter-attack ended in a header by Rilwanu Haliru Sarki just before the final whistle.

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"We played a great match," Mascherano said in a post-match TV interview. "We knew that if we made some mistakes we might have to pay. And regrettably the two mistakes we made brought them two goals."

Italy started strongly against England and scored in the 8th minute after a sequence of quick passes that put Tommaso Baldanzi in front of the goalkeeper. The English team equalized with Alfie Devine scoring from close range in the 24th. A stalemate settled in at the La Plata Stadium, one of the poorest pitches in the tournament.

But a video reviewed decision nearing fulltime gave Italy a chance from the spot. Cesare Casadei stepped up and scored his fifth goal of the tournament to secure the win and put the Italians through.

Earlier, Marcos Leonardo opened the scoring for Brazil in the 11th minute from the spot, his fourth goal at the tournament. Andrey Santos added a second from close range in the 31st.

Defender Robert Renan was sent off shortly before the break and Tunisia had the initiative for most of the second half, but Brazil scored twice in injury time through Matheus Martins and Santos.

Colombia's Oscar Cortes opened

Citizens start as undoubted favorites

United looking to stop treble-chasing City in 1st all-Manchester FA Cup final

LONDON, June 1, (AP): The roars grew louder inside Old Trafford as Erik ten Hag addressed Manchester United fans from the middle of the field, reminding them of the role they have in protecting the club's greatest ever achievement.

There was one game to go this season, the United manager told the baying crowd, and his players standing right in front of him were ready to give their all to beat Manchester City in the FA Cup final at Wembley Stadium.

"We count on you as well," he said, pointing to the supporters, who by now were punching the air in defiance. "They will give everything when you are at our backs, and I'm sure we've a really good chance to take the cup back to Old Trafford."

As rallying cries go, it was pretty much pitch perfect from Ten Hag, who knows exactly what's at stake on Saturday in a local derby with widespread repercussions.

For United, this is about much more than capturing a second trophy of the season - after the English League Cup in February that ended the club's six-year title drought - to cap an encouraging first season under Ten Hag. It's also about preserving United's proud status as the only English team to have won the league-FA Cup-European Cup treble in the same season.

City, after all, is two wins from

and finished the scoring for his team, striking first in the 48th. Yaser Asprilla made it 2-0 two minutes later and Tomás Angel added a third in the 52nd. Angel scored again in the 64th.



Argentina's Brian Aguirre (left), and Nigeria's Tochukwu Nnadi vie for the ball during a FIFA U-20 World Cup round of 16 soccer match at the Bicentenario stadium in San Juan, Argentina. (AP)

emulating that feat, having already clinched the Premier League title and booked its place in the Champions League final against Inter Milan in Istanbul on June 10.

That United can ruin City's treble bid adds more spice to the first cup final between the rivals, which is taking place about 170 miles (270 kilometers) south of Manchester.

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City starts as the undoubted favorite on the back of its stunning form since February that reeled in long-time leader Arsenal in the Premier League race and saw Bayern Munich and Real Madrid swept aside in the Champions League knockout stage.

Before a much-weakened team - featuring a bunch of youth players - lost at Brentford 1-0 in a league match with little riding on it last Sunday, City went on a 25-match unbeaten run in all competitions and won 20 of them. Along the way, Madrid was beaten 4-0, Bayern 3-0 and Arsenal 4-1. Back in October, City thrashed United 6-3.

All those games were at home, though, and City hasn't been quite so machine-like on the road. And that's not the only source of hope for United, which is seeking its 13th FA Cup title - with only Arsenal (14) having more.

Timotej Jambor scored a consolation with a headed goal in the 87th, but Colombia had the last word with another goal by Cortes in injury time.

City manager Pep Guardiola talks often of his players having "rhythm" but that might have been lost after he chose to rotate his lineups for the final two league games, with the title wrapped up. Before the loss at Brentford, City was possibly fortunate to come away from Brighton with a 1-1 draw.

Erling Haaland has 52 goals in all competitions in a stunning first season at City but it's just one goal in his last six games for the Norway striker.

Meanwhile, United won its final four matches in the league, conceding just two goals in that period. And in the last meeting between the teams, United won at Old Trafford 2-1 in January - albeit after a debatable equalizing goal from Marcus Rashford.

City is a different proposition four-and-a-half months on, though, and has more experience of these big, defining games than United in recent years. Guardiola certainly does - he is looking to claim the 34th trophy of his managerial career, and the 13th in his seven years at City.

That, of course, would set up City for a shot at standing shoulder to shoulder with United's class of '99.

"I will start to think about the treble," Guardiola said, "when I go to Istanbul with two titles in my pocket."

United striker Anthony Martial will miss the final after sustaining a hamstring injury in the team's final league game of the season, the 2-1 win over Fulham on Sunday.

Marcus Rashford is expected to start up front, with Jadon Sancho set to be on the left wing and possibly Bruno Fernandes on the right to allow United to field a sturdier central-midfield three, likely comprising of Casemiro, Christian Eriksen and either Fred or Scott McTominay.

Kevin De Bruyne and Jack Grealish missed City's final two league games because of minor injury issues, though Guardiola said he hoped the midfielders would be fit for the final.

City has no other injuries, with Nathan Ake playing 63 minutes against Brentford on his return from a hamstring problem.

The engraver got a head start. The word "Manchester" has already been engraved on the trophy to highlight the unique nature of this final, the 142nd in the world's oldest knockout competition.

There's set to be travel chaos around the final because of rail strikes that mean there will be no train services running between Manchester and London on Saturday.

BUDAPEST, Hungary, June 1, (AP): Five months after scoring the winning penalty in the World Cup final, Gonzalo Montiel converted the clinching spot kick in the Europa League final to earn Sevilla a seventh title in the competition on Wednesday.

The Argentina international sent Roma goalkeeper Rui Patrício the wrong way with his retaken penalty to seal a 4-1 win in the shootout for Sevilla after the match finished 1-1 after extra time in Budapest, where Mourinho was looking to maintain his record of having never lost a final in European competitions.

"I've won five finals and I lost this one, but I'm coming back home proud again," Mourinho told Sky Sport Italy. "The boys gave everything."

Gianluca Mancini and Roger Ibanez failed to convert for Roma from the spot against Sevilla goalkeeper Yassine Bounou. Montiel missed his first attempt but had another chance with Patrício judged to have come off his line.

SOCCER

Sevilla has still never lost a final of the Europa League or its precursor, the UEFA Cup - the team also won the competition in 2006, '07, '14, '15, '16 and '20 - and secured a place in next season's Champions League.

At one time close to the relegation zone in the Spanish league and eliminated from the Champions League, it had looked like a season to forget for Sevilla. But it was not over yet. A new coach, José Luis Mendilibar came in and things turned around before enjoying his biggest career victory on Wednesday night.

Before the final, Mourinho actually had more European title wins than Mendilibar had total games managed in those same competitions. The 62-year-old Mendilibar's career is peaking since joining then-struggling Sevilla just two months ago.

As Sevilla players celebrated on the field, Mourinho kept his calm and congratulated Sevilla on the victory.

"We lost a game but not dignity. I've never gone home prouder than today, even when I won," Mourinho said. "Great match, great final. Intense, vibrant."

After receiving his runners-up medal, Mourinho took it off and gave it to a young fan.

Paulo Dybala had put Roma ahead in the 35th minute at Puskás Aréna in the Hungarian capital. Mancini sent a through ball for Dybala who netted past Bounou with a left-footed low shot. The Argentina forward had recovered from an ankle injury in time to be declared fit for the final.



Brazil's Marcos Leonardo (left), and Tunisia's Yassine Dridi jump for a header during a FIFA U-20 World Cup round of 16 soccer match at La Plata Stadium in La Plata, Argentina. (AP)



IOC president, Thomas Bach, (right) shakes hand with FINA president Hussein Al-Musallam during their meeting in Lausanne.

Bach receives FINA 'head' Al-Musallam

LOUSANNE, Switzerland, June 1: The President of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), Dr. Thomas Bach this morning in Lausanne, Captain Hussein Al-Musallam, President of the International Swimming Federation and the development of water sports at the international level.

The work of the International Olympic Movement was also discussed.

It was Dybala's fifth goal of the Europa League, and 17th overall this season.

Sevilla was only slowly getting into the match but Ivan Rakitic came close to equalizing in first-half stoppage time with a low drive from some 20 meters (yards) that bounced off the post.

Mendilibar sent on midfielder Suso and forward Erik Lamela, a former Roma player, as substitutes at the start of the second half to rejuvenate his team.