



soccer
Pages 14-16



baseball
Page 15

A happy Eid Al-Adha to all

The Arab Times will be off the news-stands from June 29 to July 2. The next issue of the paper will appear on the stands on Monday, July 3. — See you then

Differences not a reason for conflict

Pilgrims hear call for unity

RIYADH, June 27, (Agencies): Pilgrims began flocking to Arafat holy site on Tuesday morning to perform the most significant ritual of Hajj.

Pilgrims will then move on to Muzdalifah at sunset, where they will perform Maghrib and Isha prayers, and will stay there until early Wednesday.

Undersecretary of the Saudi Ministry of Hajj and Umrah Affairs Ayed Alwinm said all Saudi government sectors are

standing by for ensuring a smooth hajj movement and offering all necessary support and services to pilgrims, the Saudi official news agency (SPA) reported.

He added that the ministry is continuing its field efforts in order to ensure the safety of pilgrims during this year's season. Muslims should unite in word, prayers and action, and should avoid conflict, Hajj preacher Sheikh Yusuf bin Mohammad said in his sermon on Mount Arafat on Tuesday.

Sheikh Yusuf, who has held several of the highest religious positions in Saudi Arabia before being appointed preacher at

this year's Hajj, reminded the world that racism has no basis in Islam, quoting a hadith – or saying – by the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH).

Sheikh Yusuf said: "God has forbidden amongst you the spilling of blood, looting of wealth and violation of honour. "The difference in languages, colours and ethnicities does not justify falling into discords and divisions."

Allah has commanded for "unity, love harmony and prohibits disputes and divisions", Sheikh Yusuf added.

The sermon was translated into 20 languages and broadcast in its original Arabic with simultaneous sign language interpretation.

Millions of pilgrims listened to the sermon and many more watched abroad.

In Kuwait, Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on Tuesday received a cable of greetings from His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on the occasion of Eid Al-Adha.

In his cable, His Highness the Crown Prince wished His Highness the Amir everlasting wellbeing and the homeland more security and progress. He also expressed best wishes for all Arab and Muslim nations.

In a reply cable, His Highness the Amir expressed sincere wishes for His Highness the Crown Prince, the nation and all Arab and Muslim nations.

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His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on Tuesday received cables of greetings from National Assembly Speaker Ahmad Al-Saadoun, His Highness Chief of the National Guards Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah, His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, His Highness Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, His Highness Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, on the holy occasion of Eid Al-Adha.

In their cables, the officials wished His Highness the Amir everlasting wellbeing and the dear nation more progress and prosperity.

In reply cables, His Highness the Amir thanked the senior officials for their sincere sentiments, expressing the best wishes for them and the nation and all Arab and Muslim nations.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received on Tuesday congratulatory cables from National Assembly Speaker Ahmad Al-Saadoun, His Highness Chief of the National Guard Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah, His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, His Highness Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, His Highness Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and His Highness Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, on the occasion of Eid Al-Adha.

In their cables, the senior officials congratulated His Highness the Crown Prince on the holy occasion and wished him everlasting good health.

For his part, His Highness the Crown Prince replied with letters thanking them for their greetings and wished them all a happy festival and a prosperous future in serving the nation.

His Highness the Crown Prince of Kuwait Sheikh Mishal Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on Monday phoned Qatar's Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani and congratulated him on the advent of Eid Al-Adha, which will start on Wednesday, June 28.

His Highness the Crown Prince also conveyed to Sheikh Tamim the greetings and congratulations of His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on the happy occasion.

He wished the Qatari Amir everlasting wellbeing and further progress and prosperity for Qatari and Qatari people.

For his part, the Qatari Amir expressed gratitude and appreciation to His Highness Sheikh Mishal on his gesture which reflected the strong, fraternal relations between the two Gulf countries and people.

Meanwhile, the Kuwait Cabinet on Monday congratulated His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and Kuwaiti people on the advent of Eid Al-Adha, which will commence on Wednesday June 28.

In its weekly meeting, held at Seif Palace under the chairmanship of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, the Cabinet welcomed the return of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah to Kuwait after an overseas trip and wished him everlasting wellbeing.

The Cabinet congratulated the newly-elected officials of the National Assembly including Speaker MP Ahmad Al-Saadoun, his Deputy MP Mohammad Al-Mutair, Secretary MP Mubarak Al-Tasha and Observer MP Mohammad Al-Huwailah as well as the chief of the all parliamentary committees.

The Cabinet also reviewed His Highness the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal's speech at the inaugural session of the National Assembly's 17th legislative term last Tuesday.

It lauded His Highness Sheikh Mishal's calls for sticking to democracy and preserving national unity as well as working for the development and progress of Kuwait.

The Cabinet promised that the committee in charge of coordinating between the government and the National Assembly would continue its efforts to set work priorities to achieve Kuwaiti people's aspirations and goals.

Day by Day

WE say again, 'The state must keep the Ministry of Defense away from the 'arms dealers'.

The state must also distance itself from those who broker major projects and be like the developed nations which deal directly with arms manufacturers and even producers of other goods.

The state must negotiate with them directly without an intermediary. This is what the developed nations do.

... Yet, tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar



Muslim pilgrims pray on the rocky hill known as the Mountain of Mercy, on the Plain of Arafat, during the annual Hajj pilgrimage, near the holy city of Makkah, Saudi Arabia, Tuesday, June 27, 2023. Muslim pilgrims in Makkah circled the Ka'aba, Islam's holiest site, and then converged on a vast tent camp in the nearby desert, officially opening the annual Hajj pilgrimage on Monday, returning to its full capacity for the first time since the coronavirus pandemic. (AP)

KPC in new approach to energy transition

Q8 founds first hydrogen refueling unit in Rome

NewsWatch

THE HAGUE: Investigations triggered by the cracking of encrypted phones three years ago have so far led to more than 6,500 arrests worldwide and the seizure of hundreds of tons of drugs, French, Dutch and European Union prosecutors said Tuesday.

The announcement underscored the staggering scale of criminality - mainly drugs and arms smuggling and money laundering - that was uncovered as a result of police and prosecutors effectively listening in to criminals using encrypted EncroChat phones.

"It helped to prevent violent attacks, attempted murders, corruption and large-scale drug transports, as well as obtain large-scale information on organised crime," European Union police and judicial cooperation agencies Europol and Eurojust said in a statement.

The French and Dutch investigation gained access to more than 115 million encrypted communications between some 60,000 criminals via servers in the northern French town of **Roubaix**, prosecutors said at a news conference in the nearby city of **Lille**. (AP)

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CAIRO: At least 3 people were killed when a 14-story apartment building collapsed in **Egypt's** northern coastal city of **Alexandria**, authorities said Tuesday.

The high-rise in the Mediterranean city's neighborhood of **Muntazah** collapsed early on Monday and initial reports said eight people were missing beneath the rubble.

On Tuesday, the city authorities confirmed that three bodies had been pulled out but did not say if anyone was still missing. Two people were reported injured in the collapse but have since been discharged from hospital.

It was also not immediately known what caused the collapse but such incidents are common in Egypt, where shoddy construction is widespread in shantytowns, poor city neighborhoods and rural areas. (AP)

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BEIRUT: Lebanon's militant Hezbollah group said its fighters shot down an Israeli drone Monday that was flying near the border and over southern Lebanon.

The group gave no further details about the type of drone that it claimed was downed near the village of Zibqine just north of the border with Israel.

An Israeli military spokesman said in a tweet that a drone crashed in Lebanon when an Israeli force was performing routine activities. The spokesman, **Avichay Adraee**, added in Arabic that there were no concerns of information being leaked. The incident comes after weeks of tensions along the Lebanon-Israel border, mainly in a disputed area known as **Chebaa Farms**. (AP)

□ □ □

THE HAGUE: Dutch authorities arrested a man and his daughter on suspicion of sending millions of euros to organizations linked to the Palestinian militant group Hamas, prosecutors said on Monday.

The 55-year-old man and his 25-year-old daughter from the town of **Leidschendam** on the outskirts of The

Hague on June 22 were detained on suspicion of breaching sanctions regulations by funding the militant group that runs the Gaza Strip.

The public prosecution office said in a statement that the pair are suspected of sending about 5.5 million euros (\$6 million) to bodies "related to the organization Hamas, which was sanctioned in 2003." (AP)



In this image made from the Ajman Police twitter, fire fighters try to extinguish a residential tower which caught fire early morning on Tuesday, June 27, 2023, in Ajman, United Arab Emirates. The fire tore through the high-rise residential building in the United Arab Emirates early Tuesday before being brought under control, according to videos circulating online. There were no immediate reports of injuries from the blaze in Ajman, one of the seven emirates that makes up the UAE, which also includes the futuristic cities of Dubai and Abu Dhabi. The footage showed a corner of the building engulfed in flames reaching from the ground level to the top, with debris falling to the street below. Ajman News, a local media outlet, later reported that the fire had been brought under control. (AP)

ROME, June 27, (KUNA): The Kuwait Petroleum International (Q8) announced Monday that it has started foundation of the first hydrogen refueling station in the Italian capital Rome.

In a press statement sent to KUNA, the company said that it would "launch the first station to supply hydrogen in Rome in collaboration with the specialized Maire Group".

The announcement was made in a ceremony attended by the company's representatives in Italy along with Italian government officials and energy and transport industry leaders.

Q8 noted that the project comes in implementation of the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC)'s strategy to provide its customers with a variety of clean and sustainable petroleum products made from renewable raw materials.

It clarified that the provision of hydrogen fuel would transform the station into an integrated center to support sustainable and low-emission mobility.

It is a valuable addition to Q8 fueling stations and to its current services which include providing conventional fuel of liquefied petroleum gas and methane, electric car charging service, as well as hydrogen fuel once the construction of the means of delivery is completed by 2026, added the statement.

It pointed out that this initiative will enable Q8 customers in the future to travel about 100 kilometers using one kilogram of hydrogen fuel for small vehicles and eight kilograms for large buses, which would reduce carbon dioxide emissions compared to conventional fuel by more than 75 percent.

"This project was developed in cooperation with the Italian government within the framework of its national plan for economic recovery and resilience aimed at developing a sustainable mobility network by supporting renewable energy and hydrogen projects," it stated, unveiling that it would be funded equally

by the partners and the European Union's Fund for Future Generations.

The statement quoted the CEO of Kuwait Petroleum International, Eng. Shafi Al-Ajmi, as saying, "Italy is considered the most important European market for the company due to the volume of its operations there: over 2,800, fueling stations in addition to the Naples Depot and the Milazzo refinery".

"We will continue to implement KPC's approach to the energy transition for the year 2050, by supporting the global movement to reduce harmful gas emissions in all of our global operations," he asserted.

He congratulated CEO of Q8 Italy and its leadership for their great role and efforts to make this achievement.

For his part, Executive Director of Q8 Italy Eng. Fadhel Al-Faraj, said, "Q8-Italy seeks to transform from a conventional fuel provider into a diversified energy company, within the framework of its energy transformation strategy."

"We welcome all sustainable products as they help us achieve our first goal, which is to respond to the needs of our customers, thus preserving our market share, and our second goal which is to establish a sustainable supply network for future vehicles in Italy," he concluded.

Meanwhile, Kuwaiti Ambassador to Italy Nasser Al-Qahtani hailed Q8's initiative to establish the first hydrogen refueling station in Rome and its contribution to the transition to clean sustainable energy.

"The adoption of this new pioneering step by Kuwait Petroleum International and its branch in Italy to contribute to the development of the Italian network for the transportation, storage and use of renewable products is directed towards transforming the vast Q8 network stations into an integrated center for renewable products with low emissions," Ambassador Al-Qahtani told KUNA.

Prayer Timings

Fajr	03:15	Asr	15:25
Sunrise ..	04:50	Maghrib ..	18:51
Zohr	11:51	Isha	20:24

Local

Expected weather for the next 24 hours:

By Day: Hot with light to moderate freshening at times northwesterly wind with speeds of 12-40 km/h with a chance for rising dust over open areas.

Weather

By Night: Hot to rather hot with light to moderate northwesterly wind with speeds of 12-35 km/h.

Station	Max Exp	Min Rec			
Kuwait City	47	35	Abdaly	46	28
Kuwait Airport	47	30	Jahra	48	31
			Salmiyah	43	34
			Ahmadi	44	35
			Nuwaisib	47	31
			Wafra	46	31

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

Strong bonds to enhance prosperity, security: Kuwait

'EU-GCC strategic partnership paper starting to bear fruit'

News analysis by Nawab Khan

BRUSSELS, June 27, (KUNA): One year after its adoption on 18 May 2022, the European Unions Joint Communication on a strategic partnership with the Gulf has begun to yield desired results.

A strengthened partnership is beneficial both for the EU and for the Gulf partners, says the 17-page document which addresses a series of key policy areas and presents concrete proposals for strengthened EU-GCC cooperation in a vast number of areas.

These include energy, green transition and climate change, trade and economic diversification, regional stability and global security, humanitarian and development challenges, and closer people-to-people contacts.

Together the 27-member EU and the 6-member GCC represent 20 percent of the global economy, 17.5 percent of global trade, and cover more than half of global foreign direct investments.

In the last one-year, high-level EU-GCC visits and meetings have become more frequent with the EU High Representative Josep Borrell, holding several meetings with GCC foreign ministers at the sidelines of international gatherings such as the UN.

European Council President Charles Michel visited Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and the UAE during a tour of the region in September while European Commission President Ursula Von der Leyen, delivered a keynote speech at the Manama Dialogue in Bahrain in November.

Other EU Commissioners also visited the Gulf region to boost energy and economic cooperation.

On June 16, 2023, GCC Secretary General Jassem Al Budaiwi met with EU High Representative Josep Borrell in Brussels and discussed bilateral relations and other issues of mutual interest and described his encounter with the head of the EU diplomacy as "very important and comprehensive."

On his part, EU spokesperson for foreign affairs, Peter Stano, described the meeting as "very good proving the commitment and attachment of both sides to deliver on this jointly defined ambition of deepening our relationship."

Al-Budaiwi and representatives from all six GCC countries participated in the seventh Brussels ministerial conference on Syria held on 15 June.

Yet, the main catalyst in the intensification in EU-GCC contacts and meetings comes after the appointment of the first EU Special Representative for the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

On his first day in office as EUSR for the Gulf on 1 June, Luigi Di Maio tweeted "ready & fully committed to engage with EU Member States & institutions, and each of our partners in the region. So much at stake and so much to do, through genuine dialogue & mutual respect. For our shared security & prosperity."

The former Italian foreign minister took up his post only three weeks ago but the number of EU-GCC meetings and visits have multiplied, unseen in many years.

In less than a month, Di Maio met all the six Brussels-based GCC ambassadors, the new head of the GCC mission to the EU, the Secretary General of the GCC, a group of visiting journalists from GCC countries, plus a number of other EU and GCC officials in an effort to enhance EU-GCC engagements and cooperation.

In his tweet after meeting Al Budaiwi on 16 June, the EU's Gulf envoy expressed his "strong support, pragmatism and shared ambition to seek jointly best ways to advance the security and prosperity of our regions and the EU strategic partnership with the GCC."

After meeting a 11-member media delegation from GCC countries in Brussels on 21 June Di Maio tweeted "great honour to meet today in Brussels key journalists from GCC countries."

"Our people and regions need to better communicate, listen to and understand each other! This is key to build trust and enable our strategic partnership," he said.

Following his meeting with the Ambassador of Kuwait to the EU, Nawaf Al-Enezi on 15 June, he expressed his "strong support and readiness to work closely to advance the EU partnership with Kuwait and the Gulf region. Ready to visit the country and engage in fruitful dialogue."

On his part, Ambassador Al-Enezi tweeted that "GCC-EU strong partnership will enhance prosperity and security for all partners & strengthen the common capacity to address global challenges."

Di Maio tweeted similar encouraging messages after meeting with other GCC ambassadors.

Besides the meetings and visits in the Belgian capital, important conferences between Europe and GCC countries were held in Germany and France.

A landmark two-day business event "Vision Golfe 2023" showcasing opportunities for commercial partnerships between France and the GCC states was held in Paris on 13-14 June.

Vision Golfe is a new platform promoting business cooperation in both private and public sectors, such as trade, sports, culture, energy and the environment between France and the GCC.

Germany and GCC member states concluded talks on 20 June on common security challenges, chiefly, the repercussions of the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict.

Kuwait praised the outcome of the gathering in Germany as a step towards greater bilateral security cooperation and an opportunity to focus on "joint interests", according to a KUNA dispatch from Berlin.

However, EU-GCC relations last year ran into a few bumps in particular after the EU Parliaments decision to postpone granting of Schengen visas to some GCC countries.

Moreover, attempts were made to implicate a Gulf country in the outbreak of a major financial scandal that hit the European Parliament.

The EU-GCC Free trade negotiations are still in limbo since more than 20 years.

But the growing positive atmosphere meeting surrounding EU-GCC relations have raised hopes that all outstanding issues will be resolved in the near future.

All in all, June can be safely described as a "landmark and crucial" month in bringing EU-GCC relations closer and stronger.

The GCC includes Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and UAE.



Al-Budaiwi



Al-Enezi

Cut loan dues to 5pc: MP

Queries raised over overseas treatment

By Saeed Mahmoud Saleh

Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 27: MP Fayez Al-Jomhour has proposed adding a clause to Article 28 of Housing Affairs Law number 47/1993, stating that the monthly housing loan payment should be five percent of the borrower's salary, instead of 10 percent.

He clarified that the five percent installment will be calculated based on the remaining salary after subtracting payments for other loans, if any.

MPs Hani Shams, Ahmad Lari, Osama Al-Shaheen, Daoud Ma'arafi and Abdulaziz Al-Saqabi submitted a bill on amending Bureau of Financial Controllers Law number 23/2015 in a bid to put all administrative controllers under the bureau.

On the other hand, MP Fahd bin Jame'e has forwarded queries to Minister of Health Abdulwahab Al-Awadhi about the procedures followed in determining the overseas treatment beneficiaries. He wants to know if the concerned higher committee has approved overseas treatment applications without consulting the experts panel. If yes, he asked about the number of such cases.

Inquired

He inquired about the total number of overseas treatment cases in the last three years and number of cases after the decision to suspend overseas treatment except for emergency cases.

He requested for copies of the curriculum vitae of the assistant undersecretaries and Minister's Office manager when Al-Awadhi assumed the post and if a court ruling was issued against any of them.

MP Hamad Al-Elyan asked Minister of Justice and Housing Affairs Faleh Abdullah Eid Al-Raqabah if the vacant supervisory positions at the Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT) since 2021 have been filled, number of filled vacancies and number of positions that are still vacant.

Al-Elyan urged the minister to clarify rumors spread on social media that he made certain changes to the annual performance assessment of some officials in order to match the conditions for promotion to supervisory positions. If this is true, the lawmaker requested for copies of the assessment forms before and after the changes. He asked about the opinion of the Administrative Department director about the changes.

Meanwhile, National Assembly Speaker Ahmad Al-Sa'adoun sent a cable to Assembly President in Djibouti Dileita Mohammad Dileita greeting the latter on the National Day of his country.

Security 'preparations' complete for Eid break

KUWAIT CITY, June 27: According to informed security sources, the Ministry of Interior, based on instructions from the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Talal Al-Khaled and under his supervision, has completed all preparations for implementing the security plan set for Eid Al-Adha holidays with the aim of facilitating the movement on roads and the park lots before and during Eid Al-Adha holidays, reports Al-Anba daily.

The ministry's plan will involve the deployment of no less than 500 patrol officers affiliated to the Operations, Traffic, Rescue and Public Security sectors, especially on the roads leading to commercial areas and major complexes.

Meanwhile, the sources explained that the Port Security Affairs Sector is on standby and has been working at full capacity to facilitate travel procedures and accommodate the congestion expected in the middle of next week.

The ports are witnessing intense movement in conjunction with the Eid al-Adha holidays and the Hajj season, requiring an active and effective security force, as promised by the Ministry of Interior, which implemented it precisely and specifically in all ports, especially Kuwait International Airport.

The plan relies on providing security and traffic coverage in areas that witness intense crowd such as markets, commercial complexes, children's parks, gymnasiums, theaters, entertainment venues, all exits and entrances to roads, and all main and secondary intersections of the aforementioned places in order to avoid congestion and traffic jams.

The plan also seeks to facilitate the movement at the entrances and exits, and in front of the mosques where Eid prayers will be held, and provide the necessary security elements in their surroundings in a way that reassures the worshippers.

There is round-the-clock coordination between the security directorates and departments with competence in implementing the comprehensive security plan. The central general operations administration works as a link for all participating security agencies in providing assistance and support.

The sources highlighted that the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs provided the Ministry of Interior with the locations and names of mosques that worshippers frequent, in order to provide them with security personnel and to organize the traffic before and after prayer.

They called on citizens and residents to cooperate with the public security officers who are exerting maximum efforts to implement security control procedures in areas that witness a massive public presence such as markets.

Eid prayer timings 5:06 am

KUWAIT CITY, June 27: The Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs has confirmed the sign language service for the deaf in mosques and other places allocated for Eid Al-Adha prayers in various governorates, reports Al-Qabas daily.

"According to the ministry, sign language will be provided in the Grand Mosque in Sharq, Sulaibikhat Prayer Center in the Sulaibikhat Youth Center, Ruqaya Al-Muzaini Mosque in Saad Al-Abdullah, Jaber Al-Ali Mosque and Duaij Al-Sabah Mosque in Sabahiya.

The Eid Al-Adha prayer is scheduled for 5:06 am on Wednesday.

This is in addition to 46 Eid prayer sites in yards, playgrounds and youth centers in the six governorates.

Acting representative of the ministry Badr Al-Otaibi has approved these places and a circular in this regard was issued to the directors of mosques.

Amir congrats Djibouti on Nat'l Day

KUWAIT CITY, June 27, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent Tuesday a cable to President of Djibouti, Ismail Omar Guelleh, congratulating him on the country's national day.

His Highness the Amir wished the President good health and the people of Djibouti all progress and prosperity. His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah

also sent Tuesday a congratulatory cable to President of Djibouti, Ismail Omar Guelleh, on the occasion of his country's national day, and wished the President good health.

Then, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent Tuesday a cable to President of Djibouti, Ismail Omar Guelleh, congratulating him on his country's national day.



KUNA photo
First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Talal Khaled Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and Lt Gen Khaled Al-Makrad (left) at the ceremony.

KFF holds oath-taking ceremony

KUWAIT CITY, June 27, (KUNA): First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Talal Khaled Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah witnessed on Monday the graduation ceremony and oath-taking in the Kuwait Fire Force for the 21st batch of university specialization officers, 13 of them conducting the system of scholarships and study leaves, and the 11th batch of non-commissioned officers who obtained a general secondary certificate during service according to the conditions for promotion to the rank of lieutenant, and their number are 38.

The force said in a press statement that the ceremony that was held in the Fire Department building in the presence of its chief, Lieutenant General Khaled Al-Makrad, in which Sheikh Talal Al-Khaled congratulated the graduates and conveyed to them the congratulations and blessings of the political leadership represented by

His Highness the Amir of the country, the Commander Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and His Highness the Crown Prince, Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

Sheikh Talal Al-Khaled expressed his pride in his presence among his brothers and sons, the graduates on this occasion, asking them to keep the oath they took to protect lives and property and not to disclose secrets, whether they were in the profession or outside it.

He also expressed his pride in the sacrifices they make to save lives and property, keeping God Almighty before their eyes. He called on the graduates to advance and raise the level of performance of their tasks, pointing out that protecting lives and property is a great responsibility that requires vigilance and high-level work to achieve societal security.

Other Voices

Kuwait ... the last bowl

By Ahmad alsarraf

Whoever believes that the Brotherhood has had its wings clipped in this or other state, or that they have been weakened on the home front or somewhere else, and that their star no longer shines and with that their motivations thus diminishing their strength, are inevitably mistaken.

It is imminent whatever they do is certainly evil, there is no way to stop their expansion and limit the spread of their evil and extremism without concerted efforts of all big powers, and labeling them a terrorist movement and boycotting them and stopping funding from the Gulf, in particular!

The Muslim Brotherhood movement started in Egypt and shortly, they will celebrate the centenary of founding the movement and the British Suez Canal Company was the first to support the movement both morally and financially, and since then, the movement has left no stone unturned to add new members if not by persuasion, then by assassinations, betrayal and corruption.

Starting from Egypt, they infiltrated into Sudan, Sham and North Africa. Their evil reached Kuwait post the end of World War II and later the rest of Gulf countries where they have extended their dominance through mosques, schools and Holy Quran memorizing centers.

Later on, they extended their roots and managed to collect huge amount of money over half a century. In a previous article, I estimated their wealth of almost \$55 billion. No one knows definitely where such money is kept.

Nevertheless, part of it was used to finance rebellion groups in the different Arab countries, financing the wars in Afghanistan and hire Pakistani militants in addition to extending process in Europe, the USA, Turkey and Kosovo through the establishment of Islamic projects, building mosques and buying securities and shares.



alsarraf



US Embassy staff hold talks with officials from the Education Ministry.

Educational, cultural boost eyed

Representatives of the Ministry of Higher Education recently held a meeting with the US Embassy staff to discuss educational and cultural cooperation as part of the US-Kuwait Strategic Dialogue Task Force on Education and Scientific Cooperation, reports Aljarida daily.

The team discussed ways to support Kuwaiti students and professionals in various academic exchange programs and local training courses that promote academic counselling, English language teaching, and professional capacity building.

The Cultural Attaché at the US Embassy Catherine Gary said, "In support of the Strategic Dialogue Task Force between the United States and Kuwait on education and scientific cooperation, the Americans and their Kuwaiti counterparts discussed the ongoing cooperation to support exchange opportunities for Kuwaiti students, government officials and civil society organizations, and support educational counselling programs to increase the number of Kuwaiti students in the United States and to prepare Kuwaiti high school students for studies abroad."

ديوانية

DIWANIYA

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

‘Definition of public money, meaning of trust vital in govt office’

“Representative Hamad Al-Olayan has proposed to convert public libraries into cultural centers under the supervision of the National Council for Culture Arts and Letters. This is a proposal that deserves encouragement. There are important questions looking for answers in the minds of Kuwaitis about corruption and combating it, starting with how to define it to the public, present its forms, and the environments that encourage and develop it,” columnist **Mozhafar Abdullah** wrote for **Al-Jarida** daily.

“On the other hand, there is an urgent need to stop the feeling of victory over the corrupt by publishing the names of the thieves via the newspapers -- and it is important if it is accompanied by a judicial ruling -- but it only stops at the desire to expose people, but does not strive end corrupting and put behind bars the thieves of public money.

“The definition of public money, and the meaning of trust in the public office is very necessary in our society because there is a disagreement in the definition of public money, so among us are those who consider it community money, or booty that fell from the sky and deposited in the ground, and so on, while functional trust is subject to distorted concepts such as nepotism, administrative injustice, favoritism in appointments.

“There are two problems that Kuwaiti governments face with regard to corruption: The first being moody, so it is lazy at times and turns a blind eye to the appropriation of public funds, as happened during the Iraqi invasion and its aftermath, and is active in periods of accountability, as is happening now with the Ministry of Interior hospitality case.

“The second: in not defining the correct understanding of how to manage wealth, which causes opportunities to practice corruption -- waste is one of its forms -- as happens in spending on education and health in exchange for discouraging returns (poor education outputs, increase in traditional diseases such as heart problems, blood pressure and diabetes).

“It is unfortunate that many financial and administrative oversight agencies have been created in Kuwait, which number up to 11, without creating an anti-corruption concept and atmosphere that the government is working on firmly, and its first steps begin with the educational curricula by characterizing it ethically and behaviorally until it moves from the stage of (defect) to the ranks of (crime).

Also:

“We followed the opening of the National Assembly at the beginning of its sessions, and we came across what His Highness the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Mishaal Al-Ahmad said in his lofty inauguration speech charting the way for Kuwait, seeking its development, renouncing differences, settling scores, addressing the creation of crises, and the need for cooperation between the two authorities to reach the ultimate goal, which is Kuwait, which is above every dispute and interrogation that sometimes comes even before the minister takes the constitutional oath, and all of them led to what we are in today, unfortunately,” columnist **Yousef Shahab** wrote for **Al-Jarida** daily.

“We have suffered many crises and disagreements between the two authorities and even between the representatives of the nation themselves, and Kuwait suffered from corruption, cases of forgery, looting of public money, dual nationality, etc., all of which has saddened every honorable citizen who loves his homeland.

“The next stage -- and the two authorities have launched their actions -- needs soul searching to put the past on the back burner with all its negative repercussions. The need of the hour is to work sincerely for the sake of Kuwait and its people, away from narrow personal interests.

“The parliamentary oversight and accountability are required to fix imbalances and crookedness and to adjust the path in the work of the executive

authority through the ministers. However, this oversight and accountability should not come with idle talk and insulting personalities, but rather with good words emanating from a conscience that wants reform.

“A few days ago, I heard the speech of late Dr. Ahmed Al-Khatib when he was a deputy, and I listened to his elegant and eloquent speech in which he criticized one of the government institutions. How I wished that all of us would see such discussions aimed at reform and that we would see deputies taking the lesson from yesterday’s deputies and their experiences that placed Kuwait in the first ranks among the developed and prestigious countries at every level.

“We have high hopes for a stage for Kuwait to build, with deputies and ministers who bear responsibility within the framework and meanings of the oath, and in hearts that give the country what it deserves instead of taking from it. So will our wishes be fulfilled?”

“I am surprised that many people expressed their views on the government upon the announcement of ministers. We congratulate the ministers for gaining the trust of the political leadership and His Highness the Prime Minister, while wishing them success in their work to realize the ambitions and aspirations of Kuwaitis,” columnist **Yousif Hajji** wrote for **Annahar** daily.

“Some incumbent and former lawmakers, politicians, experts and academicians have been criticizing and attacking the ministers without giving the latter a chance or waiting for them to take oath in front of His Highness the Deputy Amir and the National Assembly.

“The real judgment should come once the government presents its work program and the timetable for implementation. After this, we monitor the level of commitment to implement the program as per the timetable. We should carefully read the action program. Is it pro-reform and comprehensive economically and socially, such that it covers all sectors of the State? Is this program feasible?

“We also monitor how the government deals with issues concerning citizens, after which the nation’s representatives, experts, observers and followers of the local political scene must evaluate its performance.

“Among those who have been criticizing and attacking the government formation since its announcement, there seems to be rivalry and disagreements that could be personal, while the opinions of some lawmakers are rational and scientific.

“We must read and hear about the government’s program, as well as give it a chance to work, and then we can evaluate it performance.”

“The previous article was entitled, ‘A Message to the National Assembly Representatives’. Now, we convey a message to the ministers,” columnist **Dr Turki Al-Azmi** wrote for **Al-Rai** daily.

“First, the law and constitutional provisions must be applied on everyone, especially since the provision of appropriate education and healthcare has become a commodity.

“Second, everyone knows that ministers are politically accountable according to the government’s work program, while members of the National Assembly interfere in the work of ministers whenever the officials in the executive authority fail to deal with issues that require accountability.

“I hope His Highness the Prime Minister will allocate even an hour of his time for the respected and impartial veteran work team to discuss issues concerning Kuwaitis and to speed up the initiative on the part of the government, because most of them are within the core of the executive authority’s specialization.

“His Highness the Prime Minister and the ministers are obliged to take decisions based on their fields of specialization as follows:

- Expedite the digital transformation and focus on cybersecurity.
- Appoint officials based on their competencies, experience, knowledge, culture and good conduct.



Abdullah



Al-Anba photo
The Public Relations and Media Department of the Directorate-General of Fire Department (DGFD) said acting on information firemen rushed to the suburb of Sabah Al-Ahmad recently and closed one of the roads after a fuel tanker overturned and inflammable material started leaking from the tank, reports Al-Anba daily.

Mol, MoCI, Customs officials meet

Move to combat smuggling of subsidized food supplies

KUWAIT CITY, June 27: The Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior, Lieutenant General Anwar Al-Barjas, held a meeting with the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Nasser Al-Mutawa, the Director General of Customs Abdullah Al-Sharhan, the Deputy Director General of Customs for Ports Affairs Osama Al-Shami, and the Support Controller in the Supply Department, Muslim Salah Al-Rashidi, in the presence of the Assistant Undersecretary for the Public Security Sector, Major General Abdullah Al-Rajeeb, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The meeting was held to coordinate efforts to combat smuggling of subsidized food items outside the country, during which the participants discussed ways to combat the smuggling of subsidized food supplies outside the country and the legal measures taken so far to curb these illegal practices.

Lieutenant General Al-Barjas reviewed the practical proposals, requirements and needs to combat this type of smuggling, stressing the need for continued

Cosmetics warehouse in Salmiya area raided

KUWAIT CITY, June 27: The Drug Inspection Department of the Ministry of Health, in cooperation with the ministries of Interior and Commerce recently raided a cosmetics store in Salmiya and seized cosmetics from the basement warehouse, reports Al-Anba daily.

The daily added, 1,000-square-meter warehouse was found to be storing large quantities of cosmetic products that did not meet standard conditions and specifications of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

This is in addition to seizing expired products, some of which had been tampered with by changing expiry dates.

The committee that inspected the warehouse also found that the store owner did not have the registration certificates and/or purchase invoices for the seized products. The basement warehouse that was used to store cosmetics had no license from the Ministry of Commerce or the Directorate-General of Fire Department (DGFD).

The inspection was part of a periodic campaign to ensure that stores comply with the laws in force.

cooperation between the concerned agencies to eliminate this phenomenon.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Interior has been praised for its role in re-

moving all obstacles that may stand in the way of its work, stressing that all ministries and state agencies work as one team to serve the country and citizens.

63,000 new workers join labor market in first 3 months of '23

90 law violators held; ex-official’s detention ordered

KUWAIT CITY, June 27: Statistics issued by the Central Department of Statistics in cooperation with the Public Authority for Manpower show the total number of workers in the country increased by 63,000 during the first three months of this year, bringing their total number to 2.853 million, when compared to the numbers recorded at the end of last year, reports Al-Qabas daily.

The report pointed to the continued progress of the Indian community in the private sector and the family sector (domestic workers) in terms of numbers, while Kuwaitis top the number of employees in the government sector, with a total of 468,328 workers.

The statistics pointed out that the increase among Indians was 22,993 workers in the labor market in all its sectors with the figure touching 857,671, while the Egyptians take second spot with 486,656 workers, an increase of 3,473 individuals.

The number of Kuwaiti workers in the local market ranked third, with a total of 444,822 workers, an increase of 2,175 workers, while the Filipino workers maintained the fourth rank, outperforming the Bangladeshis.

Moreover, the number of workers in the government sector increased during the first quarter of this year by about 3,722 Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti male and female employees.

The figures showed that the total number of workers in the government sector rose to 468,328 employees, an increase of 3,728 employees.

The number of national workers increased by 2,290 citizens in the government sector, compared to the numbers registered for them at the end of 2022, compared to 1,432 non-Kuwaitis.

The volume of domestic employment also increased by 26,886 workers, as the report showed the presence of 780,183 domestic helpers, 98.9% of whom are distributed among 10 major nationalities, while nearly 8,000 workers are distributed among other nationalities.

Indians occupy the first place with a total of 347,000 workers in domestic sector, an increase of 9,700 workers until the end of last year, followed by the Philippines, Sri Lanka,

Bangladesh, Nepal, Ethiopia, Benin, Indonesia, Mali, and Pakistan, respectively.

Detention ordered: The Public Prosecution ordered the detention of a former official in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs implicated in a public funds embezzlement case, reports Al-Jarida daily.

90 illegals held: The continuous security campaigns organized by the Residence Investigation Affairs Department resulted in the arrest of 90 residence and labor laws violators during the past week, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to a report issued by the Public Relations and Security Media Department of the Ministry of Interior, nine of those who are in police custody are believed to be drug addicts and police have seized from them narcotic substances.

Meanwhile, 30 were arrested for violating the labor laws and 51 were detained for not carrying valid IDs and the traffic campaigns resulted in the issuance of 970 citations particularly for those who had parked their vehicles in places designated for the physically handicapped.

— Compiled by Mai Elsoukary

‘Natural death’

Filipina taken to ‘PAM’ shelter dies in hospital

KUWAIT CITY, June 27: A Filipino worker reportedly died inside the Expatriate Labor Shelter of the Public Authority for Manpower in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The daily quoting PAM sources said the deceased, believed to be a domestic worker was taken to the shelter by the Philippine embassy in Kuwait last Thursday, June 22, but upon arrival she fainted and was rushed to the Farwaniya Hospital by an ambulance.

Upon arrival at the hospital she was taken to the ‘recovery’ room to revive her, but the medical staff failed to bring her back to life.

Her death has been registered as ‘natural death’, according to the testimony of the attending physician.

‘Interior’ advises sea-goers

KUWAIT CITY, June 27: The Ministry of Interior has advised sea-goers and fishing enthusiasts in Kuwaiti territorial waters to refrain from casting fishing hooks into the freshwater lines connected to the seabed from Failaka Island to Ras Salmiya, reports Al-Jarida daily.

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KUNA photo
Kuwaiti Ambassador to Italy Nasser Al-Qahtani with Italian government officials. The Kuwait Petroleum International (Q8) announced Monday that it has started foundation of the first hydrogen refueling station in the Italian capital Rome.

Employment deal soon be signed

Chad looking to boost trade with Kuwait, woos investors

KUWAIT CITY, June 27: The new Ambassador of the Republic of Chad to Kuwait, HE Taher Khater, said Kuwait was one of the first countries to make its presence felt in Chad through charities, saying its stances are well-known to all the Chadian people even before the start of diplomatic relations between the two countries, reports Al-Rai daily.

He pointed out that Chad is a virgin land whose natural resources have yet to be developed and added the Chadian laws and legislations are investor friendly.

Agreement

He added, an agreement regarding employment with Kuwait will soon be signed, pointing out that Kuwait, as he imagines it, is a beautiful country with wonderful and hospitable people, and it warmly welcomes everyone, and this is what he got to know from many people of this good country during this short period.

He added that one of the largest areas of investment and possible cooperation with Kuwait is in livestock, as Chad owns 130 million heads of cattle including camels, cows and sheep, hoping that Chad will be one of the countries exporting livestock to Kuwait soon and contribute to food security.

He added years ago his country began exporting livestock to Egypt, the Congo and Gabon, and because his country lacked a sea outlet and paved roads, the railways facilitated the export process. The closest ports to Chad are Port Sudan, Cameroon and Nigeria. "In Chad, we have investment opportunities in agricultural wealth and fish farms, minerals, gum and sesame.

He stated that the security conditions are excellent inside Chad, noting that his country is sending part of its army to help neighboring countries and has contributed in helping combat terrorism in African countries.

He added there are about 400 Chadians working in Kuwait, and we will work to raise the numbers, as there is a great similarity between our two countries in customs and the Arabic language is what binds the Chadian society, since Arabic is taught in schools along with the French language.

MoCI issues decision on controls and provisions of credit facilities

Grantors of loans, sales on installment basis obligated to register in ‘Ci-Net’

KUWAIT CITY, June 27: According to reliable sources from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, the ministry will continue to implement the new controls for credit facilities resulting from installment sales of goods and services, based on a decision by the Minister of Commerce and Industry Muhammad Othman Al-Aiban, reports Al-Qabas daily.

They said the controls are not enforceable at the present time, but they will start being applied from the end of December, with the end of the grace period for reconciling conditions. The decision issued in May granted a six-month grace period to companies and institutions that provide sales and installment services.

The sources affirmed that citizens and residents can currently purchase goods and services on installment basis according to the previous conditions and controls.

Decision

They explained that the decision issued by the Minister of Commerce and Industry Muhammad Othman Al-Aiban included new controls for credit facilities resulting from the installment sales of goods and services. It regulated the installment sales operations carried



KUNA photo
Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah heads to Europe in official visit.

Kuwait FM heads to Europe on official visit

Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah took off on Monday on an official European trip that includes France, Italy, Austria and Hungary.

The Kuwaiti top diplomat is set to conduct several meeting with senior officials in each country to enhance bilateral ties, in addition to political discussions. (KUNA)

out by companies and commercial establishments for goods and services, and obligated all grantors of loans and sales on installment basis to register in the Credit Information Network “Ci-Net” within six months of the issuance of the decision.

The decision also obligated com-

panies granting loans and selling by installments to inquire, after obtaining an authorization from the customer, from Ci-Net about the debit balance data arising from all other obligations of the customer, according to the aforementioned network.

It stipulated that the monthly installment owed by the customer, in

addition to the installments due for other obligations registered on Ci-Net, should not exceed 40 percent of the net salary for employees, and 30 percent of pension for retirees.

The decision stressed that the value of the goods sold to a customer in the installment system should not exceed KD 5,000. It should be paid in equal monthly installments within a period not exceeding three years. The value of the commodity sold by installments shall not exceed the value of the declared price, in the event of immediate payment.

It prohibits the grantors from charging any administrative fees for the installment sale operations, as these parties are obligated not to impose any fees on their customers directly or indirectly in return for inquiring about them in the Ci-Net company system.

The decision stressed that companies and institutions granting installment sales services should set policies and take measures that would ensure the security of information and the confidentiality of data entered and extracted from the automated system of the Ci-Net, adding that they should be viewed only by authorized persons.

Bolstering role

OAPEC and Algeria talk ‘strengthening relations’

ALGIERS, June 27, (KUNA): Secretary General of the OAPEC, Jamal Al-Loughani, discussed along with Algerian Prime Minister Ayman Bin Abdurrahman on Monday strengthening bilateral relations.

The Algerian premiership, in a statement, said the discussions were an opportunity to praise the cooperation and coordination between Algeria and OAPEC.

Al-Loughani, from Kuwait, began his three-day visit to the country yesterday, discussing with the Prime Minister furthering OAPEC’s activities, bolstering its role regionally and internationally, as well as mechanisms to keep up with developments.



KUNA Photo
Minister of Social Affairs receives Foreign Ministry officials.

Social Affairs Minister tackles family issues with Foreign Ministry officials

KUWAIT CITY, June 27, (KUNA): Minister of Social Affairs, Family and Childhood Affairs Sheikh Faris Saud Al-Malek Al-Sabah explored on Tuesday with Assistant Foreign Minister for Human Right Affairs Talal Al-Mutairi and Advisor Sheikh

Jawaher Al-Ibrahim Al-Sabah, family and childhood affairs.

The Ministry of Social Affairs said in a statement that during the meeting, Kuwait’s international commitments, along with a number of important issues, were discussed.

DGCA mobilizes work to its fullest capacity

Congestion in Kuwait airport

KUWAIT CITY, June 27: The season for escaping the extreme heat in the country, and searching for cooler weather in the east and west of the world has begun. Kuwait International Airport is witnessing a huge travel movement with thousands of passengers departing daily, coinciding with the Eid Al-Adha holidays and the start of the summer vacation, reports Al-Rai daily.

Meanwhile, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), with the cooperation of the authorities operating at the airport, has mobilized to work to its fullest capacity to accommodate hundreds of flights and thousands of passengers, and to facilitate departure movement and travel procedures in order to prevent congestion of passengers in the airport halls.

The daily monitored the huge travel movement on Saturday, and the efforts of DGCA to facilitate the movement and procedures of departures, which increased during the last three days in anticipation of the Eid Al-Adha holidays.

In this regard, the Deputy Director for Planning and Projects Affairs in DGCA and the official spokesman for the administration Saad Al-Otaibi said, “DGCA, in coordination with the concerned authorities operating at the airport, has prepared for the Eid Al-Adha holidays to overcome all obstacles and provide services to passengers. Airlines and ground service providers have been alerted to the need to raise the levels of their preparations and increase the number of workers during the Eid holidays.

As part of the measures that have been put in place to reduce congestion, more of the baggage weighing counters have been opened, and the number of workers at passport counters have been increased. Also, barriers have been set up to regulate the entry and exit of travelers, sufficient labor has been provided to transport baggage through the ground service companies, and sufficient human elements have been allocated for managing operations to provide logistical support and other requirements to passengers.”

Regarding the travel destinations most requested by travelers, Al-Otaibi said most of the flights are to Dubai, Cairo, Jeddah, Riyadh, Turkey and Europe.

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Group photo of Balik Saya sa Kuwait 2023 and OFW Got Talent organizers and some grand finalists.

Photos by Techno



Left: OWWA Administrator Arnaldo 'Arnell' Ignacio in a group photo with Third Secretary and Vice Consul at Philippine Embassy in Kuwait Aaron Aguilar Lozada, Infinity Talents Group officials and PhilSoc-MSK officials. Right: A contestant gives her artwork to OWWA Administrator Arnaldo 'Arnell' Ignacio.



Sheryn Regis, Marion Aunor, Cool Cat Ash set to enthrall Filipino audience

Philippines celebrates Migrant, Independence Days with 'Balik Saya 2023'

By Marlon Aquino Malinao
Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 27: The 'Balik Saya sa Kuwait 2023 Handog ng DMW-OWWA' in celebration of the Filipino Migrant Workers Day and Philippine Independence Day is all set to enthrall Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs).

The "Balik Saya" or "Joy is Back" fun-filled event to be held at the Crowne Plaza Kuwait Al Thuraya City Al Baraka Grand Ballroom, in cooperation with the Philippine Embassy in Kuwait and powered by Infinity Talents Group, PhilSoc-MSK and GeekCon, will showcase the 'Crystal Voice of Asia' Ms Sheryn Regis with Marion Aunor and Cool Cat Ash.

Gate opens at 9:00 a.m. wherein community outreach program services of the Philippine Embassy (passport, notariats and civil registration), Migrant Workers Office (Balik Manggagawa, contract verification), OWWA (OWWA membership collection), SSS and PAG-Ibig Fund will be available at the lobby for attendees till 12 noon.

The Grand Finals of OFW Got Talent, a smorgasbord of talents, will be at 1:00 p.m. highlighting 20 grand finalists who battle it out on June 30 and vie for a chance to represent the Filipino community in Kuwait in the "battle of champions" wherein the winner will compete with other OFW Got Talent grand winners from countries where OFW Got Talent was also held.

The grand winner of OFW Got Talent in Kuwait will receive KD 300 cash prize, first runner-up will receive KD 200 and the 2nd runner-up KD 100. Winners will also receive trophies and gifts from sponsors.

Soon after the talent show, the Migrant Workers Office (MWO) and Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) will hand out 10 Loyalty Awards to 10 OFWs who have worked for the same employer for more than 10 years. Each awardee will receive a trophy celebrating their milestone.

The audience will be in for a treat after the awards ceremony as the Infinity Talents will be the front act of the "Balik Saya sa Kuwait" concert.

Jennifer Uy-Fernandez, Chan-Chan Cervantes, Najwa Lacson, Charvin Molaco, Michael Olindo, and Mansour Melad Amin will serenade the crowd with hit toppers that



Balik Saya sa Kuwait 2023 Handog ng DMW-OWWA poster

would surely entice throngs of fans.

The "cherry on top" is the most awaited concert of Ms Sheryn Regis dubbed as the "Crystal Voice of Asia".

Regis, a singer and songwriter, whose hit songs "Come In Out of the Rain", "Gusto Ko Nang Bunitaw" have dominated the airwaves worldwide, will be headlining the 'Balik Saya sa Kuwait' concert.

A 'power belter', noted for her belting range and technical ability, Regis has a career spanning more than 20 years in Philippine entertainment industry, she has since earned four multi-platinum albums and five gold records to her credit.

Marion Louise Aunor a Filipina singer, songwriter, label head of Wild Dream Records, music producer of Aunorable Produc-

tions, film scorer, movie actress and Grammy member will also grace the event.

Known as the "Queen of Theme Songs", Aunor is the niece of singer turned actress the "Superstar" Nora Aunor.

Cool Cat Ash (also known as Ashley Aunor) will also display her singing prowess on stage.

She is a multi-award-winning pop artist,

songwriter, music producer, sound engineer, film scorer and DJ. She's part of "Aunorable Productions" with her sister, Marion Aunor.

"The Balik Saya Sa Kuwait 2023 Handog ng DMW-OWWA is the brainchild of our OWWA Administrator Arnaldo 'Arnell' Ignacio. The project finally came into fruition thanks to Admin Arnell's efforts" Madam Ana del Mundo-Ramos -- Infinity Talents Group Vice-Chairwoman said.

"Thank you Sir Arnell for bringing back the JOY to the Filipinos working here in Kuwait," she added.

"Our never ending gratitude goes out to the Philippine Embassy in Kuwait headed by His Excellency Ambassador Jose "Pepe" Cabrera III. To Vice-Consul Josel Mostajo, Vice-Consul Aaron Lozada and Vice-Consul Jordan Morales ... thank you isn't enough for the support you have given since the beginning," said Madam Dolor Elenany -- Infinity Talents Group Chairwoman.

She expressed her deepest appreciation to DMW - MWO and OWWA "To Labor Attaché Attorney Manuel Dimaano and Assistant Labor Attaché Cathy Duladul and the entire MWO staff, this event wouldn't be possible without your guidance and encouragement and also to the admirable OWWA-Kuwait team - Welfare Officer Genevieve C. Aguilar-Ardiente, Welfare Officer Emmanuel Santiago C. Diaz, Welfare Officer Louella Marie B. Calanza and staff - my snappy salute to you all. You never left our side and please allow me to say that "WE MADE IT!"

The Balik Saya sa Kuwait 2023 wouldn't be possible without the help of the generous sponsors namely Ooredoo Pinoy Xpress, Gulf Air, City Centre, Dadabhai Tourism and Travel Co, Al Muzaini Exchange, BDO Remit, Al Rashed Travels, LBC, Proteins, Dental 8, Belle Amour, Phil Asia Cargo, Far Easy Cargo, Connor Cargo, Phil Pacific Cargo, Sky-freight Kuwait, iTea, Travel Club, Buffalo's, Al-Amal, GWIP, Diamak, God's Will Agency, Yaazeemir, Al Rouya Co Friday Market, Saeem Al Otaibi Ahmad Alaibaini, Dreamztree, Gold Lane, Smart School, Golden Legacy Job Movers, Shar-kiya Life Group, Everest Travel and Tours Inc, ADM Int'l Manpower Services Co, Tapsi Republik, Cucina sa Cebu, SeAndS Perfume, Beauti Korneri, and Etc Steak House.



Some of the grand finalists during the elimination rounds.

The Conversation

‘Adhan’ affirms a long and growing presence of Muslims in America

Islam’s call to prayer is ringing out in more US cities

By Leila Tarakji
Michigan State University

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

Minneapolis recently became the first major US city to allow the “adhan,” or Muslim call to prayer, to be broadcast from mosques five times a day.

In April 2023, the Minneapolis City Council unanimously approved a change to the city’s sound ordinance, effectively eliminating time constraints that previously prevented the pre-dawn and evening prayer calls from being broadcast.

For the citizens of Minneapolis and for many Muslims across the United States, this represents a historic moment. Jaylani Hussein, executive director of the Minnesota chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations, described this as a victory for religious freedom and for the US Constitution. The resolution demonstrates that Muslims are not only “welcome here, but they’re also here - that they are part of the fabric of the diversity of this city and our state,” he said in a statement.

As a scholar of Islam and Muslims in America, I am particularly interested in how Muslim Americans express themselves as a faith community at the local, national and global levels. The practice of calling worshippers to prayer is an important aspect of daily Muslim life, one that has a long history on American soil.

Adhan literally means “announcement” in Arabic and refers to the Islamic call to prayer that takes place five times a day. The five daily prayers signify one of the five pillars of Islam that are traditionally considered obligatory for every Muslim. The prayers are performed in the direction of Mecca throughout the day.

The practice of calling the adhan dates to the time of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), when it became the standard way to mark the beginning of each prayer’s time and to call Muslims to prayer. In his text “Approaching the Qur’an: The Early Revelations,” scholar Michael Sells notes that “the call to prayer punctuates daily life five times, drawing people out of their everyday preoccupation to matters of ultimate concern.”

Recited in Arabic, the adhan translates as: God is most great, God is most great; I testify that there is no god but God; I testify that Muhammad is the messenger of God; Come (alive) to the prayer; Come (alive) to flourishing; God is most great, God is most great; There is no god but God.

In Muslim-majority countries, the distinctive sound of the adhan loudly called from every mosque’s minaret is one of the most memorable sounds for visitors.

The significance of the adhan is such that Islamic tradition recommends that it be one of the first sounds that a newborn baby hears. Often, the father will gently recite the adhan in the baby’s right ear. The words mark the beginning of a person’s life on the “right path,” with the remembrance of God.

In America, where the adhan is not commonly heard in public settings, many Muslims make do with a prayer app, on their cellphones or other devices, that lists the various prayer times and calls the adhan at the appropriate time.

The earliest practice of the adhan on American soil dates back to the hundreds of thousands of enslaved African Muslims who, to varying extents, brought their Islamic practices with them. In the process, the adhan has left a deep influence on American music and culture.

Comparison

Historian Sylviane A. Diouf attributes the roots of blues music to West African Muslims who were enslaved and forcibly taken to the Americas between the 1600s and mid-1800s.

Diouf specifically makes a comparison between the adhan and “Levee Camp Holler,” a song that was written and sung by former slaves. Holler songs were precursors to the blues. “It features the same ornamented notes, elongated syllables sung with wavy intonations, melismas, and pauses. When both pieces are juxtaposed, it is hard to distinguish when the call to prayer ends and the holler starts,” Diouf writes.

More recently, Muslim rapper Lupe Fiasco released an album called “Muhammad Walks” that clearly includes sound bites from the adhan along with various references to Islamic traditions.

Generally speaking, mosques in the US make the call to prayer inside the prayer space, where it is audible only to those present. The earliest documented public broadcasting of the Muslim call to prayer took place during the World’s Columbian Exposition, a world’s fair that was held in Chicago in 1893.

The fair featured “Cairo Street,” a popular attraction that sought to recreate a small cross section of Cairene life. Among the 26 different structures that were

specifically built for this project was a mosque where tourists could hear the muezzin - one who makes the call to prayer - call the adhan from the minaret and then watch Muslim worshippers perform their daily prayers.

Later the same year, the prayer call was broadcast from a third-story window of the Union Square Bank building in New York City. After John Lant, a convert to Islam and co-founder of First Society for the Study of Islam in America, made the adhan, a congregational prayer was held before the group proceeded with the society’s first meeting.

This moment was documented by The New York Times: “For the first time in New-York’s history, cosmopolitan as the city is, the melodious call of the Muezzin, celebrated by every traveler in Mohammedan countries, was heard yesterday morning.”

Since the 1970s the adhan has been broadcast from mosques in the US, such as the American Moslem Society, which was established in Dearborn, Michigan, in 1938 and is arguably the first US mosque to be granted the legal right to transmit all five prayer calls through loudspeakers.

In nearby Hamtramck, considered to be America’s first majority-Muslim city, the adhan was legalized by local government in 2004, when a noise ordinance change was put to a citywide vote. At the time, this stirred notable tensions between Hamtramck’s different faith communities.

In 2020, the city council of Paterson, New Jersey, also authorized the call to prayer between certain hours of the day. In 2023, several mosques in Astoria, New York, received permits to broadcast the five calls to prayer specifically for the duration of the holy month of Ramadan.

Similarly, a small mosque in Occoquan, Virginia, was invited by the local mayor to broadcast the adhan on two separate occasions to mark the month of Ramadan.

Indeed, the public broadcasting of the adhan is part of a larger narrative of American plurality. It is a natural manifestation of Muslim American presence and communal expression.

The fact that the adhan can be heard in the streets of Minneapolis, Hamtramck and Astoria - alongside church bells and other sounds of worship - signifies that Muslim beliefs are not deemed less worthy, nor must they be confined to a private space. It is a sign that Muslims are at home and welcome here. (AP)

The Conversation

Artistic breakthroughs?

The folly of making art with text-to-image generative AI

By Ahmed Elgammal
Rutgers University

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

Making art using artificial intelligence isn’t new. It’s as old as AI itself.

What’s new is that a wave of tools now let most people generate images by entering a text prompt. All you need to do is write “a landscape in the style of van Gogh” into a text box, and the AI can create a beautiful image as instructed.

The power of this technology lies in its capacity to use human language to control art generation. But do these systems accurately translate an artist’s vision? Can bringing language into art-making truly lead to artistic breakthroughs?

I’ve worked with generative AI as an artist and computer scientist for years, and I would argue that this new type of tool constrains the creative process.

When you write a text prompt to generate an image with AI, there are infinite possibilities. If you’re a casual user, you might be happy with what AI generates for you. And startups and investors have poured billions into this technology, seeing it as an easy way to generate graphics for articles, video game characters and advertisements.

In contrast, an artist might need to write an essaylike prompt to generate a high-quality image that reflects their vision - with the right composition, the right lighting and the correct shading. That long prompt is not necessarily descriptive of the image but typically uses lots of keywords to invoke the system of what’s in the artist’s mind. There’s a relatively new term for this: prompt engineering.

Compel

Basically, the role of an artist using these tools is reduced to reverse-engineering the system to find the right keywords to compel the system to generate the desired output. It takes a lot of effort, and much trial and error, to find the right words.

To learn how to better control the outputs, it’s important to recognize that most of these systems are trained on images and captions from the internet.

Think about what a typical image caption tells about an image. Captions are typically written to complement the visual experience in web browsing.

For example, the caption might describe the name of the photographer and the copyright holder. On some websites, like Flickr, a caption typically describes the type of camera and the lens used. On other sites, the caption describes the graphic engine and hardware used to render an image.

So to write a useful text prompt, users need to insert many nondescriptive keywords for the AI system to create a corresponding image.

Today’s AI systems are not as intelligent as they seem; they are essentially smart retrieval systems that have a huge memory and work by association.

Is this really the sort of tool that can help artists create great work?

At Playform AI, a generative AI art platform that I founded, we conducted a survey to better understand artists’ experiences with generative AI. We collected responses from over 500 digital artists, traditional painters, photographers, illustrators and graphic designers who had used platforms such as DALL-E, Stable Diffusion and Midjourney, among others.

Only 46% of the respondents found such tools to be “very useful,” while 32% found them somewhat useful but couldn’t integrate them to their workflow. The rest of the

users - 22% - didn’t find them useful at all.

The main limitation artists and designers highlighted was a lack of control. On a scale 0 to 10, with 10 being most control, respondents described their ability to control the outcome to be between 4 and 5. Half the respondents found the outputs interesting, but not of a high enough quality to be used in their practice.

Practice

When it came to beliefs about whether generative AI would influence their practice, 90% of the artists surveyed thought that it would; 46% believed that the effect would be a positive one, with 7% predicting that it would have a negative effect. And 37% thought their practice would be affected but weren’t sure in what way.

Are these limitations fundamental, or will they just go away as the technology improves?

Of course, newer versions of generative AI will give users more control over outputs, along with higher resolutions and better image quality.

But to me, the main limitation, as far as art is concerned, is foundational: it’s the process of using language as the main driver in generating the image.

Visual artists, by definition, are visual thinkers. When they imagine their work, they usually draw from visual references, not words - a memory, a collection of photographs or other art they’ve encountered.

When language is in the driver’s seat of image generation, I see an extra barrier between the artist and the digital canvas. Pixels will be rendered only through the lens of language. Artists lose the freedom of manipulating pixels outside the boundaries of semantics.

There’s another fundamental limitation in text-to-image technology.

If two artists enter the exact same prompt, it’s very unlikely that the system will generate the same image. That’s not due to anything the artist did; the different outcomes are simply due to the AI’s starting from different random initial images.

In other words, the artist’s output is boiled down to chance.

Nearly two-thirds of the artists we surveyed had concerns that their AI generations might be similar to other artists’ works and that the technology does not reflect their identity - or even replaces it altogether.

The issue of artist identity is crucial when it comes to making and recognizing art. In the 19th century, when photography started to become popular, there was a debate about whether photography was a form of art. It came down to a court case in France in 1861 to decide whether photography could be copyrighted as an art form. The decision hinged on whether an artist’s unique identity could be expressed through photographs.

Those same questions emerge when considering AI systems that are taught with the internet’s existing images.

Before the emergence of text-to-image prompting, creating art with AI was a more elaborate process: Artists usually trained their own AI models based on their own images. That allowed them to use their own work as visual references and retain more control over the outputs, which better reflected their unique style.

Text-to-image tools might be useful for certain creators and casual everyday users who want to create graphics for a work presentation or a social media post.

But when it comes to art, I can’t see how text-to-image software can adequately reflect the artist’s true intentions or capture the beauty and emotional resonance or works that grip viewers and makes them see the world anew. (AP)



Photos from the event.

‘Mrs Athavale left everlasting impression in our hearts’

WFK pays tribute to ex-vice president

KUWAIT CITY, June 27: “To live in hearts we leave behind, is not to die”, Claude Campbell.

Truly those who leave an everlasting impression on the hearts of others, remain immortal forever. So will, the Ex-Vice President of Writers’ Forum Kuwait and famous poetess Mrs. Chhaya Athavale, who left for heavenly abode on 25th May 2023.

With hearts filled with emotions and heads bowed with respect for the late member, the members of the Writers’ Forum Kuwait met for a condolence meeting at the residence of the General Secretary Ms. Nazneen Ali, on Friday 16th June 2023.

Chhaya Athavale was poet having strong grip on three languages and excelling equally in all. She was a Hindi, Gujarati and Marathi poet and writer who contributed to the enrichment of literature particularly related

to children. She was an academician who was actively involved in Child Development and Children Psychology through her poems and short plays. She was an active member of the Writers’ Forum Kuwait and served the Forum as a Vice President before she left Kuwait for good couple of years back.

The condolence meeting started with Nazneen Ali reciting an award winning poem in Hindi that was composed by the late poetess Mrs Chhaya Athavale. This was followed by an article by the President Mrs. Maimuna Chougale, who provided an in-depth insight into Mrs. Chhaya’s proficiency as a writer and her personal character that left a profound impact on others. The glimpse of Mrs. Chhaya’s multilingual skills were further showcased by Ms. Pallavi Nithin reciting the late poet’s Marathi poem. The meeting was attended by Ms. Sabiha

Bilgrami, Ms. Kalpana Shah, Ameeruddin Ameer, Aamir Diwan, Mohan Singh and Sayeed Nazar. All the members expressed regret on the sad demise of the late member. She was remembered by one and all for her pleasing personality that influenced everyone whom she met. The members wished that a posthumous release of Mrs. Chhaya Athavale’s poetry should be done to make her writings available for the benefit of the masses. The meeting concluded with everyone recollecting the memories of the event “Ek Shaam Chhaya Athavale ke naam”, that the Forum had earlier organized in honor of Mrs. Chhaya Athavale.

Before the dispersal, Mrs. Maimuna Chougale and Ms. Nazneen Ali expressed their gratitude to the members for being a part of this condolence meet that was tribute to the late member while the members thanked Nazneen Ali for arranging the same.

ex-Audi boss convicted of fraud

Former Audi boss Rupert Stadler was convicted of fraud Tuesday in connection with the automaker's diesel emissions scandal, making him the highest-ranking executive found guilty over cars that cheated on emissions tests with the help of illegal software.

A German court handed Stadler a suspended prison sentence of 21 months and ordered him to pay a fine of 1.1 million euros (\$1.2 million), some of which will go to charitable groups. The sentence resulted from an agreement between his lawyers,

the judge and prosecutors after he pleaded guilty last month.

The former head of Volkswagen's luxury division admitted wrongdoing and regret for his failure to keep rigged cars off the market even after the scandal had become public knowledge.

The Munich regional court also sentenced the former head of engine development, Wolfgang Hatz, and a former Audi engineer, identified only as Giovanni P. for privacy reasons, to suspended prison sentences and fines.

They were accused of ensuring that diesel engines met emissions limits during testing but not on the road to save on construction costs. Prosecutors had objected to a plea agreement with Hatz. The verdicts are likely to be appealed.

The court already closed a case in April against a fourth defendant who had testified for the prosecution and ordered him to pay a fine.

It is the first criminal trial to conclude in Germany in connection with the diesel emissions scandal. (AP)



Rupert Stadler, former CEO of German car manufacturer Audi, sits in a regional court room and waits for the verdict in Munich, Germany, Tuesday, June 27, 2023. (AP)

Market Movements

27-06-2023

	Change	Closing pts		Change	Closing pts
EGYPT	-	EGX 30	+2.18	17,665.29	
UAE	-	DFM	-0.01	3,791.99	
JAPAN	-	Nikkei	-0.49	32,538.33	
PAKISTAN	-	KSE 100	-0.15	41,326.50	
PHILIPPINES	-	PSEi	-0.31	6,502.85	
SAUDI	-	Tadawul	-0.06	11,458.98	

Business

Europe interest rates to stay high as long as needed to defeat inflation, says cbank chief

FRANKFURT, June 27, (AP): European Central Bank President Christine Lagarde warned Tuesday that inflation is holding its grip on the economy and underlined that the bank intends to raise rates high enough to “break this persistence.”

Lagarde acknowledged that inflation has fallen from all-time highs last year as energy prices plunged and the bank rolled out a rapid series of rate increases, which are meant to fight price spikes by making it more expensive for consumers and businesses to borrow and spend.

“We are seeing a decline in the inflation rate as the shocks that originally drove up inflation wane and our monetary policy actions are transmitted to the economy,” she said in a speech opening the ECB’s annual policy conference in Sintra, Portugal.

“But the pass-through of those shocks is still ongoing, making the decline in inflation slower and the inflation process more persistent,” Lagarde added.

Businesses initially passed on their rising costs by charging customers higher prices, a phase that is starting to wane. Now, with unemployment at record lows, workers are

demanding higher wages to make up for lost purchasing power - threatening to keep pushing up inflation in a wage-price spiral that the bank must prevent.

Workers, Lagarde said, “have so far lost out from the inflation shock, seeing large real wage declines, which is triggering a sustained wage catch-up process as they try to recover their losses. This is pushing up other measures of underlying inflation.”

She said the ECB needs “to address this dynamic decisively” by raising rates as far as needed. The bank would discourage “expectations of a too-rapid policy reversal” and keep rates high for as long as needed, Lagarde said.

Inflation in the 20 countries that use the euro currency came in at 6.1% in May, heading down from a peak of 10.6% in October after declines in energy prices that surged after Russia’s invasion of Ukraine.

But inflation is well above the bank’s target of 2% considered best for the economy. And core inflation - which excludes volatile food and fuel prices - is

stubbornly high at 5.3%. New inflation figures are to be published Friday, with analysts at Deutsche Bank foreseeing another decline in overall inflation to 5.8%.

Higher interest rates can weaken the economy and raise the risk of recession. Europe’s economy already contracted slightly in the last months of 2022 and the first three months of this year, with two straight quarters of falling output being one definition of recession.

Even so, the bank is expected to raise interest rates again by a quarter-percentage point next month.

Lagarde all but promised such a hike at the bank’s meeting this month, repeating in her speech Tuesday that “barring a material change to the outlook, we will continue to increase rates in July.”

Central banks around the world have rapidly increased borrowing costs to combat inflation stemming from the global rebound from the COVID-19 pandemic and Russia’s war in Ukraine.

Survey conducted by The Harris Poll

Employee productivity fuelling generative AI adoption: survey

CHANDLER, Arizona, June 27, (BUSINESS WIRE): A survey conducted by The Harris Poll on behalf of Insight Enterprises, a Fortune 500 Solutions Integrator focused on driving client success through digital transformation, finds that within the next three years, most business leaders expect to adopt generative AI to make employees more productive (72%) and enhance customer service (66%). Around half of the respondents for Insight’s generative AI report, released today, say they expect to use the technology to assist with research and development (53%) and/or software development/testing (50%).

“Generative AI has opened up amazing new possibilities to build companies, to grow companies, and to make companies more efficient and profitable,” said Matt Jackson, Insight global chief technology officer. “The pace of exploration and adoption of this technology is unprecedented. People are sitting in meeting rooms or virtual rooms discussing how generative AI can help them achieve near-term business goals while trying to stave off being disrupted by who is a faster, more efficient adopter.”

The survey was designed to garner insights on how director level or above professionals at companies with 1,000+ employees are thinking about and exploring generative AI technologies.

“Some of the most pressing questions involve generative AI’s impact on employees. We are asking ourselves: How do we collaborate with it? How will it change our jobs? Will it replace us? These questions are valid, but the power of generative AI is its ability to augment, not replace, human intelligence,” said Jackson. “History tells us if you give people the right tools, they become more productive and discover new ways to work to their benefit. Embracing this technology gives employees an unprecedented opportunity to evolve and elevate how they work and, for some, even discover new career paths.”

Go to insight.com/GenerativeAI to read the complete report, and learn

more about Insight Lens™ for Gen AI. Insight’s new service helping organizations identify high-value use cases to quickly and securely scale generative AI within their business environment.

For more information on Insight, visit insight.com or call 800-INSIGHT.

The research was conducted online in the United States by The Harris Poll on behalf of Insight Enterprises among 405 U.S. adults ages 25+ who are employed full-time as a director or higher at a company with 1,000+ employees. The survey was conducted from April 26 to May 3, 2023. Data are weighted where necessary by number of businesses to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population.

The sampling precision of Harris online polls is measured by using a Bayesian credible interval. For this study, the sample data is accurate to within ±5.0 percentage points using a 95% confidence level. This credible interval will be wider among subsets of the surveyed population of interest.

All sample surveys and polls, whether or not they use probability sampling, are subject to other multiple sources of error that are most often not possible to quantify or estimate, including but not limited to coverage error, error associated with nonresponse, error associated with question wording and response options, and post-survey weighting and adjustments.

Insight Enterprises, Inc. is a leading Solutions Integrator with 13,000 team-mates worldwide helping organizations accelerate their digital journey to modernize their business and maximize the value of technology. We enable secure, end-to-end transformation and meet the needs of our clients through a comprehensive portfolio of solutions, far-reaching partnerships and 35 years of broad IT expertise. Rated as a Forbes World’s Top Female-Friendly Company and a Great Place to Work, we amplify our solutions and services with global scale, local expertise and a world-class e-commerce experience, realizing the digital ambitions of our clients at every opportunity. Discover more at insight.com.

Wall Street rises as economy ‘holds up’ better than feared



A man looks at monitors showing Japanese yen's foreign exchange rate against the U.S. dollar at a securities firm in Tokyo, Monday, June 26, 2023. (AP)

Global stocks higher

NEW YORK, June 27, (AP): Wall Street is gaining ground Tuesday after a round of reports suggested the economy is in better shape than feared.

The S&P 500 was 0.7% higher in afternoon trading. It’s been generally edging lower since a five-week rally carried it to its highest level in more than a year in mid-June.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average was up 147 points, or 0.4%, at 33,864, as of 12:06 p.m. Eastern time, and the Nasdaq composite was 1.1% higher.

Airlines were helping to lead the way after Delta Air Lines said it still sees pent-up demand in the pipeline as passengers make up for lost opportunities to travel during the pandemic. It highlighted high-income customers in particular, who account for three-quarters of spending on air travel and still look to be in good financial shape despite high inflation.

Delta’s stock rose 4.9% after it said earnings this year should come in at the top end of the range it had earlier forecast. American Airlines climbed 5.7%, and United Airlines rose 5.4%.

High inflation is hurting other companies more directly, though. Walgreens Boots Alliance dropped 9.5% after it reported weaker profit for the latest quarter than analysts expected. The retail pharmacy company also cut its forecast for earnings this fiscal

year, saying customers have become more cautious in their spending and are looking for more value amid high inflation.

Lordstown Motors plunged 36.3% after the electric pickup truck company filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection. It had warned in early May that it was in danger of failing due to a dispute with electronics company Foxconn, which was wavering on a \$170 million investment in the startup company.

Global

Global stock markets were mostly higher Tuesday after Wall Street drifted lower following its latest rally.

London, Shanghai, Paris and Hong Kong gained. Tokyo declined. Wall Street futures rebounded. Oil prices rose.

Wall Street’s benchmark S&P 500 index lost 0.4% on Monday as tech stocks declined following a rapid run-up while most other stocks advanced. The index is off this year’s high of two weeks ago but still up more than 20% since mid-October.

“The moderation from previous overbought technical conditions and extreme bullish sentiment continues,” Yeap Jun Rong of IG said in a report.

Asia

In Asia, Shanghai Composite Index gained 1.2% to 3,189.44 after China’s No. 2 leader, Premier Li

Qiang, said economic growth has accelerated and can hit this year’s official 5% target. Li, speaking at a conference, gave no growth rate for the latest quarter but said it is faster than the previous quarter’s 4.5%.

The Nikkei 225 in Tokyo sank 0.5% to 32,538.33 while Hong Kong’s Hang Seng rose 1.9% to 19,148.13.

The Kospi in Seoul shed less than 0.1% to 2,581.39 while Sydney’s S&P-ASX 200 added 0.6% to 7,118.20.

India’s Sensex rose 0.3% to 63,154.82. New Zealand and Southeast Asian markets advanced.

Stock prices have surged this year on hopes that a recession expected after the Federal Reserve and central banks in Europe and Asia raised interest rates to cool inflation might come later and be shorter and shallower than previously forecast.

Oil

In energy markets, benchmark U.S. crude rose 45 cents to \$69.82 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. The contract gained 21 cents on Monday to \$69.37. Brent crude, the price standard for international oil trading, added 42 cents to \$74.77 per barrel in London. It advanced 33 cents the previous session to \$74.18.

Currencies

The dollar edged up to 143.48 yen from Monday’s 143.45 yen. The euro rose to \$1.0939 from \$1.0915.

US industry group to write ‘standards’ for Tesla electric vehicle charging plug

DETROIT, June 27, (AP): A key U.S. automotive industry organization says it will set performance standards for Tesla’s electric vehicle charging cords in another move toward using the Tesla plug on all EVs.

The move by SAE International, formerly the Society of Automotive Engineers, comes just weeks after Ford, General Motors and Rivian said they would join Tesla’s large Supercharger network and adopt its North American Charging Standard connector in new versions of their electric vehicles.

But a rival connector called CCS is still in thousands of current EVs and will stay in use.

SAE said Tuesday that it’s already working on the standards and hopes to finish them within six months. The standards would govern how the plugs connect with charging stations, cybersecurity measures, charging speeds and reliability requirements, said Frank Menchaca, president of sustainable mobility solutions for the innovation arm of SAE’s nonprofit parent company.

The move likely spells the end of CCS, which was developed to standards set by SAE, said Guidehouse Research e-Mobility analyst Sam Abuelsamid. “It’s only a matter of time before no one is building new EVs CCS connectors on them,” he said.

CCS, he said, is much harder to maneuver and plug into vehicles than Tesla’s NACS connector, he said. Most consumers who have used both

would choose Tesla’s connector, Abuelsamid said.

But he said charging stations will have to accommodate both plugs for many years because so many vehicles are equipped with the CCS connectors.

Menchaca said Tesla and industry engineers are working on the standards in partnership. He said automakers and consumers won’t have to pay royalties to Tesla, but EV owners will need to pay Tesla to charge on its network.

The organization, he said, is not picking which connector will be used and said the industry still wants to support CCS.

Menchaca said SAE is setting standards for NACS because Ford, GM and Rivian have adopted it and it “looks like it’s poised to become really widely used. So in talking to all of the stakeholders we decided it needs to be standardized.”

The standards, he said, will provide more choice and convenience and access to a bigger charging network. “Who knows if others come on board, it could be the dominant way that people charge,” he said.

Other automakers such as Stellantis and Hyundai are considering switching to Tesla’s connector.

At present, nearly all automakers other than Tesla use CCS.

Tesla’s Superchargers are coveted by other automakers because it has more direct current fast-charging plugs in the U.S. than any other network, and its stations are in prime locations along freeway travel corridors.

China's premier says economic growth is accelerating

China's No. 2 leader said Tuesday that economic growth accelerated in the latest quarter and expressed confidence it can hit the ruling Communist Party's official target of 5% for the year.

Premier Li Qiang, speaking at a conference in the eastern city of Tianjin, gave no figure for the three months ending in June but said it was faster than the previous quarter's 4.5%.

The world's second-largest

economy rebounded from 2022's unusually weak 3% growth following the end of anti-virus controls on travel and business activity. But that faded faster than expected. Consumer and factory activity weakened in May and record-setting youth unemployment spiked up.

"It is expected that the second quarter will be faster than the first quarter," Li said at the World Economic Forum. "We expect to achieve the economic growth

rate of about 5% determined at the start of the year."

Private sector forecasters expect China's economic output to grow by at least 5% this year, but some have cut their outlooks following May's weak activity.

Chinese leader Xi Jinping's government appears to be avoiding a large-scale economic stimulus to prevent another rise in debt Beijing worries is dangerously high. (AP)

OPEC chief lauds Malaysia support

Secretary General of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries' (OPEC) Haitham Al-Ghais praised Malaysia on Monday for its backing of more cooperation with non-OPEC allies, saying the Southeast Asian nation has an illustrious history of oil output.

Citing a Malaysian oil well first discovered in 1910, the OPEC chief said it represents a "historic landmark" in the country's oil industry, in addition to being an

integral component of the future of Malaysian oil production, he told an Asian energy conference in Malaysia.

A "balanced and stable" global oil market largely hinges on the level of cooperation between OPEC and its allies from outside the organization, he emphasized, saying the matter has become all the more significant in the aftermath of the COVID pandemic.

As shown by a recent OPEC

report, he said that global demand for renewable energy has surged by some 23 percent in an upward trend that is likely to persist by the year 2045, underlining that the future of the global energy system will revolve around renewables.

"As we continue to provide energy to the world, we also recognize the need to continually reduce carbon emissions in line with global practices and standards," he told the gathering. (KUNA)

Visit a landmark in institute's international engagement

Krach Institute bolsters tech diplomacy ties with Taiwan

WEST LAFAYETTE, Ind., June 27, (BUSINESS WIRE): Purdue University's Krach Institute for Tech Diplomacy recently welcomed Ambassador Bi-khim Hsiao, Taiwan's Representative to the U.S., initiating a groundbreaking advancement in strategic technological collaboration to promote freedom and trust globally.

The visit, a landmark in the Institute's international engagement, underscored the shared democratic values of Taiwan and the United States. Two Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) were signed, facilitating extensive collaboration between Purdue University and Taiwan's National Yang Ming Chiao Tung University (NYCU) and National Chengchi University (NCCU), specifically in the vital field of semiconductors.

Chairman of the Institute, Keith Krach, hosted a discussion with Ambassador Hsiao and NYCU President Dr. Lin, emphasizing the potential of technological collaboration to accelerate innovation and ensure the adoption of trusted technology.

The Institute's CEO, Michelle Giuda, conducted an industry forum, underlining the necessity for public-private partnerships to develop technology responsibly. The delegation also had an exclusive tour of Purdue's state-of-the-art Birk Nano-technology Center and the Neil Armstrong Hall of Engineering.

"These agreements will considerably enhance the U.S.-Taiwan ties, catalyzing technological innovation and strengthening Taiwan's sovereignty and international standing," said Keith Krach. "Our expanding partnership will turbocharge trusted technology and bolster freedom for us all."

Ambassador Hsiao commended the shared democratic values that form the bed-

rock of Taiwan-U.S. relations and echoed her confidence in the upcoming collaboration with the Krach Institute, stating, "We share a common goal of technological advancement that benefits humanity and is not weaponized by authoritarian regimes against us. I am grateful to President Mung Chiang and Chairman Keith Krach for hosting me and the Taiwanese delegation at the Krach Institute for Tech Diplomacy at Purdue."

Highlighting the responsibility of tech innovators, Dr. Lin stressed, "Technological innovation holds great promise, but it also increases threats to our way of life from authoritarian regimes. High tech must be trusted to serve humanity and not abuse universal human rights. NYCU and the Krach Institute see the challenge the same way. We both understand the importance of trusted technology. We both seek to nurture talents as assets to society for they are the masters of the future. And we both put our philosophy in action to build a better and safer world."

"Securing freedom requires that we bring together – in new ways – high-tech private-sector know-how, technology expertise, such as the leading STEM students and researchers at Purdue or NYCU and NCCU, and foreign policy and national security expertise," said Michelle Giuda. "That integrated expertise and partnership – among public and private, partners and allies – is required to secure freedom and secure high tech, and why we are so excited to strengthen our partnership with Taiwan."

Longstanding Partnership

The Krach Institute for Tech Diplomacy at Purdue and Taiwan have an enduring partnership, rooted in Purdue University's seven-decade-long history of

engagement with Taiwan and Chairman Krach's strong commitment to Taiwan, punctuated by his historic visit in 2020 as the most senior State Department official in 41 years.

Krach played a pivotal role in strengthening U.S.-Taiwan ties when he served as America's top economic diplomat by establishing the Lee Economic Prosperity Partnership, concluding the Science and Technology Agreement, and orchestrating the landmark onshoring of Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company (TSMC) to the United States. The original \$12 billion TSMC deal resulted in the CHIPS and Science Act, a legislation that Krach architected, generating more than \$350 billion in domestic chip manufacturing investment and creating thousands of U.S. jobs.

"I first got to know Under Secretary Krach while he was at the State Department when I first arrived, and he's been instrumental in supporting a number of economic and science partnerships between Taiwan and the United States," said Ambassador Hsiao. "His efforts to create a fusion between technology and diplomacy is very meaningful."

About the Krach Institute for Tech Diplomacy at Purdue

The Krach Institute for Tech Diplomacy at Purdue is the world's preeminent trusted technology accelerator. As the leader of a new category of Tech Diplomacy, the Institute integrates technology expertise, Silicon Valley strategies, and foreign policy tools to build the Global Trusted Tech Network of governments, companies, organizations and individuals to accelerate the development and adoption of trusted technology and ensure technology advances freedom.

Part of its role in Diraya campaign

Kuwait Finance Hse continues to promote 'financial literacy'

KUWAIT CITY, June 27: In line with its ceaseless efforts in supporting safe banking and as part of its key role in the "Diraya" campaign, Kuwait Finance House (KFH) continues promoting financial literacy and highlighting the benefits of banking services and products such as personal finance.

Through the campaign, KFH seeks to raise awareness on the importance of understanding the two types of financing: consumer and housing financing which are meant to cater to customers' needs according to set parameters.

The Bank explained that consumer finance, which is a medium-term finance of maximum KD 25,000 is granted for financing goods and services like purchasing cars, furniture, or for getting educational or medical services over a period not exceeding five years.

Whereas housing Finance is a long-term personal finance of a maximum KD 70,000 granted over a period not exceeding fifteen years for purchasing, building or renovating private housing.

KFH added that in order to benefit from the finance services without being exposed to default risks, or lawful financial obligations, the Central Bank

of Kuwait (CBK) has enacted a set of controls for banks to comply with when granting finance, whether to their employees or customers.

The applied CBK controls require banks to offer financial advice, provide full information about the financing contract, and clarify the details of the financing process, e.g., rate of return, number and details of installments, in addition to other information prior to signing the contract. Further, banks must allow a period of two days for the customer to review and read the contract's terms and conditions carefully for better understanding of his/her rights and obligations.

Diraya is a campaign launched by CBK in cooperation with Kuwait Banking Association (KBA) and local banks. The campaign aims to disseminate awareness on financial and banking services security in addition to financial inclusion, which comes at an important time, during which the focus on digital banking services is growing.

It is worth noting that KFH has always been active in promoting and supporting the Diraya campaign objectives through its media channels and transaction channels ever since the campaign's launch in 2021.

Prince William launches 5-yr project to end long-term homelessness in UK

'Rare, brief and unrepeatable'

LONDON, June 27, (AP): Prince William launched a five-year project to end homelessness in the United Kingdom on Monday, saying he wants to make sure that instances of people being left without a roof over their heads are "rare, brief and unrepeatable."

The heir to the throne kicked off the initiative by visiting pilot projects that have received grants of up to 500,000 pounds (\$637,000) each from the Royal Foundation, the charity that supports the work of William and his wife, Kate.

All of the initiatives, including more to be unveiled on Tuesday, involve collaborative efforts between local people, organizations and businesses to develop programs tailored to the needs of their communities.

"It's a big task, but I firmly believe that by working together it is possible to make homelessness rare, brief, and unrepeatable, and I am very much looking forward to working with our six locations to make our ambition a reality," William said in a statement.

The initiative, known as Home-wards, hopes to learn from the example of countries such as Finland, which has virtually eliminated homelessness, in part by ensuring that people in crisis receive permanent housing as a first step before trying to address other issues such as substance abuse, William said.

William announced the plan as rising rents and a shortage of affordable housing push more people into homelessness amid the biggest decline in living standards since World War II. Recent research indicates that more than 300,000 people throughout the U.K. have no permanent housing on any given night, including those who are sleeping on the streets, living in cars, staying in hostels or temporarily seeking help from family and friends, Homewards said.

The prince said he first learned about homelessness when he visited a shelters with his mother, Princess Diana, when he was 11.

"I met so many extraordinary people and listened to so many heartbreaking personal stories," he said as he visited a mental health charity in south London. "Too many people have found themselves without a stable and permanent place to call home.

Matt Downie, chief executive of the charity Crisis, said Britain needs to focus on new ways to get people off the streets, because the current system of putting people in "temporary" housing such as hostels and bed and breakfasts is costing billions of pounds a year and isn't working.

"The best way to tackle homelessness is to stop it happening in the first place," Downie said. "We've seen it in



Britain's Prince William meets Tom Dinnen, Hosford Community Homes lead, right, during a visit to the East Belfast Mission at the Skainos Centre, Belfast, Northern Ireland, Tuesday June 27, 2023, as part of his tour of the UK to launch a five-year project to end long-term homelessness in the United Kingdom. (AP)

Reaching 'ambitious' climate targets will run into financial problems: EU auditors

BRUSSELS, June 27, (AP): The European Union's auditing agency warned Monday that there might not be sufficient financing available to meet the bloc's ambitious climate targets.

The warning from the Court of Auditors comes as the 27-nation bloc is already struggling to live up to image as the global leader in working toward climate neutrality because of a political fight in the EU legislature to push through environmental protection measures.

In a 63-page report, the court also noted that the European Commission, the EU's executive arm, did not include all greenhouse gas emissions in its tallies, which might lead to overly optimistic statistics. The report's authors also found some of the commission's accounting too opaque.

Regarding its finding on financing, the court said that 30% of the 2021-2027 budget was to be spent on climate action, or about 87 billion euros (\$95 billion) a year.

"This amount is less than 10% of the total investment needed to reach the 2030 targets, estimated at around 1 euros trillion per year," the report said.

The auditors complained they had "no information that sufficient financing will be made available to reach the 2030 targets, in particular from the private sector. The commission also reported that member states have a lack of collective ambition towards achieving the 2030 energy efficiency target, which had already proven to be the hardest to achieve by 2020."

But some have questioned how a man with luxurious properties, including an apartment at Kensington Palace, a cottage near Windsor Castle and a home on the king's Sandringham estate, can truly understand the issue. As Prince of Wales, he also controls the Duchy of Cornwall, some 52,000 hectares (128,500 acres) of land mostly in the Southwest of England.

In a recent interview with London's

The auditors pointed out that the targets for 2030 are much more ambitious and said they "found little indication so far that this ambition will translate into sufficient action."

It puts the EU in a tough spot. On Tuesday, the European Parliament has a committee vote scheduled on a nature restoration plan that has deeply divided the bloc. The plan is part of a far bigger project for the EU to become climate neutral by 2050.

It includes a wide range of measures, from reducing energy consumption to sharply cutting transportation emissions and reforming the EU's trading system for greenhouse gases.

The European Commission said it wanted to keep all actions interlinked for optimal impact.

Sunday Times newspaper, William acknowledged that he was "one of the most unlikely advocates for this cause."

But when he was asked whether there were any plans to put affordable housing in the Duchy of Cornwall, he answered, "Absolutely."

"Social housing," he told the Times. "You'll see that when it's ready. I'm no policy expert, but I push it where I can."

Italian group calls off pasta strike

MILAN, June 27, (AP): Italians can celebrate lower pasta prices but must face higher prices across the board for fruit and vegetables.

Italy's industry ministry reported last week that prices of pasta had fallen by an average of 0.3% in May compared with a month earlier, saying that a monitoring system it set up had the intended effect of reducing prices.

As a result, the Assoutenti consumer group called off a pasta strike planned for this week, intended to force down prices by reducing demand.

President Furio Truzzi told The Associated Press, however, that despite the overall decreases, pasta prices are obstinately high in some cities and that the group was still considering targeted strikes later this summer.

The price of a kilogram (2.2 pounds) of pasta had dropped to 2.12 euros (\$2.32) in the Adriatic port city of Ancona from a high of 2.44 euros in March, and to 2.02 euros in Genova from a peak of 2.38 euros. The price dipped below 2 euros in many cities.

But inflation is still an issue for Italian kitchens. Vegetable prices in May rose an average of nearly 15% over the previous year, accelerating from an 11% increase in April, while potato prices went up 22%, compared with the 9% increase registered a month earlier, according to the Italian statistics agency, ISTAT.

Assoutenti is pushing for a similar monitoring board for fruit and vegetable prices, which it said could be the result of speculation tied to recent

Pixion Games secures \$5.5m in funding to accelerate dev't of Fableborne

LONDON, June 27, (BUSINESS WIRE): Pixion Games, an innovative gaming studio headed by industry veterans, today announced that it has successfully closed \$5.5 million in new investment as an extension of the Company's seed round. The funds raised will help supercharge Pixion Games' development of its flagship game, Fableborne.

Fableborne is an action role-playing game (RPG) that blends strategic base building with accessible ways for players to accumulate on-chain in-game assets. Players can build their base, raid their opponents, and upgrade buildings and Heroes in a world rich of lore with stunning visuals art and fun gameplay.

With this fresh influx of capital, and continued support from its trusted investors, Pixion Games will

make significant strides in Fableborne's ongoing development. This includes Pixion League, the in-app tournament platform, turbocharging LiveOps for free-to-play games.

"Following a series of successful releases, Fableborne has garnered strong praise and positive feedback," said Kam Punia, Founder and CEO of Pixion Games. "Our team is fully focused on making Fableborne a leading, high-quality game with on-chain elements. With this mission in mind, we're proud to say that our LiveOps powered by tournaments model is nearly ready for release."

Pixion Games' funding round was backed by notable investors, including Avalanche Foundation's Blizzard Fund, Shima Capital, Eldridge, Merit Circle, ReadyPlayerDAO, VGC, Zee Prime, Mechanism

Capital, GSR, Misfits Gaming, among others. The Company has carefully curated its investor relationships by seeking out partners who are dedicated to sustainable long-term growth.

With its deep knowledge of developing multiplayer experiences for millions of players, and a unique approach to game development, Pixion Games is ready to revolutionize the web3 gaming space. The Company's proprietary tournament platform and data-informed approach to building conviction and hit titles is a stark contrast to the single project development of many web3 games. On-chain elements that enhance social play, user-generated content (UGC), and tradable in-game assets are carefully integrated to add extra value without negatively impacting core gameplay.

Is it enough?

Meta launches more parental supervision tools for Instagram

NEW YORK, June 27, (AP): Instagram and Facebook’s parent company Meta is adding some new parental supervision tools and privacy features to its platforms as social media companies face increasing scrutiny over their effects on teen mental health.

But many of the features require minors - and their parents - to opt in, raising questions about how effective the measures are. Instagram, for instance, will now send a notice to teens after they have blocked someone, encouraging them to let their parents “supervise” their account. The idea is to grab kids’ attention when they might be more open to parental guidance.

If a teen opts in, the system will let parents set time limits, see who their kid follows or is followed by, and allows them to track how much time the minor spends on Instagram. It does not let parents see message content.

Launched

Instagram launched parental supervision tools last year to help families navigate the platform and find resources and guidance. A sticking point in the process is that kids need to sign up if they want parents to supervise their accounts. It’s not clear how many teen users have opted in and Meta has not disclosed any numbers.

Such supervision allows parents to see how many friends their child has in common with accounts the child follows or is followed by. So if the child is followed by someone none of their friends follow, it could raise a red flag that the teen does not know the person in real life.

This, Meta says, “will help parents understand how well their teen knows these accounts, and help prompt offline conversations about those connections.”

Meta is also adding parental supervision tools already available on Instagram and on virtual reality product to Messenger. The opt-in feature lets parents see how much time their child spends on the messaging service and information such as their contact lists and privacy settings - but not who they are chatting with, for instance.

Such features can be useful for families in which parents are already involved in their child’s online life and activities. Experts say that’s not the reality for many people. Last month, US Surgeon General Vivek Murthy warned that there is not enough evidence to show that social media is safe for children and teens and called on tech companies to take “immediate action to protect kids now.”

Murthy told The Associated Press that while he recognizes social media companies have taken some steps to make their platforms safer, those actions are not enough. For instance, while kids under 13 are technically banned from social media, many younger children access Instagram, TikTok and other apps by lying about their age, either with or without their parents’ permission.

Manage

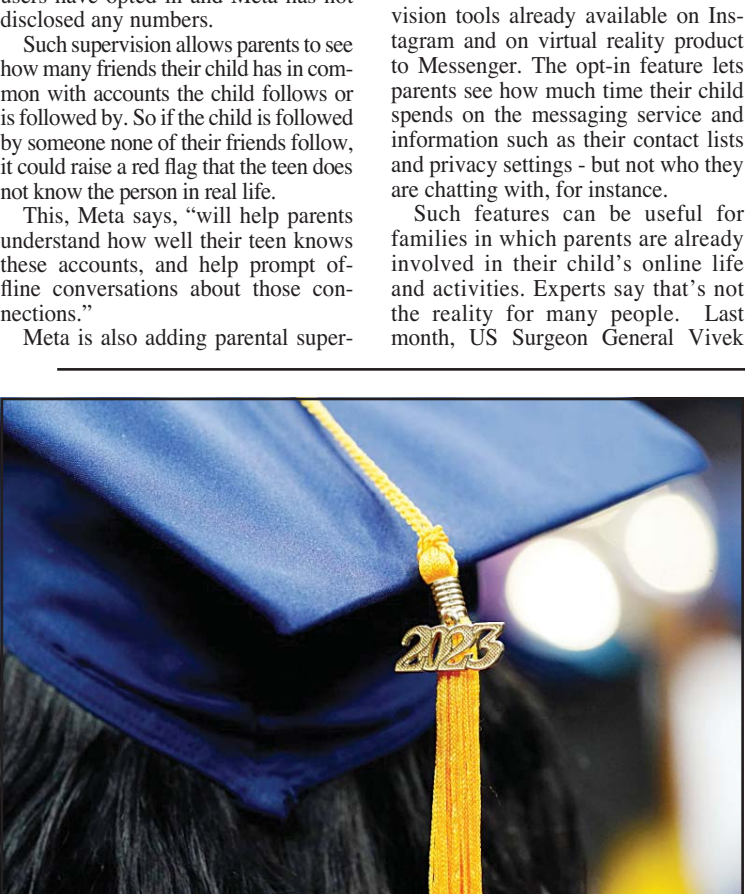
Murthy also said it’s unfair to expect parents to manage what their children do with rapidly evolving technology that “fundamentally changes how their kids think about themselves, how they build friendships, how they experience the world - and technology, by the way, that prior generations never had to manage.”

“We’re putting all of that on the shoulders of parents, which is just simply not fair,” Murthy said.

Also beginning Tuesday, Meta will encourage - but not force - children to take a break from Facebook, just as it already does on Instagram. After 20 minutes, teenage users will get a notice to take time away from the app.

If they want to keep scrolling, they can just close the notification. TikTok also recently introduced a 60-minute time limit for users under 18, but they can bypass it by entering a passcode, set either by the teens themselves, or if the child is under 13, by their parent.

“What we are focused on is kind of a suite of tools to support parents and teens on how they how can they can best engage in safe and appropriate experiences online,” said Diana Williams, who oversees product changes for youth and families at Meta. “We’re also trying to build tools that teens can use themselves to learn how to manage and recognize how they’re spending their time. So things like ‘take a break’ and ‘quiet mode’ in the evenings.”



A tassel with 2023 on it rests on a graduation cap as students walk in a procession for Howard University’s commencement in Washington, Saturday, May 13, 2023. MBA grads say the investment in their degree was worth it, according to a 2022 survey by the Graduate Management Admission Council. (AP)

Prioritize credentials

Master ‘business’ skills without paying for MBA

By Trea Branch
NerdWallet

Lindsay Mack earned her bachelor’s degree from Georgetown University in 2005. Nearly 15 years later, when she considered the best way to grow her business acumen, an MBA was not it.

Mack, who is from Philadelphia, grew her career without an MBA. When ready to advance her skills in platform strategy, she opted for a faster, lower-cost cohort program instead.

For students like Mack, the cost of a top MBA — averaging \$225,605 in the US, according to a 2022 report by BusinessBecause, an online publisher of graduate business content — is daunting, and the value is questionable.

“I didn’t see how making such a significant investment (in an MBA) would really leapfrog me to the next level,” says Mack, now Comcast’s executive director of product management.

Cost isn’t the only barrier to attaining a graduate business degree. BusinessBecause reports that the average acceptance rate for the most competitive US business schools is 16%, based on its analysis of data from US News & World Report and other sources.

If you want access to business school education without the price of tuition or hassle of admissions, you have other options.

Prioritize credentials

Consider a graduate business certification. A certification — offered by accredited colleges and universities — differs from an MBA degree primarily in how long it takes to complete the program.

Business certifications typically require about 12 to 15 class credits, while a master’s degree requires at least 30 credits, says Karen Rinehart, assistant dean of graduate programs at Marquette University Graduate School of Management in Milwaukee.

Because you’re taking fewer credits compared to an MBA, you can expect to pay much less. For example — based on the 2022-23 academic year — tuition for a graduate certificate in strategic management from Harvard Extension School, a Harvard Division of Continuing Education, is \$15,500. A Harvard MBA costs \$73,440 in tuition, not including fees.

Certificate programs are often more specialized than graduate business degrees. This can be great for those looking to develop a specific skill set — like business analytics — to advance in their career, says Olivia Jobson, associate director of graduate recruitment at Oregon State University College of Business.

By Liz Weston
NerdWallet

Raiding your retirement accounts can be expensive. Withdrawing money before age 59½ typically triggers income taxes, a 10% federal penalty and - worst of all - the loss of future tax-deferred compounded returns. A 30-year-old who withdraws \$1,000 from an individual retirement account or 401(k) could lose more than \$11,000 in future retirement money, assuming 7% average annual returns.

In the past, there were a few ways you could avoid the penalty. Congress recently added several more, and some of those exceptions allow you to repay the money within three years. That would allow you to get a refund of the taxes you paid and - best of all - allow the money to start growing again, tax deferred, for your future.

You’re still better off leaving retirement funds alone for retirement, says Erin Itkoe, director of financial planning at Tarbox Family Office, a wealth management firm in Scottsdale, Arizona. If you can’t, though, you could at least limit the damage from taking the money out early, she says.

Secure 2.0

The new penalty exceptions are part of Secure 2.0, a package of retirement plan changes that Congress passed late last year. Some exceptions are available for your IRA right now, while others take effect in coming years, says David Certner, legislative counsel for AARP. The exceptions also can apply to workplace plans, such as 401(k)s or 403(b)s, but it may require your employer to opt in, so check with your human resources department, Certner says.

However, the repayment option still isn’t available for most penalty exceptions. For example, you can avoid the penalty if you withdraw \$10,000 from an IRA for a first-time home purchase or to pay higher education expenses, but you won’t be able to repay the money later and get the taxes refunded.

Disasters, terminal illness

One new penalty exception that allows for repayment is for disasters. People who live in a federally declared disaster area and suffer an economic loss can withdraw up to \$22,000 penalty-free. Income taxes still have to be paid on the withdrawal but the income can be spread over three years to reduce the potential tax impact. This exemption was made retroactive to Jan. 26, 2021.

Another potentially large exemption with the repayment option is one for terminal illness. Effective this year, the 10% penalty is waived for people whose doctor certifies that they are expected to die within seven years, says Itkoe, who’s also a certified public accountant serving on the American Institute of CPAs’ personal financial planning executive committee. There’s no limit on how much can be withdrawn.

A three-year repayment period also now applies to the penalty exception when you have or adopt a child. This exception allows each parent a \$5,000 withdrawal within the 12 months after a child is born or adopted.

Exceptions for domestic abuse and financial emergencies to come

Next year, the 10% penalty is waived for victims of domestic abuse. The penalty-free withdrawal is limited to the lesser of \$10,000 or 50% of the account’s value and can be repaid over three years.

Also effective next year is a penalty-free distribution of up to \$1,000 for some emergency expenses. People can take one such withdrawal per year if the money is repaid. Otherwise, only one distribution is allowed every three years.

Note that both of these exceptions are “self-certified.” That means you provide a written statement asserting that you meet the requirements without having to supply other documents or proof, says Itkoe.

Secure 2.0 penalty

A penalty exception to pay for long-term care insurance kicks in for 2026, but it only applies to workplace plans, not IRAs. Note that the withdrawal -



Cash is fanned out from a wallet in North Andover, Mass., June 15, 2018. Parenting comes with many responsibilities, and one is raising financially independent kids. Generally, it’s best to leave the money in your retirement accounts safely tucked away. Withdrawing money early can trigger taxes and a 10% penalty, plus it can cut into what you otherwise would’ve had for retirement. (AP)

Shop on social media the smart way

By Kimberly Palmer
NerdWallet

When Ziwei Cong bought some sweatpants that caught her eye during a livestream shopping event on social media, she was disappointed when they arrived and didn’t fit well.

“It’s very easy for me to become irrational during these kinds of shopping events,” says the assistant professor of marketing at Georgetown University’s McDonough School of Business. She adds that the hosts can be very persuasive and hook you with limited-time offers to trigger impulse purchases.

Social shopping, or purchases made through social media sites that sometimes incorporate livestreaming events with influencers, is booming. Almost half of US consumers (47%) say they’ve made a purchase on social media, and 39% say they have bought that way and would do so again, according to 2022 data in a report released in April by the market intelligence agency Mintel.

“Shopping on social media has really taken off more with younger consumers. They’re on their phones more and on social media more often, so it’s easier to purchase via social media when they find a product they like,” says Katie Hansen, senior retail and e-commerce analyst at Mintel and author of the report.

Despite its popularity, social shopping also comes with risks, most notably overspending, as Cong’s experience illustrates. The excitement, discounts and limited quantities can lead to unplanned (and regrettable) purchases. Shopping experts suggest the following guideposts when engaging in social shopping.

Proceed slowly

Social shopping so easily leads to overspending, Cong says, because it’s so engaging. “It’s a more direct and interactive way to communicate with consumers, and it boosts the perceived experience of the product,” she explains, especially if a shopper sees their favorite influencer using the product.

The flash sales and limited promotions contribute to that rush to purchase, as does the “herding effect” from seeing other people leave comments and express their desire to buy, Cong adds.

To resist those temptations, shopping expert Trae Bodge from truetrae.com suggests slowing down and even stepping away from the screen. “Make sure it’s something you want. The sense of excitement and urgency might make you buy something that you haven’t properly vetted,” she adds. “It’s always good to take a beat.”

Budgeting expert Andrea Woroch says that if you see something appealing pop up in your feed, instead of buying it immediately, save the link to come back to later, after you take time to consider your budget. “That will avoid any buyer’s remorse,” she says.

Check reviews

Bodge also encourages shoppers to check other websites for lower prices, look for coupons and leverage cash-back options that might be available outside of social shopping, such as on retailer or brand sites.

Woroch suggests checking customer reviews, too. “Do your homework like you would on another shopping site to make sure it’s the quality you expect. A lot of people overlook that when they do social shopping,” she says — one reason why the “what I ordered vs. what I got” meme is so popular on social media.

In some cases, making returns for items purchased through social shopping can be more of a hassle, so it’s worth checking the return policy in advance, Woroch also notes.

Keep personal info private

Though social shopping can feel like a community experience, it’s worth remembering that your public comments are visible to strangers, and it’s important to keep personal details private, Bodge says. “Don’t overshare, and never put your credit card or address in the comments,” she adds.

Bodge also advises against leaving the social media platform to enter payment information on a third-party site, which could be a scam, and she encourages people to use a credit card to make purchases for added fraud protection.

Woroch notes that phones will sometimes automatically connect to available public Wi-Fi networks, which can leave you vulnerable to hackers when you are sharing payment information online. She suggests avoiding social shopping on public Wi-Fi networks.

Reap the rewards

With those precautions in place, social shopping can be a positive experience for consumers, especially because it allows them to connect directly with brands, including those they might not have otherwise been exposed to through a retailer, says Edward Fox, professor of marketing at Southern Methodist University’s Cox School of Business.

“It democratizes the commercial world and allows smaller brands to get a broader audience than they would otherwise,” he says.

It gives consumers more choices, too. (AP)

Obesity in kids rising, and it comes with health consequences

Behind Maghateer Commercial Complex & Opp. Police station, Farwaniya

People

TOKYO, June 27, (AP): Author Haruki Murakami says he’s strongly opposed to the redevelopment of a historic and beloved Tokyo park district that would remove his favorite jogging path and tear down the nearly century-old baseball stadium where he was inspired to become a novelist.

The plan approved earlier this year by Tokyo Gov. Yuriko Koike to put skyscrapers and new stadiums in the heart of the Jingu Gaien green district has become increasingly controversial. Followers of baseball and rugby history are opposed to it, as well as conservationists and civil groups who say the project has advanced without transparency, adequate environmental assessment or explanation to the residents.

The ball park and a neighboring rugby stadium used for soccer during the 1964 Tokyo Olympics would be demolished under the plan, and hundreds of trees would be removed from what’s been a Tokyo park district for centuries. When finished, the new stadiums will be surrounded by nearly 200-meter (650-foot) tall office buildings in a commercial complex.

“I’m strongly opposed to the Jingu Gaien redevelopment plan,” Murakami said on his Sunday radio show. “Please leave that pleasant jogging course full of greenery and the lovely Jingu Stadium as it is. Once something is destroyed, it can never be restored.”

Murakami used to sit beyond the outfield fence, stretching out with a beer to watch the game on a grassy slope. He remembers the moment he decided to become a novelist: In the early afternoon on April 1, 1978, when then-perennial underdog Yakult Swallows’ unknown American Dave Hilton slammed a clean double into left field and “the satisfying crack when the bat met the ball resounded throughout Jingu

Stadium,” he wrote in his 2007 memoir, “What I Talk About When I Talk About Running.”

On his way home, he bought a fountain pen and started writing. His first novel, “Hear the Wind Sing,” was finished about six months later.

Murakami said Gaien’s circular jogging course, which is just over 1-kilometer (1,093-yard) long and has a mark at every 100 meters (yards), is his favorite running area. During the radio show, he described “my secret, nice memory” of regularly passing another runner in the opposite direction, never speaking.

Earlier in the weekend, hundreds of people gathered outside the designated redevelopment area in Tokyo for a protest.

The Jingu Gaien dispute comes about two years after the Tokyo Olympics, which involved several newly constructed stadiums and have since been sullied by bribery scandals.

Koike said the metropolitan government has appropriately handled the environmental assessment and has urged the companies involved to share information with the public on the redevelopment.

The project will take 13 years to complete, but minor construction has begun. The first court hearing on a lawsuit to suspend the work will be held later this week.

Also:

NEW YORK: Salman Rushdie, Cheryl Strayed, Carl Hiasen and Ibram X. Kendi are among hundreds of authors who have endorsed an announcement by the American Library Association and the Association of American Publishers that calls attention to the 70th anniversary of a Freedom to Read Statement issued by book publishers and librar-

ians during the height of the McCarthy era.

With book bannings surging nationwide over the past two years, the library and publishing associations are urging “all members of the book community” to affirm their commitment to the June 1953 declaration, which includes such propositions as “It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those that are unorthodox, unpopular, or considered dangerous by the majority.”

Sunday’s press announcement reads in part: “Today, as we grapple with a new wave of censorship in schools, libraries, and bookstores targeting a wide range of expression, including fiction and nonfiction, the Freedom to Read Statement remains an important defense of the freedom to write, publish and inquire.”

Supporters of the initiative also include **Jennifer Egan, Ron Chernow, Jodi Picoult**, along with such organizations as Penguin Random House, Simon & Schuster, the Authors Guild and the American Booksellers Association.

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NEW YORK: The 15-year-old granddaughter of the **Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.** is collaborating on a picture book tribute to the late civil rights leader and his wife, **Coretta Scott King, Yolanda Renee King**’s “We Dream a World,” with illustrations by award-winning artist Nicole Taddell, will be published by Scholastic next Jan. 2.

“I’m excited to share this love letter in his honor. This book lets every child rediscover my grandparents’ dream,” Yolanda Renee King, herself a social justice advocate, said in a statement Friday.

Variety



This image released by Paramount Pictures shows Hayley Atwell, (left), and Tom Cruise in ‘Mission: Impossible Dead Reckoning - Part One.’ (AP)

Film

Abu Dhabi rolls out red carpet to Hollywood megastar

Tom brings new ‘MI’ adventure to UAE

ABU DHABI, United Arab Emirates, June 27, (AP): The red carpet unfurled Monday in Abu Dhabi for Hollywood action megastar Tom Cruise, who was on hand for the Middle Eastern premiere of “Mission: Impossible - Dead Reckoning Part One.”

Cruise was met by an enthusiastic crowd of fans and movie buffs eager to catch a glimpse of the star at the Emirates Palace Hotel in the capital of the United Arab Emirates.

Dressed in a tailored tuxedo and flashing his signature smile, Cruise appeared moved by the exuberant reception, stopping to speak with many attendees. The evening’s buzz was punctuated by the “Mission: Impossible” theme, its familiar chords adding a layer of cinematic nostalgia to the night.

“I’m a cinephile, I love movies and the history of cinema and how this art form develops,” Cruise told The Associated Press on the red carpet. “I didn’t know whether the audience was going to embrace (the first Mission: Impossible movie), it was the first film I ever produced and I did it because I wanted to challenge myself in many ways as an actor, as a producer, as a storyteller.”

“Mission: Impossible - Dead Reckoning Part One” is the seventh installment of the blockbuster \$3.5 billion grossing franchise famed for jam-packed action and ever-daring stunts performed by the 60-year-old Cruise himself.

“We’ve had a lot of fun coming up with these moments,” said Cruise.

The Mission: Impossible series follows the globe-trotting adventures of Ethan Hunt, a secret agent of the Impossible Missions Force, or IMF, as he undertakes high-risk covert operations. Picture heart-racing action, sophisticated gadgets, and Cruise’s Hunt executing death-defying stunts at every turn.

Matching the topic of the moment, Hunt and his IMF team are tasked with tracking down a potent new artificial intelligence weapon in “Mission: Impossible - Dead Reckoning Part One.” Scenes include base-jumping off a cliff on a motorcycle, hurling a steam train off an exploded bridge, and drifting a yellow Fiat 500 through Rome’s winding streets.

In a nod to the locale, the film incorporates several action sequences in Abu Dhabi. The desert landscapes of Liwa, known as the Empty Quarter, set the stage for intense horseback chases and firearm confrontations. Cruise runs across the dune-shaped roof of Abu Dhabi International Airport’s new Midfield Terminal in another scene.

“When you see us shooting a sequence in Abu Dhabi, it’s about that culture, it’s about that country, and that’s why we keep coming back here,” said Christopher McQuarrie, who is returning for the third time as director of the high-octane spy series.

Tense

McQuarrie joined Cruise on the red carpet along with other Mission: Impossible co-stars, both new and returning. Hayley Atwell and Pom Klementieff made their franchise debut, while Simon Pegg reprised his role as Benji Dunn, a character known for infusing comedic relief into the franchise’s most tense scenes.

“When you have a film which is high-tension you need that to occasionally be injected in order to make it a little bit more enjoyable,” said Pegg.

Following pandemic delays, the production companies behind the franchise, Paramount Pictures and Skydance, pushed the film’s release from September of 2022 to July of 2023. A leaked video from the set featured Cruise launching an expletive-laden rant at colleagues after he reportedly spotted two crew members failing to respect social distancing rules. The star expressed his concern about the potential consequences, which included shutting down production and jeopardizing the then-struggling movie industry and the jobs it supports.

“We just had to write the rulebook on how to make a film during a pandemic,” said Pegg. “Make sure everything was super safe, that was Tom’s biggest challenge in a way was to make us all feel safe and be safe, somehow we muddle through.”

Cruise was praised by many for his role in revitalizing Hollywood following the industry’s pandemic-induced stagnation. This recognition came on the heels of his blockbuster film, “Top Gun: Maverick,” which

not only marked Cruise’s first \$100 million debut but also signified the return of blockbuster movies to theaters as the most significant movie debut since the onset of the pandemic.

Abu Dhabi marks the third premiere location for “Mission: Impossible - Dead Reckoning Part One,” with the red carpet previously rolled out at the Spanish Steps in Rome and Leicester Square in London. The movie is set to open in US theaters on July 12.

Also:

LOS ANGELES: The film adaptation of **Judy Blume**’s classic coming-of-age novel “Are You There God? It’s Me, Margaret” will be available on video on demand starting Tuesday - perfect for summer sleepovers or mother-daughter movie nights at home. Directed by **Kelly Fremon Craig** (“The Edge of Seventeen”), **Abby Ryder Fortson** plays the 11-year-old narrator who is navigating a move to the suburbs, new friends, puberty, periods, first crushes and her faith. It is sweet, playful and reverential to its source material, which is hardly a requirement for enjoying the film. Like the book, it’s set in the early 1970s, because Blume did not want the characters to be texting. **Rachel McAdams** is also a standout as Margaret’s mother. It could make for a great double feature with the documentary “Judy Blume Forever,” which is available on Prime Video.

Netflix also has a new film perfect for the tween set in the animated “Nimona,” inspired by ND Stevenson’s graphic novel about a shapeshifting girl. **Chloë Grace Moretz** voices Nimona, a rebellious outsider with riot-grrrrl energy who lives in the shadows of a futuristic kingdom with medieval touches. She teams up with a disgraced knight, Ballister (**Riz Ahmed**), who is on the run after being accused of killing the queen. The film is vibrant and clever, with a fun soundtrack that aren’t clumsily handled. “Nimona” starts streaming on Friday, June 30.

Also arriving on Netflix on Wednesday is “Run Rabbit Run,” a horror starring “Succession’s” **Sarah Snook** as the single mother of a young girl who says she has memories of another life. As if Shiv isn’t enough of a sell, Snook also gets to use her native Australian accent.

LOS ANGELES: The effects of fentanyl are considered the cause of death for **Adam Rich**, the child actor known as “America’s little brother” for his role on the hit family dramedy “Eight is Enough.”

The former television star’s death this January has been ruled an accident by the Los Angeles County Medical-Examiner Coroner’s office, according to an autopsy report. Rich died in his Los Angeles home at age 54.

His stardom came at just eight years old as the mop-topped son raised by a widower newspaper columnist in ABC’s “Eight is Enough.” A limited acting career followed the show’s run from 1977 to 1981.

Rich had publicly discussed his experiences with depression and substance abuse in the months before he died. He tweeted in October that he had been sober for seven years after arrests, many rehab stints and several overdoses. He urged his followers to never give up.

He was arrested in April 1991 for trying to break into a pharmacy and again that October for allegedly stealing a drug-filled syringe at a hospital while receiving treatment for a dislocated shoulder. A DUI arrest came in 2002 after he struck a parked **California** Highway Patrol cruiser in a closed freeway lane. (AP)

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LONDON: **Sarah**, the Duchess of York, underwent surgery after being diagnosed with breast cancer, according to a spokesperson.

The 63-year-old was diagnosed with early-stage breast cancer following a routine mammogram. The surgery was a success and Sarah’s prognosis is good, the duchess’s spokesperson said. She was released from **King Edward VII’s** Hospital in London on Sunday to recuperate at home in Windsor.

Sarah, the former wife of **Prince Andrew** and the mother of **Princess Beatrice** and **Princess Eugenie**, spoke about the diagnosis on her new podcast, “Tea Talks with the Duchess and Sarah,” set to be released Monday. She recorded the segment before her operation.

Once a favorite target of **Britain’s** tabloids, the former **Sarah Ferguson** has previously published her memoirs and authored

a number of children’s books as well as a historical romance for adults. (AP)

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ATLANTA: The owner of an auto repair shop who paid a former employee with 91,500 oily pennies has been ordered by a judge to pay nearly 4 million more cents.



Rich

Ferguson

A federal judge ruled that **Miles Walker**, who owns A OK Walker Autoworks in **Peachtree City, Georgia**, owes \$39,934 to nine workers for unpaid overtime and damages.

Attorneys for Walker agreed to the payments to settle a civil lawsuit brought by the U.S. Labor Department that accused Walker

of retaliating against former employee **Andreas Flaten** in 2021.

After Flaten filed a complaint with the agency saying Walker owed him a final \$915 paycheck, the employer dumped that amount in oil-covered pennies in Flaten’s driveway. The mountain of loose change came with a pay stub signed with an expletive.

The Labor Department said further investigation found that Walker’s business had also violated overtime provisions of the federal Fair Standards and Labor Act.

The judge on June 16 signed a consent order in which Walker agreed to pay nearly \$8,700 more to Flaten in owed overtime and damages. (AP)

People & Places

Film

Bold & unique styles

Field brings Happy Clothes to masses

NEW YORK, June 27, (AP): Costume designer **Patricia Field** has never liked fashion rules. The woman who famously combined a tutu with spiky heels on Sarah Jessica Parker in “Sex and the City,” and made a plaid bucket hat cool on Lily Collins in “Emily in Paris” has a way of making high fashion feel accessible to the masses. She explains how she does it in the new documentary, “Happy Clothes: A Film About Patricia Field,” which recently premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival.

The film is directed by Michael Selditch, who also directed the CNN docu-series “American Style” in 2019. While interviewing Field for that series, he found a bold character with a unique, unconventional style of mixing color and patterns and designer looks with street wear. While at first Field resisted the idea of a documentary crew following her around, she finally relented and says she’s pleased with the result.



Field

The Emmy-winning Field, 81, was behind the inventive outfits on “Ugly Betty” and is known for styling films as well, including “The Devil Wears Prada,” which earned her an Oscar nod. The Associated Press sat down with Field and Selditch recently to talk about her process, that tutu, and which item everyone should have in their closet.

Answers have been shortened for brevity and clarity.

AP: How did you get Pat to agree to this documentary?

Selditch: I said to her, “You know, anybody can make a documentary on you. We can always find people to sit down and talk about working with you and say wonderful things and throw in archival footage. But that’s not exactly the documentary I want to make. I want to watch your process. I want to see you shop. I want to see you working with actors. I want to really make it verite and watch you work and get inside your head and be a fly on the wall.” And I said, “If we don’t do it now, when are you going to do it?”

AP: What is a typical costume fitting like for you?

Field: There’s a person and then there’s a character. But behind that character is the person, and it’s really important that they feel good because that is, in my mind, my responsibility. It’s not about dictating to actors what’s good and what’s not good. It’s about giving them choices and, of course, getting to know them. Once you get to know them, it becomes a little bit more automatic. Like Sarah Jessica Parker, I know her. I worked with her before. I know her taste. It’s about the relationship and making sure that the actor in front of that camera is comfortable, positive and ready to go.

AP: Your costumes on “Sex and The City” helped make designer brands feel more attainable by mixing high fashion accessories with basic off-the-rack clothes. Was that intentional?

Field: Let’s talk about mixing high and low. I think that you can’t just wear high or you can’t just wear low. People say, “orange and red don’t go together.” Well, they go together in a fruit bowl! (smiles) It’s nature. And what’s wrong with it? So I go by this little philosophy of mine and I tend to not get distracted by mores or rules or whatever comes across. It’s just my expression and if I feel good about it and the actor does, then it’s fine.

AP: The white tutu and gold “Carrie” necklace have become iconic items. Do you know when you’re putting something like that on an actor that it’s going to hit?

Field: I don’t always have that same formula of knowing beforehand what it’s going to be. But I have my taste. It’s not haphazard for me, and I guess it’s my formula and I guess it works for me. It’s very important. Dressing someone, man or woman, it’s a two way street. They’re in the clothes, they need to be happy. I offer the clothes, I have to be satisfied. It’s always best to establish a positive relationship and when the actor trusts you, you’re home free.

Selditch: One of the things I really love and admire about Pat is that she goes with her gut in her work and in her life. And I think that what you’re looking at there, like the tutu, it’s just in her gut, it felt right to her. Other people might be like, “Why?” But to her it felt right. And it turned out to be. And her gut isn’t ordinary or obvious. It’s fun and crazy and exciting. And that’s one of the things that people respond to in Pat’s work.

Field: I think the tutu industry will thank me. (laughs) I can’t stop seeing tutus! Years go by and there’s always tutus on the rack. I saw this (skirt) in the showroom, and I pulled it out of a basket on the floor and I immediately thought of Sarah Jessica because she’s ballet trained and she’s also fashion. She’ll understand this. She’s not going to treat this with a pair of ballet slippers. She’s going to put on a pair of spiky heels and have this little thing. And I said, “Darren (showrunner Darren Star) if it’s a hit - and I think it will be - that tutu will be classic through time.”

AP: You worked with Molly Rogers on “SATC” and now she’s the costumer for “And Just Like That...” Do you think she’s been consistent with the style on the new show?

Field: I think she’s great. She has experience. I’ve worked with Molly for many years. I met her in my shop on 8th Street and I hired her and we’ve been together ever since, doing different projects. It’s a very long and loving relationship. There is definitely a consistency. But at the same time, it wouldn’t be as good if she just tried to copy me. She is creative. She has her own way of looking at it. I think they’re doing a great job. I would probably be very disappointed if they weren’t.

AP: What’s an accessory you think everyone should have?

Field: I like a belt because the belt defines the waist and you know, all this like loose, shapeless clothing — I don’t find it very exciting. So I’m definitely a belt girl.



Elton John performs during Glastonbury Festival in Worthy Farm, Somerset, England, Sunday, June 25. (AP)

Music

Leigh’s album applies clever twists to classic country

Rodrigo readies new album ‘Guts’

LOS ANGELES, June 27, (AP): Buckle up for a sad girl fall. Olivia Rodrigo - the Grammy-winner best known for her 2021 smash single “drivers license” - will release her highly-anticipated sophomore album in September.

The singer-actor is reteaming with her close collaborator Dan Nigro for “Guts,” which will be released Sept. 8, Geffen Records announced Tuesday. “SOUR,” her first album, was a multi-platinum debut that won Rodrigo three Grammy Awards.

“For me, this album is about growing pains and trying to figure out who I am at this point in my life,” Rodrigo said in a press release. “I feel like I grew 10 years between the ages of 18 and 20-it was such an intense period of awkwardness and change. I think that’s all just a natural part of growth, and hopefully the album reflects that.”

The first track from Rodrigo’s second album, “Guts,” “vampire,” will be released on Friday, June 30.

In January 2021, Rodrigo released “drivers license,” a pop power ballad that took the world by storm, debuting at No. 1 on the Billboard 100, where it stayed for eight weeks. The song became the first in history to hit 80 million streams in seven days on Spotify, and even earned her a viral “Saturday Night Live” parody sketch starring Bridgerton actor Regé-Jean Page.

She was nominated for seven Grammy Awards - including nominations in all four of the major categories, becoming the first Filipina to do so - and took home three, including best new artist, best pop vocal album and best pop solo performance for “drivers license.”

Nigro, formerly of the band As Tall As Lions, has produced records with stars like Carly Rae Jepsen and Sky Ferreira.

As the album title would suggest, **Brennen Leigh** sings about cheating, drinking and trucking, while referencing **Red Sovine**, jukeboxes and her dog.

Leigh may not be reinventing the wheel on “Ain’t Through Honky Tonkin’ Yet,” but her throwback album makes for a fun ride.

Leigh is fully committed to the Nashville sounds of more than a half-century ago, which helped her recruit a stellar supporting cast of hot-picking traditionalists led by producer **Chris Scruggs**. **Marty Stuart**’s mandolin provides the album’s first solo, and **Rodney Crowell** croons background vocals.

The titles of some tunes give away the plot: “The Bar Should Say Thanks,” “Somebody’s Drinking About You” and “Running Out of Hope, Arkansas.” But Leigh is a smart songwriter who applies clever twists to her genre’s conventions, while keeping it country with an alto as bracing as the winter wind in her native North Dakota.

The title cut makes a convincing case for cold beer, and “Mississippi Rendezvous” depicts a third-rate romance with hilariously solemn backing vocals in support of Leigh’s octave leaps. “Every Time I Do” channels **Patsy Cline** and leaves just enough to the imagination, while “You Turned Into a Dragon” is a witty take on art imitating life that rhymes “my very eyes” with “metamorphosize.”

It will all sound great on a jukebox.

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Ben Folds’ pop confections are sweet and tart, a recipe that makes him popular with both boomers and college students. He’s a master melodist and sly satirist, a sentimental cynic and piano pounder who loves a waltz.

All those sides are evident on “What Matters Most,” an engaging 10-song set and Folds’ first studio album since 2015.

As usual, his musical approach varies widely, from pingponging synthesizer to lyrical piano, a string section, horns and handclaps, a 7/4 time signature and overdubbed vocals in inventive arrangements that evoke the

Beach Boys, the Bee Gees and a barbershop quartet. Hummable hooks are plentiful as Folds sings about “life and doldrums and pain,” hilariously swears off motel flings, and makes surrendering to love sound triumphant.

His conversational lyrics lament the state of Western civilization on “But Wait, There’s More,” and specifically the perils of internet disinformation on “Kristine From the 7th Grade.” For those who disagree with his perspective, the CD package includes a photo of Folds seated atop a piano, happily sharing an obscene gesture.

Perhaps the pandemic prompted the song “Back to Anonymous,” a shuffle that contemplates the impermanence of celebrity. But “What Matters Most” should have Folds back on the charts.

Also:

NEW YORK: Foo Fighters, Fall Out Boy, **Kelly Clarkson**, **Kane Brown** and **Lil Wayne** are among the headliners this fall at the 2023 iHeartRadio Music Festival in **Las Vegas**, which will be broadcast live throughout the country.

The lineup for the two-day event Sept. 22-23 at T-Mobile Arena also includes **Miguel**, **Public Enemy**, **Sheryl Crow**, **Tim McGraw**, **TLC** and **Thirty Seconds to Mars**. **Ryan Seacrest** will host and fans can hear it all via iHeartMedia radio stations or watch it streaming on Hulu. Highlights will be available on-demand on Hulu in the weeks following the event.

The general public will be able buy tickets starting on June 16 on AXS.com, with Capital One cardholders able to get access beginning June 14.

“This is the only festival in the world with this range of genres — spanning all the styles you hear on our 860 stations and the iHeartRadio app. Each performer can sell out on their own, so it’s incredibly rare that you can see them all together on the same stage,” **Tom Poleman**, chief programming officer for iHeartMedia, said in a statement.

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LAKE BARRINGTON, III: A suburban **Chicago** man is facing firearm charges after he told officers he accidentally shot himself in the leg while dreaming that an intruder was breaking into his home, police said.

The **Lake Barrington** man was charged about two months after Lake County Sheriff’s deputies were called to his home on April 10 on a report about a person with a gunshot wound, police said.

Deputies who found the 62-year-old man with a gunshot wound to one of his legs applied a tourniquet to the limb because he “was losing a significant amount of blood” before being hospitalized, police said.

The man told investigators he “had a dream that someone was breaking into his home” and during that dream, he “retrieved his .357 Magnum revolver and shot at who he believed was the intruder,” police said.

“When he fired, he shot himself and apparently woke up from the dream,” police said Tuesday in a news release. (AP)



Olivia Rodrigo appears at the Vanity Fair Oscar Party in Beverly Hills, Calif., on March 12, 2023. Rodrigo has announced her highly anticipated sophomore album, titled ‘Guts,’ will drop in September. (AP)



Watters



Carlson

Variety

BOULOGNE-BILLANCOURT, France: After soccer, **Hollywood** stars **Ryan Reynolds** and **Rob McElhenney** are setting their sights on Formula One.

F1 team Alpine has secured a 200 million euro (\$218 million) investment from a group of investors that includes the actors.

French automotive company Renault Group - Alpine’s parent company - said Monday that the group has acquired a 24% stake in the team. It includes Otro Capital, RedBird Capital Partners and Maximum Effort Investments, which is led by Reynolds.

“The transaction values Alpine Racing Ltd. around \$900 million following this investment,” the team said in a statement. “It will accelerate Alpine’s growth plans and sporting ambitions in F1.”

Other investors include actor **Michael B. Jordan**.

Reynolds and McElhenney completed a \$2.5 million takeover of Welsh soccer team Wrexham in November 2020. The club was thrust into the global spotlight because of its A-list owners and secured promotion to the fourth tier of English soccer this season.

With drivers **Pierre Gasly** and **Esteban Ocon**, Alpine stands fifth in the constructors’ championship. The team was fourth in the constructors’ standings last year and has been struggling in its goal to close the gap on Red Bull, Ferrari and Mercedes this season.

Renault said the investors have an expertise in the sports industry, having previously worked with the Dallas Cowboys, Fenway Sports Group, the NFL, French soccer club Toulouse and Wrexham.

Renault said Alpine Racing SAS, the entity manufacturing F1 engines in France, is not part of the transaction and will remain entirely owned by Renault Group. (AP)

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LOS ANGELES: **Jesse Watters** will fill the Fox News Channel time slot left vacant by the firing of **Tucker Carlson**, part of a dramatic revamp of the network’s evening lineup announced on Monday.

Greg Gutfeld’s late-night show that combines news and comedy will move up an hour to start at 10 pm Eastern, displacing **Laura Ingraham**. She’ll shift to 7 pm, the hour that Watters has occupied. **Sean Hannity** will stay in his 9 pm time slot, Fox said. The new lineup debuts on July 17.

The announcement comes roughly two months after Fox News fired Carlson shortly after settling a defamation lawsuit with the voting machine maker Dominion Voting Systems on the eve of trial. The case, which centered on the network’s airing of false claims following the 2020

presidential election, exposed a trove of private messages sent between Fox hosts, including Hannity and Carlson, in which they criticized peers at the network.

Carlson has since begun doing occasional monologues for Twitter, although Fox is attempting to get him to stop the broadcasts.

Fox has seen its ratings tumble since

Carlson exited. Carlson averaged 3.25 million viewers at 8 p.m. in the first three months of the year, and the string of guest hosts who replaced him the past two months usually reached under 2 million, making the network’s command more tenuous.

The lineup change signals that Fox is doubling down on its opinionated evening



Tom Cruise waves for photographers at the premiere of the film ‘Mission Impossible, Dead Reckoning Part One’ at the Emirates Palace in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, Monday, June 26. (AP) — **Details Page 11**

Health

First malaria cases in US

Obesity pill works as well as Wegovy shots

NEW YORK, June 27, (AP): What if treating obesity could be as easy as popping an effective pill? That’s a notion that has long fueled hope for many of the more than 40% of Americans who are considered obese - and fueled criticism by those who advocate for wider weight acceptance. Soon, it may be a reality.

High-dose oral versions of the medication in the weight-loss drug Wegovy may work as well as the popular injections when it comes to paring pounds and improving health, according to final results of two studies released Sunday night. The potent tablets also appear to work for people with diabetes, who notoriously struggle to lose weight.

Drugmaker Novo Nordisk plans to ask the US Food and Drug Administration to approve the pills later this year.



Bessesen

“If you ask people a random question, ‘Would you rather take a pill or an injection?’ People overwhelmingly prefer a pill,” said **Dr. Daniel Bessesen**, chief of endocrinology at Denver Health, who treats patients with obesity but was not involved in the new research.

That’s assuming, Bessesen said, that both ways to take the medications are equally effective, available and affordable. “Those are the most important factors for people,” he said.

There have been other weight-loss pills on the market, but none that achieve the substantial reductions seen with injected drugs like Wegovy. People with obesity will be “thrilled” to have an oral option that’s as effective, said Dr. Katherine Saunders, clinical professor of medicine at Weill Cornell Health and co-founder of Intellihealth, a company that focuses on obesity treatment.

Novo Nordisk already sells Rybelsus, which is approved to treat diabetes and is an oral version of semaglutide, the same medication used in the diabetes drug Ozempic and Wegovy. It comes in doses up to 14 milligrams.

But results of two gold-standard trials released at the American Diabetes Association’s annual meeting looked at how doses of oral semaglutide as high as 25 milligrams and 50 milligrams worked to reduce weight and improve blood sugar and other health markers.

Diabetes

A 16-month study of about 1,600 people who were overweight or had obesity and were already being treated for Type 2 diabetes found the high-dose daily pills lowered blood sugar significantly better than the standard dose of Rybelsus. From a baseline weight of 212 pounds (96.16 kilograms), the higher doses also resulted in weight loss of between 15 pounds (6.80 kilograms) to 20 pounds (9.07 kilograms), compared to about 10 pounds (4.54 kilograms) on the lower dose.

Another 16-month study of more than 660 adults who had obesity or were overweight with at least one related disease - but not diabetes - found the 50-milligram daily pill helped people lose an average of about 15% of their body weight, or about 35 pounds (15.88 kilograms), versus about 6 pounds (2.72 kilograms) with a dummy pill, or placebo.

That’s “notably consistent” with the weight loss spurred by weekly shots of the highest dose of Wegovy, the study authors said.

But there were side effects. About 80% of participants receiving any size dose of oral semaglutide experienced things like mild to moderate intestinal problems, such as nausea, constipation and diarrhea.

In the 50-milligram obesity trial, there was evidence of higher rates of benign tumors in people who took the drug versus a placebo. In addition, about 13% of those who took the drug had “altered skin sensation” such as tingling or extra sensitivity.

Medical experts predict the pills will be popular, especially among people who want to lose weight but are fearful of needles. Plus, tablets would be more portable than injection pens and they don’t have to be stored in the refrigerator.

But the pills aren’t necessarily a better option for the hundreds of thousands of people already taking injectable versions such as Ozempic or Wegovy, said Dr. Fatima Cody Stanford, an obesity medicine expert at Massachusetts General Hospital.

“I don’t find significant hesitancy surrounding receiving an injection,” she said. “A lot of people like the ease of taking a medication once a week.”

In addition, she said, some patients may actually prefer shots to the new pills, which have to be taken 30 minutes before eating or drinking in the morning.

Paul Morer, 56, who works for a New Jersey hospital system, lost 85 pounds using Wegovy and hopes to lose 30 more. He said he would probably stick with the weekly injections, even if pills were available.

“I do it on Saturday morning. It’s part of my routine,” he said. “I don’t even feel the needle. It’s a non-issue.”

Some critics also worry that a pill will also put pressure on people who are obese to use it, fueling social stigma against people who can’t - or don’t want to - lose weight, said Tigress Osborn, chair of the National Association to Advance Fat Acceptance.

“There is no escape from the narrative that your body is wrong and it should change,” Osborn said.

Still, Novo Nordisk is banking on the popularity of a higher-dose pill to treat both diabetes and obesity. Sales of Rybelsus reached about \$1.63 billion last year, more than double the 2021 figure.

Other companies are working on oral versions of drugs that work as well as Eli Lilly and Co.’s Mounjaro - an injectable diabetes drug expected to be approved for weight-loss soon. Lilly researchers reported promising mid-stage trial results for an oral pill called orforglipron to treat patients who are obese or overweight with and without diabetes.

Pfizer, too, has released mid-stage results for darglipron, an oral drug for diabetes taken twice daily with food.

Novo Nordisk officials said it’s too early to say what the cost of the firm’s high-dose oral pills would be or how the company plans to guarantee adequate manufacturing capacity to meet demand. Despite surging popularity, injectable doses of Wegovy will be in short supply until at least September, company officials said.

Also:

NEW YORK: The United States has seen five cases of malaria spread by mosquitos in the last two months - the first time there’s been local spread in 20 years.

There were four cases detected in **Florida** and one in **Texas**, according to a health alert issued Monday by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Malaria is caused by a parasite that spreads through mosquito bites. Infected people can suffer fever, chills and flu-like illness. If it goes untreated, infected people can develop severe complications and die. The largest death toll in recent years has been seen in children in sub-Saharan Africa.

Health officials are warning doctors, especially those in southern states where the weather is more friendly to the tropical mosquito that spreads malaria, to be aware of the possibility of infection. They also should think about how to access the IV drug that is the first-line treatment for severe malaria in the United States, the CDC said.

The agency said that the people who were diagnosed received treatment and “are improving.”



Elf Bar and Esco Bar disposable vaping devices are displayed, Monday, June 26, in Washington. The number of electronic cigarette devices sold in the US has nearly tripled since 2020, driven almost entirely by a wave of unauthorized disposable vapes from China, according to sales data obtained by The Associated Press. Recently US health regulators have begun trying to block imports of several of the biggest brands, including Elf Bar and Esco Bar. (AP)

Health

FDA crackdown on fruity flavors falls short

Unauthorized vapes pouring into US

WASHINGTON, June 27. (AP): The number of different electronic cigarette devices sold in the US has nearly tripled to over 9,000 since 2020, driven almost entirely by a wave of unauthorized disposable vapes from China, according to tightly controlled sales data obtained by The Associated Press.

The surge stands in stark contrast to regulators’ own figures, which tout the rejection of some 99% of company requests to sell new e-cigarettes while authorizing only a few meant for adult smokers.

The numbers demonstrate the Food and Drug Administration’s inability to control the tumultuous vaping market more than three years after declaring a crackdown on kid-friendly flavors. Most of the disposable e-cigarettes, which are thrown away after they’re used up, come in sweet and fruity flavors like pink lemonade, gummy bear and watermelon that have made them the favorite tobacco product among teenagers.

They are all technically illegal, but their influx has turned FDA’s regulatory model on its head. Instead of carefully reviewing individual products that might hurt adult smokers, regulators must now somehow claw back thousands of illegal products sold by under-the-radar importers and distributors.

Most disposables mirror a few major brands, such as Elf Bar or Puff Bar, but hundreds of new varieties appear each month. Companies copy each other’s designs, blurring the line between the real and counterfeit. Entrepreneurs can launch a new product by simply sending their logo and flavor requests to Chinese manufacturers, who promise to deliver tens of thousands of devices within weeks.

Cheaper

Once a niche market, cheaper disposables made up 40% of the roughly \$7 billion retail market for e-cigarettes last year, according to data from analytics firm IRI obtained by the AP. The company’s proprietary data collects barcode scanner sales from convenience stores, gas stations and other retailers.

More than 5,800 unique disposable products are now being sold in numerous flavors and formulations, according to the data, up 1,500% from 365 in early 2020. That’s when the FDA effectively banned all flavors except menthol and tobacco from cartridge-based e-cigarettes like Juul, the rechargeable device blamed for sparking a nationwide surge in underage vaping.

But the FDA’s policy - formulated under President Donald Trump - excluded disposables, prompting many teens to simply switch from Juul to the newer flavored products.

“The FDA moves at a ponderous pace and the industry knows that and exploits it,” said Dr. Robert Jackler of Stanford University, who has studied the rise of disposables. “Time and again, the vaping industry has innovated around efforts to remove its youth-appealing products from the market.”

Adding to the challenge, foreign manufacturers of the prefilled devices don’t have to register with FDA, giving regulators little visibility into a sprawling industry centered in China’s

Shenzhen manufacturing center.

Under pressure from politicians, parents and major vaping companies, the FDA recently sent warning letters to more than 200 stores selling popular disposables, including Elf Bar, Esco Bar and Breeze. The agency also issued orders blocking imports of those three brands. But IRI data shows those companies accounted for just 14% of disposable sales last year. Dozens of other brands, including Air Bar, Mr. Fog, Fume and Kangvape, have been left untouched.

FDA’s tobacco director, Brian King, said the agency is “unwavering” in its commitment against illegal e-cigarettes.

The IRI data obtained by the AP provides key insights beyond figures released last week by government researchers, which showed the number of vaping brands in the US grew nearly 50% to 269 by late 2022.

Restricts

IRI restricts access to its data, which it sells to companies, investment firms and researchers. A person not authorized to share it gave access to the AP on condition of anonymity. The company declined to comment on or confirm the data, saying IRI doesn’t offer such information to news organizations.

To be sure, the FDA has made progress in a mammoth task: processing nearly 26 million product applications submitted by manufacturers hoping to enter or stay on the market. And King said the agency hopes to get back to “true premarket review” once it finishes plowing through that mountain of applications.

But in the meantime disposable vape makers have exploited two loopholes in FDA’s oversight, only one of which has been closed.

FDA’s authority originally only referenced products using nicotine from tobacco plants. In 2021, Puff Bar and other disposable companies switched to using laboratory-made nicotine.

Congress closed that loophole last year, but the action gave rise to another backlog of FDA applications for synthetic nicotine products. Under the law, FDA was supposed to promptly make decisions on those applications. The agency has let most stay on the market while numerous others launch illegally.

An earlier loophole came from a decision by Trump’s White House, which was made without the FDA’s input, according to the previous director of the agency’s tobacco program.

“It was preventable,” said Mitch Zeller, who retired from the FDA last year. “But I was told there was no appeal.”

In September 2019, Trump announced at a news conference a plan to ban non-tobacco flavors from all e-cigarettes - both reloadable devices and disposables. But political advisers to the president worried that could alienate voters.

Zeller said he was subsequently informed by phone in December 2019 that the flavor restrictions wouldn’t apply to disposables.

“I told them: ‘It doesn’t take a crys-

tal ball to predict that kids will migrate to the disposable products that are unaffected by this, and you ultimately won’t solve the problem,” Zeller said.

In retrospect, the government’s crackdown on Juul now seems relatively simple.

In September 2018, FDA officials declared teen vaping an “epidemic,” pointing to rising use of Juul, Reynolds American’s Vuse and other brands.

Within weeks, FDA investigators conducted an unannounced inspection of Juul’s headquarters. Congressional committees launched investigations, collecting hundreds of thousands of company documents.

By October 2019, Juul had dropped most of its flavors and discontinued all advertising.

Parents, health groups and major vaping companies essentially agree: The FDA must clear the market of flavored disposables.

But lobbying by tobacco giant Reynolds American, maker of the best-selling Vuse e-cigarette, has made some advocates hesitant about pushing the issue.

The economic barriers to entry are low: Chinese manufacturers offer dozens of designs and flavors for as little as \$2 per device when ordering 10,000 or more. The devices sell in the US for \$10 to \$30.

“If you have \$5 billion you probably can’t start a traditional cigarette company,” Jackler said. “But if you have \$50,000 dollars you can just send your artwork and logo to one of these companies and it will be on a pallet next week.”

Esco Bars comes in flavors like Bubbleberry, Citrus Circus, Bahama Mama and Berry Snow.

The Austin, Texas company behind the brand, Pastel Cartel, racked up more than \$240 million in disposable sales before the FDA blocked its Chinese imports last month.

Challenges

CEO Darrell Surriff says his company has gone to great lengths to comply with FDA, spending \$8 million on an application that the agency refused to accept. He’s appealing that decision and considering challenges to the import ban.

“We’re a company that does very positive things for society and the community, and the government just attacked us,” said Surriff, who added that he recently purchased new cars for several longtime employees.

Import alerts are one of the FDA’s strongest tools to block illegal products, but industry experts say they’re easy to skirt.

“Chinese companies tend to just re-name their products and change their shipping address so then the products can easily be marketed again,” said Marc Scheineson, a former FDA attorney who now consults for tobacco clients.

The FDA’s import ban against Chinese manufacturer Elf Bar, the best-selling disposable in the U.S., demonstrates the weaknesses of the whack-a-mole approach. The alert doesn’t mention several other brands made by the company, including Lost Mary and Funky Republic.



This 2014 photo made available by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention shows a feeding female Anopheles gambiae mosquito. The species is a known vector for the parasitic disease malaria. The United States has seen five cases of malaria spread by mosquitos in the last two months...the first time there’s been local spread in 20 years. There were four cases detected in Florida and one in Texas, according to a health alert issued Monday, June 26, by the CDC. (AP)

Discovery

Baby Shark bath toys recalled: About 7.5 million singing and swimming “Baby Shark” bath toys are being recalled after multiple lacerations and puncture wounds were reported in children playing with them.

Zuru, an El Segundo, California-based toymaker, said it’s recalling both full-size and mini versions of its robotic baby shark toys that have hard plastic top fins, which pose the injury risks.

Twelve injuries have already been reported with Zuru’s full-sized Robo Alive Junior Baby Shark Sing & Swim Bath Toys - after children sat or fell on the now-recalled products. Nine of these cases required stitches or medical attention, according to a Thursday release from the US Consumer Product Safety Commission.

While injuries have only been reported with these full-sized toys so far, Zuru is also recalling Robo Alive Junior Mini Baby Shark Swimming Bath Toys “out of an abundance of caution.”

Consumers in possession of the recalled toys are instructed to stop using them immediately and contact Zuru for a full refund. To get the refund, customers are asked to cut off or bend the tail fin, write “recalled” and a registration code on the body of the baby shark and upload a photo on a site dedicated to the recall.

The recalled products can be identified by model numbers and date codes. Zuru’s Robo Alive Junior Baby Shark Sing & Swim Bath Toys and Robo Alive Junior Mini Baby Shark Swimming Bath Toys were sold in-person and online at chains including Walmart, Target, CVS, Walgreens and TJX Companies from May 2019 through March 2023.

In a company announcement, Zuru noted that the recall only impacts the versions of the baby shark toys with a hard plastic fin. The newest toys, which have a silicone fin, are not part of the recall, Zuru said.

“We want to assure our customers that we are committed to the highest levels of safety and quality of all our products, and we have implemented measures to prevent future incidents by working to promptly remove these products from retail and replace them with a newly designed product,” Zuru wrote. (AP)

Goodenough dies at 100: John Goodenough, who shared the 2019 Nobel Prize in chemistry for his work developing the lithium-ion battery that transformed technology with rechargeable power for devices ranging from cellphones, computers, and pacemakers to electric cars, has died at 100, the University of Texas announced Monday.

Goodenough died Sunday at an assisted living facility in Austin, the university announced. No cause of death was given. Goodenough was a faculty member at Texas for nearly 40 years.

Goodenough was the oldest person to receive a Nobel Prize when he shared the award with British-born American scientist **M. Stanley Whittingham** and Japan’s Akira Yoshino.

“Live to 97 and you can do anything,” Goodenough said when the Nobel was awarded, adding he was grateful he wasn’t

forced to retire at 65.

And while his name may not ring a bell to most, Goodenough’s research helped unlock a revolution in technology now taken for granted in today’s world of portable phones, tablets and just about anything else with a plug-in port for a recharge.

Lithium-ion batteries were the first truly portable and rechargeable batteries, and they took more than a decade to develop. Whittingham said in 2019 that he had no



Whittingham



Goodenough

inkling that his work decades ago would have such a profound impact on the world.

“We thought it would be nice and help in a few things,” Goodenough said, “but never dreamed it would revolutionize electronics and everything else.”

Goodenough, Whittingham and Yoshino each had unique breakthroughs that laid the foundation for developing a commercial rechargeable battery and the three shared the \$900,000 Nobel Prize. (AP)

More pressure from England, Spain and France

After near misses in finals, Popp, Germany eye Women’s WC success

DUESSELDORF, Germany, June 27, (AP): Alexandra Popp knows a lot about playing in the biggest games, and about tough losses.

A year ago, Popp had to watch from the bench as Germany lost to England in the European Championship final after getting injured in the warm-up. Last month, she and eight of her teammates from that German squad played in Wolfsburg’s 3-2 loss to Barcelona in the Champions League final despite leading 2-0.

At the World Cup, much could depend on the experience of Popp, who battled on after blows to the knee and the neck in the loss to Barcelona, a result she called “brutally bitter.” Germany coach Martina Voss-Tecklenburg was watching from the stands.

Germany was once the undisputed powerhouse of European women’s soccer - World Cup champion in 2003 and 2007 and still the only country other than the United States to be No. 1 in the FIFA rankings. As women’s soccer booms around the world, the competition is only getting fiercer for Germany.

A group containing Morocco, Co-

lombia and South Korea should be relatively comfortable for Germany, which has never failed to reach the quarterfinals at a Women’s World Cup.

Voss-Tecklenburg’s preliminary squad of 31 players includes 10 from Wolfsburg and five from national champion Bayern Munich. Popp is by far the most experienced, with 127 games and 61 goals for her country. Only three players are based abroad, backup goalkeeper Ann-Katrin Berger and midfielder Melanie Leupolz, both at Chelsea, and Lyon midfielder Sara Däbritz.

Germany will warm up for the World Cup with friendlies against two teams who are heading to the tournament for the first time. The Germans beat Vietnam 2-1 on Saturday and face Zambia on July 7.

The run to the final last year in England brought a boom in interest in women’s soccer in Germany, where Bundesliga crowds have tripled to an average of nearly 3,000 this season, though that’s still well behind the English league.

The revolution that has made wom-

en’s soccer an increasingly televised, professionalized sport has also meant Germany’s clubs and national teams face ever more pressure from England, Spain and France, not to mention old rival the United States.

Since winning the last of eight European titles back in 2013, the only major tournament win for Germany was the

SOCCER

gold medal at the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Olympics. Since the last Champions League title for a German club by FFC Frankfurt in 2015, Wolfsburg has reached four finals and lost them all.

Germany was a pioneer of women’s soccer in Europe but, after a decade of rapid transformation in the sport worldwide, it hasn’t always adapted smoothly. Bayern Munich and Wolfsburg fly the flag for Germany in the Champions League, and the Bundesliga is increasingly dominated by clubs with established and lucrative men’s soccer teams.

That shift has sidelined the kind

of independently run women’s soccer clubs which used to lead the way in Germany and internationally. Of Germany’s first three European club champions, FFC Frankfurt has been merged into Eintracht Frankfurt, MCR Duisburg is long-defunct and Turbine Potsdam was relegated from the Bundesliga this season after only two wins.

Despite the growth in interest and crowds for German women’s soccer, it’s a long way from financial independence. A report in February by the German soccer federation indicated top-tier clubs lost on average 1.52 million euros (\$1.63 million) on their women’s soccer operations the season before, a deficit greater than their average income. Much of the difference is made up by cross-subsidizing from men’s teams.

That trend is likely to continue, at least in the short term, as more German clubs invest heavily in women’s soccer. Leipzig, backed by energy-drink giant Red Bull, will play in the Bundesliga next season, but some big clubs have lagged further behind.

Perennial men’s title contender



In this Tuesday, Feb. 21, 2023 file photo, Germany’s Svenja Huth, (right), and Sweden’s Fridolina Rolföe challenge for the ball during the women’s international soccer friendly match between Germany and Sweden in Duisburg, Germany. (AP)

Borussia Dortmund only founded a women’s team in 2020 after increasing pressure from fans and criticism from Dortmund-born national team player

Lina Magull, but had to start play in 2021 at the bottom of the league system. It has been promoted to the fourth tier for next season.

Las Vegas edges Fever to ‘sweep’ season series 3-0

Clark wins Collegiate Women’s Athlete of the Year

LAS VEGAS, June 27, (AP): A’ja Wilson and Chelsea Gray combined for 49 points and the Las Vegas Aces pulled away late for an 88-80 win over the Indiana Fever on Monday night to sweep the season-series 3-0.

Wilson cleaned up against Indiana for the third time with 24 points and 10 rebounds, plus three steals, three blocks and three assists. She had 28 points when the Aces won 101-88 on Saturday and 27 in an 84-80 win earlier in the month.

Gray, who had eight points in the winning 11-0 run before the Fever made two closing free throws, had 25 points on her bobblehead night. She also had five assists to reach 1,300 for her career.

BASKETBALL

Kelsey Plum added 17 points for the Aces (13-1) and Jackie Young, who was named an all-star game starter with Wilson and Gray on Sunday, had 16.

Aliyah Boston, the sixth rookie named all-star starter, and Erica Wheeler both had 20 for Indiana (5-9), Kelsey Mitchell added 14 and Nalyssa Smith 13. Boston and Smith both had 14 rebounds.

Plum drilled a 3-pointer in the middle of the fourth quarter to give the Aces a 74-64 lead but Kristy Wallace and Wheeler had back-to-back 3s for the Fever.

Wheeler’s driving layup gave Indiana a 78-77 lead with 2:27 to play but Gray answered quickly with a pair of mid-range jumpers - the 19th lead change to go with 12 ties - and an 81-78. Plum all but wrapped it up with a 3-pointer from the right wing with 1:06 left and then Gray made four free throws.

Mitchell scored 12 points and the Fever led 23-20 after one quarter. Indiana had 16 points off 11 Las Vegas turnovers but only led 49-48 at the half as Wilson reached 22 points with a buzzer beating layup.

Iowa basketball star Caitlin Clark was honored as the Collegiate Woman Athlete of the Year on Monday night.

She received the Honda Cup in a ceremony at UCLA. It’s the second consecutive year that a women’s basketball player won the award as South Carolina’s Aliyah Boston was the recipient in 2022. Overall, 17 basketball players have won the Honda Cup - the most of any sport.

Clark, the AP women’s basketball Player of the Year, helped Iowa reach the national championship game for the first time in school history this past April before the team lost to LSU.

The junior became the first Division I women’s basketball player to have over 1,000 points and 300 assists in the same season.

Other finalists for the award were Texas senior volleyball player Logan Eggleston and



Indiana Fever forward Aliyah Boston (7) and Las Vegas Aces guard Jackie Young (0) go after the ball during the first half of a WNBA basketball game in Las Vegas. (AP)



Philippines’ Afril Bernardo, (center), shoots over Japan’s Monica Okoye, (right), and Saki Hayashi during their Women’s Basketball Asia Cup game in Sydney, Australia. (AP)

Stanford sophomore golfer Rose Zhang.

“It’s so cool, different from other awards shows,” Clark said. “You meet people that play every other sport and see how amazing they are. It’s the best of the best in the 12 sports. That’s the coolest part for me. I get to see how they live their lives.”

Clark said she tries to go to other Iowa women’s sporting events to cheer on her fellow Hawkeyes.

“It makes me want to watch and support them even more,” Clark said. “If you’re not watching women’s sports you’re truly missing out. Now is the time to tune in as the sky’s the limit for women’s sports.”

‘One day they will hit the winning formula’

Sweden looking to end run of near misses at big events

STOCKHOLM, June 27, (AP): Peter Gerhardsson took a moment, then laughed to himself as he pondered the question many in women’s soccer are asking.

Just what will it take for Sweden to end its long wait for a major international trophy?

“The next step,” the Sweden coach told The Associated Press, “is to score the penalty shot.” Such are the fine margins the Swedes have been treading at the big tournaments over the past decade or so.

A penalty-shootout loss to Canada in the final of the Olympic tournament in 2021. An extra-time loss to the Netherlands in the 2019 World Cup semifinals. A loss to Germany in the 2016 Olympic final. Exits at the semifinals of the European Championships in 2013 and last year.

It’s a tale of woe that would floor many people closely associated with the team.

Not Gerhardsson.

He simply puts it down to “one of those things” and prefers to take the positives. Essentially, if Sweden’s players keep putting themselves in these good positions, one day they will hit what he calls the “winning formula.”

Maybe that time will come at the upcoming Women’s World Cup in Australia and New Zealand.

“I don’t believe in being a ‘winner’ or anything like that,” Gerhardsson said in a phone call. “We are competing in a sport where many different things can happen in a game.”

“You look at the Olympics (in 2021) where Caroline Seger missed a penalty. I don’t think you can say that if she’d have put it in, we have a better team than in the Euros last

year or this World Cup coming now. I don’t believe in that kind of thing.”

Sweden, whose only international title came at the 1984 European Championship when only four teams were involved, is again among the favorites for the World Cup.

How can it not be with a team featuring Fridolina Rolfö, the scorer

SOCCER

of the winning goal in the Champions League final for Barcelona this month; or Stina Blackstenius, one of the top strikers in England with Arsenal; or Magdalena Eriksson, one of the most consistent center backs in Europe for years; or Filippa Angeldahl, a midfielder with growing

authority at Manchester City.

“Experience for the players playing in big games and big clubs is good for the national team,” Gerhardsson said. “They are used to playing in front of big crowds, with good teammates around them. That’s the most important thing. If you ask me what the best thing is - to play 90 minutes in the Swedish league or as a substitute at a team like Wolfsburg, I’d say the experience (of the latter) is more important.”

It was at the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Olympics where then-United States goalkeeper Hope Solo described Sweden as “a bunch of cowards” for dropping off and defending deeply in a quarterfinal match that ended with the Americans losing a penalty shootout.

The Swedes have developed since then and under Gerhardsson, the



In this July 5, 2022 file photo, Canada’s Christine Sinclair (12) and Trinidad and Tobago’s Victoria Swift compete for the ball during a CONCACAF women’s championship soccer match in Monterrey, Mexico. (AP)

coach since 2016 and with a contract until 2025, they are a modern-day pressing and counterattacking team, still not one favoring a possession-based approach.

“I say to my girls, ‘Can you remember when you started playing, when you were 5, 6, 7, 8, what you did when you lost the ball? You chased it.’ Just go - 1, 2, 3, 4. Everybody wants the ball,” Gerhardsson said. “I want to create some of the intuition that they had when they started playing football. Not being standing, watching slow (buildup play).”

Rolfö will arrive in New Zealand, where Sweden will play its group matches against South Africa, Italy and Argentina, as one of the most talked-about players in women’s soccer after that crowning achievement at the end of her second season at Barcelona.

She’ll play a more attacking role for Sweden than she does at Barcelona, where she has been deployed at left back or as a wing back.

“For me, she has shown she has tremendous left-foot shooting and I need to find positions for her to come in that situation,” Gerhardsson said. “I use her sometimes in different ways. As a No. 10; on the right side coming in with a left-footed shot.”

“In the Swedish national team, she has a more offensive position because we need it.”

As for the 38-year-old Seger, she has been included in the squad for what will be her fifth and likely final World Cup despite barely playing over the last year.

“She creates time, always, and has a good technique,” Gerhardsson said. “I like players like that, who have more time than other players.”

MLB Results/Standings

WASHINGTON, June 27, (AP): Results and standings from the MLB games on Monday.

Baltimore	10	Cincinnati	3
Detroit	7	Texas	2
LA Angels	2	Chicago W. Sox	1
Seattle	8	Washington	4
Atlanta	4	Minnesota	1
Milwaukee	2	NY Mets	1

American League

East Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Tampa Bay	54	27	.667	—
Baltimore	48	29	.623	4
New York	43	35	.551	9-1/2
Toronto	43	36	.544	10
Boston	40	39	.506	13

Central Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Minnesota	40	40	.500	—
Cleveland	37	40	.481	1-1/2
Detroit	34	43	.442	4-1/2
Chicago	34	46	.425	6
Kansas City	22	56	.282	17

West Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Texas	47	31	.603	—
Los Angeles	43	37	.538	5
Houston	42	36	.538	5
Seattle	38	39	.494	8-1/2
Oakland	20	60	.250	28

National League

East Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Atlanta	51	27	.654	—
Miami	45	34	.570	6-1/2
Philadelphia	40	37	.519	10-1/2
New York	35	43	.449	16
Washington	30	48	.385	21

Central Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Milwaukee	41	37	.526	—
Cincinnati	41	38	.519	-1/2
Chicago	37	39	.487	3
Pittsburgh	35	42	.455	5-1/2
St Louis	32	45	.416	8-1/2

West Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Arizona	47	32	.595	—
San Francisco	44	34	.564	2-1/2
Los Angeles	43	34	.558	3
San Diego	37	41	.474	9-1/2
Colorado	31	49	.388	16-1/2

Big boost for Miami ahead of Leo arrival

MIAMI, June 27, (AP): There are reminders around the city of Miami of Lionel Messi’s impending arrival: A mural of the seven-time Ballon d’Or winner painted with pink and black Inter Miami colors in the artsy Wynwood neighborhood. Another painting of the soccer star at the entrance of a local Argentinian restaurant. No. 10 Argentina jerseys sprinkled throughout the city.

Messi, who turned 36 this month, announced on June 7 that he was joining Inter Miami in a move that stunned the soccer world and will bring one of the sport’s biggest names to the United States and Miami, where enthusiasm for the sport has been growing.

Messi, who spent the past two years with Paris Saint-Germain, is still finalizing paperwork with his new club. He is expected to make his Inter Miami debut on July 21 at home against Cruz Azul in the Leagues Cup.

The move is hoped to provide a huge boost to attendance and interest in Major League Soccer ahead of the 2026 World Cup, part of which will be hosted in the U.S., as well as for Inter Miami, a club led by another global soccer icon, David Beckham, that is looking to garner the same popularity as other sports franchises in South Florida.

“He’s going to be able to leave this wonderful legacy, and it’s a legacy that couldn’t be better timed,” said Anson Dorrance, who’s in his 47th season as the women’s soccer coach at North Carolina. “We’re going to be hosting the next World Cup on the men’s side. ... And a part of constructing a platform to make sure we sell out every stadium is to make sure our top men’s professional league, the MLS, is also selling out all of our stadiums.”

The league is already getting there. Ticket prices for Inter Miami matches have skyrocketed since Messi’s announcement and teams are already selling additional tickets to future matches against the club.

According to data provided by Vivid Seats, a ticket marketplace, the average listed price for Inter Miami’s match against Cruz Azul jumped from \$126 on June 6 (one day before Messi’s announcement) to \$2,151 on June 20 - a 1,607% increase.

Site traffic, the company said, increased by 27,037% from June 6 to June 7.

On SeatGeek, another ticket exchange site, the average ticket to watch an Inter Miami match was \$34 on June 6. On June 7, it was \$178, according to data provided by the company.

“Messi is one of the greatest athletes of all time, and he is attracting huge demand for the chance to see him play in Miami and across the U.S.,” said Chris Leyden, SeatGeek’s director of growth marketing.

Messi chose Miami over Al-Hilal in Saudi Arabia, where many thought he would go and follow longtime rival Cristiano Ronaldo. Returning to Barcelona, a storied franchise where he spent most of his career, was also an option, but Messi said when he announced his decision that he wanted to go to the United States to “live football in another way.”

In more than 17 years of representing Argentina at the international stage, Messi has scored 102 goals against 38 different national team opponents. One of the greatest scorers in the sport’s history, Messi scored twice in last year’s World Cup final against France, a match that Argentina won on penalty kicks to give Messi one more accomplishment on his resume.

Messi will join a struggling club that is last in the Eastern Conference with a 5-13 record. Inter Miami recently fired its coach, Phil Neville, after 2 1/2 seasons.

Messi will have another Barcelona star at his side in Miami. Barcelona captain and former teammate Sergio Busquets will join the team this summer, as it recently confirmed via social media.

SOCCER

Mets drop 8 games under .500, lose for 7th time in 9 games as Milwaukee wins



Milwaukee Brewers pitcher Colin Rea throws during the first inning of a baseball game against the New York Mets in New York. (AP)

Angels get critical seven-game homestand off to successful start

NEW YORK, June 27, (AP): Joey Wiemer hit a go-ahead, two-run homer in the sixth inning, lifting the Milwaukee Brewers to a 2-1 victory on Monday night that dropped the struggling New York Mets to a season-worst eight games under .500.

Wiemer hit a 422-drive off Drew Smith (3-3), who pitched in relief of Justin Verlander.

Despite a major league record \$355 million payroll on opening day, New York (35-43) has lost seven of nine and 15 of 21.

Colin Rea (4-4) allowed one run in 6 1/3 innings. Devon Williams completed a three-hitter for his 14th save.

Angels 2, White Sox 1

In Anaheim, Mike Trout scored on a game-ending wild pitch, Shohei Ohtani hit his 26th home run, and Los Angeles beat Chicago.

Trout slid home head-first on the bad throw by Aaron Bummer, helping the Angels get a critical seven-game homestand off to a successful start.

BASEBALL

Carlos Estéves (2-1) pitched a scoreless ninth inning to get the win.

Luis Robert Jr. homered for the third straight game for the White Sox. Reynaldo López (2-5) took the loss after walking Trout to start the ninth. Bummer then came in to face Ohtani, who drew his own walk. The two Angels superstars successfully executed a double steal, leading to Trout’s heroics.

Braves 4, Twins 1

In Atlanta, Marcell Ozuna hit a go-ahead homer in the seventh and Spencer Strider (9-2) allowed three hits in seven innings while striking out 10 to win his fifth consecutive decision.

Ronald Acuña Jr. added a two-run homer in a three-run seventh. In the matchup of first-place teams in the NL East and AL Central, the Braves won for the 11th time in 12 games.

Minnesota played its first game at Truist Park, which opened in 2017.

Before Ozuna’s homer, the only run allowed by Sonny Gray (4-2) when Travis d’Arnaud drove in a run while grounding into a forceout.

Kirby Yates pitched the ninth for his first save since 2020.

Mariners 8, Nationals 4

In Seattle, J.P. Crawford and Eugenio Suárez both homered, and Luis Castillo overcame a shaky beginning to pitch seven strong innings and win his first start since May 27.

Seattle opened its final homestand before hosting the All-Star Game next month and needed its offense to come through as Castillo wasn’t at his best early on.

Pakistan cricket delays election of a new chairman after court challenge

Tongue replaces Ali in England squad for 2nd Ashes Test

LONDON, June 27, (AP): England wanted Mark Wood, its fastest bowler.

Instead, it opted to give an Ashes series debut to Josh Tongue as the fourth seamer in an all-pace attack against Australia in the second test starting on Wednesday at Lord’s.

Tongue replaced spinner Moeen Ali in the only change to the side which lost the first test at Edgbaston by two wickets.

Wood’s express pace hasn’t featured for England since December because of an elbow injury.

“We felt that he could definitely start the game,” England captain Ben Stokes said on Tuesday, “but with conversations we felt the extra week with buildup and getting his loads up would give him a better chance and an opportunity to play a full part from (the third test at) Leeds onwards.”

Worcestershire fast bowler Tongue made his test debut this month against Ireland on a slow pitch at Lord’s and he took 5-66 in the second innings of a 10-wicket win.

Stokes called him a “like-for-like” choice for Wood.

“The only thing that’s different is that it’s a bigger occasion for him,” he said.

“We turned up here and saw

there was quite a bit of grass on the wicket. Traditionally, Lord’s has offered more for the seamers and with how Mo’s finger was last week - it’s actually recovered really well - we thought we would get more out of our fourth bowler being Josh.”

Ali badly blistered his right index finger at Edgbaston because of a heavy workload after coming out of test retirement. Coach Brendon McCullum said Ali would play if fully fit and he appeared to prove it on Monday at training.

But England will use Joe Root’s part-time off-breaks beside a seam attack of James Anderson, Stuart Broad, Ollie Robinson and Tongue.

Stokes, coming off a knee injury, also said he hopes to bowl more after hurling 14 overs and taking two wickets last week.

“Being able to bowl that longer spell on the last day was another confidence boost for me,” he said. “At the moment things are looking good and hopefully I can play even more of a part with the ball this game.”

□ □ □

The Pakistan Cricket Board was forced to postpone the election of a chairman scheduled for Tuesday after the formation of its board of governors was challenged in court.

CRICKET

The Baluchistan High Court on Monday accepted the petition of Gul Mohammad Kakar, a former member of the PCB management committee, and set a hearing for July 17.

“Following the interim order of the honorable High Court of Baluchistan, Tuesday afternoon’s election of the PCB chairman has been postponed,” the PCB said in a statement.

Before former chairman Najam Sethi dropped out of the election, he formed a 10-member board of governors that also included two direct nominees from Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, the PCB patron.

Acting chairman Ahmed Shehzad Farooq Rana, who is also the election commissioner, then changed several of the board of governors, prompting Kakar’s court challenge.

Representatives of bigger cities such as Lahore, Karachi, Rawalpindi and Peshawar were replaced by men from smaller cities such as Dera Murad Jamali, Hyderabad, Larkana and Bahawalpur. The governors elect the new chairman.

Two of the four departmental representatives were also changed.

With Sethi out, the favored next chairman is a former holder of the office, Zaka Ashraf.

Ashraf was a direct nominee of the prime minister.



Baltimore Orioles’ Austin Hays flies out against the Cincinnati Reds during the first inning of a baseball game in Baltimore. (AP)

Suárez homered leading off the fourth inning against Washington starter Trevor Williams, and Julio Rodríguez’s two-out RBI single pulled Seattle even at 3-3. Seattle’s three-run fifth inning against Washington’s Cory Abbott (0-1) proved to be the difference.

Castillo (5-6) allowed seven hits, struck out seven and snapped a personal four-game losing streak. Paul Sewald struck out Jeimer Candelario with the bases loaded to end the game for his 14th save.

Tigers 7, Rangers 2

In Arlington, Andy Ibañez and Jake Rogers homered as Detroit overcame the early departures of their first two pitchers to beat AL West-leading Texas.

Tigers starter Matthew Boyd and reliever Will Vest were already hurt and out of the game before Ibañez

hit a tiebreaking three-run homer in the third inning for a 4-1 lead. Rogers added a two-run shot with two outs in the sixth to chase Texas starter Andrew Heaney (5-5).

Rookie Mason Englert (3-2), the third of six Detroit pitchers who combined for 16 strikeouts, allowed one run over 2 1/3 innings.

Orioles 10, Reds 3

In Baltimore, Jordan Westburg had a productive night at the plate and made a slick defensive play in his big league debut to lead Baltimore.

The game started 15 minutes late because of the weather, and there was another delay of 1 hour, 44 minutes in the third inning. Baltimore led 2-1 when play was halted, then quickly started adding runs after it resumed.

Westburg, one of the game’s top infield prospects, was called up

before the game and started at second base. He had a hit, a walk, a run and an RBI, and in the fifth, he nearly started a double play by flipping the ball with his glove to short-



Ibañez

stop Jorge Mateo on a grounder up the middle.

Bruce Zimmermann (1-0) pitched three innings after the long rain delay in relief of Cole Irvin.

Spencer Steer homered for the Reds, who have dropped three in a row following a 12-game winning streak. Brandon Williamson (1-1) threw 64 pitches in the first two innings.



Australia's Steve Smith (right), attends a nets session at Lord's Cricket Ground, London, Tuesday, June 27, 2023, ahead of the second Ashes Test cricket match against England starting on Wednesday. (AP)

Sports

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LSU wins first CWS title since 2009

Tigers rout Florida

OMAHA, Neb., June 27, (AP): LSU went from its low point of the season to the ultimate high in a span of 24 hours.

A day after it gave up the most runs ever in a College World Series game, LSU cranked up its offense and won its first national title since 2009 with an 18-4 victory over Florida on Monday night in the third and deciding game of the finals.

LSU (54-17) staved off elimination three times in bracket play and bounced back from the humiliating 24-4 loss in Game 2 to claim its seventh championship, second to Southern California's 12.

"We got punched in the mouth yesterday," Tigers star Dylan Crews said. "That's the beauty of baseball. You wake up in the morning and do it all over again. We woke up today and you could see on everybody's faces that we were ready to go. Nobody in the country was going to beat us today."

BASEBALL

The Tigers wiped out an early 2-0 deficit with a six-run second inning against Jac Caglianone (7-4). The runs kept coming until they finished with the most in a title game since USC's 21-14 win over Arizona State in 1998. The 14-run margin was the largest ever in a final. Their 24 hits were most in a CWS game.

"It wasn't our day, all the way around," Gators catcher BT Riopelle said.

Thatcher Hurd (8-3) gave up Wyatt Langford's two-run homer in the first and then allowed no hits or runs while retiring 18 of the next 21 batters. Riley Cooper took over to start the seventh and gave up Ty Evans' CWS-record fifth homer, and Gavin Guidry finished the combined five-hitter.

Cade Beloso said coach Jay Johnson's message to the team in the morning meeting was simple.

"It was, 'One game for the national championship. Are you in?' Everybody was, 'Yeah, let's go.' You can't let baseball get to you," Beloso said. "The game is brutal sometimes. You have to show up and play the next day."

There was speculation after Sunday's blowout loss about the Tigers bringing back ace Paul Skenes for a third start in Omaha. He threw a combined 243 pitches over 15 2/3 innings in two spectacular appearances, and he would have been working on three days' rest.

It turned out Skenes was able to watch from the dugout in the comfort of his sneakers while LSU poured on the runs and Hatcher kept dealing. Skenes headed to the bullpen to do some stretching and throwing in the seventh inning. He went back to the dugout after the eighth and stayed there until he and teammates raved the mound when Guidry struck out Colby Halter to end it.

Skenes was named the Most Outstanding Player of the CWS.

The overwhelmingly partisan LSU crowd included Kim Mulkey, coach of the national champion women's basketball team and the mother of Kramer Robertson, who played shortstop on the 2017 team that lost to Florida in the CWS finals.

The Tigers had been pointing toward a title run since their first team meeting last August. Johnson brought back the Southeastern Conference player of the year in Crews and the rest of the core of the 2022 lineup.

Three key transfers took LSU to a higher level. Skenes was the first college pitcher in 12 years with 200 strikeouts and could be the No. 1 pick in the amateur draft. Tommy White hit 24 homers and drove in a nation-leading 105 runs. Hurd was solid as a starter and reliever and matched his longest outing of the year in the title game.

"Right people, right place, right time," Johnson said. "This is the way it was supposed to go."

LSU joined Mississippi, Mississippi State and Vanderbilt in a line of four straight national champions from the SEC.

"Oh my gosh, this is what I dreamed of since I was a freshman, holding this trophy," Crews said. "We're champions, baby, bringing it back to LSU. It's been a long journey for us. We dealt with a lot of stuff. Just to finally say we're national champions ... I cannot wait to put another flag over the field. It's going to be awesome."

Florida (54-17) won the SEC regular-season title, was the No. 2 national seed and set school records for wins and home runs - the Gators hit 17 of the 35 homers by all teams in the CWS. But the Gators were unable to carry over the momentum from their record-setting production Sunday.



LSU celebrate after defeating Florida in Game 3 of the NCAA College World Series baseball finals in Omaha, Neb. (AP)



LSU's Alex Milazzo leaps over Florida catcher BT Riopelle (15) to score on a single by Cade Beloso in the fourth inning of Game 3 of the NCAA College World Series baseball finals in Omaha, Neb. (AP)

Governing body must quickly address financial troubles, says Canada coach

TORONTO, June 27, (AP): Men's national team coach John Herdman says the Canadian Soccer Association must quickly address its financial troubles.

Interim general secretary Jason DeVos was quoted Monday by TSN as saying the federation might need to explore a bankruptcy filing.

"We have to find solutions and find them quick," Herdman said Monday, a day before his team's CONCACAF Gold Cup opener against Guadeloupe. "It's not about pointing fingers. I think the whole group has to come together. The whole game has

SOCCER

to come together to find a genuine solution to make sure our country can perform. The players have earned that right. The staff have earned that right. We shouldn't be going backwards after a World Cup."

Canada's men reached the World Cup last year for the first time since 1986.

"I think everyone expected coming off the World Cup that it was going to be all sunshine and rainbows," Herdman said.

Caglianone, Florida's two-way star, struggled with his command for a second straight start and was done on the mound after 1 1/3 innings. He remained in the game as the designated hitter.

LSU got on the board when Jordan Thompson, who had been 1 for his last 30, singled in a run. It was tied after Caglianone hit Cade Beloso - his fifth hit batter in his 5 2/3 CWS innings - and a walk to Crews put LSU in front. Cade Fisher relieved and gave up a

couple RBI singles and a sacrifice fly. Josh Pearson's fourth homer of the season highlighted the Tigers' four-run fourth inning.

The only down note for LSU was an injury to catcher Alex Milazzo, who landed awkwardly on his left leg when he had to hurdle Riopelle as he crossed home plate in the fourth inning.

That didn't stop Milazzo from celebrating. A teammate gave him a piggyback ride to the mound for the ceremonial dogpile.

Over the past few weeks, members of Canada Soccer's management have been called upon to testify before the House of Commons' standing heritage committee, where parliamentarians questioned members about the organization's agreement with Canadian Soccer Business. CSB pays Canada Soccer a set amount each year and keeps the rest, which helps fund the Canadian Premier League.

PCB yet to get government's clearance

Ahmedabad to 'host' first game and final at cricket WC, as well as India against Pakistan

MUMBAI, June 27, (AP): The marquee league match between archrivals India and Pakistan at the cricket World Cup has been confirmed for Oct. 15 at Ahmedabad, which will also host the tournament's opening game and the final.

The International Cricket Council released the match schedule on Tuesday, less than four months before the tournament opener between defending champion England and New Zealand on Oct. 5.

The 132,000-seat Narendra Modi Stadium at Ahmedabad will host five games, including the rematch of the 2019 final between England and New Zealand and the championship decider on Nov. 19.

"Hundreds of millions of fans around the world will be part of what we hope will be the greatest ever men's cricket World Cup," ICC chief executive Geoff Allardice said in a statement.

"We know in India the teams will enjoy a unique electric atmosphere concluding with the winners lifting the trophy in the biggest cricket stadium in the world in Ahmedabad."

Ten teams will feature in the 46-day

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tournament which is being held across 10 cities. Besides Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Chennai, Delhi, Dharamsala, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Lucknow, Mumbai and Pune will host the games.

All venues will host five matches each except for Hyderabad, which will host three including two of Pakistan's league games.

The top four teams will qualify for the semifinals, which will be played at Mumbai and Kolkata.

The Pakistan Cricket Board is yet to get its government's clearance to travel to India due to strained political relations between the two countries. India has refused to travel to Pakistan for the Asia Cup in August and September, and will instead play all its matches in Sri Lanka.

The ICC said Pakistan will not play any games in Mumbai. If Pakistan reaches the semifinals, it will play in Kolkata. If India qualifies for the last four it will play its semifinal in Mumbai, unless the match is against Pakistan.

"The PCB requires the government of Pakistan's clearance for any tour to India, including the match venues," PCB Communications Director Sami Ul Hasan said in a statement.

"We are liaising with our government for guidance. This position is

Bob Bradley fired by Toronto

TORONTO, June 27, (AP): Bob Bradley was fired as head coach and sporting director of Toronto on Monday after the team won just three of 20 Major League Soccer matches this season.

Terry Dunfield, a former Toronto player and Canadian international, was promoted to interim head coach. The 41-year-old, who also played for Vancouver and Manchester City, had been head coach of the under-17 team at the Toronto academy.

Mike Sorber, Toronto's assistant coach and technical director, also was fired.

Toronto, which lost 2-1 at New England on Saturday, is 14th among 15 teams in the Eastern Conference

with three wins, seven losses and 10 draws. The team has won just two of its last 17 matches in all competitions, drawing eight. Only Miami has a worse record with five runs, 13 losses and no draws.

The 65-year-old Bradley, a former U.S. national team coach whose son is Toronto captain Michael Bradley, was hired in November 2021 and led the team to 14 wins, 26 losses and 19 draws.

"Bob has been a consummate professional with Toronto FC and we thank him for his passion and tireless work during his time here," Toronto president Bill Manning said in a statement. "We are all disappointed that we were not able to achieve the results we expected."

consistent to what we had told the ICC a couple of weeks ago when they shared with us the draft schedule and sought our feedback."

Eight teams - India, Pakistan, England, New Zealand, Australia, Afghanistan, South Africa and Bangladesh -- have directly qualified for the World Cup. Two more teams will join them from the qualifiers that are underway in Zimbabwe.

The tournament has retained the round-robin format with all teams playing against each other. All but six of the 48 games will be day-nighters.

Jay Shah, secretary of the Board of Control for Cricket in India, said it was a great honor for India to showcase the "rich diversity of our country."

"The fervor and passion for cricket in India is unique," Shah said. "I am sure fans both here and abroad would be looking forward to the tournament's return to India for the first time since 2011, when our team became the first to lift the trophy on home soil."

"I wish all the teams the very best in their preparations and look forward to hosting what promises to be another exciting tournament."



Former Indian cricketer Virender Sehwag (left) and Sri Lankan cricketer Muttiah Muralitharan pose with the International Cricket Council (ICC) men's cricket World Cup trophy during a press conference to release the tournament's match schedule in Mumbai, India. (AP)