



cricket

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Guterres, Blinken hail Kuwait efforts

Commitment to global causes lauded



KUNA photo
Kuwait's Foreign Minister Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah is seen with UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi, US Senators Chris Coons and Joe Manchin at the annual Kuwait-America Foundation Gala Dinner held in Washington.

WASHINGTON, May 14, (KUNA): UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres and US Secretary of State Antony Blinken both commended the State of Kuwait's extraordinary commitment to global causes, humanitarian efforts worldwide.

This came during their participation in the annual Kuwait-America Foundation Gala Dinner in support of UNHCR and its impactful work worldwide held by the UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador Rima Al-Sabah.

For the last 18 years, Rima, wife of Kuwait's Foreign Minister Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, has gathered distinguished guests raising critical funds in support of vital causes around the world.

The focus of this year's gala dinner returns to the global refugee crisis as over 100 million people around the world have fled their homes, which is the highest number ever recorded.

The event featured US Secretary of State Antony Blinken as keynote speaker and honored US Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo who received the Public Service Award and UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador and Hollywood star Cate Blanchett who received the Humanitarian Award. Secretary Blinken accepted the award on behalf of Secretary Raimondo.

First Lady Dr. Jill Biden, Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Sheikh Salem Al-Sabah and UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres were also in attendance as special guests.

In her welcoming remarks, Rima thanked Blinken, Guterres and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi for

their presence at the gala and for "their work on behalf of tens of millions of people in need around the world."

She also thanked all the donors who have so generously supported the refugee agency, adding, "this year alone we have, once again, raised over USD one million for UNHCR."

On his part, Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Sheikh Salem Al-Sabah emphasized the vital work of the refugee agency and its "urgent call to action."

He said that Kuwait was proud to be a longstanding supporter of UNHCR and stressed that in the last 10 years, Kuwait's contributions to the agency have been close to USD 500 million, "establishing Kuwait as a top donor to UNHCR in the region."

"These funds have helped provide emergency humanitarian aid and protection to millions of men, women, and children around the world, and even as I speak, Kuwait continues to provide aid to Sudan and Ukraine," he remarked.

He continued, "This profound commitment did not come about by accident... It is who we are as Kuwaitis... Our humanitarian ethos is inscribed in our history, spirit and DNA."

He affirmed, "The Kuwait-US relationship is today as strong as it has ever been... Kuwait and the US share a common pursuit of global peace and stability and a solid commitment to the international rules-based order. Ours is a partnership that is time and battle-tested."

"We in Kuwait remain faithful bridge-builders, neutral mediators, honest brokers, and unrelenting peacemakers... It is who we are... It is who we will always be," he said.

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Opinion

Story of the governor of Damascus, a donkey and wife of German Emperor

By Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

WHEN an ordinary citizen teaches officials about the reverence of the state, it is necessary to reconsider the administrative system that governs any state. Here, we say administrative because it is the basis for imposing order, preserving the state's reputation and prestige, and making it an advanced example among nations.

However, when there are those who know how to shake and seek to make him greater than his responsibilities, they are the ones who shake and weaken the foundations of the institutions.

In this regard, there is a true story that was published in Arab newspapers in the late nineteenth century. When the German Emperor Guillaume II visited Damascus, as part of a tour of the Ottoman Empire in 1898, he was warmly received by people who were filled with joy.

During the reception, the Empress (Guillaume's wife) noticed a beautiful white donkey at the entrance of the castle. She asked the then governor of Damascus Mustafa Assem Pasha to bring the donkey to her so that she could take it with her to Berlin.

The governor went looking for the owner of the donkey who was called Abu al-Khair Tello. He asked him to give the donkey as a gift to the wife of the emperor but the man apologized. This angered the governor, and he offered to buy the donkey, but Tello was adamant about his strict position. He then said to the governor, "O my friend, I have six purebred horses."

The governor was surprised by the man's answer, and asked him the reason for his insistence on refusing to give the donkey.

Tello replied with a smile, "Sir, if they take the donkey back to their country, the newspapers of the world will write about it, and people will ask where they got the donkey from. They will respond, 'From the Levant'. Then the 'Donkey of Damascus' will become the talk of all people. It will perhaps be subject to ridicule. People may even ask if it made sense that the German empress did not find anything she liked in Damascus other than donkeys."

He then added, "By Allah, sir, I will not present this donkey as a gift to the Empress of Germany or sell it to her, even if they give me Qarun's money."

The governor conveyed Abu al-Khair Tello's message to the emperor and the empress, and he laughed a lot. They were impressed by the answer, and the emperor issued an order to grant Tello a symbolic medal for his courageous stance.

There is more than one lesson to learn from this story. The first is that the governor wanted to suck up to the guest emperor in order to strengthen his position with the Ottoman Sultan. He did not realize that the reputation of his country was more important than a donkey, which he saw as a gift that served his interests.

The second is that the acumen of Abu al-Khair was not appreciated by the governor. This is because he built his position on his own interest. However, Tello saw that the reputation of his country was more important than a symbolic gift. Thus, he offered to present the gift of horses, something that the Germans could be proud of receiving as a gift from the Syrian people because purebred Arabian horses were well reputed at that time.

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NewsWatch

KUWAIT CITY: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent on Sunday a cable of condolences to the family of the deceased **Abdulkarim Abdulqader Al-Mzain**, recalling his role in enriching arts in the country.

His Highness the Amir prayed for his blessed soul and expressed deep solace to the bereaved family. (KUNA)

KUWAIT CITY: The Kuwaiti-Iraqi technical committee held on Sunday its sixth meeting in Kuwait.

The meeting was co-chaired by Kuwait's Deputy Foreign Minister Ambassador **Mansour Al-Otaibi** and Iraqi Counsellor **Othman Al-Aboudi**.

The two sides discussed technical and legal aspects for demarcation of the maritime borders beyond the mark (162).

They agreed on pursuing the constructive dialogue in line with approach to boost the brotherhood relations between the two countries. (KUNA)

OUAGADOUGOU: An attack by suspected Islamic extremists on a village in the west of **Burkina Faso** killed 33 civilians, the provincial governor's office said.

The provisional death toll from the Thursday evening attack on the village of **Youlou** in Mouhoun province was announced in a press release.

Provincial governor **Babo Pierre Bassinga** called the attack "cowardly and barbaric." He said in the statement that the attack happened around 5 p.m. as residents were at work in their fields beside the Mouhoun river. The governor said security actions were underway to counter the extremists.

Bassinga urged the population to increase their vigilance and to collaborate with security forces. (AP)

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's prime minister said Saturday that authorities would go after those involved in violent protests following the detention of his predecessor, **Imran Khan**, including prosecution in anti-terrorism courts.

Shahbaz Sharif's warnings were a sign of further escalation in the long-running showdown between the government and Khan, who has the backing of large numbers of supporters.

Khan returned to his home in the eastern city of **Lahore** early Saturday, after a court agreed to shield him from renewed arrest for two weeks. The 70-year-old former cricket star, who was toppled by parliament a year ago, delivered a speech from his home later Saturday.

The recent chain of events began Tuesday when Khan was dragged out of a courtroom and arrested in the capital of Islamabad. (AP)

ALPENA, Mich.: A Michigan girl was able to escape an attempted kidnapping when her brother used a slingshot to strike the would-be attacker, authorities said this week.

Mlive.com reports that the Michigan State Police arrested the accused assailant in the city of **Alpena** on Wednesday.

The 17-year-old's name has not been released though he has been charged as an adult with one count of attempted kidnapping/child enticement, one count of attempted assault to do great bodily harm less than murder, and one count of assault and battery.

Michigan State Police said in a news release that the 8-year-old girl was in her backyard when the alleged assailant came out of the woods, grabbed her and covered her mouth. Authorities said the girl's brother, 13, hit the alleged attacker in the head and chest using a slingshot. (AP)

BERLIN: Ukrainian President **Volodymyr Zelenskyy** said Sunday that his country is preparing a counteroffensive designed to liberate areas occupied by Russia, not to attack Russian territory.

Speaking during a news conference with German Chancellor **Olaf Scholz** in Berlin, Zelenskyy said **Ukraine's** goal is to free the territories within its internationally recognized borders.

The Washington Post cited previously undisclosed documents from a trove of U.S. intelligence leaks suggesting that Zelenskyy has considered trying to capture areas in Russia proper for possible use as bargaining chips in peace negotiations to end the war launched by **Moscow** in February 2022. (AP)

'Manila appears more flexible'

Kuwait sees room to maneuver



Israel's Iron Dome missile defense system fires interceptors at rockets launched from the Gaza Strip, in Ashkelon, southern Israel. Saturday, May 13, 2023. (AP)

Cease-fire appears to hold

A fragile cease-fire between Israeli forces and militants in the Gaza Strip appeared to be holding Sunday after a five-day clash that killed 33 Palestinians and two people in Israel.

The latest round of Gaza fighting was sparked Tuesday when Israeli jets killed three top commanders from the Islamic Jihad militant group in response to earlier rocket launches from Gaza. Those killings set off a barrage of militant fire and the conflagration threatened to drag the region into another all-out war until an Egyptian-brokered cease-fire took hold late Saturday.

While the calm appeared to bring a sense of relief to Gaza's 2 million people and hundreds

of thousands of Israelis who had been largely confined to bomb shelters in recent days, the agreement did nothing to address the underlying issues that have fueled numerous rounds of fighting between Israel and Palestinian militant groups in the Gaza Strip over the years.

In Gaza, residents surveyed the latest damage caused to their surroundings, with gaping holes left in the apartments serving as what Israel said were hideouts for the six senior Islamic Jihad members killed during this round. Gaza's main cargo crossing with Israel reopened Sunday after warnings that keeping it closed would force Gaza's sole power plant to shut down, deepening a power crisis. (AP)



Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, (center right), and his wife Emine, (top right), meet supporters outside a polling station in Istanbul, Sunday, May 14, 2023. (AP)

Early returns preliminary: opposition

Erdogan leads as Turkey begins count

ANKARA, May 14, (AP): Early results from Turkey's national election Sunday showed President Recep Tayyip Erdogan with a solid lead after nearly 20% of ballot boxes were counted, the Turkish state-run news agency says.

Erdogan had 55% of the vote, compared to 39% garnered by main opposition leader Kemal Kilicdaroglu, Anadolu Agency reported.

Opinion surveys indicated the increasingly authoritarian Erdogan entered his bid for reelection trailing a challenger for the first time.

Faik Oztrak, a spokesman for Kilicdaroglu's center-left party, cautioned the early returns were pre-

liminary and said the "picture is extremely positive" for the opposition.

Erdogan has ruled Turkey as prime minister or president since 2003. Pre-election polling suggested he faced the toughest reelection battle of his two decades leading the NATO member country, which has grappled with economic turmoil and the erosion of democratic checks-and-balances in recent years.

Polls closed in the late afternoon after nine hours of voting in the national election that could grant Erdogan, 69, another five-year term or see him unseated by Kilicdaroglu, who campaigned on a promise to return Turkey to a more democratic path.

KUWAIT CITY, May 14: In the face of Kuwait's strictness to put pressure on Manila's decision to lift the ban imposed on the travel of Filipino domestic workers, the Philippines Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs, Eduardo de Vega, said, "We have not decided yet to lift the ban, but this doesn't mean we won't do that while at the same time showing remarkable flexibility regarding Kuwait's position on the suspension of new entry visas for its workers, reports Al-Jarida daily.

To lift the ban imposed on the deployment of Filipino workers in Kuwait, in reference to the conditions Manila had set since last February, and its decision to stop sending domestic workers to Kuwait except under "certain conditions," De Vega said, in a televised interview, that "Kuwait's response to the ban will not include all other workers, with the exception of domestic workers," pointing out that "Kuwait's response and pressure on us in this way is a message for us to reconsider our decision," reports Al-Jarida daily.

Employment agreement violations according to the Philippine Foreign Ministry's undersecretary, "There were two recurring issues that the Kuwaiti government was concerned about related to the bilateral labor agreement between the two countries," adding that "the first issue is the initiative to establish a shelter for runaway Filipino domestic workers, and efforts to reach out to Kuwaiti employers regarding reports of violations."

He explained that "Kuwait considered these verbal efforts as violations of labor laws, while the establishment of a shelter for Filipinos who flee their employers due to violations is not supported under Kuwaiti law, but it is permissible under Philippine law."

He added, "They say, under Kuwaiti law, there should be no shelter for runaway workers, but under Philippine law, we should have these shelters, and of course it is the duty of the Philippine government to protect them."

He explained, "We do not encourage them to run away from their employers, and this is what they fear, but in the event of abuse and that they have to leave, they must have a place to go to," said Vega. "We haven't decided to lift the ban at the moment but that doesn't mean we won't."

As for the second issue that they were complaining about, it is that whenever there is a complaint about labor abuse, the Philippine government requires the foreign recruitment agency for the worker in Kuwait to contact the employer, and this also does not apply under Kuwaiti law."

"While Kuwait refers to these issues as violations, they are not clearly defined in the agreement between our two countries. Whether they are violations or not, however, it is something that the two governments need to discuss to solve the problem," he noted.

Referring to the meetings that were held with the participation of the "Congress", in the hope of making recommendations to the Philippine president, de Vega said, "The decision to lift the ban will remain under discussion by the relevant agencies, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Migrant Workers," referring to that "the

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BROADBAND COMPETITION

Business Plus



An equal internet stalled

Tanked Biden pick bares dark-money forces



Gigi Sohn, who withdrew her long delayed nomination by the Biden administration for the Federal Communications Commission, poses for a portrait at Georgetown University Law Center, Tuesday, April 4, 2023, in Washington. (AP)

If affordable broadband gets deployed anywhere, then somehow more affordable broadband might get deployed everywhere," Sen. Maria Cantwell, D-Wash., the chair of the Senate Commerce Committee, said at Sohn's February confirmation hearing. "So I think there's probably billions of dollars at stake here, and that is why the vitriol is coming at you."

When President Joe Biden nominated Gigi Sohn to serve on the Federal Communications Commission, the longtime consumer advocate expected to face criticism over her desire to expand free internet access and improve competition among broadband providers.

Instead, Sohn found herself the target of an aggressive campaign funded by a conservative group that doesn't have to disclose its donors. The American Accountability Foundation called Sohn too partisan, anti-police and soft on sex trafficking. The attacks landed - to the point that even some Democrats abandoned her. Sohn withdrew her nomination, ditching her fight for a five-year term as an FCC commissioner.

"Look, I'm not naive. I've been a consumer advocate my whole career. I knew I was going to get some opposition," Sohn told The Associated Press. "Now, did I expect what was to come - the dark money, the lies, the caricatures? No."

The battle over the nomination is the latest example of how organizations with political and financial agendas have been able to sway public opinion by deploying donations that are impossible to trace. It is also emblematic of how nominees' missteps - even on matters wholly unrelated to their prospective jobs - can become fodder for attacks.

In Sohn's case, the stakes were high. Her confirmation would've ended a 2-2 split on the commission, enabling Biden's administration to pursue its agenda of making communication networks more equitable. Sohn has been a vocal advocate of such regulations, which have been aggressively opposed by the telecom industry.

Sohn was not likely to coast to confirmation. Moderate Democrats were going to have trouble justifying their support for a nominee who had assisted controversial liberal groups, seemed to

endorse tweets critical of police and accused Fox News of being "state-sponsored propaganda."

When Sen. Joe Manchin of West Virginia announced his opposition to the nomination in March, the moderate Democrat cited Sohn's "partisan activism, inflammatory statements online, and work with far-left groups."

Even so, outside groups left nothing to chance. Just two of those organizations spent at least \$420,000 on ads seeking to torpedo Sohn's confirmation, a sum that is likely a fraction of the total spent.

Central to the advertising offensive was the American Accountability Foundation, which produced an advertising blitz assailing the nominee on Facebook, as well as in newspapers and on billboards.

Another group, co-founded by a former Democratic senator, said it spent "six figures" on ads arguing that Sohn was "the wrong choice for the FCC and rural America." The National Fraternal Order of Police also joined the fray, chastising Sohn over endorsing social media posts that were critical of law enforcement.

Opposing nominations is hardly new in American politics. But a 2010 ruling by the Supreme Court freed corporations and unions to spend unlimited amounts on political campaigns and nomination fights. The Citizens United ruling also opened the door to an influx of untraceable donations, known as "dark money," to special interest groups seeking to influence policy, elections and nominations.

Norman Ornstein, a senior fellow emeritus at the American Enterprise Institute, said such dark-money groups are growing so powerful that they can "hamstring or stymie an entire administration" by discouraging qualified people from accepting nominations.

Sohn's nomination was meant to be historic. If confirmed, Sohn would have been the FCC's first openly LGBTQ+ commissioner.

When the White House announced her nomination in October 2021, it hailed her trailblazing biography and called her a consumer advocate who would "defend and preserve the fundamental competition and innovation policies that have made broadband Internet access more ubiquitous."

When Congress failed to confirm Sohn during its last term, Biden didn't give up. In January, he renominated her to the post.

Sohn was a favorite of progressives and had served as a top adviser for Tom Wheeler, the Obama-era FCC chair who enacted net neutrality rules that were jettisoned during the Trump administration. Such regulations would have required AT&T, Comcast, Verizon and other internet providers to treat all web traffic equally. The telecommunications industry has battled such rules, arguing they are illegal and overly burdensome.

Some business groups pounced at the possibility of Sohn joining the FCC. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the world's largest business federation, said this year that it opposed Sohn's confirmation "due to her longtime advocacy of overly aggressive and combative regulation of the communications sector."

Telecommunications companies and their trade organizations took a less combative approach, at least in public. Some even congratulated her on her nomination.

It is not known whether those companies donated dark money to groups that attacked Sohn. A spokeswoman for USTelecom, a national trade association on broadband, said the group and its "members did not take a position on Ms. Sohn's nomination."

Behind the scenes, however, the industry's lobbyists worked hard to kill the nomination, according to Sohn and her allies. Telecom companies are among the nation's biggest spenders on lobbyists, with the industry shelling out \$117 million last year to influence

lawmakers and administration officials, according to OpenSecrets.

In her withdrawal letter, Sohn blamed her failed nomination on "legions of cable and media industry lobbyists, their bought-and-paid-for surrogates, and dark money political groups with bottomless pockets."

"It was a perfect storm of, you know, industry interests," Sohn told the AP in an interview last month at Georgetown Law School, where she is a fellow at its Institute for Technology Law & Policy.

At least three Democratic lawmakers agreed with Sohn's assessment, describing her nomination as a proxy fight over the future of free broadband.

"If affordable broadband gets deployed anywhere, then somehow more affordable broadband might get deployed everywhere," Sen. Maria Cantwell, D-Wash., the chair of the Senate Commerce Committee, said at Sohn's February confirmation hearing. "So I think there's probably billions of dollars at stake here, and that is why the vitriol is coming at you."

Sohn took particular umbrage with the campaign waged by the American Accountability Foundation. The nonprofit boasted it spent "hundreds of thousands of dollars" on advertising to "educate the American people how wrong she was for the position."

The AAF dished out more than \$320,000 on Facebook advertising, according to a review of advertising data by the AP. Such ads blasted Sohn over her connections to two liberal groups and suggested she opposed stiffening sex-trafficking laws. An ad alleged she was a "complete political ideologue."

The organization targeted most of its advertising in states where moderate Democratic senators are up for reelection next year, including Nevada, Arizona and Montana. In the closely divided Senate, nominees have little margin for error. They can lose only one

Democratic vote if all Republican senators oppose them.

It is unknown how much AAF spent on traditional advertising, which included ads in newspapers and on billboards. One of those billboards was on the Las Vegas Strip, looming above an illuminated sign of two showgirls replete with feathered headdresses.

The billboard called Sohn "too extreme" for the FCC and provided information for people to contact AAF. The likely target of that ad was not tourists but Sen. Jacky Rosen, a moderate Democrat seeking reelection next year.

AAF also promoted criticism of Sohn over Twitter posts in 2020 that suggested she supported the "defund the police" movement and agreed with a tweet that alleged police were "armed goons with tear gas."

Tom Jones, the group's executive director, declined an interview request. In an email, he declined to name the organization's donors, noting only that they are "G-d fearing Patriots!"

"We're guided by traditional American values," wrote Jones, a veteran Republican operative who led opposition research for Sen. Ted Cruz, R-Texas, during his failed 2016 presidential run. His group has led similar campaigns against other nominees who later withdrew from such posts as Federal Aviation Administration administrator, vice chair for supervision of the Federal Reserve Board, director of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and the comptroller of the currency.

Jones' group was joined in its campaign against Sohn by other organizations, including one led by Heidi Heitkamp, a former Democratic senator from North Dakota.

Heitkamp's advocacy group, the One Country Project, announced in 2022 it was spending at least \$100,000 on a campaign to oppose Sohn's nomination by highlighting her purported disregard for rural broadband.

The former senator, who lost her reelection bid in 2018, did not respond to requests for comment about the source of her group's funding. Heitkamp collected more than \$106,000 in donations from the telecommunications industry during her last Senate campaign, according to OpenSecrets, a non-partisan nonprofit that tracks U.S. election spending.

The National Fraternal Order of Police also opposed the nomination, a move that surprised Sohn and her allies because the police union has no business before the FCC. Citing Sohn's social media posts about police, the group said in February that a vote for Sohn "would show a complete disregard for the hard-working men and women of law enforcement."

Jim Pasco, FOP's executive director, acknowledged it was unusual for his organization to take sides on an FCC nominee. But he said Sohn's Twitter presence was too incendiary to ignore. He said no telecom companies influenced the union's decision to oppose the nomination.

"You know, we don't - we don't oppose people lightly," Pasco said. "The more we looked into it, the more we saw that this person is really, vocally opposed to just basic public safety efforts in the United States."

Sohn said she knew her nomination was dead at her February confirmation hearing. That's when Rosen, the Nevada Democrat, said police concerns about the social media posts "do give me pause." Other Democrats, Sohn said, put little effort into parrying Republican attacks.

"It was a bloodbath," Sohn said. Three weeks later, she withdrew from the fight.

editor's choice



Prayer Timings

Fajr 03:28 Asr 15:20
Sunrise .. 04:57 Maghrib .. 18:32
Zohr 11:44 Isha 19:59

Local

Expected weather for the next 24 hours:
By Day: Hot and partly cloudy with light to moderate freshening at times northwesterly wind to northerly wind with speeds of 12-45 km/h.

Weather

By Night: Mild and partly cloudy with light to moderate northerly wind to northeasterly wind with speeds of 08-32 km/h.

Station	Max Exp	Min Rec
Kuwait City	39	29

Kuwait Airport	41	30
Abdaly	43	24
Jahra	42	28
Salmiyah	33	28
Ahmadi	34	30
Nuwaisib	40	29
Wafra	42	27

CIVIL ID STATUS INQUIRY: <https://e.gov.kw/sites/kgenglish/Pages/eServices/PACI/CivilIDStatus.aspx>

Relations with UN lauded on anniversary

Kuwait keen on int'l cooperation, sustainable development: Al-Jarallah

By Nasser Al-Khamri

KUWAIT CITY, May 14, (KUNA): Since joining the UN on May 14, 1963 as the 11th member, the State of Kuwait had been keen on collaborating with the organization to boost international cooperation and sustainable development worldwide.

Speaking to KUNA on the anniversary of joining the UN, Assistant Foreign Minister for International Affairs Minister Plenipotentiary Abdulaziz Al-Jarallah commended the exemplary relations between Kuwait and the UN throughout the years.

The State of Kuwait had abided by the UN charter since joining the organization, affirmed Al-Jarallah who lauded the strong and strategic cooperation with the international organization.

He thanked the UN for its unequivocal supportive stance towards Kuwait during the Iraqi invasion of 1990 and the subsequent efforts played by the UN and other international players in the liberation of 1991.

The liberation of Kuwait had reflected the strength of international coordination in rallying support to a just cause, affirmed Al-Jarallah.

Asked about the highlights of the six decades membership of Kuwait in the

UN, Al-Jarallah said that his country made it its mission to support efforts for international stability and security, adding that Kuwaitis were also keen on assisting humanitarian causes far and wide.

He noted that Kuwait's efforts within the humanitarian domain had earned the country the title of international humanitarian center in 2014, the same honor went to His Highness the late Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah who was named as a global humanitarian leader.

Relentless

Kuwait's relentless efforts made it a perfect candidate for hosting offices of UN agencies and affiliated organizations.

Kuwait is host to the United Nations House since 2009, who has plethora of organizations offices under it including the OCHA, UNHCR, WHO, UNDP, IOM, UNICEF, WFP, UN HABITAT, and others, pointed out the Kuwaiti diplomat.

Al-Jarallah noted that the extensive diplomatic efforts by Kuwait enabled it to become a chair member in numerous UN organizations, namely the United Nations Human Rights Council 2011-14, United Nations Economic and Social Council 1967-69, and so on.

Kuwait had hosted several international conferences connected with the crises in Syria, Iraq, and Yemen as well as a conference dedicated to the plight of the Rohingya, he revealed.

In regards to the Kuwait's non-permanent membership in the UNSC 2018-19, Al-Jarallah said that Kuwait focused its efforts during its tenure to high-light Arab and Islamic causes as well as bolstering security and peace in several regions specifically the Middle East where the Palestinian cause is a focal issue that needed to be resolved.

The Kuwaiti efforts at the UNSC had resulted in various resolutions including 2019's resolution 2474, which gained approval from the majority at the UNSC. The resolution pertained to missing persons during armed conflict, he indicated.

In joint efforts with Sweden, Germany, and Belgium in 2018, resolutions 2401 and 2449 came to fruition concerning the humanitarian situation in war-torn Syria and efforts to bring a peaceful resolution to the situation there.

In April and May of 2018, Kuwait alongside several members of the Security Council had visited Bangladesh to view the situation of the Rohingya refugees who fled the Myanmar due to being prosecuted.

In June of 2019, the State of Kuwait -- the then President of the UNSC -- had visited Kuwait and Iraq in coordination with a US delegation, a visit, which resulted in a press statement commending Kuwait for its efforts to bolster the stability and security in Iraq.

The visit to Kuwait in particular was aimed at viewing Iraq's commitment to the cause of missing Kuwaiti citizens in Iraqi soil, Kuwaiti properties, and the national archives.



Al-Jarallah



KUNA photo

Lieutenant General Al-Barjas was briefed on the workflow mechanism and coordination channels with the relevant sectors of the Ministry of Interior and other parties involved in supervising and organizing the 2023 National Assembly elections during his visit to the elections headquarters.

Polls HQ readiness checked

The Interior Undersecretary, Lieutenant General Anwar Al-Barjas, on Sunday affirmed the security personnel readiness to organize and secure the National Assembly elections due on June 6.

The Ministry of Interior's Directorate General for Public Relations and Information said in a press release that Lieut. Gen. Al-Barjas affirmed, during a visit to the headquarters of the election affairs department, necessity of tackling flaws that happened in the previous parliamentary polls. Security apparatuses are ready to deal with any emergency to assure voters and candidates to portray Kuwait's true democracy, he said.

Lieut. Gen. Al-Barjas, during his visit to the election affairs department, examined all preparations that had been

taken for the polling day.

He was accompanied during the tour by Major General Abdullah Al-Rejaib, the assistant undersecretary for public security and the assistant undersecretary for traffic and operations.

Crown Prince

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace on Sunday His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

He also received First Deputy Prime, Interior Minister, and Acting Minister of Defense Sheikh Talal Khaled Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. (KUNA)

Bid to curtail forgery, illegal entry

Biometric system enforced in air, land and sea ports

KUWAIT CITY, May 14: After the activation of the integrated central system of "biometric" features in March as the first experimental stage, the security services operating in all the country's air, land and sea ports officially applied the system on all travelers - citizens and residents - from the early hours of Friday morning, reports Al-Qabas daily.

In confirmation of the article titled "A new security system for the entry and exit of travelers" that was published by the daily on February 17, 2023, informed sources affirmed that the security services operating in all the country's air, land and sea ports have prepared an integrated plan to implement the integrated central system for biometric features.

Prior to the inception, the necessary preparations were taken through several axes, most notably the successful testing of new technical devices, the provision of more security personnel trained in their use, and the development of organizational steps to facilitate the procedures of travelers through the ports, the control of security, and the establishment of discipline.

The sources revealed that the biometric project includes hand and palm prints, facial image, iris of the eye, and the electronic signature of all individuals, within the framework of the plan, which includes a comprehensive update of the implementation of entry and exit procedures for travelers and vehicles.

They explained that the new project aims to control cases of forgery, and check the local and international lists of prohibited persons before documenting the movement of travel.

The project includes the establishment of data centers for the security of the ports, the provision of automatic devices to facilitate procedures through automatic reading of travel documents and verifying their authenticity, and checking the security features in them to control cases of forgery. They are matched with the vital features of the traveler by checking fingerprints, face



Sheikh Talal

Jobs in MEW

No test required

KUWAIT CITY, May 14: The Ministry of Electricity intends to cancel the test requirement for appointing the Ministry's employees who hold electrical and mechanical engineering majors who wish to work in private sector consulting offices approved by the Ministry, reports Al-Rai daily.

Informed sources in the ministry said, "The Supreme Planning Committee in the ministry discussed this item at its last meeting, as the ministry seeks to cancel the test requirement, and suffice with conducting an oral interview with engineers wishing to work in these consulting offices, with the aim of encouraging citizens to join the sector." private".

The sources pointed out that dispensing with the test requirement will be met by several conditions and requirements, including a certificate from a recognized and documented university from higher education, in addition to a specific high percentage of final grades and other conditions related to the importance of the engineer's work in the ministry's sectors.

On the other hand, the Planning Committee discussed several issues, most notably the Ministry's sectors' preparations for the summer season, percentages of maintenance work that have been accomplished, and the plan to import electric energy from the Gulf interconnection system during the summer months.

and iris, and then verified with the local and international blacklists before documenting the travel movement.

The First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Interior and Acting Minister of Defense Sheikh Talal Khaled supervised this vital project, and had earlier inspected the implementation of the final stages of developing and establishing the integrated central system for biometric features for Kuwait.

Candidacy deadline ends

239 men, 15 women register in poll-run

By Saeed Mahmoud Saleh
Arab Times Staff

Other Voices

Al-Suwaidan seen by Al-Zaidi

By Ahmad alsarraf

My colleague Meshari Al Zaidi wrote an article in Asharq Al-Awsat newspaper, April 21, 2023 edition, on the Brotherhood figure and activist Tariq Al Suwaidan known for his activities and attempts to find out new zones for politics and culture supporting Muslim Brotherhood ideology.

Al Zaidi said he knew Al Suwaidan for more than 20 years through recorded tapes he had released to talk about Islamic history, biography of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him), the Andalusia Caliphates and other topics. Al Zaidi said despite his widespread popularity, Al Suwaidan and despite that he was an intruder on the heritage scientific material, he was making primitive mistakes, even in pronouncing the proper names and places, and these are the least mistakes.

Al Suwaidan moved on to lecture on self development redundantly using the nonsense popular material. The attendees crammed to hear those lectures presented by Al Suwaidan and his colleagues of modernized preaching stars, despite the fact that Al Suwaidan is a big fan of his own self, he is not a free lancer.

He was part of the then agenda adopted by Muslim Brotherhood and aimed at creating a media material concerning history and get use of it in order to reshape the mentality of the victims to meet the Muslim Brotherhood Ideology.

During the Arab (Muslim Brotherhood) Spring, some of the Muslim Brotherhood figures including Al Suwaidan and Salman Al Oda revealed the secret. It was not strange for Al Suwaidan to be a subject of scandal because of the tweet he uploaded on his Twitter account and deleted it later.

In that tweet, Al Suwaidan said, "Both Aqsa Mosque and the Holy Mosque in Makkah are brothers in terms of receiving the Heavenly revelation. Both are linked by the Holy light of Al Qader Night. I pray to Allah Almighty to combine them in liberation soon."

Defending himself from the negative reaction of people about his bold calling for the liberation of the Holy Mosque of Makkah, Al Suwaidan said it was an error committed by those managing his account. This actually is not correct because Al Suwaidan had earlier stated that it is he who manages his own accounts on social media. Furthermore, the excuse is not acceptable

because it is so strange that he authorizes others to run his account and upload tweets that may cause him great damage.

Al Zaidi asked if it is only Al Suwaidan among Muslim Brotherhood figures who presents to be smart on social media or he is one out of many other of his like. Al Suwaidan is basically an oil engineer. However, it did not prevent him from showing his talents in other fields. It is obvious that most of the figures belonging to Muslim Brotherhood lack the academic religious knowledge and they are not specialists in Islamic heritage and conscription. Most of them come from irrelevant backgrounds like engineering, medicine and pharmacology. This is an axiomatic piece of information for those who study the history of the Brotherhood.

What the generation of Tariq Suwaidan and Amr Khaled did, and their neighbor in that, Salman al-Oda, is experimenting with new techniques in modern public discourse, and trying to wear the mantle of modernity and tolerance, without prejudice to the core of the solid Brotherhood thought.

Al-Zaidi praised a note by the Saudi researcher Youssef Al-Dini, in which he explained this deception of forgiving the new preachers, calling for looking at "the nature of the fundamentalist personality from a political angle, and that it is not linked to religion or a state of religiosity, but rather uses religious slogans as a conceptual mask to pass its ideology towards power."

Al Suwaidan, Amr Khalid and Salman Al Oda tried a new mechanism in dealing with the crowds portraying themselves in the image of tolerance, modernity and advancement. They did so while they are committed to the core of Muslim Brotherhood ideology.

Al Zaidi highlighted the observation of the Saudi researcher Youssef Al Deini who stressed the need to study the radical characters from political view to conclude that such characters get use of religious slogans as face mask to pass their eagerness to power.

Foot note: a specialist expert corrected what I mentioned in my article published last Thursday by Al Qabas daily. He said the accurate number of Kuwaiti citizens recorded in 1957 was 104 thousand. He pointed out that considering the highest average of the increasing number of citizens after subtracting death cases, the number of Kuwaiti citizens should become a maximum of 700 thousand at present and not 1.4 million. So where is the glitch?

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Power supply of 11 garages cut off

KUWAIT CITY, May 14: Head of the Judicial Enforcement Team of the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy, Adnan Dashti, announced that power supply to 11 garages in the Fahaeel Industrial Area have been cut off, and fines have been issued against the owners of those garages after discovering the owners of these garages were using direct power supply from

the main line without installing the power meters, reports Al-Rai daily.

Dashti told the daily that the team launched a joint campaign with the Ministry of Interior, Kuwait Municipality, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, and the Public Authority for Industry in Al-Ahmadi Governorate, specifically in the Fahaeel area.

KUWAIT CITY, May 14: Forty one citizens (35 men and six women) filed their candidacies for the upcoming parliamentary election at the General Department of Election Affairs in the Ministry of Interior on Sunday -- last day of the 10-day registration period for candidates.

The total number of candidates reached 252 -- 239 men and 15 women. So far, two male candidates have opted out of the electoral race.

Following are the candidates who registered on the last day of the registration period:

- First Constituency**
- 1- Sara Husain Al-Dabi
 - 2- Saleh Muhammad Al-Anzi
 - 3- Onoud Khalid Al-Anzi
- Second Constituency**
- 1- Ibrahim Metleq Al-Dhefari
 - 2- Jaber Marzouq Al-Bazzali
 - 3- Jassem Muhammad Dashti
 - 4- Salman Saleh Al-Attar
 - 5- Abdulaziz Ali Al-Naqi
 - 6- Abdulaziz Faisal Al-Bazzali
 - 7- Fatima Husain Ghoulom
 - 8- Fahd Samawi Al-Dhefari
 - 9- Nasser Abdulrahman Al-Obaidi
 - 10- Nasser Abdullah Dashti
 - 11- Dawoud Abdulmajid Habib
- Third Constituency**
- 1- Ahmed Ali Al-Failakawi
 - 2- Basset Ali Al-Saad
 - 3- Hassan Ali Muhammad
 - 4- Khalifa Khalil Al-Tamimi
 - 5- Dawoud Salman Al-Omairi
 - 6- Abdulrazzaq Muhammad Haidar
 - 7- Abdullah Saqr Al-Khashm
 - 8- Ghada Meshari Al-Obaidi
 - 9- Fahd Saad Al-Nukhailan
 - 10- Muhammad Salem Al-Juwaihel
 - 11- Waleed Muhammad Al-Nasser
- Fourth Constituency**
- 1- Ahmed Ali Ersheed
 - 2- Badawi Saeedan Al-Majdi
 - 3- Jamaan Awad Al-Azmi
 - 4- Hamdan Muhammad Al-Otaibi
 - 5- Khalid Rafeia Al-Shelaimi
 - 6- Zaid Aqeel Al-Mutairi
 - 7- Sulaiman Rajab Al-Ma'ayouf
 - 8- Awad Khalaf Al-Anzi
 - 9- Metleq Owaied Al-Anzi
 - 10- Naif Meslet Al-Adwani
 - 11- Noor Abdullah Al-Mutairi
 - 12- Youssef Sarhan Al-Hendal
- Fifth Constituency**
- 1- Tariq Jassem Al-Mutairi
 - 2- Ayeed Muhesen Al-Ajmi
 - 3- Abdulmuhsen Youssef Al-Muqatei
 - 4- Manel Muhammad Al-Ajmi
- As per the Election Law, these candidates are allowed to withdraw their candidacy within seven days before Election Day; that is, from May 30 to June 5.

Many reasons quoted in labor row 'standoff'

KUWAIT CITY, May 14: Bassam Al-Shammari, an expert in domestic labor affairs, listed a number of reasons that led to the aggravation of the situation between the Kuwaiti and the Philippine sides in terms of the file of labor force recruitment from the Philippines, reports Aljarida daily.

He explained that the most prominent reason that led to this decline is the failure of the Center for Shelter for Expatriate Workers affiliated to the Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) in playing its role and taking the required measures in the most complete manner.

Another reason is the problem of accumulation of female workers in their embassies and buildings belonging to them in Kuwait, and the lack of any urgent and effective solutions to this problem, which has been outstanding for a long time.

Still another reason is the delay in adjudicating labor disputes, and the difficulty in securing the most basic rights of the workers especially with regard to withholding their personal documents, such as debit cards and passports. Al-Shammari highlighted the overlapping of competencies between government agencies, and the unjustified silence about unlicensed shelters at some embassies, stressing that this phenomenon occurred in the embassies of several countries, and resulted in suspension of dealings with Indonesia in 2007, and Ethiopia in 2013, as well as the Philippines during the first suspension in 2018.

He called on the concerned authorities to return the shelter center to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in order for it to be a neutral body to activate its main role. Al-Shammari said, "The concerned government agencies represented by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Interior and the Public Authority for Manpower's Department for Regulating the Recruitment of Domestic Workers are currently preparing for the upcoming visit of the Philippine delegation, which is expected in the middle of this month, to hold a series of meetings to solve the current crisis, bring the views of the two sides closer together to ensure the resumption of recruitment of new domestic workers from Manila soon, and rescind the decision to suspend visas for new workers."

Securitymen seize 152-kg hashish, over 1 million drug pills, firearms

24 violators of residency law nabbed

KUWAIT CITY, May 14: The Directorate-General of Drug Control in cooperation and coordination with the General Administration of the Coast Guard and the General Administration of Customs, through intensive security activity, collecting information and conducting further investigations seized 152 kilograms

of hashish, one million Lyrica tablets, 150 thousand Captagon pills, 8 kilograms of marijuana and two kilograms of shabu, in addition to 5 unlicensed firearms and live ammunition, reports Al-Qabas daily

First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Interior and Acting Minister of Defense Sheikh Talal Al-Khaled during the supervision of the narcotics haul praised the efforts exerted by the vigilant security men and their fruitful cooperation in confronting drug smugglers and repelling all methods and attempts of smuggling. Minister Sheikh Talal stressed once again that no one is above the law when it comes to pursuing drug smugglers and drugs pushers saying it is the first line of defense to protect the country from this scourge and society. He told the securitymen not to be complacent in protecting the country from this devastating scourge.



Minister Sheikh Talal supervising the seized drugs.

Al-Qabas photo

Bedouin drug addict held: Personnel from the Farwaniya Security Directorate have arrested a 24-year-old non-Kuwaiti for consuming drugs, reports Al-Anba daily.

The daily said the man was seized in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh on suspicion and during a body search police found on him narcotic pills, chemical, shabu, Captagon pills and marijuana in addition to drug tools and an amount of money.

Police also found in his car a knife, sword and a ring box. The man has been handed over to the concerned authority.

24 law violators nabbed: The Public Relations and Security Media Department of the Ministry of Interior stated the Residence Affairs Investigations Department raided two fake domestic workers hiring offices and arrested 10 people – all believed to be violators of the residence law and worked on daily wage basis, reports Al-Rai daily.

The sources added the Tripartite Joint Committee arrested 14 violators of law during a security campaign in the Farwaniya Governorate and referred them to the competent authorities to take legal action against them.

diwaniya

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

'Having independent body for crisis, risk management vital'

"AMONG the most prominent challenges facing countries all over the world are crises, disasters and risks, which show the capabilities of these countries, the efficiency of their ministries, institutions and policies, and the extent of their readiness to confront these crises, and mitigate their consequences hurt their citizens," columnist **Dr Abdul Amir Al-Faraj** wrote for Al-Jarida daily.

"Developed countries that have a clear vision and a targeted strategy are often more prepared to deal with any emergency crises, such as natural disasters, which include epidemics, earthquakes, volcanoes, floods, fires, the crisis of strategic plans, cyber security, and other crises.



Dr Al-Faraj

"These countries are keen to develop the necessary proactive plans to deal with any crisis, to overcome it and reach safety without significant losses or mitigate it as much as possible. Kuwait is not far from this world, and like other countries in its surroundings, it was exposed to a number of crises, which lacked precise planning to manage or mitigate them, and in return cost the state huge sums of money which eventually hindered work, along with many other damages.

"Although the Ministry of Social Affairs and Community Development issued, thankfully, in the middle of last month Ministerial Resolution No. (48) of 2023 declaring the Kuwait Society for Crisis and Emergency Management, at the initiative of a number of the founders, with the aim of spreading the culture of crisis and emergency management and educating community members on the importance of warding off risks and dealing with it using scientific and technological skills and clarifying its importance in saving human lives.

"This step alone is not enough, and it was necessary to establish an independent authority for crisis and risk management, directly reporting to the Council of Ministers, headed by the Prime Minister, and including in its membership and committees specialists from all ministries and state institutions.

"This is what neighboring countries did, such as the United Arab Emirates, which established the National Authority for Emergency, Crisis and Disaster Management within the organizational structure of the Supreme National Security Council on May 14, 2007, and by Federal Decree Law No. (2) of 2011.

"The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia followed suit where in 2018, the Saudi Council of Ministers took a decision to form a National Risk Council headed by the Crown Prince, in line with Vision 2030, and the Council included in its membership many important relevant authorities.

"Kuwait is in dire need to establish this body, provided that it is at the level of the Council of Ministers and on its initiative, and without underestimating the importance of the initiative of the founders of the Kuwait Society for Crisis and Emergency Management, and all governmental and societal efforts must be combined to create this body because of its importance in the interest of Kuwait and the interest of its citizens."

Also:

"There is no doubt that the political conflict and its intensity will be unusual because the government has struck the symbols who want to reconcile behind political polarization and invest in it, so their voice will be expensive, either to save government parties from interrogation and no-confidence or to stop legislation that harms the stakeholders, columnist **Naji Al Mulla** wrote for Al-Jarida daily.

"We do not have an iota of doubt that the government of the new era does not need all of this, as it dealt a fatal blow to the 'so-called' services members to nip in the bud bribery when it relied on the civil card to vote, stopping the provision of services through representatives and striking by-elections and bribery.

"However, those who stand against the new era are betting on exploiting the slow pace of the government's move in implementation, which marked its recent performance, and the absence of a detailed work program governed by quantitative and temporal criteria.

"This program is the basis for selecting government ministers and all officials in government agencies. In order to avoid any political riots against the government, it must pull wool over people's eyes and portray a different scenario.

"The special reality touches certainty if it comes in the form of housing cities near the sea after the liberation of the coast and the establishment of small and medium projects on it employing 70% Kuwaitis, the elimination of traffic accidents, and the adjustment of the demographics.

"These scenes, for example, close the void from which the rodents of skepticism sneak in to shake people's confidence in the government and incite them against it, and thus usurp the weapon of interrogations against it.

"The government has no choice but to thwart these traps except to make the arena crowded with all its corners with the achievements of vital projects, according to the latest and smartest ways, after making the most of the experiences of countries of the Arabian Gulf region and direct dealings with the largest

and most efficient reputed international companies par excellence.

"The signs of this trend must begin in the government's decisions to contract directly without an intermediary with the most efficient international companies to solve the road problem.

"The government must follow up on this trend by setting up all projects, and the majority of the council and the honorable people in the country will support them."

"In June 2022, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad delivered a speech that consisted of advice, suggestions and directives to correct the political, economic and social paths in the interest of the country and citizens, as well as respect the Constitution, law and regulations, and solve the problems that citizens usually face in ministries and government departments," columnist **Abdallah Al-Abduljader** wrote for Al-Anba daily.

"After the formation of a new government in 2023 and current preparations for the upcoming National Assembly election, some citizens have registered to obtain legislative seats. The people of Kuwait will soon choose their representatives among these candidates to serve in the interest of the country and citizens and to correct the path.

"Therefore, I say to the Kuwaiti people: 'If you want solutions to your problems and your needs to be addressed like housing, education, health, social issues, employment, standard of living, stability, security and safety, then you must be careful in choosing Assembly members whose biography and life are good and honest. They must be qualified, with vast experience and positive attitude. They must work in the interest of the country and the citizens, not personal, partisan or tribal interests. They must be keen on developing the country, completing its development projects and fighting against corruption. Their proposals must be on correcting the economic path and solving housing, education, health and social problems.'"

"It is fair to say that our politicians are no less than their counterparts in Europe, America and Russia. Sometimes, they may even be preferred in work and practice!" columnist **Dr Abdulrhman Al-Jiran** wrote for Al-Rai daily.

"However, the difference is that when our politician enters the arena, he finds the birds have flown away with their livelihood and there is nothing left for him but to achieve.

"It is very clear that we are facing a new political scene — the fading star of the opposition and the aging of its symbols, as the State is gradually restoring its role while preserving the prestige of the law and the government standing at the same distance with merchants, the opposition and the National Assembly. We witnessed this in the past, until the Constitutional Court issued its ruling.

"Yes, we need politicians and new blood to lead the next stage, while preserving the old military's right to participate and express an opinion without monopolizing the decision... In this article, we are concerned about the emphasis on the principle of law between the government and the parliament, as stipulated in the Constitution.

"Accordingly, I believe that one of the forms of cooperation between the two authorities is the principle of 'support and attribution' by establishing a 'permanent office' in each of the ministries and financial institutions. Their positions should be succeeded by their students and deputies who are able to perform the tasks entrusted to them."

"Countries around the world celebrate World No-Tobacco Day on May 31 each year in order to educate communities about the health risks associated with smoking and to call for effective policies to reduce smoking," columnist **Dr Hind Al-Choumar** wrote for Al-Anba daily.

"Tobacco use is the main cause of preventable death globally, killing one in 10 adults worldwide and more than eight million people each year. It destroys the environment and human health through cultivation, production, distribution consumption and post-consumption waste.

"Tobacco control is not only about stopping consumption, as it also entails halting cultivation. Governments must stop tobacco subsidies, while supporting farmers to switch to more sustainable and beneficial crops, improve food security and nutrition, and raise awareness of tobacco-growing communities about the benefits of moving away from tobacco and its cultivation.

"Governments, communities and individuals must realize the magnitude of the problem. They have to do whatever is appropriate to address the problem. Key individuals and organizations that have had significant contributions to tobacco control and to the success of World No-Tobacco Day campaigns should be rewarded.

"Some believe that smoking is the solution to psychological, social and pathological pressures in life. They think that smoking calms them down in moments of anger and depression, but in reality, it leads to poor social relations, especially when parents smoke in front of children. In this manner, they send a message to their children that smoking is okay.

"Smoking may also increase the divorce rate and spread serious diseases among members of the society as a result of active or passive smoking."

— Compiled by Mai Elsoukary

Service for pre-booking appointments launched

MoH to up mental health clinics to 60

KUWAIT CITY, May 14: The ministry sources told Al-Jarida daily there are 46 mental health clinics in the primary health care system distributed over in all health regions in the country, pointing out that these clinics provide diagnostic and treatment services for common mental illnesses but do not include emergency cases.

The sources also indicated that the Ministry of

Health has launched a service for pre-booking appointments for mental health clinics in the primary health care system, by activating a link.

On the other hand, the Ministry provided the antiseptic cidex solution, which is used in surgical operations in its facilities, especially in the Chest Diseases Hospital, where this solution is used in open heart operations.


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Other Voices

China's global strategic initiative on security and CICA military-political dimension

By Doulat Kuanyshv

Ambassador of the Republic of Kazakhstan
Expert in the Military-Political Dimension of CICA

Ambassador Doulat Kuanyshv

One of the most noticeable and significant international phenomena at the beginning of this year was the surge in China's political and diplomatic activity.

The Global Development Initiative proposed in September 2021 by Chinese President Xi Jinping from the high rostrum of the UN General Assembly brought the world's attention to development issues and strengthened cooperation among developing countries amid ongoing global crises.

A few months later, in April 2022, Chinese President Xi Jinping, speaking at the opening of the Boao Forum for Asia, put forward the Global Security Initiative (GSI) in response to the growing conflicts and security challenges in the world.

This proposal of the Chinese leader laid the foundation for the Global Security Initiative Concept Paper officially adopted by the Chinese Foreign Ministry on 21 February 2023.

Moreover, China has played a key role in restoring diplomatic relations between Saudi Arabia and Iran after many years of confrontation. The agreement signed on 10 March this year in Beijing was the result of four days of intensive negotiations between Saudi Arabia and Iran mediated by China.

A number of China's global initiatives have been supplemented by the initiative of Chinese President Xi Jinping on global civilization, proposed on 15 March this year.

Settlement

In this context, China's position on the political settlement of the Ukrainian crisis has already gained widespread attention around the world. Shortly before that, the world press showed great interest in the visit of Director of the Office of the CPC Central Commission for Foreign Affairs Wang Yi to Europe, during which he participated in and spoke at the Munich Security

Conference and met on the sidelines with US Secretary of State Anthony Blinken, Head of European Diplomacy Josep Borrell, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine Dmytro Kuleba. In Moscow, he was received by Russian President Vladimir Putin and held talks with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov.

Of course, the China's global strategic initiative on security stands apart from these events and developments. This document reflects the approaches of the Chinese leadership to the most pressing problems of peace and security. The Global Security Initiative, proposed by Chinese President Xi Jinping, aims to eliminate the deep rooted causes of international conflicts, improve the global security management system and promote long-term peace and global socio-economic development.

Moreover, the global strategic initiative reflects the serious interest of the Chinese leadership in preserving and strengthening the atmosphere of peace and security, which helps achieving the best conditions for the internal development of China and cooperation with the outside world, both in the immediate Asian and Eurasian environment and globally, in particular, in the implementation of such significant international development projects as the One Belt, One Road or the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (CEP).

Even the first, superficial glance at the Chinese document shows the similarity and sometimes the identity of the main provisions of the GSI with the goals and

objectives reflected in the Charter of the United Nations. As you know, the UN Charter is essentially an international treaty that establishes a common framework for cooperation among Member States, while the Global Security Initiative Concept Paper is an initiative, a set of proposals for solving modern global security issues.

Both the UN Charter and the Global Security Initiative Concept Paper recognize the importance of strengthening international peace and security, which is all the more important in the conditions of blazing conflicts and strained knots of disagreements and confrontations. In particular, the document establishes the principles of sovereign equality and international cooperation, especially in solving security problems.

Increased

The most important point is the need to maintain the sovereign rights of states in the context of increased international exchanges, trade and cooperation, as well as to continue peaceful dialogue and coexistence. The global strategic initiative prioritizes the recognition of the equality of states and their national sovereignty, which is based on the UN Charter and respect for the role of the United Nations, as reflected in section II "Core concepts and principles". In particular, it welcomes the maintenance of international peace, security and justice, the resolution of conflicts through diplomacy and negotiations, as well as the settlement of disputes in accordance with Article 2 of the UN Charter. Moreover, the GSI, as well as the UN Charter, calls on the international community to work together to solve global problems such as poverty, inequality, environmental issues, as well as to prevent conflicts and wars, especially nuclear war, based on the principles of equality, cooperation and the rule of law, taking appropriate measures to eliminate the corresponding circumstances, as specified in Articles 39-42 of the UN Charter, while maintaining respect for all cultures, religions, countries and ethnic groups, without associating

them with terrorist actions.

Very important in this context is the statement contained in the text of the global strategic initiative that, along with a number of other international institutions, the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) is one of the platforms for achieving the goals of the global strategic initiative designed to address security issues in Asia. In this connection, a number of important points should be clarified that characterize both the Conference itself and the interaction of CICA Member States in the military-political dimension. Today it is a pan-Asian forum that facilitates cooperation and dialogue on various security issues with a view to promoting stable and peaceful coexistence and prosperity among peoples.

As will be recalled, the initiative to create a mechanism for partnership and cooperation in Asia that the Kazakh leadership put forward more than thirty years ago has stood the test of time, as confirmed by the outcomes of the Sixth CICA Summit held in Astana last October, where the leaders of the Member States firmly declared the need to transform the Conference into a full-fledged international organization, adopting a corresponding action programme in this direction. In fact, CICA already is one, with 28 Member States representing more than half the population and more than a third of the gross output of the planet, nine Observer States, a number of international institutions and organizations as observers and partners, having the necessary legal framework for full interaction in all its five dimensions: military-political, economic, environmental, human and new challenges and threats.

In the military-political dimension coordinated by the Republic of Kazakhstan and co-ordinated by the Republic of Türkiye, the Member States agreed to include ten measures in the cornerstone document of the CICA system, the Catalogue of Confidence Building Measures, which reflects the collective views of the Member States, and for a number of reasons

decided to implement them at first on a step-by-step and voluntary basis. Four of these ten measures entered the implementation phase in accordance with the decision of the CICA Senior Officials Committee of 28 June 2013. In order to achieve effective results of military-political cooperation among CICA Member States, Kazakhstan has taken the initiative to hold a relevant annual international seminar.

Forces

Thus, the Member States may exchange information on the components of their armed forces, defence budgets, foreign military troops in their territories, and planned military activities. They are also able to invite observers to military exercises and create mechanisms for consultation on unexpected and dangerous military incidents. Furthermore, they share information about their accession to multilateral arms control, disarmament documents and conventions on outer space. Currently, four confidence building measures have been accepted for implementation on a voluntary basis. In this regard, the CICA Member States have chosen an evolutionary approach that involves enhancing interaction based on the "simple-to-complex" principle.

When it comes to weapons of mass destruction, many CICA Member States have taken steps to improve nuclear safety and have commitments under various international nuclear safety agreements.

Countries such as Bahrain, Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Egypt, India, Israel, Jordan, Korea, Pakistan, Palestine, Russia, Thailand, Türkiye, UAE and Viet Nam have signed the Convention on Nuclear Safety, while Kazakhstan have ratified it. Most CICA Member States are signatories to the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism.

Most Member States have ratified or signed the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, while Thailand is holding consultations. As for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, it has been ratified by all countries except China, Egypt, Iran

and Israel.

China and India are also members of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and have signed various international treaties related to nuclear safety, while China has also signed the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management. Kazakhstan has ratified the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management.

Russia is an IAEA member and has signed various international treaties related to nuclear safety, including the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management.

It is important to emphasize that nuclear safety is a global issue, and all states with nuclear programmes are to take steps to secure their nuclear facilities and materials. Concerning chemical and biological weapons, several Member States are in the process of consulting on the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction, with Israel being a signatory, while Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan have ratified it. Moreover, most CICA Member States have ratified or signed the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Biological and Toxin Weapons, while India, Thailand and Viet Nam are in the consultation phase.

The ongoing transformation of CICA cannot but affect all areas of interaction and multilateral approaches to cooperation to ensure long-term stability on the Asian continent, including the military-political dimension in the long run. CICA's research body, the Think Tank Forum (TTF), has an important role to play in the theoretical justification and development of practical steps in this direction.

In this sense, an in-depth analysis of the strategic security initiative will certainly provide much food for thought for TTF researchers and analysts.

Story of

Continued from Page 1

The third lesson is that there are some who attach great importance to the reputation of their country, and work to preserve it at all costs. On the other hand, opportunists work to exploit everything in order to extend their influence and enrichment, either through the illegal services that they provide through their positions to the influential or to friends and associates, and to those who believe that they are a deep state, or by enacting laws and legislation that serve their interests, even if they are at the expense of the country.

These lessons apply to several Arab countries, in which some have sought to despair about the dependence on the outside and gain strength with it over their people and their state, either through parties, or by marketing the ideas of the outside, or via militias working to undermine the state and its system of government, or even officials who believe that salvation is in accumulating wealth from public money.

Because of that, they work on approving projects in which corruption stings their noses, and they try to defend them in various ways. They are the ones who sell their country, or as the narrator of the story said - "There are the donkeys who sell their country with everything in it."

Kuwait sees

Continued from Page 1

Philippines will not lift the ban it imposed only in this way, as the country is still seeking justice in the death of Jullibee Ranara, the domestic worker, who was killed by her employer's son and her body burned and thrown into the desert."

He stressed that "this ban was imposed because of the heinous crime" committed against one of our citizens. Despite his assertion that "the lifting of the ban at the present time has not yet been decided," he hinted that "this does not mean that we will not do that," explaining that "this matter cannot be permanent, but we have to sit down and discuss."

He explained that "meetings will be held with Kuwaiti officials this month, as it is expected that the two countries will resume the terms of the current bilateral agreement," noting that "what will happen is that we will resume and they will resume."

I'm sure there will be a reciprocal appeal. Therefore, we may have to make some revisions to the work agreement, or we may come up with a new working paper on how to move forward.

The Philippine Foreign undersecretary also said that "while the suspension of issuing entry visas to Filipinos to Kuwait includes all workers, its impact is not huge," explaining that "for those who go to Kuwait, there are not many non-domestic workers who are now working there."

He added, "For those who are already there and have residence permit, they will be allowed to return to their homes, and then return to Kuwait." According to him, "There are currently between 275,000 and 300,000 Filipinos in Kuwait, and almost all of them have residence permits" pointing out at the same time that "between 5 and 10,000 Filipinos do not hold documents."

Guterres, Blinken

Continued from Page 1

On his part, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken praised Rima for her extraordinary work and leadership in raising over USD 20 million she founded and has since chaired her annual Kuwait America Foundation gala dinners.

Blinken also congratulated Sheikh Salem in his new capacity as foreign

minister, saying he is looking forward for them to continue working together.

He said that the event highlights "the stronger and ever growing partnership between Kuwait and the US, bringing us closer together to supporting refugees around the world as they seek safety and opportunity."

"We are grateful to partner with Kuwait in this endeavor," he remarked.

"As UNHCR's largest donor in the Middle East, Kuwait has led the way again and again and again around the

globe."

He added that this gala reflected that supporting refugees is "a challenge we cannot solve alone, we need partners, we need partners across the board."

In a similar fashion, UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres thanked Rima for an outstanding service as a UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador and added, "As a former United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, I must say that the best decision I have made is to appoint you."

عمليات الخفجي المشتركة

AL-KHAFJI JOINT OPERATIONS

الشركة الكويتية لنفط الخليج
KUWAIT GULF OIL COMPANY (K.S.C.)ارامكو لأعمال الخليج
ARAMCO GULF OPERATIONS

TENDER ADVERTISEMENT

Aramco Gulf Operations Company Limited (AGOC) and Kuwait Gulf Oil Company (K.S.C.) (KGOC), (Al Khafji Joint Operations) invites intending bidders to participate for the Tender No.:G1791CB23" Recreational and Cultural Activity Services for KJO"

Each intending bidder may purchase the tender documents upon payment of Saudi Riyals Five Hundred (SR500) or Kuwaiti Dinars Forty (KD 40) only which is non-refundable by visiting our Contracts Department at Al-Khafji, Saudi Arabia, or KGOC's Kuwait Office located in A-I Ahmadi, Tender & Contracts Section. The bidder may visit our KJO website: www.kjo.com.sa and follows the path; E-Services □ Tendering □ Contractors □ Ongoing Tenders to review part of tender documents, before purchasing.

The sale of Tender Documents will be effective from **May 15, 2023, until 12:00 Noon, May 23, 2023.**

The bid proposal shall be delivered by hand-delivery or thru courier service to the Contracts Department in Al-Khafji Joint Operations, Al-Khafji, Saudi Arabia on or before the closing date **14:00 Hours, Monday, May 29, 2023** of the time stipulated in the tender document.

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		Change	Closing pts			Change	Closing pts
JAPAN	- Nikkei	+0.90	29,388.30	UAE	- DFM	-0.27	3,559.09
PAKISTAN	- KSE 100	+0.39	41,325.63	PHILIPPINES	- PSEi	-1.46	6,487.58
SAUDI	- Tadawul	+0.88	11,392.78	EGYPT	- EGX 30	-1.28	17,270.69

Business

Unveiling of Zain Omantel International to revolutionize the telecom landscape

ZOI, a first-of-its-kind joint venture

KUWAIT CITY/MUSCAT, May 14: Zain, a leading telecommunications operator providing digital and ICT services in seven markets across the Middle East and Africa, and Omantel, Oman's leading integrated telecommunications services provider and the preeminent regional wholesale provider, announce the launch of 'Zain Omantel International' (ZOI), an unprecedented joint venture that will establish itself as the Middle East's premier international wholesale services provider. This groundbreaking partnership aims to revolutionize the wholesale telecommunications sector by offering a unique proposition that combines the strengths of both parties to deliver unparalleled service and support to customers worldwide.

ZOI signifies a substantial advancement in the telecommunications industry and is poised to



ZOI final logo

become a global powerhouse due to Zain's extensive regional presence and success in the retail and digital arenas, combined with Omantel's exceptional wholesale capabilities and comprehensive international

subsea and terrestrial networks. The joint venture will cater to the end-to-end telecommunications needs of operators in the Middle East, as well as international carriers, data centers, hyperscalers, con-

tent, and cloud providers seeking services within the region and beyond.

As a result, ZOI will manage all international wholesale requirements of Zain and Omantel operations in eight countries, serving over 55 million customers. Furthermore, ZOI will optimize the existing wholesale businesses of both companies by reducing operating costs and increasing competitiveness through access to state-of-the-art low-latency and high-capacity services over its extended footprint.

Partnership

Bader Al-Kharafi, Zain Vice-Chairman and Group CEO commented, "This strategic value-enhancing partnership reflects the next stage of industry collaboration and advancement, and represents another significant milestone of our '4Sight' profitable growth strategy. It also demonstrates our commitment to transforming the business and creating synergies while extending our reach and capabilities to provide the highest quality services to our customers. ZOI is ideally positioned to evolve into a significant international player on the wholesale telecommunications scene that will benefit both Zain and Omantel on financial, commercial and operational levels."

Talal Al Mamari, Omantel CEO, added, "The joint venture with Zain is a testament to our unwavering

commitment to transforming the international arm of Omantel group into a leading global provider, building on our existing position as a top regional wholesale player. ZOI is poised to become the primary gateway from our region to the rest of the world, leveraging the combined strengths of Omantel and Zain. With these differentiating factors, ZOI is the preferred partner with a truly unique presence in the international telecommunications landscape."

ZOI, in collaboration with the Omantel and Zain Group operating companies, will ensure that Zain and Omantel customers continue to experience supreme quality in international services such as internet connectivity, voice, roaming, messaging and more. Some noteworthy projects that ZOI will undertake, along with its consortium partners include the development of Blue-Raman; Africa-1; Jeddah to Marseille (J2M) subsea systems and an extensive terrestrial network connecting most of the regional countries to the landing stations and data centers. Such high-profile projects, to name a few, will create an ecosystem that is unrivalled in the region.

Sohail Qadir has been appointed as the CEO of ZOI. With a proven track record of success, Mr. Qadir has spearheaded the development and expansion of Omantel's international wholesale business. During his 13-year tenure as the Vice President

of Wholesale at Omantel, he successfully positioned the company on the global map and increased revenues tenfold. Under Mr. Qadir's leadership, Omantel Wholesale led a remarkable transformational journey that resulted in investments in more than 20 subsea cables, hosting of global hyperscalers, direct interconnections with all major international service providers and extensive roaming coverage all over the world.

Sohail Qadir, ZOI CEO said, "The region has matured in terms of the scope and consumption of reliable wholesale services, and this strategic partnership in this integral part of the telecommunications business is well-timed to capitalize on global trends. I look forward to leading ZOI in delivering differentiated services to regional and international customers alike, and providing increased value and enhanced customer experience to all associated stakeholders across our extensive operational footprint."

ZOI is set to be a game changer in the telecommunications wholesale industry, offering a wide portfolio of services and solutions to meet the increasing demands of wholesale customers. This strategic partnership between Zain and Omantel embodies the realization of wholesale synergy, aimed at consolidating each party's international operations and growing the investment at the group-level.

Over 100 companies participate

KIB sponsors Baiti Exhibition

KUWAIT CITY, May 14: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) announced that it participated as sponsor of Baiti Exhibition, designated for the construction of the Al-Mutlaa area. This distinguished step comes as part of the Bank's strategy to contribute to social and sustainable development and support trends aimed at providing banking solutions that advance the concept of social welfare, based on KIB's slogan "Bank for Life".

Commenting on the sponsorship, Abdulrahman Al Bahar, Assistant Manager in the Retail Banking Department at KIB, said, "We are always keen to be present at such meaningful events and provide all banking solutions that meet customers' needs and are in line with their aspirations. We showcased the benefits of the PayTally service from KIB that would enable customers to obtain suitable financing in an easy way with a flexible repayment period from 3 months to 5 years and without the need for a salary transfer."

On his part, Abdulaziz Al-Thawab, Marketing and Corporate Communications Specialist at KIB, praised the important role played by the Bank's team at the exhibition, from raising banking awareness, in line with the "Let's Be Aware" campaign launched by the Central Bank of Kuwait in cooperation with the Kuwait Banking Association, to introducing the distinctive and innovative products and services that KIB provides to its customers throughout the year. KIB's team also discussed with the exhibition attendees all solutions that suit their aspirations and achieve the main goal of participating in this unique event. Al-Thawab said, "We, at KIB, are committed to our pioneering role in enhancing the experience of our customers. We constantly work on renewing the benefits that we provide our customers with, which add value for all customer segments."

It is worth noting that KIB continues to maintain its advanced and leading position among banking institutions through supporting specialized projects and events that aim to improve the lifestyle of all members of society, and achieve sustainable community development, as part of its comprehensive strategy eyeing a more stable and prosperous future.

About KIB

Kuwait International Bank (KIB) is a bank that operates according to the Islamic Shari'ah, based in the State of Kuwait. Incorporated in 1973, and originally known as Kuwait Real



Abdulrahman Al Bahar



Abdulaziz-Al-Thawab

Estate Bank, KIB made the transition to its current Islamic operating model in 2007. In 2018, KIB embarked on a new phase of its journey full of innovation and development. As part of its new strategic direction, the Bank focuses on offering a next-level customer experience under the slogan: "Bank for Life".

Through a network of branches spread across the State of Kuwait, KIB offers a broad range of banking products and services, as well as innovative digital banking solutions in line with international best standards. As part of its duty towards the community, the Bank also encompasses a leading social responsibility program that aims at positively impacting all members of the community through a wide range of impactful initiatives and activities.

Today, KIB has taken concrete steps in implementing its new strategic objectives. The Bank has cemented its role as a key player in the local banking industry and has continued to maintain its strong financial performance; enabling it to be globally recognized for its strong credit rating and financial position.

Uptime Institute announces Tier III Gold Certification of Boubyan Bank

KUWAIT CITY, May 14: Boubyan Bank made a new achievement that adds to its international rankings and ratings received since the beginning of this year, as the bank's New Data Center received the "Tier III Gold Certification of Operational Sustainability" from Uptime Institute, the international institute specialized in certification of international data and information centers.

On this occasion, Mr. Waleed Al-Yaqout, General Manager at Boubyan Bank said: "The new data center's receipt of this certification highlights the ceaseless efforts of Boubyan to improve the level and quality of services, especially in the area of operational sustainability, thus reinforcing our abilities to offer the best services to our customers, the thing which is one of our priorities during the development of business plans at Boubyan."

"This certification is leading as it is the top certification adopting recognized international standards to evaluate the reliability of the performance of data centers along with practices and risks considered to be of priority to their operations, in addition to commitment to recommended practices to achieve optimal performance of the installed infrastructure, mitigating downtime risks, and avoiding human errors," he added.

He elaborated: "Receiving this prestigious certification complements the accomplishments of Boubyan Data Center, which has previously earned the Tier III Design Certification, for design of data centers worldwide in 2020, in addition to the Tier III Constructed Facility Certification, for actual implementation and operation in 2022 from the same entity."

Al-Yaqout went on to add: "Boubyan will continue investing in infrastructure and in the development of the data center as per international leading practices adopted in building data centers in a manner that guarantees the bank's leadership in terms of complying with the best industry standards worldwide in operational sustainability." "Our accomplishments since the beginning of this year can be attributed to setting up a clear strategy, assembling an experienced executive team, returning to basics of banking business, focusing on customer service, investing in digital banking services, investing in our human

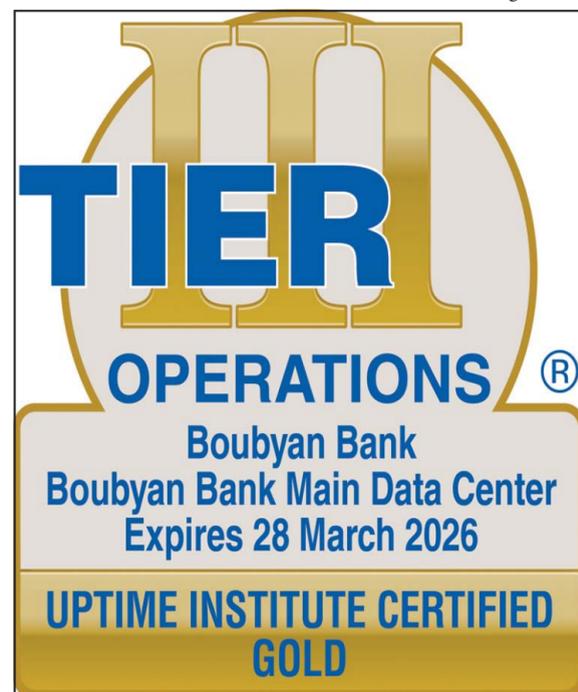


Waleed Alyaqout

resources, and focusing on national cadres," he highlighted.

The new Boubyan Bank Data Center was awarded the Gold Certification following audits

Certification Criteria



The Tier III Gold Certificate

by Uptime Institute to inspect data centers, their operational efficiency, and infrastructure, in addition to the Institute's assessment of the proposed ideas for the best practices and innovative solutions to make further achievements and maintain excellence in sustainability and operation.

It is worth-mentioning that Uptime Institute is the leading international body in the assessment of data centers based on their satisfaction of standards and criteria required by international leading practices for data centers' design.

Boubyan Data Center

The building of Boubyan Bank's new data center was designed and delivered as per the standards of Uptime Institute Tier III Certification. All the equipment operated in the building has backup in order to guarantee uninterrupted service along with continuous cooling in line with the Tier III requirements of operational sustainability.

The data center is spanned over 3 floors (Basement, Ground Floor, and 1st Floor), and comprises of 99 data cabinets, in addition to two power adapters, and two power generators in order to guarantee uninterrupted power supply in case of any power failure.

Operating revenue: KD 4.0 million

NREC reports a net loss of KD 2.3 million for Q1/2023

KUWAIT CITY, May 14: National Real Estate Company (NREC) reported its financial and operational results for the three-month period ended March 31, 2023. The Company reported a net loss attributable to the owners of the Parent Company of KD 2.3 million and a loss per share of 1.27 fils in Q1 2023, compared to a net profit of KD 3.3 million and an EPS of 1.84 fils in Q1 2022.

The Company's operating revenue came in at KD 4.0 million

for the period ended March 31, 2023, a decrease of 51% compared to the same period in 2022.

NREC Vice Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Faisal Jamil Sultan Al-Essa, said: "In Abu



Al-Essa

Dhabi, Reem Mall is officially open, and our other key operational assets in Libya, Jordan, and Egypt have achieved their strongest performances to date."

Short term focus: Exiting certain assets and reducing debt

Sultan added: "We remain committed to our goal of exiting certain assets, proceeds of which will be used towards the reduction of a major part of the Company's debt."

Established in 1973 and listed in Boursa Kuwait, National Real Estate

	Q1 2023 (Million KD)	Q1 2022 (Million KD)	Variance (%)
Revenue	4.0	8.3	-51%
Net Revenue	2.7	3.7	-27%
EBITDA	0.1	5.0	-98%
Net Profit / Loss	-2.3	3.3	-169%
EPS (fils)	-1.27	1.84	-169%

Company (NREC) is a real estate investment, development and property manager based in the Middle East and North Africa. The Company's

portfolio comprises a mix of sectors that include retail, commercial and residential properties in the region. ENDS

For more information, please contact:

Mageda Abbas - M: +965 66878225 - m.abbas@nrec.com.kw

Staff talks proceed

Biden meeting with Congress leaders put off until next week

WASHINGTON, May 14, (AP): President Joe Biden's meeting Friday with congressional leaders on the debt limit crisis was abruptly postponed to next week, with staff-level talks making progress and expected to continue through the weekend, the White House and congressional aides said Thursday.

The White House said staff would continue to hold discussions, and the delay was billed as a sign of positive exchanges between Republican leaders, Democratic counterparts and Biden.

The sudden shift jolted the high-stakes talks but did not appear to be a signal of a breakdown as the president and Congress urgently search for a budget deal to resolve the government's borrowing crisis, those familiar with the situation said.

Washington is staring down a June 1 deadline to raise the debt limit to allow continued borrowing to cover already accrued bills or risk the nation's first modern-day default, which would rock the U.S. economy and send out global shock waves as well.

For two days, private talks have been underway at the Capitol as staff from the White House and the congressional leaders worked Wednesday and again Thursday try to find a solution.

While most of those familiar with the situation said talks were progressing, House Speaker Kevin McCarthy was harshly critical of the president and Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer late Thursday.

"President Biden and Senator Schumer are stuck on no. They have no plan, no proposed savings and no clue," McCarthy told reporters, similar to criticisms he made after the previous day's talks. "Apparently, President Biden doesn't want a deal, he wants a default."

McCarthy said later: "I don't think there's enough progress for the leaders to get back together." But he added that he did expect that meeting next week.

The gears of Washington were beginning to move, not smoothly but determinedly, on resolving the crisis, a turn of events in itself after months of stalemate between the Democratic President Biden and Republican Speaker McCarthy as the deadline looms to avert an economy-fracturing national default.

Staff is looking at billions of dollars of unspent COVID money. So, too, ideas as far-ranging as easing permits for energy projects and simply ordering broad spending caps are all still in the mix as negotiators from the White House and Congress engage in closed-door talks.

Then there's one more development thrown into the works: Donald Trump is urging fellow Republicans to simply let America default on its debts if they don't get the budget cutting deal they want from Biden.

"I say to the Republicans out there - congressmen, senators - if they don't give you massive cuts, you're going to have to do a default," Trump said at a CNN town hall Wednesday night as part of his campaign to return to the White House.

It's unclear whether the sudden outburst from Trump will affect negotiations. The former president continues to have sky-high influence with many in his party, and Trump-aligned lawmakers in Congress may heed his advice to engage in brinkmanship that could lead to a default that economists say could be catastrophic.

So far, Republicans in Capitol Hill appear to be ignoring the former president's counsel. They're working behind the scenes pursuing the priorities in their recently House-passed bill that would raise the debt ceiling in exchange for steep but less than "massive" budget cuts and other future spending restrictions.

McCarthy declined to discuss Trump's comment when asked about it, shifting attention back to Biden. The postponement of Friday's White House meeting between Biden, McCarthy, Schumer, Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell and House Democratic Leader Hakeem Jeffries seemed at least in part to be merely due to scheduling issues. The House and Senate finished their work for the week on Thursday, and lawmakers may not be in Washington on Friday.

Still, the White House and the

lawmakers are racing the clock ahead of Biden's planned trip abroad next week for a summit in Asia.

Negotiators spent two hours in a Capitol basement room Wednesday as they raced to develop the contours of a deal. They were back at it even longer Thursday.

Democrats responded vigorously to Trump's outburst. Senate Majority Leader Schumer declared Trump was calling on his Republican Party to "destroy the economy."

Said Schumer: "Donald Trump is about as qualified to run the country as a broken brick. But the danger here is he holds enormous sway over Speaker McCarthy and the hard right."

McCarthy downplayed the closed-door talks underway at the Capitol as producing "nothing new."

The Republican speaker owes his gavel to Trump's support during a grueling in-house election. McCarthy, who is taking the lead in negotiations with Biden, has also held firm in his opening bid in talks, saying his staff has put no new ideas on the table beyond the legislation the House approved last month - which the White House has already said Biden would veto.

"I passed a bill - what more should I have to do?" McCarthy told reporters.

Economists warn a debt default would be devastating, ripping across the economy. The nation's credit would likely be downgraded, which would surely spike borrowing costs that would end up hitting not only businesses and government, but American households.

Trump said during the town hall he didn't think the situation would come to such extremes. Fielding questions from the audience, he predicted that "Democrats will absolutely cave" to the Republican demands.

But the former president, who had signed bills to raise the debt limit during his own presidency, said a debt default this time would be worth it.

"It's better than what we're doing right now because we're spending money like drunken sailors," he said.

The U.S. debt, which grew from \$20 trillion when Trump took office in 2017 to \$28 trillion when Biden took over in 2021, is now \$31 trillion.

Meanwhile, Democratic Minority Leader Jeffries said the staff level talks have been "very productive."

The White House has rejected the Republican proposal to roll back federal spending to fiscal 2022 levels and impose a 1% cap on annual spending for the next decade.

But there could be room for further discussions, much the way Congress and the White House agreed to spending caps in past budget showdowns.

Biden himself suggested that the unspent COVID-19 funds could be "on the table." And a person familiar with the negotiations said rules on permits are part of the discussion over the budget. The person was granted anonymity to talk about private conversations.

A top McCarthy ally, Rep. Garrett Graves, R-La., said during a roundtable with reporters Thursday there are four areas of bipartisan interest that he thinks "would be a good foundation for negotiations."

Among them, Graves outlined the COVID rescissions, spending caps, reform of permitting rules, and bolstered work requirements on some government aid recipients as topics with bipartisan interest.

"I think there is pretty good opportunity there," Graves told reporters.

He said the White House is pushing for a shorter spending cap than the 10 years Republicans proposed in their legislation.

Biden senior advisor John Podesta drew attention this week when he revived White House interest in permit reform - a major issue in the fight against climate change - including support for a proposal from Sen. Joe Manchin, D-W.Va., who has been instrumental in bipartisan deals in Congress.

But on another subject, Republicans said Thursday that any proposals from the White House for tax increases to cut deficits are a nonstarter for the House GOP.

"If the White House is looking for revenue increases, they are looking in the wrong direction," said Rep. Dusty Johnson, R-S.D., a leader of the conservative Main Street Caucus.



In this file photo, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi of Calif., accompanied by House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy of Calif., left, House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer of Md., right, and other bipartisan legislators, signs the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act after it passed in the House on Capitol Hill, March 27, 2020, in Washington. (AP)

In debt ceiling standoff, big spending is giving way to new focus on deficit

Washington endeavoring to reach a deal

WASHINGTON, May 14, (AP): One outcome is clear as Washington reaches for a budget deal in the debt ceiling standoff: The ambitious COVID-19 era of government spending to cope with the pandemic and rebuild is giving way to a new focus on tailored investments and stemming deficits.

President Joe Biden has said recouping unspent coronavirus money is "on the table" in budget talks with Congress. While the White House has threatened to veto Republican House Speaker Kevin McCarthy's debt ceiling bill with its "devastating cuts" to federal programs, the administration has signaled a willingness to consider other budget caps.

The end result is a turnaround from just a few years ago, when Congress passed and then-president Donald Trump signed the historic \$2.2 trillion CARES Act at the start of the public health crisis in 2020. It's a dramatic realignment even as Biden's bipartisan infrastructure law and Inflation Reduction Act are now investing billions of dollars into paving streets, shoring up the federal safety net and restructuring the U.S. economy.

"The appetite to throw a lot more money at major problems right now is significantly diminished, given what we've seen over the past several years," said Shai Akabas, director of economic policy at the Bipartisan Policy Center, a nonpartisan organization in Washington.

The Treasury Department has warned it will begin running out of money to pay the nation's bills as soon as June 1, though an estimate Friday by the nonpartisan Congressional Budget office put the deadline at the first two weeks of June, potentially buying the negotiators time.

"We've not reached the crunch

point yet," Biden told reporters Saturday before flying to Delaware for the weekend. "There's real discussion about some changes we all could make. We're not there yet."

Staff-level negotiators resumed talks Saturday.

The contours of an agreement between the White House and Congress are within reach even if the political will to end the standoff is uncertain. Negotiators are considering clawing back some \$30 billion in unused COVID-19 funds, imposing spending caps over the next several years and approving permitting reforms to ease construction of energy projects and other developments, according to those familiar with the closed-door staff discussions. They were not authorized to discuss the private deliberations and spoke on condition of anonymity.

The White House has been hesitant to engage in talks, insisting it is only willing to negotiate over the annual budget, not the debt ceiling, and Biden's team is skeptical that McCarthy can cut any deal with his far-right House majority.

"There's no deal to be had on the debt ceiling. There's no negotiation to be had on the debt ceiling," said White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre.

McCarthy's allies say the White House has fundamentally underestimated what the new Republican leader has been able to accomplish - first in the grueling fight to become House speaker and now in having passed the House bill with \$4.5 trillion in savings as an opening offer in negotiations. Both have emboldened McCarthy to push hard for a deal.

"The White House has been wrong every single time with understanding where we are with the House," said Russ Vought, president of Center for American Renewal and Trump's former director of the Office of Management and Budget. "They're dealing with a new animal."

The nation's debt load has ballooned in recent years to \$31 tril-

lion. That's virtually double what it was during the last major debt ceiling showdown a decade ago, when Biden, as vice president to President Barack Obama, faced the new class of tea party Republicans demanding spending cuts in exchange for raising the debt limit.

While the politics of the debt limit have intensified, the nation's debt is nothing new. The U.S. balance sheets have been operating in the red for much of its history, dating to before the Civil War. That's because government expenditures are routinely more than tax revenues, helping to subsidize the comforts Americans depend on - national security, public works, a federal safety net and basic operations to keep a civil society running. In the U.S., individuals pay the bulk of the taxes, while corporations pay less than 10%.

Much of the COVID-19 spending approved at the start of the pandemic has run its course and government spending is back to its typical levels, experts said. That includes the free vaccines, small business payroll funds, emergency payments to individuals, monthly child tax credits and supplemental food aid that protected Americans and the economy.

"Most of the big things we did are done - and they did an enormous amount of good," said Sharon Parrott, president of the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities in Washington.

"We actually showed that we know how to drive down poverty and drive up health insurance amid what would have been rising hardship," she said. Last year, Biden's Inflation Reduction Act, which was signed into law over Republican opposition, was largely paid for with savings and new revenues elsewhere.

The popularity of some spending, particularly the child tax credits in the COVID-19 relief and the Inflation Reduction Act's efforts to tackle climate change, shows the political hunger in the country for the kinds of investments that some Americans believe will help push the U.S. fully

into a 21st century economy.

A case in point: A core group of Midwestern Republican lawmakers prevented a rollback of the Inflation Reduction Act's biofuel tax credits their colleagues wanted to scrap, persuading McCarthy to leave that out of the House bill. The federal money is propping up new investments in corn-heavy agriculture states.

As McCarthy's House Republicans now demand budget reductions in exchange for raising the debt limit, they have a harder time saying what government programs and services, in fact, they plan to cut.

House Republicans pushed back strenuously against Biden's claims their bill would slash veterans and other services.

McCarthy, in his meeting with the president, went so far as to tell Biden that's "a lie."

The Republicans promise they will exempt the Defense Department and veterans' health care once they draft the actual spending bills to match up with the House debt ceiling proposal, but there are no written guarantees those programs would not face cuts.

In fact, Democrats say if Republicans spare defense and veterans from reductions, the cuts on the other departments would be as high as 22%.

Budget watchers often reiterate that the debt problem is not necessarily the amount of the debt load, approaching 100% of the nation's gross domestic product, but whether the federal government can continue making the payments on the debt, especially as interest rates rise.

From the White House on Friday, Mitch Landrieu, the infrastructure implementation coordinator, talked up the \$1.2 trillion bipartisan infrastructure bill Biden signed into law 18 months ago. He said it is creating jobs, spurring private investment and showing what can happen when the sides comes together. "We say once in a generation because it hasn't happened in our lifetimes, and quite frankly it may not happen again in the near future," he said.

Dubai Chambers inaugurates Sydney Office, signs MoU with AACCI

DUBAI, May 14: Dubai Chambers has announced the opening of a new international office in Sydney, Australia by Dubai International Chamber, one of the three chambers operating under Dubai Chambers, together with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Dubai Chambers and the Australia Arab Chamber of Commerce & Industry (AACCI).

This press release features multimedia. View the full release here: <https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20230511006019/en/>

H.E. Abdul Aziz Al Ghurair and H.E. the Honourable Margaret Beazley during the Sydney office inauguration (Photo: AETOSWire) The launch, which was announced at Dubai Chambers headquarters in Dubai, brings the total number of Dubai International Chamber's international offices to 17. The new office will maximize reach and support the expansion of Dubai companies into global markets as well as focusing on attracting Australian companies to Dubai, and will support Dubai's target to boost non-oil foreign

trade to AED 2 trillion by 2026.

H.E. Abdul Aziz Al Ghurair, Chairman of Dubai Chambers said: "Today's office inauguration and the signing of a trade-boosting MoU with our friends at the Australia Arab Chamber of Commerce & Industry serves to highlight our existing strong trading partnership, but also underlines our redoubled commitment to working together more closely to foster mutually beneficial business agreements."

Under the terms of the MoU, the two Chambers will work together to develop

new joint activities and cooperation on mutual exchange and collaboration on events. H.E. the Honourable Margaret Beazley AC KC, Governor of New South Wales, said: "NSW and the UAE have a shared history of strong bilateral ties that are important and to be celebrated. Today's historic moment, the signing of The Memorandum of Understanding between the Dubai Chambers and the Australia Arab Chamber of Commerce and Industry, is one more tangible sign of the further strengthening of links between NSW and the UAE."



Top and above photos from the opening of the 12th Lulu Hypermarket in Kuwait.

Lulu opens new Hypermarket in Kuwait

Lulu Group, leading retailer in the region, opened its latest hypermarket in the State of Kuwait. The store which is also 12th in the country was officially inaugurated by Abdul Wahab Al Marzook, Vice Chairman of Tamdeen Group at Khiran Outlet mall in Khiran city in the presence of Dr. Matar Hamid Al Neyadi, UAE

Ambassador to Kuwait, Yusuff Ali MA, Chairman of Lulu Group and other dignitaries. Also present on the occasion were Adarsh Swaika, Indian Ambassador, Manelisi Genge, South African Ambassador, large number of diplomats, government officials and other dignitaries.

Spread over 35,000 sq. feet, the fresh market will offer a wide range of fresh fruits, vegetables, grocery food, non-food items, health and beauty products, meat and seafood and a special area for local agri produces. One of the notable highlights of the store include self-checkout

counters for convenient shopping experience, as well as a dedicated area for fresh juice station. In addition to this, shoppers can explore a wide selection of household items, toys, party supplies, seasonal products, and outdoor essentials, ensuring their diverse needs are met.

Khiran Outlet Mall, which covers a vast project area of more than 3 million sq. feet, is one of Kuwait's first hybrid malls, offering a unique shopping and entertainment experience. The mall boasts a parking space for 3,700 cars, ensuring convenient access for shoppers. Moreover, it features a marina with

900 berths, catering to maritime enthusiasts. Also present on the occasion were Saifee Rupawala, CEO of Lulu Group, Ashraf Ali MA, Executive Director, Mohamed Haris, Lulu Kuwait Director, Sreejith, Regional Director of Lulu Kuwait and other senior officials.

Environmental 'groups' sue Shell over air quality

PENNSYLVANIA, May 14, (AP): Shell is putting residents' health at risk by persistently violating air quality standards at its massive new petrochemical refinery in western Pennsylvania, an environmental group alleged in a lawsuit.

The "cracker" plant, located along the Ohio River about 30 miles (48 kilometers) outside Pittsburgh, opened in November and uses ethane from a vast shale gas reservoir underneath Pennsylvania and surrounding states to makes polyethylene, a plastic used in everything from consumer and food packaging to tires.

A federal lawsuit filed by the Clean Air Council alleges that operator Shell Chemical Appalachia LLC - a subsidiary of British oil and gas giant Shell plc - is violating state and federal limits on smog, as well as emissions limits in its state-approved operating plan.

Clean Air Council members who live near the plant are "concerned about the impact of the plant's illegal pollution on their health and the health of their families," the suit said, noting that smog can worsen respiratory conditions such as bronchitis and asthma. The plaintiffs asked a judge to order Shell to bring the plant into compliance, and impose civil penalties of up to \$140,000 per day.

Shell spokesperson Curtis Smith said the company had no comment on the suit.

The plant has been shut down for repairs since early April after Shell

said it identified a problem with its flaring system, which is designed to burn off unwanted gases. Shell expects to restart the offline units later this month, Smith said. The Clean Air Council said Shell has violated limits on visible emissions from its flares.

"We will continue to report out and comply with all regulations while also applying lessons learned and best practices to ensure our operations have no negative impact on people or the environment," Smith said.

Shell was attracted to Pennsylvania because of a drilling boom in the vast Marcellus Shale natural gas field. The company had projected to spend \$6 billion on the refinery, which took years to build. At full capacity, the plant is expected to produce 3.5 billion pounds (1.6 billion kilograms) of polyethylene annually.

Environmental advocacy groups had fought the plant and predicted that it would generate more plastic pollution, compounds that form smog and planet-warming greenhouse gases. Shell has said it is using the best available technologies to try to minimize air pollution.

"Shell's persistent law-breaking must end," Joseph Minott, executive director of the Clean Air Council, said in a statement Thursday. "The community will not tolerate dangerous pollution events that risk the health of families across Beaver County and beyond."

Oil industry 'challenged' to prove promised tech rescue for climate-wrecking emissions

Kerry says he has 'serious questions' whether it can

WASHINGTON, May 14, (AP): Oil and gas producers talk up technological breakthroughs they say will soon allow the world to drill and burn fossil fuels without worsening global warming. U.S. climate envoy John Kerry says the time is here for the industry to prove it can make the technology happen - at scale, affordably and quickly - to stave off climate disaster.

And Kerry says he has "serious questions" whether it can.

Kerry's comments came in an interview with The Associated Press on one of the most crucial topics in the fight to slow global warming: the argument from oil and gas producers that they will soon have technology in place to extract the climate-damaging gases that make fossil fuels the main culprit in climate change, allowing companies to keep pumping crude and natural gas worry-free.

Kerry said the ideal solution is a fast global switch to renewable energy, but oil and gas states and companies have a right to give their claim

of technological rescue a try.

"If you're able to abate the emissions, capture it," Kerry said this past week at his climate team's offices at the State Department. "But we don't have that at-scale yet. And we can't sit here and just pretend we're going to automatically have something we don't have today. Because we might not. It might not work."

Globally, the point matters because oil and gas companies point to the hope of technology that can one day scour away most of the climate-wrecking carbon to stave off public and government pressure for the world to pivot faster away from fossil fuels and to solar, wind and other cleaner energy.

"What they're banking on is that they're going to be able to do the emissions capture," Kerry said of oil and gas companies. He ticked off the stages of operations that would involve.

"If you can do those things, you may be able to make it economically competitive," he said, adding, "I have some serious questions about whether it will be price-competitive."

Especially since 2015, when the United States and nearly 200 other governments committed to cut emissions to avoid the most disastrous scenarios of global warming, oil producers have spent hundreds of millions of dollars in public campaigns portraying themselves as climate-friendly. Industry ads and social media campaigns often suggest the carbon-purging technology is already on the job,

extracting the climate-damaging gases from oil and gas facilities' around the world.

"CO2 capture and transportation technologies have been operating safely across the globe and in the US for many years," the website of oil giant BP says.

"Technologies capture CO2 emissions at source or directly from the air," Saudi state oil giant Aramco says, describing the carbon then being stored safely underground or turned into "useful products."

In reality, the technology to capture one major climate-damaging gas, methane, from oil and gas operations does exist, and is awaiting investment to roll out at scale. But the technology to capture the biggest climate agent, carbon dioxide, remains limited in scale and costly, and often energy-intensive in its own right.

The International Energy Agency, some national governments globally, and many climate scientists and advocates are adamant that while carbon-capturing technology will play a role, oil and gas production itself must be phased out.

"Actual experience has been that commercial-scale carbon capture projects have fallen far, far short of the claims," said David Schlissel of the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis research group.

"I just think it's not the best to think that we can keep pumping the stuff, CO2, methane, into the atmosphere,

and that at some point we'll be able to capture it," Schlissel said.

A spokeswoman with the American Petroleum Institute trade group declined comment. An industry study group in 2019 called for heavy government funding to capture a quarter of current greenhouse gases within 15 years.

- API supports federal policies to achieve the "at-scale phase" of CCUS commercial deployment.

The fight - fast production cuts versus technological rescue - promises to come to a head this year.

Annual U.N.-sponsored climate talks meant to help keep countries on track to meet their pledges to cut emissions are being held this year in the United Arab Emirates.

The talks will be hosted by Sultan al-Jaber, the chief executive officer of the Emirates' state oil company. Like the U.S. and several other countries, the Gulf nation is expanding drilling even as it champions the climate cause.

Going into November's climate talks, al-Jaber is calling for a phase-out of "fossil fuel emissions," leaving it ambiguous whether he means a ramping up of technology or is open to some production cuts.

At the 2021 U.N. climate talks in Scotland, countries for the first time agreed to phase down the global use of coal. Talks the next year in Egypt saw a major push for a commitment to phase out oil and gas, but it failed.

While nonbinding, any agreement out of this year's climate talks that the world should start phasing out oil and gas production would be a first. It would put governments and the industry on the spot to comply.

Kerry rejected the idea of putting a deadline on phasing out oil and gas production. How fast that can happen depends partly on how fast the world moves to electric vehicles and renewable-fueled power grids, he said.

Instead, he said, this year's climate talks will "quite possibly" produce an international agreement to phase out the use of "unabated" oil and natural gas, meaning oil and gas where the carbon emissions are not captured. This could disappoint those calling for fast cuts in oil and gas production.

Kerry said the deadline to watch is 2030. By then, the U.N.'s top climate panel says, the world will need to have nearly halved climate-damaging emissions to stave off the more devastating scenarios of global warming.

"We can't let the wish or the hope govern common sense here," Kerry said. "If we know that we can get the job done by deploying more renewables and current technology, we ought to be doing that."

Saudi Logistics Services, LTLS sign MoU

MUNICH, May 14, (AP): Saudi Logistics Services (SAL) and Lufthansa Technik Logistik Services (LTLS) have signed an initial Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) during the Transport Logistics Exhibition 2023 held in Munich, Germany on the 11th of May, to collaborate on logistics activities of LTLS within the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Under this MoU, SAL will provide freight forwarding, transportation, and customs brokerage services to support LTLS' maintenance logistics operations for their key customers around the Kingdom.

This agreement marks the foundation of a strategic partnership between both parties, as they plan to explore other areas of cooperation in the future related to LTLS' logistics activities in Saudi Arabia. "We are

excited about this partnership with Lufthansa Technik Logistik Services, which highlights our commitment as the National Logistics Champion to providing world-class logistics services to our partners and assures SAL's dedicated role in complementing the National Transport and Logistics Strategy," said Faisal Al Bedah, CEO of SAL.

Andreas Tielmann, Managing Director of LTLS, stated: "We are delighted to partner with a well-established organization such as SAL for our logistics activities in Saudi Arabia. With this cooperation, LTLS will enhance its presence in the Middle East, which is one of the world's fastest growing aviation markets. Thereby, we further strengthen our global logistics network, which ensures top-level logistics solutions to our aviation customers."



Faisal Al Bedah, CEO SAL (left) & Andreas Tielmann, Managing Director LTLS (right). (AP)

AU joins the SAP Dual Study Program

The Australian University (AU) is the first higher educational institution in Kuwait to enter into an agreement with SAP Middle East FZ LLC, enabling graduates to thrive in a digitally focused economy through the Dual Study Program.

In terms of the partnership, students will undertake SAP-certified training courses relevant to their major subjects during their academic education. The practical exposure to technology solutions means that students will be equipped to apply for jobs within the SAP ecosystem immedi-

ately upon graduation.

Prof. Isam Zabalawi, President of the Australian University explained, "This partnership aligns with the Australian University student-centric approach as it gives our students a competitive edge in the workforce. On graduation, students will already have firsthand practical experience of industry-leading technology solutions to support their solid theoretical and other practical knowledge. The partnership elevates our training as it means students have exposure to SAP-

delivered training in the latest technological applications, while our lecturers free to focus on sharing their vast theoretical and industry knowledge. The result is a pool of well-rounded graduates who can immediately support the growth of Kuwait's digital economy."

The SAP Dual Study Program is run by the Digital Skills Center of SAP and includes business processes integration and certifications in analytics, material management, financial, and control functions.



The Australian University and SAP Middle East FZ LLC officials sign an agreement

Confab hosted for 1st time in Kuwait by AUK

Burgan sponsors engineering education conference 'EDUCON'

KUWAIT CITY, May 14: Stemming from its commitment to supporting educational initiatives, Burgan Bank announced its sponsorship of the 14th IEEE Global Engineering Education Conference (EDUCON 2023). The conference was hosted for the first time in Kuwait by the American University in Kuwait's (AUK) College of Engineering and Applied Sciences. This sponsorship comes as part of Burgan Bank's expansive social responsibility program to reinforce sustainable development and science-and-technology-based initiatives that pave a path toward a brighter future.



Eman Al Awadhi, Group Senior Vice-President – Corporate Communications & Investor Relations at KIPCO receives honors.

The conference was attended by around 300 researchers and scientists from across the different disciplines of engineering, in addition to the noteworthy presence of representatives from across Kuwait's most vital sectors. Other conference guests

included select VIPs and scientific research enthusiasts. This one-of-a-

kind annual event is an extension to a series of conferences held across

Europe, the Middle East, and Africa.

On this occasion, Mrs. Kholoud Redha Al-Feeli, Group Head of Marketing Communications at Burgan Bank said: "It was an honor for us to sponsor EDUCON 2023 as it reflected our commitment to our strategy of supporting youth in Kuwait and developing their skills across sectors and areas of specialty. This includes the field of scientific research and the engineering sector, which this conference focused on. The wide-ranging event also provided a unique opportunity for us to consolidate our role in promoting sustainable development efforts."

Al-Feeli further noted that: "Burgan Bank proudly continues its strategic partnerships with educational research facilities and entities that specialize in innovation and development. We also remain committed to supporting and participating in con-

ferences and conventions that bring together subject matter experts to facilitate conversations and sharing of ideas. With such collaboration, we can truly drive innovation, achieve nationwide development and support ambitious scientific talents."

Success

On his part, Dr. Amir Zeid - Dean College of Engineering and Applied Sciences at AUK and co-chair of the IEEE Global Engineering Education Conference, stated: "We would like to extend our gratitude to Burgan Bank for its participation in sponsoring this first-of-its-kind event in Kuwait and for contributing to its massive success. The strategic partnership that we share with Burgan is one that we're very proud of, thanks to the relentless efforts that they dedicate to the advancement of education and scientific research.

The Bank's dedication manifests clearly in its active participation in the various events that we organize and direct together, which aim to support the community members in their scientific pursuits, guaranteeing that they are enabled to keep up with the innovations and changes that the global scientific fields witness every day."

It serves to note that Burgan Bank spares no effort in reinforcing its leading position among the banking and financial institutions in Kuwait, especially with regard to its constant support of scientific research and its various methods. The Bank's sponsorship of EDUCON stands witness to its commitment to creating unprecedented opportunities for discussing the latest scientific discoveries, ensuring a smoother path toward a smarter, more sustainable future for Kuwait.



A photo from the tournament.

Kuwait Sports Club wins match

ABK platinum sponsor of HH the Amir Football Cup's 'final' match

KUWAIT CITY, May 14: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) was recently the platinum sponsor of the final match of His Highness the Amir Football Cup final match which was held at Jaber Al-Ahmad International Stadium between Kuwait Sports Club and Kazma Sports Club, under the patronage of His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. The match was attended by His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah held on Tuesday, May 9 and ended in a victory for Kuwait Sports Club with a score of 3-0.



Albenali

Loai Muqames, CEO-Kuwait at ABK represented the Bank in the highly-anticipated football match which garnered widespread attention and attendance from the Kuwaiti community. Muqames conveyed his warmest congratulations to the winning team who earned the most prestigious cup in the hearts of Kuwaiti football players.

On this occasion, Sager Albenali, Acting Chief Communications Officer at ABK, expressed his deep satisfaction at the Bank's opportunity to sponsor the match. He underscored how this affirms ABK's unwavering commitment to supporting local sports, particularly football, which enjoys massive popularity among all segments of Kuwaiti society.

Attention

Drawing attention to the significance of football in Kuwait, Albenali highlighted, "It's not just a sport but also a key social and cultural event. ABK is pleased to have had the chance to support local talents in showcasing their skills and engaging in healthy competition amongst peers."

He continued, "Our sponsorship of the match reflects ABK's commitment to supporting sporting endeavors that promote a sense of community and social cohesion thereby contributing to overall wellbeing, health, and positivity in society."

Albenali concluded by expressing his appreciation for playing an active role in the success of the

event which depicts the Bank's unwavering commitment to promoting sports, encouraging athletic achievement, and investing in the community.

Albenali also extended his appreciation to the Kuwait Football Association, communicating the Bank's eagerness to pursue continued cooperation to further strengthen the Bank's role in the field of corporate social responsibility, of which sports represents one of its prominent pillars.

Opportunities

He added that ABK looks forward to similar opportunities that allow the Bank to support and contribute to the growth of sports in Kuwait in the future.

Since its establishment in 1967, ABK has progressed to become one of the leading Kuwaiti banks in the region that is today known for offering a simpler banking experience. The Bank offers personal, corporate, and private banking of which includes a wide array of products and services. ABK also provides a broad range of local, regional, and global investment solutions and services through its subsidiary, ABK Capital. Enjoying equal stability and strength, the Bank also offers the convenience of banking across the region, servicing other markets in Egypt and the UAE.

ABK acknowledges that corporate social responsibility falls under an ever-evolving long term strategy which aims to make a positive impact. ABK believes that societal impact is simultaneously core to responsible management and a key lever to influence sustainable business outcomes.

Driven by the Bank's mission to consistently provide experiences that simplify and enrich people's lives, ABK endeavors to build strong relationships with the community. Such relationships are established and maintained through strategic activities, awareness campaigns, volunteering, and more. Through responsible banking, including contributions to the community, ABK strives to maintain a good reputation and address societal needs.

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

KUWAIT CITY, May 14: Amidst a wide presence of fashion enthusiasts and ongoing events, Gulf Bank and Oud, concluded the second edition of Oud Fashion Talks, which was held over two days at Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Cultural Centre, from May 11 to 12, 2023. The conference witnessed the participation of international and Kuwaiti designers, as well as representatives of the sponsoring companies: Tamdeen Group, Maserati Kuwait, Yeprem Jewelry and Beidou Company.

During his press statement, the Deputy General Manager of Gulf Bank, Mr. Ahmed Al-Amir, expressed his happiness with the success of the conference in achieving its objectives, for the second consecutive year, and for the ability of Kuwaiti designers to attract the attention of their international counterparts, with their magnificent and unique designs.

Al-Amir said: "We continued to work on the second edition to provide more support for young designers and creators, and to help provide them with a global opportunity – given the importance of this sector and the increasing interest and demand from entrepreneurs and youth in Kuwait."

He added: "We were keen to enrich this year's conference with a larger number of designers and added workshops to encourage the exchange of experiences between international and Kuwaiti designers. This helps young designers gain new experiences, enabling them to keep pace with the latest developments in the fashion industry."

Al-Amir pointed that the first edition of the conference shed light on sustainable fashion, and we were keen to develop the second edition by adding interactive workshops that provide the necessary environment for young Kuwaiti designers to interact with international experts, adding that: "without interactions and engagement, there will be no cooperation or development of talents and ideas."

Al-Amir mentioned that Gulf Bank will spare no effort in financing entrepreneurs in the fashion industry who meet the SMEs criteria, in order to help them grow and expand. He also referred to Gulf Bank's role in supporting various initiatives, aimed at consolidating the principles of sustainability in society; especially those related to youth, entrepreneurs and SMEs. Al-Amir noted that such initiatives aid in enhancing the Bank's role in developing the national economy and support Gulf Bank's 2025 strategy and Kuwait Vision 2035.

He continued: "At Gulf Bank, we believe in our role in supporting young talents and helping them grow and expand in the fashion industry – by providing the required support to develop their talents, their ideas and help them achieve their dreams, building their projects and lead their future."

In his final statement, he advised young people, and talented designers wishing to develop, to aim high and to work with diligence and perseverance – stressing that those who have a talent will inevitably find someone to support them in achieving their goals and developing their project, adding: "We will support and empower youth wherever they are."

Youth and Entrepreneurs

During the fourth session of the conference, Gulf Bank's Corporate Communications Manager, Ms. Lujain Al-Qenaei, reviewed Gulf Bank's role in supporting youth and entrepreneurs in the field of entrepreneurship, including designers and talented young people in the fashion industry.

Al-Qenaei stressed Gulf Bank's keenness to actively participate in various events that support young talents in Kuwait, as part of its continuous

2nd edition saw more participants, workshops

Gulf Bank expresses pride in supporting Kuwaiti designers at Oud Fashion Talks



Gulf Bank's corporate communications team.

'Transfer your salary and win rewards'

KFH launches (You Deserve) campaign

KUWAIT CITY, May 14: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) has launched its campaign (You Deserve) encouraging Kuwaiti customers to transfer their salaries to KFH. The new campaign comprises rewards and offers that are geared to the interests and aspirations of different customer segments including a guaranteed cash gift of up to K.D 400, up to 40,000 Baitak bonus points, a cash gift of K.D 100 when nominating a new Kuwaiti customer for salary transfer, a chance to win cash prizes and Gold biscuit among 536 winners with the Al-Rabeh account, in addition to the unprecedented Emergency Cash service that allows the customer to withdraw part of the salary in advance immediately and without fees through KFH applications.

KFH Group Deputy General Manager- Products, Nehal Almosalem said that the campaign is a confirmation of KFH's continuous keenness to offer the best benefits to its cus-

tomers, with the aim of encouraging them to benefit from Al-Rabeh account by transferring their salaries & enjoy the various advantages and the distinguished prizes it offers. She expressed her confidence that KFH



Almosalem

customers will benefit from the many privileges offered by the Bank.

She added that the customer is able to open Al-Rabeh account without any fees or cost, with an ATM card free for the first year, pointing out that Al-Rabeh is a saving account for salary transfer which offers annual distributions and opportunities to win K.D 1,500 weekly for ten winners, a chance to win 1 kilo of Gold per month for one winner, and K.D

25,000 for one winner every quarter. The customer may enter the weekly, monthly and quarterly draws when a minimum of three salary transfers are deposited in the account three months prior to the draw date.

It is worth noting that KFH offers a range of banking products that are tailored to the needs and aspirations of different customer segments such as KFH long-term investment plans, which encourage and motivate customers to promote a culture of planning and saving, prioritizing family spending, and enhancing opportunities to increase family income through innovative and flexible solutions with good annual investment returns.

KFH also offers the Gold Account enabling customers to save or invest in gold bullions, ensuring the highest standards of security and facilitating means to buy and sell gold through all KFH banking branches and electronic channels.

efforts to spread the culture of entrepreneurship among young people, help them achieve their ambitions, and grow their businesses.

She added: "With the increase in the number of entrepreneurs and the demand of young people for self-employment, supporting economic sustainability has become a necessary requirement in Kuwait, which is why Gulf Bank has placed SMEs at the forefront of its priorities within its 2025 strategy."

Al-Qenaei mentioned that the bank provides SMEs with a wide range of financing and non-financing services, that are designed specifically to help them develop and expand, adding, "During the conference, we were keen to host entrepreneurs who have succeeded in many economic sectors to review their experiences and be a source of inspiration for young people."

Youth Energies

Gulf Bank's Assistant Manager of Corporate Communications, Mr. Abdullah Al-Mulaifi, said: "We are pleased today with the large attendance of the public, and those interested in the world of fashion and their keenness to participate in five discussion sessions and various workshops."

He added: "At Gulf Bank, we are eager to support youth energies in various fields, and help them excel and develop – by providing all means of success that support their access to higher

levels. Kuwait is full of passionate and creative youth who have creative ideas that deserve attention and support."

Six Discussion Sessions and Four Workshops

The first day of the conference witnessed six discussion sessions with the participation of a group of experts and specialists, and the second day of the conference witnessed the four workshops moderated by Kuwaiti and international experts and designers.

International Experts Praise The Innovations of Kuwaiti Designers

During their tour of the exhibition throughout the conference, international experts praised the various exhibits created by young Kuwaiti designers – noting that the exhibition witnessed pieces by 11 Kuwaiti designers, where two of them were jewelry designers and two shoe designers.

Mohammad Jaafar: It's only a matter of time before we hear of successful fashion entrepreneurs from Kuwait

In the second session, "Making Kuwaiti Fashion Companies an Attractive Investment," the Managing Partner of Faith Capital Holding, Mr. Mohammed Jaafar, stated that, "When it comes to fashion, it's clear that it is a huge segment internationally, but we need to see more of it locally."

He added: "We know that life of an entrepreneur is very difficult, and they

always need to find a way to survive. The issue of very talented individuals is not exposure, but it's how to take their business to the next level. We help diminish those frustrations and support them on their journey."

He concluded saying: "I truly believe that with persistence and patience, it's only a matter of time before we hear of successful fashion entrepreneurs from Kuwait."

The third session: The gap between this region and the rest of the world narrows

The third session witnessed the Founder of Ibrah, Shahad Al Saabeh and the Head of Design at The Giving Movement, Khairunisa Suhail, discussing the topic of "Shaping A New Era of Arab Style."

The speakers in the session pointed that the gap is narrowing between the GCC region and other countries globally, noting that Kuwaiti customers are extremely fashion forward, bold, and brave and that they keep all of this in mind for their designs.

They added: "We've got so much culture, history, and a bright future here, and really embracing the heritage, is key for this generation and helps us revolutionize our fashion and shape our aesthetic."



From left to right: Deborah Ley, PhD, Mahendra S. Rao, MD, PhD, Sir Gregory Winter, FRS, Igor Fisch, PhD, Nicolas Mermod, PhD, Marc Func, Ulrike Lemke, PhD, Thierry Schuepbach, PhD.

NewBiologix launches with \$50m to advance novel tech platform

NewBiologix SA emerged from stealth as a technology innovation company developing a proprietary and breakthrough platform for the advanced engineering of cell lines used to manufacture gene and cell therapies. The Company's DNA-based platform is being developed to address key manufacturing challenges associated with the production of recombinant adeno-associated virus (rAAV) vectors used to produce advanced therapy medicinal products (ATMPs). NewBiologix's \$50 million (CHF 45 million) Series A was led by Recipharm A/S with additional fund-

ing from the Company's co-founders, Igor Fish and Nicolas Mermod. "As the number of gene and cell therapies in the clinic and market continues to grow, improved manufacturing solutions for viral vectors are needed," says NewBiologix co-founder and CEO, Igor Fisch, Ph.D., who brings more than 20 years' experience in biotech and cell line development to the new entity. "Our mission is to help biopharmaceutical companies treat some of the most devastating diseases by providing them with innovative technologies and solutions

to boost the production and efficacy of viral vectors, rapidly and more cost effectively." NewBiologix is currently focused on recombinant adeno-associated virus (rAAV) vectors, the preferred delivery vehicle for gene therapies. Specifically, the Company's technologies will be applied to human (HEK-293) and mammalian (CHO) cell lines. These cell lines will be engineered to be readily adaptable to meet the viral vector demands and requirements over a full range of therapeutic indications to help partners address rare, chronic, and currently incurable diseases. (AP)

The Conversation

Trials look to extend treatments to other diseases

Gene therapy helps combat some forms of blindness

By Jean Bennett
University of Pennsylvania

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

An estimated 295 million people suffer from visual impairment globally. Around 43 million of those people are living with blindness. While not every form of blindness can be cured, recent scientific breakthroughs have uncovered new ways to treat some forms of inherited blindness through gene therapy.

Jean Bennett is a gene therapy expert and a professor emeritus of ophthalmology at the University of Pennsylvania. She and her laboratory developed the first gene therapy drug for a genetic disease to be approved in the US. The drug, Luxturna, treats patients with biallelic RPE65 mutation-associated retinal dystrophy, a rare genetic disorder that causes visual impairments and blindness in patients early in life.

In March, Bennett spoke at the 2023 Imagine Solutions Conference in Naples, Florida, about what gene therapy is, why it matters and the success she and her team have had helping the blind to see. The Conversation caught up with Bennett after the conference. Her edited answers are below.

Inspired

In the past, many doctors did not think it necessary to identify the genetic basis of eye disease because treatment was not yet available. However, a few specialists, including me and my collaborators, identified these defects in our research, convinced that someday treatment would be made possible. Over time, we were able to create a treatment designed for individuals with particular gene defects that lead to congenital blindness.

This development of gene therapy for inherited disease has inspired other groups around the world to initiate clinical trials targeting other genetic forms of blindness, such as choroideremia, achromatopsia, retinitis pigmentosa and even age-related macular degeneration, all of which lead to vision loss. There are

at least 40 clinical trials enrolling patients with other genetic forms of blinding disease.

Gene therapy treatments are now available in pharmacies and operating rooms all over the world.

Gene therapy is even being used to restore vision to people whose photoreceptors - the cells in the retina that respond to light - have completely degenerated. This approach uses optogenetic therapy, which aims to revive those degenerated photoreceptors by adding light-sensing molecules to cells, thereby drastically improving a person's vision.

There are now many approved gene therapies in the U.S., but the majority are combined with cell therapies in which a cell is modified in a dish and then injected back into the patient.

Target

The majority of those therapies target different forms of cancer, although there are several for devastating inherited diseases. The drug Skysona is a new injectable gene therapy medication that treats boys ages 4 to 17 with cerebral adrenoleukodystrophy, a genetic disease in which a buildup of very-long-chain fatty acids in the brain can lead to death.

The gene therapy that my team and I developed was the first FDA-approved project involving injection of a gene therapy directly into a person - in this case, into the retina. Only one other FDA-approved gene therapy is directly administered to the body - one that targets spinal muscular atrophy, a disease that causes progressive muscle weakness and eventually death. The drug, Zolgensma, is injected intravenously into babies and children diagnosed with the disease, allowing them to live as healthy, active children.

There are now more than two dozen FDA-approved cell and gene therapies, including CAR T-cell therapies - in which T cells, a type of immune system cells, are modified in the laboratory to better attack cancer cells in the body - and therapies for various blood diseases.

I am very excited about some upcoming clinical trials that my team will soon initiate to target some other devastating blinding diseases. We will incorporate a new test of functional vision - how your eyes, brain and the visual pathways between them work together to help a person move in the world. This

US govt's \$1 billion effort to recruit 'next generation' of doctors at risk

People struggle to get timely and quality care

SALISBURY, Md., May 14, (AP): Thousands of women living in rural, eastern Maryland have few options when they're looking for someone to deliver their babies.

The local hospital doesn't have an obstetrics doctor on staff so most women in this region, flanked by sprawling farm fields and antique stores, turn to the Chesapeake Health Care clinic.

Five of the 10 obstetricians and midwives at the clinic are there because of the National Health Service Corps, which promises to pay off \$50,000 in medical school debt for every two years that a doctor serves working in rural, urban or poor areas.

"OB is frightfully difficult to recruit, and I'm not real sure exactly why," said the clinic's chief medical officer Dr. Lee Jennings. "We're isolated, we're in an area where we're the only OB group in the entire area."

Over the last three years, millions of taxpayer dollars were pumped into the National Health Service Corps to hire thousands more doctors and nurses willing to serve the country's most desperate regions during the COVID-19 pandemic in exchange for forgiving medical school debts. Now, with the health emergency over, the program's expansion is in jeopardy - even as people struggle to get timely and quality care because of an industry-wide dearth of workers.

Funding for the program expires at the end of September, although President Joe Biden asked Congress to sign off an extra half-billion dollar for the project in his budget.

The number of nurses, physi-

cian, dentists, counselors, and midwives has ballooned thanks to an extra \$800 million the US Congress kicked to the program in stimulus packages unveiled as coronavirus raged. Last year, just over 20,000 people were corps members - up 50% from 13,000 people in 2019.

Insurance

The program has placed medical professionals across a variety of disciplines - from occupational therapists in Ohio to counselors who treat drug and alcohol addictions in Alaska - in community health centers around the country. Those clinics receive federal funding to provide primary care for patients, regardless of their health insurance status or ability to pay.

The program has found rare bipartisan support from Republican and Democratic lawmakers who say they're grateful for the void corps members fill in rural and needy communities alike that are coping with shortages. The US is short thousands of family doctors, OB-GYNs and nurses, a problem that is only expected to worsen over the next decade.

Sen. Bernie Sanders of Vermont, who oversees the powerful Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, has made the issue a top talking point in hearings. Sanders said in his state, people have complained to him about waits as long as five months just to get a physical with a doctor.

The situation would worsen, he told The Associated Press, if corps funding is not renewed and increased.

"People are going to struggle to find a dentist, to find a mental health

counselor," Sanders said. "If it's bad now, it's only going to get worse."

Last month, a group of House Republicans sponsored a bill that would continue funding for the corps program, but not give it the same cash infusion that Biden has requested.

"One of the most consistent issues I've heard in my district in Pennsylvania is the shortage of physician and health care workers," Republican Rep. John Joyce, who introduced the bill, said during a congressional hearing on the health care worker shortage last month.

Still, the program's future is hanging in the balance with a split Congress that's just weeks away from allowing the U.S. to default on its debts. Uncertainty around funding for the program also makes it difficult for health clinics to recruit providers, said Carole Johnson, who heads up the federal Health Resources and Services Administration that oversees corps funding.

"We're hopeful to continue to grow. We know there's a net demand out there," Johnson said. "All the conversations that we've had have been very positive; that doesn't make it easy."

Program

One of the largest areas of growth for the program has been in mental health, with more than 2,000 additional counselors, social workers, psychologists, and substance abuse counselors being hired over the past four years.

At Chicago's largest, around-the-clock treatment center, about eight of the Haymarket Center's providers are corps members. The center sees roughly 12,000 patients every year,

many of them homeless. The corps program allows the not-for-profit Haymarket Center to recruit health care workers in a competitive market with a different benefit: as much as \$250,000 in student loan repayment, said Jeffrey Collord, the vice president of operations at the center.

"We might not be able to compensate staff at the highest levels so being able to be part of the program allows us to provide a benefit that other sites don't have access to," Collord said.

Student loan forgiveness allowed Dr. Stephen Robinson to be the family physician that he always hoped to be. He worried through medical school about the mountain of student loan debt that was piling up and watched as many of his classmates pursued more lucrative salaries as specialty doctors. But his dad researched alternatives and discovered the National Health Service Corps program.

"If more providers thought they could come out and still be able to pay off their debt, they'd go into primary services," Robinson said. "This has allowed us to do that."

His wife, Caitlin, is one of the coveted OB-GYNs that Chesapeake Health Care recruited through the program. Pregnant women drive as much as an hour to see her.

Both are now nearly debt-free after spending seven years in the program. But they don't plan on leaving this small Maryland town anytime soon. The Robinsons love raising their children close to the shore, fresh air and parks.

"We have no plans on going anywhere, even though we're done," Stephen Robinson said.

test utilizes a virtual reality game that is not only fun for the user but promises to provide an objective measure of the person's functional vision. I hope that our virtual reality test will inform us of any potential benefits from the treatments and also serve as a useful outcome measure for other gene and cell therapy clinical trials involving vision.

The biggest challenges involve systemic diseases, or diseases affecting the entire body rather than a single organ or body part. For those diseases, super-high doses of gene therapy reagents must be delivered. Such diseases involve not only technical challenges - such as how to manufacture enormous amounts of gene therapy compounds without contaminating them - but also

difficulties ensuring that the treatment targets diseased tissues without causing toxic immune side effects. That level of a problem does not exist with the eye, where relatively small doses are used and exposure to the rest of the body is limited.

Another challenge is how to address diseases in which the target gene is very large. Current ap-

proaches to delivering treatments into cells lack the capacity to hold large genes.

Cost remains a key issue in this effort - gene therapy drugs are enormously expensive. As drug manufacturers are able to refine this technique, gene therapy drugs may become more commonplace, causing their price to drop as a result. (AP)

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'BlackBerry' taps into device that ruled pre-iPhone era

Almost everyone knows Steve Jobs' uncanny vision, relentless drive and technological wizardry hatched the iPhone, a breakthrough that continues to reshape culture 16 years after the late Apple co-founder introduced the device to the world.

But when Jobs unveiled the first iPhone in 2007, another smartphone was the must-have gadget. It was the BlackBerry, a device so addictive that it became known as the "CrackBerry" among tech nerds and power brokers hunched over a tiny keyboard that was best operated with both thumbs clickety-clacking.

Now the BlackBerry is "that phone people had before they bought an iPhone," a relic so irrelevant that the Canadian company that made it is now valued at \$3 billion - down from \$85 billion at its 2008 peak when it still controlled nearly half of the smartphone market.

But its legacy is worth remembering - and audiences will get a chance to learn more about its origins in the new film, "BlackBerry." The film out in US theaters is the latest movie or TV series to delve into technology's penchant for groundbreaking innovation, blind ambition, ego clashes and power struggles that turn into morality tales.

That formula has already spawned two Academy Award-nominated movies written by Aaron Sorkin, 2010's "The Social Network" delving into Facebook's founding and 2015's "Steve Jobs," dissecting the Silicon Valley icon. Then came last year's flurry of TV series examining the scandals enveloping WeWork ("WeCrashed"), Uber ("Super Pumped") and disgraced Theranos CEO Elizabeth Holmes ("The

Dropout"), which won Amanda Seyfried an Emmy for her turn in the starring role.

Unlike any of those biopics, "BlackBerry" is told as a dark comedy revolving around two amiable but bumbling nerds, Mike Lazaridis and Doug Fregin, who can't seem to execute their plan to create a "computer in a phone" until they bring in a hard-nosed, foul-mouthed businessman, Jim Balsillie.

Although "BlackBerry" is based on a meticulously researched book called "Losing the Signal," director and co-star Matt Johnson acknowledged taking more liberties in the movie during an interview with The Associated Press. Among other changes, Johnson cited shifting some timelines, shaping the company culture through his view of the 1990s and infusing the key characters with "our own personalities and our own ideas."

Fabrication

"But our lawyers wouldn't let us put anything in the film that was outright fabrication," Johnson stressed.

Johnson had to do a lot of guesswork in his role as the enigmatic Fregin, who sold all his stock in BlackBerry's holding company - then known as Research In Motion, RIM - around the same time Apple released the first iPhone and has kept a low profile ever since.

"Doug is true cipher, he has never done a taped interview," said Johnson, which led him to portray Fregin as a "kind of mascot figure

who is tying the culture of the office together."

Ironically, Johnson got a lot of his idea on how to depict Fregin from one of RIM's early employees, Matthias Wandel, who posted a YouTube video critiquing inaccuracies that he saw in the "BlackBerry" trailer. Before that, Wandel talked extensively to Johnson about RIM's history and even provided diaries that he kept while during the BlackBerry's development.

"I think when he sees the film he is going to be quite charmed by how much of his original notes are in the film," Johnson said of Wandel. "It's so funny that he has released that video (because) so much of my character is based on him. I stole everything from that dude. I owe him huge."

Balsillie, RIM's co-CEO with Lazaridis, emerges as the film's most intriguing character. Actor Glenn Howerton (best known for his role in the TV series, "It's Always Sunny In Philadelphia") portrays Balsillie in a way that casts him as both the story's chief antagonist and protagonist dropping f-bombs in tyrannical temper tantrums at the same time he is making savvy moves that turned the BlackBerry into a cultural sensation.

"It always felt like this was a guy who weirdly felt a little outside of sort of what people would consider to be sort of a titan of technology or business," Howerton said of Balsillie during an AP interview. "I played him as someone who had something to prove at almost all times, that he could play with the big boys."

Variety



Tallia Storm poses for photographers upon arrival at the opening ceremony at the 75th international film festival, Cannes, southern France, on May 17, 2022. The 76th international film festival kicks off May 16. (AP)

Film

A record high for female filmmakers

Cannes readies a blockbuster edition

By Jake Coyle

The Cannes Film Festival, which will kick off Tuesday, is such a colossal extravaganza that taking measure of its ups and downs is notoriously difficult. It's a showcase of the world's best cinema. It's a red-carpet spectacular. It's a French Riviera hive of dealmaking.

But by at least some metrics, Cannes - following a canceled 2020 festival, a much-diminished 2021 edition and a triumphant 2022 return - is finally all the way back.

"Let's just say it's gotten very hard to get restaurant reservations again," says Christine Vachon, the veteran producer and longtime collaborator of Todd Haynes.

When the 76th Cannes Film Festival opens Tuesday with the premiere of "Jeanne du Barry," a historical drama by Maïwenn starring Johnny Depp, the gleaming Cote d'Azur pageant can feel confident that it has weathered the storms of the pandemic and the perceived threat of streaming. (Netflix and Cannes remain at an impasse.)

Last year's festival, a banner one by most judgments, produced three Oscar best-picture nominees ("Top Gun: Maverick," "Elvis" and the Palme d'Or winner "Triangle of Sadness"), again proving Cannes as the premiere global launching pad for films big and small.

This year's festival is headlined by a pair of marquee premieres: Martin Scorsese's Osage Nation 1920s epic "Killers of the Flower Moon," with Leonardo DiCaprio and Robert De Niro, and James Mangold's "Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny," starring Harrison Ford in his final performance as the character.

But as blockbuster as Cannes can be, even those films suggest the wide spectrum of cinema on hand. Both Scorsese and Mangold were first in Cannes decades ago to premiere their early breakthrough films in the Directors Fortnight sidebar. Scorsese with 1973's "Mean Streets," Mangold with 1995's "Heavy."

This time, though, they'll debut much bigger films, sure to be the hottest tickets on the Croisette. Scorsese has his \$200 million epic for Apple TV+. And Mangold will premiere, as he says, "a more splendiferous project" than his minimalist debut.

The "Indy" celebration will include a tribute to Ford. He, along with Michael Douglas, will be given honorary Palme d'Ors. To Mangold, it's a chance for Ford

to embrace the franchise's international following. The "Indiana Jones" films' essence, the director says, is rooted in golden-age cinema.

"These are things where you're taking your guidance from the classics," Mangold says. "That's something that's really appreciated by the French about American cinema. In many ways, they revere the old pictures more than even the audience in the United States do. That makes it a really wonderful platform."

This year, 21 films are competing for the Palme d'Or, which will be decided by a jury led by last year's winner, Swedish writer-director Ruben Östlund. Seven are directed by women, a new high for Cannes in its nearly eight decades of existence. Among the most anticipated is Italian filmmaker Alice Rohrwacher's "La Chimera," starring Josh O'Connor and Isabella Rossellini.

Reforms

The festival, running through May 27, will unspool against the backdrop of labor unrest on both sides of the Atlantic. France has been beset in recent months by protests over pension reforms, including raising the retirement age. In the U.S., screenwriters are on strike to seek better pay in the streaming era.

The prospect of a prolonged work stoppage could potentially drive up prices for finished films at Cannes, the world's top movie market. Among the titles seeking distribution is Haynes' "May December," which stars Natalie Portman as a journalist who embeds with a couple (Julianne Moore, Charles Melton) once renowned for their age discrepancy.

Though arthouses have struggled to match the box-office recovery at multiplexes, Vachon, a producer on "May December," says her company, Killer Films, and the indie stalwart Haynes are accustomed to "pivoting endlessly and finding opportunities no matter what the sea winds bring."

As usual, this year's competition lineup returns plenty of Cannes heavyweights, including Hirokazu Kore-eda ("Monster"), Wim Wenders ("Perfect Days"), Nuri Bilge Ceylan ("About Dry Grasses"), Ken Loach ("The Old Oak") and Nanny Moretti ("A Brighter Tomorrow"). Jonathan Glazer's "The Zone of Interest," shot in Aus-

chwitz, is one of the festival's most eagerly awaited films. It's his first since 2013's "Under the Skin." Pedro Almodóvar will premiere the short "Strange Way of Life," with Pedro Pascal and Ethan Hawke. Wes Anderson, flanked by another starry ensemble, will debut "Asteroid City."

There's also the upcoming HBO series "The Idol," from "Euphoria" filmmaker Sam Levinson starring the Weeknd and Lily-Rose Depp; "Firebrand" with Alicia Vikander as Catherine Parr and Judd Law as Tudor King Henry VIII; and the Pixar movie "Elemental," which closes the festival.

Steve McQueen, the "12 Years of Slave" filmmaker, will debut the longest film playing at Cannes and one of its most thought-provoking, "Occupied City," which McQueen made with his wife, Dutch author Bianca Stigter, is a four-hour-plus documentary that combines narration detailing violent incidents across Amsterdam during the Nazi occupation with present-day footage from those locations.

McQueen, too, began his feature filmmaking career at Cannes. His 2008 debut, "Hunger," won the Camera d'Or, a prize for best first film. "It's never as good as the first time," McQueen says.

"But it's the most important film festival," continues McQueen. "Our film is asking questions. This is where you want to premiere films that challenge and films that ask questions. You're right on the front line."

While many eyes will be on reactions to the new Scorsese or "Asteroid City," Cannes will, as it does every year, bring new directors to wider film audiences. Senegalese filmmaker Ramata-Toulaye Sy's "Banel & Adama" is the rare first feature in Palme competition.

Argentine filmmaker Rodrigo Moreno, 50, will be making his first trip to Cannes with "The Delinquents," a heist drama sprinkled with existentialism and cinematic flourishes. It's one of the highlights of the Un Certain Regard section.

The film took Moreno five years to make, partially because of the pandemic. But its Cannes selection is a long time coming in another way. Moreno's first feature as a solo director was invited to both Un Certain Regard and main competition at Berlin. The producers chose Berlin. (AP)

Features

ARABIC TIMES

MONDAY, MAY 15, 2023

Film

PARIS: Swimming, gymnastics and track & field fans can rejoice. For the first time in a European Olympics, those event finals will be televised live on network television in the **United States**.

NBC will have at least nine hours of weekday daytime coverage, expanding to at least 11 hours on weekends. With Paris six hours ahead of **New York**, the marquee finals will air live in the morning or late afternoon.

NBCUniversal's Peacock streaming service will have every sport and event live, including all 329 medal events, from July 26-Aug. 11, 2024.

"The Paris Olympics are going to be the most binge-worthy event of 2024," said **Pete Bevacqua**, Chairman, NBC Sports. "For those wanting to watch the competition as it happens, Peacock will have everything live, creating the greatest single destination in sports media history."

Most fans have wanted to watch Olympic events live. NBCUniversal has done that in the past with most sports, using its sister channels for around-the-clock coverage, but has kept the marquee events and finals for primetime.

During the Tokyo Games two years ago, the only way to watch gymnastics finals live was on Peacock or other NBC Sports digital platforms.

This will be the first time since 2012 that a Summer Games are being held in **Europe**. The London Games marked the first time NBC had a site devoted to streaming every event live by using the Olympics world feed. That meant track fans could stream the 100-meter finals live while most waited until watching the taped coverage on NBC in primetime.

While some may look at this as an evolution in NBC's coverage, **Molly Solomon**, the Executive Producer & President of NBC Olympics Production, termed it as a better way of taking advantage of the time zone.

"I believe you take each Olympics separately. I love after you finish an Olympics, you get to start with a clean slate for the next one," she said. "To bring the Olympics to the greatest number of people, how can we take advantage of the time zone? And so what we did when you look at

six hours ahead, we're like we can take over NBC in the daytime, and have live competition all day long, including the most popular sports, their finals in the afternoon on NBC."

The prime time show will show replays of the important events from the day while adding storytelling and other features.



Solomon



Tirico

"So really prime time in Paris will be the best of the best. And the time zone gives us the opportunity to create an amazing storytelling event," Solomon said. "This gives us the opportunity to reimagine and temporize coverage."

Prime time host **Mike Tirico** also will be used during the morning and weekday coverage when

there are marquee finals.

Besides streaming every sport and event, Peacock will have on-demand replays and original programming, including preview and recap shows spotlighting marquee sports.

This will be third Olympics for Peacock, which launched in 2020, although the first Summer Games

in which it has all events.

"I think this is going to be a chance for fans to engage in ways that they haven't really been able to before, because you're going to have all of these content options," said Peacock president **Kelly Campbell**. "We're giving people this flexibility to watch and enhance the viewing experience." (AP)

People & Places

Film

'Italy was a dream'

Book Club legends bond more deeply

LOS ANGELES, May 14, (AP): Candice Bergen hatched the idea for a sequel to "Book Club" before the first had even come out.

It was 2017 and they were flying to a convention of movie theater owners to drum up excitement for their movie where she, **Jane Fonda**, Mary Steenburgen and Diane Keaton play friends who decide to read "Fifty Shades of Grey."

Like all movies, it wasn't the easiest to get made - somewhere along the line someone even suggested a younger cast. But they were pretty sure they had something that audiences were going to like and that a sequel would happen. Bergen said, "It has to be Italy."

Why Italy? Well, about the same reasons anyone would choose Italy: the food, the history, the art, the people.

And their dream came true: "Book Club: The Next Chapter," out recently, finds the women traveling to Rome, Venice and Tuscany. It's part bachelorette party for Fonda's character, who is getting married for the first time (to Don Johnson) and part bucket list fulfillment - years ago, life got in the way of a trip and post-pandemic they're all feeling a little more adventurous.

"On the first film, we were only together when we got together for a Book Club meeting. It was about our individual storylines," Fonda said. "This time we were together all the time."

That meant full filming days, dinners out with everyone and weekend excursions to Florence and gelato in between takes. One morning, a makeup artist spotted Fonda at 5:30 am outside the Pantheon with a map in hand and hat on her head. A few hours later, while filming, she'd exclaim she'd already hit 10,000 steps.

"We had a schedule," Bergen said. "It wasn't like anarchy. When the day wrapped we went to dinner."

Sequel

"But the dinners out were very important," Steenburgen added. "There were a lot of discussions about where we were eating, who was eating and dreaming about Aperol Spritzes. At least for me."

Though there was support for a sequel after the first made over \$100 million at the box office, at the studio there was a fixation on the book choice being the hook. But director Bill Holderman and his co-writer Erin Simms were pretty sure that wasn't it.

"We felt like the driver of the success was the women, their friendship and the bond," Holderman said. "We had to go through a bit of a journey to convince everyone that we didn't need another 50 Shades style book."

Ultimately, they chose Paulo Coelho's "The Alchemist," inspired by something Steenburgen had said about getting written off after a certain age.

Their four stars, though of somewhat similar generations with ages ranging from 70 (Steenburgen) to 85 (Fonda) hadn't known each other very well and had never worked together before the first film. But they soon became real friends and have stayed in close touch - usually waiting for "Candy," as they call Bergen, who lives on the East Coast, to tell them she's coming to Los Angeles. Then they scramble to figure out whose house they'll go to for dinner. All have hosted at least one.

"The biggest gift by far of these two movies for me is just the friendships with these beloveds in my life," Steenburgen said.

Italy was a dream for everyone. Some had filmed there before. Fonda had once stayed in Rome for a year doing "Barbarella" with Roger Vadim, and Bergen had shot Lina Wertmüller's "A Night Full of Rain" there. When it came time to make "The Next Chapter," she suggested they call on her co-star from the 1978 film, Giancarlo Giannini, to play a part.

"He definitely has a little crush on you," Steenburgen teased. "He couldn't keep his eyes off of you."

Bergen politely disagreed. Besides, they were all focused on being together.

By the time the rest of their male counterparts arrived for the final scenes, including Johnson, Craig T. Nelson and Andy Garcia, Fonda laughed it was like, "Who are you? We felt very complete unto ourselves."

None took the film for granted, either.

Opportunities

"They really understood how lucky they were to be together and to be doing this," Simms said. "Not everybody sends older women to Italy to go make a movie. I think they really felt that and it bonded them more deeply."

Steenburgen thought back to when she was starting out, in the late 1970s, looking at women in the business who were just a generation ahead of her and wondering why there weren't more opportunities for them.

"They were brilliant and amazing and still just had so much to offer and there was nothing happening for them," Steenburgen said. "I've been in the business long enough to know that it wasn't a given that something like this could happen."

But times have changed for the better. "Book Club 2" is Fonda's third release this year, after "80 for Brady" and "Moving On."

"Studios are noticing that older women are the fastest growing demographic," Fonda said. "It's just good business."

Bergen added: "They're not quite so dismissive of us anymore."

Fonda and her co-stars have also noticed that it's often younger people who talk to them about "Book Club." She thinks part of it is that it's simply comforting to see more mature women having fun, which, she hopes takes some of the stigma and fear out of aging. And, yes, they're already scheming up a possible third movie with Bergen driving the brainstorm.

"Our next one will be in Hong Kong," Bergen said.

Steenburgen reminded her she also suggested Burning Man.

Bergen: Did I?

Steenburgen: You forget, but I make notes on all your ideas.

Bergen: That would be funny.

Steenburgen: And hot. And uncomfortable.

Fonda: I'll phone that one in.



Fonda



Loreen of Sweden celebrates with the trophy after winning the Grand Final of the Eurovision Song Contest in Liverpool, England, Saturday, May 13. (AP)



Elle King performs at the iHeartCountry Music Festival on Saturday, May 13, at the Moody Center in Austin, Texas. (AP)



Clarkson



Ye

Variety

LOS ANGELES: Kelly Clarkson has responded to a Rolling Stone report accusing her daytime talk show of being a toxic workplace.

Clarkson issued a statement on her Instagram page Saturday. She addressed the allegations after 11 current and former employees complained about being overworked and underpaid on "The Kelly Clarkson Show" and also called their work "traumatizing to their mental health" in the magazine's Friday report.

In the report, the anonymous employees called Clarkson "fantastic" but said show producers were "monsters" who made their lives "hell."

Clarkson said she loves her team. "To find out that anyone is feeling unheard and or disrespected on this show is unacceptable," she said in the post. The talk show host said she wants to maintain a healthy and safe work environment.

"As we prepare for a move to the East Coast, I am more committed than ever to ensuring that not only our team is moving, but also our new team in NY is comprised of the best and kindest in the business," she said. "Part of that build will include leadership training for all of the senior staff, including myself."

Clarkson said that there's "always room to grow" and that she wants the show to be the "best version of ourselves in any business."

"Especially when it comes to leadership, to ensure that any notion of toxicity is eradicated," she said. (AP)

LOS ANGELES: Chris Roberts, who worked as UCLA's football and basketball play-by-play radio announcer for 23 years, has died. He was 74.

He died at his Glendora home east of Los Angeles on Friday from complications of Parkinson's disease, the school said Saturday.

When he retired in 2015, Roberts equaled **Fred Hessler's** record for longest tenured play-by-play broadcaster in school history.

Music

Sights and sounds of Ukraine in spotlight

Sweden's Loreen wins Eurovision again

LIVERPOOL, England, May 14, (AP): Swedish singer Loreen won the Eurovision Song Contest on Saturday night with her power ballad "Tattoo," at a colorful, eclectic music competition clouded for a second year running by the war in Ukraine.

The diva from Stockholm beat acts from 25 other countries to take the continent's pop crown at the final of the competition in Liverpool. Finnish singer Käärijä was second in a close-fought battle of the Nordic neighbors.

Loreen, 39, previously won Eurovision in 2012 and is only the second performer to take the prize twice, after Ireland's Johnny Logan in the 1980s. It's Sweden's seventh Eurovision victory, matching Ireland's record.

"I am seriously overwhelmed," Loreen said. "This is so beautiful."

She said returning to the contest that helped make her a star was "like coming back to a family. We've had an 11-year-long relationship. We know each other by now."

Britain hosted Eurovision on behalf of Ukraine, which won last year but couldn't take up its right to hold the contest because of the war. Air raid sirens sounded across Ukraine as the contest was underway, and Ukrainian media reported a strike in Ternopil, home town of Ukraine's Eurovision entry, Tvorchi.

Under the slogan "united by music," Eurovision final fused the soul of the English port city that birthed The Beatles with the spirit of war-battered Ukraine.

The sights and sounds of Ukraine ran through the show, starting with an opening film that showed 2022 Eurovision winners Kalush Orchestra singing and dancing in the Kyiv subway, with the tune picked up by musicians in the UK - including Kate, Princess of Wales, shown playing the piano. The folk-rap band itself then emerged

onstage in the Liverpool Arena on a giant pair of outstretched hands, accompanied by massed drummers.

Contestants from the 26 finalist nations entered the arena in an Olympics-style flag parade, accompanied by live performances from Ukrainian acts including Go A, Jamala, Tina Karol and Verka Serduchka - all past Eurovision competitors.

Now in its 67th year, Eurovision bills itself as the world's biggest music contest - an Olympiad of party-friendly pop. Competitors each have three minutes to meld catchy tunes and eye-popping spectacle into performances capable of winning the hearts of millions of viewers.

Anthem

Loreen's anthem of intense love had been the bookies' favorite and won by far the most votes from professional jurors in Eurovision's complex voting system. She faced a strong challenge from Käärijä, a wildly energetic performer whose rap-pop party anthem "Cha Cha Cha" won the public vote.

Resilience (cross head)

The varied tastes of the continent were on display in a contest that took in the cabaret-style singing of Portugal's Mimar, the Britney-esque power pop of Poland's Blanka, echoes of Edith Piaf from La Zarra for France and smoldering balladry from Cyprus' entry, Andrew Lambrou.

From Australia - a Eurovision contender despite its far-away location - guitar band Voyager evoked head-banging '80s stadium rock. Croatia's Let 3 offered a surreal antiwar rock opera, and Austrian duo Teya & Salena sent up the music industry in Poe-referencing song "Who the Hell is Edgar?"

Electronica duo Tvorchi paid tribute to Ukraine's resilience on "Heart of

Steel," coming sixth.

Britain's Mae Muller drew the unenviable final performance slot of the night with her jaunty breakup anthem "I Wrote a Song." She came in second to last place - but at least avoided the humiliation of getting "nul points," or zero points.

While votes were cast and counted, Sam Ryder, last year's runner-up for Britain, performed his new single "Mountain," accompanied by Queen drummer Roger Taylor. A "Liverpool Songbook" segment featured past Eurovision stars performing songs from the city, including John Lennon's "Imagine," "You Spin Me Round (Like a Record)" by Dead or Alive and the unofficial civic anthem "You'll Never Walk Alone" - with the audience joining in, as a tribute to both Liverpool and Ukraine.

About 6,000 fans watched the show inside the arena, and tens of thousands more at a Liverpool fan zone and at big-screen events across the U.K. The global television audience has been estimated at 160 million.

Under spring sunshine, fans flocked in their thousands to a Eurovision party zone in the city's dockside area ahead of the contest. Many were draped in flags of their favored nations or dressed as their favorite acts.

"Just to come down and see people from all different nationalities, all different cultures - it's good fun," said Australian Martin Troedel, sporting a kangaroo on his hat. "Frankly there's some quite odd acts, which is what I love about it. You never know what to expect."

Liverpool embraced Eurovision, and Ukraine, with businesses across the city flying Ukrainian flags and a program of cultural events introducing locals to the art, music and food of the eastern European country.

Roberts was hired by UCLA in 1992. He called football games for 23 seasons, including 16 bowl games that included the Bruins' Rose Bowl appearances in

1994 and '99.

He also broadcast basketball, including 19 appearances by the Bruins in the NCAA Tournament. He was on the call

when UCLA won its record 11th national championship in 1995. (AP)



A gallery assistant stands between the photograph of David Bowie, taken by Brian Duffy, right, and Andy Warhol and Jean-Michel Basquiat, taken by Michael Halsband, during a pre auction photo call at Phillips auction house in London, Thursday, May 11, 2023. 'SPOTLIGHT', a Private London Collection is going on sale on May 19. The Bowie photograph is estimated at 7,000-9,000 GBP (8,800-11,000USD), Halsband's picture is estimated at 20,000-30,000 GBP (25,000-37,000USD). (AP)

WASHINGTON: After months wrestling over the fate of millions of unsold Yeezy shoes, Adidas said it will sell a portion of its remaining inventory and donate the proceeds to charitable organizations.

The German sportswear company cut ties with **Ye**, the rapper formerly known as **Kanye West**, in late October, following his antisemitic comments on social media and in interviews. Since then, the fate of 1.2 billion euros (\$1.3 billion) worth of the unsold Yeezys, a lucrative sneaker line launched with Ye, has been up in the air.

At Adidas' annual shareholders meeting, CEO **Bjorn Gulden** said the company had spent months trying to find solutions. He said the company spoke to nongovernmental organizations and groups that were harmed by Ye's comments and actions.

"Burning those shoes cannot be the solution," Gulden said, adding that Adidas will try to sell part of the remaining Yeezy inventory and "donate money to the organizations that help us and were harmed by what Ye said."

Exact details of the plan - including how many shoes will be sold and the timeline of selling them - were not disclosed. Gulden said the company will provide updates as it moves forward. (AP)

Ecology

Species threatened

Tiny bats offer hope against fatal fungus

DORSET, Vt., May 14, (AP): Deep in a cool, damp cave in Vermont, tens of thousands of furry, chocolate brown creatures stir.

The little brown bats, survivors of a deadly fungus that decimated their population, went into hibernation last fall. Now in early May, they're waking, detaching from their rock wall roosts and making their first tentative flights in search of the moths, beetles and flying aquatic insects they devour.

It's here, in deep passages that creep into a Vermont mountain, where scientists found one of the first North American outbreaks of the fungus that causes white nose syndrome. Bat bones litter the cave floor like dry lawn-mower cuttings. Look closer and you'll find tiny skulls.

And the bats are still dying.

White nose syndrome is caused by an invasive fungus first found in an upstate New York cave in 2006, a short bat flight from the Dorset, Vermont, colony. The fungus wakes bats from hibernation, sending them into the frigid, winter air in search of food. They die of exposure or starvation because the insect population is too sparse to support them that time of year.

Smaller than a mouse and about the weight of three pennies in the hand, the Dorset bats skitter across the cave walls or cling to one another

for warmth. Their health hints that at least some species are adapting to the fungus that has killed millions of their brethren across North America.

"That's really significant, because it seems to be a stronghold where these bats are mostly surviving and then spreading out throughout New England in the summer," said Alyssa Bennett, a small mammal biologist for the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife. She has studied bats and white nose syndrome for more than a decade.

"We're hoping that it's a source population for them to recover," Bennett said as critters flitted and swooped around her.

Syndrome

It will take time. Little brown bat females birth only one pup a year. And while they can live into their teens or 20s, only 60% to 70% of pups make it beyond their first 12 months, Bennett said.

Scientists now estimate that between 70,000 and 90,000 bats hibernate in the Dorset cave, the largest concentration in New England. Their numbers have dwindled from an estimated winter population of 300,000 to 350,000 or more in the 1960s, the last time the location was surveyed before white nose infiltrated.

It's unclear how far the numbers dropped after the fungus set in, but biologists who visited in 2009 or 2010 noted the ground in front of the cave was carpeted with dead bats.

The fungus that causes white nose syndrome is believed to have been brought to North America from Europe, where bats are apparently accustomed to it. Named for the white, fuzzy spots it produces on noses and other bat body parts, the fungus has killed 90% or more of the bat populations in parts of North America.

Last month, a report by the North American Bat Conservation Alliance found that 81 of the 154 known bat species in the United States, Canada and Mexico are at severe risk from white nose infection, climate change and habitat loss.

It matters. The US Geological Survey estimates that bats boost US agriculture by \$3.7 billion a year by eating crop-destroying insects such as larvae-laying moths, whose offspring bore into corn plants.

Scientists have known for years that some little brown bats seemed to survive being exposed to the fungus, despite an overall mortality rate that was feared could eradicate them. Though Dorset's little brown bats are holding on, other once common species found with them, like northern long eared or tricolored bats, are almost impossible to detect there now, Bennett said.

"There's something special about those bats," Bennett said of Dorset's little browns. "We can't tell exactly what that is, but we have genetic research that we've collaborated on that suggests those bats do have factors that are related to hibernation and immune response that are allowing them to tolerate this disease and pass those features on to their young."

Winifred Frick, chief scientist at Bat Conservation International, who has followed white nose syndrome's march across North America, said the fungus has been found in 38 states so far. She says it's a "gut punch" each time she hears of a new outbreak.

Colorado reported its first infected bats earlier this year. Frick is relieved that bats are beginning to repopulate some areas where carcasses once piled up, even if the rebound is so far only a fraction of earlier numbers.

"That's a real glimmer of hope," she said. In addition to Vermont, other areas near where white nose was first discovered also report stable, possibly rising numbers of little brown bats.

Pennsylvania lost an estimated 99.9% of its population after white nose struck, said Greg Turner, the state mammal expert for the Pennsylvania Game Commission. While the numbers are still low, they're slowly increasing in some places. One old mine in Blair County had just seven bats in 2016. This year, there were more than 330.

Extinction

"I'm feeling pretty comfortable," Turner said. "We're not going to be stuck staring down the barrel of extinction."

His research shows bats that hibernate at colder temperatures do better against white nose because the fungus grows more slowly.

That may mean the bats are less likely to wake up from the irritation it causes, though scientists still don't understand the mechanism that allows some animals to survive while so many succumb.

"By selecting colder temperatures, they're helping themselves in two ways, they're helping themselves preserve fat and preserve their energy and they're also getting less disease," Turner said.

Still, there are worrying trends. Pennsylvania's bat population is a tiny fraction of what it was before white nose invaded. In some locations, Turner and his colleagues see more bats, but inexplicably few females.

In Virginia, populations have plummeted more than 95%, though the state is starting to see some colonies stabilize or slightly grow their numbers. However, that's happening at only a fraction of the sites once monitored, said Rick Reynolds, a non-game mammal biologist with the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources.

"We remain positive, but there is a long road ahead with much uncertainty," Reynolds said in an email.

Back in Vermont, where temperatures in the Dorset cave fall into the low 40s (around 4.4 degrees Celsius) in winter, the bats seem to have found a sweet spot cold enough to slow growth of the fungus.

Bennett is working with Laura Kloepper, a bioacoustics expert from the University of New Hampshire, to get a better handle on the population count. Using acoustic modeling, they're working to get a baseline population estimate this year by comparing sound recordings with thermal imaging. They'll survey using the same method again next year to try to determine the change.

"We want to try to understand what we can possibly do to save not only the species of bat, not only the bats at this cave, but really bats around the world," Kloepper said.



Frick



Alyssa Bennett, small mammals biologist for the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife, holds a dead bat in a cave in Dorset, Vt., on May 2. Scientists studying bat species hit hard by the fungus that causes white nose syndrome, which has killed millions of bats across North America, say there is a glimmer of good news for the disease. Experts say more bats that hibernate at a cave in Vermont, the largest bat cave in New England, are tolerating the disease and passing protective traits on to their young. (AP)



Particles of rubber from Astro turf used in a retrofit of Electron Hydropower Project are found on the banks of the Puyallup River 14 miles down from the dam, Aug. 27, 2020. A company that operates a more than century-old hydroelectric dam near Mount Rainier National Park will pay \$1 million after synthetic field turf and its tiny rubber particles spilled into the Puyallup River in 2020. The Washington state attorney general's office has said that a Pierce County Superior Court judge approved the settlement amount last week. (AP)



Inseele



DeFlitch

Discovery

Heat wave in Pacific NW: Temperatures are expected to start climbing significantly Saturday in parts of the Pacific Northwest as an early heat wave takes hold, possibly breaking records and worsening wildfires already burning in western Canada.

The historically temperate region has grappled with scorching summer temperatures and unprecedented wildfires fueled by climate change in recent years.

The National Weather Service issued a heat advisory lasting from Saturday through Monday for much of the western parts of both Oregon and Washington state. It said the temperatures could raise the risk of heat-related illness, particularly for those who are dehydrated or don't have effective cooling. Governor of Washington is **Jay Inseele**.

Temperatures in Portland, Oregon, are expected to hover around 94 F (34.4 C) throughout the weekend, according to the weather service. The current daily temperature records for May 13 and 14 stand at 92 F (33.3 C) and 91 F (32.8 C), dating from 1973 and 2014, respectively.

Temperatures in the Seattle area could also meet or surpass daily records, according to National Weather Service meteorologist **Jacob DeFlitch**. The mercury could near 85 F (29.4 C) on Saturday and reach into the low 90s (32.2 C) on Sunday, he said.

The unseasonal high temperatures could further flame the dozens of fires burning in Canada's western Alberta province, where officials have ordered evacuations and declared a state of emergency. Residents and officials in the Northwest have been trying to adjust to the likely reality of longer, hotter heat waves following the deadly "heat dome" weather phenomenon in 2021 that prompted record temperatures and deaths across the region.

Elizabeth Romero and her three children were among those cooling off at a fountain in downtown Portland on Friday afternoon.

"We decided to stop by ... until we all feel better," she said, adding that she plans to seek out shaded parks during the

The Conversation

Arexvy 94% effective at protecting against severe disease

1st RSV shot, a new tool in old fight

By Annette Regan

University of San Francisco

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

The US Food and Drug Administration approved the world's first vaccine to prevent the respiratory infection RSV, short for respiratory syncytial virus, on May 3, 2023. The new shot represents six decades of starts and stops in the hunt for a vaccine to curb one of the most common winter respiratory viruses. RSV leads to around 14,000 deaths in older adults every year and can cause severe illness in infants and children as well.

The vaccine, called Arexvy, made by the biopharmaceutical company GSK, is approved for use in adults ages 60 and over. Now that it is FDA-approved, it must still be endorsed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, a move that's expected in summer 2023.

The Conversation asked Annette Regan, an epidemiologist and vaccine specialist, to discuss the significance of the first vaccine against RSV and the other RSV vaccine candidates that are in the pipeline.

The vaccine targets a protein known as RSV F glycoprotein, which is found on the surface of the virus. The F protein enables the RSV virus to enter host cells.

By stimulating antibodies against this protein, the vaccine should protect against infection. Clinical trial data suggests this is the case, since Arexvy was 80% effective at protecting against RSV-related disease and 94% effective at protecting against severe disease.

The vaccine also includes an adjuvant, a substance that helps amplify the effect of the vaccine by boosting the immune system's response.

The RSV vaccine has been developed for and tested in adults age 60 and older. While the FDA has approved the vaccine - which means it has deemed it safe and effective - the shot will not be administered by health care professionals until it is reviewed by an independent expert

group coordinated by the CDC called the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practice, which makes vaccine recommendations to the CDC.

The committee's recommendations will cover how the vaccine should be used - including the ages at which the vaccine should be given - the number of doses needed, the time between doses and precautions and contraindications.

The committee is expected to meet in June 2023 to make a recommendation on the new RSV vaccine, after which the CDC would officially endorse it. The vaccine could be rolled out to the public as soon as late summer 2023, well before the typical RSV season, which usually starts in the fall and peaks in winter.

Recommend

It's hard to say what the committee's recommendation will be. It could recommend the vaccine for all adults 60 and older, or a subset of older adults. While the clinical trial showed the vaccine was 81% effective among adults ages 60 to 69 and 94% effective among adults ages 70 to 79, it was only 34% effective among adults 80 and older. Given the lower efficacy for adults ages 80 and older, the committee could place an age cap on the recommendations.

A vaccine against RSV has been in the works for decades. One problem that has plagued vaccine manufacturers is the difficulty of identifying an antigen - the piece of the virus that the vaccine targets - that doesn't change, or shape-shift. The F protein of the RSV virus is notorious for changing its shape once it fuses with a host's cell.

In 2013 and 2014, the National Institutes of Health worked out how to "freeze" the F protein into a fixed shape before fusing with a cell so that a vaccine could target it well. This was a game-changer that allowed the development of effective vaccines using this target.

In addition to challenges in identifying a good antigen, there were earlier setbacks. Early attempts to create an inactivated RSV vaccine

in the 1960s were stalled after they caused an enhanced form of RSV disease. Children who had never had RSV before and received the vaccine experienced very severe illness when they encountered the virus in the community, and two children died. This tragic outcome sidetracked vaccine development for decades, as researchers needed to investigate the cause and ensure that the problem wouldn't occur again for future vaccines.

In addition to Arexvy, many other promising RSV candidates are under development, some of which are likely to become available later this year or in early 2024.

The next RSV vaccine under review with the FDA is Pfizer's RSV vaccine. It is similar to the recently approved vaccine except that it has no adjuvant and is bivalent, meaning that it targets both RSV A and RSV B - the two strains of RSV. This vaccine is meant not only for adults ages 60 and older, but also for pregnant people - with the aim of protecting young infants through maternal antibodies.

Data from a phase 3 clinical trial - the last stage of clinical trials before a company would apply for a license - shows that when given during pregnancy, the Pfizer vaccine was 82% effective in protecting infants less than 3 months old against severe RSV infection. The FDA will be making a determination on the Pfizer vaccine for older adults later in May 2023 and for pregnant people in August 2023. The CDC advisory committee is scheduled to discuss vaccine recommendations in October 2023, making this the likely next possible vaccine available.

A few other biopharmaceutical companies have developed alternative RSV vaccines, some of which are in phase 3 clinical trials. For example, Moderna has an mRNA vaccine against RSV with promising preliminary results. Regardless of which companies make it to the finish line next, it is clear that in the near future there will be a variety of new tools to help protect against RSV infection. (AP)

weekend. (AP)

Mountain lion killed in Colo: In Colorado's mountains, an 11-year-old girl went to check on the family's chickens in their wooden hen house Wednesday only

to find a mountain lion that swatted at her face, leaving a small puncture wound on her cheek, according to wildlife officials.

The girl was treated and released from the hospital, and Colorado Parks and Wildlife officers arrived on scene to find the predator still in the wire mesh coop -

where they killed it.

This marks the 25th time a mountain lion attacked and injured a human in Colorado since 1990. Three other attacks over the same period resulted in human deaths.

In March, a mountain lion clawed a man in the head while he soaked in a hot tub with his wife at a rental home. He escaped with superficial injuries. Officials believe these don't represent a pattern, merely unfortunate coincidences.

The latest attack appeared to be defensive, according to officials. The roughly 30-pound (13.6-kilogram) female mountain lion didn't appear to be stalking the young girl because it didn't mount a pursuit.

"This was a small mountain lion probably just looking for an easy meal in the chicken coop," said Sean Shepherd, Area Wildlife Manager, in a statement. "The victim likely surprised the lion. It probably felt threatened and it swatted at her as she entered."

While attacks are rare, Shepherd continued, they can't take any chances after an attack. The body was sent to a lab to ensure it wasn't diseased with rabies, Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza or another infection.

The wildlife agency encourages residents to limit hiding places for mountain lions around homes, install outdoor lighting, and keep pets and children inside at dusk. (AP)



A SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket lifts off from Cape Canaveral Space Force Station, Fla., Sunday, May 14, carrying a batch of Starlink satellites. (AP)

Allgaier settles for second

Cup champion Larson rallies from 30th to win Darlington Xfinity race

DARLINGTON, S.C., May 14, (AP): Kyle Larson was already excited about what the weekend at Darlington Raceway would mean. He added an even larger moment for him to remember with his first career win at the track "Too Tough To Tame."

Larson rallied from 30th starting the final stage, bumping John Hunter Nemechek coming out of the final turn as the two raced to the finish line to win the Xfinity Series race on Saturday.

Larson, the 2021 NASCAR Cup Series champion, was named one of stock-car racing's 75 greatest drivers who've been honored during the celebration at Darlington's annual throwback weekend.

Now, he's got a checkered flag after so many close calls at Darlington, where he's had three seconds and two thirds in 10 career Cup races and never finished worse than seventh in his five previous Xfinity events here.

"Every time you get to come to Darlington, it's special," Larson said. But this weekend's festivities are very different as Larson can't wait for the Sunday brunch before the Goodyear 400 where 33 of the 75 all-time NASCAR greats will gather.



Chicago Sky's Rebekah Gardner (right), drives at Minnesota Lynx's Rachel Banham during the second half of a pre-season WNBA basketball game in Toronto. Sky won 82-74. (AP)

"You'll get to see legends and Hall of Famers and everybody who's still alive on the 75 list," he said. "I really look forward to that. I think it's going to be a special kind of thing and morning for me that I'll probably never forget."

Larson, the 2021 NASCAR Cup Series champion, was making his first start of the season in the Triple A Series. It looked like his chance at a win ended when he was assessed a pit-road speeding penalty that dropped him to 30th before the final stretch.

But there was Larson alongside Nemechek at the end to pull out his 14th career Xfinity victory.

"We had a really, really good car the whole race," Larson said. "We were kind of bouncing off each other a little bit. I'm not sure what happened into three, but it seemed like he tried to get in behind me to shove me in the corner."

CAR RACING

"He kind of hooked me right and hit the wall," Larson continued. "What an exciting race there."

Larson took the lead entering turns three and four. Nemechek, who led a race-high 58 laps, attempted a final pass, but got bumped by Larson and slid away to the inside wall. Nemechek finished fifth.

Nemechek was disappointed with the finish, not with how he and Larson raced at the end. "That's good-hard racing," Nemechek said. "I'm smiling ear-to-ear internally, let's put it, for the hard racing we had today and how him and I raced each other."

Justin Allgaier, who won the previous two spring Xfinity races at Darlington, was second. Cole Custer was third and points leader Austin Hill was fourth.

Larson took the opening stage and was in line to win stage two before getting caught at the end by Nemechek.

The biggest crash came after a restart on lap 67 in turn four as Sheldon Creed spun high in turn four, slid down the track and was hit by Brandon Jones hard enough that Creed's hood flopped up against the car's windshield.

"I mean, what happened?" series points leader Austin Hill asked his team over the radio.

Judge hits 2 HRs, Volpe passes Joe for steals mark as Yanks edge Rays



Arizona Diamondbacks' Ketel Marte (right), scores a run on a wild pitch by San Francisco Giants pitcher Tristan Beck (right), in the eighth inning during a baseball game in Phoenix. (AP)

NEW YORK, May 14, (AP): Aaron Judge hit a pair of two-run homers, Anthony Volpe broke Joe DiMaggio's Yankees record for consecutive stolen bases at the start of a career and New York rallied from a six-run deficit and beat the Tampa Bay Rays 9-8 on Saturday.

Judge found his stroke following an injured list stint caused by a sore hip and hit his first homers since April 19 for his 29th career multihomer game.

Volpe is 13 for 13 in steal attempts, one more than DiMaggio from the start of his career until he was caught at home by Boston on Sept. 25, 1939.

Kyle Higashioka also had a two-run homer for the Yankees, and Orlando Cabrera added a two-run single. Jimmy Cordero (3-1) pitched 1 2/3 scoreless innings for the win.

Yandy Díaz hit his first career grand slam in Tampa Bay's five-run fifth and Randy Arozarena added a broken-bat, two-run single. Ryan Thompson (1-1) took the loss after Shane Bieber failed to hold a 6-0 lead.

Rangers 5, Athletics 0

In Oakland, Jon Gray took a non-hitter into the seventh and finished with eight scoreless innings. Nathaniel Lowe homered to extend his hitting streak to 12 games, and Texas beat Oakland.

Ezequiel Duran also connected on a two-run homer in the ninth for the AL West-leading Rangers, who are 24-15 for their best mark through 39 games since going 25-14 in 2013.

Gray (3-1) retired 20 of the first 22 batters he faced and worked around a pair of walks while dominating the worst team in baseball. He set down the first two batters in the seventh before the light-hitting Jace Peterson slapped a single to right for the A's first hit.

John King worked the ninth inning for Texas to complete the five-hitter.

Orioles 2, Pirates 0

In Baltimore, Tyler Wells pitched seven innings of one-hit ball and Baltimore used homers by Adley Rutschman and Gunnar Henderson to beat slumping Pittsburgh and clinch its ninth series win in its last 10.

Wells (3-1) had a career-high eight strikeouts and walked two. Wells retired 17 straight before walking Carlos Santana, who had singled in the second, with two outs in the seventh.

Yennier Cano and Félix Bautista completed the three-hitter. Bautista earned his 10th save in 13 chances. Roansy Contreras (3-4) took the loss for Pittsburgh, which has dropped four in a row and 11 of 12.

Dodgers 4, Padres 2

In Los Angeles, J.D. Martinez hit a go-ahead three-run homer in the first inning. Julio Urias tossed seven strong innings and Los Angeles beat San Diego for its fourth straight victory.

The NL West leaders earned their fifth consecutive series win and have won 17 of their last 20 at Dodger Stadium.

Urias (5-3) allowed two runs and three hits in seven innings. The left-hander struck out four and walked none. Caleb Ferguson earned his first save of the season.

The Padres got solo homers by Juan Soto in the first and Ha-Seong Kim in the second off Urias, both with two outs. Joe Musgrove (1-1)

took the loss as San Diego dropped its fourth in a row and fell for the sixth time in seven games.

Guardians 8, Angels 6

In Cleveland, Josh Naylor's three-run homer highlighted Cleveland's stunning comeback in the eighth inning in a win over Los Angeles.

Down 6-2, the Guardians scored six times in the eighth to pull off their most improbable win in a season. Andrés Giménez also homered in the eighth.

The Guardians strung together four straight singles with José Ramírez and Josh Bell driving in runs off reliever Andrew Wantz. Naylor then connected on an 0-1 pitch from Ryan Tepera (2-2).

Eli Morgan (2-0) pitched one inning to get the win on his 27th birthday. Trevor Stephan earned his second save, retired Mike Trout and Shohei Ohtani to start the ninth before putting two runners on. The right-hander got Brandon Drury to ground out for his second save.

Mickey Moniak homered in his first at-bat this season and scored three runs for the Angels. Zach Neto hit a two-run homer for Los Angeles.

Mariners 5, Tigers 0

In Detroit, rookie right-hander Bryce Miller shut down Detroit for seven innings as Seattle moved above .500 for the first time since a win on opening day.

BASEBALL

Miller (2-0) allowed three hits, two in the first inning, and struck out three while walking none. Jarred Kelenic hit a two-run home run and Teoscar Hernández hit a solo homer. They are tied for the team lead with eight.

Alex Faedo (0-1), making his second start of the season and first career appearance against the Mariners, allowed three runs on four hits while walking one and striking out seven in his second start of the season and first against Seattle.

Reds 6, Marlins 5

In Miami, Jake Fraley hit a three-run shot for his third homer in two days as Cincinnati beat Sandy Alcantara and Miami.

Henry Ramos had two hits, including a go-ahead RBI double off Alcantara in the eighth. Reliever Ian Gibaut (3-0) earned the win and Alexis Diaz picked up his ninth save.

Alcantara (1-4) squandered two leads. He issued a leadoff walk in the eighth to Jonathan India, who stole second before Fraley's run-scoring single tied it at 4-4. Alcantara gave up six runs, seven hits, struck out nine and walked two in 7 2/3 innings.

Cardinals 4, Red Sox 3

In Boston, Kenley Jansen (1-2) blew a ninth-inning lead for the



Philadelphia Phillies starting pitcher Ranger Suarez works against the Colorado Rockies during the first inning of a baseball game in Denver. (AP)

Rangers dominate Athletics

and Jazz Chisholm Jr. hit his seventh homer of the season, a solo shot in the seventh.

Diamondbacks 7, Giants 2

In Phoenix, rookie Dominic Fletcher hit a two-run homer and a go-ahead, bases-clearing triple for five RBIs, Zac Gallen pitched 7 2/3 strong innings and Arizona beat San Francisco.

Fletcher hit his first MLB homer on Friday and followed that with a clutch triple in the sixth inning on Saturday, ripping a line drive into the right-center gap that scored Josh Rojas, Ketel Marte and Christian Walker and pushed the D-backs up 4-1. Fletcher added a two-run homer in the eighth.

Gallen (6-1) gave up two runs on five hits, striking out six and walking two. He now has a 2.35 ERA.

Giants right-hander Anthony DeSclafani (3-3) gave up three runs. Casey Schmitt and Michael Conforto both had two hits for San Francisco.

Blue Jays 5, Braves 2

In Toronto, Bo Bichette singled home the tiebreaking run in the seventh inning and finished 2 for 4 with two RBIs as Toronto handed Atlanta its first series loss on the road this season.

The Blue Jays won their second straight over Atlanta, which had won six straight series away from home to start the season. Erik Swanson (2-1) got five outs for the win and Jordan Romano earned his 10th save in 12 chances.

Kevin Kiermaier had three hits and scored twice, and Whit Merrifield had three stolen bases and an RBI for Toronto.

Atlanta's Marcell Ozuna hit a two-run homer in the second, his seventh. A.J. Minter (2-5) took the loss.

Twins 11, Cubs 1

In Minneapolis, Alex Kirilloff hit two of Minnesota's season-high five home runs in a rout over Chicago.

Joey Gallo, Jorge Polanco and Carlos Correa also homered for the Twins. Joe Ryan (6-1) got plenty of run support, striking out 10 in six scoreless innings, including striking out the side in the sixth.

Kirilloff, appearing in just his seventh game this season, opened the scoring with an opposite-field solo shot to left in the first. His second homer came three pitches after Gallo's towering drive to the second deck in right-center in the third. It was Kirilloff's third career multi-homer game and his first since July 5.

Cubs starter Hayden Wesneski (2-2) surrendered four of the Twins' homers in a game that was delayed at the start an hour and 21 minutes by rain.

Cardinals 4, Red Sox 3

In Boston, Kenley Jansen (1-2) blew a ninth-inning lead for the

second straight day when shortstop Kiké Hernández's throwing error on a potential game-ending double play allowed Nolan Gorman to score the go-ahead run in a three-run ninth, lifting St. Louis over Boston.

The Red Sox wasted a stellar start by Chris Sale, who pitched eight innings of one-run ball in his longest outing since 2019. He struck out nine, giving up three hits with one walk, throwing 77 of his 110 pitches for strikes.

Nolan Arenado had a solo homer for St. Louis. Rob Refsnyder had a two-run double and three hits, and Rafael Devers added an RBI single for the Red Sox.

Andre Pallante (2-0) worked a scoreless inning for the win and Giovanni Gallegos earned his third save.

White Sox 3, Astros 1

In Chicago, Luis Robert Jr. homered and drove in two runs, and the Chicago White Sox beat the Houston Astros 3-1 on Saturday night.

Tim Anderson and Yoán Moncada each had three hits for the White Sox, who had lost three straight and four of five. Dylan Cease pitched six shutout innings.

Chicago wanted ahead to stay with two runs in the eighth against Rafael Montero (0-3). Moncada hit a leadoff double and scored on Robert's liner to right. Seby Zavala added a two-out RBI single for a 3-1 lead.

Joe Kelly (1-1) got four outs for the win, and Kendall Graveman worked the ninth for his second save.

Jeremy Peña had three of Houston's eight hits. The Astros had won three straight.

Brewers 4, Royals 3

In Milwaukee, rookie Joey Wiemer's sacrifice fly with one out in the ninth inning gave Milwaukee a victory over Kansas City.

Christian Yelich homered twice for Milwaukee, with the second tying it at 3 in the sixth with a shot off Josh Taylor, who relieved starter Zack Greinke to begin the inning.

Brian Anderson opened the ninth with a single off Carlos Hernández (0-1). Owen Miller's one-out double sent Anderson to third. Wiemer then sent an 0-1 pitch deep enough to center to easily score Anderson.

Devin Williams (3-0) got the victory with a perfect ninth.

Kansas City's Salvador Perez opened the fifth with his eighth homer.

Phillies 7, Rockies 4

In Denver, Ranger Suárez labored through four innings in his return from injury, Bryce Harper hit a two-run home run and Philadelphia beat Colorado in a game in which Rockies starter Ryan Feltner was struck in the head with a line drive.

On the mound for the Phillies for the first time since throwing five scoreless innings in Game 3 of last season's World Series, Suárez (2-0) gave up three runs and seven hits, including five doubles, while throwing 72 pitches. Gregory Soto earned his first save.

Harper hit his second homer since returning from Tommy John surgery off Pierce Johnson in the ninth as Philadelphia won a season-best fifth straight.

Feltner (2-3) took Nick Castellanos' 92.7 mph liner off the back right portion of his head with two outs in the second inning and immediately collapsed on the mound. He didn't appear to lose consciousness and was able to walk to the dugout with the assistance of two staff members.

Ryan McMahon and Jurickson Profar each had two doubles for the Rockies.

MLB Results/Standings

WASHINGTON, May 14, (AP): Results and standings from the MLB games on Saturday.

American League East Division				National League East Division				
W	L	Pct	GB	W	L	Pct	GB	
Tampa Bay	30	11	.732	—	Atlanta	25	14	.641
Baltimore	26	13	.667	3	Philadelphia	20	19	.513
Toronto	23	16	.590	6	New York	19	20	.487
New York	23	18	.561	7	Miami	19	21	.475
Texas	22	18	.550	7-1/2	Washington	16	22	.421
St. Louis	4	Boston	3	LA Dodgers	4	San Diego	2	
Cleveland	8	LA Angels	6	Arizona	7	San Francisco	2	
				Philadelphia	7	Colorado	4	

American League Central Division				National League Central Division				
W	L	Pct	GB	W	L	Pct	GB	
Minnesota	22	18	.550	—	Milwaukee	22	17	.564
Cleveland	18	21	.462	3-1/2	Pittsburgh	21	19	.525
Detroit	17	21	.447	4	Chicago	19	20	.487
Chicago	14	27	.341	8-1/2	Cincinnati	18	21	.462
Kansas City	12	29	.293	10-1/2	St. Louis	15	25	.375

American League West Division				National League West Division				
W	L	Pct	GB	W	L	Pct	GB	
Texas	24	15	.615	—	Los Angeles	25	15	.625
Los Angeles	21	19	.525	3-1/2	Arizona	22	18	.550
Houston	20	19	.513	4	San Diego	19	21	.475
Seattle	20	19	.513	4	San Francisco	17	22	.436
Oakland	9	32	.220	16	Colorado	16	24	.400

Suns fire coach Monty Williams

PHOENIX, May 14, (AP): The Phoenix Suns fired Monty Williams on Saturday, two years after reaching the NBA Finals and a year after he was the overwhelming choice as the coach of the year, two people with knowledge of the decision said.

The people spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because the team had not announced the decision.

Williams had great success in his four regular seasons in Phoenix, winning 63% of his games. But three consecutive years of playoff frustration was likely too much for the Suns to overlook - especially after two straight years of Phoenix trailing by 30 points at halftime of elimination games at home.

BASKETBALL

ESPN and The Athletic first reported the decision.

The Suns had a 2-0 lead in the 2021 NBA Finals, only to lose in six games. They lost in the second round in each of the last two seasons, both times in an embarrassing finale - last year to Dallas, this year to Denver.

"Neither day feels good," Williams said after the loss earlier this week to Denver, when asked to compare last season's debacle to this year's season-ending loss.

Saturday likely didn't feel good either.

The Suns now become yet another high-profile coaching opening, after Toronto fired Nick Nurse and Milwaukee fired Mike Budenholzer. Nurse won the 2019 NBA title with the Raptors, while Budenholzer was the coach who overcame Phoenix's 2-0 lead in the 2021 finals.

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Winners display their medals during the closing ceremony of the Korean Ambassador's Taekwondo Championship.

Korean Kukkiwon Taekwondo team dazzle fans

Kuwait Club, Al-Fatat Club win titles at Taekwondo Championship

Kraken send series to deciding Game 7

Eberle scores 2

SEATTLE, May 14, (AP): For their first venture into the Stanley Cup playoffs, the Seattle Kraken are giving their fans quite the exciting, yet stressful experience.

Two playoff series. And now, a second Game 7.

"That's all you can ask for These games are what makes playoff hockey fun," Seattle's Jordan Eberle said.

Eberle scored twice, Eeli Tolvanen had a goal and two assists, and the Kraken beat the Dallas Stars 6-3 on Saturday night to force a deciding Game 7 in their Western Conference semifinal series.

Tolvanen's goal in the opening minutes of the second period gave Seattle a 3-1 lead. Rookie Tye Kartye scored his third of the playoffs beating Jake Oettinger with a wrist shot less than three minutes later, and the Kraken withstood several pushes by the Stars to send the series back to Texas.

"We were ready tonight. I feel like last couple games they've been maybe the ready team at the start," Tolvanen said. "That was the big key today. All four lines were ready to play."

Matty Beniers and Yanni Gourde each added a goal and an assist for Seattle, which is headed to the second Game 7 in its short playoff history after ousting defending Stanley Cup champion Colorado with a 2-1 win in the deciding game of the opening round. The Kraken are the sixth team in league history to go to a Game 7 in each of the franchise's first two playoff series.

Philipp Grubauer stopped 20 shots for the win.

ICE HOCKEY

"We had a goal in mind. We wanted to make sure that we were still one of the six teams alive when we woke up tomorrow morning and have the opportunity to go and play a Game 7," Seattle coach Dave Hakstol said. "We know the test. We know the challenge. It'll be a big one, but we'll be ready."

Mason Marchment, Joe Pavelski and Joel Kiviranta scored for Dallas. Oettinger gave up four goals on 18 shots before he was pulled 4 1/2 minutes into the second period. Scott Wedgewood came on and stopped nine of the 10 shots he faced.

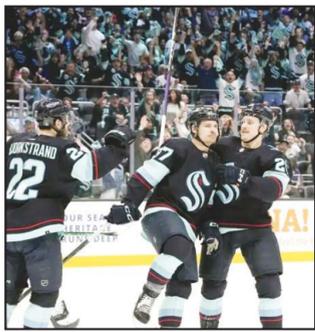
Game 7 will be Monday night in Dallas. "I mean, their lives were on the line. They played desperate hockey and played a good game," Dallas captain Jamie Benn said.

The Stars last played a Game 7 in the second round of the 2020 playoffs in the NHL bubble in Edmonton when Dallas beat Colorado 5-4 in overtime. This will be first Game 7 in Dallas since the second round in 2016, when Stars lost 6-1 to St. Louis after giving up three first period goals.

Pavelski scored his 72nd career playoff goal and his eighth of the series when he redirected Miro Heiskanen's shot from the point during a power play in the second period. Pavelski is tied with Alex Ovechkin for the most playoff goals among active players.

And he could have had more. Pavelski nearly added a second goal in the opening seconds of the third period, but his shot hit the post and Heiskanen's rebound attempt slid wide of the goal mouth. Moments later, Jason Robertson's shot from the slot hit the same post and ricocheted away from danger.

Seattle appeared to put a wrap on the win when Beniers finished a 2-on-1 off a pass from Eberle with his third playoff goal at 8:43 of the third period following a key penalty kill by the Kraken. But 16 seconds later Kiviranta tipped Thomas Harley's shot from the point past Grubauer to pull the Stars back to 5-3.



Seattle Kraken center Yanni Gourde (37) celebrates his goal against the Dallas Stars with Oliver Bjorkstrand (22) and Eeli Tolvanen (20) during the first period of Game 6 of an NHL hockey Stanley Cup second-round playoff series in Seattle. (AP)

Model is the brainchild of Najam Sethi

'Hybrid model for Cup may end Pakistan-India logjam'

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan, May 14, (AP): The Pakistan Cricket Board is still hopeful India agrees to its hybrid model of hosting majority of the Asia Cup games at a neutral venue in September.

The hybrid model is the brainchild of Najam Sethi, who is the head of the PCB management committee.

Sethi met with the members of the Asian Cricket Council in the United Arab Emirates this week to work out solution after India said it will not travel to Pakistan for the event, apparently because of political tensions between the two countries.

Pakistan, India, qualifier Nepal, Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka are the six nations due to compete in the Asia Cup which is seen as a major tune-up for the teams due to participate in the World Cup in India.

"Until India is ready to play Pakistan bilaterally and in Pakistan, let's have a hybrid solution," Sethi said.

Sethi's suggestive model to end the impasse means India could play

Pakistan at a neutral venue in major tournaments like the Champions Trophy and even the World Cup, while the remaining matches are played in the host nation as scheduled.

After India hosts the World Cup later this year, Pakistan is due to host the Champions Trophy in 2025.

CRICKET

Sethi believes the hybrid model could work in both major events because he could face a similar situation if the Pakistan government asks him not to send the national team to the World Cup in Oct.-Nov.

"I am concerned about not just the Asia Cup but also the World Cup and the Champions Trophy," Sethi said. "The World Cup will be in India ... my government might turn around to me and say we have security issues there, you don't go."

"And then the Champions Trophy following the World Cup, which we are hosting, India might turn around and say the same thing.

We are not going to play in Pakistan and ask the ICC to shift the venue ... this is not going to work. What I am proposing is the way out of this logjam."

Sethi has reportedly even suggested that Pakistan hosts only four games of the Asia Cup while the remaining 13 games can be staged at a neutral venue which would most likely be in the UAE. He is even willing to host the final at a neutral venue even if Pakistan qualifies for it against India or any other nation.

Sethi said he wanted an amicable solution for the Asia Cup which could pave the way for both nations to compete against each other in other major tournaments at a neutral venue.

"I have not been threatening anybody, give me a break," Sethi said. "I am trying to be positive and find a way out of this problem. I could have easily said that if India is not going to come and play in Pakistan, we will not play in India, but I tried to find a hybrid model."

Sethi hoped ACC president Jay Shah, who is also secretary of the Board of Control for Cricket in

Punjab knocks out Delhi from IPL race

HYDERABAD, India, May 14, (AP): Opening batter Prabhsimran Singh's maiden Indian Premier League century helped Punjab Kings to eliminate Delhi Capitals from the playoffs race.

Also, Nicholas Pooran's unbeaten 44 off just 13 balls gained Lucknow Super Giants a crucial win at the expense of Sunrisers Hyderabad by seven wickets.

Singh's 103 off 65 balls anchored Punjab to 167-7. The next best score was Sam Curran's 20.

Delhi limped to 136-8 to lose by 31 runs. The top-order problems continued on another slow pitch at home as Punjab left-arm spinner Harpreet Brar grabbed 4-30 and legspinner Rahul Chahar 2-16.

Singh started slowly but once he gauged the slowness of the pitch he was rampant, hitting 10 fours and six sixes.

Singh got a lucky escape on 68 when he was dropped in the deep, but he endured until the penultimate over when he was clean-bowled by fast bowler Mukesh Kumar while going for a reverse ramp shot.

Captain David Warner, with 54, gave Delhi a rollicking start of 65 without loss in the batting powerplay before it slumped to 88-6 against the brilliant bowling of Brar and Chahar.

Brar dealt two crucial blows when Rilee Rossouw was caught in the deep, and he successfully went for a video referral to earn a lbw verdict against Warner in the same over.

CRICKET

"Another disappointing effort with the bat after the start we had," Warner said. "We found the right combination but we keep losing four, five wickets in the middle and that is something you cannot do at this level."

Punjab jumped to sixth and remain in the top-four playoffs hunt with two games in hand.

Delhi has won only four of 12 games and was rooted to the bottom of the table.

Hyderabad's miserable home run continued after Lucknow cruised to 185-3 in 19.2 overs.

Pooran smacked four sixes and three fours in the chase. Prerak Mankad hit his first half-century, 64 not out, but Pooran's late counterattack in the death overs inflicted on Hyderabad its fifth home loss.

Heinrich Klaasen (47) and Abdul Samad (37 not out) did the heavy lifting in Hyderabad's 182-6 total.

Lucknow captain Krunal Pandya dismissed Aiden Markram and Glenn Phillips off successive deliveries, but Klaasen hit three sixes and three fours and Samad blazed four sixes to give Hyderabad late acceleration.

Lucknow's top order was strangled on the slow pitch and, despite Marcus Stoinis (40) and Mankad featuring in a 73-run, third-wicket stand, the asking run rate reached 14 an over off the last five overs.

Pooran took control by lofting Abhishek Sharma for three straight sixes off the first three balls he faced, and clinched the win with a flicked boundary against Fazal-haq Farooqi to fine leg.

"We spoke at the break, we felt we needed sixes to win the game," Pooran said. "Once a spinner came in, we targeted him. Happy to walk in and hit sixes anytime. ... T20 is a batsmen's game, and it is important to take risks."

Lucknow broke into the top four but Hyderabad's play-off hopes were slim.

KUWAIT CITY, May 14: In the presence of Kuwait's sports leaders, led by the President of Kuwait Olympic Committee Sheikh Fahad Al-Nasser and officials of the Public Authority for Sports, as well as the Ambassador of the Republic of South Korea Chung Byung-ha, the Korean Ambassador's Taekwondo Championship was concluded in the Volleyball Association hall in Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Complex. A large audience of fans and enthusiasts of the game were present to enjoy the dazzling performance by the Korean Kukkiwon Taekwondo team, which is considered the most famous in the world and had previously entered the Guinness Book of Records.

On the closing day of the tournament, Salwa Club won first place in the Olympic system competition for girls, followed by Al-Fatat Club in second place and Al-Mustaqbal Club in third.

In the youth Olympic system competitions, Kuwait Club came first, followed by Al-Nasser Club in second place and Burgan Club in third.

In the open competitions for women, Al-Fatat Club came first, Al-Tadamon second, and Salwa third.

The South Korean Ambassador Chung Byung-ha expressed his happiness about the successful conclusion of the tournament, which bears his name.

He affirmed that the tournament was organized professionally by the Kuwait Taekwondo Federation, and witnessed the performance of the Korean show team - Kukkiwon - which dazzled everyone with its great style.

The ambassador said, "The public attendance was huge, which indicates the

good level the game has reached in Kuwait, thanks to the interest of the Taekwondo Federation headed by Hani Al-Mershad in recent years."

Furthermore, the President of the Kuwait Olympic Committee Sheikh Fahad Al-Nasser praised the wonderful conclusion of the Korean Ambassador's Taekwondo Championship.

He said, "The conclusion was different from the rest of the tournaments, thanks to the dazzling show by the Korean show team, which won the admiration and amazement of everyone."

Sheikh Fahad affirmed that the Kuwait Taekwondo Federation has proven its great success in organizing championships, stressing that the Kuwait Olympic Committee stands with such successful federations in order to advance the game and spread it on a wider scale among the masses.

In addition, the President of the Kuwait Taekwondo Federation Hani Al-Mershad thanked the Ambassador of the Republic of South Korea Chung Byung-ha for his sponsorship of the tournament.

He also appreciated the great support of the Kuwait Olympic Committee, the Public Authority for Sports, and the committees working in the tournament, which worked during the past period to ensure the success of the tournament.

Al-Mershad indicated that the Board of Directors of the Kuwait Taekwondo Federation will work to implement the plan to develop the game and advance it for the better, and organize tournaments, in addition to working on external participation through the national team in an appropriate manner.

Alex Palou moves into IndyCar points lead

INDIANAPOLIS, May 14, (AP): Alex Palou inherited the lead on Lap 65, then drove away from the pack Saturday to win the Indianapolis Grand Prix by 16.8006 seconds over Pato O'Ward.

It's Palou's first win in 11 career starts at Indy, his first of the season and the first for Chip Ganassi Racing since Marcus Ericsson won the season opener in March. The victory also sent the 2021 IndyCar series champion into the points lead, six ahead of Arrow McLaren's O'Ward, who has been the runner-up three times in five races this season.

Palou has won five times since joining the series in 2020.

"We honestly knew we had a fast car yesterday," the Spaniard said. "The car has been fast all weekend. I just had to execute." Alexander Rossi, the 2016 Indianapolis 500 winner, finished third. Pole winner Christian Lundgaard finished fourth for Rahal Letter-

man Lanigan Racing - his second straight top-five finish on Indy's 14-turn, 2.439-mile road course.

Felix Rosenqvist, a teammate of Palou and Rossi, was fifth while defending race winner Colton Herta of Andretti Autosport wound up sixth.

But nobody could stay with Palou, who passed Lundgaard at the end of the first lap and wound up leading a race-high 52 of 85 laps on a warm, sticky, mostly sunny day.

The race came down to tire strategy late. Lundgaard and Palou pitted on opposite ends of Lap 60 with Lundgaard going with sticker primaries while Palou went with scuffed tires. O'Ward, of Mexico, pitted three laps later and took the softer sticker reds.

And when Rossi pitted on Lap 65, going with reds, Palou moved to the front of the pack and kept pulling away.

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United States Michael Eyssimont (right), and Hungary's Tamas Pozsgai battle for the puck during the group A match between United States and Hungary at the ice hockey world championship in Tampere, Finland. (AP)

Sports

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Some of the winners display their prizes on the podium.

Al-Shafei rule the general ranking

Kuwaiti women sweep Gulf category at Kuwait International Aquathlon Champ'ship

KUWAIT CITY, May 14: The 4th Kuwait International Aquathlon Championship, which was organized by the Kuwait Triathlon Club on the evening of Friday, May 12, witnessed strong competitions on the Marina Beach, in the presence of the Deputy Director for Competitive Sports Affairs at the Public Authority for Sports Bashar Abdullah, the President of the Kuwait Triathlon Club Rashid Al-Kandari, and members of the Board of Directors.

Muhannad Al-Shafei came first in the general ranking for men, followed by his compatriot Saif Al-Din Ismail in

second place, and Omar Hamza from Bahrain in third place.

In the women's category, Malak Ismail from Egypt came first, followed by Najlaa Al-Jariwi from Kuwait in second place, and Juliana Syria from Argentina came third.

In the Gulf category for men, Omar Hamza from Bahrain won first place, followed by his compatriot Abdul Rahman Mubarak in second place, and Hamad Al-Khalidi from Kuwait in third.

In the Gulf category for women, Kuwaiti women dominated the first three

places with Najlaa Al-Jariwi in first place, Lulwa Al-Rifai in second, and Fatima Al-Ghanim in third.

In the age category of 15-19 years for women, Phoebe Kemp from Britain came first, followed by Lulwa Al-Rifai from Kuwait in second.

In the age category of 20-29 years for women, Kuwaiti players took the first three places, with Fatima Al-Ghanim in first place, and Huda Al-Saleh in second.

In the age category of 30-39 years for women, Noura Al-Barrak came first. In the age category of 40-49

years, Jelly Su from the Philippines came first.

In the age category of 15-19 years for men, Abdulrahman Al-Hassan from Bahrain came first, followed by Fahd Al-Anzi in second place and Omar Al-Shaibani from Kuwait in third.

In the age category of 20-29 years for men, Abdul Rahman Mubarak from Bahrain came first followed by Hamad Al-Khalidi in second and Ali Dashti from Kuwait in third.

In the age category of 30-39 years for men, Kuwaitis Yousef Dashti and Saad Faraj won first and second places

respectively.

In the age category of 40-49 years for men, Mohsen Al-Ali from the United Arab Emirates won the first place, followed by Yaqub Al-Rashidi in second place and Saleh Al-Duwaisan from Kuwait in third.

In the category of over 50 years for men, Alistair Stewart from Britain came first and Mohammed Al-Hamad from Kuwait came second.

The President of the Kuwait Triathlon Club Rashid Al-Kandari congratulated the male and female competitors who won top places in the Kuwait International Aquathlon Championship 4th Edition.

He highlighted that the strong level of competition in the tournament among the champions from different countries of the world serves as the best evidence of the success of the tournament.

Al-Kandari wished the rest of the players success in the upcoming tournaments.

He thanked the committees working in the tournament for their keenness to prepare all matters to ensure a strong technical and organizational tournament.



Participants pose with officials during the closing ceremony of the 4th Kuwait International Aquathlon Championship.



Winners with officials after the awarding ceremony.

Evenepoel wins TT to 'move' back into overall lead of Giro

CESENA, Italy, May 14, (AP): Pre-race favorite Remco Evenepoel won another time trial to move back into the overall lead of the Giro d'Italia on Sunday.

In contrast to the opening time trial, however, Evenepoel won by the slightest of margins on stage nine - the longest of the race's three individual time trials.

The Belgian, who rides for Soudal Quick-Step, beat Geraint Thomas by

"I don't think I paced it very well," Evenepoel said. "I started too fast and my second part wasn't that great. I found some better legs in the technical part because I could recover a bit."

"I wasn't feeling too well in the second part with the head wind. It's another stage win but it wasn't my best time trial."

Tao Geoghegan Hart was third in the time trial, two seconds slower than Evenepoel. Just eight seconds separated the top five finishers in a strong performance from the general classification contenders.

Monday is the Giro's first rest day before Tuesday's 10th stage. There are two categorized climbs in the rolling 196-kilometer route through the Tuscan Apennines from Scandiano to Viareggio on the Mediterranean coast.

"To go to the mountains with the advantage I have now is pretty good but Ineos for sure will have some plans to attack me," Evenepoel said. "But we have a strong team and a lot of confidence."

SOCCER

stretched City's unbeaten run to 21 games in all competitions.

It was an 11th straight win in the league, which has seen the defending champions overhaul long-time leader Arsenal at the top of the table and put Pep Guardiola on the brink of a third successive title and his fifth in six seasons.

Defeat for Everton, meanwhile, leaves the Merseyside club just one point above the relegation zone and in a desperate fight for survival after 69 years in the top flight.

If Leicester beats Liverpool on Monday, Everton would drop into the bottom three with two games to play.

Few expected Sean Dyche's team to cause an upset against City, even after its shock 5-1 win against Brighton on Monday.

And despite holding the visitors for a long period of the first half, the game was effectively settled inside two minutes before the break.

Gundogan fired City ahead with a moment of improvisation that seemed to come from nothing in the 37th minute.

With his back to goal, the Germany international controlled Riyad Mahrez' cross from the right with one touch before flicking a shot over his shoulder and past Everton goalkeeper Jordan Pickford.

Two minutes later City's lead was doubled, with Gundogan the provider this time when crossing for Haaland to head in a second goal.

It was only the Norway striker's third touch of the match to that point.

Gundogan struck his second after

the break with a curling free kick from the edge of the area to continue his outstanding campaign.

While Haaland's goal-scoring feats has earned him the majority of the praise this season, and saw him named Footballer of the Year on Friday, Gundogan has been a key part of City's three-pronged trophy pursuit of the Premier League, Champions League and FA Cup.

Gundogan's two goals at Goodison came after his double against Leeds last week and took his total for the season to nine in all competitions.

He is widely expected to leave in the summer when his contract expires and has been strongly linked with a move to Barcelona.

That would leave Guardiola with a hole to fill in his midfield, with one potential replacement, Jude Bellingham, reportedly closing in on a transfer to Real Madrid.

City's attentions will now turn to Madrid, with the teams playing each other in the second leg of the Champions League semifinals on Wednesday.

With that game finely poised at 1-1 after the first game in Madrid, Guardiola was concerned about the impact the Eurovision Song Contest would have on his preparations for that match.

He would have preferred the Everton game to be played a day earlier to give his players more rest time, but said the staging of Eurovision in Liverpool on Saturday had meant that was impossible.

It mattered little to the outcome of this game, with City a comfortable winner in the end, but it remains to be seen what effect it will have on the performance against Madrid.

Bryan Mbeumo and Yoane Wissa struck as Brentford cruised to a 2-0 win against West Ham.

Brentford took advantage as West Ham manager David Moyes made a host of changes to his team, likely with a view to the second leg of the Europa Conference League semifinals at AZ Alkmaar on Thursday. West Ham won the first leg 2-1.

Haaland scores as City continue relentless march toward EPL title

Brentford blank West Ham

LIVERPOOL, England, May 14, (AP): Manchester City's seemingly relentless march toward the Premier League title continued with a 3-0 win against Everton on Sunday.

Two goals from Ilkay Gundogan and another from Erling Haaland - his 52nd of the season - secured the points at Goodison Park and

US outclass newcomers Hungary at ice hockey worlds

TAMPERE, Finland, May 14, (AP): The United States had to come from a goal down to outclass newcomer Hungary 7-1 for its second win at the ice hockey world championship on Sunday.

Canada had to do the same on the way to a 5-2 victory over Slovenia, the other newly promoted team in the top division.

Nick Bonino scored two goals for the Americans and Rocco Grimaldi had a goal and two assists in their Group A game at Nokia Arena in Tampere.

Americans Alex Tuch and Nick Bonino responded to Istvan Sofron's goal to come back into the game in the opening period.

Bonino added his second in the middle period on a power play and Cutter Gauthier made it 4-1 with a shot between the pads of goaltender Dominik Horvath.

Connor Mackey, Grimaldi and Luke Tuch finished

the scoring with a goal each in the third period.

MacKenzie Weegar had a goal and two assists in the second three-point game for the Calgary Flames defenseman while Michael Carcone and Jack McBain had a goal and an assist for Canada.

After Jan Drozdz's goal put Slovenia ahead in the

opening period, Canada answered with a three-goal second period in the Latvian capital Riga.

Carcone equalized with a wrist shot 1:13 into the frame, Pierre-Olivier Joseph rallied Canada to a 2-1 lead and Milan Lucic doubled the advantage on a power play.

Weegar and McBain had one each in the third before Drozdz reduced the deficit to 5-2 with his second.

ICE HOCKEY



Everton's Nathan Patterson (left), and Manchester City's Phil Foden battle for the ball during the English Premier League soccer match between Everton and Manchester City at the Goodison Park stadium in Liverpool, England. (AP)

Manchester City's Phil Foden scored his second goal of the season to help the club secure a 3-0 victory over Everton on Sunday.

Foden's goal came in the 37th minute, following a cross from Ilkay Gundogan. The Norwegian striker finished off the play with a simple tap into the net.

Manchester City's lead was doubled by Erling Haaland in the 42nd minute, as he headed in a cross from Gundogan.

Manchester City's third goal came in the 52nd minute, as Erling Haaland scored his 52nd goal of the season.

Manchester City's victory over Everton extends their unbeaten run to 21 games in all competitions.

Manchester City's win over Everton moves them to the top of the Premier League table, ahead of Arsenal.

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