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# KUWAIT VOICES OPTIMISM ON REGIONAL DETENTE

## Jeddah Declaration welcomes Syria



Leaders of Arab countries pose for a group picture ahead of the Arab summit in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, Friday, May 19, 2023.

Crown Prince Diwan photo



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky.

Crown Prince Diwan photo



In this photo provided by Saudi Press Agency, SPA, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman meets with Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky, during the Arab summit in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, Friday, May 19, 2023. (Saudi Press Agency via AP)



In this photo released by the Syrian official news agency SANA, shows Syrian President Bashar Assad, (left), meets with Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, during the Arab summit in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, Friday, May 19, 2023. (SANA via AP)

### Kuwait Amir Rep. meets Zelensky

Representative of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah met Friday Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky on the sidelines of the 32nd Arab Summit currently hosted by the Saudi City of Jeddah.

During the meeting, His Highness the Crown Prince conveyed greetings of all forms of boosting them to serve interest of the two states and their peoples, in addition to the latest developments on international and regional arenas.

The representative of His Highness the Amir stressed Kuwait's stance towards the Ukrainian crisis that calls for the necessity of abiding by the principles of international law and the UN Charter stressing on the sovereignty of the countries, their independence and their territorial integrity, in line with the internationally recognized borders.

The meeting was attended by Director of His Highness the Crown Prince Office retired General Jamal Mohammad Al-Thayab, Foreign Affairs Undersecretary at His Highness the Crown Prince Diwan Mazen Essa Al-Essa and Assistant Foreign Minister for Europe Affairs Ambassador Sadiq Marafi. (KUNA)

### Summit reaffirms centrality of Palestinian cause

**JEDDAH, May 20, (KUNA): Jeddah's Arab Summit concluded Friday with the issuance of a statement in which Arab leaders reaffirmed the need to coordinate on the economy, steps to ensure national security, and the Palestinian crisis.**

During a press conference following the summit, Saudi Foreign Minister Faisal bin Farhan and Arab League Secretary-General Ahmad Abu al-Gheith

said that the final statement of the Jeddah-hosted summit referred to the centrality of the Palestinian cause, protecting national security through the rejection of foreign interference and reform of the Arab League.

The centrality of the Palestinian cause was highlighted, saying this support was "absolute" for the "inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to freedom and self-determination."

It also pledged commitment

to endeavors aimed at granting independent statehood to Palestine, with full sovereignty, according to the 1967 lines, with East Jerusalem as a capital.

On the Sudanese conflict, Abu al-Gheith affirmed that the Arab League, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt are cooperating to urge the concerned parties in Sudan to reach an understanding.

In a reply to a question regarding Syria's return to the Arab League, Abu al-Gheith stressed that the decision was an Arab internal matter.

Regarding the Ukrainian crisis, the Saudi foreign minister stressed that dialogue is the "only solution" for the Ukraine-Russia war.

"We welcomed the Ukrainian President in the Arab League's meeting to hear all parties' points of view on the crisis," he added.

The Saudi minister also said "We will discuss with our Western partners regarding ties with Syria," adding that efforts are being made to help Syrian refugees get back to their homeland.

Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman, President of the 32nd Arab Summit, concluded Friday the top-level meeting by approving the Jeddah Declaration, stating:

■ The summitters reaffirmed centrality of the Palestinian cause to Arab countries as one of the main factors of stability in the region, condemning in the strongest terms the practices and violations that target the Palestinians' lives.

■ They called for intensive efforts to reach a comprehensive and just settlement for the Palestinian issue, and to find a settlement to achieve peace on the basis of the two-state solution in accordance with international references, namely the Arab Peace Initiative.

■ The conferees welcomed the decision issued by the League Council meeting at the ministerial level, which included resumption of the participation of Syrian government delegations in its meetings.

■ They reaffirmed support for everything that guarantees security and stability of the Republic of Yemen and achieves aspirations of the brotherly Yemeni people.

■ The summitters expressed solidarity with Lebanon, urged all Lebanese parties to engage in dialogue to elect a president who satisfies people's aspirations to restore regular work of constitutional institutions and conduct required reforms.

■ They affirmed that sustainable development, security, stability, and living in peace are inherent rights of the Arab citizen, and this will only be achieved by complementing efforts, combating crime and corruption firmly and at all levels.

Meanwhile, the Representative of His Highness the Amir (of the State of Kuwait) Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, on Friday addressed the 32nd Arab summit held in Jeddah. The Representative of His Highness the Amir (of the State of Kuwait) Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince

Continued on Page 4

## Net profit for Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait – Egypt

— Details Page 8 —

## Moon Dubai's next big thing

DUBAI, May 20, (AP): Who says you cannot reach for the moon? A proposed \$5 billion real estate project wants to take skyscraper-studded Dubai to new heights - by bringing a symbol of the heavens down to Earth.

Canadian entrepreneur Michael Henderson envisions building a 274-meter (900-foot) replica of the moon atop a 30-meter (100-foot) building in Dubai, already home to the world's tallest building and other architectural wonders.

Henderson's project, dubbed MOON, may sound out of this world, but it could easily fit in this futuristic city-state. Dubai already has a red-hot real estate market, fueled by the wealthy who fled restrictions imposed in their home countries during the coronavirus pandemic and Russians seeking refuge amid Moscow's war on Ukraine.

And even though a previous booms-and-bust cycle saw many grand projects collapse, Henderson and others

suggest his vision, funded by Moon World Resorts Inc., where he is the co-founder, might not be that far-fetched.

"We have the biggest 'brand' in the world," Henderson told The Associated Press, alluding that the moon itself - the heavenly body - was his brand. "Eight billion people know our brand, and we haven't even started yet."

The project Henderson proposes includes a destination resort inside the spherical structure, complete with a 4,000-room hotel, an arena capable of hosting 10,000 people and a "lunar colony" that would give guests the sensation of actually walking on the moon.

The MOON would sit on a pedestal-like circular building beneath it and would glow at night. Henderson discussed the project at the Arabian Travel Market earlier in May in Dubai.



This artist rendering shows the \$5 billion project, MOON envisioned on the Dubai Pearl, a coveted plot of land at the base of The Palm Jumeirah. A proposed \$5 billion real estate project wants to take skyscraper-studded Dubai to new heights by bringing a part of the heavens down to Earth. Canadian entrepreneur Michael Henderson envisions building a 274-meter (900-foot) replica of the moon atop a 30-meter (100-foot) building in Dubai. (AP)

### NewsWatch

**KUWAIT CITY:** The Kuwaiti Foreign Ministry on Saturday condemned the attack on the Qatari embassy building in the Sudanese capital Khartoum.

The ministry was alluding to the incident, where a group of gunmen burst into the diplomatic mission's building and vandalized it.

In a statement, the department affirmed utter rejection of all forms of violence and sabotage targeting offices of the diplomatic missions in Sudan that constitute blatant violation of the international law and the 1961 Vienna treaty.

It renewed the call upon the official authorities and all stakeholders in Sudan to take immediate action and provide full security for the buildings of the missions, safeguard the personnel and punish the perpetrators. (KUNA)

**RIYADH:** GCC Secretary General Jasssem Al-Bedaiwi on Thursday affirmed that the Gulf-US partnership is pivotal for serving mutual interests and beeping up regional security.

The GCC Secretariat General said in a statement that Al-Bedaiwi affirmed the partnership significance during a meeting with the US Ambassador to Saudi Arabia Michael Alan Ratney at the secretariat's headquarters in the Saudi capital Riyadh.

Al-Bedaiwi and Ratney discussed preparations for joint commissions' meetings, namely the joint task team, and regional issues of joint concern.

The GCC chief congratulated

Ratney on his recent appointment as Washington's ambassador in Riyadh.

Al-Bedaiwi heads the six-member Gulf Cooperation Council that comprises Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the UAE, Bahrain, Qatar and Oman.

The GCC countries that joined hands to establish the regional bloc in early 80s of the past century in the shadow of a major war between Iran and Iraq are either close friends to the US or bonded with Washington with defense treaties. (KUNA)

**DUBAI:** Iran on Friday executed three men accused of deadly violence during last year's anti-government protests despite objections from human rights groups.

Mizan, the judiciary's website, announced the executions of Majid Kazemi, Saleh Mirhashemi and Saeed Yaghoubi, without saying how they were carried out. Authorities say they killed a police officer and two members of the paramilitary Basij group in Isfahan in November during nationwide protests.

Rights groups say the three were subjected to torture, forced into televised confessions and denied due process.

The protests erupted last September after the death of a 22-year-old woman, Mahsa Amini, who had been detained by the country's morality police for allegedly violating its strict Islamic dress code. The demonstrations rapidly escalated into calls for the overthrow of the theocracy that has ruled Iran since the 1979 Islamic Revolution. (AP)



Prayer Timings			
Fajr .....	03:23	Asr .....	15:20
Sunrise ..	04:53	Maghrib ..	18:36
Zohr .....	11:44	Isha .....	20:04

# Local

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

## Mol allays fears of citizens, residents

# Clarification about biometric system installed at land, air ports

KUWAIT CITY, May 20: Security sources dispelled the concerns that many citizens and residents are having regarding the application of the biometric system at the border crossings and at the airport. They explained that the process aims to build a database at the Ministry of Interior, reports Al-Rai daily.

They revealed that the ministry has installed 49 devices at the land, sea and air ports, in addition to two centers in Umm Al-Hayman and Jahra.

The sources explained that this step does not cause any obstacle for citizens or residents in terms of traveling or renewing residency. Requesting for fingerprint does not prevent travelers from leaving or entering the country.

The ministry is currently creating a security database for those coming into the country, irrespective of whether they are citizens, residents or Gulf nationals, and even visitors. The next step will include residents of the country by taking their ten fingerprints and linking it to the process of the renewal of their residency.

The sources said, "The application of the biometric feature system recorded accuracy, efficiency, high capacity, and great speed in showing results, and in collecting data for all people who underwent fingerprinting, as the country's land, air, and sea ports witnessed severe crowding among those coming to take an eye, face and the finger prints.

The Department of Land and Air Ports has registered the largest number of travelers coming into the country, including citizens, residents and visitors, by taking their fingerprint, which in normal cases takes not more than three minutes. Whoever faces the problem of the fingerprint not being recognized either due to an injury or other reason, it is recorded in the system, and then the eye and the face is scanned, which takes about five minutes.

However, in the event that the port witnesses a large congestion of travel-

ers, only Kuwaitis will be allowed to enter. They will be informed of the need to go to one of the two centers in the areas of Umm Al-Haiman and Jahra to take the fingerprint. These centers will work 24 hours a day to support the border crossings and reduce congestion, especially with the large travel movement expected during the summer period.

The fingerprint system is applied to anyone who is 21 years old and above, that is, those born in 2002 or before. The fingerprint system does not apply to those under this age.

The sensory fingerprint device sends complete data to the Criminal Evidence Department, to set up a special database so that the data becomes linked to the Gulf security system. There are agreements within the GCC countries to exchange data of people who are wanted in security cases, or if the person is wanted in one Gulf country and is in another Gulf country, or someone with dual citizenship such as having two passports for two different countries. The aim is to detect counterfeits, nab those wanted by security, and record the security data of the person subject to the fingerprint.

The Criminal Evidence Department, in coordination with the General Department of Information Systems, has installed 49 devices for scanning purposes in the land ports. Seven among them are in Salmi port, 8 in Nuwaiseeb, 4 in Abdali, two in the sea port, and 14 devices in the airport terminals 1,4 and 5, in addition to Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Airport and the Protocol Hall. Also, 14 devices have been set up in the Umm Al-Hayman and Jahra centers, which will operate 24 hours a day to receive citizens."

The sources revealed that the workers in charge of the fingerprint devices have undergone a training course for the project, so that they can work on the devices with accuracy, professionalism and speed to avoid any delay for the

### Weather

**Expected weather for the next 24 hours:**

**By Day:** Rather hot with light to moderate southeasterly wind changing to northwesterly wind with speeds of 12-35 km/h and some high clouds will appear.

**By Night:** Mild and humid over

coastal areas with light to moderate southeasterly wind to light variable wind with speeds of 08-28 km/h and some scattered clouds will appear with a chance for mist forming over coastal areas.

Station	Max Exp	Min Rec
Kuwait City	35	28

Kuwait Airport	37	27
Abdaly	37	24
Jahra	37	27
Salmiyah	31	27
Ahmadi	32	28
Nuwaisib	37	27
Wafra	37	25

travelers.

It is worth highlighting that the Ministry of Interior had completed a project to develop and establish an integrated central biometric system for the State of Kuwait, which includes fingerprints, palm, face, iris and electronic signature for all individuals.



Sheikh Talal

The project was supervised by the First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Interior and Acting Minister of Defense Sheikh Talal Al-Khaled. He followed up the implementation of the final stages of the project, and was briefed on the components of the second phase represented in the project of updating the systems and infrastructure of the ports. This project includes a comprehensive modernization of the implementation of entry and exit procedures for travelers and vehicles. It also includes the establishment of data centers for the security of the ports and the provision of automated devices to facilitate procedures by a mechanism for reading travel documents, verifying their authenticity and checking

their security features, controlling cases of forgery, and matching them with the traveler's vital features by checking fingerprints, face and iris of the eye, and checking local and international black lists before documenting travel.

The project also includes conducting security checks on vehicles at the land ports to verify that they are not included in the lists of stolen and wanted vehicles locally and internationally, before documenting the movement of the vehicle.

# 9 arrested in primary poll

## Iraq MP's statement condemned

By Saeed Mahmoud Saleh  
Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 20: Nine citizens, including some members of the nullified 2022 Parliament, were

arrested and referred to the Public Prosecution recently for organizing primary elections in the Fourth Constituency.

Sources from the Ministry of Interior disclosed that special teams have been tasked to monitor the local arena to uncover election-relat-

ed violations like the organization and participation in primary elections, which are criminalized acts as per the National Assembly Election Law number 35/1962. Sources affirmed these teams have been instructed to strictly enforce the law and refer all those proven to have committed violations to the prosecution. Sources said this campaign will continue until Election Day — June 6, 2023.

Meanwhile, former MP and First Constituency candidate Osama Al-Shaheen condemned the provocative statements of Iraqi lawmaker Soud Al-Saaedi about the Kuwaiti marine and land borders. He asserted such statements are outrightly rejected, because they are illegal and unjustified.

Al-Saaedi filed a petition at the Higher Federal Court in Iraq against the treaty between Kuwait and Iraq regarding Abdullah Bay. He wondered why the Kuwaiti government remains silent over the issue, stressing the need to take an official stand against such attitude.

He added Kuwait seems to be gearing toward granting loans and donations to Iraq, warning this could lead to negative repercussions. He then urged the Iraqi authorities to clarify their stand on the issue.

**'Report vote-buying':** The Ministry of Interior has set up "a hot line" (97272672) to report about any illicit vote purchase with respect of the National Assembly election due on June 6.

The ministry in a statement on Friday SAID the criminal investigation set up a WhatsApp number to deal seriously and secretly with any person, mediator or publisher involved in the vote purchase or who may seek persuasion for voting for a candidate in exchange for money or any kind of gifts.

It warned that the wrongdoer may face a penalty of up to five years behind iron bars and a fine reaching KD 5,000 (approx. USD 16,000). (KUNA)

**'Continue routine jobs':** The Acting Undersecretary of the Ministry of Social Affairs Abdulaziz Sari issued an administrative circular to all managers appointed in cooperative societies, in which he stressed the need to ensure adherence to the provisions of the law, ministerial decisions and regulations regulating cooperative work, and he insisted that their work be limited to the urgent disposal of matters, and that they should refer to the ministry for guidance in any matter of importance to the cooperative society and its members, until the election of a board of directors to undertake the task of managing the affairs of the cooperative society, reports Aljarida daily.

## HH Amir congratulates Cameroon

KUWAIT CITY, May 20, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable Saturday to President of Cameroon Paul Biya, expressing congratulations on the occasion of his country's National Day.

In the cable, His Highness the Amir wished President of Cameroon good health, and Cameroon and its friendly people further progress and prosperity.

### Crown Prince

His Highness the Crown Prince

Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable Saturday to President of Cameroon Paul Biya, expressing congratulations on the occasion of his country's National Day, and wishing him good health.

### Prime Minister

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent a cable Saturday to President of Cameroon Paul Biya, expressing congratulations on the occasion of his country's National Day.

## Plan to stop goods sale in installments

KUWAIT CITY, May 20: Major electronic appliances and furniture companies are studying the possibility of stopping the sale of their goods in installments after the Minister of Commerce and Industry issued a decision saying companies cannot increase the value of the product if sold in installment, reports Al-Rai daily.

Responsible sources told the daily the companies are involved in extensive discussions to study the decision of the Minister which says the company cannot charge more for customers who opt to pay in installments unlike those who pay cash.

The sources pointed out that the other conditions mentioned in the

decision include setting a ceiling for these sales at five thousand dinars to be paid in equal monthly installments within a period not exceeding 3 years which negatively affects the revenues of electronics and furniture companies in the event they continue to sell goods for the same value in cash and in installments.

## Dar Al Shifa Hospital enhances its leading position globally in healthcare by signing a Cooperation Agreement with Bumrungrad International Hospital



**Wattanachai Nirundorn:**  
The agreement will explore and foster opportunities between both sides

**Mr. Bader Jeraq:**  
Signing the agreement coincides with Dar Al Shifa's celebration of its 60th Anniversary

**Dr. Ahmad Nasrallah:**  
The agreement depicts common vision and accumulated expertise of both sides

Dar Al Shifa hospital hosted an official ceremony on the occasion of signing a memorandum of understanding with Bumrungrad International Hospital, in presence of Mr. Wattanachai Nirundorn, Charge D'Affaires of the Thai Embassy, Mr. Bader Jeraq, Chairman of Dar Al Shifa Hospital, Board Members, Mrs. Narjes Al-Yousefi, Member of the Board, Dr. Khaled Jraq, Deputy Chairman, Mr. Waleed Jraq, and Mr. Qais Alghanim, Board Member, Dr. Ahmad Nasrallah, CEO of the Hospital, and a number of diplomats, ministry officials, in addition to hospital managers of the medical and administrative departments.

The ceremony was followed by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between both sides, the inauguration of the International Information Office situated in the hospital lobby to guide patients, offer information and assistance for accessing Bumrungrad services from Kuwait.

### Program Development

In this context, H.E. Wattanachai Nirundorn, Charge D'Affaires of the Thai Embassy, stated: "I am confident that this cooperation will lead to success and create more opportunities between us towards exploring aspects of future cooperation."

### Best Case

Mr. Bader Jeraq, Chairman of Dar Al Shifa Hospital explained that signing

the memorandum confirms continuing global and regional achievements and health leadership of the Hospital, with keen desire to provide the best healthcare to its clients in the various disciplines.

"The MoU is concurrent with Dar Al Shifa's celebration of its 60th Anniversary. Those years witnessed substantial and distinctive phases of health development, translated by the Hospital's Executive Management, with endless support by the Board of Directors." He added.

### International Partnership

From his part, Mr. Arterat Charukitpitat, CEO of Bumrungrad International Hospital, stated: "The amicable relations between Thailand and Kuwait extend to over 60 years." "The partnership evidence the strong ties between our countries, where both parties are committed to facilitating the utilization by the clients of the high-quality healthcare services."

"Bumrungrad is holder of Best Hospital in Thailand Award, and is one of the 3 Best Hospitals in the World for three consecutive years (2021 - 2023) from Newsweek Magazine. The Hospital strongly intends to achieve our 2023 vision to become the most thought healthcare and wellbeing destination."

He added.

From his part, Rajiv Butcher, CEO of Partnerships at Bumrungrad International

Hospital, stated: "We are pleased to see such alliance with Dar Al Shifa Hospital in Kuwait, which is the first private hospital in Kuwait."

"We are distinguished with a hundred years of expertise and success in healthcare, and aim at providing excellent healthcare to the clients of Dar Al Shifa Hospital." He elaborated.

Rajiv Rajan, Chief Business Development Officer of Bumrungrad International Hospital stated that such partnership and cooperation with Dar Al Shifa Hospital will strengthen the relations between the two countries on patient care and scientific research areas, as well as the exchange of knowledge program.

### Global Institutions

From his side, Dr. Ahmad Nasrallah, Dar Al Shifa Hospital's CEO, stated that signing the cooperation agreement between Dar Al Shifa Hospital and Bumrungrad Hospital, a pioneer in healthcare sector globally, stresses that Dar Al Shifa's, extending sixty years, is on the right track and is advancing in steady steps towards the globalization and development.

"The agreement covers cooperation of medical staff at Dar Al Shifa Hospital and Bumrungrad Hospital in the areas of regenerative medicine, dermatology, regenerative surgeries, and trauma treatment." He concluded.



KUNA photo  
Deputy Foreign Minister, Ambassador Mansour Al-Otaibi, with the new Ambassador of the Russian Federation to the State of Kuwait.

## Deputy FM meets Russian envoy

Deputy Foreign Minister Ambassador Mansour Al-Otaibi received on Thursday the new Russian Ambassador to Kuwait Vladimir Ziltov.

The two sides discussed means of promoting cooperation between the two countries at various levels.

The Deputy Foreign Minister Ambassador also met with Charge D'Affaires at the Lebanese Embassy in Kuwait Ahmad Arafa.

A statement by the Foreign Ministry said that the two officials discussed ways to bolster bilateral relations. (KUNA)

## Other Voices

# Bishop of Canterbury & the Pope Benedict

By Ahmad alsarraf

The Archbishop of Canterbury was found guilty of driving five miles faster than the authorized limit, and the judge fined him £510!

The Archbishop did not intercede for his prestigious position, or the fact that he placed the crown, days before, on the head of King Charles III, and the latter did not intervene to intercede for him, under the pretext that "this is our son"!

For your information, the bishop was driving his old Volkswagen, without bodyguards, drivers, or escorts, and he is the archbishop of Britain!

In the 1980s, I had previously experienced a similar story, when a judge ruled that the nephew of Queen Elizabeth should pay a very large fine, for driving fast!

The judge justified the harshness of the ruling by saying that members of the royal family are role models for the people, and they must be contradicted in a different way, so that they serve as an example to others!

I think we will need a thousand years to reach their level of understanding of how blind justice works. That is if you would be so kind and wait for us!

The driving violation of the Bishop of Canterbury reminded me of a "joke" that spread a lot in the corridors of the Vatican, after Pope Benedict took over the papacy in 2005, when he received

a gift from his motherland, Germany, which was a unique car!

The new pope was impressed by the gift, and decided, in clear contravention of custom, to drive it himself. Late at night, he asked his driver to accompany him and sit in the back seat.

Driving a car was an experience that the Pope had missed since he entered the priesthood, when he was in his early twenties, and it was difficult for him to resist the temptation to drive it fast, and it was only moments until a policeman on a motorcycle stopped him, and he bent forward, and as soon as he recognized the personality of the greatest pontiff, who remained indifferent to the matter, he took two steps backwards and made a call to his boss, and the following strange conversation took place between them:

■ Sir, I just stopped a very well known personality for speeding in the streets of Rome, what should I do?

■ Issue him a violation; no one is above the law.

■ But he is a VVIP that you can't imagine.

■ Issue him a violation; no matter how big he is.

■ Sir, please understand me he is a VVIP and can be a dangerous character.

■ I told you twice: issue him a violation; whatever the degree and status of that character.

■ But he is really big and dangerous.

■ What do you mean big, important and dangerous?

Sir, I do not know exactly who that character is, but what I do know very well is that the driver of that person is His Eminence, Pope Benedict.

email: a.alsarraf@alqabas.com.kw



# diwaniya

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

## ‘Respect judiciary to protect state from falling into chaos’

“IT IS certain that the 2020 Council, which was reinstated by the Constitutional Court, did not and would not be liked by some members of the annulled Council, and they described it as unpopular and almost destitute, because they were a minority in that Council, and they were unable to impose their views harmful to the state in that Council, so they raised a kind of shameful riot, which led to the disruption of the sessions, because the government and the parliamentary majority did not deal with that bad behavior firmly,” columnist **Dr Abdul Mohsen Hamadeh** wrote for **Al-Jarida** daily.

“The weakness of the government led those members to persist in their transgression, and chaos increased in the parliament, so the government submitted its resignation due to its inability to cooperate with the Council.

“The authority decided to dissolve the Council of 2020 and call for new elections, and the Council of 2022 came with a populist parliamentary majority, concerned with dropping loans that cost the state more than 14 billion dollars, and compromising the national identity, as the majority of the members of that Council called for granting citizenship without adhering to the regulations to protect the homeland to grant citizenship to those who do not deserve it.

“And that majority was characterized by a loud, bad voice, and the government refused to attend the council’s sessions, on the condition that those demands be withdrawn, so the sessions were disrupted. Meanwhile, the Constitutional Court was looking into electoral appeals, including an appeal filed by deputies from the 2020 Council, in which they claimed that His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmed Al-Nawaf submitted his resignation, declaring his government’s inability to cooperate with the Council, without attending the Council’s sessions, so how did it become clear to His Highness that the Council does not cooperate with him?

“The argument presented by Dr. Anwar Al-Fazia and Dr. Nawaf Al-Yassin, in their capacity as representatives of some of the 2020 deputies affected by the dissolution of that parliament, is full of arguments that convinced the court judges to invalidate the dissolution of the 2020 parliament, so they decided to reinstate it, and this resulted in the invalidity of the 2022 election, and this is not the first time that the Constitutional Court ruled to invalidate the dissolution of the parliament.

“The same court had already ruled to nullify the 2012 council and reinstate the 2009 council, and that was during the era of His Highness the late Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad, may God have mercy on him, accepted the court’s ruling with grace, and re-convened the 2009 council to complete its term. Why do we see today that there is hesitation on the part of the government to accept the court’s opinion?

“The fear is that there will be a bad party in the government who incites against the opinion of the court, and the fear that that bad party that entered the government and incites it against the court’s ruling is the one who was leading the chaos in the 2020 Council, and we hope that His Highness the Prime Minister will not be deceived in the praise that some members of the court are repeating.

“The revoked council, and they describe His Highness as a man of reform and the new era, and we all hope that this will not be a reason to deceive His Highness and respond to their demands that are harmful to the state.

“Respecting the judiciary is stability for the security of the state and preserving it from falling into chaos, and judges rule in the name of God and in the name of the Amir, and they have no interest in standing with one party against another. Fine, so he said, “If Britain is fine as long as its judiciary is fine, then the opinion of the judiciary must be respected and its reputation not to be compromised.”

### Also:

“It is no secret to anyone the state of general frustration among all the Kuwaiti people due to the failure of the successive parliaments to achieve the aspiration for the desired political stability, which has become like “white eggs” in Kuwait,” columnist **Sultan Majid Al-Salem** wrote for **Al-Jarida** daily.

“On the other hand, I also do not think that it is right to start at this particular time in the electoral race by pointing the finger of blame at this or that, but rather one is supposed to be smarter than the scene, and to make the movement himself, and to put the supreme interest of the country above any consideration.

“Yes, the people are frustrated, and if we take into account the numbers of those registered in the elections administration as upcoming candidates on the scene, we clearly deduce the expected participation rate on the next polling day, and what is required is that the Kuwaiti voter now has an insight equal to 6/6 on the date of the next 6/6 when he casts his precious vote and does not hesitate or hesitate to participate, as this is a legitimate right for you, and you must play your part as your conscience dictates to you.

“Certainly, I am not intending to direct anyone’s opinion in this article in favor of a specific candidate in an electoral district, as I believe that the good and the bad are very clear, and it is no secret to anyone who will be a true representative of the people to achieve their aspirations and who will represent the people and laugh at them and engage them in gelatinous, horizontal conflicts that do not fatten or fatten.

“What is important from this is that the individual among us advances and puts the supreme interest of the country, not that personality, and chooses the best, and has an insightful view 6/6 on 6/6. On the sidelines: My dear readers, I will stop writing the weekly article during the summer period, God willing, at the beginning of next October I will continue writing again. Until then, may you be well and happy.”

□ □ □

“I have been monitoring the local arena since the door of candidacy for the 2023 parliament election opened, following the issuance of the Amiri decree on holding the election and setting the election date – June 6, 2023,” columnist **Tariq Borsly** wrote for **Al-Anba** daily.

“The obvious and clear relationship is renewed with tenderness, guidance and paternal eagerness to get out of the political crisis. His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad and His Highness the trustworthy Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad – may God protect them – called on everyone to push the locomotive of political action toward its rightful destination. This is the right step that people want.

“Every now and then, our faith in Kuwaiti democracy is renewed through the political leadership’s dealings with the legislative and executive authorities, as well as the forbearance and patience with all the political outcomes that put us on the track of developmental obstruction and put the two authorities in front of public embarrassment.

“In order to achieve Kuwaiti democracy and strengthen the bonds of interdependence, sincerity, love and affection between the ruler and the ruled, the people must respond to the call to elect members of the 2023 legislature. Who will be elected this time?

“Souls must be filtered between politicians, national priorities must be arranged, and scores must be settled based on the principle of national unity. Kuwait is a trust in our necks, and the people will elect you.”

□ □ □

“The huge boom that the world experienced over the past few years in technology and communications contributed to the tremendous changes, breakthrough, revolution and quantum leap in technological progress in a remarkable way towards a brighter future, especially if we consider the massive and rapid development in the field of the Internet, which has become one of the basic needs in our lives. Our need for the Internet has become equivalent to our need for the air we breathe,” columnist retired Staff **Colonel Abdullah Al-Misbah** wrote for **Al-Anba** daily.

“All important governmental transactions – banking, commercial, security, military, personal accounts and others – are now totally dependent on the Internet. We have started using certain terms like e-government, e-shopping, electronic money transfer and e-mail as an essential part of our daily life.

“All the aforementioned information are broadcasted, disseminated and circulated by sending electromagnetic waves (wireless) or through optical fibers spread across the oceans. Data are stored in computers with very high storage capacity called servers or via electronic clouds (iCloud).

“The downside of this mutation is that important information is subject to monitoring and hacking. It can be viewed by unauthorized persons through computers or smart phones. It is exploited in a hostile manner after viewing, destroying or stealing its secret contents, or making modifications or illegal financial transfers, hence, the term ‘cybersecurity’.

“Unfortunately, there is neither interest nor awareness of this field in Kuwait. I believe that the first possible solution in the matter of cybersecurity is our government’s belief in the importance of this project, not to make it a marginal project within the State’s bureaucratic documentary cycle. It must be among the priorities of national defense and one of the pivotal projects associated with global development in technology to keep pace with what other Gulf countries have achieved, at least in cybersecurity, as we are the least interested country in this field.”

□ □ □

“Within a few days, we will elect the new National Assembly as part of a political game with weakness of the development product, madness of some demands and the urgent need for radical change, which includes our good choice of representatives as voters, followed by the good work of our representatives under the dome of the Assembly having only one goal – to serve Kuwait and its people away from conflict, revenge and settling scores,” columnist **Sami Al-Nissan** wrote for **Annahar** daily.

“This will help ministers and lawmakers, especially the new ones, in preparing training and qualification courses for them to know the goal of the existing political game and the best way to achieve the goal. This is in addition to understanding the principles and texts of the Constitution, the well-established rules of constitutional work, some of the contents of the minutes of the Constituent Assembly, rulings of the Constitutional Court, previous practices, protocols, and ways to maintain a healthy relationship between the authorities after fighting replaced cooperation and obstruction replaced facilitation.

“Kuwait will either end its political crises and then develop and progress, or the suffocating crises will end Kuwait and the existing social peace.”

□ □ □

“Refusal to participate in the upcoming parliamentary election as a candidate – as it appears in published figures – is a dangerous indicator. It means reaching a popular conviction that the parliamentary institution is no longer capable of carrying out its work as it should, and that it is more effective to ignore such an institution and search for other paths and channels to convey the citizen’s voice. Through such paths and channels, it is easy to confront the symbols of corruption,” columnist **Nasser Al-Abdali** wrote for **Al-Qabas** daily.

“Those who were previously enthusiastic to run for election are no longer so, especially when they witnessed many of those who claimed to be fighters against corruption and those who uttered their famous cry of no return to the trio of corruption, rushed to ally with the thieves of public money in order to gain here and there. They also witnessed those trying to confront the wave of corruption being attacked and questioned day and night by the new coalition, so many have opted to stay away.

“Former National Assembly Speaker Ahmed Al-Saadoun’s position has become clear, as every representative or candidate based their decision to run for the election on Al-Saadoun’s bid for speakership regardless of who stands behind the campaign supporting him to reach that seat. The last time he occupied the seat, he wrapped all propositions, which we were glad to hear about after a long period in a scene that surrealists thinkers would have been unable to paint.

“I expect that the reluctance to run for election will be followed by the reluctance of voters to cast their votes. In my opinion, the latter will be the biggest disaster, because it means that we are facing a new phase whose features will be confined to two parties – authority and citizen. This is after the masses lost confidence in the government and parliament at the same time, and they are heading towards their demands.”

□ □ □

“May 19, 2023... We must remember this date. It should not pass us by unnoticed. It is the date for holding the Arab Summit in Riyadh, marking Syria’s attendance for the first time after its estrangement,” columnist **Dr Abdullah Al-Hawaj** wrote for **Annahar** daily.

“The whole world, not only the Arabs, will monitor this summit, when all the Arabs might meet for the first time. This world is suffering and the international system no longer care for the needy, the bereaved and the weak.

“The international system has failed to establish the foundation of justice. The model of failure was evident in the absence of justice since the outbreak of the Arab-Israeli conflict, and since they left the rope on the sidelines to one party to attack under one-sided pretexts the sanctities, the defenseless Palestinian people, the land and rights of others with excessive use of force.

“The time has come for the Arabs to say their final word in this conflict – to be or not to be. The time has come for the Arab Summit to confront itself with decisions that the man on the street in the frustrated country is waiting for (or not).

“The time has come for peace and security to return to unhappy Yemen, to parts of glorious Lebanon, to the future Iraq, and to Syria in its entirety. The project is based on constants that we deliberately ignore or insist on ignoring and turning a blind eye to.

“No one doubts that the Arab national security has been threatened internally and externally. It is not a secret that the rule of law at the national level must take its way into implementation, so no one becomes above the law. Projects are alien to us and some are waiting for us to rule with clear injustice in the arenas of international organizations.”

— Compiled by Mai Elsoukary



KUNA photo  
First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Interior and Acting Minister of Defense holds talks with the Commander of the US Central Command, Lieutenant General Michael Corella on his official visit to the country.

### Ties with US deep-rooted: Sheikh Talal

First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Interior, and Acting Minister of Defense Sheikh Talal Khaled Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah on Friday praised the deep and well-established relations between Kuwait and the United States of America and their permanent and joint cooperation at all levels, especially concerning the military aspects.

Sheikh Talal’s remarks came in a press statement issued by the Ministry of Defense after he received in

his office today the commander of the US Central Command, Lieutenant General Michael Corella, and his accompanying delegation, on the occasion of his official visit to the country.

During the meeting, Sheikh Talal Al-Khaled and Corella addressed topics of common interest and latest developments at the regional and international levels. (KUNA)

## Traveling with gold bars requires customs docus

‘Unnecessary’ jewelry must be declared

**KUWAIT CITY, May 20: All travelers – citizens and residents – leaving with gold bars must obtain a statement regarding these bars from the Air Cargo Customs Department at the Kuwait Airport before traveling, within the framework of adherence to the applicable customs procedures, especially since it has been noted that travelers have left with large quantities of gold during the recent period, reports Al-Anba daily.**

The customs source said this phenomenon has only one meaning that the traveler who carries gold with them has converted the value of his money into gold, which must be dealt with by customs authorities in the context of laws in force to protect the traveler himself before anything.

The traveler is required to bring an invoice proving his ownership of the gold bars, in addition to his identification papers, and submit to the Air Cargo Customs Department one day before travel to prove what bars he will carry with him during the flight, and upon his arrival at the airport, he presents the issued statement to the customs inspectors and completes the journey with ease.

About the quantity limit to be disclosed, the source indicated that any gold bars or coins, regardless of their size, small or large, must be disclosed and a statement obtained, as they are not artefacts or jewelry for personal use, as the bars are known to be a conversion process from currency to gold, and then it must be re-monetized in another country, which must be subject to an audit that ensures the following:

1- Evidence of the traveler’s ownership of the gold, as his submission of the purchase invoice in the export statement is evidence that he obtained it properly and did not obtain it as a result of any illegal behavior.

2- Protection of travelers, both citizens and residents: Proving that citizens and residents carry these bars when traveling is one of the protection mechanisms for them, since they disclosed them directly, which proves their good faith.

Regarding the submission of a statement issued for the artifacts, the source confirmed that the gold artifacts that women carry for personal use when traveling, it is a relative matter. If they are in reasonable quantities that are used as adornment, then a statement by the female traveler is not required.

But if the quantities that a woman wears are exaggerated in weight, then the matter here requires that she go through the normal procedures, including obtaining a statement issued for those artifacts.

## Ban on 5 UK universities

**KUWAIT CITY, May 20: Minister of Education and Higher Education Dr Hamad Al-Adwani has ordered suspension of the enrollment of Kuwaiti students in five British universities, reports Al-Qabas daily.**

The daily obtained a copy of the decision, which stipulates the suspension of enrollment of Kuwaiti students at all levels of undergraduate and postgraduate programs at the University of Salford, De Montfort University and Brunel University London.

The minister also stopped the enrollment of Kuwaiti students in the Bachelor in Electronics and Electrical Engineering program at the University of Central Lancashire and Bachelor in Pharmacy at the University of Brighton.



KUNA photo  
KRCS officials and volunteers during the dispatch of aid to Sudan.

### Aid to Sudan continues

Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) announced on Thursday that the ninth relief aid plane carrying 10 tons of relief aid has departed Kuwait on its way to Sudan. KRCS’s head of public relations and media Khaled Al-Zaid told KUNA that the relief aid campaign would maintain the air bridge between Kuwait and Sudan and would continue to ensure the arrival of much needed materials.

He added that the campaign would hopefully lessen the suffering of the Sudanese people and help them during their ordeal.

He noted that KRCS, in cooperation with the Kuwaiti government, has sent 90 tons of relief aid to Sudan since the beginning of the campaign.

The Kuwaiti government, under the directives of the leadership, kick-started a relief aid campaign to help Sudanese people as part of Kuwait’s commitment towards this urgent humanitarian issue. (KUNA)

The process of evaluating artifacts when traveling is subject to the discretion and experience of customs inspectors in Kuwait, who have the skills to enable them to estimate the situation for the traveler, which is something they deal with very high flexibility to ensure the application of the spirit of the law as well as the protection of the capabilities of citizens and residents.

Regarding large quantities of gold taken by travelers, the source indicated that the matter cannot be stopped, as Kuwait is an open market that has no restrictions, and it is part of facilitating the movement of trade and funds as long as it proceeds in the proper legal context and there are no suspicions that the movement of that gold may be linked to any activity other than legal.

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# Engineers may find it difficult to get jobs in future: KES chief

Eng Al-Atl says output far exceeds market needs

**KUWAIT CITY, May 20:** The head of the Kuwait Engineers Society, Eng. Faisal Al-Atl, has sounded an alarm bell saying Kuwait may find it hard to find jobs for engineers in future because the number of engineering graduates is 3,000 annually while the actual need

for both the government and private labor market does not exceed 1,000, reports Al-Rai daily.

He added, because there is no coordination between education of all kinds and the need of the labor market, and since the annual turnout of engineers far outpace the need of the labor market, there is a need for specialized engineers in the oil sector, such as



Eng Al-Atl

machinery and drilling engineers, but none studies these disciplines, while the focus is on petroleum engineering in general, so there is an imbalance in the labor market and its needs in which the graduate will not find an opportunity to work in the future with his certificate.

Al-Atl said the KES has prepared a list of 13,000 expatriate engineers who have not passed the professional tests carried out by the society in cooperation with the Kuwait University and also “we did not find a clear response in this regard.”

**Proposal**

He went on to say that the KES has submitted a proposal and called on the Public Authority for Manpower to amend the Kuwaitization law in the private sector so that the rate is not less than 30 percent for Kuwaitis.

He added, until 2004, the number of public benefit associations was approximately 25, and they have been operating since the 1960s, according to goals and plans to develop and serve their members and society in general.

However, after this date, the number exceeded 100 associations with the same goals and technical specializations. It seems that some of these associations have a political goal that may weaken the strength of the civil society in confronting corruption, dispersing its ideas, and interfering in its work, and public benefit associations, especially professional associations, since their inception, serving the country and the citizen through declared goals and activities for all.

Meanwhile, he said according to published figures, the number of Kuwaiti engineers working in the private sector does not exceed 2,000, unlike oil engineers and the government sector.

### Employment

He added, the KES supports the employment of Kuwaiti engineers, and the Kuwaitization of the engineering sector, and “this is our major demand and in all our meetings with officials, we call for opening new work horizons and stopping the queue system for Kuwaiti engineers in the government sector, and we have initiated the rehabilitation of hundreds of engineers to replace them in the private sector as well.

“In this regards, we presented a project to replace the Kuwaiti engineers to work in the private sector by regulating the engineering labor market in Kuwait under the title ‘Engineers are future leaders’ which has so far received a lukewarm response by assigning the association the task of accrediting non-Kuwaiti

engineers,” he said.

He went on to say, that everyone who submits an application for membership and fulfills the conditions gets it, and we have members and colleagues from the bedouin category and they enjoy all the services provided by the society except they don’t have the voting right in the elections for the society’s board members.

Al-Atl confirmed that the Society of Engineers is the oldest public benefit society in Kuwait, as it was established in 1962, with the beginning of the urban and economic renaissance and shortly after Kuwait’s independence, and its objectives include contributing to the industrial and urban renaissance in the country, preserving the rights and legitimate professional interests of engineers and organizing the rules for practicing the profession and raising their standards.

This is in addition to working to consolidate ties and documenting scientific and technical cooperation between engineers in Kuwait and their colleagues in Arab and foreign countries, encouraging the conduct of engineering research and the development of Arab engineering specifications in partnership with the concerned institutions and bodies, seeking to resolve disputes that occur between engineers or between them and their clients in connection with engineering work and encouraging engineering vocational training in Kuwait by various available means.



Officials during the opening of the Ambulance Center.

## MoH opens Ambulance Center in Kabd-B

The Ministry of Health has declared open the Ambulance Center in Kabd-B; which operates round the clock to serve those residing in Jawakhir Kabd, Farwaniya Equestrian Center, Fire Training School and Scouts Camp, reports Al-Rai daily.

Director of the Medical Emergency Department Dr Ahmed Al-Shatti disclosed in a press statement that the center was inaugurated under the aus-

pices of Assistant Undersecretary for Medical Support Services Yaqoub Al-Tamar. He said this is the eighth ambulance center in Farwaniya Health District in particular, and 77th in general.

He also affirmed the opening of such centers at the University City and West Abdullah Mubarak in Farwaniya Governorate earlier, to be followed by three other centers in Ahmadi Health District later.

## 10 tenders floated for roads repair

# ‘Roads maintenance ongoing in all governorates of Kuwait’

**KUWAIT CITY, May 20:** According to informed sources in the Ministry of Public Works, the maintenance teams in all six governorates of the country have finished dealing with 679 sites in different parts of the country during the first ten days of the launch of the excavation treatment plan. Work is ongoing around the clock, even during official holidays, reports Al-Qabas daily.

The sources explained that the directives of the Minister of Public Works Dr. Amari Bouqomaz stressed the need to focus on the most affected places and give them priority in action by closing deep and medium potholes that cause damage to vehicles, pose a danger to those who drive, or cause traffic confusion.

Priority is given to the main roads separating the areas, followed by the main roads within each plot, all the way to the internal streets, according to a detailed database.

Based on the proactive monitoring process, the governorates of Hawalli, Farwaniya, and Ahmadi are the most affected. However, work is taking place at the level of the various governorates to complete that plan as soon as possible. Work is being carried out according to the prior monitoring of those sites. The data is updated daily through technical teams in each governorate whose task is to look for any new damaged sites.

A total of 107 sites in three areas in Hawalli Governorate, namely: Jabriya, Zahra and Salwa, out of 13 areas in the governor-

ate, were dealt with, including 8 areas with new maintenance contracts that are currently under warranty. The roads in Salwa areas have been completed. Work is currently underway in Salmiya and Mishref areas, in addition to Jabriya area, which has been in operation since the beginning of the plan.

In Farwaniya Governorate, 203 deep and medium potholes were dealt with in five areas, namely: Ishbiliyah, Farwaniya, Ardiya, Rabiha and Abdullah Al-Mubarak, in addition to Jordan and Muhammad bin Al-Qasim Streets.

In Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governorate, 145 sites were dealt with, namely: the coastal strip in Abu Al-Hasaniyah and Mesillah areas, as well as Funaitees and Qurain areas, and the roads separating the Mubarak Al-Kabeer, Abu Fatira and the Qurain markets areas.

Meanwhile, the “Kuwait Al-Youm” a Kuwait government publication printed in its Sunday issue the details about 10 tenders for road repair, reports Al-Qabas daily.

The bidding for the tenders began May 15 and the closing date is set for June 15.

According to the details of the tenders, each governorate will have an independent tender, in addition to 3 tenders for the maintenance of highways and one for the Jaber Bridge.

The opening of bids shall be preceded by a preliminary meeting with the interested companies, to be held on the first of next June.

## Jeddah Declaration

Continued from Page 1

Sheikh Mishal began his speech by conveying greetings from His Highness the Amir and his wishes for success in the summitters’ efforts to serve the Arab nation and its just causes.

He proceeded with congratulations to Saudi Arabia for chairing the 32nd session of the top-level gathering, affirming that the kingdom, with its experience and wisdom, will cap works of the summit with success. He also expressed gratitude for the warm hospitality.

The Representative of His Highness the Amir, Sheikh Mishal, also extended gratification to the Algerian president for chairing the previous summit and the Arab League namely the secretary general for preparing for the top-level meeting.

“We are optimistic regarding the detente that happened in the region,” namely the joint statement by Saudi Arabia and Iran .. affirming that such understandings will impact positively on the region’s stability, prosperity and peoples’ aspirations, stated the Representative of His Highness the Amir and the Crown Prince in the beginning of his speech.

“However, optimism is laced with concern toward some challenges facing our Arab homeland, for our meeting today is held amid rapid developments around our Arab States that undoubtedly reflect on our region’s stability and security,” he added.

“Moreover, some disturbances in the world such as the events in Ukraine, imply dangerous ramifications on the international security and peace, thus we ought to work out perceptions and adequate mechanisms to deal with these developments and challenges,” His Highness Sheikh Mishal said in his address to the summitters in Jeddah.

“We have been following up with concern recent developments” in Sudan, where the violence and armed conflict spread .. and we affirm necessity of immediately halting all forms of armed actions to spare the blood and preserve (the country’s) resources.”

Sheikh Mishal underscored necessity of resorting to “dialogue, the peaceful track and the voice of wisdom” to address the crisis in Sudan. He lauded the Saudi-US initiative aimed at ending the crisis and starting talks between the two parties of the strife, launched in Jeddah. “We hope that this will be a step toward restoring security and stability to brotherly Sudan,” he said.

On Syria, the Representative of His Highness the Amir and the Crown Prince renewed support for the Arab League Resolution 8914, statement of the Jeddah meeting and declaration of the Amman meeting, “while we deeply hope that Syria’s return to the Arab fold will be start for ending the crisis and hardships of the brotherly Syrian people.”

The State of Kuwait, His Highness

Sheikh Mishal has continued, affirms its unwavering and principles stance that calls for preserving Syria’s unity, sovereignty and territorial sanctity, its rejection of of any intervention in its domestic affairs and the ongoing stand of offering humanitarian support to all segments of the Syrian people.

His Highness the Amir Representative expressed hope that the Syrian government would adhere to the Jeddah, Amman declarations, the Security Council resolution 2254 for ensuring Syria’s restoration of its regular and influential role on the Arab, regional and international arenas.

Sheikh Mishal emphasized that the Palestinian cause would remain on top of the priorities and challenges facing the Arab nation, re-affirming the unwavering support for the Palestinian people in the face of the Israeli occupation, aggression and crimes that target the historic status of Jerusalem.

We also call upon the international community to undertake its role to revive the peace process for sake of reaching a comprehensive and just solution according to resolutions of the international legitimacy and the Arab peace initiative to safeguard the brotherly Palestinian people’s rights for establishing their independent state on their territories with East Jerusalem as its capital,” he said.

On Yemen, he re-affirmed Kuwait’s admiration of the prisoners’ swap deal, describing it as a positive step toward a comprehensive political solution that may end the crisis according to the Gulf initiative, outcome of the national dialogue and Security Council resolutions.

Expressing appreciation for the efforts exerted by Saudi Arabia and Oman aimed at ending the crisis, he urged all stakeholders to contribute to the efforts for restoring stability in Yemen and meeting aspirations of the people.

On Libya, Sheikh Mishal urged all parties to seek consensus for meeting the aspirations at the political, security and constitutional levels, pending the holding of national elections.

Furthermore, Sheikh Mishal affirmed that Kuwait has been following up with concern on issues concerning the Arab world, namely combating narcotics, extremism and terrorism, food and water security, including the water rights for Egypt and Sudan, affirming the need to adhere to the UN charter and enhance “pre-emptive diplomacy.”

He urged the Arab States to cooperate, seek regional integration and launch joint ventures for sake of attaining sustainable development, confront the looming challenges, namely ensuring unhindered energy supplies to the international markets, climatic change, preserving the environment, cyber security, telecommunication and information security, backing innovation and partnerships in this realm.

“We as Arab States are facing huge responsibilities and challenges that warrant more efforts and coordination to ensure a stable future throughout the Arab world.”



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Embassy, private sector organize ‘Symposium on Medical Treatment and Tourism in Thailand’

# Thailand removed all Covid 19 health restrictions for tourists

KUWAIT CITY, May 20: Chargé d’Affaires at the Embassy of Thailand to Kuwait, Watanachai Naran-don, said Thailand has provided people all over the world with a wonderful combination of medi-cal treatment and medical tourism, pointing out that it is one of the best medical centers in the world, reports Al-Rai daily.

Narandon said his country has removed all restrictions and health conditions related to “Covid 19” for all tourists.



Chargé d’Affaires Naran-don

He disclosed last year about 70,000 tourists from Kuwait visited his country.

He was speaking at a “Symposium on Medical Treatment and Tourism in Thailand”, which was organized in cooperation with the Thai private sector for health and wellness, at the Jumeirah Hotel Thursday morning

Narandon added that his coun-try has provided people all over the world with a wonderful combination of medical treatment and medical tourism.

He stated that Thailand has 59 hospitals accredited by the Joint Commission International or JCI, which is the highest number among the countries of Asia, the Pacific and South Asia, and ranks fourth in the world.

He referred to the facilities that are provided to Kuwaitis visiting Thai-land for treatment, through special-ized information offices and agen-cies in Kuwait, before traveling.

He added, “There are no diseases or symptoms that cannot be treated in Thailand, because our doctors have experience, expertise and great professionalism in various medical fields.”

He concluded saying his country is preparing to be the medical center of the world, under the national strat-egy for Thailand as an international medical center 2017-2026.

In turn, Director of the Tourism Authority of Thailand for the Middle East and Dubai, Chaiwatt Tamthai, said that Thailand has always been

considered the first travel destina-tion with its tropical islands, cuisine, historical and cultural treasures, and bustling markets, and it has also be-come known for wellness and com-prehensive health on a global level.

He added, “According to the Global Health Security Index (GHS) for the year 2019, Thailand ranked first in Asia, and sixth out of 195 countries for the strongest health se-curity in the world, especially during the epidemic.”

“With well-established tourism, medical and wellness sectors, the number of health and wellness tour-ists to Thailand has increased stead-ily since the early 2000s, taking its place at the top of the global health and wellness tourism destination.

He pointed out that the reasons that enable Thailand to control this growing market are the reasonable cost of medical treatment, the good treatment provided by hospitals and private clinics, and the highly devel-oped tourism industry.

He noted that in 2019, it received more than 39 million visitors from all over the world and more than 78,199 Kuwaitis, and now the situ-ation is improving and the tourism momentum is picking up again.

He indicated that there are nearly 400 hospitals that provide advanced services to foreign patients. The country is proud of having the larg-est private hospital in Asia, as well as having the first Asian hospital to obtain ISO 9001 certification and JCI accreditation.

# Kuwait economic growth lowest among GCC peers – World Bank

‘Slowdown expected in 2023’

KUWAIT CITY, May 20: The World Bank in its re-cent report Wednesday said Kuwait’s economic growth in 2023 is expected a slow-down and will reach 1.3 percent in response to the cautious approach adopted by the “OPEC Plus” to pro-duction and the slowdown in global economic activity, suggesting that the oil sec-tor would contract by 2.2 percent this year, despite the recent operation of the Al-Zour refinery, reports Al-Rai daily.

The bank also expected the growth of the non-oil sectors in Kuwait to slow down by 4.4 per-cent this year, attributing the rea-son in the first place to private con-sumption, and that the uncertainty regarding policies resulting from the political stalemate leads to un-dermining the implementation of new infrastructure projects.

In its report on the latest economic developments in the Gulf region, which was titled: “The Health and Economic Burden of Non-Communicable Diseases in the Gulf Countries,” the World Bank suggested that infla-tion in Kuwait this year would decrease to 2.6 percent, compared to 4.3 percent last year, and that the surplus would reach the current account of about 22 percent of the gross domestic product, compared to 26 percent in 2022.

### Decline

The report expected that the Gulf economies would grow at a slower pace in 2023 compared to the previous year due to the decline in oil and gas revenues and the slowdown in global economic activity. Kuwait has the low-est economic growth among the GCC countries this year, and it records the third highest growth in the non-oil sec-tors after the UAE (4.8 percent) and Saudi Arabia (4.7 percent).

The report predicted that the econ-omy of the Gulf countries would grow at a rate of 2.5 percent in 2023 and 3.2 percent in 2024. This comes in com-parison with the remarkable growth of the region’s gross domestic prod-uct, which amounted to 7.3 percent in 2022, due to the strong increase in oil production for most of this year.

The reason for the poor perfor-mance is primarily due to the decline in the hydrocarbon gross domestic product, which is expected to contract by 1.3 percent by 2023 after the an-nouncement of the production cut in “OPEC Plus” last April and the global economic slowdown, but the strong growth in the non-oil sectors, which it is expected to reach 4.6 percent by 2023, which will reduce deficiencies in hydrocarbon activities.

The World Bank attributed this pri-marily to private consumption, fixed



American Baccalaureate School team

148 teams from 80 nations partake in competition

## American Baccalaureate School team victorious in US Robotics Competition

KUWAIT CITY, May 20: The Amer-ican Baccalaureate School team partic-ipating in the Seaperch World Under-water Robotics Competition was able to pass all stages of the competition and win the first places, starting with the West Asian qualifiers, and all the way to the world finals, which con-cluded on Tuesday at the University of Maryland in United State of America, reports Al-Qabas daily.

A total of 148 teams from 80 coun-tries participated in the competition.

Amid strong competition from a number of US military schools partic-ipating in this major technological event, the American Baccalaureate School team performed distinguish-ably, enabling it to occupy first place

at the level of Asian teams.

Participants praised the team’s abili-ty to build a distinguished robot during their first participation in these finals, as well as their ability to successfully complete all the tasks of the competi-tion.

On the sidelines of the competition, Kuwait’s Ambassador to the United States Al-Zain Al-Sabah met the school team, and she congratulated and encouraged them on this achievement, which raised Kuwait’s name high in foreign scientific forums.

Meanwhile, Director General of the American Baccalaureate School Areej Al-Ghanim congratulated the partic-ipating school students, affirming that this achievement came after a long

journey of hard work and dedication by the school to its creative students.

She wished them more scientific achievements.

The participating school team con-sists of Muhammad Al-Sabah, Yousef Al-Mazedi, Abdulaziz Al-Hollan, Abdul Rahman Al-Terkait, Abdulaziz Al-Awadhi, Hassan Al-Madkoor, and Rashid Al-Shibli, as well as the two engineers in charge of the training - Fadi Sadiq and Iman Suleiman.

The school had booked a date in the international finals of the competition in Maryland after its team won first place in the high school category, as well as awards for “Best Underwater Stability” and “Best Maneuvering” in the SeaP-erch competition held in Sharjah.

amounted to more than \$80 billion in 2019. With population aging and non-communicable diseases prevalent, these costs are expected to increase in the future rather than decline.

For his part, Issam Abu Suleiman, Regional Director of the Gulf Cooper-ation Council Countries Department at the World Bank, said: “Many GCC countries have already taken strong steps to address the aforementioned risk factors, including imposing taxes on tobacco products, smoke and sug-ary drinks, and restricting or banning advertising, promotion or sponsorship of tobacco or smoke products, and re-ducing the amount of salt in foods.

Several Gulf states have also set themselves important environmental targets. There is an opportunity to do more to reduce non-communicable diseases and their costs in the future.”

Guest

**Ravi Kohli**

Managing Director,  
City Trade International

A show that celebrates India-Kuwait  
friendship

with Host

**Chaitali B Roy**

Author / Broadcaster / Journalist

**May 25th 2023**

**8 pm**

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Chaitali B Roy

Sadaaqa poster

## Sadaaqa presents Ravi Kohli

KUWAIT CITY, May 20: Sadaaqa celebrates the long and rich history of friendship and shared cooperation between India and Kuwait.

For centuries, Kuwaiti sailors and merchants sailed to Indian ports leading to a close relationship based on trade and cultural intermingling. In the beginning of the 20th century, Indians began relocating to the Arabian Gulf for work & business.

While following their own indi-vidual dreams, they contributed to the development of their adopted home.

Sadaaqa explores this symbi-otic relationship and celebrates it through individual experiences.

On May 25, Sadaaqa focuses on the Kohli family of Kuwait.

The Kohlis are one of Kuwait’s most well- known Indian families. Mr UC Kohli, grandfather of our guest, Mr Ravi Kohli left India more than a century back. After spending some years in Iraq and Iran, he shift-ed to Kuwait in 1936. Here, he set up a spare parts business which was soon booming. Once established, Mr UC Kohli worked hard for the community. His footprints in the field of education is felt even today.

He founded the first Indian school here. Hundreds & thousands of stu-dents have passed out of the many branches of the school. Mr Ravi Kohli himself studied there before going to the USA to graduate in Business. After coming back to Ku-wait, he had a short stint in the air-lines industry. Post that he founded a company that dealt in corporate gifts. He also founded two of Ku-wait’s very popular Indian restau-rants- Dawat and Taal.

In our May episode of Sadaaqa we celebrate the spirit of Indian families like Kohlis who have scripted their own narratives in a foreign land, giving back as much as they have taken.

Late Amir declared women’s day on May 16, 2005

## Diplomatic Women’s Committee marks Kuwaiti Women’s Day 2023

By Mujahid Iqbal

KUWAIT CITY, May 20: The Diplomatic Women’s Committee (DWC) of Kuwait culminated its 2022-2023 cultural and social activ-ity season with an event commem-orating Kuwaiti Women’s Day, which falls on the 16th of May every year.

Narjes Al-Shatti, advisor to the DWC board of directors, as well as the event’s coordinator Mrs. Fouzia Abdul Basit, both commented on this occasion explaining the back-ground of Kuwaiti Women’s Day and DWC’s choice to celebrate it. They explained that Kuwaiti Wom-en’s Day was declared by the late Amir Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah on May 16, 2005, to coincide with the parliament’s decision at the time, to extend long-awaited polit-ical rights to Kuwait’s women. The date was chosen in recognition of the decades-long hard work, activ-ism, and advocacy by generations of Kuwaiti women seeking equal foot-ing under the constitution, with their fellow male citizens.

The Amiri decree for this day also recognized Kuwaiti women’s valu-able contributions in various fields domestically, in the Gulf and Arab regions, as well as on the global scene. The decree also paid hom-age to the exceptional role women played in resisting the Iraqi inva-sion of Kuwait in 1990 including the women martyrs who sacrificed their lives for Kuwait’s liberty.

Since Kuwaiti Women’s Day was declared, the late Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah con-tinued to emphasize its celebration



Photos from the event

throughout his reign in recognition of Kuwaiti women’s continued and tireless contributions towards Ku-wait’s development and its future. In that spirit, it was only fitting that DWC chose the heritage site that is the Asharqiyyah School for Girls as its venue to celebrate Kuwaiti Wom-en’s Day this year.

The school is a historic symbol of Kuwaiti women’s empowerment as it was the first modern girls’ school in the country. As it opened its doors in 1940 it also opened the door for generations of Kuwaiti women to go on to achieve great pursuits cultural-ly and professionally, thereby taking women’s contributions to Kuwaiti society to a new high.

DWC’s celebration featured women entrepreneurs residing in Kuwait and representing various international communities including Sudan, Burkina Faso, Mali, North Korea, Mongolia, Azerbaijan, Indo-nesia, Pakistan, and Lesotho.

The celebration also featured a presentation by Amal Al-Faris showcasing the work of aspiring Ku-waiti fashion designers. The audi-ence also enjoyed a presentation by Kuwaiti fashion designer Tasneem Al-Wuggayan, recreating the tradi-tional Kuwaiti wedding rituals. Fi-nally, Sheikh Hala Bader Muham-mad Al- Ahmad Al-Sabah, DWC’s honorary president, saluted and thanked everyone who participated in making this event a success. The event was emceed by media person-ality Abdulaziz Darweesh who was exceptionally engaging and charm-ing with the audience throughout the evening.



Exhibition preserves 1990 invasion stories for future generation

AUK and CAP launch first Oral History Exhibition in Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, May 20: The American University of Kuwait (AUK) collaborated with the Contemporary Art Platform (CAP) to launch an oral history exhibition titled, "Voices from the Occupation: The Unearthing of Memory and History through Storytelling."

Held at the CAP exhibition hall, it featured snippets of recorded interviews from AUK's Oral History and Documentation Project (OHDP) archives, showcasing the personal experiences of individuals who lived in Kuwait during the Iraqi occupation. The exhibition provided visitors with the opportunity to get a glimpse into the experiences of those who lived through the occupation, preserving their stories for future generations.

AUK librarian, Ms. Asma Al Kanan, emphasized the significance of fostering community engagement and collaboration through this project, "Seeing the narratives of the OHDP program come to life bringing various segments of our community together in an interactive platform is enchant-



Group photo with Dr. Rawda Awwad, Ms. Asma Al Kanan, Ms. Eman Al Awadhi, and library staff.

ing. I'm proud of the library team and the level of support extended by the AUK administration."

The OHDP team, Reem Alali and Abdulaziz Almahmeed, stressed that such exhibitions and interinstitutional collaborations are a natural progression of oral history projects around the world.

KIPCO senior vice president of Communications and Investor Relations, Ms. Eman Al-Awadhi, expressed her views on the significance of the exhibition, "Ever since its inception, KIPCO has been a primary supporter of the OHDP program. Education is an integral part of our portfolio, and we recognize that AUK offers a diverse range of programs that can position the institution at the forefront of academia globally. Our unwavering support for AUK is rooted in our belief that educating Kuwait's youth and equipping them with essential skills is critical. The program's significance stems from the realization that Kuwait has undergone several historical events, underscoring the paramount

importance of preserving history. Notably, the availability of documented information in this region is comparatively limited, thereby emphasizing the significance of oral history in preserving Kuwait's past."

The exhibition will also host a variety of cultural events and talks on oral history and the 1990 occupation. Visitors can attend these events to learn more about the exhibition and the importance of preserving oral history.

To listen to the oral history interviews, visit the OHDP website: <https://oralhistory.auk.edu.kw/gallery>

The American University of Kuwait (AUK) is an independent, private, equal opportunity, and coeducational liberal arts institution of higher education. The educational, cultural and administrative structure, methods and standards of AUK are based on the American model of higher learning. The language of instruction is English. More information on the American University of Kuwait can be found at [www.auk.edu.kw](http://www.auk.edu.kw)

Students showcase talent

ICSK Junior holds assembly to celebrate Foundation Day

KUWAIT CITY, May 20: "Celebrating the legacy – where learning and growth has been in full display for 64 years."

It has been said and believed since long that for any great work to be done, it is important to have the right foundation. It forms the platform on which the future stands. It's a day when the past, present and future of the institution come together, taking vows to uplift the institute. On this occasion a special assembly was conducted in ICSK Junior on 7th May 2023 in which students showcased their talents with great enthusiasm and zeal.

Principal Mrs. C. Sheeja addressed the assembly and shared the contribution and the humanitarian vision of our founders. She also promised and sought assurance from the students and teachers that they would keep setting new benchmarks with every passing year and strive to strengthen the school's proud legacy with even more enhanced performance. She appreciated the sincere effort put in by the students and teachers to make the event memorable.

The event set in motion with the recitation of the verses from the Holy Quran along with a prayer song. It was followed by an apt thought for the day offering tribute to the institution with a great legacy. There was an excellent speech by the student about the foundation day, 64 years of making a difference, learning, a lifetime of success.

A birthday is incomplete without a birthday song and they didn't miss the opportunity of singing it melodiously while also displaying the historical view of ICSK, in a short presentation the young ones dressed as heads of the institution of all the branches stole the show. The celebration dance following the birthday wishes was enjoyed by all.

The energy and passion of the students was visible in the performances that they put up. The celebration was complete with the cake cutting ceremony. The staff members and students cherished the moments, and vowed to collaborate their efforts for the glorification of the school.

Assembly concluded with the pledge and the singing of the Indian National Anthem.



A photo from the event.



Photos from the event.

Pakistani ambassador graces event

Pakistan Women's Forum hosts Eid Milan Dinner

By Mah Rukh Omer

KUWAIT CITY, May 20: Pakistan Women's Forum, Kuwait held Family Eid Milan Dinner on May 11.

H.E. Malik Muhammad Farooq (Ambassador of Pakistan to Kuwait & Chief Patron of PWF) graced the event as a Chief Guest.

Mrs. Tehreem Ilyas (Head of Chancery), Mrs. Sabiha Arain (Honorary Advisory) with her husband Ubaid Arain, Mrs. Nighat Amjad with her husband Pir Amjad, PWF members with their families and friends also dignified the event with their presence.

This was the first family event in the tenure of 22-24. It was an enlightening yet vibrant gathering, where all the guests were gratified to meet and they got to know each other.

Event began with a warm welcome and briefing of event from Mrs. Nighat Tariq (President PWF). Then 5 raffle draws were held by Mrs. Arusa Harris (Treasurer PWF)



HE Malik Muhammad Farooq, Pakistani ambassador with PWF members

for the guests to jazz up the event. Following the raffles a delightful dinner was served. Guests relished dining and conversing with each other for a while, after which next 5 raffle draws were also announced.

Winners received their raffle prizes through H.E. Malik Muhammad Farooq (Ambassador of Pakistan to Kuwait) followed by his brief address to the guests.

In the address, H.E. paid his grati-

tude to PWF for being invited to the event and appreciated the efforts of PWF's Executive Board on organizing such a dynamic event. He also recognized the efforts of PWF and other Pakistani organizations working in Kuwait to present a soft image of Pakistan to the world.

A special token of appreciation was presented to H.E. Malik Muhammad Farooq by PWF Team.

Mrs. Nighat Tariq paid an exclusive vote of thanks to all the guests and to the sponsors for raffles -- Elegance Couture by Sana, KAAL Concept Store, CELT Institute, Basketry by Arusa and Sayila's for the wonderful brownies.

She also thanked Shahi Qila Restaurant for their good service and delicious food.

At the conclusion of the event, feedback was received from the guests, who highly appreciated PWF's efforts in organizing the event and expressed their desire to take part in future events as well.



Photos from the event.



ICSK Amman conducts leadership training programme

The leadership training programme of the newly elected school senate, was held at ICSK Amman on 13th May and it aimed to develop leadership skills and foster personal growth among the students. The camp provided a range of activities, workshops, and team-building exercises designed to enhance leadership qualities, communication skills, and problem-solving abilities.

The chief guest of the day, Azharuddin Amer Mohammed, Honorary Secretary, ICSK Board of Trustees and an Investment Banker by profession, provided valuable insights on leadership qualities and responsibilities of a good leader. He inspired the students to develop their own leadership journeys. The second session for the day was on the topic 'Leading by Serving' which was effectively handled by the school counsellor, Mrs. Sara Sony Idiculla. She emphasized on how to be a leader by build-

ing self-confidence and valuing themselves and others.

Group discussions on Crisis Management Situations and table topics session were also held and the best speakers were awarded. The Senate organised the camp under the support and guidance from Principal Mr. Rajesh Nair, Vice Principal Dr. Mary Isaac, Senate Advisor Mrs. Sumitra Nandakumar and the House mentors.

The event was efficiently anchored by the senate

members, Mahadev. K and Anushka Panwar and the welcome speech was delivered by the Student Senate President, Sakina Taizun. The vote of thanks was proposed by the Student Editor, Sherwin Sterlin.

The leadership camp provided an immersive and transformative experience for participants, equipping them with the necessary skills and knowledge to become effective leaders.



top Lebanese official in IMF talks calls for cbank head to resign

The Lebanese official heading talks with the International Monetary Fund to bail out Lebanon's tanking economy called Thursday for the country's embattled central bank chief to resign, amid allegations of corruption and an international arrest warrant issued against him.

Once seen as the guardian of Lebanon's financial stability, Central Bank Gov. Riad Salameh is now widely blamed for an economic meltdown that began in 2019. The Lebanese pound has since plummeted in value and wiped out much of the savings of ordinary Lebanese, plunging an estimated three-quarters of the population into poverty.

Lebanon's caretaker deputy prime minister, Saade Chami, told The Associated Press in an interview that the allegations against the central bank chief put the government's credibility at risk and "could threaten the country's financial relations with the rest of the world," including with the IMF and other global financial institutions.

Chami is the highest-ranking Lebanese official to call for Salameh's resignation to date.

Salameh, 72, has held his post for almost 30 years. A European-led investigation into his personal wealth stashed abroad has raised questions about his tenure at the central bank and wider issues of corruption in Lebanon's financial and political system.

A spokesperson for Salameh, who has denied allegations of corruption and mismanagement, did not immediately respond to a request for comment. (AP)



Lebanon's caretaker Deputy Prime Minister Saade Chami speaks during an interview with The Associated Press at his office in Beirut, Lebanon, Thursday, May 18, 2023. (AP)

Market Movements				19-05-2023			
		Change	Closing pts			Change	Closing pts
▲ JAPAN	- Nikkei	+0.77	30,808.35	▼ UAE	- DFM	-0.31	3,544.53
	PAKISTAN - KSE 100	+0.34	41,614.87		EGYPT - EGX 30	-0.58	16,745.54
	PHILIPPINES - PSEi	+0.54	6,664.55				
	SAUDI - Tadawul	+0.59	11,344.40				

# Business

Wall Street's best week since March stalls

## Tokyo stocks hit 33-year high on Wall Street gain, weak yen

TOKYO, May 20, (Agencies): Tokyo stocks extended their winning streak for a seventh straight session on Friday, with a key index ending at a 33-year high, on the back of overnight gains on Wall Street and the weaker yen.

The benchmark Nikkei 225 Stock Average on the Tokyo Stock Exchange (TSE) gained 234.42 points, or 0.77 percent, from Thursday to 30,808.35, its highest close since Aug. 1, 1990.

The broader Tokyo Stock Price Index, which includes all shares on the market's First Section on the TSE, was also up 3.84 points, or 0.18 percent, to 2,161.69, the highest finish since Aug. 3, 1990.

On Thursday, major US benchmarks, including the Dow Jones Industrial Average, the S&P 500 index and the Nasdaq Composite, ended higher. In Tokyo, shares of export-oriented companies advanced due to the yen's depreciation against the US dollar, which hit the lower JPY 138 level.

The weak yen supports exports by making Japanese products more competitive overseas and increases their overseas profits when converted into local currency.

Global

Global shares were mostly higher Friday as hopes grew that the United States Congress would reach a deal to avoid defaulting on the nation's debt.

France's CAC 40 added 0.7% in early trading to 7,495.92, while Germany's DAX jumped 0.7% to 16,284.35. Britain's FTSE 100 edged up 0.5% to 7,779.82. U.S. shares were set to drift higher with Dow futures up 0.1% at 33,659.00. S&P 500 futures rose nearly 0.2% to 4,219.00. Oil prices rose.

Australia's S&P/ASX 200 gained 0.6% to 7,279.50. South Korea's Kospi added 0.9% to 2,537.79.

Chinese shares fell on renewed worries set off by signs that an extended lockdown over the coronavirus pandemic hurt sales. Also weighing on Chinese shares were inflationary pressures and geopolitical risks, analysts said.

Hong Kong's Hang Seng slipped 1.4% to 19,450.57, while the Shanghai Composite lost 0.4% to 3,283.54.

"While the broader risk environment has been singlehandedly uplifted by progress around the U.S. debt ceiling negotiations, Chinese equities continue to struggle for gains," said Yeap Jun Rong, market analyst at IG.

US

Wall Street's best week since March ran out of steam Friday as worries rose about the U.S. government's efforts to avoid a potentially disastrous default on its debt.

The S&P 500 slipped 6.07 points, or 0.1%, to 4,191.98. The Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 109.28, or 0.3%, to 33,426.63, while the Nasdaq composite gave up 30.94, or 0.2%, to 12,657.90.

Despite its weak Friday, the S&P 500 still managed to break out of a long, listless stretch where it failed to move by 1%, up or down, for six straight weeks. It gained 1.6%, with much of the strength earlier in the week coming on rising hopes that Washington can avoid a debt default.

Democrats and Republicans are facing down a June 1 deadline, which is when the U.S. government could run out of cash to pay its bills, unless Congress allows it to borrow more. A default on its debt would likely mean a recession for the economy, which has economists and investors both widely expecting a deal to be made.

But some of the hope ebbed Friday after a top negotiator for House Speaker Kevin McCarthy said it's time to "press pause" on talks. That helped cause the S&P 500 to flip from modest midday gains to losses. It's the latest flick in the tug of war that's dominated Wall Street for weeks.

A default on the U.S. debt would almost surely cause a recession. But helping to counterbalance those worries on Friday were hopes that the Federal Reserve may soon take it easier on its hikes to interest rates. That, in contrast, could ease the pressure on an already slowing economy.

Traders took comments made by Fed Chair Jerome Powell Friday to indicate the Fed may leave interest rates alone at its next meeting in June. That would be the first time it's done so in more than a year after raising rates at a furious pace in hopes of driving down inflation.

High rates have helped inflation cool from its peak last summer. But they do that by hurting the economy broadly and dragging down prices of stocks, bonds and other investments. Manufacturing and other areas of the economy have already shown weakness under the weight of higher interest rates.

After Powell spoke, Treasury yields gave up some of their gains from earlier in

the day as traders ratcheted back bets for another Fed rate hike in June.

The yield on the 10-year Treasury rose to 3.69% from 3.65% late Thursday. That yield helps set rates for mortgages and other important loans.

The two-year Treasury yield, which moves more on expectations for Fed action, climbed as high as 4.33% before Powell began speaking. It later fell back to 4.25%, down from 4.26% late Thursday.

Just a day earlier, traders were upping bets for a Fed hike in June. That was after Dallas Fed President Lorie Logan suggested another hike may be on the way unless more data arrives to suggest further cooling of inflation, which remains well above the Fed's target.

On Wall Street, DXC Technology rose 2.5% for one of the bigger gains in the S&P 500 after offering a mixed earnings report.

Its revenue for the latest quarter fell shy of forecasts, but it also announced a new \$1 billion program to buy back its own stock. Investors tend to like such purchases because they can goose a company's earnings per share.

On the losing side was Foot Locker, which tumbled 27.2%. It lowered its financial forecast for the year because it's having to mark down prices to get shoppers to buy amid what it calls a tough economic environment.

Another retailer, Ross Stores, fell 0.6% after giving a forecasted range for earnings this full year that fell short of some analysts' projections. That was despite its sales and revenue for the latest quarter topping Wall Street's expectations.

Much scrutiny has been on retailers this week, which also saw Home Depot, Target and Walmart report mixed results. That's because resilient spending by U.S. households has been one of the main pillars keeping the economy from falling into a recession.

Oil

In energy trading, benchmark U.S. crude rose 33 cents to \$72.19 a barrel. Brent crude, the international standard, edged up 42 cents to \$76.28 a barrel.

Currencies

In currency trading, the U.S. dollar declined to 138.17 Japanese yen from 138.66 yen. The euro cost \$1.0797, up from \$1.0777.

Sour crudes more available in the market

## Sweet and sour oils

By Kamel Al-Harami  
Independent Oil Analyst

THESE are the two commonly used words associated with oil in any news. They are simply the two types of oil that make big impacts on the income as well as the industry. One of them commands a bigger premium price compared to the other.

The sweet crude oil is lighter and better, resulting in more expensive selling oil products such as gasoline, reformate, and naphtha. It has a lesser sulfur content of below 1 percent, and is less pollutant. Its gravity ranges between 43-45 API. It is very valuable and ensures high financial returns.

The best known light crude oil is Tapis from Malaysia. However, it is not traded openly due to limited volume. Therefore, it cannot be considered as a market indicator and is mostly refined domestically, and sold to Japan.

The most common sweet crude oils are the American West Texas Intermediate (WTI), and North Sea Crude oil "Brent". These are most freely traded in the markets, and reflect the crude oil price globally. Other crude oils are priced almost accordingly with discounts based on the sulphur level and products yielded from refining.

Russian Urals crude can also be classified as sweet crude oil but sometimes also as sour as it is blended with low sulphur ranging between 0.8 percent and 1.6 percent and with 31 API. It is discounted to Brent north sea crude oil.

The other type is the sour crude oil, mostly concentrated in the Arabian Gulf region, which has the biggest reserve along with Venezuela, the crude oils of which have the heaviest gravity. It contains a high percentage of sulphur reaching above 2.5 percent, making it costly to refine and resulting in poor products yields that are light and expensive.

Presently, all countries producing sour crudes opt for cracking to

produce lighter crudes and to compete with the same products produced from light crude oils. With less availability of light crudes, the intention is to go for upgrading and refineries with more sophisticated and advanced technology. In the case with Kuwait, its investments are in 650,000 barrels per day from Zour refinery that produces light products for Far East, Europe and USA markets including light diesel, jet fuels, and low sulphur diesel. The same is with the remaining two refineries in Mina Abdullah and Al-Ahmadi after the recent upgrade.

Sour crudes are more available in the markets and most of the OPEC have them, with some exceptions like Nigeria which has crude called Brent, but is light and free of sulphur, making it best for producing gasoline. On the other hand, some Venezuelan crude oil is hard to produce, despite being considered part of its biggest oil reserve. It remains questionable whether it will be produced later in the years to come.

In conclusion, sweet crudes command a higher price for the end values it produces when processed and refined. This is because it yields higher light products and there is high value for one barrel. Plus, it costs less to refine.

Oils are also priced according to its destination such as Far East, Europe, or the USA markets.

For each destination there is a main crude oil price indicator. Brent price will be discounted for any sour crude sold in Europe. For the USA market, the WTI price indicator is used, but not much volume goes to the USA markets unless producers want to reach a certain volume target. Its price level is normally below any price indicators.

Far East markets are usually a combination of average Oman and Dubai crudes with some premium amounts or discounts depending on the market situation. Undoubtedly, when the supply is tight, then a premium of \$2 - \$3 per barrel will be added.

In the end, all types of oil will have their own niche markets and customers, irrespective of whether they are sweet or sour.



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Al-Harami

## Debt ceiling negotiators pushing for weekend deal, much work remains

Both teams appear upbeat

## Why a government default could be worse than a government shutdown

WASHINGTON, May 20, (AP): Negotiators from the White House labored Thursday over the U.S. debt limit with House Speaker Kevin McCarthy's emissaries at the Capitol, grinding through head-to-head talks trying to strike a budget deal to avert a looming economic crisis.

With hopes for a breakthrough as soon as this weekend, President Joe Biden and McCarthy tapped their top representatives to work out a deal after talks with a larger contingent stalled.

Upbeat, McCarthy said it was important to have an "agreement in principle" by the weekend if they hope to get to a House vote next week. That would leave enough time for the Senate to act, too, ahead of a deadline as soon as June 1.

"Everyone's working hard," McCarthy told CNN and others at the Capitol.

The White House team also appeared upbeat as they entered the building, but declined comments and departed two hours later. They were expected to be back at it on Friday and into the weekend.

Biden was briefed on the negotiations on Friday morning in Japan, where he is attending the Group of Seven summit, the White House said, adding that negotiators told the president that "steady progress is being made." "This does not have to be a crisis," Vice President Kamala Harris said during a virtual meeting of community leaders on Thursday.

"A default could trigger a recession, stop military paychecks and raise interest rates for years to come," Harris said. "America must pay our bills, just like you and your family and other hardworking Americans do every single day."

All sides are racing devise a budget-cutting deal that Democrats and Republicans can live with, the price to be paid as McCarthy's newly empowered House Republicans try to extract steep spending reductions. Those cuts would be in exchange for GOP votes to raise the debt limit, which is now \$31 trillion, and keep paying the nation's already-due bills.

Biden and McCarthy have mostly cooled what had been heated rhetoric over the Republican demands. A White House official said Bruce Reed, the deputy chief of staff, is traveling with the president in Japan to keep in contact and keep Biden informed at the G7. Biden cut short the rest of his trip to Papua New Guinea and Australia so he could return early to Washington.

"I'm confident that we'll get the agreement on the budget and America will not default," Biden said Wednesday before he departed.

Behind closed doors are the key personnel who could cut a sweeping

WASHINGTON, May 20, (AP): All the hand-wringing over a potential government default if Congress doesn't increase the government's \$31.4 trillion debt ceiling has conjured up images of past government shutdowns. In shutdowns, "essential" workers - TSA agents and such - showed up, but most federal employees stayed home. Work piled up in offices, and litter piled up in untended national parks.

However, there's a big difference between a government shutdown and a default on the nation's debts.

America very well knows what happens in a shutdown - it's had four of them in the past 30 years. There's a lot more uncertainty about a default, which could well have more wide-ranging and devastating impacts, at home and around the world. There's never been a default, and negotiators are trying to find a way to avoid one now.

A look at what is known - and not - about both:

GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN

A shutdown occurs when Congress doesn't approve funding legislation so that the government can keep spending money to remain open.

When Congress hasn't authorized or extended government funding, there is no authority to spend money. Essential work continues - the military remains on guard - but most federal workers are sent home, and activities cease until Congress acts.

It's harmful to the economy, and can disrupt many lives, but it's far from catastrophic.

The U.S. has experienced four true government shutdowns where operations were impacted by more than one business day, according to the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget. That usually includes limitations on government services - like park maintenance and benefit checks - and non-essential federal employees are

sent home.

"We know what a government shutdown looks like," said Shai Akabas, director of economic policy at the non-profit Bipartisan Policy Center. "And everyone knows on which date that will occur."

The White House keeps a long list of agency contingency plans in the event of a government shutdown. The country narrowly avoided one last December.

GOVERNMENT DEFAULT

A default would occur if the government exceeds its legal borrowing limit and can no longer pay all its creditors or pay for existing programs.

The uncertainty about a default starts with when it actually occurs and in what order the government would pay its bills with whatever money it still has coming in.

A default "would be a very different situation" from a shutdown, said Akabas. "We don't know what the effects would look like because it's never happened in the history of our country."

He added that there is "massive uncertainty" about when the U.S. would reach its X-date, the moment when it no longer can borrow money to pay bills.

Brian Riedl, a senior fellow at the Manhattan Institute focusing on tax issues, said "there is no blueprint for how the government can manage a debt limit default," and much of it would come down to how Treasury would pay or put off paying its bills.

President Joe Biden, Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen and countless economists have warned darkly about the "catastrophic" impacts of a default.

Yellen this week said it would destroy jobs and businesses, and leave millions of families who rely on federal government payments to "likely go unpaid," including Social Security beneficiaries, veterans and military

families.

"A default could cause widespread suffering as Americans lose the income that they need to get by," she said. Disruptions to federal government operations would impact "air traffic control and law enforcement, border security and national defense, and food safety."

WHO GETS PAID - AND WHO DOESN'T

Wendy Edelberg, an economist at the Brookings Institution, said that in the event of a default "it is widely assumed that Treasury would figure out how to make principle and interest payments until they had money to pay all non-interest payments."

That means many programs could be up in the air until the U.S. raised enough money to pay for them, while debt holders like China would receive payments - in a scheme called "debt payment prioritization."

So while Social Security recipients, for instance, continued to receive automated payments and scheduled checks during a shutdown, Akabas said, it's not so clear that they would get paid in a default.

"Maybe workers will come into work," maybe they won't, Riedl said. "There is an assumption that federal workers would come into work and get paid eventually."

"There's no specific blueprint. It comes down to whether their agency gets funding," he said. "If we do hit the debt limit, there's going to be a lot of new court cases on who determines who gets paid and how."

WHERE NEGOTIATIONS STAND

Democratic and Republican leaders have said that a default will not occur, despite their standoff on raising the debt limit.

Before leaving Wednesday for a Group of Seven summit meeting in Japan, Biden said he was "confident" that the U.S. will be able to raise the debt ceiling.

## Discover the future of 'Android POS' with SUNMI 3rd-generation products

CHICAGO, May 20, (PRNewswire): SUNMI has pre-launched its 3rd generation POS terminal at the National Restaurant Association Show 2023 in Chicago, booth 5561. The pre-launch includes three flagship new products: SUNMI V3 MIX, SUNMI T3 PRO, and SUNMI T3 PRO MAX.

SUNMI V3 MIX is an innovative pos terminal with 10" high-resolution display and a built-in printer make it mobile and desktop two different use type. Light in weight, compact in design and easy to use enable V3

MIX to reduce the time required for cashiering and improve payment efficiency significantly.

As commercial lightweight cash registers becomes a trend, SUNMI MIX series can receive orders, scanning, NFC/SoftPOS, and printing bills, providing SMB customers with a one-stop solution. Furthermore, there are various choices of accessories that can help their daily business, USB customer display, handstrap, shoulder strap wall mount and more.



BT plans to shed up to 55,000 jobs, replace some with AI

U.K. telecom company BT Group said Thursday that it plans to shed up to 55,000 jobs by the end of the decade and replace some of them with artificial intelligence, as part of an overhaul aimed at slimming down its workforce to slash costs.

BT, which has 130,000 workers including both staff and contractors, said in its latest earnings report that its number of employees would be reduced to between 75,000 and 90,000 by 2030.

“By the end of the 2020s, BT Group

will rely on a much smaller workforce and a significantly reduced cost base,” CEO Philip Jansen said. “New BT Group will be a leaner business with a brighter future.”

Tech and telecom companies have been cutting jobs as the industry undergoes a painful shakeup amid flagging economic growth and surging inflation. U.K.-based wireless carrier Vodafone, which operates in Europe and Africa, said days earlier that it’s laying off 11,000 workers as part of a major revamp.

BT, a former state monopoly previously known as British Telecom, will eliminate about 10,000 jobs through digitization, automation and the use of AI in its processes. “That’s about using technology to do things much more efficiently,” Jansen said. The cuts also include 15,000 jobs building fiber-optic broadband and 5G mobile networks and 10,000 servicing and repairing them. Once those networks are fully rolled out, BT won’t need as many workers to build or maintain them. (AP)



A logo of the BT group is displayed at the headquarters, in London, Thursday, May 18, 2023. U.K. telecom company BT Group said Thursday that it plans to shed up to 55,000 jobs by the end of the decade as part of an overhaul aimed at slimming down its workforce to slash costs. (AP)

Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait - Egypt makes 100% net profit growth in the first quarter of 2023

Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait – Egypt (ABK-Egypt) continues to build on its success as one of the fastest growing banks in the Egyptian market despite a challenging economic landscape, delivering very strong results in all key performance indicators in the first quarter of the year 2023 and fortifying its market position with outstanding growth ratios in business volume and profitability.

Demonstrating this notable growth, ABK-Egypt’s Net Profit doubled in the first quarter of the year to reach EGP 1.1 billion compared to EGP 551 million over the same period in 2022. Net Interest Income increased by 40% recording EGP 841 million, compared to EGP 603 million over the same period last year, and Net Operating Profit increased by 63% in the period ended 31 March 2023 to reach EGP 779 million, compared to EGP 478 million in March 2022.

The Bank’s Total Assets mounted to EGP 79.8 billion in March 2023, a 5.6% increase compared to 75.6 billion in December 2022. Total Customer Deposits increased by 3.3% to reach EGP 68.3 billion, compared to EGP 66.2 billion in December 2022 and the Total Gross Loans Portfolio increased by 6.64% to reach EGP 38 billion compared to EGP 35.6 billion at the end of 2022.

Commenting on the Bank’s performance, Mr. Ali Marafi, Chairman of ABK-Egypt, said, “Recording outstanding profits over the first quarter of the year is a fulfilling accomplishment for us as it accords with our seventh year of operations in the Egyptian market. Our focus has always



Ali Marafi, Chairman of ABK-Egypt



Khaled El Salawy, Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director, ABK-Egypt

been to ensure sustainable success and throughout this fruitful yet exhilarating journey, the Bank managed to demonstrate its strong presence with positive ratios across all its key performance indicators, whilst adhering to prudent risk management practices to face the challenging market conditions.”

Mr. Marafi added, “Our long-term business strategy reflects our commitment to supporting Egypt’s economic development and we will continue to seize business opportunities in response to changing market conditions and improve the efficiency of our business model to maintain a competitive edge in

the market.”

Reaffirming the Bank’s solid position, Mr. Khaled El Salawy, CEO & Managing Director of ABK-Egypt, said, “These strong results, with Profit before Tax recording EGP 1,249 million in the first quarter of the year compared to EGP 698 million, confirm the resilience of our strategy and operating model as well as the effective role played by our team in achieving balanced growth in terms of market share and profitability.”

In continuation of the optimistic outlook for the year 2023, Mr. El Salawy added that the Bank’s strategic direction

will continue to prioritize its efforts in digital transformation with the clear vision of offering customers best-in-class digital experiences that ensure maximum speed and convenience. Over the course of the year, several important steps were taken towards enhancing digital solutions and the portfolio of offerings, and upgrading the service level to provide a distinguished banking experience across all channels and maximize value to customers.

El Salawy concluded, “Despite the turbulent market scene, we remain positive and committed to serving the best interest of our shareholders, customers, and employees. We also confirm our commitment to supporting all efforts endeavored by the Egyptian government and Central Bank of Egypt towards achieving economic stability and growth.”

**Social and Digital Leadership**

In addition to its vital role in supporting the Egyptian economy and providing the best banking services and products, ABK-Egypt endeavors to continue to enhance its role in social responsibility, which is an integral part of its strategy.

It does so by continuously participating in various social initiatives and events organized by government and private sectors, as well as non-profit organizations concerned with healthcare, women empowerment, environment, education, sports, supporting people with special needs, and more. This, in turn, contributes to strengthening the Bank’s presence and position.

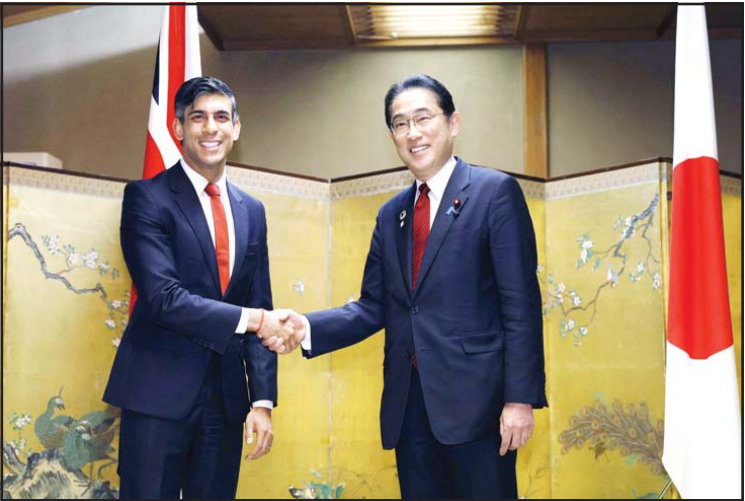
Furthermore, ABK-Egypt is committed to promoting its social responsibility by providing full support to the most vulnerable individuals in society. This is achieved through its contributions to development projects and sponsoring a range of social initiatives that aim to enhance and improve the standard of living.

These initiatives vary from providing financial aid and shelter to those in need to supplying food and medical care, educational opportunities, as well as assisting children, individuals with disabilities, and the most in-need families across Egyptian governorates.

ABK-Egypt also plays an important role in achieving sustainable development by supporting various sectors. This is done by financing small and medium-sized projects and providing various multipurpose financing solutions and tools that meet the needs of these sectors, enabling the companies to achieve their operational objectives.

As such, ABK-Egypt continues to invest in technology and innovation to serve its customers as a key part of its digital transformation strategy and growth objectives. The Bank has made several improvements to its digital banking channels and endeavors to remain in the lead in terms of its digital advancements.

This is in addition to the Bank’s interest in financial inclusion and promoting financial literacy in society by participating in and supporting the initiatives of the Central Bank of Egypt, and leading entities in this field, in order to spread awareness regarding banking and financial products and services to all segments of society.



Japan's Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, (right), and Britain's Prime Minister Rishi Sunak shake hands before their working dinner ahead of the Group of Seven (G-7) nations' meetings Thursday, May 18, 2023, in Hiroshima, western Japan. (AP)

Defense, clean energy eyed

Japan, UK strike historic accord on ‘cooperation’

HIROSHIMA, Japan, May 20, (AP): Japan and Britain agreed Thursday to cooperate in a broad range of areas including defense, clean energy, cyber-security and semiconductors.

The pact was announced as British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida held talks ahead of the Group of Seven summit in Hiroshima, Japan.

The two sides said the pact would strengthen their cooperation in economic, security and technological fields.

“Japan and the United Kingdom are connected by our shared values of freedom, democracy, rule of law, fundamental human rights, and open and fair trade. These values are at the heart of our intention to work together for global security, resilience, and innovation,” the accord says.

The accord includes plans for a “semiconductors partnership” to improve the supply chain for the components so vital for automobiles, defense technology and many modern consumer products.

It involves “new commitments to pursue ambitious R&D cooperation and skills exchange, strengthening our domestic sectors and bolster supply chain resilience in an increasingly competitive market,” the British government said in a statement.

Earlier Thursday, Sunak said Japanese companies had committed to investing 17.7 billion pounds (\$22 billion) in clean energy projects. They include funding for offshore wind, low carbon hydrogen and other clean energy projects.

Britain has been pursuing closer trade ties with Japan and other Asian countries after leaving the European Union. As part of that effort it has formally applied to join a regional trade

bloc, the Comprehensive and Progressive Trans-Pacific Partnership, or CPTPP.

More than half of the investment pledged by Japan will come from the trading house Marubeni Corp. and will go to offshore wind and green hydrogen projects in Scotland and Wales.

Japan and Britain also agreed to “ensure diverse, resilient, and sustainable critical mineral supply chains needed for clean energy technologies,” Japan’s trade ministry said in a statement. It said the cooperation would also aim to improve standards in the industry. Mining of such minerals has often been plagued with labor abuses and environmental damage.

Sumitomo Corp., another major trading house, plans to expand offshore wind projects in the United Kingdom. Its affiliate Sumitomo Electric Industries plans to build a factory to make high-voltage cables in the Scottish Highlands, it said.

Sunak visited a Japanese naval base earlier Thursday and announced plans for closer defense cooperation - dubbed the “Vigilant Isles” - by doubling the size of joint military exercises, deploying Britain’s Carrier Strike Group in the Indo-Pacific in 2023 and expanding an air defense program.

The fleet, made of an aircraft carrier, its escorts and its aircraft, will work with the Japan Self Defense Forces and other regional partners to “help defend peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific,” the British government said.

“The Hiroshima Accord will see us step up cooperation between our armed forces, grow our economies together and develop our world-leading science and technology expertise. It marks an exciting next phase in the U.K. and Japan’s flourishing partnership,” Sunak said in a statement.

Court avoids ruling on law shielding net cos from being sued for what users post

US justices unanimously reject lawsuit

WASHINGTON, May 20, (AP): The Supreme Court on Thursday sided with Google, Twitter and Facebook in lawsuits seeking to hold them liable for terrorist attacks. But the justices sidestepped the big issue hovering over the cases, the federal law that shields social media companies from being sued over content posted by others.

The justices unanimously rejected a lawsuit alleging that the companies allowed their platforms to be used to aid and abet an attack at a Turkish nightclub that killed 39 people in 2017.

In the case of an American college student who was killed in an Islamic State terrorist attack in Paris in 2015, a unanimous court returned the case to a lower court, but said there appeared to be little, if anything, left of it.

The high court initially took up the Google case to decide whether the companies’ legal shield for the social media posts of others, contained in a 1996 law known as Section 230, is too broad.

Instead, though, the court said it was not necessary to reach that issue because there is little tying Google to responsibility for the Paris attack.

“We therefore decline to address the application of Section 230 to a complaint that appears to state little, if any, plausible claim for relief,” the court wrote in an unsigned opinion.

The outcome is, at least for now, a victory for the tech industry, which predicted havoc on the internet if Google lost. But the high court remains free to take up the issue in a later case.

“The Court will eventually have to answer some important questions that it avoided in today’s opinions. Questions about the scope of platforms’ immunity under Section 230 are consequential and will certainly come up soon in other cases,” Anna Diakun, staff attorney at the Knight First Amendment Institute at Columbia University, said in an emailed statement.

Google general counsel Halimah DeLaine Prado said an email that the company will “continue our work to safeguard free expression online, combat harmful content, and support businesses and creators who benefit from the internet.”

A lawyer for the family of Nohemi Gonzalez, who was killed in Paris, expressed disappointment at the out-



In this Feb. 21, 2023 file photo, Attorney Eric Schnapper, (right), gestures to Beatriz Gonzalez, (second from right), the mother of 23-year-old Nohemi Gonzalez, a student killed in the Paris terrorist attacks, and stepfather Jose Hernandez, (front row center), speak outside the Supreme Court in Washington. (AP)

Possible fight over AI looms

Twitter accuses Microsoft of misusing its data

SAN FRANCISCO, May 20, (AP): A lawyer for Twitter owner Elon Musk accused Microsoft of misusing the service’s data and demanded an audit from the software giant.

The letter primarily addresses a seemingly narrow set of alleged infractions by Microsoft in drawing information from Twitter’s database of tweets. But the move could foreshadow more serious developments. Musk has previously accused Microsoft and its partner OpenAI in a tweet of “illegally” using Twitter data to develop sophisticated AI systems such as ChatGPT.

“Lawsuit time,” Musk wrote in that April tweet. But the letter, signed by Musk lawyer Alex Spiro, tiptoed around that concern. It noted that Microsoft’s agreement with Twitter barred it from overuse of the service’s data such as exceeding “reasonable request volume” or “excessive or abusive usage.” Spiro then noted that “despite

these limitations,” Microsoft had retrieved more than 26 billion tweets in 2022 alone.

He provided no context for those numbers. The process of training AI systems requires enormous amounts of data such as written text, which AI algorithms scour for patterns that the AI can use to make sense of language and large bodies of knowledge.

In other respects, the letter primarily laid out a series of vaguely worded allegations. For instance, it noted that while Microsoft was required to inform Twitter about its intended use of the data, it failed to do so for six of the eight Microsoft apps that drew on information from the Twitter database.

Similarly, the letter asserted that at least one Microsoft app had supplied Twitter data to a number of virtual locations that “reference a government entity or agency.” That apparently violated Microsoft’s agreement with Twitter,

the letter stated, which prohibited the company from retrieving Twitter data “on behalf of ‘any government-related entity’” without first notifying Twitter.

The letter stated that Microsoft had failed to provide such notification.

Microsoft spokesman Frank Shaw provided a statement noting that Microsoft will review questions raised by the letter and then will “respond appropriately.” The statement added that “we look forward to continuing our long term partnership” with Twitter, which it did not refer to by name. Shaw declined to address specifics from the letter.

Spiro’s letter demanded that Microsoft describe in detail the Twitter data it possesses or has previously destroyed, the purpose for each of its apps that drew on Twitter information, and any government entities that used these Microsoft apps and whether they received data from Twitter’s database.

come, but pledged to fight on. “We lawyers see this decision as just another hurdle we need to navigate. It took decades to topple Big Tobacco, we’ll eventually rein in reckless and greed driven Big Tech as well,” Nitsana Darshan-Leitner wrote in an email.

The families of victims in both attacks asserted that the internet giants did not do enough to prevent their platforms from being used by extremist groups to radicalize and recruit people.

They sued under a federal law that allows Americans injured by a terrorist

attack abroad to seek money damages in federal court. The family of a victim in the bombing of the Reina nightclub in Istanbul claimed that the companies assisted in the growth of the Islamic State group, which claimed responsibility for the attack.



New dynamic, powerful and ‘Ready for it’

# Al Mulla Automobiles reveals Mercedes-Benz GLC SUV

KUWAIT CITY, May 20: Al Mulla Automobiles Co., member of the Al Mulla Group and the sole authorized distributor of Mercedes-Benz in Kuwait, has recently revealed the all-new Mercedes-Benz GLC SUV in an exclusive press event at the Mercedes-Benz Boutique - Avenues mall on May 17th, 2023.

The company took this opportunity to display several GLC SUV vehicles ranging from the standard to AMG line, highlighting the variety of choices available to customers. The all new GLC SUV will be showcased to boutique guests and available for on the spot test drives from May 17- 21.

During the special event which was attended by the management team at Al Mulla Automobiles Mercedes-Benz, in the presence of Kuwait’s local press and our valued customers. Al Mulla Automobiles took this opportunity to provide guests with a technical showcase and walkthrough of the all new GLC SUV.

Commenting on this occasion, Mr. Steven Brown, Director Mercedes-Benz Kuwait said: “On behalf of Al Mulla Automobiles Co. - Mercedes-Benz Kuwait we are delighted to have this opportunity to showcase the all new GLC SUV to our esteemed customers and distinguished members of the press. The all new GLC SUV embodies the versatility offered by the SUV family from Mercedes-Benz. Modern, sporty luxury, the new GLC SUV embodies this in every detail. We thank our guests for joining us and we look forward to providing our boutique guests with the opportunity to view a variety of GLC SUV vehicles and book a test drive which we made available throughout the display period.”

The new design of the GLC SUV underlines the unique proportions, dramatic surfaces, precisely molded edges and a clearly laid-out and high-quality interior, in addition to its driving performance and efficiency. The GLC SUV is at home on any terrain: whether on or off the road, it provides drivers with comfort and agility. The new rear-axle steering makes it even more maneuverable and safe.

**Success story: Mid-Size SUV from Mercedes-Benz**

Mercedes-Benz entered the mid-size SUV segment in 2008, with the GLK. Its exterior design was unmistakably derived from the G-Class, the forefather of all Mercedes-Benz SUVs. In 2015 the brand presented its successor under the name GLC SUV. This also impressed with the excellent safety typical of the brand, state-of-the-art assistance systems, energy efficiency and high dynam-



Al Mulla Automobiles Co. officials during the unveiling of new Mercedes-Benz GLC SUV in an exclusive press event at the Avenues Mall.

ics. Since the GLC SUV’s introduction and its direct predecessor, the GLK, Mercedes-Benz has sold more than 2.6 million examples worldwide. The GLC SUV presented now is the third generation, and seamlessly continues this success story.

**Exterior design: Expressive highlights**

One of the defining design highlights of the GLC SUV is the redesigned front end, with headlamps that connect directly to the radiator grille to emphasize the vehicle’s width. DIGITAL LIGHT headlamps with additional daytime driving light ellipses and new blue trim, plus active floor lighting, are available as optional extras. The typical Mercedes SUV radiator grille with redesigned cut-out has a chrome surround, this frames a sporty louvre in matt grey with chrome trim and the grille with vertical louvers in high-gloss black. From the AMG Line upwards, a radiator grille with Mercedes-Benz pattern is available: a three-dimensional star pattern with high-gloss chrome surfaces. The new simulated under guard in chrome at the front emphasizes the vehicle’s width and accentuates

the off-road look.

**Interior design: Modern, sporty luxury**

The dashboard is clearly structured: the upper section has a wing-like profile with new, flattened round nozzles reminiscent of the engine nacelles of an aircraft. The lower section has a generous trim area that flows harmoniously into the curved center console. Its orientation towards the driver contributes to sportiness: the dashboard is slightly angled towards the driver by six degrees.

There is a free-standing, high-resolution LCD screen in front of the driver. It appears to float in front of the wing profile and trim area. This sets the driver’s display apart from traditional cockpits with classic dial instruments. It has a size of 12.3 inches (31.2 centimeters).

The central display also makes the paradigm shift towards digitization clear: the vehicle functions can be controlled using the high-quality touchscreen. Its portrait orientation is particularly advantageous for navigation. Like the dashboard, the screen surface is slightly angled towards the driver. The

central display has a screen diagonal of 11.9 inches (30.2 centimeters). Ergonomically located below the central display is a fingerprint scanner. A colour head-up display can be ordered as optional equipment.

The modern, highly reduced design of the door panels frames both ends of the dashboard. The door center panel with integrated armrest evolves from a vertical surface into a horizontal orientation. Reflecting the design of the center console, the front section takes the form of a metallic high-tech element. It can be used as a grab or closing handle and houses the power window controls. Another highlight is the floating control cluster, into which the door opener and seat adjustment controls are integrated.

The new GLC SUV is available with a leather-lined dashboard with nappa-look beltlines (optional, standard for the AMG Line). Some trim elements have innovative surfaces. These include new interpretations of open-pored veneers in brown tones as well as an open-pored, black wood veneer featuring fine, form following inlays in real aluminum.

**Intuitively operated and learn-capable: Latest generation of MBUX**

After the S-Class and C-Class, the new GLC SUV also receives the second generation of the MBUX (Mercedes-Benz User Experience) infotainment system. The vehicle interior becomes even more digital and intelligent as both the hardware and software have made great strides: on the LCD screens, brilliant images make it easy to control vehicle and comfort functions.

The driver and central display offer a holistic, aesthetic experience. The information is presented in a clearly structured way. The appearance can be individualized with a total of three display styles (classic, sporty, discreet) and three modes (navigation, assistance, service). In addition, the GLC SUV offers the off-road mode.

Full-screen navigation offers the driver the best possible guidance while driving. Augmented Video is available as optional equipment. A camera registers the surroundings in front of the vehicle, the central display shows the moving images and also superimposes virtual objects, information and markers. These include, for instance, traffic signs, direc-

tional arrows, lane-change recommendations, and house numbers which can make navigation much easier, especially in urban areas.

**All-wheel drive: Mercedes-Benz 4MATIC**

All models of the new GLC SUV come with the latest 4MATIC all-wheel drive system. The new front-axle drive allows higher torque levels to be transferred, with an ideal axle load distribution for driving dynamics. This also has a considerable weight advantage compared to the axle drive of the preceding series. The longitudinal transfer case, which is also new, further reduces friction losses. It also has a closed oil circuit and does not require any additional cooling measures.

**Latest assistance systems: Supporting the driver**

The latest generation of the Driving Assistance package plus contains additional and improved functions. These reduce driver workload in day-to-day situations for more comfortable and safe driving. When danger threatens, the assistance systems can respond to impending collisions as the situation demands. Several advanced features can make driving even safer. Active Distance Assist DISTRONIC, for example, can now react to stationary vehicles on the road at speeds of up to 100 km/h (previously 60 km/h). One of the new features of Active Steering Assist is lane detection with an additional 360-degree camera, which particularly offers advantages at low speeds, for example when forming an emergency lane. As well as sign posted speed limits, Traffic Sign Assist now also recognizes conditional signs such as “in wet conditions”. The stop sign and red traffic light warning functions are new.

The all new GLC SUV will be available for test drives and displayed in the Mercedes-Benz Boutique in the Avenues from May 17th -21st 2023 . For more information and queries related to the all-new GLC SUV, please visit Al Mulla Automobiles Mercedes-Benz showroom in Al Rai, Mercedes-Benz Boutique in The Avenues, WhatsApp or call the customer center at 1887888 and follow the account on Instagram @ MercedesBenzKuwait, or visit the website at [www.mercedes-benz-mena.com/kuwait/en](http://www.mercedes-benz-mena.com/kuwait/en)



A group photo of industry leaders participating in the summit.

## Empower young students

# Burgan sponsors AUS Art’s Night

KUWAIT CITY, May 20: Burgan Bank recently sponsored the American United School’s (AUS) seventh annual Art’s Night, held under the theme “Lights, Camera, Music: From Broadway to Hollywood.” The latest sponsorship is a testament to the Bank’s commitment to student development and fostering confidence-building environments where creativity can thrive. It also comes as part of Burgan Bank’s broad social responsibility program and efforts to make a positive difference in the community.

In celebration of the arts, around 600 participants who attended the event were introduced to the artworks produced by the AUS Pre-K to 12 Grade students and spread across different areas of the campus. The showcase included a variety of galleries, music, culinary samples and theatrical performances by students.

The night also featured interactive art and STEAM stations that fostered engagement between students and their parents, offering them a chance to explore various art techniques, such as calligraphy, painting with texture, and sculpting. Moreover, the event showcased an interactive poetry board, a wall Post-it art station, and 3D art installations for all ages to experience art in a variety of ways.

On this occasion, Ms. Hessa Husain Al-Najadah, Senior Manager of Corporate and CSR Communications, said: “Now more than ever, it is important to support educational institutions that encourage and inspire children to participate in uplifting, empowering and creative forms of expression.

Our objective as a dynamic commercial bank goes beyond financial performance; we also measure our success by our efforts to help empower young students to build and sustain a brighter future.

To this end, Burgan Bank supports impactful events that promote the connection between students, teachers and parents, which, in turn, contributes to creating a positive environment where innovation and creativity can flourish.”

As a leading Kuwaiti financial institution, Burgan Bank always strives to contribute to the growth of youth in Kuwait by sponsoring and participating in a variety of educational initiatives and programs that promote student development and personal growth.



A photo from the event.

## ‘Let’s Be Aware’

# Gulf Bank educates people on borrowing and financing

KUWAIT CITY, May 20: As part of its keenness to promote financial literacy in society, Gulf Bank continues to support the Diraya “Let’s Be Aware” campaign for the third consecutive year – by broadcasting and spreading awareness and educational materials through social media, the Bank’s website, and other channels.

Gulf Bank’s Corporate Communications Officer, AbdulMohsen Al-Nassar, stressed that obtaining sufficient knowledge on the types of loans and their details, protects customers from accumulating obligations and defaulting on payments – advising customers to request all details related to the loan from the bank, and to review all the conditions and obligations before borrowing.

Al-Nassar indicated that borrowing and financing operations are one of the most requested banking operations by



Al-Nassar

customers, hence, the Central Bank of Kuwait has established clear and specific policies for loan operations, along with instructions for banks and finance companies, to provide customers with loan details such as: Payment dates, consequences of non-payment, amount and number of installments, as well as installment to net salary ratio.

The Central Bank of Kuwait instructed banks and finance companies to provide customers with financial advice before and during the financing. The risks of increasing financial obligations are also explained, especially in case of any change due to a person’s financial situation such as a change in employment, retirement, or a change in the applicable interest rate.

It is noteworthy that The Central Bank of Kuwait, in cooperation with Kuwait Banking Association, has launched the Diraya “Let’s Be Aware” campaign in 2021, to acquaint bank customers with the most important banking services provided to them. This is to ensure the safety of transactions and to enhance financial inclusion, as well as monetary and economic stability – through comprehensive awareness of customers’ rights and obligations.

## Firm showcases various milestones

# stc Kuwait participates in the Leaders’ Summit 2023 ‘organized’ by SAMENA

KUWAIT CITY, May 20: Kuwait Telecommunications Company – stc, a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and platforms to customers, enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, announced its participation in the “Leaders’ Summit 2023”, which is SAMENA Council’s premier annual congregation for Public and Private sector Leaders from South Asia, the Middle East, North Africa, Asia, Europe and beyond. Through its participation, stc Kuwait showcased the 4 key pillars behind its future corporate strategy which aims to assist the Company in leading the Kuwaiti telecommunications and ICT market.

The theme of the Leaders’ Summit this year focused on ‘Sustainable Connectivity and Emerging Ecosystems in Digital Economy’, where key players including high level executives and industry leaders joined together at the Atlantis Hotel in Dubai, UAE on 15 of May 2023 to discuss key subjects related to the telecom and digital solutions market in the MENA region.

**Focused**

The event this year focused on ICT Infrastructure Requirements in Emerging Markets, SA-ME-NA Digital Services Landscape & New Digital Enablers; Multi-Dimensional Approaches in Cybersecurity; Evolution of 5G Digital Technologies, Future Mobile and Metaverse based Life and Business, a need for New Frequency Allocations for Telecom Operators, Non-Terrestrial Network Integration, and overall Value-Creation, among other important matters that Public-sector and Private-sector leaders have identified to the Council for dialogue.

Engineer Maziad Alharbi, CEO of stc Kuwait and Member of the Board of Directors at SAMENA Telecommunications Council, attended the summit alongside other representatives from stc.

Through its role as an industry leader in the local and regional tel-



Engineer Maziad Alharbi, CEO of stc Kuwait holds talk on the sideline of the summit.

ecom markets, stc showcased the various milestones the Company managed to achieve to enhance its position as a digital pioneer building on its initiatives aimed at enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait. In this regard, the acquisition of E-Portal in Q2-2022 has been a key milestone in achieving this leadership position, and is expected to support stc’s future business expansion strategy.

**Enhance**

By completing a transformation journey that started in 2019, stc has defined its future Corporate Strategy in order to enhance the company’s aspiration and goals to LEAD the Kuwait telco and ICT market by offering innovative services, growing priority segments, and deploying an efficient and digital operating model.

Underscoring the Company’s commitment to digital transformation, stc emphasized in a statement the importance of its participation in industry-leading events like the Leaders’ Summit. Such platforms provide invaluable opportunities to

engage with industry experts, exchange ideas, and acquire knowledge that can be harnessed to seize market opportunities. With its strategic investments in 5G infrastructure, stc has evolved into a trailblazer offering digital, cloud, IoT, and data center services, alongside cutting-edge ICT solutions and services. Now, more than ever, the Company is well positioned to support the vision of enterprises, government entities, and SMEs in line with Kuwait Vision 2035 through innovative solutions tailored to their diverse needs and requirements. This is the embodiment of stc’s commitment to enabling digital transformation and enriching the customer journey experience.

To find out more about stc’s events, promotions, and sponsorships, follow stc’s official social media platforms, visit one of stc’s branches, download mystc mobile application, visit [www.stc.som.kw](http://www.stc.som.kw) or contact the customer service center by dialing 102 for around the clock assistance.







Harry and Meghan’s pap run-in another episode in their media battle

LONDON, May 20, (AP): The latest chapter in the drama surrounding Prince Harry and Meghan’s treatment by the tabloid media was much ado about something.

But exactly what happened Tuesday night in New York when the royals left a gala event and were followed by a group of photographers is not completely clear. No fender was bent. No traffic citations issued. Nobody was hurt.

What is evident is that the royal couple was shaken and the pursuit will likely further fuel Harry’s fury at the media as well as his greatest fear that his wife could meet the same fate as his mother, Princess Diana, who died in a car crash while being chased by paparazzi.

The couple’s representatives claimed they had been pursued by photographers in a “near catastrophic car chase” through the streets of Manhattan. Photographers who were involved confirmed they followed the couple for miles over an extended period but described it as a low-speed affair. A photo agency later contended it was Harry and Meghan’s security guards who acted recklessly.

Harry’s perception of what happened - and his whole relationship with the media - is undoubtedly colored by his mother’s fatal crash when he was just 12 years old.

“My mother was chased to her death,” Harry said in the mental health docuseries “The Me You Can’t See,” discussing his fears about Meghan being hounded by the media. “And now look what’s happened. You want to talk about history repeating itself? They’re not

going to stop until she dies.”

The New York run-in occurred the same day a lawyer for Harry argued in a London court that he should be able to challenge a government decision denying him the right to pay police for his own security in the UK.

A spokesperson for the couple called it a “relentless pursuit” that resulted in “multiple near collisions.”

Relentless, definitely. But one photographer involved told The Associated Press that he kept up with the couple’s vehicle on his bicycle for miles as the group moved through Manhattan traffic.

At one point, the couple sought refuge in a police station before attempting to evade the photographers in a yellow cab. By that time, police patrol cars had gotten involved and gave the taxi an escort. The cab driver said he drove Harry and Meghan around only briefly, returning to the vicinity of the police station after just a few minutes. During that time, when they were stopped behind a garbage truck, photographers crowded around the cab taking pictures through the closed windows.

Police spokespeople declined to answer questions about the episode, saying only in a statement that the presence of so many photographers on the road made the transport of the duke and duchess “challenging.”

**Investigate**

Still, New York Mayor Eric Adams condemned the paparazzi as “reckless and irresponsible.”

A photo agency issued a statement denying the freelance photogra-

phers involved had done anything wrong and insisting that they had “no intention of causing any distress or harm.”

On the contrary, Backgrid USA said the photographers present reported that part of Harry’s security escort “was driving in a manner that could be perceived as reckless.” But Backgrid also said it took the couple’s concerns seriously and would investigate.

Harry, the younger son of King Charles III, has argued his safety was compromised by the absence of police protection during a short visit to the UK in July 2021, when his car was chased by photographers as he left a charity event.

His battle with the news media has taken two shapes: speaking out against his perceived mistreatment, part of what he calls his life’s mission to reform the press, and taking tabloid publishers to court in London, where one case is currently on trial.

The bulk of Harry’s lawsuits are against the British tabloid press. Three cases center around a phone hacking scandal that dates back more than a decade.

The lawsuits - including an ongoing trial against the publisher of the Daily Mirror in which the duke is supposed to testify next month - are providing fresh reminders of the unscrupulous tactics employed by some journalists and private eyes hired by the papers.

Harry and other high-profile claimants in the cases, including Elton John and actor Elizabeth Hurley, allege nefarious practices that went as far as bugging, wire tapping and using deceit to get medical records.

Variety



Natalie Portman poses for photographers upon arrival at the premiere of the film ‘The Zone of Interest’ at the 76th international film festival, Cannes, southern France, Friday, May 19. (AP)

Film

Penn calls Producers Guild the ‘Bankers Guild’

Ford bids adieu to Indiana Jones

CANNES, France, May 20, (AP): As the Cannes Film Festival crowd stood in rapturous applause, a visibly moved Harrison Ford stood on the stage, trying to keep his emotions in check.

The warmth of the audience and a clip reel that had just played had left Ford shaken.

“They say that when you’re about to die, you see your life flash before your eyes,” he said. “And I just saw my life flash before my eyes — a great part of my life, but not all of my life.”

If last year’s Cannes was partially defined by its tribute to “Top Gun Maverick” star Tom Cruise, this year’s has belonged to Ford. This time, it’s been far more poignant. Ford, 80, is retiring Indiana Jones, saying goodbye to the iconic swashbuckling archeologist more than 40 years after he first debuted, with fedora, whip and a modest snake phobia.

It’s been a moving farewell tour — most of all for Ford, who has teared up frequently along the way. Speaking to reporters Friday, Ford was asked: Why give up Indy now?

“Is it not evident?” he replied with a characteristically sheepish grin. “I need to sit down and rest a little bit. I love to work. And I love this character. And I love what it brought into my life. That’s all I can say.”

“Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny,” the fifth Indiana Jones film, premiered Thursday night in Cannes, bringing an affecting coda to the franchise begun with 1981’s “Raiders of the Lost Ark.” While that film and the next three were all directed by Steven Spielberg from a story by George Lucas, Ford’s final chapter is directed and co-written by James Mangold, the “Ford vs. Ferrari” filmmaker.

The gala, one of the most sought-after tickets at Cannes this year, also included an honorary Palme d’Or given to Ford. The next day, Ford was still struggling to articulate the experience of unveiling his final turn as Indiana Jones.

“It was indescribable. I can’t even tell you,” said Ford. “It’s just extraordinary to see a kind of relic of your life as it passes by.”

Following the disappointment of 2008’s little-loved “Indiana Jones and the Crystal Skull,” the possibi-

ties for a fifth film lingered for years and went through many iterations. Ford said he was intent on seeing a different, less youthful version of Jones. “Dial of Destiny” is set in the 1960s and finds Indiana as a retiring professor whose long-ago exploits no longer seem so special in the age of space exploration.

“I wanted to see the weight of life on him. I wanted to see him require reinvention and support. And I wanted him to have a relationship that was not a flirty movie relationship,” said Ford, who stars alongside Phoebe Waller-Bridge. “I wanted an equal relationship.”

Ford is clearly deeply pleased with the movie. He was especially complimentary of his castmates and Mangold, whom he said did more than “fill the shoes that Steven left for us.”

“Everything has come together to support me in my old age,” said Ford with a wry grin.

**Retiring**

The movie begins with an extended sequence set back in the final days of WWII. In those scenes, Ford has been de-aged to appear much younger. Lucasfilm chief Kathleen Kennedy was quick to say that an AI-crafted Ford won’t be used by the company in the future. Ford called the employment of a de-aged version of him “skilled and assiduous” — and didn’t make him jealous.

“I don’t look back and say I wish I was that guy. I’m real happy with age,” said Ford. He then added, with an expletive, that it could be worse. “I could be dead.”

Ford isn’t retiring from acting. He has two ongoing TV series (“Shrinking,” “1923”) and he said he remains committed to working.

“My luck has been to work with incredibly talented people and find my way into this crowd of geniuses and not get my ass kicked out,” said Ford. “And I’ve apparently still got a chance to work and I want that. I need that in my life, that challenge.”

Ford, like Indiana, isn’t departing without his hat. He’s kept one, Ford said, but he more prizes the experience of making the films. “The stuff is great but it’s not about the stuff.”

And Ford can still turn heads. One female reporter

declared that the 80-year-old was “still hot” and asked Ford — who briefly appears shirtless in the movie — how he stays fit. After a few chuckles and some mention of his avid cycling, Ford answered with mock pomposity.

“I’ve been blessed with this body,” he replied. “Thanks for noticing.”

**Also:**

**CANNES, France:** Sean Penn strongly backed the current Hollywood screenwriters strike while speaking at the Cannes Film Festival on Friday, saying the dispute over Artificial Intelligence is “a human obscenity.”

Penn addressed the ongoing Writers Guild of America strike in a press conference for his new film, “Black Flies,” director **Jean-Stéphane Sauvaire**’s harrowing, gritty drama about **New York** paramedics. Asked about the strike, Penn said “the industry has been upending the writers and actors and directors for a very long time.”

“There’s a lot of new concepts being tossed about including the use of A.I. It strikes me as a human obscenity for there to be pushback on that from the producers,” said Penn, a veteran writer-director in addition to being an actor.

Film and TV screenwriters earlier this month began striking after talks with producers broke off. The WGA is seeking better pay, new contracts for the streaming era and safeguards against the use of AI-scripted work-arounds.

“The first thing we should do in these conversations is change the Producers Guild and title them how they behave, which is the Bankers Guild,” added Penn. “It’s difficult for so many writers and so many people industry-wide to not be able to work at this time. I guess it’s going to soul-search itself and see what side toughs it out.”

Penn’s comments come as the potential for a wider work stoppage in Hollywood may be growing. The Directors Guild is also negotiating a new contract with producers. The board of SAG-AFTRA, the actors union, this week voted to ask members for strike authorization as it prepares to enter negotiations for a new contract.

**NEW YORK:** Salman Rushdie made an emotional and unexpected return to public life, attending the annual gala of PEN America and giving the event’s final speech as he accepted a special prize, the PEN Centenary Courage Award, just nine months being after being stabbed repeatedly and hospitalized.

“It’s nice to be back - as opposed



Amanpour

Trump

to not being back, which was also a possibility. I’m glad the dice rolled this way,” Rushdie, 75, told hundreds gathered at the American Museum of Natural History, where he received a standing ovation.

It was his first in-person appearance at a public event since he was attacked last August while on stage at a literary festival in

Western New York.

Rushdie, whose attendance had not been announced beforehand, spoke briefly, and dedicated some of his remarks to those who came to his help at the Chautauqua Institution, a nonprofit education and retreat center. He cited a fellow attendee, **Henry Reese** of the City of Asylum project in **Pittsburgh**,

for tackling the assailant and thanked audience members who also stepped in.

“I accept this award, therefore, on behalf of all those who came to my rescue. I was the target that day, but they were the heroes. The courage, that day, was all theirs, and I thank them for saving my life,” he said. (AP)



People & Places

Film

‘Not powerless’

Depp on his Cannes return, hitting bottom

CANNES, France, May 20, (AP): Just a year ago, the image of **Johnny Depp** smiling and waving atop the Palais steps at the Cannes Film Festival would have been unthinkable to most - including to Depp, himself. “When you hit the bottom, you hit the bottom, you hit the bottom, then you find the basement to the bottom,” Depp told The Associated Press the day after “Jeanne du Barry,” in which he stars as King Louis XV, opened Cannes.

This time last year, Depp was immersed in a libel trial he brought against Amber Heard, his ex-wife, based on a 2018 Washington Post op-ed piece in which she referred to herself as “a public figure representing domestic abuse.” A British court had ruled in 2020 that a tabloid labeling Depp “a wife beater” were “substantially true.” Soon after the ruling in the UK, Hollywood had largely cut ties with Depp, jettisoning him from both the “Fantastic Beasts” and “Pirates of the Caribbean” franchises.

“When it all went down, confusion is a good word. Befuddled. Because it does almost reach the Bugs Bunny experience,” Depp says now. “You say to yourself: Is this my life? What happened?”

Some greeted Depp’s feting in Cannes with similar degrees of befuddlement.

A Virginia jury eventually ruled that Heard had defamed Depp on three counts and awarded him \$15 million in damages. In a countersuit, Depp was found guilty of one charge of libel and Heard was awarded \$2 million. Depp may have won in court, but public opinion remains divided on the actor who was once one of the most bankable stars in movies - with many supporters of abused women and the #MeToo movement wondering if sexual assault victims would be more reticent to come forward if they might be sued for defamation.

Reception

Outside the premiere of “Jeanne du Barry” in Cannes, fans grasped for autographs and signs read “Viva Johnny!” On social media, the reception was more fraught. Supporters of Heard rallied around the hashtag #CannesYouNot, arguing that Cannes - which has been criticized for welcoming men accused of misconduct - shouldn’t have invited Depp.

“If you support Cannes, you support predators,” posted Eve Barlow, a journalist and friend of Heard. Heard herself hasn’t commented on Depp’s Cannes premiere.

Depp has seldom spoken in public since the trial, but he granted an interview with the AP on Wednesday after a day of interviews with mostly French media. (Depp remains very popular in France where he has sometimes lived and where the film industry is contending with its own #MeToo reckoning.) He was eager to cast his own battles in the light of Hollywood scandals of the past.

“Never boring but unpleasant, curious years. Escapades. Rumors. Accusations,” Depp said. “I read far too much about Fatty Arbuckle but I didn’t see any (Buster) Keaton coming my way to save my ...”

“One of the things that kept going in my head was Hunter,” he continued, invoking longtime mentor Hunter S. Thompson. “I could hear his voice: ‘Buy the ticket, take the ride.’”

“I don’t think Marlon would have survived,” Depp said, referencing Brando. “I don’t think he came close to going through something like this. Had he been alive to watch this happen, he would have gone sideways. He would have killed somebody.”

One thing that’s been unclear was if Depp had any remorse for how the trial - a bitter and often theatrical legal battle played out in front of cameras - unfolded. Depp became a hero to some right-wing critics of so-called cancel culture. Asked if he had any misgivings about the supporters he attracted, Depp responded: “I did notice that people actually opened their mouths about it. At that time, that was brave.”

“Not for a moment will I regret anything unless I’ve done something horrible to someone, which I haven’t,” Depp added. “I’m not going to regret being taken down a strange road for that period of time because I learned so much more about myself.”

“Jeanne du Barry,” directed by the French filmmaker and actor Maïwenn, is Depp’s first film in three years. Maïwenn stars as Jeanne Vaubernier, a working-class woman who becomes Louis XV’s mistress. Depp speaks French in the film, which doesn’t yet have US distribution. Maïwenn, too, is a controversial figure. She recently admitted to assaulting prominent French journalist Edwy Plenel at a café, yanking his hair back and spitting in his face.

Banned

It’s not the only business Depp has in Cannes. He’s seeking financing for “Modi,” a biopic of Italian artist Amedeo Modigliani that he hopes to shoot this fall, with Al Pacino attached. Depp, who will perform next week at a London tribute for the late Jeff Beck, a close friend, also recently renewed his contract with Dior in a \$20 million deal.

“I don’t know the image of Johnny Depp in the US,” Cannes director Thierry Fremaux said Monday. “If Johnny Depp had been banned from acting in a film, or the film was banned, we wouldn’t be here talking about it.”

And there’s been plenty of conversation generated by Depp’s appearance in Cannes, even in reviews haven’t been good. Time’s Stephanie Zacharek called it “less a comeback than a tepid lurching into a very small spotlight.” But the overall reception has been warm. Depp, who said he lives 45 minutes away, was taken aback by the thrall.

“I didn’t know what planet I was on,” he said, smiling.

Speaking to reporters in the festival press conference, Depp mocked the idea that he has many critics, likening anyone who protested his presence in Cannes to “some species, some tower of mashed potatoes, covered in the light of a computer screen, anonymous, with apparently a lot of spare time.”

Sitting on a terrace overlooking the Cannes’ Croisette later, Depp appeared relaxed and jovial, though his thoughts remained fixed on his legal battles with Heard.

“You’re not powerless but you’ve been postponed,” he said of how he felt before the trial. “At that point, I just thought: F--- it. I’ve been lucky. I’ve been around for a long time. I’ve made a lot of films. That’s, I suppose, my legacy. Alright. I can live with that. I didn’t do anything wrong.” But he said after years of swimming through “that horrible molasses,” he came out much stronger.



These images released courtesy of Pierce Brosnan show ‘So Many Dreams,’ (left) and ‘One Dark Night,’ (right) acrylic on canvas. The artworks are part of Brosnan’s first solo art exhibition running through May 21 in Los Angeles. (AP)



Pierce Brosnan appears at the premiere of ‘Black Adam’ in London on Oct. 18, 2022. Brosnan’s first solo art exhibition, titled, ‘So Many Dreams,’ runs through May 21 in Los Angeles. (AP)



Rourke



Baldwin

Variety

**LONDON:** **Andy Rourke**, bass guitarist of The Smiths, one of the most influential British bands of the 1980s, has died after a lengthy illness with pancreatic cancer, his former bandmate **Johnny Marr** said Friday. He was 59.

In a lengthy post on Instagram, guitarist and songwriter Marr paid tribute to Rourke, who he first met when both were schoolboys in 1975.

“Throughout our teens we played in various bands around south **Manchester** before making our reputations with The Smiths from 1982 to 1987, and it was on those Smiths records that Andy reinvented what it is to be a bass guitar player,” Marr said.

During their short time together as a four-piece band, The Smiths deliberately stayed away from the mainstream of popular music, garnering a cult following on the independent music scene.

Though much of the attention focused on the song-writing partnership of Marr and frontman **Steven Patrick Morrissey**, better known as Morrissey, the sound of The Smiths owed much to Rourke’s bass and his rhythm section partner, drummer **Mike Joyce**. (AP)

**BERLIN:** Austrian-born actor **Helmut Berger**, a European movie star in the 1960s and 1970s who rose to prominence with roles in films by Italian director **Luchino Visconti**, died Thursday, his agent said. He was 78.

Berger died “peacefully but nevertheless unexpectedly” early Thursday in his home city of **Salzburg**, agent Helmut Werner wrote on his management company’s website.

Berger was born in **Bad Ischl, Austria** on May 29, 1944. In 1964, he worked as a film extra in **Rome** before being discovered by Visconti, who would later become his partner and in 1966 gave him his first role. He played prominent roles in Visconti’s “The Damned,” “Ludwig” and “Conversation Piece.”

Berger’s credits also included appearances in **Vittorio De Sica**’s “The

Art

Actor’s first solo art exhibit is biographical

Brosnan unveils personal paintings

LOS ANGELES, May 20, (AP): Pierce Brosnan has attempted to write about himself many times, but it’s through painting that the artist truly feels he can fully express himself.

“(The artwork) is biographical. I’ve tried to write the memoirs, and it’s so boring. It’s just having to dig into the head and the heart and the memory of life. And so these paintings definitely have a history of who I was, where I was, when I was,” said the actor.

Brosnan is publicly unveiling his most vulnerable role yet, hosting his first solo art exhibition - which runs through May 21 in Los Angeles. Titled “So Many Dreams,” it’s a collection of paintings and drawings that the actor created between the 1980s and present day.

Painting isn’t a new pandemic hobby or venture that the actor is just now tackling head-on. Although best known for playing James Bond and starring in other classics, Brosnan began pursuing the visual arts as a young boy living in Ireland.

He would later move to the United States, landing where he would land the lead role on NBC’s “Remington Steele,” which made Brosnan into a global household name and one of the most coveted actors in Hollywood.

“I found myself living here, and I was strongly influenced by the LA artists of the early 80s. I had a certain desire and wish and a want to paint. I had the money to afford the art supplies, the canvas, the brushes,” Brosnan said. “I bought all these wonderful, wonderful art supplies, and they just ended up in a cupboard.”

It wasn’t until 1987, when Brosnan’s late wife, Australian actor Cassandra Harris, was diagnosed with ovarian cancer that Brosnan

would dust off his painting supplies and began to use the art form as an emotional release and comfort for him and Harris.

“One night, I got up, and I just started painting. I started painting with my fingers,” said Brosnan, recalling how he would would paint while Harris recovered from chemotherapy treatments. She died in 1991, but the actor has kept that first work, titled “One Dark Night” and it hangs in the exhibit.

Primary colors stretch across a smudged black painted canvas and one can almost see the frustration and release that Brosnan must have felt. “I went to the canvas to explore that dark rage, that kind of fractured pain that I had. But the color came out. And so the color balance to whatever that inner life was,” he said.

Credits

While pops of bright colors factor prominently in Brosnan’s art, he says he doesn’t wish to categorize his collection.

“Someone else can categorize it. It’s not up for me to define it. It’s the audience. It’s they who want to criticize or celebrate the work,” he said.

Brosnan credits his wife, journalist and documentarian Keely Shaye Brosnan, for giving him the courage and push to publicly display his art.

Many of Brosnan’s paintings are a result of drawings that he creates while chatting on the phone.

“My wife, Keely, bought these pads that sit by the phone with her initials, my initials. And soon as I am on a phone call, or I’m doing business, and I have a morning of calls. The pad is there, and the drawings just happen. They just show themselves, so they have a mystery.”

A wall of the exhibit features the

drawings, many of which are faces that pop into his mind or photographs that he comes across. “I look at that, and I think, who is this person. ‘Who is this man? What is the meaning of these images,’” said the actor.

Brosnan’s first solo exhibit, thanks to a push from Keely and perfectly timed around the actor’s 70th birthday on Tuesday, is a celebration of his work and the dreams he’s fulfilled during his time.

“It’s my own birthday gift to myself to have the courage to say, come and see my artwork,” he said. “I still have so many dreams. I have fulfilled coming to America. Creating a career for myself was a big dream and a gamble, and it paid off. ‘So Many Dreams’ is a love story. It’s a love story of women who have influenced my life and my children and the art form that I make as an actor,” he added.

The exhibit has helped Brosnan see the totality of his work and he says he can now “work my way out of the weeds and trying to define it and trying to grow as an artist, as a painter.”

Brosnan wants to branch out into other art forms, ceramics, pottery, sculpture and even wood carvings.

“This is definitely a transitional moment in my life as an actor, as an artist ... and that fills me with an exhilaration of expectations and desires and wants. And we shall see where the wind takes us.”

But Brosnan does have one solution to his failed attempts at writing a memoir.

“I think a book of paintings would be nice. It would be a coffee table book with a painting and then 500 words or more about that period in time, that person. That kind of that appeals to me.”

Garden of the Finzi-Continis,” **Massimo Dallamano**’s “Dorian Gray,” and, later, in **Francis Ford Coppola**’s “The Godfather Part III.”

After a string of health problems, Berger announced the end of his acting

career in November 2019. (AP)

**SANTA FE, NM:** Attorneys for the weapons supervisor on the New Mexico film set where **Alec Baldwin**



Harrison Ford poses for photographers with his honorary Palme d’Or at the photo call for the film ‘Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny’ at the 76th international film festival, Cannes, southern France, May 19. (AP) — Details Page 11

shot and killed a cinematographer asked a judge to dismiss her involuntary manslaughter charge, as Baldwin’s was last month.

The motion filed in Santa Fe County court from lawyers for **Hannah Gutierrez-Reed**, the armorer on the set of the Western “Rust,” says that the prosecutors who brought the charge did not have the authority to file it, that the investigation was sloppy and improper, and that Gutierrez-Reed’s due process rights were violated.

Baldwin was pointing a gun at cinematographer **Halyna Hutchins** during a rehearsal on the New Mexico film set in October 2021 when it went off, killing her and wounding the film’s director **Joel Souza**.

In January of this year, Baldwin and Gutierrez-Reed were each charged with involuntary manslaughter. Baldwin’s charge was dropped on April 21 by new special prosecutors who had taken over the case. They cited new evidence and the need for more time to investigate, and warned he could be charged anew.

Thursday’s filing alleges that Gutierrez-Reed’s prosecution was “tainted by improper political motives” and says that Santa Fe District Attorney **Mary Carmack-Altwies** and the initial special prosecutor she appointed, **Andrea Reeb**, “both used the tragic film set accident that resulted in the death of **Halyna Hutchins** as an opportunity to advance their personal interests.” (AP)



Science

‘Gamechanger’

Titanic 3D scan shows shipwreck in new light

LONDON, May 20, (AP): Deep-sea researchers have completed the first full-size digital scan of the Titanic, showing the entire wreck in unprecedented detail and clarity, the companies behind a new documentary on the wreck said Thursday.

Using two remotely operated submersibles, a team of researchers spent six weeks last summer in the North Atlantic mapping the whole shipwreck and the surrounding 3-mile debris field, where personal belongings of the ocean liner’s passengers, such as shoes and watches, were scattered.

Richard Parkinson, founder and chief executive of deep-sea exploration firm Magellan, estimated that the resulting data - including 715,000 images - is 10 times larger than any underwater 3D model ever attempted before.



Geffen

“It’s an absolutely one-to-one digital copy, a ‘twin,’ of the Titanic in every detail,” said **Anthony Geffen**, head of documentary maker Atlantic Productions.

The Titanic was on its maiden voyage from Southampton, England, to New York City when it hit an iceberg off Newfoundland in the North Atlantic on April 15, 1912. The luxury ocean liner sank within hours, killing about 1,500 people.

The wreck, discovered in 1985, lies some 12,500 feet (3,800 meters) under the sea, about 435 miles (700 kilometers) off the coast of Canada.

Geffen says previous images of the Titanic were often limited by low light levels, and only allowed viewers to see one area of the wreck at a time. He said the new photorealistic 3D model captures both the bow and stern section, which had separated upon sinking, in clear detail - including the serial number on the propeller.

Researchers have spent seven months rendering the large amount of data they gathered, and a documentary on the project is expected to come out next year. But beyond that, Geffen says he hopes the new technology will help researchers work out details of how the Titanic met its fate and allow people to interact with history in a fresh way.

“All our assumptions about how it sank, and a lot of the details of the Titanic, comes from speculation, because there is no model that you can reconstruct, or work exact distances,” he said. “I’m excited because this quality of the scan will allow people in the future to walk through the Titanic themselves ... and see where the bridge was and everything else.”

Parks Stephenson, a leading Titanic expert who was involved in the project, called the modelling a “gamechanger.”

“I’m seeing details that none of us have ever seen before and this allows me to build upon everything that we have learned to date and see the wreck in a new light,” he said. “We’ve got actual data that engineers can take to examine the true mechanics behind the breakup and the sinking and thereby get even closer to the true story of Titanic disaster.”

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**Volcano:** Mexico’s Popocatepetl volcano rumbled to life again this week, belching out towering clouds of ash that forced 11 villages to cancel school sessions.

The residents weren’t the only ones keeping a close eye on the towering peak. Every time there is a sigh, tic or heave in Popocatepetl there are dozens of scientists, a network of sensors and cameras, and a roomful of powerful equipment watching its every move.

The 17,797-foot (5,426-meter) volcano, known affectionately as “El Popo,” has been spewing toxic fumes, ash and lumps of incandescent rock persistently for almost 30 years, since it awakened from a long slumber in 1994.

The volcano is 45 miles (72 kilometers) southeast of Mexico City, but looms much closer to the eastern fringes of the metropolitan area of 22 million people. The city also faces threats from earthquakes and sinking soil, but the volcano is the most visible potential danger - and the most closely watched. A severe eruption could cut off air traffic, or smother the city in clouds of choking ash.

Ringed around its summit are six cameras, a thermal imaging device and 12 seismological monitoring stations that operate 24 hours a day, all reporting back to an equipment-filled command center in Mexico City.

A total of 13 scientists from a multi-disciplinary team take turns manning the command center around the clock. Being able to warn of an impending ash cloud is key, because people can take precautions. Unlike earthquakes, warning times can be longer for the volcano and in general the peak is more predictable.

On a recent day, researcher **Paulino Alonso** made the rounds checking the readings at the command center run by Mexico’s National Disaster Prevention Center, known by its initials as Conapred. It is a complex task that involves seismographs that measure the volcano’s internal trembling, which could indicate hot rock and gas moving up the vents in the peak.

Monitoring gases in nearby springs and at the peak - and wind patterns that help determine where the ash could be blown - also play a role.

The forces inside are so great that they can temporarily deform the peak, so cameras and sensors must monitor the very shape of the volcano.

How do you explain all of this to 25 million non-experts living within a 62-mile (100-kilometer) radius who have grown so used to living near the volcano?

Authorities came up with the simple idea of a volcano “stoplight” with three colors: green for safety, yellow for alert and red for danger.

For most of the years since the stoplight was introduced, it has been stuck at some stage of “yellow.” The mountain sometimes quiets down, but not for long. It seldom shoots up molten lava, and is more the “explosive” type, showering out hot rocks that tumble down its flanks and emitting bursts of gas and ash.

The center also has monitors in other states; Mexico is a country all too familiar with natural disasters.

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**Mystery tremors:** A series of minor tremors recorded on the Danish Baltic island of **Bornholm** Saturday has puzzled scientists, who now say they were caused by “acoustic pressure waves from an unknown source.”

At first the tremors were thought to have been caused by earthquakes. Then, seismologists theorized that they originated from controlled explosions in **Poland**, more than 140 kilometers (nearly 90 miles) to the south.

On Monday, the Geological Survey of **Denmark** and **Greenland**, an official body that monitors the underground, said the tremors were “not caused by earthquakes, but by pressure waves from an event in the atmosphere.” However, they came from “an unknown source.”

“The seismologists can report that it is unlikely that the tremors originate from a controlled explosion in Poland, which was carried out shortly before the first reports of tremors on Bornholm,” the body known as GEUS said in a statement.

GEUS said it had received “more than 60” tips from people on Bornholm that “earthquake-like tremors” - described as a deep rumbling, shaking and rattling, changing pressure in the ear - had been reported in the afternoon on Bornholm.

No one was hurt. Police said they too were contacted by members of the public about the tremor on the eastern part of the island. Danish media reported that the tremors caused a crack in the wall of a house.

GEUS said that seismic tremors were measured at a magnitude of 2.3.



This image provided by Blue Origin shows the Blue Moon lander. Jeff Bezos’ Blue Origin received a \$3.4 billion contract Friday, May 19, 2023, to develop a lunar lander named Blue Moon. It will be used to transport astronauts to the lunar surface as early as 2029. (AP)

NASA picks Bezos’ Blue Origin to build lunar landers for moonwalkers

Jeff Bezos’ rocket company has won a NASA contract to land astronauts on the moon, two years after it lost out to SpaceX.

Blue Origin received a \$3.4 billion contract Friday to lead a team to develop a lunar lander named Blue Moon. It will be used to transport astronauts to the lunar surface as early as 2029, following a pair of crew landings by Elon Musk’s SpaceX.

NASA will get astronauts to lunar orbit using its own rockets and capsules, but wants private companies to take over from there.

NASA Administrator Bill Nelson said the agency

wants different landing options as it seeks a return to the moon more than a half-century after the end of the Apollo moonshots.

Blue Origin is kicking in billions of dollars, on top of the NASA contract, to help establish a permanent presence on the moon.

“We have a lot to do before we successfully land and return astronauts,” said John Couluris, a Blue Origin vice president.

Two years ago, Blue Origin sued after NASA awarded SpaceX the contract for the first lunar landing. A federal judge upheld the space agency’s

decision.

NASA’s Artemis program, which follows the 1960s and 1970s Apollo moonshots, kicked off with a successful test flight late last year. Launched atop NASA’s new moon rocket, an empty Orion capsule went into lunar orbit before returning home.

The next Artemis flight will come late next year when one Canadian and three U.S. astronauts fly to the moon and back, but not land. Two Americans would descend to the lunar surface aboard a SpaceX Starship on the mission after that, no earlier than late 2025. (AP)

Health

Pfizer’s vaccine protects newborns

FDA backs maternal RSV vaccine

WASHINGTON, May 20, (AP): A first-of-its-kind RSV vaccine for pregnant women guards their newborns against the scary respiratory virus -- and federal health advisers on Thursday backed Pfizer’s shot despite some lingering questions.

RSV fills hospitals with wheezing babies each fall and winter, and the virus struck earlier than usual and especially hard in the US this past year.

If the vaccine pans out, “many infants and their parents will breathe easier in the coming years,” said Dr. Jay Portnoy, a member of the Food and Drug Administration advisory panel from Children’s Mercy Hospital in Kansas City, Missouri.

The idea: Give women a single injection late in pregnancy, between 24 weeks and 36 weeks, so they develop RSV-fighting antibodies that pass through the placenta - just like they pass protection against other bugs to their babies.

In Pfizer’s international study of nearly 7,400 pregnant women, maternal vaccination proved 82% effective at preventing severe RSV during babies’ most vulnerable first three months of life. At age 6 months, it still was proving 69% protective against severe illness.

Pfizer said there were no signs of safety problems but the FDA did ask its scientific advisers to consider whether a slight difference in premature birth between vaccinated moms and those given a dummy shot was of concern. Debate over whether that was really a hint of trouble or just due to chance dominated the panel’s daylong meeting.

Pfizer pledged to closely track the vaccine’s real-world use for more evidence. Ultimately the advisers unanimously decided that the shot is effective - and voted 10-4 that there’s adequate safety data. The FDA will consider Thursday’s recommendations in making the final decision on approval.

“If you’re in any sense risking premature births with this vaccine, I think there will be a big price to pay,” said Dr. Paul Offit of the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia, among the panelists who voted “no” on the safety question.

If the FDA ultimately approves the maternal shot, it would mark a second milestone in the decades-long quest to prevent the respiratory syncytial virus. Earlier this month the FDA approved the world’s first RSV vaccine, rival

GSK’s shot for older adults, who also are at high risk. There isn’t a vaccine yet for children, but Pfizer is about to begin testing one.

Here are some things to know:

RSV is a common threat

For most healthy people, RSV is a cold-like nuisance. But it can be life-threatening for the very young -- infecting deep in the lungs to cause pneumonia or impeding babies’ breathing by inflaming their tiny airways. In the U.S. alone, between 58,000 and 80,000 children younger than 5 are hospitalized each year, and between 100 and 300 die, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

“All young infants are at risk of severe disease with RSV,” but postponing infection even by a few months lessens that risk, said CDC’s Dr. Katherine Fleming-Dutra.

Vaccine’s potential impact

Pfizer’s vaccine isn’t intended to prevent RSV infection but to avoid the worst outcomes. In late-stage testing, six infants born to vaccinated mothers had a severe RSV illness in their first three months of life compared to 33 infants whose mothers received a dummy shot. In addition, the vaccine cut in half the chances of needing any medical attention for an RSV infection by age 6 months.

The company predicts the US could prevent as many as 20,000 infant hospitalizations a year, and 320,000 doctor visits, if enough pregnant women were vaccinated.

Safety data

Vaccine reactions included typically mild injection-site pain and fatigue. As for the prematurity question, vaccinated mothers had slightly more preterm infants -- 5.7% versus 4.7%. The vast majority were born just a few weeks early. That’s better than the nation’s preterm birth rate -- overall in the U.S., 1 in 10 babies were born premature last year -- and the study imbalance wasn’t statistically significant, meaning it could be due to chance.

Competitor GSK halted its own trials of a maternal RSV vaccine because of prematurity concerns, spurring questions about Pfizer’s shot. Pfizer said the preterm difference in its study was fueled by participants in South Africa - for unknown reasons - and there was no difference spotted in the U.S. or other high-income countries.



This electron microscope image provided by the National Institutes of Health shows human respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) virions, colored blue, and anti-RSV F protein/gold antibodies, colored yellow, shedding from the surface of human lung cells. Advisers to the Food and Drug Administration on Thursday, May 18 debated a first-of-its-kind RSV vaccine to protect newborns by immunizing their moms late in pregnancy. (AP)

Discovery

**Mastodon bones on display:** A selection of bones belonging to a juvenile mastodon who roamed the woods of Michigan 13,000 years ago is now on display at the Grand Rapids Public Museum, after workers unearthed it by chance last year.

Excited museum officials showed off some of the long-extinct pachyderm’s remains on Thursday, although much of the skeleton still is going through the drying process.

Mastodons might seem similar to woolly mammoths, but they were shorter and stockier - imagine a mix between a woolly mammoth and modern elephant - and their tusks were shorter and less curved.

The Michigan skeleton was discovered by Kent County drain commission workers digging about 30 miles north of Grand Rapids. Museum CEO Dale Robertson called the discovery “amazing.”

“It’s probably an understatement,” he said during a news conference Thursday before officials toured the new exhibit.

It’s not unusual to find mastodon bones, especially in the Midwest. But what’s special about this discovery is that as much as 80% of the mastodon’s bones are intact, “which is really, really impressive,” said **Cory Redman**, the museum’s science curator.

“Anything over 20 you’re super excited about, so 75 to 80% is absolutely fantastic,” Redman said. (AP)

□ □ □

**Man attacked by shark:** A man was hospitalized after being attacked by a shark in the Florida Keys, officials said.

The 20-year-old Miami-Dade man was bitten on the leg while spearfishing off Marathon, according to a Monroe County Sheriff’s Office news release.

The man was with two other people, who brought him ashore in a private boat, officials said. They met an air ambulance helicopter crew at the eastern end of the Seven Mile Bridge, and the helicopter took the injured man to a Miami hospital.

Officials didn’t immediately release the man’s name or condition or any details about the shark. (AP)

□ □ □

**Hawk ‘Pale Male’ dies:** Pale Male, a red-tailed hawk who brought a touch of the wild to swanky Manhattan as he nested above Fifth Avenue for three decades, has died.

Pale Male died recently after being found ill and grounded in Central Park, wildlife rehabilitator Bobby Horvath posted on Facebook. The hawk was believed to be 33 years old.

Horvath posted that he picked Pale Male up and took him to his rehab group’s veterinarian, who did bloodwork and X-rays. The hawk later ate a small meal but

remained weak and lethargic, Horvath said. “We hoped for any improvement but sadly it was not meant to be,” he said.

Pale Male, so named because of his whitish plumage, was first spotted in Central Park as a juvenile in 1991 and began nesting on Fifth Avenue across from the park in 1993.

Bird lovers crowded inside the park to watch as Pale Male and his succession of mates hatched and raised their young each spring.



Zahn



Redman

The birders were outraged in 2004 when Pale Male’s nest with then-mate Lola was ripped from its ledge on the 12th floor of a ritzy apartment building whose residents included actor Mary Tyler Moore and CNN anchor **Paula Zahn**.

The co-op board that had voted to remove the nest as a hazard quickly reversed itself and restored a row of anti-pigeon spikes that the hawks had used to anchor their nest. Pale Male and Lola rebuilt their nest. (AP)



Swiatek says thigh injury ‘shouldn’t be anything serious’ ahead of French Open

# Rune follows up win over Djokovic by beating Ruud to reach final

ROME, May 20, (AP): Holger Rune followed up his latest victory over Novak Djokovic with another impressive performance, producing a 6-7 (2), 6-4, 6-2 comeback win over fellow Scandinavian Casper Ruud on Saturday to reach the Italian Open final.

It's the third clay-court final this season for Rune, after the 20-year-old Dane won a title in Munich, Germany, and was beaten by Andrey Rublev for the Monte Carlo Masters trophy.

Rome is the last big tournament before the French Open starts next weekend and both Rune and Ruud are shaping up as contenders.

The seventh-ranked Rune was coming off a win over six-time Rome champion Djokovic in the quarterfinals - his second victory against the 22-time Grand Slam champion in little more than six months.

The fourth-ranked Ruud, who is from Norway, reached the final last year at Roland Garros, losing to Rafael Nadal - who announced on Thursday that he won't be competing in Paris because of a lingering hip injury that has sidelined him since January.

In a tight and spectacular first set, Ruud won the first five points of the tiebreaker to take control.

The match was filled with memorable points, starting when Ruud ran down a drop shot and replied with a delicate but sharply angled winner in the second game.

Rune was ready the next time that Ruud attempted the same shot and ran down a seemingly impossible ball outside the doubles alley, sending Ruud back toward the baseline before eventually finishing the point off with a volley winner. Rune then waved his hands to urge on roars from the crowd.

After Ruud broke serve midway through the second set, Rune took a medical timeout to have his right shoulder treated.

Rune then produced an 83 mph (134 kph) forehand return winner off a first serve as he broke to take the second set.

At the start of the third, Rune whipped another forehand cross-court after he was stretched off the court.

Under constant pressure due to Rune's court coverage and footspeed, Ruud double-faulted to hand Rune a break early in the third and never recovered.

The match was played in overcast conditions under intermittent rain.

The right thigh injury that forced top-ranked Iga Swiatek to retire during her Italian Open quarterfinal "shouldn't be anything serious," the Polish player said.

## TENNIS

Swiatek had to stop playing during the third set against Wimbledon champion Elena Rybakina in a match that started late Wednesday evening.

"I felt pain in my right thigh. It was pretty sudden. At the beginning I didn't really know if it was serious or not," Swiatek said. "We did an examination with the physio afterwards. It shouldn't be anything serious, so I'm pretty positive that I'll be back soon."

Swiatek will be aiming for a third French Open title - and second straight - when the clay-court Grand Slam begins in 10 days.

"To be ready for Roland Garros I need to recover right now. I'm going to take couple of days off. ... Since Stuttgart I wasn't really able to recover with that tight schedule that we have on WTA," Swiatek said, referring to a tournament in Germany last month.



Denmark's Holger Rune returns the ball during a semi final match against Norway's Casper Ruud at the Italian Open tennis tournament in Rome, Italy. (AP)

## Highlanders, Waratahs win

# Chiefs bounce back from first defeat of the season

HAMILTON, New Zealand, May 20, (AP): Lock Tupou Vaa'i scored two tries for the Hamilton-based Chiefs who bounced back rapidly from their first loss of the season to beat the Wellington-

based Hurricanes 23-12 Saturday in a rain-soaked match in the 13th of 15 regular-season rounds.

The Chiefs' 10-match winning streak ended last weekend when they were beaten by the Queensland Reds. They quickly rebounded by winning on Saturday to cement their place atop the table and ensured they will host a home playoff.

The match took place in torrential rain in Hamilton which limited attacking options. The Chiefs made the best of their few choices, using their lineup drive and kicking well as the rain made the contest for the high ball a lottery.

The Hurricanes also weren't in charge of their own lineup and fumbles or overthrows led to both of Vaa'i's tries.

The Chiefs led 10-0 at halftime but the Hurricanes came back into the match strongly with two second-half tries, only to be repelled by two late penalties by Chiefs flyhalf Damian McKenzie.

"When it comes to this point in the season the weather changes and the rugby we play has to change accordingly," Chiefs captain Sam Cane said.

## RUGBY

"It was always going to be a battle of the forwards when the weather came in like that and it won't be pieces of individual brilliance that wins games at this point in the season, it will be collective effort."

The Chiefs scored their first try from a lineup drive after six minutes. When the drive seemed to stall, the backs rushed in and added the impetus which carried hooker Samisoni Taukei'aho over the line.

The Hurricanes overthrew a line-out in the 21st minute and the Chiefs pounced. Pita-Gus Sowakula carried the ball forward strongly and Vaa'i was on hand to promote it over the line.

Vaa'i scored again in the 47th from another Hurricanes lineup error, stooping low to place the ball over the line.

The Hurricanes came back with two good tries in the conditions. Fullback Josh Moorbey made a break down the right flank, fending tacklers then kicking ahead and winning the race to the ball behind the goal line.

Backrower Brayden Iose then intercepted a loose pass on half-way and dashed away to score as the Hurricanes denied the Chiefs a bonus point. But McKenzie landed penalties in the 66th and 75th minutes which kept the Hurricanes at bay.

Fullback Sam Gilbert kicked a penalty five minutes after the full-time siren to give the Dunedin-based Highlanders a 20-17 win over the Melbourne Rebels.

Gilbert also kicked a goal in the 72nd which drew the Highlanders level with the Rebels at 17-17 after Reece Hodge had nudged the Rebels ahead with a penalty in the 61st.

At Sydney, fullback Max Jorgensen showed his playmaking skills as the New South Wales Waratahs maintained their late-season surge with a 32-18 home win over the Fijian Drua.

The Waratahs won their fourth match in a row, scoring five tries to two to consolidate sixth place.

Jorgensen's one-handed passes set up first-half tries to his wingers Mark Nawaqanitawase and Dylan Pietsch and he threw a more conventional pass for the match-clinching try to No. 8 Lange Gleeson in the 71st minute.

Earlier, Fijian Drua five-eighth Caleb Muntz kept his side in the game in the first half with two penalties.

He opened the scoring in the seventh minute but that was the only lead the visitors held.

CINCINNATI, May 20, (AP): Aaron Judge hit his seventh home run in seven games and the New York Yankees beat the Cincinnati Reds 6-2 on Friday night.

Anthony Rizzo also homered for the surging Yankees, who improved to 9-3 in their last 12 games.

Judge, who received a standing ovation from the many Yankees fans in attendance following his pregame batting session, wasted little time making his presence felt in the teams' first meeting in Cincinnati since 2017. The reigning AL MVP took the fifth pitch he saw from Reds starter Ben Lively (1-2) 431 feet to center field for his 13th home run of the season.

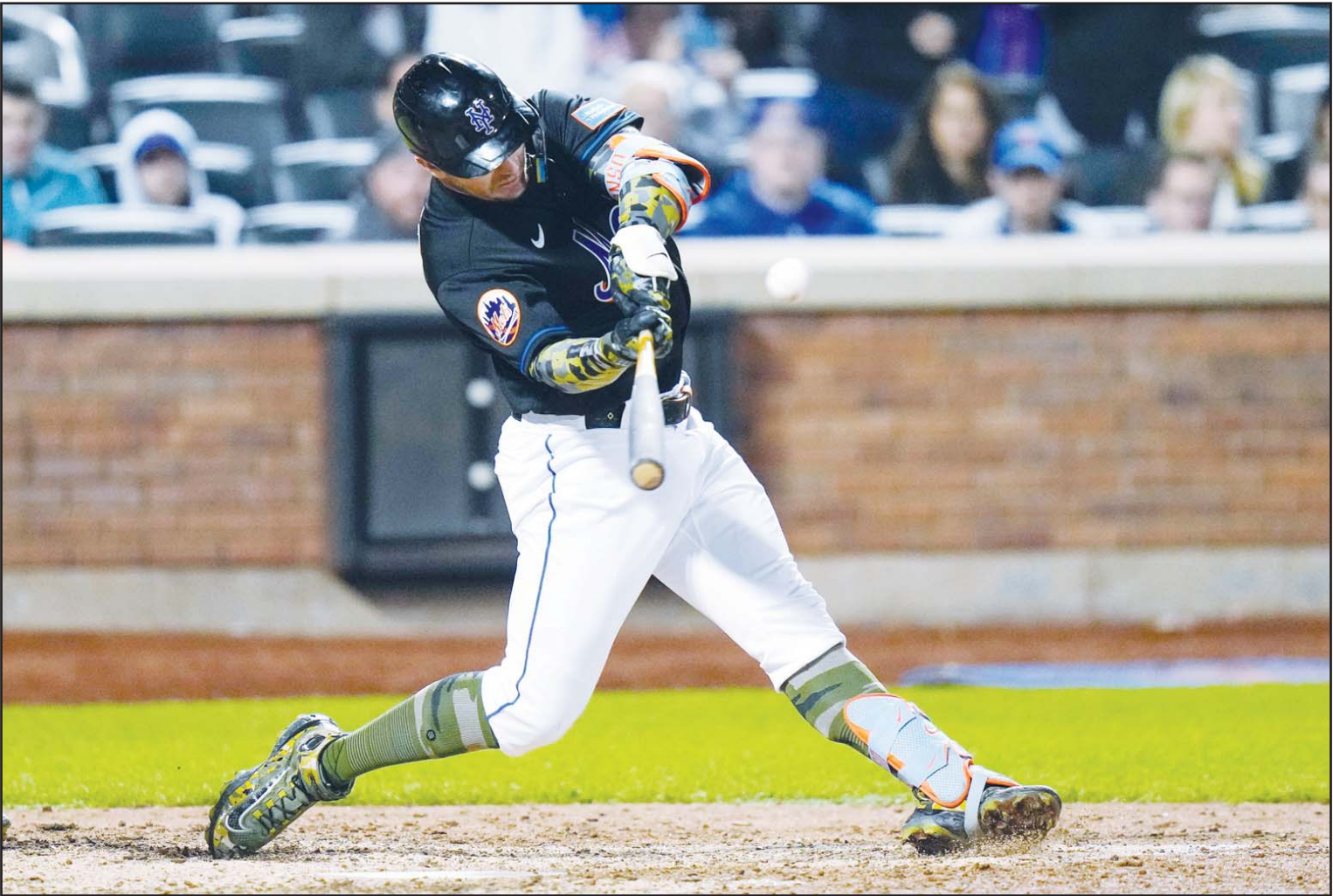
It was Judge's only hit of the night, but he has homered in five of the last seven games - including hitting two in two games during that stretch.

With New York still leading 1-0 lead before the bottom half of the fifth inning, all four umpires administered a foreign substance check on Yankees starter Clarke Schmidt (2-4). The umpires allowed Schmidt to stay on the mound after he appeared to clean off his glove hand.

But Reds manager David Bell was ejected while disputing the umpires' decision to allow Schmidt to continue his scoreless outing. Cincinnati had just three hits off Schmidt at that point.



Judge



New York Mets' Pete Alonso hits a grand slam during the seventh inning of a baseball game against the Cleveland Guardians in New York. (AP)

**Rays 1, Brewers 0**

In St. Petersburg, Francisco Mejia had an eighth-inning sacrifice fly and major league-leading Tampa Bay beat Milwaukee.

Luke Raley was hit by a pitch from Peter Strzelecki (2-3) leading off the eighth. Raley stole second, went to third on catcher William Contreras' throwing error and came home on Mejia's fly to left.

## BASEBALL

Jason Adam (1-1) struck out Willy Adames to end the eighth with Owen Miller on third. Peter Fairbanks worked the ninth for his fourth save, stranding a runner at third. Tampa Bay (33-13), coming off a 4-6 trip, improved to 20-3 at home.

**Mets 10, Guardians 9, 10 innings**

In New York, Pete Alonso tied it with a grand slam in the seventh inning and Francisco Lindor hit an RBI single in the 10th as the New York Mets overcame a 5-0 deficit to beat Cleveland.

Gabriel Arias hit a two-run homer in the top of the 10th against Drew Smith (3-1). In the bottom half, Mark Vientos and Francisco Alvarez tied it with RBI singles against Emmanuel Clase (1-4). Brandon Nimmo beat out an infield single before Lindor - facing his former team for the first time - singled past diving second baseman Andrés Gimenez. The Mets have won three straight.

**Dodgers 5, Cardinals 0**

In St. Louis, Mookie Betts hit a three-run homer, Tony Gonsolin combined with four relievers on a two-hitter and Los Angeles beat St. Louis.

Gonsolin (2-1) continued his comeback from his spring training ankle injury. He allowed just one hit and two walks in five innings.

One day after slugging seven home runs and scoring 16 runs, the Cardinals were shut out while managing only two singles. Brusdar Graterol, Shelby Miller, Caleb Ferguson and Tyler Cyr followed Gonsolin to the mound and shut down the Cardinals.

**Astros 5, Athletics 1**

In Houston, Kyle Tucker homered, José Altuve made his season debut and Houston beat Oakland for its fifth straight victory.

Tucker hit a two-run homer in the sixth inning that landed deep in right where many fans wore metallic gold crowns in honor of "King Tuck." It was Tucker's bobblehead night, honoring his 2022 Gold Glove. His seventh homer of the year came off Ken Waldichuk (1-3) and scored José Abreu.

Tucker also doubled in the fourth to score Yordan Alvarez, who led off with a double of his own off the top of the wall in center. The Astros have won eight of their last nine games.

There was an added buzz in the Minute Maid Park atmosphere for Altuve's 2023 debut. The 33-year-old veteran had been on the injured list since fracturing his right thumb March 18 while playing for Venezuela in the World Baseball Classic. Altuve went 0 for 4 with a walk.

**Red Sox 6, Padres 1**

In San Diego, Rafael Devers homered twice and drove in four runs to help Boston hand staggering San Diego its 10th loss in 12 games.

Devers and his friend and former teammate, Padres shortstop Xander Bogaerts, took the lineup cards out for the pregame exchange and hugged. Devers then circled the bases in front of Bogaerts in consecutive innings in his 14th career multi-homer game.

Devers hit a solo shot to right so hard leading off the second that he stumbled back a few steps before starting his trot. He hit a three-run homer nearly to the base of the batter's eye in straightaway center field with no outs in the third for a 6-0 lead. He has 13 homers this season.

Both came off lefty Blake Snell (1-6), who allowed six runs and five hits in four innings.

Other than Fernando Tatis Jr.'s lead-off homer in the third off James Paxton (1-0), the Padres' offensive struggles continued on a day when slugger Manny Machado went on the 10-day injured list with a hairline fracture in his left hand.

**Angels 5, Twins 4**

In Anaheim, Mickey Moniak had three hits and made a game-saving catch at the wall in the seventh inning

as Los Angeles rallied to beat Minnesota after Angels starter Reid Detmers took a no-hitter into the sixth inning.

Hunter Renfroe also had three hits for the Angels, who gave Mike Trout the day off after the team flew cross country Thursday after completing a four-game series in Baltimore.

Detmers tied a career high with 12 strikeouts and allowed only three Twins to reach base via walks before Byron Buxton lined a base hit to left with two outs in the sixth to end the left-hander's bid for a second no-hitter. Carlos Correa's walk and Buxton's single started a three-run rally that allowed Minnesota to tie it. Detmers ended up allowing three runs and two hits.

Willi Castro homered in the seventh inning for the Twins to give them a short-lived 4-3 lead. Moniak, who was playing Trout's usual spot in center field, was a home run shy of hitting for the cycle. His triple in the seventh inning drove in Zach Neto and tied it at 4.

**Braves 6, Mariners 2**

In Atlanta, Orlando Arcia's single off the right-field wall drove in the go-ahead run in the seventh, Marcell Ozuna had three RBIs and Atlanta Braves overcame another strong start by Seattle rookie Bryce Miller.

Miller, making only his fourth major league start, led 2-1 before fading and leaving the game in the seventh. Ozuna's bloop single off Trevor Gott drove in Eddie Rosario with the tying run. Arcia's 374-foot single off the bricks on the right-field wall drove in Ozzie Albies, who walked.



Los Angeles Dodgers' Chris Taylor rounds first on his way to an RBI double during the fifth inning of a baseball game against the St. Louis Cardinals in St. Louis. (AP)

**Cubs 10, Phillies 1**

In Philadelphia, Nico Hoerner had two two-run doubles in his return from the injured list and Chicago beat Philadelphia to end a five-game losing streak.

Marcus Stroman (3-4) allowed one run and three hits in six innings for the victory. The Cubs have won seven straight games over the Phillies dating to the 2021 season.

**Pirates 13, Diamondbacks 3**

In Pittsburgh, Ke'Bryan Hayes had three hits and three RBIs, Bryan Reynolds homered for the first time in six weeks and drove in four runs and Pittsburgh rolled over Arizona ace Zac Gallen.

Gallen (6-2) lasted just 3 2/3 innings and allowed a career-high eight runs - five earned - and eight hits as his six-game winning streak ended. He walked four and struck out two. Gallen had given up a total of six runs in his previous seven starts.

**Rangers 7, Rockies 2**

In Arlington, Adolis Garcia homered for the fifth time in five games, Corey Seager and Josh Jung hit two-run doubles in a five-run fifth inning and Texas beat Colorado.

Martin Perez (5-1) allowed two runs and seven hits in a season-high seven innings and matched a season high with seven strikeouts. The Rangers have won nine of their last 13 games.

Karl Kauffmann (0-1) allowed five runs, including four earned, in 4 1/3 innings in his major league debut. The 2019 second-round draft pick out of Michigan gave seven hits, walked two and struck out four.

**Giants 4, Marlins 3**

In San Francisco, San Francisco scored three runs in the sixth following a throwing error by Miami pitcher Sandy Alcantara, offsetting another big night by Luis Arraez.

Mitch Haniger had two hits, including an RBI double, as the Giants won their fourth straight.

Bryan De La Cruz homered and

drove in three runs for the Marlins. Arraez singled twice, doubled and scored, raising his average to .388 with his 17th multi-hit games this season.

Miami manager Skip Schumaker and catcher Jacob Stallings were ejected in the ninth inning after J.D. Davis walked. There was a brief delay as both managers emerged from the dugouts, and all four umpires conferred before Davis was awarded first base.

**Orioles 6, Blue Jays 2**

In Toronto, Ryan Mountcastle hit a three-run homer, Anthony Santander and Adam Frazier also went deep and Baltimore beat Toronto.

Kyle Gibson (5-3) allowed one run in seven innings to snap a three-start losing streak as the Orioles won for the third time in four games. Gibson gave up five hits, walked two and struck out five.

Toronto has lost four of five since sweeping a three-game series against Atlanta last weekend.

**White Sox 2, Royals 0**

In Chicago, Michael Kopech allowed only one hit over a career-high eight innings to help Chicago beat Kansas City.

Kopech simply toyed with the Royals as the White Sox opened a weekend series between teams with two of the majors' worst records on a winning note. The hard-throwing right-hander struck out 10 on 98 pitches.

Kopech (2-4) retired the first 16 batters before giving up a single to Michael Massey, who was erased on a double play. Kendall Graveman retired the side in the ninth for his third save.

**Tigers 8, Nationals 6**

In Washington, Akil Baddoo hit one of Detroit's four homers and drove in four runs, Matthew Boyd pitched effectively into the sixth inning and Tigers held on to beat Washington.

Zack McKinstry's solo shot and Baddoo's three-run homer helped the Tigers to a 6-0 lead after three innings against rookie Jake Irvin (1-2). Detroit has won 10 of its last 15.

Washington rallied for six runs late, thanks to a pair of two-run shots from Lane Thomas and Keibert Ruiz. The Nationals have lost four in a row and five of six.

Matt Vierling and Riley Greene also went deep for Detroit, which has 35 homers this season.



Chennai guarantees playoffs ‘spot’ in IPL

NEW DELHI, May 20, (AP): Chennai Super Kings ensured its place in the Indian Premier League playoffs with a resounding 77-run win over Delhi Capitals on Saturday.

Openers Devon Conway (87) and Ruturaj Gaikwad (79) punished wayward Delhi bowlers as Chennai scored 223-3.

Delhi again struggled with the bat despite captain David Warner scoring 86 off 58 balls before his side limped to 146-9 against Chennai’s pace and spin attack.

Chennai ended the league stage with 17 points.

Conway smacked his sixth half century of the season and Gaikwad notched his third as both batters raised a solid 141-run stand off 87 balls. Gaikwad was the slower of the two in the powerplay but capitalized in the middle overs, especially dominating the spin of Kuldeep Yadav.

Delhi’s pace bowlers Khaleel Ahmed (1-45) and Anrich Nortje (1-43) offered

CRICKET

plenty of width to Conway and Gaikwad by either bowling too full or too short as the two batters hit 14 fours and 10 sixes between them.

Both were heading for centuries but Gaikwad holed out at deep square leg just before the death overs started and Conway was dismissed in the penultimate over as Nortje’s ball held onto the surface and the New Zealander couldn’t get his timing right.

Shivam Dube smashed three sixes in 22 off nine 9 balls and Ravindra Jadeja made a seven-ball 20 as Chennai accelerated in the last five overs by scoring 75 runs.

Deepak Chahar (3-22) destroyed Delhi’s run chase inside the batting powerplay when he dismissed Phil Salt and Rilee Rossouw off successive deliveries after Tushar Deshpande had Prithvi Shaw brilliantly snapped up by Ambati Rayudu at mid-off in the second over.

Warner gave Delhi’s total some respectability but Chennai claimed wickets at regular intervals. Fast bowler Matheesha Pathirana (2-22) and spinner Maheesh Theekshana (2-23) took control in the later stage of the innings.

Tkachuk ends 6th-longest game in NHL history as Panthers ‘outlast’ Hurricanes



Florida Panthers' Matthew Tkachuk (19) protects the puck from Carolina Hurricanes' Brady Skjei (76) during the fourth overtime in Game 1 of the NHL hockey Stanley Cup Eastern Conference finals in Raleigh, N.C. (AP)

Denz wins another Giro stage

Armirail 1st Frenchman in pink this century

CASSANO MAGNAGO, Italy, May 20, (AP): Nico Denz sprinted to his second victory in the Giro d'Italia after almost celebrating too early, while Bruno Armirail became

the first Frenchman to wear the pink jersey in this century.

Denz lifted his arms in celebration as he crossed the line at the end of the 14th stage on Saturday but he

appeared not to have spotted Derek Gee on his right. However, the German cyclist managed to pip Gee by half a wheel.

Denz, who rides for Bora-Hansgrohe, won Thursday's 12th stage for his first victory in a Grand Tour, in his sixth Giro.

Alberto Bettiol was third, while the general classification riders rolled across the line more than 21 minutes behind Denz at the end of another cold and rainy stage.

That moved Armirail into pink and gave previous leader Geraint Thomas a night off from podium celebrations and news conferences, and an early recovery ahead of a tough day in the mountains.

CYCLING

Armirail became the first French cyclist to wear the maglia rosa since Laurent Jalabert in 1999. The Groupama-FDJ rider has an advantage of 1 minute, 41 seconds over Thomas, and Primož Roglič was two seconds further back.

There was one top-category climb near the start at Sierre as the race headed from Switzerland back across to Italy and an almost entirely flat rest of the 193-kilometer (120-mile) route to Cassano Magnago.

A large breakaway of 29 riders eventually escaped on the approach to the climb.

Four riders got away from that bunch with about 60 kilometers remaining but they were caught by the chasing group shortly before the line.

Armirail was 53 seconds behind and faced an anxious wait for the general classification group.

Sunday's 15th stage has four categorized climbs on the 195-kilometer (121-mile) route from Seregno to Bergamo.

The Giro ends in Rome in eight days.

‘Definitely, tired but you’re less tired when you win’

RALEIGH, N.C., May 20, (AP): Back and forth they went, the Florida Panthers and Carolina Hurricanes playing a game that seemed destined to have no end while leaving legs growing wobbly with each passing minute.

Then, just as the teams appeared headed for yet another extra period, Matthew Tkachuk pounced on his chance to finish off yet another overtime and road victory for the Panthers in these playoffs.

Tkachuk beat Frederik Andersen in the final seconds of the fourth overtime to give the Panthers a 3-2 victory over the Hurricanes early Friday in Game 1 of the Eastern Conference final.

Tkachuk took a feed from Sam Bennett after Florida won a battle for the puck as Carolina tried to clear it from the zone, then whipped a shot from the right circle past Andersen with 12.7 seconds left.

That sent Tkachuk racing toward center ice to celebrate with teammates in what turned into the longest game in either franchises' history, as well as the sixth-longest game in NHL history.

"Definitely, tired but I think you're less tired when you win," Tkachuk said, adding: "I hope you guys and everybody else enjoyed that game, because what I'm seeing is two really good teams fighting it out for every inch." Florida won its seventh straight road game in these playoffs and improved to 5-0 in overtime. Game 2 is Saturday night in Raleigh, less than 48 hours after the teams played more than two full games worth of hockey.

This one ended roughly six hours after the puck drop.

"We didn't even know what overtime we were in," Panthers forward Ryan Lomberg said.

Aleksander Barkov and Carter Verhaeghe scored in regulation for the Panthers, and Sergei Bobrovsky made 63 saves in what turned into a goaltender battle as the game got more ragged and players racked up the ice time.

Andersen finished with 57 saves for Carolina, which got power-play goals from Seth Jarvis and Stefan Noesen.

"It was a good goalie battle," Carolina coach Rod Brind'Amour said. "It was unfortunate we just couldn't find one." Tkachuk finally ended a game that had multiple wild sequences in critical late moments.

Most notably, there was Lomberg appearing to have the winning goal in his return to Florida's lineup



United States Rocco Grimaldi (centre), battles for the puck with Denmark's Morten Poulsen (right), and Mikkel Boedker during the Group A match between United States and Denmark at the ice hockey world championship in Tampere, Finland. (AP)

US stay unbeaten at worlds

TAMPERE, Finlan, May 20, (AP): The United States shut out Denmark 3-0 on Saturday to stay perfect at the ice hockey world championship.

Alex Tuch scored one goal and added two assists for the United States to earn its fifth victory from five games.

Cutter Gauthier broke the deadlock midway through the final period on a power play before Tuch doubled the advantage and Rocco Grimaldi finished it off with an empty net goal.

Goaltender Casey DeSmith stopped 22 shots for the shutout.

The Americans lead Group A with 15 points and have secured a spot in the quarterfinals. The top four teams from the two eight-team groups advance to the knockout stage.

In the Latvian capital of Riga, the Czech Republic beat Norway 2-0 to go top of Group B and earn a spot in the last eight.

Dominik Kubalik scored the opening goal with a slap shot on a power play for the Czechs to lead the scoring table at the tournament with seven goals.

prise for a young core that had just ended a nine-year postseason drought. They had since accomplished the goal of building a consistent winner and Cup contender, though second-round exits the past two seasons on home ice had cast a damper on some of that sustained success.

This time, Carolina beat the New Jersey Islanders in six games and then the New Jersey Devils in five to make it back. But on a night when both teams had plenty of chances to end this one in any of the OTs, Carolina ended up losing its ninth straight game in the conference-final round dating to 2009 in brutal fashion.

"It was kind of really who was going to make the last mistake," Carolina captain Jordan Staal said. "Unfortunately, it was us." The longest game in NHL history came on March 24, 1936, when the Detroit Red Wings beat the Montreal Maroons 1-0 in the sixth overtime on Mud Bruneteau's goal at 116 minutes, 30 seconds of extra play.

Florida's previous record for longest game was 104:31 in Game 4 of the 1996 Stanley Cup final against Colorado. Carolina's previous record was 114:47 for Game 3 of the 2002 Stanley Cup final. The teams each lost those games.

Carolina's losing streak in the NHL semifinals dates to Pittsburgh's sweep of the Hurricanes in 2009 when Maurice was in his second stint as Carolina's coach. Boston then swept the Hurricanes a decade later.

Both teams welcomed back forwards from lengthy injuries.

Carolina's Teuvo Teravainen hadn't played since suffering what the team described as a hand injury in Game 2 of the first-round series against the New York Islanders. The injury required surgery on April 20 and left him with a scar running the length of his left thumb.

Lomberg had missed eight straight games due to an upper-body injury.

ICE HOCKEY

from injury, beating Jalen Chatfield in a battle and then whipping the puck by Andersens 2 1/2 minutes into the first OT.

But Carolina successfully challenged the play for goaltender interference. Replays showed Florida's Colin White - while being bumped by Carolina's Jack Drury - making skate-to-skate contact with Andersen, then bumping him as Andersen ended up on all fours on the other side of the crease before Lomberg's shot found the net.

Later in that first OT, Jarvis - who had the game's first goal on a power-play blast from the slot - nearly ended it on a loose rebound but rang the crossbar.

It turned out, the game was nowhere near its epic finish.

Florida hadn't been to an Eastern Conference final since 1996, before a large chunk of its roster had even been born. But these Panthers had turned a late surge to qualify for the final wild-card spot into a postseason-shaking moment by taking down Boston following the Bruins' record-setting 65 wins and 135 points, followed by beating a Toronto team buzzing off its first series win in nearly two decades.

Now the Panthers have handed the Hurricanes - who had the league's second-best regular-season record - their first series deficit of the postseason.

Carolina is in the Eastern final for the second time in five years. The last time, it was a feel-good sur-



Germany's Nico Denz (right), sprints to win the 14th stage of the Giro D'Italia, tour of Italy cycling race, from Sierre to Cassano Magnago. (AP)





Brentford's Kevin Schade (left), and Tottenham Hotspur's Emerson Royal battle for the ball, during the English Premier League soccer match between Tottenham Hotspur and Brentford, at the Tottenham Hotspur Stadium, London. (AP)

# Sports

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## Manchester United in sight of CL return

Firmino scores late equalizer to keep alive Liverpool's hopes

**BOURNEMOUTH, England, May 20, (AP): Manchester United is in touching distance of a return to the Champions League after beating Bournemouth 1-0 on Saturday to strengthen its place in the top four of the Premier League.**

The win - sealed by Casemiro's close-range overhead kick in the ninth minute - moved United three points clear of fifth-place Liverpool, which drew 1-1 with Aston Villa and only has one game left to play.

United only requires a point from its final two games, at home to Chelsea and Fulham, to get back into the Champions League after a one-season absence. That would be yet another positive for United in a strong first season under Dutch coach Erik ten Hag, who has already guided the team to the English League Cup trophy as well as a spot in the FA Cup final against Manchester City on June 3.

Being in the Champions League should see United attract bigger names in the offseason transfer window, while adding more value to a club that is up for sale and the subject of offers from Qatar and British billionaire Jim Ratcliffe.

It was maybe fitting that a goal by Casemiro moved United so close to that top-four place, with the Brazil midfielder playing an influential role since joining from Real Madrid last year and running the game at Vitality Stadium.

His goal came from a rare foray forward. Christian Eriksen clipped a pass over the defense and into the penalty area toward Casemiro, who reacted to the ball taking a slight deflection off a Bournemouth player by adjusting his body and acrobatically volleying in off the post with his back to goal.

United was without Marcus Rashford because of an illness and that impacted the visitors' attacking threat against a Bournemouth team already safe from relegation and with little to play for.

United needed a save with his legs by David De Gea from substitute Kieffer Moore to preserve the clean sheet and win.

### SOCCER

Roberto Firmino kept alive Liverpool's Champions League qualification dreams with a goal as a substitute in his last game for the club at Anfield.

The Brazilian striker poked in a finish in the 89th minute to earn Liverpool a 1-1 draw with Aston Villa.

A loss, coupled with fourth-place Manchester United's 1-0 victory at Bournemouth on Saturday, would have guaranteed Liverpool could not have finished in the top four.

Instead, Liverpool is not quite out of it, with Jurgen Klopp's team three points behind third-place Newcastle and Man United, which each have two games left to play. Liverpool only has one game remaining, at already-relegated Southampton next weekend.

Ollie Watkins missed a penalty for Villa in the 22nd but Jacob Ramsey put the visitors ahead five minutes later by sidefooting home at the far post from Douglas Luiz's cross.

Firmino is one of four players - along with James Milner, Naby Keita and Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain - leaving this summer at the expiry of their contracts and the Brazilian came on in the 72nd minute for his final home game.

And he got behind Villa's defense to convert Salah's right-wing cross with the outside of his left foot.

Firmino has played for Liverpool since 2015.

Klopp watched the game from the stands while serving a touchline ban for questioning the integrity of a referee.

Harry Kane scored a goal and lost the game in perhaps his final home appearance for Tottenham.

The England captain, who again has been linked with an offseason move away from Tottenham, curled home after an indirect free kick in the eighth minute only for Bryan Mbeumo to score twice and set up another goal in the second half for Brentford in its 3-1 win.

Tottenham might now struggle to qualify for any European competition for next season, having come into the game in seventh place - the division's



Wolverhampton Wanderers' Nathan Collins (left), and Everton's Amadou Onana battle for the ball during the English Premier League soccer match between Wolverhampton Wanderers and Everton at the Molineux Stadium, Wolverhampton. (AP)

### Hertha relegated from Bundesliga

**BERLIN, May 20, (AP): Hertha Berlin was relegated from the Bundesliga on Saturday after conceding in the fourth minute of injury time to draw with Bochum 1-1.**

Former Union Berlin defender Keven Schlotterbeck headed the goal that sent Hertha down to the second division.

It's Hertha's seventh relegation from the Bundesliga. Only Nuremberg (9) and Arminia Bielefeld (8) have been demoted more times.

Hertha needed a win to postpone the relegation decisions to the final day of the season and it was looking good for the home team after Lucas Tousart finally made the breakthrough with a header to Marco Richter's corner in the 64th minute.

Both teams hit the post in the final minutes before Schlotterbeck was left unopposed to head Kevin Stöger's header past Oliver Christensen in the Hertha goal.

It ensured Hertha stayed last on 26 points with no chance of finishing above the bottom two. Bochum, which was also not safe, moved to 32 points.

Schalke has 31 points in the relegation playoff spot after a 2-2 draw at home to Eintracht Frankfurt.

only qualifying spot for the third-tier Europa Conference League.

Brentford stayed in ninth place but is only one point behind Tottenham ahead of the teams' final games of the season next weekend.

Kane's 28th league goal this season was perhaps his best of the campaign as he picked out the top corner with a 25-meter shot after Dejan Kulusevski rolled the ball backward with the sole of his foot at a free kick. It put Kane eight goals behind the league's top scorer, Erling Haaland.

Kane will be 30 years old by the time next season starts. With only one year left on his contract, he and Tottenham might decide this summer is the time to part ways to give the club a chance to get some money for its star player and for him to get a better opportunity for trophies.

### Butler scores 27

## Heat take 2-0 lead over Celtics in East finals

**BOSTON, May 20, (AP): Jimmy Butler went forehead-to-forehead with the Boston Celtics, and the Heat are heading back to Miami with an opportunity to advance to the NBA Finals.**

Butler scored 27 points, hitting back-to-back buckets to tie the game and give Miami the lead, and the eighth-seeded Heat left Boston with a 111-105 victory Friday night and a 2-0 lead in the Eastern Conference finals.

Butler also provided eight rebounds, six assists and an emotional spark after Boston's Grant Williams started jawing with him: Butler stared down Williams, with both players drawing technical fouls for the double head-butt.

Then "Jimmy Buckets" scored and scored some more — nine points in all during a 23-9 run that turned a nine-point deficit into a 105-100 lead.

"I knew that was going to be good for us," said Caleb Martin, who came off the bench to score 25 points. "We'll take mad Jimmy at any time. You could kind of see it in his eyes he was ready to go after that."

Bam Adebayo had 22 points, 17 rebounds and nine assists for Miami, which returns home with a chance to sweep and become just the second No. 8 seed to reach the NBA Finals.

Game 3 is Sunday night.

Jayson Tatum had 34 points, 13 rebounds and eight assists for Boston. But the Celtics star went 0 for 3 with two turnovers in the fourth quarter, when Boston blew an 89-77 lead en route to a second home loss in three nights.

After finishing 13 games ahead of the Heat in the regular-season -- and then watching top-seeded Milwaukee fall to Miami in the first round -- the Celtics have stumbled on what appeared to be

clear path to their second straight NBA Finals.

### BASKETBALL

"It's tough. It's a challenge. But there's no point being up here sad and (stuff)," Tatum said. "They came in and won two games. They played well; you give them credit. But we're not dead or anything. We've got a great opportunity. I still have the utmost confidence. Everybody has the utmost confidence. We've just got to get ready for Game 3."

Jaylen Brown scored 16 points on 7-for-23 shooting; he went 1 for 5 with a turnover in the final quarter, when Miami outscored Boston 36-22.



Miami Heat forward Jimmy Butler (top left), looks to pass between Boston Celtics forward Jayson Tatum (bottom left), and center Al Horford (right), during the second half of Game 2 of the NBA basketball playoffs Eastern Conference finals in Boston. (AP)

"We've got some dogs, and I love it. I love every bit of it," Butler said on the postgame TV broadcast. "Guys never quit. We never give up. We love playing with one another. We've got so much faith and trust in one another."

The Celtics led by 11 in the third quarter and made it a dozen early in the fourth. Williams made a 3-pointer to make it 96-87 and was talking to Butler on the way back down the court. Butler scored at the other end and was fouled by Williams; the two players leaned into each other — drawing double technicals — before Butler hit the ensuing free throw.

"Some healthy competition. I ain't going to lie to you. Healthy competition. And I love it. I'm always here to compete. I like to talk, at times," Butler said. "As long as we get the win, I'm good with it."

Asked if Boston "poked the bear" by getting Butler angry, Brown said, "Next question." But Butler said there was no doubt that the attempt to get him off his game actually fired him up.

"Yes it did," Butler said. "But that's just competition at its finest. He hit a big shot and started talking to me. But I like that. It's just competition. It pushes that will to win. It makes me smile. ... I just don't know if I was the best person to talk to."

After Tatum missed from long distance — one of three missed 3s in the fourth quarter — Butler drove to the basket to make it a four-point Boston lead. Miami trailed 98-96 when Butler was called for an offensive foul, kicking Marcus Smart after landing on a missed 3-pointer.

Heat coach Erik Spoelstra challenged, but lost.

Butler responded.

He made a 17-footer to tie it 100-all, and then a short fadeaway to give Miami the lead. After Max Strus made one of two free throws, Adebayo scored on a putback dunk to make it 105-100 with less than a minute to play.

"I love that gnarly version of Jimmy," Spoelstra said. "But you get that regardless. I think now people are just paying more attention. ... Jimmy is just a real competitor."