



Iran, Taleban fight on border over water rights

Tehran reinforces border

DUBAI, May 27, (AP) - The Taleban and Iran reportedly exchanged gunfire Saturday on the Islamic Republic's border with Afghanistan, an advocacy group said, as tensions rise over water rights between the two nations.

Iran's state-run IRNA news agency acknowledged the fighting on the border of Iran's Sistan and Baluchestan province and the Afghan province of Nimroz, saying its forces inflicted "heavy casualties and serious damage." However, it stopped short of identifying those it fired at as Taliban forces - possibly trying not to escalate the clash.

Taliban-controlled media in Afghanistan did not acknowledge the fighting.

The advocacy group HalVash, which reports on issues affecting the Baluch people in the predominately Sunni province of Sistan and Baluchestan, quoted residents in the area describing the fighting as starting Saturday morning. The group put the fighting near the Kang district of Nimroz, saying some people in the area had fled the violence.

Videos posted online, purportedly from the area, included the crackle of machine gun fire in the distance. HalVash later posted an image of what appeared to be the remains of a mortar round, saying that "heavy weapons and mortars are being used." A later video from HalVash purported to show Iranian forces firing a mortar.

The apparent clash comes as Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi earlier this month warned the Taliban not to violate Iran's water rights to the Helmand River. Raisi's remarks represented some of the strongest yet over the long-running concerns about water in Iran.



Belgium's Olivier Vandecasteele (left), is greeted by his family after landing at Melsbroek military airport in Melsbroek, Belgium, Friday, May 26, 2023. (AP)

Oman hosts swap

Belgium, Iran hold prisoner exchange

DUBAI, May 27, (AP) - Belgium and Iran exchanged prisoners on Friday in a controversial move that saw an Iranian diplomat convicted of attempting to bomb exiles in France returning to Tehran bedecked in flowers while a visibly gaunt aid worker headed back to Brussels.

Belgian Prime Minister Alexander De Croo said in a statement that the aid worker, Olivier Vandecasteele, had been freed and said that for him, "the choice was always clear: Olivier's life was always the most important."

He said Vandecasteele had been unjustly held in Iran for 455 days and added that "in Belgium, we abandon no one. Not least someone who is innocent," whatever the legal and diplomatic consequences.

Iranian state television later showed the diplomat, Asadollah Assadi, being welcomed at the airport by Iran's judiciary chief and the secretary of human rights council Kazem Gharibabadi. Assadi had a floral wreath placed around his neck and held a bouquet of flowers - a hero's welcome in Iran.

Despite the contentious optics, Belgian Justice Minister Vincent Van Quickenborne said he would do it again, anytime.

"There is a moral compass. If you have the choice between freeing someone innocent or keeping one, or 10 guilty in prison, then you always have to choose the fate of the innocent," he told VRT network.

Conviction

He compared the exchange to last December's U.S.-Russian prisoner swap between WNBA basketball star Brittney Griner and Russian arms dealer Viktor Bout following her trial and conviction on drug possession charges in Moscow.

"The United States did it too," Van Quickenborne said, adding that it is his "absolute duty to help every innocent Belgian."

The swap took place in Oman, long an interlocutor for the West with Iran. Its foreign ministry said and added that "the sultanate of Oman appreciated the high positive spirit that prevailed in the talks in Muscat between the Iranian and Belgian sides, and their keenness to settle this humanitarian issue." Muscat is Oman's capital.

In January, Iran sentenced Vandecasteele to a lengthy prison term and 74 lashes after convicting him of espionage in a closed-door trial. He was also fined \$1 million. Vandecasteele was arrested in Iran in February 2022 while packing up his belongings, after working with the Norwegian Refugee Council and Relief International in the Islamic Republic from 2015 to 2021, according to Amnesty International.

His family and the Belgian government strongly denied Iran's claims, made without offering evidence, that he was a spy.

In 2021, Belgium convicted Assadi of masterminding a thwarted bomb attack against an exiled Iranian opposition group in France and sentenced him to 20 years in prison. Prosecutors tied Assadi to a couple, stopped by the Belgian police and found with 550 grams (1.21 pounds) of TATP explosives and a detonator in 2018. They had been trying to target a meeting in Villepinte, France, of the Mujahedeen-e-Khalq, an exiled Iranian opposition group known as the MEK.

Among dozens of prominent guests at the rally in Villepinte that day were then-President Donald Trump's lawyer, Rudy Giuliani; Newt Gingrich, former conservative speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives; and former Colombian presidential candidate Ingrid Betancourt.

Nearly 2,400 expat teachers face residence cancellation

3-month grace

KUWAIT CITY, May 27: The Ministry of Education has addressed the Ministry of Interior to cancel the residence permits of about 2,400 expatriate teachers of various specializations, including 1,900 whose services were terminated after they were included in the so-called replacement plan in addition to 500 who had submitted their resignation, informed sources confirmed to Al-Qabas daily.

The sources added the Human Resources Department of the Ministry of Education is keen to complete the transactions of non-Kuwaiti teachers whose services ended at the end of the current academic year 2022-2023, to complete the procedures for settling their dues and canceling their work permits as soon as possible, so that they do not incur any fines or fees.

The sources pointed out that the Ministry of Interior will give employees whose services have ended 3 months grace period in order to settle their dues and their status in general. The sources indicated that Education Ministry is keen not to delay the completion of residence cancellation procedures to enable the teachers to travel to their countries at the specified time and to avoid delays and loss of ticket reservations.

On the other hand, the Education Ministry has asked the Ministry of Health to expedite the medical examination procedures for newly hired educational staff working in the ministry of both the Palestinian and Jordanian teachers, after a delay of up to 30 days.

Informed sources confirmed that the Expatriate Labor Examination Department, the Tuberculosis Control Unit and Ports Health authorities in the Ministry of Health were late in sending the results of the examination to the Ministry of Interior, which resulted in the disruption of the distribution of teachers to schools.

The Education Ministry stressed the need for the procedures to be completed quickly. The sources pointed to the continuation of the Education Ministry in its plan for the replacement policy, which it approved about 3 months ago under the directives of Minister Dr Hamad Al-Adwani, pointing out that what is being raised on the ground about freezing decisions or postponing the termination of the services of those covered by replacement for a year is incorrect.



Hezbollah supporters riding on a scooter, wave an Iranian flag as they drive past a graffiti depicting slain Iran's Quds force General Qassem Soleimani, seen on a wall that was built by Israel, while they mark the 'Liberation Day', the 23rd anniversary of Israel's withdrawal from southern Lebanon on May 25, 2000, at the southern Lebanese-Israeli border village of Kfar Kila, Thursday, May 25, 2023. (AP)



A giant banner of Turkish President and People's Alliance's presidential candidate Recep Tayyip Erdogan is displayed on an historical city wall, in Istanbul, Turkey, Saturday, April 22, 2023. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan is favored to win re-election in a presidential runoff Sunday, May 28, 2023, despite a host of domestic issues. (AP)

Turkiye is witnessing Sunday decisive presidential run-off between incumbent President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and main rival Kemal Kilicdaroglu amidst a number of challenges like refugees and the daunting task of recovery from the devastating earthquake. (AP)



Children sit and play on the remains of a tank, at the river port in Renk, South Sudan Wednesday, May 17, 2023. Tens of thousands of South Sudanese are flocking home from neighboring Sudan, which erupted in violence last month. Saudi Arabia and the United States said Friday the warring sides in Sudan's conflict are adhering better to a new, week-long cease-fire following days of sporadic fighting. (AP)

The truce, brokered by Riyadh and Washington, went into effect on Monday, but fighting continued in the Sudanese capital of Khartoum and the western Darfur region. Particularly intense clashes flared up on Wednesday, the two mediators said in a joint statement. (AP)

NewsWatch

WASHINGTON: Jill Biden will promote empowerment for women and young people, and attend Jordan's royal wedding, during an upcoming trip to the Middle East, North Africa and Europe.

The first lady was scheduled to depart Wednesday on a six-day trip that will also take her to Egypt, Morocco and Portugal. Her office shared some details first with The Associated Press.

It will be Biden's first Middle East visit as first lady. She traveled to Namibia and Kenya in February.

"The first lady believes that supporting youth across the world is critical to our common future, with education, health, and empowerment at the heart of it," said Vanessa Valdivia, her spokesperson.

"With her visit to the Middle East and North Africa, the first lady will continue to build on her work to empower young people, and reaffirm our commitment to strengthen our partnerships and advance our shared priorities in the region," Valdivia said in an email.

In Amman, the capital of Jordan, Biden will attend the June 1 wedding of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Al Hussein bin Abdullah II, heir to the throne, and Rajwa Khalid Alseif, an architect.

President Joe Biden and the first lady have a deep and longstanding friendship with the crown prince's parents, King Abdullah II and Queen Rania. (AP)

WASHINGTON: Spokesperson of the US Department of State Mathew Miller Thursday confirmed that Iranian ballistic missile testing has been acknowledged.

During a press briefing, Miller said, "we are aware of those reports. We've seen them, obviously. As we have made clear, Iran's development and proliferation of ballistic missiles poses a serious threat to regional and international security and remains a significant nonproliferation challenge."

He added that despite restriction based on the US Security Council's Resolution 2231, Iran continues to seek such developments, assuring his

nation's commitment in preventing Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons. "To maintain the ability to communicate with Iran and deliver messages to them when it is in the United States best interest to do so is vital," added Miller, without identifying means and messages should they be conveyed. (KUNA)

RIYADH: Saudi-Iraqi coordination council on Thursday affirmed intent on bolstering relations between the two nations across various fields.

Concluding statement of the council's fifth session mentioned that heading the Saudi side was Minister of Commerce Dr. Majed Al-Qasabi whereas Iraqi side was headed by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Planning Dr. Mohammad Tamim.

The two commended the successful efforts of OPEC+ in strengthening the stability of the oil market, asserting importance of furthering such cooperation for the benefit of both producers and consumers.

The statement also touched on the efforts of the joint team concerned with establishing the 1,000 megawatt Saudi-Iraqi electric grid. (KUNA)

BAGHDAD: Iraq on Friday condemned an assault that targeted its embassy in the Swiss capital Bern.

The foreign ministry said in a statement unknown persons attacked the embassy building and terrorized the personnel who were inside it.

It called on Swiss authorities to investigate the incident. No other details about the attack or when it happened. (KUNA)

KUWAIT CITY: Kuwait will host Sunday the 110th meeting of the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries' (OAPEC) Council of Ministers on delegates level to discuss some topics on the organization activities, said the bloc's secretary general.

In a statement issued Saturday, OAPEC chief Jamal Al-Loghni said the meeting would be held with the participation of the OAPEC Executive Bureau and member states' oil ministers.

He elaborated that the gathering will also focus on developing the organization's work and restructuring it, and reviewing the systems and laws that govern its work in a way consistent with challenges and developments in energy. (KUNA)

Prayer Timings

Fajr	03:18	Asr	15:20
Sunrise ..	04:50	Maghrib ..	18:40
Zohr	11:45	Isha	20:10

Local

Expected weather for the next 24 hours:

By Day: Hot and partly cloudy with light variable wind to light to moderate freshening at times northwesterly wind with speeds of 08-40 km/h with a chance for ris-

Weather

ing dust over open areas.

By Night: Rather hot and partly cloudy with light variable wind to light to moderate northwesterly wind with speeds of 08-30 km/h.

Station **Max Exp** **Min Rec**
Kuwait City 40 30

Kuwait Airport	42	24
Abdaly	43	24
Jahra	42	28
Salmiyah	37	29
Ahmadi	38	31
Nuwaisib	41	25
Wafra	42	24

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

Ban on working in sun starts June 1 to Aug 31

PADA seeks to find jobs for disabled in public, private sectors

KUWAIT CITY, May 27: The Public Authority for Persons with Disabilities held a coordination meeting to follow up on job integration and empowerment of persons with disabilities in the public and private sectors, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The Director of the Authority, Dr. Bibi Al-Amiri, spoke of the importance of integrating people with various disabilities in the Kuwaiti labor market, in coordination and cooperation with the government and private sectors, pointing out that this is the most important priority of the authority.

Al-Amiri praised the efforts of the "human construction" and the relevant authorities that have been working, for more than 4 years, to develop and rehabilitate people with disabilities in various fields, explaining that next week will see the graduation of the fourth batch after the people of this category have been trained and qualified to join the labor market.

The Director of "Human Construction", Awatef Al-Salman, said that signing a memorandum of understanding with the Disability Authority is a continuation of the "Partners to Employ Them" campaign, which was launched in 2018, and includes the same goals, which are qualitative training associated with employment, and the search for new career paths for



Dr Bibi Al-Amiri

people with disabilities.

Al-Salman affirmed the association's keenness to mobilize the social responsibility of the private sector by providing appropriate jobs, and activating the role of government agencies for the same goal, indicating that this is represented by creating a suitable environment for work.

She explained that the Public Authority for Disability Affairs will hold an exhibition for the employment of people with disabilities who have undergone training and rehabilitation on May 31, in cooperation with several parties, including the Public Authority for Manpower, the Civil Service Bureau, the Federation of Banks, and a group of agencies in the government and private sectors, which provides an opportunity to employ 74 employees in various fields, including management.

Deputy Director General for National Employment Affairs in the "Manpower" Najat Al-Youssef pointed out the continuation of striving to provide more job opportunities commensurate with the capabilities and qualifications of this category of people, stressing the keenness of the "national manpower" to extend a hand of cooperation with all parties wishing to provide job opportunities for Kuwaiti youth in various fields of work in the private sector.



Ban announced: The Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) has an-

nounced that administrative decision No. 535/2015 to ban working in open areas during the noon hours from 11:00 am to 4:00 pm will come into force from the beginning of June to the end of next August, reports Al-Jarida daily.

According to sources from PAM, the authority will not tolerate violators of the decision. The inspection teams will follow up its implementation over a period of three months through unannounced inspection campaigns on work sites to monitor any violations and take legal measures against business owners, if any violations are detected in this regard.

They said the decision aims to protect workers from the scorching sun during the summer season, and to organize work and not reduce its hours, while ensuring that projects that are implemented are not exposed to any harm.

The sources said, "Working in open areas during this period of the year is difficult due to the harsh climatic conditions."

They indicated that the implementation of the decision during the past years was widely accepted and appreciated by companies operating in various sectors, taking into account the public interest and to meet Kuwait's obligations to implement international labor standards at noon hours."

The sources affirmed that the implementation of the decision signifies the commitment of business owners to the health and safety of their workers, as well as the keenness to adhere to the controls and regulations of the private sector labor law, and the decisions regulating it.



Participants of the 'development road' conference.

KUNA photo

Iraq 'development road' confab sets up panels

The "development road" conference, hosted by Baghdad on Saturday, concluded with formation of panels tasked with addressing mechanisms of states' engagement in the mega venture, intended to link up south Iraq with the north.

The Iraqi Government said in a statement that the conferees discussed blueprints for regional countries' participation in the enterprise, executive plans and development ventures that would be affiliated to

the road project. Among the topics examined on the table were affiliate renewable energy projects, link-up of the road that stretches from Faw port in the south to the borders with Turkey in the north with regional ports, prospected financial returns and feasibility studies.

The convention was attended by transport ministers and officials from Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Turkey, Jordan, Syria, the UAE, Qatar, Oman and the Kuwaiti Ambassador to Iraq Tareq Al-Faraj. (KUNA)

'Food diplomacy builds bridges'

Envoy prepares Turkish cuisine

KUWAIT CITY, May 27: Within the framework of the Turkish Kitchen Week, the Turkish ambassador to Kuwait, Touba Sonmez, hosted, at her residence, a number of local media representatives, in the presence of the Indonesian ambassador, to taste the Turkish food and follow up on the stages of cooking some of the most famous dishes.

The ambassador prepared a number of distinctive dishes from the Turkish kitchen in front of the audience. She emphasized the importance of cultural exchange as an important bridge of communication between peoples, supporting and enhancing popular communication, adding that "food diplomacy brings people together."



Touba Sonmez

Her Excellency explained that the Turkish cuisine, rich with its internationally known delicacies, whose uniqueness and flavors were formed over thousands of years of civilizations, traditions and unique social heritage, returned again to the global arena, through the Turkish Food Week, during its second edition, from May 21-27, where unique Turkish food is served to different peoples of the

world, through Turkey's representatives abroad. The ambassador indicated that the Kuwaiti people know the Turkish cuisine and are fond of its dishes, as Turkey is one of the favorite tourist destinations for Kuwaitis, in addition to the presence of about 70 Turkish restaurants and hotels that serve famous Turkish foods.

Job reshuffle: State Minister for Municipality Affairs Fahd Al-Shula is expected to appoint Deputy Director General for Municipal Affairs in Hawally and Al-Ahmadi Governorates Eng Saud Al-Dabbous as Director General of Kuwait Municipality, reports Al-Qabas daily quoting sources.

Sources added the minister referred Assistant Secretary General of the Municipal Council Jassim Al-Habib and another official - Abdul-Mohsen Aba Al-Khail - for retirement effective May 21, 2023.

Nod to 25 seats: The Kuwait University Council has approved 25 seats for admission to the College of Public Health in the next academic year, reports Al-Qabas daily quoting sources.

Sources disclosed that the council has laid down a vision for the development of the college, while stressing there is no plan to demolish it.

Manila seeks another meeting with Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, May 27: The Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) is seeking further dialogue with the Kuwaiti government following the continuation of the entry ban and suspension of visa issuance to Filipino nationals, reports Al-Rai daily.

In a press interview, the Philippine Assistant Secretary of State Paul Raymond Curtis affirmed that Manila respects the laws and regulations of Kuwait, and that the Philippine Foreign Ministry will communicate with Kuwait to hold another meeting on this issue.

He said, "Kuwait is a sovereign country. They have their own laws. They have their own system. We respect them, and we also want to make sure that when we are in another country, we stick to their lines and do not cross them."

Unfortunately, there may be actions that have been interpreted as violations, but we will continue to work with Kuwaitis to ensure that there are no violations regarding the welfare of Filipinos within the limits of Kuwaiti laws.

Manila is grateful that Kuwait continues to welcome more than 200,000 Filipinos who live and work there."

Meanwhile, Kuwait Municipality has not issued a single license for the establishment of sports stadiums for commercial purposes in or outside private housing areas, reports Al-Rai daily quoting a reliable source.

According to the source, Municipal Council member Nasser Jadaan Al-Azmi asked the executive body in the Municipality about the issue, and he was informed that "the supervisory teams in the governorates are inspecting stadiums regularly."

He also pointed out that there is no coordination with government agencies like the Ministry of Electricity and Water regarding lighting stadiums, or the Ministry of Commerce to find out the status of commercial use, or the Public Authority for Youths to verify the validity of the authority's supervision of stadiums, considering the Municipality has not issued such licenses.

Mega embezzler gets 15 years jail, must return KD4m

KUWAIT CITY, May 27: The Court of Cassation has closed the curtain on the case filed against an employee of Kuwait Fire Service Directorate for the embezzlement of huge sums of money by increasing his salary several times through trickery and manipulation. The court sentenced him to 15 years in prison and obligated him to return KD four million to the State Treasury, reports Al-Qabas daily.

According to the case file, the defendant increased his salary 15 times in two years, and invested huge amounts of money in buy-

ing rosaries and rings.

The case began when detectives received confidential information about financial suspicions surrounding an employee of the payroll department in the Kuwait Fire Service Directorate.

His senior colleague at work accidentally found a salary certificate of the defendant which revealed a large amount even though his actual salary at the time did not exceed KD 2,000.

Detectives intensified their investigations, and developed a well-articulated plan to ap-

prehend the accused. It was found that the employee had embezzled two million dinars over a period of two years, as he mastered the mechanism of raising his salary.

The mechanism began with the accused gradually increasing his salary from KD 4,000 to KD 9,000, and then after just three months, he increased it to KD 17,000. When he was reassured of the situation as no inquiries were received from any competent authority, he raised his salary to KD 42,000, which is the highest salary a public employee receives in Kuwait.

'Hire Kuwaiti graduates immediately sans tests'

'Working moms can stay at home'

'Far-reaching'

'IT, social media major feature in Kuwait poll'

KUWAIT CITY, May 27, (KUNA): Candidates for the upcoming National Assembly elections opted for using IT tools and digital and social media to manage their campaigns, deliver their messages, better communicate with their voters, IT and digital media specialists have concurred.

Yasser Othman, head of the business development section at an IT firm, told KUNA Saturday that relying on information technology has become a major feature in electoral campaigns.

"IT tools help candidates ensure a better understanding of the voters' opinions and respond to their inquiries," he clarified, noting that the world has become more interconnected and people's use of social media networks is now an everyday routine.

He said candidates prefer digital advertisements for its ability to spread widely and reach voters in real time.

Othman pointed out the digital electoral campaigns differ according to the targeted audience, the issues which candidates want to focus on and the message they seek to deliver.

For her part, Aya Al-Taweel, director of the design and e-marketing section at an information technology company, told KUNA that most candidates heavily rely on advertisements on social media platforms.

Al-Taweel highlighted the significant impact of social media on electoral campaigns.

"It provides the candidate with the opportunity to reach a broader and more diverse audience in cost-effective ways, in addition to the ability to directly interact with voters," Al-Taweel noted.

She added that the information technology had also facilitated making of opinion polls, using digital analytic tools and smart technology.

"These tools help collect data more accurately and provide insights into the opinions of voters," she clarified.

For his part, Ahmad Al-Mutairi, editor-in-chief of a digital newspaper, told KUNA that modern media, including electronic newspapers, provide an enormous amount of information that contributes to the shaping of voters' opinions and attitudes.

Al-Mutairi stated that anyone who follows the ongoing electoral campaigns note traditional electoral gatherings declined as the candidates rely on social media to deliver their messages directly and effectively.

He believed that electronic media plays a crucial role in improving public awareness and providing voters with necessary information to take their decision.

Missing citizen's corpse 'located'

KUWAIT CITY, May 27: The body of the Kuwaiti citizen Mubarak Al-Rashidi, who went missing in mid-April, has been found in the western Al-Salmi area, the Ministry of Interior said on Friday evening.

Under instructions from the First Deputy Prime Minister, the Minister of Interior and Acting Minister of Defense Sheikh Talal Al-Khaled Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, the General Directorate of Criminal Investigations has launched a search campaign since the disappearance of Al-Rashidi.

Hundreds of security personnel, including from the departments of public security, traffic, central operations, patrols and helicopters, as well as volunteers, joined the search campaign.

They worked relentlessly around the clock until they located the body of the deceased man, the Ministry's General Directorate of Security Relations and Media said in a press release.

The Ministry expressed sincere condolences for the bereaved family, pledging to continue searching for clues as to what led to Al-Rashidi's death. (KUNA)

By Saeed Mahmoud Saleh
Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 27: Fourth Constituency candidate Sultan Ajeel Al-Shemmari has withdrawn from the 2023 parliamentary electoral race.

Al-Shemmari explained that he took this decision to give other candidates from his tribe a higher chance of winning in the election.

Meanwhile, Fourth Constituency candidate Muaz Mubarak Al-Duwaila disclosed that if he wins in the election; he will submit a bill to give women working in the public sector the option to stay at home to take care of their children and they will receive basic salary.

He pointed out this will not be an additional cost for the State treasury, citing Article 41 of the Constitution which mandates the State to provide jobs for all citizens. He said the State has been unable to fulfill this duty, considering the increasing number of citizens applying for jobs. He believes that his bill will help in generating more jobs - the posts vacated by women if they choose to stay at home to take care of their children.

Clarified

He then clarified that the bill is not mandatory, as only the women who are willing to stay at home can benefit from it. He added the bill is not aimed at encouraging women to withdraw from public sector work and social activities, indicating that taking care of children is one way of helping the society. He asserted the bill gives women more freedom to decide to work as a doctor, teacher, pilot or housewife. He concluded that the bill will not hinder the aspirations of female workers who want to advance in their careers.

Fifth Constituency candidate Dr Muhammad Al-Azeb has expressed support for oil engineering graduates who voiced objection to the results of recruitment exams conducted by Kuwait National Petroleum Corporation (KNPC).

He called for coordination between the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) and KNPC to specify the number of students in each department to match the available vacancies.

He also suggested the cancellation of the recruitment exams and to hire Kuwaiti graduates immediately; wondering if the current system is a ploy in favor of contracting companies to hire expatriates, instead of nationals.

diwaniya ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

'Turn a deaf ear to rumors and vote for best candidate'

"TWO people do not disagree that elections, whatever elections they were, and in any country, are punctuated by many phenomena and behaviors, not all of them are positive. Rather, there are many negative behaviors that disturb the peace of the elections, and our parliamentary elections are no exception," columnist **Israr Jowhar Hayat** wrote for **Al-Qabas** daily.

"Perhaps the most prominent of these negative behaviors is spreading rumors with the aim of soiling the image of a candidate, or reducing his chances of success.

"Perhaps the method of spreading rumors is one of the oldest methods of influencing the numbers and fortunes of candidates, and it is a method that has continued and even increased with the various social media, in terms of rapid spread and ease of broadcasting.

"And by observing and following up on many elections, whether parliamentary or municipal council and others in the country, by virtue of my membership on the board of directors of the Kuwaiti Transparency Association, I discovered many types of rumors.

"No one disagrees that, unfortunately, some of these rumors may affect the reputation, status, and integrity of some candidates, which must be stopped immediately.

"While there is another type that seems very dangerous, because its outward appearance is praise and its in wardness is completely different, such as repeating by saying "So and so is successful" or "So and so will garner more than 3,000 votes," for example, and therefore another may lose votes, especially those votes that may be shared by more than one candidate. Therefore, when these votes think that the success of their first choice of candidates is guaranteed, they go to vote for another candidate whose proposal and visions they admire. Therefore, the loss of these votes due to a "successful" rumor may lead to the loss of the parliamentary seat as well.

"There is another rumor that often spreads, after closing the door to candidacy and examining and scrutinizing the names of the candidates, that lists come out indicating the disqualification of some candidates, and these rumors often work on psychological warfare to shake the self-confidence of either the candidate or his supporters, and it does not end and does not stop except with the official announcement by the concerned authorities with the final lists of candidates; while the matter is not devoid of attributing tweets or stances to a candidate that reflects his orientation, visions, and program.

"Today, and since we are in important and fateful elections, and since we are living in a state of political instability that requires us to choose well, and work to bring the free patriotic voice to the seat of oversight and legislation, and to vote for the best performer, and the best out of concern for Kuwait, its future, and the future of our children, the first



Israr Hayat

steps is to fight rumors.

"Today, reaching the candidate, in light of his presence on social networks, and even the establishment of virtual election headquarters for some candidates, has become very easy to access the candidates and their programs, and their visions, requiring only the click of a button to read and see for himself/herself the character and achievement of the person, turn a deaf ear to the rumors and decide what is best for the nation."

Also:

"A few days separate us from the third parliamentary elections, as Parliament 2023 will be the third National Assembly in less than four years, since the last parliaments were dissolved and nullified, then returned and dissolved which has only resulted in our heads turning and twisting and we have lost the ability to focus, follow-up and count which can be seen as a painful situation for the practice of democratic politics," columnist **Dr Moudi Abdulaziz Al-Hamoud** wrote for **Al-Qabas** daily.

"We thought it would rise and take root, but we are witnessing its decline and instability, until it put us and the country and its capabilities in the midst of political storms that do not subside or leave, so the citizens' enthusiasm decreased and they became frustrated, hesitant and openly unwilling to participate.

"It is not only the voters who lost the enthusiasm but with them the candidates especially the voice of reformers and serious ones has toned down. And the initiatives of professional associations, forums, and political groups in urging participation and discussion are absent in the arena. There is nothing left but a voice and repeated promises from some candidates to tear open the public budget and pledge to spend public money on an alleged welfare that they have advocated.

"A sad parliamentary scene as seen by many has been aggravated by the raging conflict on social media, which is far from all rivalry or honest competition to reach conflict and treason between the people of the country. Some of yesterday's friends have become enemies today.

"How pleased we were with what a good group of Kuwaiti women called for, whose hearts burn like many of us in this country. Our differences can only be achieved by giving up our tribal, sectarian, familial, and self-interested affiliations when we choose the representatives of the nation, and victory is for those who build and not those who question or vote for the 'undeserving' persons.

Kuwait's sun does not shine for those who extinguish its cultural and economic flame and increase its retreat. It is an opportunity that should not be lost in the paths of intolerance and reluctance to participate. Let us seize it, so that we may have someone who fulfills our dream by choosing effective MPs and a government capable of pulling the country out of what it is in to a better future. Our choice alone is the way to do so. Let us work for the third time to do what so far has been undone."

□ □ □

"In democratic systems all over the world, the election is a legitimate

right of citizens. This right is manifested in the most wonderful aspect, which is freedom to choose who can change some laws for the better in order to bring the country toward safety and self-sufficiency, and to correct the previous mistakes and missteps," columnist **Emad Eqab** wrote for **Al-Anba** daily.

"In accordance with this point of view, our belief in the State and its system is manifested in the effort to actively contribute to the continuation of the democratic process that came as a result of struggle and jihad to assume a place among nations as respected people and State based on equality in rights and duties.

"It is imperative for us to fully participate in the electoral process, without the feeling of disappointment or abandonment due to some crises that we experienced and prevented us from changing our reality for the better. We hope that we can contribute to the actual and realistic change that serves citizens and our country in order to advance in the economic, political, scientific, security and other fields

"The level of frustration among citizens who wish to see their country free from political, economic and security crises is high. All resources and means must be utilized to reach the path of integration and advancement of Kuwait.

"Therefore, we as a people who believe in their own capabilities, must decide without the influence of a tribe or ideological or ethnic affiliation, as all of them do not work in the interest of the homeland and the citizen."

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"It is possible that the upcoming election will end with the same result and faces will not change much! Perhaps, the competition for the speakership will be more intense, especially since the government intends to remain neutral in the speaker and committee elections," columnist **Dr Naji Al-Zaid** wrote for **Al-Jarida** daily.

"There is nothing wrong with that. Things will not change much. As usual, there will be interrogation of ministers and then the prime minister.

"This means things will not calm down and the dissolution of the legislature is possible within a few months! I mean, it is neither our medicine nor our evil for tomorrow. Rather, evil will surround us. We have neither achieved true democracy, nor we are in a position that can be exploited to predict the future.

"The biggest dilemma is the voters' lack of enthusiasm in the election. Perhaps, there will be a great reluctance to participate, so the legislature will remain the representative of certain groups, not all voters.

"We can only wait. The majority is pessimistic, because despair will prevail and issues will remain suspended. The consequence will be the absence of a decision and domination of a political and social vacuum for long periods. This is dangerous as it could affect the stability of society! Are there solutions for the government to get out of this political deadlock?!"

— Compiled by Mai Elsoukary

Other Voices

Ways to protect your eyes

By Ahmad alsarraf

The New York Times, the most famous newspaper in the world, published a report on eye health, and here are some of the guidelines for healthy eyes in the article, related to nine common beliefs people have about the eye, and the response of senior doctors to them:

■ Does reading a book or looking at an electronic device closely harm your eyes?



alsarraf

That's true, says Dr. Chu, associate clinical professor of optometry at the State University of New York College of Optometry, because our eyes aren't meant to focus on objects close to our face for long periods of time, and when we do, especially when we're children, it encourages eyeballing. The eye is to lengthen, which may, over time, cause myopia.

Therefore, we must follow the 20-20-20 rule, that is, we read for 20 minutes, shift our gaze to something that is at least 20 feet away, and look at that thing for at least twenty seconds.

■ Does reading in the dark lead to a decline in vision?

This is wrong, however, if the lighting is so dim that you need to hold your book or electronic device close to your face, it can increase the risks mentioned above, and lead to eyestrain, headaches and difficulty concentrating, which are often temporary symptoms.

■ Does spending more time outside help vision?

Yes, spending time outdoors can reduce the risk of myopia. It is thought that sunlight may encourage the retina

to produce dopamine.

■ Can too much ultraviolet light damage eyesight?

This is real. There's a reason experts don't stare at the sun. Dr. Ehrlich said that overexposure to the sun's ultraviolet A and ultraviolet B rays can cause irreversible damage to the retina. Wearing sunglasses that block ultraviolet rays can provide the necessary protection.

— Does taking a break from wearing eyeglasses slow down the deterioration of vision?

A terrible mistake, whoever needs glasses, must wear them.

■ Is the blue light emitted from screens harmful to the eyes?

Wrong, and there is no strong evidence that this will happen with exposure to screen light. But constantly staring at a screen makes us not blink enough, and that can cause eye strain and temporary blurred vision.

■ Is smoking harmful to eye health?

Inevitably, there is a relationship between smoking and eye diseases, including cataracts and age-related optic degeneration. The toxic chemicals in cigarettes also enter the bloodstream and damage delicate tissues in the eye, including the retina, lens and macula.

■ Are carrots good for the eye?

This is true, although a diet full of carrots will not give you perfect vision.

— Is deterioration of eyesight part of old age, and is it inevitable?

Big mistake, most causes of vision impairment in adulthood, including age-related macular degeneration and cataracts, are preventable or treatable if detected early. In addition, if your vision begins to diminish, do not consider it "just aging", but a visit to an optometrist or ophthalmologist can help avoid these conditions.

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e-mail: a.alsarraf@alqabas.com.kw

Couple leaves kids unattended after fight

Negligent parents face deportation

KUWAIT CITY, May 27: The First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Interior and Acting Minister of Defense Sheikh Talal Al-Khaled has issued instructions to not renew the residency of an Egyptian couple and their six children and to grant them temporary residency until the end of the academic year, after which they are to be deported, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

He took this decision after receiving a report from the community authorities about domestic disputes between the couple, which led the husband to leave his wife and six children, and stay with one of his friends without leaving any means of sustenance for his family. It reached such an extent that two of his children would take turns going to school in order to take care of an infant who is less than three months old.

According to a security source, one of the children called the Operations Room of the Ministry of Interior, and said her parents left her with her five siblings without food and that they were hungry and did not

find anything to eat for two days.

The Assistant Undersecretary for Public Security Affairs at the Ministry of Interior Major General Abdullah Al-Rajeb was immediately informed. He issued instructions that the six children be taken to the police station and provided with meals.

The community authorities, who took care of the children, were notified, and the father was summoned.

He revealed that he was unemployed as he had been laid off from work and had financial problems, which resulted in disputes with his wife and was eventually forced to leave the marital home four months ago and stay with his friend.

He affirmed that he is committed to the expenses of his children, revealing that he pays the tuition fees and the transportation fees for the bus that takes them to and from their school. As for the mother, she said she was no longer able to take care of the children as she had nothing to spend on them, and so she went to stay with her friend.

15 cyclists injured in accident on Gulf Street, leave hospital

Motorist turns himself in

KUWAIT CITY, May 27: About 15 people sustained fractures and injuries as a result of a traffic accident, Friday, when they were practicing their hobby of riding bicycles along the Arabian Gulf Street, reports **Al-Rai** daily.

Security sources told the daily that the accident occurred when a motorist ran into a group of bikes who were allegedly riding against the flow of traffic.

The sources stated that the necessary legal measures will be taken against the driver of the vehicle for not paying attention while driving, explaining that the cyclists were riding in the opposite direction on purpose and with the intention of seeing the cars coming head on instead of being behind them, even though the road is originally not designated for the use of bicycles.

The sources said assistance was provided to all those injured in the accident, and those whose condition required hospitalization to receive the necessary treatment.

Meanwhile, the Security Information Department at the Ministry of Interior reported that 15 Asians were run over on the Arabian Gulf Street, and the driver of the vehicle who initially fled the scene of the accident has reportedly turned himself in after a case of hit-and-run was filed against him and the authorities where checking the CCTV cameras to arrest the suspect.

Practices

The Ministry of the Interior calls on everyone who practices sports on the main and public roads to abide by the laws, noting that there have been similar previous incidents, and called for the need to obtain a permit from the competent authorities, which includes providing security patrols to protect them and allocating safe paths on the roads in order to preserve the safety of everyone.

Later, the Ministry of Interior clarified in another statement that the suspect has turned himself in and all necessary legal measures are being taken against him."

In the meantime, spokesman of the Ministry of Health Dr. Abdullah Al-Sanad told KUNA nine persons, who were slightly injured in the accident, have been discharged from hospital after receiving first aid. "They are in stable condition," he added.

Two other persons are still being treated, including one who has been admitted to the ICU and another at the gynecological surgery ward, he added.

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Kuwaiti extradited: A Kuwaiti involved in a money laundering case has been extradited from Egypt through the coordinated efforts of the Public Prosecution and its Egyptian counterpart, as well as close monitoring by Attorney General Saad Al-Safran reports **Al-Qabas** daily.

Within the framework of international cooperation on criminal matters between the prosecution and its counterpart in the sisterly Republic of Egypt, a Kuwaiti, who was prosecuted in Egypt for involvement in laundering Public Institution for Social Security funds, was extradited to Kuwait. This came after Kuwait submitted an extradition request to the Egyptian authorities.

The prosecution is keen on following up the investigation with the accused to uncover the truth, protect public funds and prevent organized crimes.

The prosecution then thanked its counterpart in Egypt, headed by Attorney General Hamada El-Sawy, for exerting tremendous efforts to complete the extradition process.



Pigeons take shelter under a tree in Salmiya as temperature rose to 45 C on Saturday, May 27.

Fire Dept team on tour

Preventing fires at work sites

KUWAIT CITY, May 27: Under the supervision of the Vice President of the Prevention Sector, of the Directorate-General of Fire Department (DGFD) Major General Khaled Abdullah Fahd, with the inspection teams continued Friday morning inspection of a number of projects which are under construction and warehousing facilities to measure and

reduce fire risks and ensure that temporary extinguishing systems conforming to safety and fire prevention requirements are in place to protect lives and property, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

The campaign came as a complement to the proactive preventive campaigns carried out by the DGFD on projects under construction in various governorates.



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Campaign aims at localizing jobs

KAC continues to discover new talent through 'Wathiq'

KUWAIT CITY, May 27: The Kuwait Airways continues its unremitting efforts to discover talents and recruit Kuwaiti youth and recent graduates through the "Wathiq" program with the aim of localizing jobs, reports Al-Anba daily.

2022, which comes within the framework of encouraging recent graduates to engage in work in the field of aviation and air transport and enhancing the spirit of patriotism and belonging to the national carrier of Kuwait. In this regard, the Assistant CEO of Support Services, Muhammad Al-Fawaz, said, "After the success

achieved by the "Wathiq" campaign from December 2022 to January 2023, the efforts are continuing to target and discover talents to the labor market. Due to the increasing demand by applicants, the company continues to conduct interviews and sort job applications, and added, the compa-

ny has received since the launch of the program more than 4 thousand applications to work in all operational and support departments. For his part, Director of the Human Resources Department in the company, Ahmed Al-Bannai said Kuwaitiya strives to pump new blood into the company.

Proposal to abolish Supreme Council for Planning and Dev

Council said not very reliable in bringing about targeted shift

KUWAIT CITY, May 27: According to informed sources, there is a governmental proposal to abolish the Supreme Council for Planning and Development, and replace it with another that is concerned with drawing up an ambitious economic policy and preparing promising development programs, reports Al-Rai daily.

MEW team registers 300 violations in '23

KUWAIT CITY, May 27: Head of the Judicial Enforcement Team at the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy Adnan Dashti revealed that the team has registered 300 violations and filed a case since the beginning of this year, reports Al-Rai daily. In a press statement, Dashti affirmed



Eng Dashti

that the team continues its inspection campaigns with the assistance of many government agencies to uncover irregularities in the electricity and water networks. He said the number of violations recorded recently is lower than those recorded in previous years.

In a related context, the seizure team carried out a campaign in coordination with the electrical distribution networks in Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governorate and representatives of the ministries of Interior and Commerce, Kuwait Municipality, Public Authority for Food and Nutrition, and Public Authority for Industry in Qurain Markets.

They said, "A government committee has prepared a proposal for excluding the Supreme Council for Planning and Development from the development engines in the country. It stated that the council is not very reliable in bringing about the targeted shift in the country's economic development path in the short, medium and long terms. The idea of establishing the council, which is proposed to be named

"The Economic Development Board", is based on establishing an entity responsible for achieving targeted economic development in the country, maximizing non-oil public revenues, increasing the level of employment of Kuwaitis,

and improving the local business environment, to the extent of raising the country's ranking in global competitiveness indicators and the rates of capital flows into the country, with increased participation of the private sector.

The role of the proposed new council includes bringing about diversification in the economic base such as offering development investment opportunities to the national and foreign investor. It will serve as a pivot for managing the economic future in Kuwait and bringing about sustainable development in the country.

It will also be concerned with reviewing and developing economic, financial and development legislation and policies, and correcting them towards achieving the New Kuwait 2035 vision."

The sources went on to say, "What makes the proposed Economic Development Board different from the existing one is that it will have the authority to set the general framework for development, approve its timeline, coordinate between all concerned parties, and have the authority to supervise and follow up either executive or in everything related to ensuring work according to the schedule.

Also, it will have the authority to intervene at any time in the work of the concerned authorities to implement its directives, and hold the negligent officials accountable, if any."

National Day greetings

HH Amir congratulates Georgia

KUWAIT CITY, May 27, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a congratulatory cable to President of Georgia Salome Zourabichvili on Friday on her country's National Day, wishing her a long healthy life and more prosperity for the country. Kuwait Crown Prince congratulates Georgia on Nat'l Day. Meanwhile, His Highness the Crown

Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a congratulatory cable to President Salome Zourabichvili on her country's National Day, wishing her a long healthy life and more prosperity for the country. Also, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent a congratulatory cable to President Salome Zourabichvili on her country's National Day.



Jassem Al-Huweidi



Rashed Bdeeh

Bid to revamp sports situation

Kuwait's athletes pin hopes on forthcoming parliament

News report by Hamad Al-Shemmeri KUWAIT CITY, May 27, (KUNA): Kuwaiti athletes pin their hopes on the forthcoming National Assembly (parliament) to revamp the country's sports situation, urging hopefuls to seek in earnest to wipe out obstacles haunting them.

Speaking to KUNA, Jassem Al-Huweidi, a retired Kuwaiti sportsman, called on future members of parliament to attach more attention to all sports problems and work hard to resolve them.

Given that young athletes make up 65 percent of the country's youth, the next legislature should seek to enact pieces of legislation that aim to serve Kuwait's sports field and to contribute to fulfilling athletes' expectations and ambitions so that they could achieve sports accomplishments for the na-

tion, he requested. Echoing Al-Huweidi's views, Mohammad Karam, a former player of the Kuwaiti national soccer team, urged the election winners to do their best to support and develop Kuwaiti sports.

However, speaking to KUNA, he called on voters to choose the candidates who are believed to work to serve national, rather than individual or personal, interests. For his part, Rashed Bdeeh, a former national team footballer, suggested that the coming parliament would allocate parts of its sessions for particularly discussing sports affairs and serving sports and athletes.

The next deputies should seek to pass laws that could better serve the sports clubs and facilities in the country, emphasizing that youth in general and young sports persons in particular deserve much more care.

Best services eyed for residents

16 new schools to open next year in new residential areas

KUWAIT CITY, May 27: The Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education, Dr. Hamad Al-Adwani announced the opening of 16 new schools in a number of areas at the beginning of the next academic year, in addition to schools that have been maintained, indicating that most of them are in new residential areas, reports Al-Qabas daily.

Al-Adwani said in a statement that, based on the directives of the Prime Minister, His Highness Sheikh Ahmed Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, "we will provide the best services for the residents of the new cities, and work has been done to ensure the readiness of these schools to provide educational services to the children of the people of these areas."

He also referred to the opening of 6 new schools within the Horizon Schools project, which was recommended by His Highness the Crown Prince to upgrade the educational system and improve its outputs, stressing the Ministry of Education's keenness to confront negative phenomena that some may resort to during the examination period.

He added, "We will not hesitate to take all measures to combat these phenomena and prosecute those who seek to harm our students, and there is tangible cooperation from all state agencies, led by the Ministry of Interior, and these efforts will continue, and we will not stop taking all the measures that we have taken in the past."

He went to say, the ministry is in the process of conducting a rotation of the twelfth grade examination committees between educational regions, to put an end to negative phenomena, noting the cooperation with the ministries of Information, Interior and Commerce to confront electronic cheating devices during the examination period.

Al-Adwani confirmed the launch of the "Get Ready" campaign, which aims to prepare students for the exams psychologically,

The great actor

Ahmed Gohar dies

KUWAIT CITY, May 27: The great actor, Ahmed Gohar, passed away after battling with an illness, reports Al-Qabas daily.

Gohar was famous for his heritage works that depicted Kuwait in the past. He owned Al-Abraq Foundation for Artistic Production. He started his artistic career in 1982 playing minor roles, until he got famous in the 1990s. His love for traditional works made him take risks and go into the field of production, although he was still at the beginning of his career. The first series he produced in 1993 was "Tash Warsh, The Good".

educationally, and from the health point of view, indicating that the ministry's plan began a long time ago in preparation for the exams.

Meanwhile, Assistant Undersecretary for the Facilities Sector at the Ministry of Education Eng Muhammad Al-Khalidi has confirmed the plan to construct 46 schools in Al-Mutlaa, West Abdullah Al-Mubarak and South Abdullah Al-Mubarak, reports Al-Anba daily.

Al-Khalidi disclosed the ministry is waiting for the Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) to hand over the plots for the construction of these schools.

He also affirmed the opening of 16 new schools in September. He said seven of these schools are in West Abdullah Al-Mubarak and two in Sabah Al-Ahmad residential area, in addition to seven schools that were renovated.

PACI adds 2 new indicators in its statistics on demographics

KUWAIT CITY, May 27: The Public Authority for Civil Information (PACI) announced that two new indicators have been added to the population and labor force indicators section on its statistical services website, reports Al-Qabas daily.

In a press statement recently, the authority explained that the first indicator highlights the rate of growth of the Kuwaiti population according to various years. The second indicator focuses on the rate of increase of non-Kuwaitis over the years with the possibility of identifying specific nationalities to display the development of their numbers.

According to the latest indicators, PACI went on to explain that the increase in the total number of Kuwaitis during the past 32 years was 939,000. The total number of those registered in the systems in 1990 amounted to 578,511. The total that was registered until the end of last year amounted to 1.5 million.

The rate of individuals in one Kuwaiti family has decreased since 2020 to 4.60 compared to the rate recorded in 1995 when the rate of Kuwaiti individuals in private families reached 6.44.

The number of Kuwaiti private families has increased to 313,000. The annual increase in the number of Kuwaitis as of the end of last year amounted to 28,700. The annual increase rate ranged between 25

and 32 thousand people, with the exception of 1993, which witnessed an annual increase estimated at 78,900 people.

The population as of the end of last year amounted to 4.7 million, of whom 3.2 million were expatriates, while citizens represented 32 percent of the total population.

The total number of citizens registered with PACI is 1.5 million. They constitute the largest number among the total number of communities in the country, with nine communities controlling the highest presence among the population.

The total number of workers in the Kuwait market out of the total population amounted to 2,056 million workers, 24 percent of whom are in the government sector, and 76 percent in the private sector.

About 77.2 percent of Kuwaitis contribute to work in the government sector, followed by expatriates in the government sector with Egyptians at 7.9 percent, followed by Indians, Saudis, Bangladeshis, Syrians, Pakistanis, Jordanians, Filipinos, and then Nepalese."

As for the private sector, the Indian community constitutes the highest percentage with 30 percent, followed by Egyptians, Bangladeshis, Kuwaitis, Pakistanis, Filipinos, Nepalese, Syrians, Jordanians, and Saudis.

PACI concluded that the percentage of workers compared to the total population amounted to 43 percent.

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Part of the UK-Kuwait meeting.

UK keen on bolstering relations

Kuwait, UK officials discuss bilateral ties

KUNA photos
Assistant Foreign Minister, Ambassador Maarefi and UK Minister, Tariq Ahmad.

LONDON, May 27, (KUNA): A ranking official of the Kuwaiti Ministry of Foreign Affairs held talks on Thursday with senior British officials on bilateral relations and regional and international issues of mutual concern.

Ambassador Sadeq Maarefi, the assistant foreign minister for Europe's affairs, who held the talks, told KUNA that the discussions came at start of a European tour.

He revealed that they were held with Juliette Wilcox, the Cyber Security Ambassador for UK Defence and Security Exports at the Department for International Trade.

State of Kuwait Ambassador to Britain and North Ireland, Badr Al-Awadh, attended the meeting.

He indicated that the discussions touched on preparations for celebrating the 70s anniversary of the Kuwaiti Investment Office in Britain and the 125th anniversary of the bilateral relations.

Maarefi added that he sensed from the British side keenness on bolstering the relations in political, economic, military and security spheres. They also affirmed London's unwavering commitment to safeguard Kuwait's security and sovereignty, he added.

The meetings constituted an opportunity to address some academic issues and prospects of facilitating procedures for Kuwaiti students studying in Britain, Maarefi concluded.

Arab League to attend forum on Sun

AMF to be held under PM's patronage

KUWAIT CITY, May 27, (KUNA): The Arab Media Forum will be launched Sunday under auspices of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Sabah, and would include 14 seminars dealing with a host of media issues.

The Forum Secretary General Madhi Al-Khamees, in a statement to KUNA Saturday, said the forum, which would celebrate its 20th anniversary, was keen on translating speeches of His Highness the Amir and His Highness the Crown Prince into action by promoting media action among Arab countries and people.

Al-Khamees, who thanked media sectors in Kuwait and Arab League for contributing to the success of the forum, said there would be many events throughout the forum. They will be preceded by an exhibition about media, communication technologies and applications.

He added seminars would discuss future of media, passion of success, force of media and diversity of sources, media and life, content creation in social media, and future of media amidst artificial intelligence.

Al-Khamees said seminars would also discuss Arab drama, media and marketing strategies as well as role in media in economic development.

Also:

CAIRO: The Arab League said on Saturday that it would partake in the Arab Media Forum due in Kuwait on Sunday under auspices of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Sabah. The Cairo-based bloc's participation in the event reflects the significance and attention it pays to joint Arab media action, Assistant Secretary-General for Media and Communications Ambassador Ahmad Khattabi said in a press statement.

The league commits to throwing much weight behind the activities and events of Arab organizations and agencies working under the umbrella of the Council of Arab Information Ministers, he said.

Therefore, he maintained, the bloc is keen on participating in Kuwait-hosted Arab Media Forum while marking the 20th anniversary of its creation.

'Most significant regional entity'

GCC ... Forty-two years of fruitful integration experiment – Report

KUWAIT CITY, May 27, (KUNA): Forty-two years have passed since the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) was created, marking the most successful integration experiment in the region and constituting a core pillar of security and stability.

Founded on May 25, 1981, the GCC remains to be the most significant regional entity that has managed to notch up numerous gains for the interest of its countries and peoples, as described by His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah during the 43rd Gulf Summit held in Riyadh on December 9.

Delivering Kuwait's speech during the gathering, Sheikh Mishal said the joint Gulf journey embraces so many accomplishments that had upgraded this great entity to the ranks of the world's most fruitful and effective entities.

His Highness the Crown Prince added that the council had fulfilled the expectations and hopes of its countries' peoples in view of Gulf citizenship and strategic and economic benefits.

On May 25, 1981, the leaders of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Bahrain, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Sultanate of Oman, Qatar and State of Kuwait met in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, where they reached a cooperative framework joining the six states to effect coordination, integration and inter-connection among the Member States in all fields in order to achieve unity.

The decision was not a product of the moment but an institutional embodiment of a historical, social and cultural reality. Deep religious and cultural ties link the six states, and strong kin relations prevail among their citizens.

The GCC's basic objectives are to effect co-ordination and inte-

gration, to deepen and strengthen relations, links and areas of cooperation, to stimulate scientific and technological progress in the fields of industry, mining, agriculture, water and animal resources, to establish scientific research, to establish joint ventures and encourage cooperation by the private sector for the good of their peoples.

Over the past four decades, the GCC march has witnessed major achievements in various fields that have positively reflected on the people of the GCC member countries and have met their economic, political, military and security ambitions.

Thanks to the wisdom and far-sightedness of its leaders, the GCC has managed to prove itself as a strong framework for collective security and a fence for protecting and safeguarding its countries' gains and addressing all risks and perils.

In foreign policy, the member states have adopted single positions on a host of political issues based on good-neighborliness, non-interference in internal affairs and respect of countries' sovereignty as well as peaceful resolution of disputes.

Ending the Iraqi-Iranian war, liberating the State of Kuwait from the Iraqi invasion, backing Iraq's unity, stability and sovereignty, supporting the cause of the occupied UAE three islands, achieving inter-Gulf reconciliation and supporting the Palestinian issues are all prime paradigms in this regard.

Militarily, the first meeting of the GCC army chiefs of staff, held in the Saudi capital of Riyadh in 1981, was a jump-off for forging inter-Gulf military cooperation, with numerous military strategies having been adopted over the past four decades.

Campaign includes 3 various stages

Kuwait Heart Foundation launches campaign

KUWAIT CITY, May 27, (KUNA): Kuwait Heart Foundation launches an awareness campaign aimed to reduce the number of deaths caused by heart diseases, and encourage early detection examinations.

In a press statement, the Foundation's Secretary General Dr. Rashed

Al-Oweesh said that the campaign includes three various stages and will end on World Heart Day on September 29.

Dr. Al-Oweesh added that seven doctors specializing in cardiology will be hosted to present detailed explanations, noting that it will be

shown on Al-Rai TV and social media platforms.

He noted that the foundation works hard to raise awareness of the risk factors causing heart diseases, particularly smoking, obesity, and physical inactivity, and to reach the largest possible number of people.

Device retrieves splintered parts of files

Kuwaiti engineer wins patent from US for dentistry extractor's manufacture

KUWAIT CITY, May 27 (KUNA): The Kuwaiti engineer Intisar Al-Shehaimah has won a patent from the US Patent and Trademark Office for making an extractor used in dentistry.

The device retrieves splintered parts of files used in treating teeth nerves.

Al-Shehaimah, quoted in a statement issued by Kuwait University, said that she made sure that the device would be easy to use, of rapid perfor-

mance and safe.

The mobile device of various sizes is safe for both the patient and the doctor, she affirmed.

Her 3-D presentation of the invention proved helpful to win the patent.

Kuwait expected to record lowest growth in Gulf: EIU

Reasonable recovery of MENA capital flows seen

KUWAIT CITY, May 27: The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) stated in a recent analysis that the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region recorded a strong performance in 2022 in terms of attracting foreign direct investment (FDI), expecting the recovery of capital flows to the region to be reasonable in 2023 and 2024, reports Al-Rai daily.

The unit believes the macroeconomic background will be supportive of FDI flows for most of the region's economies, and suggested that more than half of the region's countries will record average economic growth rates higher than 3 percent during the same period.

The unit expects Kuwait to record the lowest economic growth in the Gulf during this year and the following years, as the figures issued by the "Economist Intelligence" indicate that the average real Kuwait GDP growth will reach 1.9 percent during this period, while the UAE will record the highest rate for the same period by 4 percent followed by Qatar 3.7 percent, then Bahrain 3.5 percent, then Oman 3 percent, then Saudi Arabia 2.4 percent.

Rates

Moreover, most countries in the region, particularly the Gulf states, will continue to enjoy low inflation rates and stable exchange rates, which encourages the investment climate. However, the unit excluded from this two major economies, Egypt and Turkey, which are expected to suffer from the weakness of their currencies and severe price pressures in 2023, while this applies to crisis countries such as Lebanon, Iran, Sudan, Syria and Yemen.

In this context, the unit suggested that Kuwait would record the second highest inflation rate in the Gulf, after the UAE, over the average period of 2023, pointing out that the oil and gas industries in the countries of the region received a major investment injection in 2022, and the future prospects appear promising in terms of foreign direct investment flows to oil and gas sectors.

Although global oil prices continue to decline from their 2022 levels, according to the unit, this constitutes a modest decline, indicating that prices will remain reasonably high, to above \$80 a barrel in 2023 and about \$77 next year.

It also expected that high prices and high revenues driven by the recovery of demand, especially from Europe and Asia, would attract additional inflows of foreign direct investment, which would lead to improving pro-

6.1% GDP from tourism

Kuwait's 'participation' of tourism least among GCC

KUWAIT CITY, May 27: A recent study has revealed that Kuwait recorded the lowest participation of the tourism sector in the economy at the level of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries, after the average contribution of the tourism sector to the country's GDP reached only 6.1%, compared to 10.8% in the UAE, 9.8% in Bahrain, and 9.7% in Qatar, 9.4% in Saudi Arabia, and 6.8% in Oman.

While the rate of Kuwaiti spending on foreign tourism is estimated at more than 4 billion dinars annually (\$14 billion), equivalent to about 11% of the gross domestic product, the study, which was prepared by the Tourism Enterprises Company and recently reviewed by the Council of Ministers, urged the need to reduce tourism leakage abroad, while the country's annual revenues from tourism did not exceed the level of 300 thousand dinars only.

The "tourism projects" finished drawing the outlines for the establishment of the entertainment city in a way that achieves a meaningful economic return for the state, and enables the concerned authorities to attract specialized foreign companies to invest and contribute to the development and operation of the city, and to transfer the necessary expertise, after a team from the company conducted an opinion poll with the participation of a segment of citizens and residents and analyze its results, in order to determine the components of the new entertainment city and study its feasibility, in order to be able to meet the needs of the residents of Kuwait and fill the shortage in

entertainment products.

The two options for implementing the project include a legislative amendment to the State Property Law that the period of offering to exploit the site be 50 years or more, and then it is possible to achieve an internal return of 15%, so that it is attractive to investors in the private sector and injecting the value of the capital required by the state (building and then contracting with an international operator), noting that Wafra Real Estate Company has expressed its desire to invest in the project.

Project

The study estimated the cost of implementing the project at about 200 million dinars, of which 120 million is capital expenditures, and 80 million is for infrastructure. It is expected that the project will contribute to the GDP by about 85 million dinars in 2035, and will provide approximately 4 thousand new job opportunities, and that the number of potential visitors to the city will reach entertainment to 900,000 visitors by 2030, with an expected internal rate of return of 11% to 13%, assuming that the lease contracts are for 50 years and that the government provides infrastructure financing worth 65-75 million dinars.

She emphasized that the implementation of the project needs a legislative amendment so that the project exploitation period will be 50 years instead of 3 years, as Article 19 bis of the State Property Law 105 of 1980, which is applicable to state-owned companies that manage state property on its behalf.

ductivity in existing facilities and putting new sites into service.

With regard to Saudi Arabia, the unit pointed out that the Kingdom intends to increase its oil production capacity to 13.2 million barrels per day by 2027 from its current level of 12.2 million, while the UAE intends to increase its production capacity to 5 million barrels per day from the 4.2 million it produces at present.

To the contrary, the unit indicated that Iran, which possesses huge oil reserves in addition to the largest reserves of natural gas in the region, will face, due to the international sanctions imposed on it, difficulty in the short and medium term in attracting foreign direct investments to develop its capabilities to export crude and refined oil, natural gas and liquefied natural gas.

The unit indicated that Qatar has

consolidated its position as one of the largest exporters of liquefied natural gas, and, driven by foreign direct investment, has embarked on a massive expansion of its capacity to produce and export LNG, and to better serve its customers in Asia and Europe.

On the other hand, The Economist Intelligence reported that the Gulf states and other energy-exporting countries in the region reaped huge financial revenues from their oil and gas sales and expects this situation to continue in the short and medium term, as money will continue to be pumped into national development projects that will attract global partners and foreign investments, noting that the historical obstacles in the way of foreign direct investments will continue in some countries in the region and will crystallize in some cases by 2023.

TSP should not exceed 13.96 sq kms: Al-Jader

Municipality reveals surplus land for storage

KUWAIT CITY, May 27: The Kuwait Municipality revealed a surplus land has been allocated for storage in the country, based on the recommendations of updating the Third Structural Plan (TSP) of the country for the year 2030, considering that "the increase in storage sites negatively affects the industrial development strategy in the country, reports Al-Qabas daily.

In response to a question by a member of the Municipal Council, Fahd Al-Abd Al-Jader, regarding the industrial plots designated for storage, of which the daily obtained a copy, should have not exceeded 13.96 square kilometers.

The sources stated that "by examining the current storage sites in the country, it was found that the total storage area is

21.87 square kilometers, and it is noted that the total areas of those storage areas actually exceed the storage areas recommended by the Third Structural Plan," noting that "the allocation of new storage lands must be a reflection The strategic plan for the future industrial development of the country".

In its response, the municipality provided details of the large storage sites and their affiliation with 8 government agencies, which are the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Public Authority for Agriculture and Fisheries Affairs, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Electricity and Water, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, and the Public Authority for Industry.

Center aims to improve mental & cognitive health

Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad healthcare prize targets elderly health program

GENEVA, May 27, (KUNA): His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah Prize for Research in Health Care for the Elderly and in Health Promotion reflects the position of the elderly as a major development priority in health programs, Minister of Health (MoH) Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi said Friday.

This came in the minister's speech before a ceremony of delivering the award within the framework of the 76th World Health Assembly on May 21-20.

The elderly deserve care and attention, in recognition of their sincere efforts during their career, he said.

The prize shows one of the bright signs and positive initiatives of constructive cooperation between Kuwait and the World Health Organization (WHO) over six decades since Kuwait joined the organization, he elaborated.

Representing Kuwait, the minister expressed his delight at partaking in this occasion.

Dr. Abla Sibai, dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences (FHS) at the American University of Beirut and Dr. Wu Jing, head of China's National Center for Chronic and Non-communicable Disease Control and Prevention have won the prize.

Sibai was named for the prize due to her prominent contributions in the elderly health in Lebanon.

In addition, Sibai has developed the "national strategy for the elderly" in Lebanon in 2020 and 2030 and estab-

KUNA photo
The Kuwaiti health minister addresses his statement at inauguration of the awards ceremony

lished the Arab network on aging and the center for geriatric studies for the relation between research and policy at the national, regional and international levels.

Meanwhile, the Chinese center was chosen for the prize as it has included a facility for the health of the elderly since 2013 and delivered a broad range of activities that advance health promotion for the elderly.

The center aims to improve the men-

tal and cognitive health of older people, which involves more than 700,000 people from nearly 2,000 urban and rural areas.

For his part, WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said "at a time when the world faces many challenges, each of you is an inspiration and a reminder of the progress that can be made to improve health and well-being for all. I salute you all and I thank you all".

11 scientific articles published in high-quality journals

AUK Prof Dr Hussain completes KFAS-funded research project

KUWAIT CITY, May 27: The American University of Kuwait (AUK) associate professor of electrical engineering and assistant dean of the College of Engineering and Applied Sciences, Dr. Ghulam Hussain, successfully completed his KFAS-funded research project with exceptional outcomes.

Dr. Ghulam received the research grant as a Principal Investigator (PI) in March 2019 and recently completed his project, titled "Smart Condition Monitoring and Self-Healing Networks for Power

Grid (Project # PR18-18EO-01)."

Despite facing challenges during the pandemic, Dr. Ghulam and his co-investigators successfully accomplished the project goals. They published a total of 11 scientific articles in high-quality journals, including 8 Q1 publications (3 IEEE Transactions, 3 IEEE Access, and 2 Elsevier), as well as 5 papers in top-level conferences, the quantity and quality of the publications highlighting this exceptional accomplishment.

The research work aimed to

develop an integrated online monitoring system for power system equipment used in power plants and electrical grids. Several non-intrusive sensors were developed and implemented, and algorithms were developed to detect several electrical faults occurring in power equipment and their assessment in terms of severity and risk. The introduced concept of automated monitoring of incipient faults enables maximizing the in-service life of the components and

reducing power outages, which is highly beneficial for power and utility companies globally and for Kuwait in particular.

The project was completed through a collaboration with researchers from the USA, Finland, and Pakistan, and practical tests were performed in laboratories and on-site environments. The exceptional outcomes achieved by Dr. Ghulam through his research project have not only contributed significantly to the advancement of the field of engineering, but also to



Dr Hussain

the betterment of the global community at large.

The American University of Kuwait (AUK) is an independent, private, equal opportunity, and co-educational 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



Photos from the event.



Photos from the event.



A photo from the event.

'True success is about growing others'

Indian Public School holds Investiture Ceremony

KUWAIT CITY, May 27: "Outstanding leaders go out of the way to boost the self-esteem of their personnel. If people believe in themselves, it's amazing what they can accomplish." — Sam Walton

The Indian Public School, Salmiya organized Investiture Ceremony on 20th May 2023 at the school auditorium. The programme commenced with marching in of the newly elected students council. A traditional lamp lighting, symbolic of the darkness being wiped away by the light of knowledge, added to the auspiciousness of the event.

The Principal of Indian Public School, Mrs A Cherian welcomed the Chief Guest, parents and invi-

tees to the function. In her address she reminded everyone of the time when everything came to a standstill during the Corona pandemic, how there was no lockdown for education and how it was blooming even then through various digital platforms.

She spoke of the noblest of professions- teaching- and how it paves way for all other professions. She thanked the teachers and the parents for their cooperation in the remarkable performance of the students in the CBSE Board examinations. She exhorted the parents to give their continued support in reaping excellent results in the forthcoming year as well.

The Students council members led

by the Head Boy Mohammed Irshad Jasim and Head Girl Keziah Melva Dias were sworn in by the Principal in a solemn oath taking ceremony. The young leaders pledged to uphold the values of the school and keep the school flag fluttering high while discharging their duties honestly and impartially.

The badges were distributed to the dynamic and vibrant leaders by the Chief Guest Dr Prasanth Vasudev, the Principal of Gulf Indian School. The Chief Guest, in his address, spoke about the true spirit of leadership by reminding the leaders that when one is a leader, true success is about growing others.

He remembered his time as a school Head Boy and how difficult

it was to strike the right balance between academics and activities. He recollected that some of those who never got selected to the council went on to become leaders and CEO's of various companies- a warning that leadership is not to be taken for granted, it should not get into one's head. He urged the student leaders to lead by their example, congratulating and applauding them on their success.

Mesmerizing dances and scintillating music made the day a memorable one for the invitees. The event concluded with the Vote of Thanks proposed by the Vice-Principal Anil Kumar who thanked everyone who worked tirelessly in making the program a resounding success.

Indian envoy graces event

UP NRI Forum holds Blood Donation Camp in Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, May 27: UP NRI Forum-Kuwait, established in 2015 is now one of the premier social and charitable organization representing people from across Uttar Pradesh (India), residing in Kuwait. We undertake various social, charitable and cultural activities e.g. Indian Independence Day Celebration, Free Health Check-up / Guidance Camps, Blood Donation Camps, Cultural and Social Meets etc., since inception of the Forum.

In continuation of the same, a Blood Donation Camp was organised by the Forum on Friday May 19th-2023, at Adan Hospital Blood Bank Branch-Kuwait, from morning 8 am to 2pm, attracting an impressive turnout of 126 donors. The event witnessed an enthusiastic response from individuals of all walks of life, as community members eagerly stepped forward to contribute to this noble cause. In a remarkable display of community spirit and generosity, the donors showcased their unwavering commitment to saving lives through their selfless act of donating blood.

The event received a significant boost as the Honourable Ambassador of India to Kuwait, H.E. Dr. Adarsh Swaika graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. The presence of the Honourable Ambassador added a special touch of prestige to the event. Mr. Kamal Singh Rathod, First Secretary (Community Affairs & Associations) Indian Embassy, also added the elegance to the Camp with his presence.

The Ambassador acknowledged the vital role played by blood donors in the healthcare system and expressed his gratitude to the participants for their generosity. During interaction, the Ambassador emphasized the need for continued support

for blood donation campaigns, urging others to follow the noble example set by the attendees. Other prominent Indian and Kuwaiti dignitaries also attended the Camp to donate the blood and inspire others for the same.

Behind the scenes, a dedicated team of volunteers worked tirelessly to ensure the smooth execution of the Blood Donation Camp. These selfless individuals and their family members organized and managed the event, ensuring that each donor had a positive and comfortable experience. From registration to post-donation care, the volunteers diligently oversaw every aspect of the camp, demonstrating their exceptional commitment to the noble cause. The Hospital Staff fully cooperated with the volunteers and donors and executed the transfusion process in a truly professional manner.

The Blood Donation Camp left a lasting impact on both the organizers and the participants, reaffirming the power of collective action in bringing about positive change. The event not only replenished the blood banks but also raised awareness about the ongoing need for blood donation drives to save lives.

As the volunteers and organizers of the event under leadership of the Forum's President Dr. Mohan Ram reflect on their accomplishments, they express gratitude to all the Blood Donors. Camp Sponsors BEC Currency Exchange and Sahara Group of Companies for their staunch support. Their combined efforts have undoubtedly made a difference in the lives of those in need of blood transfusions.

The grand success of this Blood Donation Camp serves as a reminder that, together, we can make a significant impact and bring hope to those facing medical emergencies.



A photo from the event.

oil down

The Kuwaiti oil price dropped by USD 1.39 to USD 77.68 pb on Friday against USD 79.07 pb on the previous day, Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) announced on Saturday.

Comparatively, at international markets, forward Brent crude contracts went up by 69 cents to USD 76.95 pb, and the West Texas Intermediate crude rose by 84 cents to USD 72.67 a barrel. (KUNA)

Iran, Iraq seek boost

Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian and his Iraqi counterpart Fuad Hussein on Friday underlined the necessity of strengthening Iran's gas pipelines to Iraq.

This came in a telephone conversation between both ministers, where they also discussed regional cooperation between their countries, Iran's official news agency reported.

During the call, the two foreign ministers stressed the implementation of the signed security agreement between them, and ways to enhance banking cooperation between Tehran and Baghdad. (KUNA)

recession may be necessary to get inflation down

Britain's Treasury chief said he would be prepared to see the U.K. economy slip back into recession if further interest rate hikes are necessary to bring down inflation.

With the Bank of England expected to keep raising rates following higher-than-anticipated inflation figures this week, Jeremy Hunt said it was necessary to prioritize measures to slow the pace of price increases.

In an interview with Sky News that aired Friday, Hunt said the "only path to

sustainable growth" is to bring inflation under control.

Asked if he was comfortable with further rate hikes even if it could precipitate a recession, Hunt said, "Yes, because in the end, inflation is a source of instability. ... It is not a trade-off between tackling inflation and recession."

Like other central banks, the Bank of England has been raising interest rates aggressively over the past 18 months or so to a 15-year high of 4.5% after inflation spiked sharply, first because of

bottlenecks caused by the coronavirus pandemic and then Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which caused energy and food prices to surge.

Higher borrowing costs are aimed at making it more expensive for individuals and businesses to borrow, which dampens demand in the economy.

"If we want to have prosperity, to grow the economy, to reduce the risk of recession, we have to support the Bank of England in the difficult decisions that they take," Hunt said. (AP)

Market Movements

26-05-2023

	Change	Closing pts		Change	Closing pts		
UAE	- DFM	+0.44	3,541.41	PAKISTAN	- KSE 100	-0.16	41,002.60
JAPAN	- Nikkei	+0.37	30,616.31	PHILIPPINES	- PSEi	-0.46	6,530.20
				SAUDI	- Tadawul	-0.46	11,184.57
				EGYPT	- EGX 30	-0.27	17,043.62

Business

Capital Intelligence maintains investment grade rating for Kamco Invest with a 'stable outlook'

KUWAIT CITY, May 27: Kamco Invest, a regional non-banking financial powerhouse with one of the largest AUMs in the region, announced today that Capital Intelligence Ratings maintain its Long- and Short-Term Corporate Ratings of Kamco Invest at 'BBB' and 'A3', respectively. The outlook on the ratings remains 'Stable' primarily due to Kamco Invest's leading position in the asset management industry, as well as the Company's strong funding and liquidity base.

Capital Intelligence indicated that earnings performance in 2022, considering the net profits and Return on Average Assets, was better than in pre-Covid 2019. Performance in GCC equity markets so far in 2023 has been lackluster and this may weigh on performance at Kamco Invest. However, absent a significant market correction, a reasonable level of profitability should be achieved.

In its report, Capital Intelligence highlighted two key credit strengths. The first strength being Kamco Invest's strong funding and liquidity base. With funding mainly derived from its KWD40mn bond issue and a KWD5mn long-term bank loan, Kamco Invest enjoys considerable flexibility with its future funding plans. Further important credit strengths include low leverage and debt-equity ratios,

particularly on a net basis, and a strong and capable management team.

Aside from its funding and liquidity base, Capital Intelligence stated that Kamco Invest's second and main credit strength is the Company's business model with substantial assets under management (AUM). This provides a large and stable revenue stream aside from the growing investment banking business. The real estate platform is generating regular asset management fees and although the geographical expansion has made a limited earnings contribution to date, it offers considerable opportunities for the future.

Faisal Mansour Sarkhou, Chief Executive Officer, commented, "The investment grade rating by Capital Intelligence for Kamco Invest serves as a strong validation of our company's financial stability, sound business model, and exceptional management capabilities. We remain dedicated to fulfilling our responsibilities to our stakeholders, diligently pursuing fresh investment prospects, and delivering innovative solutions to our esteemed clients."

It is worth noting that Kamco Invest has assets under management of USD14.2bn and enjoys a strong financial position and healthy capital structure

with KWD60.8mn in shareholders' equity, a net debt to equity ratio of 0.19x, with 25.8% of total assets in cash & cash equivalent as of 31 March 2023.

About Kamco Invest

Kamco Investment Company K.S.C (Public) "Kamco Invest" is a regional non-banking financial powerhouse headquartered in Kuwait with offices in key regional financial markets, established in 1998 and listed on Boursa Kuwait in 2003. It is an Independently managed subsidiary of KIPCO Group adopting highest standards of corporate governance and regulated by the Capital Markets Authority and Central Bank of Kuwait. The Company offers a comprehensive range of investment solutions covering asset management, investment banking and brokerage.

Kamco Invest has AUM of over USD14.2bn as of 31 March 2023 allocated to various asset classes and jurisdictions, making it one of the largest asset managers in the MENA region. It has acted as investment banker to deals exceeding USD35bn from its inception to 31 March 2023 in equity capital markets, debt capital markets and mergers & acquisitions.



Faisal M. Sarkhou

Debt ceiling explained

What to know about showdown in Washington as default looms

WASHINGTON, May 27, (AP): House Republicans still do not have a deal with President Joe Biden to raise the debt ceiling as the nation is a little more than a week away from a potentially catastrophic default.

House Speaker Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., said Friday that negotiators were working to "finish the job" and seal a deal before the United States runs out of cash to pay its bills. Republicans worked through the night with the White House to find agreement on spending cuts that GOP lawmakers have demanded in exchange for raising the debt limit.

McCarthy said he did not know whether they would finalize the details in the next 24 hours.

"I thought we made progress yesterday," he said. "I want to make progress again today. And I want to be able to solve this problem."

Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen warned Congress on Friday that the government could default as soon as June 5 - four days later than previously estimated. A default would potentially devastate the U.S. and global economy depending on how long the standoff goes.

A look at the negotiations and why they are happening:

What is the debt ceiling fight all about?

Once a routine act by Congress, the vote to raise the debt ceiling allows the Treasury Department to continue borrowing money to pay the nation's already incurred bills.

The debt limit vote in more recent times has been used as a political leverage point, a must-pass bill that can be loaded up with other priorities.

House Republicans, newly empowered in the majority this Congress, are refusing to raise the legal limit unless Biden and the Democrats impose federal spending cuts and restrictions on future spending.

The Republicans say the nation's debt, now at \$31 trillion, is unsustainable. They also want to attach other priorities, including stiffer work requirements on recipients of government cash aid, food stamps and the Medicaid health care program. Democrats oppose those requirements.

Biden had insisted on approving the debt ceiling with no strings attached, saying the U.S. always pays its bills and defaulting on debt is non-negotiable. But he launched negotiations after House Republicans passed their own legislation and made clear they would not pass a clean debt ceiling increase.

What happens if the debt ceiling isn't raised?

There isn't really a blueprint for what would happen. But a first-ever government default would threaten the economy. Yellen and economic experts have said it could be "catastrophic."

On Wednesday night, the rating agency Fitch put the nation's credit on "Rating Watch Negative," which

amounts to a warning that it might downgrade the U.S. credit as a result of the impasse.

If rating agencies such as Fitch were to actually downgrade America's debt, it would mean that Washington would have to pay higher interest rates on Treasury bonds, notes and bills.

White House estimates say a prolonged default could cause 8.3 million job losses and a world-shaking recession, while even a brief default could lead to 500,000 fewer jobs. Moody's Analytics has estimated that a default of no longer than a week would lead to the loss of 1.5 million jobs.

The repercussions would be broad. Mark Zandi, chief economist at Moody's Analytics, said that "no corner of the global economy will be spared."

Yellen has said that federal government payments to millions of families would "likely go unpaid," including Social Security beneficiaries, veterans and military families. Disruptions to government operations also would impact "air traffic control and law enforcement, border security and national defense, and food safety."

Is a resolution close?

The bipartisan negotiators have routinely reported "progress." But weeks of talks have so far failed to produce a deal.

The two sides are looking at an agreement that would raise the debt ceiling for two years - until after the next presidential election - cutting spending for 2024 and imposing 1% cap on spending growth for 2025.

They have been at odds over how to trim annual budget deficits. Republicans are determined to cut spending; Biden's team favors holding spending levels flat.

"It's really coming down to one thing, this has been about spending," McCarthy said Friday morning.

But reaching a negotiators' agreement is only part of the challenge. Any deal would also have to pass the Republican-led House and Democratic-majority Senate with significant bipartisan support. In the end, leaders from both parties will need to muscle it over the finish line.

What are the hangups?

Democrats have strenuously objected to a Republican push to impose stiffer work requirements on people who receive government aid through food stamps, Medicaid health care and the cash assistance programs.

Biden has publicly kept the door open to some discussion over work requirements. But House Republicans say the White House is balking at their proposals.

Louisiana Rep. Garret Graves, one of McCarthy's negotiators, told reporters that "Democrats right now are willing to default on the debt" over their opposition to increased work requirements for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or food stamps.

WASHINGTON, May 27, (AP): Work requirements for federal food aid recipients have emerged as a final sticking point in negotiations over the looming debt crisis, even as President Joe Biden said a deal is "very close."

Biden's optimism, in comments to reporters as he left the White House on Friday evening, came as the deadline for a potentially catastrophic default was pushed back to June 5 and seemed likely to drag negotiations between the White House and Republicans over raising the debt ceiling into another frustrating week.

House negotiators departed the Capitol after 2 a.m. Saturday without a deal. They were expected to return hours later in hopes of reaching agreement with the White House over the holiday weekend.

Both sides have suggested one of the main holdups is a GOP effort to expand existing work requirements for recipients of food stamps and other federal aid programs, a longtime Republican goal that Democrats have strenuously opposed.

Even as they came closer to a framework on spending, each side seemed dug in on the work requirements. White House spokesman Andrew Bates called the GOP proposals "cruel and senseless" and said Biden and Democrats would stand against them.

Louisiana Rep. Garret Graves, one of House Speaker Kevin McCarthy's negotiators, was blunt when asked if Republicans might relent on the issue: "Hell no, not a chance."

The later "X-date," laid out in a letter from Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen, set the risk of a devastating default four days beyond an earlier estimate. Still, Americans and the world uneasily watched the negotiating brinkmanship that could throw the U.S. economy into chaos and sap world confidence in the nation's leadership.

Yet Biden was upbeat as he departed for Camp David: "It's very close, and I'm optimistic."

Failure to lift the borrowing limit, now \$31 trillion, to pay the nation's incurred bills, would send shockwaves through the U.S. and global economy. In a blunt warning, Yellen said failure to act by the new date would "cause severe hardship to American families, harm our global leadership position and raise questions about our ability to defend our national security interests."

Anxious retirees and others were already making contingency plans for missed checks, with the next Social Security payments due next week.

Biden and McCarthy, R-Calif., have seemed to be narrowing on a two-year budget-slashing deal that would also extend the debt limit into 2025 past the next presidential election. The contours of the deal have been taking shape to cut spending for 2024 and impose a 1% cap on spending growth for 2025.

But talks over the proposed work requirements for recipients of Medicaid, food stamps and other aid programs seemed at a standstill Friday afternoon.

Biden said the work requirements for Medicaid would be a non-starter. But he initially seemed potentially open to negotiating minor changes on food stamps, now known as the Supplemental Nutrition Assis-

Tech leads more gains on Wall St



Navy Rear Admiral Michael Weittlauffer, left, talks with designated market maker Patrick A. King as traders mingle with members of the armed services after the closing bell rang at the New York Stock Exchange, Friday, May 26, 2023, in New York. Fleet Week is underway in New York City with the arrival of thousands of military service members on shore leave. (AP)

World markets higher

NEW YORK, May 27, (AP): Technology stocks powered solid gains for Wall Street on Friday after another chipmaker reported strong demand related to artificial intelligence.

The upbeat finish to the week for major indexes comes amid lingering anxiety over persistently high inflation, the risk of a U.S. debt default and broadly weak corporate earnings.

The S&P 500 rose, 54.17 points, or 1.3% to close at 4,205.45. It notched a small gain for the week and is in the green as May nears its close.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average rose 328.69 points, or 1%, to 33,093.34.

The tech-heavy Nasdaq notched the biggest gains, rising 277.59 points, or 2.2%, to 12,975.69. The index rose 2.5% for the week as artificial intelligence became a big focus for investors.

Marvell Technology surged a record-setting 32.4% after the chipmaker said it expects AI revenue in fiscal 2024 to at least double from the prior year. That follows Thursday's report from fellow chipmaker Nvidia, which gave a big forecast for upcoming sales related to AI.

The revolutionary AI field has become a hot issue. Critics warn that it is a potential bubble, but supporters say it could be the latest revolution to reshape the global economy. The nation's financial watchdog, the Consumer Finance Protection Bureau, said it's working to ensure that companies follow the law when they're using AI.

Wall Street remains focused on Washington and ongoing negotiations for a deal to lift the U.S. government's

debt ceiling and avert a potentially calamitous default.

Officials said President Joe Biden and House Speaker Kevin McCarthy were narrowing in on a two-year budget deal that could open the door to lifting the nation's debt ceiling. The Democratic president and Republican speaker hope to strike a budget compromise this weekend.

Wall Street and the broader economy already had a full roster of concerns before the threat of the U.S. defaulting on its debt became sharply highlighted on the list.

"Should we avoid that, and it appears that is a high probability, we come back to a trajectory of a slowing economy, still-too-high inflation and restrictive monetary policy," said Bill Northey, senior investment director at U.S. Bank Wealth Management.

A key measure of inflation that is closely watched by the Federal Reserve ticked higher than economists expected in April.

The persistent pressure from inflation complicates the Fed's fight against high prices. The central bank has been aggressively raising interest rates since 2022, but recently signaled it will likely forgo a rate hike when it meets in mid-June. The latest government report on inflation is raising concerns about the Fed's next move.

Wall Street is now leaning slightly toward the potential for another quarter-point rate hike in June, according to CME's Fedwatch tool. The Fed has already raised its benchmark interest rate 10 times in a row.

The Fed faces a difficult choice at its next meeting, wrote Brian Rose, senior U.S. economist at UBS, in a report.

Global

World markets were mostly higher Friday, lifted by optimism that Congress and the president will strike a deal to unlock a vote for lifting the U.S. government's debt ceiling and avert a potentially calamitous default.

Germany's DAX slipped 0.1% to 15,785.97 while the CAC 40 in Paris was up just over 1 point at 7,231.25. Britain's FTSE 100 was also little changed, gaining 2 points to 7,573.21.

The enthusiasm carried over to Asia, where Tokyo's Nikkei 225 gained 0.7% to 31,019.61. In Seoul, the Kospi climbed 0.2% to 2,558.81, helped by a 2.2% rise in the share price for Samsung Electronics, South Korea's biggest company.

The Shanghai Composite index added 0.4% to 3,212.50, while the S&P/ASX 200 in Sydney also was 0.2% higher, at 7,154.80.

Oil

In other trading Friday, benchmark U.S. crude oil reversed an early retreat, picking up 16 cents to \$71.99 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. It sank \$2.51 on Thursday to \$71.83 per barrel.

Brent crude, the international standard, rose 6 cents to \$76.24 per barrel.

Currencies

The U.S. dollar fell to 139.73 Japanese yen from 140.07 yen. The euro rose to \$1.0732 from \$1.0726.

age to include adults 55 and under. It would also decrease the number of exemptions that states can grant to some recipients subject to those requirements.

Biden's position on the SNAP work requirements appeared to have hardened by Friday, when spokesman Bates said House Republicans are threatening to trigger an unprecedented recession

"unless they can take food out of the mouths of hungry Americans."

Any deal would need to be a political compromise, with support from both Democrats and Republicans to pass the divided Congress. Many of the hard-right Trump-aligned Republicans in Congress have long been skeptical of Treasury's projections, and they are pressing McCarthy to hold out.

BA cancels dozens of flights over computer problems

British Airways canceled dozens of flights Friday due to computer problems, disrupting the plans of thousands of travelers at the start of a busy holiday weekend. Most of the 42 affected flights were on short-haul routes to and from Heathrow, Europe's busiest airport. Computer issues on Thursday caused planes and crew to be out of position Friday, which was expected to be the busiest day for U.K. air travel since before the

coronavirus pandemic. Other flights were delayed, as some passengers were unable to check in online. "We're aware of a technical issue, which we have been working hard to fix," the airline said on its website. Travel is expected to be especially busy over the next few days as a three-day weekend coincides with the start of a weeklong holiday for most schools in Britain.

Travelers to UK face long waits amid systems problem affecting electronic gates. Travelers arriving in the U.K. faced hours long delays Saturday after a technical problem shut electronic border gates at airports across the country, forcing everyone to have their passports checked manually on what was expected to be one of the busiest travel weekends of the year.

WB approves \$300m financing to help poor in Lebanon

The World Bank approved a \$300 million additional financing to Lebanon's poor, providing cash payments to help families struggling through the country's historic economic meltdown, the institution said in a statement Friday. The new financing comes two years after the World Bank approved a \$246 million loan to Lebanon to provide emergency cash assistance to hundreds of

thousands in the tiny Mediterranean nation of 6 million people. Lebanon is in the throes of the worst economic and financial crisis in its modern history. The meltdown, rooted in decades of corruption and mismanagement by Lebanon's ruling class, began in October 2019 and has left more than three quarters of Lebanon's population in poverty. "The additional financing will

enable the government of Lebanon to continue to respond to the growing needs of poor and vulnerable households suffering under the severe economic and financial crisis," said Jean-Christophe Carret, World Bank's director for Mideast. The World Bank said the additional financing will provide cash transfers to 160,000 households for 24 months, including current beneficiaries. (AP)



Kuwait Insurance Company employees and their children who participated in the beach clean-up campaign.

Kuwait Insurance organizes a beach clean-up campaign with employees and their children

Kuwait Insurance Company organized a beach clean-up campaign, as part of its environmental program to protect marine life in Kuwait. The company's employees and their children participated as a commitment to social responsibility towards the environment. They spread awareness of the importance of preserving a clean habit and to instill a culture of valuing environmental protectionism.

Commenting on the campaign, Fajr Al-Sayegh, Manager of the Corporate Communications Department, stated: "Organizing this campaign comes from our belief in the importance of protecting our beaches and preserving marine life, and embodying a sense of responsibility towards our environment to keep it clean and beautiful set out to the waterfront to clean the beaches, and to deliver a message to all citizens and

residents about the importance of protecting marine life from various pollutants, as well as highlighting Kuwait's place in our hearts". She added that Kuwait Insurance is keen to bring about awareness and adhere to its environmental obligations. The company's environmental initiatives, she said, aim to effectively contribute in protecting nature and raising awareness in a society that enjoys a healthier

and better life. Al-Sayegh thanked all the employees of the company and all the workers who volunteered in the beach clean-up campaign, praising the support they provided and their efforts in making the campaign a success. In conclusion she added that Kuwait deserves a lot and the least we can offer is to keep its beaches clean.

Yellen, Georgieva 'discuss' economy outlook under Article IV consultation

US, IMF in cordial meeting

The Conversation

What is hydrogen, and can it really become a climate change solution?

By Hannes van der Watt

The conversation is an independent and nonpartisan source of news, analysis and commentary from academic experts.

Hydrogen, or H, is getting a lot of attention lately as governments in the U.S., Canada and Europe push to cut their greenhouse gas emissions.

But what exactly is H, and is it really a clean power source?

I specialize in researching and developing H production techniques. Here are some key facts about this versatile chemical that could play a much larger role in our lives in the future.

Hydrogen is the most abundant element in the universe, but because it's so reactive, it isn't found on its own in nature. Instead, it is typically bound to other atoms and molecules in water, natural gas, coal and even biological matter like plants and human bodies.

Hydrogen can be isolated, however. And on its own, the H molecule packs a heavy punch as a highly effective energy carrier.

It is already used in industry to manufacture ammonia, methanol and steel and in refining crude oil. As a fuel, it can store energy and reduce emissions from vehicles, including buses and cargo ships.

Hydrogen can also be used to generate electricity with lower greenhouse gas emissions than coal or natural gas power plants. That potential is getting more attention as the U.S. government proposes new rules that would require existing power plants to cut their carbon dioxide emissions.

Because it can be stored, H could help overcome intermittency issues associated with renewable power sources like wind and solar. It can also be blended with natural gas in existing power plants to reduce the plant's emissions.

Using hydrogen in power plants can reduce carbon dioxide emissions when either blended or alone in specialized turbines, or in fuel cells, which consume H and oxygen, or O, to produce electricity, heat and water. But it's typically not entirely CO-free. That's in part because isolating H from water or natural gas takes a lot of energy.

There are a few common ways to produce H:

- Electrolysis can isolate hydrogen by splitting water - HO - into H and O using an electric current.

- Methane reforming uses steam to split methane, or CH, into H and CO. Oxygen and steam or CO can also be used for this splitting process.

- Gasification transforms hydrocarbon-based materials - including biomass, coal or even municipal waste - into synthesis gas, an H-rich gas that can be used as a fuel either on its own or as a precursor for producing chemicals and liquid fuels.

- Each has benefits and drawbacks. Hydrogen is often described by colors to indicate how clean, or CO-free, it is. The cleanest is green hydrogen.

- Green H is produced using electrolysis powered by renewable energy sources, such as wind, solar or hydropower. While green hydrogen is completely CO-free, it is costly, at around US\$4-\$9 per kilogram (\$2-\$4 per pound) because of the high energy

required to split water.

Other less energy-intensive techniques can produce H at a lower cost, but they still emit greenhouse gases.

Gray H is the most common type of hydrogen. It is made from natural gas through methane reforming. This process releases carbon dioxide into the atmosphere and costs around \$1-\$2.50 per kilogram (50 cents-\$1 per pound).

If gray hydrogen's CO emissions are captured and locked away so they aren't released into the atmosphere, it can become blue hydrogen. The costs are higher, at around \$1.50-\$3 per kilogram (70 cents-\$1.50 per pound) to produce, and greenhouse gas emissions can still escape when the natural gas is produced and transported.

Another alternative is turquoise hydrogen, produced using both renewable and nonrenewable resources. Renewable resources provide clean energy to convert methane - CH - into H and solid carbon, rather than that carbon dioxide that must be captured and stored. This type of pyrolysis technology is still new, and is estimated to cost between \$1.60 and \$2.80 per kilogram (70 cents-\$1.30 per pound).

Over 95% of the H produced in the U.S. today is gray hydrogen made with natural gas, which still emits greenhouse gases.

Whether H can ramp up as a natural gas alternative for the power industry and other uses, such as for transportation, heating and industrial processes, will depend on the availability of low-cost renewable energy for electrolysis to generate green H.

Yaccarino announced as boss

Why a glass cliff could put Twitter new CEO in danger

By Barbara Ortutay

Less than two months into his \$44 billion purchase of Twitter, Elon Musk declared that whoever took over as the company's CEO "must like pain a lot." Then he promised he'd step down as soon as he found a replacement "foolish enough" to want the job.

That person, Musk announced Friday, is Linda Yaccarino, a highly-regarded advertising executive from NBCUniversal. She'll start in six weeks. How long she'll last might depend on her pain tolerance.

When Musk tweeted on Thursday that he's found a new CEO but didn't say who, one word stuck out: "she." Some of his more extreme Twitter followers took immediate issue with the new CEO's gender, but the fact that Musk hired a woman is actually notable simply because it is so rare - in business overall and especially in the tech industry - to see female chief executives.

Her appointment renewed questions about the "glass cliff," a theory that women - as well as underrepresented minorities - are more likely to be hired for leadership jobs when there's a crisis, which sets them up for failure. The term was coined in 2005 by University of Exeter professors Michelle Ryan and Alex Haslam, and there have been plenty of famous examples since then, from Yahoo's Marissa Mayer to the U.K.'s Theresa May.

Could Yaccarino be headed toward it?

"Her credentials are impeccable and she's been extremely successful so far. But she's also been in settings where her success was achievable," said Jo Ellen Pozner, a business professor at Santa Clara University who studies corporate governance. "I mean no disrespect to her or to diminish her in the least. I just think that this is an impossible situation for basically anybody."

Whether or not she succeeds depends in part on how much Musk is willing to step back from Twitter's day-to-day operations. The Tesla and SpaceX CEO said he will continue to serve as Twitter's executive chairman - Yaccarino's boss - as well as its chief technology officer, reporting to her. He added that Yaccarino "will focus primarily on business operations."

From the moment Yaccarino's name was confirmed, advertising industry experts hailed the decision as a good one - perhaps the only one - to steer Twitter toward stability and profitability. Yaccarino oversaw NBCUniversal's market strategy and advertising revenue for its broadcast, cable and digital assets, which totaled nearly \$10 billion. In comparison, Twitter's final quarterly revenue as a public company, reported in July, was just \$1.17 billion. "She is exactly what Twitter needs to start rebuilding advertiser trust, bring back big advertisers and really start improving Twitter's ad business,"

said Jasmine Enberg, an analyst at Insider Intelligence who follows Twitter. "That said, there are still a lot of challenges and Yaccarino is going to have her hands full from day one."

Musk's tenure at Twitter's helm has been chaotic at best. He began his first day firing the company's top executives, followed by roughly 80% of its staff. This has meant that Twitter has far fewer engineers to ensure that the site is running smoothly and far fewer content moderators to help rid it of hate speech, animal cruelty and graphic violence.

He's upended the platform's verification system and has scaled back safeguards against the spread of misinformation. It's been some of these changes - along with Musk's own penchant for spreading misinformation and engaging with prominent conspiracy theorists and far-right figures - that analysts say soured many advertisers on the platform.

"Elon Musk has been telling us for months repeatedly that Twitter's problems are the result of advertisers pulling away. But that's not the source of his problems. Advertisers pulling away are a symptom of the problems at Twitter. He's created chaos. He's eliminated internal controls. He's eliminated critical functions like content moderation. He's made the user experience very unpredictable. He's allowed dangerous voices to flourish," Pozner said. "Nobody - man, woman, alien - is going to be able to right this ship given these circumstances."

The glass cliff theory holds up in business as well as politics, and, according to a 2011 Harvard Business Review report, "does not seem to apply to organizations with a history of female leaders."

Twitter, like most tech companies, does not have a strong history of female leaders. Its founders were all men, as were all five of its CEOs, including Musk. While female chief executives are rare across industries, they are exceptionally rare in tech. Of the 340 CEOs in a recent survey of S&P 500 companies, 18 were women, up from 16 in 2020. In tech, prominent female CEOs include Oracle's Safra Catz and chipmaker AMD's Lisa Su.

Yaccarino seems ready to go head-to-head with Musk, though it's not clear how that'll play out. In a recent on-stage interview with him, she asked Musk if he would commit to not tweeting after 3 a.m. Agreeing that he's "gotten myself in trouble a few times" with late night/early morning tweets, he responded with a noncommittal "I will aspire to tweet less at 3 a.m."

She also asked Musk if he's open to let advertisers "influence" his vision for Twitter, in "product development, ad safety, content moderation" so they could get more excited about investing in the platform.

Musk quickly shut her down.

Trade officials express concern about each other's restrictions

WASHINGTON, May 27, (AP): Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo and her Chinese counterpart, Wang Wentao, expressed concern Thursday about policies of each other's governments following Chinese raids on consulting firms and U.S. curbs on exports of semiconductor technology, their gov-

ernments said. The two sides announced no progress in disputes over technology and security but said Raimondo and Wang promised to strengthen exchanges on trade issues.

Companies from both sides have been buffeted by tighter official

controls on trade in semiconductors and other activity on security grounds. Political relations between the two governments are at their lowest level in decades following disputes over technology, security, China's territorial claims and Beijing's treatment of Hong Kong and

ethnic minorities. Raimondo "raised concerns" about Chinese actions against U.S. companies in China, her office said in a statement. It said they also discussed the trade and investment environment and "areas for potential cooperation" but gave no details.

Menzies, MYAirline form joint venture in Malaysia

Menzies Aviation, the leading service partner to the world's airports and airlines, and an Agility company, has agreed a joint venture with MYAirline to establish a ground services company in Malaysia.

As part of the new partnership, Menzies will provide ground services at Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KUL) initially serving MYAirline at Terminal 2. KUL will be Menzies' first location in Malaysia, where there are opportunities for growth and expansion as the aviation

sector continues its Covid-19 pandemic recovery.

Kuala Lumpur-based MYAirline was recently established as a low-cost carrier with nine domestic routes and two international routes, which are set to launch next month to Thailand.

The entry into Malaysia complements Menzies' existing operations in three other Southeast Asian countries including Indonesia, China-Macau and Thailand.

Hassan El-Houry, Chairman, Menzies

Aviation said: "We are delighted to be entering Malaysia through this new partnership with MYAirline. Kuala Lumpur International Airport is the largest and busiest airport in Malaysia and will provide an excellent base for our Malaysian operation. We're focused on accelerating growth in the region through partnerships that will contribute to this rapidly developing aviation market and offering our global standards to deliver the safest, most secure and sustainable aviation services."



Menzies Aviation and MYAirline announce joint venture partnership.

Bank launches special offer

Gulf Bank customers can win Apple Watch Ultra, iPhone 14 Pro

KUWAIT CITY, May 27: As we begin to welcome the summer season, Gulf Bank, in collaboration with Visa, launches a special offer that gives 60 customers a chance to win an Apple Watch Ultra or an iPhone 14 Pro device.

Gulf Bank has announced that the promotion period will run from May 21 to June 30, 2023, and the 60 winners will be announced on July 10, 2023, under the supervision of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

This offer is valid only for Gulf Bank Visa credit cardholders, and on payments that are made using their phones or smart watches during the offer period. Customers get one



Visa Offer

chance to win for every KD 10 spent in Kuwait, and three chances to win for every KD 10 spent internationally.

On this occasion, Gulf Bank's Assistant General Manager of Consumer Banking, Mr. Mohammed Taqi, said that "Gulf Bank is keen to reward its customers and meet their requirements. This is part of the bank's continuous efforts to provide the best products and services, as well as an outstanding customer experience."

Taqi mentioned that Gulf Bank's credit cards have many features that customers can benefit from – as these cards provide customers with many

offers in various sectors, including restaurants, hotels, travel and tourism, entertainment, health and beauty, car rentals, and many others.

Enables

Gulf Bank offers its customers the best and fastest rewards program in Kuwait, which enables customers to redeem points for tickets on all airlines and make hotel reservations at more than 300,000 hotels around the world.

The Gulf Points program provides customers with many benefits, including: The opportunity to travel anytime, and anywhere throughout the year, to earn miles

when redeeming points from their favorite airline and to gain additional points when paying the remaining value of their reservation.

Other benefits also include automatic entry into the program for all Gulf Bank credit card holders, with no minimum payment required to earn points and redeem them for free tickets on all airlines.

Gulf Bank's vision is to be the leading Kuwaiti Bank of the Future. The Bank is constantly engaging and empowering its employees as part of an inclusive and diversified workplace in recognition of every employee's role in delivering customer excellence

and serving the community at large. With its extensive network of branches and innovative digital services, Gulf Bank is able to give its customers the choice of how and where to conduct their banking transactions, all while ensuring a simple and seamless banking experience.

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



Al Dirwaza account

'July monthly draw'

June 1st last day to deposit in Al Dirwaza account – KIB

KUWAIT CITY, May 27: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) announced that June 1st is the last date to open or deposit in Al Dirwaza account to enter the July monthly draw for a chance to win prizes of KD 20,000 for 11 winners. Accordingly, the Bank is reminding its current and potential customers to open or deposit more in Al Dirwaza account to increase their chances in July's Draw that will take place in the presence of representatives from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, as well as representatives from KIB.

Ali AlSane, Manager - Product Development, Digital Transformation & Innovation at KIB, said: "We encourage everyone to take advantage of this opportunity to open or deposit more in Al Dirwaza account to increase their chances in July's Draw. Each KD 1 that has completed a full month's cycle in the account will count for one chance, and chances are calculated based on the lowest monthly balance preceding the draw. We would like to remind our customers who already opened Al Dirwaza account that their winning chances in the

draw on cash prizes increase with higher deposits. As for our future customers, we invite them to open an Al Dirwaza account by visiting the branches or through KIB's mobile application and benefit from the best draw account in Kuwait."

AlSane further highlighted KIB's commitment to meeting and exceeding its customers' expectations by designing tailored prize offers, introducing innovative banking products, and launching promotional campaigns that add value to their lives, in line with KIB's "Bank for Life" slogan.

Each month, 11 account holders have the chance of winning valuable cash prizes, with the first winner receiving KD 10,000 and the remaining 10 receiving KD 1,000. The Bank announces the winners of the monthly draw on its website and social media channels, as well as in newspapers. The cash prizes are deposited in their Al Dirwaza accounts within two business days from the announcement. To enter the upcoming Al Dirwaza draws, KIB customers can open an account at any time and at any place. A minimum of KD 100 is required to open an account and can only be withdrawn upon account closure.

It serves to note that Al Dirwaza account is the best-in-class savings account in the sector, with annual expected profits up to 2% disbursed on monthly basis, where the customer gets an expected profit of 2% for the first 3 months from the account opening date and up to 1% expected rate onward. The expected profits are automatically deposited into the customer's account within the first day of the beginning of each month.



Zain Arab Media Forum 2023

Event until May 29

Zain strategic partner of Arab Media Forum

KUWAIT CITY, May 27: Zain today announces its strategic partnership with the 18th Arab Media Forum, which kicks-off today, Sunday, in the Diamond Hall at the St. Regis Hotel Kuwait. The event continues until 29 May and comes under the patronage of H.H. the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al Ahmad Al Sabah.

Zain's strategic partnership with the forum extended throughout the past 10 years and comes this year to further reflect the company's strong belief in the significant role media plays within the community. By sponsoring the event, Zain contributes to shouldering the local and regional media sectors and continues to support the Arab World's biggest media gathering.

The event's program is set to feature Zain Kuwait CEO Eaman Al Roudhan joining a special panel discussion on the impact of technology in the progress and sustainability of communities. The panel will also feature Kuwait Airways CEO Maen Razouqi and Director General of the Central Agency for Information Technology (CAIT) Dr. Ammar Al Hussaini and will be moderated by Omani journalist Mousa Al Farie.

Zain has prepared a number of cultural programs and activities for the forum, including a workshop on the essentials of hosting TV, radio, and podcast shows and a workshop on creative writing, both hosted by media influencer Ali Najem. The company also hosts a special talk show, Zain Microphone, at the event, hosted by TV presenter Abdulrahman Aljaser, where he'll interview some of the event's top guests to discuss the future of media and the impact of technologies like AI on the age of information.

This year, the Arab Media Forum celebrates its 20th year, and comes under support from the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS). The event is set to welcome high-profile executives from the Arab world, including foreign affairs ministers, media and information ministers, owners and executives of Arab media institutions, media personalities, journalists, authors, actors, and more.



AlSane

'You deserve the best financing'
KFH launches housing & personal finance campaign for customers

KUWAIT CITY, May 27: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) has launched the "You deserve the best financing" campaign to familiarize customers with the financing services and products. This encompasses consumer finance including medical and educational products, furniture and appliances, and housing finance including all materials, construction work, plans, licenses, supervision, and local real estate.

The campaign aims to meet all customer needs through integrated and comprehensive services and financing solutions. It is worth noting that this campaign is an extension of the "You deserve the best financing" salary transfer campaign.

KFH Group Deputy General Manager- Products, Nehal Almosalem said that the campaign confirms KFH's keenness to offer KFH customers exclusive benefits for housing financing, including residential real estate financing, which is one of the main products aiming to provide integrated solutions in line with the needs of customers and the type of property. Moreover, the campaign aims at financing all customers' needs and requirements of materials and construction works in convenient installments, in addition to engineering consultancy services. Other special features of consumer finance include financing services for furniture, electronics, household appliances and their accessories, as well as financing for customers' educational products to provide seats at relevant institutions in monthly installments. It also provides medical care financing services to cover expenses of treatment.

Specialized

Almosalem pointed out that KFH offers exclusive benefits at the market level with a selection of suppliers specialized in related fields as well as credit advantages including: maturity of the first installment up to 12 months from the contract for housing financing and 6 months for consumer finance, with the maximum limit for housing financing reaching KD 70,000, and the repayment period of 15 years and up to KD 25 thousand for consumer finance, and a maximum repayment period of up to 5 years. Therefore, customers can obtain financing up to KD 95 thousand, according to the maximum limits for personal finance with salary collateral, with the customer



Nehal Almosalem



ABK launches ABK Advantage Rewards Program.

Innovative, unique loyalty program

Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait launches its 'ABK Advantage Rewards' Program

KUWAIT CITY, May 27: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) introduces 'ABK Advantage Rewards' program, an innovative and unique loyalty program designed to reward customers for conducting daily banking transactions.

Existing ABK customers will automatically be enrolled into the program and immerse themselves in a world of exclusive benefits. In addition to earning rewards on various banking products, all eligible ABK customers will have the opportunity to apply for ABK Advantage credit cards to unlock limitless rewards.

Similarly, new cardholders will automatically and seamlessly be enrolled into the ABK Advantage Rewards program and start earning "Tokens," the point currency system that can be accumulated with every purchase.

Therefore, by simply paying using their card, customers have the chance to collect Tokens, which can later be redeemed for a variety of products and services across an array of participating partner brands, and enjoy various redemption options that are just a click away.

For every KD 1, customers earn 3 Tokens on local spends and 6 Tokens on international spends. Furthermore, the Bank offers the opportunity to earn Tokens for banking with ABK by opening new fixed deposits, current accounts and savings accounts, as well as for recurring salary credited to the account.

It only gets simpler – customers can download the ABK mobile app or log on to their Online Banking accounts on eahli.com to start redeeming. Numerous choices await ranging from plan-



Johair Marafi

ning a vacation trip, benefiting from airport meet & assist services, booking hotels around the world, indulging at cafés and restaurants, enjoying entertainment like the cinema, watching the world's best sporting events, visiting the seven wonders of the world, and much more.

Coverage

In addition to the aforementioned benefits, customers may also benefit from a series of features associated with the cards. These include travel accident and medical coverage; complimentary airport lounge access at over 1,000 lounges; ABK SecurePay for extra online shopping security; ABK offers across multiple merchants; and the ability to make purchases through ABK's digital wallets.

Commenting on the program, Johair

Marafi, Acting General Manager of ABK's Retail Banking Division, said, "We have launched a truly unique program which reflects ABK's continued commitment to offer customers the best promotions and rewards in appreciation of their trust in the Bank's products and services."

She continued, "A series of promotional campaigns are soon to be launched that aim to further enhance the Bank's position in the banking sector and attract more potential customers to start a worthwhile banking experience and journey with ABK."

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

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

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

having the possibility of postponing one installment per year with KFH Pass solution, and the opportunity to reschedule the debt in the future.

Almosalem stressed that being keen to provide its services to customers in a distinctive manner and in line with the latest financial technology, KFH launches the

digital financing service, which includes processing all paperwork for financing transactions electronically eliminating the need to visit the branch, therefore saving time and effort, and shortening the time of completing KFH customers' transactions, noting that terms and conditions apply.

Almosalem indicated that KFH is determined to meet the needs of customers, enhance cooperation with suppliers through communication channels and extended partnership ties between the two sides. This contributes to improving customer satisfaction and maintaining high levels of service quality.

The Conversation

EPA issues new warning about 'forever chemicals' in drinking water

Products labeled as 'green' contain harmful PFAS

By Kathryn Crawford Middlebury

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

You've probably been hearing the term PFAS in the news lately as states and the US government consider rules and guidelines for managing these "forever chemicals."

Even if the term is new to you, chances are good that you're familiar with what PFAS do. That's because they're found in everything from non-stick cookware to carpets to ski wax.

PFAS stands for per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances, which are a large group of human-made chemicals - currently estimated to be around 9,000 individual chemical compounds - that are used widely in consumer products and industry. They can make products resistant to water, grease and stains and protect against fire.

Waterproof outdoor apparel and cosmetics, stain-resistant upholstery and carpets, food packaging that is designed to prevent liquid or grease from leaking through, and certain firefighting equipment often contain PFAS. In fact, one recent study found that most products labeled stain- or water-resistant contained PFAS, and another study found that this is even true among products labeled as "nontoxic" or "green." PFAS are also found in unexpected places like high-performance ski and snowboard waxes, floor waxes and medical devices.

At first glance, PFAS sound pretty useful, so you might be wondering "what's the big deal?"

The short answer is that PFAS are harmful to human health and the environment.

Some of the very same chemical properties that make PFAS attractive in products also mean these chemicals will persist in the environment for generations. Because of the widespread use of PFAS, these chemicals are now present in water, soil and living organisms and can be found across almost every part of the planet, including Arctic glaciers, marine mammals, remote communities living on subsistence diets, and in 98% of the American public.

Levels

The Environmental Protection Agency recently issued new warnings about their risk in drinking water even at very low levels.

Once people are exposed to PFAS, the chemicals remain in their bodies for a long time - months to years, depending on the specific compound - and they can accumulate over time.

Research consistently demonstrates that PFAS are associated with a variety of adverse health effects. A recent review by a panel of experts looking at research on PFAS toxicity concluded with a high degree of certainty that PFAS contribute to thyroid disease, elevated cholesterol, liver damage and kidney and testicular cancer.

Further, they concluded with a high degree of certainty that PFAS also affect babies exposed in utero by increasing their likelihood of being born at a lower birth weight and responding less effectively to vaccines, while impairing women's mammary gland development, which may adversely impact a mom's ability to breastfeed.

The review also found evidence that PFAS may contribute to a number of other disorders, though further research is needed to confirm existing findings: inflammatory bowel disease, reduced fertility, breast cancer and an increased likelihood of miscarriage

and developing high blood pressure and preeclampsia during pregnancy. Additionally, current research suggests that babies exposed prenatally are at higher risk of experiencing obesity, early-onset puberty and reduced fertility later in life.

Collectively, this is a formidable list of diseases and disorders.

Created

PFAS chemicals have been around since the late 1930s, when a DuPont scientist created one by accident during a lab experiment. DuPont called it Teflon, which eventually became a household name for its use on nonstick pans.

Decades later, in 1998, Scotchgard maker 3M notified the Environmental Protection Agency that a PFAS chemical was showing up in human blood samples. At the time, 3M said low levels of the manufactured chemical had been detected in people's blood as early as the 1970s.

Despite the lengthy list of serious health risks linked to PFAS and a tremendous amount of federal investment in PFAS-related research in recent years, PFAS haven't been regulated at the federal level in the United States.

The EPA has issued advisories and health-based guidelines for two PFAS compounds - PFOA and PFOS - in drinking water, though these guidelines are not legally enforceable standards. And the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry has a toxicological profile for PFAS.

Federal rules could be coming. Congress is considering legislation to ban PFAS in some food packaging. The EPA has a road map for PFAS regulations it is considering, including regulations involving drinking water. The Biden administration has said it also expects to list PFOA and PFOS as hazardous substances under the Superfund law, a move that worries utilities and businesses that use PFAS-containing products or processes because of the expense of cleanup.

States, meanwhile, have been taking their own actions to protect residents against the risk of PFAS exposure.

At least 24 states have laws targeting PFAS in various uses, such as in food packaging and carpets. But relying on state laws places burdens on state agencies responsible for enforcing them and creates a patchwork of regulations which, in turn, place burdens on business and consumers to navigate regulatory nuances across state lines.

Based on current scientific understanding, most people are exposed to PFAS primarily through their diet, though drinking water and airborne exposures may be significant among some people, especially if they live near known PFAS-related industries or contamination.

The best ways to protect yourself and your family from risks associated with PFAS are to educate yourself about potential sources of exposures.

Products labeled as water- or stain-resistant have a good chance of containing PFAS. Check the ingredients on products you buy and watch for chemical names containing "fluor-." Specific trade names, such as Teflon and Gore-Tex, are also likely to contain PFAS.

Check whether there are sources of contamination near you, such as in drinking water or PFAS-related industries in the area. Some states don't test or report PFAS contamination, so the absence of readily available information does not necessarily mean the region is free of PFAS problems. (AP)

Orserdu may be effective in ER+, HER2- advanced breast cancer patients: study

59% reduction in progression risk or death

FLORENCE, Italy, May 27: The Menarini Group ("Menarini"), an Italian pharmaceutical and diagnostics company, and Stemline Therapeutics ("Stemline"), a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Menarini Group, have announced results from a new analysis of the pivotal Emerald clinical study that suggest that oral single-agent elacestrant may be effective in ER+, HER2- advanced or metastatic breast cancer patients with Non-Detected ESR1-mut whose disease has progressed within six months of treatment with a CDK4/6i. Results from this new post-hoc subgroup analysis will be presented at the upcoming American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) Annual Meeting in Chicago, IL.

Emerald is a Phase 3 registrational trial that demonstrated statistically significant PFS with elacestrant versus SOC endocrine monotherapy (fulvestrant, letrozole, anastrozole, exemestane). Based on these results, the US Food & Drug Administration (FDA) approved Orserdu (elacestrant) on January 27, 2023, for the treatment of postmenopausal women or adult men with ER+, HER2-, ESR1-mutated advanced or metastatic breast cancer with disease progression following at least one line of endocrine therapy.

ESR1 mutations are present in up to 40% of ER+, HER2- advanced or metastatic breast cancers, and they are a known driver of resistance to standard endocrine therapy.

Importantly, a previous subgroup analysis of the Emerald PFS results, which were presented at the San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium (SABCS) 2022, demonstrated that the duration of prior CDK4/6i treatment was positively associated with longer PFS on elacestrant but not with SOC. For patients with ESR1-mut who were treated with CDK4/6i for ≥12 months prior to randomization on Emerald, elacestrant achieved a median PFS of 8.6 months versus 1.9 months on SOC, with an absolute difference of 6.7 months, and a 59% reduction in the risk of progression or death (HR=0.41 95% CI: 0.26-0.63).

In this new analysis to be presented at ASCO 2023, researchers evaluated treatment with elacestrant in a subgroup of patients with Non-Detected ESR1-mut enrolled in the Emerald study with rapidly progressing disease. Results for patients whose disease progressed within six months of CDK4/6i therapy demonstrated a median PFS of 5.32 months for the elacestrant arm, compared to 1.87 months for patients who received SOC (HR 0.518; 95% CI: 0.216-1.165).

Treatment

"Endocrine therapy given in combination with a CDK4/6 inhibitor is a mainstay in ER+/HER2- metastatic breast cancer for first-line treatment. It is encouraging to see that patients with ESR1-mutations who had a longer duration of prior CDK4/6i therapy, when treated subsequently with elacestrant, had 8.6 months of median PFS versus 1.9 months with the standard of care, as we published at SABCS in December 2022. Until now, elacestrant's potential benefit in patients with Non-Detected ESR1-mutations was an

Colorectal cancer third most prevalent worldwide

Fruquintinib gets FDA priority review for previously treated metastatic CRC

OSAKA, Japan, May 27: Takeda (TSE:4502/NYSE:TAK) and Hutchmed (China) Limited (Nasdaq/AIM:HCM, HKEX:13) (HUTCHMED) have announced that the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has granted priority review of the New Drug Application (NDA) for fruquintinib, a highly selective and potent inhibitor of vascular endothelial growth factor receptors (VEGFR) -1, -2 and -3 for the treatment of adult patients with previously treated metastatic colorectal cancer (CRC). If approved, fruquintinib will be the first and only highly selective inhibitor of all three VEGF receptors approved in the US for previously treated metastatic CRC. The Prescription Drug User Fee Act (PDUFA) goal date assigned by the FDA for this NDA is November 30, 2023.

"We are confident that fruquintinib has the potential to transform the treatment landscape for those living with previously treated metastatic colorectal cancer, as demonstrated by its strong clinical profile," said Awmy Farajallah, M.D., head of Global Medical Affairs Oncology at Takeda. "There are significant needs for patients with this disease in the US, and we believe fruquintinib has the potential to address these needs regardless of patients' biomarker status. We look forward to continuing conversations with the FDA with the goal to make this therapy available to patients as soon as possible."

The NDA for fruquintinib includes results from the Phase 3 Fresco-2 trial along with data from the Phase 3 Fresco-1 trial conducted in China. Fresco-2 is a global Phase 3 multi-regional clinical trial (MRCT) conducted in the US, Europe, Japan and Australia investigating fruquintinib plus best supportive care (BSC) vs placebo plus BSC in patients with previously treated metastatic CRC. The Fresco-2 trial met its primary and key secondary endpoints, showing a significant and clinically

meaningful improvement in overall survival (OS) and progression-free survival (PFS), respectively. Fruquintinib has been generally well tolerated in patients to date.

"The clinical benefit of fruquintinib has been confirmed in multiple ways, from global clinical studies to commercialization in China. We are pleased to have Takeda as our partner furthering development and commercialization of fruquintinib outside of China," said Dr. Michael Shi, Head of R&D and Chief Medical Officer, Hutchmed. "Today's acceptance marks a significant advancement towards the goal of providing patients with previously treated metastatic colorectal cancer a much-needed therapeutic option, given the limited treatment options currently available to patients. This also supports our ongoing vision to design and develop differentiated molecules that help patients with high unmet needs globally."

Results

Fruquintinib is currently approved in China under the brand name ELUNATE®. Approval in China was based on the results of the Fresco study, a Phase 3 pivotal registration trial of fruquintinib in 416 patients with metastatic CRC in China, published in The Journal of the American Medical Association, JAMA, in June 2018 (NCT02314819). In March 2023, Hutchmed and Takeda closed an exclusive licensing agreement to further the global development, commercialization and manufacture of fruquintinib outside of China.

Fruquintinib is a highly selective and potent oral inhibitor of VEGFR -1, -2 and -3. VEGFR inhibitors play a pivotal role in blocking tumor angiogenesis. Fruquintinib was designed to improve kinase selectivity with the intention of minimizing off-target toxicities, improving tolerability and providing more consistent target coverage. Fruquintinib has been generally well

tolerated in patients to date and is being investigated in combinations with other anti-cancer therapies.

The Fresco-2 study is a multi-regional clinical trial conducted in the US, Europe, Japan and Australia investigating fruquintinib plus BSC vs placebo plus BSC in patients with previously treated metastatic CRC. As previously disclosed, the 691-patient study met its primary endpoint of OS in patients with metastatic CRC who had progressed on standard chemotherapy and relevant biologic agents and who had progressed on, or were intolerant to, TAS-102 and/or regorafenib. In addition to OS, a statistically significant improvement in PFS, a key secondary endpoint, was observed. Fruquintinib has been generally well tolerated in patients to date. Summary results were initially presented at the European Society for Medical Oncology (ESMO) Congress in September 2022.

CRC is a cancer that starts in either the colon or rectum. According to the International Agency for Research on Cancer, CRC is the third most prevalent cancer worldwide, associated with 935,000 deaths in 2020. In the US, it is estimated that 153,000 patients will be diagnosed with CRC and 53,000 deaths from the disease will occur in 2023. In Europe, CRC was the second most common cancer in 2020 with approximately 520,000 new cases and 245,000 deaths. In Japan, CRC was the most common cancer with an estimated 148,000 new cases and 60,000 deaths in 2020.5 Although early-stage CRC can be surgically resected, metastatic CRC remains an area of high unmet need with poor outcomes and limited treatment options. Some patients with metastatic CRC may benefit from personalized therapeutic strategies based on molecular characteristics; however, most patients have tumors that do not harbor actionable mutations.

Takeda is focused on creating better health for people and a brighter future for the world.

open question. The results presented at ASCO 2023, while exploratory, suggest that treatment with oral elacestrant following disease progression within six months of CDK4/6i treatment for Non-Detected ESR1-mutations may provide clinical benefit for these patients, and warrant further study," said Virginia Kaklamani, MD, DSc, breast medical oncologist and professor of medicine, UT Health San Antonio, MD Anderson Cancer Center.

Safety data were consistent with previously reported results. Most adverse events (AEs), including nausea, were grade 1 and 2, and no grade 4 treatment-related AEs (TRAEs) were reported. Only 3.4% of patients re-

ceiving elacestrant and 0.9% receiving SOC discontinued therapy due to any TRAE. No deaths assessed as treatment-related were reported in either arm. No hematologic safety signal was observed, and none of the patients in either treatment arm had sinus bradycardia.

"At Menarini Group, we are focused on developing innovative solutions that address the greatest unmet needs in cancer treatments," said Elicin Barkar Ergun, CEO of the Menarini Group. "Orserdu represents an important step towards that, providing the first and only FDA-approved oral endocrine therapy after 20 years, for advanced or metastatic ER+/HER2- tumors with

ESR1 mutations. This new data advances our understanding of further potential areas where elacestrant may help patients living with metastatic breast cancer who have limited treatment options."

2023 ASCO Annual Meeting Presentation Details Abstract Title: Oral elacestrant vs standard-of-care in estrogen receptor-positive, HER2-negative (ER+/HER2-) advanced or metastatic breast cancer (mBC) without detectable ESR1 mutation (EMERALD): Subgroup analysis by prior duration of CDK4/6i plus endocrine therapy (ET) Abstract #: 1070 | Poster Bd #: 291 Session Title: Breast Cancer - Metastatic Session.

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In Cannes, standing ovations stretch on and on

Green carpet in UAE welcomes India's film elite for awards

ABU DHABI, United Arab Emirates, May 27, (AP): Indian celebrities and Bollywood stars on Friday walked a green carpet for a second year in a row in the United Arab Emirates — the signature color of the International Indian Film Academy awards.

The 23rd edition of the "Bollywood Oscars" is being hosted at the Etihad Arena in Abu Dhabi, the UAE capital, over two days. Friday night kicked off with performances by Bollywood A-listers such as Badshah and Rajkumar Rao.

The spotlight will shift on Saturday night to the main event, a grand awards ceremony that recognizes cinematic achievements from the past year.

"Often film stars and the industry are something that's far away from things like India and with us traveling around the world, we can bring them closer and create a bigger industry," said Noreen Khan, vice president of IIFA.

Home to over 3.5 million Indians, the UAE has an undeniable link to India's thriving multi-billion dollar film industry. Bollywood continues to extend its sway within the UAE, with its films being produced and screened across the country, and affluent Bollywood celebrities acquiring prime real estate properties across this federation of sheikhdoms.

"When would you ever get the chance to see Salman Khan, Shah Rukh Khan, everyone up close, so I think it would be a great way of connecting the world with Bollywood," said veteran film director Farah Khan, who has attended every single IIFA awards.

The annual ceremony also presents an opportunity for Indian celebrities to showcase their fashion, and this year was no exception. Notable figures such as Urvashi Rautela, Abhishek Bachchan, and Nora

Fatehi display their sartorial choices on the green carpet.

"Last year I was here, I met Salman Khan and he gave me three songs in his film, that's how important it is," said singer Sukhbir Singh who will be performing on Friday. "So this is where connections are made."

Salman Khan, one of Indian cinema's most recognizable names and the brand ambassador for IIFA 2023, was to perform on Saturday night. Hindi film stars Abhishek Bachchan and Vicky Kaushal will be hosting the event and veteran actor Kamal Haasan is to be awarded the Outstanding Achievement in Indian Cinema award.

Over 18,000 local and international fans lined the streets and filled the Etihad Arena, eager to catch a glimpse of their favorite stars.

Nowhere are the length of standing ovations at high-wattage premieres more carefully recorded and parsed than in Cannes. Did a movie garner a triumphant eight-minute standing ovation? Or did the audience stand for a mere four or five minutes?

How has such an unlikely metric come to reverberate around the world within minutes of a premiere? And why is everyone standing for so long? Doesn't anyone's hands get tired?

Such effusive displays of enthusiasm have come to be a hallmark of Cannes and, sometimes, a bit of marketing gimmick for films looking to resonate far from the Croisette. If Cannes, the world's largest and glitziest film festival, stands for cinematic excess, its thunderous standing ovations can seem like its greatest overindulgence. No one needs a bathroom break?

Less widely understood, though, is how the pageantry of Cannes shapes and distorts standing ovations. When audiences rise after the credits roll in the Grand Theatre Lumière, Cannes' biggest screen, they aren't just standing and applauding the movie they just watched.

Immediately after a film wraps, a cameraman swoops in and begins shooting the filmmaker and cast members, who are sitting in the middle of the theater. That video plays live on the screen for everyone inside while the camera — often very patiently — puts each prominent actor in close-up. Applause is only partly for the movie; it's also for each star.

When "Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny" recently premiered in Cannes, the camera gave **Mads Mikkelsen**, **Phoebe Waller-Bridge**, **Ethann Isidore**, **Harrison Ford** and director **James Mangold** each their own moment to bask in adulation. In the end, trade publications — which have reporters inside the theater to keep time — clocked the standing ovation at five minutes. Variety pronounced it a "lukewarm" reception.

Inflation may be such a scourge that it's even affecting standing O's. In most places in the world, a five-minute standing ovation would count as a dream response. In Cannes, it's supposedly as tepid as a day-old espresso.

Reviews for "Dial of Destiny" were, indeed, mixed. But it's also possible that the audience — or the movie's stars — had had enough after a 142-minute movie that was preceded by a much-cheered tribute to Ford. The next day, a visibly emotional Ford called the experience "indescribable."

"The warmth of this place, the sense of community, the welcome is unimaginable," said Ford. "And it makes me feel good."

Film

Variety

Features

ARABIC TIMES

SUNDAY, MAY 28, 2023



Katherine Langford poses for photographers upon arrival at the premiere of the film 'Last Summer' at the 76th international film festival, Cannes, southern France, Thursday, May 25. (AP)

Film

Alice Rohrwacher debuts her latest enchantment

'La Chimera' is a radiant highlight of Cannes

CANNES, France, May 27, (AP): To the Italian filmmaker Alice Rohrwacher, "fairy tale" is an often misunderstood concept. For many, it suggests kings and queens, a light kind of fantasy.

But Rohrwacher is devoted to — "obsessed with" she says — the tradition of Italian fairy and folk tales, which tend to feature peasants, animals and "doors between reality and magic that never close." They have deeply informed and enriched Rohrwacher's lyrical, ramshackle and wonder-filled films.

"For me, it's something planted in the ground," says Rohrwacher says of fairy tales. "It's not something in the air."

Rohrwacher's latest enchantment, "La Chimera," digs deeper. The film, which premiered Friday at the Cannes Film Festival, is about the tombaroli: Italian tomb raiders who hunt ancient graves to find artifacts to sell. Josh O'Connor stars as an Englishman with a special gift for sensing where to dig, a mystical talent connected with mourning for a lost love. It's said that in the tombs of the dead, he's seeking a door to the afterlife.

"La Chimera," a radiant and melancholy highlight of this year's Cannes, concludes what Rohrwacher considers a triptych of films about the past and its connections to today. Her 2015 film "The Wonders" is about a young family of beekeepers whose threadbare pastoral life collides with reality television. "Happy as Lazzaro," which won best screenplay at Cannes in 2018, follows a farmhand from a feudal-run estate who wanders into a modern city.

"What we do with our past is my big question," Rohrwacher said in an interview in Cannes a few days before the "La Chimera" premiere. "Normally, people either glorify the past or want to forget about it. But these two directions are not my path. We are in every gesture what we were and what we will be."

Rohrwacher grew up in the Umbria region of Italy fascinated by the tombaroli. It was less the illegality that impressed Rohrwacher than that they weren't disturbed by their grave robbing.

"How can you find the authority to destroy something that is sacred?" said Rohrwacher.

In making "La Chimera," Rohrwacher accompanied

a group on an archeological dig.

"When we put the light inside this place, there was a plate. He said this is the first time in 3,000 years that there are eyes on this. That was so impressive to me," she says. "I could never have at home something like this, with all this power."

Treasures

"La Chimera," though, isn't just about the gravitational pull of the past. It concerns a merry band of male tombaroli in pursuit of Etruscan treasures, relics from an ancient time in which women were proudly independent. "La Chimera," which co-stars Carol Duarte, Isabella Rossellini and Rohrwacher's sister, Alba Rohrwacher, is a work of social archeology, too, boring into Italian machismo past and present.

"It's a lot a movie about masculinity and maybe also the sadness of having to play a role of macho," Rohrwacher says. "Normally in the movies or books that tell how honorable it is to be macho. But, in fact, I think these men have to be macho but they're not very good at being macho and maybe a little bit sad to be macho. Now we are in a different era, I think, I hope."

In making films tethered to folktales with an earthy realism, Rohrwacher is herself bridging grand Italian traditions. She has one foot in centuries-old fables and one in neo-realistic masterworks of Roberto Rossellini and Vittorio De Sica. She calls her films "magical neo-realism."

"The visible is always connected to the invisible," Rohrwacher explains. "Things go always together like souls inside the bodies."

Rohrwacher is now preparing what she calls a large work on fairy tales. She has concluded something in finishing her trilogy on the past, or maybe not. Even if she made a film about the future, Rohrwacher says, "It would also tell us about our past."

Also:

CANNES, France: The Cannes Film Festival always commands a certain amount of awe.

The appearances by cinema royalty, the nightly parade of high fashion and the festival's ability to launch filmmakers and films large and small onto the global

stage all combine to produce an array of eye-catching moments during the 12 days of Cannes.

As the festival draws to a close Saturday, see some of its standout moments through the lenses of photographers for The Associated Press.

From its first day, the 76th edition demonstrated its ability to draw attention, hosting **Johnny Depp's** return to cinema with the opening night film, "Jeanne du Barry."

While some were irked by the emphasis on Depp — who told the AP "I didn't know what planet I was on" during his appearance for the premiere — the festival quickly turned the spotlight onto other stars.

Michael Douglas accepted an honorary Palme d'Or and kisses from his wife and daughter at the top of the festival's famed Palais stairs. **Harrison Ford**, debuting his last film as Indiana Jones, also accepted an honorary award, choking back tears after a career highlight reel was played.

Martin Scorsese, **Robert De Niro** and **Leonardo DiCaprio** reunited on the red carpet at the premiere for "Killers of the Flower Moon," one of the festival's most prestigious entries and a return for Scorsese to the French Riviera cinema celebration. **Wes Anderson** also returned, this time joined by **Tom Hanks**, **Scarlett Johansson** and the many stars of his film "Asteroid City."

Six days after her father's premiere, **Lily-Rose Depp** debuted her own controversial project, the HBO series "The Idol." The younger Depp and costar **The Weeknd** shined on the red carpet and smiled and laughed together as photographers snapped away.

The festival runs on its own precise rhythm, with press conferences and daytime photocalls. The French Riviera often serves as a whimsical backdrop, as when actor **Tom Mercier** did a handstand for photographers or "Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny" actor **Ethann Isidore** took a leap from a podium.

Yet the biggest attention grabbers remain the flashy premieres, where fans crane for even fleeting glimpses of their heroes. Cannes is the place where stars playfully interact with the cameras and, when the films stop, awards prognostications begin as the applause helps carry movies to screens around the world.

LOS ANGELES: Jurors have deliberated for more than a week without reaching a verdict in the rape retrial of "That '70s Show" star **Danny Masterson**, and will have to return and resume talks after the long holiday weekend.

The Los Angeles County jury of seven women and five men went home Friday without reaching a verdict on any of the three counts of rape against the 47-year-old, who could get up to 45 years in prison if convicted of all three.

The jury got the case as closing arguments ended May 17. With planned time off, they have been talking for a total of 6 1/2 days and have had relatively few questions for the judge. Jurors have asked for the reading back of some testimony — including part of the cross-examination of Masterson's former girlfriend, who is one of the three accusers. But the requests have shed little light on the state of deliberations.

Jurors will return to court Wednesday morning after taking the weekend, Memorial Day and another planned day off.

In the actor's first trial, long deliberations led to a mistrial in December, when jurors couldn't come to consensus on any counts. A majority voted to acquit him on each. A retrial began in April.

Prosecutors allege that Masterson drugged and raped the three women, including a former longtime girlfriend, at his Hollywood-area home between 2001 and 2003, when he was at the height of his fame for the Fox TV sitcom "That '70s Show."

Masterson has pleaded not guilty. The defense said Masterson had consensual sex with the women, and attempted to discredit their stories by pointing to inconsistencies. (AP)

HOUSTON: The man accused of fatally shooting **Migos** rapper **Takeoff** last year outside a Houston bowling alley has been indicted on a murder charge, according to court records.

Patrick Xavier Clark had been free on a \$1 million bond when a grand jury in Houston indicted him on Thursday.

Letitia Quinones-Hollins, one of Clark's attorneys, said the indictment was not unexpected. "When we get inside a courtroom and in front of a jury, where we will be able to put our

evidence and cross-examine the state's witnesses ... we expect the jury will come back with a verdict of not guilty," Quinones-Hollins said Thursday in a statement.

Takeoff was shot in the head and back as more than 30 people were leaving a private party at the bowling alley around 2:30 a.m. on Nov. 1. Houston police have said the gun-



Masterson



Takeoff

fire followed a disagreement over a "lucrative" game of dice outside the bowling alley, but that the 28-year-old rapper was not involved and was "an innocent bystander."

Clark, 33, who has worked as a DJ and night club promoter, was arrested on Dec 1.

Authorities allege that surveillance video showed Clark was

holding a wine bottle in one hand when he fired his gun. Fingerprints found on the bottle were later used to identify him. FBI sources had also pointed to Clark as being at the shooting, according to police.

Prosecutors alleged Clark had tried to flee the country before his arrest, looking online for information about using fake plane tickets

to obtain an expedited passport. Quinones-Hollins denied Clark was trying to leave the country after the shooting.

Born Kirsnick Khari Ball, Takeoff was the youngest member of Migos, the Grammy-nominated rap trio from suburban Atlanta that also featured his uncle **Quavo** and cousin **Offset**. (AP)

People & Places

TV

Long overdue love

'Everything' actor Hong still having his moment

LOS ANGELES, May 27, (AP): Greeted with a standing ovation at the Screen Actors Guild Awards, **James Hong** could easily have just basked in the applause and moved on. But for the 94-year-old, the mostly Asian cast of "Everything Everywhere All at Once" winning best cast seemed like an opportunity for a stark reminder that Hollywood wasn't always so open.

"It just came out of me that after all these years of working with producers and directors, and they were always saying, 'Oh the Asian, the Chinese, are not good enough to play the leading role,'" Hong told The Associated Press recently. "But look at Michelle (Yeoh) and all these colleagues now coming forward to be recognized ... You can't help but say 'Look at us now.'"



Hong

Looking at Hong now, you will see perhaps the busiest nonagenarian in show biz. The last year for him has been a wild ride. A year ago he finally received his star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. Shortly after, "Everything Everywhere All at Once" and the overwhelming response propelled the actor into every major awards event. He got to see the movie collect seven Oscars, including a historic best actress win for Yeoh. Host Jimmy Kimmel even took a moment to pay tribute to him.

Viewers will soon be able to hear Hong in "Gremlins: Secrets of the Mogwai," an animated prequel series of the movie franchise. Episodes began streaming Tuesday on Max (formerly HBO Max). He also appears in an episode of the new Disney+ show, "American Born Chinese," which also premiered this week and is producer on the upcoming movie "Patsy Lee and the Keepers of the 5 Kingdoms."

It's as if the universe is trying to make up for all the racial discrimination the Asian American icon endured over the years.

Hollywood

Born in Minneapolis, Hong originally studied civil engineering in college. After serving in the Korean War, he decided in 1953 to move to Hollywood. He got his break on Groucho Marx's quiz show, "You Bet Your Life." Small film roles opposite actors like Clark Gable followed. But so did roles that were racist tropes.

In the series "The New Adventures of Charlie Chan," Hong played the son of the titular Chinese detective. He had to stomach watching a white lead actor "put on fake eye pieces" so that his eyes would look more "Asian."

"Then he would just talk in a very stoic pattern that's supposedly Chinese," Hong recalled. "That irritated me for many, many years."

A lot of his early roles reflected the limited options for Asian actors at the time: workers in laundries, restaurants on railroad lines.

Those "Asian clichés" are far behind him now. He is also helping to revisit some and flesh them out.

Sam Register, president of Warner Bros. Animation, had the idea to do a prequel to "Gremlins" and gave showrunner Tze Chun the reins to come up with ideas. Chun wanted to expand on the family history of Mr. Wing, the store owner played by Keye Luke who houses original Gremlin Gizmo in the 1984 flick. In this animated take, viewers will see Mr. Wing as a little boy in 1920s Shanghai encountering the furry creatures who shouldn't eat after midnight. Hong, who was actually friends with Luke, voices Sam's sly and spunky grandfather.

Hong's "iconic voice" was at the top of the show's wish list. There's something about his delivery that is "equal parts gravitas and incredible humor," Chun said.

"It's never what you think it's going to be, which is what's so exciting about it," Chun said. "It's like you can try to hear it when you're writing it on the page. But then when he does it, he brings that like unique spin to it that is just out of left field. And, frankly, just makes it better."

"Secrets of the Mogwai," which retains some of the dark and funny elements of the movie, also serves as a "Mulan" voice cast reunion. Ming-Na Wen, BD Wong, George Takei and Hong were all part of the 1998 Disney animated feature.

Connection

The "Mulan" connection was a complete coincidence.

"We just kind of went out to our first choices," Chun said. "These are people that I've looked up to like for my entire life."

Chun is one of several Asian American film directors and showrunners who have gotten emotional seeing Hong celebrated. Melvin Mar, one of the producers of "American Born Chinese," teared up when he spoke to him right before his Walk of Fame ceremony.

"That guy is a legend beyond legend," Mar said. "He was just so funny and quick and just a pleasure to have on set. Just the sweetest guy."

Gene Luen Yang, author of the "American Born Chinese" graphic novel and also a producer on the show, says Hong's life epitomizes Asian American history.

"His journey in Hollywood really is symbolic of us as Asian Americans. The kind of roles that he was offered in the beginning to now having his own Hollywood star, it shows the kind of progress that we've made," Yang said.

Hong is grateful that he has been around to witness how anti-Asian discrimination and whitewashing are no longer as tolerated. With new attitudes and new technology like streaming services, there are also more acting gigs than he thought possible.

"I'm going to be thinking of another project to do. Why? Because online and all these streaming things have created a whole new different field," he said. "You don't have to make a whole feature. You can make a something 10 minutes or half an hour or hour long and still get it so-called displayed."

With over 650 acting credits including 200-something voiceovers, is there anything Hong wants to conquer? Yes, but not in acting. He fantasizes about a James Hong comic book series with his brand of sarcastic humor.

"We'll see," Hong said. "I'm not going to stop working. My wife wants me to go to a retirement home soon, but I don't think I'm fit for that. I wouldn't know what to do."



This image released by HBO shows Matthew Macfadyen as Tom Wambsgans, (left), and Nicholas Braun as Greg Hirsch in a scene from the series 'Succession.' (AP)

Television

Uncertainty about outcomes for sparring siblings

Who will prevail in 'Succession' finale?

LOS ANGELES, May 27, (AP): There's no Iron Throne, but the stakes feel just as high.

"Succession," the critically acclaimed drama chronicling a Murdoch-esque feuding billionaire family, wraps its four-season run on Sunday with a highly anticipated 88-minute finale.

And just like another tentpole HBO show, "Game of Thrones," there's no shortage of theories over how the series will end and who will prevail. But instead of a throne, the Roy siblings are battling over the sprawling Waystar Royco media empire.

The Shakespearean-level intrigue has prompted speculation among fans looking for clues in past episodes, characters' names and elsewhere. Even the final episode's title, "With Open Eyes," has critics poring through the John Berryman poem that has been used for each season finale's title.

Here are some of the questions that remain as the finale nears.

Where Do Things Stand with the Roy Family?

"Succession" has been about who will ultimately run the media conglomerate founded by Logan Roy, the belligerent and profane Roy family patriarch played by Brian Cox.

For most of the series, three siblings have been vying for the crown: Kendall, played by Jeremy Strong; Roman, played by Kieran Culkin; and Shiv, played by Sarah Snook. A fourth sibling - Connor, played by Alan Ruck - instead mounted an ill-fated run for president.

By the end of season three, the siblings had buried their differences enough to attempt a corporate coup of their father - only to be betrayed by Shiv's husband Tom Wambsgans, played by Matthew Macfadyen.

The series' most shocking twist came early this season, when Logan died on his way to close a deal with GoJo, a tech company.

Logan's death and the power vac-

uum it created have led to renewed struggle among the siblings, with Kendall and Roman hoping to block the GoJo deal.

Who Will Prevail?

Show creator Jesse Armstrong told The New Yorker earlier this year "there's a promise in the title of 'Succession,'" a sign that there'll be some certainty at least on this question.

The finale could live up to Logan's statement in season 3 that life is "a fight for a knife in the mud."

Kendall appeared in the penultimate episode to be on track to follow in his father's footsteps, delivering an impromptu eulogy at Logan's funeral after Roman was too grief-stricken to do so.

After aligning himself with the far-right presidential candidate Jeryd Mencken - who the Roy's network questionably declared the winner - Roman's fortunes appeared to be falling and was seen fighting with protesters in the streets in the final scenes.

Shiv, meanwhile is still trying to shepherd the GoJo deal with a plan she's concocted that would install her as the company's chief executive in the United States.

Connor, after losing every state and endorsing Mencken, is instead planning for his hoped-for ambassadorship.

There are a few wild cards that remain, in and outside the Roy family. The biggest one of all is Greg, the cousin and fan favorite played by Nicholas Braun, known for his awkward quotes and verbal abuse he endures from Tom.

Who Won the Election?

All of this is happening with the backdrop of an unsettled US election that may have been swung to Mencken (Justin Kirk) with the help of the Roy's cable network and a seemingly not-coincidental fire at a vote center in a swing state.

The scenario and the series' Election Night episode has echoed the conversations revealed among Fox News

executives and talent during the defamation suit by Dominion Voting Systems that led to a nearly \$800 million settlement with the network.

"Succession's" fictional election results have both professional and personal implications for the Roy family, with protests over Mencken erupting throughout the city. But even Shiv seems willing to put her moral qualms aside at the prospect of making a deal with Mencken.

What About Tom and Shiv?

Tom and Shiv's marriage had been on shaky ground before he betrayed her to Logan at the end of last season.

This season it's even more so, with the two holding a no-holds-barred argument at a pre-election party where the two traded grievances and insults.

Shiv's revelation to Tom on Election Night that she's pregnant prompted one of the most gut-wrenching responses, with Tom asking her whether she was telling the truth or just using a new tactic against him.

The show continues to offer some signs of affection between the two, with Shiv telling an exhausted Tom to sleep at her apartment after the funeral, but it remains to be seen whether their marriage is salvageable.

Is This Really the End?

There are plenty of examples of shows that lived on after their finales. "Game of Thrones" spawned a popular prequel series, "House of the Dragon," while "Seinfeld" got a second try on its much-maligned finale on "Curb Your Enthusiasm."

Even "The Sopranos," known for one of the buzziest finales of all time, came back with a movie looking at Tony Soprano's beginning.

Armstrong has left open revisiting his character in another fashion, and the possibilities for doing so are endless. A Tom and Greg buddy comedy? Or maybe a Logan Roy origin story, just to reveal the first time he said his signature vulgar phrase.



Anushka Sharma poses for photographers upon arrival at the premiere of the film 'The Old Oak' at the 76th international film festival, Cannes, southern France, May 26. (AP)



Kuti



Williams

Variety

ST LOUIS: A former cast member of the reality TV show "Basketball Wives LA" admitted to more than a dozen federal felonies in a court appearance in St. Louis.

British Williams, 33, of St. Louis, pleaded guilty to five counts of misuse of a Social Security number, four counts of bank fraud, three counts of making false statements to the IRS and three counts of wire fraud. Sentencing is scheduled for Aug. 23.

US Attorney **Saylor A. Fleming** said in a statement that the crimes "victimized taxpayers, banks, credit card companies, individuals and programs that were intended to help struggling businesses and employees during the COVID-19 pandemic." Fleming said federal prosecutors will seek reimbursement for the victims.

Among the crimes Williams admitted to in the plea agreement: Using false Social Security numbers to defraud banks and credit card companies; illegally obtaining loans meant for businesses damaged by the COVID-19 pandemic; and submitting fake medical bills to an insurance company, defrauding that company of nearly \$140,000.

All told, the losses from her fraud schemes amounted to nearly \$450,000. (AP)

LAGOS, Nigeria: A Nigerian Afrobeats star facing trial on five counts of assaulting a police officer will embark on a delayed concert tour after being released on bail, his manager said.

Seun Kuti, who was in court, has concerts scheduled in more than a dozen countries but his departure had been on hold because of the trial, his manager **Ayo Moses** told The Associated Press.

The son of Nigerian musical icon and political agitator **Fela Kuti,** who himself was serially detained by Nigerian military regimes, Seun Kuti had been held for more than a week after he was caught allegedly assaulting a police officer in

Nigeria's economic hub of Lagos.

At Wednesday's court hearing, the presiding judge ruled that it was the public prosecutor - not the police - that

had the power to prosecute the musician.

The judge then adjourned the case until a further hearing on July 3.

"He is on bail and as a responsible

citizen, he will continue to enjoy his rights because he is presumed innocent," **Femi Falana,** his lawyer, said after the hearing. (AP)



Bollywood actress Kriti Sanon arrives to attend the 23rd International Indian Film Academy (IIFA) awards in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, May 26. (AP) — Details Page 11

TALLINN, Estonia: Nobel Peace Prize laureate **Ales Bialiatski** has been transferred to a notoriously brutal prison in Belarus and hasn't been heard from in a month, his wife said.

Natalia Pinchuk told The Associated Press that Bialiatski, who is serving a 10-year sentence, has been kept in an information blackout since his transfer to the N9 colony for repeat offenders in the city of **Gorki,** where inmates are beaten and subject to hard labor.

"The authorities create unbearable conditions for Ales and keep him in strict informational isolation. There is not a single letter from him for a month, nor does he receive my letters," Pinchuk said by telephone.

In March, a court convicted 60-year-old Bialiatski - Belarus' top human rights advocate and one of the winners of the 2022 Nobel Peace Prize - and three of his colleagues on charges of financing actions violating public order and smuggling.

It was the latest move in a years-long crackdown on dissent that has engulfed the country since 2020. (AP)

Space

Galactic final test

Lunar lander 'crash' blamed on software

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla., May 27, (AP) — A private Japanese moon lander went into free-fall while trying to land on the lunar surface last month, company officials said Friday, blaming a software issue and a last-minute switch in the touchdown location.

The spacecraft belonging to the company ispace was originally supposed to land in a flat plain. But the target was changed to a crater before December's launch. The crater's steep sides apparently confused the onboard software, and the 7-foot (2-meter) spacecraft went into a free-fall from less than 3 miles (5 kilometers) up, slamming into the lunar surface.

The estimated speed at impact was more than 300 feet (100 meters) per second, said the company's chief technology officer, Ryo Ujiie.



Hakamada

NASA's Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter photographed the crash site the next day as it flew overhead, revealing a field of debris as well as lunar soil hurled aside by the impact.

Computer simulations done in advance of the landing attempt did not incorporate the terrain of the new landing site, Ujiie said.

CEO and founder **Takeshi Hakamada** said the company is still on track to attempt another moon landing in 2024, and that all the lessons learned

will be incorporated into the next try. A third landing attempt is planned for 2025.

If successful, ispace would have been the first private company to land a spacecraft on the moon. Only three governments have achieved that: Russia, the United States and China. An Israeli nonprofit tried in 2019, but its attempt also ended in a crash landing.

Named Hakuto, Japanese for white rabbit, the spacecraft and its experiments were insured, according to Hakamada. The United Arab Emirates had a mini lunar rover on board that was lost in the crash.

Two U.S. companies have lunar landers awaiting launch later this year from Cape Canaveral, in partnership with NASA.

Meanwhile, Virgin Galactic completed what's expected to be its final test flight Thursday before taking paying customers on brief trips to space.

Successful

Six of the company's employees, including two pilots, landed at Spaceport America in southern New Mexico after the short up-and-down flight that included a few minutes of weightlessness. It took about an hour for the mother ship to carry the spaceplane to an altitude where it could fire its rockets and make the final push to the edge of space.

"Successful boost, We Have Reached Space!" Virgin Galactic tweeted.

The flight came nearly two years after founder Richard Branson beat fellow billionaire and Amazon founder Jeff Bezos and rocket company Blue Origin into space. Bezos ended up flying nine days later from West Texas and Blue Origin has since launched several passenger trips. Federal aviation authorities banned Virgin Galactic launches after Branson's flight to investigate a mishap.

Virgin Galactic has been working for more than a decade to send paying passengers on short space hops and in 2021 finally won the federal government's approval.

The initial commercial flight expected later this year will include members of the Italian Air Force who will conduct experiments. Next will come customers who purchased tickets years ago for their chance at weightlessness aboard a winged spacecraft that launches from the belly of an airplane.

About 800 tickets have been sold over the past decade, with the initial batch going for \$200,000 each. Tickets now cost \$450,000 per person.

Virgin Galactic has reached space five times since 2018 and will be aiming for 400 flights per year from Spaceport America once it finishes building its next class of rocket-powered planes at a facility in neighboring Arizona.

After Branson's trip, the Federal Aviation Administration grounded flights as it investigated a problem that caused the rocket ship to veer off course during its descent back to its runway in the New Mexico desert. Virgin Galactic insisted at the time that Branson and others were never in any danger.

The company made changes to its carrier airplane and the spaceplane. The delay was nearly twice as long as expected, partly due to supply chain issues and labor shortages.

Also:

SEOUL, South Korea: South Korea successfully launched a commercial-grade satellite for the first time Thursday as part of its growing space development program, as rival **North Korea** is pushing to place its first military spy satellite into orbit.

The two Koreas, technically in a state of war, have no military reconnaissance satellites of their own and both are eager to possess them. The South Korean launch Thursday will likely assist its efforts to develop a space-based surveillance system.

The domestically built three-stage Nuri rocket lifted off from a launch facility on a southern island with a payload of eight satellites, including a main commercial-grade satellite whose mission is to verify radar imaging technology and observe cosmic radiation in a near-Earth orbit.

Science Minister **Lee Jong Ho** later told a televised news conference that the launch was successful, saying it proved the rocket's reliability and South Korea's potential to operate various satellites and explore space.

Lee said seven of the eight satellites including the main one were successfully released from the rocket. He said more time is required to confirm the release of the eighth satellite.

"Today, we confirmed that dreams can come true," South Korean President **Yoon Suk Yeol** wrote on Facebook. "I hope our future generations have a great dream and challenge while looking at the Nuri rocket soaring into space."

The launch boosted South Korea's hopes of catching up with Asian neighbors such as **China**, **Japan** and **India** in a regional space race. Lee, the science minister, said South Korea plans to conduct three more Nuri rocket launches by 2027 and will seek to develop more advanced launch vehicles.

The launch was initially scheduled for Wednesday but was postponed at the last minute due to a technical problem.

Last year, South Korea used a Nuri rocket to place a "performance verification satellite" in orbit, becoming the world's 10th nation to send a satellite into space with its own technology. But that launch was primarily designed to test the rocket.

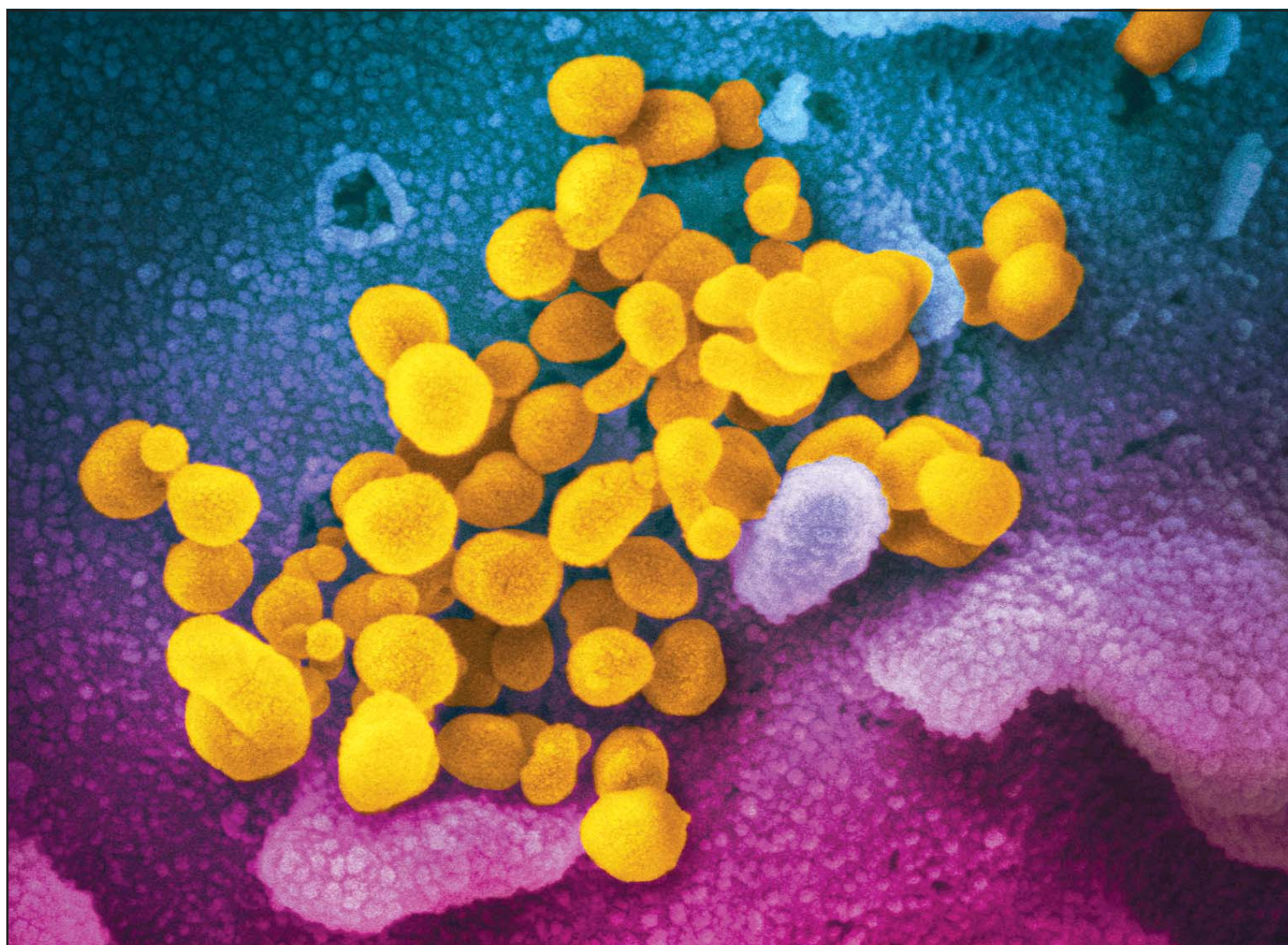
Many experts say Thursday's launch will also help South Korea accumulate technologies and know-how to operate military spy satellites and build long-range missiles.

South Korea is expected to launch its first spy satellite later this year. It currently relies on U.S. spy satellites to monitor North Korean facilities.

Lee Choon Geun, an honorary research fellow at South Korea's Science and Technology Policy Institute, noted that the satellite launched Thursday is designed to be placed in a sun-synchronous orbit, which is typically used for reconnaissance satellites.

South Korea already has missiles capable of reaching all of North Korea. But experts say it needs longer-range missiles to prepare for future security threats from potential adversaries **China** and **Russia**.

Tensions on the Korean Peninsula remain high following North Korea's barrage of missiles tests since the beginning of last year. Some of the tests demonstrated its potential ability to launch nuclear strikes on the mainland U.S. and South Korea and Japan.



This undated, colorized electron microscope image made available by the U.S. National Institutes of Health in February 2020 shows the Novel Coronavirus SARS-CoV-2, indicated in yellow, emerging from the surface of cells, indicated in blue/pink, cultured in a laboratory. The sample was isolated from a patient in the U.S. There's less risk of getting long COVID in the omicron era than in the pandemic's earlier waves, according to a study of nearly 10,000 Americans that aims to help scientists better understand the mysterious condition, published in JAMA on Thursday, May 25. (AP)

Health

COVID pill Paxlovid gets full FDA approval

1 in 10 get long COVID after omicron

WASHINGTON, May 27, (AP) — About 10% of people appear to suffer long COVID after an omicron infection, a lower estimate than earlier in the pandemic, according to a study of nearly 10,000 Americans that aims to help unravel the mysterious condition.

Early findings from the National Institutes of Health's study highlight a dozen symptoms that most distinguish long COVID, the catchall term for the sometimes debilitating health problems that can last for months or years after even a mild case of COVID-19.

Millions worldwide have had long COVID, with dozens of widely varying symptoms including fatigue and brain fog. Scientists still don't know what causes it, why it only strikes some people, how to treat it -- or even how to best diagnose it. Better defining the condition is key for research to get those answers.

"Sometimes I hear people say, 'Oh, everybody's a little tired,'" said Dr. Leora Horwitz of NYU Langone Health, one of the study authors. "No, there's something different about people who have long COVID and that's important to know."

The new research, published Thursday in the Journal of the American Medical Association, includes more than 8,600 adults who had COVID-19 at different points in the pandemic, comparing them to another 1,100 who hadn't been infected.

By some estimates, roughly 1 in 3 of COVID-19 patients have experienced long COVID. That's similar to NIH study participants who reported getting sick before the omicron variant began spreading in the U.S. in December 2021. That's also when the study opened, and researchers noted that people who already had long COVID symptoms might have been more likely to enroll.

But about 2,230 patients had their first coronavirus infection after the study started, allowing them to report symptoms in real time -- and only about 10% experienced long-term symptoms after six months.

Prior research has suggested the risk of long COVID has dropped since omicron appeared; its descendants still are spreading.

The bigger question is how to identify and help those who already have

long COVID.

The new study zeroed in on a dozen symptoms that may help define long COVID: fatigue; brain fog; dizziness; gastrointestinal symptoms; heart palpitations; sexual problems; loss of smell or taste; thirst; chronic cough; chest pain; worsening symptoms after activity and abnormal movements.

The researchers assigned scores to the symptoms, seeking to establish a threshold that eventually could help ensure similar patients are enrolled in studies of possible long COVID treatments, as part of the NIH study or elsewhere, for apples-to-apples comparison.

Symptoms

Horwitz stressed that doctors shouldn't use that list to diagnose someone with long COVID -- it's a potential research tool only. Patients may have one of those symptoms, or many -- or other symptoms not on the list -- and still be suffering long-term consequences of the coronavirus.

Everyone's doing studies of long COVID yet "we don't even know what that means," Horwitz said.

Meanwhile, Pfizer received full approval on Thursday for its COVID-19 pill Paxlovid that's been the go-to treatment against the coronavirus.

More than 11 million prescriptions for Paxlovid have been dispensed since the Food and Drug Administration allowed emergency use in late 2021. The emergency status was based on early studies and was intended to be temporary pending follow-up research.

The FDA granted full approval for adults with COVID-19 who face high risks of severe disease, which can lead to hospitalization or death. That group typically includes older adults and those with common medical conditions like diabetes, asthma and obesity.

The decision allows Pfizer's drug to remain on the market indefinitely and to be marketed similarly to other drugs.

The pill is still available for children ages 12 to 17 under a separate emergency authorization.

The U.S. government has stockpiled millions of doses of Paxlovid and patients will continue to receive it at no charge, the FDA said in a statement. More than 14,000 new COVID-19 cas-

es were reported each week last month, although most U.S. cases are no longer reported to health authorities.

Paxlovid is the fourth drug for COVID-19 to receive full FDA approval and the first one that is a pill. The previously approved therapies are IV or injectable drugs, typically given at clinics or hospitals.

Pfizer originally studied Paxlovid in the highest-risk COVID-19 patients: unvaccinated adults with other health problems and no evidence of prior coronavirus infection. In that group, the FDA said the drug lowered the risk of hospitalization or death by 86% when given shortly after symptoms emerged.

But that doesn't reflect the US population today, where more than 95% of people have protection from at least one vaccine dose, a prior infection or both.

Also:

BROWNSVILLE, Texas: Federal officials say more than 200 patients could be at risk of fungal meningitis after having surgical procedures at clinics in a **Mexico** border city.

The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has said that it is collaborating with the Mexican Ministry of Health and US state and local health departments to respond to the outbreak among patients who traveled to **Matamoros**, across the border from Brownsville, Texas.

Officials have identified and closed two clinics linked to the outbreak, River Side Surgical Center and Clinica K-3.

The Mexican Ministry of Health sent the CDC a list of 221 US patients who might be at risk for meningitis based on their recorded surgical procedures at either clinic from January to May 13. Three additional patients not on the list have also been identified, bringing the total of people in the **United States** known to have potential exposure to 224, the CDC said.

The CDC is working with more than two dozen state and local health departments to contact people with potential exposure and urge them to go to their nearest medical facility for testing. Meningitis testing includes an MRI and a lumbar puncture, also called a spinal tap.



This photo released by Virgin Galactic shows mission specialist Jamila Gilbert, (center), looking out one of the portal windows as she experiences weightlessness during a test flight on May 25. Virgin Galactic completed what's expected to be its final test flight Thursday before taking paying customers on brief trips to space. (AP)



Sanchez



Hewson

Discovery

Killer whales damage boats: A pod of killer whales repeatedly rammed a yacht in the Strait of Gibraltar this week, damaging it enough to require Spanish rescuers to come to the aid of its four crew members.

It was the latest episode in a perplexing trend in the behavior of orcas populating the Atlantic coast of the Iberian Peninsula that has left researchers searching for a cause.

Spain's Maritime Rescue service said that killer whales repeatedly ran into the *Mustique*, a 20-meter (65-foot) vessel sailing under a UK flag, rendering its rudder inoperative and cracking its hull. Spanish rescuers needed to pump out seawater before towing her to safety.

The alert reached the Spanish service via their British counterparts, who had relayed on the distress call, the Spanish service said. A helicopter and a rescue boat were deployed to help the damaged boat to dock in Barbate. Spain's prime minister is **Pedro Sánchez**.

This was the 24th such incident registered by the service this year. The service didn't provide data from last year.

But the Atlantic Orca Working Group, a team of Spanish and Portuguese marine life researchers who study killer whales near the Iberia Peninsula, says that these incidents were first reported three years ago. In 2020, the group registered 52 such events, some of which resulted in damaged rudders. That increased to 197 in 2021 and to 207 in 2022.

The killer whales seem to be targeting boats in a wide arc covering the western coast of the Iberia Peninsula, from the waters near the Strait of Gibraltar to Spain's northwestern Galicia.

According to the group, these killer whales are a small group of about 35 whales that spend most of the year near the Iberian coast in pursuit of red tuna. The so-called Iberian orcas average from five to 6½ meters (16-21 feet) in length, compared to the orcas of Antarctica which can reach nine meters (29½ feet).

There have been no reports of attacks against swimmers. The interactions on boats seem to stop once the vessel becomes immobilized.

Biologist Alfredo López, of the University of Aveiro and member of the research group, said that the incidents are rare - and enticingly odd. (AP)

Corals face violent death: Sea urchins in have been dying off at an alarming rate, researchers announced - a de-

velopment that threatens the Red Sea's prized coral reef ecosystems.

According to scientists, an unknown pathogen is killing off the black sea urchin, *Diadema setosum*. The massive

die-off was first observed in the eastern Mediterranean Sea in July and gradually spread. Researchers have since seen it spread south to the neighboring Red Sea, the scientists said.



In this photo provided by ispace, engineers and affiliates work on the flight model of the HAKUTO-R Mission 1 Lunar Lander at the IABG Space Test Centre in Ottobrunn, Germany, in August 2022. A Tokyo company whose lunar lander slammed into the moon last month says inadequate software and a last-minute switch in the touchdown location led to the crash. Officials for the company ispace said Friday, May 26, that its spacecraft was originally supposed to land in a flat plain. (AP)

Blues beat Hurricanes to stiffen challenge for a top-four place

Chiefs clinch 1st place in Super Rugby Pacific as playoff race heats up

WELLINGTON, New Zealand, May 27, (AP) — The Hamilton-based Chiefs will take top seeding into the quarterfinals of Super Rugby Pacific after beating the ACT Brumbies 31-21 in Canberra on Saturday.

The Chiefs are now safe in first place with 54 points, seven points clear of the Christchurch-based Crusaders (47), heading into next weekend's final regular-season rounds.

By beating the best team in Australia by 10 points on its home ground Saturday, the Chiefs left no doubt they are the best team in the competition.

The best part of their performance was the defensive effort, though that lapsed a little in the last few minutes. The Chiefs led 17-7 at halftime and eased away to a 31-7 lead at one point with tries to Cortez Ratima and Shaun Stevenson — Stevenson's 11th of the season.

Both teams lost their captains to injury — the Chiefs' Brad Weber (head clash) and the Brumbies' Allan Alaataoa (calf strain).

The defending champion Crusaders kept up a strong challenge for a top-two place with a 42-18 bonus-point win over the New South Wales Waratahs in Christchurch.

The Crusaders started the 14th round in second place in the standings and, with a late try to secure the bonus point, moved five points clear of third-place Blues (42 points). The Brumbies are fourth with 41 points and the Hurricanes fifth with 37.

The top two teams have home advantage as long as they remain in the playoffs.

Two tries including the crucial last try in the 78th minute came from the Crusaders' famous lineup drive but others were team tries which featured strong carries and off-loading from players such as lock Sam Whitlock.

The Waratahs closed on the Crusaders with two second-half tries, briefly threatening the Crusaders' bonus point. But replacement Sione Havili-Talutua scored from a driven lineup just before the end to restore a six tries to three bonus-point margin.

Flyhalf Riche Mo'unga scored a try and kicked six conversions from six attempts for 17 points.

"There's one more week (of the regular season) and the table's looking tight," Crusaders captain Codie Taylor said. "This bonus point is crucial for us."

"There's a couple of results we'll be watching and we've got one more week which will be a tough one as well (against the Hurricanes)."

The Crusaders have lost three All Blacks props to injury and called up former All Black John Afoa from France as a replacement. At 39 years, 223 days, he is the oldest man to have played Super Rugby.

RUGBY

In Auckland, winger Mark Telea scored four tries for the Blues who beat the Wellington-based Hurricanes 36-25 to stiffen their challenge for a top-four place.

Telea scored twice in the first half, then twice in the last 15 minutes as the Blues struggled to hold out the resurgent Hurricanes.

The Blues dominated possession in the first 30 minutes but the Hurricanes came back into the match on either side of halftime. Winger Kini Naholo scored two tries as the Hurricanes twice drew within six points of the Blues in the dying minutes.

But center Rieko Ioane scored a vital try in the 74th minute and Telea skidded over for his fourth near full-time to save the match.

The Fijian Drua hung on to beat Moana Pasifika 47-46 in Lautoka earlier Saturday in a match which contained all the best elements of Pacific Islands rugby. It was physical but it was also fast-paced and skillful, and it was played in glorious sunshine in front of an exuberant crowd.

Iosefo Masi scored three tries for the Drua who led throughout but couldn't get a decisive break on Moana Pasifika, who for the second time in recent weeks came within a point of their first win of the season.

Former Wallabies flyhalf Christian Leali'ifano had a chance to win the match for Moana Pasifika with a last-gasp conversion of Samiuela Moli's 80th-minute try, but he swung the ball wide of the posts.

The match saw 14 tries, eight in the first half after which the Drua led 26-24. The Drua led 47-27 after 57 minutes but Moana Pasifika almost snatched the match with three late tries.

Everton, Leicester and Leeds in scramble

European spot and relegation battle at stake on EPL last day

LONDON, May 27, (AP) — The Premier League title has been wrapped up and the Champions League places are set, but there's still a European spot on the line and a relegation battle to be decided when the season ends Sunday.

Here are some things to keep an eye on:

European spot

League champion Manchester City will be joined in next season's Champions League by Arsenal, Manchester United and Newcastle. Liverpool and Brighton will finish fifth and sixth, respectively, for spots in the second-tier Europa League.

That leaves three teams in contention for seventh to earn a place in the Europa Conference League. Aston Villa is in pole position with 58 points, followed by Tottenham (57 points) and Brentford (56 points).

Unai Emery has guided Villa up the table since taking over from the fired Steven Gerrard in October when the Birmingham club was just three points above the relegation zone. Villa hosts Brighton.

SOCCER

Tottenham plays at relegation-threatened Leeds in a game that has potential for lots of scoring. Leeds is in must-win mode and will surely press forward. Harry Kane has 28 league goals — second only to the prolific Erling Haaland — and with two more would match his best Premier League output from the 2017-18 season.

A draw could be enough for Spurs because in a tie-breaker they would be ahead of Villa on goals scored.

Brentford must beat City at home to have any chance of seventh place. Pep Guardiola may opt to rest some regulars as he looks ahead to both the FA Cup final and the Champions League final.

"I'm a big dreamer. I believe everything is possible in football," Brentford manager Thomas Frank said Friday. "We just need to beat the best team in the world. It's a massive mountain. At home, with this group of players, everything is possible."

Separately, West Ham is 14th in the Premier League but can qualify for the Europa League by winning the Europa Conference League final against Fiorentina on June 7.

Everton, Leicester and Leeds are in a scramble to avoid joining last-place Southampton in being relegated to the second-tier Championship next season.



Chelsea's Mykhailo Mudryk (left), challenges for the ball with Manchester United's Antony during the English Premier League soccer match between Manchester United and Chelsea at the Old Trafford stadium in Manchester, England. (AP)

Everton is currently "safe" in 17th place with 33 points. Leicester and Leeds are both in the drop zone on 31 points, with Leicester ahead on goal difference. All three play at home on Sunday.

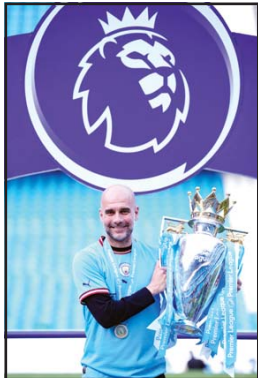
Everton hosts Bournemouth and will be without injured striker Dominic Calvert-Lewin and defenders Nathan Patterson and Ben Godfrey.

Leicester must beat West Ham and hope that Everton doesn't win. The improbable 2016 Premier League champions would win a tiebreaker with Everton and Leeds on goal difference.

Leeds needs the most help, and it faces a Tottenham team still in contention for a European spot. A victory is mandatory to have a chance of staying up. If Everton draws and Leicester loses, Leeds can stay up if it wins by at least three goals.

In the final minutes of last season, Jack Harrison's stoppage-time goal kept Leeds in the Premier League.

NBC's Premier League team is used to covering the



Manchester City's head coach Pep Guardiola poses with the trophy as he celebrates Premier League title after the English Premier League soccer match between Manchester City and Chelsea at the Etihad Stadium in Manchester, England. (AP)

pomp and circumstance of the champions lifting the trophy on Championship Sunday.

With Manchester City having its title ceremonies last week after winning its third straight Premier League title and fifth in the last six seasons, it's all about the fight to avoid relegation going into the final match day.

NBC's studio crew and top announcer team will be at Goodison Park for Everton's match against Bournemouth. Everton has 33 points, two points clear of the relegation zone, but could find itself out of England's top division for the first time in nearly 70 years with a loss and a victory by either Leicester City or Leeds United. Everton could be relegated with a draw and a win by Leicester City, which won the 2016 title.

This is first time in NBC's 10 years of carrying the Premier League that it will be on site for a match with relegation implications.

"I think this is as good as it gets. It would be great to have a title race as well, but this actually allows us to focus on relegation, which we so often can't do," said NBC Premier League host Rebecca Lowe. "It paints a whole different picture of an end of a season."

"It's so rare to have three clubs this size threatened with relegation, which makes the gravitas, the jeopardy, everything even bigger."

Everton's large following of fans in the United States is another reason why NBC decided to anchor coverage from Goodison Park. Three teams will vie to avoid the last two relegation spots and join Southampton in heading to the second-tier Championship next season.

NBC studio analyst and former U.S. men's national team goalkeeper Tim Howard, who made 414 appearances for Everton from 2006-16, will be on hand.

With the Indianapolis 500 on NBC, all 10 matches will be streamed on Peacock for the first time. The Everton match also will be on USA Network, while Leicester City hosting West Ham is on SYFY and Leeds United vs. Tottenham on CNBC. Bravo will carry Manchester United's match against Fulham, which has no bearing on the standings. All of the matches will start at 11:30 a.m. ET.

Coverage will begin at 9:30 a.m. ET on Peacock and one hour later on USA Network.

Pierre Moossa, NBC's Coordinating Producer for the Premier League, said Sunday's coverage could be among the most dramatic since they started covering the league in 2013.

"I know that we all get excited about trophies and medals and everything else, but the imagery after Sunday's results will be as emotional as you'll see in any sport," he said. "What it means to the club or what it means to the players is ultimately their essence."

While there will be sadness for Leicester City and Leeds United if they are relegated, Lowe said he thinks the scenes from Everton could be different.

"If Everton go down, it's going to be a lot of anger mixed into the sadness, which will make for quite some scenario," she said.

The season average for matches on NBC and USA Network is 500,000 viewers, which is even with last season, and the second-most watched Premier League season in the U.S.



Celtic's Callum McGregor (center), and teammates celebrate with the league trophy after the cinch Premiership match between Celtic and Aberdeen at Celtic Park, Glasgow, Scotland. (AP)

Verstappen takes Monaco GP pole ahead of Alonso as Perez 'crashes'

Sainz Jr. fifth ahead of Hamilton's Mercedes

MONACO, May 27, (AP) — Defending Formula One champion Max Verstappen produced a superb final lap to take pole position at the Monaco Grand Prix on Saturday and deny Aston Martin veteran Fernando Alonso his first pole in 11 years.

Verstappen called his first pole at Monaco "very lovely" but there was nothing to cheer for his Red Bull teammate Sergio Perez as last year's race winner crashed early in qualifying.

Alpine's Esteban Ocon surprisingly led near the end of the session before the 41-year-old Alonso moved back to the top as he chased a first pole since the German GP in 2012, when he was with Ferrari.

But Verstappen had other ideas as he brushed the walls of the sinewy street circuit to beat Alonso's time by just 0.084 seconds and clinch his fourth pole of the season and 23rd of his career.

"I knew this weekend it was going to be tight," the 25-year-old Verstappen said. "I definitely pushed a bit harder."

Alonso walked over to Verstappen and shook his hand after a tight tussle between the two-time F1 champions.

MOTOR RACING

"Feels great, I always had confidence in what I could do," Alonso said. "We're starting on the front row in Monaco, so job done."

Alonso has four third-place finishes in five races, so Verstappen joked that he'd try to help him finally win again.

"I'll think about it. I'd like to see Fernando win, but I'd like to win myself," Verstappen said. "I love watching his style."

Ferrari's Charles Leclerc was chasing a third straight pole on his home circuit but qualified in third, 0.106 behind Verstappen. Ocon ended up in fourth and Ferrari's Carlos Sainz Jr. was fifth ahead of Lewis Hamilton's Mercedes.

"I've been struggling like crazy with the car," a disappointed Leclerc said. "That was the maximum I could do."

Pierre Gasly (Alpine), George Russell (Mercedes), Yuki Tsunoda (AlphaTauri) and Lando Norris (McLaren) rounded out the top 10. Perez will start from the back. Regarded as one of F1's best

Georgia extends contract for AD Josh Brooks

Iowa AD Barta announces retirement

IOWA CITY, Iowa, May 27, (AP) — Iowa athletic director Gary Barta will retire on August 1 after 17 years at the university, the school announced Friday.

Barta, 59, is one of the longest tenured athletic directors in a Power Five conference. He was hired by Iowa in 2006 after being the AD at Wyoming.

An interim director will be announced next week, Iowa said.

In September, Iowa hired former Ball State athletic director Beth Goetz to be deputy director of athletics and chief operating officer, putting her in position to possibly succeed Barta.

"It has been an absolute privilege and honor to serve in this role the past 17 years," Barta said in a statement. "This decision didn't come suddenly, nor did it come without significant thought, discussion, and

prayer." "That said, I'm confident this is the right time for me and for my family."

Iowa won four NCAA national team titles and 27 Big Ten team titles during Barta's tenure. The women's basketball team is coming off an appearance in the national championship game and the wrestling team is coming off a second-place finish at the NCAA championships.

Barta served as the chairman of the College Football Playoff committee in 2020 and 2021.

FOOTBALL

He faced heavy criticism over more than \$11 million in settlements for lawsuits in recent years alleging racial and sexual discrimination within the athletic department.

On the heels of a second straight national football championship, Georgia has rewarded athletic director Josh Brooks a contract extension that ties him to the Bulldogs through at least 2029.

The athletic association board, wrapping up its annual spring meeting Friday at a resort on Lake Oconee, also announced plans for a new track and field facility that will free up space for two more football practice fields.

Brooks' new contract will increase his salary to \$1,025 million a year, with annual raises of \$100,000.

The 42-year-old Brooks, who took over the athletic department in 2021 after Greg McGarity retired, called the Georgia job "a dream for me" and said he hopes to spend the rest of his career in Athens.

las had a prime view of it all as he watched from a balcony overlooking the track.

Haas driver Kevin Magnussen's car stalled on the track near the end of P3, prompting a virtual safety car. Moments later, with tires cooler, Hamilton locked up as he snaked past Fairmont Hotel and wedged into the barriers at Mirabeau.

Hamilton climbed out and slid under a barrier before walking back pensively with his hands behind his back as the car was hoisted high in the blue sky air by a crane.



Red Bull driver Max Verstappen of the Netherlands steers his car during the Formula One qualifying session, at the Monaco racetrack, in Monaco. (AP)

drivers on street circuits, the Mexican driver lost control of the rear when entering Sainte-Devote too quickly, thudded into the barriers and bust his left tire to bring out a red flag.

Hamilton, who had crashed near the end of the third practice, left late to make it into Q2 on a new set of soft tires and then also squeezed into Q3 on his last lap.

Alonso started Q3 with the fastest time and set the tone for a thrilling ending.

"I'm pushing like an animal," Alonso said on team radio. He came close, but the Spanish veteran is well placed on Sunday to push for his first win since 2013.

Monaco is arguably the toughest track for overtaking but its claustrophobic nature leads to tension and crashes.

"If an opportunity comes we will take it," Alonso said. "We cannot take it for granted that all three cars will finish."

Verstappen has won three races



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Sale stars again on mound, Red Sox snap skid

MLB-best Rays beat NL West-leading Dodgers

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla., May 27, (AP): Cooper Criswell earned his first big league win, Yandy Díaz homered and drove in two runs, and the major league-best Tampa Bay Rays beat the NL West-leading Los Angeles Dodgers 9-3 on Friday night.

It was the first meeting between the teams since the Dodgers beat Tampa Bay in six games in the 2020 World Series.

Criswell (1-1) replaced opener Jalen Beeks with two outs in the second and allowed one run, four hits and three walks in four innings. In all, eight Rays pitchers gave up nine hits and six walks, but limited Los Angeles to 3-for-14 hitting with runners in scoring position.

Jose Siri added a two-run homer in the eighth for the Rays (38-15).

Noah Syndergaard (1-4) gave up six runs and eight hits in six innings in the loss.

Dodgers slugger Freddie Freeman extended his hitting streak to 15 games, going 2 for 4 with a walk.

Red Sox 7, Diamondbacks 2

In Phoenix, Chris Sale threw five strong innings, Kiké Hernández smacked a two-run homer and Boston snapped a four-game losing streak by beating Arizona.

It was Sale's fourth consecutive impressive outing, and the 34-year-old gave up one run on four hits while striking out three and walking one.

BASEBALL

The Red Sox jumped ahead 3-0 in the second. Rookie Triston Casas and Connor Wong hit run-scoring doubles, while Raimel Tapia drove home the third run with a single through the right side. Boston finished with 14 hits, including three each for Alex Verdugo and Casas.

It was another mediocre outing from D-backs rookie Brandon Pfaadt (0-2), who gave up five runs on eight hits over 3 2/3 innings. Arizona's Lourdes Gurriel Jr. hit an RBI triple in the fourth, extending his hitting streak to a major league-best 17 games.

Reds 9, Cubs 0

In Chicago, Hunter Greene threw six hitless innings and Cincinnati came within six outs of the first no-hitter of the season in a victory over Chicago.

Greene (1-4) matched a career high with 11 strikeouts in picking up his first win in 11 starts this season. The hard-throwing 23-year-old right-hander walked two while throwing 110 pitches.

The Cubs got their only two hits in the eighth against Eduardo Salazar as Christopher Morel lined a single to center leading off the inning and Miles Mastrobuoni singled with one out.

Matt McLain, Spencer Steer, Tyler Stephenson and Stuart Fairchild each had three of Cincinnati's season-high 19 hits.

Cubs starter Justin Steele (6-2) got tagged for a season-worst six runs, five earned, and gave up 10 hits.

Nationals 12, Royals 10

In Kansas City, Lane Thomas opened the game with a home run, Corey Dickerson's three-run shot highlighted an eight-run sixth inning and Luis Garcia had six hits in Washington's win over Kansas City.

The eight-run inning was the largest scoring inning in Nationals' history and came against Kansas City's Jordan Lyles and Josh Staumont. Lyles (0-9) allowed five earned runs in five innings, giving up six hits and three walks with two strikeouts.

Bobby Witt Jr. had two homers for the Royals (15-37), a solo shot in the sixth inning and a three-run blast in the seventh, finishing with a career-high five RBIs.

Jeimer Candelario added a two-RBI triple for the Nationals. Patrick Corbin (4-5) worked 6 1/3 innings, allowing six runs, seven hits, four walks with six strikeouts.

Mets 5, Rockies 2

In Denver, Francisco Lindor homered and drove in four runs, leading Max Scherzer and New York past Colorado.

Brandon Nimmo tripled twice, walked three times and scored three runs during a perfect night at the plate for the Mets, who have won seven of nine following a 6-16 skid.

Scherzer (4-2) struck out eight in seven innings of one-run ball. Adam Ottavino got two outs against his former team for his fifth save, aided by Nolan Jones' baserunning blunder in the ninth.

Ryan McMahon and Charlie Blackmon homered for Colorado. Jurickson Profar had a single to extend his on-base streak to 33 games.

Scherzer set season highs in innings, strikeouts and pitches with 102. He scattered six hits, didn't walk a batter and worked out of a jam in the seventh.

Padres 5, Yankees 1

In New York, Juan Soto and Fernando Tatis Jr. hit two-run homers and San Diego beat New York.

Soto put the Padres ahead in the fifth inning against Randy Vásquez (0-1), who was making his big league debut. Tatis boosted the lead to 4-0



Pittsburgh Pirates' Jack Suwinski hits a two-run home run against the Seattle Mariners during the fifth inning of a baseball game in Seattle. (AP)



Real Madrid's Vinicius Junior (right), duels for the ball with Valencia's Thierry Correia during a Spanish La Liga soccer match between Valencia and Real Madrid, at the Mestalla stadium in Valencia, Spain. (AP)

in the sixth against Ron Marinaccio.

Joe Musgrove (2-2) ended a four-start winless streak. He allowed one run and six hits in 6 1/3 innings with six strikeouts and no walks.

Anthony Rizzo had an RBI grounder in the sixth for the Yankees.

Rougned Odor added a run-scoring single in the ninth for San Diego against Ryan Weber, giving him 12 RBIs in his last five games.

Astros 5, Athletics 2

In Oakland, Hunter Brown struck out a career-high 10 over seven innings and retired 16 straight during one stretch, Corey Julks drove in three runs and Houston sent Oakland to its season-worst ninth straight loss and 12th in 13 games.

The A's (10-43) own the worst 53-game start since 1901. The 1932 Red Sox won their 53rd game to move to 11-42, then lost the next eight and 13 of 14.

After Esteyru Ruiz singled to leading off the A's first, Brown (5-1) didn't allow another baserunner until a one-out walk in the sixth. Ryan Pressly earned his ninth save.

Seth Brown hit a two-run homer in the seventh for Oakland. James Kaprielian (0-5) made it 12 straight losses by the A's starters over the past 19 games since their only two wins May 5-6 at Kansas City.

Phillies 6, Braves 4

In Atlanta, Craig Kimbrel became the eighth pitcher in major league history to earn 400 saves, Brandon Marsh hit a go-ahead, two-run single in the sixth inning and Philadelphia topped Atlanta.

Making his 730th career appearance, the 34-year-old Kimbrel worked a scoreless ninth to get his sixth save in six chances this season. Of the seven previous relievers to reach 400 saves, only Mariano Rivera (697 games), Trevor Hoffman (706) and Kenley Jansen (778) hit the threshold in under 800 appearances.

Kimbrel, the 2011 NL Rookie of the Year, played his first five seasons in Atlanta, was a four-time All-Star with the Braves and still holds the franchise record with 186 saves.

Facing reliever Joe Jiménez (0-1) with the bases loaded in the sixth, Marsh made it 4-3 with a single to left field that scored Nick Castellanos and J.T. Realmuto. The Phillies scored twice in the seventh off Lucas Luetge on Trea Turner's RBI double and Bryce Harper's sacrifice fly.

Atlanta's Michael Harris II snapped a 1-for-28 slump with a two-run homer.

White Sox 12, Tigers 3

In Detroit, Andrew Vaughn hit a two-run homer and drove in three

Spanish federation accepts Valencia appeal

Spanish court opens investigation into racist abuse targeting Vinicius

MADRID, May 27, (AP) — A Spanish court opened a judicial investigation Friday into an alleged hate crime perpetrated by the three people arrested this week for racially abusing Real Madrid player Vinicius Junior during a game.

Vinicius, who is Black, was subjected to racist taunts on Sunday in Valencia at Mestalla Stadium, which will have parts of its stands closed for the next three games as punishment. The Brazil forward has repeatedly been targeted by similar abuse this season.

The Valencia-based court said in a statement that Vinicius will be asked to give testimony via video-conference at some point. Vinicius earlier this year already spoke before a judge in another case of racial abuse against him. He said at the time he would not accept an apology and expected the perpetrator to be punished.

The judge also asked for the Valencia club to identify the security guards at the game so they could possibly give testimony and to conserve any audiovisual material of the match from the 72nd minute for possible study.

The Spanish soccer federation on Friday partially accepted an appeal by Valencia for the punishment it received because of the racist incidents on Sunday. The appeal's committee reduced the partial closure of Mestalla Stadium from five to three matches, and reduced the amount the club was fined from 45,000 euros (\$48,200) to

27,000 euros (\$29,000).

The club had called the punishment "unfair and disproportionate," saying it acted quickly to help identify and ban the fans accused of abusing Vinicius.

Three fans were detained by police on Tuesday and released pending an investigation.

Valencia's initial appeal had been rejected on Thursday. It has 15 days to file another appeal.

Valencia, which is still fighting against relegation to the second division, has one home game left in the league this season, against Espanyol on Sunday. Espanyol is also trying to avoid demotion.

The section of Mestalla that will be closed is where the insults against Vinicius came from, behind one of the goals. It's also where the club's more hardcore fans usually are located.

Police on Tuesday also detained four people accused of hanging an effigy of Vinicius off a highway bridge in Madrid in January. They were released from custody on Thursday while still under investigation for perpetrating a hate crime.

They were prohibited from attempting to communicate with Vinicius, and can't get within a 1-kilometer (0.62-mile) area around Madrid's stadium and training facilities. They also can't come within the same distance of any soccer stadium between four hours before and four hours after a Spanish league game.

runs, Yoan Moncada also had three RBIs and Chicago routed Detroit.

Lance Lynn (4-5) allowed three runs - one earned - on three hits and five walks while striking out five in six innings.

Joey Wentz (1-5) gave up five runs on six hits and two walks over four innings for the Tigers, who also had chances to score a lot of runs, but squandered many of the opportunities and finished 1 of 9 with runners in scoring position with eight left on base.

To save the bullpen, Detroit put shortstop Zach Short on the mound and he threw pitches in the mid-40s and Chicago hit three singles off him - giving it 17 hits - to go ahead by nine runs.

Rangers 12, Orioles 2

In Baltimore, Corey Seager hit his third career grand slam to highlight an eight-run fourth inning as Texas beat Baltimore for its ninth win in 12 games.

The Rangers' fourth inning featured a two-run homer by Robbie Grossman, two hits apiece by Josh Jung and Josh Smith, and Seager's bases-loaded shot to deep center.

Jon Gray (5-1) won his career-best

fourth consecutive start. He gave up one run and four hits over seven innings, striking out eight and walking one.

Leody Travers hit a two-run homer in the second to give Texas the lead for good, and Marcus Semien extended his hitting streak to 15 games with an eighth-inning single.

Orioles rookie Grayson Rodriguez (2-2) allowed eight earned runs and six hits, including three homers, in 3 1/3 innings.

Marlins 6, Angels 4

In Anaheim, Jorge Soler homered for the fourth straight game and Miami snapped Los Angeles' four-game winning streak.

Bryan De La Cruz had four hits, including a two-run homer in the seventh inning, and Miami improved to 3-5 on its 10-game trip. Jesús Luzardo (4-3) allowed one run in five innings and struck out seven.

Mike Trout had an RBI single, Brandon Drury homered and Gio Urshela had three hits for the Angels.

Soler became the first Marlins player in six years to homer in four consecutive games with a solo shot in the third. The outfielder crushed a changeup down the middle by Reid



Boston Red Sox starting pitcher Chris Sale throws to an Arizona Diamondbacks batter during the first inning of a baseball game in Phoenix. (AP)

MLB Results/Standings

WASHINGTON, May 27, (AP) — Results and standings from the MLB games on Friday.

Team	W	L	Pct	GB
Chicago W. Sox	12	10	.545	3
Tampa Bay	9	10	.476	3
Cleveland	4	10	.286	3
Texas	12	10	.545	2
San Diego	5	10	.333	1
Toronto	3	10	.231	1
Washington	12	10	.545	10
Houston	5	10	.333	2
Miami	6	10	.364	2
Boston	7	10	.412	2
Pittsburgh	11	10	.524	6
Cincinnati	9	10	.476	0
Philadelphia	6	10	.364	4
San Francisco	15	10	.600	1
NY Mets	5	10	.333	2

American League				
East Division				
W	L	Pct	GB	
Tampa Bay	38	15	.717	—
Baltimore	33	18	.647	4
New York	30	23	.566	8
Boston	27	24	.529	10
Toronto	27	25	.519	10-1/2

Central Division				
W	L	Pct	GB	
Minnesota	26	25	.510	—
Detroit	23	28	.469	2
Cleveland	22	28	.440	3-1/2
Chicago	22	31	.415	5
Kansas City	15	37	.288	11-1/2

West Division				
W	L	Pct	GB	
Texas	32	18	.640	—
Houston	29	21	.580	3
Los Angeles	28	24	.538	5
Seattle	26	25	.510	6-1/2
Oakland	10	43	.189	23-1/2

National League				
East Division				
W	L	Pct	GB	
Atlanta	31	20	.608	—
New York	27	25	.519	4-1/2
Miami	26	26	.500	5-1/2
Philadelphia	24	27	.471	7
Washington	22	29	.431	9

Central Division				
W	L	Pct	GB	
Milwaukee	27	24	.529	—
Pittsburgh	26	24	.520	-1/2
Chicago	22	28	.440	4-1/2
St. Louis	23	30	.434	5
Cincinnati	22	29	.431	5

West Division				
W	L	Pct	GB	
Los Angeles	31	21	.596	—
Arizona	29	22	.569	1-1/2
San Francisco	26	25	.510	4-1/2
San Diego	24	27	.471	6-1/2
Colorado	22	30	.423	9

run third, Kevin Gausman won for the first time in more than month and slumping Toronto beat Minnesota.

Toronto won for the second time in nine games. Gausman (3-3) allowed a run and struck out eight over 5 1/3 innings for his first victory since April 23. Jordan Romano earned his 11th save.

Kiermaier got the scoring started with his fourth home run of the season, a solo shot to right field with two outs in the third. George Springer followed with his second double of the game and scored on Bichette's 10th home run. Louie Varland (2-1) pitched six innings for the Twins.

Pirates 11, Mariners 6

In Seattle, Andrew McCutchen hit the 21st leadoff homer of his career, the first of four home runs off Seattle starter George Kirby, and Pittsburgh matched a franchise record with seven long balls in the victory.

The seven home runs more than doubled Pittsburgh's previous high for a game this season (three) and marked the third time since 1901 the Pirates hit seven in a game. They previously did it in 2003 and 1947, both against St. Louis.

Jack Suwinski had his second multi-homer game of the season, with a two-out, two-run shot to center field off Kirby in the fifth inning and a long solo homer to right in the seventh. Bryan Reynolds finished with four RBIs including a two-run triple, an RBI single and his seventh homer.

Carlos Santana, Ke'Bryan Hayes and Tucupita Marcano added solo shots.

Detmers (0-4).

Guardians 4, Cardinals 3

In Cleveland, Shane Bieber worked into the seventh inning, Amed Rosario hit a three-run double and closer Emmanuel Clase survived another stress-filled ninth inning as Cleveland held on to beat St. Louis.

Bieber (4-3) limited the Cardinals to sacrifice flies by Nolan Arenado and Alec Burleson before a pair of two-out walks got him into trouble in the seventh.

Rosario's bases-clearing double in Cleveland's four-run fifth came off St. Louis rookie Matthew Liberatore (1-1).

Bieber allowed two runs and five hits in 6 2/3 innings before being pulled. He's 9-1 in his career against NL Central teams. Clase picked up his MLB-leading 17th save in 22 chances.

Giants 15, Brewers 1

In Milwaukee, Mitch Haniger hit a two-run homer and drove in four runs as San Francisco moved above .500 for the first time this season with a win over Milwaukee after the Brewers lost Willy Adams when he was struck by a foul ball while in the dugout.

Adams got hit by a line drive from teammate Brian Anderson in the bottom of the second inning. Adams left the stadium to receive more tests and evaluation.

Haniger went 3 of 5 with the homer and a two-run double. Patrick Bailey went 4 of 5 with three RBIs. J.D. Davis went 3 of 6 with three runs and three RBIs, including a two-run homer. Brett Wisely hit a three-run homer and went 2 for 5. Mike Yastrzemski was 3 of 5 and scored two runs. Michael Conforto scored three runs.

San Francisco's Alex Wood (1-0) worked 5 2/3 innings and gave up one run and three hits. He struck out five and walked five.

Brewers starter Freddy Peralta (5-4) gave up eight hits and a career-high 10 runs in just 2 1/3 innings.

Blue Jays 3, Twins 1

In Minneapolis, Kevin Kiermaier and Bo Bichette homered in a three-



Fans cheer on Slovenia's Primoz Rogli during the 20th stage of the Giro d'Italia cycling race, an individual mountain time trial from Tarvisio to Monte Lussari, Italy. (AP)

Sports

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Bayern Munich players celebrate winning the German championship after the German Bundesliga soccer match between 1.FC Cologne and FC Bayern Munich in Cologne, Germany. (AP)

Bayern win record-extending 11th straight Bundesliga title

Dortmund fall short in race

BERLIN, May 27, (AP): Jamal Musiala scored in the 89th minute to fire Bayern Munich to the Bundesliga title with a 2-1 victory at Cologne after Borussia Dortmund could only draw on the final day of the season.

Dortmund, which was leading by two points before the last round, was held 2-2 at home by Mainz on Saturday, allowing Bayern to finish in first place because of its better goal difference.

SOCCER

Dortmund needed to win to be sure of ending Bayern's 10-year reign as champion.

Bayern announced shortly after winning the title that it had fired chief executive Oliver Kahn and sporting director Hasan Salihamidzic.

Both were under scrutiny for their decision to fire Julian Nagelsmann as coach in March and replace him with Thomas Tuchel right before the team's Champions League and German Cup exits.

Tuchel said Friday that even a Bundesliga title win would not mask what has been an unsatisfactory season for the Bavarian powerhouse.

Kahn responded to his firing on Twitter, where he congratulated the team and said he'd like to celebrate with the players "but unfortunately I can't be there today because I wasn't allowed."

It's just the third time Bayern managed to jump to first place on the last day of the season after it edged Werder Bremen to the title in 1986 and Bayer Leverkusen in 2000.

"I think anyone who's interested in soccer, particularly German soccer, will say we don't deserve it, and I understand, because our second half of the season was so chaotic, on the field, off the field," Bayern veteran Thomas Müller said. "But this moment is still



Chelsea players celebrate becoming WSL champions after the Barclays Women's Super League match at the Select Car Leasing Stadium, Reading. (AP)

Chelsea win Women's Super League for 4th consecutive year

READING, England, May 27, (AP): Chelsea secured its fourth straight Women's Super League by beating Reading 3-0 on Saturday to wrap up the double in style.

Having beaten Manchester United in the FA Cup final this month, Chelsea eased past Reading with goals from Guro Reiten and a Sam Kerr double.

The Blues' recent dominance shone through as their hosts failed to deal with the attacking talent of Emma Hayes' side, which finished the season on a seven-game league winning run. The breakthrough came in the 18th minute through Kerr, who picked up a pocket of space inside the box before heading Reiten's cross past goalkeeper Grace Moloney to make it 1-0.

Reiten added the second after 42 minutes when she pounced on a loose ball in the Reading backline to go one-on-one with Moloney before producing a composed finish.

Chelsea enjoyed long periods of possession after the break

unbelievable for the group, that's what will be remembered, it's crazy."

Dortmund fans were celebrating when Cologne's Dejan Ljubicic scored a penalty in the 81st minute against Bayern - which needed to win - but Musiala came on as a substitute four minutes later and scored four minutes after that to send the title Bayern's way.

Dortmund had started in pole position, but Kingsley Coman struck in the eighth minute against Cologne for Bayern to increase the pressure.

Then Sébastien Haller had a first-half penalty saved after Andreas Hanche-Olsen stunned the

Dortmund fans by heading in Mainz's opening goal in the 15th minute.

Karim Onisiwo got Mainz's second goal in the 24th with another header and the visitors looked capable of scoring more against the mistake-prone Dortmund defense. There was nothing but pride at stake for Mainz.

Raphaël Guerreiro pulled one back in the 69th for Dortmund, but by the time Niklas Süle equalized in the sixth minute of injury time, it was far too late for the "black and yellows."

Rani Khedira fired Union Berlin into Europe's top club competition with a late winner over Werder

and Kerr's efforts paid off in the 88th minute. The Australia captain was slipped through on goal and her first effort came back off the post but she was first to react to claim a simple tap-in and round off the victory.

SOCCER

Manchester United was once again grateful for substitute Lucia Garcia but its bid for the WSL title narrowly fell short.

Garcia came off the bench to score a late winner against Manchester City last weekend and ensure the title race went to the last day of the season, where United needed to beat Liverpool and hope Chelsea slipped up.

The first part was accomplished as Garcia's 72nd-minute strike secured a 1-0 win for United at Prenton Park, it wasn't enough.

Bremen for 1-0. Union finished fourth, ahead of Freiburg, which lost 2-1 at Eintracht Frankfurt.

Schalke was relegated after a 4-2 loss at Leipzig, and Stuttgart will contest the relegation/promotion playoff against the team that finishes third in the second division. Stuttgart drew with Hoffenheim 1-1.

Bochum secured survival with a 3-0 win over 10-man Bayer Leverkusen.

Also, Borussia Mönchengladbach defeated Augsburg 2-0 in Lars Stindl's last game for the club, and already-relegated Hertha Berlin enjoyed a 2-1 win at Wolfsburg.

Ecuador secure Group B 2nd spot

US & Argentina finish perfect in group rounds ahead of KO stage

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina, May 27, (AP): The United States completed a perfect group stage at the Under-20 World Cup for the first time.

The Americans beat Slovakia 2-0 in San Juan on Friday to top Group B, with Cade Cowell scoring before half-time from a counterattack and Niko Tsakiris adding the second in injury time. Ecuador secured second spot in the group with a 9-0 win over Fiji.

The U.S., which had already secured a place in the knockout stages, continued its dominant roll to finish the preliminaries with three wins from three games, and no goals conceded. It's the first time in 17 appearances at the Under-20 World Cup that the U.S. team has finished with a 3-0-0 record in the group stage.

U.S. defender Brandon Craig has played all 270 minutes so far in the tournament and says team chemistry has been an important factor.

"It's really special to not concede a goal and we take real pride in that," Craig said. "I'm really proud of this group - (now) knockouts to come."

SOCCER

The U.S. team will play Tuesday against the third-place team from either group A, C or D.

"It's win or go home," Craig said of the playoffs. "So we're going to do anything we can to just win. It doesn't need to be pretty."

"Obviously, clean sheets come first. If we keep a clean sheet, the more likely we're going to win."

Slovakia could still advance as one of the four best third-place teams.

Ecuador led Fiji 4-0 by halftime, including a brace by Justin Cuero. Alan Minda also scored twice in the second half, and Cristopher Zambrano scored



Slovakia's Mate Szolgai, (right), and Obed Vargas of the United States battle for the ball during a FIFA U-20 World Cup Group B soccer match at the San Juan stadium in San Juan, Argentina. (AP)

both of his in injury time. Ecuador's next rival will be the runner-up of Group F, which could be Gambia, South Korea or Honduras.

Argentina beat New Zealand 5-0 in San Juan to record its third victory and finish atop Group A. Ignacio Maestro Puch, Gino Infantino and Luka Romero netted before the break. Brian Aguirre scored from the spot and Alejo Veliz headed in the last goal in the second half.

New Zealand, with four points, still has a chance of advancing as one of the best third-placed teams.

Argentina, which only got a spot in the tournament as host after Indonesia was stripped of the rights in late March, will next play one of the third-place finishers in Groups C, D or E on Wednesday.

Rogli closes on Giro title

MONTE LUSSARI, Italy, May 27, (AP): Primož Rogli all but secured the Giro d'Italia title on Saturday by overtaking leader Geraint Thomas on the penultimate stage despite having a mechanical problem on the mountain time trial.

Rogli started the stage 26 seconds behind Thomas - who was trying to become the oldest Giro champion in history - but finished the route 40 seconds quicker than the British cyclist after the demanding climb of the Monte Lussari.

That saw Rogli move into the leader's pink jersey, 14 seconds ahead of Thomas going into the race's mainly ceremonial final stage.

It will be a fourth Grand Tour victory for Rogli, who won the Spanish Vuelta three years in a row from 2019-2021.

Rogli also almost won the Tour de France in 2020, when was leading going into another mountain time trial on the penultimate stage. But that time it

was Rogli who lost time and the race to compatriot Tadej Pogacar in one of the most memorable upsets in a Grand Tour in recent years.

It appeared as if the Jumbo-Visma cyclist's hopes were evaporating again when he rode over a pothole about halfway through the brutal climb up Monte Lussari and his chain came off, meaning he had to quickly change bicycles.

His teammates and staff had their hands over their heads in disbelief.

CYCLING

Despite that setback, Rogli - who had been 16 seconds ahead of Thomas at the previous intermediate time check - went on to increase his advantage.

The 33-year-old Rogli won the stage by a clear margin over Thomas. Almeida was third, 42 seconds slower.