



asian games
Pages 15 & 16

THE FIRST ENGLISH LANGUAGE DAILY IN FREE KUWAIT
Established in 1977 / www.arabtimesonline.com



soccer
Pages 15 & 16
20

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2023 / RABEE' A AWWAL 10, 1445 AH

emergency number 112

NO. 18401

16 PAGES

150 FILS

FUMBLING APPOINTMENTS PLACE EDUCATION SECTOR UNDER CLAWS OF CORRUPT

Dilemma of submission ... to deep state

'Artificial crisis' indicates lack of understanding of Kuwaiti culture

By Ahmed Al-Jarallah
Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

- The welfare state has ended... fees must be raised and subsidies must be removed, taking into account those with low incomes
- Solutions cannot be found if stakeholders are the ones advising the decision-makers and making the decisions
- A system to protect future generations, unless the intention is to employ them as "drivers and servants" in other countries
- Parliamentarians imposing their conflicting orientations with society means departing from the state of institutions
- The ideas of the Minister of Finance are very good if they are implemented according to a fair princi-

- ple... The Constitution allows the imposition of taxes
- In all countries of the world, systems take from the wealthy and companies to develop their infrastructure
- The circle of corruption is expanding. Continuing in this manner will cause Kuwait to lose the remaining benefits of its wealth
- The artificial crisis at the university was caused by the Minister of Education and its director and indicates a lack of understanding of Kuwaiti culture
- Kuwait will not develop if this type of appointments continues, while the financial demands of parliamentarians are kept silent

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 24: We were greatly optimistic about the visit of His Highness the Crown Prince to China and his meeting with the Chinese leaders, led by President Xi Jinping. During the visit, the signing of agreements and meetings with officials of international companies to bring about a qualitative shift in the country's development projects and emerge from the stage of stagnation were expected to be held.

However, the deep state and its corrupt clique are still spreading their tentacles into the joints of the country and seizing the opportunity, whenever it has a chance, to create a crisis either between the two authorities or between the government and the people. The issue of co-education at the university is one of such crises.

Nothing positive seems to be coming our way. We say this because the countries around us are racing with the wind for development and keeping pace with modernity to achieve well-being for the nation and the people. Even poor countries in Africa and elsewhere that have long been ravaged by famine have gotten rid of the scourge of corruption and have reached a great level of development and growth. On the other hand, we are moving nowhere.

Here is a question raised by the political circles close to senior decision-makers — Is it possible to get out of the current impasse with incomplete temporary remedies that target the symptoms of the disease and do not eradicate its causes?!

This question was raised by circles close to the decision-makers after they noticed fumbling in appointments to senior and mid-level positions, the result of which was to slip back into the crisis box after those appointed were unable to deal seriously with the problems, especially the dictations of some.

The circles stated, "The artificial crisis caused by the minister of Education and Higher Education, and the university director indicates a lack of understanding of Kuwaiti culture, and the values and traditions on which the children of Kuwait are nurtured, generation after generation.

Their position on the guardianship of the values, and the obligation of the students in banning co-education is not only an indication of the inability of those to exercise their role and responsibilities to the fullest extent, but also of a lack of proper appreciation for an academic educational institution such as the university. This is a realistic example of what takes place in various state ministries.

Also, there is great discomfort among the senior decision-making circles regarding the reality of the situation. From the deep state, which we thought the country had gotten rid of forever, has emerged another state that manages the institutions, and dictates its directions and decisions to the executive officials who consider the institutions to be a milking cow. They are skilled at milking its udder until it bleeds, which indicates the absence of national responsibility.

We expected to be saved from the corrupt, but we found that the new ones are no different from the previous ones to seize public money and achieve personal interests.

The improper implementation of the decisions vexed the society, whether at the university or the Ministry of Education, especially the flexible working hours and the like, which is subject to major criticism from the educational body, as well as in most ministries. It is as if we are in a vicious circle from which there is no way to escape.

We blame the so-called elite, as they were supposed to work on developing minds, but they fell into the dilemma of submitting to some parliamentarians, leaving three or four of them to impose their orientations and visions that conflict with Kuwaiti society.

This means deviating from the principle of the state of institutions is considered, at the same time, as a painful blow to the development of Kuwait, which has been suffering for three decades from stagnation and backwardness.

This situation requires uprooting it from its roots and stopping the infiltration of corruption, which has been continued by the fangs of the deep state.

Another issue that cannot be tolerated is the financial demands that parliamentarians propose day and night to shackle the state with a huge budget as it tries to move towards the future."

The circles praised the directions of the Minister of Finance Fahad Al-Jarallah, stressing that he announced a set of "very good" ideas that will bear fruit if they are implemented according to a fair principle, and revealed that the articles of the Constitution allow the government to impose taxes.

They said, "If the tax system is carefully studied and established as it is supposed to be established in various global countries where they take from the powerful, the wealthy, and companies, and work to develop the infrastructure, as well as sort those with limited and low incomes, it would benefit the state and take into account the interests of the people.

Everyone has become convinced that the welfare state ended a long time ago, and that continuing to ignore this trend is the reason for the financial confusion facing Kuwait, in addition to the corruption whose scope is expanding day after day.

Continued on Page 5

MP sounds alarm as fraud crimes on rise

By Saeed Mahmoud Saleh
Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 24: MP Khalid Al-Otaibi says the decision issued by Iraq's Federal Court about the constitutionality of the treaty signed between Kuwait and Iraq on the use of Abdullah Bay has false claims with no foundations, adding that it also ignored the United Nations' regulations.

He explained that the agreement between Kuwait and Iraq was signed in 2012 and approved by the legislative authorities of both countries before being referred to the United Nations. These aspects prevent any party from suspending the treaty.

The decision of Iraq's Federal Court was laden with hateful words that expose the Iraqi position towards Kuwait, and indicate that nothing of the Iraqi hostility towards Kuwait has changed despite the nonstop support provided by Kuwait to Iraq since the Liberation.

The decision of the Federal Court unmasked the schemes and bad intentions plotted by Iraq against Kuwait and aimed at abandoning the international commitments.

MP Al-Otaibi stressed the need to continue exerting diplomatic efforts and adopting a firm position towards the Iraqi hostilities to conclude the permanent agreements on defining the marine borders.

He called upon the United Nations' Security Council to issue a strong statement against the Iraqi court's decision.

Meanwhile, MP Abdulaziz Al Saqabi sent parliamentary questions to the Minister of Finance Fahad Al-Jarallah regarding the fraud crimes that have been on a rise lately and targeting individuals' money through suspicious sites and applications.

He wanted to know the role played by the Central Bank of Kuwait concerning these crimes and to what extent the public institutions cooperate with the Central Bank in this regard.

Continued on Page 5



Mourners react during the funeral of Asid Abu Ali, 21, and Abdulrahman Abu Daghsh, 32, in Nour Shams refugee camp in the northern West Bank, Sunday, Sept. 24, 2022. (AP)

Newswatch

KUWAIT CITY: Kuwait's Ministry of Interior has announced that the General Department of Civil Defense would test emergency sirens on Monday at 10:00 am local time in six governorates.

The tests aim to inspect the sirens efficiency, and to make citizens and residents aware of various indications of the sirens' tones, the ministry said in a statement.

It added that the tests were also made to remind citizens and residents of the safety precautions that must be taken in case of emergency or danger.

For any information or inquiries, the civil defense urges people to contact the following numbers (25379429- 25379278). (KUNA)

CAIRO: EgyptAir said Saturday a technical problem forced its B737-800 aircraft to land at King Fahd International Airport, also known as Dammam Airport in eastern Saudi Arabia while heading from Cairo to Dubai.

The pilot of the flight MS905 was able to make a successful emergency landing as per the international aviation rules, Egypt's flag carrier said in a press release, noting that all the 120 passengers are safe.

The plane is still at Dammam airport for technical checks, while its passengers were transferred to an alternative aircraft to continue their trip to Dubai, the statement added. (KUNA)

WASHINGTON: The Biden administration is poised to admit Israel this week into an exclusive club that will allow its citizens to travel to the United States without a U.S. visa despite Washington's ongoing concerns about the Israeli government's treatment of Palestinian Americans.

U.S. officials say an announcement of Israel's entry into the Visa Waiver Program is planned for late in the week, just before the end of the federal budget year on Saturday, which is the deadline for Israel's admission without having to requalify for eligibility next year.

The Department of Homeland Security administers the program, which currently allows citizens of 40 mostly European and Asian countries to travel to the U.S. for three months without visas.

Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas is set to make the announcement Thursday, shortly after receiving a recommendation from Secretary of State Antony Blinken that Israel be admitted, according to five officials familiar with the matter who spoke on condition of anonymity because the decision has not yet been publicly announced. (AP)

Crown Prince returns home

Kuwait to build renewable energy stations: Al-Ostad

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 24, (KUNA): His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah arrived in Kuwait Sunday after attending the opening ceremony of the 19th Asian Games in Hangzhou and holding official talks with Chinese President Xi Jinping.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent on Sunday a cable to Chinese President Xi Jinping, thanking him for the invitation for the opening ceremony of the 19th Asian Games in Hangzhou.

His Highness the Crown Prince expressed appreciation and gratitude for the Chinese President for the warm welcome and reception, praising the success of the opening ceremony.

His Highness the Crown Prince wished the Chinese president everlasting health and wellness, and further progress and prosperity to his country and people.

State of Kuwait is heading in the direction of constructing clean energy stations in order to honor the growing electricity demands and provide cheap power, Minister of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy said.

"We will have power shortage in the coming years so the State's approach is to invite corporates or consortiums to establish clean energy stations in what is known as the Independent Power Provider (IPP)," Dr. Jassem Al-Ostad told KUNA.

These companies, he added, would be building solar power stations that provided clean and cheap electricity on one side, and contribute to Kuwait's honoring of its commitment towards the 2030 UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to provide renewable and clean energy thus minimize emissions.

Al-Ostad signed a memorandum of understanding with the national energy department of China regarding power systems and renewable energy. The MoU was signed during His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's visit to Hangzhou, at the invitation of Chinese President Xi Jinping.

Al-Ostad called on importance of changing to clean energy through environment-friendly projects.

He noted that solar panels could be installed on roofs of schools and houses, and could be connected to the power grid.

Continued on Page 5

Raid kills 2

'No Mideast peace without ... full rights'

UNITED NATIONS, Sept 24, (AP): Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas told the U.N. General Assembly that there can be no peace in the Middle East without his people enjoying their "full and legitimate national rights."

It was the closest he came in a nearly 25-minute address to acknowledging U.S.-led negotiations aimed at getting Saudi Arabia to normalize relations with Israel. The Saudis have said such a deal must include major progress toward the creation of a Palestinian state, something Israel's far-right government has all but ruled out.

"Those who think that peace can prevail in the Middle East without the Palestinian people enjoying their full and legitimate national rights are mistaken," Abbas said at the start of his address to the U.N.

The 87-year-old Palestinian leader's speech largely resembled those he has delivered in past sessions. He accused Israel of a litany of violations against Palestinian rights and called for an international conference to revive the peace process.

He said the Israeli occupation of lands the Palestinians want for a future state "challenges more than a thousand resolutions, violates the principles of international law and international legitimacy, while racing to change the historical, geographical and demographic reality on the ground."

The Israeli delegation walked out of the hall early in his address, when he spoke about Israel's

Continued on Page 5

Bid to repatriate migrants

EU urged to rethink Syria safe zones

NICOSIA, Sept 24, (AP): Cyprus has formally called on the European Union to re-evaluate which areas of Syria can be declared safe and free from armed conflict so that Syrian migrants can eventually be repatriated there, Cypriot authorities said Friday.

Interior Minister Constantinos Ioannou was the sole official to raise the issue during July's informal gathering of his EU counterparts in Spain. No other EU nation has taken a formal position on safe zone re-evaluation, the Interior Ministry told The Associated Press.

Cyprus is fronting the re-evaluation bid because it says its proximity to the region has now made it a prime destination for Syrian migrants.

Ethnically divided Cyprus, with a population of nearly a million in the southern, internationally recognized part where migrants seek asylum, says migrants now comprise

6% of its population - much higher than the average in other EU member countries.

War-torn Syria has for the past 12 years been designated as an unsafe country where indiscriminate violence poses a real risk to the safety of its citizens. The threat makes them eligible for international protection status which enables them to live and work in third countries.

The government of Cyprus is proposing that the EU re-examine whether conditions on the ground in Syria - or parts of the country - have changed enough for Syrians to be safely repatriated.

The practicalities of how such repatriations would take place could be decided later. One possibility would be to start repatriations of Syrians who hail from the declared safe zones, according to the Cypriot ministry.



Ammar Hammasho, migrant from Edlib, Syria, who lives in Cyprus, kisses one of his four children after they arrived with their mother at a refugee camp in Kokkinotrimithia, outside the capital Nicosia, in the eastern Mediterranean island of Cyprus, on Sunday, Sept. 10, 2017. (AP)

Prayer Timings

Fajr 04:18 Asr 15:06
 Sunrise .. 05:37 Maghrib .. 17:43
 Zohr 11:40 Isha 19:00

Local

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

Weather

Expected weather for the next 24 hours:

By Day: Hot and relatively humid over coastal areas with light variable wind changing to light to moderate southeasterly wind with speeds of 06-32 km/h.

By Night: Rather hot to mild

and relatively humid specially over coastal areas with light to moderate southeasterly wind to southwesterly wind with speeds of 06-28 km/h and some scattered clouds will appear.

Station Max Exp Min Rec
 Kuwait City 43 34

Kuwait Airport	44	25
Abdaly	44	26
Jahra	44	29
Salmiyah	39	33
Ahmadi	39	34
Nuwaisib	42	26
Wafra	44	24

Kuwait body exposes 'flawed' Iraqi ruling on Khor Abdullah

'Historical fallacies' cited; 'Iraqi MPs had ratified deal'

By Nasser Al-Khamri

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 24, (KUNA): A Kuwait-based research center on Sunday said that an Iraqi court ruling that invalidated an agreement with Kuwait over regulating navigation in the Khor Abdullah waterway was riddled with flaws, citing the "historical fallacies" contained in it.

Upon closer inspection, the Iraqi Federal Supreme Court ruling, which rendered the agreement as "unconstitutional" earlier this month, comes across as highly paradoxical since it had previously ratified the deal in 2014 after Iraqi lawmakers unanimously voted in favor of the agreement a year earlier.

In its thorough analysis of the Iraqi court ruling, Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR), citing Kuwait University's Faculty of Law professor Dr. Ali Al-Rashidi, slammed the mere notion that the deal proved detrimental to Baghdad, saying the ruling does not contravene constitutional procedures in any way since it was made with legal validity.

Shining light on the paradoxical nature of the ruling, it said that Iraq's parliament, being the country's legislative power, not only supported the agreement, but an Iraqi court even rejected an appeal by a lawmaker to invalidate the agreement in a testament to how "contradictory" the latest court ruling appears to be.

Citing the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, an international agreement that regulates treaties among sovereign states, the KISR analysis underlined that since Iraqi lawmakers had ratified the agreement, it was a clear "gesture of consent" since the same Iraqi court had also given its approval of the "constitutionality" of the ruling.

Emphasizing the principles of the aforementioned convention, all parties involved in a treaty are obligated to "implement the agreement in earnest," while any attempt by a party involved in a treaty to question its validity after it had been ratified is inappropriate, according to the analysis.

Afterwards, the Center confirmed that the court's decision dated September 4, 2023, ruling that the agreement was unconstitutional, contradicts the idea of the final ruling issued by the Federal Supreme Court on December 18, 2014, which was confirmed by Article (94) of the Iraqi Constitution, as well as Article (5) of the Federal Supreme Court Law Number 30/2005.

The center stated that this comes in addition to the fact that the court's recent decision contradicts the previously mentioned texts regarding the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties. Especially since the highest Iraqi court, the Federal Supreme Court, had previously explicitly confirmed in its final ruling in 2014 the constitutionality of the law issued by the Iraqi Council of Representatives regarding ratifying the agreement regulating maritime navigation between the Iraq and Kuwait.

Indicated

The Center indicated in its reading that after both Iraq and Kuwait approved the bilateral agreement regarding the regulation of maritime navigation in Khor Abdullah, a copy of the agreement was deposited at the United Nations in December 2013 through the Permanent Representatives of Iraq and Kuwait, Muhammad Ali Al-Hakim, and Mansour Al-Otaibi.

It continued that this bilateral deposit comes in line with the first paragraph of Article 102 of the United Nations Charter, which stipulates that "every treaty and every international agreement concluded by any member of the United Nations after the implementation of this agreement must be registered in the secretariat of the UN and published as soon as possible."

In line with what was stipulated in the second paragraph of Article 102 of the Charter of the United Nations, "No party to an international treaty or agreement that has not been registered in accordance with the first paragraph of this article may invoke that treaty or that agreement before any branch of the United Nations."

According to the Centre's reading, the Permanent Representative of the Repub-

lic of Iraq to the United Nations, Muhammad Al-Hakim, stressed on that agreement, which regulates maritime relations between the two countries on the basis of United Nations resolutions, especially Resolution 833, which says that "both parties are committed to it, and that it also means that the two countries agree to facilitate the process of the passage of ships and traffic in Khor Abdullah."

It pointed out that the Official Newspaper of Iraq published on 11/25/2013, Issue No. 4299, the law ratifying an agreement between the government Iraq and the government of Kuwait regarding the regulation of maritime navigation in Khor Abdullah. The second article of the law stipulates "this law shall be implemented by date of publication in the Official newspaper."

Moreover, the Center said that, the Iraqi government accordingly deposited a copy of the agreement with the United Nations in December 2013. The first paragraph of Article 16 of the agreement stipulated that this agreement come into effect after the exchange of notices, by which the last party notifies the other party of its completion of the procedures. The internal legal requirements necessary for its implementation.

This was achieved after the Iraqi copy deposit in December 2013, in accordance with Article 15 of the agreement. The Iraqi Federal Supreme Court in 2014 also issued its ruling confirming the constitutionality of the law issued by the Iraqi Council of Representatives regarding the ratification of the agreement, which means it is effective for both parties.

Pointed

The center pointed out that the second paragraph of Article 16 of the agreement stated that the agreement remains in effect for an unlimited period, provided that the agreement may not be terminated except with the consent of both parties.

Therefore, Article 16 requires bilateral approval to terminate this agreement, meaning that it may not be terminated by one party only.

Article 14 of the Convention stipulates that any dispute that arises between the two parties regarding the interpretation or application of the agreement shall be settled amicably between them through consultations. In the event that they are unable to reach an agreement regarding this dispute, it shall be referred to the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea.

Regarding the objective facts and historical allegations in the ruling, the Research Center stated in its reading that "the ruling of the Iraqi Federal Supreme Court was supposed to be limited to a specific issue, which is the agreement on regulating navigation in Khor Abdullah, but it descended into a maze of allegations about the historical existence of Kuwait."

"These allegations that had no reliable scientific response to it, no evidence, no maps, and no studies have been published regarding it, which makes it a waste of time. Kuwait, as a land, a people, and a state, is a historical fact, and there is no room or claim to deny it," the Center added.

It also pointed out that these claims of historical rights completely contradicts what the basic principles of international law have concluded. The Security Council took these principles into account when it adopted the borders agreement, which was signed by both Kuwait and Iraq in the years 1932 and 1963, which is what studies of international law call for, which it refuses to dissolve. However, the objective scientific study of the issue of Kuwait's borders with Iraq always reaches the same results, which was backed by the world.

The statement noted that He stated that the reason for this is clear, as Kuwait's borders are officially registered in international documented documents, maps and agreements. No one denies them and no one claims their falsity except those who want to contradict the people and misrepresent scientific facts. The history of these documents goes back to periods that precede the emergence of modern Iraq and its independence. They are not artificial documents to falsify evidence.

Sheikh Jarrah meets top global officials

'Khor Abdullah' top on agenda

NEW YORK, Sept 24, (KUNA): Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah discussed Friday with President of the UN General Assembly Dennis Francis the recent Iraqi Supreme Court's Khor Abdullah verdict.

This came during the meeting held today on the sidelines of the 78th session of the UN General Assembly currently held in New York, the Foreign Ministry said in a press statement.

It added that the meeting tackled the latest developments related to the Iraqi Federal Supreme Court ruling declaring the law ratifying the agreement regulating maritime navigation in Khor Abdullah waterway between the two countries unconstitutional and Iraqi government's cancellation of the security swap protocol in Khor Abdullah which was signed with Kuwait in 2008.

Both sides touched upon the cooperation between Kuwait and the UN in all domains. Kuwaiti Deputy Foreign Minister Ambassador Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah met Friday Deputy Secretary General for Political Affairs and Director of the European External Action Service Enrique Mora on the sidelines of the 78th session of the UN General Assembly in New York.

In a statement, the Foreign Ministry said that the meeting tackled the latest developments related to the Iraqi Federal Supreme Court ruling declaring the law ratifying the agreement regulating maritime navigation in Khor Abdullah waterway between the two countries unconstitutional.



Saudi Arabia's Ambassador to Kuwait Prince Sultan Bin Sa'ad led the celebrations in the Avenues Mall to mark the Independence Day of the country. A large number of people turned out to join the celebrations.

Photo by Mohammad Morsi

62 caravans get go ahead

New protocol facilitates Hajj pilgrimage for illegal bedoun

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 24: A new protocol has been introduced to facilitate the registration of bedoun – people who are living illegally in Kuwait with no recognized nationality – who wish to participate in the Hajj pilgrimage during the upcoming season, reports Al-Qabas daily.

They will now be included in the Kuwaiti pilgrim lists, following specific conditions outlined by the Supreme Committee for Hajj. The primary objective is to streamline the registration process and avoid any delays. Once approvals are granted by Saudi authorities, the registration will progress.

In addition, approved Kuwaiti Hajj campaigns have commenced efforts to secure lodging for the pilgrims in the Holy Land no later than a month before the pilgrimage. During this phase, details regarding contracts, prices, and the commencement of registration in October will be disclosed.

It has been noted that a total of 62 caravans have been designated to partake in Hajj for the forthcoming season. Each caravan is mandated to have a minimum of 50 registered

pilgrims, with a maximum cap set at 250 pilgrims for individual campaigns. For combined campaigns organized by companies, the numbers will be doubled, allowing a maximum of 600 pilgrims for doubles and triples combined, and 800 pilgrims for quartets.

Officials have underscored that the Ministry of Awqaf has coordinated with all authorized entities utilizing the electronic platform, gathering their information. The grouping of registrations will be based on kinship for the upcoming Hajj season, focusing on the first and second degrees of kinship within the group.

The registration period will be sufficient once the central platform for pilgrim registration is made accessible, extended from one month to forty days. The criteria for Hajj and the selection process will prioritize individuals who have not previously undertaken Hajj. Preference will be given to groups consisting of relatives, and the sorting will be based on the eldest member. Additionally, the bedoun security card must remain valid throughout this process.

Bid to improve operations

'Awqaf' opts for internal transfers

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 24: In a move aimed at enhancing operations across various sectors and departments within the governorates, Dr. Badr Al-Mutairi, the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, has initiated a reassignment and transfer initiative involving 8 departmental heads within the ministry.

As per the directive, the following appointments were made -- Ahmad Al-Khalidi was appointed as the Director of the Information Systems Center; Hussein Bouzbar was appointed as the Head of the Cleaning Department in the Department of Mosques in Hawalli Governorate, and Abdul Rahman Al-Numis was designated as the Head of the Automated Projects Follow-up Department at the Information Systems Center. The decision stands valid for a period of one year from its issuance.

Moreover, the decision encompassed the transfer of Nasser Al-Khalidi from his role as the Head of the Rehabilitation and Training Department in the Educational Affairs Control Department in the Department of Islamic Studies and Qur'anic Sciences for the Capital and Hawalli Governorates, to the position of Head of the Curriculum Affairs Department within the same administrative domain.

Furthermore, Muhammad Al-Mu-

tairi was transferred from the position of Head of the Curriculum Affairs Department in the Control of Educational Affairs in the Department of Islamic Studies and Qur'anic Sciences for the Capital and Hawalli Governorates, to the role of Head of the Training and Qualification Department within the same administrative realm.

Saeed Al-Hajri moved from the position of Controller of Support Services in the Department of Islamic Studies for the Al-Ahmadi and Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governorates to the role of Controller, 'Al-Siraj Al-Munir,' at the Department of Islamic Studies and Qur'anic Sciences for the Farwaniya and Jahra Governorates.

Moreover, Hanan Al-Lamie transitioned from her position as the Head of the Planning and Performance Development Department at the Center for Promoting Moderation to the role of Head of the Vacations and Permanence Department within the Human Resources and Administrative Development Department. Khaled Al-Otaibi shifted from the position of Head of the Secretariat Department in the Office of the Assistant Undersecretary for the Holy Quran and Islamic Studies Affairs Sector to the position of Head of the Secretariat Department at the Mosques managed by Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governorate.

Govt intends to revise vision of Kuwait 2035

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 24: During the signing of seven Kuwaiti-Chinese agreements, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Oil, and Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment, Dr. Saad Al-Barrak, unveiled the Kuwaiti government's intention to revise the "Kuwait 2035" vision and extend it to "2024-2040." This decision prompts questions about the rationale behind this update and whether it is justified.

Kuwaiti economists unanimously support the vision update, citing low completion rates that render the original 2035 goal unattainable.

They attribute these delays to ongoing political tensions between the government and the National Assembly, which have hindered project implementation. They predict that without comprehensive reforms and the resolution of political disputes, the extension could extend even further to 2050.

Extension

Former Housing Minister Yahya Al-Sumait considers this extension a consequence of mismanagement and political appointments driven by personal interests. He emphasizes that the government's inability to swiftly execute projects, such as railways and transforming Kuwait into a financial hub, necessitates this move. Al-Sumait also points out that Kuwaiti private sector capital is frequently invested in neighboring countries due to obstacles in the domestic market.

Economic expert Muhammad Ramadan underscores that the political conflict between the government and the National Assembly has obstructed project implementation. He laments the failure to transform Kuwait into a financial center despite proposing this vision over 15 years ago. Ramadan believes that the update is necessary to address these obstacles, even though some progress has been made on various projects.

Here's an overview of the nine reform paths within the Kuwait 2035 plan:

1. Building a special international economic zone: Establishing an international economic zone with specific laws and regulations to attract high-value investments, encourage innovation, and ensure transparency. The estimated completion date is 2025.

2. Public Privatization: Modernizing legislative frameworks and introducing privatization initiatives to reform public finances, diversify income sources, enhance service quality, and create job opportunities in the private sector.

3. Promoting a dynamic private sector: Creating an attractive investment environment driven by the private sector through ease of doing business, fair competition, and innovation in various fields.

Capabilities

4. Strengthening the capabilities of citizens and institutions: Providing individuals with knowledge, skills, creativity, and innovation capabilities to create a productive and competitive workforce and enhance social capital.

5. Restructuring the government apparatus: Creating an agile government that enhances integrity, transparency, and digital transformation while meeting citizens' needs.

6. Building a cohesive infrastructure: Developing an advanced infrastructure network, including projects related to transportation, energy, and urban development.
7. Creating environmentally harmonious living areas: Promoting sustainable resource use, reducing pollution, and improving citizens' quality of life through environmentally friendly living areas.

8. Promoting the health and well-being of all: Enhancing healthcare services, promoting healthy lifestyles, and developing national capabilities in the healthcare sector.

9. Effective participation in the global community: Strengthening Kuwait's regional and international position in diplomacy, trade, culture, and charitable work. These reforms aim to shape Kuwait's future, but their success depends on overcoming political challenges and implementing them effectively.

'Kuwait Belt and Road initiative versus the Economic Corridor'

"THE Belt and Road initiative, initially conceived by China around 30 years ago, evolved into a comprehensive strategy in 2013. It is a modern extension of the historical Silk Road, reaching from China to Africa and the Middle East, and passing through Central Asia," columnist **Dr Abdullah Sahr** wrote for **Al-Rai** daily.

"The project has been conceptualized to consist of two major lines. The first, known as the Maritime Silk Line, commences from Chinese and Asian ports, traversing the Arabian Sea, the Red Sea, and eventually reaching Europe via the Suez Canal; the second line, the overland Silk Line, branches into multiple routes, originating from China and extending to Asia, Africa, and Europe, connecting through an intricate network of railways and touching more than 200 cities.

"At its outset, 18 countries were part of this strategy, and over time, it has garnered the support of approximately 126 countries and over thirty international organizations, representing about 60% of the global population. Kuwait was among the early adopters, signing the initiative. However, regrettably, Kuwait did not proceed to establish the necessary protocols with China for undisclosed reasons. In contrast, many nations that followed suit have engaged in these projects through the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank. Surprisingly, there is no information available on Kuwait's membership in this bank, despite its initial approval of its establishment when China proposed the idea in 2014.



Dr Sahr

"In exchange for this project, several Gulf countries, notably Saudi Arabia and the UAE, have entered into an agreement for a parallel initiative called the Economic Corridor with India, bypassing Kuwait. From both economic and political perspectives, Kuwait must swiftly activate these protocols to achieve several objectives, including fulfilling the objectives outlined in the development plan to transform Kuwait into a commercial and financial hub.

"This is in addition to developing Kuwaiti islands through a partnership with China; enhancing infrastructure development in Kuwait at an accelerated pace through Chinese companies known for their efficiency and speed in project completion; leveraging Chinese expertise in constructing housing communities, desert greening, combating desertification, and undertaking environmental projects.

"By also positioning Kuwait as a major partner in this strategy, offering protection against various international and regional political fluctuations and establishing itself as a key player for the strategic balance in the future; creating genuine employment opportunities for youth and diversifying economic income sources and by carefully reviewing official Chinese maps illustrating the Belt and Road routes, it is evident that they do not definitively confirm passage through the Gulf.

"However, this does not rule it out entirely. Some maps exclude the Gulf region, while others suggest a line passing through the Gulf into Iraq, hinting that Kuwait is ideally situated for this strategy. A collaboration between the three major Gulf countries can establish a free trade zone and a pivotal city for trade intersection.

"What is essential in this endeavor is a commercial mindset, determination, and prompt decision-making. It is hoped that His Highness the Crown Prince, may God protect and guide him, will succeed in translating these objectives to propel Kuwait towards a brighter future."

Also:

"The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has garnered worldwide attention, emerging as a beacon of excellence, creativity, and progress in various domains. The nation has seized the spotlight due to a steadfast commitment to a well-thought-out vision, achieving desired outcomes to the awe and solidarity of its people. By implementing comprehensive plans, programs, and cultural initiatives to amplify the nation's identity, Saudi Arabia has dazzled the world, compelling global attention towards the Kingdom of Goodness," columnist **Mohsen Abu Qaba Al-Otaibi** wrote for **Al-Anba** daily.

"This success story is attributed to an inspiring leader, King Salman bin Abdulaziz, Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, may God grant him good health and distinction, and the visionary efforts of His Royal Highness Prince Mohammed bin Salman, Crown Prince and Prime Minister of Saudi Arabia, may God protect him and grant him success for the benefit of the devoted sister Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

"Day by day, loyalty intensifies, fostering deep faith, enthusiasm, and a readiness for further sacrifice and contribution to this benevolent nation. The Kingdom, epitomizing strength derived from its people, witnesses the unwavering unity and resilience of its citizens, acting as a safety valve and a fortress against rumors and conspiracies. The Saudi people stand united, rejecting racism, sectarianism, and tribalism, upholding values and reinforcing the concepts of loyalty, love, and belonging.

"In every crisis, the solidarity of the Saudi people bolsters the nation's resilience, dismantling the forces of evil and corruption, guided by faith and supported by the courage and valor of security forces. Some have stayed true to their pledges to God, sacrificing their lives for the homeland, embodying the essence of sacrifice and unwavering commitment to the sovereignty of the nation and the dignity of its people.

"The spirit of unity has become an impenetrable barrier, upholding security, love, dedication, loyalty, and rallying around the historical and honorable leadership of the sisterly Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The people hold firmly to the strong rope of God, exhibiting unyielding faith, unity as one family, and adherence to these values. Under the wise leadership and with faithful hearts relying on God's law, victory is assured against diverse adversaries, by the grace of God.

"In essence, the great sister kingdom possesses exceptional leadership, a dedicated, understanding populace, a sophisticated, aware, and prudent media, and a government that is vigilant and a deterrent against dishonorable actions. On this occasion, I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the leadership, government, and people of the Kingdom of Goodness on National Day.

"I pray to God Almighty to bestow blessings of security and safety upon you, preserving your homes—a home of glory, pride, chivalry, and loyalty—continuing this development and progress we deeply cherish and take pride in. May it serve as an inspiration for the entire world."



"At the beginning, we did not know the extent of the danger of social media, especially since the purposes include social communication, exchange of ideas and information, and discovery of everything new in our world," columnist **Mohammad Al-Ruwaihel** wrote for **Al-Jarida** daily.

"We did not know that we would be surrounded by it in a world distorted with lies and misleading information, violating the freedom of others, invading their privacy and fabricating rumors against them. We did not know that this virtual world is full of hypocrites, mercenaries, degraded and downtrodden people who hide behind fake accounts to promote their malicious agendas and spread rumors and information that harm their homelands and peoples.

"Some social media accounts have expanded their influence. They have become a malicious means for spreading chaos and panic in society. It has become a center for disseminating false news and misleading information to form an influential political opinion, and serve the agendas of the corruption system that we expected to diminish and vanish through cooperation between the executive and legislative authorities during the first legislative term.

"The accounts that manipulate the feelings and minds of citizens, destabilize the nation and instigate social chaos by spreading rumors have neither deterrent nor accountability. Rather, there is a noticeable disregard among officials and indifference on the part of the government due to the lack of an official spokesperson to provide citizens with the correct information.

"Without a doubt, such accounts are pushing for an organized war to spread rumors, discord and hatred among the components of society. They are neither random nor the representative of their owners. They are systematic and organized. They receive orders and directives from a system with influence, money and a special agenda that is far from the national interest.

"The government must realize the seriousness of these accounts before they can create a public opinion which may not be controlled. It should expose such accounts, those who manage them and those behind them, and then refer them to the concerned authorities.

"It should also appoint an official spokesperson who explains everything to the citizens with full transparency and honesty. The spokesperson should release news that piques the citizens' interest and related to their future. He should not leave the scene for the agendas of the corruption system to tamper with people's feelings and minds through the mercenaries of fake accounts. If they continue to tamper with what we see, they will inevitably create chaos and instability."



"The problem with some of our politicians is that they insist on turning back the clock. This is impossible and we do not know the secret behind their insistence on pulling us back — whether we like it or not," columnist **Talal Al-Saeid** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"It is impossible to turn back time. Members of the National Assembly must focus on improving education in general, cultivating virtue among people and fighting social diseases, such as drug abuse and its derivatives. Families are suffering due to these social illnesses.

"It is also necessary to focus on the role whose impact on people we missed, that is, the role of the mosque, the role of the school and the role of diwanias in educating people. As for summarizing the negative phenomena on the subject of segregation, it entails falsehood!

"Reform is a comprehensive process that includes all sectors of society, but they should aim for the best. The role of the sticks passed forever. You prevent segregation at the university, yet most of you are graduates of mixed universities. Who prevents segregation in the market, the cooperative, the shops, the restaurants and all aspects of life?"

"Speak to the wise person in an appropriate manner, for Kuwait will not be Kandahar. At the same time, our society is known for its moderation and it rejects all types of extremism.

"Let us be preoccupied with topics that concern people. Do not waste your time on people and things that are not beneficial. How does a borrower, who has not even KD10 left in his salary, benefit from preventing segregation? How does a retiree, who has low pension and can barely meet his monthly obligations, benefit from preventing segregation? How does a young man, who has been living in a rented house for 20 years, benefit from your law?"

"Education in general must be reconsidered, not just segregation, which is not a priority! Promote education and its outcomes, then talk about segregation."



"Despite the major change in the political scene that took place the past year, the problems and crises have not changed, and will not change as long as the radical change does not include the basic systems of government such as the Constitution and the basic laws," columnist **Dahim Al-Qahtani** wrote for **Al-Qabas** daily.

"From the parliamentary aspect, a new parliamentary majority that is loyal to the government was brought in. It is mostly made up of the previous opposition. This does not coincide with the advanced project to radically change the parliamentary scene.

"At present, there is no real reform project other than the New Testament document, the terms of which were announced by His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad at the opening of the first and only session of the 2022 Council.

"This document represents the hope that the Kuwaiti people had been waiting for for many years. It was welcomed and widely supported by the public.

"Kuwait needs a comprehensive reform project that has been talked about for a long time, but has not been proposed yet. It is a waste of time and effort for us to continue with this confusing situation that is based on buying time without a specific goal.

"Is change difficult? Certainly any change will not be easy. There are great prices that will be paid, but these prices will be much lesser than the prices that will be paid later if the change does not occur.

"There is also hope that young people in their prime will realize the importance of joining political work early. This should be done through a state of political awareness based on understanding and not enthusiasm."

— Compiled by Mai Elsoukary



Acting Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, Sheikh Talal Al-Khaled chairs the meeting.

Mot photo

New strategies to manage traffic in peak hours eyed

Asian expat wanted in fraud arrested

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 24: In an official announcement, the Ministry of the Interior stated that Acting Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior, Sheikh Talal Al-Khaled, chaired a security meeting today, as part of the Ministry's routine engagements with security leaders, reports **Al-Qabas** daily.

During the meeting, Sheikh Talal Al-Khaled, accompanied by a team of assistant undersecretaries and Lieutenant General Anwar Al-Barjas, the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior, discussed the traffic situation in the initial week of the new academic year.

Their primary focus was on devising strategies to effectively manage traffic congestion, especially during peak hours, to facilitate the smooth movement of students to and from their schools.

Reviewed

Furthermore, the Minister reviewed the outcomes of intensive security and traffic campaigns carried out by various sectors of the Ministry of Interior, specifically targeting violators and those breaching the law, especially against violators and individuals posing a threat to the nation's security.

The Minister emphasized the priority of enforcing the law firmly and addressing traffic congestion. This entails deploying traffic patrols on both major and interior roads, evaluating intersections to ensure seamless traffic flow, and taking a strong stance against any misconduct. Additionally, he called for heightened public awareness campaigns to promote traffic awareness, encourage compliance with traffic regulations, and instill core values and loyalty to the homeland.



Asian fraudster nabbed: An Indian expatriate, sought in connection with 38 cases involving fraud, theft, breach of trust, and accumulating a debt of one million dinars, has been apprehended by the Interior Ministry in the Sabah Al-Nasser area, reports **Al-Rai** daily.

According to security sources, Brigadier General Suleiman Jaber Al-Saeedi, the head of Sabah Al-Nasser police station, noticed the suspect during a security checkpoint setup while on an inspection tour. When the man was told to stop, he attempted to flee and was subsequently captured after a pursuit.

The sources further revealed, "Upon investigation, it was discovered that he was implicated in 38 cases involving fraud, theft, breach of trust. Sixteen criminal sentences had been handed down, and the outstanding amounts totaled approximately one million dinars, encompassing checks, bills of exchange, and debt declarations."

The sources also pointed out, "General Al-Saeedi referred this high-priority security suspect, holding a record number of criminal cases, to the appropriate authorities."

It is also said the man was staying in the country illegally for the past nine years.



'Mini apartments': The team formed by the Hawally Governorate comprising members from the Kuwait Mu-

Company caught selling KD460 phone for KD900

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 24: The Commercial Control Department of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry monitored attempts by some companies to raise prices in violation of laws and decisions, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

The ministry recently discovered that a multi-branch company that sells electronic devices was selling a particular type of mobile phone device for KD 900 and taking advantage of people's desire to acquire the mobile phone.

This type of mobile phone has not been officially released in the local market, and its actual price is KD 460.

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry warned companies and stores that sell electronic and electrical devices that it will refer to justice anyone who exploits people's desire to acquire modern communications devices, and raises their prices illegally, taking advantage of the devices not being officially released in the local market, in implementation of article 2 of law No. 10/1979.



24,540 citations issued: Traffic officers, during their security tours, issued 24,540 various traffic citations in the past seven days in all governorates, based on the directives and instructions of the Director General of the General Traffic Department Major General Yousef Al-Khadra, says **Al-Seyassah**.

According to statistics issued by the General Traffic Department, 13 juveniles were referred to the Juvenile Prosecution for driving vehicles without a license, and 114 vehicles and 22 motorbikes were seized and referred to the impound garage.

Three people were arrested in possession of suspected narcotic substances and referred to the Drug Control General Department. They arrested 18 violators of the residency law, nine without any identification document, and 26 individuals who had had pending arrest warrants issued against them for either absconding, civil execution and investigations.

According to a security source, such traffic campaigns will intensify during the next few days, coinciding with youth groups heading to desert areas and roads. Night inspections will be conducted to control the traffic situation.

municipality (Hawally branch) with support from personnel from the Ministry of Interior cordoned off plots 11 and 12 in the Salmiya after receiving several complaints that residential apartments had been exploited by some vested interests and converted them into 'mini apartments' to house the so-called bachelors (single men), reports **Al-Rai** daily.

The team cordoned off the entrances and exits of the two plots, with security support, to prevent confusion between inspectors and singles.

During the campaign several properties were found to be in violation of the group of violating properties inhabited by singles were monitored, in addition to properties that were confirmed to be in violation of the building regulations because some of these apartments have made 'partitions' and divisions measuring no more than two meters.

Decree issued on land rental

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 24: Minister of State for Municipal Affairs and Minister of State for Communications, Fahd Al-Shoula, has issued an official decree pertaining to the rental rates of leased spaces within and around various Ministry of Transportation premises and unoccupied land, reports **Al-Qabas** daily.

According to the decree, a copy of which has been obtained by the daily, the rental cost for spaces leased within government mall centers, where ministries, agencies, and institutions offer their services to the public, will be set at 200 dinars for the initial square meter and an additional 12 dinars for each subsequent meter for each individual space. This revised rate will come into effect starting from today.

Celebrate with Style
A place to make unforgettable memories
MUGHAL MAHAL FAHAHEEL
AL-RAYAN FAMILY LOUNGE & FUNCTION HALL
Weddings | Seminars | Conferences | Celebrations
Sea view | Ample car parking
For more enquires Call: 23911174 / 23911175 / 97644421
Email: fahaheel@mughalmahal.com
info@mughalmahal.com

Kuwait's minister of health backs out of meet due to presence of Israeli minister

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 24: In continuation of Kuwait's honorable stances concerning important Arab and Islamic issues, the Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi backed out from the Health Ministers' Conference held on the side-

lines of the United Nations General Assembly meeting in objection to the presence of the Minister of Health and Minister of Interior of the State of Israel, reports Al-Qabas daily.

According to health sources, Minister Al-Awa-

dhi left the hall before the Israeli minister started his speech at 3:00 pm New York time. He did not return to the hall, in line with Kuwait's firm and well-established positions towards the Palestine issue and other Arab issues.

'Divorce cases see 22% decrease in first year of marriage last year'

Spouses with university degree have highest divorce rates

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 24: In a good indication of the efforts made by the government, various state agencies, public benefit associations, and specialists to confront the phenomenon of divorce and not destroy the family entity, statistics issued by the Ministry of Justice showed a decrease in the divorce rate in the "first year of marriage" in Kuwait during the year 2022 by 21.9% compared to the year 2021.

The statistics, a copy of which has been obtained by Al-Anba, according to the statistical book prepared by the Statistics and Research Department of the Information Technology and Statistics Sector in the Ministry of Justice, indicated a decrease in the number of divorce cases

in the first year of marriage during the past year from 948 cases in 2021 to 740 cases in 2022 by an amount 208 cases.

The statistics show marriages in Kuwait reached 13,656 in 2022 from 16,393 the previous year, 66.9% of which are for a Kuwaiti who married a citizen, and 17.5% of both spouses are non-Kuwaiti.

Highest

The percentage of divorces for those married from one year to less than 5 years is the highest, followed by the percentage of those married for less than a year, and it decreases as the duration of married life increases.

Spouses with a university degree have the highest divorce rates in Kuwait, at 30.4% of the total divorce cases, followed by those with intermediate qualifications, at 22.1%.

Almost 11.4% of citizens married non-Kuwaiti women and 4.2% of female citizens married non-Kuwaiti men during the past year.

The number of "divorce before consummation"

cases decreased from 738 cases in 2021 to 610 cases in 2022, by 128 cases, or a rate of 17.3%.

Decreased

Divorce cases for "couples with one or more wives remaining married" decreased from 2,787 cases in 2021 to 1,365, with 1,422 cases, or a rate of 51.0%.

According to educational status, for couples, the percentage of marriages with university qualifications reached 42.5%, then those with post-secondary diploma qualifications at 20.1%, then high school holders at 19.5%, then those with intermediate qualifications at 13.1%. As for the rest of the educational cases, their percentage reached 4.8% of the total cases, marriage.

As for wives, the percentage of marriages with university degree holders reached 52.5%, then those with secondary qualifications at 23.4%, then those with post-secondary diploma qualifications at 15.1%, then those with intermediate qualifications at 6.0%. As for the rest of the educational cases, their percentage reached 3.0% of the total marriages.

Social Security Institution to open rehab center for Kuwaiti retirees

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 24: The Public Institution for Social Security announced that it will open a rehabilitation health treatment center for Kuwaiti retirees in the coming months, based on the directives of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a press statement, the institution explained that this initiative comes primarily as an affirmation of His Highness the Amir's continued

support for retirees.

It is the first health center in the country specializing in the elderly category with government support, enabling them to comprehensively evaluate their cases and provide them with appropriate treatment plans.

The total area of the center is 3,000 square meters in the Mubarak Al-Abdullah suburb. It includes clinics, gyms, swimming pools, physical

therapy rooms, and others. It is divided into three separate floors, and has common spaces designated for social interaction, such as a restaurant and café that serve the center's members.

The center will be managed by distinguished teams specialized in various medical fields that will aim to prevent and treat age-related diseases and meet either physical, psychological, or other health needs.

National Day greetings

Amir congratulates Guinea-Bissau

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 24, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable to President Umaro Sissoco Embalo, congratulating him on the National Day of his country.

His Highness the Amir expressed wishes of good health to President Embalo and prosperity to the people of Guinea-Bissau.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable to President Umaro Sissoco Embalo, congratulating him on the National Day of his country.

Also, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent a cable to President Embalo, congratulating him on the National Day of his country.



Kuwait's Sarah Al-Noums at the exhibition.

Al-Rai photo

42nd 'International Caricature'

Cartoonist Al-Noums represents Kuwait at the exhibition in France

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 24: Media personality and fellow cartoonist Sarah Al-Noums proudly represented the State of Kuwait and the Kuwaiti Cartoon Society at the 42nd "International Caricature - Saint-Just-le-Martel" (International Caricature) exhibition held in Limoges, France, reports Al-Rai daily.

The exhibition will continue until October 7.

Al-Noums joined a group of Arab artists at the opening ceremony, graced by the presence of the regional governor, the provincial deputy, and the head of the municipal council of the province.

Expressing her pride in representing Kuwait on an international stage, Al-Noums highlighted the Kuwaiti Caricature Society's participation with fifty paintings. She noted the notable increase in works from Kuwait compared to previous years, capturing attention at the exhibition.

Al-Noums also commended the outstanding Arab representation at the exhibition, particularly highlighting the selection of artist Saad Hajo from the Syrian Republic as the first Arab artist and main guest. His exhibition featured a curated collection of his works, animated drawings, and artistic sculptures.

One center serving 223,000 people

'MoH keen to increase health centers in the Hawally area'

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 24: According to health sources, the Ministry of Health, as part of its efforts to open many additional specialized centers and clinics in residential areas, is intensifying efforts to demolish, establish, complete, and maintain the South Hawally Medical Center, especially with the ongoing coordination with the regulatory authorities to obtain the necessary approvals, reports Al-Qabas daily.

The sources explained that Hawally area has only one health center that serves about 223,000 people, including about 2,000 Kuwaiti citizens, as per statistics issued by the Public Authority for Civil Information (PACI). Congestion has become the most prominent feature of this center, along with the suffering that the elderly and those with chronic diseases face.

Without mentioning the reasons, the supervisory authorities postponed the approval of the ministry's request to award a tender for the project to demolish, construct, complete and maintain the South Hawally Center, the cost of which amounts to KD 3.8 million, to one of the parties.

Hawally area had 3 medical centers - West Hawally, South Hawally, and one near Hawally Park, which had been used by a department affiliated with the Ministry of Health since 2014, and with the aim of staying in it for a period of only up to six months until the completion of construction. The building for that department is in Sabah Medical Center. This period has now exceeded eight years, despite the readiness of the department building in Sabah area.

The presence of only one health center in Hawally area would put additional pressure on Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hospital, specifically its emergency unit. There are repeated scenes of long queues being witnessed at West Hawally Clinic, such that patients eventually resort to specialized clinics in private medical centers and hospitals, which puts another pressure on families' budgets, as they need more than one visit during the week sometimes, in addition to dispensing medications from the pharmacies of those facilities.

It is worth mentioning that the number of primary healthcare centers in the country is 112, which are distributed across all governorates. Most of them are in Ahmadi Governorate with 31 centers, followed by the Capital Governorate with 26

Al-Asousi participates

'MEW keen to organize blood donation drives'

By Mohammed Ghanem

Al-Seyassah Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 24: Acting Undersecretary of the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy Eng. Maha Al-Asousi affirmed the keenness of the ministry to organize humanitarian campaigns to contribute to the blood bank's stock.

During her participation in the blood donation campaign organized by the ministry's Public Relations Department in coordination with the Doha Western Station, Eng. Al-Asousi revealed that a large number of leaders and employees participated in the campaign as a national duty.

She said a number of patients also donated during the campaign, which lasted for two days, highlighting that the cooperation between the ministry and the blood bank is not new.

Meanwhile, the Director of the Public Relations Department Eng. Maha Al-Hajri said the campaign is part of the ministry's humanitarian work.

She praised the interaction shown by the ministry's employees and leaders with the campaign.

Eng. Al-Hajri affirmed that the ministry is working with the blood bank to secure stock that will help meet the needs of patients.

She added that the campaign is continuing and will move from the ministry building to Doha Western Station.

In addition, informed sources confirmed the completion of the feasibility study prepared by a global consultant on the Shaqaya Power Station to produce electricity from renewable energy.

They said, "The partnership body implementing the project is awaiting the meeting of the Supreme Committee to obtain approvals in preparation for presenting the project to the implementing companies. The project aims to produce about 4,500 megawatts, which is expected to enter service at the beginning of 2027 as a first phase."

centers, then Farwaniya Governorate with 22 centers, Hawally Governorate with 19 centers, and Jahra Governorate with 14 centers.

WFP official hails Kuwait's long-term support

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 24, (KUNA): Representative of the World Food Programme (WFP) in the GCC, Mohammad Yahya, affirmed recently Kuwait's continuous support in emergency and humanitarian response activities.

Yahya stated to KUNA on the program's launch, "We are working closely with the Kuwaiti government to provide long-term sustainable support to the most vulnerable communities around the world."

He added that regarding the lack of funding and the deteriorating level of

food security worldwide, Kuwait contributed USD 18.8 million in 2023 to support WFP operations in various countries.

He also added that WFP is struggling to meet global needs for food aid with a decrease of 60 percent this year, noting that it is the highest rate recorded in the program's history, which forced them to only rescue people that are suffering from hunger.

He stated that, "It is no longer limited to the fact that we have received much less funding, but also to the fact that we need more this year."



September

Room Promotion





Weekdays (Saturday - Wednesday)	
Queen Cabana (2 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.	2 Bedroom Chalet (4 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.
NOW	NOW
BHD 57.173/-net	BHD 128.000/-net
Weekends (Thursday & Friday)	
Queen Cabana (2 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.	2 Bedroom Chalet (4 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.
NOW	NOW
BHD 65.000/-net	BHD 145.000/-net

Promo period from 1st – 30th September 2023 Terms & conditions apply*

Kuwait 10th biggest world oil producer in 2022

Country's average daily production reach 3.028 million barrels

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 24: A report from Visual Capitalist revealed that Kuwait secured the tenth spot on the global list of leading oil producers in 2022. The country's average daily production reached 3.028 million barrels, accounting for 3.2% of the total worldwide oil production, which amounted to 93.848 million barrels per day. This average production represents a notable 12% increase from Kuwait's production levels in 2021, reports Al-Anba daily.

The report highlighted that during 2022, oil prices surged to their highest point, exceeding \$100 per barrel and marking the highest level in eight years. This spike followed a tumultuous year in energy markets due to the Russian-Ukrainian war.

As a result of the price surge, oil companies experienced a doubling of their profits, and the economies of the largest oil-producing nations gained significant momentum.

The Energy Institute's Statistical Review of World Energy report ranks the world's oil supplier countries as follows -- 1- The United States with 17.771 million barrels; 2- The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia with 12.136 million barrels; 3- Russia with 11.202 million barrels; 4- Canada with 5.576 million barrels; 5- Iraq with 4.502 million barrels; 6- China with 4.111 million barrels; 7- United Arab Emirates with 4.02 million barrels; 8- Iran with 3.822 million barrels; 9- Brazil with 3.107 million barrels and 10- Kuwait with 3.028 million barrels.

Hence, the United States solidified its position as the world's primary oil producer since 2018 and maintained its prominence in 2022 by achieving an output of approximately 18 million barrels per day. This figure translates to roughly 5% of the global oil supply. The majority of the nation's oil production is centralized in five key states: Texas, New Mexico, North Dakota, Alaska, and Colorado.

Following closely, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia secured the second position, boasting a production exceeding 12 million barrels per day, constituting approximately 13% of the worldwide supply. Russia secured the third spot with an oil production of 11 million barrels per day in 2022. These three major oil-producing nations, alongside Canada in fourth place and Iraq in fifth place, contribute to over half of the world's oil supplies.



Kuwaiti associations have been dispatching substantial aid to the afflicted abroad.



KUNA photos

'Revolution requires regulations'

Bioprinting could achieve major 'medical breakthroughs': IOMS

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 24, (KUNA): Bioprinting is a technology that could bring about major breakthroughs in the medical world, as it grants the ability to grow in labs human cells and organs with the very same shape and function, stated the Islamic Organization for Medical Sciences (IOMS) on Sunday.

Organization Chief Dr. Mohammad Al-Jarallah spoke while inaugurating symposium, "Bioprinting.. opportunities and challenges from an Islamic perspective" held over two days with participation of more than 15 states and 400 participants.

This technology, explained Dr. Al-Jarallah, is used in the treatment of unhealthy organs, tissues or cells to improve vital functions. This, he added, could save millions of people awaiting their treatment on donor waitlists.

It is a comprehensive biological process, employing the use of modern three-dimensional printing technologies, Al-Jarallah expounded saying that thus far they have successfully printed skin grafts,

outer ear tissue and liver tissue, while full organs printing remains in preliminary stages.

This congregation, he stated, aims to provide better healthcare while finding a fine-tuned balance between technological advancements, and ethical and legal principles.

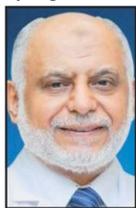
Director of World Health Organization for Middle East, Dr. Ahmad Al-Manthari, spoke of recent innovations in direct cell printing mechanisms and called for collecting and analyzing more data on cell and tissues donations.

As head of Islamic research complex at Al-Azhar, Nazir Ayad, he affirmed that bioprinting does not go against the principles of Islam, saying that it is a religion that supports the promotion of physical health.

He stated that while this pushes the world towards the precipice of medical revolution, it requires the implementation of tightly-woven regulations.

In this regard, former Jordanian Islamic affairs minister Abdunnasser Abu Albasal commented that this drives the Islamic nation to adapt to rapidly changing world and technologies.

Cardiologist Dr. Hanan Shamsi indicated that while it is a highly promising technology, it is faced with many technical challenges.



Dr Al-Jarallah

Dilemma of

Continued from Page 1

The mission of guidance and advice remains within its correct framework, when officials realize that continuing in this manner will cause Kuwait to lose the remaining benefits of its wealth, which will soon be depleted if dependence on oil remains the only and main source of income, and the revenues generated from fees does not become a source of national income.

Getting out of the impasse requires the state to develop primary and heavy industries as a first step towards starting a system to protect future generations, unless the intention is for our young people to become workers in other countries such as drivers and servants.

The solution, as more than one expert and observer has advised, lies in lifting subsidies and doing justice to those with low incomes, based on the principle of "taking must be matched by giving". This solution cannot see the light if the stakeholders and opportunists are the ones advising the decision-makers, while at the same time, they are the ones deciding, especially in the issue of loans that put pressure on a large segment of Kuwaitis, which means that the situation remains as it is.

The situation can neither improve, nor can Kuwait develop if we continue to have this type of appointments, poor decision-making, and confusion in the administration."

MP sounds

Continued from Page 1

MP Al Saqaabi wanted to know if the Central Bank received complaints from citizens and residents regarding the electronic fraud crimes that they have been exposed to. If yes, he wanted to know the number of such complaints received by the Central Bank in the last fiscal year.

He asked if the Central Bank conducted a study or investigated the issue to figure out the reasons behind the rise in such crimes.

MP Al-Saqaabi asked if the Central Bank launched media campaigns to raise public awareness about these crimes and ways to avoid being victimised. If so, he wanted to be pro-

vided with details of these campaigns.

He asked if the Central Bank needs special legislation to control such crimes and why it does not ask The Shared Electronic Banking Services Company (KNet) to adopt more advanced procedures to carry out payments along with the entry of password.

Meanwhile, MP Al-Saqaabi sent questions concerning the same issue to the State Minister of Municipal Affairs and State Minister for Communications Affairs Fahad Al-Shaula, asking if Communications and Information Technology Regulatory Authority (CITRA) has received complaints from citizens and residents concerning the fraud crimes committed against them through websites and applications. If so, he wanted to be provided with the number of such websites, applications and phone numbers that are prohibited and suspended because of such complaints in the last five years.

He also wanted to know if CITRA has conducted a study to unveil the reasons behind the spread of such electronic fraud crimes and to what extent the other public institutions are cooperating with CITRA to deal with these crimes.

Furthermore, MP Meteb Ayed Al-Anzi submitted parliamentary questions to the Minister of Justice and State Minister for Housing Affairs Faleh Al-Raqaba, asking about the number of lawsuits filed at the Ministers' Court and the number of acquittal rulings, if any, as well as the number of guilty rulings, if any.

In addition, MP Dawoud Marafie submitted parliamentary questions to the Minister of Information and Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Abdulrahman Al Mutairi, asking about the number of workers at Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs who were appointed based on contracts and wage system, and how many among them are Kuwaitis, children of Kuwaiti women, Bedoun residents and expatriates.

He wanted to know the actual demand of the ministry for national workers and the number of Kuwaiti graduates who have been appointed in the ministry since 2020.

MP Marafie asked if there are any vacancies in supervisory positions that have not yet been advertised to be filled.

He also wanted to know the number of Kuwaiti and expatriate consultants at the minister's office and in the offices of undersecretary and assistant undersecretaries of the ministry.

'No Mideast

Continued from Page 1

practice of holding the remains of alleged Palestinian attackers. There have been no serious or substantive peace talks in over a decade. Abbas is deeply unpopular among Palestinians, many of whom view his Palestinian Authority as a corrupt pillar of the status quo.

Also:

NOUR SHAMS REFUGEE CAMP: Two Palestinians were killed during an Israeli military raid Sunday in the northern West Bank, Palestinian health officials said, the latest bloodshed in a surge of violence during a sensitive Jewish holiday period.

The Israeli military said it moved into the Nour Shams refugee camp, near the town of Tulkarem, to destroy what it described as a militant command center and bomb-storage facility in a building.

Kuwait to

Continued from Page 1

The Minister cited similar projects in neighboring countries and proved to be successful.

"His Highness the Crown Prince has been clear in his instructions to establish renewable energy stations, and the MoU with the Chinese side served this purpose," said Al-Ostad.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah ended a constructive and productive visit to Hangzhou, during which Kuwait and China signed seven memoranda of understanding over wide-ranging vital projects, that would have positive impacts on development in Kuwait.

'Shaping a positive image'

Kuwait's humanitarian diplomacy portrays plentiful relief programs

By Nasser Al-Khamri

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 24, (KUNA): Kuwait's long record of humanitarian aid for the needy has become quite rich due to unaccountable relief programs and campaigns to relieve peoples suffering from poverty or entangled in repercussions of catastrophes.

Kuwaiti organizations and associations have scrambled for many years to respond to crises and disasters, adding a new concept in diplomatic work, the humanitarian diplomacy.

Anwar Al-Hasawi, the deputy chairman of Kuwait Red Crescent Society, affirmed in an interview with KUNA, marking the World Humanitarian Action Day (August 10), that Kuwait is highly visible on the international map for relief work, given enormity of the relief campaigns it has launched over many years.

Kuwait had to deal with two major recent catastrophes that afflicted Libya, ravaged with the devastating hurricane Daniel and Morocco that suffered a powerful quake rendering whole villages heaps of ruins.

As part of Kuwait's relief air bridge for Libya, at least five plane loads of supplies had been dispatched to the stricken country. Hamad Al-Aoun, the deputy director general of "Al-Salam" charity told KUNA that the association had dispatched detergents and chemical substances to fight viruses, amid fears that Libya might witness epidemics' outbreak due to rotting dead bodies, many still submerged in mud or drowned, particularly in Derna, the hardest hit region.

The tons of supplies included masks, beds, wheelchairs and other medical accessories, he said.

Abdullah Al-Traiji, Chairman of Kuwait Scout Association, declared that the society along with Arab counterpart associations have raised donations to relieve the victims in both Libya and Morocco.

Omar Al-Thuwaini, the general supervisor of the relief campaign, "fazaat al-maghrab," said 14 Kuwaiti societies joined hands to assist the quake victims in Libya. He indicated that the

aid included blankets and food parcels.

Meshari Al-Enezi, an official of "Al-Najat" charity, said the next phase of the humanitarian operation would be rebuilding houses, schools and medical centers. Moreover, the Kuwaiti embassy in Morocco organized a blood donation campaign for helping the injured.

Kuwait, since start of 2023, has established an air bridge sending 16 plane loads of tons of relief, medical and food supplies to the Sudanese people.

It had scrambled to relief hundreds of thousands of Rohingya who fled persecution in their country to Bangladesh where they ended up in impoverished camps. The ICRC Regional Head of Delegation for the Gulf Cooperation Council, Mamadou Sow, lauded Kuwait for backing the ICRC efforts to relieve the Rohingya.

Aftermath

In Turkey, the Kuwaiti medical team "shifaa" was present in the south of the country in the aftermath of the devastating earthquake that jolted the nation earlier this year. They had been present there attending to the needs of hundreds of thousands of Syrians who escaped war in their home country.

Dr. Husam Bechir, the head of a Kuwaiti team of surgeons, said the group arrived in Hatay, South Turkey, to follow-up on previous missions that had been undertaken by other Kuwaiti doctors with backing from Kuwait Zakat (alms) House.

The "shifaa" team has a record of executing relief missions in Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Gaza and Somalia. Up to 8,500 patients have been treated or given medical aid in these countries.

Also regarding the region, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and Sheikh Abdullah Nouri Charity signed a cooperation agreement for aiding Syrian refugees in Lebanon. The UNHCR acting representative in Kuwait, Maher Ishaqat, said in a statement the accord was the third to be inked with Abdullah Al-Nouri society, indicating that the two entities have become bonded with a strategic partnership and involved in joint fund raising for aiding the refugees in winter times.

The Kuwaiti good hands have been stretched for many miles across the region reaching Egypt, where Kuwait Office for Charitable Projects delivered 24 fishing boats and tools to limited-income Egyptian fishermen. Up to USD 30,000 had been granted by the Kuwaiti Al-Najat charity to assist fishermen who depended on ramshackle boats to earn bread.

For its part, the International Islamic Charity Organization distributed 11,000 sacrificed live stocks to 440,000 people in 25 countries. IT distributed sacrificial meat to the needy every year during Al-Adha eid. The granted meat reached people in need in Kuwait and many countries.

"Rahma around the world" launched a project in Gaza to aid cases of special needs -- with support from the Kuwaiti Al-Awqaf Secretariat General.

In the aftermath of the fiery blast that rendered Beirut port and nearby residential districts largely heaps of ruins, Kuwait Red Crescent Society renovated and reequipped the maternity ward of Al-Makassed Hospital. Kuwait had also given aid to other hospitals that were damaged in the explosion that affected wide sections of the Lebanese capital.

Khaled Al-Zaid, the KRCS director of public relations and media, said that the Kuwaiti humanitarian aid for many years helped in shaping a positive image of the State of Kuwait abroad. "Kuwait's diplomacy has constituted a soft power for the state especially that it has gained a humanitarian aspect," he said.

Al-Zaid, who was speaking during the Qatar Red Crescent celebration of International Day for Humanitarian Law in Doha, said the participants in the event discussed a task paper themed "media and the humanitarian diplomacy," shedding light on Kuwait as an oasis for good deeds.

The name Kuwait has become synonymous with humanitarian deeds, he said.

Heartened with Kuwait's generous assistance for peoples in need, the UN had designated it as the center for humanitarian action and the former Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah as the leader for humanitarian action.

عمليات الخفجي المشتركة

AL-KHAJFI JOINT OPERATIONS

الشركة الكويتية لنفط الخليج
KUWAIT GULF OIL COMPANY (K.S.C.)

أرامكو لأعمال الخليج
ARAMCO GULF OPERATIONS

TENDER ADVERTISEMENT

Aramco Gulf Operations Company Limited ("AGOC") and Kuwait Gulf Oil Company (K.S.C) ("KGOC"), (Al Khafji Joint Operations) invites intending bidders to participate for the **Tender No.: GT811PC23 Construction of Traffic Inspection Facilities.**

Each intending bidder may purchase the tender documents upon payment of **Saudi Riyals Five Hundred (SR 500) or Kuwaiti Dinars Forty (KD 40) only** which is non-refundable by visiting our Contracts Department at Al- Khafji, Saudi Arabia, or KGOC's Kuwait Office located in Al- Ahmadi, Tender & Contracts Section. The bidder may visit our KJO website: www.kjo.com.sa and follows the path; E- Services □ Tendering □ Contractors □ Ongoing Tenders to review part of tender documents, before purchasing.

The sale of Tender Documents will be effective from **September 25, 2023, until 12:00 Noon, October 11, 2023.**

Attending the Pre- Tender Meeting and Site Visit are Mandatory.

A Pre-Tender meeting will be held at KJO Auditorium, Office Park Building, at Al-Khafji Joint Operations, Saudi Arabia, **at 10:00 AM local time on October 11, 2023** A site visit will be held soon after the pre-tender Meeting.

The bid proposal shall be delivered by hand-delivery or thru courier service to the Contracts Department in Al- Khafji Joint Operations, Al- Khafji, Saudi Arabia on or before the closing date **14:00 Hours, Monday, November 13, 2023** of the time stipulated in the tender document.

For more Information, You May Contact The Following Nos.

Tel. No.: +966 (13) 765 5147 E- Mail: ctdtenders@kjo.com.sa
Website: www.kjo.com.sa

The Embassy of the United States of America Will Hold a Sealed Bid Auction

On September 29 - 30, 2023. Viewing and submission of the bids will be held from 8:00- 16:00, at American Embassy in Bayan, Al-Masjed Al-Aqsa Street, at the back gate. Opening of bids on October 1 Calling/Payment on October 2 and 3.

Collection of sold items from October 2 to 5, 2023. Sale items include used 40-foot freight containers, used furniture, office equipment, office machines, appliances, drapes, carpets, junk, and more. All items will be sold as is to the highest bidder, and sales will be in Kuwaiti Dinars (Cash or K-net).

For more information, please call:
22591263 - 22591264
22591094 - 22591115

experts set to convene for Bahrain's Fintech Forward 2023

Bahrain is gearing up to host the inaugural Fintech Forward 2023 (FF23) where the first day, October 11, 2023, will be programmed by Economist Impact. Set to be held at Exhibition World, Sakhir, under the patronage of the Central Bank of Bahrain (CBB) and in strategic partnership with Bahrain Economic Development Board (Bahrain EDB) with the support of Bahrain Fintech Bay (BFB), across the two key days of FF23, industry leaders in financial services and fintech will gather to share insights, discuss strategies, and debate the challenges - and opportu-

nities - that industry disruptors could bring to their businesses. Against a backdrop of immersive digital experiences, the conversations will be driven around the three key themes of the inaugural conference - Regulation, Investment, and Innovation.

FF23 aims to further promote Bahrain as a destination for all things fintech, encouraging idea generation and foreign investment opportunities through impactful conversations and sessions, profiling benefits for international companies considering putting down roots in Bahrain,

which is currently experiencing impressive economic growth and low inflation. Businesses operating in Bahrain gain insight from a workforce that combines highly skilled, bi-lingual, driven Bahraini nationals alongside a diverse talent pool offering a global perspective, leading to a better bottom line and sustainable growth.

With a 75-year track record of evidence-based policy spanning 205 countries, Economist Impact will be utilising its market-leading expertise in informed analysis to bring critical debates to life. (AP)

loan to support Syrians

Jordan and Germany signed a soft loan agreement worth 22.4m euros (USD 23.87 million), as support of Jordan's Ministry of Education in receiving Syrian students.

According to a statement published by Jordan's Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation on Friday, the soft loan will support salaries of teachers in public schools, for the academic year 2023-2024.

The agreement was signed by Jordanian planning minister Zeina

Toukan and German Reconstruction Bank and German Development Bank (KfW) Director Mark Schwiete.

The agreement is part of the education ministry's plan to provide the children of Syrian refugees with proper education, without affecting the quality of education for Jordanian students, said Toukan in a press statement.

Jordan hosts about 1.3 million Syrian refugees, half of them are registered under the UN. (KUNA)

Market Movements

24-09-2023

EGYPT	EGX 30	Change	Closing pts	Change	Closing pts
↑		+133.13	20,213.70	↓	

Business

Markets now pricing in two rate cuts next year

Central banks pause amid business conditions contraction

By National Bank of Kuwait

North America

Federal Funds Rate

The U.S. Federal Reserve left its benchmark interest rate unchanged at the target range of 5.25% to 5.50%, as widely expected by the market. The central bank signaled borrowing costs will likely stay higher for longer after one more hike this year. Twelve out of nineteen Fed officials said that they still expect to raise rates once more this year. Markets are now pricing in two rate cuts next year instead of the previously projected four rate cuts. Projections also showed that they expect inflation to fall below 3% next year and then return to their initial target of 2% by 2026. As inflation remains elevated, the overall sentiment given by the Fed was deemed hawkish as they repeated language on "extend of additional policy firming. All in all, the so called "soft landing" was a bit far-fetched 3 months ago, but now seems within reach.

U.S PMI

There was no significant change in U.S business activity as shown in the latest data to come out on Friday. Flash Manufacturing PMI rose from 47.9 previously to 48.9, remaining in contraction territory. Meanwhile, Flash Services PMI dropped slightly to 50.2, allowing the index to remain in expansion territory.

The U.S Dollar Index closed the week at 105.58.

Inflation in Canada

Inflation in Canada accelerated more than expected in August on the back of rising energy prices, with annual CPI coming in at 4% versus 3.3% in July. On a monthly basis, this represents a 0.4% increase versus estimates of a 0.2% rise. In their press release, governmental organization Statistics Canada stated, "In addition to facing higher energy prices, Canadians paid more for rent and mortgage interest in August." Following the release of inflation data, markets are pricing in a 56% chance of no hike for the upcoming Bank of Canada monetary policy meeting.

Europe

SNB Policy Rate

The Swiss National Bank kept its policy rate unchanged at 1.75%. The latest data in August showed that inflation had in fact declined in recent months and stood at 1.6%, thus downplaying the need for an interest rate hike by the SNB. The monetary policy tightening deployed by the SNB seems to have properly fought back against inflationary pressures so far, however, the SNB reiterated that further tightening can still come into play if deemed necessary.

HIGHLIGHTS

■ The U.S. Federal Reserve left its benchmark interest rate unchanged at the target range of 5.25% to 5.50%.

■ Inflation in Canada accelerated more than expected.

■ The Swiss National Bank kept its policy rate unchanged at 1.75%.

■ The Bank of England kept its bank rate unchanged at 5.25%, with the latest PMI data showing worrying signs to the BOE.

■ The Bank of Japan kept interest rates unchanged in its last meeting, as it fights to bring inflation to its 2% target.

Eurozone PMIs

As the latest PMI data comes out from the Eurozone, both services and manufacturing remain in contraction territory, and there seems to be no sign of growth anytime soon. The Eurozone's Composite PMI came in at 47.1 after it had reached 46.7 in August. The European Central Bank's vicious rate hike cycles seems to have taken its toll on the economy with the impact now being clearly felt. The ECB seems to have taken the approach of prioritizing inflation rather than the wellbeing of the economy, and they seem that they will continue that way until they reach their desired inflation target.

The EUR/USD currency pair closed the week at 1.0652.

United Kingdom

UK Inflation

Inflation in the United Kingdom fell more than expected coming in at 6.7% annually versus 6.8% previously. This represents an increase of 0.3% on a monthly basis. Expectations were that figures would come in at 7% annually and 0.7% monthly amid a rise in energy prices globally. The Office for National Statistics stated, "The largest downward contributions to the monthly change in both CPIH and CPI annual rates came from food, where prices rose by less in August 2023 than a year ago, and accommodation services, where prices can be volatile and fell in August 2023." Core CPI which excludes food and energy also fell drastically more than anticipated coming in at 6.2% from 6.9% previously. The Office for National Statistics explained the difference between headline and core figures citing "Rising prices

Rates - 21st May, 2023

Currencies	Previous Week Levels				This Week's Expected Range		3-Month
	Open	Low	High	Close	Minimum	Maximum	Forward
EUR	1.0661	1.0613	1.0736	1.0652	1.0500	1.0800	1.0700
GBP	1.2381	1.2229	1.2424	1.2238	1.2100	1.2500	1.2247
JPY	147.72	147.31	148.45	148.37	146.00	149.00	146.20
CHF	0.8959	0.8930	0.9078	0.9069	0.8900	0.9100	0.8977

for motor fuel led to the largest upward contribution to the change in the annual rates."

Bank Rate

The Bank of England kept its bank rate unchanged at 5.25%, after expectations had long been predicting a 25bps hike. The latest flash PMI data to come out on Friday, which the BOE had a sight of prior to its decision, showed a significant drop to 47.2 from 49.5 in August, showing clear signs of recession. The services sector dropped further into contraction and showed the lowest score since Global Financial Crisis when not taking covid times into account. As for employment, wages had been a major concern for inflation as they had been surging to high levels, however the latest data shows that employment has dropped to its lowest levels since 2009, and thus canceling out the concern of high wages. That, along with cooling inflationary pressures, must have been key behind the BOE's decision to pause rate hikes.

The GBP staggeringly dropped against the USD, with the currency pair closing the week at 1.2238.

Asia Pacific

China Loan Prime Rate

The People's Bank of China's one-year loan prime rate has been kept unchanged at 3.45%, while the five year loan prime rate was held at 4.2%, both in line with expectations. As recent economic data showed that the world's second largest economy is coming back from a sharp slowdown, policy makers believe that the need for immediate monetary easing can be neglected at this time.

Japan's Monetary Policy Statement

Expectedly, the Bank of Japan kept interest rates un-

changed in its last meeting, as it fights to bring inflation to its 2% target. Speaking about the decision, Governor Kazuo Ueda said "We have yet to foresee inflation stably and sustainably achieve our price target. That's why we must patiently maintain ultra-loose monetary policy." The BOJ believe that external factors, such as global oil prices, are adding onto inflation and thus believe that there should be no rush to exert stimulus into the economy. However, the BOJ reiterated that should they need to, they will "take additional easing measures without hesitation." Markets have seen the latest remarks by the BOJ as dovish, and that has allowed the Japanese Yen to depreciate further.

The Japanese Yen continues to weaken against the U.S. Dollar, with the pair closing at 148.37.

Commodities

Crude Oil

In commodities, global benchmark Brent crude rose towards \$95 a barrel as investors digest the prospect of a widening supply deficit after OPEC+ extended supply cuts. Saudi Arabia and Russia extended a combined 1.3 million barrels per day of supply cuts to the end of the year. Brent and WTI have gained ground for three consecutive weeks, and are on track for their biggest quarterly increases since Russia's invasion of Ukraine in

Q1 of 2022. Despite the supply cuts, demand concerns remain with China as the key risk due to its sluggish economic recovery.

Kuwait

Kuwaiti Dinar

USD/KWD closed last week at 0.30880.

Banks must verify integrity of funds, info: central bank

'Fulfill due diligence'

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 24: According to reliable sources, banks have consulted the opinion of the Central Bank of Kuwait regarding the required control mechanism for banking operations between the accounts of bank employees and customers, reports Al-Rai daily.

They revealed that the banks asked the supervisory regulator to provide them with the adequacy of the procedures followed by them to monitor the accounts of their employees, and whether the Central Bank has any directives that must be taken into account.

In this regard, the Central Bank of Kuwait stated that banks must fulfill due diligence requirements to verify the integrity of the funds and information available to them, either about the movement of customer or employee accounts, and compare it with their financial data recorded in the "Know Your Customer" form, to ensure the

extent of its consistency with the transactions executed on their accounts.

The Central Bank asked banks to rely on the instructions previously issued by it and amended in February, which specified the frameworks and concepts that banks must take into account when setting policies and work procedures that must be followed to verify compliance with fulfilling the requirements of the instructions for monitoring the accounts of their employees and customers.

The banks rely on the instructions of the Central Bank of Kuwait and their internal control systems for implementing oversight instructions on employees' and customers' accounts, especially with regard to unusual money flows to the client's accounts, irrespective of whether he is an employee or a client outside the bank.

The banks follow a more careful policy on employee accounts, in accordance with the instructions of the Central Bank. As soon as suspiciously high amounts enter the employees' accounts, the bank immediately inquires about the source of these funds, and seek evidence to confirm their legitimacy, especially if the liquidity flowing to the employee's account is high compared to the size of his salary and

traditional income rates.

The sources affirmed that banks generally review customers' account opening papers and review the negative lists before opening new accounts or conducting banking transactions with customers.

They said the banks audit the payments of funds received into the accounts, during which the equivalent of the usual income is taken into account, or proof of its legality is provided in the event that its level exceeds the traditional financial rates that enter the client's accounts, especially those that enter his accounts on a regular basis.

The sources highlighted that banks, in the context of their audit of the movement of funds into accounts either for employees or customers, are committed to all procedures, and apply the requirements of the law and instructions for combating money laundering and terrorism financing, including ensuring when opening the account that the official identification documents match the customer's ID.

They affirmed the banks' commitment to the Central Bank of Kuwait's close follow-up framework of developments in internal control trends at all established levels.

California bill to have human drivers ride in autonomous trucks vetoed by governor

SACRAMENTO, Calif. Sept 24, (AP): California Gov. Gavin Newsom has vetoed a bill to require human drivers on board self-driving trucks, a measure that union leaders and truck drivers said would save hundreds of thousands of jobs in the state.

The legislation vetoed Friday night would have banned self-driving trucks weighing more than 10,000 pounds (4,536 kilograms) - ranging from UPS delivery vans to massive big rigs - from operating on public roads unless a human driver is on board.

Lorena Gonzalez Fletcher, head of the California Labor Federation, said driverless trucks are dangerous and called Newsom's veto shocking. She estimates that removing drivers would cost a quarter million jobs in the state.

"We will not sit by as bureaucrats side with tech companies, trading our safety and jobs for increased corporate profits. We will continue to fight to make sure that robots do not replace human drivers and that technology is not used to destroy good jobs," Fletcher said in a statement late Friday.

In a statement announcing that he would not sign the bill, the Democratic governor said additional regulation of autonomous trucks was unnecessary because existing laws are sufficient.

Newsom pointed to 2012 legislation that allows the state Department of Motor Vehicles to work with the California Highway Patrol, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration "and others with relevant expertise to determine the regulations necessary for the safe

operation of autonomous vehicles on public roads."

Opponents of the bill argued self-driving cars that are already on the roads haven't caused many serious accidents compared to cars driven by people. Businesses say self-driving trucks would help them transport products more efficiently.

Union leaders and drivers said the bill would have helped address concerns about safety and losing truck driving jobs to automation in the future.

The bill coasted through the Legislature with few lawmakers voting against it. It's part of ongoing debates about the potential risks of self-driving vehicles and how workforces adapt to a new era as companies deploy technologies to do work traditionally done by humans.



United Auto Workers from Detroit join Local 12 members in solidarity as strikes continue on Stickney Avenue outside Stellantis Toledo Assembly Complex on Saturday, Sept. 23, 2023, in Toledo, Ohio. (AP)

Strategy also carries potentially significant risks

Auto workers still have room to expand strike

MICHIGAN, Sept 24, (AP): Even after escalating its strike against Detroit automakers on Friday, the United Auto Workers union still has plenty of leverage in its effort to force the companies to agree to significant increases in pay and benefits.

Only about 12% of the union's membership is so far taking part in the walkout. The UAW could, if it chose to, vastly expand the number of workers who could strike assembly plants and parts facilities of General Motors, Ford and Stellantis, the owner of the Jeep and Ram brands.

Yet the UAW's emerging strategy also carries potentially significant risks for the union. By expanding its strike from three large auto assembly plants to all 38 parts distribution centers of GM and Ford, the UAW risks angering people who might be unable to have their vehicles repaired at service centers that lack parts.

The union's thinking appears to be that by striking both vehicle production and parts facilities, it will force the automakers to negotiate a relatively quick end to the strike, now in its second week. To do so, though, some analysts say the union might have to act even more aggressively.

"We believe the next step for UAW is the more nuclear option - going for

a much more widespread strike on the core plants in and around Detroit," said Daniel Ives, an analyst with Wedbush Securities. "That would be a torpedo."

Sam Abuelsamid, an analyst at the consulting firm Guidehouse Insights, suggested that with so many workers and factories still running, the union has a number of options with which to squeeze the companies harder.

"They could add more assembly plants to the list," Abuelsamid said. "They could target more of the plants that are building the most profitable vehicles."

As examples, he mentioned a plant in Flint, Michigan, where GM builds heavy-duty pickups, and a Stellantis factory in Sterling Heights, Michigan, that produces Ram trucks.

All three companies said that talks with the union continued on Saturday, though officials said they expected no major announcements.

In Canada on Saturday, Ford workers began voting on a tentative agreement that their union said would increase base pay by 15% over three years and provide cost-of-living increases and \$10,000 ratification bonuses. The tentative deal was forged earlier this week, hours before a strike deadline.

The union, Unifor, said the deal, which covers 5,600 workers, also in-

cludes better retirement benefits. If the deal is ratified in voting that will end Sunday morning, the union will use it as a pattern for new contracts at GM and Stellantis plants in Canada.

In the United States, the UAW began its walkout more than a week ago by striking three assembly plants - one each at GM, Ford and Stellantis. In expanding the strike on Friday, the UAW struck only the parts-distribution centers of GM and Stellantis. Ford was spared from the latest walkouts because of progress that company has made in negotiations with the union, said UAW President Shawn Fain.

Striking the parts centers is designed to turn up pressure on the companies by hurting dealers who service vehicles made by GM and Stellantis, the successor to Fiat Chrysler. Service shops are a profit center for dealers, so the strategy could prove effective. Millions of motorists depend on those shops to maintain and repair their cars and trucks.

"It severely hits the dealerships, and it hurts the customers who purchased those very expensive vehicles in good faith," said Art Wheaton, a labor expert at Cornell University. "You just told all your customers, 'Hey we can't fix those \$50,000 to \$70,000 cars we just sold you because we can't get you the parts.'"

BUSINESS

Xiamen Airlines Chairman met with Qatar Airways Group CEO

On September 20th, Xiamen Airlines Chairman Zhao Dong met with Qatar Airways Group CEO Akbar Al Baker, marking one month until the launch of Xiamen Airlines Beijing Daxing/Xiamen to Doha route.

Zhao Dong shared that 2023 marks the 35th anniversary of diplomatic relations between China and Qatar, as well as the 10th anniversary of the Belt and Road initiative. Currently, Xiamen Airlines and Qatar Airways have developed comprehensive codeshare cooperation. Looking ahead, the two sides plan to deepen their partner-

ship, offering passengers more interactive and possibly even "direct selling" experiences to make air travel more entertaining. Together, Xiamen Airlines and Qatar Airways aim to provide a unique and enjoyable flying experience for passengers from Arab countries and China!

Akbar Al Baker gladly accepted Zhao's invitation to visit China and highlighted their comprehensive strategic cooperation, including the milestone of their first-ever codeshare partnership in China. He believed that Xiamen Airlines routes will seamlessly

connect with Qatar Airways' global network, offering passengers a richer selection of flights and seamless travel experiences.

In the spirit of this momentous collaboration, Xiamen Airlines has scheduled to operate regular routes between Beijing Daxing and Doha, as well as Xiamen and Doha from October 2023. The Beijing Daxing-Doha route will operate daily, while the Xiamen-Doha route will provide flights twice a week. Passengers can anticipate a world-class flying experience on Boeing 787 Dreamliners.



Xiamen Airlines Chairman Zhao Dong held a pivotal meeting with Qatar Airways Group CEO Akbar Al Baker in Los Angeles.

Microsoft's revamped \$69 bln deal for Activision gets closer to UK approval

Watchdog closer to reversing earlier decision

LONDON, Sept 24, (AP): British competition regulators signaled Friday that Microsoft's restructured \$69 billion deal to buy video game maker Activision Blizzard is likely to receive antitrust approval.

The Competition and Markets Authority said the revamped proposal "substantially addresses previous concerns" about stifling competition in the fast-growing cloud gaming market, which frees players from buying expensive consoles and gaming computers by streaming games to tablets, phones and other devices.

The updated offer "opens the door to the deal being cleared," the watchdog said, though there are lingering concerns. Microsoft has offered remedies that the watchdog provisionally decided will resolve those issues, and regulators are now getting feedback on those fixes before making a final decision.

The announcement shows the U.K. watchdog is closer to reversing its earlier decision to block Microsoft from taking over the maker of hit gaming franchises like Call of Duty and World of Warcraft, removing a final obstacle for one of the largest tech transactions in history.

"The CMA's position has been consistent throughout - this merger could only go ahead if competition, innovation and choice in cloud gaming was preserved," CEO Sarah Cardell said. "In response to our original prohibition, Microsoft has now substantially restructured the deal, taking the necessary steps to address our original concerns."

Since the deal was announced in January 2022, Microsoft has secured approvals from antitrust authorities covering more than 40 countries. Crucially, it got a thumbs-up from the 27-nation European Union after agreeing to allow users and cloud gaming platforms to stream its titles without paying royalties for 10 years.

But it hit a roadblock in Britain, where regulators feared Microsoft's pur-

chase of Activision would harm competition and hurt gamers.

The companies agreed to extend the original July deadline for the deal to close to mid-October to try to overcome the British regulator's objections. The CMA then put its original decision on hold and opened a new investigation into the revamped proposal.

Microsoft President Brad Smith said the company is "encouraged by this positive development" in the U.K. watchdog's review process.

"We presented solutions that we believe fully address the CMA's remaining concerns related to cloud game streaming, and we will continue to work toward earning approval to close prior to the October 18 deadline."

Under the restructured deal, Microsoft will sell off cloud streaming rights outside of the EU and three other European countries for all current and new Activision games released over the next 15 years to French game studio Ubisoft Entertainment.

What does it mean, who's hit and what's next?

US federal govt is headed into a shutdown

WASHINGTON, Sept 24, (AP): The federal government is heading toward a shutdown that will disrupt many services, squeeze workers and roil politics as Republicans in the House, fueled by hard-right demands for deep cuts, force a confrontation over federal spending.

While some government entities will be exempt - Social Security checks, for example, will still go out - other functions will be severely curtailed. Federal agencies will stop all actions deemed non-essential, and millions of federal employees, including members of the military, won't receive paychecks.

Here's a look at what's ahead if the government shuts down on Oct. 1.

What is a government shutdown?

A shutdown happens when Congress fails to pass some type of funding legislation that is signed into law by the president. Lawmakers are supposed to pass 12 different spending bills to fund agencies across the government, but the process is time-consuming. They often resort to passing a temporary extension, called a continuing resolution or CR, to allow the government to keep operating.

When no funding legislation is enacted, federal agencies have to stop all non-essential work and will not send paychecks as long as the shutdown lasts.

Although employees deemed essential such as air traffic controllers and law enforcement officers still have to report to work, other federal employees are furloughed. Under a 2019 law, those same workers are slated to receive backpay once the funding impasse is resolved.

When would a shutdown begin and how long will it last?

Government funding expires Oct. 1, the start of the federal fiscal year. A shutdown will effectively begin at 12:01 a.m. if Congress is not able to pass a funding plan that the president signs into law.

It is impossible to predict how long a shutdown would last. With Congress divided between a Democratic-controlled Senate and Republican-led House, and Speaker Kevin McCarthy's hard-right conservatives looking to use the shutdown as leverage for spending cuts, many are bracing for a stoppage that could last weeks.

Who does a shutdown affect?

Millions of federal workers face delayed paychecks when the government shuts down, including many of the roughly 2 million military personnel and more than 2 million civilian workers across the nation.

Nearly 60% of federal workers are stationed in the Defense, Veterans Affairs and Homeland Security departments.

Federal workers are stationed in all 50 states and have direct interaction with taxpayers -- from Transportation Security Administration agents who operate security at airports to Postal Service workers who deliver mail.

Some federal offices will also have to close or face shortened hours during a shutdown.

Beyond federal workers, a shutdown could have far-reaching effects on government services. People applying for government services like clinical trials, firearm permits and pass-

Huawei launches intelligent architecture and intelligent E&P solution for oil and gas industry

SHANGHAI, Sept 24, (PR Newswire): At HUAWEI CONNECT 2023, Huawei launched the intelligent architecture and intelligent E&P solution for the oil and gas industry.

Huawei's intelligent architecture for oil and gas is made up of six intelligent segments. Every segment involves hierarchical decoupling. The architecture is compatible with mainstream third-party frameworks and can interconnect with existing or newly built third-party platforms and data lakes.

Based on large models, users can take a differentiated approach to emerging intelligent needs. The unified intelligent architecture builds upon what the industry, partners, and Huawei have to offer, and can adapt to all kinds of business models.

Huawei's intelligent E&P solution integrates high-performance computing, massive data storage, AI exploration models, and collaborative scheduling of software and hardware resources. New technologies, like storage, high-performance computing platforms, AI, and cloud, help oil and gas enterprises achieve efficient and refined E&P research.

Huawei's E&P storage solution provides stable, reliable, secure, and high-performance storage devices to house it. It meets the storage performance needs of seismic data processing, interpretation, and reservoir numerical simulation, and shortens routine processing time by 30%.

Huawei's E&P cloud solution implements centralized data management and sharing based on the cloud, which allows customers to convert CAPEX to OPEX. The maximum processing area can be expanded from 400 km² to 2000 km², and the depth of the stratum that can be processed is increased from 5 km to 8 km, greatly improving seismic processing and interpretation efficiency.

Huawei provides an AI platform that lends services to seismic data processing and interpretation, oil and gas reservoir identification by well logging, and pumping well condition diagnosis. The modeling period of seismic exploration

could see delays. Businesses closely connected to the federal government, such as federal contractors or tourist services around national parks, could see disruptions and downturns. The travel sector could lose \$140 million daily in a shutdown, according to the U.S. Travel Industry Association.

Lawmakers also warn that a shutdown could rattle financial markets. Goldman Sachs has estimated that a shutdown would reduce economic growth by 0.2% every week it lasted, but growth would then bounce back after the government reopens.

Others say the disruption in government services has far-reaching impacts because it shakes confidence in the government to fulfill its basic duties. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce warned, "A well-functioning economy requires a functioning government."

What about court cases, the work of congress and presidential pay?
The president and members of Congress will continue to work and get paid. However, any members of their staff who are not deemed essential will be furloughed.

The judiciary will be able to continue to operate for a limited time using funds derived from court filings and other fees, as well as other approved funding.

Notably, funding for the three spe-



Huawei's intelligent architecture for oil and gas

plements centralized data management and sharing based on the cloud, which allows customers to convert CAPEX to OPEX. The maximum processing area can be expanded from 400 km² to 2000 km², and the depth of the stratum that can be processed is increased from 5 km to 8 km, greatly improving seismic processing and interpretation efficiency.

Huawei provides an AI platform that lends services to seismic data processing and interpretation, oil and gas reservoir identification by well logging, and pumping well condition diagnosis. The modeling period of seismic exploration

could see delays. Businesses closely connected to the federal government, such as federal contractors or tourist services around national parks, could see disruptions and downturns. The travel sector could lose \$140 million daily in a shutdown, according to the U.S. Travel Industry Association.

Lawmakers also warn that a shutdown could rattle financial markets. Goldman Sachs has estimated that a shutdown would reduce economic growth by 0.2% every week it lasted, but growth would then bounce back after the government reopens.

Others say the disruption in government services has far-reaching impacts because it shakes confidence in the government to fulfill its basic duties. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce warned, "A well-functioning economy requires a functioning government."

What about court cases, the work of congress and presidential pay?
The president and members of Congress will continue to work and get paid. However, any members of their staff who are not deemed essential will be furloughed.

The judiciary will be able to continue to operate for a limited time using funds derived from court filings and other fees, as well as other approved funding.

Notably, funding for the three spe-

cially appointed by Attorney General Merrick Garland would not be affected by a government shutdown because they are paid for through a permanent, indefinite appropriation, an area that's been exempted from shutdowns in the past.

That means the two federal cases against Donald Trump, the former president, as well as the case against Hunter Biden, the son of President Joe Biden, would not be interrupted. Trump has demanded that Republicans fund the prosecutions against him as a condition of funding the government, declaring it their "last chance" to act.

Has this happened before?

Prior to the 1980s, lapses in government funding did not result in government operations significantly shutting down. But then-U.S. Attorney General Benjamin Civiletti, in a series of legal opinions in 1980 and 1981, argued that government agencies cannot legally operate during a funding gap.

Federal officials have since operated under an understanding they can make exemptions for functions that are "essential" for public safety and constitutional duties.

Since 1976, there have been 22 funding gaps, with 10 of them leading to workers being furloughed. But most of the significant shutdowns have taken place since Bill Clinton's presidency, when then-Speaker Newt Gingrich and

his conservative House majority demanded budget cuts.

The longest government shutdown happened between 2018 and 2019 when then-President Trump and congressional Democrats entered a stand-off over his demand for funding for a border wall. The disruption lasted 35 days, through the holiday season, but was also only a partial government shutdown because Congress had passed some appropriations bills to fund parts of the government.

What does it take to end a shutdown?
It's the responsibility of Congress to fund the government. The House and Senate have to agree to fund the government in some way, and the president has to sign the legislation into law.

Congress often relies on a so-called continuing resolution, or CR, to provide stopgap money to open government offices at current levels as budget talks are underway. Money for pressing national priorities, such as emergency assistance for victims of natural disasters, is often attached to a short-term bill.

But hardline Republicans say any temporary bill is a non-starter for them. They are pushing to keep the government shut down until Congress negotiates all 12 bills that fund the government, which is historically a laborious undertaking that isn't resolved until December, at the earliest.

Maersk's new dual-fuel vessel - to be powered in part by green methanol - is small and plans to operate in the Baltic Sea, but Maersk may be using this vessel as a prototype for larger alternative-fuel container ships expected to be delivered next year. Evergreen, also among the world's larger shipping companies, has ordered 24 dual-fueled methanol ships.

Purchases like Maersk's and Evergreen's are an indication that the maritime industry will be moving in the direction of greener fuels. They also indicate that the industry is willing to follow the IMO's focus on well-to-wake emissions, meaning not just emissions

from ship operations but also from fuel production.

The other significant challenge faced by the maritime industry is having a sufficient supply chain available to support dual-fueled vessels, which can operate on alternative fuels.

There are currently a limited number of ports worldwide with the necessary infrastructure to provide alternative fuels. But, here again, simple economics suggests that if there is enough demand, supply should follow.

With Maersk, Evergreen and others preparing to operate more dual-fuel container ships, the industry is demonstrating demand so the green-methanol supply chain can develop, and hopefully soon. Japan recently launched its first dual-fueled LNG bunkering ship - essentially a floating gas station - to develop the supply of LNG fuel.

The new IMO strategy has some big caveats: The goals are nonbinding, and the strategy explicitly encourages compliance when "national circumstances allow." In other words, no nation-state will be under any legal obligation to comply.

The statement seems to have been included as a means to appear focused on achieving goals while placating some countries that may not be able or willing to meet the goals by 2030 or beyond.

It's also unclear whether the "national circumstance" pertains to a physical nation-state, to flag registry - meaning where the ship is registered - or both. Many ships are registered in countries with weaker regulations. Adding such language appears to say that the IMO is serious about emissions and understands that some countries may have significant challenges to meet the standards. It also gets around opposition to a carbon levy, or tax on emissions, which some delegates - China for example - adamantly opposed.

Many countries, such as the U.S., United Kingdom, Australia and those in the European Union, will work to meet the strategy, I believe. The EU is already launching its own carbon levy on shipping beginning in 2024.

One factor that the IMO, most analysts and environmentalists rarely discuss is the additional cost of using an alternative fuel.

By some estimates, green methanol costs three times as much as low-sulfur fuel oil. And low-sulfur fuel oil is more expensive than high-sulfur fuel oil. The maritime research company Drewry estimated that switching to methanol on a well-to-wake basis would increase fuel costs by 350%, or equal to approximately an additional \$1,000 for each 40-foot-long shipping container aboard.

Shipping lines will soon also face higher costs from the European Union if they don't clean up their emissions. Starting in 2024, the EU Emissions Trading System will cover all cargo and passenger ship voyages in EU waters and ports involving over 5,000 gross tons, regardless of where the ship is registered. The costs to those with high emissions are expected to significantly increase the operating costs for the global shipping fleet.

Hecla Emissions Management, a consulting arm set up by Wilhelmsen Ship Management and Affinity Shipping, analyzed the three-year phase-in period for just the EU change and expects it to cost the shipping industry nearly \$19 billion.

Whether we like it or not, these additional costs will be borne by the cargo owners, who will pass the costs along to their customers - and, ultimately, the consumer, meaning you and me. (AP)

The Conversation

Global shipping has a new climate strategy

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

By Don Maier
University of Tennessee

The world's largest shipping companies are starting to update their fleets for a greener future. Maersk received the world's first dual-fuel methanol container ship in July 2023, and dozens more container ships that can run on alternative fuels are currently on order.

The industry - responsible for about 3% of global greenhouse gas emissions, more than Canada and Ireland combined - has reasons to act and to have some confidence in its multimillion-dollar investments.

On July 7, the 175 member countries of the International Maritime Organization, a United Nations agency that regulates global shipping, agreed to a new climate strategy that includes reaching net-zero greenhouse gas emissions "by or around, i.e., close to, 2050."

The strategy's language is vague, obscure and almost noncommittal. But it points the industry toward a cleaner future. New European Union rules will also soon go into effect that will significantly raise costs for ships burning highly polluting sulfur fuel oil.

I spent several years working in the shipping industry and follow it as a researcher and analyst. Here's what I see changing.

The new IMO strategy does not explicitly set a new fuel standard, but it seems to indicate that less reliance on cheap, environmentally harmful, heavy-sulfur fuel oil is the best direction, and possibly less use of low-sulfur fuel oil.

What the strategy does is set goals to reduce international shippings' greenhouse gas emissions by at least 20% by 2030, compared with 2008 levels; by at least 70% by 2040; and to reach net-zero emissions around 2050. The IMO also commits to implement a greenhouse gas emissions-pricing mechanism - a carbon levy or tax - by 2027, and to develop a goal-based marine fuel standard. At this time, that's the only direction the IMO has provided regarding the emissions-pricing mechanism.

While the new strategy may not have been as clear or restrictive as many people hoped, the IMO may be providing the maritime industry an opportunity to set the direction itself.

A number of large ship owners and operators have already built and placed orders for container ships with some sort of alternative fuel use, primarily methanol or liquefied natural gas, and there is some interest in hydrogen. LNG is still a fossil fuel, though it's less polluting than traditional sulfur fuel oil. Methanol, however, can be made from either natural gas or renewable sources.

Maersk's new dual-fuel vessel - to be powered in part by green methanol - is small and plans to operate in the Baltic Sea, but Maersk may be using this vessel as a prototype for larger alternative-fuel container ships expected to be delivered next year. Evergreen, also among the world's larger shipping companies, has ordered 24 dual-fueled methanol ships.

Purchases like Maersk's and Evergreen's are an indication that the maritime industry will be moving in the direction of greener fuels. They also indicate that the industry is willing to follow the IMO's focus on well-to-wake emissions, meaning not just emissions

Japan's central bank keeps ultra-low rates policy

TOKYO, Sept 24, (KUNA): Japan's central bank decided on Friday to maintain its ultra-low interest rates policy.

At a two-day policy meeting, Bank of Japan's (BOJ) Governor Kazuo Ueda and his eight board colleagues agreed to keep short-term interest rates at minus 0.1 percent and guiding 10-year gov-

ernment bond yields around zero percent within the 0.5 percent cap, according to a statement released by the BOJ.

"The bank will continue to maintain the stability of financing, mainly of firms, and financial markets, and will not hesitate to take additional easing measures if necessary," it said. The central bank also said it

will continue to offer to purchase 10-year Japanese government bonds at an effective ceiling of 1.0 percent in fixed-rate operations every business day, the new upper limit it adopted in July.

Meanwhile, the BOJ said the world's third-largest economy is likely to continue recovering moderately for the time being, although

it is expected to be under downward pressure stemming from a slowdown in the pace of recovery in overseas economies.

Thereafter, as a virtuous cycle from income to spending gradually intensifies, Japan's economy is projected to continue growing at a pace above its potential growth rate," it said.

التجاري
Al-Tijari

Be more than a Millionaire with Al-Najma

1,500,000 KD

CBK Al Najma Account Prize winner

Al-Tijari announces the winner of Al Najma Account

Commercial Bank of Kuwait conducted the weekly draw for Al Najma Account on Sunday September 24, 2023. The draws were conducted in the presence of Ministry of Commerce and Industry representative Mr. Mansour Al-Thafeeri. The result of the draw was as follows: 1. Al Najma weekly draw – the prize of 5,000/- Kuwaiti Dinars went to the winner Mr. Bishouy Saber Attallah Eissa. The Bank stated that Al Najma Account prizes are distinguished by the highest

cash prize and diversity of prizes throughout the year clarifying that the account offers weekly prize of KD 5,000/-, monthly prize of KD 20,000/- and a semi-annual prize of KD 500,000 in addition to the largest prize – linked bank account payout of KD 1,500,000. Al-Najma Account can be opened by depositing KD 500, and customer should maintain a minimum amount of KD 500 to be eligible to enter all draws on Al-Najma Account prizes. As for the chances of

winning, the more balance a customer maintains in Al Najma Account, the more chances the account holder will get to win, the account also offers additional benefits like the ATM card, a credit card against customer's account and all CBK banking services that customer can enjoy. The Bank revealed that Al Najma account is available to everyone, and anyone can open Al Najma account through CBK mobile application in simple steps from anywhere and at any time.

ABK partners with Behbehani Motors Company to offer exclusive discounts on Volkswagen vehicles

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 24: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) is delighted to announce a new collaboration with Behbehani Motors Company, a leading automotive dealership in Kuwait, to provide customers with exclusive discounts on select Volkswagen car models.



Ms. Johair Marafi Acting General Manager of Retail Banking at ABK.

As part of this partnership, customers can enjoy significant savings of up to KD 1,600 on the Golf GTI, Tiguan, and T-Roc 2023 models, in addition to 5 years of free maintenance, road assistance, and warranty (terms and conditions apply). This exciting joint venture combines ABK's commitment to offering exceptional value and Volkswagen's expertise in the automotive industry.

Volkswagen vehicles offer a multitude of advantages that make them a popular choice. Renowned for their commitment to quality and craftsmanship, they are built with meticulous attention to detail complemented by cutting-edge technology,

ensuring durability, reliability, and long-term satisfaction. Additionally, Volkswagen cars are known for their advanced safety features, providing drivers and passengers with a secure driving experience.

ABK understands the importance of providing its customers with access to high-quality products and services that enhance their lifestyle and meet their evolving needs. By teaming up with Volkswagen Kuwait, ABK aims to deliver excellent value and an unparalleled car buying experience.

Johair Marafi, Acting General Manager of Retail Banking at ABK, expressed her enthusiasm about the partnership, saying, "At ABK, we strive to constantly enhance our offerings and add value for our customers. Our collaboration with Volkswagen Kuwait allows us to go above and beyond by extending exclusive discounts on these popular models. We are thrilled to bring significant savings and exceptional benefits to our valued customers."

Alongside the discounted prices, customers who take advantage of this limited-time offer will enjoy a range of additional benefits that

provide peace of mind and ensure they receive comprehensive support throughout their experience.

Marafi added, "I would like to thank Volkswagen Kuwait for their collaboration with ABK. Their commitment to quality, innovation, and customer satisfaction correspond with our values and we look forward to a successful campaign together."

ABK remains steadfast in its vision and determination to remain a leading financial institution that consistently surpasses customer expectations. Through the establishment of strategic alliances and the provision of unique benefits, ABK continuously delivers remarkable value and a tailored banking journey for its clients.

To avail this exclusive offer, customers are encouraged to visit to the Volkswagen Kuwait showroom where a dedicated ABK staff member will be ready provide assistance with their inquiries to ensure a seam-

less experience.

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 offers a wide array of personal, corporate, and private banking products and services. ABK also provides a broad range of local, regional, and global investment solutions and services through its subsidiary, ABK Capital.

Across the region, the Bank offers individuals and corporates the convenience of comprehensive banking and financial services in the Egyptian market through ABK-Egypt's network of 44 branches.

This is in addition to ABK's three branches located in Dubai, Abu Dha-

bi, and Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC) in the United Arab Emirates, servicing both Kuwaiti and Emirati individual and corporate clients.

ABK is a strong supporter of Central Bank of Kuwait and Kuwait Banking Association's 'Let's Be Aware' awareness campaign. Through its various initiatives, the Bank aims to promote financial inclusion by educating Kuwaiti society about customer rights, responsibilities, and the different types of banking and special needs services. Additionally, ABK consistently provides strategic information on how to avoid banking and financial fraud, loan application requirements, digital services, and more.

For more information about ABK, 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.

stc continues its 'inspireU' initiative



Participants of the stc 'inspireU' initiative pose for a group photo.

Shortlisted 3 start-ups based on a set criteria

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 24: Kuwait Telecommunications Company – stc, a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and platforms to customers, enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, is pleased to continue the activities of the first phase of the 'inspireU' initiative, an entrepreneurial state-of-the-art incubator and accelerator designed to support start-ups and SMEs. 'InspireU' in Kuwait falls under stc's 'Weyak' umbrella that focuses on supporting Kuwaiti SMEs and start-ups as well as other Kuwait-based innovative concepts.

As this the 10th intake of inspireU program hosted by stc, 3 start-ups were selected from the Kuwaiti market based on the criteria defined under the program to be among the 20 companies participating in the tenth edition of the inspireU program.

Following the selection process, the start-ups will then go through a rigorous 6-month training camp in order to accelerate their growth and define the key objectives that will propel their business models forward. Additionally, the start-ups will visit the inspireU location in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia where they will attend intensive courses that will assist them in reaching their desired growth trajectories.

InspireU provides entrepreneurs with workspaces in both Kuwait and Saudi Arabia and assists in obtaining permits and licenses for winning projects in addition to providing practical guidance and targeted trainings. Winning projects will have access to several networking opportunities through participation and visits to international conferences. In addition, inspireU provides financial support to enable start-ups to realize their ideas and dreams.

Danah AlJasem, General Manager of Corporate Communications at stc, said, "It brings us great joy to shortlist the 3 winning projects in our first edi-



Danah AlJasem.

tion of the inspireU program in Kuwait which is a program that has been running for 10 years by stc group. "inspireU" falls in line with the core objectives behind our 'Weyak' SME and entrepreneurship initiative, as stc is a strong supporter of Kuwaiti SMEs and start-ups, especially those who implement their digital transformation strategies to innovate and streamline their operations."

AlJasem added "We are proud to launch "inspireU" in Kuwait and to witness the successful turnout of this initiative, and we would like to congratulate and wish the shortlisted projects the best of luck in their training camp and overall journey."

AlJasem concluded, "stc has designed an innovative CSR framework that enables the Company to support various projects and initiatives within Kuwait, while playing a role in stimulating the economy. Amongst the key pillars defined under our CSR program, we have dedicated a special focus on empowering entrepreneurs, SMEs and start-ups in different ways, such as the inspireU program. We believe in the true potential behind these ventures, and the constructive role they can play in making lasting and sustainable differences within our community. Moving forward, stc will continue to leverage its network and expertise to organize platforms that can bolster these ventures by providing supportive outlets for long-term success."

Cadre 1



Rami Abu Jaber – VeryAlity.

Name: **Rami Abu Jaber**
Project Name: VeryAlity
About VeryAlity:
The first platform of its kind that connects smartwatches with video game characters. Users can upgrade their game characters by exercising in real life.

Our experience with InspireU:
We received interest from various investors, worked with major companies, and participated in one of the largest video game conventions in the world, all in just the first week! The program exceeded all our expectations.

Cadre 2
Founder: **Ali Abbas**
Co-founder: **Mehdi Al-Mousawi**
Project Name: Sparts
About the Program: Keep your car safe with "Sparts"!
Overview:
"Sparts" App: The first application in Kuwait for car services and spare parts

The "Sparts" app represents a revolutionary step in the car services and spare parts industry in Kuwait. Thanks to the power of technology and continuous development, the app offers a reliable platform that meets a range of car-related needs.

Our experience with InspireU:
We are deeply grateful to the InspireU team for their boundless generosity. They provided us with a professional work environment, with valuable trainings from day one. We are confident that success and excellence will be the fruits of this dedication.



Khalid Al Busairi – Delicon Logistics Solutions.

Cadre 3
Name: **Khalid Al Busairi**
Delicon Logistics Solutions
Overview:
Delicon Logistics Solutions is a cloud platform that assists companies in managing local delivery orders, shipments, storage, and e-commerce. It also offers software solutions for logistics service providers.

Quote:
We are pleased with our decision to participate in the InspireU program. As a founder of a startup, I see it as a rare and exceptional opportunity that has allowed us to accelerate our growth, access invaluable resources, and connect with a network of mentors and fellow entrepreneurs. This experience truly changed the game for our company, propelling us towards success in ways we couldn't have achieved on our own.

The Company has supported the SME segment by providing easier access to a range of tools that can support the stimulation of organic growth in cost-efficient ways. In support of the sector, stc collaborated with various entities and organized numerous activities that aimed to shed light on the achievements of local entrepreneurs, SMEs, and start-ups in Kuwait. To support the surrounding community and empower the youth, stc is always keen to collaborate with both the private and public sectors to create a wider impact in supporting the local economy by backing innovative initiatives

AU students achieve 3rd place at the Carbon Neutrality Cup Competition

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 24: Petroleum Engineering students from Australian University (AU) recently participated in the inaugural Neutrality Cup Competition organized by the Gulf Petrochemicals and Chemicals Association (GPCA). The event, themed "Shaping a Sustainable Future with Innovative Solutions", was held in Bahrain. AU's team made their mark, clinching the third spot in this prestigious and innovative competition. The AU team consisted of students, Faisal Al Balool and Abdullah Al Rabaie, supervised by Dr. Jean El Achkar, Assistant Professor of Petroleum Engineering at AU.

The competition, which took place from the 5th to the 7th of September 2023 in Manama, gathered industrialists, stakeholders, and participants from 15 prominent universities across the GCC region. Initiated by the GPCA Youth Council, the GPCA Carbon Neutrality Cup aims to foster the development of science-based carbon neutrality solutions, bridging the gap between the chemical industry and academia. In its inaugural edition, the competition garnered several innovative projects from senior undergraduate and postgraduate STEM students from various universities across the GCC region.

The students' journey involved presenting their projects in a presentation session by delivering a 10-minute oral presentation before a substantial audience, which in-



The winners with Dr Jean.

cluded an eminent panel of industry experts who critically evaluated their work by engaging in discussions and inquiries, and thus enhancing the competitive spirit of the event.

Reflecting on this achievement, Dr. El Achkar said: "The achievement signifies the culmination of the dedicated research efforts of AU towards integrating its students into faculty-led research initiatives and has yielded outstanding outcomes, the competition brought together STEM students, industry leaders and academia to share knowledge and inspire one another. I congratulate our students and all participants and wish them all a successful future."

HSBC Kwt appoints Ahmed Al Murad as the Head of Wholesale Banking

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 24: HSBC Kuwait has appointed Ahmed Al Murad as the Head of Wholesale Banking, following the approval from the Central Bank of Kuwait, to deliver the bank's growth agenda.

Ahmed has been leading the Global Banking team in HSBC Kuwait for the past 2 years and with this new role his responsibilities will expand to cover the Commercial Banking as well.

Ahmed will focus on leveraging HSBC's strength as the largest international bank in the country, connecting large corporates, multinationals and government related entities to international markets, and supporting global businesses seeking to grow their business in Kuwait.

"We are building a team of expert bankers in HSBC Kuwait to support our clients in country and help drive their global growth ambitions and Ahmed's extensive experience in banking and finance, along with his local knowledge, ideally places him to do exactly that," said Julian Wentzel, Head of Global Banking, MENAT.

Samer Alabed, CEO of HSBC in Kuwait said: "The investment in a robust wholesale banking team is key to optimising our competitive advantage in our next phase of growth. With Ahmed's leadership we will continue to offer market leading banking products and services and connect our customers to global expertise in over 60 countries and territories worldwide."



Ahmed Al Murad, Head of Wholesale Banking.

Media enquiries to:
Mai Salem +974 55576008
maisalem@hsbc.com
Notes to the editors:
HSBC in the MENAT region
HSBC is the largest and most widely represented international banking organisation in the Middle East, North Africa and Türkiye (MENAT), with a presence in nine countries across the region: Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Türkiye and the United Arab Emirates. In Saudi Arabia, HSBC is a 31% shareholder of Saudi Awwal Bank (SAB), and a 51% shareholder of HSBC Saudi Arabia for investment banking in the Kingdom. Across MENAT, HSBC had assets of US\$71bn as at 31 December 2022.

global sustainability at the forefront at WIF

Recognizing sustainability as the defining challenge of our time, the upcoming UNCTAD World Investment Forum (WIF), to be held from 16 to 20 October 2023 in the UAE's capital Abu Dhabi, will serve as the perfect opportunity to facilitate the transition to a more sustainable economy, particularly for developing countries.

The 8th edition of the Forum, to be anchored on the overall

theme of "Investing in Sustainable Development," will bring together heads of state and ministers, CEOs of largest global companies, and other investment stakeholders from various countries to formulate policies and strategies that will address key and emerging investment-development challenges through a series of local and international forums and conferences.

Over 7,000 investment stake-

holders from 160 countries will be participating in the 8th edition of WIF at the Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre (ADNEC).

The UAE hosting WIF this year coincides with the country's declaration of the year 2023 as the "Year of Sustainability," which will encourage nationwide commitment to sustainable practices and innovative solutions to help address environmental issues on a global scale. (AP)

ads coming to Amazon Prime Video: \$2.99 opt-out fee

Amazon Prime Video will include advertising during shows and movies starting early next year, joining other streaming services that have added different tiers of subscriptions.

Members of Amazon Prime can pay \$2.99 per month in the U.S. to keep their service ad-free, the company said Friday.

Streaming services are in a heated tug-of-war over viewers and users are growing more

adept at jumping in and out of those services, often depending on price. The platforms risk losing customers with price hikes, but they could lose them if they don't generate new content that wins over users.

Disney will begin charging \$13.99 a month in the U.S. for ad-free Disney+ in mid-October, 75% more than the ad-supported service. Netflix already charges \$15.49 per month for its ad-

free plan, more than twice the monthly subscription for Netflix with ads.

Amazon said limited advertisements will be aired during shows and movies starting early next year so that it can "continue investing in compelling content and keep increasing that investment over a long period of time."

Live events on Amazon Prime, like sports, already include advertising. (AP)

Top global leaders to descend on Riyadh

World Tourism Day 2023: Saudi Arabia unveils speaker lineup

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia, Sept. 24: Details of the speaker lineup have been revealed for this year's World Tourism Day (WTD), to be held in Riyadh from 27th - 28th September. With more than 500 government officials, industry leaders and experts from across 120 countries set to descend on Riyadh for the event, the level of attendance demonstrates the significance of WTD 2023 in charting the future of the global tourism sector's growth.

The breadth of high-level speakers showcases the collective impetus across industry to celebrate the sector's successes while exploring solutions to its most pressing challenges. Speakers announced today include:

António Guterres, UN Secretary General, said: "Tourism is a powerful force for progress and mutual understanding. But in order to deliver its full benefits, this force must be protected

and nurtured. On this World Tourism Day, we recognize the vital need for green investments to build a tourism sector that delivers for people and planet. So let us all do more to harness the full potential of sustainable tourism. Because investing in sustainable tourism is investing in a better future for all."

WTD 2023 will be held under the theme "Tourism and Green Investments" with the aim of fostering global collaboration to examine investment opportunities to strengthen resilience of the tourism industry, steering the sector towards an investment-led and sustainably focused future. The two-day event will see tourism leaders participate in keynote speeches and panel discussions centered around three UNWTO core themes: people, planet and prosperity. Participants will explore the power of tourism and the sector's role in bridging

cultures, preserving the environment, and promoting a more harmonious and interconnected world.

The first day will explore the UNWTO theme of 'Tourism and Green Investments' through panels ranging from the power of tourism in building bridges; investing in human capabilities; the potential of less-traversed tourism destinations; challenges and solutions in achieving a sustainable future; to bridging the innovation gap and powering entrepreneurship. On the evening of the first day, a gala dinner will be hosted in Saudi Arabia's UNESCO heritage site Diriyah, as a celebration of WTD 2023.

Session

The Tourism Leaders Forum will be held on the second day under the theme 'Tourism for People, Prosperity and Intercultural Dialogue'. A public

sector session will examine the sustainable future for the industry, while a private sector session will explore seamless end-to-end travel. A WTD 2024 handover session will also be conducted between Saudi Arabia and Georgia, ahead of Georgia's hosting of the event next year.

The scale of the event being hosted in Riyadh showcases the importance attached by the Saudi government to the development of the global tourism sector. The Kingdom was elected Chair of the Executive Council of the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) for 2023, and hosted the World Travel and Tourism Council's Global Summit in Riyadh last year.

According to the recent UNWTO Barometer Report, the Middle East reported the best results in January-July 2023, with arrivals 20% above pre-

pandemic levels. The region continues to be the only to exceed 2019 levels so far, with Saudi witnessing extraordinary double-digit growth at (+58%).

Policies

About The Ministry of Tourism Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Tourism was founded in 2020, following the opening of Saudi Arabia to international tourists in 2019. The Ministry spearheads the Kingdom's Vision to bring Saudi tourism to the forefront. Its endeavors align with the Kingdom's ambitious goals, aiming to create 1 million jobs for its citizens, enable accelerated and sustainable growth with future-focused policies, investments, and talent development guided by data, receive 100 million tourism visits by 2030, and amplify the sector's GDP contribution from 3% to 10%. In doing so, the Ministry of Tourism issues

licenses and classifications for tourism activities and creates and approves tourist visa regulations.

About UNWTO The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) is the United Nations specialized agency for fostering tourism as a vehicle for equal, inclusive and sustainable development. Working with its Member States, international organizations and the private sector, UNWTO promotes safe and seamless travel for all. UNWTO also works to make tourism the foundation of trust and international cooperation and a central pillar of growth and opportunity. As part of the wider UN system, UNWTO is at the forefront of global efforts to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including through its ability to create decent jobs, promote equality and preserve natural and cultural heritage.



A train passes the construction site of the High Speed 2 (HS2) rail line at Euston station in London, Tuesday, Feb. 11, 2020. The British government confirmed Sunday, Sept. 24, it may scrap a big chunk of an overdue, over-budget high-speed rail line once touted as a key way to attract jobs and investment to northern England. (AP)

Costs make govt think twice

High-speed rail was touted as game-changer in Britain

LONDON, Sept 24, (AP) - The British government confirmed Sunday it may scrap a big chunk of an overdue and over-budget high-speed rail line once touted as a way to attract jobs and investment to northern England.

British media reported that an announcement is expected this week that the line will end in Birmingham - 100 miles (160 kilometers) from London - rather than further north in Manchester.

The Conservative government insists no final decision has been made about the embattled High Speed 2 project.

But Cabinet minister Grant Shapps said it was "proper and responsible" to reconsider a project whose costs have ballooned because of high inflation driven by the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine.

"We've seen very, very high global inflation in a way that no government could have predicted," said Shapps, a former transportation secretary who now serves as the UK's defense minister.

Project

"It would be irresponsible to simply spend money, carry on as if nothing had changed," he told the BBC.

The projected cost of the line, once billed as Europe's largest infrastructure project, was estimated at 33 billion pounds in 2011 and has soared to more than 100 billion pounds (\$122 billion) by some estimates.

HS2 is the UK's second high-speed rail line, after the HS1 route that links London and the Channel Tunnel connecting England to France. With trains traveling at a top speed of around 250 m.p.h. (400 kph), the new railway was intended to slash journey times and increase capacity between London, the central England city of Birmingham and the northern cities of Manchester and Leeds.

Though it drew opposition from environmentalists and lawmakers representing districts along the route, the project was touted as a way to strengthen the north's creaky, overcrowded and unreliable train network. The government hailed it as a key plank in its plan to "level up" prosperity across the country.

The north of England, which used to be Britain's economic engine, saw industries such as coal, cotton and shipbuilding disappear in the last decades of the 20th century, as London and the south grew richer in an economy dominated by finance and services.

The government canceled the Birmingham-to-Leeds leg of HS2 in 2021 but kept the plan to lay tracks on the 160 miles (260 km) between London and Manchester.

Former Conservative Prime Minister Boris Johnson, a longtime champion of the project, said cutting it back even further "makes no sense at all."

'Make it safe'

UK asserts its global AI leadership at UN

UNITED NATIONS, Sept 24, (AP) - Britain pitched itself to the world Friday as a ready leader in shaping an international response to the rise of artificial intelligence, with Deputy Prime Minister Oliver Dowden telling the UN General Assembly his country was "determined to be in the vanguard."

Touting the United Kingdom's tech companies, its universities and even Industrial Revolution-era innovations, he said the nation has "the grounding to make AI a success and make it safe." He went on to suggest that a British AI task force, which is working on methods for assessing AI systems' vulnerability, could develop expertise to offer internationally.

His remarks at the assembly's annual meeting of world leaders previewed an AI safety summit that British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak is convening in November. Dowden's speech also came as other countries and multinational groups - including the European Union, the bloc that Britain left in 2020 - are making moves on artificial intelligence.

The EU this year passed pioneering regulations that set requirements and controls based on the level of risk that any given AI system poses, from low (such as spam filters) to unacceptable (for example, an interactive, children's toy that talks up dangerous activities).

"It is no wonder that Chinese universities teach the constant cancellation of UK infrastructure as an example of what is wrong with democracy," Johnson said.

Manchester Mayor Andy Burnham said people in northern England were "always treated as second-class citizens when it comes to transport."

"If they leave a situation where the southern half of the country is connected by modern high-speed lines, and the north of England is left with Victorian infrastructure, that is a recipe for the north-south divide to become a north-south chasm over the rest of this century," Burnham, a member of the opposition Labour Party, told British TV channel Sky News.

The government has also delayed work on bringing the line all the way to Euston station in central London. When it opens, some time between 2029 and 2033, trains will start and finish at Old Oak Common station in the city's western suburbs.

Govts tap latest tech to get ahead of flames

As wildfire risks rise, AI solutions are gaining ground to fight them

LONDON, Sept 24, (AP) - Wildfires fueled by climate change have ravaged communities from Maui to the Mediterranean this summer, killing many people, exhausting firefighters and fueling demand for new solutions. Enter artificial intelligence.

Firefighters and startups are using AI-enabled cameras to scan the horizon for signs of smoke. A German company is building a constellation of satellites to detect fires from space. And Microsoft is using AI models to predict where the next blaze could be sparked.

With wildfires becoming larger and more intense as the world warms, firefighters, utilities and governments are scrambling to get ahead of the flames by tapping into the latest AI technology - which has stirred both fear and excitement for its potential to transform life. While increasingly stretched first responders hope AI offers them a leg up, humans are still needed to check that the tech is accurate.

California's main firefighting agency this summer started testing an AI system that looks for smoke from more than 1,000 mountaintop camera feeds and is now expanding it statewide.

The system is designed to find "abnormalities" and alert emergency command centers, where staffers will confirm whether it's indeed smoke or something else in the air.

Interrogate

"The beauty of this is that it immediately pops up on the screen and those dispatchers or call takers are able to interrogate that screen" and determine whether to send a crew, said Phillip SeLegue, staff chief of intelligence for the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

The cameras, part of a network that workers previously had to watch, provide billions of bytes of data for the AI system to digest. While humans still need to confirm any smoke sightings, the system helps reduce fatigue among staffers typically monitoring multiple screens and cameras, alerting them to look only when there's possible fire or smoke, SeLegue said.

It's already helped. A battalion chief got a smoke alert in the middle of the night, confirmed it on his cellphone and called a command center in San Diego to scramble first responders to the remote area.

The dispatchers said that if they hadn't been alerted, the fire would have been much larger because it likely wouldn't have been noticed until the next morning, SeLegue said.

San Francisco startup Pano AI takes a similar approach, mounting cameras on cell towers that scan for smoke and alert customers, including fire departments, utility companies and ski resorts.

The cameras use computer vision machine learning, a type of AI.

"They're trained very specifically to detect smoke or not, and we train them with images of smoke and images of not smoke," CEO Sonia Kastner said.

The images are combined with feeds from government weather satellites that scan for hotspots, along with other data sources, such as social media posts.

The technology gets around one of the main problems in the traditional way of detecting wildfires - relying on 911 calls from passers-by that need confirmation from staffers before



Falco Kuester, a researcher at ALERTCalifornia, a program run by the University of California San Diego, looks at imagery of firefighters at a fire from one of the program's cameras, Monday, Sept. 18, in San Diego. California's main firefighting agency, Cal Fire, in July started trying out an artificial intelligence system that looks for smoke from more than 1,000 mountaintop cameras feeds. (AP)

Hawaii economists warn 'the risk is real'

Lahaina locals could be priced out of rebuilt town without zoning changes

HONOLULU, Sept 24, (AP) - Residents who survived the wildfire that leveled the Hawaii town of Lahaina might not be able to afford to live there after it is rebuilt unless officials alter the zoning laws and make other changes, economists warned Friday.

"The risk is very real," Carl Bonham, executive director of the University of Hawaii Economic Research Organization, told a virtual news conference ahead of the group's release Friday of its quarterly state economic forecast.

Soaring housing prices have already forced many Native Hawaiians and other longtime Hawaii residents to leave the islands and move to the US mainland. The wildfire that claimed at least 97 lives and destroyed 2,200 buildings in the West Maui community of Lahaina - 86% of which were residential - amplifies that problem for the survivors. Nearly 8,000 of them have been placed at 40 hotels or other accommodations around the island of Maui.

or struck by falling trees. Hawaii's electric utility acknowledged that its power lines started a devastating blaze in Maui this summer after apparently being downed by high winds.

PGE, which provides electricity to 51 cities in Oregon, has deployed 26 Pano AI cameras, and Bekkedahl said they have helped speed up response and coordination with emergency services.

Previously, fire departments were "running around looking for stuff and not even really knowing exactly where it's at," he said. The cameras help detect fires quicker and get teams on the ground faster, shaving up to two hours off response times.

"That's significant in terms of how fast that fire can spread and grow,"

"Market prices for this new housing are likely to far exceed the already high prices that existed in Lahaina before the fire. For renters, the old housing stock that was destroyed provided opportunities for reasonable rents," the economic report said.

A spike in housing costs would be a further burden for people - including retirees and those who worked in restaurants, hotels and shops - who lost their homes and jobs when their places of employment burned to the ground on Aug. 8, or when West Maui temporarily closed to tourism after the disaster.

Interrogate

West Maui, where the verdant coastline is studied with resort hotels, will reopen on Oct. 8.

"You'll see that that will speed our recovery for those who have suffered so much," Gov. Josh Green said.

At a news conference on Thursday at the state Capitol, Green stressed

that the displaced survivors won't be forced out of hotels to make room for tourists, with October typically being a slow month for tourism.

But it is much less clear when people displaced by the fire will be able to move back to Lahaina and whether they'll be able to afford to do so. Bonham said he doubts that rebuilding will start before 2025.

The warning about locals being priced out of a rebuilt Lahaina, which was once the capital of the former Hawaiian kingdom in the 1800s, comes despite Green's assurances that he won't let it get too expensive for locals. Green previously indicated that he was considering having the state acquire land for workforce housing, but he later said that wouldn't happen unless the community requested it.

On Aug. 19, Green banned unsolicited offers for property in Lahaina to prevent land from being snapped up by deep-pocketed outsiders.

Bekkedahl said.

Using AI to detect smoke from fires "is relatively easy," said Juan Lavista Ferres, chief data scientist at Microsoft.

"What is not easy is to have enough cameras that cover enough places," he said, pointing to vast, remote areas in northern Canada that have burned this summer.

Ferres' team at Microsoft has been developing AI models to predict where fires are likely to start. They have fed the model with maps of areas that burned previously, along with climate and geospatial data.

The system has its limitations - it can't predict random events like a lightning strike.

The Conversation

Treatment plan for depression can be challenging

Deep brain stimulation, biomarkers transform depression recovery

By Christopher Rozell and Sankaraleengam Alagapan
Georgia Institute of Technology

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

It can be challenging to create a treatment plan for depression. This is especially true for patients who aren't responding to conventional treatments and are undergoing experimental therapies such as deep brain stimulation. For most medical conditions, doctors can directly measure the part of the body that is being treated, such as blood pressure for cardiovascular disease. These measurable changes serve as an objective biomarker of recovery that provides valuable information about how to care for these patients.

On the other hand, for depression and other psychiatric disorders, clinicians rely on subjective and nonspecific surveys that ask patients about their symptoms. When a patient tells their doctor they are experiencing negative emotions, is that because they are relapsing in their depression or because they had a bad day like everyone does sometimes? Are they anxious because their depression symptoms have lessened enough that they are experiencing new feelings, or do they have some other medical problem independent of their depression? Each reason may indicate a different course of action, such as altering a medication, addressing an issue in psychotherapy or increasing the intensity of brain stimulation treatment.

Help

We are neuroengineers. In our study, newly published in Nature, we identified potential biomarkers for deep brain stimulation that could one day help guide clinicians and patients when making treatment decisions for those using this approach to alleviate treatment-resistant depression.

Clinical depression does not respond to available therapies in a significant number of patients. Researchers have been working to find alternative options for those with treatment-resistant depression, and many decades of experiments have identified specific brain networks with abnormal electrical activity in those with depression.

This notion of depression as abnormal brain activity rather than a chemical imbalance led to the development of deep brain stimulation as a depression treatment: a surgically implanted, pacemaker-like device that delivers electrical impulses to certain areas of the brain. Studies testing this technique have found that it can decrease depression severity over time in most patients.

Our research team wanted to find specific changes in brain activity that could serve as a biomarker that objectively measures how well deep brain stimulation is helping patients with depression. So we monitored the brain activity of 10 patients receiving deep brain stimulation for severe treatment-resistant depression over six months.

At the end of six months, 90% of the patients responded to the therapy - defined by a reduction of symptoms by at least a half - and 70% were in remission, meaning they no longer met the criteria for clinical depression.

To identify a potential biomarker, we developed an algorithm that looked for patterns in brain activity changes as patients recovered. The

algorithm was based on data from six out of the original 10 patients who had usable data from the experiment. We found that there are coordinated changes in different frequencies present in the electrical activity within the area of the brain being stimulated. Using these patterns, the algorithm was able to predict whether someone was in a stable recovery with 90% accuracy each week.

Interestingly, we observed some parts of this pattern moved in the opposite direction later in stimulation therapy compared with the patterns at the start of therapy. This finding provides evidence that the long-term recovery is due to the brain adapting to the stimulation in a process called plasticity rather than as a direct effect of the stimulation itself.

Investigating

We also saw other potential biomarkers worth investigating further.

For example, abnormalities in brain imaging taken before implanting the electrodes in specific parts of the brain correlated with how sick each patient was. This could provide clues about what's causing depression in some people, or help develop imaging methods to determine who might be a good candidate for deep brain stimulation.

For another example, we found that the facial expressions of patients changed as their brains changed over the course of their treatment. While physicians often report this anecdotally, quantifying these changes may provide a way to develop objective markers of recovery that incorporate a patient's behavior with their brain signals.

Because the results of our study are based on a small sample of patients, it's important to further investigate how broadly they can be applied to other patients and newer deep brain stimulation devices.

Clinical depression is a debilitating condition that causes significant personal and societal suffering. It is one of the largest contributors to the overall disease burden of many countries. Despite the many approved treatments available, nearly 30% of the 8.9 million US adults taking medications for clinical depression continue to have symptoms.

Deep brain stimulation is one of the alternative therapies for treatment-resistant depression that researchers are investigating. Studies have shown that deep brain stimulation can offer effective and long-term relief for some patients.

Although deep brain stimulation is an approved treatment for other conditions like Parkinson's disease, it remains an investigational therapy for treatment-resistant depression. While the results from small experimental studies have been positive, they have not been successfully replicated in large-scale, randomized clinical trials necessary for approval from the US Food and Drug Administration.

Finding an objective biomarker that measures recovery in depression has the potential to improve treatment decisions. For example, one patient in our study had a relapse after several months of remission. Were a biomarker available at the time, the clinical team would have had warning that the patient was relapsing weeks before standard symptom surveys showed that anything was wrong. Such a tool could help clinicians intervene before a relapse becomes an emergency. (AP)

850m people affected by kidney disease, CKD

Aiosyn's AI-powered kidney suite to transform renal disease study

Lung cancer leading cause of cancer death

Keytruda-Lenvima shows no survival advantage in NSCLC

NIJMEGEN, Netherlands, Sept 24: Aiosyn, a medical software company specializing in AI-powered pathology solutions, has announced the release of an AI kidney suite designed to advance research in the field of renal disease. Leveraging cutting-edge deep learning technology, this innovative solution provides biopharma and research organizations with powerful tools for analyzing kidney structures and quantifying lesions that impact kidney health. Aiosyn's kidney AI suite marks yet another significant milestone for the company, following the recent launch of Aiosyn Mitosis Research.

Patrick de Boer, CEO of Aiosyn: "The platform will enable researchers to identify new and existing CKD biomarkers to study specific patient subgroups. With these new algorithms and AI capabilities we provide CKD researchers with new tools to complement existing biomarker projects and help to advance CKD precision medicine."

With 850 million people worldwide affected by kidney disease and Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) projected to become the fifth leading cause of death by 2040, there is an urgent need for improved diagnosis and treatment.

Quantify

Aiosyn's kidney AI suite utilizes AI-powered computational pathology algorithms to objectively quantify kidney lesion scores, offering an opportunity to enhance reproducibility and accelerate drug development. The platform addresses the limitations of the Banff classification currently used in renal biopsy analysis, which suffers from observer variability and relies on qualitative assessments.

Aiosyn's kidney AI suite facilitates the identification and characterization of pathological processes, presenting a promising avenue for substantial improvements in CKD research and clinical trials. Alongside its kidney AI platform, Aiosyn is actively developing advanced deep learning algorithms for the detection of cancer biomarkers.

Aiosyn is a Dutch medical software company that develops AI-powered pathology solutions for cancer and kidney diseases. Aiosyn's solutions are integrated into standard pathology workflows. The Aiosyn team has been built upon 20+ years of research experience in the field of pathology and is rooted in the pathology practice.

A cardiovascular research study is now available in Baltimore, Md, for an investigational treatment to help patients with elevated lipoprotein (a), known as Lp(a). Elevated Lp(a) is recognized by healthcare professionals as an important risk factor for cardiovascular disease. However, Lp(a) is often not tested for—and testing is often not covered by insurance—because there are no currently approved treatments for lowering Lp(a). Participants in this study will receive Lp(a) tests at no cost. Lp(a) is similar to "bad" LDL cholesterol, but has an extra protein that hangs off LDL cholesterol particles. This makes it even stickier than LDL and more likely to cause blockages and blood clots in blood vessels. Heart attack or stroke are some of the serious and, unfortunately, common cardiovascular events associated with elevated Lp(a). According to the Baltimore City Health Department, heart disease is the leading cause of death and stroke is the third leading cause of death in Baltimore.

RAHWAY, NJ, Sept 24: RAHWAY, NJ, Sept 24: Merck (NYSE: MRK), known as MSD outside of the United States and Canada, and Eisai have provided updates on two Phase 3 trials, LEAP-006 and LEAP-008, evaluating Keytruda, Merck's anti-PD-1 therapy, plus Lenvima, the orally available multiple receptor tyrosine kinase inhibitor discovered by Eisai, in patients with certain types of metastatic non-small cell lung cancer.

LEAP-006: The Phase 3 LEAP-006 trial evaluating Keytruda plus Lenvima in combination with pemetrexed (Alimta®) and platinum-containing chemotherapy versus Keytruda with pemetrexed and platinum-containing chemotherapy, a current standard of care option in this disease setting, as a first-line treatment for adult patients with metastatic, nonsquamous non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC) who have confirmation that epidermal growth factor receptor (EGFR)-, anaplastic lymphoma kinase (ALK)- or c-ros oncogene 1 (ROS1)-directed therapies are not indicated, did not meet its dual primary endpoints of overall survival (OS) and progression free survival (PFS). At the study's final analysis, there was not an improvement in OS for patients treated with Keytruda plus Lenvima with chemotherapy compared to Keytruda with chemotherapy. Earlier interim analyses did not demonstrate a statistically significant improvement in PFS or objective response rate (ORR), a key secondary endpoint.

LEAP-008: The Phase 3 LEAP-008 trial evaluating Keytruda plus Lenvima versus docetaxel, a current second line standard of care option, as a treatment for patients with meta-

static NSCLC who progressed on or after platinum-containing chemotherapy and one prior anti-PD-1/L1 immunotherapy, and have confirmation that EGFR-, ALK- or ROS1-directed therapies are not indicated, did not meet its dual primary endpoints of OS and PFS. At the final analysis of the study, there was not an improvement in OS for patients who received Keytruda plus Lenvima compared to docetaxel. Earlier interim analyses did not demonstrate a statistically significant improvement in PFS or ORR, a key secondary endpoint.

In both the LEAP-006 and LEAP-008 trials, the safety profiles of the Keytruda plus Lenvima -based treatment regimens were consistent with that observed in previously reported studies evaluating the combination. A full evaluation of the data from these studies is ongoing. The companies will work with investigators to share the results with the scientific community.

Diagnosed

Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death worldwide. In 2020 alone, there were more than 2.2 million new cases and 1.8 million deaths from lung cancer globally. Non-small cell lung cancer is the most common type of lung cancer in the US, accounting for about 81% of all cases. In the US, the overall five-year survival rate for patients diagnosed with lung cancer is 25%, which is a 21% improvement over the last five years. Improved survival rates are due, in part, to earlier detection and screening, reduction in smoking, advances in diagnostic and surgical procedures, as well as the introduction of new

therapies. Early detection and screening remain an important unmet need, as 44% of lung cancer cases are not found until they are advanced. Only 5.8% of people in the US who are eligible were screened for lung cancer in 2021.

"As a leader in lung cancer research, we continue to try to advance science for our patients by building upon the standard we set several years ago with Keytruda," said Dr. Gregory Lubiniecki, Vice President, Global Clinical Development, Merck Research Laboratories. "While these results are not what we hoped for, we are proud of the foundational role that Keytruda has established in the treatment of certain types of lung cancer, and we are committed to continuing to research how we can further improve responses to our medicines for patients with difficult-to-treat forms of the disease."

"Despite great progress in recent years, unmet needs still remain in the treatment of patients with metastatic non-small cell lung cancer, particularly for those without targetable biomarkers," said Dr. Corina Dutcus, Senior Vice President, Global Clinical Development, Oncology at Eisai Inc. "Keytruda plus Lenvima has demonstrated survival benefit in advanced renal cell carcinoma and advanced endometrial carcinoma, and while we are disappointed that the final analyses of these non-small cell lung cancer studies did not show the same benefit, we remain committed to applying learnings from these studies and furthering research in oncology for people with unmet needs. We thank all the patients, their families and the investigators involved."

MEDICAL CLASSIFIEDS

Take care of your health

To advertise in this page please call: (+965) 24813566 Ext.: 513 or E-mail: advt@arabtimesonline.com

For your ads on this page

Call: 24813805 E-mail: advt@arabtimesonline.com

www.arabtimesonline.com

SHIFA AL JAZEERA MEDICAL CENTRE FARWANIYA

DENTAL & COSMETIC DEPARTMENT

- SCALING & GUM TREATMENT
- COSMETIC SMILE RECONSTRUCTION
- GUM & ORAL SURGERY
- BAD BREATH TREATMENT
- SURGICAL TREATMENT
- ROOT CANAL TREATMENT
- COSMETIC FILLING
- FIXED & REMOVABLE DENTURES
- CROWN TREATMENT
- SIMPLE & SURGICAL EXTRACTION

Working Time: From 9am to 1pm & 5pm to 9pm
Ph: 24 734 000

Behind Maghateer Commercial Complex & Opp. Police station - Farwaniya
www.shifaaljazeera.com.kw

US breakdancers aim to preserve Black roots at Olympics

NEW YORK, Sept 24, (AP) — As ambassadors of the country where breakdancing originated 50 years ago, members of Team USA have something to prove — and potentially to lose — when the hip-hop dance form makes its official debut at the Paris Games in 2024.

That's because for US breakers like Carmar Hall, Victor Montalvo and Jeffrey Mike Louis, it's more than just nailing the right moves; it's about preserving breaking's soul.

"When I started breaking, it wasn't about competition; it was about culture, it was about Black dance," said Hall, an African American Team USA member. "The Olympic platform is not going to appreciate the understanding. It's structured in a certain way, and in that structure, you lose a little bit of the heart."

But it is precisely that structure that international competitors to the US have zoned in on while battling for a shot at Olympic gold in head-to-head contests over the past year. And at the moment, Team USA's squad of b-boys and b-girls, the term for male and female breakers, is trailing in rankings tabulated by the World DanceSport Federation, the International Olympic Committee-approved body that administers breaking battles.

As of Friday, the top three b-boys in the world are Canada's Philip Kim, known as B-Boy Phil Wizard; Japan's Shigeyuki Nakarai, known as B-Boy Shigekix; and France's Danis Civil, known as B-Boy Dany. The top three b-girls in the world are Japan's Ami Yuasa, known as B-Girl Ami; China's Qingyi Liu, known as B-Girl 671; and Lithuania's Dominika Baneviciute, known as B-Girl Nicka.

"Everybody else has surpassed the United States, so we better go out and do some workout camps," said Chuck D of the iconic hip-hop

group Public Enemy. "The United States probably ain't going to gold, silver or bronze. ... Other places, they've been training for years. It's like martial arts."

Dancers need to win or perform well at WDSF-sanctioned events to earn the points that will eventually qualify them for the Paris Games. The next World Breaking Championship is taking place this weekend in Leuven, Belgium, just outside of Brussels.

The top b-boy and the top b-girl from the championship will automatically gain spots in the Olympics. After the Belgium event, Olympic-qualifying competitions are scheduled in China and Chile, through mid-December. Additional Olympic trials will be held in the early part of next year and run through June 2024. At the end of the process, 16 b-boys and 16 b-girls will be allowed to compete over two days at Paris' iconic Place de la Concorde.

Competitive

Montalvo, a 29-year-old from Kissimmee, Florida, who also goes by B-Boy Victor, is not discouraged.

"We have a big chance, a really big chance," he said. "We always make the podium."

Montalvo, who is ranked No. 5 in the world among competitive breakers, and nine others have already been named to Team USA, even though they haven't yet qualified for the Paris Games. Competing alongside Montalvo this weekend in Leuven will be No. 7-ranked Team USA member Sunny Choi, aka B-Girl Sunny; Team USA member and No. 40-ranked Morris Isby, aka B-Boy Morris; and Logan Edra, aka B-Girl Logistix, a native of San Diego, California, who is ranked No. 13 in the world but is not a member of Team USA.

It's widely understood in the competitive breaking community that judges favor dancers who master the foundations of breaking: "to-prock" moves, footwork, "downrock" moves done closer to the floor, "power" moves showing acrobatics and strength, along with the classic "headspins," "windmills" and "freeze" poses.

In the past, judging in hip-hop breaking competitions has always been very subjective. But that won't be the case with the Paris Olympics, where officials will use a newly developed system to decide which b-boy or b-girl has bested their opponent in one-on-one battles.

The Trivium judging system, created for the debut of breaking at the 2018 Youth Olympic Games in Buenos Aires, is a digital scoring platform that allows judges to react in real time to breakers' physical, artistic and interpretative qualities — their "body, mind and soul." A panel of five judges scores each breaker on creativity, personality, technique, variety, performativity and musicality. The scores can adjust throughout the battle, based on how breakers respond to their opponents.

Scores can be lowered if a breaker "bites," or copies, a set of moves from their opponent. Misbehavior, such as deliberate physical contact with an opponent, and other unsportsmanlike conduct can also lower a breaker's score.

The scoring system could not have been developed without the input of the breaking community, said Alexander Diaz, a Boston-based member of Team USA.

"It's hard to get all the dancers, all the breakers on the same page," said Diaz, who is also known as B-Boy El Niño.

Dance

Variety



This image released by Lionsgate shows Sylvester Stallone in a scene from 'The Expend4bles.' (AP)

Film

Yet another expend4ble sequel

Stallone, Statham back in 'Expend4bles'

LOS ANGELES, Sept 24, (AP) — It's a throwaway line, but maybe a bit too meaningful, under the circumstances. "Gravity is setting in," says Barney, Sylvester Stallone's aging character in "Expend4bles," when someone asks how he's doing.

Indeed, gravity is setting in throughout "Expend4bles," a movie whose most enticing mystery is not the secret identity of its shadowy villain, but how you pronounce the film's title. Are we supposed to enunciate the mid-word numeral, or is it merely visual? Is this what stands for a smart new spin on a tired franchise? Will we soon have "My Big F4t Greek Wedding"? Are these questions supposed to distract us from how stunningly mediocre the film is?

Perhaps we digress. This is, obviously, the fourth "Expendables" film, but our considered scientific opinion is that you needn't see the first three to catch up. True, there's no explanatory intro, but if you've seen earlier "Expendables" films, you'll know there's not much to know. These guys are the indestructible mercenaries who swoop in — literally, on Barney's turbo-prop plane — to do dirty work in miserable places. The body count is head-spinningly high (this film, directed by Scott Waugh, returns to an R rating after a switch to PG-13 for the last installment). The dialogue is head-spinningly mundane. The flow of testosterone is, well, head-spinning.

Leading the pack, as ever, is Stallone's Barney Ross and his expert knife-wielding best bud, Lee Christmas — Jason Statham, reveling in his Cockney charm and smiling more than usual. (This is not a bad thing.) Also back are Dolph Lundgren's Gunner and Randy Couture's Toll Road.

And now, perhaps in a nod to the previously unrecognized fact that half the human race is female, we have Megan Fox as mercenary leader Gina. More on her in a bit. Also providing new blood is Andy Garcia as a prickly CIA handler, Curtis "50 Cent" Jackson as an ex-Marine and new team member, and two martial arts stars: Iko Uwais as ruthless arms dealer Rahmat, and Tony Jaa as quiet warrior Decha. Other additions: Jacob Scipio is the son of Antonio Banderas' character from the last film, and Levy Tran is a new female teammate,

adept with a whip chain.

Got all that? In a prelude scene in New Orleans, we reconnect with Barney, who now has salt-and-pepper hair, and a bad back — so bad, he enlists Christmas to help him recover his prized skeleton ring at a biker bar, which he's lost in a thumb-wrestling contest. The thugs dispatched and the ring collected, it's time to get back to work.

This means a trip to Libya, to "Gadhafi's old chemical plant," where aforementioned arms dealer Rahmat (Uwais) is securing detonators for a nuclear weapon. CIA handler Marsh (Garcia) needs the Expendables to stop him. The other thing you should know is that Barney is determined to unmask a shadowy figure code-named Ocelot who's maybe pulling all the strings.

Resistance

Not surprisingly, the Expendables run into resistance. The body count mounts, and then something happens that will change the trajectory of the film. We can't give it away, but let's just say it brings Statham's Christmas to the forefront for much of the film.

But he makes an early error that sidelines him for a bit. Leading the next stage of the mission will be Gina (Fox), his ex (or maybe current?) girlfriend. Gina is introduced to us the only way a woman in a testosterone-dripping franchise like this can be: Sexy AND crazy, yelling like the dickens in a hot little dress. She also wears an absurd amount of makeup, including on the mission. Apparently, there's a brand of matte lipstick that holds up very well through manual combat. Which is convenient if your ex-boyfriend may or may not be showing up.

All this action takes place on a freighter where the aforementioned nuclear bomb is being stored. It includes countless killings and also a motorcycle chase (on a freighter!) It all gets very tiresome.

It doesn't help that the special effects sometimes seem thrown together with about as much care as the script. Some of the most obvious green screens provide inadvertent comedy. As for intended comedy, the only truly funny scene is when Christmas, sidelined, tries out a job as security detail for an obnoxious social media influencer.

The likable British action star is having a busy year. In "Expend4bles," as mentioned, they let him smile a lot, and it's a nice touch. Still, if there's an "Expend5bles," they're gonna need more than a Statham smile and another mid-word numeral in the title.

"Expend4bles," a Lionsgate release, has been rated R by the Motion Picture Association "for strong/bloody violence throughout, language and sexual material." Running time: 103 minutes. One star out of four.

Also:

LOS ANGELES: Public support for striking Hollywood actors and writers is broad, but not necessarily deep enough for most people to change their viewing habits, a new poll finds.

A majority (55%) of US adults sympathize with the writers and actors in the months-long dispute than with the studios they're striking against (3%), the poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research shows.

Half of Americans (50%) approve of writers and actors striking, while 40% are neutral on the topic, and 9% disapprove.

The more people said they had heard about the strike, the more likely they were to favor it. About six in 10 Americans have heard "a lot" or "some" about the labor strikes of writers and actors against Hollywood studios. People who have heard "a lot" or "some" about the strike are more likely than those who have heard less to approve (63% vs. 29%).

"I'm a big supporter of labor," said one respondent, **James Denton of Louisville, Kentucky**, who said he strongly approves of the strikes and has followed them closely. "I'm a union member myself, my father was the president of a union, I believe in unions, they're well worth the money."

About a quarter (24%) of US adults do not sympathize with either the writers and actors or the studios, and 18% are split between the sides.

Overall sympathy toward the writers and actors runs much more strongly among Democrats (70%), than Independents (47%) and Republicans (39%). Republicans (35%) are more likely than Democrats (15%) to say they sympathize with neither side.

NEW YORK: Actor **Sophie Turner** sued her estranged pop star husband **Joe Jonas** to force him to turn over the passports of the couple's two young daughters so she can take them to **England**.

Turner, who was served with divorce papers this month after four years of marriage to Jonas, said in her petition that the couple had planned to raise their daughters in her native England. It also said that the girls, ages 3 and 1, "are both fully involved and integrated in all aspects of daily and cultural life in England."

Best known for playing Sansa Stark on HBO's "Game of Thrones," Turner filed her petition in federal court in New York under the child abduction clauses of the Hague Convention, an international treaty aimed at compelling the return of a child taken from their country of "habitual residence."

Turner, 27, says that she and Jonas, 34, made a mutual decision to raise their daughters in England and to relocate there in April of this year.

During part of August and September, while Jonas began a tour with his band the Jonas Brothers in the **United States**, Turner would be working long hours filming a television series in England. So, Turner said she and Jonas had agreed that the children would travel with Jonas and a nanny.

The plan was for Turner to travel to New York after filming wrapped on Sept 14 to collect the children, but in the meantime "the breakdown of the parties' marriage happened very suddenly," Turner said.

According to Turner, Jonas filed for divorce in **Florida** on Sept 1 and she learned about it through the media on Sept 5. The pair issued a joint statement on their Instagram accounts on Sept. 6 saying they had mutually decided to amicably end the marriage.

Turner says she and Jonas saw each other on Sept 17 — and she asked him for the children's passports so she could take them back to England, but Jonas refused to turn over the passports of the girls, who were born in the **United States**, and have dual **US** and **British** citizenship.

The court filing says the girls are temporarily living with Turner in a **Manhattan** hotel. The Jonas Brothers were scheduled to perform in **Philadelphia** on Thursday and in **Baltimore** on Friday.

Jonas said in a statement that he is "seeking shared parenting with the kids so that they are raised by both their mother and father" and that he is "okay with the kids being raised both in the US and the UK." "This is an unfortunate legal disagreement about a marriage that is sadly ending," he added. (AP)



Turner



Jonas

BAGLEY TOWNSHIP, Mich: A woman was rescued from an outhouse toilet in northern **Michigan** after she climbed in to retrieve her Apple Watch and became trapped.

The woman, whose name was not released, lowered herself inside the toilet after dropping the watch at the Department of

Natural Resources boat launch at Dixon Lake in **Osego County's** Bagley Township, state police said Wednesday in a release.

First responders were called when the woman was heard yelling for help. The toilet was removed and a strap was used to haul the woman out.

"If you lose an item in an

outhouse toilet, do not attempt to venture inside the containment area. Serious injury may occur," state police said in the release.

The state police did not say if the woman was injured or if the watch was recovered.

Bagley Township is about 240 miles (386 kilometers) northwest of **Detroit**. (AP)

People & Places



Bally



Bottega Veneta



Dolce & Gabbana



Bottega Veneta



Bottega Veneta

Fashion

MILAN: The Milan fashion world has become a designer carousel. Powerhouse Gucci and Swiss luxury brand Bally both introduced designers this season, while Tod's bade their creative director farewell and Moschino is in an interim phase.

The question on everyone's minds: Where will former Gucci creative director **Alessandro Michele**, who has been out of circulation since stepping down last November, next pop up? Rumors are flying.

Some scenes from Milan Fashion Week womenswear preview shows for Spring-Summer 2024 on Saturday:

The fashion crowd at the Dolce&Gabbana show almost revolted as **Billie Eilish's** "Barbie" anthem "What Was I Made For" looped yet again, 45 minutes after show time.

Eilish can blame **Kylie Jenner**, who was late for the show, for having Milan fashionistas want the song off their playlists.

With Jenner comfortably seated, the curtain opened on a **Domenico Dolce** and **Stefano Gabbana's** latest collection, exploring to the tiniest detail the beauty and artisanal qualities of corsetry, and all manner of lingerie.

Sheer tailored dresses did the job of showing off the workmanship. But even more mainstream daytime dresses, button-down pinstriped suits and print dresses were tailored to offer a hint of a brassiere, a peek of a slip. And in keeping with a bodycon trend that has made corsets, bra tops and tiny culottes part of an everyday wardrobe, some looks came down the runway completely al fresco, with perhaps a sheer stocking and garter.

Dolce & Gabbana

Dolce & Gabbana also apparently checked the weather forecast and offered tailored raincoats. They would have been handy during a hailstorm that hit during the long pre-show wait.

The Dolce & Gabbana front row and runway alike were star-studded: **Halle Bailey** stood out in bright yellow in a front row of mostly black-and-white clad personalities, including Jenner, who wore sunglasses and hair pulled in a tight bun.

On the runway, **Ashley Graham** wowed in a sheer halter slip over black bra and panties. **Naomi Campbell** commanded the runway in a sheer three-quarter slip over lingerie, a look that was finished with a rose choker.

Bottega Veneta's **Matthieu Blazy** offered some crazy proportions for next summer, while also being one of the only Milan designers to take into account warm weather pastimes: beach and travel. Most collections on other runways seemed stuck in the city.

Blazy said the collection was inspired not by travels, but by fantasy-fueled childhood maps on the back of cereal boxes.

That is the only way to make sense of the oversized - meaning huge - intrecciato bags. Or the exaggerated hips on a dress, or big cuffs and collars on a

Above and below: Models present creations as part of the Dolce & Gabbana, Bottega Veneta and Bally women's Spring Summer 2024 collection presented in Milan, Italy, Saturday, Sept. 23. (AP)

Style



Bottega Veneta



Bottega Veneta



Bottega Veneta



Bottega Veneta



Bally



Bottega Veneta

Ferragamo

Every look in Ferragamo creative director **Maximilian Davis's** latest collection,

edelweiss hanging by a chain in a mesh pouch. "Many of these clothes that you see, I think they are good for everyone. They are nice on a 20-year-old girl or boy, but I can see them even for a person like me, I am 45, because those are classics," Bellotti said. "It depends on how you wear it, and who is going to wear it."

Front-row guests included **Adrien Brody** and **Quinta Brunson** along with brand ambassador **DK of the South Korean supergroup Seventeen**, who was met by a crowd of screaming fans outside.

Davis taken Renaissance inspiration from Florence, Ferragamo's home. This season, he playfully mixed in fetish details, which he claims as part of his DNA: leather chokers that flow into a pleated chiffon dress, thick ankle straps on stiletto heels and horsetail fringe that caresses the leg through deep slits in long dresses.

At just 28, Davis is taking the fashion world by storm. His third collection marked an evolution, with a focus on fluidity while also adding sculptural details, playing with prints and incorporating hardware elements.

Davis has taken Renaissance inspiration from Florence, Ferragamo's home. This season, he playfully mixed in fetish details, which he claims as part of his DNA: leather chokers that flow into a pleated chiffon dress, thick ankle straps on stiletto heels and horsetail fringe that caresses the leg through deep slits in long dresses.

The collection mixed the hard and soft. Viscose dresses have organic shapes that cling to the body, quietly ruched for movement. Long kaftans are anchored by thick hardware incorporated as jewelry, with oversized prints of a Venus flytrap. Super-wide belts with wooden bead detailing provided a contrast to white dress with pretty pleated detailing. (AP)

staying true to the Swiss luxury fashion house's customer base.

Bellotti's debut collection tackles the quandary with office basics elevated with tailored flair, inviting a new audience with a slight bias cut on a midi skirt, or short shorts with a leather blazer. The collection grew bolder with a twisted plaid miniskirt, which evolved into 3-D floral skirts that bloomed out of overcoats. Underlining the transition, pointy Maryjane flats had a studded version.

Bellotti added a Swiss touch with leather clad cowbells on bags, and

men's shirt, their size emphasized by the zig-zag cut. Or the enormous leather pom-poms stuck on the side of a dress.

Blazy teased his ideas, opening with an old-fashioned black swimsuit, shifting back to workwear, before again appearing with a culotte and raffia bag, as his character went back-and-forth from work to holiday, until finally giving in

full-on to the fantasy.

"It not about how you put your suit anymore," Blazy said. "It is about how you can almost become this wonder,

this dream."

The task facing Bally's new designer, **Simone Bellotti**, is to attract an edgier, perhaps younger, client while

MILAN

Health

Allergy nasal spray

US backs maternal RSV vaccine to protect infants

NEW YORK, Sept. 24, (AP) — US health officials on Friday recommended RSV vaccinations for moms-to-be, a second new option to protect newborns from serious lung infections. The shots should be given late in pregnancy but only during RSV season, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said.

"This is another new tool we can use this fall and winter to help protect lives," said CDC Director **Dr. Mandy Cohen** in a statement.

Cohen signed off after a CDC advisory panel backed the vaccine. The only opposition came from a panel member who found the recommendation "incredibly complicated."

A month ago, the agency recommended another option for infants to guard against severe RSV: lab-made antibodies given to babies younger than 8 months before their first RSV season. A single dose is given to babies by injection after they are born.



Cohen

Most infants will likely only need protection from one — either the mom's vaccine or the antibodies — but not both, Cohen said.

There is no head-to-head study that answers which is more effective, and no published research on how safe it is to give both. And they are both expensive, although the cost will be ultimately covered by insurance.

The RSV vaccine, made by Pfizer, should only be given between 32 weeks and 36 weeks of pregnancy. The shot prompts the moms-to-be to develop virus-fighting antibodies that pass through the placenta to the fetus. Protection in newborns likely drops after 6 months of age, so the shot is for use between September and January in most of the US, to coincide with the time of year when RSV infections tend to be most common.

A baby born in April, for example, may not have much immunity left from the mother's vaccination by the time the fall RSV season comes around.

"It really depends on when the due date is as to how impactful this vaccination will be," said **Dr. Grace Lee**, chair of the CDC advisory panel.

RSV, or respiratory syncytial virus, is a common cause of coldlike symptoms. A surge last year filled hospitals with wheezing children, but far more US seniors are hospitalized and die from the virus.

Two new vaccines were recently approved for Americans age 60 and older. There isn't a vaccine for children.

Some CDC panel members who ultimately supported the recommendation expressed reservations. Available data suggests the antibodies are a more cost-effective — and probably longer-lasting — way to prevent severe illness in infants. Several also balked at the \$295-a-dose price Pfizer has been charging for the same RSV vaccine for seniors, called Abrysvo.

□ □ □

Allergy: Federal regulators declined to approve a nasal spray to treat severe allergic reactions recently, calling for more research on what would have been the first alternative to injections using devices such as an EpiPen.

The US Food and Drug Administration told ARS Pharmaceuticals Inc., of San Diego, that the company needs to conduct another study on repeat doses of epinephrine, a drug that halts potentially life-threatening reactions, called anaphylaxis, using the company's nasal spray device compared with injections.

The move comes four months after an FDA advisory committee recommended approval of the device, dubbed neffy. The FDA is not required to follow the committee's recommendations, though it usually does.

Richard Lowenthal, president and chief executive of ARS, said in a statement that the company would appeal the FDA's decision and resubmit an application in early 2024.

The ARS product is one of several needle-free devices being developed to treat dangerous reactions to food, insect stings and medications. Such a device could alter treatment for the between 33 million and 45 million Americans with severe allergies to food and other triggers.

Advocates for people with allergies said they were "frustrated" by the FDA's request for more research.

"Our community believe this innovation would finally come to the more than 10% of Americans with life-threatening food allergies, but instead, the FDA will force us to wait even longer," **Sung Poblete**, chief executive of Food Allergy Research & Education, a nonprofit group, said in a statement.

□ □ □

COVID-19 vaccine: Some people seeking the newest COVID-19 vaccine are running into high demand, insurance headaches and supply delays coast to coast.

Millions of the newly formulated vaccines have shipped out since the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention signed off on them last week for ages 6 months and up. Cases started rising again in late summer, and experts hope that the new shots will help protect people during the upcoming fall respiratory virus season.

But some people have had to cancel appointments because their insurance hasn't updated the billing codes to cover the vaccines. Others signed up for an appointment, only to have it canceled due to supply issues. And in some places, there are no available nearby vaccines: A search in Juneau, Alaska, through the federal government's website shows no available appointments within 100 miles.

Some pharmacies have a limited supply of the shots. Alaska Department of Health spokesperson **Alex Huseman** said, but order backlogs and slow shipments have prevented the vaccines from being widely available. Private health care providers hopefully can get them as early as next week, she said.

"This rollout has been a little bumpier than anticipated, but we do not believe there will be any significant delay in vaccine availability," Huseman said.

This is the first time that the vaccines are reaching most Americans through the commercial market, bringing public and private health insurers back in the mix. Previously, the federal government bought and distributed COVID-19 vaccines for free since they became available.

CVS Pharmacy spokesperson **Matt Blanchette** said some insurers are still in the process of updating their billing systems to cover the vaccines. For others, the shots were covered by insurance without issue, but appointments were canceled by their pharmacy due to supply delays.

Walgreens and CVS confirmed that delivery delays to some stores across the country had led to canceled appointments.

"We are aware of isolated incidences at a small number of locations where appointments had to be rescheduled due to delays in supply," a Walgreens spokesperson said, noting most stores "have supply to support existing patient appointments."

Moderna and Pfizer representatives told The Associated Press that they have enough supply. Pfizer spokesperson said it is not experiencing any shortages and has "shipped and delivered several million doses of its 2023-2024 COVID-19 vaccine." Moderna had six million available as of Thursday, vice president of communications **Chris Ridley** said.

Marwa Bakr, the owner of a small, private pharmacy on Milwaukee's southwest side, said she put in a preorder for Pfizer and Moderna's new vaccines a month ago. She got a call from Moderna this week telling her she should get the vaccines in the next two weeks, and Pfizer has said the shots could come by the end of next week.

She used to order the vaccines through the federal government, and said the return to the commercial process is "taking longer."



A NASA helicopter waits for the arrival of a space capsule carrying NASA's first asteroid samples on Sunday, Sept. 24, to a temporary clean room at Dugway Proving Ground, in Utah. The Osiris-Rex spacecraft released the capsule following a seven-year journey to asteroid Benu and back. (AP)

Space

Experts anticipate at least a cup of rubble from Benu

First asteroid samples heading for Earth

NEW YORK, Sept. 24, (AP) — A space capsule carrying NASA's first asteroid samples streaked toward a touchdown in the Utah desert Sunday to cap a seven-year journey.

Flying by Earth, the Osiris-Rex spacecraft released the capsule from 63,000 miles (100,000 kilometers) out. The capsule was expected to parachute down four hours later onto the military's Utah Test and Training Range.

Scientists anticipated getting at least a cup of rubble from the carbon-rich asteroid known as Benu. About a teaspoon was returned by Japan, the only other country to bring back asteroid samples.

The pristine samples are believed to be the leftover building blocks from the dawn of our solar system and will help scientists better understand how Earth and life formed.

Osiris-Rex rocketed away on the \$1 billion mission in 2016. It reached Benu two years later and, using a long stick vacuum, grabbed dust and pebbles from the small roundish space rock in 2020. By the time it returned Sunday, the spacecraft had traveled 4 billion miles (6.2 billion kilometers).

Now free of the sample capsule, Osiris-Rex is already targeting another asteroid. That encounter won't occur until 2029.

NASA's recovery effort in Utah includes helicopters and a temporary clean room set up at the range. The samples will be flown Monday to a new lab at NASA's Johnson Space Center in Houston.

Scientists anticipate getting about a half pound (250 grams) of pebbles and dust, much more than the teaspoon or so brought back by Japan from two other asteroids. No other country has fetched pieces of asteroids, preserved time capsules from the dawn of our solar system that can help explain how Earth - and life - came to be.

Sunday's landing concludes a 4 billion-mile (6.2-billion-kilometer) journey highlighted by the rendezvous with the carbon-rich Benu, a unique pogo stick-style touchdown and sample grab, a jammed lid that sent some of the stashed spilling into space, and now the return of NASA's first asteroid samples.

"I ask myself how many heart-pounding moments can you have in one lifetime because I feel like I might be hitting my limit," said the University of Arizona's Dante La-

retta, the mission's lead scientist.

A brief look at the spacecraft and its cargo:

Asteroid chaser Osiris-Rex blasted off on the \$1 billion mission in 2016. It arrived at Benu in 2018 and spent the next two years flying around the small spinning space rock and scouting out the best place to grab samples. Three years ago, the spacecraft swooped in and reached out with its 11-foot (3-meter) stick vacuum, momentarily touching the asteroid's surface and sucking up dust and pebbles. The device pressed down with such force and grabbed so much that rocks became wedged around the rim of the lid. As samples drifted off into space, Lauretta and his team scrambled to get the remaining material into the capsule. The exact amount inside won't be known until the container is opened.

Formation

Discovered in 1999, Benu is believed to be a remnant of a much larger asteroid that collided with another space rock. It's barely one-third of a mile (half a kilometer) wide, roughly the height of the Empire State Building, and its black rugged surface is packed with boulders. Roundish in shape like a spinning top, Benu orbits the sun every 14 months, while rotating every four hours. Scientists believe Benu holds leftovers from the solar system's formation 4.5 billion years ago. It may come dangerously close and strike Earth on Sept. 24, 2182 - exactly 159 years after the asteroid's first pieces arrive. Osiris-Rex's up-close study can help humanity figure out how to deflect Benu if needed, Lauretta said.

Osiris-Rex will release the sample capsule from 63,000 miles (100,000 kilometers) out, four hours before it's due to touch down at the Defense Department's Utah Test and Training Range on Sunday morning. The release command will come from spacecraft builder Lockheed Martin's control center in Colorado. Soon afterward, the mothership will steer away and take off to explore another asteroid. The capsule - nearly 3 feet wide (81 centimeters) and 1.6 feet tall (50 centimeters) - will hit the atmosphere at 27,650 mph (44,500 kph) for the final 13 minutes of descent remaining. The main parachute will slow the last mile (1.6 kilometers), allowing for a mild 11 mph (18 kph) touchdown. Once everything is deemed safe, the cap-



A deer stands in a forest in the Taunus region in Frankfurt, Germany, Saturday, Sept. 23. (AP)



Russo



Reynolds

Discovery

'Power' palazzo reopens: An ancient Roman imperial palazzo atop the city's Palatine Hill was reopened to tourists, nearly 50 years after its closure for restoration.

The nearly 2,000-year-old Domus Tiberiana was home to rulers in the ancient city's Imperial period. The sprawling palace allows for sweeping views of the Roman Forum below.

The public is now able to tour it, following decades of structural restoration work to shore the palace up for safety reasons. Excavations uncovered artifacts from centuries of Roman life following the decline of the empire.

The director of the Colosseum Archeological Park, which includes the Palatine Hill, in a written description of the restored palazzo, dubbed it "the power palace par excellence."

On the eve of the reopening, the official, **Alfonso Russo**, quoted a first-century Roman poet as saying the sprawling palace seemed "infinite" and that "its grandiosity was just like the grandiosity of the sky."

Although the domus, or residence, is named after Tiberius, who ruled the empire after the death of Augustus, archaeological studies indicated that the palace's foundations date from the era of Nero, shortly after the fire of 64 A.D. that devastated much of the city.

After the demise of the Roman Empire, the residence suffered centuries of abandonment, until when, in the 1500s, the Farnese noble family developed an extensive garden around the ruins.

Thanks to the palazzo's reopening to the public, visitors today can get a better idea of the path ancient emperors and their courts enjoyed en route to the domus.

The English word "palatial" is inspired by the sumptuous imperial residence atop the Palatine, one of ancient Rome's seven hills.

The domus, built on the northwest slope of the hill, is considered to be the first true imperial palace. Besides the emperor's residence, the complex included gardens, places of worship, quarters for the Praetorian Guard that protected the ruler and a service district for workers that overlooked the Roman Forum.

Excavation and restoration work, carried out also during the coronavirus pandemic when for months tourism was at a minimum, helped archeologists piece together what Russo calls centuries of history in a place that "somehow went forgotten."

On display for those visiting the reopened domus is a selection of hundreds of artifacts that were found, including objects in metal and glass. Statues, other decorations and ancient coins were also dug up. (AP)

Iowa gov husband has cancer: The husband of Iowa Gov **Kim Reynolds** has been diagnosed with lung cancer, the governor's office announced.

Reynolds said her husband, **Kevin Reynolds**, 65, has been diagnosed with lung cancer, and expressed optimism about his treatment.

"Our doctor has assured us that significant advancements in lung cancer treatment have been very effective and we have every reason to be optimistic," the governor said in a statement. "We are confident in our team as we begin treatment, and we will beat this together."

Reynolds called her husband "my anchor throughout our 41 years of marriage."

Kevin Reynolds retired in 2017 after a career in soil and water conservation. He and the governor have three daughters and

11 grandchildren. (AP)

□ □ □

Okefenokee World Heritage bid: A US agency said Friday it will nominate the vast, federally protected wildlife refuge in the Okefenokee Swamp for listing as a UNESCO World Heritage site.



Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge maintenance crew leader Pete Chesser, right, crew member Walker Huling, left, pile their pruned vegetation along a wilderness water trail, Tuesday, April 5, 2022, in Folkston, Ga. A US agency says it will nominate the Okefenokee Swamp's vast wildlife refuge for a place on the official list of the world's most treasured natural and cultural sites. The National Park Service filed a notice Friday, Sept. 22, that it will seek a UNESCO World Heritage site designation for the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge. (AP)

as one of the world's last intact blackwater swamps and home to abundant alligators, endangered red cockaded woodpeckers, stilt-legged wood storks and more than 400 other animal species.

"It would join a long list of iconic American landscapes - the Grand Canyon, Yellowstone, Yosemite," said **Kim Bednarek**, executive director of the nonprofit Okefenokee Swamp Park that's working with the U.S. government on the refuge's nomination package. "Nobody questions the value of those places."

Since the 1970s, the World Heritage list has recognized more than 1,100 natural and cultural sites worldwide for having "outstanding universal value" to all of humanity. Just 25 places in the U.S. have been listed, including national parks like the Grand Canyon in Arizona and treasured manmade landmarks such as the Statue of Liberty.

The most recent US addition, a network of ancient Native American ceremonial and burial mounds in Ohio, was announced by UNESCO's World Heritage Committee.

The Okefenokee refuge covers more than 90% of the swamp and is the largest national wildlife refuge east of the Mississippi River. Its diverse wildlife, cypress forests and flooded prairies draw roughly 600,000 visitors each year, according to the US Fish and Wildlife Service, which manages the refuge. (AP)

Designation as a World Heritage site wouldn't impose any added restrictions or regulations for the Okefenokee. But conservationists say the distinction of being listed gives governments and local communities an incentive to protect and preserve the sites. (AP)



Participants pose for a group photo.

Exciting showdown

IDAK's Badminton, TT teams compete in epic clash

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 24: A thrilling sporting spectacle was on display at the IDAK-KDD's Badminton and Table Tennis Championship 2023, held at Bayan High School, Hawally, Kuwait. The two teams Mighty Mustangs (MM), led by Dr Noufal (Men) and Dr Amrita (Women) and Power Panthers (PP), led by Dr Mahesh (Men) and Dr Sushma (Women), went head-to-head in the high-stakes championship match. The competition promised to be fierce, as players from both teams have been training rigorously in preparation for this event. Both teams boast exceptional talent and offered all the IDAK sports enthusiasts with a unique opportunity to witness the fusion of two exciting racket sports under one roof.

from Al Mullah Exchange was the Guest of Honor. The first match was the Women's Singles, between MM (Green) represented by Dr. Aastha and PP (Red) represented by Dr Sharon. Dr Sharon won the match with a final score of 30-5. The second match was the Men's Doubles (I), between Dr. Jitendra and Dr. Rahul from MM and Mr. Nithin and Mr. Melbin from PP. Team MM proved to be superior and had a easy win over PP, with the final score of 30-10.

cheered on by the spectators which added an extra layer of excitement to the games. PP continued their winning streak by defeating MM in the Women's Doubles, where the combo of Dr Prashanth/Dr Ranjana (PP) defeated Dr Jolly/Dr Ranjitha, 30-20. PP secured their overall Badminton championship by winning the Mixed Doubles, Dr. Mahesh/Sushama of PP beat Dr. Sanjay/Dr Neethu of MM. As expected the matches were filled with fast-paced rallies and heart-stopping moments on the court.

BADMINTON

MM reigned supreme in the second Men's Doubles match as well, where Dr Renjith and Dr Noufal from MM won a fiercely fought battle with Dr Ashwin and Mr Sharon from PP (30-22). PP's came back strongly by winning the 50+ Men's Doubles (30-26), PP represented by Dr Thomas/Dr Bobby and MM represented by Dr John/Dr Joju. It was a great spectacle to watch the teams' camaraderie and teamwork come to life.

Each point scored was

Marlins stay in wild-card hunt

Dodgers rout Giants

MIAMI, Sept 24, (AP): Jake Burger hit a three-run homer, the Marlins scored the tie-breaking run in the eighth inning and Miami beat Milwaukee 5-4 on Saturday to stay within a game of the Cubs for the third NL wild card and prevent the Brewers from clinching the NL Central.

Pinch runner Garrett Hampson scored the winning run on a wild pitch by Brewers reliever Joel Payamps (6-5) in the eighth.

Orioles 2, Guardians 1
In Cleveland, John Means carried a no-hit bid into the seventh inning and Anthony Santander drove in a pair of runs, sending AL East-leading Baltimore over Cleveland. Means, a 30-year-old left-hander, was making his third start in 17 months following Tommy John surgery. Cleveland's only hit - and lone hard-hit ball - occurred when Andrés Giménez pulled a change-up to right for a 406-foot homer.

Dodgers 7, Giants 0
In Los Angeles, Clayton Kershaw pitched two-hit ball over five innings. Mookie Betts hit a two-run double that set a record of 105 RBIs for a leadoff hitter, and Los Angeles earned its 95th win of the season and 15th shutout, tied for second in the major leagues. Kershaw (13-4) struck out five and walked two. The three-time Cy Young Award winner has not gone beyond five innings in any of last seven starts.

Rays 7, Blue Jays 6
In St. Petersburg, Josh Lowe hit a three-run homer and a walk-off single that capped a two-run ninth inning, lifting Tampa Bay over Toronto after the Rays wasted a five-run lead. Rays starter Zack Littell took a shutout in the sixth but was pulled after the Blue Jays put two runners on with two outs due to Curtis Mead's throwing error at third and a wild pitch on a strikeout.

Rangers 2, Mariners 0
In Arlington, Jordan Montgomery pitched seven scoreless innings, switch-hitting All-Star catcher Jonah Heim drove in a run and AL West-leading Texas blanked Seattle. Montgomery (10-11) struck out six and walked two while scattering five hits. He is 4-2 in his 10 starts for the Rangers.

Phillies 7, Mets 5
In Philadelphia, Bryce Harper sparked Philadelphia's comeback from a two-run deficit by reaching 20 homers for the ninth time, leading the Phillies to their fourth straight win. Harper had three RBIs for the defending NL champions (86-69), who are closing in on an NL wild card berth. Alec Bohm also homered as the Phillies, who opened a four-game lead over Arizona for the top wild card.

Royals 3, Astros 2
In Houston, Jordan Lyles gave up just two hits in five innings, Bobby Witt Jr. drove in his 93rd run of the season and Kansas City won nine of its last 10 games.

Houston has lost four of its last five games and fell to 39-41 at home this year. Still, the Astros maintained their half-game lead for the final AL wild-card spot over Seattle with seven games remaining.

Angels 1, Twins 0
In Minneapolis, Jo Adell homered, Kenny Rosenberg outpitched Sonny Gray and Los Angeles beat Minnesota, a day after the Twins clinched the AL Central title.

Rosenberg (2-2), a 28-year-old left-hander making his fourth big league start and ninth appearance, allowed five hits and two walks in five innings with five strikeouts. Carlos Estévez, the Angels' fourth reliever, hit Kyle Farmer with a pitch starting the ninth, then got three straight outs for his 31st save in 35 chances.

Cubs 6, Rockies 3
In Chicago, Cody Bellinger hit a tiebreaking sacrifice fly in the seventh inning, and Chicago topped Colorado to improve its position in the NL wild-card standings.

BASEBALL

Led by a solid performance from its bullpen, Chicago earned its second straight win after a stretch of seven losses in eight games. It moved within a half-game of Arizona for the second NL wild card and ensured it would hold onto sole possession of the third spot for at least another day.

Cardinals 5, Padres 2, 11 innings
In San Diego, the Padres matched the expansion 1969 Montreal Expos as the only teams to go 0-12 in extra innings as St. Louis ended San Diego's season-high, eight-game winning streak.



Philadelphia Phillies' Zack Wheeler pitches during the first inning of a baseball game against the New York Mets in Philadelphia. (AP)

MLB Results/Standings

WASHINGTON, Sept 24, (AP): Results and standings from MLB games on Friday.

Yankees	7	Arizona	1	Chicago Cubs	6	Colorado	0
Toronto	6	Tampa Bay	2	Milwaukee	16	Miami	1
Boston	3	Chicago W. Sox	2	Atlanta	9	Washington	6
Cleveland	9	Baltimore	8	Philadelphia	5	NY Mets 10 Inn	4
Texas	8	Seattle	5	Pittsburgh	7	Cincinnati	5
Kansas City	7	Houston	5	San Diego	4	St Louis	2
Minnesota	8	LA Angels	6	San Francisco	5	LA Dodgers	1
Oakland	8	Detroit	2				

American League East Division				National League East Division				
W	L	Pct	GB	W	L	Pct	GB	
z-Baltimore	95	59	.617		x-Atlanta	99	55	.643
z-Tampa Bay	94	61	.606	1-1/2	Philadelphia	85	69	.552
Toronto	86	68	.558	9	Miami	79	75	.513
New York	78	76	.506	17	New York	71	83	.461
Boston	76	78	.494	19	Washington	68	87	.439
Central Division				Central Division				
W	L	Pct	GB	W	L	Pct	GB	
x-Minnesota	82	72	.532		z-Milwaukee	88	66	.571
Cleveland	74	81	.477	8-1/2	Chicago	80	74	.519
Detroit	72	82	.468	10	Cincinnati	79	76	.510
Chicago	58	96	.377	24	Pittsburgh	73	81	.474
Kansas City	52	102	.338	30	St Louis	67	87	.435
West Division				West Division				
W	L	Pct	GB	W	L	Pct	GB	
Texas	85	68	.556		x-Los Angeles	94	60	.610
Houston	85	69	.552	-1/2	Arizona	81	73	.526
Seattle	84	69	.549	1	San Francisco	77	77	.500
Los Angeles	69	85	.448	16-1/2	San Diego	76	78	.494
Oakland	47	107	.305	38-1/2	Colorado	56	97	.366

Warehouse space available

Contact :
Nisha : 90079810

Embassy of India, Kuwait

TENDER No.- KUW/ADM/15/02/2023 DATED- 25.09.2023

TENDER NOTICE FOR INSTALLATION OF BARBED WIRE AND METALLIC FENCE

Embassy of India, Kuwait invites bids from interested companies for supply & installation of barbed wire and metallic fence in its premises.

Prospective / Interested companies are advised to inspect the area and present their offers in a sealed cover marked "Offer for installation of barbed wire and fence in the Embassy- to be opened by addressee only" and addressed to the "Head of Chancery, Embassy of India, Diplomatic Enclave, Arabian Gulf Street, Safat 13015, Kuwait." The bid must be submitted at the Embassy on or before 19 October 2023.

The detailed tender document along with its annexure may be downloaded from Central Procurement Portal <https://eprocure.gov.in/cppp/> and also the official website of the Embassy of India, Kuwait from <https://indembkuwt.gov.in/tender-kuwait-in-india.php>. (please scan QR)

For any other clarification please contact Mr. S. James Jacob, Attache (Administration) on any working day (Sunday - Thursday) between 0800 hrs 1630 hrs on +96522513498 or email to: sdmkuwa@mea.gov.in

Subscribe to our service "Arabtimes WhatsApp" to stay updated on the latest local and international news and events

To activate this Free Service:

- 1- Save our number on your contacts **92220947**
- 2- Send "Start" WhatsApp message to the number you saved.

www.arabtimesonline.com arabtimeskuwait arabtimeskuwait arabtimeskuwait arabtimeskuwait arabtimeskuwait

Three goals in final 10 minutes

Lewandowski, Cancelo lead Barcelona to comeback win over Celta

BARCELONA, Spain, Sept 24, (AP): Robert Lewandowski scored two late goals before João Cancelo snatched the 89th-minute winner to lead Barcelona to a 3-2 comeback win over Celta Vigo at home in the Spanish league.

Rafa Benítez was eying his first big win since returning to coaching in Spain with his team ahead 2-0 before Lewandowski struck in the 81st minute. Cancelo then set up Lewandowski to equalize in the 85th before the Portugal right back completed the turnaround.

"It was a great fightback," said Barcelona coach Xavi Hernández, who signed a contract extension through 2025 on Friday. "It is true we were disorganized at times and didn't make the ball flow like in other games, but the team won in faith and courage."

Barcelona is tied on points with the surprising Girona at the top of the table after its fellow Catalan club routed Mallorca 5-3.

Jorgen Strand Larsen put Celta ahead in the 19th and substitute Anastasios Douvikas made it 2-0 in the 76th while its five-man defense held the defending champions in check - until the final minutes.

SOCCER

Cancelo joined Barcelona on the final day of the transfer window on loan from Manchester City. He has made an immediate impact by giving Barcelona a versatile right back, and it was never more evident than when he joined in a last-gasp push against Celta.

After Lewandowski had given Barcelona hope by scooping a shot over goalkeeper Ivan Villar, Cancelo acted as a midfielder to provide an assist for the Poland striker to make it 2-2. His next move was to make a run through the heart of the defense where he met a lobbed pass by Gavi Páez and guided it home.

Cancelo said he was relieved to have helped his new team after having had what he called a poor performance after turning the ball over several times.

"I made many mistakes, but you just have to keep focused and play until the end," Cancelo said. "We didn't play well and Celta did well defending its area. But it is always better to play poorly and win, than to play well and lose."

João Félix set up Lewandowski's first goal, adding to his three goals already since he also arrived on loan just before the market closed.

It was a bitter loss for Benítez, who took over Celta this summer for his first job in Spain since his short-lived stint with Real Madrid in 2015. Celta has only one win in six games under the coach that led Valencia to league titles back in 2002 and 2004.

"I think we played well for most of the game, but in that final stretch I have the feeling their last two goals were preventable," Benítez said. "Tiredness could have played a part, but those goals can be stopped if you are well positioned. I hope this helps us grow because for 80 minutes we were superb."



Barcelona's Lamine Yamal, (left) challenges for the ball with Celta's Mihalio Ristic during a Spanish La Liga soccer match between Barcelona and Celta at the Olympic Stadium of Montjuïc in Barcelona, Spain. (AP)

Kuwait soccer team bid adieu to Games

HANGZHOU, Sept 24: Kuwait bid farewell to the 2023 Asian Games in Hangzhou, China, as they ended in a 1-1 draw against Thailand in third and final round of Group 5 competitions.

The Olympic team secured fourth place with two points, on par with Bahrain and Thailand, while the South Korean team dominated the group with 9 points.

Bahrain claimed second place despite a 0-3 loss to South Korea, while Thailand suffered a 0-4 defeat against South Korea. Meanwhile, the Olympic Blue Team faced a 0-9 loss.

Emilio Becks, the Portuguese coach of the Olympic Blue Team, made several lineup changes from the squad that faced Bahrain in the second round. This was primarily due to injuries to Abdulaziz Naji and Talal Al-Qaisi, as well as Salman Al-Awadi's absence due to accumulated yellow cards.

ASIAN GAMES

The match commenced with a lineup featuring Abdulaziz Al-Bahar, Sultan Al-Faraj, Youssef Al-Haqan, Khaled Sabah, Faisal Al-Shatti, Mohsen Fallah, Fahd Al-Fadli, Badr Al-Mutairi, Othman Al-Dosari, Hamad Al-Tuwaijri, and Fahd Al-Harbi.

The Thai national team displayed strength and took Kuwait by surprise with an early goal by Jakabong Sanmahon in the tenth minute. They capitalized on the lack of organization in our Olympic team's defense and relied on their speed.

Kuwait attempted to regroup, improve ball movement, and launch attacks on the opponent's goal to level the score, but their efforts were unsuccessful.

In the second half, the coaching staff introduced Fahd Al-Azmi in place of Othman Al-Dosari, leading to an overall improvement in the team's performance. Our Olympic team appeared more cohesive, and the players' determination was evident. Later in the match, Bandar Al-Salama and Mohammed Al-Rashid substituted Fahd Al-Harbi and Badr Al-Mutairi, aiming to enhance the offensive aspect, especially considering that this result would not benefit our Olympic team.

The advantage slightly favored the Blue Team, with our players successfully moving the ball better. Al-Salama attempted a long-range shot, but it was caught by the Thai goalkeeper (68).

Fifteen minutes before the match's conclusion, Faisal Al-Shatti was substituted due to an injury, and Abdulrahman Al-Dihani took his place. Subsequently, Fahd Al-Azmi, the substitute, was replaced by Badr Jamal. The Thai national team retreated to defend their goal, and our Blue Team failed to capitalize on this advantage. However, Youssef Al-Haqan managed to score the equalizing goal for the Blue Team just two minutes before the end of the match. Despite their best efforts to secure a victory, our Blue Team's endeavors proved unsuccessful.

Meanwhile, our national handball team embarks on its journey at the nineteenth Asian Games in Hangzhou, China, with an early morn-



Japan's Shohei Kawakami competes on the parallel bars during the men's team artistic gymnastics event of the 19th Asian Games in Hangzhou, China. (AP)

ing match against the Thai national team. This match is part of Group A competition, which also features the host team, China.

Group A's initial matches, in which our national team participated, commenced on Sunday with matchups against China and Thailand. In this tournament, participating teams are divided into four groups, with the top two teams from each group advancing to the main round. The main round consists of two groups, where the top two teams from each group will progress to the semi-finals.

The Blue Hand, as our handball team is known, aims to secure their first victory at the start of their journey in the tournament. This achievement would significantly boost the morale of the players as they strive to qualify and compete in the later stages.

However, Faisal Siwan, the director of national teams at the Handball Federation, noted that many players on the national handball team are relatively inexperienced in international competitions. Additionally, several players, including Saif Al-Adwani, Fawaz Al-Mashari, Fawaz Al-Shammari, Mohammed Amer, and Abdulaziz Yassin, are nursing injuries, which could impact the performance of the Blue Hand, led by Algerian coach Saeed Hajazi.

Siwan explained that the handball team is entering the Asian Games with a fresh outlook, aiming to build a strong team capable of competing effectively in the future. He also commended the players for their commitment to the coaching and administrative staff's instructions during their preparation in Slovenia.

Regarding the match against the Thai national team today, Siwan acknowledged that the opening

matches in any tournament are often challenging due to limited knowledge about the opponents. Nonetheless, he expressed confidence in the players and their abilities, affirming that they would fight until the final whistle.

In the realm of Taekwondo and Boxing competitions, our national Taekwondo athlete, Ali Al-Morshed, resumes his quest in the under-58kg category at the Asian Games. He faces Chinese opponent Jing Ki at 5 a.m. Coach Walid Al-Morshed confirmed Ali Al-Morshed's readiness to compete and aims to qualify for the tournament's final rounds to uphold Kuwait's reputation.

Meanwhile, Sara Al-Fuqha and Abdulrahman Al-Fadil are set to compete in the individual rowing event at 4 a.m. Swimmer Walid Abdulrazzaq seeks redemption after his elimination from the 100m freestyle by striving to qualify in the 50m

freestyle race.

The boxing national team commences their campaign, with Mansour Khalifa stepping into the ring for his first match in the under-51kg weight category against a Taipei opponent.

Our national shooting team is determined to pass the qualifications and secure a spot in the finals of the 10m air rifle competition, with athletes Ali Al-Mutairi, Saud Al-Subeai, and Abdullah Al-Harbi leading the charge.

In the realm of fencing matches, Ali Al-Nassar, our national foil category fencer, put up a spirited fight against the tenth-ranked Japanese player, Matsumaku, in the round of 16. Despite a lack of experience, Ali Al-Nassar showed promise initially but ultimately succumbed to the skilled Japanese fencer, resulting in his exit from the competition. Another member of our national fencing team, Ali Abbas, faced elimina-

tion in the preliminary rounds.

Ali Al-Nassar revealed that the preliminary rounds were fiercely competitive, and he advanced to the round of 16 thanks to the guidance of coach Saud Zamal. His qualification hinged on defeating his Vietnamese opponent with a score of 15-6, but his encounter with the tenth-ranked Japanese player, Matsumaku, highlighted the disparity in experience.

Fencing team coach Saud Al-Zamal commended Ali Al-Nassar and Ali Abbas for their satisfactory technical performances in the preliminary rounds of the foil competition. Despite having opportunities to qualify for the finals, technical errors ultimately led to their elimination.

In swimming, judo, and e-sports, our national swimming sensation, Walid Abdulrazzaq, faced elimination in the preliminary round after finishing fifth with a time of 50.03 seconds in the 100m freestyle competition.

The judo national team experienced tough luck, with Mishaal Al-Ali losing to Japanese player Kondo and Saud Al-Umairi succumbing to Filipino player Nakanuz in the preliminary round.

On the e-sports front, player Mashari Al-Zafiri encountered disappointment against his Bahraini opponent, Al-Faqihi, losing with a score of 1-2 in the second round. Nonetheless, he had previously secured a place in the second round after defeating a player from the Palestinian team with a score of 2-1.

In tennis, both players Issa Qabazard and Badr Al-Qatani faced setbacks with scores of 0-2 against the Thai player Kaset Samerj and the Uzbek player Fomi in the singles matches. Additionally, they experienced defeat in the doubles match against the Uzbek team."



The effects of exiting the tournament evident on Mohsen Fallah.

Rough for Ranieri

Inter stay perfect with win at Empoli, which are still 'without' point or goal

MILAN, Sept 24, (AP): Inter Milan's perfect start to the Serie A season continued with a 1-0 win at Empoli on Sunday but the Nerazzurri found it harder than they perhaps expected against a side that has yet to register a point or score a goal after five matches.

It needed a special strike from Federico Dimarco in the second half to break down Empoli's resolute defense, which had conceded 12 goals in its previous four matches.

More than half of those came in last weekend's 7-0 defeat at Roma, which led to the dismissal of coach Paolo Zanetti and the hiring of Aurelio Andreazzoli for his third spell at the club.

Inter has now won all five of its Serie A matches, conceding just one goal, and moved three points ahead of second-place AC Milan.

Defending champion Napoli can move to within five points of Inter with a win at Bologna later. Roma was also playing later.

Inter travelled to Empoli full of confidence after last weekend's 5-1 thrashing of Milan in the city derby. It also drew 1-1 at Real Sociedad in their Champions League opener on Wednesday.

The Nerazzurri piled on the pressure from the start and had two good



Empoli's Nicolò Cambiaghi, (left), challenges Inter's Benjamin Pavard during the Italian Serie A soccer match between Empoli and Inter Milan at the Castellani Stadium in Empoli, Italy. (AP)

opportunities in the opening two minutes, while a Matteo Darmian header had to be headed off the line by Empoli defender Ardan Ismajli in the 10th minute.

Inter thought it had broken the deadlock in the 35th but Marcus Thuram's

goal was ruled out for offside.

The visitors did finally make the breakthrough six minutes into the second half. An Inter corner was headed out but only as far as Dimarco on the edge of the area and he unleashed a precise shot on the half-volley into the top far corner.

Claudio Ranieri's Cagliari is still looking for its first win back in Serie A after it lost 2-0 at Atalanta.

SOCCER

Goals from Ademola Lookman and Mario Pašalić secured Atalanta its third win of the season.

Lookman almost scored before his 33rd minute opener as he slalomed through the Cagliari defense but his strike came off the crossbar and seconds later, as the move continued, Davide Zappacosta also hit the right post. Cagliari also saw an effort come off the woodwork nine minutes from time as it tried to get back into the match.

Elsewhere, clinical Fiorentina had two shots on target and scored from both as it beat Udinese 2-0. Udinese, which has only scored once in five matches, had 20 attempts on goal, eight on target.

Burgan ink deal with Okambo, extend Hamzadich contract

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 24: Burgan Club has made significant moves in their volleyball team by signing the Argentine professional, Lucas Okambo, and extending the contract of Serbian pro, Irfan Hamzadich, from the previous season.

These acquisitions are aimed at bolstering the squad's strength for the upcoming 2023-2024 season. Burgan had previously added a number of local talents to their roster, including Youssef Mendil

from Al-Jahra, Nasser Shweikar from Al-Arabi, and the Al-Qadisiyah pair of Badr Juhar and Abdullah Al-Muwain.

These actions reflect Burgan's unwavering commitment to delivering a strong performance and competing for domestic championships in the upcoming season. Additionally, the club has renewed the contract of their Argentine coach, Lisandro Schneider, for the second consecutive season.

Meanwhile, Al-Qadisia has extended the contract of their Argentine coach, Julian Alvarez, who previously coached Burgan.

They have also renewed the contract of their Brazilian professional, Diego Moraes, and signed with the Venezuelan player, Wilner Rivas. Furthermore, they have renewed contracts with local talents like Mohammed Al-Banna, Mohammed Al-Sharif, and Ahmed Abdulrazzaq have also been included.

In parallel, Kuwait has brought in Turkish coach Taner Atik, renewed contracts with their Iranian professional, Saber Kazemi, and Chinese professional, Libin Liu, while securing the services of Youssef Kabbad from Al-Jahra.

VOLLEYBALL



A file photo of players in action.

Turning to the Kazma volleyball team, they have appointed Iranian coach Javad Shamami and added Russian professional Artem Sushko and German professional Igor to their lineup. Local talents like Mohammed Al-Banna, Mohammed Al-Sharif, and Ahmed Abdulrazzaq have also been included.

In parallel, Kuwait has brought in Turkish coach Taner Atik, renewed contracts with their Iranian professional, Saber Kazemi, and Chinese professional, Libin Liu, while securing the services of Youssef Kabbad from Al-Jahra.



Red Bull driver Max Verstappen of the Netherlands celebrates on the podium after winning the Japanese Formula One Grand Prix at the Suzuka Circuit, Suzuka, central Japan. (AP)

Sports

Latest sports scores at — <http://sports.arabtimesonline.com>

Villa ramp up pressure on Pochettino

Son scores twice as Spurs hold Arsenal in north London derby

LONDON, Sept 24, (AP) — Son Heung-min scored twice as Tottenham maintained its unbeaten Premier League record under Ange Postecoglou by holding Arsenal to a 2-2 draw in the north London derby on Sunday.

Arsenal led twice through an own-goal by Cristian Romero and a penalty by Bukayo Saka, but Son made it 1-1 shortly before halftime and leveled again on a quick counter just a minute after the Gunners had scored their second.

Tottenham's second goal came after a huge mistake by Jorginho, who dangled on the ball in midfield and was dispossessed by James Maddison.

Both teams remained level on 14 points each after four wins and two draws to open the season, but fell four points behind leading Manchester City.

Tottenham has impressed under Postecoglou but this was seen as the biggest test yet for the manager's attack-minded "Angeball" tactics.

And a point at Spurs' biggest rival will only underline the feeling that the club is heading in the right direction after a disappointing last season under Antonio Conte.

Aston Villa ramped up the pressure on Mauricio Pochettino by beating 10-man Chelsea 1-0 at Stamford Bridge.

Chelsea now has three losses and just one win under Pochettino in the league and went a man down in the 58th minute when Malo Gusto was shown a straight red card for a reckless tackle.

Villa took full advantage as Ollie Watkins scored the winner in the 73rd

Ireland edge SA in clash of titans; England romp

PARIS, Sept 24, (AP) — Ireland defeated defending champion South Africa 13-8 in a No. 1 vs. No. 2 showdown at the Rugby World Cup that exceeded the hype at Stade de France.

In a low-scoring but ferociously gripping match, both sides scored a try but Ireland slotted all of its goal kicks while South Africa missed four of five, leaving 11 points in the wind.

Right winger Mack Hansen scored Ireland's try after 33 minutes - the first South Africa conceded in this tournament - and left winger Cheslin Kolbe replied with a try for the Springboks early in the second half.

After Jonathan Sexton's penalty put Ireland ahead 10-8 an hour in, his replacement Jack Crowley slotted a 77th-minute penalty to leave South Africa needing a try to draw

and a converted score to win.

With seconds left, the Springboks attempted a rolling maul off lineout ball but they were smothered and couldn't recycle the ball quickly enough before the play was

England 71, Chile 0

Winger Henry Arundell scored a record-tying five tries for England in Lille his Rugby World Cup debut.

England's highest score in 20 years featured 11 tries, eight of them converted by captain Owen Farrell, who closed to within one point of Jonny Wilkinson's England all-time points record of 1,179.

Criticized for the poor quality of its game at the Rugby World Cup, England excited with flair, pace, and clinical finishing for a third straight win in Pool D and all but secured a spot in the quarterfinals. England will need to beat Samoa in

two weeks in their last pool game.

England's approach to an historic first meeting with the lowest-ranked team in the tournament was to put away the boot and run at the Chileans. The passes flowed freely on a sunny afternoon, with England

RUGBY

players resorting to kicking only to create attacks and tries.

Portugal 18, Georgia 18

Portugal couldn't have come closer to its first Rugby World Cup win in Toulouse.

Os Lobos rallied from 13-0 down and looked to have settled the result thanks to two blistering tries from winger Raffaele Storti. But a thrilling climax left both teams unsatisfied.

with a second effort after his initial shot was blocked.

Chelsea had been the dominant team until the sending off but once again were inefficient in the final third.

Villa nearly took the lead in spectacular fashion against the run of play in the 20th when a corner was only partially cleared, and the ball dropped out of the air to the waiting Lucas Digne who whacked an audacious loop-

ing volley from 35 yards that Robert Sanchez tipped over the bar.

Chelsea has not scored in the league since August but played through Villa

SOCCER

with a confidence that belied their modest goal return of five under Pochettino. Mykhailo Mudryk tucked a superb

ball in behind the defence for Nicolas Sanchez to run on to, but the striker's shot was turned behind by Villa goalkeeper Emi Martinez.

Darwin Nunez scored his fourth goal of the season to help Liverpool beat West Ham 3-1 at home.

The Uruguay international has now scored in back-to-back games for the first time since February as Jurgen Klopp's side made it five successive



Tottenham's Pedro Porro tries to block a shot from Arsenal's Fabio Vieira, (right), during the English Premier League soccer match between Arsenal and Tottenham Hotspur at Emirates stadium in London, England. (AP)

Premier League wins to move into outright second spot, two points behind defending champion Manchester City.

Nunez netted with a rasping 60th-minute volley from Alexis Mac Allister's lofted pass to restore Liverpool's lead after Jarrod Bowen's diving header in the first half had canceled out Mohamed Salah's penalty. It was Salah's 12th goal in his last 13 appearances at Anfield.

Substitute Diogo Jota added the third goal in the 85th. Liverpool scored at least three goals in their opening three home league games for only the second time in the last 43 years.

With a clinical volley, Bruno Fernandes got Manchester United back to winning ways against Burnley in the Premier League on Saturday.

His 45th-minute strike secured a 1-0 win at Turf Moor and ended United's three-match losing run.

The Portugal international produced a moment of quality when meeting a long diagonal pass from Jonny Evans with a right-footed shot past Burnley goalkeeper James Trafford from a tight angle.

It was only United's third win of a troubled season that had seen it lose three of its opening five games in the league going into Saturday's match.

China sweep through gold medals on 'opening' day of Asian Games

Stepping on to the podium today is a new starting point: Qiu

HANGZHOU, China, Sept 24, (AP) — China has dominated the Asian Games for the last 40 years, and the 2023 edition will be the same.

The host country won 20 gold medals - 30 overall - on Sunday, just hours after Saturday's opening ceremony overseen by President Xi Jinping and watched by 80,000 at Hangzhou Olympic Sports Center Stadium.

The first gold medal of the games went to the Chinese pair of Zhou Jiaqi and Qiu Xiping in women's lightweight double sculls. The Chinese rolled from there and many are already looking ahead to next year's Olympics in Paris.

ASIAN GAMES

"Stepping on to the podium today is a new starting point," Qiu said. "To prepare for next year's Paris Olympics with all our strength is equivalent to starting from scratch."

Added teammate Zhou: "This can help us build self-confidence and help us prepare."

Two other gold medals on the first day went to Hong Kong, in men's pairs in rowing, and in men's individual foil in fencing.

Hong Kong, a former British colony, was returned to Chinese rule in 1997 and has come under increasingly tight control from Beijing following months of pro-democracy protests in 2019.

China won gold in modern pentathlon (2), artistic gymnastics (1), rowing (6), shooting (2), wushu (2) and swimming (7).

Zhang Yufei won the women's 200 butterfly, the same event she won two months ago at the world championships in Fukuoka, Japan.

"I actually felt the pool was a little slow for me," she said. "And I told my coach that I wasn't feeling in good form or I could have gone faster."

Wang Shun took the men's 200 IM, and Li Bingjie won the women's 1,500.

South Korea won five gold medals on the first day and 14 overall to trail China in second place. South Korea won two gold medals in modern pentathlon, two more in taekwondo, and one in fencing.

Japan had two gold and 14 overall, just behind South Korea.



China's Zhang Yufei competes during the women's 200 meter butterfly swimming final at the 19th Asian Games in Hangzhou, China. (AP)

The only other gold medals on the first day went to Taiwan and Uzbekistan.

China won almost 300 medals - 132 gold - five years ago in the Asian Games in Indonesia with Japan and South Korea the main challengers.

Host nations traditionally get a homefield "medal bump," so China's dominance this time could be more overwhelming than usual.

The Asian Games feature 12,500 participants from 45 nations and territories. Next year's Olympics will involve about 10,500 from more about 200 delegations.

Cricket is prominent in the Asian Games, and India and Sri Lanka will face off on Monday for the gold in the women's game. The earlier bronze medal game matches Bangladesh against Pakistan.

The men's final is Oct. 7, and many expect a final between old rivals Pakistan and India.

Assefa shatters women's marathon world record



Ethiopia's Tigst Assefa celebrates after winning the women's division of the Berlin Marathon and a new world record, in Berlin, Germany. (AP)

'Unbelievable season' Max easily wins Japanese GP, edge closer to 2023 series title

SUZUKA, Japan, Sept 24, (AP) — Max Verstappen survived a dramatic first lap then coasted to victory at the Japanese Grand Prix on Sunday to move a step closer to securing

his third consecutive Formula One championship.

The Red Bull driver, who missed out on the podium a week ago in Singapore, started from pole and held on for his 13th win of the season.

With Verstappen's victory, Red Bull secured the constructors' title, their sixth overall and second in a row. They did it with six races remaining.

"What an unbelievable season we are having," Verstappen said. "You can all be very proud here at the track and back at the factory. You guys built a rocket ship of a car, well done."

McLaren driver Lando Norris was second, 19.4 seconds back of Verstappen, while his teammate Australian rookie Oscar Piastri was third for his first F1 podium.

Verstappen, who also secured a point for the fastest lap, increased his lead over Red Bull teammate Sergio Perez to 177 points. He could wrap up his third consecutive title at the Oct. 6-8 Qatar Grand Prix.

The race got off to a thrilling start with Verstappen, Piastri and Norris going wheel-to-wheel but the Red Bull driver held his lead through the first two turns.

Verstappen commented on the excitement at the start.

"Lucky nothing happened," Verstappen said. "It all got quite close but that's racing, that's how it goes at the start. And then of course you had a good battle into Turn 1 and Turn 2, I was lucky there (was) a bit more grip in Turn 2."

MOTOR RACING

It was a disastrous day for Perez, who was given a penalty for hitting Haas driver Kevin Magnussen and retired from the race after serving the penalty.

The Mexican driver won in Saudi Arabia in March and Azerbaijan in April but has struggled since.

Verstappen saw his record 10-race winning streak come to end at Marina Bay in Singapore and came to Japan determined to get back on top of the podium. Prior to Sunday's race, he led every session at the fast Suzuka circuit, where he wrapped up last year's championship in a rain-shortened race.

Conditions on Sunday were ideal and Verstappen took full advantage.

The safety car came out on the first lap when Alfa Romeo driver Valtteri Bottas made contact with another car resulting in debris on the track. Verstappen was able to quickly retake the lead after his first pit stop and was never seriously challenged.

Ferrari driver Charles Leclerc was fourth followed by Mercedes' Lewis Hamilton.

A battle between the McLaren drivers was ultimately won by Norris.

BERLIN, Sept 24, (AP) — Tigst Assefa broke the women's world record by more than two minutes Sunday at the Berlin Marathon, as Eliud Kipchoge won the men's race for the fifth time but couldn't break his own record.

Ethiopian runner Assefa, the winner in Berlin a year ago, ran the race in 2 hours, 11 minutes, 53 seconds to break the previous women's record of 2:14:04 set by Kenya's Brigid Kosgei at the Chicago Marathon in 2019.

ATHLETICS

Assefa sank to her knees after crossing the line and raised her arms, then celebrated with the flag of Ethiopia. She was nearly six minutes clear of any other runner in Sunday's marathon, with Sheila Chepkirui of Kenya second in 2:17:49 and Tanzania's Magdalena Shauri third in 2:18:41.