



Amir condolences as Iraq deadly fire claims more than 100



Mourners attend the funeral of people who died in a fire during a wedding ceremony in Hamdaniya, Iraq, Wednesday, Sept 27, 2023. A fire that raged through a hall hosting a wedding in northern Iraq has killed more than 100 people and injured 150 others, and authorities warn the death toll could rise. (AP)

150 hurt

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 27, (Agencies): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on Wednesday addressed cables to Iraqi President Abdulatif Rashid and Prime Minister Mohammad Shayaa Al-Sudani expressing wholehearted condolences on the people who lost their lives in a fire at a hall during a wedding in Ninawa in North Iraq.

His Highness the Amir prayed for souls of the deceased, for the bereaved families so they may patiently bear loss of their loved ones, wished the injured quick

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Saudi okays railway linkage with Kuwait

Cabinet gives green light

Focus on influenza, pneumonia

RIYADH, Sept 27, (KUNA): The government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia gave the green light on Tuesday to the railroad linkage project with the State of Kuwait.

The agreement on the project was approved during a cabinet meeting held in NEOM city under the chairmanship of Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, according to the Saudi Press Agency.

Meanwhile, Saudi Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammad bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud unveiled on Monday the ambitious blueprint to transform the Soudah mountains and segments of the Rijal Almaa province into Soudah Peaks.

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Health Ministry kicks off winter vaccination drive

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 27, (KUNA): On Wednesday, the Ministry of Health inaugurated its winter vaccination campaign for the 2023/2024 season at Al Rawda Health Center, with the esteemed presence of Dr. Ahmed Al-Awadhi, the Minister of Health, alongside several key leaders from the ministry.

Dr. Munther Al-Hasawi, Assistant Undersecretary for Public Health Affairs, shared with the Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) that this extensive campaign spans over 50 health centers, strategically placed across

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Opinion

Prime Minister and ministers, come down from ivory towers

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

THE main problem in Kuwait is the ivory towers in which the Prime Minister and ministers are, due to which they fail to see the reality for what it is through field work. The country is hence moving against time, and does not keep pace with the developments of the current era.

On the other hand, all the officials in the neighboring Gulf countries, from the rulers to the junior officials, work from the field.

This is due to the fact that the objective is to strive for a strong state that works according to what benefits its people, enhances social stability in it, and does not leave it vulnerable to advisors who tailor their reports according to their personal interests, and not based on what the country needs.

If these people consider the suffering of Kuwaitis over the housing crisis as beneficial to them, they would rush to convince decision-makers that the reason was the lack of sufficient land areas to provide housing for all citizens.

If they are among the beneficiaries of the continued exacerbation of the crisis of loans and dud cheques, and the imprisoning of people and investing in them in order to accumulate their wealth, they argue that it will cost KD 14 billion, but the truth is that personal loans, which are the cause of the crisis, do not exceed KD 1.9 billion.

This also applies to roads, health, education, and subsidies, given that a lot of public money is being stolen in these areas either through tenders for which huge budgets are allocated, because the costs are inflated to astronomically high numbers, or through trade in rice, tea, imported milk, and services such as electricity and water, from which real estate owners benefit.

All of this gives the beneficiaries hundreds of millions every month, and they will therefore not allow their cash-cow to be slaughtered.

A few days ago, newspapers published about the problems facing school students including the fact that there are no chairs or tables in some schools. The minister, instead of ensuring the needs of the learners are met, moved quickly to meet the request of three MPs and the university director, and submitted their injunctions.

Although the law on co-education ban is difficult to implement, it has caused a crisis, protests, and sit-ins in the most important national educational edifice.

This happened due to the lack of ability to stand up to a parliamentarian, as if accountability is the end of the universe. The truth of the matter is that the absence of vision and submission to advisors led to this abnormal situation that Kuwait has been experiencing for three decades. Importance was given to the signal of an advisor, and his words became "the nail on a board."

This is why we saw in previous national assemblies the way outdated laws were passed even though the countries seeking development abolished them.

Also, for years, real estate prices have been declining due to the decrease in the demand for them as a result of many residents leaving to work in neighboring countries. When observers advised the need to open up the country, people came out and said, "We do not want anyone to come to us... We want them to be sent away."

Naturally, they do not realize the negative consequences of the country's closure on the national economy, as well as on the quality of business.

On the other hand, there are those who raise the slogan of what is "halal" and what is "haram". Based on their limited vision, they not only want to restrict those who will come to the country, but also set impossible conditions. A testimony to that is the proposal to prevent pregnant women from entering Kuwait.

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Day by Day

IN our youth, they taught us that owls are ominous, that crows bring bad luck, a black cat seen as jinn, foxes deemed cunning, wolves perceived as deceitful, and camels believed to harbor malice.

But as we matured, we realized these attributes manifest in some individuals, if not all, as they deceive while displaying signs on their desks proclaiming, "This is from the grace of my Lord." The devils shun them, for they disavowed assistance in thievery, falsehood, and malevolent traits.

... Yet tomorrow is another day

Zahed Matar



Lieutenant General Khaled Al-Mekrad, Chief of the Kuwait Fire Force, conducts an inspection tour of the support center located in the Al-Rai region. The purpose of this visit was to assess the force's readiness and preparedness for the upcoming rainy season. — See Page 5

Newswatch

KUWAIT CITY: The Amiri Diwan on Wednesday voiced much thanks to all citizens and residents who offered condolences over the demise of Sheikh Mubarak Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. (KUNA)

JERUSALEM: Israel arrested five Palestinians in a plot allegedly hatched in Iran to target and spy on senior Israeli politicians, including Israel's far-right national security minister, the country's internal security agency said Wednesday.

The Shin Bet security service alleged that an Iranian security official living in neighboring Jordan had recruited three Palestinian men in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and another two Palestinian citizens of Israel to gather intelligence about several high-profile Israeli politicians. (AP)

RIYADH: The 2023 World Tourism Day (WTD) titled "tourism and green investment" kicked off in Riyadh, with the participation of more than 500 government officials, and tourist experts and leaders from 120 countries. The participants discuss the most outstanding tourist topics to enhance growth and sustainability in this field.

In his inaugural speech, Saudi Tourism Minister Ahmad Al-Khatib said Riyadh's hosting of WTD is important to the Kingdom as the tourist sector is one of the most essential sectors in the world. (KUNA)

Tehran launches imaging satellite amid tensions

Attack on Bahraini forces could hurt rapprochement

DUBAI, Sept 27, (Agencies): Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Jassem Al-Budawi affirmed on Tuesday that a GCC-Iranian rapprochement, based on neighborliness, non-interference in domestic affairs of other countries and abidance by international treaties, serves regional stability.

He, however, warned that the recent Houthis attack on Bahraini forces stationed on the Saudi-Yemeni borders risks pushing this rapprochement steps backward.

Al-Budawi hoped Iran would understand the need to have normal relations with its neighbors based on good neighborliness principles.

In a meeting with Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian a few days ago, he confirmed that his country is willing to have these normal relations with the GCC member states.

The GCC chief estimated the annual growth rate of the GCC states at 6 percent.

The six GCC members make up the world's eighth largest economy with GDP of up to USD 2.4 trillion, he added.

He expected that the GDP of the GCC member states would jump to USD 6 trillion by 2050, their sovereign funds would reach USD 3,225 billion and the pan-GCC trade would hit USD 107 billion.

In other news, Iran claimed on Wednesday that it successfully launched an imaging satellite into space, a move that could further ratchet up tensions with Western nations that fear its space technology could be used to develop nuclear weapons.

Iran's Communication Minister Isa Zarepour said the Noor-3 satellite had been put in an orbit 450 kilometers (280 miles) above the Earth's surface, the state-run IRNA news agency reported. It was not clear when exactly the launch took place.

There was no immediate acknowledgment from Western officials of the launch or of the satellite being put into orbit. The U.S. military did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Iran has had a series of failed launches in recent years.

The most recent launch was carried out by Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard, which has had more success. Gen. Hossein Salami, the top commander of the Guard, told state TV that the launch had been a "victory" and that the satellite will collect data and images.

Authorities released footage of a rocket taking off from a mobile launcher without saying where the launch occurred. Details in the video corresponded with a Guard base near Shahroud, some 330 kilometers (205 miles) northeast of the capital, Tehran. The base is in Semnan province, which hosts the Imam Khomeini Spaceport from which Iran's civilian space program operates.

Infrastructure

The Guard operates its own space program and military infrastructure parallel to Iran's regular armed forces and answers only to Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

It launched its first satellite into space in April 2020. But the head of the U.S. Space Command later dismissed it as a "tumbling webcam in space" that would not provide vital intelligence. Western sanctions bar Iran from importing advanced spying technology.

The United States has alleged that Iran's satellite launches defy a U.N. Security Council resolution and has called on Tehran to undertake no activity related to ballistic missiles capable of delivering nuclear weapons.

The U.S. intelligence community's 2022 threat assessment claims the development of sat-

ellite launch vehicles "shortens the timeline" for Iran to develop an intercontinental ballistic missile because it uses similar technology.

Iran has always denied seeking nuclear weapons, and says its space program, like its nuclear activities, is for purely civilian purposes. U.S. intelligence agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency say Iran abandoned an organized military nuclear program in 2003.

Over the past decade, Iran has sent several short-lived satellites into orbit and in 2013 launched a monkey into space. The program has seen recent troubles, however. There have been five failed launches in a row for the Simorgh program, another satellite-carrying rocket.

A fire at the Imam Khomeini Spaceport in February 2019 killed three researchers, authorities said at the time. A launchpad rocket explosion later that year drew the attention of then-President Donald Trump, who taunted Iran with a tweet showing what appeared to be a U.S. surveillance photo of the site.

Tensions are already high with Western nations over Iran's nuclear program, which has steadily advanced since Trump five years ago withdrew the U.S. from the 2015 nuclear agreement with world powers and restored crippling sanctions on Iran.

Efforts to revive the agreement reached an impasse more than a year ago. Since then, the IAEA has said Iran has enough uranium enriched to near-weapons grade levels to build "several" nuclear weapons if it chooses to do so. Iran is also building a new underground nuclear facility that would likely be impervious to U.S. or Israeli airstrikes. Both countries have said they would take military action if necessary to prevent Iran from developing a nuclear weapon.

Prayer Timings

Fajr 04:20 Asr 15:04
Sunrise .. 05:39 Maghrib .. 17:39
Zohr 11:39 Isha 18:56

Local

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

Weather

Expected weather for the next 24 hours:

By Day: Hot with light variable wind to light to moderate southeasterly wind with speeds of 08-30 km/h.

By Night: Rather hot to mild

with light to moderate southeasterly wind to light variable wind with speeds of 08-28 km/h.

Station **Max Exp** **Min Rec**
Kuwait City 41 30
Kuwait Airport 42 25

Abdaly	41	24
Jahra	42	29
Salmiyah	36	31
Ahmadi	39	30
Nuwaisib	40	25
Wafra	40	23

MP queries on allocation of 5% co-ops' profits to support govt

Al-Tasha submits questions on hacking incident

By Saeed Mahmoud Saleh
Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 27: MP Fayez Al-Jomhour submitted parliamentary questions to the Minister of Social Affairs, Family and Childhood Affairs Sheikh Fares Al-Sabah about the legal basis upon which the decision was issued to allocate five percent of the profits of cooperative societies to support the government.

He revealed that the decision was issued in 2018 by the Court of Appeals to nullify a previous similar decision, when the court highlighted the fact that the funds of cooperative societies are considered private property of the shareholders and cooperative societies that are subject to the government's administrative oversight.

MP Al-Jomhour said he wondered why the subsequent ministers of Social Affairs continued to ignore the aforementioned court decision.

He asked about the purpose of the five-percent cut, and if it was meant for developing projects.

MP Al-Jomhour asked what benefit the shareholders get from the allocation of the five-percent profits of cooperative societies to support the government.

Supporting

He wanted to know the amount of money allocated for supporting the governments in the last three years, and the share from each governorate.

Meanwhile, MP Mubarak Al-Tasha submitted parliamentary questions to the Minister of Finance Fahad Al-Jarallah regarding the recent hacking incident that targeted the systems at the Ministry of Finance.

He asked for a detailed report on the incident, including the departments that were affected by the cyber attack, and whether it was committed by a single computer or through botnets.

MP Al-Tasha wanted to know the documents that were infiltrated, their importance and when the most recent update of the systems was carried out.

He asked if the users' behavior through SIEM was analysed, and if the process helped in protecting against the cyber attack.

MP Al-Tasha highlighted that computer experts recommend regular maintenance of the servers and systems to avoid such hacking attacks through loopholes in the old systems.

He wanted to know when the last maintenance was carried out, and which servers were used.

Contract

MP Al-Tasha said the Ministry of Finance had mentioned in the statement it issued on September 25 that it had signed a contract with an international company that is specialized in dealing with cyber attacks, and that the company is reliable and provides such services to many governments and companies.

The lawmaker wanted to know the name of that company, the procedures taken to sign the contract, the amount of the contract, and a copy of the contract.

Regarding the announcement made by the ministry that a committee was formed to investigate the incident, MP Al-Tasha asked if the committee consists only of employees of the Ministry of Finance or if investigation is being carried out with the cooperation of National Center for Cyber Security.

He wanted to know the names, qualifications and experiences of the committee members.

MP Al-Tasha said some information claimed that the reason behind the cyber attack was the termination of a number of expatriate consultants. He asked if this information is true and if any of the expatriate consultants involved in the issue has been caught.

The lawmaker cited some newspapers which published that the hacker offered to send the stolen data back to the Ministry of Finance for an amount of 15 bitcoin or \$400,000, and gave the ministry a grace period of seven days to respond, else he will put the data up for sale.

MP Al-Tasha asked if this information is true, and the actions taken by the ministry in this regard.

Investigation

In another development, MP Jarrah Al-Fawzan called upon Minister

KPA to sign deals with GCCs entities

New Kuwait-UAE maritime trade route to boost commerce: Shula

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 27, (KUNA): The new maritime trade route between the State of Kuwait and the UAE will boost commercial exchange and strategic ties, said a state official on Wednesday.

Speaking to the press while inaugurating the new route between the Kuwait's Shuwaikh and the UAE's Khalifa ports, Minister of State for Municipal Affairs and Minister of State for Communications Affairs Fahad Al-Shula said that the new route would shorten transport period for cargo and goods to one day instead of five days via land.

He indicated that the Interior Ministry, Kuwait Customs, and the Kuwait Ports Authority (KPA) had agreed to coordinate on eliminating all obstacles facing the transportation of cargo.

He tasked the KPA to sign deals and agreements with other GCCs entities to

ensure smooth commercial exchange and cooperation amongst countries in the region.

On his part, Matar Al-Neyadi – the UAE Ambassador to Kuwait – said that cargo of fresh goods and food-stuff would benefit highly from the new maritime route, affirming that the opening of the path would also have a positive impact on the cost of transportation.

The shipping process would be carried out weekly, boosting movement of goods, revealed the ambassador, adding that would be carried out in a door-to-door mechanism wherein the goods would leave warehouses in the UAE and head straight forward to the ones in Kuwait and vice versa.

The UAE diplomat said that the volume of commercial exchange last year had reached around USD one billion.

He expected that the number would rise this year in light of support reflected by the two countries.

The "SS ANIA" vessel docked in Shuwaikh port earlier today to kick start the new maritime route aimed at transporting vehicles and rolled products, which cannot be transported via containers.

Tests conducted on 600 people

MoH event on 'Preventing Heart Disease'

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 27: The Department of Prevention and Response to Chronic Non-Communicable Diseases, with the cooperation of the Department of Health Promotion, held an event titled "Preventing Heart Disease" to mark the the Gulf Cardiovascular Disease Awareness Week and the World Heart Day.

In a press statement, the Director of the department Dr. Hamoud Al-Zuabi revealed about providing tests and services to more than 600 people during the two-day event held at the Ministries Complex.

He said the tests revealed that many of the patients and workers at the center were infected, and had no knowledge of cholesterol, diabetes, high blood pressure and other chronic non-communicable diseases.

Dr. Al-Zuabi indicated that the event was part of the Ministry of Health's efforts to combat chronic diseases and eradicate health illiteracy.

He praised the efforts exerted by the participants and supporters of the campaign, led by those working in the services department in the Ministries Complex.

Meanwhile, Head of the Community Health Department at the Ministry of Health Dr. Nouf Al-Obaidan explained that the event aimed to increase awareness about the risk factors for heart disease among the public, and included answering many medical questions from the workers and visitors to the complex. Several services were provided during the event, including checking the levels of blood sugar, blood pressure, and cholesterol, measuring weight, and distributing awareness brochures and publications about heart diseases and their risk factors.

Absenteeism among students returns

By Abdul Rahman Al-Shammari

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 27: Barely two weeks have passed since the start of the new academic year but the phenomenon of mass absence of male and female students in various educational levels returned after Thursday, Sept 28, was declared as an official holiday on the occasion of the Prophet's birthday.

According to educational sources, the percentage of absenteeism by students varied from one school to another, but it was not less than 60 percent after prior agreement among parents who granted their children a leave of absence. Under the pretext that the students will not attend school, they expected the school administrations to contact them to take their children home.

The students who attended their

schools began their studies and completed their assignments according to the study plan without any postponement.

The sources explained that various schools in all the educational zones recorded absenteeism rates in their schools, despite the solutions and measures imposed by the ministry every year in order to eliminate or reduce this phenomenon, including linking absenteeism to grades and deducting grades of the absent student.

However, some officials confirmed that implementing the regulations regarding absenteeism is not a solution, but what is actually required is providing awareness to parents about the necessity of obligating their children to attend school, especially in light of the presence of a study plan and curriculum that must be completed.

of Education, Higher Education and Scientific Research Adel Al-Manee to launch an investigation on the lack of readiness of schools to receive students for the new academic year.

He stressed the need to figure out the reasons behind this problem and to hold accountable those who are responsible for it.

The lawmaker revealed that there are footages being circulated showing classrooms in some schools without chairs and tables and with the students sitting on the floor, adding that there are other footages showing broken chairs and tables, all of which indicate that schools were not prepared well for receiving the students.

Furthermore, the National Assembly Speaker Ahmad Al-Saadoun sent a cable of condolences to Speaker of the Iraqi Parliament Mohamed Al-Halbousi over the victims of the fire that broke out in a wedding hall in Nineveh located in the North of Iraq.

He asked Allah Almighty to show mercy to the victims and he wished speedy recovery for the injured.

Proposal

In addition, MP Abdulwahab Al-



Above: some of the photos from the celebration.

Photos by Rizk Taufiq

Ambassador Hayat graces event as guest of honor

Embassy of Vietnam marks 78th National Day

By Paul Francis X. Fernandes

Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 27: The Embassy of Vietnam in Kuwait hosted a reception to celebrate the 78th anniversary of the country's National Day at the Regency Hotel.

The event witnessed a significant turnout, graced by Ambassador Sameeh Hayat, Assistant Foreign Minister for Asia Affairs of Kuwait, as the esteemed Guest of Honor.

Those attending the event included diplomatic corps representatives from various embassies, Kuwaiti friends of Vietnam, and the Vietnamese community residing in Kuwait.

In his opening address, the Vietnam Ambassador to Kuwait HE Ngo Toan Thang, emphasized the remarkable achievements Vietnam has attained over more than

35 years of implementing the Doi Moi (Reformation) policy, spanning various crucial fields.

He highlighted notable accomplishments, such as Vietnam attracting \$25 billion in foreign investment in 2022, and the country's burgeoning economy, estimated at nearly \$400 billion.

He went on to say, Vietnam has also forged strong trade ties with neighboring countries and established enduring relations with 30 strategic and comprehensive partners.

"The friendly and diverse relationship between Vietnam and Kuwait spans 47 years," said Ambassador Ngo Toan Thang and underscored Kuwait's pioneering role as the first Gulf country to establish diplomatic relations with Vietnam in 1976.

Additionally, he said, Kuwait was the first Gulf nation where

Vietnam chose to establish its embassy 20 years ago.

The collaboration between the two nations extends across various domains, encompassing political dialogues, robust trade turnovers, and cultural activities, which have significantly contributed to the growth of Vietnam's tourism industry.

Ambassador Ngo Toan Thang expressed gratitude to His Highness the Amir, His Highness the Crown Prince, and Prime Minister, HH Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, as well as the Kuwaiti government, businesses, and its people for fostering this relationship.

During the ceremony, attendees were treated to an array of exquisite Vietnamese dishes, including the iconic "pho", "banh mi", and egg coffee, offering a delightful gastronomic experience.

diwaniya ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

'Exercising fairness & honesty in assessment of our leaders vital'

"I FIND it difficult to imagine anyone not being impressed, even admiring, the young Saudi Crown Prince, Prince Mohammed bin Salman, during his interview with Fox News," columnist **Iqbal Al-Ahmad** wrote for **Al-Qabas** daily.

"This coincided with the address by His Highness the Prime Minister, Sheikh Ahmed Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, at the United Nations General Assembly's 77th session. During this speech, some social media accounts seized upon linguistic errors, responding in varying ways according to their respective intentions and motives.

"Mistakes are natural for anyone, irrespective of their level or position. However, overlooking the critical and significant content of this speech, particularly Kuwait's clear stances regarding the Durra Field and Abdullah Port, is where the real concern lies.

"While I too noticed these errors and wished that His Highness the Prime Minister had not made them (for whatever reasons), reading the speech in its entirety assured me that it held important content outlining Kuwait's position on crucial matters such as his call for Iraq's government to take immediate and tangible steps regarding border demarcation and the Federal Supreme Court's decision on "Khor Abdullah" were pivotal points.

"In his speech, His Highness also affirmed Kuwait's belief in the validity of the agreement regulating navigation in Khor Abdullah with Iraq, underscoring Kuwait's right to take necessary measures to preserve its legal rights. Many people overlooked these significant points and focused only on the errors.

"Certainly, a person's educational background and experiences shape their personality, especially when holding a high position. However, it's crucial to acknowledge that historical political figures have been humble in knowledge yet impactful in their country's history due to their intelligence, vision, and determination in making and defending the right decisions for the nation and its people.

"The emergence and global fascination with any political figure instill confidence in the represented country and pride in its people. High political positions are vulnerable to intense media scrutiny, demanding readiness, capability, and vigilance. Even unintentional mistakes or slips of the tongue undergo extensive analysis. We should exercise fairness and honesty in our assessment of leaders. A true friend believes in you and not just what you say.

"We hope for more individuals like His Highness Prince Mohammed bin Salman, the Saudi Crown Prince, in our Arab world, with vision, dynamism, capabilities, and the ability to articulate using numbers, ratios, and statistics.

"However, the issue lies in making informed choices based on clear and steadfast principles. Every country requires leadership driven by a clear, robust vision, marked by determination and resilience to achieve what may seem impossible.

"It remains true that high-ranking positions pay the price for being in the public eye across all forms of media, and they cannot afford mistakes, especially if recurring.

"Thorough preparation, equipping oneself with knowledge and figures are paramount. As the proverb goes, 'May God have mercy on a man who knows his own worth'. Media appearances, especially with powerful and respected parties, unveil what lies behind the scenes."

Also:

"The visit of His Highness the Crown Prince, Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah (may God protect him), to the People's Republic of China and his recent meeting with President Xi Jinping, resulted in a range of crucial agreements and memorandums of understanding," columnist **Dr. Sultan Majid Al Salem** wrote for **Al-Jarida** daily.

"This occurred during a pivotal moment on both the international and local fronts. The visit was strategically aimed at expanding Kuwaiti partnerships with the world's second-largest economy, China. Additionally, it coincided with a period when there is a heightened need for the exchange of expertise and leveraging the latest technological advancements, particularly in the tech sector, from the Chinese side.

"Among the significant memorandums of understanding signed with the Chinese side, those pertaining to environmental governance and the implementation of a low-carbon waste recycling system at the national level stand out. These areas have been emphasized in prior discussions, underscoring their importance in bolstering the Kuwaiti national economy, initiating a sustainable circular economy, minimizing carbon emissions, and diversifying industries to reduce over-reliance on the oil sector.

"China possesses extensive and varied experiences in both fossil and renewable fuel sectors, making them a valuable partner for collaboration. However, what holds paramount importance is the genuine willingness at the state level to engage with the Chinese counterparts in the upcoming days.

"The foundation of this engagement will be the transparency of data and a clear articulation of Kuwait's position, enabling intellectual and technical exchanges. In the upcoming phase, every individual will be responsible within their domain and authority.

"There have been instances where the state entered into memorandums of understanding across various domains without a tangible impact on the ground, largely due to inadequate preparation and a lack of seriousness in addressing the matters realistically.

"The accountability lies not with the consulting party, but with the beneficiary party for not demonstrating sufficient seriousness in engaging with the party possessing extensive knowledge.

"The current imperative is to establish working teams that meticulously address every aspect of the agreements reached with the Chinese side. This involves setting clear timelines, providing necessary resources, and empowering these teams to accomplish the aspirations of anyone who holds this country dear. With the wealth of knowledge available on the Chinese side, this must be fully utilized during

their next presence in Kuwait, focusing on enhancing infrastructure in environmental, industrial, and economic domains, and advancing research and development efforts.

"The onus is now on the Kuwaiti side to capitalize on Chinese expertise. While we have engaged with this formidable partner on paper, it is essential to translate this collaboration into tangible outcomes. Failure to seize this golden opportunity would result in a loss for all parties involved."

"This is how the Kuwaiti leadership visits major countries, as a pioneer in achieving developmental goals. This is because Kuwait's leadership and people enjoy a high position among the leaders of the developed and developing world on the international scene. It is also because of Kuwait's active role and extended friendships with various countries of the world, which are characterized by a history of joint cooperation and effective and fruitful partnership since its independence", columnist **Tariq Boursli** wrote for **Al-Anba** daily.

"Yes, the visit of His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad was aimed to realize several visions to be implemented by exchanging experiences and implementing huge projects with a major country such as the People's Republic of China, which has been linked with Kuwait since 1971 by bonds of friendship and cooperation at all levels.

"Recently, we have found an increase in the number of Chinese companies in Kuwait. There is cooperation in the field of industries and in the commercial and investment aspect. The Chinese are also distinguished by being people who have high morals and societal etiquette, as well as sharing beautiful friendship with other people. They also transmit their civilization in an enjoyable public folkloric way.

"In fact, I recommend making touristic visits to China due to the beauty of the different regions in that country and the diversity of their terrain and climate from one region to another. The unique limestone mountains have contributed to the classification of Guizhou province as one of the World Heritage Sites listed on the UNESCO list. Also, this region is home to a kingdom. In addition, huge underground caves and many rivers attract tourists who love adventure and excitement.

"As for the visit of His Highness the Crown Prince, it contributed to strengthening the relationship between the two countries from the economic aspect.

"Kuwait is the seventh largest supplier of oil to the State of China. Trade revenues between the two countries are developing steadily. The Chinese Minister of the Foreign Relations Department of the Communist Party revealed in February that, "The volume of trade exchange between the two countries reached more than \$30 billion at the end of 2022."

"What this visit achieved in terms of signing seven memorandums of understanding in many strategic areas is evidence of the fact that the political authority will overcome all obstacles in order to advance sustainable development.

"We are counting on the cooperation of the two authorities in the second session of the current legislative term, with the government activating all the signed agreements and running the wheel of huge investment projects in the country.

"Hence, the torch of Kuwait is His Highness the Crown Prince, representing His Highness the Amir in this historic visit to China, hand-in-hand with friendly countries and on the wheel of sustainable development."

"Since we failed – yes, we failed – to solve the domestic worker crisis, and all the solutions tried by the concerned authorities did not yield results, the crisis is still the same and it is getting worse," columnist **Waleed Al-Jassem** wrote for **Al-Rai** daily.

"The establishment of 'Al-Durra', specifying the recruitment fees, security or diplomatic measures and increasing the human rights margin for laborers did not solve the problem.

"There is no vision that solves such a simple issue, which preoccupies us at a time we are in dire need of a vision for the future.

"Indeed, the owners of labor recruitment offices uttered in a pessimistic manner that everything that has been done regarding the domestic worker crisis is not serious, compared to what has yet to come!

"All of these happened, but we did not advance. Perhaps, it will be useful to listen to this advice: Start with the abolition of the sponsorship system or make it optional. Al-Durra and other companies that should be established immediately – with the participation of reputable domestic labor recruitment offices – should sponsor thousands of domestic workers, so the employment contracts are with them and they are responsible for everything related to domestic employment.

"They hire workers and complete procedures such as medical examination, visa and bank accounts. They are responsible for guaranteeing the rights of workers like salaries and vacation days, such that no argument remains with any party in which the sponsor (Kafeel) is accused of anything.

"As for us – the beneficiaries of domestic workers in our homes, we will get rid of the headache, routine and procedures. Our role will be limited to contracting with offices that will certainly charge us for the medical examination, accommodation, health insurance and so on, while obligating us to transfer the monthly salary on time. Their commitment is to provide employees, and even substitutes whenever the workers are on leave or if they do no longer want to work.

"Under such circumstances, the relationship of the owner of the house with the worker will be professional. The Philippines and every other country that made remarks on prohibiting the entry of their workers to Kuwait will lose in any argument, because all rights are protected humanely, financially and administratively. The relationship turns into a professional contractual relationship. Both the company and the domestic worker have what they need and must do what they have to do. In the same manner, the sponsor has what he needs and must do what he has to do..."

— Compiled by Mai Elsoukary



Speaker Al-Saadoun while receiving the Argentinian official.

KUNA photo

National Assembly Speaker receives Argentinian official

Kuwait's National Assembly Speaker Ahmad Al-Saadoun received in his office Wednesday Undersecretary for Multilateral and Bilateral Economic Negotiations of Argentina Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ramiro Ordoqui.

The meeting was attended by Ambassador of Argentina to Kuwait Claudia Alejandra and Assistant Foreign Minister for Administrative and Financial Affairs Ambassador Abdullah Al-Yahya. (KUNA)

Securitymen arrest 12 after raids on 7 liquor dens in different areas

Man arrested for running fake production company

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 27: Investigation officers were able to arrest 12 people, in 7 different cases, on charges of manufacturing and promoting local alcohol, reports Al-Rai daily.

The Public Relations and Security Media Department of the Ministry of Interior stated, "In continuation of the efforts of the criminal security sector to arrest violators and outlaws, the General Department of Criminal Investigation, represented by the Provincial Investigation Department, was able, through daily activity and intensifying search and investigation operations in various regions of the country, to arrest 12 Asian women in 7 different cases on charges of manufacturing and promoting local liquor.

The sources added, "7 apartments equipped for manufacturing liquor were raided, and 7,854 bottles of locally made alcohol, 116 barrels or raw material were seized."

The accused and the seized items were referred to the competent authority to take all necessary legal measures against them.

Fake films co: Officers from the Criminal Security Department arrested an individual who was accused of running a fake company for producing films and drama series with the aim of defrauding citizens, reports Al-Rai daily.

It turned out that more than 30 cases of fraud involving large sums of money were registered against him.

The Ministry of Interior warned citizens and residents against scams that take place by requesting financial information.

It urged people not to respond to unreliable websites.

Meanwhile, the Cybercrime Department of the Ministry of Interior has warned citizens and residents against advertisements that promote the sale of tickets for concerts, entertainment venues, etc. on social media, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The ministry indicated that these advertisements may include links to fake websites that facilitate fraud.

'Al-Sharif' expat arrested: The Committee to Combat the Phenomenon of Singles Living in Private and Model Housing has arrested a well-known expatriate of Bangladeshi nationality, who went by the name "Al-Sharif" for renting apartments and converting them into small investment rooms and renting out to the so-called bachelors or singles, reports Al-Rai daily.



One of the firefighters extinguishes the blaze.

KUNA photo

Fire in wood stores contained

Five squads of Kuwait Fire Force contained a fire that ripped through wood stores in Shuwaikh industrial region on Wednesday.

KFF said in a statement that the department was alerted early today about a fire that broke out at carpentry stores in the areas. Firefighters scrambled to the region and

managed to extinguish the blazes that were raging at four stores.

No substantial damage was reported.

The fire department urged managers of factories, commercial and investment buildings to take necessary measures against fires. (KUNA)

The Hawalli Governorate Municipality Branch Emergency Team, headed by Ibrahim Al-Sabaan, told the daily that in collaboration with the Investigation Department of the Ministry of Interior the suspect was put under surveillance, arrested and taken in for questioning.

During interrogation he was charged with violating laws of the country including that of the Kuwait Municipality and the Ministry of Electricity and Water.

Further interrogations revealed the man had rented more than six residential apartments within Salmiya and was living on the extra rent he collected from 'his' tenants.

He has been handed over to the concerned authorities and is believed to be awaiting deportation.

Minor burns suffered: One person suffered minor burns when he attempted to put out fire to two cruise boats which were parked in front of a house in Hittin, reports Al-Anba daily.

The Al-Anba daily said the fire was put out by firemen from the Sabhan Fire Center.

Prompt action by firemen prevented the fire from spreading to cars parked nearby. The injured man was handed over to paramedics.

Fires consume KD 17mn: Responsible firefighting sources said the

financial losses resulting from the fires that the country witnessed during the first half of the current year are estimated at about 17 million dinars, reports Al-Qabas daily.

The sources said that the country witnessed 2,108 fires that broke out from January 1 to June 30 2023, an increase of 3% over the same period last year, 2022.

The sources explained that the material cost of losses in residential places amounted to 531 thousand dinars, while the material cost of losses in non-residential places, such as factories, plots, etc., amounted to more than 14 million dinars, and the financial cost of land transport losses amounted to one million and 600 thousand dinars, and other fires were responsible for the rest of the financial losses.

The sources indicated that residential fires during the first half of this year were 661, an increase of 4% over the same period last year, while the recorded non-residential fires were 260, an increase of 8% over the same period last year, while fires in other places recorded were 619, a decrease of 9% compared to last year, and land transportation fires recorded 556 fires, an increase of 17% over last year, and sea transportation fires recorded only 12 fires.

The breakdown of the fires is as follows – 661 in residential places, 260 in non-residential places, 556 in land transportation, 12 in sea transportation and 619 elsewhere.

MoH to 'rehire' 120 Bedoun employees

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 27: The Acting Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior, Sheikh Talal Al-Khaled, has issued directives to the Ministry of Health to re-hire 120 'Bedoun' employees whose contracts the Ministry had earlier decided to terminate, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The contracts were reportedly terminated based on the conditions set by the Central Agency for the Affairs of Illegal Residents (Bedoun) regarding renewing security cards.

The sources told the daily, Al-Khaled's decision comes based on the fact that Kuwait is a center for humanitarian work, in addition to the ministry's need for these employees who have no other job or place to work.

According to the directive, 120 bedoun employees are expected to return to work in the Health Ministry.

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Dubai-based body expects AI tools to pervade Arab media future

AI skills 'dire necessity', Kuwaiti participants tell Arab media gathering

DUBAI, Sept 27, (KUNA): A number of Kuwaitis participating in a pan-Arab media forum on Wednesday agreed that equipping nascent journalists with proper Artificial Intelligence (AI) skills has become a "dire necessity," given the industry's evolving landscape.

One way of instilling these skills into youngsters in the field is through holding extensive workshops and seminars in a bid to educate them on the matter, according to Dr. Mohammad Al-Rumaihi, who was named Arab media's personality of the year amid the gathering.

He highlighted the significance of the event as the region's perennial media gathering, saying it allows media institutions and personnel the chance to share their knowhow with one another, which bodes well for the development of the field, he underlined.

The event also presents an opportunity for media organizations to get acquainted with the newest skills and trends in the industry, chiefly, the emergence of AI and other digital technologies, said the chief editor of Kuwait's Al-Qabas daily Waleed Al-Nusf.

Highlighting the pervasiveness of social media platforms in today's world, Dr. Ayed Al-Manna spoke of how television and radio, in addition to paper-based news sources have increasingly become antiquated, paving the way for a digital revolution.

Citing the growth of the AI market in Kuwait, Mohammad Al-Mulla said that as the world continues to accelerate a digital drive, developing AI skills is now all the more imperative to ensure a more prosperous future in the field.

The Arab gathering brings together representatives of more than 160 media institutions from more than a dozen Arab countries to discuss the future of media in the region.

A Dubai-based media body on Tuesday cited Artificial Intelligence (AI) and similar cutting-edge technology as an integral part of the industry's future, saying such tools would help bring more efficiency to the field.

The growth of smart phone technology, coupled with the meteoric rise in social media usage, is a testament to the fact that the future of the media industry lies in the use of digital technology, said Muna Al-Meri, the deputy chief of the Dubai media council.

On the use of AI and other digital technologies, she said it would behoove media institutions in the region to share their knowhow and experiences in the field, which would be helpful in allowing these bodies to hone their skills in the use of AI tools.

The aforementioned point also serves as the primary objective for the pan-Arab talks, which bring together representatives of more than 160 media institutions from more than a dozen Arab countries, she underlined.

Kuwait Chamber of Commerce, British delegation explore investment opportunities and partnership



Officials of the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry during a meeting with the British delegation.

Al-Ghanim lauds Kuwait and UK's stronger economic ties

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 27, (KUNA): Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry organized Tuesday a meeting included Kuwaiti economic activities and a British delegation to discuss investment opportunities and commercial partnerships between the two sides.

Dherar Al-Ghanim said the meeting included the UK Ambassador to the country Belinda Lewis, who led the delegation, and Awal Fuseini, Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board's Halal Sector Senior Manager.

Al-Ghanim noted that such meetings have a positive impact on boosting economic cooperation, lauding the historic ties between Kuwait and the UK mainly economy.

Britain is one of Kuwait's main trading part-



British delegation during a discussion on investment opportunities and commercial partnerships with the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry officials.

ners, with a total exchange volume of 640 million pounds in 2021, he said.

He stressed the importance of making more efforts to increase the volume of trade exchange

between the two friendly countries.

Meanwhile, Lewis said these gatherings aim to offer commercial and investment opportunities available in the UK, and discuss establish-

ing some possible projects in the two countries.

She expressed her satisfaction about cooperation between the two sides, referring to UK's great interest in increasing collaboration with Kuwait in all domains.

Fuseini thanked the chamber for organizing the meeting which creates a chance to entrepreneurs of the two sides.

He elaborated that there are several and huge possibilities in the two countries, urging all investors to hard work to enhance commercial exchange and set up investment projects.

He made a presentation on the UK meat sector and that Britain is the third largest exporter of meat in the world.

Furthermore, Reem Al-Fulaij, Chairman of the Board of Directors and Director General of the Kuwait Food and Nutrition Public Authority, stressed keenness on the safety of all types of food that are in line with all standards approved by international organizations and agencies.

September

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The Guest Show poster.

Australian ambassador on TGS

This Thursday, The Guest Show on Radio Kuwait is honored to present H.E. Melissa Kelly, Ambassador of Australia to the State of Kuwait. Ambassador Kelly is a career diplomat. She is the first Australian woman to lead the Embassy in Kuwait.

Ambassador Kelly's interest in people, culture and world affairs began at a young age when in a non digital world she established connections with people around the

world through what we used to call 'pen pals'. She later translated her passion for global affairs into a degree in International Law.

Before coming to Kuwait, she was posted in Saudi Arabia, where she witnessed the seismic changes that took place. In this very informative and engaging conversation, Ambassador Kelly talks about her self and about the nuances of the very special relationship between Australia and Kuwait.

Celebrating 60 years of diplomatic ties

Embassy of Pakistan in collaboration with NCCAL and PNCA will organize 'Pakistani Cultural Week'

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 27: The Embassy of Pakistan in collaboration with the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL), Kuwait and Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA) will organize "Pakistani Cultural Week" from 13-16 October 2023. Director General, PNCA Mr. Muhammad Ayoub Jamali will lead the 25-member cultural delegation from Pakistan.

Pakistani Cultural Week will comprise of performances by renowned Pakistani artists, including folk/ghazal singers, world-renowned instrumentalists and performing artists. The cultural week will showcase cultural diversity of Pakistan alongside reflection of commonality of traditions and shared values between the people of two brotherly states.

The cultural week will also feature an expert talk on linkages between the ancient Dimun and Indus civilizations of Kuwait and Pakistan. World acclaimed Pakistani archeologist and recipient of Pakistan Civil Award, Dr. Ashraf Khan along with Dr. Hasan Jassem Ashkanani, Assistant Professor (Anthropology) of Kuwait university will brief on the historical relations between the two countries.



Pakistan Cultural Week poster

Pakistan Cultural Week is organized as part of series of events to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and Kuwait. Earlier this year, a joint logo was officially launched by the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the two countries and both capitals agreed to organize a series of events/programs to commemorate this historic milestone of 60 years of brotherly ties.

Kuwaiti relief heroes rally in Atlas Mountains to heal quake-stricken hearts

Kuwait's aid continues to pour into quake-hit Morocco

MARRAKECH, Morocco, Sept 27, (KUNA): Kuwaiti relief personnel and volunteers remain stationed in the quake-demolished regions in the heights of Atlas Mountains aiding the stricken populace and consoling the bereaved who lost loved ones.

Under the logo, "fazaat al-maghreb," personnel of Kuwait Red Crescent and Kuwaiti charities have

flown for thousands of kilometers from the home country, Kuwait, "the center of humanitarian action," reaching the quake demolished regions.

The earthquake that left heavy damage in Al-Hoz region claimed 3,000 lives and injured a large number of people.

Staff of the State of Kuwait Embassy in Morocco, upon instructions

by the political leadership, have been involved in the relief operation, assessing the needs and participating in blood donations for the wounded.

Ambassador Abdulatif Al-Yahya along with Kuwaiti citizens residing in Morocco have also been engaged in the efforts to sooth the victims' plights.

Kuwait on Tuesday continued to deliver aid to the people affected by a devastating earthquake that struck Morocco's High Atlas Mountains earlier this month, leaving thousands of people dead and heaps of destruction in its wake.

The latest batch of aid "follows up" on previous campaigns launched by Kuwait-based charities in the wake of the natural calamity, said Kuwait Red Crescent Society deputy chief Anwar Al-Hasawi.

The Kuwaiti charity is working alongside its partners in Morocco to assess the scope of aid needed given the utter destruction triggered by the tremor, he underlined, saying the aid comes as "per the instructions" of Kuwait's political leadership.

The magnitude 7.2 quake, Morocco's deadliest in more than 60 years, struck late on September 8, with the North African country's ancient city of Marrakech bearing the brunt of the devastation.



Kuwait Red Crescent Society official with Moroccans who fled their quake demolished region.

Kuwait Fire Force assesses readiness for rainy season

KFF chief conducts inspection tour

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 27, (KUNA): On Wednesday, Lieutenant General Khaled Al-Mekrad, Chief of the Kuwait Fire Force (KFF), conducted an inspection tour of the support center located in the Al-Rai region. The purpose of this visit was to assess the force's readiness and preparedness for the upcoming rainy season.

According to a statement from the Fire Department, this inspection tour was carried out in accord-

ance with the directives of Acting Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, Sheikh Talal Khaled Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. The tour was conducted in the presence of several leaders and officers from the force, as well as representatives from various military and civilian agencies.

Rapid intervention

During the inspection, a thorough review of equipment and machinery designated for handling rapid intervention cases during the rainy season was conducted. This included advanced hydraulic water pumps, electrical and mechanical pumps of various sizes and

types, as well as portable boats. These resources are essential for reaching areas inaccessible to fire engines and for rescuing individuals trapped in vehicles or homes.

Furthermore, discussions centered around the strategies and plans that have been developed in collaboration with relevant authorities in the country. The emphasis was on activating the major accident command room, which is equipped with the latest technological devices and tools. This command center plays a crucial role in monitoring the response of reports and guiding teams to minimize damage and address any issues arising from unstable weather conditions.

Prime Minister and

Continued from Page 1

Although the Minister of Interior canceled the above mentioned order, it indicates a pattern of thinking of some decision-makers in the country.

When the Prime Minister, ministers, and undersecretaries are on the field, they will realize the extent of the problems that people are facing. But when they remain behind closed doors and are content with their subordinates giving them military salutes, then Kuwait will not develop, and will remain an example of backwardness in the countries of the region.

Saudi okays

Continued from Page 1

According to Saudi Press Agency (SPA), the project aims to develop the mountainous area, located in the southwest region of the Kingdom in the Asir region, into "a luxury mountain tourism destination set 3,015 meters above sea level on Saudi Arabia's highest peak."

The Saudi Prime Minister and Chairman of Soudah Development emphasized that Soudah Peaks marks the dawn of a new era in upscale mountain tourism, offering an unparalleled living experience while safeguarding the natural environment and preserving the region's cultural and heritage treasures. He also stated that the visionary project aligns seamlessly with the goals of Vision 2030, aimed at bolstering tourism and entertainment, fueling economic expansion, attracting substantial investments, bolstering the Kingdom's cumulative GDP by over SAR29 billion (USD 7.731 bln) and generating numerous direct and indirect employment prospects.

"Visitors will have the opportunity to discover the beauty of Soudah Peaks, explore its rich culture and heritage, and experience the authentic hospitality of the local community. Soudah Peaks will offer unforgettable experiences amidst lush greenery, above the clouds," added the Prince, citing SPA.

Soudah Peaks will offer luxury hospitality services to 2 million visitors all year long as it will encompass six distinct development zones, each boasting an array of top-tier amenities. These will include hotels, opulent mountain resorts,

charming residential chalets, villas, exclusive mansion sites, a variety of entertainment and commercial offerings, and outdoor attractions catering to sports, adventure, wellness, and cultural experiences.

Soudah Development will deliver 2,700 hospitality keys, 1,336 residential units, and 80,000 square meters of commercial space for Soudah Peaks by 2033.

Health Ministry kicks

Continued from Page 1

all regions of Kuwait. The primary focus of this initiative will be on administering influenza and pneumonia vaccinations, which are known to be prevalent during the winter season.

Dr. Al-Hasawi emphasized the critical nature of receiving vaccinations, particularly for individuals with risk factors such as obesity, asthma, other respiratory conditions, and diabetes. He clarified that influenza vaccinations are recommended from as early as six months of age to mitigate the severity of the disease, reduce the duration of infection transmission, and minimize the days of suffering from related complications for infected individuals.

Furthermore, Dr. Al-Hasawi highlighted the Ministry's commitment to ensuring an ample supply of vaccinations for all targeted groups, expressing the readiness to provide additional vaccinations if the need arises.

He also noted that while there are various respiratory viruses, the vaccination program primarily safeguards against the most aggressive strains, numbering four in total. Dr. Al-Hasawi assured the public that these vaccines are readily available at all designated vaccination centers under the Ministry's jurisdiction.

Dr. Walid Al-Busairi, the Director of the Mubarak Al-Kabeer Health District and the Acting Director of the Capital Health District, echoed the importance of receiving vaccinations unless there are medical contraindications. He explained that vaccinations not only decrease the likelihood of infection but also reduce the severity of the illness in case of infection, thereby lowering hospitalization rates due to complications.

Amir condoles

Continued from Page 1

recovery and safety for the whole people of Iraq.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah also addressed cables to Iraqi President Abdulatif Rashid and Prime Minister Mohammad Shayaa Al-Sudani expressing wholehearted condolences.

His Highness the Crown Prince prayed for souls of the deceased and wished the injured quick recovery.

Speaker of the National Assembly Ahmad Al-Saadoun sent a cable of condolences to the Iraqi parliament Speaker Mohamed Al-Halbousi, expressing condolences over a wedding fire in an area in Nineveh governorate, which claimed a number of lives and caused injury of several individuals.

Al-Saadoun expressed hopes for the swift recovery for those injured and solace for the victims' families.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah addressed cables to Iraqi President Abdulatif Rashid and Prime Minister Mohammad Shayaa Al-Sudani expressing wholehearted condolences on the people who lost their lives in a fire at a hall during a wedding in Ninawa in North Iraq.

A raging fire seemingly caused by fireworks set off to celebrate a Christian wedding consumed a hall packed with guests in northern Iraq, killing more than 100 people and injuring 150 others as authorities warned Wednesday the death toll could still rise.

Authorities said that flammable building materials also contributed to the latest disaster to hit Iraq's dwindling Christian minority. In the fire's chaotic aftermath, officials offered conflicting death tolls and security officials said they had detained staff at the wedding hall as part of their investigation.



Volunteers of Kuwaiti charity delivering aid to Moroccans in quake stricken areas. Inset: A young Moroccan boy sits after his home was destroyed following an earthquake.

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The Conversation

Internships are learning opportunities

Create a college internship where students actually learn, not quit

By **Kyoungjin Jang-Tucci, Hee Song**
and **Matthew T. Hora**
University of Wisconsin-Madison

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

When Angelica landed a prestigious internship with a major corporation just outside of Houston, she was ecstatic about the opportunity to launch her career in finance.

Such optimism was warranted, as research shows that students with internships are almost twice as likely to graduate college, have a 12.6% higher likelihood of being invited to job interviews, and earn 6% higher wages than noninterns once they graduate.

But even with a decent paycheck and scholarships to cover her rent, Angelica considered leaving the internship within weeks. What went wrong?

As part of the three-year College Internship Study at the Center for Research on College-Workforce Transitions at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, we found that interns can have a tough time adapting to the culture of a new city, organization and work environment.

In Angelica's case, the shock was partly about geography. She was the only intern in a group of 17 from out of town, and she felt "alone and in a big city where I didn't know anybody."

But more alienating was the fact that she knew of only one other Hispanic woman in her intern group, and the company itself, she said, was mostly white. Ultimately, she believed that "none of these people really have anything in common with me." She felt excluded and started to believe it would be impossible to work full time at the company.

Experiences

Angelica's story demonstrates that not all student interns have positive and productive experiences. In fact, research shows that internships can reinforce gender inequalities in the workplace, create unrealistic expectations for career advancement and even exploit student labor.

Interns are learners as much as they are workers earning a paycheck. Unfortunately, the educational aspect of internships frequently gets overshadowed, with interns assigned mundane or repetitive tasks unrelated to their academic or professional interests. This can hinder their career development, for example by diminishing their motivation to pursue a career in that field.

Another problem, which our own research revealed, is that too often supervisors adopt a hands-off strategy. They expect interns to define and complete tasks independently.

While this may work for long-term or mature employees, it is unsuitable for most interns who are new to professional life. Interns typically have a shorter tenure, limited authority and less access to resources. This makes it difficult to complete complex tasks with little supervision. The lack of structure and guidance can also cause significant stress that weakens their learning and job performance.

And, finally, unstructured internships can alienate students who are already marginalized - particularly those who are first-generation, low-income or students of color. That's because the lack of structure or supervision can make students feel overwhelmed, pushing them to seek guidance from family or friends. These students may not have family connections in prestigious or professional occupations and therefore lack support systems to deal with their challenging workplace situations.

Based on our research, we offer four strategies for designing effective and welcoming internships for college students.

In order to ensure interns acquire new knowledge and skills, supervisors can establish both long-term and short-term learning goals. This is required in countries like France, where internships with companies are fully included in college curricula, but not in the US.

Learning goals can include specific tasks the intern will be expected to perform, technical knowledge they will gain and transferable skills like communication or teamwork that they should develop through the internship.

Ideally, they are developed in collaboration with faculty advisers, students and employers. We especially emphasize the importance of engaging students in these conversations. Different interns will likely have unique objectives for their own internship experience.

Documenting these goals using forms like this one from the University of Minnesota can help students discern where to concentrate and hone their skills during the internship.

A well-known theory in educational psychology shows that people learn best when they are gradually introduced to new tasks or subject matters. In our own study, we found that interns also benefit from starting their jobs with easier tasks and gradually transitioning to tasks that require less oversight.

When internship tasks are structured progressively from easier to harder, it gradually increases students' understanding over time. Our research also shows that interns benefit from assignments that have clear expectations and deadlines and pose minimal consequences if performed incorrectly.

Research confirms the importance of clear, regular and open lines of communication between interns and their supervisors. This became especially important during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, when online internships suffered from infrequent and virtual communications. Many interns were left feeling unsatisfied and neglected.

Effective

Whether the internship is in-person or online, an effective communications strategy involves regular meetings to review progress, discuss new tasks and ideas and provide students with an opportunity to voice their concerns. Open communication can be especially important for interns who are new to a job, company or city.

Employees in general benefit professionally and psychologically from having workplace mentors with similar backgrounds and identities to their own. Yet, workers from marginalized groups - especially women - often have a harder time finding supportive and relatable mentors.

However, simply pairing mentors and interns based on characteristics like race or gender may not be the best approach. Different interns - and supervisors - have varying needs, experiences and capabilities. Companies can first survey interns on their values and preferences regarding mentoring and supervision, and then match them in accordance with their mentorship needs and preferences.

Additional strategies to enhance interns' sense of belonging include peer mentoring and frequent social events - methods that have been proven to help newcomers adapt to new environments.

We believe internships must be seen as more than a part-time job where students simply need to be hired, onboarded and shown a desk. Internships are learning opportunities and, as such, require careful design. Done right, internships can help interns gradually get more acquainted with the culture where they work and the jobs they will be expected to do. (AP)



Photos from the event.

Annual extravaganza celebrates culture, creativity

British Academies Carnival 2023 showcases talent, training

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 27: On the evening of September 16th, 2023, The British Academies came alive with its annual extravaganza, the British Academies Carnival, celebrating talent, culture, and creativity. The event was inaugurated by esteemed dignitaries, including Madam Vera, the Founder of BSK, the Vietnamese Ambassador H.E. Thang Toan, and a renowned sports celebrity Rabba AlHajrie. Their presence and a short speech by each of the dignitaries added a touch of prestige to the

event, underlining its significance in promoting culture, arts, and sports training.

The British Academies Carnival 2023 was made possible through the support and partnership of Al Mulla Exchange and The Diet Care, along with valued contributions from National Geographic Ultimate Explorer, Below Zero, Dental 8 Clinic, Royale Hayat Hospital, and Dada Bhai Travels. The event served as a platform for British Academies to shine, featuring dazzling gymnastic and

roller skating routines, enchanting piano and ballet performances. Guests were also entertained by captivating magic and bubble shows, an electrifying LED light dance, and a spectacular dinosaur dance that added a unique touch of fun and creativity to the night. Beyond the entertainment, attendees had the chance to savor a diverse array of food and beverages, and numerous businesses and service providers displayed their offerings, enhancing the overall vibrancy of

the Carnival.

In a significant development, several parents seized the opportunity to register their children for British Academies' training courses during the Carnival itself, highlighting the appeal and effectiveness of the showcased courses.

We extend our sincere appreciation to our event sponsors and all Carnival partners for their invaluable support in making this event a resounding success.

Event highlights university's educational initiatives

AUK joins FAWSEC to introduce new teachers to Kuwaiti culture

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 27: The Center for Continuing Education (CCE) at the American University of Kuwait (AUK) collaborated with FAWSEC Educational Company to introduce new teachers in Kuwait to the rich culture, customs, and lifestyle of the country. The event took place on AUK's campus, highlighting the University's active participation in educational initiatives.

The event provided teachers from top American, Bilingual, and British Schools in Kuwait with a comprehensive introduction to Kuwaiti culture and traditions. CCE AUK set up a booth where their representatives disseminated valuable information to attendees regarding the range of programs and services they provide.

This immersive experience was facilitated through a diverse lineup of exhibitors, esteemed national speakers, industry experts, and expats who have established themselves in Kuwait. Attending the event were approximately 200 new hires, which was sponsored by the Trusted Food Group, Burgan Bank, and IKARUS United Marine Services Company (K.S.C.).

Ms. Amal Al-Banai, AUK executive vice president, underscored the University's commitment to nurturing an environment conducive to educators. "We believe that educators play a pivotal role in shaping the future of our students and society. Therefore, we provide our educators with the resources, support, and opportunities they need to excel in their roles. A thriving academic community is one where educa-



Group photo of AUK's representatives and attendees.

tors are not only respected but also continuously encouraged to innovate, grow, and inspire."

AUK is dedicated to providing a warm and welcoming environment for educators. Events as such not only enhance the

experiences of new hires but also contribute to the overall educational landscape in Kuwait.

USD up

The US dollar rose Wednesday vis a vis the Kuwaiti Dinar by 0.03 percent to settle at KD 0.309 and the euro went down by 0.23 percent to KD 0.326 compared to yesterday's exchange rates.

The Central Bank of Kuwait said in its daily bulletin that the sterling pound fell by 0.44 percent to KD 0.375, also the Swiss franc by 0.47 percent to the level of KD 0.336 and the Japanese yen firmed at KD 0.002.

Exchange rates declared by the CBK reflect average prices and not rates of actual transactions. (KUNA)

CBK issues bonds valued USD 153m

The Commercial Bank of Kuwait has successfully issued the first tranche of bonds at a value of KD 50 million (USD 153 million), as part of Tier 2 capital of maximum KD 100 million (some USD 306 million). The bank said in a statement posted on website of Boursa Kuwait, on Wednesday, that the number of issued bonds reached 1,000 with a nominal value of KD 50,000 (some USD 153,000) per bond. The rate of the bonds issuance

in the first tranche amounted to 100 percent of the nominal value, with a 10 year maturity due on December 26, 2023.

As to the financial impact of the measure, the statement indicated that it would increase the bank capital and boost its solvency.

The Commercial Bank of Kuwait, established in 1960, was listed in the bourse in 1984, with a capital amounting to KD 250 million (USD 762 million). (KUNA)

Kuwait's exports to EU show upward trend

Kuwait's exports to the 27-member European Union totaled 3.16 billion euro (USD 3.3 billion) in the first seven months (Jan-July) of 2023, according to the EU statistical office.

By contrast, Kuwait's exports to the EU in the 12 months of 2022 totaled 3.5 billion euro (USD 3.6 billion).

Meanwhile, Kuwait's imports from the EU for the 12 months of 2022 were worth 5.5 billion euro, (USD 5.8 billion) and for the first seven months of 2023 worth 3.44 billion euro (USD

3.6 billion). These figures were received by KUNA from Eurostat, the EU's statistical office said in statement released today.

Mineral fuels, lubricants and related materials formed the bulk of Kuwait's exports to the EU followed by chemicals and related products.

The bulk of Kuwait's imports from the EU were miscellaneous manufactured articles, followed by chemicals and related products. (KUNA)

Market Movements

26-09-2023

	Change	Closing pts		Change	Closing pts		
JAPAN	- Nikkei	+0.18	32,371.90	UAE	- DFM	-0.29	4,142.12
PAKISTAN	- KSE 100	+0.21	46,408.68				
PHILIPPINES	- PSEI	+1.77	6,374.94				
SAUDI	- Tadawul	+1.45	11,076.94				

Business

Kuwait experienced 3.6% fall in cash circulation

Supply of coins up by 0.7 percent

By Ahmad Fathi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 27: During August of last year, Kuwait experienced a 3.6 percent decrease in cash circulation, representing local liquidity. The total cash in circulation dropped from 2.02 billion dinars in July to 1.947 billion dinars in August, amounting to a reduction of 74 million dinars. This decline continued from the start of 2023, with a 2.6

percent decrease, equating to approximately 52.1 million dinars, compared to the 1.999 billion dinars reported in December of the previous year. Additionally, there was an annual decrease of 1.6 percent, amounting to 31.9 million dinars, down from 1.979 billion dinars at the end of August 2022.

Data from the Central Bank of Kuwait for August reveals that cash in circulation is categorized into banknotes and coins. Banknotes saw a month-

ly decrease of 2.6 percent, totaling 52.4 million dinars, transitioning from 1.99 billion dinars in July to 1.91 billion dinars in August. On an annual basis, banknotes experienced a 1.6 percent decrease, equivalent to 32.4 million dinars, compared to the 1.948 billion dinars recorded in August 2022. Over an eight-month period, banknotes dropped by 2.6 percent, reaching 1.968 billion dinars in December from 1.999 billion dinars.

On the contrary, the supply of coins increased by 0.7 percent, totaling 229 thousand dinars during the first seven months of 2023. This rise elevated the total from

31.134 million dinars at the end of December to 31.363 million dinars in August. Furthermore, there was a 1 percent annual increase, equivalent to 319 thousand dinars, up from 31.044 million dinars in August 2022. The balance of coins remained steady on a monthly basis.

Breaking down the banknotes further, they are categorized into six denominations: a quarter dinar, half a dinar, a dinar, five dinars, ten dinars, and twenty dinars. The dinar category witnessed a 10 percent monthly decrease, shedding 6 million dinars and reaching 53.5 million dinars in August from 59.5 million dinars in July. However, it increased by 12.8 percent from the beginning of 2023, totaling 6.1 million dinars, compared to 47.4

million dinars in December 2022.

The half dinar category decreased by 9.14 percent monthly, amounting to a reduction of 1.5 million dinars, stabilizing at 14.9 million dinars. Meanwhile, the quarter dinar category experienced an 8.1 percent monthly decrease, equaling 1.1 million dinars, resulting in a total of 12.5 million dinars in August.

The five-dinar denomination faced an 8.2 percent monthly decrease, declining by 9.3 million dinars, from 113.4 million dinars in July to 104.1 million dinars in August. However, it showed a 1.4 percent increase over eight months, reaching about 1.4 million dinars, compared to 102.7 million dinars at the end of December.

Regarding coins, there was a 1 percent annual growth, amounting to an increase of 319 thousand dinars, as the total rose from 31.044 million dinars at the end of August 2022 to 31.363 million dinars in August. Additionally, from the start of 2023, there was a 0.7 percent increase, totaling 229 million dinars, compared to 31.134 million dinars at the end of December.

The distribution of coin denominations was as follows: 100 fils amounted to 14.16 million dinars, 50 fils reached 9.946 million dinars, 20 fils totaled 4.081 million dinars, 10 fils equated to 1.91 million dinars, and 5 fils amounted to 1.089 million dinars, while the smallest denomination, 1 fil, totaled about 12 thousand dinars.

Time runs short to avoid a govt shutdown

US Congress moving into crisis mode

WASHINGTON, Sept 27, (AP): Congress is rushing headlong into crisis mode Tuesday with a government shutdown days away, as Speaker Kevin McCarthy faces an insurgency from hard-right Republicans eager to slash spending even if it means halting pay for the military and curtailing federal services for millions of Americans.

There's no clear path ahead as lawmakers return with tensions high and options limited. The House is expected to launch an evening vote on a package of bills to fund parts of the government, but it's not at all clear that McCarthy has the support needed as holdouts demand steeper spending cuts.

"It's easy," McCarthy quipped Tuesday when asked about keeping the government open.

But with just five days to go before Saturday's deadline, the right flank in the House has seized control, leaving the Senate trying to stave off a federal closure. Senators are pushing ahead with their own bipartisan stopgap measure to keep offices funded in time before Saturday's deadline.

Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer opened the chamber by saying the temporary measure from the Senate would be "a bridge towards cooperation and away from extremism," and include some supplemental funding for Ukraine and disaster assistance in the U.S. that has been in jeopardy.

With a supportive nod, Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell appeared on board with the bipartisan Senate plan saying, "Government shutdowns are bad news."

A government shutdown would disrupt the U.S. economy and the lives of millions of Americans who work for the government or rely on federal services - from the military personnel and air traffic controllers who would be asked to work without pay to some 7 million people in the Women, Infants and Children program, including half the babies born in the U.S., who could lose access to nutritional benefits, according to the White House.

The standoff comes against the backdrop of the 2024 elections as a core group of hard-right Republicans are being egged on by Donald Trump, the Republican frontrunner to challenge President Joe Biden, who has urged McCarthy's House to stand firm in the fight or "shut it down."

It is setting up a split-screen later this week as House Republicans hold their first Biden impeachment inquiry hearing probing the business dealings of his son, Hunter Biden, as Congress spirals closer to a shutdown. It also comes as former Trump officials are floating their own plans to slash government and the federal workforce if the former president retakes the White House.

Against the mounting chaos, Biden warned the Republican conservatives off their hard-line tactics, saying funding the federal government is "one of the most basic fundamental responsibilities of Congress."

Biden implored the House Republicans not to renege on the debt deal he struck earlier this year with McCarthy, which set the federal government funding levels and was signed into law after approval by both the House and the Senate.

"We made a deal, we shook hands, and said this is what we're going to do. Now, they're renegeing on the deal," Biden said late Monday.

But Trump is pushing Republicans to dismantle the deal with Biden. "Unless you get everything, shut it down!" Trump wrote in all capital letters on social media. "It's time Republicans



Speaker of the House Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., emerges from a closed-door Republican strategy session to talk to reporters about updates on funding the government and averting a shutdown, at the Capitol in Washington, Wednesday, Sept. 27, 2023. (AP)

Theft that threatens workers, shoppers cited

Target to close 9 stores including 3 in San Francisco

NEW YORK, Sept 27, (AP): Target said Tuesday that it will close nine stores in four states, including one in New York City's East Harlem neighborhood, and three in San Francisco, saying that theft and organized retail crime have threatened the safety of its workers and customers.

The closings, which will be effective Oct. 21, also include three stores in Portland, Oregon, and two in Seattle. Target said that it still will have a combined 150 stores open in the markets where the closures are taking place. It said it will offer affected workers the opportunity to transfer to other stores.

The Minneapolis retailer said the decision to close the stores was difficult.

"We know that our stores serve an important role in their communities, but we can only be successful if the working and shopping environment is safe for all," Target said in a statement.

Target said it has invested heavily in strategies to prevent theft, such as adding more security workers, using third-party guard services and installing theft-deterrent tools, like locking up merchandise. It also has trained store leaders and security-team members to

learned how to fight!"

The Republican speaker McCarthy brushed off Trump's influence as just a negotiating tactic, even as the far-right plan keeps torpedoing his plans.

McCarthy arrived at the Capitol after a tumultuous week in which a handful of hard-right Republicans torpedoed his latest plans to advance a usually popular defense funding bill. They brought the chamber to a standstill, and leaders sent lawmakers home for the weekend with no endgame in sight.

McCarthy, of California, was hopeful the latest plan on a package of four bills, to fund Defense, Homeland Se-

curity, Agriculture, and State and Foreign Operations, would kickstart the process.

At the same time, McCarthy was also reviving his plan for the Republicans to pass their own stopgap measure even though a handful on the hard-right said they would never vote for it, denying him a majority. That proposal would fund the government while also adding severe border security provisions that Biden, Democrats, and even some Republicans reject.

"I'm working all my time to make sure that there would not be a shutdown," McCarthy insisted Tuesday.

For example, the Target store in East Harlem is one of the few choices residents have nearby to buy good quality healthy foods. In San Francisco, one of the stores slated to close is located at 13th Street and Folsom under a busy overpass with homeless tents in a largely commercial neighborhood with auto shops. In Seattle, one of the stores is located on a busy avenue near the University of Washington.

Target CEO Brian Cornell has been one of a handful of retail CEOs flagging what they described as rising theft over the past year or so. Cornell had held steadfast he didn't want to

resort to closing stores despite mounting losses. Target said in May that theft was cutting into its bottom line and it expected related losses could be \$500 million more than last year, when losses from theft were estimated to be anywhere from \$700 million to \$800 million. So that means losses could top \$1.2 billion this fiscal year.

Moreover, Cornell told analysts in August that violent incidents against workers at Target stores increased 120% for the first five months of the year compared with the same period a year ago.

"Our team continues to face an unacceptable amount of retail theft and organized retail crime," Cornell told analysts. "Unfortunately, safety incidents associated with theft are moving in the wrong direction."

The announcement also comes as Target is still reeling from being targeted for its LGBTQ+ support, in particular its displays of Pride Month merchandise. In late May, ahead of Pride Month, Target pulled some items in particular regions and made other changes after encountering hostility from customers who confronted workers and tipped over displays. Target said the moves were made to protect workers in the stores.

But at least one top Trump ally, Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene, R-Ga., who is also close to McCarthy, said she would be a "hard no" on the vote Tuesday to open debate, known as the Rule, because the package of bills continues to provide at least \$300 million for the war in Ukraine.

Other hard-right conservatives and allies of Trump may follow her lead. While their numbers are just a handful, the hard-right Republican faction holds sway because the House majority is narrow and McCarthy needs almost every vote from his side for partisan bills without Democratic support.

Caroline Lucas, the only Green Party member of the House of Commons, called the decision "morally obscene" at a time when the climate emergency is getting "more and more serious."

While Britain needs to continue pumping oil and gas from existing projects, it shouldn't be opening up new fields, she said.

Lucas also said Rosebank wouldn't boost energy security or bring down bills because most of the oil will be shipped overseas and whatever comes back to Britain will be sold at market prices.

"Energy security and cheaper bills aren't delivered by allowing highly subsidized, foreign-owned fossil fuel giants to extract more oil and gas from these islands and sell it overseas to the highest bidder," she said.

Sunak in July announced plans to issue hundreds of new oil and gas licenses to protect jobs and make Britain more energy independent as

Britain approves new North Sea oil 'drilling'

LONDON, Sept 27, (AP): Britain on Wednesday gave the go-ahead for a major oil and gas project in the North Sea, ignoring warnings from scientists and the United Nations that countries must stop developing new fossil fuel resources if the world is to avoid catastrophic climate change.

The North Sea Transition Authority approved development of the Rosebank field, allowing owners Equinor and Ithaca Energy to move forward with the project about 130 kilometers (80 miles) northwest of the Shetland Islands. The authority is a U.K. regulator charged with both maximizing the economic benefits of Britain's North Sea energy resources and helping the country meet its goals for reducing carbon emissions.

The decision comes as Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's government faces criticism for watering down its environmental commitments ahead of an election that is expected to take place next year. Sunak recently delayed a ban on gasoline- and diesel-powered vehicles and proposed easing water quality rules for developers after expensive environmental programs proved unpopular with some voters.

The government argues that Britain needs projects like Rosebank to bolster domestic oil and gas production, control costs for consumers and provide "energy security" as the country makes the transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy sources such as wind and solar.

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Sunak in July announced plans to issue hundreds of new oil and gas licenses to protect jobs and make Britain more energy independent as

production declines at the country's aging North Sea oil fields.

Production from Britain's North Sea fields, which were first developed in the early 1970s, has declined steadily over the past quarter century. The fields produced the equivalent of about 1.3 million barrels a day in May, down 75% from the peak in December 1996.

One of the largest untapped deposits in U.K. waters, Rosebank holds an estimated 300 million recoverable barrels of oil, Equinor said.

Norway-based Equinor, which owns 80% of Rosebank, said the two partners plan to invest \$3.8 billion in the project, supporting about 1,600 jobs at the height of construction. The first phase of the project will begin producing in 2026-2027.

The government argues that Rosebank and other new projects will be "significantly less emissions intensive than previous developments."

"Continued North Sea production is important for maintaining domestic security of supply and making the U.K. less vulnerable to a repeat of the energy crisis that caused prices to soar after Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine," the government said.

Sunak last week delayed the government's plan to ban sales of new gasoline- and diesel-fuel cars until 2035, five years later than previously scheduled.

That came after Sunak's Conservative Party capitalized on voter anger over a new emissions charge for drivers in London to win the by-election to fill a vacant seat in the House of Commons. Since then, re-examining environmental programs has become an important issue for the party, which trails in most opinion polls after 13 years in power.

The government says it still aims to achieve its target of eliminating net carbon emissions by 2050.

"We are investing in our world-leading renewable energy but ... we will need oil and gas as part of that mix on the path to net zero and so it makes sense to use our own supplies from North Sea fields such as Rosebank," Energy Secretary Claire Coutinho said in a statement.

Susannah Streeter, head of money and markets at Hargreaves Lansdown, said recent decisions raise questions about the government's commitment to its environmental targets, which may prompt companies to delay needed investments in renewable energy.



Campaigners take part in a Stop Rosebank emergency protest outside the UK Government building in Edinburgh, after the controversial Equinor Rosebank North Sea oil field was given the go-ahead, in Edinburgh, Wednesday, Sept. 27, 2023. British regulators have approved new oil and gas drilling at a site in the North Sea. The U.K.'s North Sea Transition Authority said on Wednesday that it had approved the Rosebank Field Development Plan. (AP)



Ahmed Al Mutawa

'Warba' announces winners of 'Al Sunbula' weekly draw

Warba Bank - the best bank in corporate and investment banking services in Kuwait - announced the winners of the weekly Al Sunbula draws. Warba Bank will continue to hold weekly draws for ten winners of Al Sunbula account, in the presence of a representative of Ministry of Commerce and Industry and Warba Bank employees.

Each of the 10 lucky winners of the Sunbula weekly draw of Warba Bank received KD 1,000, and the winners

are: Fouz Salah Mahdi Al-Shammari, Nawaf Hamad Abdulaziz Al-Mutawa, Hiyyam Abdullah Al-Haj Theeb, Bader Nasrallah Sayed Abdulwahab, Masouma Bader Al-Nasser, Abeer Jum'a Salem Rashed, Rashed. Khaled Jaailan Al-Owaihian, Mohammad Abdullah Jumah Al-Fahad, Mshari Hussein Radi Al-Hamad, and Amsha Nazzal Al-Rsheed Al-Muasab.

As for the Sunbula account, it is the ideal choice for all those wishing to save money and achieve appropriate

financial returns on their accounts at the same time, in addition to the opportunity to win cash prizes throughout the year.

Regarding the conditions, Mr. Ahmed M. Al-Mutawa, Area Manager Retail Banking Group said: "KD 100 is now required to enter the weekly Sunbula draws and major draws, and the client still gets one chance for every KD 10 in the account, and the chances are calculated according to the lowest balance in the account during the

month. Therefore, a full month must have passed in the account to qualify for the weekly draw, and two full months for the major draws to count the chances. There are no restrictions or limits for withdrawal and deposit, the higher the deposited amount, the greater the client's chances to win".

Notably Warba Bank launched its latest banking solutions service, "Customer Onboarding", in accordance with the terms of its ambitious five-year strategy.

Hyundai and Kia recall nearly 3.4 million vehicles due to fire risk and urge owners to park outdoors

DETROIT, Sept 27. (AP): Hyundai and Kia are recalling nearly 3.4 million vehicles in the U.S. and telling owners to park them outside due to the risk of engine compartment fires.

The recalls cover multiple car and SUV models from the 2010 through 2019 model years including Hyundai's Santa Fe SUV and Kia's Sorrento SUV.

Documents posted Wednesday by the U.S. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration say the anti-lock brake control module can leak fluid and cause an electrical short, which can touch off a fire while the vehicles are parked or being driven.

The automakers are advising owners to park outdoors and away from structures until repairs are done.

Dealers will replace the anti-lock brake fuse at no cost to owners. Kia says in documents that it will send notification letters to owners starting Nov. 14. For Hyundai the date is Nov. 21.

Hyundai reported 21 fires in the affected vehicles in the U.S., and another 22 "thermal incidents" including smoke, burning and melting of parts, the documents say. Kia reported 10 fires and melting incidents.

Hyundai said in a statement that owners can continue to drive the vehicles and that no crashes or injuries have been reported. The automaker said it was doing the recall to ensure safety of its customers.

The company said an O-ring in the antilock brake motor shaft can lose sealing strength over time due to the presence of moisture, dirt and dissolved metals in the brake fluid, causing leaks. The new fuse limits the operating current of the brake module, the statement said.

In a statement, Kia said an engine compartment fire could happen in the area of the brake control unit due to an electrical short that results in excessive current. The statement says the exact cause of the short circuit is unknown and that there

China bank to beef up support for economic recovery

TOKYO, Sept 27. (KUNA): China's central bank vowed to continuously support the real economy and strengthen policy adjustments on Wednesday, as the country's economic recovery is improving, despite still facing a harsher external environment.

"Currently, the external environment is becoming more complex and severe, with a slowdown in international economic trade and investment, still high inflation and interest rates in developed countries that are expected to remain elevated," the People's Bank of China said in a statement.

Meanwhile, as the world's second-biggest economy continues to recover and improve with increasing momentum, it still faces challenges such as insufficient demand, the statement said, following the third-quarter meeting of the central

bank's monetary policy committee.

"We need to provide continuous support, ride the uptick in economic momentum, intensify the strength of macroeconomic policy adjustments and ensure a precise and effective implementation of prudent monetary policy," the statement said.

The central bank also said it will intensify the implementation of the monetary policy tools that have been introduced to ensure a reasonably ample level of liquidity while encouraging a rebound in price levels to maintain them within a reasonable range.

China's gross domestic product (GDP) expanded 6.3 percent in the second quarter compared with a year earlier, up from 4.5 percent in the first quarter of the year.

have been no crashes or injuries.

Michael Brooks, executive director of the nonprofit Center for Auto Safety, questioned why the companies aren't fixing the leak problem and why they are waiting so long to send letters to owners.

The remedy is replacing one fuse with another, but brake fluid can still leak, potentially causing a safety problem, Brooks said.

"Why not fix the problem?" he asked. "What you're not doing here is fixing the O-ring and the leak that's causing the problem in the first place. You're combatting a symptom or part of the problem without actually fixing the underlying

design issue."

Brooks also questioned why NHTSA is allowing the companies to only replace a fuse, and why owners aren't being sent interim letters immediately warning them of a serious problem. "You would think that you should be notifying those owners right now that they shouldn't be parking in their garages or their house could catch fire," he said.

Statements from both companies don't address why the fluid leaks aren't being repaired or why it will take about two months to notify owners by letter. Spokespeople for both companies said they would check into the questions.

Menzies Aviation 'wins' 7 ground handling licenses

Landmark Spanish tender

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 27: Menzies Aviation, the leading service partner to the world's airports and airlines, and an Agility company, has been awarded seven ground handling licenses by the Spanish Airport Authority (AENA), in a landmark tender spanning 41 licenses at 43 airports across Spain.

The largest ground handling tender in the world, estimated to be worth more than 5 billion EUR, saw Menzies enter a competitive tender process that has resulted in becoming one of the main ground services partners in Spain.

Menzies has been awarded ground handling licenses for Barcelona (BCN), Palma Mallorca (PMI), Malaga (AGP), Alicante (ALC), Gran Canaria (LPA), Tenerife Sur (TFS) and Tenerife Norte (TFN) airports. The seven-year licenses will see Menzies provide full ramp and passenger services at these airports from early 2024 to 2031.

To ensure best-in-class standards and systems across its Spanish operations, Menzies will invest in equipment, employees and facilities to enhance safety, sustainability and performance, such as:

- Upskilling new employees with its industry leading safety, training and operational procedures.
- Investing in brand-new electric Ground Service Equipment (GSE), equipped with telematics and state of the art safety devices.
- Delivering a clear road map for a new generation digital aircraft turnaround that will have a positive impact on ramp efficiency, safety and sustainability.
- Ensuring operational IT systems are connected and integrated with airport and airline IT platforms.

Menzies has been operating in Spain since 2004 and will continue to provide passenger services at a further seven airports.

Hassan El Houry, Chairman - Menzies Aviation, said: "We are honoured that the Spanish Airport Authority (AENA) has awarded Menzies licenses to deliver our safe and trusted services in seven airports across Spain, including two new airports. These stations will complement our existing operations across Europe, which now includes 51 airports in 16 countries, and follows successful acquisitions and partnerships in Montenegro, Serbia, Bulgaria and Italy.

"We look forward to welcoming new colleagues to the Menzies team and creating an inclusive environment where everyone can reach their full potential and career goals. We recently agreed a new labour agreement with the main unions in Spain, which complements the handling sector's collective bargaining agreement, creating a great platform for success."

Philipp Joeinig, CEO, Menzies Aviation, said: "We are extremely proud to be selected as one of the main ground handling partners by the Spanish Air-



Menzies Aviation expands services and footprint in Spain.



Burgan Comfest



Nasser Al Qais

Burgan Bank 'sponsors' 2023 Pop Up by Comfest Culture Convention

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 27: In a bid to continue connecting with audiences across Kuwait's varied market segments, Burgan Bank recently announced its first-ever title sponsorship of Pop Up by Comfest, the biggest comic convention in Kuwait. The much-anticipated pop culture event is set to take place at the Kuwait International Fairground in Mishref on September 28-30, with an expected turnout of 25,000 visitors. The sponsorship comes as part of the Bank's comprehensive strategy for growing its customer base and addressing the younger audience's evolving banking needs and growing aspirations.

In light of this sponsorship, Mr. Naser

Al-Qaisi, General Manager of Retail Banking at Burgan Bank, said: "The youth and young adults of any nation resemble a massive driving force for their economies. That's why we are very excited to take a step closer to our Kuwaiti youth through the title sponsorship of Pop Up by Comfest 2023, allowing us to understand and serve them better. Not only do we look forward to showcasing the varied banking products and services we have to offer that cater to young customers' needs and growing aspirations; but we are also delighted to support the country's vibrant comic art and entertainment scene."

Al-Qaisi affirmed that the Pop Up by Comfest sponsorship and on-

ground presence is an excellent opportunity for the Bank to introduce the younger audience to Burgan's wide range of innovative products and services, which are designed to add ease and convenience to young customers' fast-paced, modern lifestyles. This includes Burgan's new virtual card, VIP credit card, cash-back credit cards, and the new Visa x-change prepaid card. In addition, the Bank's on-ground presence allows for direct conversations with the convention's youthful audience, allowing the staff to offer them personalized solutions to their financial and banking needs, as well as raise awareness about the best and safest banking practices in 2023.

a 5.7% increase in airport turns. We look forward to working with AENA as a strategic partner, supporting our airline customers to continue this impressive growth."

Via website, mobile app, others

KFH continues to serve its customers during holiday

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 27: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) continues to provide its banking services around the clock through a group of various technological and digital tools during the holiday.

Most of the banking services are available in several channels around the clock, whether through the bank's website, KFH.com, or via the KFHOnline mobile application, or through the KFH Go electronic branches that are spread in many important locations, in addition to the KFH accounts on social media and many E-services channels and KFH branch at Kuwait international airport.

KFH Go branch is considered a new electronic channel that helps transfer normal customer transactions to an innovative automated branch, that provides capabilities that allow customers to benefit from highly efficient banking services. It includes more than 80% of the services and business provided by the branches in their traditional sense, which makes KFH Go branches the preferred choice to many segments of customers, especially the youth.

KFH GO branches include the XTM device that allows direct video call with service personnel, as well as automatic teller machines and cash deposit machines. The cash deposit machines receive 300 notes per transaction.

Moreover, Customers can perform a variety of interactive banking services through KFH Go's 10 branches located in various places in Kuwait, including Kuwait International Airport, such as: establishing "Murabaha" financing transactions, requesting credit and prepaid cards, updating data and phone numbers, activating bank cards, opening deposits and accounts, instant cheque printing, receiving gold biscuits (10 grams), opening (gold, sav-

ings, Al-Rabeh, electron) accounts, online gold purchase and sell, cardless withdrawals using QR code through mobile, or by using Civil ID or phone number, in addition to many other financing and banking services conducted quickly, easily and safely.

The electronic banking services at KFH are also characterized by their high efficiency in addition to ease and safety. This was evident in the number of electronic banking operations that KFH customers carried out via KFHonline, on the website or through the mobile application.

The e-banking transactions includes: opening a bank account online for citizens and residents to join become a KFH customer without having to visit the branch, local and telex financial transfers, opening deposits, adding beneficiaries, balance inquiry, cheque book request, requesting financing, opening an account, requesting Al-Kheir Card, and checking the PINs for credit and debit cards, activating new bank cards, reporting a lost credit/debit cards, checking the financing obligations and the number of installments, perusal of investment plans, receiving account balances and deposits summary, along with other wide range of digital services.

KFH has recently launched digital signature service in personal financing products through KFH mobile app or desktop from anywhere without having to visit the branch, instant card issuance within 3 minutes, Live FX Pricing, instant cross-border payments service at KFH-Turkey using Ripple's technology and digital Wallet service through smart mobiles and watches which provides advanced and smart digital payment methods according to highly developed security standards in cooperation with Samsung, Fitbit and Garmin.

KIB to be closed during Prophet Muhammad's birthday holiday

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 27: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) announced that it will continue to provide its on-line banking services around the clock during the holiday celebrating Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)'s birthday for the year 1445 AH. The Bank aims to meet the needs of its customers, whether inside Kuwait or abroad, during the break.

The Bank will be closed for business during the official holiday on Thursday, 28 September 2023, and normal working hours will resume on Sunday, 1 October 2023.

KIB highlighted its commitment to serving its customers and enabling them to follow up on their financial affairs and complete their banking transactions with efficiency and without disruption. The Bank indicated that it will continue to provide its banking services through all its digital platforms 24/7 during the holiday, including the KIB Mobile smartphone application that allows customers to perform most basic banking operations, in addition to the Live Chat and KIB Online services on the Bank's website www.KIB.com.kw. Customers can also reach KIB via its call center, at 1866866 for local calls and at +965 22957300 for international calls, or through its WhatsApp account registered with the local bank number 1866866 for general inquiries about products and services.

KIB also emphasized the readiness of the Bank's ATMs to accommodate the expected increased

demand for cash withdrawals during the holiday, both in terms of providing sufficient liquidity and the number of machines available in different areas in Kuwait.

Kuwait International Bank (KIB) is a bank that operates according to the Islamic Shari'ah, based in the State of Kuwait. Incorporated in 1973, and originally known as Kuwait Real Estate Bank, KIB made the transition to its current Islamic operating model in 2007. In 2018, KIB embarked on a new phase of its journey full of innovation and development. As part of its new strategic direction, the Bank focuses on offering a next-level customer experience under the slogan: "Bank for Life".

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

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

Indonesia launches 1st carbon exchange market

Indonesia launched on Tuesday a carbon exchange market aimed at turning into a main player in global carbon trade.

Indonesian President Joko Widodo, during the inauguration ceremony, expressed gratitude to Financial Services Authority, the Indonesian Stock Market and other relevant authorities for launching the first carbon stock exchange in the nation, a step signaling start of the "carbon trade

in our country". He, according to the Indonesia news agency, indicated that the project would help Indonesia in honoring pledges it had made according to the 2015 Paris climate pact, genuinely designed to prevent gas emissions from exceeding the 1.5 degrees centigrade threshold.

The president estimated that the new market value would hit USD 194 billion. Meanwhile, the chairman of

the financial services authority, Mahendra Siregar, said authorities hoped 99 coal-fired power plants would take part in the new exchange, around 86 percent of the total operating in the country.

Indonesia is the largest coal exporter at the global level. Skeptics doubt that the Asian nation will honor its climatic obligations amid the operation of more energy plants, many are coal-fueled. (KUNA)

Alibaba spinning off Cainiao logistics for Hong Kong IPO

Chinese e-commerce company Alibaba said Tuesday that it would spin off its logistics arm, Cainiao Smart Logistics Network, in an initial public offering in Hong Kong, making it the first business unit to go public following a major restructuring.

Alibaba said in a filing that it had submitted a spin-off proposal to the Hong Kong Stock Exchange, and that it has received confirmation to proceed.

Alibaba will continue to be a majority shareholder in Cainiao, holding over 50% of the company and retaining it as a subsidiary. The company currently owns nearly a 70% stake in Cainiao, Alibaba's main delivery arm that handles logistics and parcels for merchants both in China and abroad.

The move comes about six months after Alibaba first announced that it would split its

business into six different units. Apart from its main e-commerce business, the other five business units, which include logistics and cloud computing, will be allowed to raise external capital or spun off to go public in order to provide flexibility and maximize shareholder value.

The Cainiao IPO would be the first of Alibaba's business units to undergo an initial public offering. (AP)

'Majority of tourists opt for familiar destinations'

Are we stuck in 'travel bubble'? Travel habits exposed in survey

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia, Sept 27: International tourists are less likely to consider exploring unfamiliar tourist destinations, opting to travel to locations that they are more familiar with, according to an international YouGov survey published.

The YouGov survey of over 17,500 people, commissioned by the Saudi Tourism Authority and published ahead of this year's World Tourism Day in Riyadh, was carried out in 15 countries across Asia, Africa, America, Europe and the Middle East. While results vary between geographies, the study reveals that 66% of tourists prefer traveling to countries that provide familiarity, while 67% tend to travel to destinations that they have previously visited or have heard about through their network, such as family and friends.

There are some global differences in the findings with 90% of tourists from Middle Eastern countries seeing familiarity with the destination as a key factor in making travel decisions, while British (62%), French (75%), Chinese (68%) and Japanese (74%) tourists feel more comfortable travelling to places that they know less about.

The implication for those destinations that have a developing tourism sector with less spending power for

international promotional efforts is that they will lack the ability to generate the familiarity which is clearly an important factor for people when choosing where to travel. On the other hand, for the more mature tourism destinations, their challenge is to encourage tourists away from the hotspot locations and into their lesser-known regions.

Resonating with previous studies which found that 80% of tourists visit just 10% of the world's tourism destinations[1], the stark findings of this survey not only emphasize tourists' preference for familiar destinations but also shed light on the need for more sustainable tourism practices worldwide.

Compromise

Fahd Hamidaddin, Chief Executive Officer and a Member of the Board of the Saudi Tourism Authority, said: "The findings of this international survey give us great insight into the trends and habits of global tourists and how important a sense of familiarity is to them when choosing destinations."

"However, familiarity does not mean that destinations need to compromise their authenticity as the research also supports the notion that visiting new places deepens our appreciation of di-

verse cultures and fosters mutual understanding. When we travel, we are agents of good - we export our own cultures and return home with new discoveries, new ideas and new perspectives."

"I hope that, by highlighting how travel has the power to broaden perspectives, we will inspire more people to opt for less familiar destinations. I look forward to discussing the results of this survey with my peers during World Tourism Day in Riyadh this week to explore how, collectively, we continue to make all corners of the world inviting and accessible for all."

The results support recent news reports from nations, such as Croatia and France, who have implemented measures to better control high volumes of tourists in their most popular destinations. The city of Dubrovnik, Croatia, has implemented a "Respect the City" campaign to manage tourism and minimize its impacts, while French Tourism Minister Olivia Gregoire asserted that France needed to better manage influxes during peak season that threatened "the environment, the quality of life for locals, and the experiences of its visitors."

Of tourists that have ventured to new destinations, 83% report that the



YouGov survey highlights tourists' preference for known destinations.

experience changed or broadened their perspective providing compelling evidence of the profound impact of tourism in connecting people and enhancing mutual understanding.

Commissioned by the Saudi Tourism Authority, the global survey was conducted ahead of this year's World Tourism Day (WTD), which is being hosted in Riyadh from 27th - 28th September. WTD 2023 will unite global tourism

ministers, industry leaders and sector experts under the theme "Tourism and Green Investments." Through a series of engaging sessions, panel discussions and workshops, participants will explore the essential role of tourism and global collaboration in driving prosperity, safeguarding cultures, preserving the environment, and promoting a more harmonious and interconnected world.

Saudi Tourism Authority (STA),

launched in June 2020, is responsible for marketing Saudi's tourism destinations worldwide and developing the destination's offering through programs, packages and business support. Its mandate includes developing the country's unique assets and destinations, hosting and participating in industry events, and promoting Saudi's tourism brand locally and overseas. The STA operates 16 representative offices around the world, serving 38 countries.

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.

Firm affirms its position as space industry leader

Sierra Space secures \$290M Series B funding & boosts valuation to \$5.3 bln

LOUISVILLE, Colo., Sept 26: Sierra Space, a leading pureplay commercial space company building the first end-to-end business and technology platform in space with \$3.4 billion in customer contracts, announced today it has closed a \$290 million Series B funding round. The round brings the company's total capital raised to \$1.7 billion, the largest ever capital raise by a commercial space company over the combined Series A and B rounds. This latest milestone elevates Sierra Space's valuation to \$5.3 billion and reaffirms the company's position as a leader in the new global space industry.

With this latest private capital infusion, Sierra Space expects to forge critical global partnerships and accelerate plans to build a transformational space tech ecosystem that will revolutionize the space economy of tomorrow. The company is currently transitioning the Dream Chaser spaceplane from years of development to recurring mission operations for NASA cargo resupply flights to the International Space Station (ISS). The company has been in development of the first commercial space station for five years, successfully achieving several hardware design and testing milestones; full-scale testing is due by the end of this year. The program maturity cements Sierra Space's position as the industry leader in business-ready commercial space station development for use in Low Earth Orbit (LEO) and in deep space.

"Sierra Space is excited to create a long-term strategic relationship with our Japanese investors and industry partners," said Tom Vice, CEO of Sierra Space. "As we transition our revolutionary Dream Chaser spaceplane into operations for NASA cargo resupply missions to the International Space Station, we focus our capital deployment to the development and operations of the first commercial space station - the next step in our in-space infrastructure - the growth of our national security offering and scaling our space systems components business."

Insurance

The round is co-led by Japan's largest bank, MUFG, Kanematsu Corporation, a Japanese trading company and Tokio Marine & Nichido Fire Insurance, Japan's largest property and casualty insurance group with participation from Sierra Space's existing investors. The companies are already participating in a JAXA (Japanese Aerospace Exploration Agency) study to explore how to conduct activities in LEO as the ISS approaches the end of service.

"MUFG aspires to help all our stakeholders take the next step forward, and we believe this should serve as the starting point for all business activities. Sierra Space Corporation's aim to build a platform in space that will benefit life on Earth is the very embodiment of this concept, and MUFG has decided to invest in Low Earth Orbit to support commercialization, the creation of new industries, and the resolution of social issues. In the future, MUFG, alongside Kanematsu, Tokio Marine & Nichido Fire Insurance, and Sierra Space, will not only contribute to the regional economy of Oita Prefecture, but also create social impact in Japan and throughout Asia," said Junichi Hanzawa, President & CEO of MUFG Bank, Ltd.

This latest funding adds further momentum to Sierra Space's growing partnership network in Japan, including the exploration of Oita Airport as a landing site for Sierra Space's Dream



MoU signing ceremony between Eden by Ammar Alali, Co-Founder and President of Eden and Ministry of Energy and Minerals by His Excellency Mohsin Hamad Al Hadhrami, the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Energy and Minerals. From the United States, Chargé d'Affaires, Leslie Ordeman, US Embassy to Oman, and Dan Milstein, Senior Advisor at US Department of Energy were also present.

Groundbreaking deal

Eden to explore stimulated geologic hydrogen in Oman

MUSCAT, Oman, Sept 27: Eden, a leader in sustainable natural resource recovery, has announced that it has signed a Memorandum-of-Understanding with the Oman Ministry of Energy and Minerals ("MEM") to lead development of stimulated geologic hydrogen in Oman.

The Sultanate of Oman has embarked on an ambitious endeavor to position itself as a global leader in clean hydrogen production and exportation. Their ambitious goal is to achieve a production capacity of one million tons by the year 2030. In February 2023, His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq issued Royal Decree No. 10/2023, designating specific land blocks for the development of renewable energy and clean hydrogen projects. Oman's rich hydrogen reserves are well-documented, and the distinctive geological features of the Oman ophiolite terrain render it particularly appealing for hydrogen research, with the potential for both scientific investigation and commercial extraction and production.

The MoU agreement between Eden and Oman MEM was signed on September 24th during a United States and Oman joint technical workshop on geologic hydrogen. Bilaterally, the two nations have inaugurated the Strategic Dialogue with the objective of building upon the strong historic partnership between the two nations. The Strategic Dialogue cooperation in the energy sector includes collaboration in clean hydrogen investments, research, and knowledge sharing.

Chaser spaceplane - with partners Oita Prefecture, Kanematsu and Japan Airlines, a burgeoning partnership with Mitsubishi Heavy Industries to develop a wide range of technologies to orbit and on orbit.

A family of reusable spaceplanes, Dream Chaser has three variants leveraging flexible design and performance versatility to address cargo, crewed or national security space requirements across domestic and international

"Geologic hydrogen fits perfectly in the Sultan's strategy to provide the world with secure and low carbon energy," said HE Mohsin Hamad Al Hadhrami, the Undersecretary, Ministry of Energy and Minerals. "I thank everyone for the effort and for the consistency and persistence to make it happen, and the discussion with Eden which started at the beginning of the year and now closing the year by signing an MoU today, which in my view is a sign of solid partnership with the U.S. It's a sign that the DOE and the MEM are doing the right things like empowering industry."

Chargé d'Affaires, Leslie Ordeman, US Embassy to Oman mentioned that he is "very pleased to participate in today's session, in which Eden, a US-based company, partnered with the Omanis on exploring a new and exciting energy source for our shared green future together. It's a U.S. priority to find alternative energies and Eden is at the forefront of doing just that."

Dan Milstein, Senior Advisor, U.S. Department of Energy, Office of International Affairs, who facilitated the dialogue between Oman MEM and Eden, also mentioned that he is "thrilled that Eden was able to be here in Oman at this U.S.-Oman technical workshop. Eden has done a lot of legwork leading up to this and was here even before I had an inkling that Oman was an interesting place to explore geologic hydrogen. Eden seems to be on everyone's mind here for applying their technology to stimulated hydrogen production."

commercial, civil government and defense customer segments. The Dream Chaser is capable of transporting crew and cargo to and from LEO and facilitating a 1.5 low-g landing on compatible commercial runways around the world. Dream Chaser is backed by a NASA contract to perform cargo resupply missions to the ISS and - in conjunction with the company's Space Technologies business - contributes to \$3.4 billion in active contracts.

Mahendra Negi named as chairman

VicOne opens headquarters in Tokyo to address automotive cyber threats

TOKYO, Sept 27: VicOne, a wholly owned subsidiary of Trend Micro, providing world leading automotive cybersecurity solutions, has announced it has added Japan to its global operations in Taiwan, Germany and the United States, with the opening of its headquarters in Tokyo. In addition, VicOne named Mahendra Negi as chairman of the company.

"We've leveraged years of expertise in cyberthreat intelligence to deliver automotive protection that can cover a vehicle's entire life cycle. With our central operations in Tokyo, we bring our expertise in local integration to this hub of global automotive manufacturing and innovation," said Max Cheng, CEO of VicOne.

In addition, VicOne name Mahendra Negi as chairman of VicOne. As CFO and board member of Trend Micro, Mahendra brings unparalleled leadership and vision to customers seeking automotive cybersecurity solutions that deliver better outcomes for OEMs and drivers of connected vehicles today and in the future.

"Our unique expertise and global presence perfectly positions us to support Japan-based automakers as they expand their businesses worldwide," said Negi. "This is an exciting time for the automotive industry and VicOne can help OEMs capitalize on the opportunities ahead."

Specialization

Mr. Negi has been recognized by leading business publications including Ranked No. 1 Internet Analyst in Japan by Institutional Investor magazine, Ranked No. 2 Software Analyst by both Institutional Investor and the Nikkei Shimbun, Japan's top business newspaper. Prior to joining Trend Micro in 2000, Mr. Negi worked at Merrill Lynch, specializing in Japan's internet and software industries. He holds a master's degree in physics from Nagpur University in India and a master's degree in management from the London Business School.

Rapid uptake of connected vehicles across global markets has increased OEMs' risk of significant brand and financial damage with the growth of updatable vehicle functions controlled by software. According to Gartner, an internationally recognized technology research and consulting firm headquartered in the U.S., cybersecurity is an increasing priority for automakers driven by the growing surface area susceptible to attack.



From left: Masanori Namba, VicOne's Vice President of Automotive Business, global headquarters; Mahendra Negi, Chairman of VicOne; and Max Cheng, CEO of VicOne, at the opening of VicOne's global headquarters in Tokyo, Japan, Sept 26.

Innovations take center stage

Shanghai Electric showcases technological marvels at CIIF

SHANGHAI, Sept 27: Shanghai Electric (SEHK:2727, SSE:601727) recently showcased its offerings at the China International Industrial Fair 2023 ("CIIF") held at the National Convention and Exhibition Center (Shanghai) from Sept 19-23, 2023, under the theme A Zero-Carbon Future For All, with a focus on the three major pillars of smart energy, intelligent manufacturing, and digital intelligence integration. Shanghai Electric impressed visitors with a demonstration of its equipment manufacturing digital transformation results that integrate digital intelligence, wind power, photovoltaic power, energy storage, and allocated solutions, among other world-class innovative technologies that have the capacity to empower a zero-carbon future for all.

"When China proposed its 3060 dual carbon targets, which aim to achieve peak carbon emissions by 2030 and carbon neutrality by 2060, Shanghai Electric began developing a comprehensive new power system and a three-dimensional zero-carbon industrial park solution," Liu Ping, President of Shanghai Electric Group, said in his speech at CIIF. "Our allocated wind, solar, and storage integrated solu-

tions, digital intelligence integration, and smart carbon management system that showcasing at CIIF will empower more customers and partners around the world to achieve their carbon reduction and zero-carbon development goals."

On the opening day of CIIF, Shanghai Electric signed strategic cooperation agreements with AVIC Commercial Aviation Engine Co., Ltd. and the Yangtze River Delta National Innovation Center, opening a new comprehensive collaboration chapter.

Empowering

Empowering the energy transformation of the industrial supply chain through the release of three major smart industry solutions

With decades of experience in the development of technological innovation in the energy industry, Shanghai Electric has successively released three major smart industry solutions, namely, Energy Carbon Smart Butler, SEU-Cloud Industrial Internet Platform 4.0, and Zero Carbon Industrial Park. It has also developed an "energy carbon steward" based on its industrial internet platform that realizes the transformation from energy expert to energy carbon steward.

Partnership aims to democratize generative AI use

Infosys, Microsoft partner to drive generative AI adoption

BENGALURU, India, Sept 27: Infosys (NSE: INFY), (BSE: INFY), (NYSE: INFY), a global leader in next-generation digital services and consulting, has announced that it is collaborating with Microsoft to jointly develop industry leading solutions that leverage Infosys Topaz, Azure OpenAI Service and Azure Cognitive Services. Both organizations are bringing together their respective artificial intelligence (AI) capabilities to enhance enterprise functions with AI-enabled solutions across multiple industries. The integrated solutions will accelerate rapid democratization of data and intelligence that will help businesses increase productivity and drive new revenue growth.

Generative AI has opened new avenues of AI applications and key enterprise functions across industries, and Infosys is providing services, frameworks, solutions, and platforms in multiple application areas, such as semantic search, document summarization, contact center transformation, AI-augmented software development lifecycle (SDLC) and marketing content creation. For example, Infosys helped a leading financial services company implement an AI-based solution to generate document summaries and provide a semantic search capability using generative AI. This resulted in automated organization of documents, which significantly reduced efforts and improved productivity of their financial advisors.

Through the collaboration with Microsoft, Infosys Topaz is using Azure OpenAI Service and Azure Cognitive Services to augment its capabilities, in order to help enterprise customers transition from digital to AI solutions. The integrated solutions will boost customers' operational efficiency, decrease turn-around-time, future-proof investments, and open new business models.

Balakrishna D. R. (Bali), Executive Vice President and Global Head - AI and Automation, Application Development & Maintenance, Infosys, said, "Infosys Topaz is empowering businesses with improved operational efficiencies and reduced time-to-market for launching new products and services."

BioCarbon gets pre-certification with Puro.earth

American BioCarbon, a revolutionary manufacturer of sustainable products derived from sugarcane bagasse, has been pre-certified by Puro.earth for CO2 Removal Certificates (CORCs) generated by bagasse biochar production in its commercial facility. This milestone marks a significant step in American BioCarbon's mission to combat climate change through innovative solutions that simul-

taneously address multiple UN Sustainable Development Goals. The American BioCarbon project demonstrates how to create economic value and environmental benefits within a circular economy. When the commercial facility becomes fully operational in 2024, it will generate more than 175,000 high-integrity CORCs annually, establishing American BioCarbon as one of the leading producers of carbon

removal credits in North America. American BioCarbon currently operates a demonstration-scale facility co-located with Cora Texas Sugar Mill, where it has a production volume of over 2,000 CORCs. Biochar has the potential to sequester 1.36-3.00 gigatons of carbon dioxide emissions by 2050. American BioCarbon will play a critical role in bringing the industry to scale at a time when demand is urgent. (AP)

Lucid Scientific raises \$7m in Series A financing

Lucid Scientific, a life science instruments company that manufactures Resipher, announced the completion of a \$7 million Series A financing led by IAG Capital Partners. Additional participants include Lucid's original investor base, the Georgia Research Alliance's Venture Fund, and Dynamk Capital, bringing Lucid's total funding to date to approximately \$13 million. Proceeds from this round will help the company aggressively expand

production, sales and marketing, as well as broaden new product advancements. IAG Venture Partner Dr. Ehsan Jabbarzadeh will join Lucid's Board of Directors. "We are thrilled to partner with Lucid Scientific to market a groundbreaking technology for real-time analysis of cell metabolomics," said Dennis Sacha of IAG Capital Partners. "The platform will provide scientists with a powerful tool to understand dynamic biological re-

sponses and the discovery of cures for most difficult diseases." The financing accelerates exceptional momentum for Lucid, and for their upcoming launch of new Resipher hardware and consumable products this fall. Resipher provides researchers with valuable insights into cellular metabolism that are of central importance for a wide range of therapeutic applications and drug safety considerations. (AP)

The Conversation

Microbiologist explains how to protect self from infection

Deadly flesh-eating bacteria infections on the rise in US

By Bill Sullivan
Indiana University

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

Flesh-eating bacteria sounds like the premise of a bad horror movie, but it's a growing - and potentially fatal - threat to people.

In September 2023, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issued a health advisory alerting doctors and public health officials of an increase in flesh-eating bacteria cases that can cause serious wound infections.

I'm a professor at the Indiana University School of Medicine, where my laboratory studies microbiology and infectious disease. Here's why the CDC is so concerned about this deadly infection - and ways to avoid contracting it.

Flesh-eating

There are several types of bacteria that can infect open wounds and cause a rare condition called necrotizing fasciitis. These bacteria do not merely damage the surface of the skin - they release toxins that destroy the underlying tissue, including muscles, nerves and blood vessels. Once the bacteria reach the bloodstream, they gain ready access to additional tissues and organ systems. If left untreated, necrotizing fasciitis can be fatal, sometimes within 48 hours.

The bacterial species group A Streptococcus, or group A strep, is the most common culprit behind necrotizing fasciitis. But the CDC's latest warning points to an additional suspect, a type of bacteria called Vibrio vulnificus. There are only 150 to 200 cases of Vibrio vulnificus in the US each year, but the mortality rate is high, with 1 in 5 people succumbing to the infection.

Catch flesh-eating bacteria

Vibrio vulnificus primarily lives in warm seawater but can also be found in brackish water - areas where the ocean mixes with freshwater. Most infections in the US occur in the warmer months, between May and October. People who swim, fish or wade in these bodies of water can contract the bacteria through an open wound or sore.

Vibrio vulnificus can also get into seafood harvested from these waters, especially shellfish like oysters. Eating such foods raw or undercooked can lead to food poisoning, and handling them while having an open wound can provide an entry point for the bacteria to cause necrotizing fasciitis. In the US, Vibrio vulnificus is a leading cause of seafood-associated fatality.

Infections rising

Vibrio vulnificus is found in warm coastal waters around the world. In the U.S., this includes southern Gulf Coast states. But rising ocean temperatures due to global warming are creating new habitats for this type of bacteria, which can now be found along the East Coast as far north as New York and Connecticut. A recent study noted that Vibrio vulnificus wound infections

increased eightfold between 1988 and 2018 in the eastern US.

Climate change is also fueling stronger hurricanes and storm surges, which have been associated with spikes in flesh-eating bacteria infection cases.

Aside from increasing water temperatures, the number of people who are most vulnerable to severe infection, including those with diabetes and those taking medications that suppress immunity, is on the rise.

Necrotizing fasciitis symptoms

Early symptoms of an infected wound include fever, redness, intense pain or swelling at the site of injury. If you have these symptoms, seek medical attention without delay. Necrotizing fasciitis can progress quickly, producing ulcers, blisters, skin discoloration and pus.

Treating flesh-eating bacteria is a race against time. Clinicians administer antibiotics directly into the bloodstream to kill the bacteria. In many cases, damaged tissue needs to be surgically removed to stop the rapid spread of the infection. This sometimes results in amputation of affected limbs.

Researchers are concerned that an increasing number of cases are becoming impossible to treat because Vibrio vulnificus has evolved resistance to certain antibiotics.

Prevent infection

The CDC offers several recommendations to help prevent infection.

People who have a fresh cut, including a new piercing or tattoo, are advised to stay out of water that could be home to Vibrio vulnificus. Otherwise, the wound should be completely covered with a waterproof bandage.

People with an open wound should also avoid handling raw seafood or fish. Wounds that occur while fishing, preparing seafood or swimming should be washed immediately and thoroughly with soap and water.

Anyone can contract necrotizing fasciitis, but people with weakened immune systems are most susceptible to severe disease. This includes people taking immunosuppressive medications or those who have pre-existing conditions such as liver disease, cancer, HIV or diabetes.

It is important to bear in mind that necrotizing fasciitis presently remains very rare. But given its severity, it is beneficial to stay informed.

Surgical debridement (cutting away affected tissue) is the mainstay of treatment for necrotizing fasciitis. Early medical treatment is often presumptive; thus, antibiotics should be started as soon as this condition is suspected. Tissue cultures (rather than wound swabs) are taken to determine appropriate antibiotic coverage, and antibiotics may be changed in light of results. Besides blood pressure control and hydration, support should be initiated for those with unstable vital signs and low urine output. (AP)

Docs successfully perform weight loss surgery using robotics system

'Maestro asset to laparoscopy practice'

PARIS, Sept 27: Moon Surgical, a French-American pioneer in collaborative robotics, has announced that Baptist Health (Jacksonville, Florida) performed the first clinical procedures in the United States using the Maestro System.

Three surgeons who practice at Baptist Health hospitals used the Maestro System over a week to perform sleeve gastrectomies - the most common bariatric (weight loss) surgery. The surgeons employed by North Florida Surgeons included Steven Hodgett, MD, FACS; Craig Morgenthal, MD, FACS; and Alexander Rose, MD.

Procedures

"The Maestro System is an asset to my laparoscopy practice," said Dr. Hodgett, Medical Director, Baptist Center for Bariatric and Reflux Surgery. "During procedures, the two co-manipulative arms provided me with stable vision and dependable organ retraction, allowing me to give more focus to my surgical case and perform at my best."

An important added benefit is the ability of the system to reduce the number of operating room staff required to support a laparoscopic procedure. Maestro takes on the tasks of holding and adjusting instruments as needed, empowering hospitals to optimize their OR staff distribution, and surgeons with greater control, confidence, and efficiency.



Dr. Hodgett performing a sleeve gastrectomy using the Maestro System at Baptist Health Hospital in Jacksonville, Florida.

LONDON, Sept 27: A Medscape study of 4,347 doctors across Europe's biggest economies has found that only half of UK doctors (54%) would choose the profession for themselves if they had their time over. The UK result was the lowest of the European G5 where in Germany 72%, Spain 68%, France 62%, and Italy 60% of doctors would choose medicine if they were faced with the decision today.

The research, which included results from 569 doctors practising full-time in the UK, found the number was even lower for younger doctors, with just 49% of medical professionals under age 45 reporting they would choose the profession again. The study also found the vast majority of doctors (86%) felt that working in the NHS has become harder in the past year. NHS staffing levels are by far the most challenging aspect of

work, with half of doctors (53%) citing this reason above all else.

"Our research shows the UK leads the top five economies in Europe on doctors' regret, in that around half would not choose a medical profession again if they had their time over. This is particularly stark for younger doctors, where less than half would do it all again, a sobering temperature check of morale in the wake of recent and historic strike action by junior doctors and consultants," said Dr John Whyte, Chief Medical Officer at Medscape-WebMD.

The study found 80% of doctors do not feel they are fairly rewarded for the job that they do, and only 1 in 4 (24%) would recommend their children join the medical profession, down 44% when compared to the same research conducted in 2019.1

"We have seen a significant downward shift in the familial association

within the medical profession when we compare these results to the same research conducted in the year before the outbreak of the pandemic. Just one in four doctors would recommend medicine to their children, down by 44% in four years. Traditionally children of doctors in the UK are 24 times more likely than their peers to enter the medical profession,2 which signifies how important this pathway is for future recruitment," said Dr Whyte.

The findings shine a new light on staff vacancies within NHS England, which when published in June stood at 112,000 and are mainly being filled through international recruitment.3 In 2020 the General Medical Council reported a third of doctors who graduate in the UK moved abroad to countries like Australia, New Zealand, the USA, and Canada.

believes the future of the operating room lies in the hands of the empowered surgeon.

By equipping surgeons with complete control, renewed confidence, and technology adaptable to any situation they encounter, Moon Surgical strives to improve efficiency in operating rooms and provide better surgical care for patients. The minimalistic, co-manipulative Maestro System uses tomorrow's technology to deliver these vital skills to surgeons, today.

Cytel Inc, provider of quantitative insights and health data analytics to leaders in the life sciences, has acquired the Berlin-based company co.faktor GmbH with its dedicated healthcare consultancy services co.value® (market access), co.medical® (medical communications), and co.patient® (patient relations) concentrations. As a result, Cytel's services for biopharma

commercialization will gain new and complementary specialist consultancy capabilities and localized expertise for successful market access in Germany, a first wave launch country. The acquisition marks another milestone in Cytel's strategic growth in Europe, and follows the recent acquisition of stève consultants, specialists in market access, real-world evidence (RWE), and health economics and outcomes research (HEOR) in France. Cytel now boasts a 200-person-strong access consultancy team, making it one of the only providers that offers the full fleet of advisory services, from clinical trial and real-world data and evidence analytics to global market access and local in-country Health Technology Assessment (HTA) support.

Cytel is now primed to provide global drug sponsors and their affiliate teams with advanced analytical support across the lifecycle through commercialization.

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Writers' strike ends as guild leaders approve contract with studios

LOS ANGELES, Sept. 27, (AP) - Hollywood's writers strike was declared over after nearly five months Tuesday night when board members from their union approved a contract agreement with studios, bringing the industry at least partly back from a historic halt in production.

The governing boards of the eastern and western branches of the Writers Guild of America and their joint negotiating committee all voted to accept the deal, two days after the tentative agreement was reached with a coalition of Hollywood's biggest studios, streaming services and production companies. After the vote they declared that the strike would be over and writers would be free to start on scripts at 12:01 a.m. Wednesday.

Late-night talk shows - the first to go dark when writers walked out on May 2 - are likely the first shows that will resume. Scripted shows will take longer to return, with actors still on strike and no negotiations yet on the horizon.

The writers still have to vote to ratify the contract themselves in early October, but lifting the strike will allow them to work during that process, the guild told members in an email.

After Tuesday's board votes, the contracts were released for the first time to the writers, who had not yet been given any details on the deal, which their leaders called "exceptional."

The three-year agreement includes significant wins in the main areas writers had fought for - compensation, length of employment, size of staffs and control of artificial intelligence - matching or nearly equaling what they had sought at the outset of the strike.

The union had sought minimum increases in pay and future residual earnings from shows of between 5% and 6%, depending on the position of the writer. The studios had wanted between 2% and 4%. The compromise deal was a raise of between 3.5% and 5%.

The guild also negotiated new residual payments based on the popularity of streaming shows, where writers will get bonuses for being a part of the most popular shows on Netflix, Max and other services, a proposal studios initially rejected. Many writers on picket lines had complained that they weren't properly paid for helping create heavily watched properties.

Regulation

The writers also got the requirement they sought that shows intended to run at least 13 episodes will have at least six writers on staff, with the numbers shifting based on the number of episodes. They did not get their desire for guaranteed staffs of six on shows that had not yet been ordered to series, settling instead for a guaranteed three.

Writers also got a guarantee that staffs on shows in initial development will be employed for at least 10 weeks, and that staffs on shows that go to air will be employed for three weeks per episode.

On artificial intelligence, the writers got the regulation and control of the emerging technology they had sought. Under the contract, raw, AI-generated storylines will not be regarded as "literary material" - a term in their contracts for scripts and other story forms a screenwriter produces. This means they won't be competing with computers for

screen credits. Nor will AI-generated stories be considered "source" material, their contractual language for the novels, video games or other works that writers may adapt into scripts.

Writers have the right under the deal to use AI in their process if the company they are working for agrees and other conditions are met. But companies cannot require a writer to use AI.

Still-striking members of the Screen Actors Guild-American Federation of Television and Radio Artists returned to the picket lines earlier Tuesday for the first time since the writers struck their tentative deal, and they were animated by a new spirit of optimism.

"For a hot second, I really thought that this was going to go on until next year," said Marissa Cuevas, an actor who has appeared on the TV series "Kung Fu" and "The Big Bang Theory." "Knowing that at least one of us has gotten a good deal gives a lot of hope that we will also get a good deal."

Writers' picket lines had been suspended, but they were encouraged to walk in solidarity with actors, and many were on the lines Tuesday, including "Mad Men" creator Matthew Weiner, who picketed alongside friend and "ER" actor Noah Wyle as he has throughout the strikes.

"We would never have had the leverage we had if SAG had not gone out," Weiner said. "They were very brave to do it."

The Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers, which represents the studios in negotiations, chose to deal with the longer-striking writers first, and leaders of SAG-AFTRA said they had received no overtures on resuming talks. That's likely to change soon.

Film

Variety



Carlos Santana performs at the BottleRock Napa Valley Music Festival in Napa, Calif., on May 26, 2019. A new documentary 'Carlos' covers the music career of the multi-Grammy Award-winning artist. (AP)

Film

Academy gifts McDaniel's Oscar replica to Howard University

'Carlos,' a loving portrait of Santana

LOS ANGELES, Sept. 27, (AP) - A new documentary on rock icon Carlos Santana begins with the legendary philosopher-guitarist asking a simple question: "Do you believe in magic?"

"Magic. Not tricks - the flow of grace," he says. You may be convinced you do a little less than 90 minutes later by director Rudy Valdez's intimate portrait of a man with a magical ability and a story told with few tricks.

"Carlos" is a traditional linear tale, tracing Santana's formative years in Tijuana, Mexico, his set at Woodstock, his relentless touring and dive into spirituality, climaxing with his triumphant 1999 "Supernatural" album.

It's lovingly told - and intimate. There is the first known recording of a 19-year-old Santana in 1966 - already a guitar master with a familiar, blistering style - and one later in life in which he delights his children behind a couch with sock puppets.

But some of the most powerful images are several old homemade clips Santana made himself, alone at home just jamming. It's like hearing the magic flow straight from the source, watching unfiltered genius work while his guitar gently wails.

Valdez uses various images almost like a collage to capture his subject - talk show clips, old concerts, and newly conducted interviews with the master, one at sundown with the icon beside a fire. The only forced bit is a roundtable of Santana's wife and sisters.

A highlight is watching Santana and his band play in the rain during 1982's Concert for the Americas in the Dominican Republic. Other directors might show a short clip and go but Valdez lets it play long, a treat. We see Santana grow up to a violinist father and a fierce mother, who became mesmerized by the blues-rock of Ray Charles, B.B. King and Little Richard. He was pressing tortillas at a diner in San Francisco in the late 1960s - he calls the city a "vortex of newness" - and go to the Fillmore to listen to the Grateful Dead and Country Joe and the Fish.

After being busted trying to sneak into the legendary venue without paying, impresario Bill Graham

was so impressed by this skinny guitarist that he invited him to open for the Who, Steve Miller and Howling Wolf.

At Woodstock - he and his band wouldn't have their debut album out for months more - Santana hits the stage very high by accident (Thanks, Jerry Garcia) and says a little prayer: "God, I know you're here. Please keep me in time and in tune." Throughout his set, Santana seems to be wrestling the neck of his guitar, which to him resembled a snake.

His first royalty check was spent on a home and a refrigerator for mom, fulfilling a promise. "It's better than Grammys and Oscars and Heisman trophies. It feels better than anything," he says in the documentary.

Meditation

Inevitably, the fall comes, with the drugs and over-indulgence. Shocked by the deaths of Jimi Hendrix and Janis Joplin, Santana decides he must choose between heroin or spiritual meditation. He picks the latter, dresses in white, eats healthy, turn to jazz and decides to "surf the cosmos of imagination."

With enduring hits like "Oye Como Va" and "Black Magic Woman," Santana was voted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in 1998, the first person of Hispanic heritage to be inducted. But he wasn't done yet. "This Earth time is an illusion," he argues, after all. "Supernatural," which arrived in 1999 during a Latin pop explosion, won a total of nine Grammys with such hits as "Smooth," "Put Your Lights On" and "Maria Maria." He is called a second-act king. Man, he's a hot one.

Valdez shows real style illustrating that Santana's bands were far from stable when it came to its lineups - he cleverly shows various different singers belt out the same section of "Black Magic Woman" live - and captures Santana today watching an old concert he did with his late dad. "He's proud of me and I'm proud of him. And I miss him," he tells the camera.

Santana deserves to be on the Mount Rushmore of rock and that's why in so many ways "Carlos" is a

corrective to the thinking of people like Jann Wenner, co-founder of Rolling Stone, who overlooked Santana for his new book of transcendent rockers, "The Masters." A master is hiding in plain sight.

Also:

NEW YORK: Hattie McDaniel's best supporting actress Oscar in 1939 for "Gone With the Wind" is one of the most important moments in Academy Award history. McDaniel was the first African American to win an Oscar, and it would be half a century before another Black woman again won an acting award. But the whereabouts of her award, itself, has long been unknown.

Now, the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences has created a replacement of McDaniel's legendary Academy Award that it's gifting to Howard University. Upon her death in 1952, McDaniel bequeathed her Oscar to Howard University where it was displayed at the drama department until the late '60s.

The film academy, along with the Academy Museum of Motion Pictures, announced Tuesday that the replacement award will reside at the university's Chadwick A. Boseman College of Fine Arts. The Oscar will be presented in a ceremony titled "Hattie's Come Home" on Oct. 1 on the Washington D.C. university campus.

"Hattie McDaniel was a groundbreaking artist who changed the course of cinema and impacted generations of performers who followed her. We are thrilled to present a replacement of Hattie McDaniel's Academy Award to Howard University," said Jacqueline Stewart, Academy Museum president, and Bill Kramer, chief executive of the academy, in a joint statement. "This momentous occasion will celebrate Hattie McDaniel's remarkable craft and historic win."

McDaniel's award was a plaque, not a statuette, as all supporting acting winners received from 1936 to 1942. During the 12th Academy Awards, McDaniel was seated at a segregated table on the far side of the room at the Ambassador Hotel.

ROME: Sophia Loren is expressing gratitude for all the affection she received following surgery needed after the film star fractured a hip and thigh bone in a bathroom fall, her agent said Tuesday.

Andrea Giusti quoted the actress, who is 89, as saying: "I thank everyone for the closeness and affection that they are showing me. I am better, just have to do rehabilitation and give myself a period of rest."

Loren had the surgery for the fractures on Sunday, the same day she fell in her villa near Lake Geneva.

The movie legend has lived in Switzerland for decades. Earlier this month, she appeared, looking radiant, with Italian designer Giorgio Armani in Venice at a fashion show. (AP)

NEW YORK: Taylor Swift's trip to watch the Kansas City Chiefs' Travis Kelce play football on Sunday didn't just have the internet talking nonstop. Following the 12-time Grammy Award winner's appearance at Arrowhead Stadium, jersey sales for the All-Pro tight-end seemingly skyrocketed.

According to sportswear and fan merchandise company Fanatics, Kelce was one of the top 5 selling NFL players Sunday. He "saw a nearly 400% spike in sales throughout the Fanatics network of sites, including NFLShop.com," a spokesperson told The Associated Press via email.

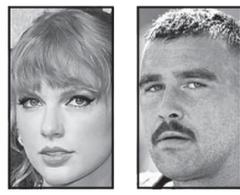
Sales spiked on the same day that Swift was spotted in Kansas City, watching the Chiefs play the Chicago Bears alongside Kelce's mother, Donna, from one of the football stadium's glass-enclosed suites.

Kelce did not speak to reporters afterward, but he was spotted leaving Arrowhead with Swift by his side.

Still, just about everyone in the Kansas City locker room was buzzing about the news after Sunday's game, including coach Andy Reid, who joked that "I set them up."

Swift has always been reluctant to discuss her personal life in public, but rumors have been flying about the popstar and the pro football player in recent months - notably after a July episode of Kelce's "New Heights" podcast,

when he said he was disappointed that he didn't get to meet Swift and gift her a friendship bracelet during Kansas City stop on her Eras Tour. In a later appearance on the "Pat McAfee Show," Kelce revealed that he invited Swift to watch him play. (AP)



Swift

Kelce

BARCELONA, Spain: Spanish prosecutors have charged pop star Shakira with failing to pay 6.7 million euros (\$7.1 million) in tax on her 2018 income, authorities said Tuesday, in Spain's latest fiscal allegations against the Colombian singer.

Shakira is alleged to have used an offshore company based in a

tax haven to avoid paying the tax, Barcelona prosecutors said in a statement.

She has been notified of the charges in Miami, where she lives, according to the statement.

Shakira is already due to be tried in Barcelona on Nov. 20 in a separate case that hinges on where she lived between 2012-14. In that

case, prosecutors allege she failed to pay 14.5 million euros (\$15.4 million) in tax.

Prosecutors in Barcelona have alleged the Grammy winner spent more than half of the 2012-14 period in Spain and therefore should have paid taxes in the country, even though her official residence was in the Bahamas. (AP)

Features

ARABO TIMES

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 2023

People & Places



Christian Dior



Christian Dior



Yves Saint Laurent



Christian Dior

Fashion

PARIS: Amid the electric ambiance of strobe lights and an usually sweltering Parisian fall, Dior's show Tuesday set in the Tuileries gardens witnessed a dazzling circus of stars. With Hollywood's recent writers' strike still on, insiders mused if Paris Fashion Week would be the season's celebrity magnet - and the presence of Jennifer Lawrence, Charlize Theron, Elizabeth Debicki, and Kim Jisoo seemed to echo that sentiment.

But the real star this season was the collection itself. Never one to shy away from a statement on feminism, the Italian couturier Maria Grazia Chiuri crafted an unusually subtle collection in predominantly black and white that fused echoes of the medieval and contemporary. Set against an art backdrop challenging time-worn perceptions on women's roles, this show was not only a reminder that fashion is a mirror of society - but among her most accomplished so far.

Dior

The atmosphere was charged with palpable anticipation. But even more electric was Chiuri's dance between the medieval and the 80s punk - the former, an era of chivalry and legends, the latter, an age of defiant self-expression.

The first looks to grace the runway were what might be called "gamine gothic." The garments, draped in a play of black with cascading tassels, bore dynamic clumps of silk that crafted a silhouette both historic and undeniably fresh. But fashion, much like history, is cyclical, and soon this dark romanticism gave way to stark white interpretations. The result? A nod to the rebellious 80s, evoking memories of punk rockers and their spirited defiance.

But Chiuri didn't stop at mere clothing. The accessories - from contemporary neck chokers to sometimes-bejeweled leg bands that one might associate with armor - added layers of intrigue. And just when insiders thought that they'd seen the collection's piece de resistance, Chiuri surprised with an audacious take: a medieval-inspired bikini in stark black.

While the designs borrowed elements from historical eras, they also encapsulated the spirit and journey of the contemporary woman. The ash and chamomile tones, paired with the evocative use of fabrics, served as metaphors for strength, defiance, and progression.

Yves Saint Laurent

Designer Anthony Vaccarello channeled the audacious spirit of boundary-breakers like Amelia Earhart and Adrienne Bolland, offering a collection that oozed authority and elegance.

The 70s safari-inspired ensembles, from khaki trenches to strong shoulders, reinforced this message of strength - and sometimes, aggression. Amplifying this stance was a soundtrack reminiscent of The Godfather's.



Christian Dior



Christian Dior

Above and below: Models wear creations for Yves Saint Laurent and Christian Dior Spring/Summer 2024 womenswear fashion collection presented Tuesday, Sept. 26 in Paris. (AP)

Style

Yves Saint Laurent



Yves Saint Laurent



Christian Dior



Christian Dior



Yves Saint Laurent

PARIS

trousers, every piece was crafted.

Vaquera

Vaquera's was a vivid portrayal of the celebrity phenomenon. The inaugural look featured a model draped in a see-through fishnet body stocking, her gaze masked by sunglasses, conjuring images of a star evading paparazzi, highlighting the allure and its invasiveness of fame.

Designers Patric DiCaprio and Bryn Taubensee, themselves ironically donning eye-shielding A-list sunglasses, tapped into the theme of ceaseless scrutiny in an era of omnipresent cameras. Their designs were a reflection on celebrity and the fashion industry that amplifies, and at times, shields it.

Vaquera, known for challenging conventions, didn't disappoint. A dramatically oversized white parachute shirt was paired with a surreal 4-meter striped tie.

Also:

TORONTO: Former Canadian fashion mogul Peter Nygard leveraged his wealth, assets and status over several years to lure young women and girls to a top-floor bedroom suite at his company's Toronto headquarters where he forced himself on them, prosecutors alleged Tuesday as arguments at his sexual assault trial got underway.

Nygard invited all five complainants in the case - whose identities are protected by a publication ban - to visit his custom-built office building under pretenses ranging from tours to job interviews, with all the encounters ending in the bedroom suite, the prosecution said. There, he sexually assaulted them at different times, sometimes trapping or intoxicating them, the prosecution alleged in opening arguments.

masculine that were feminine in spirit.

When most of Paris Fashion Week revels in razzle-dazzle, one designer chose to let his clothes take the spotlight sans the spectacle. Enter Peter Do, the New York prodigy who, with his Paris debut, redefined modern minimalism and returned the focus to pure design.

A palette dominated by neutrals with unexpected bursts of lipstick red set the tone, while the clothes themselves spoke understated luxury. Whether it was a filmy deconstructed trench coat, a ribbed turtleneck with detachable sleeves, or those impeccably tailored

and sand playing out in fabrics like cotton and linen, the balance between strength and elegance was maintained throughout.

Baz Luhrmann, accompanied by his "Elvis" actor Austin Butler, and other luminaries watched as Vaccarello's vision unfolded, integrating elements from the

Climate

Clean energy shift

Warming drives SEAsia to start power sharing

VIETNAM, Hanoi, Sept 27, (AP): The urgency for Southeast Asian nations to switch to clean energy to combat climate change is reinvigorating a 20-year-old plan for the region to share power.

Malaysia and Indonesia inked a deal in Bali, Indonesia last month to study 18 potential locations where cross-border transmission lines can be set up.

Those links could eventually generate power roughly equivalent to what 33 nuclear power plants would produce in a year. They are economically and technically feasible, and now are supported by regional governments, said Beni Suryadi a power expert at the ASEAN Centre for Energy in Jakarta, Indonesia.

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations or ASEAN is a political and economic gathering of 10 countries across a vast region, from tiny Brunei and Singapore to military-controlled Myanmar and fast-rising economic power Vietnam. Experts describe imports by Singapore of hydroelectric-generated power from Laos via transmissions through Thailand and Malaysia as a "pathfinder" project, marking the first time that four countries in the region have agreed to trade electricity.

Cross-border power purchases accounted for just 2.7% of the region's capacity in 2017, according to the Global Interconnection Journal. But those were between two countries, such as Thailand and Laos. Now, more countries are looking at power sharing as a way to wean their economies off coal and other fossil fuels. Vietnam would like a regional grid so it could sell clean energy, such as from offshore wind, to its neighbors while the Malaysian province of Sarawak is looking to sell its hydropower to neighboring Indonesia.

The plan for a regional grid between the 10 members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations was conceived two decades ago, but progress has been stalled by various problems including technical barriers and political mistrust.

The region now recognizes it must move faster. Climate change could reduce the region's economic potential by more than a third by the middle of the century, according to a report presented at the 2021 UN climate conference in Glasgow, Scotland. Demand for electricity is rising, and governments have realized the transition away from fossil fuels requires an interconnected grid, Suryadi said.

Capacity

"It has become a crucial need for every country," he said. In the past, countries in the region were focused more on energy security, relying heavily on fossil fuels and often building more capacity than they needed. But renewable energy costs are falling, making hydroelectric, solar and wind power more affordable. And all ASEAN countries apart from the Philippines have pledged to stop adding carbon to the atmosphere by 2050.

So, arguments in favor of an interconnected grid appear to be prevailing.

Tiny, landlocked Laos, with a population of only 7 million, has built more than 50 dams in the past 15 years, relying on its status as the "battery of Southeast Asia" to profit from sales of power to Thailand, Vietnam, and China.

It still has surplus power it needs to sell to others in the region.

Singapore - a small city-state of 6 million with nearly no natural resources - must import clean energy to meet its renewable energy goals.

Regional grids can help bridge gaps between where power is needed and where it can be generated, helping countries adjust to outside shocks like big jumps in oil prices. They also can help cut costs: In 2021, for instance, Europe saved \$36 billion by trading power, European regulators have estimated.

Interconnected grids can also deliver reliable electricity to communities in remote regions like West Kalimantan, on the island of Borneo. A life punctuated by rolling blackouts that forced shops to shutter and people to use diesel generators was the norm until a 170-kilometer (105-mile) long cross-border power line coming from neighboring Malaysia's Sarawak province changed that in 2016.

"This is a no-brainer way to do it ... because it's been done elsewhere and the benefits are obvious," said **Rena Kuwahata**, an energy analyst at the Paris-based International Energy Agency.

But issues remain.

One of ASEAN's core policies is non-interference, which means members tend to shy away from joint projects. Domestic energy priorities are sometimes at odds with the potential benefits of an interconnected grid. Nadhilah Shani, another expert at the ASEAN Center for Energy said that this creates a "dilemma" for countries: they could sell clean energy to neighbors for the region to wean itself off fossil fuels, or they could use those resources towards meeting their own climate targets.

Renewables

Malaysia gets only 1% of its electricity annually from clean sources. It banned the export of renewables in 2021 to try and develop a domestic clean energy industry. That ban was lifted this year but an Indonesian ban on clean energy exports imposed last year remains in effect.

The region's lack of a regulatory framework for such things as installing submarine power cables is another stumbling block.

Not all the technical problems have been ironed out. Voltages used by each country can vary, as do the capacities of their grids. Even countries whose grids span borders, like Thailand, need to upgrade them, Harald Link, owner of B.Grimm Power and president of Thailand's Association of Private Power Producers, said in an interview.

Projections of where power will be needed must be factored in, for example, plans for power-hungry data centers. "You need a huge amount of electricity - and they want it green. And where do you get it from? For some countries, it is more difficult to make it green," Link said.

Costs are high: at a minimum some \$280 billion in power sector investments are required, according to the ASEAN Center for Energy.

China's involvement in building much of the region's energy infrastructure via its Belt and Road Initiative could also be a concern. In 2021, Laos, under pressure from its mounting debts, granted a 25-year concession to operate its power grid to a majority Chinese-owned company.

But despite intermittent tensions between China and some of its neighbors over territorial disputes and other issues, generally Beijing and ASEAN are working on the basis of "mutual interests and benefits," said Nadhilah Shani, another expert at the ASEAN Center for Energy.

Given how expensive it is to build power grids, the private financing needed to build it can influence how and where projects are built, said Shani. Still, she said, national priorities play a bigger role than Chinese investments in how electricity is transmitted.

"We are in good place in ASEAN to have this kind of collaboration in terms of trading and we have reached a common understanding," she said.



Kuwahata



In this photo taken from video released by Roscosmos space corporation, a Russian Soyuz MS-23 space capsule descends about 150 km (90 miles) south-east of the Kazakh town of Zhezkazgan, Kazakhstan, Wednesday, Sept. 27. The Soyuz capsule (inset photo, from left), NASA astronaut Frank Rubio, Roscosmos cosmonauts Sergey Prokopyev and Dmitri Petelin touched down on Wednesday on the steppes of Kazakhstan. (AP)

3 astronauts return to Earth; NASA's Rubio sets US space record

A NASA astronaut and two Russian cosmonauts returned to Earth on Wednesday after being stuck in space for just over a year. American Frank Rubio set a record for the longest US spaceflight - a result of the extended stay.

The trio landed in a remote area of Kazakhstan, descending in a Soyuz capsule that was rushed up as a replacement after their original ride was hit by space junk and lost all its coolant while docked to the International Space Station.

What should have been a 180-day mission turned into a 371-day stay. Rubio spent more than two weeks longer in space than Mark Vande Hei, who held NASA's previous endurance record for a single spaceflight.

Russia holds the world record of 437 days, set in the mid-1990s.

The Soyuz capsule that brought Rubio and cos-

monauts Sergey Prokopyev and Dmitri Petelin back was a replacement launched in February. Russian engineers suspect a piece of space junk pierced the radiator of their original capsule late last year, midway through what should have been a six-month mission. Engineers worried that without cooling, the capsule's electronics and any occupants could overheat to dangerous levels, so the craft returned empty.

There wasn't another Soyuz to launch a fresh crew until this month. Their replacements finally arrived nearly two weeks ago.

"No one deserves to go home to their families more than you," the space station's new commander, Denmark's Andreas Mogensen, said earlier this week.

Prokopyev told ground controllers throughout the descent that all three were feeling good. They expe-

rienced more than four times the force of gravity as their capsule streaked through the atmosphere and came to a touchdown in the barren Kazakh steppes, ending up on its side. Helicopters moved in with recovery crews to fetch the astronauts.

"It's good to be home," Rubio said after being pulled from the capsule.

Rubio, 47, an Army doctor and helicopter pilot, said at a news conference last week that he never would have agreed to a full year in space if asked at the outset. He ended up missing important family milestones including the oldest of his four children finishing her first year at the US Naval Academy and another heading off to West Point.

Rubio had said the psychological aspect of spending so long in space was tougher than he expected. He may hold on to this record for a while. NASA has no plans as of now for more yearlong missions. (AP)



Nico DelGado of Commerce City, Colorado shares a moment with his two year-old dog Hercules on Tuesday, Sept. 26, at Kaizen Food Rescue distribution site in Englewood, Colorado. PetSmart Charities, the leading funder of animal welfare in the country, is raising awareness of the pervasiveness of pet hunger by announcing the first-ever Pet Hunger Awareness Day with pet food distribution events across the country and a related social media campaign. (AP)

Discovery

\$200m for salmon reintroduction:

The Biden administration has pledged over \$200 million toward reintroducing salmon in the Upper Columbia River Basin in an agreement with tribes that includes a stay on litigation for 20 years.

The Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, the Coeur d'Alene Tribe and Spokane Tribe of Indians signed the deal with federal officials on Thursday, The Seattle Times reported.

The funds from the Bonneville Power Administration will be paid over 20 years to implement a plan led by the tribes to restore salmon and steelhead in the basin.

Constructing the Grand Coulee Dam about 80 years ago in eastern Washington, and Chief Joseph Dam downstream, stopped salmon from migrating into the basin and through tribal lands, cutting off tribal access to the fish, which leaders say has caused devastating cultural harm.

Salmon runs in the Upper Columbia had been abundant for thousands of years and were a mainstay of tribal cultures and trade.

The Upper Columbia United Tribes, which includes tribes in Washington and Idaho, have been working on the reintroduction plan. Now in the second of four stages, it includes research over the next two decades to establish sources of donor and brood salmon stocks for reintroduction, test biological assumptions, develop interim hatchery and passage facilities, and evaluate how the program is working.

"In 1940, Tribes from around the Northwest gathered at Kettle Falls for a Ceremony of Tears to mourn the loss of salmon at their ancestral fishing grounds," **Jarred-Michael Erickson**, chairman of the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, said in a statement from the White House Council on Environmental Quality. "The federal government is taking a major step toward righting that historic wrong. ... The Colville Tribes (look) forward to our children celebrating a Ceremony of Joy when salmon are permanently restored to their ancestral waters."

The US Bureau of Reclamation additionally is committing \$8 million in federal money toward juvenile salmon outmiga-

tion studies, genetic sampling and fish passage design development.

Northwest RiverPartners, which represents users of the Columbia and Lower Snake rivers, including barge operators and utilities, has been against dam removal on the Lower Snake for salmon recovery but supports this effort, which leaves dams intact.

"Taking this next step in studying salmon reintroduction above these blocked ar-



Erickson



Miller

as is the right thing to do and lays the foundation for the possibility of sustainable salmon runs in the upper Columbia River Basin," executive director **Kurt Miller** said in a statement. "Reintroduction has the potential to create hundreds of miles of upstream habitat for salmon, responds to important Tribal commitments, and does so without negatively impacting the hydropower our region relies on." (AP)

The Conversation

Modern dust carry human-made toxic pollutants

Desert storms silent health threat

By Claire Williams Bridgwater and Fatim Samara

American University of Sharjah

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

Humans have contended with dust storms for thousands of years, ever since early civilizations appeared in the Middle East and North Africa. But modern desert dust storms are different from their preindustrial counterparts.

Around the world, deserts now increasingly border built structures, including urban dwellings, manufacturing, transportation hubs, sewage treatment and landfills. As a result, desert dust lifts a growing load of airborne pollutants and transports these substances over long distances.

This is happening throughout the Global Dust Belt, an arid to semiarid region that stretches from western China through Central Asia, the Middle East and North Africa. Similar storms occur in the US Southwest and central Australia.

To our thinking, modern desert dust storms have been overlooked as a public health crisis. Elevated exposure to these events is likely to contribute to rising respiratory and other diseases, including asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. We are environmental researchers whose work shows a need for better public health practices to protect people from dust storm pollutants.

To appreciate the scale of the threat, consider the Arabian Peninsula, where asthma rates have been the world's highest for the past two decades.

In spring 2011, one of the most severe desert dust storms in recent decades swept across the Middle East at the peak of the dust storm season. Its plumes spread from the west coast of the Persian Gulf to the eastern shores of the Caspian Sea, covering northern Saudi Arabia, southern Iraq, Kuwait and western Iran. One quadrant of this large storm alone covered most of the Arabian Peninsula.

This storm reached vertically as high as 5.5 miles (9 kilometers) above the ground. Its wind speeds exceeded 45 mph (72 kilometers per hour) - higher than average wind speeds in the region. Dust particle concentrations peaked at 530,000 micrograms per cubic foot (15,000 micrograms per cubic

meter), blocking sunlight for days.

One study found that a large proportion of individuals exposed to sandstorms had symptoms that included increased cough, runny nose, wheezing, acute asthmatic attack, eye irritation and redness, headache, sleep disturbance and psychological disturbances. Another study reported that increased dust storm exposure in western Iran led to increases in hospital admissions for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and more deaths from respiratory causes.

Researchers study desert dust storms in a dozen different fields, each with its own terminology, expertise and body of knowledge. This work includes analyzing satellite images, creating simulation models for predicting dust particle transport, and identifying each dust storm's particle content. So far, however, the health effects of desert dust storms and their changing particle content have gotten scant attention.

As we discuss in a recent review article, studies have found pollutants in dust storms that include bioactive metals such as copper, chromium, nickel, lead and zinc, as well as pesticides, herbicides, radioactive particulates and aerosolized sewage. The extent to which desert dust storms transport a special class of pollution particles, those even smaller than one micron - or one millionth of a meter - is not yet clear.

Nanoparticles

This is the class of submicron pollutants, abbreviated as PM1.0, which includes degraded microplastics, metallic nanoparticles, diesel exhaust and fine particles from degraded tires. Of all particulate matter classes, submicron particles are the most harmful to human health because when once inhaled, they enter the bloodstream, affecting every organ in the body, and even crossing the blood-brain barrier.

We offer several practices here that we believe would help public health agencies successfully tackle the problem of polluted dust storms.

1: Identify particle content for each dust storm.

Existing technology now makes it possible to identify the types of particles being carried in any particular storm. Scientists can already conduct particle trajectory analysis to trace dust and pollutant particles back to

their sources.

Knowing the particle content of dust storms can identify ways to make these storms less hazardous, whether capping sewage systems or securing waste at ports to prevent materials from being picked up by dust storms.

2: Archive samples from each desert dust storm.

One physical catalog for dust storm particles already exists at the 19th-century dust storm archive kept by the Natural History Museum at Humboldt University in Berlin. We see a need for a modern archive that collects digital data on particle types, particle trajectory analysis, spatial coordinates and meteorological data.

Keeping both physical samples and data from each dust storm would allow for a comparative understanding of how and why particle content is changing. This has been done to analyze particle content related to military activity in the Middle East.

3: Protect indoor and closed spaces from the smaller dust storm particles.

During a major dust storm, high-speed winds blow fine particles around windows and doors for days. The particles most likely to penetrate indoors include the smallest, most harmful submicron class.

Typically, a gray, fluffy residue appears inside buildings after a dust storm, but there is no data so far on the identity and size of these particles. Our concern is that submicron pollutant particles are highly concentrated in this residue.

For a safe cleanup, we recommend that people should avoid dry vacuuming, which lofts particles back into the air. Instead, it is better to remove residues with water and a wet mop. We also recommend wearing face masks indoors before, during and after dust storms, since particulate concentrations start to rise ahead of the main storm. In our view, people should treat dust storm residue inside built structures as hazardous material until studies show otherwise.

4: Educate biomedical and meteorological experts together.

The rising human-made content of desert dust storms, particularly fine and ultrafine submicron particles, is a neglected public health concern that we believe calls for combined medical and meteorological expertise. (AP)

Argentine jersey is best-selling jersey in history of league

Messi Mania has grabbed hold in MLS, but will it be a long-lasting boost?

WASHINGTON, Sept. 27, (AP) — It's highly unlikely any player other than Lionel Messi could have brought Prince Harry, Selena Gomez and Leonardo DiCaprio out to a regular-season Major League Soccer match.

But there they were — very noticeable in fact — in the crowd when Messi's Inter Miami squad took on LAFC in Southern California early this month.

Since Messi arrived in the United States, the league and his team have both been enjoying a rare spotlight, with sell-outs on the road and at home, No. 1 jerseys flying off the shelves, ticket prices at times reaching unheard-of levels and sponsors jumping on board.

"He's the best player in the world. What did you think he was going to do when he came here?" LAFC coach Steve Cherundolo said after Inter Miami's star-studded sold-out match in Los Angeles.

It's almost necessary to be an A-lister to score a good ticket to watch him play: Front-row tickets on the secondary market have been going for thousands of dollars. Regardless of the costs they

step, then many will want to invest and they could have the opportunity to do it. This league has huge potential. Now it's time to show this potential."

Messi, 36, has 11 goals and eight assists in 12 games across all competitions for Inter Miami. He's already helped the team secure one trophy, this summer's League's Cup.

MLS has gotten a bump from an international star before. David Beckham, now Messi's boss as co-owner of Inter Miami, was a game-changer for the league when he signed with the LA Galaxy in 2007. The league literally changed the rules for Beckham, devising the Designated Player rule that allows teams to sign high-profile players without them counting toward the salary cap. Messi was signed under the same rule.

With his Hollywood good looks and his Spice Girl wife, Beckham raised the profile of the league.

Fox Soccer analyst Alexi Lalas, who was president of the Galaxy when Beckham joined, said that while Beckham helped boost the league's profile, Messi is elevating the game itself.

"Messi is arguably the greatest player to play the game. That conversation was not had relative to David Beckham, as good as he was as a player," Lalas said. "I think the impact of Messi is going to be greater in terms of the on-field product and the evolution and the growth of that, in that I think that he almost gives license to others to at least consider coming to Major League Soccer."

For now, the fans are responding to what MLS is offering with Messi as the face of the league.

So far, average attendance in MLS is up nearly 5% over last year, although the league also added a new team in St. Louis this season. Inter Miami's attendance is up 36% over last year.

Television viewership is more difficult to gauge because league games are broadcast on Apple TV's MLS Season Pass, a subscription-based streaming platform that was launched this season. Apple TV hasn't shared ratings.

Streaming measurement firm Antenna reported 110,075 new MLS Season Pass signups on the day of Messi's Inter Miami debut. That's a 280% increase from the number of sign-ups on opening day of the 2023 season. Another 65,000 signed up when he played his second game, according to data first reported by the Wall Street Journal.

Messi's No. 10 jersey is the best-selling jersey in the history of the MLS store. Sales surpassed every other jersey sold this season on the league's website within just 45 minutes of its release, and there's a backlog of orders still waiting to be filled.

Sponsors are also buying in. Royal Caribbean signed a multiyear partnership deal with Inter Miami in August.

All told, Inter Miami chief business officer Xavier Asensi has predicted in interviews that the club is on target to hit record revenues of more than \$200 million in 2024, on par with some European clubs.

Still, it remains to be seen how widespread the Messi effect will be, whether fans will be wooed to the league as a whole.

Julio Morales, who was holding a painting he did of Messi before the Miami match at LAFC, said he paid \$600 for his ticket to see Messi.

"We'll see how the games go," Morales said about whether he'll start following MLS. "I mean, if the games get better, then maybe."

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may incur, more fans are going through the turnstiles to watch the seven-time Ballon d'Or winner and reigning World Cup champion.

"I was never an MLS person," said Kenny Schorr, a fan from Miami Springs and former college soccer player who was at a recent Inter Miami game. "I would watch a game and get frustrated. The talent level was so different. I'm not trying to put anybody down, but you look at what Messi does and the talent is only going to increase with his presence."

Messi Mania has even reached beyond the pitch.

The day after Messi posted on social media about his meal from Banchemo Pizzeria, a homey Argentine-style pizzeria in Miami's North Beach, there was a line out the door at the restaurant.

Clearly, the demand for all things Messi is off the charts, but will that translate to greater success for MLS in the United States, where "football" means the NFL not soccer?

"With the arrival of Messi, everything is changing, everything is opening eyes," LAFC defender Giorgio Chiellini said. "It's a step. Part of that has to be a



Inter Miami forward Lionel Messi takes a shot against Toronto FC midfielder Alonso Coello during the first half of an MLS soccer match in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. (AP)

'Horse racing's future is really in peril'

Horse racing groups 'introduce' safety legislation they hope will replace HISA

WASHINGTON, Sept. 27, (AP) — New legislation introduced in Congress on Tuesday would dismantle the year-old national authority in charge of regulating safety and medication in horse racing and replace it with an organization backers say would allow for the safe treatment of horses and address concerns about doping.

The Racehorse Health and Safety Act, proposed by the North American Association of Racetrack Veterinarians and several horsemen's associations, would include a national umbrella of rules for states to follow but give individual racing commissions more authority to enforce them. The bill was introduced by Louisiana Republican Rep. Clay Higgins.

"While the federal government may have had good intentions in passing (the Horse Racing Integrity and Safety Act), in practice it ended up obstructing best practices in the horse business," Higgins said. "I will not sit by and allow horses to be harmed while government crushes the families that have built their lives around the horse racing industry."

The plan would essentially move the oversight of the sport back to states, creating a system with a board chosen by racing commissioners — closer to what existed before the Horse Racing Integrity and Safety Authority was established. Critics say HISA goes too far with arbitrary medication rules and creating a Racehorse Health and Safety Organization would be a better way of regulating an industry that in recent years has largely acknowledged the need for reform.

HISA CEO Lisa Lazarus in a phone interview with The Associated Press said it was an unfortunate development for the industry as horse racing tries to survive.

Tom Rooney, president and CEO of the National Thoroughbred Racing Association, in a statement sent to the AP called it a "desperate attempt by detractors to repeal HISA, a law that is working to make the sport of thoroughbred racing safer and more transparent."

He added the NTRA will continue to support HISA.

Eric Hamelback, CEO of the NHBPA, said the new law "takes into account horsemen's input (and) veterinary science (and) allows for horses to be given proper care in the best interest of equine health and welfare."

HISA was the result of concerns over doping in the sport of kings and the new rules replaced a patchwork system of standards in the 38 U.S. racing states that can vary by track and location. It was signed into law late in 2020 by then-President Donald Trump and began regulating safety measures last year and medication and anti-doping rules in May. Safety has been at the forefront for months after high-profile horse deaths at Churchill Downs and

HORSE RACING

Saratoga Race Course.

"Horse racing's future is really in peril, and if we don't come together and work hard to reduce equine injuries and make the sport safer, we may not have a sport in the future," Lazarus said.

HISA faced a series of legal challenges before going into place. Texas remains opposed and has for a year not been able to simulcast its races out of state as a result.

Hamelback and other stakeholders agree there was change needed from the status quo but have criticized HISA and the Horseracing Integrity and Welfare Unit — its independent enforcement agency — for banning or limiting the withdrawal times for substances that they say have little or no impact on performance.

Russell Williams, president of the board of the U.S. Trotting Association that governs harness racing of standardbreds, said one faction of the industry favors no medication in horse racing — "basically have hay, oats and water."

"The purpose of that is to prove to the public that there's no doping going on," Williams said. "The other side of that debate is science, sports medicine."

Williams said the new proposal was put together by racetrack veterinarians before being reviewed by officials in thoroughbred, standardbred and quarter horse racing.

Garnacho on target as Man United rout Palace in League Cup defense



Manchester United's Facundo Pellistri, (right), is tackled by Crystal Palace's Chris Richards during the English League Cup third round soccer match between Manchester United and Crystal Palace at Old Trafford stadium in Manchester, England. (AP)

Exeter stun Luton

MANCHESTER, England, Sept. 27, (AP) — Seven months after lifting the trophy, Manchester United made a successful start to its defense of the English League Cup by beating Crystal Palace 3-0.

Alejandro Garnacho and Casemiro fired the holders into a 2-0 first-half lead at Old Trafford and Anthony Martial added a third after the break in the third-round match. It is now back-to-back wins for Erik ten Hag's team, which has endured a disappointing start to the season.

The dominant performance against an understrength Palace followed Saturday's narrow victory at Burnley and will give United fans hope the team has turned its form around.

The League Cup ranks fourth among English soccer's most important tro-

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phies. But Ten Hag still savored last season's success.

Victory against Newcastle in February's final at Wembley Stadium ended the club's six-year wait for a trophy and saw Ten Hag deliver silverware in his first season at the club. He went on to also reach the FA Cup final, only to lose to Manchester City, and also guided United back into the Champions League to mark an impressive campaign.

Things have not gone so well this time, with his team losing four out of five games before beating Burnley 1-0. This latest victory was far more convincing, even if Palace benched regular starters Marc Guehi, Eberechi Eze and Joachim Anderson and was also without forward Odsonne Edouard.

Ten Hag also made changes with Bruno Fernandes, Marcus Rashford and Rasmus Hojlund on the bench and Christian Eriksen absent.

Mason Mount, however, made his first appearance since Aug. 19 after returning from an injury.

As UEFA works on return for Russian teams, Ukraine promises boycott

GENEVA, Sept. 27, (AP) — The Ukraine soccer federation said it will boycott any European youth competition that includes Russia as UEFA works on easing a blanket ban imposed since the war started.

Ukraine soccer officials also urged other UEFA member countries late Tuesday to refuse to play Russia, a stance that England reiterated within hours of the European soccer body announcing a new policy of trying to reintegrate Russian Under-17 teams.

Qualifying groups are played in October and November for the Under-17 European Championship for boys and girls, which have finals tournaments next year.

"UAF confirms that we will not take part in any competitions with the participation of Russian teams," the Ukraine federation said, "and appeal to other UEFA member associations to boycott possible matches with the participation of teams from the Russian Federation." "We strongly urge UEFA to review

Munetsi has 2 assists as Lille edge Reims

Fukui among 3 debutants for Bayern in win

MÜNSTER, Germany, Sept. 27, (AP) — Four goals, three debuts. Bayern Munich eased to a 4-0 win at third-division team Preussen Münster to start its German Cup campaign, with Israeli goalkeeper Daniel Peretz, Portugal wing back Raphaël Guerreiro and Japanese

teenager Taichi Fukui all making their debuts for the Bavarian powerhouse.

First-half goals from Eric Maxim Choupo-Moting, Konrad Laimer and Frans Krätzig set Bayern up for a comfortable game, allowing coach Thomas Tuchel to send on Guerreiro and Fukui

in the second half. Fukui usually plays for Bayern's under-19s, while Guerreiro had been injured since his summer switch from Borussia Dortmund.

In-form French teenager Mathys Tel made his first start of the season as Tuchel made five changes to the team that thrashed Bochum 7-0 in the Bundesliga at the weekend.

Tel, who wrapped up the scoring in the 86th minute, showed his threat early on by setting up Choupo-Moting for the opener in the ninth. Serge Gnabry had to go off shortly afterward with a left arm

SOCCER

injury from a collision with Münster goalkeeper Johannes Schenk.

The 20-year-old Krätzig — a defender — went on in Gnabry's place after making his debut against Bochum. Krätzig almost scored straight away, seeing his header deflected out for a corner.

There was a brief holdup midway through the half when Bayern fans threw tennis balls onto the field, apparently in protest against the German soccer federation's scheduling of games. Bayern and Leipzig's first-round cup games were postponed from August because of their participation in the German Super Cup.

Schenk made a fine save to deny Leon Goretzka before Laimer got the dominant visitors' deserved second goal in the 40th. There was still time before the break for Krätzig to score his first goal for Bayern.

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Marshall Munetsi set up both goals as Reims moved up to fifth place in the French league by beating Lille 2-1 away. Munetsi provided the assist for Mohammed Daramy to give Reims the lead in the 12th minute, and again when Keito Nakamura doubled the advantage four minutes later with first French league goal.

Benjamin Andre pulled one back for Lille in the 79th but Reims held on to leapfrog its opponent in the table. Reims has 10 points from six games, while Lille stayed on eight.



Bayern's Eric Maxim Choupo-Moting, (left), and Muenster's Thomas Kok challenge for the ball during the German Soccer Cup first round match between Preussen Muenster and Bayern Munich in Muenster, Germany. (AP)

Garnacho fired United ahead in the 21st minute after converting Diogo Dalot's cutback in the box.

His low shot had too much power for Palace goalkeeper Sam Johnstone, who had only just come on as a substitute for the injured Dean Henderson.

Johnstone was tested again moments later when Dalot blasted an effort from an angle, which the keeper blocked.

He was beaten again, however, in the 27th, this time by Casemiro, who headed in Mount's corner to double United's lead.

Martial added a third 10 minutes into the second half when firing across goal after meeting Casemiro's looping ball to the far post.

United plays Palace again in the Premier League on Saturday and the Londoners showed their threat when twice forcing saves from 'keeper Andre

Onana later in the match.

Third-division Exeter produced a shock 1-0 win against Luton to knock the Premier League club out of the competition. Luton made 10 changes from the team that picked up its first topflight point of the season against Wolverhampton on Saturday, but the result will still go down as a big upset. Demetri Mitchell scored the winner in the 83rd, but Exeter had to see out the game with 10 men after he was sent off in the 88th.

Wolverhampton was also eliminated after throwing away a two-goal lead to lose 3-2 at second-division Ipswich. Hwang Hee-Chan and Toti Gomes had seemingly put the visitors on course for the next round after goals inside the first 15 minutes. But Omari Hutchinson, Freddie Ladapo and Jack Taylor sealed a comeback win for Ipswich.

SOCCER

Tuesday that it wants to restore Russian teams into its youth competitions, though without their flag, anthem, national colors and playing in only away games.

UEFA said "children should not be punished for actions whose responsibility lies exclusively with adults," and its staff will look at finding groups that Russian Under-17 teams can play in. Ukraine's Under-17 girls' teams is

scheduled to play three games in Germany from Oct. 14-20 in a group that also includes Austria and Romania.

The Under-17 boys are due in Liechtenstein to play games from Oct. 15-21 against the host, Germany and Finland.

Russian youth players plus their coaches and officials would face issues getting visas and flights to travel for UEFA games. Serbia is a traditional ally of Russia that will host qualifying groups for Under-17 boys and girls in the weeks ahead.

The English Football Association defied UEFA's new policy despite having vice presidents of UEFA and FIFA, David Gill and Debbie Hewitt, respectively, and likely being confirmed in two weeks' time by UEFA as the men's Euro 2028 co-host with its British and Irish neighbors.

"We do not support the position of readmitting Russia to UEFA age grade competitions," the English FA said, "and our position remains that England teams won't play against Russia."

13-year-old Chinese skateboarder wins gold



Canada players celebrate their win over Jamaica in a CONCACAF women's championship soccer series match in Toronto. (AP)

Canada's women book ticket to Paris Olympics

Cloe Lacasse and Jordyn Huitema scored, and Canada defeated Jamaica 2-1 on Tuesday night in the second leg of the teams' Olympic qualifier to secure a berth at next summer's Paris Games. Canada is the reigning Olympic gold medalist after winning at the Tokyo Games two years ago. Canada went into the match with the advantage after defeating Jamaica 2-0 in the first leg of the CONCACAF play-in qualifier last week in Kingston.

The United States had already secured the first of CONCACAF's two spots in the field for the Olympics.

Drew Spence gave Jamaica the lead with a goal on a free kick that sailed over the wall and tucked into the corner, out of reach of Canadian goalkeeper Kailen Sheridan in the 33rd minute.

After a pair of shots that hit the crossbar, Canada broke through in the 39th with a goal by Lacasse that put the team up 3-1 on aggregate.

Huitema came into the game as a second-half substitute and scored in the 50th before a packed house at BMO Field. The announced attendance was 29,212.

Canada was coming off a disappointing finish at the Women's World Cup this summer. The Canadians didn't advance out of the group stage. Jamaica fell to Colombia in the round of 16 at the World Cup. (AP)

Indian shooter Samra dominates

HANGZHOU, China, Sept 27, (AP): She's the youngest member of the nearly 900-strong delegation from China, and the 13-year-old skateboarder is now going home with a gold medal.

She's also already thinking about being a force at next year's Paris Olympics.

Cui Chenxi, from Shandong province, edged out 18-year-old teammate Zeng Wenhui for the gold on Wednesday in women's street skateboarding. Miyu Ito, a 16-year-old Japanese skateboarder, took bronze.

Cui's gold was one of many for the host nation on Day 4 of the two-week event in Hangzhou, where more than 12,000 competitors from 45 countries and territories in Asia are competing in 481 events.

In women's street skateboarding, each competitor did two runs and then five tricks, with the highest scoring run being added to the two highest scoring tricks for the final result.

"My tactic was to be conservative on the first run, to get some points on the scoreboard, then make a push for it on the second run," Cui said.



China's Cui Chenxi celebrates with her gold medal during the awards ceremony for skateboarding women's street final at the 19th Asian Games in Hangzhou, China. (AP)

record, surpassing the Czech Republic's 208-run win against Panama in 2021.

Cricket was first incorporated into the Asian Games in 2010, and looks to be heading to the Olympic program soon, likely in the 2028 Los Angeles Games or the 2032 Brisbane Games.

India's women's cricket team took gold on Monday, defeating Sri Lanka.

In Nepal's win over Mongolia, Nepal batter Dipendra Singh Airee needed only nine balls to hit a 50, smashing the previous record of 12 balls held jointly by India's Yuvraj Singh and two others. He also set a record for the highest strike rate, 520, with a knock of 52 off 10 balls.

Teammate Kushal Malla set another milestone by reaching a century in 34 balls, one fewer than the previous record.

Cricket powerhouses India and Pakistan are among the tournament favorites, and could generate a massive television audience if they face one another in the men's cricket final at the Asian Games on Oct. 7. That final, however, could be overshadowed by the start of the Cricket World Cup in India, which runs Oct. 5-Nov. 19.

Indian shooter Sift Kaur Samra won two medals, taking gold in the women's 50-meter rifle, three positions competition, and silver in the team version of the same event.

In the individual event, Zhang Qiongyue of China took silver and Ashi Chouksey of India took the bronze.

Chouksey missed the silver in her very last shot.

In women's team skeet shooting, Kazakhstan took gold, edging out China. Thailand won the bronze.

ASIAN GAMES

The gambit paid off, as she scored significantly higher on her second run. That, combined with her first two tricks, won her the gold even though she missed the last three tricks.

Looking ahead, Cui said she's now got her sights on the Olympics.

"First I will concentrate on getting there, then I can make a big attack," she said.

Chinese skater Zhang Jie took gold in the men's street finals, with teammate Su Jianjun winning bronze.

Indonesian competitor Sanggoe Darma Tanjung took silver and said the competition was extremely tough.

"I can't believe I can make this podium," he said after getting his medal. "Everyone is good, amazing."

Nepal's cricket team trounced Mongolia in a preliminary-round match Wednesday, setting multiple records along the way to the 273-run win.

Nepal's batters dominated Mongolia's bowlers, going 314-3 in what was the first time a team has scored more than 300 in the 20-overs format. Mongolia scored 41-10, and Nepal's margin of victory also set a

Wilson has 30 points, 11 rebounds

Aces on verge of qualification, Liberty even series

LAS VEGAS, Sept. 27, (AP): A'ja Wilson punched the air after big shots, yelled following key plays and all but willed Las Vegas to victory as Aces fans repeatedly chanted "M-V-P!"

The big lesson is don't tick off A'ja Wilson.

After saying it "hurt like hell" to just miss out on winning her third MVP, she responded on Tuesday night with 30 points and 11 rebounds to help lift the Las Vegas Aces to a 91-84 victory over the Dallas Wings and 2-0 series lead in the WNBA semifinals.

Wilson is the first player in WNBA playoffs history with three consecutive 30-point games.

BASKETBALL

"She plays her freakin' heart out every single night on both ends," Aces point guard Chelsea Gray said. "It's a luxury to be able to play with somebody like her."

The top-seeded Aces can close out the best-of-five series when it shifts to Dallas on Friday. Teams that have taken a 2-0 leads have won all 16 WNBA playoffs series, according to ESPN.

Las Vegas also received contributions from Gray with 23 points and eight assists, Kelsey Plum with 18 points, and Jackie Young with 13 points and nine rebounds.

Arike Ogunbowale led No. 4 Dallas with 24 points, Natasha Howard had 20 points and 10 rebounds, Teaira McCowan added 12 points and 10 rebounds, and Satou Sabally scored 13 points.

Wilson came out determined, scoring 10 points and collecting four rebounds in the first quarter. After driving by Howard for a transition layup and 3-point play late in the period, Wilson punched both fists and yelled.

It was quite a different emotion from earlier when she found out the MVP award went to Breanna Stewart of the New York Liberty and Wilson said it was difficult news to accept.

The two are expected to meet in the WNBA Finals, but both teams still have unfinished business. The Wings showed they had no intention of making it easy for the Aces. Dallas went on a 14-2 run from late in the second quarter to early in the second half to come to within 44-43.

The Wings tied the game at 49 before Plum put the Aces back in front for good with a 3-pointer to ignite an 11-2 run.

But Dallas didn't go away, cutting the deficit to 73-68 early in the fourth quarter and staying within reach the rest of the way. Ogunbowale's long past to Howard for the layup on the fast break brought the Wings to within 85-81 with 1:36 left before the Aces survived with the victory.

If the Wings want to extend their season, they will have to do more than make it close at the end, and maybe



Dallas Wings' Teaira McCowan (7) Las Vegas Aces center Kiah Stokes (41) and Dallas Wings forward Satou Sabally vie for a rebound during the second half in Game 2 of a WNBA basketball semifinal series in Las Vegas. (AP)

Pakistan agrees deals that will allow players to get share of ICC revenue

ISLAMABAD, Sept. 27, (AP): The Pakistan Cricket Board has agreed a "momentous" three-year central contract deal with its international squads that will include players getting a proportion of International Cricket Council revenue.

There had been deadlock between the squads and the PCB for several months since the contracts expired on June 30, with the players asking for their share in the revenue the board gets from the ICC, the game's governing body.

The new three-year contract is backdated to July 1, 2023 but the cricket board said the performance of the players would be reviewed every 12 months.

"As many as 25 cricketers will be offered a momentous deal that will include a proportion of ICC revenue," the PCB said in a statement on Wednesday.

It is the first time the PCB has merged the red-ball and white-ball contracts of the players, saying it is "aimed at promoting fairness and a transparent selection process."

Each player in the four categories received a raise of more than

100 per cent. Three in the top category, Babar Azam, Mohammad Rizwan and Shaheen Shah Afridi, will get a monthly retainer of \$15,600.

"It is a historic deal," skipper Babar said. "It has been a lengthy and, at times, challenging negotiation process, but I believe we have reached a fair and beneficial agreement for both parties."

The players will receive a share of three per cent of ICC revenue, which will be around \$1 million. The PCB will be earning around \$34 million per year from the ICC.

Besides getting a monthly retainer, there is a raise of 50 per cent in match fees for players who feature in test matches, an increase of 25 per cent for ODIs and 12.5 per cent for T20s.

The PCB also agreed that the centrally contracted players can play in two other T20 leagues aside from the Pakistan Super League.

"I am pleased to announce that after lengthy negotiations the PCB has come to a financial agreement with the players," said Zaka Ashraf, chairman of the PCB managing committee.

that will happen in more familiar surroundings.

"They went on those different runs and then we battled back, and then they would go on another run and we

would have to battle back," Dallas coach Latricia Trammell said. "We've got to sustain, hang close and execute at a high level of what we want to do."

With their season on the line, Sab-

Japan, Samoa face off to stay in quarterfinals race

TOULOUSE, France, Sept. 27, (AP): The situation for Japan and Samoa at the Rugby World Cup could hardly be tighter going into their pool match on Thursday.

They are tied on five points in Pool D after two games each. They have the same number of tries - six - and conceded only one each. Samoa leads their points scored tally by just one, 54-53. In their last match two months ago in the Pacific Nations Cup, Samoa had a man advantage but had to come from behind twice to win by two points.

The winner in Toulouse will stay in quarterfinals contention while the loser's hopes will be all but snuffed out. Both teams need the confidence boost, let alone a win. Their last pool games are another step up; Japan meets Argentina while Samoa tackles England.

"We're at a situation at this tournament," Japan assistant coach John Mitchell said, "where they are actually going to have to fight and care for each other more than any other day - it's not just like any other test match."

"It's really important on both sides of the ball that we really do show our heart and how much it means to us, and how much this tournament is an opportunity to present a message to the next generation."

Japan and Samoa broke ground at the Rugby World Cup by handling the spirited Chileans. Then both ran into trouble.

Japan's year-long poor form and leaky defense could not expose an equally poor and uninspiring England in Nice. Japan's 2019 quarterfinalists would have run rings around 2023 England, but shutting down during the COVID-19 pandemic

has regressed Japan.

Despite unforced errors and woeful clearances from the 22, the Japanese closed within a point of England in the 54th minute. But the positive vibes lasted only two minutes when England scored a fluky try from the ball bouncing forward off the head of prop Joe Marler. The tension disappeared, Japan faded and England skipped away from 13-12 to win 34-12.

As bad as Japan was towards the end of the England game, Samoa made a horrible start against a vulnerable Argentina in Saint-Etienne. Samoa fullback Duncan Paia'au conceded a yellow card in the first minute, and Argentina scored a try where Paia'au would have been.

RUGBY

Christian Leali'ifano, who didn't kick well from hand, missed two penalty shots and a halftime lead Samoa should have owned turned into a 13-3 deficit that the Pumas, growing in confidence, never looked like giving up.

Samoa, unable to get its game going, made more tackles - 139 - than meters, 132.

With flyhalf Lima Sopoaga still injured, coach Seilala Mapusua backed Leali'ifano to rebound.

"As a player, you might not get it right on the day and that's OK because you've got 14 other guys on the field there to help you," Mapusua said. "I know our whole squad back him up 100%. Christian is looking forward to getting back on the field and putting in a strong performance."



Bandar Al-Enezi during a taekwondo fight.

Best of the Rest

Authority takes control: The Jabra Equestrian Club has come under the jurisdiction of the General Sports Authority following the directive of Muhammad Othman Al-Aiban, the Minister of Commerce and Industry and the Minister of State for Youth Affairs, to dissolve the club. Youssef Al-Baidan, the Director General of the General Sports Authority, expressed his gratitude to the former Board of Directors of the Jabra Equestrian Club for their cooperation in adhering to the court's decision and complying with the legal requirements.

Al-Baidan emphasized the fruitful collaboration among various government agencies in implementing official decisions and court orders. He also acknowledged the pivotal roles played by different sectors within the Ministry of Interior, under the leadership of Sheikh Talal Al-Khaled, Acting Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, as well as Lieutenant General Anwar Abdul Latif Al-Barjas, the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior.

Osimhen angered: Napoli forward Victor Osimhen has deleted almost all pictures of himself in the team's shirt from his social media accounts after the soccer club posted

a mocking video of him online. Napoli posted a video Tuesday that appeared to make fun of Osimhen's penalty skills after he missed a spot kick in Sunday's 0-0 draw at Bologna.

It later deleted the video but Osimhen responded by deleting almost all pictures of himself in a Napoli shirt. His agent also reacted angrily. (AP)

Poland eyes Oly: Poland will tell the International Olympic Committee it wants to host the 2036 Summer Games, state president Andrzej Duda said Wednesday.

Duda announced the government-backed project less than three weeks before parliamentary elections on Oct. 15.

It follows Poland hosting the multi-sport 2023 European Games earlier this year with 7,000 athletes centered on Krakow.

Duda said Polish Olympic officials will soon present a letter of intent to IOC President Thomas Bach. The European Olympic Committees group meets Oct. 6-7 in Istanbul.

The European Olympic body said Wednesday it welcomed Poland's interest to build on its European Games project.



Kuwaiti shooter Abdullah Al-Tarqi displays his gold medal.

Sports

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Al-Tarqi strikes gold for Kuwait at Asiad

Handball team advance to second round

HANGZHOU, China: In a momentous achievement, Kuwaiti shooter Abdullah Al-Tarqi clinched the first gold medal for Kuwait and the second overall at the on-going 19th Asian Games in Hangzhou, China. Al-Tarqi's victory came in the highly competitive skeet shooting competition, making his win even more remarkable as he had overcome an injury.

Al-Tarqi displayed exceptional skill and determination, hitting all 60 targets in the final, earning him the coveted gold medal. His flawless performance outshone his competitors, with Indian shooter Naraka Ajas securing second place and the silver medal, while the bronze medal went to Qatari shooter Nasser Al-Attayah.

The President of the Kuwaiti Shooting Sports Club, Duaij Al-Otaibi, attributed this remarkable achievement to the unwavering support of His Highness the Crown Prince, who not only met with Kuwaiti youth athletes during his visit to China but also attended the opening ceremony. His support greatly motivated the athletes, resulting in the proud moment of the Kuwaiti national anthem playing at this edition of the Asian Games.

Al-Otaibi dedicated this triumph to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf

ASIAN GAMES

Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Meshaal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the Kuwaiti people, and the Kuwaiti shooting community. He praised Al-Tarqi's stellar performance and expressed hopes for more medals in the remaining shooting competitions at the Asian tournament.

He emphasized that these victories underscore the significance of sports in Kuwait, thanks to the support of the country's political leadership. Al-Otaibi also expressed pride in Kuwaiti shooting's impressive results on the international stage.

In a call following his victory, Abdullah Al-Tarqi expressed overwhelming happiness and dedicated his gold medal to the leadership and people of Kuwait. He acknowledged the tough competition throughout the qualifiers and the final rounds, particularly from Indian and Qatari shooters. Al-Tarqi credited his success to his unwavering focus and determination, coupled with divine grace.

He extended his best wishes to his fellow athletes in upcoming competitions, in shooting and other disciplines, with the hope of contributing more medals to Kuwait's achievements. Al-Tarqi also expressed gratitude for the support received from the president and members of the shooting club, recognizing their role in Kuwaiti shooting's continuous success in major international sporting events.

In other results of the Kuwaiti shooters Mansour Al-Rashidi, who came in nineteenth place after being hit (116) out of 125, was eliminated from the qualifying round, and the shooter Abdulaziz Al-Saad came in twenty-sixth place with (113) hits out of 125. This is considered the first participation. In the women's competition, shooter Iman Al-Shamaa came in tenth place with (113) hits out of 125. Shooter Afrah Al-Muhammad came in nineteenth place with (108) shots out of 125, while shooter Fatima Al Zaabi came in twenty-third place with (95).) According to out of 125.

Kuwait handball team continued to provide excellent performances in the first group matches, as it defeated the host Chinese team with a score of 27-24 in the second round, topping its group and qualifying with the Chinese Dragons to the second round, which is held in a two-group system, playing among each other.

In the rest of the games, our national squash team achieved victory over its Qatari brother 3-0 before losing to India 0-3 in the team competitions. In turn, the blue taekwondo player Bandar Al-Anazi was eliminated from the preliminary qualifiers after losing to the Uzbek player with a score of 0-2. The two swimming players also left. Walid Abdel Razzaq and Saud Shamroukh competed in the tournament by not qualifying in the 100m butterfly and 200m freestyle.

Today's competitions
The duo, Abdullah Al-Rashidi and Iman Al-Shamaa, will open today's competitions in the mixed doubles "skeet" competition at four o'clock in the morning. At the same time, shooter Hamad Al-Namshan will enter the qualifiers for the first round of the 10m



Gold medalist Abdullah Al-Tarqi celebrates on the podium with officials.



An opponent falls as Kuwaitis look on during a handball match between Kuwait and China.

Injured batter Iqbal left out of Bangladesh World Cup squad

MIRPUR, Bangladesh, Sept 27, (AP): Key batter Tamim Iqbal was left out of Bangladesh's 15-member Cricket World Cup squad on Tuesday because of back injury concerns.

Tamim, Bangladesh's all-time top scorer in ODIs with 8,357 runs in 240 innings, returned to the squad for the New Zealand series after recovering from back pain which had led him to quit the one-day captaincy.

CRICKET

He made 44 in the second ODI against New Zealand, which Bangladesh lost by 86 runs, but the back pain returned and he did not play in the third game on Tuesday.

"The decision was taken after consulting with every stakeholder, like the team management which includes captain and head coach and the medical team," Abedin said. "It is understood his pain could be back any time so we can't take risk with him."

Tamim retired from the national team during Bangladesh's series

pistol shooting competition, and in swimming, Walid Abdel-Razzaq and Saud Al-Shamroukh will compete in the 50m butterfly race, 800 m freestyle in a row, and the career of the promising Salem Al-Abakal begins at seven in the morning in the golf competition, and at nine in the morning the boxing champion Noura Al-Mutairi faces off against her Indonesian competitor Hasana, and her colleague Ali Zahir faces his Malaysian competitor

against Afghanistan in July but reversed the decision after meeting with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

He then took an injection in London as part of his recovery from the back pain.

Bangladesh has two genuine openers in its squad in Litton Das and Tanzid Hasan. Litton has recently been going through a bad patch and Tanzid, who made his debut during the Asia Cup, is yet to play any big knock.

The selection panel also kept Mahmudullah as they believe the senior player has the fitness and form to merit inclusion.

Mahmudullah made 49 and 21 in the second and third games against New Zealand.

Bangladesh opens its World Cup campaign against Afghanistan on Oct. 7.

Bangladesh squad: Shakib Al Hasan (captain), Litton Das, Tanzid Hasan, Najmul Hossain, Towhid Hridoy, Mushfiqur Rahim, Mahmudullah, Mehedi Hasan, Nasum Ahmed, Mahedi Hasan, Taskin Ahmed, Mustafizur Rahman, Hasan Mahmud, Shoriful Islam, Tanzim Hasan.

Muhammad Aswan, and the squash team faces a difficult confrontation against its Pakistani counterpart.

Yesterday in Hangzhou, China, Kuwaiti sharpshooter Abdullah Al-Tarqi made history by clinching Kuwait's first gold medal and the second overall in the 19th Asian Games skeet shooting competition. He achieved this remarkable feat by hitting a perfect score of 60 out of 60 shots in the final round.

Milik scrambles in Juventus' winner

Barca winning run ends with draw at Mallorca

MADRID Sept 27, (AP): Barcelona's five-game winning streak in the Spanish league ended with a 2-2 draw at Mallorca.

Barcelona twice came from behind to salvage the point. It had won five in a row after opening with a draw at Getafe. It also won in its Champions League debut against Antwerp last Tuesday.

The result left the Catalan club in danger of relinquishing the lead when the remaining midweek games are played. It leads Girona by one point and Real Madrid by two points. Girona visits Villarreal on Wednesday, while Madrid hosts promoted Las Palmas.

SOCCER

"We conceded two goals after defensive mistakes and we can't allow that to happen," Barcelona coach Xavi said. "It's a shame, we lost two points because of these mistakes."

Mallorca, which squandered a few good chances on counterattacks, has just one win so far and is sitting near the relegation zone with six points.

"It was a fair result, we are satisfied," Mallorca's Mexican coach Javier Aguirre said. "A victory would have been too much for us today."

Mallorca was coming off a 5-3 loss at Girona.

The hosts opened the scoring through Vedat Muriqi in the eighth minute before Raphinha equalized in the 41st. Abdon Prats put Mallorca ahead again just before halftime, and Fermin Lopez sealed the draw in the 75th with what was his first league goal for the Catalan club.

Barcelona had a penalty kick awarded in the 66th, but the decision was reversed by video review.

Sevilla scored twice in the first 10 minutes and went on to rout Almeria 5-1 for its second league win of the season.

Youssef En-Nesyri scored in the seventh minute and Dodi Lukebakio in the eighth, then Suso added another in the 38th before Erik Lamela and Kike Salas closed the scoring in the second half.

It was the fifth loss for Almeria, which remains the only team yet to win a match.

Almeria next hosts Granada, while Sevilla visits Barcelona.

Morocco picked 2025 Afcon hosts

CAIRO, Egypt, Sept 27, (AP): Morocco being picked Wednesday to host soccer's Africa Cup of Nations in 2025 was expected.

It was a surprise, however, that the 2027 tournament was awarded to East African neighbors Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania when its bid rivals included soccer powers Senegal and Egypt.

The Confederation of African Football's president Patrice Motsepe announced the winners after votes by its executive committee.

Morocco was heavily favored to get the 2025 AFCON, when the 2022 World Cup semifinalist is also cur-

rently part of an innovative European joint bid for the 2030 tournament with Spain and Portugal, and possibly Ukraine.

Morocco's bid opponents were a Benin-Nigeria co-host plan and Zambia after Algeria this week withdrew its candidacy from both the 2025 and '27 contests. Guinea previously was picked for 2025 but was stripped of hosting by CAF.

East Africa has not staged the biennial tournament since Ethiopia was the 1976 host.

The delayed 2023 edition of the 24-team tournament kicks off in January in Ivory Coast.



Barcelona's Gavi (right) challenges for the ball with Mallorca's Antonio Sanchez during a Spanish La Liga soccer match between Mallorca and Barcelona at the Son Moix stadium in Palma de Mallorca, Spain. (AP)

lacked the attacking threat to trouble Juve's well-organized defense. Nikola Krstovic went closest for Lecce when he fired wide in the 76th.

Lecce's Mohamed Kaba was sent off with a second yellow card for what the referee felt was a dive in injury time. Replays suggested the French forward wasn't looking for a penalty and simply fell in a tussle for the ball.

Juventus slumped to a 4-2 defeat at struggling Sassuolo on Saturday after making three glaring errors and the home team was careful not to risk giving away any more goals. The win lifted the "Old Lady" to second, two points behind Inter, which hosts Sassuolo on Wednesday.

Arkadiusz Milik scored for Juventus to beat Lecce 1-0 and deal the visitors their first Serie A loss of the season. Federico Chiesa missed the only real chance in a forgettable first half for Juventus, which emerged with more vigor after the break.

Milik made the breakthrough in the 57th minute when he emerged at the back post to convert from close range after Adrien Rabiot headed on Weston McKennie's cross. A VAR check confirmed the Poland striker was onside. Lecce was one of only two remaining teams along with Inter Milan to remain unbeaten after the opening five rounds but the visitors