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AUDIT BUREAU RELEASES POPULATION STRUCTURE GUIDELI Kuwait's expatriate workforce up 21%

Opinion

Thousand solutions for housing issue, but the government is blind and deaf

Stricter penalties proposed for residency trafficking

By Faris Al-Abdan

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: The Audit Bureau's report on the follow-up of recommendations to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of government procedures highlighted the recommendations made by the National Committee for Regulating the Population Structure.

These recommendations aim to address the imbalance in the population structure of Kuwait.

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By Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

"TO WHOM are you reciting your psalms, O David?" - This applies to the ongoing housing crisis that the Kuwaiti citizens have been enduring for more than forty years, a problem that persists without resolution.

Regardless of what is written, those accountable for it, starting with the Council of Ministers and all successive councils of ministers, often ignore it or resort to a series of slogans and rhetoric as smoke-

Therefore, there is outcry in the desert due to the inability to comprehend the problem. Everyone is blowing their own trumpet because



there is a firm conviction among all those responsible for this crisis that only their solution should be taken into consideration. This is why we

do not suggest going back to the beginning when the state built homes Al-Jarallah and distributed

them to citizens. Those homes were more comfortable for their residents and were more sensitive to the social and economic traditions common in the country.

However, greed, acquisition, and trading in people's lives have led to this being replaced by the so-called "land and loan". We began to see these ugly concrete forests that have not been sensitive to the environment.

The crisis has today become a dilemma, especially with the extension of the waiting period to between 15 and 20

This is why we have a housing crisis, something that the real estate dealers have exploited by raising the value of land and construction.

There is a group of citizens who were sell the house after its price increased several times, and seek to obtain another under the name of their children, family, and loved ones.

Earlier, we mentioned that Kuwait Credit Bank holds rights amounting to approximately three billion dinars that are fully guaranteed in every aspect. Therefore, by leveraging these assets to secure loans from local or international banks, and using the funds to construct housing cities with all specifications and environmental considerations, similar to the initiatives seen in Gulf countries and some developed countries, we can effectively resolve this long standing dilemma. Such a process will be profitable for society and will contribute to public

It is true that solving this issue comes at a cost, but it is cheaper than the crisis that citizens are experiencing. There are foreign companies that are ready to finance projects. Some of them built an integrated city in one of the countries and paid the loan in installments over a period of 15 years. Some others are ready to carry out the projects at the lowest costs, and then recover their money from soft loans, guaranteed by the state.

If the argument in the past was that parliamentarians rejected such solutions because they sought to obtain a share of any project, currently there is no National Assembly, and the matter is in the hands of the Council of Ministers, which has both executive and legislative capacities

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Photo by Mohamad Morsi

Over 200 medicines get price cuts of up to 60%

The following are the key recommendations:

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: Minister of Health Dr. Ahmed Al-Awadhi issued a ministerial decision to reduce the prices of 209 medicines and pharmaceutical preparations in the private health sector within the framework of the periodic review of the prices of these items.

The list of medicines and pharmaceutical preparations with reduced prices include antibiotics, medications for blood pressure and diabetes, cholesterol-lowering medications, blood

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Day by day

WE have eagerly anticipated this period of political calm. We needed a decision-maker whose directives are fully respected and obeved.

For many years, we were mired in chaos, hearing empty promises without action. Our leader, you are truly remarkable

You have clearly defined your vision, which has helped us understand our true needs. What we require is a righteous will. How sweet is the wisdom in pursuing goodness and justice.

... Yet tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar

Newswatch

KUWAIT CITY: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable of condolences Tuesday to Saudi Arabian King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, expressing sincere condolences for the passing of Princess Sultana bint Saud bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud.

In the cable, His Highness the Amir sent thoughts and prayers to the royal family, asking Allah Almighty to have mercy on her

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah also sent a cable of condolences Tuesday to Saudi Arabian King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, expressing sincere condolences for the passing of Princess Sultana bint Saud bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud. (KUNA)

KUWAIT CITY: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable of condolences on Tuesday to President of Nepal Ram Chandra Poudel, expressing sincere condolences over victims of the flooding and landslide that hit the country following incessant rains.

In the cable, His Highness the Amir wished a speedy recovery of the injured and hoped that Nepali officials would be able to overcome the effects of this natural disaster. (KUNA)

KUWAIT CITY: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on Tuesday sent a condolence cable to President of Niger and Chairman of the National Council for the Safeguard of the Homeland **Abdourahamane Tchiani**, over

the victims of heavy rains. In the cable, His Highness the Amir prayed to Almighty Allah to bestow mercy upon the dead and wished speedy recovery for the injured, hoping for the friendly country to overcome the impacts of such a natural disaster. (KUNA)



للموارد الوراثية النباتية

Delegates gather for a group photo at the Regional Consultative Forum on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture hosted by Kuwait.

Kuwait zeroes in on genetic resources for food security

KUWAIT CITY, July 9, (KUNA): Dr. Mishaan Al-Otaibi, Acting Director General of the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR), emphasized Kuwait's commitment to enhancing regional and international cooperation in sustainable genetic resource management. Speaking at the Regional Consultative Forum on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture in Kuwait, Al-Otaibi highlighted the country's dedication to sustainable agriculture, biodiversity preservation, and

The forum, hosted by Kuwait and supported by the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS), the National Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture Authority (NGRFA), and the FAO's International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, aims to bolster Kuwait's leadership in plant resource conservation and promote collaboration at local, regional, and global levels. Al-Otaibi underscored the forum's role in positioning Kuwait as a pivotal partner in responsible plant genetic resource management

Dr. Fadhila Al-Salamin, Director of the Biotechnology Program at the Environment and Life Sciences Research Center, and Head of the Forum's Organizing Committee, echoed these sentiments. She outlined the forum's objectives, including the review and revision of the Second Global Plan of Action for Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture. Al-Salamin also highlighted plans to establish a national committee for genetic resources to facilitate expertise exchange, resource utilization, and benefit sharing on local and international scales.

The ongoing regional meeting underscores Kuwait's commitment, alongside its scientific institutions, to safeguarding biodiversity, supporting food security initiatives, and enhancing the sustainable use of resources. The efforts aim to foster closer regional cooperation and conduct comprehensive assessments of plant genetic resources crucial

Ministers confer over discovery of **Kuwaiti woman's remains in Saudi**

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and **Agencies**

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and the Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yusuf Saud Al-Sabah received, Tuesday, a phone call from Saudi Interior Minister Prince Mohammad bin Nayef Al-Saud on the discovery

of the remains of a Kuwaiti female citizen in the Kingdom.

A statement by the Kuwait Ministry of Interior Tuesday revealed that Sheikh Fahad Al-Yusuf extended his gratitude to Saudi authorities for the quick re-

Sheikh Fahad

sponse and doing what was necessary to resolve the issue. He also praised the fruitful coopera-

tion on the matter. Through high-level Kuwaiti-Saudi security coordination, Saudi authorities discovered the body of a Kuwaiti woman in a desert area north of the Jubail Governorate in Saudi Arabia.

Her Kuwaiti husband had reported leaving her in a bathroom during his return from the Kingdom of Bahrain, passing through Saudi Arabia before reaching Kuwait. Investigations are ongoing with the husband who was arrested by criminal investigation

According to security sources, the suspect had arrived in Kuwait from the Kingdom of Bahrain via the Kingdom of Saudi

When his son asked him about his mother, the suspect told him that he "forgot her" in one of the bathrooms during his return. The son informed the victim's family and then the Kuwaiti security authorities.

His father was immediately arrested by Ahmadi police officers. When questioned about his wife's whereabouts and the reason for returning alone from Saudi Arabia despite traveling together to Bahrain, he repeated the same explanation - he had "forgotten her" in one of the bathrooms. He stressed that he had "left her" because of some ongoing disagreements between

Continued on Page 5



Palestine Committee meeting in the Arab Parliament convenes. Arab Parliament President Adel Al-Asoomi reaffirms commitment to Palestinian rights, independence, and Jerusalem as capital during Tuesday's meeting

Expected weather for next 24 hrs: By Day: Very hot with light variable wind to light to moderate northwesterly wind, with speeds of 08-28 km/h.

By Night: Hot to rather hot with

Weather

Station

Kuwait City

light to moderate northwesterly wind to light variable wind, with speeds of 06-26 km/h and some high clouds will appear. Min Rec **Max Exp**

Kuwait Airport 31 Abdaly 28 Jahra Salmiyah Nuwaisib Wafra

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

Report if anyone bought 'disability' certificate: authorities

CSC directs EPA to verify degrees of Kuwaiti, expat employees

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: The Environment Public Authority (EPA) has announced the formation of a team to review the academic certificates of its employees, including both citizens and residents, reports Al-Rai daily.

In a statement, the authority indicated that in response to a letter from the Civil Service Commission (CSC) regarding the examination of educational certificates, the acting Director General of the Public Environment Authority,



Eng. Samira Mohammad Al-Kandari, has issued a decision to form a team. post-secondary educational certificates of employees who have obtained their academic qualifications from January 1, 2000, to the present.

This team will sort and examine the

Meanwhile, the Public Authority for Persons with Disabilities has urged anyone with evidence of "purchasing a certificate" to come forward and submit it so that the necessary legal actions can

The statement further mentioned that the team will verify the authenticity of academic certificates and review them based on the principles and standards set by higher education authorities. Upon completing the review, the team will submit a detailed report on their findings and audit results to the Civil Service Commission.

'New president extends olive branch'

Iran ties with Kuwait, other GCC countries to improve, says envoy

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: The Iranian Ambassador to Kuwait Mohammad Totonji said he is optimistic about the future of Iranian-Kuwaiti and Iranian-Gulf relations under the presidency of Dr. Masoud Pezeshkian, reports

Al-Qabas daily. He highlighted the new president's commitment to extending a hand of friendship to all countries, emphasizing Iran's dedication to supporting peace and stability in the region.



to strengthen political relations, particularly with neighboring countries, which he described as a priority under Iran's foreign policy, consistent with the approach during the late President Dr. Ibrahim Raisi's tenure.

Looking ahead, Totonji anticipated en-

Totonji

hanced ties with Kuwait and other neighboring states, emphasizing the foundational role of these relationships in Iran's diplomatic strategy.

He acknowledged the positive reactions and congratulatory messages extended by regional leaders and heads of state to President Pezeshkian, highlighting the significance of the messages from Kuwait's

Regarding the recent Iranian presidential elections, Totonji noted a significant participation rate among the Iranian community in Kuwait, with approximately 50% turnout, which increased in the second round of voting compared to the first.

Regarding the presidential inauguration, Totonji indicated that the specific date for the oath-taking ceremony would be announced later, in accordance with Iran's constitutional procedures.

He suggested that it is expected to occur in the first week of August, following the current summer break of the Iranian parlia-

Means sought to better protect families, children KUWAIT CITY, July 9, (KUNA):, and Childhood Affairs and Minister by the Ministry of Social Affairs. of cooperation to achieve this of State for Youth Affairs Dr. Mathal The meeting focused on exploring Al-Huwaila, Minister of Health Dr. means and tools to better serve and Ahmad Al-Awadhi, and Minister of protect families and children, the Justice, Endowments and Islamic statement added. The meeting was attended by The ministers also mulled form-Affairs Dr. Mohammad Al-Wasmi,

The Minister of Social Affairs, Family and Childhood Affairs, Minister of State for Youth Affairs Dr. Mathal Al-Huwaila and Minister of Health Dr.

Three Kuwaiti ministers held a meeting on Monday to bolster cooperation for serving families and

Minister of Social Affairs, Family

according to a statement issued

ing a joint team to study aspects

goal and boost social stability and security. The move is part of the social and humanitarian role of state institutions and their efforts to achieve public interests, it con-

CSC pledges to provide jobs for Kuwaitis, serve country

New titles created to accommodate graduates: Dr Al-Hazaa

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: With the cooperaaffirmed the keenness of the company to tion of the Ministry of Interior and the National Diwan for Human Rights, the Talabat company organized a workshop regarding

the safety of delivery drivers with the aim of improving their work circumstances, reports Al-Rai daily. The workshop started with a lecture presented by a representative of the National Diwan for Human Rights who highlighted

the humanitarian rights of delivery workers in line with the relevant laws of Kuwait. The discussion focused on the day-today troubles the delivery workers faces and

ways to to deal with them. Meanwhile, Head of the Department of Communication and Public Affairs in Talabat Company Abdullah Al-Mansour

organize such workshops in coordination with the relevant public institutions with the aim of raising the awareness of the delivery workers about traffic accidents and traffic violations so that they can avoid them.

He said, "Even though Talabat's delivery workers already receive comprehensive logistical support, the company considers it a fundamental responsibility to prioritize their care and well-being".

Meanwhile, Traffic officers seized a total of 120 motorcycles used by delivery workers due to violations, the majority of which are for delivering orders on motorcycles during the ban period imposed to protect them from the direct summer sun, reports

'Jawahir' raids target violations

Focus on delivery drivers problems

394 wanted persons held in week

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: The Rescue Police General Department at the Interior Ministry arrested 394 persons wanted by law within a week – from June 30 to July 6, reports Al-

Within the above-mentioned period, the department launched security and traffic campaigns in many areas. Besides the arrest of persons wanted by law for involvement in different cases; these campaigns also resulted in the issuance of 12,404 citations for various violations, impounding of 21 vehicles, arresting 327 people, referring 74 judicially wanted vehicles to the competent authorities, resolving 15 quarrels and arresting an infiltrator into the country.

The department added that the number of security operations carried out throughout the week totaled 1.587.

Meanwhile, Director General of the Public Authority for Agriculture Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR) Asma Al-Otaibi, along with specialists and judicial officers from the livestock sector, recently inspected Jawakhir Kabad to ensure strict compliance with the authority's regulations and to uncover viola-

tions, reports Al-Rai daily Al-Otaibi told the daily that the visit was aimed at verifying complaints and reports about violations, indicating warnings were issued to breeders who committed violations. She explained this will be followed by monitoring; and then legal measures will be taken if the violations are not rectified.

She affirmed the continuation of such visits in order to enforce the law. He also urged the horse owners to change the conditions of the horses to avoid legal problems.

According to PAAAFR, such visits will guarantee that the areas are utilized for the permitted purpose – livestock breeding.

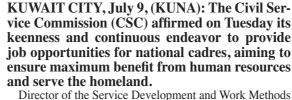


Kuwait's Chief of General Staff Bandar Al-Muzayan receives Head of Intelligence and Security at the Peninsula's Shield Force, Jaber Al-Marri.

Al-Marri, team visit Kuwait

Kuwait's Chief of General Staff Bandar Al-Muzayan received Head of Intelligence and Security at the Peninsula's

Shield Force, Jaber Al-Marri, and his accompanying delegation on occasion of his official visit to the country. (KUNA)



Director of the Service Development and Work Methods Department and Director of the Human Resources Development Center at the CSC, Badour Al-Enezi, said in her speech during a workshop organized by the CSC entitled New Mechanism for CSC Nominations for Engineering Titles" that the workshop announces the new engineering titles (Project Engineer, Safety Engineer, Environmental Engineer, Contract Engineer, and Industrial Engineer) in addition to the media titles (Editor).

Al-Enezi added that, in view of recent administrative developments and to keep pace with the latest developments in job titles and frameworks, especially in the engineering and media fields, the CSC, in cooperation with Kuwait University, has updated and developed job titles in line with professional developments in various fields to achieve development, improve job performance, and raise the level of services provided.

She explained that the workshop clarifies the tasks and duties and the relationship of these jobs with other jobs to raise work efficiency and ensure maximum benefit from human resources, stressing the keenness of the Bureau to develop jobs and titles for engineering specializations and to re-study their job descriptions in accordance with recent developments and the approval of the Civil Service Commission, given their importance in developing tasks and work in government agencies.

Strategic

She stated that the Commission sets strategic plans based on the real needs of the state to improve government performance and development through a careful study of the needs of various agencies, ensuring the provision of qualified cadres capable of meeting work requirements with high efficiency.

Al-Enezi stressed the Bureau's endeavor and exertion of strenuous efforts to analyze challenges to develop policies in line with development goals and enhance the capabilities of government agencies, ensuring readiness to face future challenges and achieve the best results for the benefit of the country.

Assistant Undersecretary for Administrative Development Affairs at the CSC, Muhammad Al-Ahmad, told Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) that the workshop aims to clarify the developments in the job descriptions for roles held by employees or recent graduates in engineering and media specializations, and to clarify the tasks, duties, and relationships of these jobs with other roles to raise work efficiency and ensure benefit from national human resources

Al-Ahmad added that the CSC has made great efforts to create new titles that serve all government

agencies, indicating that the titles came after careful study with Kuwait University. He stated that the new titles create additional opportunities for engineers and appoint them according to their qualifications in various departments to serve the country, indicating that the Commission, in addition to providing job opportunities, is keen on the integrity of nominations and the application of equal opportunities and

justice in employment. Acting Dean of the College of Engi-

neering and Petroleum, Dr. Khaled Al-Hazaa, told KUNA that with the development of the country and the increase in the number of graduates in engineering and media professions, the need arose to create new titles, and accordingly, coordination and cooperation took place between the

Al-Hazaa added that Kuwait University seeks to qualify engineers and prepare them to serve employers in the country, and is keen to keep pace with the labor market and its developments, indicating that participation in the workshop demonstrates the importance of these jobs and specializations for the benefit of the country.



The mini-bus is a total wreck after the collision.

6 Asian workers perish, 4 injured in accident on Seventh Ring Road

By Munaif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: A tragic collision occurred on the Seventh Ring Road, opposite the Jaber Al Ali area, resulting in the deaths of six people and injuries to four others. Among the deceased were four individuals of Indian nationality and two of Bangladeshi nationality. The four injured are all Indian nationals and were taken to the hospital for treatment.

According to a security source, the Ministry of Interior's operations room received a report about the accident, which involved a bus carrying workers and another vehicle. Emergency responders, including security personnel, ambulance teams, and general fire force personnel, rushed to the scene. Upon arrival, they confirmed the fatalities and transported the bodies to forensic medicine. The four injured were promptly taken to the hospital. An investigation into the accident has been initiated.

Sale money seized

Expat held with drugs

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: Security personnel in the Jahra Governorate have arrested an expatriate for possessing narcotic pills, money believed to be proceeds from sale of drugs, and a sharp tool, reports Al-Anba daily.

Prior to being handed over to the General Administration for Narcotics Control, the detainee faced charges related to evading security patrols and resisting arrest.

According to a security source, the incident unfolded during routine patrols by rescue teams across various areas of Jahra Governorate,

particularly in the Al-Naseem area. Upon suspicion, the driver of the vehicle when ordered to pull over, initially refused but was chased and

forced to pull over.

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A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

London and its unique position in the hearts of Kuwaiti visitors

"CITIZENS of the GCC countries -- men and women -- have long acknowledged London's unique position, rooted in relations dating back to the nineteenth century. This understanding between British officials and Gulf

rulers aimed to ensure stability in their countries, safeguard maritime routes. and fend off external threats. This mutual interest fostered a diverse Britpresence, tailored to the needs of main-



maritime security," columnist, former permanent envoy of the State of Kuwait to the UN, the former GCC secretary general Abdullah Bishara wrote for

Al-Qabas daily.
"London's commitment to ensuring tranquility in the Gulf, extending to India -- the prized jewel of the British Empire -- underpinned this presence.

"În Kuwait, British involvement began later, with an agreement reached in January 1899 between Sheikh Mubarak Al-Sabah and Britain. Unlike the southern Gulf, where Britain's presence was driven by different motivations, Sheikh Mubarak Al-Sabah sought an alternative to the Ottoman state's unsatisfactory approach. His discontent with the Ottomans led him to explore other options, ultimately aligning with Britain.

"Britain has long safeguarded Kuwait's security, thwarting the ambitions of the Ottoman Empire, protecting it from various tribal invasions, and defending against armed entities in the region with designs on Kuwait.

"Britain also countered claims from the Iraqi government during the royal era and in the 1960s, with the most significant threat being the 1990 invasion. In all these crises, Britain stood as Kuwait's trusted protector, ready to confront aggressors with military force, as evidenced in 1961 and 1990.

"This steadfast commitment has fostered a strong bond between Kuwait and Britain. One of the most prominent signs of this is the significant Kuwaiti presence in London and other British cities. Kuwaitis have been investing in London since 1953, with their investments growing in size and diversity over the years.

"The number of Kuwaiti students has increased, as has the number of Kuwaitis owning properties in London. They feel secure and welcomed, frequenting shops, restaurants, and living spaces, and becoming a vibrant part of the city's life. A visit to the streets behind the famous Selfridges, bustling with Kuwaitis morning and evening, vividly illustrates this connection.

"London's appeal extends beyond just safety and investment opportunities. The city caters to all tastes, with renowned restaurants, cafes, and shops known for fashion, elegance, and the latest trends.

"Moreover, London remains a cultural capital, celebrated for its theatres showcasing classical and Shake-spearean plays, Oscar Wilde's works, modern musicals, and classical music venues. The city also offers shops featuring both Arabic and international songs and music, reflecting its rich cultural diversity.

"In London, we find everything we could desire, and for me, the most important attractions are the various libraries that house the latest books from around the world. It brings me joy to see Kuwaiti men and women in these libraries, enjoying the diverse selections. Additionally, there are libraries offering

used books at reasonable prices. "The city's museums are rich with stories of ancient and modern history, featuring exhibits about British kings and leaders as well as cultures from around the globe. I am a regular visitor to the British Museum, which holds a vast collection of artifacts from the

Pharaohs and the history of Egypt. "There's a perception among Londoners that Gulf citizens primarily visit places like Oxford Street and Harrods, but the city offers much more. For instance, the River Thames provides a unique way to see London, with boat tours offering recorded explanations of

historical sites. "I once asked a writer friend about the number of books published in London, and he told me that over four thousand books are released each month in various fields. The press gives weekly introductions to these books and reviews the most significant ones.

"Moreover, British newspapers often have writers who summarize and evaluate books, highlighting their importance and attracting readers. I am an avid follower of the London press, appreciating its content, valuing its freedom, and enjoying the diversity of its writers -- from critics to political commentators and ministers.

"The best gift the London press offers is its comprehensive coverage of global events, made even more accessible with modern technology that disseminates its content worldwide almost instantaneously.

"While in London, I read The Times, Daily Mail, and The Guardian daily. On Sundays, I enjoy the extensive supplements in The Sunday Times, The Telegraph, and The Observer, which provide in-depth analysis and cultural insights with professional mastery.

"London satisfies everyone -- its residents, visitors, Europeans, and people from around the globe. This satisfaction stems not only from the topics it covers but also from its level of freedom, experience, and, most importantly, the professionalism of its press.

"Despite the economic transformations London has undergone, which have impacted the lives of its residents, the press has maintained a high standard of journalistic responsibility, fiercely protecting its hard-earned reputation.

"London remains uniquely generous to tourists and locals alike, offering entertainment, education, marketing, medical care, and distinguished educational institutions. Above all, it values discipline and upholds the rule of law.

"Amid all splendor, I have noticed during my visits to London that sensational journalism has expanded significantly. The social reservations that once repelled such journalism have weakened in the face of materialistic temptations. What was once deemed inappropriate has gained acceptance, and markets for this type of content have grown.

"The readers' appetite for celebrity gossip and Hollywood secrets has increased, with dedicated pages in London newspapers. Translations of books by socialites, particularly from France and other European capitals, narrate the diverse lives of these individuals and the intricacies of their romantic affairs. This popular press, despite its sensationalist approach, attracts a growing number of readers and often sells out before the more serious publications.

"Despite high prices, expensive restaurants, crowded streets, and busy transportation, London continues to enchant its residents and visitors. It captivates the dreams of millions who aspire to experience its magic.'

"When Kuwaiti newspapers resumed publication after the end of the war in 1991, a climate of caution prevailed. This was marked by official censorship, self-censorship by the newspapers, and personal censorship by the writers. The press at that time tried to adapt to the extraordinary circumstances imposed by the situation," columnist **Suad Fahd Al-Moajil** wrote for Al-Qabas daily.

"Today, Kuwait faces a unique challenge in its democratic journey, influenced by some members of parliament misusing their tools, which has made cooperation between the executive and

legislative authorities nearly impossible. "This, along with various political issues, led to the dissolution of the National Assembly and the suspension of some constitutional articles for a pe-

riod not exceeding four years. "Unlike the events of 1976 and 1986, there is now a clear timeline for resolving the current impasse. The suspension of the Assembly and certain constitutional articles is an exceptional measure but does not signal the end of the democratic process, which remains deeply rooted in Kuwaiti consciousness and history. Instead, this period serves as an opportunity to refine the practice of democracy rather than the

"The current situation does not reflect any doubt among authorities, officials, and citizens about the importance of democracy in protecting rights and consolidating duties for all members of society, regardless of their rank, responsibilities, or positions. The Constitution remains a vital historical document safeguarding everyone's rights.

"There are positive aspects in every challenging situation, including political life. Critical stages often reveal impurities among writers, influencers, politicians, media professionals, and the public.

"Some have used the situation to launch personal attacks rather than reform or correct the path. Some "intellectual" writers have indulged in unprofessional and biased criticism of Kuwait's achievements and its democratic practices. They have wrongly portrayed the dissolution of parliament as a punishment rather than a period of recovery and review, and have blamed the Constitution and freedoms for Kuwait's problems, displaying a lack of professional responsibility.

"Both the legislative and executive authorities share responsibility for Kuwait's political crises over the past fifteen years. Some representatives engaged in vengeful interpellations, financial proposals draining the state, and demands based on factional, tribal, or sectarian interests, making cooperation between the legislative and execu-

tive branches almost impossible. "This hindered young national representatives with practical programs. The government also bears significant responsibility, with some ministers failing to uphold their oaths and allowing corruption and poor performance to fester within state ministries.

"The citizen, being the most affected party, also holds a dual responsibility. Citizens have elected corrupt representatives and participated in corruption if it served their interests. Only responsible citizens can build a good

"Kuwait is currently in a critical phase, and everyone must work together to overcome it safely. This requires addressing all the loopholes and negatives that have marred the political, electoral, governmental, and parliamentary systems. Only through such reform can we envision a truly new

- Compiled by PFX Fernandes



Shiite Muslims listen to the sermon at one of the Husseiniyas.

5,000 troops in place to guard Husseiniyas

Shiite Muslims begin rituals

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: In preparation for Ashura, approximately 5,000 soldiers have been deployed to secure and cover 110 Husseiniyas across the country, reports Al-Rai daily. The Husseiniya councils commenced on Sunday evening, marking the start of the Ashura nights. Citizens and residents gathered for the religious rituals, which were conducted with notable safety, reassurance, and organization.

Security Measures and Observa-

Al-Rai reported on the start of Ashura nights, noting the significant presence of security officers and personnel from the Ministry of Interior, including female police officers. These forces are responsible for protecting the sites and managing traffic, as per a pre-arranged plan with the owners of the Hussainiyas. The cooperation was highlighted by the distribution of patrols at the entrances and exits of the Hussainiya parking lots and the deployment of security personnel around the sites. Volunteers at the Husseiniya councils assisted in search-

ing attendees. **Security Coordination**

Security sources revealed that the security personnel have a detailed schedule of all the Hussainiyas, including their numbers and the timings of rituals. Security personnel arrive an hour before the events to secure and sweep the sites, then distribute themselves around the area until all attendees have left. They provide high-security efficiency, remove obstacles, and offer all necessary security support. These efforts are directed by the First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahd Al-Yousef, and the Undersecretary of the Ministry, Lieutenant General Sheikh Salem Al-Nawaf.

Location Coverage The country has 110 Hussainiyas, primarily located in the governorates of the capital,

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: The Criminal

Court, headed by Judge Nayef Al-Da-

houm, decided to detain political activist

Anwar Al-Fikr at the Central Prison in a

State Security case filed against him and

Key security sectors participating include traffic, rescue, public security, criminal investigations, and special forces. An operations room at the ministry building, staffed by representatives from all relevant security and governmental sectors, operates during the Hussainiyas' working hours, issuing orders and assessing the security situation, especially at high-density locations.

Hawalli, and Mubarak Al-Kabeer, followed

by Ahmadi and Jahra. The police force is

on high alert, with all members of the Inte-

rior Ministry from various sectors deployed

throughout Muharram. About 5,000 soldiers

from different ministry sectors have been

tasked with ensuring the safety and comfort

of citizens and residents during their reli-

Community Cooperation

Security Sectors Involved

The sources praised the cooperation of the Hussainiyas' owners and attendees, who adhered to the security plan from prior meetings, greatly contributing to the successful conduct of the rituals.

Public Sentiment

gious observances.

Several citizens expressed their appreciation for the security personnel's efforts to ensure their safety, allowing them to practice their rituals comfortably. They noted that the first day of Ashura proceeded without issues, with security personnel providing extensive support despite the hot weather. The citizens highlighted their pride in the vigilant security forces, especially in aiding the elderly and people with special needs.

Fire Safety Measures

Firefighting personnel were also present at the sites to ensure safety requirements, checking entrances, exits, and cooking equipment within the Hussainiyas. The owners cooperated by removing potential fire hazards. Firefighting teams are stationed at 14 high-density locations, equipped with necessary gear for any emergencies. **Medical Support**

Al-Rai observed the presence of emergency medical technicians, with two clinics (one for men and one for women) set up in each busy Hussainiya. These clinics provide first aid and medical services to visitors, with personnel ready to handle fatigue or health issues. In critical cases, the operations room in Subhan is alerted, and patients are transferred to hospitals. The Ministry of Health has supplied all necessary equipment, devices, and medicines for on-site treatment.

set a session for July 15 for the presenta-

Fikr with challenging the rights and pow-

ers of His Highness the Amir, transgress-

ing the authority of HH the Amir, and

broadcasting false news that could harm

The Public Prosecution charged Al-

tion of the defense panel.



A police car in front of a mosque.



Weapons and drugs in the suspect's possession.

'Massive sweep'

25 drug-runners, pot growers held in raids

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: In a recent operation, security forces seized an array of illegal items, including 7 kilograms of various chemicals, shabu, hashish, heroin, 8 marijuana seedlings, and 10,000 narcotic pills. Additionally, six firearms were confiscated from drug dealers and marijuana growers, reports Al-Anba daily.

A total of 25 suspects were arrested in connection with 14 different cases. The Criminal Security Sector, specifically the General Department for Combating Narcotics, led the operation. The suspects were found in possession of approximately 7,250 kilograms of various narcotic substances, including chemicals, shabu, hashish, marijuana, and heroin. They also had about 10,000 psychotropic pills, eight marijuana seedlings, six unlicensed firearms, live ammunition, and cash from drug sales.

Upon interrogation, the defendants admitted that the seized items were intended for trafficking and personal use. Both the suspects and the confiscated items were handed over to the competent authorities for further legal action.

In a statement, the Ministry of Interior affirmed its commitment to combating drug dealers and smugglers to protect society from these dangerous activities. They urged the public to cooperate with security forces and report any suspicious activities via the emergency number 112 or the General Department for Combating Narcotics hotline at 1884141

Fake cops rob expats: Officers from the Search and Investigation Department in Al-Ahmadi Governorate have arrested suspects involved in robbing expatriates by impersonating detectives, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to a security source, the case unfolded when an expatriate reported to a police station in Al-Ahmadi that he had been forcefully robbed by an unknown person while returning home around 10 pm and provided details about the suspect's vehicle. Following the report, detectives launched an intensive

investigation. A few days later, they identified a vehicle matching the description that had been provided and caught the man red-handed while attempting to rob another expatriate.

During interrogation he admitted to the charges filed against him. The suspect was later identified during a police line-up.

12,404 citations in week

Political activist Al-Fikr detained

59 caught driving while drunk & carrying drugs

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: Statistics issued by the General Administration of Rescue Police show during a security campaign from Sunday, June 30, 2024, until Saturday, July 6, 12,404 traffic violations were issued and 21 vehicles were impounded, reports Al-Anba daily.

The campaigns also resulted in the arrest of 59 people who were caught driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs or in possession of narcotics. They have been referred to the Directorate-General for Drugs Control.

The statistics also showed the arrest of 394 wanted persons for various reasons - those wanted in connection with criminal records, reported absconding, illegally staying in the country or wanted in connection with theft.

The securitymen were also able to arrest one infiltrator who entered Kuwait from a neighboring country. The police patrols provided assistance to 327 motorists and held resolve 15 disputes and seized 74 vehicles wanted by the judiciary.

Expat commits suicide: An unidentified expatriate ended his life by hanging inside an apartment in the suburb of Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh, reports Al-Anba daily.

cine. In the meantime, the authorities have initiated investigations, categorizing the incident as a case of suicide. According to a security source, the Ministry of the Interior

The corpse was subsequently transferred to forensic medi-

received a report early yesterday morning regarding the suicide in Jleeb. Upon arrival, security personnel and investigators confirmed that the individual, born in 1991, had used a rope tied to the room's ceiling to end his life by hanging.

Ex-MP released: The Criminal Court of Appeals, presided over by Judge Hani Al-Hamdan, decided to release former MP Hamad Al-Olayan on bail of KD 2,000.

Meanwhile, the Court of Appeals refused to release the candidate Musaed Al-Qarifa and set the case for judgment on September 8. Al-Olayan had appeared before the court from his prison cell in his first trial session on appeal and denied the charges of transgressing the powers of His Highness the Amir and criticizing his decisions





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Municipal Council 'approves' measures to address warehouse shortage, infrastructure developments

Al-Saffarin Market plan advances, MoH's request denied

By Inaas Awadh

LOCAL

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: In swift response to a recent report by Al-Seyassah daily on food security concerns due to warehouse shortages, the Municipal Council has approved a study to provide sufficient storage land to meet rising demand, prompted by the escalating prices of warehouses. This decision was made during the second regular main session of the third session, chaired by Abdullah Al-Bahri.

The key decisions and approvals

Study on Storage Land -- The Council agreed to study and provide adequate storage land to address the shortage and rising warehouse

East Sabah Al-Ahmad Project --Approval to link this residential project to surrounding roads.

Fiber Optics Site: Allocation of a site in Subiya for a major fiber optics project.

Entertainment City Project --Transfer of site allocation from the Amiri Diwan to the Public Investment Authority.

Commercial Activities in Investment Buildings -- Allowing the use of ground floors for licensed commercial activities and permitting basements for storage under necessary conditions, including the "food truck" vehicles

The Municipal Council added, this is in addition to reallocating the Shagaya Renewable Energy Complex land from the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research to the Minis-

try of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy; reallocation of the Zoo site in Al-Omariya to the Ministry of Finance for in-kind payment towards the Public Institution for Social Security's actuarial deficit, with conditions for resubmission if there are changes in usage or allocation.

Also included on the list are the development of Salmiya Boulevard Park by the Public Authority for Agriculture Affairs and Fish Resources; transfer of the Civil Defense site from Al-Dajeej to Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh and reallocation of project sites for the General Department of Emergency Patrols and the General Department of Information Systems in Al-Zahraa.

These measures aim to enhance infrastructure, address storage issues, and support various developmental projects across Kuwait.

The Municipal Council approved the request from the Kuwait Lawyers Association to extend the suspension of licenses for law offices in residential areas for one year, starting from June 30, to allow for adjustments.

They also approved the proposal from Al-Bahri to amend Article 10 of Ministerial Resolution No. 322/2023 regarding the zoning and subdivision of land for construction.

Under new business, the Council agreed to rename the diplomatic area in West Mishref, Block 7, to Diplomatic Enclave.

Additionally, the Council approved the Kuwaiti Insurance Federation's request to add new activities to the list of general and health-disturbing businesses, including traditional insurance, Takaful insurance, and all types of in-

The Council approved the proposal by Deputy Council President Khaled Al-Mutairi to add a clause to the building regulations, issued

by ministerial decision, regarding the specifications and standards for investment buildings within and outside Kuwait City.

This includes adding a new clause allowing existing buildings, according to Municipal Decree No. 30 of 1985 on building regulations, to continue utilizing the ground floor for licensed commercial activities until the building is demolished, based on four considerations, one of which permits property owners to use the first floor for allowed activities under this system.

Existing commercial licenses for the ground floor will be canceled if the owner wishes to use the first and second floors for permitted commercial activities.

The three requests approved under new business activity include providing sufficient storage land to meet demand, considering the rise in warehouse prices due to scarcity; licensing basements designated for storage in investment buildings with necessary conditions and addressing issues with unorganized food trucks affecting residential areas.

The Council also approved two proposals by member Rashifa Al-Shalfan, one for adopting an aerobic composting project (compost) and another for preserving the marine

The key conditions include a joint timeline for regularly cleaning the sea of municipal solid waste such as plastics, fishing nets, wood, and other debris, identifying collection points for waste before transporting it to treatment or landfill sites by the Kuwait Municipality, increasing awareness signs, and coordinating with the Environmental Public Authority to enforce waste disposal regulations in the sea.



Work in progress on Darwaza Al-Abdul Razzak.

Darwaza Al-Abdul Razzaq project on schedule

The Ministry of Public Works has confirmed that maintenance work on the Darwaza Al-Abdul Razzaq project is progressing as planned and according to the estab-

lished schedules, reports Al-Jarida daily Currently, the focus is on the lower part of the gate, where the project contractor is raising the roof and conducting necessary maintenance activities in accordance with the Ministry's specifications.

It is anticipated that sections of the gate will be opened soon, with the entire project slated for completion after all maintenance tasks are finished.

Of the Al-Saffarin Market in The Council did not approve the Shuwaikh, the Council referred the Ministry of Health's request to alletter from Minister Dr. Noura Allocate land in Hawalli Governorate for establishing a specialized dental Mushaan to the technical committee proposing its modification to a complex for productive crafts and small industries for the benefit of the National Fund for Small and Medium

Enterprises.

lighting ongoing activities such as maintenance of the lower part, followed by roof installation and asphalt covering, culminating in the restoration of the gatehouse for public access.

The Municipal Council referred to the Executive Authority a proposal submitted by member Fahd Al-Abdul Jader to cancel the its previous

decision that allowed comprehensive and specialized sports clubs, sports federations, and the Olympic Committee to invest in areas within their locations.

The Ministry emphasized that there is rigorous over-

The efforts of those involved in the maintenance of

the Darwaza Abdul Al-Razzaq were commended, high-

sight from Dr. Noura Al-Mashaan, Minister of Public

Works and Municipality, to ensure the timely comple-

tion of the project according to schedule.

The matter will undergo further study, including consideration of recommendations from the Legal and Financial Committee.

Authority finds remaining period insufficient

KIA extends Abdali project timeline to 2026 amid committee meeting delays

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: The Kuwait Investment Authority (KIA) is moving forward with the General Warehouses and Northern Border Ports Company (Abdali) project, extending the preparatory phase by one year until March 31, 2026, due to delays in the founding committee meetings, reports Al-Qabas

The project, long part of Kuwait's development plans, including the 2024-23 πscar year, aims to establish pub lic warehouses and border crossings in

Abdali, northern Kuwait. Initially planned for completion by March 31, 2025, the extension was deemed necessary as the Authority found the remaining period insufficient for full preparation to commence implementation. The project's initial capital is expected to amount to 154 million

The establishment of the General Warehouses and Border Ports Company (Abdali) is mandated under Law No. 5 of 2008, focusing on developing warehouses and border crossings to serve both the local Kuwaiti market and as a gateway to Iraq. This initiative aims to meet growing demands for logistics services and support manufacturing in-

By 2036, the Abdali project is projected to cover an area of 12.7 km², including 10 km² for light and medium industries, 3 km² for logistics tenants, and 1.4 km² for infrastructure and roads.

distribution of plots KUWAIT CITY, July 9: The Public Authority for Housing Welfare has announced that its Board of Directors will convene next week to review the pro-

Authority to review

ect, reports Al-Qabas daily. The aim is to align this distribution with the interests of citizens who have

cess for distributing residential plots within the South Saad Al-Abdullah proj-

pending housing applications.

The authority stated that details of the new distribution mechanism will be made public following the Board of Di-

rectors' meeting. This information will be made public through various media channels and the official social media platforms of the

Moreover, the PAHW will continue to accept allocation requests for project plots via the Sahel government application, prioritizing applicants based on their historical housing application sta-

This move underscores the institution's commitment to addressing housing needs in accordance with esparency in the allocation process

Additional spaces will be allocated for workers' housing, offices, hotels, parking, and other necessary facilities.

PAFN inaugurates Ardiya office for issuing 'food truck' licenses

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: Public Authority for Food and Nutrition (PAFN) inaugurated an office in Ardiya for the issuance of licenses for food trucks. The office is located in the building of vehicles technical check in the Ministry of Interior, reports Al-Rai daily.

According to the Director of Farwaniya Inspection Department in PAFN Nawaf Al-Anzi, the launch of the office is part of the procedures adopted by PAFN to upgrade the performance and ease the completion of transactions for citizens and residents.

PAFN is coordinating with the Ministry of Interior to add the owners of water tankers and restaurant delivery vehicles to the list of beneficiaries of

The office is supplied with all the needs of the owners of food trucks who are seeking to obtain licenses.

Al-Anzi revealed that PAFN has addressed the administration of Grand Avenues to open an office there to serve the owners of commercial shops and facilitate their transactions.

He added that there are five vacancies at PAFN including head of departments in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh, Al-Rai, Khaitan, and Firdous as well as head of samples department.



Workers under hot sun.

60 companies cited for 'noon work violations'

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: The Manpower Authority has released the results of their afternoon work team inspections conducted from June 1 to 30. According to the Authority, 60 sites were inspected, with a total of 68 workers found at sites violating the noon work ban, reports Al-Rai daily .

The report highlights that 60 companies were found to be in violation for the first time. Additionally, the Authority received 40 reports regarding the employment of workers during the prohibited noon hours.

Upon re-inspection, 50 companies were found to have met the necessary requirements and conditions, with no further violations recorded at these sites.



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Environmental concerns and regulatory hurdles resurface ahead of critical council session

Municipality faces renewed challenges over Jahra waterfront project

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: The Kuwait Municipality is set to discuss the development project of the Jahra waterfront (Corniche) during the technical committee meeting today, chaired by Munira Al-Amirah, in preparation for presenting it in the upcoming third main session of the Municipal Council on the July 22.

Sources informed Al-Seyassah that the municipality's report on the Jahra waterfront project, which was re-submitted, remains unchanged from the previous report.

This includes the same obstacles that were highlighted over a year ago, specifically during the session held on March

At that time, the project was rejected by a majority of five members, with five abstaining and only two approving, citing environmental, financial, and administrative reasons.

The Environment Public Authority had set conditions and controls in its report to the municipality, citing violations of its systems and regulations.

Additionally, there was a lack of a clear financial study for the investor concerning the project, which covers a 6-kilometer frontage and an area of 5.8 million square meters. Furthermore, the project requires approvals from several state agencies, such as the Ministry of Electricity, which rejected the project due to conflicts with cables extending

The environmental impact study submitted by the EPA, a copy of which has been obtained by Al-Seyassah, conditionally approved the project.

The conditions included canceling proposed facilities and buildings on the coastline (the upper limit of the highest tide), removing proposed canals and chalets located north of the project, and maintaining mangrove cultivation in the

The EPA emphasized adherence to Environmental Protection Law No. 42 of 2014, its provisions, regulations, and executive decisions, as well as implementing recommendations, mitigation measures, and the environmental management and monitoring plan to reduce negative environmental impacts.

Key recommendations from the environmental permit include introducing sustainable development principles into the project, such as designing green buildings and smart structures, using renewable energy, and recycling

The study highlighted the importance of the mangrove environment, which has muddy sediments crucial for marine organisms. Any changes could cause deterioration of this unique environment in Kuwait, prohibiting any landfilling in the site to prevent changes in physical properties and negative impacts on organisms and the environment from hu-

The EPA emphasized the need for investors to obtain environmental approvals for each facility separately, in line with Resolution No. 2 of 2015. It stressed the importance of providing updates at each implementation phase

Kuwait FM congratulates UK counterpart

KUWAIT CITY, July 9, (KUNA): Kuwait's Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya sent a cable Monday to the newly-appointed UK Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs David Lammy to congratulate him on

In his cable, Minister Al-Yahya wished Lammy great success in his mission and expressed readiness to work with him for upgrading bilateral relations in all do-

of the project to secure environmental approval, particularly when establishing temporary facilities and buildings.

Moreover, investors must submit final plans, designs, and the geographical coordinates of the project site for approval by the Municipal Council.

Regarding excavation works, the concerned ministry has strictly prohibited the dumping of excavation waste into

It mandated coordination with relevant authorities to identify suitable disposal locations. Continuous monitoring of subsurface water and water displaced from the project site is required to ensure safety.

The ministry outlined the need to determine disposal methods for subsurface water and conduct groundwater analyses, in accordance with Resolution No. 12 of 2017, which regulates the protection of the aquatic and coastal environ-

ment from pollution.

The EPA also required notification prior to the start of implementation and excavation works to review water analysis results before any discharge of groundwater

The contracts for the transportation

and disposal of all waste types, along with transportation records, must be submitted and adhered to during construction and operation phases.

Periodic environmental monitoring reports are required every six months from the start of implementation.

These reports should include all items in the environmental management plan and environmental monitoring and control programs mentioned in the environmental impact assessment study of the project. This ensures the Environment Authority can follow up on the project comprehensively.

Audit findings raise transparency issues

KIA's sovereign immunity on spotlight amidst mismanagement allegations in London court

Al-Seyassah Special Report

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: The issue of "diplomatic immunity enjoyed by about 20 employees of the Kuwait Investment Office in London" has resurfaced, and sources with insider information have warned of "mismanagement."

A London court convened recently to determine whether the Kuwait Investment Authority possesses sovereign immunity in a labor case filed by the former Kuwait Investment Office CEO. Notably, the Authority's leaders were absent, citing their inability to travel.

Sources indicated that nearly a-yearand-a-half after former Finance Minister Abdul Wahab Al-Rasheed left his position at the KIA, Kuwait's investments and reputation continue to suffer due to his reckless decisions.

A European court had previously ruled that the KIA does not enjoy immunity. If the Authority is confident in its position, why doesn't it confront the issue directly instead of hiding behind immunity?

The British courts will now scrutinize all the office's activities, potentially placing the Authority's operations under intense examination

One source questioned, "If the KIA is confident of its stance in the labor issue,

Thousand solutions

This means that there is no excuse

to start resolving this crisis, unless the

ministers have butterflies in their stom-

ness the Prime Minister becomes es-

sential, because he is the one who leads

the ministers, and he has no excuse to

delay decisions and laws that can help

He can order the relevant institu-

tions and the Ministry of State for

Housing Affairs to contract with major

foreign companies with long experi-

ence in building housing cities to work

After that, the price of the house can

be paid in installments over a period

of 15 to 20 years, and the waiting pe-

riod can be reduced to three years at

the latest. However, it seems that our

screams are far from the ears of those

there housing banks that finance con-

struction for individuals eligible for

housing, with the state subsidizing

Finally, we beg to ask - Why aren't

who are supposed to listen.

immediately on their completion.

achs, thus causing the delay.

in the solution.

Continued from Page 1

why not confront it directly rather than hiding behind immunity and risking its revocation?" They noted that British courts will now evaluate whether the KIA activities in London are sovereign

> or commercial. which could have significant implications for the Authority's current and future activities. Meanwhile.

Kuwait, Belinda Al-Rasheed Lewis, regarding whether the British government considers the KIA investments in stocks, bonds, and real estate in Britain as sovereign or com-

Al-Seyassah

posed a question to the British

Ambassador to

response thus far. The Audit Bureau's report on the 2021/2022 budget implementation revealed that the Kuwait Investment Office in London manages portfolios beyond the Future Generations Fund, including portfolios for the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation and the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences. Public

mercial acts. However, there has been no

disclosure of these portfolios could result in them being subjected to taxes, potentially impacting Kuwait's reputation.

In the fiscal year 2022/2023 report, the Audit Bureau advised the KIA and its law firm to avoid using diplomatic and sovereign immunity as a defense in employee lawsuits. However, the KIA continues to invoke sovereign immunity in the labor case, raising questions about their rationale.

It's worth noting that a Swiss court ruled in 1994 that the KIA did not enjoy immunity in a case related to Spanish investment scandals. The sources questioned whether the Finance Minister and the Managing Director are aware of this and what the Board of Directors' stance is on the potential disastrous consequences of their decisions.

Sources called for government intervention to halt the Authority's mismanagement, questioning when failing officials would be dismissed and held accountable.

They emphasized that it is in the public interest to prevent ongoing mismanagement of funds intended for future generations

The Kuwait Investment Office in London manages approximately \$250 billion of the Kuwait Investment Authority's total assets.

industry; the price reduction rate for

It will take effect three months after the date of its publication in the Official Gazette in order to give the private health sector enough time to prepare

and implement the price reductions. It also stipulates adding the medicines and pharmaceutical preparations in the attached list to Ministerial Resolution No. 74 of 2023 to ensure the comprehensiveness and integration of efforts exerted in this regard.

Health Insurance Hospitals set to ease burden on public healthcare

Key benefits for expats and state savings

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: The Health Insurance Hospitals Company recently held a press conference to shed light on the project aimed at providing medical services to support the health system in the country, reports Al-Anba daily.

Chairman of the company's Board of Directors Hamed Al-Bassam affirmed that starting the operations of health insurance hospitals to serve expatriates after a delay of three years will reduce pressure on government hospitals. In this manner, government health services will be exclusive for citizens; thereby, giving them easy access to treatment appointments, he explained.

He also confirmed that the State will save a lot through this project; as it will be complementary to the Ministry of Health's system and generate revenues for the State, instead of being a burden on its budget.

He pointed out the company is a basic model that complements the development plan (New Kuwait) and provides advanced health care services. This project is considered the first of its kind in the Middle East. Once operational, the health insurance hospitals will be a fundamental pillar for expanding the quality of medical services in Kuwait's health sector, he disclosed.

He concluded the conference by thanking the ministry for its cooperation during the construction phase. He then unveiled the company's aspiration to obtain the green light from the government to immediately begin operating the project, and to contribute to providing health services to expatriates under the supervision and as per the vision of the ministry.

Also, Dr. Anwar Al-Rashed disclosed that talks on the idea of establishing the company began in 2008

AYCCC 'grants' Kuwaiti environment activist Al-Saad council membership

and environment.

KUWAIT CITY, July 9, (KUNA): The Arab Youth Council for Climate Change (AYCCC) granted Mariam Al-Saad, director and founder of the Kuwaiti Al-Manakh environmental association, membership of the council in recognition of Kuwait's efforts and commitment in this field to preserve the climate



KUNA photo Mariam Al-Saad, director and founder of the Kuwaiti Al-Manakh environmental association.

In remarks to Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) on Monday, marking the occasion, the leading Kuwaiti environmental preservation and awareness advocate, Al-Saad said, "It is a great honor to represent Kuwaiti youth on this level, and this position will provide an opportunity for the Kuwaitis to work with their peers regionally and globally to help come up with sustainable solutions for the environment."

Al-Saad said AlManakh is a non-profit organization, founded in 2021, to raise awareness of the dire repercussions of climate change and sustainability in Kuwait through education, research, and social participation. As for the AYCCC, she said it is

also a non-profit organization, initiated in 2021 by youth under the guidance of Arab Youth Center (AYC) and Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al-Nahyan in the United Arab Emirates.

when the government decided to develop the health system in an innovative way based on the principle of pre-

serving health. The project entails the establishment of a health insurance system for expatriates, including hospitals with a capacity of 660 beds; in addition to big integrated health centers that provide advanced health services to the insured. Some of these centers engage in medical activities in various governorates, while the health insurance will cover all expatriates holding Article No. 18 visa (private sector employees who will be obli-

In line with its commitment to Diraya campaign

gated to obtain an insurance policy through the company). Director of Medical Engineering

Department Hussein Al-Sayegh confirmed that the hospitals and health centers have the latest medical equipment. He said the health insurance system is now ready to receive patients and provide high-quality health services, as soon as the necessary licenses are obtained.

Secretary of the Board of Directors Mishal Al-Roumi stated that health insurance hospitals are essential for improving the quality and method of providing health services in the country.

costs and guaranteeing interest? **Kuwait's expatriate**

Continued from Page 1

National Labor Market Platform - Assign the Public Authority for Civil Information and the Public Authority for Manpower to coordinate with relevant authorities to launch the national platform for the labor market and submit a time plan for implementing the project.

Worker's Identity Integration - Approve the proposal to add the worker's identity through the 'My Identity' ap-

Kuwait Visa Application – Approve and launch the 'Kuwait Visa' applica-

Kuwaitization Project -- Launch the Kuwaitization project for cooperative societies in partnership with relevant au-

Electronic Lease Contract - Assign the Public Authority for Civil Information to launch the electronic lease contract within 6 months and submit a time plan for implementing the project.

The following are the additional measures that should be undertaken:

Electronic Employment Contract -Assign the Public Authority for Manpower, in coordination with the Fatwa and Legislation Department, to study the legality of applying the electronic employment contract; form a labor market development team

Follow-Up on Government Measures - The report also covered the results of following up on recommendations to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of government measures in reducing the spread of marginal labor keeping in mind human rights and legal compliance while adhering to the constitution and state laws. In this regard, efforts are ongoing to amend laws and regulations to preserve the rights of all parties.

Public Authority for Manpower actions must include measures taken to suspend the files of violating employers; activation of systems to fine companies that do not comply with Resolution No. 2022/156, imposing a fine of 100 dinars for each violating worker registered with the company.

It has been noted that there has been an increase in the number of expatriate workers over the last three years, with a 21% increase in 2023 compared to 2021.

The Audit Bureau's report emphasized the need for significant reforms to address labor issues and improve the management of foreign workers in Ku-

In this regard the key recommenda-

tions include the following:
Establishing a Clear Labor Policy – Formulate a definitive labor policy to identify the actual needs for specific specializations required from foreign workers in the private and oil sectors

Reviewing Regulations and Laws Revise existing regulations and laws governing the affairs of foreign workers to ensure their financial and living rights, as well as the rights of employers

Solving Legal, Financial, and Humanitarian Issues - Address and resolve all problems related to the legal, financial, and humanitarian aspects of foreign

Accountability and Legal Action -Hold accountable institutions and companies found by the Authority to be bringing in more workers than needed; take legal action against employers who hire workers after their contracts have expired, which violates the Constitution, labor laws, and international standards.

Integrated Program for Workforce Nationalization - Develop an integrated program and strategic plan to replace expatriate workers with national workers without compromising performance levels in economic activities.

Harsher Penalties for Residency Trafficking - Impose stricter penalties on those committing residency trafficking; refer files of violating employers to judicial authorities to deter such activities.

Changing Societal Perception of Craftsmanship -- continue efforts to change the perception of craftsmanship, professional, and manual work in Kuwaiti society; organize events to highlight the value and importance of these types

of work. The recommendations highlight the need for a comprehensive and strategic approach to labor management, ensuring the rights and responsibilities of both workers and employers are upheld, and aiming to balance the labor market with national workers while maintaining economic efficiency.

Over 200

Continued from Page 1

thinners, anti-seizure medications and other vital medications

Based on the report of the Drug Pricing Committee, which conducted a comprehensive review of drug prices to ensure a balance between providing medicines at affordable prices and supporting the national pharmaceutical some of them exceeded 60 percent. The decision also aims to reduce the financial burden on patients and ensure

that they obtain the necessary medi-

cines at reasonable prices.

The Drug Pricing Committee plays a pivotal role in reviewing and updating prices periodically; as a reflection of the Ministry of Health's ongoing commitment to improving the health care system, meet the citizens' needs for medicines at reasonable prices, and reducing medical costs for patients.

Ministers confer

Continued from Page 1

The detectives immediately notified Saudi security authorities of the citizen's statement in order for necessary investigations to be carried out and ensure the

Kuwaiti woman's return to the country. During investigation, Saudi security authorities discovered a body dumped in a remote area north of Jubail Governorate. Upon verifying the body and coordinating with Kuwaiti security authorities, it was confirmed to be that of the Kuwaiti woman through finger-

print matching. The sources confirmed that Saudi security authorities are conducting investigations into the case in coordination with Kuwaiti security authorities to uncover the full details of the crime, including its motives and causes.

They noted that once investigations are concluded, the body will be transferred to Kuwaiti security authorities.

Trial of murder suspect in Kuwait In a post on his X account, retired Major Ĝeneral Hamad Al-Suraie stated that according to the Kuwaiti Penal Code, specifically articles 12 and 13, a Kuwaiti citizen who commits a crime outside Kuwait is tried inside Kuwait in accordance with the provisions of the law in force in the place where the act was committed. Due to the cooperation between the Saudi and Kuwaiti authorities and the presence of a common security vision, decisions will be made through mutual understanding, reflecting ongoing joint security coop-

Eastern Province Police announces the discovery of the "body" in Jubail

eration between the two parties.

The official spokesperson for the Eastern Province Police in Saudi Arabia announced that following reports of a Gulf citizen's disappearance while traveling through Saudi territory with her husband, she was found deceased in a desert area north of Jubail Governorate. Regulatory procedures related to the incident are currently being fi-

KFH warns against unverified online links

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) advises customers to stay cautious about a new phishing scam targeting their bank accounts and stealing their funds. KFH warning is part of its continuous support for Diraya campaign, which aims to promote banking awareness, in collaboration with the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) and the Kuwait Banking Association (KBA).

In its press release, KFH stated that the new form of online scam involves sending a message with a suspicious link tricking victims to click the link to visit a particular website or participate in a survey. Once they click the link, their devices will be hacked, enabling the hacker to access and exploit their personal data for harmful purposes.

KFH urged customers to stay vigilant and refrain from disclosing their



Diraya logo

personal information to requests received through e-mails, text messages, or phone calls, as they are attempts to obtain customers' banking information to steal their funds or data

KFH advised customers to be careful when receiving links as these links could lead to theft of sensitive bank-

ing information. The bank also recommended that customers protect their bank accounts by avoiding the storage of confidential information, such as card numbers or passwords, on their mobile phones. Additionally, customers were urged not to share their OTP with anyone and to log out of the bank's application or website promptly

after finishing a transaction. KFH added that fraudsters can target anyone, regardless of age or social status. They employ various tactics, including enticing but fake offers, seemingly urgent bank warnings about account problems, suspicious online friend requests, or pleas for help over the phone, benefitting from technology, the launch of new product or services and major events to mislead individuals and steal their valuable in-

Kuwait Modern Pentathlon Federation inks agreement with Saudi counterpart

RIYADH, July 9, (KUNA): Kuwait Modern Pentathlon Federation (KMPF) President Nasser Al-Waleed announced on Monday the signing of an international cooperation agreement with the Saudi counterpart to develop modern pentathlon in both countries.

Al-Waleed told KUNA that the agreement aims to exchange expertise, cooperate and coordinate participation in upcoming tournaments to develop modern pentathlon in GCC, Arab, Asian, and foreign countries worldwide.

The agreement also envisages a project to sharpen the skills of referees and coaches in both countries and prepare players capable of competing globally, in preparation for the Youth Olympics, due in Senegal in 2026, in addition to other pentathlon events, he added.

Moreover, the accord stipulated that a media liaison officer would be appointed to exchange and promote news and broaden the tasks of the two federations, eyed as new as both had been founded less than three years ago.



President of the Kuwait Modern Pentathlon Federation, Nasser Al-Waleed delivers a souvenir to the Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors and Head of the Executive Office of the Saudi Federation Hussein Al-Abdulwahab.

World News Roundup

Europe

Putin hosts India PM to deepen ties: India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi met President Vladimir Putin in Moscow on Tuesday, deepening ties between the two nations as Western leaders gathered at a NATO summit in Washington and Russia stepped up attacks in Ukraine with deadly missile

While leaders - including President Joe Biden and Britain's newly elected Prime Minister Keir Starmer - prepared to mark 75 years of the world's biggest security organization, and reassure Ukraine of NATO's support, Putin and Modi were pictured viewing an exhibition of nuclear technology in space.

Modi earlier Tuesday lay a wreath at a war memorial near the

Kremlin during his first visit to Russia since Moscow's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022. He also met Putin Monday at the start of his two-day trip, shortly after Russian missiles slammed across Ukraine, severely damaging the largest children's hospital in Kyiv and killing at least 42 people across the country, officials said While Modi's trip received wall-to-

wall coverage in Russia, coverage of Russia's deadly attack on Ukraine has been

Modi posted photos of his arrival in Putin Moscow on the social media platform X, in both Russian and English, saying he was "looking forward to further deepening the Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership between our nations.

Russian state media reported that Putin and Modi would discuss energy ties, including Russia helping India to build more nuclear Russia has had strong ties with India since the Cold War, and

New Delhi's importance as a key trading partner has grown since war in Ukraine. (AP)

Russian playwright, theater director get 6 yrs: A Russian court on Monday convicted a theater director and a playwright of terrorism charges and sentenced them to six years each in prison, the latest in an unrelenting crackdown on dissent across the country that has reached new heights since Moscow sent troops into Ukraine.

Zhenya Berkovich, a prominent independent theater director, and playwright Svetlana Petriychuk have already been in jail for over a year awaiting trial.

Authorities claimed their play "Finist, the Brave Falcon" justi-fies terrorism, which is a criminal offense in Russia punishable by up to seven years in prison. Berkovich and Petriychuk have both repeatedly rejected the accusations against them.

In one hearing, Berkovich told the court that she staged the play in order to prevent terrorism, and Petriychuk echoed her sentiment, saying that she wrote it in order to prevent events like those depicted in the play.

The women's lawyers pointed out at court hearings before the trial that the play was supported by the Russian Culture Ministry and won the Golden Mask award, Russia's most prestigious national theater award. In 2019, the play was read to inmates of a women's prison in Siberia, and Russia's state penitentiary service praised it on its website, Petriychuk's lawyer said. (AP)

Rescuers search rubble at Kyiv hospital: Rescuers searched the rubble at a children's hospital Tuesday for more dead and wounded, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said, a day Russian missiles slammed into the facility and cities across the country in a massive daytime barrage. The death toll from the strikes rose to 42, officials said.

Zelenskyy said on the social platform X that 64 people were hospitalized in the capital, as well as 28 in Kryvyi Rih and six in Dnipro - both cities in central Ukraine.

It was Russia's heaviest bombardment of Kyiv in almost four months and one of the deadliest of the war, hitting seven of the city's 10 districts. The strike on the Okhmatdyt children's hospital, which interrupted open-heart surgery and forced young cancer patients to take their treatments outdoors, drew an international outcry.

The 10-story hospital, which is Ukraine's largest medical facility for children, was caring for some 670 patients at the time of the attack, Okhmatdyt's Director General, Volodymyr Zhovnir, said Tuesday. The missile hit a two-story wing of the hospital.

Danielle Bell, the head of a UN team tracking human

violations in Ukraine, said at least two people were killed at the hospital and some 50 people were injured, including seven chil-

Biden condemns Russia attack on Kyiv: US President Joe Biden condemned the Russian attack on ukraine's capital Kyiv that killed dozens of civilians.

In a White House statement late Monday, Biden said that Russia's attack on a Ukrainian children's hospital is an "a horrific re-

minder of Russia's brutality."
"I will be welcoming President Zelensky and NATO leaders to Washington DC, and I will be meeting with President Zelensky to make clear our support for ukraine is unshakeable. Together with our allies, we will be announcing new measures to strengthen ukraine's air defenses to help protect their cities and civilians from Russian strikes," Biden said.

The new measures will be agreed upon in the NATO's threeday summit, set to kick off on Tuesday. (KUNA)

Poland, Ukraine sign agreement: Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk signed a bilateral security agreement in Warsaw on Monday, just one day before the start of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) summit in Washington.

The agreement spells out Poland's continued defense support for Ukraine, especially air defense. Poland also pledged to support energy security for Ukraine, and participate in reconstruction. The European Union (EU) and 19 countries have signed similar agreements with Ukraine, Tusk noted.

The document includes practical bilateral commitments, not just "empty promises," he added. (Xinhua)

Far-right groups to lead political force: Far-right parties from 12 countries, including France's National Rally and Hungary's ruling Fidesz, announced on Monday that they have joined together to form a new bloc in the European Parliament and plan to become a major political force.

The European Parliament moved perceptibly to the right following Europe-wide elections a month ago as many voters abandoned the business-friendly liberals and environmentalist Greens. Mainstream center-right and center-left groups still hold the majority though.

The new bloc, dubbed Patriots for Europe, is made up of 84 EU lawmakers and will be led by Jordan Bardella, the 28-yearold protégé of Marine Le Pen. Kinga Gál, from Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's Fidesz party, will be first vice president. Right-wing parties from Austria, Belgium, the Czech Repub-

lic, Denmark, Greece, Italy, Latvia, the Netherlands, Portugal and Spain are also involved. Forming a group brings parties more influence, money and the possibility of coveted posts on parliamentary committees. (AP)

Belarus sets conditions for prisoners: Human rights activists on Monday accused Belarusian authorities of setting unacceptable conditions for the release of political prisoners, including writing public statements admitting their guilt and repenting.

The accusation comes just days after President Alexander Lukashenko promised to release those who are seriously ill and those who were swept up during the 2020 mass protests against his rule. The number of those freed so far has reached at least 18, according

to activists, among them opposition party leader Ryhor Kastusiou who is suffering from a severe form of cancer. The United States and the European Union have welcomed the release of some political prisoners but called on Belarus to free all those jailed during the 2020 protests. Some were released under an amnesty while others were par-

doned. Those who were pardoned had to publicly admit their guilt. Some political prisoners have refused to write such a letter as they do not believe they are guilty, the Viasna human rights center said.

There are currently 1,420 political prisoners behind bars in Belarus, including Nobel Peace Prize laureate Ales Bialiatski. Of those, more than 200 people are seriously ill and require medical care, Viasna said. (AP)



US First Lady Jill Biden speaks during an event at The American Legion Post 111 as she campaigns for her husband, President Joe Biden, on July 8 in Seminole Heights, Fla. (AP)



volunteers and medical workers clean up the rubble and search victims after Russian missile hit the country's main children hospital Okhmadit in Kyiv, Ukraine on July 8. (AP)





America

Tourists flock to Death Valley: Hundreds of Europeans touring the American West and adventurers from around the US are still being drawn to Death Valley National Park, even though the desolate region known as one of the Earth's hottest places is being punished by a dangerous heat wave blamed for a motorcyclist's death over the weekend.

French, Spanish, English and Swiss tourists left their air-conditioned rental cars and motorhomes Monday to take photographs of the barren landscape so different than the snow-capped mountains and rolling green hills they know back home. American adventurers liked the novelty of it, even as officials at the park in California warned visitors to stay safe.

"I was excited it was going to be this hot," said Drew Belt, a resident of Tupelo, Mississippi, who wanted to stop in Death Valley as the place boasting the lowest elevation in the US on his way to climb California's Mt Whitney, the highest peak in the lower 48 states. "It's a once in a lifetime opportunity. Kind of like walking on Mars." (AP)

Florida teen bitten by shark: A shark

bit a Florida teen on the leg during a lifeguard training camp Monday morning, officials said.

The attack occurred near the Ponce Inlet lifeguard tower shortly before noon, Volusia County Beach Safety officials said. The 14-year-old boy had been practicing water entries when he landed on a shark.

The teen's injuries weren't considered life-threatening, officials said. He was taken by his parents to get stitches. (AP)

Teenager stops runaway boat: An empty runaway boat speeding in circles on New Hampshire's largest lake was brought safely to a stop by a teenager who jumped aboard from a personal wa-

Rich Bono, who captured the events on video, said he was on the dock Wednesday in Lake Winnipesaukee's Smith Cove when he heard some commotion in what is usually a quiet, no-wake zone.

"I can hear an engine revving, and I looked down the end of the dock toward the

Politics

Trump returns to campaign trail

Jill Biden 'all in' on Joe's reelection

TAMPA, Fla, July 9, (AP): Jill Biden on Monday declared herself "all in" on President Joe Biden's bid to remain as the presumptive Democratic presidential nominee, despite calls by some Democrats for him to drop out after his damaging debate performance against Donald Trump shook their confidence in him.

The president himself has brushed aside those calls and insisted anew on Monday that he isn't leaving the race.

"For all the talk out there about this race, Joe has made it clear that he's all in," the first lady told a military crowd in Wilmington, North Carolina, the first of three battleground states she was visiting.

"That's the decision that he's made, and just as he has always supported my career, I am all in too," said Jill Biden, who teaches English and writing as a community college professor. Later Monday, in remarks at an

American Legion post in Tampa, Florida, she said her husband considers support of the military and veterans a 'sacred obligation" that she contended contrasts with Trump. "As commander in chief, President

Biden wakes up every morning ready to work for you," Jill Biden said. "Donald Trump wakes up every morning thinking of one person and one person only: himself." Danny Fuqua, president of the Dem-

ocratic Veterans Caucus of Florida, said Biden's ties to the military make him the clear choice in November. "The Bidens are a military family.

They are one of us. They not only see the uniform, they see the person in it," Jill Biden addressed another military audience later Monday in Co-

lumbus, Georgia, home of the Army's sprawling Fort Moore. Rebound (012) Her daylong tour was part of the

Biden campaign's broader effort to rebound from the president's halting performance against Trump in last month's debate.

The debate led some congressional Democrats and others to call on him to let another candidate challenge Trump because they no longer believe the 81-year-old president is mentally and

noise and saw a boat circling, circling, cir-

cling, and no one was in it," he said. "Obvi-

ously, that's not good." (AP)

physically capable of defeating the former Republican president in No-

Jill Biden also announced the formation of an organizing group, Veterans and Military Families for Biden-Harris at her Tampa stop.

"We can't take anything for granted. We have to meet this moment because our freedoms are at risk," she said. The president has insisted since the

June 27 debate that he is staying in the

race. He did so again on Monday in a letter to congressional Democrats and during an on-air telephone interview with MSNBC. Jill Biden used her appearance to draw contrasts between her husband's

and Trump's attitudes toward U.S. service members, veterans and their families. The president's late son Beau served

in Iraq as a member of the Delaware Army National Guard, and the first lady's father was a Navy signalman during World War II. "This is personal to us," she said,

describing the waits to connect by phone with a service member stationed overseas or having to smile through a loved one's absence on holidays.

"Let me ask you this ... Does Donald Trump know what it's like?" she said.

Also:

MIAMI: Former President Donald Trump is getting back on the campaign trail Tuesday, rallying voters in his home state at his flagship golf resort in a celebratory mood as Democrats face tough calls over President Joe Biden's reelection chances.

Trump is nearing a deadline to announce his running mate but appears in no rush as much of the attention is still centered on questions about Biden's ability to govern for another four-year term. Some Democrats have started calling for Biden to step down as their presumptive nominee following his dismal debate performance last month.

Both Biden, 81, and Trump, 78, are at least two decades older than most American presidents have been, according to the Pew Research Center, which said the median age for all US presidents on their first inauguration is 55 years old. But that has not stopped

Trump from arguing he is stronger than Biden, who repeatedly stumbled, paused and could not complete sentences at times during the June 27 debate. Trump was criticized by Democrats for making false statements during the debate about the Jan. 6, 2021, riot at the US Capitol and suggesting immigrants entering the US illegally were taking so-called "Black jobs" and "Hispanic jobs."

In an interview Monday with Fox News Channel's Sean Hannity, Trump said he thought Biden "might very well stay in" the race. "Nobody to wants to give that up that way," Trump added. "He is going to feel badly about himself for a long time. It's hard to give it up that way, the way where they're trying to force him out."

In the Miami suburb of Doral, Trump will underscore his strong support in a former battleground state that has now shifted toward the GOP. US Sen Marco Rubio, a Miami native and one of the contenders for the vice presidential post, will be attending the rally along with other Florida politicians. Kevin Cabrera, a Miami-Dade

County commissioner who was Florida state director for Trump's 2020 reelection campaign and is set to speak at the rally, said to expect an "overwhelming show of unity.' "The rally will display our unified

front, showcasing a stark contrast to the Democrats, who are lost and fighting with each other over Biden's health and ability to continue," Cabrera said.

The presumptive GOP nominee will also touch on Biden's handling of immigration and the economy, highlighting the rise in home prices and goods. Trump will also talk about how Florida is affected by the increasing arrivals of immigrants as the final destination for many people illegally crossing the US-Mexico border.

The leadership crisis among Democrats has perhaps given Trump a reason to wait for his VP announcement so as to not draw attention away from Biden's woes. Senior advisers and key allies say they still don't know whom Trump will choose as his running mate, and many believe the choice is still in flux.

Some power back in Houston: while the weakened storm moved east, Power started to come back for some spawning suspected tornadoes and of the millions of homes and busicausing more damage. nesses left in the dark when Hurricane Beryl was blamed for killing several peo-

ple in Texas on Monday and at least one person in Louisiana, officials said.

Beryl slammed into the Houston area,

After a peak Monday of more than 2.7 million customers around Houston without power, the numbers improved to more than 2.4 million homes and businesses lacking electricity by Monday night, according to PowerOutage.us. The lack of cooling to people's homes, downed power lines and non-functioning traffic lights led officials to ask residents to stay home if possible.

'Houstonians need to know we're working around the clock so you will be safe," Houston Mayor John Whitmire said Monday at a media briefing, urging residents to also know the dangers of high water, to stay hydrated and to check on their neighbors.

Beryl later Monday weakened into a tropical depression with maximum wind speeds of about 35 mph (56 kph). Monday evening that tornadoes had been spotted in northeastern Louisiana. Bossier Sheriff Julian Whittington said in a Facebook post that a woman was killed in the Benton area when a tree fell on her home. (AP)



Russian President Vladimir Putin, (left), and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, (second from right), visit Atom pavilion at the Exhibition of Achievements of National Economy (VDNKh) in Moscow, Russia on July 9. (AP)

Lat/Am

Brazil bus crash kills 5

'No room for failure against Haiti gangs

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti, July 9, (Agencies): The head of the Kenya-led multinational force tasked with curbing gang violence in Haiti said on Monday "there's no room for failure" and that the United Nations-backed police mission was committed to ensuring democratic elections in the Caribbean nation.

The nationally broadcast news conference was the first public comment from the Kenyan force, though the briefing did not take any questions from the media.

Still, major questions remain about the Kenyan force, which arrived late last month in Haiti - months after powerful gangs seized control of most of the country's capital, Port-au-Prince, and caused the prime minister's resignation.

"We have a job that we are committed to do," Kenyan officer Godfrey Otunge said. "We intend to achieve this by working closely with Haitian authorities and local and international partners dedicated to a new Haiti.'

The UN-backed mission, to which the United States has pledged over \$300 million in support, has been questioned from the start. At home, Kenyan police have long been accused by watchdogs and witnesses of human rights abuses,

including in recent protests. Haiti's new Prime Minister Garry Conille has called the history of foreign intervention in his country a "mixed bag" that has included human rights abuses and a "lack of respect for sovereignty and local cul-

Some in Haiti, however, have welcomed the new mission with hope.

Kenya has pledged 1,000 police to the international police force - 200 initially arrived - and Conille last week told the UN Security Council that the next contingent will be arriving "very soon." Later, they will be joined by police from the Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Benin, Chad and Jamaica. The force will total 2,500 personnel

Tasked

A transitional council appointed Conille as the new prime minister in May. US officials have urged him to prioritize establishing an electoral council as the country strives to rebuild its government. Conille is tasked with stabilizing the country in preparation for democratic elections in February 2026.

Otunge said the new mission aims to "create security conditions conducive to holding free and fair

Haitian police chief Normil Rameau also addressed the nation on Monday, saying the UN-backed mission is focused on reclaiming all areas from gang control, reinstating police presence in regions lacking authority and assisting Haitians displaced by the gangs to return home.

More than half a million people have been displaced by the violence.

Rameau and other Haitian authorities have not shared details of future operations, citing strategic reasons and saying they do not want to alert the gangs of their plans.

Haiti asked for an international force to combat gangs in 2022, and UN Secretary-General António Guterres appealed for months for a country to lead the force before the Kenyans came forward.

The gangs have grown in power since the July 7, 2021, assassination of President Jovenel Moïse and are now estimated to control up to 80% of Haiti's capital. The surge in killings, rapes and kidnappings has led to a violent uprising by civilian vigilante groups.

Also:

SAO PAULO: At least five people were killed and another five injured Monday when two buses crashed into each other in the Brazilian city of Sao Paulo, the local fire department reported.

The accident occurred on Highway 191 in the municipality of Ipeuna, 206 km from Sao Paulo, the largest city in Brazil. One of the buses was transporting patients to a medical center for clinical studies while the other vehicle was empty.

Four of the victims were traveling on the bus carrying patients. The fifth casualty was the driver of the empty bus.

As a result of the crash, the highway was closed in both directions to facilitate rescue efforts, said local authorities.

KINGSTON. Jamaica: Jamaicans will contend with food shortages in the aftermath of Hurricane Beryl, which is estimated to have destroyed over \$6.4 million in food crops and supporting infrastructure, officials in

Jamaica said on Monday. Floyd Green, Jamaica's agriculture minister, said preliminary assessments indicate significant damage to crops including vegetables, tubers such as yam and cassava, and fruits like breadfruit, ackee, mangoes and bananas, which are popular food sources.

He said livestock and fishing sectors were also impacted significantly by the record-breaking storm that unleashed tumultuous winds and rainfall as it traveled westward just off Jamaica's south coast last week on route to the Cayman Islands, Mexico, and Texas.

"We have seen about 85% of our bananas and our plantain lines go down in Portland and St Mary, Green said after visiting farms in the southern parish of St Elizabeth.

Yam farmers in southern Trelawny have asked for assistance as they report significant damage to their

"We do understand that it needs a quick response at this time and we know our farmers are out there and thankfully, they are resilient," Green said. "They are planning to get back to farming and we at the ministry (of agriculture and fisheries) will be willing to assist them.

The Jamaican agriculture minister said farmers who grow crops in greenhouses in the parishes of Clarendon, Manchester and St Elizabeth have been hard-hit. This is going to be a massive blow for our vegeta-

ble (crop) lines," said Green. Small-scale poultry farmers have sustained major

damage to chicken houses, he said. On Monday, Glendon Harris, a former president of the farmers' lobby Jamaica Agricultural Society, forecast that the damage to the agricultural sector will result in a disruption to the food chain supply on the island.

"We are going to see a shortage of some of our basic food items," Harris said. "St Elizabeth is the known breadbasket, and Manchester is close behind, so based on the hit they have taken, it is going to affect the ready food for the market across the island.



A night view of southwest China's Chongqing Municipality is seen on July 6. (Xinhua)

Asia

Australia names envoy to confront antisemitism

Women gradually rise in Japan politics

TOKYO, July 9, (AP): Eight years ago, Yuriko Koike became the first woman to lead Tokyo, beating her male predecessor. She won her third term as governor Sunday, and one of her closest rivals was a woman.

Multiple women competing for a top political office is still rare in Japan, which has a terrible global gender-equality ranking, but Koike's win highlights a gradual rise in powerful female officials and a society more open to gender balance in politics. That said, even if a woman eventually becomes prime minister, politics here is still overwhelmingly dominated by men, and experts see a huge effort needed for equal representation.

Role

"There are growing expectations for women to play a greater role in politics," said parliamentarian Chinami Nishimura, a senior official with the main opposition Constitutional Democratic Party of Japan. "In politics or parliament, which are still largely considered men's work, it is extremely meaningful for women to show their

Nishimura, who also heads the opposition party's gender-equality promotion team, hopes to have women make up 30% of her party's candidates in the next national election. Prime Minister Fumio Kishida's conservative Liberal Democratic Party last year vowed to achieve 30% female representation within 10 years and is working to recruit more female candidates.

Finding aspiring female candidates, however, isn't easy. Women in Japan are still often expected to be in charge of childrearing, elderly care and other family responsibilities.

National parliamentarians are also expected to regularly travel between Tokyo and their home constituencies, which makes it especially difficult for female lawmakers trying to balance a career and family. Nishimura says former female colleagues have quit national politics and returned to local assemblies because of such demands.

Nishimura began her political career in her hometown Niigata's prefectural assembly in 1999, the first woman to serve there in decades. The 53-member assembly now has five women.

A growing number of women are now seeking political careers, but they are still in the minority, especially in national politics where electoral decisions are largely determined by closeddoor, male-dominated party politics, and outspoken women tend to be tar-

Confiscated 'illegal fireworks' explode in Philippines; 27 hurt

ZAMBOANGA, Philippines, July 9, (AP): At least 27 people, including 19 police and other government personnel, were injured when a large pile of confiscated illegal fireworks exploded in a powerful blast in the southern Philippines, damaging houses, hotels and an international airport, officials said Tuesday

Two of the victims of Mondav afternoon's explosion were in serious condition in a hospital in the southern port city of Zamboanga, where the mayor ordered an investigation into why the planned controlled destruction of the fireworks by police ordnance experts turned into a massive blast.

Police explosives experts were piling the fireworks in a clearing near a marine firing range ed detona the large heap, which had been doused with water, suddenly exploded. The blast was so powerful that it shattered glass windows as far as three kilometers (nearly two miles) away, according to officials and witnesses.

The passenger terminal at Zamboanga international airport, about two kilometers (more than a mile) from the blast, sustained minor damage but no injuries or flight delays were reported, the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines

Also:

Indonesia: Rescue JAKARTA, workers dug through tons of mud and rubble on Tuesday as they searched for dozens of missing people after a landslide hit an unauthorized gold mining area on Indonesia's Sulawesi island, killing at least 23 people.

More than 100 villagers were digging for grains of gold on Sunday in Bolango when tons of mud plunged down the surrounding hills and buried their makeshift camps, said Heriyanto, head of the provincial Search and Rescue Office.

One of Koike's top rivals was a woman, Renho, a veteran former parliamentarian who goes by one name and who finished third.

Also:

MELBOURNE. Australia: The Australian government named a special envoy Tuesday to confront a rise in antisemitism across the country since the Israel-Hamas war began.

A similar envoy will soon be appointed to challenge Islamophobia in Australia and both will promote social cohesion, Prime Minister Anthony **Albanese** told reporters at the Sydney Museum.

Albanese's own Sydney office has been targeted with pro-Palestinian graffiti as rival activists clash over the Israeli-Hamas war in Australian cities and university campuses.

Albanese appointed Jillian Segal, a Sydney lawyer and business executive, to be "special envoy to combat antisemitism in Australia" for three years. She will consult with community groups and report back to Albanese and Multicultural Affairs Minister Andrew Giles.

WELLINGTON, New Zealand: A minister in Papua New Guinea's government who has been charged over an alleged domestic assault in Australia will step down from his post as a court case against him unfolds, the country's prime minister said.

Police in the Australian state of New South Wales said in a statement Saturday that a 58-year-old man was arrested and charged after a domestic dispute in Sydney. A 31-year-old woman known to him had injuries to her face after the altercation, the statement said.

Australian authorities did not name Petroleum Minister **Jimmy Maladina** as the accused, but his identity was widely reported by news outlets in Papua New Guinea and Australia.

Meanwhile, Papua New Guinea Prime Minister James Marape said in a written statement Sunday that Maladina "offered to step aside" while he attended to a complaint "as it is heard in court in Australia," without elaborating further on the incident.

This is the first time Rwandan authorities are officially commenting on plans by the UK's new Labour Party government to cancel the scheme, which drew criti-

It was not clear if Rwandan authorities

others as cruel and inhumane. were reacting to press reports or had been

cism from human rights watchdogs and



Incumbent Tokyo Gov Yuriko Koike celebrates after she was elected for Tokyo's gubernatorial election in Tokyo on July 7. Multiple women competing for a top political office is still rare in Japan, but Koike's win highlights a gradual rise in powerful female officials and a society more open to gender balance in politics.

given official notification of plans to terminate the agreement.

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer said in his first news conference Saturday that the Rwanda deportation plan "was dead and buried before it started.'

Starmer denounced it as a "gimmick," though it's unclear what he will do differently as a record number of people have come ashore in the first six months of the year. (AP)

'Journo shooting death unlawful' A Kenyan court on Monday ruled that the 2022 shooting death of a Pakistani journalist by police in Nairobi was unlawful and unconstitutional, a lawyer and his

family said. Justice Stella Mutuku in the ruling in Nairobi also faulted Kenya's attorney general and the director of public prosecutions for laxity in investigating the shooting of Arshad Sharif, after police opened

fire at his car at a roadblock checkpoint. Sharif's family has accused an elite Kenyan police unit of intentionally killing Sharif. The 50-year-old journalist had fled Pakistan earlier that year to avoid arrest at home on charges of maligning Pakistan's

A panel of Pakistani investigators in December 2022 concluded that the killing of Sharif was a "planned assassination

national institutions.



backing to M23. (AP)

Kenyan police stand guard outside the US embassy in Port-au-Prince, Haiti on July 5. The head of the Ken-ya-led multinational force tasked with

curbing gang violence in Haiti said on

that the United Nations-backed police

mission was committed to ensuring democratic elections in the Caribbean nation. (AP)

Africa

gional conflict.

ever.

Congo official welcomes truce:

The top UN official in Congo on Mon-

day welcomed a two-week humanitarian

cease-fire in its mineral-rich east, where

she said violence has reached "alarming

levels" and risked provoking a wider re-

say whether the truce that began last Fri-

day was holding. But she told reporters,

"My hope, and I think the hope of each

Special envoy Bintou Keita wouldn't

'tȟere's no room for failure' and

Algeria eliminates 2 terrorists: The Algerian Ministry of National Defense said on Monday that the country's army forces eliminated two armed militants during an anti-terrorist operation in the province of Khenchela, near the eastern border with Tunisia.

The ministry said the terrorists were neutralized on Sunday, with one of them identified as Boughrara Mourad, who joined terrorist groups in 2010. Efforts are

ongoing to identify the second individual. The army forces seized, during the operation, two Kalashnikov machine guns and a substantial amount of ammunition.

The ministry added that in the first half of this year, a total of six terrorists were eliminated, nine were arrested, and 15 others surrendered. (Xinhua)

Rwanda aware of UK plan: Rwanda's government says it is aware of the United Kingdom's intention to terminate its plan to deport asylum-seekers to the East Afri-

In a statement late Monday, the office of the Rwandan government spokesman said the deal had been initiated by the UK "to address the crisis of irregular migration affecting the UK - a problem of the UK, not Rwanda.'

Boursa sees significant gains

During yesterday's session, the Boursa Kuwait saw its general index rise by 46.68 points, reaching 36,705.2 oints, marking a significant increase of 98.0%, reports

Al-Seyassah daily.
The trading session involved 17.197 million shares traded through 13,936 cash transactions, amounting to a total value of 6.48 million dinars

performance from the latest trading session:
-- General Index increased by 46.68 points to reach 36,705.2 points, marking a rise of 0.98%. A total of 17.197 million shares were traded through 13,936

The following is the summary of the Boursa Kuwait's

cash transactions, amounting to 6.48 million dinars.
-- The Main Market Index rose by 2.0 points, reach-

KSE 100

SAUDI

JAPAN

EGYPT

PAKISTAN

PHILIPPINES

ing 26,592.4 points. Trading involved 4.55 million shares through 4,082 cash transactions, totaling 2.8 million dinars

The Premier Market Index climbed by 90.89 points, reaching 1,769.2 points, which represents an increase of 18.1%. Trading activity included 7.141 million shares exchanged through 9,854 transactions, valued at 4.40 million dinars.

-- The Main 50 Index decreased by 34.3 points to reach 42,572.5 points, indicating a decrease of 0.06%. Trading volume consisted of 9.37 million shares traded through 2,817 cash transactions, totaling 7.6 million di-

Gulf nations see surge in bond issuance

Fitch Ratings has highlighted that the Gulf companies and countries are actively issuing bonds to stimulate economic growth, with a notable increase in green bond issuance, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

According to a recent report by Fitch, most Gulf

countries have made significant strides in developing their debt markets, with total debt nearing one trillion dollars by the end of the first quarter of 2024, including

approximately 40% in the form of sukuk.

Khaled Darwish, Head of Capital Markets and Bonds for the Middle East at HSBC, reported that bond and sukuk issuances in the region surpassed \$90 billion in the first half of 2024, marking nearly 70% growth.

Sovereign issuances accounted for half of this to-tal, primarily directed towards financing government deficits and substantial capital expenditures across the Middle East.

Apart from governments, Darwish noted that banks and companies collectively accounted for the other

half of issuances The companies utilized these funds to refinance existing debts, while banks sought liquidity to support lending across various sectors.

Looking ahead, Darwish anticipated a potential slowdown in issuance activity in the second half of the year as markets monitor interest rate movements and the US elections.

Market Movements 09-07-2024 Change Closing pts Change Closing pts Business +61.66 11,779.83 -3.674,078.29 Nikkei 225 +799.47 41.580.17 **PSEi** +27.23 6,556.66 EGX 30 +54.37 28,466.24



80,783.56

+117.00



Photos during the collaboration.

Kuwait plans refinery expansion by 2025 to meet global demand

KNPC, KIPIC to leverage digital transformation

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: Wadha Al-Khatib, acting CEO of both the Kuwait **National Petroleum Com**pany (KNPC) and Kuwait **Integrated Petroleum In**dustries Company (KI-PIC), has outlined plans to increase the refining capacity of Kuwait's local refineries -- Al-Zour, Al-Ahmadi, and Mina Abdullah -- from 1.4 million barrels per day to approximately 1.5 million barrels per day by 2025.

This expansion aims to meet growing global demand for clean refined products such as clean fuel oil, low-sulfur diesel, naphtha, and jet fuel that adhere to international environmental standards.

Al-Khatib emphasized the importance of digital twinning across both companies to implement compreĥensive digital transformation mechanisms across all facilities and depart-

This initiative is expected to enhance local refinery production capacities and improve operational efficiency. KNPC, as part of the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation, is actively advancing towards digital transformation and leveraging artificial intelligence technolo-

In addition to increasing production efficiency, digital transformation in the oil sector plays a crucial role in cost reduction and facility maintenance, while enhancing overall security and

safety protocols by detecting potential malfunctions early.

Under Al-Khatib's leadership, KNPC and KIPIC are progressing with initiatives aligned with Kuwait Petroleum Corporation's vision to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050.

These efforts underscore Kuwait's commitment to integrating digital technological advancements across all projects within the country's oil sector.

The Al-Zour refinery, inaugurated on May 29 by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, ranks among the world's top ten largest refineries, boasting a daily refining capacity of 615 thousand barrels.

It incorporates cutting-edge global technologies and an advanced environmental system that ensures rigorous environmental monitoring and operates with minimal smoke and noise emissions.

Digital twinning is a key strategy for implementing digital transformation across KNPC and KIPIC, enhancing operational efficiency and potentially increasing production capacity.

This initiative aligns with the KPC vision for carbon neutrality by 2050, leveraging digital technologies and AI to improve safety, detect issues early, and optimize spending.

Additionally, the Al-Zour refinery, one of the world's largest, showcases Kuwait's ommitment to advanced tech nologies and environmental sustainability with its innovative design and environmental control systems.

'Enhanced digital payment options'

ABK and Network International revolutionize online payments

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) is proud to announce its strategic partnership with Network International (Network), a leading enabler of digital commerce in the Middle East and Africa region. This collaboration signifies a major milestone

enhancing e-commerce solutions for ABK merchants.

By leverag-ing Network's expertise, ABK can equip its merchants with cutting-edge capabilities,

enabling them to accept credit Johair Marafi

card transactions on their websites and offering convenient payment links. This initiative will streamline the online payment process and provide merchants with the flexibility to generate and share payment links, enhancing customer

ABK merchants now can accept pay ments through popular digital wallets, such as Apple Pay, Samsung Pay, and Google Pay. This expansion of paymitment to staying at the forefront of

digital payment trends. "We are excited to join forces with Network to revolutionise the digital payment landscape for our merchants.

This initiative will empower them with advanced e-commerce solutions, enabling them to offer a seamless and secure payment experience to their customers," said Johair Marafi, General Manager of Retail Banking at ABK.

'This endeavour underscores our dedication to innovation and excellence in delivering digital payment solutions to merchants. Furthermore, it reinforces ABK's position as a pioneer in the digital payment landscape, providing comprehensive and innovative payment solutions to empower merchants and enhance the overall experience"

Navneet Dave, Managing Director & Co-Head of Processing - Middle East at Network International, commented,"We are thrilled to collaborate with ABK in driving their digital transformation objectives. The partnership is a testament to our shared vision of enabling businesses to thrive in the digital age. Deploying Network's expertise and solutions underscores the Bank's impact in the Kuwait market by providing best-inclass merchant experiences enhanced by seamless efficiency. Together, we will enhance the overall experience for ABK merchants and elevate the payment journey for consumers."

with a focus on digital transformation, its collaboration with Network sets the stage for a new era of enhanced e-commerce capabilities and customer

Inflation was unchanged in May, despite pick up in food category

Non-oil activity metrics still sluggish, but oil production set to rise

By National Bank of Kuwait

Non-oil indicators in Q2 2024 continued to come in soft and suggestive of a sluggish economy, which, according to recent GDP figures for 2023 is operating at subpar levels. Nevertheless, improvements so far this year in consumer spending, business credit, real estate and project activity, provide some grounds for optimism ahead. PMI readings have also remained in expansion territory in recent months, with business confidence running at historically high levels. Moreover, the outlook for overall economic growth was boosted in early June by the news that OPEC+ would begin unwinding its voluntary crude oil production cuts from October 2024 onwards. Kuwait will see its oil GDP rise, alongside exports. Oil prices have also held up, despite concerns the OPEC+ decision could lead to a supply glut at some point over the next few quarters.

Meanwhile, developments on the domestic political front—the Amir's suspension of the National Assembly in early May for up to four years and his call for a new government to accelerate economic reforms and development could herald a significant improvement in the country's economic prospects. Properly tackling legacy issues such as bureaucracy and low investment levels may take time, but we see a combination of faster decision making, strong executive support, more stable government, accelerated project approvals and broad buy-in on key policy reform areas providing clear potential upside to the medium-term growth outlook. Non-oil activity weakens further in final quarter of

Preliminary GDP figures for Q4 2023 published by the Central Statistical Bureau show that despite a quarteronquarter improvement (+11.2% q/q) in line with the seasonal trend, non-oil output contracted further yearon-year (-2.3% y/y from -2.0% in Q3). This extends the run of declines to

five consecutive quarters.

Manufacturing (-8.8% y/y), other services including real estate (-4.3%) and wholesale & retail trade (-6.3%) were especially weak. Oil sector GDP growth was also negative again in Q4 (-6.4% y/y), reflecting Kuwait's participation in OPEC+ crude oil production cuts. Overall growth came in at -4.4% y/y. For 2023 overall, non-oil GDP declined by 2.9%, a second consecutive contraction after a downwardly revised -0.1% in 2022. These figures are preliminary and subject to revision (output in the manufacturing sector has been significantly revised over several quarters, for example). Nevertheless, taken at face value, achieving our forecast of +2% non-oil growth in 2024 would require

For oil GDP, we have adjusted our forecasts slightly upwards after the OPEC+ decision in early June to gradually unwind members' 2024 voluntary production cuts. For Kuwait, this would translate into the restoration of 135 kb/d of withheld crude gradually at a rate of 11 kb/d every month from October 2024 to September 2025, leaving output at about 2.55 mb/d by the close of next year. These gains will be a boon for exports of both crude oil and higher value Table 1: Key economic data Estimates/forecasts 2024f 2017 2018 2019 2020 2021 2022 2023* (KD billion) 33.6 43.0 55.8 (percent change -2.1 Real GDF -4.8 -4.3 Non-oil (including refining) 1.3 2.5 6.8 -0.8 5.4 -0.1 -2.9 2.6 2.1 3.0 3.4 3.6 0.6 1.1 4.0 Inflation (% y/y, average) -8.7 -3.9 -3.1 -9.2 -5.9 11.6 -5.3 Fiscal balance (before FGF transfers) -31.6 38.7 4.9 Oil 39.0 35.8 26.2 37.7 47.9 39.5 4.6 4.3 5.6 3.7 Non-oil 4.6 50.3 47.5 31.4 Exchange rate (KD per US\$1, average) 0.303 0.304 0.307 0.302 0.307 0.307 85 Kuwait export crude price (\$/bbl, avg) 51 69 64 41 101 84 2.42 2.41 2.59 Oil production (million b/d, average)* 2.71 Source: Central Statistical Bureau, Ministry of Finance, Central Bank of Kuwait, NBK estimates. *Based on estimated figures by CSB and NBK. ** Uses JODI/OPEC direct communication figures

refined products, such as gas oil and LSFO.

Oil prices gain in Q2 amid supply cuts, geopolitical risk

Oil prices closed slightly higher in Q2 2024, supported by ongoing OPEC+ voluntary supply cuts, resurfacing regional geopolitical risk, a fairly resilient global economy and improving prospects for US Fed monetary policy easing in H2. Local marker Kuwait Export Crude ended June at \$87.9/bbl, up 1.9% q/q (+10.5% ytd). Prices were volatile in June, especially after OPEC+ surprised markets with its decision to gradually unwind 2024's voluntary supply cuts from October onwards, a move that caused prices to drop by around 5%. Prices eventually recovered once OPEC+ made it clear that it could reverse its decision if oil demand weakened and as tensions in the Levant and the

Red Sea intensified. PMI shows non-oil expansion easing in Q2

Non-oil private sector activity slowed in Q2, with the June PMI reading coming in at 51.6, down from March's postpandemic series high of 53.2. Nevertheless, June was the seventeenth month of expansion for local firms, supported by ongoing gains in output and new orders as well as in employment. Staffing and purchase costs were major drivers of higher input prices for businesses, many of which had to raise selling prices to maintain profit margins. Overall business optimism about the year ahead remained strong. Card spending growth defies trend to tick up in Q1 Consumer spending growth surprised in Q1 2024, edging up slightly to 5.9% y/y (from +5.4% y/y in Q4 2023), according to Central Bank of Kuwait cards data.

This lends some support to the view that the phase of

slowing spending growth witnessed since 2022 has abated, with the potential for steadier or even improving growth ahead. Other factors in such a trend could be a fading adjustment to previous interest rate increases, possibly lower interest rates ahead (with the Fed expected to start cutting interest rates from H2 2024), a moderating inflation picture, and ongoing support for households from elevated

public spending and hiring. Real estate sales rose on sizeable commercial deals

Real estate activity increased in May, with total sales of KD371 million (+9.8% y/y) recorded. This was thanks to several sizable commercial deals in the Hawalli (KD77mn) and Al-Ahmadi (KD58mn) governorates. Residential and investment sales declined, however, to KD135mn (-25%) and KD72mn (-20%), respectively, though May's residential sales were above the 2023 monthly average and the reading for investment sales is a significant improvement on April's 7-month low.

In the first five months of 2024, sales were up 5.6% y/y thanks to higher commercial sales (+77%), while residential and investment sales fell by 2.9% and 13.0%, respectively. Higher financing costs and affordability issues continues to weigh on residential demand while stricter enforcement of residency laws and rising living costs may have pressured investment sales (CPI data show rental growth easing to 1.6% y/y in May from 3.6% in September 2023). Lower expected interest rates in 2024-25 should provide some support for the sector.

Project activity picks up in Q2 Following a lackluster Q1, project awards jumped 444%

in Q2 to KD688 million, according to MEED Projects.

Awarded projects included infrastructure in the South Sabah Al-Ahmad and affordable housing (Al-Nayeem area) cities. The outlook for H2 2024 is positive, with MEED Projects highlighting KD7 billion worth of mostly power-related potential projects including the Al-Zour Independent Water and Power Plant (IWPP) phases 2&3 project (KD1.2bn), the Al-Khairan IWPP project (KD800mn) and the Al-Shagaya

Renewable Energy Complex project (KD100mn). Inflation steady but food price rises accelerate in Q2 Consumer price inflation was steady at 3.2% y/y in May, unchanged for a second month in row but up on March's rate of 3.0%. Core inflation was 3.2% for the third month running in May. Price growth has broadly softened in categories ranging from housing services to clothing and transportation, but food price inflation has accelerated, from 5.2% y/y at end-March to 6.1% in May, spurred by increases in the prices of meat and poultry. We still expect inflation to moderate as we move through the year with consumer demand overall subdued, though ongoing stubbornness in some price areas suggests a modest deceleration to 3.0% on average.

Domestic credit boosted by recovery in business lend-

Domestic credit growth picked up from the muted levels seen last year, standing at a relatively decent 1% YTD and 2.7% y/y through April. Business credit drove most of that growth, expanding by 1.5% YTD (+1.4% y/y), nearly double the increase recorded in all of 2023, and supported by lending to the construction, real estate and trade sectors especially. Household credit growth, however, was modest, inching up in April by only 0.4% YTD and 2.3% y/y. Looking ahead, the demand for credit would get a boost from potential cuts in interest rates and a pick-up in project activity as the new government accelerates implementation of its development plan.

Meanwhile, resident deposit growth decelerated in

April (+0.5% ytd; +2.1% y/y).The slowdown was largely a reflection of a sharp drop in public institutions' deposits and a marginal decline in government deposits. Private sector deposits, though, continued to increase (+2.0% y/y), following a weak 2023.

Equities fell in Q2 amid global economic uncertainty After solid gains in Q1, the Boursa Kuwait All-Share Index reversed course in Q2, falling 5.3% q/q (+1.8% ytd), in line with the decline in the broader regional and global markets amid expectations that interest rates would remain higher for longer. A challenging global economic climate and escalating geopolitical tensions were additional factors leading to weaker investor sentiment. Softer foreign demand was evident in the net foreign capital outflows observed in each month of the quarter (net KD54 million in total). The equity market will continue to depend on cues from global markets, which in turn will depend on monetary policy and growth prospects. Reduced geopolitical tensions, improvements in key project activity or economic reform momentum could provide a much-needed catalyst, while continued delays would be detrimental to sentiment.



Commercial Bank of Kuwait's CEO - Ms. Elham Mahfouz



Ms. Rasha Othman, Executive Vice President, Investment Banking (Capital Markets) at Markaz



General Manager - Treasury and Investment Division at the Commercial Bank of Kuwait, Mr. Hus-

Al-Tijari 'completes' the KWD100m subordinated Tier 2 bonds program

Second tranche of KWD 50 million successfully issued



The Bank will use the proceeds from the bond issuance to increase their Tier 2 capital, enhancing the Bank's capital adequacy ratio, in compliance with the Basel III framework. The proceeds will also support the Bank's future expansion plans.

Moreover, the unsecured subordinated Tier 2 compliant bond issuance was rated BBB by Capital Intelligence, reflecting the Bank's solid capital base, which enjoys a high first-tier capital ratio and a high total capital adequacy ratio. Other supporting factors include high quality assets and maintaining its non-performing loan ratio at zero for six consecutive years as of the end of 2023 and the first quarter of 2024, in addition to high rates of non-performing loan reserves. The Bank also boasts a strong profit rate with the highest average of return on assets compared to similar banks, in addition to a high liquidity rate and a strong financing base.

Commenting on this announcement, Commercial Bank of Kuwait's CEO, Ms. Elham Mahfouz, said: "It gives us great pride to successfully complete the Bank's second tranche issuance, as well as the first bond program of its kind, denominated in Kuwaiti dinar. The bonds have received great traction from investors, given the excellent position the Bank enjoys in the Kuwaiti banking

Moreover, the strong demand that we have seen clearly demonstrates the market's confidence in Kuwait's banking sector in general, and in the Bank's performance and its future strategic plans in specific, coupled with the efficiency of the lead manager and subscription agent. The success of the bond issuance will directly contribute to the enhancement of the Bank's capital adequacy, while supporting future growth plans.

The timely success of this deal is attributed to the clear operational framework of the Bank, supported by the professional expertise of the lead manager and subscription agent, and the positive and impactful interac-

UK's Treasury chief gives 1st major speech



Markaz's CEO, Mr. Ali H. Khalil

tion with the regulatory authorities, namely the Central Bank of Kuwait and the Capital Markets Authority.'

General Manager-Treasury and Investment Division at the Commercial Bank of Kuwait, Mr. Hussain Al Aryan, said: "As the second oldest established Kuwaiti bank, the success of this issuance further reinforces the Bank's positioning, from a credit and credibility perspective. It is also a testament to the strong positioning of Kuwait's capital market, as an attractive investment destination that offers high return opportunities for both issuers and investors alike. This collaborative partnership with the Kuwait Financial Centre "Markaz" resulted in the efficient completion of the bond issuance, playing a pivotal role in the overall success of the op-

Also commenting on the success of the operation, Markaz's CEO, Mr. Ali H. Khalil, said: "We cherish the strong relationship we have with the Commercial Bank of Kuwait and we are pleased to have fulfilled our role as a lead manager and subscription agent, solidifying our expertise in the investment banking sector. The issuance witnessed strong demand from investors, driven by the stable performance and growth strategy pursued by the Commercial Bank of Kuwait, and its strong credit rating, in addition to our professional capabilities as the lead manager. We look forward to continuing supporting more local companies across various sectors with the issuance of bonds and sukuk, to achieve their business objectives.

Ms. Rasha Othman, Executive Vice President, Investment Banking (Capital Markets) at Markaz, said: "The successful completion of the bond program issuance denominated in Kuwaiti dinar represents a significant addition to our track record, as Markaz played the key role in orchestrating the first convertible bonds into shares, denominated in the Kuwaiti dinar, as well as the first BOT- Backed bonds in Kuwait, and the first high-yield bonds, denominated in Kuwaiti dinar, in addition to the first Sukuk issuance for a Kuwaiti company. These milestones reflect the continuous innovation and the outstanding execution capabilities of Markaz's investment banking

Prices peaked in Jan 2023

Egg prices surge again in Stimulating economic growth govt's mission US amid bird flu, inflation

SACRAMENTO, United States, July 9, (Xinhua): The prices of eggs, a staple in American households and among the most volatile grocery items, are soaring once again as bird flu hits chicken flocks across the United States.

Consumers like Jane Thompson, a resident living in Sunnyvale, California, are feeling the pinch.

"I buy eggs every week for my family. They're such an important part of our meals," Thompson said while shopping at a local Costco store on Sunday. "Just two weeks ago, I paid 3.78 U. S. dollars for two dozen, and now the price is 4.99."

A manager at the Costco store, who didn't give her name, told Xinhua that egg prices had been volatile recently. "The prices of eggs change weekly or even daily," she said

In recent weeks, U.S. consumers have been facing rising costs of everyday groceries, with eggs and lettuce experiencing the most significant increases since the start of this year, according to a Forbes report citing the latest data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Data from the consumer price index revealed a 9.5 percent surge in egg prices from last November through May. Simon M. Shane, a poultry veterinarian and adjunct professor at North Carolina State University, attributed this rise to the ongoing Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI)

had decimated chicken flocks nationwide, with an estimated 20 million to 22 million hens lost, Shane wrote in an analysis posted on egg-news.com

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: In

its capacity as the issuer,

The Commercial Bank of

Kuwait (Al-Tijari), and the

Kuwait Financial Centre

"Markaz", the lead manag-

er and subscription agent,

announced in a joint state-

ment the completion of the

KWD 100 million subordinated Tier 2 capital bonds

program after issuing the

KWD 50 million second

tranche bond with a tenure

period of 10 years, callable

This issuance was executed

through a private placement to

qualified investors, where the bonds

were fully subscribed, reflecting

the investors' trust in the quality

of the issuance, enhancing the po-

sition of the Commercial Bank of

Kuwait, and highlighting the com-

petence of the lead manager. This

deal also marks the completion of

the first bond program for the Com-

The bonds of the second tranche of

the program offer rewarding returns

for holders, as they were issued at a

floating interest rate of 3.0% above

the discount rate set by the Central

Bank of Kuwait, with the minimum

annual interest rate standing at 5.0%,

per annum, payable semi-annually.

mercial Bank of Kuwait.

after 5 years.

"Close to 13 million hens were lost during the 4th quarter of 2023 that have not yet been completely replaced. During April 2024, almost 8.4 million hens were depopulated, with an additional 5.7 million during May," Shane

He added that as a result, the total industry inventory was down by 4 percent overall to 1.53 million cases during the last week of June.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service (ERS) reported similar findings in its 2024 Food Outlook, saying that an "outbreak of HPAI that began in 2022 contributed to elevated egg prices by reducing the U.S. egg-layer flock.'

After egg prices peaked in January 2023, they declined or stabilized through much of 2023. However, new confirmations of HPAI in egg layers beginning in November 2023 drove price increases in late 2023 and early 2024. In May 2024, prices for farm-level eggs were 97.6 percent higher than in May 2023, according to the ERS report updated on June 25

"The ongoing HPAI outbreak continues to affect egg-layer flocks, with volatile effects on prices," said the report, adding that egg prices are "the most volatile category" tracked by the

HPAI, commonly known as bird flu,

LONDON, July 9, (AP): Britain's new Labour government will make stimulating economic growth its mission, the Treasury chief said Monday, pledging to limit bureaucracy to make

it easier to invest in the country. In her first major speech, Rachel Reeves said there was no time to waste to reverse what she called "14 years of chaos and economic instability" under

Conservative governments. "Where governments have been unwilling to take the difficult decisions to deliver growth - or have waited too long to act - I will deliver," she told business leaders and reporters.

Britain's first female Treasury chief and a former Bank of England economist, Reeves said sustained economic living standard s for all and to rebuild the country's stretched and underfunded public services.

She said she's taking immediate action to relax planning rules to remove obstacles to building infrastructure, housing and energy projects.

"To investors and businesses who spent 14 years doubting whether Britain s a safe place to invest, then let me tell you, after 14 years, Britain has a stable government," she said. "In an uncertain world, Britain is a place to do business.

Reeves said she will assess the "spending inheritance" left by the Conservatives over the coming months before making the government's first budget statement later this year.

She pledged to set a mandatory target of 1.5 million new homes in England over the next five years, as well as remove an effective ban on onshore wind energy developments that has been in place since 2015.

The environmental group Friends of the Earth welcomed that announce-

"By ending the onshore wind ban in England, Labour is making an important stride towards delivering on our climate goals, while also paving the way for lower bills, as renewables produce some of the cheapest and cleanest energy available," said Mike Childs, head of science, policy and research at

the organization. British Prime Minister Keir Starmer, who became leader on Friday after a landslide majority in last week's election, has promised to "rebuild the infrastructure of opportunity" for voters frustrated with a stagnant economy, rising poverty and dysfunctional public healthcare.

Soaring rental and mortgage rates and a chronic shortage of housing were among the top issues voters raised during the election campaign. Homebuilding in Britain has slowed down





Britain's Chancellor Rachel Reeves delivers a speech at the Treasury to an audience of leading business figures and senior stakeholders, announcing the first steps the new government will be taking to deliver economic growth, in London, Monday, July 8, 2024. (AP)

Chinese company helps transform Kenya's

HK's govt seeks to regulate online car-hailing platforms

HONG KONG, July 9, (AP): The Hong Kong government is seeking to regulate online car-hailing platforms through licensing and impose tougher penalties on illegal ride services, a move likely to have a significant impact on tech companies such as Uber.

Transport officials sent a document Monday to the legislature, asking lawmakers to further study the proposal. The officials also said they would further assess and iron out details, such as requirements for obtaining licenses and the number of vehicles that can be run through online platforms. Authorities plan to complete the legislative proposals sometime in 2025.

Hong Kong's taxi industry has

long resisted online platforms like Uber, seeing them as a threat to its business

In Hong Kong, it is illegal for drivers of private vehicles to provide paid services to customers without a permit. Police have in the past arrested some Uber drivers suspected of driving without a permit and in 2018, the city's court system fined more than two dozen

Uber, which started operating in Hong Kong in 2014, remains a popular choice in a city where many residents are frustrated with poor taxi services.

The San Francisco-based company has faced many challenges in its overseas expansion meeting multiple legal and regulatory challenges.

construction sector through 'precast tech' als, including concrete slabs, steel

NAIROBI, July 9, (Xinhua): About 30 km southeast of Nairobi, the Kenyan capital, China Wu Yi (Kenya) Precast Company Limited has built an expansive factory for new building technologies, causing ripples in the local construction sector.

The company in 2016 established the Kenya Building Industrialization Research Development and Production Base alongside the building materials supermarket project called "Wu Yi Base" in the industrial town of Athi River.
The Wu Yi Base is an architec-

tural marvel nestled between serene plains and farmland. For the past several years, the factory has been churning out precast materi-

in the past decades, and in the year to

March construction began on about

135,000 homes - down by more than

quarter profits. They joined Delta Air

beams, and columns, for assembly into a modern house.

Inside the sprawling complex that houses the production base, a su-permarket for building materials, and living quarters, local youth like Brian Calisto Kariuki have secured gainful employment, a platform to gain insight into precast building technology.

A geospatial engineering major the 30-year-old joined China Wu Yi in 2017 to work at the precast building materials factory and has risen through the ranks to become an assistant manager at the firm.

In a recent interview with Xinhua, Kariuki noted that with precast tech-

one-fifth compared to the year before.

The current system is "clearly anti-

growth, and these proposals should

nology readily available, a developer only has to assemble columns and slabs on site to construct a house; the technology shortens the time and maintains good quality.

"When you do precast, you can do four floors in a month. So you save time and money. You can control the quality of the concrete," said Kariuki. 'Another advantage is that it is allweather, so whether it is raining or sunny, you can still do precast.

To date, China Wu Yi has constructed landmark buildings using precast technology, including the Central Bank of Kenya pension towers and the Rose Avenue shopping center building in Nairobi, Kariuki

help," said Paul Johnson, director of the Institute for Fiscal Studies, an independent think-tank.

Figure reached for the first time as travel surges

Over 3 mln pass through US airport security in a day

More than 3 million people passed through U.S. airport security on Sunday, the first time that number of passengers have been screened in a single day as travel surges, according to the U.S. Transportation Security Administration.

The record, which was widely predicted to happen at some point over the July Four holiday weekend, topped the June 23 mark of more than 2.99 million screened passengers. Eight of the

10 busiest days in TSA's history have come this year as the number of travelers tops pre-pandemic levels.

TSA was created after the terror attacks on Sept. 11, 2001, and replaced a collection of private security companies that were hired by airlines. The agency operates under the Department of Homeland Security, which said that agents on Sunday checked 35 passengers every second.

While Americans continue to grapple with inflation, travel costs includhave eased significantly from a year ago. Hotel rooms were 1.2% cheaper in May compared with a year ago, according to recent government inflation data. Those costs have been trending lower since the beginning of the year.

While most U.S. airlines lost money in the first quarter - traditionally the weakest time of year for travel - they were all expecting a summer of full planes.

This spring, American and South-

west said they expected solid second

Lines and United Airlines in giving an upbeat outlook for the April-through-June period, which includes the start of peak season for carriers Delta reports its second-quarter earn-

ings on Thursday, with analysts predicting sales of \$15.5 billion, nearly \$1 billion more than the same period a year ago. Next week, United and American issue their quarterly results, with Wall Street forecasting higher revenue from a year ago for both carriers.

pandemic shut travel down four years ago has brought some downside for airlines: complaints.

The Transportation Department said last week that it received nearly 97,000 complaints in 2023, up from about 86,000 the year before. The department said there were so many complaints that it took until July to sort through the filings and compile

the figures. That's the highest number of complaints about airlines since 2020, when airlines were slow to give customers refunds after the coronavirus pandemic shut down air travel.

The Transportation Department said the increase in complaints was partly the result of more travelers knowing about their rights and the ability to file a complaint. Airlines receive many more complaints from travelers who don't know how or don't bother to complain to the government, but the carriers don't release those numbers.

Bank detects new wave of fraud

Company sailed to Alhala islet to raise awareness

KIB alerts public to Zain promotes marine environment protection rising online scams

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) has announced the detection of a new wave of online financial scam operations that rely on various digital communication platforms and target all user categories. The Bank reiterated its warning to customers to avoid falling victim to such schemes that expose their financial and personal data to theft. This step is part of KIB's ongoing support for the "Let's Be Aware" (Diraya) financial awareness campaign, launched by the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) and the Kuwait Banking Association (KBA) in cooperation with local banks. Additionally, the warning comes as part of KIB's comprehensive awareness program aimed at spreading financial and banking literacy among all segments of society

In this regard, Mohammed Al-Sarraf, Assistant Manager – Anti-Fraud Unit at KIB, said: "At KIB, we continue to uncover various and increasingly diverse types of financial scam tactics, compelling us to intensify efforts to educate our customers and community members about various scam risks, proactive prevention, and counteractive measures." He added: "Throughout the year, we detect different scam tactics where perpetrators deliberately create new ways to access individuals' financial and personal data, targeting both customers and non-customers and stealing their money through suspicious and unauthorized means. Recently, two new methods were discovered, prompting us to develop and distribute specific awareness materials and content, including a series of tips for customers to protect them from falling victim to such scams, particularly through digital communication platforms, whose

usage is increasing day by day."
Al-Sarraf called on all KIB customers to ignore unknown individuals who offer money in exchange for sharing personal payment links. He pointed out that the first scam tactic involves scammers claiming to be human resources (HR) recruiters on social media platforms like TikTok, Instagram, YouTube, and others, who deceive individuals with promises of easy and quick job opportunities with lucrative pay. These scammers request the victim's account details and send them payment links, entangling the victim in fraud schemes and enabling the scam-

This week Australia is celebrating NAIDOC week

which shines a spotlight on the history, culture and traditions

of its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples -

the oldest continual culture on the planet!

That includes this special book about



Mohammed Al-Sarraf

mers to steal their money.

The second tactic involves scammers asking customers to carry out simple tasks on their mobile phones, such as liking certain photos and writing comments, in exchange for small amounts of money or rewards valued at KD 3 or 4. They then ask the customer to share payment links worth up to KD 150 from their personal account to receive a reward ranging between KD 10 and 20, which is used for fraudulent financial collection operations. Additionally, scammers may ask customers to purchase illegal cryptocurrencies like Binance and KuCoin in exchange for a profit margin of up to 95%, transferring the cryptocurrency to them while keeping a 5-10% share, which leads to the customer becoming legally liable, he said.

It is worth noting that KIB spares no effort in raising awareness among customers and community members about the importance of maintaining their financial security by safeguarding their sensitive banking and confidential information at all times. To this end, the Bank continues to publish awareness content on all its social media pages, participate in relevant events and activities, and support financial awareness campaigns, especially the "Let's Be Aware"campaign. This reflects KIB's commitment to its comprehensive social responsibility that stems from its main slogan, "Bank for Life".

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: Zain, in collaboration with the Scientific Center, has organized a unique awareness event to promote marine environment

The company sailed to Alhala islet in southern Kuwait to emphasize the importance of preserving the marine environment and raising awareness of

sustainability goals. During the event, teams from Zain and the Scientific Center engaged with seagoers on boats and jet skis, reminding them to avoid littering and disposing of harmful waste, especially near coral reefs.

This initiative also aimed to promote sustainability goals to mitigate the impacts of climate change.

Alhala is a small islet-like area in southern Kuwait that appears during low tide and submerges during high tide. It is a popular summer destination for the local seafaring community. Zain actively engaged with visitors at Alhala, distributing gifts and ice cream to help them cope with the hot weather and make the most out of the experi-

Environmental sustainability is a top priority for Zain. The company's social initiatives aim to foster a culture of sustainability within the community by promoting practices such as reducing energy consumption, recycling, using renewable energy sources, and preserving the marine environment.

Zain continues to support various



Zain shared summer vibes with seagoers.

environmental preservation efforts by partnering with organizations that share its vision, including the Scientific Center, part of the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences

The company also maintains strategic partnerships with volunteer groups like the Kuwait Dive Team, to which it has donated a fully equipped boat to

support marine protection operations in Kuwait. This partnership has resulted in the removal of thousands of tons of harmful waste and the protection of tens of thousands of sea creatures.

Bank promotes sustainable agriculture and youth empowerment

NBK supports Permaculture Training in Portugal with LOYAC

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) reaffirms its commitment to sustainable agriculture and community development through its support of LOYAC's Permaculture Training Program in Portugal.

This initiative underscores NBK's strategic partnership with LOYAC aimed at promoting environmental sustainability and youth empowerment.

The Permaculture Training Program in Portugal offered participants a comprehensive understanding of permaculture principles and practices.

Permaculture, known for its integration of ecological principles and regenerative agriculture, equips participants with skills to design sustainable ecosystems that support biodiversity and enhance environmental health.

Throughout the 7-day course, which took place from 24th June to 2nd July, 10 volunteers engaged in theoretical sessions, hands-on workshops, and practical demon-

They explored essential permaculture concepts such as observation, design principles, soil health, water management, and plant di-

The program culminated in a day of cultural exploration and sightseeing, enriching the participants' learning experience.

The Permaculture Training Program aligns with NBK's commitment to sustainable development and youth empowerment.

This initiative is part of NBK's broader efforts to support educational and environmental initiatives that empower Kuwaiti youth and foster sustainable practices.

NBK always strives to empower Kuwaiti youth to realize their potentials, build their personalities and motivates their ambition.

These agricultural trips with LOYAC comes in line with our





Green adventure group picture.

strategy to invest in our society.

Throughout the program, Loyacers had practical training in agriculture with the aim of achieving advanced skills in the field that will allow the trainee to find job opportunities in existing and expected agricultural initiatives and projects

LOYAC is a nonprofit organization that runs several programs for the youth to de-

velop their professional skills, enhance their personal growth and help them find their sense of purpose by extending themselves to others.

Hinge CEO advocates for workplace friendship and connection

Importance of workplace friendships for employee happiness

Twice each month, executives at the dating app company Hinge gather for a team meeting. But rather than dive into discussions about metrics or revenue, they begin by simply talking.

Please join Ambassador Melissa Kelly for DAI Storytime at Amricani

Saturday, 13 July at 3:30

DAI Children's Library

Amricani Cultural Centre

No registration is required; just come and have fun.

DAI July poster

For the first 30 minutes of the two-hour meeting, these coworkers reveal hopes and anxieties - what they worry about, what they're grateful for, what they're feeling. Even at a company focused on connecting people, forging real relationships in the workplace takes effort, Hinge CEO Justin McLeod told an audience at the South by Southwest conference earlier this year. He was co-presenting at the event with Ann Shoket, whose initiative to combat workplace loneliness is called "10 Minutes to Togetherness.

As America navigates what Surgeon General Vivek Murthy described last year as a loneliness epidemic, employers and employees across the country are trying to address what for many people is a lack of real friendships at work.

The problem of loneliness has been bubbling for decades; Robert D. Putnam documented it in his groundbreaking book "Bowling Alone" nearly a quarter-century ago. Remote work has only intensified the problem, for extroverts and introverts alike, says leadership expert Michael Bungay Stanier, author of "How to Work with (Almost) Any-

"People have this desire to be seen and be heard," Bungay Stanier says, but on video calls, the group gets right to the business at hand rather than having the natural, informal interactions of a real room. It reduces people to "little heads in squares."

It's not easy to talk about this lack of friendship at work "because it feels like a shameful confession," Bungay Stanier says. But his clients are beginning to bring up the subject.

Awkward as it may be, these are conversations worth having, according to psychology professor Laurie Santos, creator of Yale University's wellknown class "The Science of Well Being."

In her own presentation at South by Southwest earlier this year, Santos cited research that showed workplace friendships and a sense of belonging are vital to employees' happiness -- and companies' success.

We assume that friendships at work are "a nice-to-have, not a need-tohave," she said.

But "maybe one of the reasons we're all so disengaged at work, maybe one of the reasons 'quiet quitting' seems so appealing, is that we're actively not investing in the thing that might matter the most for our happiness at work, which is our connection with other people," Santos said.

Some large companies began paying more attention to employee health long before the pandemic, often focusing on the physical: adding a gym to the office building or serving healthier food in the caf-

Today, more employers "are not just checking boxes, but actually looking at ways to really enhance people's health and well-being," says Suzanne Heidelberger, who has led teams managing real-estate properties for global companies including American Express and Fidelity Investments. She focuses on bringing a hospitality mindset to corporate spaces.

For example, employers might: - Rethink physical spaces with relationships in mind, she says. Some companies are adding staircases, both to help people get more steps and to encourage the "casual collisions" that can lead to good relationships. Some are trying to transform green rooftops - created to be environmentally friendly - into gathering spaces.

- Create groups and events to help employees find friends who share their interests. "It could even be something goofy, like an ice cream social for dog lovers, where we're going to teach you how to make healthy ice cream for your dog," Heidelberger says.

- Offer online gatherings as well. During the pandemic, American Express offered online cooking classes that helped employees feel connected and introduced them to coworkers.

Employees are also seeking answers on their own, notes executive coach Daniel Boscaljon, founder of the Healthy Relationship Academy, which helps organizations build better workplaces.

It's not always easy: As much as people crave relationships, he says, many lack strong interpersonal skills.

"When you meet somebody with good relationship skills, a lot of times it's like magic," Boscaljon says. "People open up, they'll start to talk, they'll feel comfortable. Then, sometimes, they'll have kind of a 'vulnerability hangover,' where they're like, 'I was too open there. What just happened?" ... People are so unused to it."

One key, he says, is to work on one's own well-being. "You can't have a work personality and a home personality," he says. "Who you are as a whole person shows up in every place that you're in."

Another strategy, according to Bungay Stanier, is to communicate with coworkers about how you can best work together before you dive into a

"We've all got our small little habits and preferences," he says. "And we assume what's normal for us is normal for everyone.'

Raising issues beforehand helps you "avoid making small rips in the fabric of a relationship" that keep people from becoming friends, Bungay

Stanier says. Those inevitable rips are also worth discussing. "The relationships that

thrive are ones that get repaired," he says. More than anything, remember the importance of everyday greetings at work - even if they make you a bit uncomfortable. A simple hello, Bungay Stanier says, could be the beginning of the end of lone

Paramount and Skydance merger ends family reign

NEW YORK, July 9, (AP): The entertainment giant Paramount will merge with Skydance, closing out a decades-long run by the Redstone family in Hollywood and injecting desperately needed cash into a legacy studio that has struggled to adapt to a shifting entertainment

It also signals the rise of a new power player, David Ellison, the founder of Skydance and son of billionaire Larry Ellison, the founder of the software company Oracle.

Shari Redstone's National Amusements has owned more than threequarters of Paramount's Class A voting shares through the estate of her late father, Sumner Redstone. She had battled to maintain control of the company that owns CBS, which is behind blockbuster films such as "Top Gun" and "The Godfather."

Just weeks after turning down a similar agreement with Skydance, however, Redstone agreed to a deal on terms that had not changed

"Given the changes in the industry, we want to fortify Paramount for the future while ensuring that content remains king," said Redstone, who is chair of Paramount Global.

The new combined company is valued at around \$28 billion. In connection with the proposed transaction, which is expected to close in September 2025 pending regulatory approval, a consortium led by the Ellison family and RedBird Capital will be investing \$8 billion.

Skydance, based in Santa Monica, California, has helped produce some major Paramount hits in recent years, including Tom Cruise films like "Top Gun: Maverick" and installments of the "Mission Impos-

Skydance was founded in 2010 by David Ellison and it quickly formed a production partnership with Paramount that same year. If the deal is approved, Ellison will become chairman and chief executive officer of what's being called New Paramount.

Ellison outlined the vision for New Paramount on a conference call about the transaction Monday. In addition to doubling down on core competencies, notably with a "creative first" approach, he stressed that the company needs to transition into a "tech hybrid" to stay competitive in today's evolving media landscape.

Technology

"You've watched some incredibly powerful technology companies move into the ... media space and do so very successfully," Ellison said. He added that it was "essential" for New Paramount to chart a similar course going forward.

That includes plans to "rebuild" the Paramount+ streaming service, Ellison noted - pointing to wider goals to expand direct-to-consumer business, such as increasing engagement time on the platform and reducing user churn. He also said that the company aims to transition to more cloud-based production and continue the use of generative artificial intelligence to boost efficiency.

Executives also outlined further restructuring plans for New Para-

mount on Monday's conference call, with chairman of RedBird Sports and Media Jeff Shell noting that they had identified some \$2 billion in cost efficiencies and synergies that they'll "attempt to deliver pretty

rapidly."
Shell and others addressed the declining growth of linear TV. Flagpany's operations, but learning how to run this portion of business differently will be key, he said.

The on-again, off-again merger arrives at tumultuous time for Paramount, which has struggled to find its footing for years and its cable business has been hemorrhaging. In an annual shareholder meeting in early June, the company also laid out a restructuring plan that included

Leadership at Paramount was also volatile earlier this year after its CEO Bob Bakish, following a number of disputes with Redstone, was replaced with an "office of the C.E.O," run by three executives. Four company directors were also replaced.

Paramount is one of Hollywood's oldest studios, dating back its founding in 1914 as a distributor. Throughout its rich history, Paramount has had a hand in releasing films - from "Sunset Boulevard" and 'The Godfather," to "Raiders of the Lost Ark" and "Titanic.'

The studio also distributed several early Marvel Cinematic Universe

films, including "Iron Man" and "Thor," before the Disney acquisition. In addition to "Mission: Impossible" and "Top Gun," Paramount's current franchises include "Transformers," "Star Trek" and "Jackass."

While Paramount has not topped the annual domestic box office charts for over a decade, the wild box office success of "Top Gun: Maverick" in 2022 (nearly \$1.5 billion worldwide) was an important boon to both movie theaters and the industry's models is account. boon to both movie theaters and the industry's pandemic recovery.

Variety



This image released by Sony Pictures shows Will Smith in 'Bad Boys: Ride or Die.' 'Bad Boys: Ride or Die' is currently showing in Kuwaiti cinemas. (AP)



Lisa Bonet are officially divorced. A Los Angeles County judge's dissolution of the marriage of the two actors, who had already been separated for years, took effect

for more than seven years and were a couple for 12 years before

Bonet, whose legal name is **Lilakoi Moon**, filed for divorce in January. The documents listed the couple's separation date as October 7, 2020, more than three years earlier. They made their separation

The divorce went as quickly legally possible and came without dispute. Neither person will get financial support, they have agreed on how to split their assets, and they will have joint custody of their 16-year-old daughter and

his roles in the "Aquaman" movies and on "Game of Thrones." Bonet, 56, was a star of "The Cosby Show," its spinoff "A Different World," and the films "High Fidelity" and "Enemy of the State."

moa, who has revealed on social media that he is dating "Hit Man" and "Father of the Bride" actor Adria Arjona. (AP)

MILAN: The Brera Modern will be inaugurated in the fall 52 years and 39 Italian governments after it was first envisioned, officials announced Monday.

The new museum just a few doors from Milan's Brera Painting Gallery will house more than 100 contemporary art works that belong to Brera's collection that have mostly been relegated to storage.

The project has been plagued by numerous delays, most recently the discovery of asbestos and problems with the conditioning system.

The new museum is set to officially open on Dec. 7, when the eyes of the European cultural elite are already on Milan for the annual gala premiere of La Scala's

The honor falls to the new Brera director, Angelo Crespi, who took over in February as part of moves by the far-right-led government to put Italians at the head of key

Bonet and Momoa were married

opera season.

they wed.

LOS ANGELES: Jason Momoa and

LOS ANGELES, July 9, (AP): The new remixed and expanded "Mind Games: The Ultimate Collection" is for those John Lennon fans who really, really love his inconsistent 1973 record of the same name. The problem is, many Lennon fans would rank the

public in 2002.

15-year-old son. Momoa, 44, is best known for

It was the first marriage for Mo-

the ground up" by Lennon's son, Sean Ono Lennon dubbed "The Ultimate Mixes." "The Elemental Mixes" presents the songs stripped down from postproduction enhancements, but with Lennon's voice at the forefront. The best disc of the bunch is the "Raw Studio Mixes" which delivers "Mind Games" as it was recorded in

original "Mind Games" fourth or fifth among his most

beloved records. Not that the fourth-best John Lennon

album is bad or anything, it's just that "Mind Games"

has to have a special place in your heart to make the

new "Ultimate Collection" worth it, which is available

the two-disc version that offers the original album re-

over, say, "Imagine" or "Plastic Ono Band" as their fa-

vorite Lennon album, there's the "Super Deluxe Edi-

tion" that was limited to just 1,100 copies for a cool

\$1,350. It includes extras such as a hologram-engraved

Thinking about buying that one? Too late, it's long

But for the rest of us, there are the more economical

six- or two-disc collections. The six-disc version has all

of the music included on the two-disc version, with ad-

ditional CDs offering listeners multiple ways to experi-

ence "Mind Games," including an audio documentary

and an expansive book that goes deep into the songs

and what was happening in Lennon's life and the world

There's the original recording remixed "from

Most Lennon fans will be more-than satisfied with

And for those rare few who may pick "Mind Games"

in two or six-disc editions.

mastered plus a disc of outtakes.

EP and bespoke I-Ching coins.

sold out.

at this time.

the studio before overdubs and other post-production effects. This one, more than any of the others, really puts the listener on the studio floor with Lennon and the other musicians.

Disc three, titled "The Elements Mixes," not to be

Is Lennon's new 'Mind Games' too much? confused with "The Elemental Mixes," goes in the op-

posite direction and removes Lennon's vocals all to-

gether. That's a bold move, to put it kindly, that will

'Ultimate Collection' a must-have for fans

likely become the least played one in this set for most. "The Evolution Documentary" delivers just what it promises - mini-audio documentaries showing how each song evolved. That's kind of cool, especially for those who like to hear how the songs changed during recording without listening to every single take. The studio banter from Lennon and Yoko Ono is a fun bo-

Release

Rounding out the set on disc six, or disc two of the slimmed down release, are, of course, the outtakes.

All of it may have the more casual fan throwing their hands in the air and shouting the Lennon lyric, "Gimme

It's unlikely that anyone listening to all five-plus hours of "The Ultimate Collection" will be shouting "Gimme more 'Mind Games'!"

Swizz Beatz and Timbaland are bringing the "Verzuz" series back with a new major platform for viewers to watch musicians face off in a song-against-song

The legendary producers announced Wednesday that Verzuz cemented an exclusive partnership for independent distribution with the social media site X.

Swizz Beatz said he's looking forward to the new chapter for Verzuz, which became popular during the coronavirus pandemic.

"Not only are we excited to have Verzuz on X, we're excited to help X build the biggest entertainment company in the world," he said in statement before he thanked several X executives including owner Elon Musk for believing in their vision. "We can't wait to get back to work.

Both companies agreed on a "mutually beneficial alliance" where Swizz Beatz and Timbaland maintain full ownership and creative control, while X receives exclusive distribution rights

Timbaland said he's thrilled to expand their viewership through X, which has more than 300 millions monthly active users. Viewers will be able to watch

"Our goal has always been to bring Verzuz to the world which we can now do bigger than ever," he

"Verzuz" came to life in 2020 after a friendly competition between Swizz Beatz and Timbaland on social media started off to entertain homebound fans during the pandemic. But their platform eventually evolved into a place where some of music's biggest stars com-

peted against each other in the same fashion. The series had grown from a novel event to bridging music's past and present. It began on Instagram Live to

having in-person battles in front of an audience. Some of the most epic battles have included John Legend vs. Alicia Keys, Erykah Badu vs. Jill Scott, Gladys Knight vs. Patti LaBelle, Gucci Mane vs. Jeezy, Brandy vs. Monica and Snoop Dogg vs. DMX. An April battle between Babyface vs. Teddy Riley ended abruptly due to audio issues but was completed another

The series was acquired by Triller in 2021, but Swizz Beatz and Timbaland sued the social video platform company for breach of contract. The producers settled with Triller in 2022.

'Our platform stands at the forefront of innovation, and Verzuz defines the essence of an innovative content experience," said X CEO Linda Yaccarino. "As we continue to work with the most exciting voices to bring premium content to X, there is no better fit than this series.

Also:

LOS ANGELES: Last year, country musician **Megan Moroney**'s debut album, "Lucky," was named one of AP's top albums for 2023, for its sharp writing and congenial delivery - a Gen Z songwriter I previously described as possessing Taylor Swift-level acuity. Her pen continues to be her weapon on "Am I Okay?" a heartbreak-filled rollercoaster ride of a sophomore album, filled with quotable kiss-offs and evolved compositions. It releases Friday.

cultural institutions. His predecessory, British Canadian historian James Bradburne who had pushed to finish the Modern, had completed two four-year terms and was ineligible to continue.

The Brera, established in 1809, contains masterpieces by Canova, Caravaggio, Raphael and Hayez.



weeks for a temporary exhibition. Concerts are planned in the outdoor garden this summer. The Brera, with the addition of the Modern, is expected to reach 500,000 visitors this year, up from 466,709 last year and in continual

increase from pre-pandemic highs

Palazzo Citterio has already

drawn 30,000 visitors over three

ROME: Actor Willem Dafoe, a frequent red-carpet visitor to the Venice Film Festival, was named artistic director Monday of the Venice Bien-

of around 410,000. (AP)

nale's theater department. Dafoe, who lives near Rome with his Italian wife, said the ap-

pointment came as a surprise but that he was "born in the theater' and trained initially as a stage

In a statement released by the Biennale, he said the program of his two-year 2025-2026 term would follow his own development, "a sort of exploration of the essence of the body." (AP)

People & Places

People

Daughter reveals

Sexual abuse claims rock Munro's legacy

TORONTO, July 9, (AP): The daughter of the late Nobel laureate Alice Munro has accused the author's second husband, Gerard Fremlin, of sexual abuse, writing that her mother remained with him

because she "loved him too much" to leave.

Munro, who died in May at age 92, was one of the world's most celebrated and beloved writers and a source of ongoing pride for her native Canada, where a reckoning with the author's legacy is now concen-

Andrea Robin Skinner, Munro's daughter with her first husband, James Munro, wrote in an essay published in the Toronto Star that Fremlin sexually assaulted her in the mid-1970s - when she was 9 - and continued to harass and abuse her until she became



a teenager. Skinner, whose essay ran Sunday, wrote that in her 20s she told the author about Fremlin's abuse. Munro left her husband for a time, but eventually returned and was still with him when he died,

"She reacted exactly as I had feared she would, as if she had learned of an infidelity,' Skinner wrote. "She said that she had been 'told too late,

she loved him too much, and that our misogynistic culture was to blame if I expected her to deny her own needs, sacrifice for her children and make up for the failings of men. She was adamant that whatever had happened was between me and my stepfather. It had nothing to do

Sentence

Skinner wrote that she became estranged from her mother and siblings as a result. Shortly after The New York Times' magazine published a 2004 story in which Munro gushed about Fremlin, Skinner decided to contact Ontario Provincial Police and provided them letters in which Fremlin had admitted abusing her, the Toronto Star reported in a companion news story also published Sunday. At 80, he pleaded guilty to one count of indecent assault and received a suspended sentence - one that was not widely reported for nearly two decades.

The news stunned and grieved the literary world, although some readers - and Skinner herself - cited parallels in the author's work, for which she was awarded the Nobel in 2013 and dubbed a "master of

the contemporary short story" by the judges.

Author Margaret Atwood, a fellow Canadian and longtime friend of Munro's, told the Star that she didn't know about Skinner's story until after Fremlin had died and Munro was struggling with

"The kids probably wondered why she stayed with him," Atwood said. "All I can add is that she wasn't very adept at real (practical) life. She wasn't very interested in cooking or gardening or any of that. She found it an interruption, I expect, rather than a therapy, as some do."

The owners of Munro's Books, a prominent independent store in Victoria, British Columbia, issued a statement Monday expressing support for Skinner hearth co-founded the store in 1963 with first husband and Skinner's father, James Munro, who continued to run the store after their 1971 divorce. Two years before his 2016 death, he turned the store over to four staff

"Along with so many readers and writers, we will need time to absorb this news and the impact it may have on the legacy of Alice Munro, whose work and ties to the store we have previously celebrated," the store said in a statement issued Monday.

In Skinner's account, she wrote that she had told her father - with whom she lived for most of the year - of the initial assault, but he told her not to tell her mother and continued to send her to Munro and

"The current store owners have become part of our family's healing, and are modelling a truly positive response to disclosures like Andrea's," reads a statement from Skinner and other family members posted on the store's website. "We wholly support the owners and staff of Munro's Books as they chart a new future.

Although Skinner spent many years estranged from her siblings, they have since reconciled and her family spoke with the Toronto Star in support of Skinner. While they felt the world needed to know of the coverup and that sexual violence must be talked about, the Star reported, Munro's children believe her acclaimed literary reputation is deserved.

Imagination

"I still feel she's such a great writer - she deserved the Nobel," daughter Sheila Munro told the Star. "She devoted her life to it, and she manifested this amazing talent and imagination. And that's all, really, she wanted to do in her life. Get those stories down and get them out."

Sheila Munro, also an author, wrote of her mother in the 2002 book "Lives of Mothers & Daughters: Growing Up With Alice Munro," a project suggested by Alice Munro. Sheila makes no reference to the abuse of Skinner, but does observe that her mother often drew upon her private life and that she struggled to separate Munro's fiction "from the reality of what actually happened."

Munro biographer Robert Thacker noted to The Associated Press that such Munro stories as "Silence" and "Runaway" center on estranged children. In "Vandals," a woman grieves over the loss of a former boyfriend, Ladner, an unstable war veteran who we learn assaulted his young neighbor, Liza.

"When Ladner grabbed Liza and squashed himself against her, she had a sense of deep danger inside him, a mechanical sputtering," Munro wrote, "as if he would exhaust himself in one jab of light, and nothing would be left of but black smoke and burnt smells and frazzled wires.

Thacker, whose "Alice Munro: Writing Her Lives" came out in 2005 - the same year Fremlin was convicted - told the AP that he had long known of Fremlin's abuse but omitted it from his book because it was a "scholarly analysis of her career."

"I expected there to be repercussions one day," said Thacker, who added that he even spoke to the author about it. "I don't want to get into details but it wrecked the family. It was devastating in lots of ways. And it was something that she spoke deeply



Daisy Edgar-Jones poses for photographers upon arrival at the premiere of the film 'Twisters' in London on Monday, July 8. (AP)



Alec Baldwin listens to testimony during a pretrial hearing in Santa Fe, N.M., on Monday, July 8. Baldwin is facing a single charge of involuntary manslaughter in the death of a cinematographer. (AP)

Variety

WASHINGTON: An actor who played a street-brawling newsman in the movie "Anchorman: The Legend of Ron Burgundy' and a pizzeria owner in the television series "Bob's Burgers" pleaded guilty on Monday to interfering with police officers trying to protect the US Capitol from a mob's attack.

Jay Johnston, 55, of Los Angeles, faces a maximum sentence of five years in prison after pleading guilty to civil disorder, a felony. US District Judge Carl Nichols is scheduled to sentence Johnston on Oct. 7.

The estimated sentencing guidelines for Johnston recommend a prison term ranging from eight to 14 months, but the judge isn't bound by that term of his plea agreement with prosecutors.

Johnston's attorney, Stanley Woodward, told his client not to comment to reporters as they left the courtroom.

Johnston, who was arrested last June, is one of more than 1,400 people charged with federal crimes stemming from the Jan 6, 2021, attack on the US Capitol.

Video footage captured Johnston pushing against police and helping rioters who attacked officers guarding an entrance to the Capitol in a tunnel on the Lower West Terrace, according to an FBI agent's affidavit. Johnston held a stolen police shield over his head and passed it to other rioters during the attack on Jan. 6, 2021. the affidavit says. Johnston "was close to the entrance to the tunnel, turned back and signaled for other rioters to come towards the entrance," the agent wrote.

Johnston was the voice of the character Jimmy Pesto on Fox's "Bob's Burgers. The Daily Beast reported in 2021 that Johnston was "banned" from the animated show after the Capitol attack.

Johnston appeared on "Mr. Show with Bob and David," an HBO sketch comedy series that starred **Bob Odenkirk** and David Cross. His credits also include small parts on the television show "Arrested Development" and in the movie "Anchorman," starring Will Ferrell. (AP)

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The honor falls to the new Brera director, Angelo Crespi, who took over in February as part of moves by the far-rightled government to put Italians at the head of key cultural institutions. His predecessory, British Canadian historian **James** Bradburne who had pushed to finish the Modern, had completed two four-year

People

Actor could face 18 months prison

Jury selection begins in Baldwin trial

SANTA FE, N.M., July 9, (AP): Alec Baldwin's trial in the shooting of a cinematographer is set to begin Tuesday with the selection of jurors who will be tasked with deciding whether the actor is guilty of involuntary manslaughter.

Getting chosen to serve in a trial of such a major star accused of such a major crime would be unusual even in Los Angeles or Baldwin's hometown of New York. But it will be essentially an unheard-of experience for those who are picked as jurors in Santa Fe, New Mexico, though the state has increasingly become a hub of Hollywood production in recent years.

Baldwin, 66, could get up to 18 months in prison if jurors unanimously decide he committed the felony when a revolver he was pointing at cinematographer Halyna Hutchins went off, killing her and wounding director Joel Souza during a rehearsal for the Western film "Rust" in October 2021 at Bonanza Creek Ranch, some 18 miles (29 kilometers) from where the trial is being held.

Trigger

Baldwin has said the gun fired accidentally after he followed instructions to point it toward Hutchins, who was behind the camera. Unaware the gun contained a live round, Baldwin said he pulled back the hammer - not the trigger - and it fired.

The star of "30 Rock" and "The Hunt for Red October" made his first appearance in the courtroom on Monday, when Judge Mary Marlowe Summer, in a significant victory for the defense, ruled at a pretrial hearing that Baldwin's role as a co-producer on "Rust" isn't relevant to the trial.

The judge has said that the special circumstances of a celebrity trial shouldn't keep jury selection from moving quickly, and that opening statements should begin Wednesday.

"I'm not worried about being able to pick a jury in one day," Marlowe Summer said. "I think we're going to pick a jury by the afternoon." Special prosecutor Kari Morrissey, however, was dubious that Baldwin's lawyers, with whom she has clashed in the run-up to the trial, would make that possible.

"It is my guess that with this group of defense attorneys, that's not gonna happen," Morrissey said at the hearing. Baldwin attorney Alex Spiro replied,

"I've never not picked a jury in one day. I can't imagine that this would be the first time." Dozens of prospective jurors will be brought into the courtroom for questioning Tuesday morning. Cameras that will carry the rest of the proceedings will be turned off to protect their privacy. Jurors are expected to get the case after a nine-day trial.

Attorneys will be able to request they be dismissed for conflicts or other causes. The defense under state law can dismiss up to five jurors without giving a reason, the prosecution three. More challenges will be allowed when four expected alternates are chosen.

Before Marlowe Sommer's ruling Monday, prosecutors had hoped to highlight Baldwin's safety obligations

A look at Baldwin's career on the eve of 'Rust' shooting trial

LOS ANGELES, July 9, (AP): Hollywood has never known exactly what to do with Alec Baldwin, so it has done a little of everything with

Before the horrific 2021 shooting of cinematographer Halyna Hutchins on the set of the Western "Rust" put his career in question, he took on, and sent up, a wide spectrum of variations of masculinity. He has shifted from playing heroes to scoundrels to thugs to gentle father figures to office alpha males to a

Boss Baby."
He went from star leading man to bit player to scene stealer, at times going years without a major role in a hit film or show. But he has remained a household name for nearly 35 years, largely on the strength of his real-life personality: as an outspoken liberal, occasional hothead, talk-show guest, podcast host, game show host, and the king of all "Saturday Night Live" hosts.

Here's a look at Baldwin's career in and out of Hollywood as he prepares to stand trial for involuntary manslaughter.

Alexander Rae Baldwin III is the eldest of six children of a schoolteacher and football coach who grew up in Massapequa, New York and studied acting at New York University. He made his screen debut at age 22 in 1980 on the longrunning soap opera "The Doctors." where he remained until 1982. In 1984 and 1985 he took a step up with a recurring role on a prime-

time soap, "Knots Landing. Baldwin would break into film in an epic year that included major parts in five major moves. His big-screen breakthrough came opposite Geena Davis and Michael Keaton in "Beetlejuice." But Baldwin's bespectacled, bourgeois husband character in Tim Burton's antic ghost story would not be the norm. His archetypes would emerge in other films. He plays a cheating boyfriend to Melanie Griffith in director Mike Nichols' huge hit romcom "Working Girl," and a brassknuckled, hairy-chested brawler wedded to Michelle Pfeiffer in Jona-than Demme's "Married to the Mob." The studios smelled a movie star.

For a brief moment, Baldwin became a leading man in the mold of Harrison Ford and Tom Cruise. He was the first to play CIA analyst Jack Ryan on screen, in 1990's Cold War submarine thriller, "The Hunt for Red October," a major hit.

on the set as co-producer to bolster an alternative theory of guilt beyond his alleged negligent use of a firearm. They aimed to link Baldwin's behavior to "total disregard or indifference for the safety of others" under the involuntary manslaughter law.

But the prosecution managed other wins Monday. They successfully arBut he would be replaced as Ryan in subsequent films by Ford. "The studio cut my throat," Baldwin said years later.

He instead played Stanley Kowalski in a Broadway revival of "A Streetcar Named Desire." He would get a Tony nomination, and an

Emmy nomination for a TV version. He had a small but unforgetta-ble role in 1992's "Glengarry Glen Ross" as a slick business bigwig who dresses down, chews out and emasculates a group of salesmen, telling them they lacked "brass balls" (while holding a pair in front of his crotch). The role became a cultural touchstone, and an early rendition of the kind of scene-stealing part that would one day become his specialty. Years later, he would parody it as an alpha elf in Santa's workshop on "Saturday Night Live." Baldwin would host the show for the first time in 1990, and go on to do it a record 17 times.

Baldwin's three younger actor brothers began to emerge in his wake. Daniel Baldwin was a reqular on the series "Homicide: Life on the Street" from 1993 to 1995. Billy Baldwin starred opposite Sharon Stone in the 1993 erotic thriller "Sliver." Stephen Baldwin had a major role in the 1995 classic "The Usual Suspects."

The brothers as a group became a cultural phenomenon. When Alicia Silverstone admits Paul Rudd is attractive in 1995's "Clueless," she says he's "kind of a Baldwin."

Meanwhile, Alec Baldwin was expanding the family, and his Hollywood profile, by marrying actor Kim Basinger in 1993. He had starred with her in 1992's "The Marrying Man" and 1994's "The Getaway." Both films flopped at the box office, but Baldwin and Basinger would remain an A-list couple in the public eye for a decade, even playing themselves on "The Simpsons. Another flop came with the final attempt to make Baldwin a blockbuster leading man, 1994's "The Shadow."

Baldwin's career as a movie star flagged in the late 1990s. He starred in director Rob Reiner's "Ghost of Mississippi," but began becoming a bit part specialist, and a popular voice actor, narrating the kids' show "Thomas & Friends" and the Wes Anderson film "The Royal Tenenbaums.'

gued for the exclusion of summary findings from a state workplace safety investigation that placed much of the blame on the film's assistant director, shifting fault away from Baldwin.

And the judge ruled that they could show graphic images from Hutchins' autopsy, and from police lapel cameras during the treatment of her injuries.

terms and was ineligible to continue. (AP)

BAGHDAD: Iraq's Ministry of Culture, Tourism, and Antiquities announced on Monday the successful repatriation of 181 smuggled artifacts from the United States and other countries.

The recovered items include a bronze figurine and eight metal boxes containing ancient skeletons, the ministry said in a statement. These artifacts were originally





smuggled from the Nimrud archaeological site in Nineveh province to Los Angeles

The ministry highlighted the role played by Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia' Al Sudani's visit to the United States in April for securing the return of these artifacts. The ministry also announced the return of many artifacts of different eras, which had been smuggled to countries such as Jordan, Norway, Germany, and Britain. (Xinhua)

Chinese researchers design wearable for instant health monitoring

New wristwatch analyzes sweat for real-time health insights

Study shows aerobics reverse muscle aging in mice

HEFEI, July 9, (Xinhua): Smart wearable devices have evolved with advanced features for a holistic health and fitness experience, monitoring heart rate, tracking step count, calculating calorie intake, and now notifying users when they need electrolyte drinks during exercise with just a flick of the wrist.

Scientists from the Hefei Institutes of Physical Science (HIPS) under the Chinese Academy of Sciences have designed a wristwatch that can measure essential chemicals in body sweat. Their findings were published in the journal ACS Nano.

Sweat contains electrolytes, primarily potassium, sodium and calcium. The balance of these essential minerals is crucial for supporting muscle function, nerve health and regular heartbeat, said Yang Meng, an associate professor at the institute and one of the authors of the study

Electrolytes

Sweating leads to the loss of both water and electrolytes. "Excessive loss of potassium, for instance, can impact

Aerobic exercise alleviates aging skeletal muscle fibrosis

BEIJING, July 9, (Xinhua): Walking in parks or along sidewalks in Chinese cities, it is common to encounter runners or joggers. In addition to promoting physical fitness, they could also be alleviating aging skeletal muscle fibrosis through aerobic exercise.

According to a recent research article published in the Journal of Cachexia, Sarcopenia and Muscle, Chinese researchers have disclosed that aerobic exercise effectively reverses decline in

heart function and neuromuscular

activity. Similarly, the depletion of

sodium ions may result in symptoms

such as fatigue, dizziness and muscle

cramps," Yang said, explaining the

endurance capacity and mitigates muscle atrophy in aged mice.

Aging negatively impacts tissue repair, particularly in skeletal muscle, where the regenerative capacity of muscle stem cells (MuSCs) diminishes with age. Although aerobic exercise is known to attenuate skeletal muscle atrophy, its specific impact on the regenerative and repair capacity of MuSCs remained unclear.

The researchers from the South Chi-

na Normal University exposed mice to moderate-intensity continuous training (MICT) from either nine months to 25 months or 20 months to 25 months, and evaluated the effects of aerobic exercise on MuSCs function and muscle regeneration.

The results showed that the MICT initiated at both nine and 20 months led to a marked increase in running duration and distance, according to the study. Additionally, the MICT resulted in increased skeletal muscle weight and an enhanced cross-sectional area.

Notably, the secretion of connective tissue growth factor increases in the MuSCs aging process, which not only impairs the regenerative capacity of MuSCs, but also leads to skeletal muscle fibrosis.

Aerobic exercise has shown the capacity to lower this harmful effect, and thus it could be useful to promote it among the elderly.

Huang Xingjiu, of the Institute of Solid

trolyte drinks to counteract the loss of energy and replenish it, researchers in the study measured the sweat composition of these chemicals in athletes running long distances on a

The accuracy reached approximately 95 percent when compared to the standard detection method.

"When there are electrolyte abnormalities, the device will remind users to supplement them promptly," said the co-first author Cai Xin. "The aim of developing this device is to provide warnings for electrolyte loss and reduce exercise-related injury risks."

For ordinary people, the conventional electrolyte test requires samples of body fluids taken in hospitals. The new wristwatch has the potential to serve as an alternative to needles for measuring electrolytes.

In addition to offering a non-invasive test, the device allows for real-time monitoring of electrolytes, "which is undoubtedly a significant advancement in human health monitoring," said Xu Han, a physician at the Central Hospital of Bengbu, who was not involved in the study. The next goal of the research team is to design various sensitive membrane materials for monitoring more physiological information, such as glucose and chloride ions.

importance of maintaining a balanced electrolyte level. The wristwatch designed by Yang's

Work friends hard to find

Steps for combatting Voice box transplant helped workplace loneliness

NEW YORK, July 9, (AP): Twice each month, executives at the dating app company Hinge gather for a team meeting. But rather than dive into discussions about metrics or revenue, they begin by simply talking.

For the first 30 minutes of the twohour meeting, these coworkers reveal hopes and anxieties - what they worry about, what they're grateful for, what they're feeling. Even at a company focused on connecting people, forging real relationships in the workplace takes effort, Hinge CEO Justin McLeod told an audience at the South by Southwest conference earlier this year. He was co-presenting at the event with Ann Shoket, whose initiative to combat workplace loneliness is called "10 Minutes to Togetherness.'

As America navigates what Surgeon General Vivek Murthy described last year as a loneliness epidemic, employers and employees across the country are trying to address what for many people is a lack of real friendships at

Remote

The problem of loneliness has been bubbling for decades; Robert D. Putnam documented it in his groundbreaking book "Bowling Alone" nearly a quarter-century ago. Remote work has only intensified the problem, for extroverts and introverts alike, says leadership expert Michael Bungay Stanier, author of "How to Work with (Almost) Anyone."

"People have this desire to be seen and be heard," Bungay Stanier says, but on video calls, the group gets right to the business at hand rather than having the natural, informal interactions of a real room. It reduces people to "little

heads in squares. It's not easy to talk about this lack of friendship at work "because it feels like a shameful confession," Bungay Stanier says. But his clients are beginning to bring up the subject.

Awkward as it may be, these are conversations worth having, according to psychology professor Laurie Santos, creator of Yale University's wellknown class "The Science of Well Be-

In her own presentation at South by Southwest earlier this year, Santos cited research that showed workplace friendships and a sense of belonging

are vital to employees' happiness -and companies' success.

We assume that friendships at work are "a nice-to-have, not a need-to-

But "maybe one of the reasons we're all so disengaged at work, maybe one of the reasons 'quiet quitting' seems so appealing, is that we're actively not investing in the thing that might matter the most for our happiness at work, which is our connection with other people," Santos said.

Attention

more attention to employee health long before the pandemic, often focusing on the physical: adding a gym to the office building or serving healthier food in the cafeteria.

porate spaces

For example, employers might:

Create groups and events to help employees find friends who share their interests. "It could even be something goofy, like an ice cream social for dog lovers, where we're going to teach you how to make healthy ice cream for

During the pandemic, American Express offered online cooking classes that helped employees feel connected and introduced them to coworkers.

have," she said.

Some large companies began paying

Today, more employers "are not just checking boxes, but actually looking at ways to really enhance people's health and well-being," says Suzanne Heidelberger, who has led teams managing real-estate problems for global companies including American Express and Fidelity Investments. She focuses on bringing a hospitality mindset to cor-

Rethink physical spaces with relationships in mind, she says. Some companies are adding staircases, both to help people get more steps and to encourage the "casual collisions" that can lead to good relationships. Some are trying to transform green rooftops created to be environmentally friendly into gathering spaces.

your dog," Heidelberger says.

■ Offer online gatherings as well.

Employees are also seeking answers on their own, notes executive coach Daniel Boscaljon, founder of the Healthy Relationship Academy, which helps organizations build better workplaces. It's not always easy: As much as people crave relationships, he says, many lack strong interpersonal skills.

WASHINGTON, July 9, (AP): A

Massachusetts man has regained his

voice after surgeons removed his

cancerous larynx and, in a pioneer-

ing move, replaced it with a donated

box are extremely rare, and normally

aren't an option for people with ac-

tive cancer. Marty Kedian is only the

third person in the US ever to un-

dergo a total larynx transplant - the

others, years ago, because of injuries - and one of a handful reported

Surgeons at the Mayo Clinic in Ar-

izona offered Kedian the transplant

as part of a new clinical trial aimed at

opening the potentially lifechanging

operation to more patients, including

some with cancer, the most common

Kedian, 59, told The Associated

Press four months after his trans-

plant - still hoarse but able to keep

up an hourlong conversation. "I want

Surgery

the first time he phoned his 82-year-

old mother after the surgery "and she

could hear me. ... That was impor-

The study is small - just nine

more people will be enrolled. But it

may teach scientists best practices

for these complex transplants so

that one day they could be offered

to more people who can't breathe,

swallow or speak on their own be-

cause of a damaged or surgically re-

and very kind of walled off from the rest of the world," said Dr. Da-

vid Lott, Mayo's chair of head and

neck surgery in Phoenix. He started

the study because "my patients tell

me, 'Yeah I may be alive but I'm not

Lott's team reported early results of the surgery Tuesday in the journal

"Patients become very reclusive,

moved larynx.

really living.

tant to me, to talk to my mother.

He became emotional recalling

people to know this can be done."

"People need to keep their voice,"

way to lose a larynx.

worldwide

Transplants of the so-called voice

Although they are not the first to team collects sweat from the skin and analyzes it in real time using a sensor chip with an ion-sensitive membrane. When sweat enters the device, it will

come into contact with the membrane that contains three tubules capable of measuring sodium, potassium and calcium levels, respectively.

invent sweat sensors, the Chinese researchers emphasized the wristwatch's solid interface for long-term reliability.

"It surpasses the stability of many other sensors by consistently monitoring the three ions in human sweat for over six months," said lead researcher State Physics under the HIPS. Since endurance athletes use elec-

a cancer patient speak again ethically as we can," Lott said.

transplants become a viable option. "It isn't a 'one-off," but an opportunity to finally learn from one patient before operating on the next, said Dr. Marshall Strome, who led the 1998 transplant in Cleveland.

Head-and-neck specialists say the

Mayo trial is key to helping larynx

This first attempt in a cancer patient "is the next important step," he

Other options are being studied, noted Dr. Peter Belafsky of UC Davis, who helped perform the 2010 transplant. His patients at high risk of larynx loss record their voice in anticipation of next-generation speech devices that sound like them.

Breathe

But Belafsky said there's "still a shot" for larynx transplants to become more common while cautioning it likely will take years more research. One hurdle has been achieving enough nerve regrowth to breathe without a trach tube.

Kedian was diagnosed with a rare laryngeal cartilage cancer about a decade ago. The Haverhill, Massachusetts, man underwent more than a dozen surgeries, eventually needing a trach tube to help him breathe and swallow - and struggled even to muster a raspy whisper through it. He had to retire on disability. Still the once gregarious Kedian,

known for long conversations with strangers, wouldn't let doctors remove his entire larynx to cure the cancer. He desperately wanted to read bedtime stories to his granddaughter, with his own voice rather than what he called robotic-sounding speech devices.



A rare feat part of a pioneering study

In this photo provided by the Mayo Clinic, Marty Kedian greets his dog, Baxter, on his first trip outside the Mayo Clinic Hospital after his surgery in Phoenix, on March 16, 2024. (AP)

Mayo Clinic Proceedings.

The larynx may be best known as the voice box but it's also vital for breathing and swallowing. Muscular tissue flaps called vocal cords open to let air into the lungs, close to prevent food or drink from going the wrong way - and vibrate when air pushes past them to produce speech.

The first two US larynx transplant recipients - at the Cleveland Clinic in 1998 and the University of California, Davis, in 2010 - had lost their voices to injuries, one from a motorcycle accident and the other damaged by a hospital ventilator.

But cancer is the biggest reason. The American Cancer Society eswill be diagnosed with some form of laryngeal cancer this year. While today many undergo voice-preserving treatment, thousands of people have had their larynx completely removed, breathing through what's called a tracheostomy tube in their neck and struggling to communicate.

timates more than 12,600 people

Although the earlier US recipients achieved near normal speech, doctors haven't embraced these transplants. Partly that's because people can survive without a larynx - while antirejection drugs that suppress the immune system could spark new or recurring tumors.

"We want to be able to push those

Then Kedian's wife Gina tracked down the Mayo study. Lott decided he was a good candidate because his cancer wasn't fast-growing and -- especially important -- Kedian already was taking antirejection drugs for an earlier kidney transplant.



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West Indies seek to spoil his party

England great Anderson keen to finish on a high



Belgium's Jasper Philipsen celebrates as he crosses the finish line ahead of Germany's Pascal Ackermann, (left), Colombia's Fernando Gavira, (second left), and Eritrea's Biniam Girmay, wearing the best sprinter's green jersey, to win the tenth stage of the Tour de France cycling race over 187.3 kilometers (116.4 miles) with start in Orleans and finish in Saint-Amand-Montrond, France. (AP)

Philipsen finally 'triumphs' in sprint finish on Stage 10 of Tour de France

Overall leaders stayed the same

SAINT-AMAND-MON-TROND, France, July 9, (AP): Jasper Philipsen edged a thrilling sprint to win his first stage of this **Tour de France on Tues**day after finishing runner-up twice last week.

Biniam Girmay, winner of two stages already, was runner-up a second time, and Pascal Ackermann was third.

CYCLING

The overall leaders stayed the same. Tadej Pogacar retained the yellow jersey with the same 33 second gap on Remco Evenepoel and more than a minute on two-time defending champion Jonas Vingegaard.

The 10th stage from Orléans to Saint-Amand-Montrond in central France was a flat 187 kilometers (116 miles) without classified climbs, and set the stage for a mass sprint.

Philipsen, the Belgian rider known

Dupont's selection confirmed as French rugby federation announces squads for Paris Games

PARIS, July 9, (AP): Antoine Dupont, Olympian. One of the world's best rugby players will get to use the new epithet after being included in the French sevens squad for the Olympics in Paris starting later this

The 27-year-old Dupont, already one of the most decorated players in the 15-a-side game, started working with the sevens squad earlier this year with the aim of winning an

Olympic gold medal on home soil. He played three sevens world series tournaments for a return of two gold medals and a bronze. He only had to stay healthy through his regular club commitments to have his selection confirmed when the French

for his powerful finishes, finally capitalized. This was his seventh career

rugby federation announced its men's and women's Olympic squads on Monday.

The already high expectations on the French men's squad intensified after it won its first world series title in Madrid last month, beating league-leading Argentina 19-5 in the

This season already the French men won the Los Angeles stop of the world series in March for their first tournament victory in 19 years.

France entered the world series finale in Madrid ranked fifth but peaked at the right time edge twotime Olympic champion Fiji in the semifinals and then Argentina in the

enjoyed a picturesque route, passing

the 500-year-old Château de Cham-

pitch, we have a lot of confidence.' Squads:

recent success: "When he is on the

Dupont's sevens teammate Paulin Riva explained the reason for the

Men: Jean-Pascal Barraque, Antoine Dupont, Théo Forner, Aaron Grandidier Nkanang, Jefferson Lee Joseph, Stephen Parez-edo Martin, Varian Pasquet, Rayan Rebbadj, Paulin Riva, Jordan Sepho, Andy Timo, Antoine Zeghdar.

Women: Anne-Cécile Ciofani, Lili Dezou, Caroline Drouin, Camille Grassineau, Joanna Grisez, Chloé Jacquet, Iän Jason, Carla Neisen, Lou Noel Rivier, Séraphine Okemba, Chloé Pelle, Yolaine Yengo.

Stage 11 on Wednesday will get the riders back climbing again in the Mas-

stage in the last three Tours. Following the first rest day, the race

unfolded without major disruptions despite intermittent showers. The peloton

sif Central mountains.

China overcome Japan to win Asian Women's U20 title

JIANGMEN, China, July 9, (Xinhua): China beat defending champions Japan 3-2 to claim the Asian Women's U20 Volleyball Championships title here on Tuesday, ending an 8-year trophy drought.

China led 13-5 in the last set, before Japan won five straight points to narrow the gap to only three points. After a time-out, China retrieved their determination to earn a match point and cashed in with an ace.

Japan won the first set 25-23 after a close contest, before China put their noses in front by taking straight sets 25-21, 25-17. A must-win set saw Japan stormed to a 25-14 victory to pull the match level.

"It was pretty rocky for us in the beginning, but we started to enjoy



Players of Czech Republic celebrate after winning the final match against Puerto Rico at the FIVB Women's Volleyball Challenger Cup 2024 in Manila, the Philippines. (Xinhua)

the match after adjusting our mentality. It was not easy for us to win the title," China's captain Wang Yidi, who won the MVP of the event said after the match.

China had been waiting for the title for eight years after beating Japan in 2016. China had lost to Japan in the final two years ago.

VOLLEYBALL

"We were fighting as one tonight. Although we experienced up and downs in the match, we won it and we will be more confident. I see many hopes in these girls, in both technical and mental, they are the future," China's coach Kuang Qi

With plenty of stars at the 2024 Oly, France's Marchand may shine brightest

LONDON, July 9, (AP): It doesn't matter if James Anderson takes a bunch of West Indies wickets for England in the first test at Lord's from Wednesday.

The series opener will be Anderson's 188th and last test and he will transition into England's fast-bowling

He was pensioned off by England managing director Rob Key, coach Brendon McCullum and captain Ben Stokes. They met him at a Manchester hotel in April to say he wasn't in their plans for the 2025-26 Ashes in Australia.

This was a month after Anderson returned from India, where he took 10 wickets at an average of 33.50. That series was lost 4-1 but on the last morning of the last test in Dharamsala,

CRICKET

Anderson became the first seamer in history to take 700 wickets.

He spoke then of being in the best shape, liking where his game was at, and being really excited for this summer, when he will turn 42 at the end of

This week, he said he was surprised at how calmly he took the news from Key, McCullum and Stokes. He understood their decision, adding, "I've sort of made peace with that."

Anderson warmed up for his last test by showing his class last week in his first English County appearance for Lancashire. He took 7-35, the best figures in the championship.

His 21-year test career comes full circle at Lord's, where he made his test debut in 2003 against Zimbabwe. Lord's witnessed Anderson's careerbest figures of 7-42 against the West

As one era ends, another could start. Surrey seamer Gus Atkinson and wicketkeeper Jamie Smith have been handed test debuts. Both played white-ball cricket for England last year; Atkinson went to the ODI World Cup.

Chris Woakes returns for his first test since he was the player of the series in last year's Ashes. Stokes was back as an allrounder, allowing for offspinner Shoaib Bashir to make his home test debut after taking 17 wickets in India.

The West Indies plays its first test since the extraordinary eight-run victory over Australia in Brisbane in January, after a 10-wicket thrashing in

Allrounder and former captain Jason Holder was recalled to the squad along



In this file photo, England's James Anderson gestures to the crowd after taking his 700th wicket on the third day of the fifth and final test match between England and India in Dharamshala, India. (AP)

with fast bowler Jayden Seales. St. Kitts and Nevis opening batter Mikyle Louis and fast bowler Jeremiah Louis are the uncapped players in the 15-man squad. Louis replaced an injured Kemar Roach.

In Roach's absence, Alzarri Joseph will lead the pace attack with Jayden Seales and Shamar Joseph, whose 7-68 scuttled the Australians in Brisbane in the second innings. That earned Shamar Joseph in his second test the player of the match and short series.

Shamar Joseph called England retiree Anderson "perfect" as a test player to the Jamaica Gleaner newspaper but "I want to rain on his parade."

Anderson said he was trying hard not to think of his pending forced re-

"The big thing for me this week is wanting to play well, bowl well and get a win," he said. "I'm sure the emotions during the week will change, but right now that's what I'm trying to focus on to stop myself crying.

England Squad: Zak Crawley, Ben Duckett, Ollie Pope, Joe Root, Harry Brook, Ben Stokes (captain), Jamie Smith, Chris Woakes, Gus Atkinson, Shoaib Bashir, James Anderson.

West Indies squad: Kraigg Brathwaite (captain), Alick Athanaze, Joshua Da Silva, Jason Holder, Kavem Hodge, Tevin Imlach, Alzarri Joseph, Shamar Joseph, Mikyle Louis, Zachary McCaskie, Kirk McKenzie, Gudakesh Motie, Jayden Seales, Kevin Sinclair, Jeremiah Louis.

Sport helps us defend ourselves

Palestinian female boxers hold on to their 'dreams'

GAZA, July 9, (Xinhua): Once again, cided to look for her former coach and Halla Ayoub, a 17-year-old Palestinian teammates, as well as boxing gear. boxer, has found her way to the sport despite the setbacks amid the devastating conflict between Israel and armed Palestinian factions.

Before the war, Ayoub and dozens of other female Palestinians had challenged the convention and gender stereotype to join the first-ever female boxing club in Gaza called the Palestinian Center of Boxing for Women.

"I picked up this sport five years ago, as I wanted to prove to our society that women and men can be equal in such sports," she said. "I was so happy when I succeeded in getting a place in the Palestinian National Team, and I would represent my country in international competitions." Ayoub used to practice for 16 hours a week. In late 2023, she could have represented Palestine in an Arabian competition.

But all her hope was dashed as the Israeli army launched a large-scale war on Gaza after Hamas, the Islamist group ruling Gaza, carried out an unprecedented attack on the Israeli towns adjacent to Gaza. Many Palestinian facilities, including sports clubs, were

"Like most of our people, my family and I were forced to be displaced and leave our city to head to the southern parts of Gaza," Ayoub said with a sad voice, adding that "in every displacement journey, I saw my dream shattered in front of my eyes." Ayoub cried over her loss sometimes, but she gathered strength for her dream. Boxing has turned her into a determined one with more self-confidence, and she de-

After efforts, she met her coach and teammates and resumed training in the refugee camp in Mawasi of Khan Younis in the south of Gaza. "Boxing helps us defend ourselves

and enhance self-confidence and is a way to get rid of the negative energy many people suffer from," she said. At first, Osama Ayoub, co-founder

of the club, was hesitant about the training, mainly because people were struggling to survive. But the girls presented their reasons: to get rid of psychological pressures and not to lag behind after the war ends.

The 40-year-old boxing coach fi-

BOXING

nally nodded in agreement. "I feel very proud when I see my students gathering every day and training." He said that at first, "people were surprised, but after a few days, they got used to the scene and started coming to watch the training as a form of entertainment." Halla Ayoub hoped the war would end soon so she could continue practicing and someday participate in international competitions.

'The looks of admiration I see in the eyes of camp residents make me determined to continue on the path that I've started to achieve my dream, which is to become a famous player around the world and to prove to the world that Palestinian girls in Gaza don't give up their dreams easily," she said.

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PARIS, July 9, (AP): Most of the big stars from the last Olympics will be back at

the pool in Paris. Caeleb Dressel. Katie Ledecky. Ariarne Titmus.

Emma McKeon. But the local favorite might just shine brightest of them all.

France's Léon Marchand has drawn comparisons to the great Michael Phelps, a link that was only strength-ened by Phelps' longtime coach, Bob Bowman, overseeing the 22-year-old's rise to prominence. At last summer's world

championships in Fukuoka, Marchand broke Phelps 15-year-old world record in the 400-meter individual medley, to go along with victories in the 200 IM and Phelps' signature events.

200 butterfly - two more of "Leon has several things

that make him a great," Bowman said. "He has speed and he has endurance. So he kind of has the whole package that you want, and so far he's done well under pressure, which is the other piece of that equation. He has it all really

Marchand will also have the home-pool advantage in Paris, where the swimming will be contested in a temporary facility set up inside the La Défense Arena, the 30,000-seat home of the rugby club Racing 92.

The place figures to be especially loud every time Marchand steps up on the "I get to swim the (400)

IM against the world record holder in his home counsaid Carson Foster, the top American hopeful. "That atmosphere is going to be electric.

Marchand, who swam for Bowman at Arizona State, competed in four events at the Tokyo Games, with a best showing of sixth in the 400 individual medley. But he emerged as one

of the sport's rising stars at the 2022 world championships in Budapest, and his performance the following year in Fukuoka only raised the stakes heading into his home-country Olympics.

"When I came back from Tokyo, I was like, 'Damn, this is like a game-changer. Now I can actually beat those guys pretty soon," Marchand said. "I know I can train better. I know I

1970s that was powered by

can improve this." Swimming has faced many doping scandals over the years, going all the way back to the East Germans' rise to prominence in the

state-sponsored doping. Now, all eyes are on the

Chinese after reports that nearly two dozen of their top swimmers tested positive for banned substances ahead of the Tokyo Olympics but were allowed to compete. Five of those swimmers went on to win medals, including three golds.

It was also revealed that three of those same Chinese swimmers had previously tested positive for a different substance but faced no ramifications.

Ledecky said many swimmers have lost faith in the World Anti-Doping Agency and can't help but wonder if the competition in Paris will be fair.

Phelps, who won a record 23 gold medals during his career, went before the U.S. Congress to express

his concerns

"It is clear to me that any attempts of reform at WADA have fallen short, and there are still deeply rooted, systemic problems that prove detrimental to the integrity of international sports and athletes' right to fair competition, time and time again," he said.

The United States and Australia have long been the world's most prominent swimming nations, fueling a rivalry that will heat up again in Paris.

While the Americans traditionally have the deepest team, the Aussies have proven to be formidable foes in recent years - especially on the women's side.

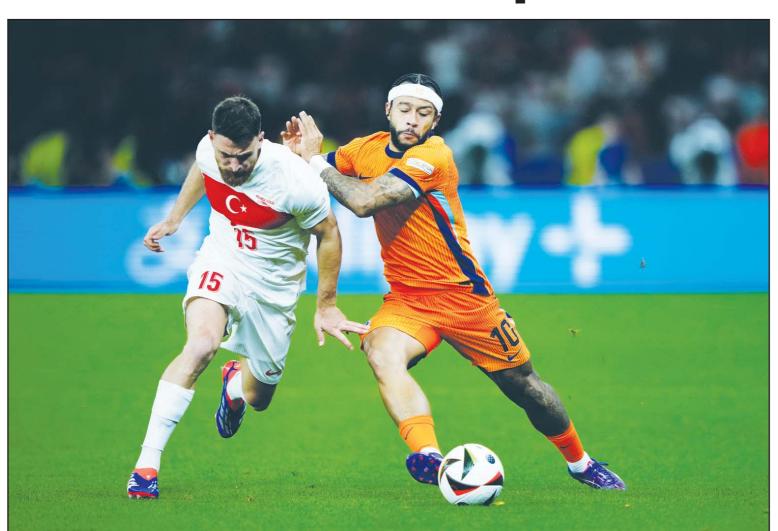
At the 2023 worlds, the team from Down Under captured 13 gold medals in swimming. The U.S. won seven, though it did lead the

overall medals table 38-25 Mollie O'Callaghan and Kaylee McKeown each won a pair of gold medals in Fukuoka, Titmus knocked off Ledecky again in the 400 freestyle, and the Aussies bested the Americans in both freestyle relays. Australia currently holds

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England play Netherlands aiming for back-to-back European finals



Turkey's Salih Ozcan, (left), vies for the ball with Memphis Depay of the Netherlands, during a quarterfinal match between the Netherlands and Turkey at the Euro 2024 soccer tournament in Berlin, Germany. (AP)

Shaw says he's fit to start against Dutch if Southgate picks him

DORTMUND, Germany, July 9, (AP): England can reach back-to-back European **Champion**ship finals when it meets the Netherlands in Dortmund in the second semifinal. The winner plays **Spain or France in Sun**day's final.

Both teams conceded the opening goal in their quarterfinals before coming back to win, with England beating Switzerland in a penalty shootout after a 1-1 draw and the Netherlands winning 2-1 against Turkey.

After a win on penalties in his 100th game in charge of England, manager Gareth Southgate defending his often-cautious tactics as the kind of "streetwise" style successful teams use. The backlash from England fans, including some who threw plastic cups at him after a group-stage game, is "quite difficult" to deal with, he added.

The Netherlands will be by far the highest-ranked team England has faced after group games with Serbia, Denmark and Slovenia, followed by knockout games with Slovakia and Switzerland.

The referee for the game is Felix Zwayer, who once had ties to a match-fixing scandal in Germany. England midfielder Jude Bellingham was fined 40,000 euros (\$43,400) in 2021 while playing for Borussia Dortmund for criticizing Zwayer.

SOCCER

England has relied on the rightfooted Kieran Trippier at left wing back, but his tendency to cut inside has meant England has made little use of the left wing all tournament. Leftfooted Luke Shaw came off the bench against Switzerland for his first minutes since February after injury. Shaw says he's fit to start against the Netherlands if Southgate picks him.

Southgate has to choose whether to stick with Ezri Konsa in the center of defense after he replaced the then-suspended Marc Guéhi against Switzerland. Guéhi is eligible again.

There's scrutiny of Harry Kane's fitness after the England captain went off with cramp in extra time against Switzerland. Ivan Toney came off the bench and scored one of England's five successful penalties in the shootout.

Netherlands coach Ronald Koeman could keep his lineup unchanged for the third game in a row, with Memphis Depay starting alongside Cody Gakpo and Steven Bergwijn up front.

England has played a full hour more than the Netherlands in the last 10 days, after beating Slovakia in extra time and then Switzerland on penalties. The Dutch wrapped up their wins over Romania and Turkey without needing extra time.

The Netherlands scored the opening goal in only one of its five games so far at Euro 2024, against Romania in the last 16. England last scored the opening goal against Denmark in the group stage.

Al Arabi postpone fifth professional signing to Sept

By Hassan Musa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: The technical and administrative staff at Al Arabi has decided to delay signing a fifth professional plvayer until September, just before the summer transfer window closes.

Al Arabi's current roster includes four foreign players: Nigerian Anayo Iweala, Algerians Ahmed Khalidi and Sofiane Bouchard, and Moroccan Hamza Khaba.

The club has opted not to renew the

contracts of the Algerian trio Imad Eddine Boubacar, Tunisian Ayman, and Moroccan Walid Sabbar. Al Arabi plans to select its fifth for-

eign player from Asia after assessing the team's needs during its training camp abroad in mid-July.

Training continues at Sabah Al-Salem Stadium before the team heads to Bosnia on July 18 for their pre-season

Players Bandar Al-Salama and Hassan Hamdan are completing rehabilitation and strength training at the Aspire Acad-



Players intensify training their training session.

Bellamy hired as Wales coach

CARDIFF, Wales, July 9, (AP): Former Wales captain Craig Bellamy was hired to coach the national team until

2028 on Tuesday. "It's the proudest moment of my career," said Bellamy, who retired from playing in 2014. "It was always my

ultimate dream.' Bellamy, who was a pacy striker with Liverpool, Manchester City and Newcastle, has most recently been assistant coach at Burnley in the English Premier League. This will be his first senior coaching role.

He played 78 times for Wales from 1998-2014, captaining the team from

Bellamy's first game in charge will be against Turkey in the Nations League. Wales has been without a coach

since the departure of Robert Page. who was fired in June after failing to qualify the team for the European Championship.

Page did lead Wales to the 2022 World Cup, the first time the national team played in that tournament since

The Netherlands hasn't reached a European Championship final since it won the tournament in 1988 and was last a semifinalist in 2004.

England's first shot on target against Switzerland was Bukayo Saka's goal to level the score in the 80th minute. One round earlier, Bellingham's spectacular overhead kick was England's first shot on target. That came in the fifth minute of second-half added time.

Dutch forward Gakpo is the topscoring player left at Euro 2024 with three goals. What was initially thought to be a fourth against Turkey was instead ruled to be an own-goal. Kane and Bellingham are England's top scorers with two.

"I don't really understand the criticism. What he's done for the country, for us as players as well, he really took us to the next level ... I've got a lot to thank him for because he showed a lot of faith and trust in picking me when he didn't have to." England defender Luke Shaw on

manager Gareth Southgate. "Hopefully it's us that will have the ball more than England. So it's more England that's running. I expect a high intensity game." Netherlands defender Micky van



England's goalkeeper Jordan Pickford, completes a training session in Blankenhain, Germany ahead of the semifinal match against The Netherlands at the Euro 2024 soccer tournament. (AP)

emy in Qatar. They are expected to join

the team in Bosnia by the end of July. Al Arabi aims to strengthen its squad to compete for local titles after a trophyless season. The team also seeks to achieve notable results in the Asian Challenge Cup, representing Kuwait in the tournament.

SOCCER

Participating clubs include Al-Seeb (Oman), Al-Futwa (Syria), Hilal Al-Quds (Palestine), Arkadag (Turkmenistan), Bashundhara Kings (Bangladesh), Mazaya (Maldives), a Lebanese representative, and two teams from Anna (Kyrgyzstan), Atak (Afghanistan), Church Boys United (Nepal), and Barrow (Bhutan), plus two teams eliminated from the AFC Champions League 2 preliminary round from the West Region.

Al Arabi awaits the Challenge Cup group stage draw on August 22. The group matches will take place from October 26 to November 2, with the quarter-finals' first legs on March 5-6, 2025, and second legs on March 12-13. The semi-finals will be held on April 9-10 and April 16-17, with the final set for May 10, 2025.

Best of the Rest

Biuk completes transfer: Croatian forward Stipe Biuk has completed a transfer from Los Angeles in Major League Soccer to Spanish side Real Valladolid.

MLS said in a statement that Valladolid exercised an option to acquire the 21-year-old who had been at Valladolid on loan since January and helped the team earn promotion to La Liga.

He moved to Los Angeles from Croatia's Hajduk Split in 2022 on a four-year-contract. He debuted for Hajduk at age 17 and played at all youth levels for Croatia. (AP)

Celta Vigo sign Marc Vidal: Spanish La Liga side Celta Vigo have completed the signing of Barcelona B-team goalkeeper, Marc Vidal

The 24-year-old, who made 25 appearances for Barcelona B in the third tier of the Spanish game (RFEF I) last season, has agreed to a four-year deal with the team from the northwest of Spain.

Vidal spent last season on loan at Barca B from second division Andorra, after playing six times for them in the previous season. However, Andorra's relegation at the end of the campaign meant they were willing to release him from the remaining year of his contract.

"I'm very happy to be here (...) said Vidal on the Celta website, highlighting that the club's style of playing from the back fitted into his game. (Xinhua)

Diaz set to join Corinthians: Corinthians are poised to appoint Argentine Ramon Diaz as their

manager for the rest of the 2024 Brazilian football season, news outlet Globo Esporte said on Monday. The 64-year-old has reached an

in-principle agreement and could

be in the Corinthians for the home clash against Criciuma next Tues-Corinthians have been searching for a new manager since sack-

(Xinhua)

ing Antonio Oliveira last week.

Khaitan sign Brazilian star Fernando for new season

By Hassan Musa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: Khaitan Club has signed Brazilian player Luis Fernando to bolster the team for the new season.

Fernando marks Khaitan's first foreign player acquisition, while the technical staff, led by Romanian coach Florin Matrock, is currently reviewing several professional candidates to select the best fit for the team.

SOCCER

Notably, Khaitan released all its foreign players last season and is now seeking to attract higher-caliber talent before heading to their foreign camp in

Khaitan competes in the Premier League, having finished eighth in the standings last season.

In related news, Al-Fahaheel has strengthened its squad by signing former Khaitan goalkeeper Ahmed Al-Dosari on a free transfer for one year.



Fernando with an official.

Al-Fahaheel has also secured contracts with its foreign players, renewing deals with Brazilian strikers Vitor da Silva, Rodrigo Yuri, and William Barros, as well as Ivory Coast striker Ado Robben.

Additionally, Al-Fahaheel has signed Abdullah Mawi and Mishal Fawaz and renewed contracts with most of its local players, following the recommendations of their technical staff led by Syrian coach Firas Al-Khatib.

Ronaldo aims to play with his son

RIYADH, July 9: Adrian Mutu, the former Juventus, Chelsea, and Romanian national team player, recently commented that Cristiano Ronaldo, the star of Al Nassr and the Portuguese national team, is determined to stay on the field until he can play an official match alongside his son, Cristiano Junior.

Since joining Al Nassr in early 2023, Ronaldo has made a significant impact, becoming the top scorer last season in Saudi Arabia with a record 35 goals.

Mutu, who has played in England, Italy, and France, stated, "Ronaldo is committed to playing at least one match with his son, and this ambition

keeps him motivated on the field." Cristiano Junior, who is part of Al Nassr's youth teams, has expressed his desire to play with his father. In a previous interview, Ronaldo shared, "My son tells me, 'Don't retire yet, wait a few years until we can play together.'

SOCCER

Ronaldo, who recently reached the quarter-finals of the European Championship with Portugal before losing to France on penalties, announced that this was his last European tournament with the national team.



Cristiano Ronaldo with his family.

'She's the best'

US team has 2 goals for Paris: win gold and see Simone Biles

LAS VEGAS, July 9, (AP): Bam Adebayo has two primary goals to accomplish at the Paris Olympics. The first one is obvious: a gold medal.

The second one: getting a picture

with Simone Biles. Among Biles' biggest fans - literally - going into the Paris Games is a group of fellow Olympians, some of them more than 2 feet taller than she is, most of whom have never been to any sort of gymnastics meet in their lives. But make no mistake: The U.S. men's basketball team loves her.

"She's the best," three-time Olympic medalist LeBron James said. "It's that simple. She's the best.'

It speaks to the power of Biles that, on an American roster with James and Kevin Durant and Stephen Curry and countless other greats from all sides of the sporting world, she's not only the face of the U.S. Olympic Team - but it could be argued that she's the face of the Paris Gmes, the most dominant and most captivating athlete in the world right now. Biles is the most decorated gymnast ever, with 37 medals from Olympic and world championship competitions.

BASKETBALL

And when the U.S. basketball players can be there to watch her in Paris, they will be. If the schedules align on the basketball off days - and there are opportunities, such as the Aug. 1 women's all-around final they'll be figuring out ways to get tickets.

"I heard it's really expensive to get in," said U.S. guard Tyrese Haliburton. whose five-year, \$245 million contract with the Indiana Pacers begins at the start of the next NBA season. "But I think I can make that work.'

They feel Biles is worth it.

At 4-foot-8, she could probably dunk a basketball if she thought about it and came up with some super-creative way to make it happen. At last month's U.S. Olympic trials in Minneapolis, Biles reached a height of 12 feet - according to NBC - during the first tumbling pass of her floor routine. A basketball rim is 10 feet off the

"To be that good - well, excuse me, to be that great - and she still keeps breaking barriers," Adebayo said. "To be able to see that just one time and hopefully get a picture with her, it'd mean a lot because she's done a lot for not only the faces of us but for her sport as a whole.'

U.S. guard Devin Booker will never have the most gold medals on his block; one of his neighbors in Phoenix just happens to be 23-time Olympic swimming champion Michael Phelps. That's the most golds in Olympic his-

Biles has seven Olympic medals, tying the most by any U.S. gymnast. And if Booker can be there to see her break



Golden State Warriors' Ethan Bolden (28) looks to pass against Los Angeles Lakers' Tommy Kuhse (31) during an NBA summer league basketball game in San Francisco. (AP)

that record, count him in.
"It's really inspiring," said Booker, who was part of the team at the Tokyo Olympics when the rules of the pandemic made it extremely difficult for athletes to attend other competitions. "That's another thing I missed last go-round. I wasn't able to watch any other events or see any other countries or anything. I'll be there in full support if I have the time and the schedule matches up.

Another thing that makes the basketball team marvel at Biles is her lon-

The last 12 Olympic all-around competitions in women's gymnastics have been won by teenagers; Biles was 19 when she won gold at the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Games. She's 27 now. She'd be the second-oldest Olympic women's all-around champion ever if she wins in Paris.

With the expectation that this will be her last games, Durant is clear: "I've got to go see that," he said.

"I was talking to a gymnast the other day and I didn't know their peak is from like 15 to like 18 or 19 or something like that," Durant said. "So, for her to be at that age and still elite, of course, yeah, I want to go check her out. I've always been a fan of what she was doing. Introduced me to that sport, really. I wasn't really paying attention much until she started doing her thing. ... Simone is somebody who set the tone for what a champion, an Olympian, a winner in life should be.

Biles still being the world's best at 27, in her sport, makes about as much sense as a 39-year-old entering his 22nd NBA season and signing \$100 million contracts to keep going and still playing at an extremely high level. James sees the parallel between their career paths.



Novak Diokovic of Serbia plays a backhand return to Hulger Rune of Denmark during their fourth round match at the Wimbledon tennis championships in London. (AP)

Sports

Latest sports scores at — http://sports.arabtimesonline.com

Vekic reaches first Grand Slam semifinal

Nole moves closer to another title

LONDON, July 9, (AP): Donna Vekic persevered to win the biggest match of her career.

The 28-year-old Croatian, slowed in recent years by injuries, reached her first Grand Slam semifinal in her 43rd appearance at a major tournament by beating qualifier Lulu Sun 5-7, 6-4, 6-1 at Wimbledon on Tuesday.

"I felt like I was dying out there, the first two sets. But I just kept going, hoping to have a chance and it came in the end," Vekic said in an on-court interview.

Vekic becomes the second woman representing Croatia to reach the last four at the All England Club, after Mirjana Lucic in 1999.

The 23-year-old Sun, who played college tennis at the University of Texas, was making her debut at the grass-court tournament and is the first player from New Zealand to reach the Wimbledon quarterfinals in the Open

"It was a really tough match, she played unbelievable," said Vekic, who had knee surgery in 2021. "She really pushed me to my limits.

Serving for the second set at 5-3, Vekic committed five double-faults to help Sun break, but Vekic broke right back to force a deciding set, which the veteran player dominated.

Novak Djokovic is just one example of a superstar athlete who manages to find motivation wherever possible. Serena Williams, Michael Jordan and Tom Brady are others who come to mind.

With Djokovic, it often derives from - or at least his perception that there are crowds who are against him. At Wimbledon, the 24-time Grand Slam champion was certain that people in the stands were drawing out the pronunciation of his opponent's last name to sound like they were booing ... and Djokovic, to use a meme-generating phrase associated with Jordan, took that personally.

He objected to the "disrespect" he thought was being directed his way at Centre Court on Monday night while moving a step closer to an eighth title at the All England Club.

"I played in much more hostile environments, trust me," Djokovic told the rowdiest folks there. "You guys can't touch me."

It's not the first time Djokovic was riled up by spectators cheering against him - he famously described pretending chants of "Roger! Roger!" (as in Federer) were actually his own twosyllable name, "Novak! Novak!" - and probably won't be the last.

TENNIS

Diokovic, who will be back on Centre Court on Wednesday against Alex de Minaur, turns it into fuel.

"Some of the greatest athletes of all time feel slighted a lot. They use it to give them inspiration: 'I'm going to beat you,"" James Blake, a former professional player who reached No. 4 in the rankings, said Tuesday. "In the grand scheme of things, what went on yesterday wasn't a huge deal. But he used it for motivation, so good for him. I'm sure it's not easy every day. You're the greatest of all-time already and you want to push yourself to beat someone that's fired up to play you. So you use whatever you can use.

As 2003 Wimbledon runner-up Mark Philippoussis described it, Djokovic "wants to hear 'boo,' to be honest with you, because it makes him play better. If I were to play him, I'd just give him compliments on a change



Kuwaiti Ambassador to Amsterdam Ali Al-Dhafiri with the squash delegation.

Kuwaiti Ambassador honors squash delegation in Amsterdam

The Kuwaiti Ambassador to Amsterdam, Ali Al-Dhafiri, hosted a luncheon in honor of the Kuwaiti Squash Association delegation, led by Board Member Adel Al-Gharib, and the players' coach who participated in the Dutch International Champi-

Djokovic was asked after his straight-set victory over Holger Rune

"Boooooo!" - in the fourth round Monday whether there's anything that could be done about over-the-top

He said he doesn't think so and

There are those who like that ele-

"It's kind of good, too, when you

former top-10 player Alicia

"Often, it's silent, but (players) have

see emotion from players, when some-

one gets upset or annoyed. It's theater," former top-10 player Alicia

to take a bit of the noise and the vocal

fans at the same time. Maybe if it was

the U.S. Open, no one would notice as

much, because we're so used to it being so loud," Molik said. "But at

Wimbledon, there's a bit more of a

hush, isn't there? So probably every

word muttered is a little magnified

to what was being said in the tourna-

ment's main stadium on Monday was

Alexander Zverev, the two-time

major finalist who was wasted a two-

Another player who was sensitive

acknowledged that ticket-holders can

support whichever player they want.

"Ruuuuuune!"

interjections from the seats.

ment of the sport.

Molik said.

of ends."

onship, which concluded yesterday. Among the attendees were embassy members Sheikh Jaber Al-Sabah and Walid Al-Muneis.

During the event, delegation head Al-Ghareeb presented a commemorative shield to Ambassador

Al-Dhafiri, expressing gratitude for the warm reception and continuous support from the delegation's arrival in Amsterdam to the last day, as well as the luncheon invitation. highlighting the ambassador's role in boosting the players' morale.

The delegation departed the Netherlands yesterday, heading to Houston, USA, to participate in the Junior World Cup. This will be preceded by a four-day training camp, with the tournament concluding on the 24th of this month.



Taylor Fritz of the United States plays a backhand return to Alexander Zverev of Germany during their fourth round match at the Wimbledon tennis championships in London. (AP)

Al-Khamili praises Kuwait's junior team at the 'Arab Championship'

By Khaled El Anzi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: Nayef Al-Khamili, Assistant Secretary of the Kuwait Volleyball Association and head of the delegation for the national junior team participating in the Arab Championship, confirmed that the participation of the junior team has been fruitful and beneficial so far.

He stated, "We are competing in the Arab Championship for junior volleyball in Jordan with a team playing in

VOLLEYBALL

its first international tournament. These young and talented players need experience and development to ensure a strong future performance.

Al-Khamili emphasized that the aim of participating in this championship was to acclimate the players to the atmosphere of intense matches, eliminate their fear, and help them gain valuable experience. This preparation is intended to ensure these talents eventually secure a place in the senior national team.

He also mentioned that the Kuwait Volleyball Association is dedicated to developing the junior and youth national teams, as they are the foundation of the senior national team. He praised the players' discipline and adherence to the instructions from the technical and administrative staff during the tournament.

The team began the Arab Championship with a 0-3 loss to Saudi Arabia, then defeated Iraq 3-0, followed by losses to Jordan 2-3 and Bahrain 0-3.

"Al-Azraq" will face the Libyan national team today and will conclude the tournament with a match against Qatar tomorrow. Additionally, Bahrain will play against Iraq, and Jordan will compete against Saudi Arabia.

Bahrain currently leads the team standings with 13 points, followed by Saudi Arabia with 11, Libya with 9, Jordan with 5, Kuwait with 4, Iraq with 3, and Qatar with no points.



Nayef Al-Khamili, the head of the delegation with the technical team.



Ghazi Al-Otaibi

set lead and was beaten in five by Taylor Fritz.

When their match ended, Zverev complained to Fritz about things he heard coming from the American's guest box - not his coaches, but from people "that are not maybe from the tennis world, that are not maybe (used to) watching every single match; they

were a bit over the top."
Unlike Djokovic, Zverev wasn't able to enjoy getting the last word in the form of a victory

Kuwait U-18 team 'prepares' for Cup qualifiers in Istanbul

By Khaled El Anzi Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: The Under-18 Blue Youth Basketball team was departing this morning for Istanbul, Turkey, where it will undergo a 15-day external training camp in preparation for the Asian Cup qualifiers, "Zone Gulf." The qualifiers will be hosted by Kuwait at the Basketball Association hall in the Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Complex

from July 29th to August 2nd. Leading the national youth basketball delegation is Ghazi Al-Otaibi. The team includes Mohsen Al-Mutairi, Mishal Muhammad Adarian, with Salman Ramadan as coach. Khaled Al-Qallaf as assistant coach, Abdulaziz Al-Mawli as team manager, and 14 players: Ahmed Al-Rashid, Adam Asad, Hamza Asad, Rashid Al-Rashid, Talal Fahd, Abdulaziz Al-Qattan, Abdulaziz Al-Muslim, Adnan Dhabih, Ali Al-Shehab, Omar Al-Issa, Muhammad Al-Dahes, Muhammad Al-Shammari,

Adel Al-Sayed, and Wael Al-Anzi.

During the Turkish camp, the team will participate in approximately five trial matches. The technical staff will assess the players' performances to fi-nalize a roster of 12 players who will compete in the Asian qualifiers.

Ghazi Al-Otaibi expressed the team's ambition to secure a spot in the Asian Cup finals in Amman, Jordan, scheduled for early September.

BASKETBALL

He acknowledged the tough competition within the Gulf region due to the teams' closely matched levels but affirmed confidence in the players and administrative support to achieve their

Al-Otaibi also noted that the team will engage in five trial matches during the training camp to hone their skills progressively in preparation for the

'We will win again'

Brazil hope Neymar and history will bring fresh hope

SAO PAULO, July 9, (AP): When Brazil was knocked out of the Copa America quarterfinals by Uruguay on Saturday night in Las Vegas, Neymar wept for his distressed teammates while at a samba concert in Brazil. The squad and its all-time leading

scorer weren't all that focused on the Copa when it started, but they will desperately need each other in two years if they want a different outcome at the next World Cup.

So far, there are few signs Brazil and Neymar will re-engage in time to make a meaningful difference.

Neymar was never going to the Copa after he ruptured the ACL in his left knee last October. Vinicius Junior, Brazil's top scorer in the Copa with two, missed the Uruguay quarterfinal

SOCCER

because of a suspension. And teenage sensation Endrick didn't find the net during the tournament.

Expectations of Brazil winning a first Copa in five years were low. Not with the team lying sixth in South America World Cup qualifying, not without Neymar, and not with World Cup champion Argentina lying in wait. But a goal-less draw with Costa Rica, getting outplayed by Colombia, and failing to score against 10-man Uruguay was worse than expected.

"It is not the first time that they say we are finished, but believe it, we will win again," the Brazilian Football Confederation said on its social media channels on Monday, in a rare public acknowledgement of the squad's shortcomings. "We are the national team that has won the most in the history of the game. But losing is also part of our history.

Brazilian pundits, former footballers and analysts say the team can regroup, but wonder whether coach Dorival Júnior - who has had the job only since January - is the right man to lead that process.

They also regard Neymar as wast-



Players of Brazil embrace during a penalty shootout against Uruguay in their Copa America quarterfinal soccer match in Las Vegas. (AP)

ing his talent in Saudi Arabia far from the big leagues and overly focused on his private life. They also point to Brazil wasting a full year under interim coach Fernando Diniz, allegedly because CBF executives were waiting for Carlo Ancelotti to quit Real Madrid.

"We need to speed it up after this Copa America because we are starting (World Cup preparations) now," said TV Globo pundit Júnior, who played for Brazil's 1982 World Cup team. "France has the same coach for years, many of the same players. Spain was very much starting like we were and now they are ahead. Argentina is aging, but still very hard to beat. Brazil is dropping well be-

Nostalgic fans point to 2001 to believe Brazil can turn things around quickly. That year, Brazil under new coach Luiz Felipe Scolari was dumped from the Copa quarterfinals by Honduras. That embarrassment made supporters believe Brazil had no hope for the 2002 World Cup in Japan and South Korea.

Brazil's then-star Ronaldo missed that Copa but, along with a team overhaul, recovered from his second ACL injury to lead the team to its fifth World Cup star.

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