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## **DEGREE CONDITION FOR EXPAT FAMILY VISA SCRAPPED** Filipino skilled worker hiring resumes

Philippines implements immediate circular for recruitment to Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, July 15: The Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) in the Philippines recently issued a circular on the resumption of the recruitment of Filipino professional and skilled workers bound for Kuwait.

The Arab Times obtained a copy of Memorandum Circular No. 01 Series of 2024 on the accreditation mechanism, required documents, processing of contracts, and ways of protecting the workers.

According to the circular, "the existing procedures under Part III Rule 1 of the 2023 DMW Rules and Regulations Governing the Recruitment and Employment of Landbased Overseas Filipino Workers for the verification of accreditation documents, approval and revalidation of job orders of foreign employers/principal, foreign recruitment agency (FRA) and onsite accreditation outlined under Memorandum Circular No. 16, Series of 2022 are hereby implemented." The circular enumerated the necessary documents for "the processing and issuance of Overseas Employment Clearance (OECs)" for the abovementioned workers as follows:

1. Accreditation Certificate with approved job order issued by the Migrant Workers Office (MWO) in Kuwait as registered by the Landbased Accreditation Bureau (LAB) in the system;

2. Master employment contract duly verified by the MWO-Kuwait;

3. Copies of the worker's employment documents such as valid passport, employment visa or work permit, certificate of medical fitness, and certificate of attendance to the required employment orientation briefing.

On the processing of contracts, the circular explained that "the qualified Licensed Recruitment Agency (LRA) will be

sional and skilled workers and pay the fees for the issuance of

the OEC. The circular includes a stipulation on protecting the workers; indicating that employers who wish to hire professional and skilled workers from the Philippines should have no welfare

cases record and this must be certified by the MWO in Kuwait. It also stipulates the formation of a Joint Technical Working Group, whose members are from the concerned authorities in Kuwait and the Philippines. The group will "monitor, discuss and address issues and concerns" of

The DMW affirmed that this circular is effective immediately, adding that it will issue another set of guidelines for the resumption of the recruitment of domestic workers from the Philippines.

both the employers and employ-

In other news, Al-Seyassah daily reported that the Ministry of Interior on Monday decided to cancel the university degree condition for expatriates to apply for a family visa.

Sources explained that based on the decision, expatriates are allowed to bring their wives and children under the age of 14 to the country without the condition of having a university de-

Last January, the ministry issued a directive for the residency affairs departments in various governorates to start receiving family visa applications according to new controls and conditions as per the instruction of First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior and Defense Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousuf Al-



### Nationalize jobs and make them rewarding

By Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

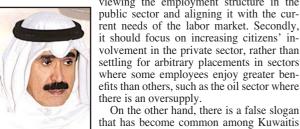
THE nationalization of jobs is a crucial matter for any country, due to which it must work on achieving this goal.

Article 26 of the Kuwaiti Constitution stipulates that, "(1) Public office is a national service entrusted to those who hold it. Public officials, in the exercise of their duties, shall aim at the public interest. (2) Foreigners may not hold public offices except in the cases specified by law.

Unfortunately, this article has been suspended for decades due to chaotic practices in employing non-Kuwaitis. If a non-citizen is needed for a task, it is considered temporary rather than per-

Therefore, the government must address this issue by first re-

**Opinion** 



Al-Jarallah

viewing the employment structure in the public sector and aligning it with the current needs of the labor market. Secondly, it should focus on increasing citizens' involvement in the private sector, rather than settling for arbitrary placements in sectors where some employees enjoy greater benefits than others, such as the oil sector where there is an oversupply.

that has become common among Kuwaitis - "A Kuwaiti does not work in this or that profession, and he dislikes it", but the truth

The brief period of the invasion had revealed that citizens are capable of working in various professions. We saw citizens working as bakers, barbers, mechanics, and in other occupations during that time.

This opportunity has not been exploited over the past three decades. What is worse is that the use of non-Kuwaitis has expanded to the point where the government employment apparatus is saturated with expatriates.

Is it reasonable that a small country with few citizens, such as Kuwait with 1.518 million citizens, needs 2.858 million expatriate workers to serve them?

While successive governments promoted Kuwaitization, they undermined it by allowing recruitment agencies to place non-Kuwaiti employees who had resigned from the public sector into the positions they were occupying, thereby increasing the financial In this regard, I remember an event in the Sultanate of Oman,

which was attended by the late Sultan Qaboos bin Saeed. During the horse parade, some of the horses had defecated. A Filipino worker emerged to clean it, but as soon as the Sultan saw him, he asked an aide, "Why was the worker not Omani?" The official replied that the worker's salary is approximately

USD 300, and a citizen will not work in this profession, as he expects a salary of about USD 1,000. He therefore mandated that Omanis should receive competitive salaries across all professions.

This is why today you see national workers throughout Oman. There are Omanis working as taxi drivers, in hotels and other such

Also in Bahrain, citizens work in all professions, and there is nothing wrong with honorable work.

In Saudi Arabia, following the Saudization decision, the percentage of Saudis working in all professions increased to about 70 percent. Women also started working in many professions. There are even taxi drivers. The standard of living of Saudis has thus

Kuwait's problem is multi-faceted. First is the multiplicity of job cadres in the public sector. Second, there is no vision for the localization of professions and jobs. Thirdly, there are no incentives for citizens to work in various public and private sectors. Fourth is the indiscriminate support for national workers and lack of oversight. Fifth is the government's lack of seriousness in all

Because of all this, the state will continue to suffer. If the current government is serious about addressing the crisis of depletion of public reserves, it must look into these problems and develop serious solutions to them.

The nationalization of jobs and professions is the first step towards independence and strength for any country.

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The Arab Times had the distinct honor of speaking with His Excellency Miguel Moro Aguilar, the outgoing Spanish Ambassador to the of Kuwait. State Over the past four years, His Excellency has played a pivotal role in strengthening bilateral relations between Spain and Kuwait, fostering economic, cultural, educasocial and tional, diplomatic ties. - See Page 11





KRCS volunteers carry food parcels to the displaced Palestinians in Khan Yunis' Al-Mawasi neighborhood, southern Gaza.

### **KRCS** sends urgent relief to displaced Gazans

Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) started on Monday its urgent relief aid project implementation to Palestinians by distributing necessities to thousands of displaced people in Khan Yunis' Al-

Mawasi neighborhood, southern Gaza. Director General of Wafaa Capacity executing body, Muhaisen Al-Atawna said to KUNA , that the project comes in light of Israel's ongoing war on Gaza since October.

Al-Atawna added the project supports and provides help to the displaced and refugee camps that were forces, noting that food and bread is included as there is no gas for cooking, as well as medical and personal hygiene supplies.

Kuwait Red Crescent Society has implemented many relief and medical aid projects to support Palestinians in



KUNA photo

Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, chairs the third permanent committee meeting to follow up on the development plan and the government's work

### Deputy FM, panel discuss development plan

Deputy Foreign Minister Ambassador Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah chaired on Monday the third meeting of the permanent committee tasked with following up on the development plan and the government's work program.

The meeting discussions focused on proiects, programs, and plans overseen by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and ways to overcome any obstacles that may hinder their implementation. (KUNA)

### Newswatch

KUWAIT CITY: The Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) announced on Monday the allocation of an issuance of bonds and tawarruq amounting to KD 240 million (about USD 792 million).

The CBK said in a statement to KUNA that the issuance period is three months with a return rate of 4.375 percent. (KUNA)

MUWASI, Gaza Strip: Hamas said Sunday that Gaza cease-fire talks were ongoing and the group's military commander was in good health, a day after the Israeli military targeted Mohammed Deif with a massive airstrike that local health officials said killed at least 90 people, including

Deif's condition was still unclear after Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Saturday night "there still isn't absolute certainty" he was killed. Army chief Lt. Gen. Herzi Halevi told journalists Israel attacked a compound where Deif "was hiding" but added: "It's still too early to summarize the results of the attack, which Hamas is trying to hide." (AP)

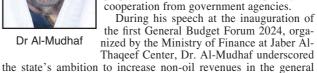
### **Financial stability rests on** 3 key axes: Dr Al-Mudhaf

KUWAIT CITY, July 15: Dr. Anwar Al-Mudhaf, Minister of Finance and Minister of State for Economic Affairs, said achieving financial sustainability for Kuwait hinges on three fundamental axes, reports Al-Seyassah daily. These include, rationalizing government spending to control the

growth of the government budget, aiming to stabilize spending at 5.24 billion dinars by 2027/2028; diversifying government income sources to reduce reliance on oil revenues by doubling non-oil revenues in the general budget to 4 billion dinars and enhancing government financial performance and pub-

lic finance management to improve budget

preparation and address waste, requiring full



budget from 4 percent to 10 percent of the GDP by 2030. He highlighted that Kuwait's non-oil revenue percentage is significantly lower compared to Gulf countries, where Saudi Arabia stands at 10 percent and the UAE at 15 percent.

Dr. Al-Mudhaf also pointed out that the salary item in the general budget has been steadily increasing, with a 40 percent rise in recent years to reach 8.14 billion dinars in the 2024 budget, up

**Continued on Page 5** 

### **MEW, STC smart meter deal** to facilitate collection of bills

**By Mohammad Ghanem** 

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 15: The Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy has signed a contract with STC for the supply of 500,000 smart electricity meters. Sources from the ministry said that the supply contracts will

enable the Customer Affairs Sector at the ministry to collect payments for outstanding electricity bills in a more precise manner compared to the past, when such payments were calculated through a manual accounting method and mechanical meters that do not have any electronic specifications. Sources explained that the ministry will cover all types

of housing, including private, industrial, commercial and investment; indicating this is a qualitative leap towards the digital transformation that the government has been keen on Sources confirmed that the meters' specifications will

enable customers to control electricity consumption in real time; especially during the summer period, which contributes to supporting rationalization efforts. In a related development, sources revealed that the min-

istry recently formed a committee whose members are from the concerned government agencies, including Kuwait University and the Public Authority for Applied Education and

**Continued on Page 5** 



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### **Environmental and social impact studies to be submitted to EPA**

### Municipality okays Sulaibikhat Bay Plan Development project

Sector of the Municipality, under the leadership of Deputy Director General Eng. Manal Al-Asfour, has given the green light to the Sulaibikhat Bay Master Plan Development Project. This approval includes the master plan, land uses, and building ratios, divided into six distinct areas, reports Al-Oabas daily.

A report from Al-Qabas detailed that the Sulaibikhat Bay project is situated within Kuwait Bay, west of Kuwait City. It spans from the borders of service sector No. 16 in the Shuwaikh and Al-Rai commercial craft service area to the boundaries of Doha Port. The project encompasses six development areas: Innovation Area, Sulaibikhat Coast Area, Sulaibikhat Sports Area, Ras Ashirj Area, Ashiri Residential Area, and Ashiri Islands Area. These areas cover approximately 35% of the project site, including reshaped

coastline and proposed islands. The available vacant lands for development currently constitute 29% of the site

Municipal-The ity's approval aligns with the state's master plan, endorsed by Decree No. 255 of 2008, which em-



population growth. land use, road networks, services, and public facilities. This plan also aims to create job opportunities and follows the local plan for the third regional area, established by the Municipal Council on June 24, 2013.

Regarding the building system for the development areas, specific proportions and heights have been set for certain parts of the project, which will take precedence in case of any discrepancies with the designated building system. The project covers an area of 8.152 square kilometers, approximately 35% of the study area, equivalent to 2,300 hectares, with a seafront extending 38 kilometers. **Innovation Zone** 

The Innovation Zone covers 609,311 square meters, with a total built-up area of 133,900 square meters. It includes:

Commercial use: 32%, maximum height of 4 floors (including mezzanine)

Government facilities: 2%, maximum height of 4 floors

Open spaces and central gardens: 42% Roads, parking lots, and infrastructure:

Sulaibikhat Coast

rnment

The Sulaibikhat Coast area spans 1,611,879 square meters, with a total builtup area of 1,315,600 square meters. It in-Private residential use: 17%, maximum

height of 3 floors Investment residential use: 8%, maxi-

mum height of 4 floors

Commercial use: 8%, maximum height of 4 floors (including mezzanine)

Recreational use: 4% Open spaces and central parks: 25% Roads, parking lots, and infrastructure:

**Sports Area** 

The Sulaibikhat Sports Area covers 1,707,314 square meters, with a built-up area of 110,000 square meters. It includes: Investment housing: 2%, maximum height of 6 floors

Government facilities: 14% Recreational use: 42%

Open spaces and central parks: 22% Roads, parking lots, and infrastructure:

to 3 floors

Ras Ashirj spans 2,725,980 square meters, with a total built-up area of 1,395,500 square meters. It includes:

Commercial use: 6% Government facilities: 7%

Recreational use: 23%, with hotel apartments up to 4 floors and coastal resorts up

Nature reserves: 7% Open spaces and central parks: 34% Roads, parking lots, and infrastructure:

Ashirj Residential Area

The Ashirj Residential Area covers 600,995 square meters, with a total built-up area of 467,700 square meters. It includes: Private residential use: 9%

Investment housing: 19% Commercial use: 2% Government facilities: 4% Open spaces: 26%

Roads, parking lots, and infrastructure:

The Ashirj Islands area spans 896,413 square meters, with a total built-up area of 292,200 square meters. It includes:

Commercial use: 11% Government facilities: 3% Recreational use: 32% Central parks and local parks: 38% Roads and parking lots: 16% **Municipality Requirements** 

The Municipality mandates that environmental and social impact studies be submitted to the Environment Public Authority for each development project separately. Detailed design plans for the project areas and road networks must be approved by the Master Plan Department and coordinated with relevant ministries. Projects may be proposed in successive stages, following established procedures and systems.

The classification and approval of commercial activities and uses, including government facilities, residential use, entertainment, parks, and open spaces, will be managed by the Master Plan Department. Specific ratios and heights have been determined for parts of the project and will take precedence in case of discrepancies. The number of residential and commercial plots, hotel rooms, and any special development requirements will be detailed in the



Mol photo

Technical Inspector Fahad Al-Saeed from the General Traffic Department being honored.

### **Sheikh Fahad honors GTD's Al-Saeed**

First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense, and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef honored Technical Inspector Fahad Al-Saeed from the General Traffic Department (Technical Inspection Department of Hawalli Governorate) for his dedication and excellence in performing his work, reports Al-Seyassah daily. Sheikh Fahad emphasized that the Ministry of Interior is committed to honoring its distinguished members, applying the principle of rewarding those who are loyal to their work, so they may serve as role models for their colleagues.



The minister of interior in a group photo during the meeting with Interpol president.

### Kuwait and Interpol seek ways to boost security co-operation

KUWAIT CITY, July 15, (KUNA): Kuwait's First Deputy Prime Minister, Defense Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Fahad Yousef Al-Sabah on Monday met President of the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol), Dr. Ahmed Naser Al-Raisi.

In the meeting, both officials discussed ways to deepen cooperation and coordination between Kuwait and the organization in the field of security and information ex-

The Ministry of Interior stated in a press

release that Minister Fahad Yousef received Dr. Al-Raisi on Monday, where they discussed several common issues.

Minister Sheikh Fahad emphasized Kuwait's role in cooperation with international organizations and its support for achieving security, peace, and human rights at the global level.

The talks also addressed ways to enhance cooperation and coordination between Kuwait and Interpol in the field of security and information exchange, the statement added.

## **PAAET launches commercial** inspection diploma program

Authority issues new guidelines for re-enrollment

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

**KUWAIT CITY, July 15:** Faisal Al-Ansari, Director of the Department of Commercial Control and Consumer Protection at the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. announced a significant initiative aimed at bolstering Kuwait's commercial inspection capabilities.

In collaboration with the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training's Higher Institute for Administrative Services, the ministry has launched the Commercial Inspection Diploma

The objective of the program is to enhance the number of qualified commercial inspectors by training a new generation.

The initiative will initially enroll 100 inspectors -- 70 male and 30 female -- for a comprehensive twoyear training program during which the participants will undergo rigorous training and education tailored to the demands of commercial inspection.

The program will run annually over three consecutive days, from Saturday to Monday, to accommodate applicants and ensure comprehensive training.

The graduates will be equipped to join the commercial inspection profession, contributing to regulatory compliance and consumer protec-

Al-Ansari emphasized the ministry's commitment to injecting fresh talent into the workforce to address ongoing needs and potential gaps due to retirements or resignations The initiative not only aims to meet current demands but also prepares a reserve of inspectors for future

### Inspection

He highlighted the ministry's proactive approach to conducting inspection tours across all governorates. These efforts, he said, are crucial in monitoring prices and com-

bating counterfeit goods. The launch of the Commercial Inspection Diploma Program underscores Kuwait's proactive stance in enhancing regulatory frameworks and ensuring consumer protection in commercial practices.

This initiative not only supports economic stability but also reinforces Kuwait's commitment to upholding fair trade practices and safeguarding consumer interests.

Meanwhile, in a recent update from the Public Authority for Applied Education, the Student Affairs Committee of the Deanship of Students has announced revised guidelines for students seeking reenrollment after being dismissed for low grades or exceeding the allowed period of stay, reports Al-Jarida daily.

These guidelines, aimed at facilitating the continuation of studies for affected students, outline specific conditions and financial require-

According to informed sources within the Authority, the following application fees have been set by the Student Affairs Committee:

■ Application Fee: 10 Kuwaiti dinars ■ Theoretical Courses: 50 Ku-

waiti dinars per unit ■ Theoretical-Practical Courses:

75 Kuwaiti dinars per unit ■ Practical Field Training Courses:

100 Kuwaiti dinars per unit To qualify for re-enrollment, students must meet stringent criteria:

■ Students must have no more than 37 units left to complete. ■ The cumulative GPA (general

■ Graduation requirements must be fulfilled within one academic

and specialized) must be 2.00 or



KUWAIT CITY, July 15: The Ambassador of the State of Kuwait Mishal Mustafa Al-Shammali recently held a meeting with the CEO of Business Development (Commercial) of GMR Group -Airport Sector Rajesh Arora in

the Indian city of New Delhi. According to a report posted in Al-Khaleej Kuwait, the GMR Group - Airport Sector specializes in projects related to the construction, management and de-

velopment of airports in India and a number of countries around the world.

During the meeting, they discussed matters related to mutual cooperation between the State of Kuwait and India including the construction and management of air-

ports and various ground services. Arora emphasized the global importance of the State of Kuwait and its international reputation and interest in developing the infrastructure of airports and their facilities.

Meanwhile, Ambassador Al-Shammali praised the company's work in managing more than six major and subsidiary airports in India, as well as number of airports in India's neighboring and other countries.

He said he hoped there will be further strengthening of cooperation between the State of Kuwait and India at all levels in the future.

### Other Voices

### Recent elections in the UK: a turning point

### By Nasser Al-Hajeri

The recent elections in the United Kingdom have brought significant changes to the political landscape, highlighting a shift in public sentiment and a potential turning point for the country's future. These elections, held amid economic uncertainty and political turbulence, have

reshaped parliamentary dynamics and prompted reflections on the current state of British politics.

A notable outcome was the Labour Party's resurgence, as it gained considerable ground at the expense of the ruling Conservative Party. This shift is largely due to Labour's focus on healthcare, social justice, and climate change - issues



that resonate deeply with an increasingly concerned electorate. Under Keir Starmer's leadership, Labour has presented a more cohesive and compelling vision, standing in stark contrast to the Conservatives' internal divisions and recent

The Conservative Party, which has been a dominant force in British politics for much of the past decade, faced a notable backlash from voters. Factors such as the handling of the COVID19 pandemic, economic management issues, and controversies surrounding Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's administration have contributed to a decline in public trust. The election results have sparked debates about the party's future direction and its ability to reconnect with a broader electorate.

Smaller parties and independent candidates also made significant strides in these elections. The Liberal Democrats and the Green Party both saw increased support, reflecting voter dissatisfaction with the traditional two-party system. The Liberal Democrats, advocating for electoral reform and stronger social policies, secured key constituencies, indicating a public appetite for change. The Green Party's gains underscore the growing importance of environmental issues among voters.

In Scotland, the Scottish National Party (SNP) experienced a notable setback, losing several seats to Labour. This shift signals a change in the political mood, as Labour's focus on social and economic issues resonated with Scottish voters. The losses for the SNP have raised questions about the future of the Scottish independence movement, with Labour's resurgence presenting a significant challenge to Nicola Sturgeon and her party's am-

Northern Ireland's political dynamics also evolved, with Sinn Féin emerging as a dominant force advocating for Irish reunification. The Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) faced losses, reflecting shifting political attitudes and demographics in the region.

Overall, the recent elections in the UK highlight a period of significant political realignment. The results have not only altered the composition of Parliament but also set the stage for critical debates about the country's future. With pressing issues like Brexit, the economy, and social policy at the forefront, the coming years will be crucial in shaping the UK's path forward. The political landscape is set for continued evolution, reflecting the dynamic nature of democracy.

year, comprising two regular semesters and a summer semester.

■ Pre-registration must align with the academic plan, and students are discouraged from interrupting or withdrawing from courses without a compelling excuse.

Students re-enrolling at their own expense are ineligible for social bonuses, rare specialization bonuses, or excellence bonuses typically offered to other students.

The Student Affairs Committee has the authority to review re-enrollment applications for a maximum of one semester.

Applications for re-enrollment must be submitted at the student's expense within 60 days from the date of final dismissal. Students dismissed before the implementation of these guidelines are exempted from this requirement.

For students dismissed due to exceeding the allowed period of stay, the graduation requirements must be completed within one academic

GPA must meet or exceed 2.00, calculated based on a standard unit distribution over semesters.

Students are prohibited from withdrawing or completely stopping enrollment without presenting a valid excuse to the Student Affairs Committee.

These guidelines reflect the General Authority's commitment to supporting students in achieving their educational goals while maintaining academic standards and in-

### **Lieut-Gen Sheikh Salem inspects some Husseiniyas in Jahra and Hawally**

KUWAIT CITY, July 15: Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior Lieutenant General Sheikh Salem Al-Nawaf, along with a number of security officials, recently inspected some Husseiniyas in Jahra and Hawally governorates; during which he met several concerned officials to review the ministry's plan for

securing places of worship and Husseiniyas during Muharram, reports Al-Rai daily.

On the sidelines of the inspection tour, Sheikh Salem Al-Nawaf explained that the primary goals of the security institution and its leadership include protecting lives and properties, as well as ensuring the

safety and security of citizens and expatriates, including the Husseiniya visitors.

He also inspected the security checkpoint in Hawally Governorate where he was briefed on the security plan being implemented including the intensified security measures around Husseiniyas, ensuring

smooth traffic flow in their vicinity, and overcoming obstacles and dif-

He praised the strong cooperation between the Husseiniya visitors and security personnel, which contributed to the successful implementation of the security and traffic plans.

## diwaniya 💎 چيوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

### 'Key reasons for trading halt ... ensuring market stability'

"HALTING trading in shares is a vital tool used by stock exchanges and securities issuing companies to protect shareholders and mitigate the risks associated with trading under unusual circumstances," columnist Dr. Nasser Borsley, wrote for Al-Qabas daily.

"This procedure is crucial for maintaining the stability of financial markets and enhancing investor confidence.

Below are some of the most prominent reasons for halting trading to protect sharehold-

"Disclosure of Material Information --When significant information that could affect stock prices is about to be disclosed,



is temporarily suspended. This allows investors sufficient time to process the new information and make informed investment decisions, thereby reducing the risks associated with trading based on incomplete information.

"Extreme Market Volatility -- Markets sometimes experience extreme volatility due to rumors or unexpected events. In such cases, regulators may halt trading to limit potential losses and prevent panic among investors. This pause provides time to verify information and correct the situation, contributing to overall market stability.

Suspicion of Market Manipulation -- If there is evidence or suspicion of market manipulation, such as insider trading or other illegal activities, trading is halted pending an investigation. This helps maintain market integrity and protects shareholders from unfair practices.

"Unexpected Events -- Natural disasters or major political and economic crises can significantly impact financial markets. Trading may be halted to prevent investor panic and to protect them from making hasty decisions in emergency situations. This enhances market stability through what is known as Trading Psychology.

"Regulatory Actions -- Certain regulatory actions, such as changes in financial or regulatory policies or mergers and acquisitions, may require a trading halt. This ensures that all shareholders have the necessary information about potential changes and can make investment decisions based on that informa-

"Technical Reasons -- Sometimes trading suspension is necessary for technical reasons, such as updates to trading systems or periodic maintenance. Although these reasons may seem unrelated directly to protecting shareholders, they ensure the safety and security of trading operations and reduce the risks of technical errors that may affect the market.

ing trading in shares is ar essential measure aimed at protecting shareholders during emergency or unusual circumstances that may impact financial markets.

"By allowing time to absorb new information, reducing extreme volatility, preventing manipulation, and ensuring integrity, trading suspensions contribute to market stability and enhance investor confidence.

"These steps are a critical part of the regulatory mechanisms that ensure financial markets operate fairly and efficiently, thereby protecting the rights of shareholders and other stakeholders.

### Also:

"I swear to God, I hesitate and feel sad whenever I want to express my opinion about the Zionist crimes that are happening, and about those who caused them," columnist Talal Abdul Karim Al-Arab wrote for Jarida daily.

"But what can we say, when Ismail Haniyeh appeared before us from Qatar, dressed in an Iranian-style suit, and another time in a Gulf dishdasha, smiling and raising the victory sign? Behind him is a painful picture of the ruins of

destroyed Gaza. "What is the sign of victory for? And why smile? Should Gaza be erased from existence? Or should its people be displaced as Israel wanted and planned? Or is it because you are still proud of your health and well-being? We said it before, and we will say it again:

"It is this deliberate, murderous stubbornness that claimed the lives of tens of thousands, destroyed Gaza methodically, and emptied Gaza of its popula-

"This miserable sign of victory reminded us of Hassan Nasrallah's saddest celebration of his divine victory, so we said at the time: "If this was a victory, then what about defeat?" It seems that victory for "revolutionism" is the safety of its leaders.

"What happened to Gaza, which was beautiful, is a major crime, the responsibility for which is borne by those who caused it, those who incited it, and those who cheered and applauded it.

"Unfortunately, there is a media blackout that silences the cries of the bereaved and victims of Gaza, and there is real terrorism for those who raise their voices against the stubbornness of "Hamas," which has not and will not lead to anything but what Israel literally

wanted. "At the beginning of the Hamas operation in October, the Israeli reaction was violent and brutal, as if it was impatiently waiting for that day. Its first statement was that Gaza must be emptied of its people. To achieve this, an unprecedented brutal air bombardment began on specific areas, forcing them to

gradually displace towards the south. "It is not possible for Israel to be satisfied with just fighting Hamas, as Hamas is nothing but bait, but Hamas understood the conspiracy wrong. It made demands that were not achievable.

"It wants the release of its prisoners, a ceasefire, an Israeli withdrawal, and to maintain its dominance over Gaza. This will not happen, as Israel continues its systematic bombing without stopping, exploiting Hamas's stubbornness, resulting in more destruction and dis-

"The question now, after Gaza has been destroyed and most of its people forced to leave: What if Israel agrees to stop the bombing now? What if Israel now agreed to release Hamas prisoners in exchange for its own? Will the leaders race to raise more victory signs?

"After Gaza was occupied instead of liberating Palestine? All that will happen is that Israel will release several hundred prisoners in exchange for the loss of more than 40,000 innocent lives and many more wounded and disabled.

"Depriving oneself of emotions is difficult, and it is even more difficult to speak the truth because it is bitter. But we say it while feeling bitterness, as Arab citizens who have loved Palestine since childhood. What happened to Gaza is nothing but a grand conspiracy that was planned years ago with a clear and unambiguous scenario.

"Ahmed Yassin was assassinated, followed by the assassination of his successor, Abdulaziz Al-Rantisi, and then the assassinations stopped because they separated Gaza from Palestine and turned it into a Hamas emirate.

"On October 7, 2023, the scenario began to be completed, with the occupation of Gaza and emptying it of its people, and we will soon see clearly what the criminal Netanyahu meant when he said: The fighting will not stop until all our goals are achieved.

"Let those who cheered and glorified rejoice, and let those who were stubborn and arrogant raise their victory signs, claiming the lives of Gaza and its people. Neither speeches of pity and condemnation nor loud demonstrations were of any benefit to Gaza.

"Israel, protected militarily, politically, and economically by the West, will not stop its war until it achieves its full goals, even if it releases its captives, the axe has fallen on the head.'

"The recent enforcement of the law has inspired us to foster a spirit of optimism," columnist Dr. Turki Al-Azmi wrote for Al-Rai daily.

"In the past, corruption, particularly involving interference from National Assembly members, and the tendencies of some leaders to facilitate the requests of MPs (intermediaries), was baffling to

"Today, however, we can feel a relative decline in this phenomenon. There is now a focus on implementing digital government systems to enable every citizen to access and complete their transactions online.

"We continue to be cautious about the fate of many officials and consultants who contributed to the spread of corruption that we are trying to combat by implementing the law.

"We have noticed numerous removals and warnings issued for various violations. What is really needed is to educate society about upcoming procedures, and amend some regulations concerning structures such as umbrellas and gardens in front of homes, with the introduction of fees. This approach not only generates revenue for the state but also ensures orderly governance without causing undue harm.

"We call for reform so that we do not return to what was before. Many violations and abuses have occurred over the past decades without any appropriate action being taken to achieve justice and equality through good organization.

"No region is better than another. There is no difference between a high-class person and an ordinary person in front of the law (a citizen is a citizen before the law when it is applied as required)!

"Reform needs to consider those who were excluded by the "mafia" of administrative corruption and those with mutual interests. Reform urgently needs to address the issue of the standard of living, repair roads, raise the quality of education (the most important), and improve the level of health care.

"Who among us does not want to live in prosperity? Who among us does not want to diversify sources of income? Who among us does not want to apply the law to everyone?

"Everyone agrees on that, but everyone looks at each issue according to their own viewpoint.

"Conclusion - In terms of controlling prices, interest rates, and the unemployment rate, the Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell told lawmakers that the US Central Bank will not wait until inflation reaches two percent to consider reducing interest rates.

"According to an IMF report, the inflation rate in Kuwait reached 3.2 percent in the year 2024.

"For this reason, we demand an improvement in the standard of living, in line with the inflation rate, as we have not noticed any increases that have occurred (the last increase in the cost of living was in 2008, and the last increase in salaries was in 2011), not to mention the increase in prices and the devouring of the citizens' pocket due to loans as a result of those increases.

"Oh God, inspire the right officials to achieve development and raise the standard of living of citizens so that we can achieve the reform we want to achieve... God is the Helper.

 Compiled by PFX Fernandes and Mahmoud Ateyieh



Photo by Rizk Taufiq

Chewing tobacco pouches seized by the authorities

### Authorities seize illegal chewing tobacco

**Store owners referred to Commercial Prosecution** 

#### By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 15: The security authorities during a security campaign have seized 582 pouches of chewing tobacco from Fahaheel.

The raids were conducted on stores by security personnel from the Al-Ahmadi Governorate. The owners of the stores where the contraband was found have been referred to the Commercial Prosecution.

Chewing tobacco can cause many types of cancer, including cancer of the mouth,

tongue, gums, stomach, oesophagus (throat) and bladder. Heavy users might also notice that their teeth can start to get worn down and stained by the chewing tobacco, which can also cause the gums to recede.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, along with other agencies, conducted extensive inspection campaigns in Al-Ahmadi, Hawalli, Jahra, and Farwaniya Governorates, resulting in multiple violations for commercial fraud and non-compliance.

A notable case involved a store falsely labeling Syrian tomatoes as Jordanian to capitalize on their higher market value.

### **Comply with zoning, safety** regulations - Municipality

KUWAIT CITY, July 15: During the second inspection tour conducted by the Engineering Audit and Follow-up Department of Kuwait Municipality in the Ahmadi Governorate, part of a campaign to enforce compliance with regulations, officials iden-

tified several violations, reports Al-Seyassah daily. Specifically, they issued 14 citations and 53 warnings to properties owners in the Mahboula area for unauthorized use of basements contrary to their licensed purposes.

This crackdown underscores the municipality's efforts to ensure that buildings adhere to zoning and safety regulations, aiming to maintain order and safety within residential and commercial areas.

Meanwhile, the Directorate-General of Fire Department (DGFD) conducted an inspection at the Al-Kut marina, highlighting safety concerns posed by wooden boats, reports Al-Seyassah daily. The department emphasized the importance of adhering to fire prevention measures to ensure the safety of occupants and protect property.

Violations noted during the inspection included inadequate safety measures, such as housing for workers, storage of highly flammable materials, presence of cooking stoves and gas cylinders, and insufficient spacing between boats.

These violations increase the risk of fire hazards, prompting the DGFD to urge boat owners to comply strictly with

### DGFD controls chemical leak at the Shuwaikh Port

KUWAIT CITY, July 15: Sunday afternoon, personnel from the Directorate-General of Fire Department (DGFD) controlled a chemicals leak (nitric acid) from a transport container at the Shuwaikh Port, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

No injuries have been reported.

## Court upholds death for bedoun in Al-Firdous father's killing case

KFA ordered to pay KD 1.71mln to Sheikh Dr Al-Fahad

#### **Jaber Al-Hamoud**

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, July 15: The Court of Appeals, presided over by Counselor Abdullah Al-Othman, has upheld the death sentence for a Bedoun man who killed his father with a Kalashnikov rifle in the Al-Firdous area. The incident occurred after an argument over breakfast escalated into violence.

During the trial, the accused confessed that on the day of the incident, he had returned home under the influence of various drugs supplied by a friend. He explained that a dispute with his father had escalated into a physical altercation over drug use, leading him to retrieve a firearm and shoot his father twice in the chest, resulting in his death. The court rejected his defense that drug use influenced his actions during the crime.

KFA ordered to pay Sheikh Talal: The Court of Appeals has confirmed the initial ruling mandating the Kuwait Football Association (KFA) to pay Sheikh Dr. Talal Al-Fahad 1,710,000 dinars. This amount is recognized as a debt owed to Sheikh Dr. Al-Fahad during his tenure as president of the association from 2010 to 2016, reports

Additionally, the court has ordered the association to pay 30,000 dinars to Sheikh Al-Fahad as compensation for the moral and material damages he suffered due to the delay in recovering the debt.

The court dismissed a counterclaim by the association, which sought to have Sheikh Al-Fahad compensate it with two million dinars.

Court refuses to release Al-Fakr: The Criminal Court refused to release the political activist and former MP Anwar Al-Fakr who has been imprisoned in connection with the case of insulting the governance system. The court also adjourned the case to July 29 for ruling after hearing the defense team's arguments.

The Public Prosecution had charged Al-Fakr with challenging the rights and powers of His Highness the Amir of the country, offending the authority of the state's governance, and broadcasting false news that would weaken the country's prestige and harm its national interests.

**Defamation case set for Sept:** The Court of Appeals adjourned to early September the State Security case filed against a lawyer who was sentenced to four-year imprisonment, and refused to release him on bail.

The Public Prosecution had charged the lawyer with incitement to use force, calling for overthrowing the govern-ment, insulting the Amir, and misusing the phone through posts on his X account. However, the defendant denied the charges.

He said to the court that he did not post those statements on his X account, adding that his account had been hacked and he had no idea who posted those statements on his ac-

It is noteworthy that the Criminal Court had earlier sentenced him to four-year imprisonment with hard labor, and ordered the confiscation of his electronic devices, and the closure of his X account.

Female passengers case set for Oct 20: The Criminal Court postponed until Oct 20 the trial of two female citizens accused of committing acts of violence on board a Kuwait Airways plane from Thailand and assaulting the plane's security officer.

The defendants were released on bail of KD1,000; while the security officer is set to testify on Oct 20. According to the case files, Kuwait Airways Corporation

disclosed that the reason behind the delay of flight KU414 from Bangkok International Airport was a quarrel between some passengers. The Public Prosecution ordered the detention of the two

female citizens on charges of committing acts of violence on board the plane when they engaged in a fight. They defied the plane's security officer and insulted him while they were in an abnormal condition, which led

to the flight returning to Bangkok International Airport to ensure the safety and security of the plane and its pas-Order to detain 2 Mol officers: The Public Prosecution

has ordered the detention of two officers from the Ministry

of Interior. One of these officers serves as a police station

They are charged with enabling defendants, who had arrest and detention orders against them, to escape and leave

Additionally, they are accused of forging official docu-The Public Prosecution has interrogated the accused officers and confronted them with the charges. The investigation

procedures are currently ongoing.



Mol photo

Some of those arrested for violating the Residency Law.

### Several violators of law arrested

The General Administration of the Special Security Forces, in collaboration with the General Administration of Residence Affairs Investigations and under the direct oversight of Major General Abdullah Saffah, Assistant Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interio curity Affairs, conducted a coordinated security operation, reports Al-Seyassah

The campaign resulted in the arrest of 41 residency and labor laws violators

and 6 others for not carrying any identification papers.

According to a reliable security source, the operation involved closing off entry and exit points to Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh and internal streets leading to

The security patrols from both the Special Security Forces and the General Administration of Residence Affairs Investigations then commenced inspec-

### No injuries reported: KFF

### Fire at Mubarak Hospital controlled

KUWAIT CITY, July 15, (KUNA): Fire fighters controlled a minuscule fire, which occurred at Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hospital early Monday dawn with no injuries reported, said Kuwait Fire Force (KFF).

A statement by the KFF revealed that Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi and acting KFF chief Major General Khaled

Abdullah were present on site to follow up

Meanwhile, Health Ministry spokesman Dr. Abdullah Al-Sanad affirmed in a press statement on X that all hospital staff and patients were safe.

Health Ministry officials are on site to make sure that all were unharmed and that medical services would continue, he





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### Authority reaffirms commitment to enhancing and developing young people's competencies

### Kuwait marks 'Int'l Youth Skills Day' with focus on empowerment

## **CAPT** postpones bid submission date for 18 road repair projects



Sheikh Ahmed Al-Mishaal during visit to the Kuwait Cancer Center.

### Govt performance monitoring agency inspects Kuwait Cancer Center project

KUWAIT CITY, July 15: Sheikh Ahmed Al-Mishaal, head of the Government Performance Monitoring Agency, conducted an inspection of the Kuwait Cancer Center project within the Al-Sabah health district, reports Al-Rai dai-

He affirmed the agency's commitment to leveraging all available resources to support cancer patients and expressed readiness to overcome any challenges or delays affecting the project.

During his visit, Sheikh Al-

Mishaal and his delegation were welcomed by Dr. Ahmed Al-Awadhi, the Minister of Health, and a team of engineers overseeing the

They conducted a thorough inspection as part of the agency's regular field visits to monitor government projects.

Emphasizing the urgency of completing the project without delays, Sheikh Ahmed Al-Mishaal underscored the vital importance of the Cancer Center in providing critical medical services.

New deadline set for July 28

**KUWAIT CITY, July 15:** The Central Agency for Public Tenders has announced the postponement of the bid submission date for the '18' road repair projects, originally scheduled for Sunday, July 14, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The new deadline for submitting bids has been set for Sunday, July 28. This delay provides additional time for companies competing for these projects to finalize their pro-

According to sources from the Ministry of Public Works, the road repair practices encompass extensive maintenance across the country's six governorates.

This includes both fundamental maintenance of road works within the first and second ranges, and comprehensive infrastructure services under the PART oversight.

These services encompass sewage, rainwater drainage, telephone networks, lighting installations, and landscaping along designated roadways.

Among the notable projects slated for maintenance are:

■ General maintenance of the First

Ring Road

■ Intersection improvements for the Third, Fourth, and Fifth Ring

■ Maintenance of the Sixth and Seventh Ring Roads

■ Upgrades to King Fahd Road, Fahaheel Road, Subbiya, Abdali, Jahra Roads, and Al Salmi Road

■ Extension Approvals for Maintenance Contracts In a related development, CAPT

has granted extensions for existing maintenance contracts: Farwaniya Governorate -- Ap-

proval for a second extension of urgent, emergency, and miscellaneous road maintenance with a contracted company for 365 days, valued at 625 thousand dinars.

Farwaniya and Jahra Governorates -- Approval for the first extension of a contract for imaging and general maintenance of the rain sewer network, worth 750 thousand dinars, covering a period of 180 days.

These extensions aim to ensure continuity in essential road maintenance services while new bids for comprehensive road repairs are processed.

The agency will oversee the study and evaluation of submitted bids over the next 30 days in adherence to the Tenders Law before making final decisions.

KUWAIT CITY, July 15: Nasser Al-Sheikh, Acting Director General of the General Youth Authority, reaffirmed the Authority's commitment to enhancing and developing youth skills as its foremost

On the occasion of International Youth Skills Day, celebrated globally under the theme 'Youth Skills for Peace and Development',

Al-Sheikh

Al-Sheikh highlighted the Authority's initiatives aimed at equipping young people with essential tools to achieve their aspirations and contribute effectively to society

#### Commitment

In his statement, Al-Sheikh emphasized the Authority's dedication to providing innovative training programs and comprehensive development initiatives. These efforts are designed to foster an environment conducive to youth development and propel societal progress.

Among the prominent projects and programs initiated by the General Youth Authority to nurture youth skills are:

Valley of Youth Project -- Offering workshops and courses in fields such as science, scientific research, technology, and technical software

Work Makers Project -- Focuses on qualifying and training recent graduates to enhance their employability in the la-

bor market Professional Entrepreneur Program -- Supports young entrepreneurs in transforming their ideas into small and

medium-sized projects Youth Creativity League Project --Enhances skills in various disciplines

including drawing, robotics, mathematics, debates, and Quranic studies Al-Sheikh underscored the importance of providing appropriate education and training opportunities for young

people. These initiatives aim not only to

develop their skills but also to empower them to actively participate in national development efforts. As Kuwait and the world commemorate International Youth Skills Day, the General Youth Authority continues to play a pivotal role in preparing the youth for leadership roles and fostering

By investing in youth skills development, Kuwait aims to build a brighter future where young people are empowered agents of positive change in their

a culture of innovation and entrepre-



Al-Kandari honoring Engineer Fatima Hayat.

#### Al-Kandari commits to state policies

### MoSA prioritizes energy efficiency

KUWAIT CITY, July 15: Dr. Jassim Al-Kandari, Acting Assistant Undersecretary for the Social Welfare Sector at the Ministry of Social Affairs, emphasized the ministry's commitment to implementing state policies aimed at rationalizing electricity consumption, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

He highlighted the importance of partnerships with other government sectors to benefit the nation and citizens, especially in terms of sustainability

and saving public funds. Al-Kandari expressed gratitude to the Ministry of Electricity and Water for their cooperation in promoting the culture of energy conservation.

Jahra governor commends education sector's support

KUWAIT CITY, July 15: The Jahra Governor Hamad Al-

Habashi received the Director General of Jahra Educational District, Jassim Bu Hamad, the Director of Projects Department at the Ministry of Education, Muhammad Fahhad, and the Director of Maintenance Engineering at Jahra Educational District, Salem Al-Sahou, at the governorate's general office, reports Al-Seyassah daily. The governor praised the support and follow-up of the education sector within the governorate and its effective

contributions in overcoming obstacles and facilitating various procedures with ministries, agencies, and state institu-He expressed his satisfaction with the efforts made by

the educational district administration in operating and opening seven schools in Mutlaa residential city for the He also reviewed the closed schools in all areas of the



Jahra Governor Hamad Al-Habashi with government officials at the governorate's general office.

### **AASU completes sorting for students**

### KU commences application process for admission for academic year 2024/2025

KUWAIT CITY, July 15: Kuwait University has announced the commencement of the application process for admission to the first semester of the academic year 2024/2025, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The application period runs from today until the July 25. Interested candidates can submit their applications through the university's website at https://portal.ku.edu.kw/admission

Eligible applicants include Kuwaiti students, children of Kuwaiti women, Gulf nationals, and illegal residents who are not children of Kuwaiti women.

Applicants must have graduated from Kuwaiti schools under various educational systems, including the unified system, the religious institute, the American high school, and the English high school (for graduates of Kuwait schools only).

For those eligible categories who prefer to submit their applications in person, they are required to visit the admission and registration hall at Sabah Al-Salem University City (Shadadiyah) from July 18 to 25.

This announcement underscores the beginning of the admission process and provides clear guidelines for interested candidates re-

garding eligibility and application procedures. Meanwhile, Dean of Admissions and Registration at Abdullah Al Salem University, Dr. Ahmed Al-Mutawa, announced the completion of sorting admission applications for Kuwaiti students and children of Kuwaiti **PAFN 'extends' application** period for school canteens

KUWAIT CITY, July 15: The Public Authority for Food and Nutrition (PAFN) has decided to extend the period specified for companies to apply for the running of school canteens in line with regulations issued rearrains appeal contens. tions issued regarding school canteens and the relevant ministerial Decision No. 5/2021, reports Al-Shahed daily.

The applications are to be submitted to PAFN either directly in its headquarters located in Sabah Al-Salem or online via its official website from Sunday, July 14 to Thursday, July 25.

women who graduated from high school and meet the admission requirements for all colleges at the university.

Notifications have been sent to the accepted students via their email.

He added that the application portal is open today and tomorrow through the electronic registration system on the university's

The competition for seats in all colleges was based on the differential average and secondary school percentage without discrimination between male and female applicants.



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KUNA photo

The Minister of Electricity and Water during his meeting with the Chinese representative in the Middle East

#### Kuwait, China strengthen renewable energy cooperation

The Minister of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy, and the Minister of State for Housing Affairs Dr. Mahmoud Boushahri on Monday discussed renewable energy projects with CEO of State Power Investment Corporation (SPIC) and Representative of China in the Middle East and North Africa Ma Shao.

In a press statement, the ministry said that the meeting covered bilateral relations and energy cooperation between Kuwait and China, exploring ways to enhance this cooperation based on a strategic Memorandum of Understanding signed between the ministry and China's National Energy Administration for developing

the electrical energy system and renewable energy.

They also discussed some quick and applicable solutions to boost electricity production for the summer of 2025, the statement added. (KUNA)

#### **Amendment of laws recommended**

### Audit Bureau urges PAM to provide enough shelters for expat workers

KUWAIT CITY, July 15: The State Audit Bureau (SAB) called upon the Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) to provide sufficient number of shelters for expatriate workers, reports Al-Qabas daily.

In the report issued by SAB, it was revealed that the shelters belonging to the embassies of other countries have been closed and the laborers have been moved to the shelters run by PAM. The Ministry of Health coordinated with PAM to minimize the infection cases in the shelters by providing the hygiene requirements for the workers and keeping the rooms clean as well as providing them with necessary health care facilities.

According to the report, the majority of workers residing in PAM shelters in the last three years are from the Philippines, Sri Lanka and India. Toping the list are workers from the Philippines in the last three years.

The report recommended the amend-

ment of the relevant laws in order to enhance the workers' protection and uphold their employes rights.

The report raised concerns about companies that violate the labor quotas set by PAM, and highlighted the need for improved coordination between PAM, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and related institutions. It recommended amending existing laws and regulations to safeguard the rights of all stakeholders involved. The recommendations included establishing a clear strategy for workers based on the actual demands of the labor market in both the oil and private sectors.

The report stressed the need to raise awareness among workers about their

It recorded some observations such as the shelters do not accommodate workers from countries that do not have embassies in Kuwait, resulting in fewer laborers staying in the shelters.

#### **Public gardens proposal submitted**

### Ahmadi Municipal Council OKs four key infrastructure projects

#### **By Inaas Awad**

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 15: Ahmadi Committee of the Municipal Council, during its meeting yesterday headed by Nasser bin Muhaini, approved four items out of the five on its agenda.

The four items that were approved were the organizational plan for site No. 85 in Mina Abdullah, the Ministry of Electricity and Water's request to reallocate the location of the main electrical substation in Fahaheel Block 4, and two requests from the Public Authority for Roads and Transportation of which the first is regarding the allocation of two water lines to drain rainwater in South Sabahiya and Fahaheel, and the second is regarding the allocation of a path into the sea in Nu-

based on the appeal of some residents of Riqqa regarding the lack of public gardens in the area, and the presence of unused spaces in the two aforementioned blocks.

### Filipino skilled

#### **Continued from Page 1**

This step was taken after the issuance of Ministerial Resolution No. 56/2024 on the new conditions and controls for the issuance of an entry visa to join a family member, such as raising the salary requirement to KD800, the applicant must have university qualifications and his profession in the country should match his qualification certificates.

On the other hand, sources confirmed that the security sectors in the ministry continue their campaigns against violators of the Residency and Labor laws. They affirmed these campaigns will not stop and will cover all governorates in order to expel violators from the country.

Sources added that the senior leadto provide all the necessary humanitarian services to the violators, and for the Deportation Administration to expedite the completion of procedures for their deportation.

### MEW, STC

### **Continued from Page 1**

Training (PAAET), to find the best way to offer a tender for the supply of 200,000 smart water meters; which the ministry had earlier planned to offer along with the tender for 500,000 smart electricity meters.

On the other hand, Minister of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy and Minister of State for Housing Affairs Dr. Mahmoud Bushahri had a meeting with the chief executive officer (CEO) of State Power Investment Corporation Limited (SPIC) and Representative of the People's Republic of China to the Middle East and North Africa Ma Shao.

During the meeting, the two sides reviewed bilateral relations and cooperation in the field of energy between the State of Kuwait and China: as well as ways to strengthen these relations.

They also talked about renewable energy projects and some applicable quick solutions to enhance electrical energy production for the summer of

### **Financial stability**

### **Continued from Page 1**

from 9.9 billion dinars in 2015.

He attributed this increase primarily to the cumulative growth in government sector employment since 2014. noting that the ratio of salaries to GDP in Kuwait is the highest among Gulf countries, ranging from 7 percent to 13 percent.

He called for full cooperation among government entities in preparing the budget for the fiscal year 2025/2026, emphasizing the crucial role of financial representatives in these sectors as the first line of defense in budget rationalization efforts

Dr. Al-Mudhaf reiterated that the current financial priorities of the Ministry of Finance include reducing the fiscal deficit through expenditure rationalization, addressing waste, and increasing and diversifying income

Furthermore, Dr. Al-Mudhaf disclosed that the Ministry of Finance has initiated nine effective initiatives aimed at rationalizing government spending and boosting non-oil revenues, in alignment with the directives of His Highness the Amir Sheikh

waiseeb Chalets area. The committee decided to retain the

proposal submitted by member Fahad Al-Abd Al-Jader for the allocation of temporary parking spaces in Adami Rest House.

In a related development, the Municipal Council member Fahad Al-Khanin yesterday submitted a proposal to establish public gardens in Riqqa blocks 4 and 6 in Ahmadi Governor-

He explained that the proposal was

Mishal Al-Ahmad, who stressed the importance of safeguarding national wealth and ensuring economic interests serve the nation's benefit.

Dr. Anwar Al-Mudhaf, Minister of Finance and Minister of State for Economic Affairs, sounded the alarm regarding Kuwait's severely limited financial liquidity, describing it as critically constrained. He emphasized the urgent need for awareness of this issue and efforts to adjust and improve it, gradually eliminating its fluctuations.

The Cabinet has tasked the Ministry of Finance with presenting its proposals for financial and economic reforms, along with addressing fiscal waste and outlining corrective measures, submitting a biannual report to the Cabinet on Dr. Al-Mudhaf revealed that the

General Reserve balance is nearing depletion, decreasing from 6.33 billion dinars in 2015 to less than 2 billion dinars in the fiscal year 2023-2024, pri marily due to continuous withdrawals to cover fiscal deficits. He highlighted that the substantial

balance of the Reserve has previously helped navigate crises over the past four years but stressed that decisive measures are now essential to address the current situation. Dr. Al-Mudhaf stated, "We all as-

pire to return Kuwait to the prosperity it once enjoyed," emphasizing that achieving financial sustainability requires rationalizing government spending and controlling budgetary growth, stabilizing it at 5.24 billion dinars by 2027-2028

Regarding government employment he pointed out the need for disciplined hiring practices and performance evaluations to ensure greater efficiency. He highlighted the risks of unchecked continuous growth in salaries, stressing the importance of re-evaluating employee productivity practically, especially since many reasons for employment have now

Dr. Al-Mudhaf affirmed Kuwait's role as a leading country in providing subsidies and support that are essential but emphasized the necessity of reviewing them to ensure they reach deserving segments of the population.

He called for a review of service fees provided by government entities and the recalibration of state property rentals after government properties are no longer utilized. He mentioned that the Cabinet has emphasized the careful management of all government real estate and lands, with plans to optimize their allocation to government entities to reduce rental costs across various sectors.

Dr. Al-Mudhaf highlighted that consumer spending in Kuwait is the highest in the Gulf region, reaching 48 billion dinars annually. He attributed this to generous subsidies, comfortable salaries, and a robust retirement system, which are important to preserve but must be effectively managed and

During the forum, Dr. Anwar Al-Mudhaf presented the future fiscal outlook based on the current state, indicating that the next four years could see a cumulative deficit of over 26 billion dinars from the fiscal year 2025/2026 to 2028/2029

For the fiscal year 2025/2026, the projected deficit in the general budget is around 4.4 billion dinars, with expenditures estimated at 12.6 billion dinars and general revenues at 8.21 billion dinars. The average Kuwaiti oil barrel price is expected to be \$80, with

a breakeven price set at \$98 per barrel. Moving to the 2026/2027 budget, the estimated deficit increases to 4.6 billion dinars, with expenditures at 8.26 billion dinars and revenues at 3.20 billion dinars. The oil price per barrel is forecasted at \$75, with a breakeven price of \$101 per barrel.

## Municipality asserts control over site allocation amidst governance debate

Key agenda items await discussion as council holds 5th meet

#### By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 15: The Technical Committee at the Municipal Council, headed by council member Munira Al-Amir, will hold its fifth meeting for the third term on Tuesday to discuss a number of items on its agenda including the following:

■ Request of the Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) to amend the boundaries of the housing project in South Khaitan -- Blocks 1, 2, 3 and 4. The Kuwait Municipality has informed the council that it approved the request of PAHW to amend the council's decision taken on May 1, 2017 regarding the allocation of Blocks 3 and 4 in Khaitan to the authority by amending the borders and the total allocated area of 1,509,197.59 square meters to become 1,584,429.09 square meters. This is an increase of approximately 74,845,319 square meters and an increase in the number of plots and housing units proposed according to the plan presented by PAHW to become 1,448 plots; instead of 1,200 plots.

■ Technical opinion on the letter approved by Director General of the Municipality Saud Al-Dabbous. The newspaper obtained a copy of the letter, stating compliance with the requirements stipu-

lated in the decision of the council. Commitment to the requirements contained in the responses of the members of the Public Facilities and Services Subcommittee during its meetings on Sept 21. 2021 and Dec 5, 2023; and coordination with them before implementation.

■ Authorizing the competent departments to move and modify the dimensions and area of the site to no more than the designated areas in the event that it conflicts with any existing infrastructure or any regulatory reasons during installa-

■ Request of the National Council for Culture, Arts and Literature (NCCAL) to increase commercial exploitation percentage in public libraries to become 20 percent of the entire area of the public library and adding commercial activities such as a gift shop, an educational institution, an academic training unit, a café, snacks shop, and print-



Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi and other ministry leaders met with the Ambassador of Indonesia to Kuwait Lena Maryana, and officials from the Indonesian embassy.

### Strategic talks on nurse recruitment

### Al-Awadhi meets Indonesia's envoy to discuss ways to increase cooperation

KUWAIT CITY, July 15: Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi held a meeting recently with the Ambassador of Indonesia to Kuwait Lena Maryana, in the presence of the Undersecretary of Ministry of Health Dr. Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi, the Assistant Undersecretary for Health Services Dr. Hisham Kelendar, and Director of Public Relations Department Dr. Rihab Al-Watyan, reports Al-Rai daily.

During the meeting, they discussed various ways to enhance cooperation between Kuwait and Indonesia concerning health matters including the recruitment of Indonesian nurses and technicians in Kuwait.

Ambassador Maryana invited Minister Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi and the senior officials of the Ministry of Health to visit the hospitals and medical factories in Indonesia in order to enhance cooperation between the two parties.

The minister highlighted the importance of the visit as the basis for increased cooperation and the establishment of a fruitful strategic partnership between the two friendly countries.

ing and photography shop.

Final version of the proposal to amend Schedule 18 stating the requirements and specifications for the buildings in Abdally Economic

■ Proposal of council member Nasser Al-Jadaan on the allocation of temporary sites for the benefit of the Union of Consumers Cooperative Societies that the council decided in its session on April 3, 2024 to refer to the executive branch to address the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor in this regard and to update its response. The Legal Department in the Municipality informed the council about it, noting that the council, according to the law, is responsible for determining land uses and allocating sites, whether the allocation is permanent or temporary.

The allocation of sites by the Municipality to government agencies is limited to others, and since the request to allocate temporary sites for the benefit of the Union of Consumers Cooperative Societies is not presented by the supervising authority; it was decided that the council, in its area of competence to determine sites, would only concern itself with public projects within the framework of the general plan of the State associated with the submission and organization of government agencies.

The Municipality also clarified that Article 37 of Ministerial Resolution No. 127/2023 regarding the internal regulations to organize the work of the council stipulate that a member of the council is not permitted to interfere in the work of the executive body, and the question must be about issues within the jurisdiction of the council.

In addition, it is not permissible to consider the request of the Public Authority for Manpower (PAM), the Ministry of Social Affairs or any government agency to allocate certain plots to legal entities based on State Property System Law No. 105/1980 and its amendments, as well as Law No. 116/2014 on the partnership between the public and private sectors and its executive regulations.

New vision targets key positions

### MoSA pushes for Kuwaitization in cooperative sector

KUWAIT CITY, July 15: The Cooperatives Sector in the Ministry of Social Affairs is currently working on a new vision to Kuwaitize some jobs in cooperative societies in order to open the way for the recruitment of the largest number of citizens to join this sector, reports Al-Jarida daily quoting sources.

Sources revealed that the new vision is on the Kuwaitization of certain jobs in cooperatives; such as the certified accountant, purchasing clerk, warehouse custodian, goods receipt officer, and markets and warehouses

officials among other professions. In a bid to complement the efforts exerted by the concerned quadripartite committee, the sector is currently studying the nomination file and conducting personal interviews to push for the Kuwaitization of jobs in cooperative societies. This is in line with Ministerial Resolution No. 68/2023; which stipulates the regulations, requirements and mechanisms for assigning supervisory positions to citizens like

cooperative directors, their deputies and department heads, sources explained.

Sources pointed out this step could significantly contribute to the ongoing efforts to generate jobs for citizens; stressing that the success of such a vision could reduce job pressure on the government sector, especially if the financial privileges are attractive.

Sources added personal interviews are being conducted for those wishing to apply for supervisory positions in cooperatives – a move widely accepted by citizens, considering "the number of applicants for one supervisory position reaches dozens who are all being interviewed to choose the most capable of leading the cooperatives in the coming years.'

Sources also disclosed that since the beginning of this year; the concerned committee has approved the employment contracts of 172 citizens and 57 of whom are in supervisory positions.

### **World News Roundup**

#### **Europe**

#### **Estonia PM resigns**

### King Charles to visit Australia and Samoa

LONDON, July 15, (AP): King Charles III is preparing to visit Australia and Samoa in October, an itinerary that will span 12 time zones and test the monarch's stamina as he recovers from cancer treatment.

The trip, announced on Sunday by Buckingham Palace, marks a watershed moment for the 75-year-old king, who has been slowly returning to public duties after taking a break following his cancer diagnosis in early February. The decision to undertake such a long journey will be seen as a sign of Charles' recovery, even though the program in Australia will be "lim-

The visit to Australia will be a critical moment for the king as he tries to shore up support for the monarchy at home and abroad. The trip will mark the first time since he ascended the throne that Charles will



visit one of the 14 countries outside the United Kingdom where the British monarch remains head of state, a link that is a source of pride for some but an unwelcome reminder of Britain's colonial dominance for others.

While he will undoubtedly be welcomed by fans waving the flag and singing, Charles is also likely to hear antimonarchy voices in a country where 45% of voters in a 1999

referendum supported creating an Australian republic. Prime Minister Anthony Albanese's Labor Party supports ditching the monarchy, but the government says it isn't a priority and there is no timeline for another referendum.

"It's clear that there's a real reevaluation going on there as to whether the Commonwealth, and certainly the realms, want to retain their connection to the British monarchy or not," Ed Owens, a historian and author of "After Elizabeth: Can the Monarchy Save Itself?" told The Associated Press in an interview before the trip was announced. "So, you know, there are troubled waters ahead." Albanese said he and Governor-General Sam

Mostyn, the monarch's representative in Australia, would welcome Charles and Queen Camilla. Albanese noted Charles had already made 15 official visits to Australia, the most recent in 2018. The monarch had also spent several months in an Australian bordering school as a teen in 1966.

The palace provided few details of the tour. Charles and Camilla will visit the Australian Capital Territory and New South Wales as well as making a more formal state visit to Samoa, where the king will appear at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, the palace said.

Man charged with murder: A 34-year-old man was charged Monday with murdering two men whose remains were found in two suitcases in southwest Eng-

London's Metropolitan Police said Yostin Andres Mosquera has been charged with murdering Albert Alfonso, 61, and Paul Longworth, 71. He is due to appear in a London court later Monday.

Police said the victims had previously been in a relationship and still lived together, and that the suspect had been staying with them at their west London

Deputy Assistant Commissioner Andy Valentine said "the evidence gathered so far does not suggest there was a homophobic motive" to the killings.

"I hope it will be of some reassurance that whilst enquiries are still ongoing and the investigation is at a relatively early stage, we are not currently looking for anyone else in connection with the two murders,

The suspect was arrested at a train station in Bristol on Saturday, three days after the grisly discovery of body parts in suitcases on the city's Clifton Suspen-

Police officers arrived at the iconic bridge at around midnight Wednesday, 10 minutes after receiving reports of a man behaving strangely.

Estonia PM Kallas resigns: Estonia's Prime Minister Kaja Kallas has stepped down as the leader of the Baltic country to become the foreign policy chief of the European Union later this year.

Kallas, Estonia's first female prime minister, handed in her formal resignation to President Alar Karis during a brief meeting at the Presidential Palace in the capital, Tallinn, on Monday. Estonia under Kallas, 47, has been one of Europe's most vocal backers of Ukraine following the full-scale Russian invasion in February 2022. She replaces Josep Borrell of Spain, who has served as the EU foreign policy chief since 2019.

Summing up Kallas' 3 1/2 years at the helm of the nation of 1.3 million, Karis said in a statement that "it has been a time full of crises, the milestones (such as) the coronavirus, the economic recession and the war in Europe, when Russia destroyed our previous security picture with its aggression in Ukraine'

The prime minister's move automatically triggered the resignation of Kallas' three-party Cabinet, made up of her center-right Reform Party, the Social Democratic Party and the liberal Estonia 200 party. It will continue as a caretaker government until the new Cabinet has been sworn in, most likely the end of July or early August.

Germany shuts one of its rail routes: One of the busiest railway lines in Germany, the 70-kilometer (45-mile) stretch between Frankfurt and Mannheim, is closing for five months starting Monday as the country launches an effort to get its notoriously disruptionprone network into shape.

State-owned railway operator Deutsche Bahn is closing the route until Dec. 14 and plans a full overhaul of the tracks, stations and other infrastructure. More than 300 trains per day use the stretch, part of a main north-south route that connects Hamburg and Cologne with Stuttgart and Basel, Switzerland, and often pick up delays that have knock-on effects elsewhere on the network.

During the closure, all regional trains on the route will be replaced by buses, while long-distance services will be diverted via slower routes.

The 1.3 billion euro (\$1.4 billion) overhaul is supposed to kick off a broader program to modernize 40 stretches of railway by 2030 and improve the reliability of a network that often fails to impress. Over the past month, it frustrated soccer fans at the Germanhosted European Championship, which ended Sunday.

On Friday, Deutsche Bahn said its punctuality during the tournament was "mixed," adding that it got "the maximum out of the railway system, but the possibilities

were limited by outdated and overloaded infrastructure.



US President Joe Biden addresses the nation from the Oval Office of the White House in Washington on July 14, about the assassination attempt on Republican presidential candidate former president Donald Trump at a campaign rally in Pennsylvania. (AP)



Estonia's Prime Minister Kaja Kallas and her husband Arvo Hallie arrive at an event commemorating the 75th anniversary of NATO at the Andrew W. Mellon Auditorium at the NATO summit in Washington on July 9. Kallas has stepped down on July 15 as the leader of the Baltic country to become the foreign policy chief of the Europe-an Union later this year. (AP)



### **America**

Abbott demands answers: With around 270,000 homes and businesses still without power in the Houston area almost a week after Hurricane Beryl hit Texas, Gov. Greg Abbott on Sunday said he's demanding an investigation into the response of the utility that serves the area as well as answers about its preparations for upcoming storms.

"Power companies along the Gulf Coast must be prepared to deal with hurricanes, to state the obvious," Abbott said at his first news conference about Beryl since returning to the state from an economic development trip to Asia.

While CenterPoint Energy has restored power to about 2 million customers since the storm hit on July 8, the slow pace of recovery has put the utility, which provides electricity to the nation's fourth-largest city, under mounting scrutiny over whether it was sufficiently prepared for the storm that left people without air conditioning in the searing summer heat.

Abbott said he was sending a letter to the Public Utility Commission of Texas requiring it to investigate why restoration has taken so long and what must be done to fix it. In the Houston area, Beryl toppled transmission lines, uprooted trees and snapped branches that crashed into power lines.

With months of hurricane season left, Abbott said he's giving CenterPoint until the end of the month to specify what it'll be doing to reduce or eliminate power outages in the event of another storm. He said that will include the company providing detailed plans to remove vegetation that still threatens power lines. Abbott also said that CenterPoint didn't

have "an adequate number of workers prestaged" before the storm hit. (AP)

Bid to replace bridges: Massachusetts is making headway on putting together the funding needed to replace two aging bridges that connect Cape Cod to the rest of the state.

Gov Maura Healey announced Friday that the Massachusetts Department of Transportation and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers have secured nearly \$1 billion in additional federal dollars for the construction of the replacement spans over the Cape Cod Canal. The funding was included in a bipartisan bridge investment program.

### **Politics**

### Trump calls for unity after attack

### Reject political violence, says Biden

WASHINGTON, July 15, (AP): US President Joe Biden on Sunday urged Americans to reject political violence and recommit themselves to resolving their differences peacefully, saying the upcoming presidential election will be a "time of testing" in the aftermath of the attempted assassination of former President Donald Trump.

In a prime-time national address from the Oval Office, Biden said political passions can run high but "we must never descend into violence.' The president said his party and the Republicans can compete forcefully over different policy visions - but must do it in a civil fashion.

"All of us now face a time of testing as the election approaches," Biden said. "There is no place in America for this kind of violence - for any violence. Ever. Period. No exception. We can't allow this violence to be normalized.

Biden spoke for six minutes in his third address to the nation since Saturday evening's attack by a shooter that left Trump with a bloodied ear, killed one rallygoer and seriously injured two others. His warning came hours after FBI Deputy Director Paul Abbate said agents have seen increasingly violent rhetoric online since the attack at the Trump rally.

### Grappling

Since the shooting, the president and his team had been grappling with how to calibrate the political path forward after the weekend attack targeting the very person Biden is trying to defeat in November's election. Biden sharply condemned the attack, but indicated he plans to continue to press his campaign agenda and has "no doubt" Republicans will do the same when they open the Republican National Convention in Milwaukee on Monday.

He emphasized that said those disagreements must remain peaceful.

"We can do this," Biden pleaded, saying the nation was founded on a democracy that gave reason and balance a chance to prevail over brute force. Biden also warned that political tensions were being inflamed by

a balkanized media environment and exploited by American enemies.

'Here in America we need to get out of our silos, where we only listen to those with whom we agree, where misinformation is rampant, where foreign actors fan the flames of our division to shape the outcomes consistent with their interests, not ours," Biden said.

Earlier Sunday, Biden was briefed in the White House Situation Room and condemned the attempted assassination of Trump as "contrary to everything we stand for as a nation." He said he was ordering an independent security review of how such an attack could have happened.

The president said he has also directed the US Secret Service to review all security measures for the RNC. Hours later, Audrey Gibson-Cicchino, the Secret Service's coordinator for the convention, said the weekend attack against Trump did not warrant any changes to the agency's security plan for the event and officials "are fully prepared.'

### **Motives**

Biden promised a "thorough and swift" review and asked the public not to "make assumptions" about the shooter's motives or affiliations.

The president said he and first lady Jill Biden were praying for the family of Corey Comperatore, a former fire chief who was shot and killed during the Trump rally Saturday night in Butler, Pennsylvania.

The president also said he'd had a 'short but good conversation" with Trump in the hours after the shootings and said he was "sincerely grateful" that the former president is "doing well and recovering."

Trump, who has called for national

resilience since the shooting, posted on his social media account after Biden's remarks, "UNITE AMERICA!"

Biden, who has set out to brand Trump as a dire threat to democracy and the nation's very founding principles, put a temporary pause on such political messaging after the shooting. Shortly after Saturday night's attack,

Biden's reelection campaign froze "all outbound communications" and worked to pull down its television ads.

The president also postponed a planned trip to Texas on Monday, where he was to speak on the 60th anniversary of the Civil Rights Act at the Lyndon B. Johnson presidential library. An NBC News interview between Biden and anchor Lester Holt will now occur at the White House, instead of in Texas, as initially planned.

### Campaign

Biden's campaign said that, after the NBC interview airs on Monday night, the Democratic National Committee 'will continue drawing the contrast" with Trump over the course of the GOP convention. It was unclear when campaign ads will resume.

Biden still plans to make a planned trip to Las Vegas, which will include a campaign event Wednesday. Vice President Kamala Harris postponed her planned campaign trip to Florida on Tuesday, where she had been set to meet with Republican women.

Meanwhile, Trump called for unity and resilience Sunday after an attempt on his life injected fresh uncertainty into an already tumultuous presidential campaign. A full day after the shooting, the

gunman's motive remained a mystery, with investigators saying they believe he acted alone before he was fatally shot by Secret Service agents.

Trump, the presumptive Republican presidential nominee, said the upper part of his right ear was pierced by a bullet. His aides said he was in "great spirits" and doing well. He arrived in Milwaukee on Sunday evening for the convention, which begins Monday. He told the Washington Examiner that he had rewritten his speech for the event to focus more on national unity than on the policies of Biden.

In a post Sunday on his social media site, Trump said: "In this moment, it is more important than ever that we stand United, and show our True Character as Americans, remaining Strong and Determined, and not allowing Evil to Win.'

The additional \$1 billion brings the total amount of federal funding secured for the project to nearly \$1.72 billion, in addition to the \$700 million in state funding pledged by the Healey administration. The full cost to replace both bridges is estimated at around "This is a game-changing award for Mas-

sachusetts. We've never been closer to re-building the Cape Cod Bridges than we are right now. This funding will be critical for getting shovels in the ground," Healey said.

Cape Cod and the islands - Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket - are home to 263,000 permanent residents and are popular tourist destinations with five million annual visitors. The Army Corps of Engineers currently owns and maintains the bridges, which officials say are structurally deficient. functionally obsolete, and nearing the end of their usable life. The corps has warned that if the spans aren't replaced within the next several years, one of them would have to be completely closed for 18 months for



Children cool themselves off at Fontana dei Leoni amid a heatwave in Rome, Italy on July 14. (Xinhua)

maintenance. (AP) 

Congress OKs bill: The Senate passed legislation to overhaul oversight and bring greater transparency to the crisis-plagued federal Bureau of Prisons following reporting from The Associated Press that exposed systemic corruption in the federal prison system and increased congressional scrutiny.

The Federal Prison Oversight Act, which the House passed in May, now goes to President Joe Biden to be signed into law. It establishes an independent ombudsman for the agency to field and investigate complaints in the wake of rampant sexual abuse and other criminal misconduct by staff, chronic understaffing, escapes and high-profile deaths.

It also requires that the Justice Department's Inspector General conduct riskbased inspections of all 122 federal prison facilities, provide recommendations to address deficiencies and assign each facility a risk score. Higher-risk facilities would then receive more frequent inspections.

Sen. Jon Ossoff, D-Ga., introduced the bill in 2022 while leading an investigation of the Bureau of Prisons as chair of the Senate Homeland Security Committee's subcommittee on investigations. It passed unanimously Wednesday without a formal roll call vote, meaning no senator objected.

Ossoff and the bill's two other sponsors, Judiciary Committee Chair Sen Dick Durbin, D-Ill., and Sens Mike Braun, R-Ind, launched the Senate Bipartisan Prison Policy Working Group in February 2022 amid turmoil at the Bureau of Prisons, much of it uncovered by AP reporting. (AP)

### Lat/Am

#### Mexico to probe case

### Fujimori plans to run for president

LIMA, Peru, July 15, (AP): Former president Alberto Fujimori, who was pardoned in December from his convictions for corruption and responsibility for the murder of 25 people, plans to run for Peru's presidency for the fourth time in 2026, his eldest daughter

"My father and I have talked and decided together that he will be the presidential candidate," Keiko Fujimori, leader of the right-wing Fuerza Popular party, said on social networks.

Despite the announcement, Peruvian law says anyone found guilty of acts of corruption cannot run for the office of president or vice president.



Fujimori, who was convicted in 2009 of involvement in the killing of 25 Peruvians during his administration in 1992, has three convictions on corruption charges and owes about \$15 million to the Treasury, according to the Attorney General's Office specializing in corruption crimes. The former president was extradited from Chile in 2007 and was in a Peruvian prison until last December

Fujimori, 85, joined his daughter's party in June, posting a video of the event in which he is seen with Keiko Fujimori along with the phrase: "The founding leader of Fujimorism takes his place in Fuerza Popu-

Keiko Fujimori, 49, has herself run for president three times unsuccessfully. On July 1, a trial began against her on allegations of money laundering for which the prosecution is seeking a sentence of 30 years in prison.

Alberto Fujimori, who governed with an increasingly authoritarian hand in 1990-2000, has begun to rebuild his image on social networks since being released from prison in December under a 2017 presidential pardon that was revived by Peru's Constitu-

Fujimori reported in May that he had been diagnosed with a new tumor on his tongue that was considered malignant. In July, he underwent hip replacement surgery after a fall, his daughter said.

#### Also:

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti: Violence permeates every fiber of Haitian society. It used to linger on the outskirts of the capital, targeting the poorest, but now everyone - from street vendors to doctors to schoolchildren - are in its grip.

Yet, people find ways to keep living.

For the first half of 2024, Associated Press photographers have documented how violence has affected the capital, Port-au-Prince, and what it looks like on a daily basis as people go about their lives, going to work, school and grocery shopping.

It's become increasingly common to see victims of violence sprawled on busy streets.

You see people on motorcycles zooming past bodies in the middle of a road or sidestepping them on sidewalks. Some glance at the bodies; others just stay the course. It's also common to see dogs or other animals gnawing on the remains of a body left abandoned

Every day, gunfire scatters Haitians who flee the streets and hide behind a wall or a column of a nearby building for protection as gangs battle for more turf. Gang violence has displaced more than a half mil-

lion people, forcing tens of thousands to cram into makeshift shelters including schools.

Still, you see people from children to the elderly finding moments of hope, smiling, laughing, playing, studying. There are moments of calm, however brief, like when a child rested her head on her mother's lap as she got her hair styled at a shelter.

Haiti has been under siege by violent gangs that control 80% of the capital and whose tentacles reach beyond Port-au-Prince.

The country is now at a crossroads as it welcomes the fourth major foreign intervention in its history: a UN-backed mission led by **Kenya** that will soon be joined by personnel from countries including the Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Benin, Chad and **Jamaica** for a total of 2,500 police and soldiers.

**MEXICO CITY:** Prosecutors in northern Mexico said they will investigate the case of a long-missing man whose body was found lying unidentified in a state morgue, despite pleas months ago to find him.

The Zacatecas state prosecutor's office said late Thursday it had "opened investigations into the situation and to determine whether any public servant was responsible for failing to act.'

The man's mother, Virginia de la Cruz, had approached authorities in the north-central state of Zacatecas eight months ago for help in finding her missing son, José Alejandro. For months, prosecutors told De la Cruz they had no information. But she found they had her son's body all that time.

Mexico has about 115,000 missing people, whose relatives often have to search for them with their own resources in the face of government inaction. But the country also has a backlog of about 50,000 corpses that have been found, but which authorities don't have the manpower or equipment to identify.

De la Cruz's son was finally found to be one of them, after he went missing in November, 2023. But it wasn't even authorities who identified him - it was

On one of her countless trips to prosecutors' offices and the morgue, De la Cruz was asked to step into the morgue in early July to look at one body that had been found months before.

The corpse's face was too disfigured by a gunshot wound to be recognizable, De la Cruz recalled in an interview Friday with local media. But she had an

"Show me his hands, because his hands had 'Alex' tattooed on them," she asked. "They showed me both of his hands, and in fact, it was my boy," she said, weeping.

Nobody paid much attention to the case - or facilitated the release of the body for burial - until De la Cruz burst onto the floor of the state congress, shouting, weeping and swearing at the inaction of officials.

"They had the DNA, and they never called me," sobbed De la Cruz on the floor of the state Congress Thursday.

DNA testing is often the best way to identify the bodies, but Mexico has not spent enough money or effort to speed up such tests, subjecting mothers to months, years and even decades of uncertainty and



In this photo taken from video released by Russian Defense Ministry Press Service on July 15, Russian military sailors attend a welcome ceremony of their joint naval forces exercise in Zhanjiang, Guangdong province, China on July 14. (AP)



People line up to cast their vote in presidential election in Kigali, Rwanda on July 15. (AP)





### Africa

Rwandans vote: Rwandans are voting pected to extend the long rule of President Paul Kagame, who has held power since

Some voters in the capital Kigali arrived arrived as early as 5 a.m. and waited for polls to open. There were long lines at some

"This is going to be my first time to vote. I am voting for President Kagame because I have never seen a leader like him before. said passenger motrcyclist Jean Claude Nkurunziza.

Election authorities say 9.5 million Rwandans are registered to vote in the population of 14 million. Provisional results are expected later on Monday.

The outcome will almost certainly be in favor of Kagame, an authoritarian leader who is running virtually unopposed.

His opponents are Frank Habineza of the Democratic Green Party of Rwanda and independent candidate Philippe Mpayimana, both of whom struggled to attract supporters during campaigns.

Kagame faced the same opponents in 2017, when he took nearly 99% of the vote. Habineza told the AP Monday that his party "has improved and we are confident we will perform very well this time.'

Kagame, 66, has been in charge of the small eastern African country since he seized power as the leader of rebels who took control of Rwanda's government and ended the genocide in 1994

He was Rwanda's vice president and de facto leader from 1994 to 2000, when he first became president. He is condemned by many as a violent authoritarian while praised by others for presiding over impressive growth in the three decades since the genocide. (AP)

Mogadishu bombing kills 5: A bombing outside a café Sunday in the Somali capital of Mogadishu killed at least five people, police said.

Some people were watching the European soccer final between Spain and England on a screen inside the café when a car loaded with explosives blew up outside, said Maj Abdifitah Aden Hassa, spokesman for Somali police. He told reporters that at least 20 other people were injured in the attack.

Pictures posted online and purporting to be from the scene showed a fire burning outside the café in the aftermath of the ex-"Some of the spectators got injured while

trying to jump the perimeter wall of the café, and others got wounded in a stampede," witness Ismail Adan said by phone.

Most of the victims were in the street at the time of the explosion, he said.

It was not immediately clear who was re-

sponsible for the attack. Attacks by the Islamic militant group al-Shabab are frequently reported in Mogadishu and elsewhere in Somalia. The group opposes Somalia's federal government, which depends on the support of foreign troops to stay in power.

But Mogadishu had been mostly peaceful in recent months.

That calm was broken on Saturday with an attempted jailbreak by inmates inside a

**Asia** 

### **Communist Party starts 4-day meeting**

### China, Russia start joint naval drills

BEIJING, July 15, (AP): China and Russia's naval forces on Sunday kicked off a joint exercise at a military port in southern China on Sunday, official news agency Xinhua reported, days after NATO allies called Beijing a "decisive enabler" of the war in Ukraine.

The Chinese defense ministry said in a brief statement forces from both sides recently patrolled the western and northern Pacific Ocean and that the operation had nothing to do with international and regional situations and didn't target any third party.

The exercise, which began in Guangdong province on Sunday and is expected to last until mid-July, aimed to demonstrate the capabilities of the navies in addressing security threats and preserving peace and stability globally and regionally, state broadcaster CCTV reported Saturday, adding it would include anti-missile exercises, sea strikes and air defense.

Xinhua News Agency reported the Chinese and Russian naval forces carried out on-map military simulation and tactical coordination exercises after the opening ceremony in the city of Zhanjiang.

The joint drills came on the heels of China's latest tensions with NATO allies last week.

The sternly worded final communiqué, approved by the 32 NATO members at their summit in Washington, made clear that China is becoming a focus of the military alliance, calling Beijing a "decisive enabler" of Russia's war against Ukraine. The European and North American members and their partners in the Indo-Pacific increasingly see shared security concerns coming from Russia and its Asian supporters, especially China.

In response, China accused NATO of seeking security at the expense of others and told the alliance not to bring the same "chaos" to Asia. Its foreign ministry maintained that China has a fair and objective stance on the war in

Last week, a US Coast Guard cutter on routine patrol in the Bering Sea also came across several Chinese military ships in international waters but within the US exclusive economic zone, American officials said. Its crew detected three vessels approximately 124 miles (200 kilometers) north of the Amchitka Pass in the Aleutian Islands, which mark a separation and linkage between the North Pacific and the Bering Sea.

Later, a fourth ship was spotted approximately 84 miles (135 kilometers) north of the Amukta Pass.

The US side said the Chinese naval vessels operated within international rules and norms.

Also:

BEIJING: China's ruling Communist

Mogadishu prison. In that attack, in which

at least eight people were killed, prisoners

convicted for their roles in al-Shabab at-

tacks exchanged fire with prison guards be-

**Khadga Prasad Oli takes oath** as Nepal's PM for fourth time KATHMANDU, Nepal, July 15,

(AP): Nepal's newly appointed prime minister took the oath of office Monday at a ceremony in Kath-Khadga Prasad Oli, the leader of Nepal's largest communist party,

was named prime minister on Sunday following the collapse of a previous coalition government. Oli, 72, will be leading a coalition government made up of his Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist Leninist) and the Nepali Congress party, the two largest parties in Nepal. This is his fourth

time serving as prime minister of the Himalayan nation. Two deputy prime ministers and 19 ministers appointed by him also took the oath of office. He is expected to further expand the Cabinet, including members from coali-

tion partner parties. The last government headed by Pushpa Kamal Dahal collapsed on Friday after Oli's party, which had been part of the coalition, withdrew its support to join the new partner-

Oli will have to seek a vote of confidence in parliament within a month to continue in office. The two parties in the new alliance have more than half the members in parliament, giving them enough votes to pass a vote of confidence.

Oli's biggest challenge as prime minister will be balancing Nepal's relationship with its giant neighbors India and China, as both seek to wield influence over the small na-

#### Also:

KATHMANDU: Rescuers in Nepal have recovered a total of 11 bodies from the river that two buses full of people were swept into by a landslide, officials said Monday.

Rescuers found the bodies in different spots along the riverbanks as they searched for the missing buses and some 50 people who were on board.

Government administrator Khima Nanda Bhusal said seven bodies were identified and relatives contacted. Three of the dead are Indians and the remaining four are Nepali nationals. He said four more bodies were

also recovered from the river, but because they haven't been identified, it was unclear if they had been on board the buses.

"We will continue the search as long as it is needed and have no plans to give up. We will work until all of them are found," he said.

Party started a four-day meeting Monday that is expected to lay out a strategy for self-sufficient economic growth in an era of heightened national security concerns and restrictions on access to American technology.

While the meeting typically focuses on such long-term issues, business owners and investors will also be watching to see if the party announces any immediate measures to try to counter a prolonged real estate downturn and persistent malaise that has suppressed China's post-COVID-19

"There's a lot of unclarity of policy direction in China," which is weighing on consumer and investor confidence, said Bert Hofman, the former World Bank country director for China and a professor at the National University of **Singapore**. "This is a point in time where China needs to show its cards."

Economic growth slowed to 4.7% on an annual basis in the April to June quarter, the government reported Monday.
Chinese leader Xi Jinping ad-

fore they were killed.

dressed the closed-door meeting on

Somali President Hassan Sheikh Moha-

mud has declared "total war" against the

extremists, who control large parts of cen-

Monday, expounding on a draft of its coming decision on "deepening reform and advancing Chinese modernization," the official Xinhua News Agency said.

Security was tightened in central Beijing, as it generally is for major government events, with uniformed guards posted in some subway stations and neighborhood-watch people wearing red armbands stationed in public

The decision will send a message to local government officials and others about the future direction of policy. The general expectation is that it will confirm a path laid out by Chinese leader Xi Jinping, though some hope for some fine-tuning to address concerns that increasing government control over business and society is stifling economic growth.

The Communist Party's 205-member Central Committee is holding its third plenum, or the third plenary session of a five-year term that started in 2022. This year's meeting was expected to be held last year, but was

delayed.

letin.

tral and southern Somalia and have been the target of scores of US airstrikes in recent years. (AP). (AP)

Niger prison escapees caught: A large number of the prisoners who escaped from the high-security Koutoukale prison, about 50 km northwest of the capital Niamey, have been captured and some "neutralized" by the Nigerien Defense and Security Forces (FDS), the army announced Saturday evening in its information bul-

The army said this escape followed a mutiny that had broken out in the remand center, and several dozen detainees managed to escape.

But thanks to the "rapid and effective" intervention of alerted security units, a large number of the fugitives were apprehended, said the army. "The area is currently cordoned off, and aerial search operations are underway to locate the remaining escapees."

At the same time, an FDS unit on patrol in the Gorou sector, in the same area, managed to locate and "neutralize" three armed terrorists actively wanted after their escape from Koutoukale prison, according to the

The army called on the public to exercise increased vigilance. "Anyone who has information or sees suspicious individuals is asked to report them immediately to the police." (Xinhua)



Outgoing Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal, (left), congratulates newly elected Prime Minister Khadga Prasad Oli, (right), after the oath of office at the Presidential residence in Kathmandu, Nepal on July 15. Oli, the leader of Nepal's largest communist party, was named prime minister on Sunday following the collapse of a previous coalition government. (AP)

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Members who participated in the meeting

### **Kuwaiti-Saudi joint committee** holds 116th meeting at Wafra

Key officials review strategic plans

KUWAIT CITY, July 15: The 116th meeting of the Permanent Kuwaiti-Saudi Joint Committee was held at the Wafra Joint Operations Headquarters in Saudi Arabia, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Rey officials present included Sheikh Dr. Nimr Fahd Al-Malik Al-Sabah, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Oil, and Muhammad Al-Ibrahim, Assistant Saudi Minister of Energy.

Discussions centered on reviewing reports on petroleum operations in the onshore and submarine Divided Zone, strategic plans, major projects, and the integration of advanced technologies. The committee also assessed the progress of the Permanent Joint Committee Office, emergency preparedness plans, and operational procedures

Sheikh Nimr Al-Sabah emphasized the importance of

continuous meetings to address obstacles, enhance environmental and safety measures, develop national workforce training, and optimize technological advancements in petro-

both countries, reflecting ongoing collaboration and leadership efforts in the Khafji and Al-Wafra joint operations.

Sheikh Nimr Al-Sabah expressed gratitude to the Saudi side for their positive and fraternal spirit during the 116th meeting of the Joint Committee. He emphasized the importance of realizing mutual aspirations in petroleum projects through enhanced coordination between the Kuwaiti Ministry of Oil and the Saudi Ministry of Energy.

Kuwait Gulf Oil Company.

### The joint action plan aims to achieve strategic interests for

## This collaboration aims to streamline operations in the Divided and Flooded Zones, ensuring the safety of workers at joint operations such as Wafra and Khafji, involving companies like Aramco Gulf Works, Saudi Arabian Chevron, and

### **New CEO appointment confirmed**

### Kuwait Gulf Oil CEO concludes tenure

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 15: The CEO of Kuwait Gulf Oil Company, Khaled Al-Otaibi, has concluded his tenure, and in a message to employees and senior officials, he expressed deep appreciation for their dedication, diligence, and teamwork that transformed the company into more than just a workplace but a cohesive family.

The appointment of a new CEO has been confirmed, though the name has

Moreover, new leadership appointments include a deputy CEO for financial and administrative affairs, following Naif Abdullah Al-Anzi's departure. Looking ahead, Gulf Oil is poised for expansion, particularly in increas-

### **KPC** appoints acting **CEO**

KUWAIT CITY, July 15: The Board of Directors of the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation issued a decision to appoint Abdul Wahab

Al-Mazen as acting CEO of the Kuwait Gulf Oil Company, effective today, Monday, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

ing production capacity in the divided zone with Saudi Arabia, notably in the Wafra field.

Plans are underway to elevate daily roduction from 170,000 to 200,000 barrels through collaborative efforts with Saudi Chevron, leveraging advanced technologies for enhanced production capabilities.

The Wafra field has already achieved significant milestones in digital transformation, implementing innovative technologies like "SLB Drill Log," the first of its kind in the Middle East for

digital drilling operations. Furthermore, Gulf Oil and Saudi Aramco are targeting an increase in production capacity at the Khafji field from 250,000 to 300,000 barrels per day by the year 2025, reflecting ongoing strategic initiatives to bolster oil production in the region.

### Facial recognition & biometric identity at branches

### KFH leads digital transformation in banking sector

KUWAIT CITY, July 15: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) continues to take the lead in launching high-quality digital financial services and solutions, enhancing its technological infrastructure, and improving the means of providing technical assistance to KFH customers through different platforms, smart branches and self-service machines. These achievements are part of KFH's endeavors to lead the digital transformation sphere in the banking sector and enhance its standing as the first bank and the most preferred in this field.

KFH is striving to capitalize on the swift advancements in Artificial Intelligence, Data Engineering, Fintech, Emarketing, and Digital Product Design and stringent cybersecurity protocols. Ultimately, KFH succeeded in converting a large number of processes and functions from the manual system to the automated system using the Robotic Process Automation (RPA) application. The use of this technology increases better utilization of resources, enhances production efficiency, reduces service time for customers, achieves their satisfaction, deepens their confidence, and enhances their banking experience.

Additionally, KFHonline (available through both a mobile app and website) offers over 150 services, whereas XTM devices and KFH Go smart branches offer around 50 different services. Accordingly, the customer has the option to choose between around 200 e-services offered through apps and other various

KFH services also include e-payment solutions, online account opening, instant card printing, selling and buying gold in addition to the many branchless

banking transactions.

KFH has launched Tam, the first Islamic Digital Bank in Kuwait, as part of its commitment to digitalization and delivering top-notch services to the youth segment. It has also launched a new digital service called (WAMD). This service allows customers to send and receive money instantly and for free using their mobile numbers, 24/7

KFH has succeeded in enrolling new customers through digital vending machines. This was made possible by the first mobile device in the market called D-POS, which allows customers to sign up and establish accounts on KFH systems instantly and from any location.

KFH also facilitated the exchange of credit and prepaid cards for KFH cus-







Kuwait's first Islamic digital bank launched by KFH.

tomers within 3 minutes using instant card issuance machines. Furthermore, it launched the first corporate mobile banking which provides five essential services to support their business. The Bank has also successfully implemented in its branches facial recognition technology based on biometric identity.

KFH customers can open a foreign currency account via KFH Online, which was previously only possible in branches. Also, KFH collaborated with Western Union to offer co-branded international money transfer services through the KF-HOnline app. Customers are now able to open foreign currency savings accounts through KFH Online

Moreover, KFH offers its customers several banking card services, allowing its customers to temporarily suspend and deactivate their cards and view their Baitak Rewards Program points through KFHonline app. The Bank has also made progress in updating customer's Civil ID and authentication without the use of a physical card. Customers can transfer their funds from their prepaid card to their personal bank account.

The launch of Zaheb, a digital payment platform for businesses, has enhanced KFH's relationship with companies, and allowed corporate customers to easily pay by generating payment links and QR codes, eliminating the need for

KFH also introduced three new debit card products with various features specifically designed for corporate customers for government use. One of these cards is issued with limited acceptance only on government KNET POS/PG terminals. This card has received positive feedback and attracted the interest of

KFH stood out as the first bank in Kuwait to launch a number of digital services including but not limited to the following:

- Facial recognition technology based
- on biometric identity in KFH branches. ■ Online Cash Emergency Service. ■ Exceptional digital services for Gold Account holders (selling, buying,
- delivering, storing and gifting). ■ Zaheb digital platform. ■ Instant printing service for credit
- and prepaid cards (the first of its kind in the Middle East) ■ Fund transfer from a prepaid card to
- the account. ■ Direct money transfer to Türkiye through Ripple network.
  - Cheques deposit service through

### Crude oil prices hold steady around \$85/b

### Geopolitical tensions impact oil markets

#### **Bv KAMCO Invest**

rude oil prices remained elevated and traded around the USD 85/b level last week led by mixed predictions on future oil demand, promising economic data, mainly the latest inflation reading from the US, and continued geopolitical issues. Support also came from the rising risk of supplies from Canada after the unabated spread of wild fires that surrounded the oil sands region. Nevertheless, prices declined for the first time after four consecutive weeks of gains mainly led by flattish demand data from China as well as declining war risk premium after news of cease fire emerged related to the war on Gaza. Finished product market showed strains resulting in lower refinery margins and prompting a number of oil refineries to lower utilization rates, although jet fuel demand soared due to rising air travel around the world.

On the geopolitical front, the situation between Russia and Ukraine escalated with the recent drone attacks. The latest attack caused fire at a petrol refinery oil depot in Russia's Rostov region after a Ukrainian drone attack. However, the decline in shipments from Russia, that reached the lowest since the start of the Russia-Ukraine war, was caused by Russia's restraint on output as it complies with the OPEC+ output quotas. A storm at the pacific port of Kozmino also affected shipments from Russia. News of a ceasefire related to the war on Gaza calmed oil market. However, the ceasefire was also necessitated by the difficulties in circumventing the Red Sea route by oil shippers. The latest report showed challenging weather conditions have affected multiple shipments that are taking the longer route.

Meanwhile, the latest data from China once again dashed hopes of a demand recovery. The country faces deflationary pressure as highlighted by the fall in latest factory gate prices. Softer demand for crude oil from China was also highlighted by the fall in freight rates of VLCC carriers that tumbled 20% on the US-China route and around 57% on the Middle East-China route since May-2024. Bloomberg data also showed that the number of supertankers headed to China has fallen to the lowest in nearly two years. On the other hand, provisional data on oil consumption in India showed gain during June-2024, offsetting some negative reaction to

On the supply front, Hurricane Beryl idled a number of oil refineries in the US, but the impact was lower than expected as several of these refineries swiftly resumed operation. Oil production in the US stayed elevated at one of the highest levels on record at 13.3 mb/d. Data from IEA showed a 150 tb/d increase in global oil production in June-2024. OPEC oil production decline, according to OPEC secondary sources, and stood at 26.57 mb/d as most countries reported marginal declines, barring Libya, while the overall DoC production witnessed a steeper decline of 125 mb/d to reach 40.8 mb/d during the month mainly reflecting a fall in production in Russia.

#### **Oil Prices**

Oil market volatility slid to the lowest in six years as opposing forces resulted in oil trading in a tight range. A bloomberg report showed that second month implied volatility for Brent crude grade (a key indicator for options pricing that partly reflects expectations of price swings) declined to a six-year low last week. Brent crude future prices traded at around the USD 85/b level after seeing the first decline in five weeks last week. Prices reached a two-month high level at the start of July-2024 at around USD 87/b level but receded last week led by fears on the demand front, especially after disappointing data coming out of China as well as somewhat lower-than expected demand in the summer driving season in the US. Consumer sentiment in the US also trended downward that affected oil prices. The latest monthly survey by the University of Michigan showed US consumer sentiment falling to an eight-month low in July-2024 despite improving inflation expectations for the near term. The lower consumer inflation provided some relief, however higher services inflation still continues to haunt the next move by the US Fed.

In terms of monthly price trend, prices of all crude grades reported marginal change during June-2024. Average spot brent crude oil price was up by 0.7% to reach USD 82.4/b during June-2024 as compared to an average of USD 81.8/b during May-2024. On the other hand, OPEC reference basket prices was slightly down by 0.4% to reach USD 83.2/b while Kuwait export grade crude witnessed a decline of 0.3% to average at USD 84.9/b during June-2024. Meanwhile, the consensus estimate for Brent crude showed minimal changes as compared to last month and was flattish for the next four quarters. According to Bloomberg consensus

estimates, crude oil prices are expected to average at USD 85.0/b in Q3-2024 and remain elevated at USD 85/b level till the end of the year. On the other hand, price forecasts from the US EIA was lowered in the latest report as compared to the forecast during the previous month. The agency expects Brent to reach USD 86.0/b in 2024 vs. USD 88.0/b in the previous forecast whereas next year price is expected to come in at USD 88.0/b as compared to the previous forecast

#### **World Oil Demand**

World oil demand growth forecast for 2024 was kept unchanged in OPEC's latest monthly report. The agency expects oil demand to grow by 2.25 mb/d this year to reach 104.46 mb/d in 2024 as against 102.21 mb/d last year. However, there were downward adjustments to demand data for Q1-2024 reflecting actual data for the OECD region but this was fully offset by a better-than-expected data for some non-OECD countries for the same quarter supported by solid economic activity and growth in mobility and air travel. In terms of products, there was growth in demand for distillates and transportation fuels in China, the Middle East, India, and

OPEC's optimistic projection for demand growth reflects an expected strong demand for air travel and healthy road mobility, including trucking. In addition, industrial, construction and agricultural activities in non-OECD countries as seen during Q1-2024 are also expected to result in higher demand for the rest of the year. OPEC also said that, petrochemical capacity additions in non-OECD countries, mainly in China and the Middle East, would also support demand.

Meanwhile, there was an increase in demand for jet fuel led by a strong summer travel season in the Northern Hemisphere. Data from flightradar24 showed that the number of flights exceeded pre-pandemic levels and a similar indication was given by seat capacity data from OAG Aviation. The latest weekly figure from the US showed jet fuel product supplied was almost 20% higher than last year, affecting product inventory levels. Elsewhere, the increasing temperatures in the Middle East region also resulted in crude oil usage for electricity generation with Saudi Arabia importing

the highest quantities of crude oil in more than three years.

For 2025, OPEC once again retained its forecast for global oil demand growth. The agency expects world oil demand to grow by 1.85 mb/d next year to reach 106.31 mb/d. The growth is expected to come mainly from non-OECD countries with demand projected to grow by 1.7 mb/d while the OECD region is expected to grow demand growth of 0.1

#### **World Oil Supply**

Oil supply growth forecast for the non-DoC countries for this year remain unchanged as compared to OPEC's last month's forecast. Supply from these countries is expected to grow by 1.23 m/d in 2024 to average at 53.0 mb/d during the year. The latest data from the US EIA showed nationwide crude and condensates production averaging at almost 13.3 mb/d during the week ended 5-July-2024. This was one of the highest production levels achieved in the US that came despite a steep and continued fall in oil rig count. The latest weekly oil rig count data from Baker Hughes showed oil rigs in the US fell to 478 last week, the lowest in over 2.5 years. The increase in production despite a fall in oil rigs shows better well productivity and consolidation in the sector with larger players playing a key role. Meanwhile, hurricane Beryl affected a number of oil sites, but the impact was lower than expected. As a result, a number of facilities were on track to resume operations in the coming days. There were also threat to overall product market as oil refiners were squeezed resulting in falling refining margins. Data from IEA suggested that OPEC+ cuts and North Sea field maintenance has squeezed the crude oil market and with the oversupplied product markets, there could be run cuts by refineries. As a result, the IEA trimmed its forecast for US throughput to reflect a slightly more cautious outlook for USGC margins and a greater impact from refinery closures. Elsewhere, oil supply from Canada once again came to a spotlight after wildfires encircled the Fort McMurray region. The wildfire prompted Suncor Energy to scale down production from its 231 tb/d Firebag oilsands site.

The forecast for 2025 was also kept broadly unchanged from last month's level. OPEC has forecasted oil supply from the non-DoC countries to grow by 1.1 m/d next year to average at 54.1 m/d during the year. According to the US EIA, oil production in the US is expected to reach 13.8 mb/d next year, a steep upgrade from the previous forecast of 13.71 mb/d next year.

### **Businesses look to AI for short-term goals**

### KPMG publishes playbook on how Al can drive 'functional transformation'

KUWAIT CITY, July 15: Businesses are becoming more cognizant of the value they can deliver with artificial intelligence (AI) and Generative AI (gen AI). With this awareness, also comes the familiarity with the risks that they might face if AI and gen AI are deployed incorrectly.

To help businesses overcome this barrier and tap into the potential of AI, KPMG published its gen AI playbook, AI & generative AI in functional transformation. The publication strives to serve as a guide for businesses planning to leverage gen AI to drive functional transformation and identifies potential disruption opportunities within operational functions.

Majid Makki, Partner - Head of Management Consulting and Technology Advisory, KPMG in Kuwait, said, "We understand that core organizational functions are the biggest catalysts of gen AI implementation, given the crucial roles they play. That's why, through this guide, we wanted to call attention to the areas where gen AI could serve as a transformative force as well as highlight the challenges that could affect the

foundation of trust. According to the KPMG 2023 global tech report, 57% of the respondents believe that gen AI will help them fulfill short-term business goals over the next three-year horizon. This is considering that embedding gen AI capabilities can significantly enhance process efficiency and speed by automating redundant tasks and those that may require human intervention. While the finding suggests a willingness to explore implementation possibilities, led by businesses' needs to increase profitability, improve compliance and enhance consumer experience, the guidebook stresses that the effectiveness of gen AI relies on the quality of the underlying data and well-engineered



Majid Makki

KPMG's practical guide also points out five enabler categories that could be integrated into six key functions, i.e., Marketing, sales, service and commerce, Procurement, Supply chain management, Finance, HR, and IT management. The enablers are: (i)content and insight generators; (ii) information extractors;(iii) smart chatbots;(iv) language translators; and(v) code generators.

What kind of functional transformation can businesses drive with AI?

Illustrating the power of AI, the publication clarifies that organizations could leverage it to automate, optimize and transform procurement functions.

This could, in turn, elevate sourcing efficiency and bring about dynamic contract lifecycle management, resulting in streamlined procurement decisions and enhanced contract management. As for supply chain management functions, businesses could ensure advanced predictive planning and automated quality assurance through AI-powered integrated planning and scenario modelling and AI-enhanced quality management.

KPMG's guide further underscores

that finance should be at the center of gen AI adoption across organizations, harnessing AI to make for crossfunctional commentary and contract generation and review. This would not only drive improved understanding offinancial performance but also reduce the levels of financial risk across an organization.

Furthermore, IT management functions could employ AI to maximize availability to users and reduce security incidents, HR functions to streamline on boarding processes and matching learning to employee requirements, and Marketing, sales, service and commerce functions to improve personalized and targeted marketing reach as well as engagement levels.

Overall, this practical guide explores 30 emerging use case opportunities that gen AI offers an organization's front, middle and back office to enhance the human experience – either as customers, suppliers, or as employ-

"AI isn't independent of systems. It goes hand in hand with existing business models, technology platforms, governance frameworks and service delivery models, impacts people's roles and helps bring about positive change across critical business processes," adds Majid.He explains that for gen AI to provide maximum value to an organization - be it global or Kuwaiti, it should be implemented and integrated in the way that's right and within crucial operational functions.

The guidebook underlines that while AI is moving quickly, the user interface and new content creation capabilities of gen AI make it relevant to a wide range of organizations and business functions. To keep pace with it, business leaders must consider how they can think and act faster with respect to how they can leverage the technology

#### Thailand set to roll out a controversial \$13.8b handout plan in digital money to citizens

BANGKOK, July 15, (AP): Thailand's prime minister said Monday that eligible businesses and individuals can register from August for digital cash handouts, a controversial program that will cost billions of dollars and is meant to boost the lagging economy.

The government announced in April the widely criticized ambitious plan, named the "Digital Wallet," meant to give 10,000 baht (about \$275) to 50 million citizens in digital money to spend at local

Prime Minister Srettha Thavisin posted on the social platform X, saying the registration will begin Aug.1 and that he has given instructions to ensure the smooth implementation of the program.

The "Digital Wallet" was a major campaign promise of the ruling Srettha's Thai party ahead of last year's general election. The government says that this scheme will cause an "economic tornado." and Srettha has said the stimulus and subsequent consumption are expected to boost gross domestic product growth by 1.2 to 1.6 percentage points. However, economists have criticized the program, calling it an ineffective way to contribute to sustainable economic

growth compared to other measures. In addition, its financing has faced several hurdles, delaying its planned implementation. At first, the government said the state Bank for Agriculture and Agricultural Cooperatives would cover some of the funding needed. However, after warnings by financial experts, it was announced that the project's funding would

come out of the 2024 and 2025 fiscal budgets

Deputy Minister of Finance Julapan Amornvivat said at a news conference on Monday the budgetary funding became possible after the plan's estimated cost dropped from 500 billion baht (\$13.8 billion) to 450 billion baht (\$12.4 billion), asserting that all estimated 50 million people will still be part of the program as only up to 90% of those eligible utilized them in previous handouts.

Julapan added that the Digital Wallet

committee has agreed to exclude tens of thousands of shopowners and cash recipients who have a record of committing fraud in past programs.

The plan also has certain limitations, such as excluding certain goods that are yet to be decided, and earlier proposals suggested oil, services, and online purchases should be among them. Julapan said the Commerce Ministry would handle the exclusions set to be announced next week after the detailed plan is submitted to the Cabinet

### Qatar second largest LNG exporter in the world during April-2024

### Natural gas prices increase during Q2-'24 as geopolitical issues persist

#### By KAMCO Invest

Global gas prices witnessed an increase during Q2-2024 led by a notable increase in average monthly natural gas prices in the US and the EU, on the back of recovering world economic growth partly due to the positive sentiment afforded by expected accommodative monetary policies in the second half of this year coupled with existing geopolitical downside risks. The uptick in natural gas prices in Europe and Asia were mainly attributed to the ongoing geopolitical instability coupled with outages at several LNG facilities. In Europe, the growth in natural gas prices was supported by the likelihood of further cuts to Russian natural gas pipeline supply and the disruption caused by unexpected outage in Norway's Sleipner Riser offshore hub which connects pipelines from the Nyhmna gas plant in Norway to the Easington terminal in the UK According to Oilprice.com, currently Norway's is the EU's largest natural gas supplier delivering approximately 30% of the EU gas consumption. Further cuts to Russian natural gas supply to Europe is one of the key pressure points that might cause significant uptick in global gas prices during the H2-2024 because of the expected increase in EU LNG demand.

As the Russia-Ukraine conflict drags on, it maintains its impact on the European and global energy market instability and strengthens the continuing mission by the EU to cut off all Russian natural gas supplies to the EU countries. So far, between 2020 and 2023 the share of Russian in EU natural gas imports declined from approximately 50% (167 bcm) down to 15% (45 bcm) according to Bruegel. Consequently, EU imports of non-Russian natural gas increased as a direct rebalancing outcome of the ongoing conflict. According to the World Bank, average monthly prices for the EU countries increased by 5% y-o-y during June-2024 to reach USD 10.87/MMBtu as compared to USD 10.35/MMBtu in June-2023. Similarly, the World Bank average monthly prices for the US natural gas prices witnessed 15% y-o-y growth during June-2024 to reach USD 2.51/MMBtu up from USD 2.18/MMBtu. In China, natural gas prices stayed which limited buying interest in higher spot LNG prices as the country's pipeline imports witnessed 17% increase for the first five months of 2024 to reach 21.85 million metric tons. Global LNG imports declined by 3.9% y-o-y during May-2024 to 45 bcm continuing the April-2024 fall in global LNG exports. European LNG imports witnessed 28% y-o-y (4.3 bcm) fall registering their eleventh

consecutive month decline. Overall natural gas consumption in Asia increased during Q2-2024 mainly due to growth in consumption in China. According GECF, gas consumption in China during April and March-2024 recorded y-o-y growth of 8.5% and 11% to reach 34 bcm and 36.4 bcm respectively. This growth was mainly driven by the continued resurgence of economic activities in the country. Moreover, electricity production from natural gas in China increased by 2% y-o-y during April-2024 while overall electricity production in the country registered a 5% y-o-y increase to reach 730 TWh during the similar period. Similarly, natural gas consumption in India increased by 18% y-o-y to 5.9 bcm recording its sixteenth months of y-o-y consecutive growth. In contrast, natural gas consumption in Japan and South Korea declined during the two consecutive months of April and May 2024

Natural gas consumption in Japan declined from 5.9 bcm in April-2024 to 5.4 bcm in May-2024 mainly due to declining demand from the Power Generation sector because of unusually mild weather conditions during the period. Gas consumption in South Korea fell from 3.7 bcm in April-2024 to 3.3 bcm in May-2024. This decline was also attributed to a drop in demand in the Power Generation sector.

Natural gas consumption in the EU continued its downward trend witnessing a decline during April and May-2024 as natural gas consumption reduction measures continue to take effect according to GECF. Gas consumption in April declined 12% y-oy while gas consumption in May-2024 witnessed a 6% y-o-y fall to 18 bcm. Gas-based power generation in the block witnessed 22% y-o-y fall in April-2024 and 16% y-o-y contraction during May-2024 respectively. Natural gas consumption for mostly the large economic countries in the EU witnessed y-o-y decline during May-2024 led by Italy (-9.5%) Germany(-4%)

WASHINGTON, July 15,

(AP): In the race to stay

ahead in artificial intelli-

gence, the biggest technol-

ogy companies are swal-

lowing up the talent and

products of innovative AI

startups without formally

Now three members of the U.S.

San Francisco-based Adept an-

nounced a deal late last month that

will send its CEO and key employees

to Amazon and give the e-commerce

giant a license to Adept's AI systems

Some call it a "reverse acqui-hire."

Others call it poaching. Whatever it's

called, it's alarming to some in Wash-

ington who see it as an attempt to

bypass U.S. laws that protect against

sive consolidation that's going on in

AI," U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden, an Oregon

Democrat, told The Associated Press.

"The technical lingo is 'up and down

the stack'. But, in plain English, a few

companies control a major portion of

the market, and just concentrate - rath-

er than on innovation - trying to buy

out everybody else's talent."
So-called "acqui-hires," in which

one company acquires another to ab-

sorb talent, have been common in the

tech industry for decades, said Michael

A. Cusumano, a business professor at

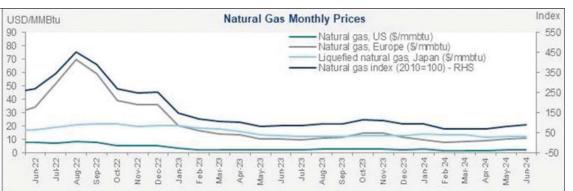
"I'm very concerned about the mas-

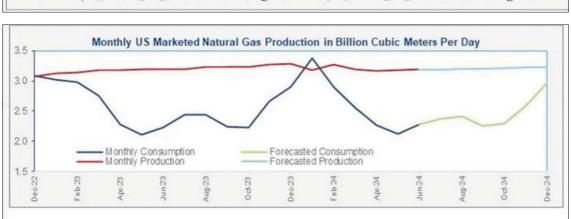
Senate are calling for an investiga-

acquiring them.

and datasets.

monopolies.





and France (-2.9%). Unusually warm

Sources: EIA, World Bank and Kamco Invest Research

spring season was one of the key drivers of the fall in the block's gas consumption with Germany experiencing its warmest spring since records began.

Natural gas consumption in the US improved 1.7% y-o-y during May-2024 to reach 66 bcm as the shift from coal to gas continues in the power generation sector due to elevated gas prices coupled with growth in power for cooling demand in certain regions of the US. In May-2024, power generation from natural gas recorded 4.6% y-o-y growth while representing 42% of the country's power generation mix. Similarly, natural gas consumption in Canada increased by 4% y-oy during May2024 mainly driven by cold weather in significant parts of the country including British Columbia and Yukon which increased heating demand. In its latest short-term energy outlook, the EIA forecasted that US natural gas consumption would fall to 104 bcf/d (2.5 bcm/d) in 2024 reflecting an overall expected consumption decline in the country

According to GECF, US shale gas production increased by 1% y-o-y to reach 87.4 bcm in May-2024 mainly from America's Appalachian region which accounted for 36% of the total shale gas production during the month. On the other hand, natural gas production in Canada edged up 1.3% y-o-y to reach 16.1 bcm during March-2024. Canada's Alberta region produced 60% of the country's natural gas production during March-2024. The EIA estimates that US natural gas marketed production to reach 103 bcf/d (2.91 bcm/d) in 2024 witnessing a decline of 1% from 2023 to 2024. In terms of sectors, the EIA forecasts that the US natural gas share of electricity generation to reach 41% in 2024, recording a marginal drop from 42% in 2023. In terms of natural gas prices in the US, the EIA forecasts the Henry Hub natural gas spot price to average at around USD 2.50/MMBtu during 2024 and then increase to USD 3.30/MMBtu in 2025 due to expected decline in natural gas production in the US and continued demand for LNG exports which is forecasted to reach an annual record in

In terms of exports, the EIA expects US (LNG) exports to average 12 Bcf/d (0.34 bcm/d) in 2024, in line with exports in 2023. Furthermore, US LNG exports are expected to increase by 2 Bcf/d (0.06 bcm/d) or 18% in 2025 to 14 bcf/d (0.4 bcm/d); due to the additional LNG export capacity that is expected to be afforded by three of the five LNG export projects currently under construction which are expected to start operations.

Total European natural gas production in April-2024 witnessed a marginal decline of 0.6% y-o-y to reach 15.7 bcm. The drop in gas production was attributed to a sizable fall in natural gas production in the UK and Netherlands. However, natural gas production in Norway recorded a growth of 3.4% y-o-y to reach 10.7 bcm during April-2024 after 5% y-o-y growth in March2024. According to GECF, Norwegian gas production during the period Jan-Apr 2024 increased by 4% y-o-y to reach 44.7 bcm mainly driven by the growth in natural gas output of the Troll field. Comparatively, natural gas production in the UK and the Netherlands declined by 6% y-o-y and 32% y-o-y to reach 2.8 bcm and 0.7 bcm, respectively. The drop in gas production for the two countries was both attributed to maturing and aging gas fields.

Natural gas production in China increased by 4.8% y-o-y to reach 19.8 bcm in April-2024. Comparatively, gas production in India witnessed a stronger growth at 6% y-o-y to reach 3 bcm during the similar period. according to the GECF, India's offshore gas field output represented approximately 74% of the total natural gas production in the country. On the other hand, natural gas production in Australia, the world's second largest LNG exporter in May-2024, recorded 2.7% v-o-y increase in March-2024 to reach 13.9 bcm.

#### GCC

According to data gathered by GECF, Qatar was the second largest LNG exporter in the world during April-2024 at 6.4 Mt (8.7 bcm) after Australia which exported approximately 6.5 Mt (8.84 bcm) of LNG during the similar period. However, in May-2024, Qatar's monthly LNG exports reached an estimated 8.2 bcm falling into the third place in the global top LNG exporters table behind the USA (10.5 bcm) and Australia (8.84 bcm). There has been significant contract activity in the GCC region during Q22024 including Qatari's agreement with China for the order to build 18 vessels with a capacity of 271,000 meters cubic each and valued at a total USD 6 Bn. There have been 6 new LNG sale agreements signed in May-2024 including the Ruwais LNG HOA contract in which the UAE will export an estimated 0.8 bcm per year of LNG to Germany for 15 years. Comparatively, four out of the five new sale LNG agreements signed in April-2024 where from the Qalhat LNG project in Oman including a sale and purchase agreement to provide 1.4 bcm of LNG per year to Turkey for ten years.

### **World's first**

### Hydrogen-powered

The world's first hydrogen-powered commercial passenger ferry will start operating on San Francisco Bay as part of plans to phase out diesel-powered vessels and reduce planet-warming carbon emissions, California officials

The 70-foot (21-meter) catamaran called the MV Sea Change will transport up to 75 passengers along the waterfront between Pier 41 and the downtown San Francisco ferry terminal starting July 19, officials said. The service will be free for six months while it's being run as part of a pilot

"The implications for this are huge because this isn't its last stop," said Jim Wunderman, chair of the San Francisco Bay Area Water Emergency Transportation Authority, which runs commuter ferries across the bay. "If we can oper-ate this successfully, there are going to be more of these vessels in our fleet and in other folks' fleets in the United States

Sea Change can travel about 300 nautical miles and operate for 16 hours

the Fuel Cell & Hydrogen Energy Association, said the ferry is meaningful because it's hard to reduce greenhouse

multiply out by the number of ferries operating around the world," he said. "There's great potential here. This is how you can start chipping away at the carbon intensity of your ports.'

Backers also hope hydrogen fuel cells could eventually power container

zation, which regulates commercial shipping, wants to halve its green-

house gas releases by midcentury. warming Earth's atmosphere, the Biden administration is turning to hydrogen as an energy source for vehicles, manufacturing and generating electricity. It has been offering \$8 billion to entice the nation's industries, engineers and planners to figure out how to produce and deliver clean hy-

SAN FRANCISCO, July 15, (AP):

said Friday, demonstrating the ship.

Frank Wolak, president and CEO of gas emissions from vessels.

"The real value of this is when you

As fossil fuel emissions continue

### 'ferry' to run in US

program.

and we think in the world.

before it needs to refuel. The fuel cells produce electricity by combining oxygen and hydrogen in an electrochemical reaction that emits water as a byproduct. The technology could help clean up

the shipping industry, which produces nearly 3% of the world's total greenhouse gas emissions, officials said. That's less than from cars, trucks, rail or aviation but still a lot - and it's rising.

The International Maritime Organi-

## Big Tech's approach to 'poaching' talent, products from small AI startups criticised

US senators up in arms with the biggest companies

### **Weak consumer demand dragged on growth**

### China's economy slowed in the last quarter

BANGKOK, July 15, (AP): China's economy expanded at a slower-than-forecast 4.7% annual rate in the last quarter, the government reported Monday, while emphasizing signs of improvement in factory

output, income and investment. The expansion was sharply below the 5.3% annual pace of growth seen in the first quarter of the year.

The progress this year, after growth slowed sharply during the COVID-19 pandemic, has been "hard won," the National Bureau of Statistics said.

"Since the beginning of this year, global economic growth momentum has been weak, inflation is sticky, geopolitical conflicts, international trade frictions and other problems have occurred frequently, domestic demand is insufficient, enterprises

the Massachusetts Institute of Technol-

ogy. But what's happening in the AI

the majority, but not all, license tech-

nology, leave the company functioning

but not really competing, that's a new

A similar maneuver happened at

the AI company Inflection in March

when Microsoft hired its co-founder

and CEO Mustafa Suleyman to head

"To acquire only some employees or

industry is a little different.

twist," Cusumano said.

are under great operating pressure, and there are many risks and hid-den dangers in key areas," it said in

a statement.

"There are many difficulties and challenges in promoting the stable operation of the economy," it said. Economists say weak consumer demand and reduced government

spending are dragging on growth in

the world's No. 2 economy. The statistics bureau said the economy grew at a 5% pace in the first half of the year, at the target set by the government for around 5% growth.

In quarterly terms, the way many countries report their growth, the economy grew 0.7%.

The update came as leaders of the ruling Communist Party gathered for a once-a-decade conclave

up Microsoft's consumer AI business, along with Inflection's chief scientist

and several of its top engineers and researchers. That arrangement has already attracted some scrutiny from regulators, particularly in Europe.

Wyden also wants U.S. regulators to investigate the Amazon-Adept deal. He and fellow Democratic Sens. Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts and Peter Welch of Vermont sent a letter Friday urging antitrust enforcers at the Justo set economic policy that was expected to focus on self-sufficient strategies for growth in an era of tensions over trade and technology.

The four-day meeting of the Communist Party's 205-member Central Committee is the third plenary session of a five-year term that started in 2022. This year's meeting was expected to be held last year, but was delayed.

The pólicies resulting from the closed-door meetings are likely to come days after it ends.

Party plenums usually focus on long-term issues, but business owners and investors are watching for any immediate measures to counter a prolonged downturn in the property market and persistent malaise that has suppressed China's post-COVID-19 recovery.

tice Department and the Federal Trade

Commission that "sustained, pointed

action is necessary to fight undue con-

Amazon didn't immediately respond

"What is going on here is instead of

buying startups outright, big tech com-

panies are trying a new play," Wyden

said in an interview before sending the

letter. "They don't want to formally ac-

quire the companies, avoiding the anti-

solidation across the industry."

to a request for comment Friday.

Recent bright spots suggest growth has stabilized.

On Friday, the government reported higher than expected exports in June that further boosted China's trade surplus.

Exports grew 8.6% from the same time a year earlier, though imports fell 2.3%. The trade surplus widened to \$99 billion, up from \$82.6

billion in May.

The statistics bureau said Monday that factory output rose 5.3% in June.

Retail sales, a measure of consumer demand, were up 4.1% in January-May, while nominal disposable income, not adjusted for infla-

tion, grew 5.4%, it said. But that level of retail sales is well below expectations, noted Yeap Jun Rong of IG.

trust scrutiny. I think that's going to be the playbook until the FTC really starts

digging into these deals. DOJ and FTC officials didn't immediately respond to requests for comment on the senators' letter.

President Joe Biden's administration and lawmakers from both parties have championed stronger oversight of the tech industry in recent years, likely scaring off big acquisitions that might have sailed through in earlier eras.

### Chinese EVs transforming livelihoods of Kenyan taxi drivers

NAIROBI, July 15, (Xinhua): Paul Mwai was seated inside his parked car while browsing through his mobile phone to confirm his next customer on his digital app.

The 33-year-old taxi driver had just received an order to transport a client to a mall in Nairobi, the capital of Kenya, which was about 12 kilometers away from his current location.

It was a few minutes to mid-day and

Mwai had already ferried more than 10 passengers since morning to their various destinations in the fast-growing capital and its satellite towns.

"My electric vehicle is very popular during a recent interview.

among customers who are conscious about the environment," Mwai said

Mwai recently purchased a brand new Neta V, a Chinese electric vehicle brand that has been introduced into the

Kenyan market.

He was able to afford the 4 million shillings (about 31,000 U.S. dollars) price tag thanks to a partnership between Moja EV Kenya, the local distributor of the Neta V brand and a local bank which provides loans for purchase of the vehicles.

Mwai said that his decision to switch to an electric vehicle after operating a petrol powered vehicle in the taxi busi-

ness for the past seven years has yielded many benefits.

His daily revenues fluctuate between 6,000 and 7,000 shillings (46.5-54.2 U.S. dollars) against expenditures compromising 31 dollars for the repayment of the car loan and electric charging

cost of 6.2 dollars. This compares favorably against the profit he generated daily when he operated a fossil fuel taxi car because

earnings averaged 34.8 dollars per day while expenses consisted of 9.3 dollars for repayment of car loan of the conventional car and 19.38 dollars for fuel.

Mwai noted that a key reason for his increased earnings is due to the fact that e-vehicles have lower maintenance cost as they lack an engine and gearbox while the cost of charging is lower than the cost of fuel for running

## What's On







Photos during the event.

### Supporting environmental initiatives and encouraging eco-friendly practices in community

### stc sponsors 2nd Bloom Market highlighting 'Plastic-free July'



Group photo at KON program.

KON program at AUK empowers young entrepreneurs

### **NBK** supports **LOYAC's 'KON'** program

KUWAIT CITY, July 15: As a platinum sponsor, National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) welcomes the participants from LOYAC's program "KON". This social entrepreneurship program is co-created with Babson College, the most prestigious entrepreneurship college in the United States and the number one institution in the world for entrepreneurship education. The program aims to introduce young adults between the ages of 12 to 16 to the world business and to turn their ideas into action.

The program will take place in the American University of Kuwait (AUK) and includes 50 student trainees.

NBK will take part in the training sessions that will be ongoing until the 15 of August 2024. Throughout the five weeks program, leaders from NBK along with a group of professional leaders mentors and trainers, locally and regionally will encourage the participants to create a profitable business that solves social challenges.

NBK's sponsorship and participation in the program comes as a part of its strategic partnership with LOYAC. NBK is dedicated towards supporting talented young people

and empowering them towards achieving their goals.

"KON" is one of these initiatives that help invest and

support young youths. NBK supported KON for eight consecutive years. The program provides its expertise to young people through training sessions and workshops and looks forward to seeing the participants moving into key leadership roles in their near future.

"KON" students will experience different stages during the program, thinking, planning and doing. The experiential learning journey the students undertake throughout the five weeks supports them to learn skills that include creativity, critical thinking, problem solving, communication and collaboration. The students also learn technical skills to write up a successful business plan, and how to pitch their business ideas to investors. By the end of the program, students will be able to present their business ideas before a jury panel, in addition to a professor from Babson College.

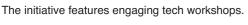
NBK believes that investing in human resources is investing in our future. The KON program goes along with NBK's initiatives to invest in youth and support their aspirations.

LOYAC is a nonprofit organization that runs several programs for the youth to develop their professional skills, enhance their personal growth and help them find their sense of purpose by extending themselves to others.



Al Dehani, Al Musaibeeh, and Al Mana with Zain, SACGC, and Assima officials.







The camp runs daily until 21 July.

### Tech skills camp for youth at Assima Mall

### Zain, SACGC launch Innovation Nation Summer Camp

KUWAIT CITY, July 15: For the second year in a row, the Innovation Nation (IN) Summer Camp has kicked-off in strategic partnership between Zain and Sabah Al Ahmad Center for Giftedness and Creativity (SACGC) – a KFAS center, and in collaboration with Assima Mall. The initiative aims to foster young people's tech skills through engaging mini-workshops that run daily from 15-21 July.

The camp's recent launch was attended by SACGC Gen-

The camp's recent launch was attended by SACGC General Manager Neda Al Dehani, Zain Kuwait Corporate Relations Department Manager Hamad Al Musaibeeh, Zain Kuwait Innovation and Entrepreneurship Expert Haya Al Mana, and officials from Assima Mall. The opening day was a tremendous success, with many ambitious young individuals signing up to seize this opportunity to develop their passion for technology.

sion for technology.

Designed for children and youth aged 7-14, the Innovation Nation Summer Camp features a combination of daily courses and engaging workshops located on the ground floor of Assima Mall. Each workshop is approximately two hours long, and those interested can easily walk in and sign up for their favorite course without the need for pre-registration.

The workshops are supervised and facilitated by experts and certified trainers from Sabah Al Ahmad Center for Giftedness and Creativity. The content is presented in an innovative and engaging manner that appeals to young people. The IN Camp covers a variety of topics, including digital drawing and 3D printing, augmented reality (AR), robotics and programming, electronics, mechanical and software engineering, and more.

Additionally, Zain hosted a similar camp dedicated to the children of Zain employees. This special two-day camp was held at the Zain Innovation Campus (ZINC) in the company's main headquarters in Shuwaikh and featured rich and engaging content for children aged 5-13. The youngsters had

This partnership between Zain, SACGC, and Assima Mall is part of the broader Innovation Nation initiative, which encompasses all of Zain's innovation and entrepreneurship programs. The initiative focuses on science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) and primarily targets young people and entrepreneurs, aiming to foster a digitally capable generation.

KUWAIT CITY, July 15: Kuwait Telecommunications Company – stc, a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and platforms to customers, enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, sponsored the 2nd Bloom Market, which highlighted a "Plastic-free July" initiative amongst other activities focusing on sustainable living. The sponsorship aligns with stc's 2024 sustainability program and follows the Company's commitment to environmental preservation and the adoption of long-term sustainable practices.

The Bloom Market was held at the Avenues Mall from July 11th – 13th, with the theme focusing on a plastic-free July. In alignment with the concept, the event featured 17 local businesses, with participants ranging from recycled furniture stores to eco-friendly daily consumables and fashionwear. The market also included numerous activities and awareness workshops aimed at raising awareness about the importance of preserving the environment and reducing plastic usage. Visitors were also able to view different innovative products that contribute to sustainable living from the different participating businesses.

stc's sponsorship of the market, for the second year, follows the strategic partnership formed in collaboration with SEEDs Co. under the "weyak" umbrella, which focuses on supporting local SMEs and start-ups as well as youth initiatives. The Company indicated that by incorporating sustainability into the core of its operations and community activities, stc aims to demonstrate its belief in the power of small, sustainable moves to make a significant impact.

Commenting on the sponsorship, Danah AlJasem said, "Environmental stewardship and encouraging sustainable living are two key attributes that fall under our progressive sustainability strategy at stc. We are thrilled with the level of participation at the 2nd Bloom Market in Kuwait, and highly support this year's theme of promoting a plastic-free month. Our sponsorship of the Bloom Market reflects stc's commitment to sustainability, preserving the environment, and supporting local SMEs operating within this field. SEEDs Co. has managed to once again create an appealing platform for all ages while making sustainability an inclusive and engaging topic for discussion and action."

AlJasem further added, "stc would like to congratulate SEEDs Co. for another successful market that included various initiatives to educate the local community on environmental preservation. Our commitment to sustainability remains a core aspect of our CSR strategy, and we firmly believe that through collective efforts with both the govt. and private sectors, we can make a significant impact on our community and inspire lasting change for future generations."

Yuser Almutawa, Chief Operating Officer of SEEDs Co., said, "We are proud to have had stc as the main sponsor of the 2nd Bloom Market and look forward to more future collaborations that will positively influence our community. Their commitment to sustainability and community engagement perfectly aligns with our mission to promote a lifestyle that prioritizes environmental consciousness. She also highlighted that events and activities similar to the Bloom Market are crucial for encouraging entrepreneurs in various sustainability fields to develop their businesses and concepts. They also play a significant role in increasing Kuwaiti consumer awareness about the availability of sustainable consumer goods in Kuwait."

### **Bank promotes health and humanitarian goals**

### KIB concludes annual blood donation campaign

KUWAIT CITY, July 15: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) announced the conclusion of its annual blood donation campaign, which was launched in collaboration with the Kuwait Central Blood Bank under the slogan "Your Donation Saves Lives". This initiative comes as part of KIB's comprehensive social responsibility strategy, which embraces sustainable corporate practices and embodies the Bank's commitment to environmental, social, and corporate governance (ESG) principles. The vital campaign was organized at KIB's headquarters and saw the participation of many employees who volunteered to donate blood, aiming to contribute to the campaign's health and humanitarian goals.

Commenting on the initiative, Abdullah Al Khamees, from the Marketing Department and the Corporate Communications Unit at KIB, said: "At KIB, we are committed to organizing blood donation campaigns and encouraging employees from all departments to participate. This effort aligns with our commitment to raising health and community awareness and promoting a culture of public health, in line with the goals of the Bank's community program. Additionally, it aims to support the Blood Bank in fulfilling its vital role in meeting the ongoing needs of hospitals and healthcare institutions for surplus blood supplies for their patients."He added: "Blood donation helps stimulate blood circulation and prevent diseases. We consider it an important motivator for adopting a healthy lifestyle that improves the physical health of participants.

Al Khamees praised the active role KIB employees play in supporting and ensuring the success of this campaign every year through their continuous dedication to volunteering and donating blood. He noted that "this reflects their understanding of the importance of each







KIB

KIB blood donation drive

individual's role in achieving the success of any charitable initiative and the significant impact it has on society as a whole."

It is worth noting that KIB continues to launch and participate in various forms of community campaigns and events that have a vital impact on the members of the community. The Bank boasts a distinguished record

of advanced initiatives in the field of volunteer work, within the framework of its comprehensive social responsibility program, both internally and externally. This includes initiatives for health awareness, mental and physical well-being, sports events, as well as local and regional humanitarian contributions and national participation in related fields.

## AlU's School of Business secures 'CMI' accreditation for accounting, finance and management programs

KUWAIT CITY, July 15: American International University (AIU) is pleased to announce that its School of Business has received accreditation from the Chartered Management Institute (CMI) for its Accounting, Finance, and Management programs. CMI is a prestigious professional institution that provides certifications in management and leadership.

CMI accreditation ensures that graduates from AIU's programs receive both a degree from AIU and a globally recognized CMI certificate or diploma, depending on their program. This dual credential enhances graduates' employability worldwide and validates their managerial and leadership skills, crucial for success in accounting, finance, and management roles.

"The CMI accreditation underscores AIU's commitment to preparing students for leadership in business," said Dr. Lasha, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs at AIU. "It reflects our dedication to providing a curriculum that meets international standards and equips graduates with the skills required for today's competitive business environment."

AIU's Accounting program prepares students for roles in financial management, auditing, and compliance, while the Finance program focuses on financial analysis, investment management, and risk assessment. The Management program emphasizes strategic leadership and operational management

skills essential for business success.

Prospective students interested in Accounting, Finance, or Management careers can find more about AIU's CMI accredited programs and apply for Fall 2024 enrollment at aiu.edu.kw





AIU programs earn globally recognized CMI certification.



### SPECIAL REPORT

### **Ambassador Aguilar leaves a lasting legacy**

## Outgoing Spanish envoy reflects on four years of diplomatic achievements, enduring ties in Kuwait

**By Paulo Francisco X. Fernandes**Arab Times/Al-Seyassah Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 15: The Arab Times had the distinct honor of speaking with His Excellency Miguel Moro Aguilar the outgoing Spanish Ambassador to the State of Kuwait. Over the past four years, His Excellency has played a pivotal role in strengthening the bilateral relations between Spain and Kuwait, fostering economic, cultural, educational, social and

diplomatic ties.

Under his esteemed leadership, the Spanish Embassy has seen numerous achievements and successful initiatives that have significantly contributed to the mutual growth and understanding between Kuwait and Spain. As he prepares to embark on his new appointment in Spain, we reflect on his remarkable tenure here in Kuwait and the lasting impact of his

dedicated service. **Arab Times:** Your Excellency, can you highlight some of the key accomplishments or milestones during your tenure as the Spanish Ambassador to Kuwait?

**Ambassador:** I have been here for nearly four years, arriving in the middle of the COV-ID-19 pandemic. It was definitely not the ideal time to start my journey as ambassador, but I came with the enthusiasm and energy of a first-time ambassador. Despite the constraints of the pandemic and other challenges, I believe the embassy made significant breakthroughs in bilateral relations.

The embassy organized visits at various political levels between Kuwait and Spain, involving the foreign ministries of both countries in April and May, as well as in November 2021

We actively participated in political consultations with the Kuwaiti Assistant Minister for European Affairs and the Spanish counterpart in Madrid on three occasions. Additionally, the Vice Minister of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs visited Madrid for bilateral consultations.

For the first time, we held a joint committee meeting on trade and commerce on November 2022. Although an agreement existed, it had never been implemented until then.

We continued to strengthen relations by signing agreements and significantly improving tourism ties. We worked on establishing direct flight connections between Kuwait and Madrid, as well as Barcelona, in addition to the Kuwait-Malaga direct flight introduced a year before my posting in Kuwait.

I can proudly say that the relations between Kuwait and Spain have reached new heights in politics, tourism, economy, culture, health, and even sports. We also embarked on scientific collaborations between both countries, particularly with KFAS and KISR in Kuwait. Despite the constraints, we have managed to address many issues and enhance the image of both countries.

I have participated in festivals in Marbella organized by Kuwaiti citizens and, along with my Kuwaiti counterpart in Spain to promote the image of Kuwait. I also attended the launch of the direct flight to Madrid in September 2022 at the Kuwaiti embassy in Madrid, an enthusiastic event that was attended by over 150 guests.

I have always supported events in Kuwait with a Spanish connection, including soccer, tennis, paddle, and boxing. I have fully played my part in anything that benefited both Spain

AT: What do you consider to be the most significant challenges you faced during your time in Kuwait, and how did you address them?

Ambassador: As I mentioned earlier, when I arrived, COVID-19 had brought the world to a virtual standstill. Like many people, I faced significant challenges because the pandemic not only affected Spain and Kuwait but the entire humanity.

Despite taking all necessary precautions, such as wearing a mask and maintaining social distance, I was infected by the virus twice. Nevertheless, I had to carry on with my duties and could not afford to wait for two years for the pandemic to subside. This was, I believe, the most challenging part of my tenure in Kuwait.

Then the political constraints and certain situations here also made it difficult to push some projects forward, either due to a lack of interlocutors or changes in personnel.

However, I had the unwavering support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and civil servants in the Kuwaiti government, such as the assistant ministers, including Mr. Marafi in charge of European Affairs or of those in the areas of protocol and international organizations.

Their assistance and collaboration were invaluable. Additionally, some ministers, like the Minister of Information, were very supportive, as were the people at the NCCAL and the Kuwait Library on the cultural, field.

Despite the obstacles posed by COVID-19, we managed to organize and strengthen the relations between our two countries.

In hindsight, when I leave Kuwait, I will carry with me many happy memories. I will leave with a clear conscience, knowing that I have done my best in taking bilateral relations between Kuwait and Spain to another level.

AT: What initiatives or strategies did you

implement to promote cultural, economic, or political ties between Spain and Kuwait? **Ambassador:** First of all, I believe that cul-

**Ambassador:** First of all, I believe that culture is too important to neglect because it is the heartbeat of nations, bringing out the best from deep within.



His Excellency Miguel Moro Aguilar the outgoing Spanish Ambassador to the State of Kuwait.

'Spain and the Arab world have long-standing relations for many reasons, primarily due to the historical presence of Arabs, Arab culture, and language in Spain.'

Regarding Spain and the Arab world, there are long-standing relations for many reasons, primarily due to the historical presence of Arabs, Arab culture, and language in Spain.

For centuries, the Iberian Peninsula has contributed depth and facilitated people-to-people and cultural contacts with the Arab peoples. Beyond these historic roots, Kuwaitis, in particular, are very fond of certain areas in Spain, where they spend their summers and appreciate many aspects of our culture.

Given the circumstances, our strategy and goal focused on fostering more connections between the people of Spain and Kuwait. We organized several cultural events and activities to achieve this goal throughout the years.

For instance, we brought two different flamenco groups to Kuwait, featuring beautiful nights filled with the culture and essence of Andalusia, the most recent by the 'Anabel Veloso' flamenco band. They performed on the stage of Abdul Hussein Abdul Reda under the aegis of the NCCAL, strengthening cultural ties between the two countries and societies.

The embassy also worked an eclectic program featuring the music of Spain and its influence on the music of the Americas, such as the guitar and the violin duo Orbón and Fernández. This music, born from the mixture of two worlds and cultures, created an indelible memory and sensation. Recently we had an excellent pianist, Eduardo Fernández, who offered a magnificent performance here in Kuwait and also in Bahrain.

In collaboration with the National Council for Culture Arts and Letters, the Spanish Embassy orchestrated a musical evening at the Kuwait National Library in May. This event served as a platform for cultural convergence, bringing people together through the universal language of music, fostering understanding and unity among people.

These cultural activities, along with confer-

ences and lectures, were significant milestones. About three years ago, we emphasized various cultural initiatives, including highlighting the First Voyage of Circumnavigation by Fernão de Magalhães and Juan Sebastián Elcano (1519-1522) at the National Library, an event successfully organized with the participation of experts from Kuwait University.

In addition to these efforts, we organized beautiful events to promote Marbella. A delegation led by the Mayor of Marbella, Her Excellency Mrs. Angeles Muñoz, and the Princess of Orleans, along with top representatives from well-known hotels in Marbella, visited Kuwait. This joyful event promoted luxurious tourism dedicated to the beautiful town of Marbella in southern Spain, which is highly appreciated by our Kuwaiti friends.

A special representation from local tourism agents and Kuwaiti friends, including some members of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, had the opportunity to exchange views with the Spanish delegation in a cordial atmosphere, showcasing the steadily close links between both nations.

We also worked on promoting the Spanish language, literature, and culture abroad. Although we don't have an institute in Kuwait dedicated to this purpose, the Spanish language is promoted through private academies and various public and private university departments. We collaborated with the French Institute to organize accredited exams, initially held at the embassy premises. However, due to the growing number of enthusiasts, we had to move these exams to other venues due to space constraints.

Spanish is widely spoken, second only to English globally. It is the official language or one of the official languages of 20 countries in Europe, and Central, South, and North America, with more than 540 million native speakers. This makes it one of the most widely spoken

languages in the world, excluding languages spoken within individual nations, such as Chi-

Language is a powerful tool, deserving recognition in our world, and many Kuwaitis have shown interest in learning Spanish.

On the education front, Spain has doubled the number of accredited universities for the benefit of Kuwaitis who wish to study in Spain. Consequently, Spanish culture has also seen improvement on a global level.

I think we've worked hard over these years to broaden the perception of Spain, and we've succeeded. People are more aware of Spain now. This was one of the main points my team and I insisted on to promote tourism in a more balanced way in Kuwait.

AT: What do you see as the most pressing issues in the region, and how has Spain contributed to addressing them during your tenure

Ambassador: The international situation is currently quite grim. We are enduring a terrible war in Ukraine, fought on European soil, posing a significant challenge for all European nations at the international level.

Additionally, the devastating war in Gaza has shocked everyone in the region, including us in Spain. These two conflicts and the emerging tensions at the international level have severely affected world peace.

Spain has always voiced its constructive opinion in order to find diplomatic solutions and moderate tensions in Ukraine, Gaza, and other conflict areas. The region is likely to remain turbulent for the foreseeable future.

Conflicts cannot be solved only by force, as some might believe. Spain has worked closely with like-minded nations such as Kuwait and close partners like Egypt and Jordan to find solutions to these conflicts. We are particularly focused on resolving the conflict between Israel and Palestine by recognizing the right of

Palestinians to an independent state.

Recently, the Prime Minister of Spain announced the recognition of an independent Palestinian state, marking an important milestone for Spain. We work along with our partners in the European Union in order to try and give an impulse to the search for a solution to this long festering conflict. We need to make vital moves in this direction to preserve the two-state solution, which still remains the only viable solution to the conflict that has devastated Palestine for so long and put the region to the

AT: Can you share a particularly memorable moment or experience from your diplomatic service in Kuwait?

Ambassador: I will take many beautiful memories of Kuwait with me. Frankly speaking, it is difficult to sum them all up due to the intense nature of the work over the past few months.

However, I believe that when I am more relaxed back in Spain, these memories will resurface as I reflect on my achievements. I have had four intense, important, and interesting years, filled with various situations and contacts with Kuwaitis at all levels, particularly those I met during my visits to Diwaniyas.

One beautiful moment was when His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received Spain's King Felipe VI and his accompanying delegation during their trip to Kuwait to offer condolences over the demise of the late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

I accompanied His Majesty the King from Spain to Kuwait, and this was a very significant contact between the King and His Highness the Amir.

Another memorable event was during the visit of His Holiness Pope Francis to Bahrain in my capacity as Ambassador to that Kingdom. I was the only Ambassador among a restricted audience which took place in the context of that visit, comprising Kuwaiti and Bahraini dignitaries. This was a very special moment because the Pope came with a message of universal peace, particularly to Bahrain and the Middle East.

I was also in Spain whenever Dr. Ahmed Al-Sabah visited, and in 2021, His Majesty the King had a long meeting with Dr. Ahmed. They had very fruitful and positive discussions about bilateral ties, regional affairs, and many vital issues. The opening of the flights to Spain was undoubtedly an other milestone.

AT: How do you assess the current sociopolitical landscape in Kuwait, and what role do you see for Spain in supporting its development?

Ambassador: Internationally, the situation is complex, and some semblance of international order has been put to the test. International law has been flouted. It is crucial for all countries to believe in themselves, to preserve and protect peace, respect states and their sovereignties, and find solutions based on the United Nations charter for peaceful coexistence rather than resorting to war. Unfortunately, we see disturbing scenarios unfolding.

As I mentioned before, Spain is a voice for moderation and a peace mediator, seeking to find solutions to conflicts in a peaceful manner. We collaborate with Kuwait in this arena because the viewpoints of the Kuwaiti authorities align with ours.

Domestically, we see changes in Kuwait, and I sincerely hope that Kuwait will find the best path forward. Under the wise leadership of His Highness the Amir, the Crown Prince, and the Prime Minister, Kuwait will hopefully be able to bounce back, achieve social justice, provide the best opportunities for its citizens, and take steps in the right direction for the nation's betterment.

I sincerely hope that the relations between Kuwait and Spain will continue to flourish in the near future.

AT: Looking back on your term, what do you hope will be your lasting legacy as the Spanish Ambassador to Kuwait?

Ambassador: I was very happy to be in Kuwait these past years. I think Kuwait is a beautiful country, mainly because the people are very welcoming. My colleagues and I know that in other countries, we often cannot communicate as easily with the local people.

Kuwaitis and residents are very interesting, and I was truly able to form beautiful friendships. Spain is a very close friend of Kuwait, and I am sure that in the future, we will continue to strengthen our relations, which are now about 62 years old. Personally, Kuwait will always remain in my heart as a very important part of my professional and personal life.

Thank you for covering all the embassy events. The Arab Times has been very supportive and is very important to the Spanish Embassy and the Kuwaiti people. It is one of the leading newspapers in the country. Congratulations on that, and thank you for this last interview in my last days in the country.

AT: What advice would you give to your successor in terms of navigating the diplomatic landscape and fostering relations between Spain and Kuwait?

Ambassador: The new ambassador will be in Kuwait very soon. He is a distinguished and highly experienced career diplomat, and I am confident he will do a wonderful job. He is well-versed in consular and diplomatic matters in general and is already familiar with the region, having served as the deputy head of mission in Saudi Arabia. I wish him all the best.

editor's choice



### People & Places

### **Obituaries**

#### **Video artist Viola dead**

### James Sikking, actor of 'Hill Street Blues,' dies

LOS ANGELES, July 15, (AP): James Sikking, who starred as a hardened police lieutenant on "Hill Street Blues" and as the titular character's kindhearted dad on "Doogie Howser, M.D.," has died at 90.

Sikking died of complications from dementia, his publicist Cynthia Snyder said in a statement Sunday

Born the youngest of five children on March 5, 1934 in Los Angeles, his early acting ventures included an uncredited part in Roger Corman's "Five Guns West" and a bit role in an episode of "Perry Mason." He also secured guest spots in a litany of popular 1970s television series, from the action-packed "Mission: Impossible," "M.A.S.H." "The F.B.I.," "The Rockford Files," "Hawaii Five-O" and "Charlie's Angels" to "Eight is Enough" and "Little House on the Prairie."

House on the Prairie."

"Hill Street Blues" would debut in 1981, a fresh take on the traditional police procedural. Sikking played Lt. Howard Hunter, a clean-cut Vietnam War veteran who headed the Emergency Action Team of the Metropolitan Police Department in a never-named city.

The acclaimed show was a drama, but Sikking's character's uptight nature and quirks

were often used to comic effect. Sikking based his performance on a drill instructor he'd had at basic training when military service cut through his time at the University of California, Los Angeles, from which he graduated in 1959.

"The drill instructor looked like he had steel for hair and his uniform had so much starch in it, you knew it would sit in the corner when he took it off in the barracks," he told The Fresno Bee in 2014, when he did a series of interviews with various publications marking the box set's release

#### Mystery

When it debuted on the heels of a Hollywood dual strike, the NBC show was met with low ratings and little fanfare. But the struggling network kept it on the air: "Up popped this word 'demographic," Sikking told the Star Tribune in 2014. "We were reaching people with a certain education and (who) made a certain kind of money. They called it the 'Esquire audience.

The show ultimately ran until 1987, although for a brief moment it wasn't clear Sikking would make it that far. A December 1983 episode ended with his character contemplating dying by suicide. The cliff-hanger drew comparisons to the "Who shot J.R.?" mystery from "Dallas" not long before - although it was quickly resolved when TV supplements accidentally ran a teaser summary that made it clear Hunter had been saved.

"I remember when Howard tried to kill himself. My brother called and asked, 'You still got a job?' I said, 'Yeah,' and he said, 'Oh good,' and then hung up," Sikking told The Fresno Bee.

Sikking would earn an Emmy nomination for outstanding supporting actor in a drama in 1984. The look and format of "Hill Street Blues" were something new to Sikking - and many in the audience, from the grimy look of the set to the multiple storylines that often kept actors working in the background, even when they didn't have lines in the scene.

"It was a lot of hard work, but everybody loved it and that shows. When you have the people who are involved in the creation, manufacture - whatever you want to call it - who are really into it and enjoy doing it, you're going to get a good product," he told Parade. com in 2014. "We always had three different stories running through (each episode), which means you had to listen and you had to pay attention because everything was important.

Aside from "Hill Street Blues," Sikking played Captain Styles in 1984's "Star Trek III: The Search for Spock." He wasn't enthusiastic about the role, but had been lured by the idea that it would take just a

"It was not my cup of tea. I was not into that kind of outer space business. I had an arrogant point of view in those days. I wanted to do real theater. I wanted to do serious shows, not something about somebody's imagination of what outer space was going to be like, Sikking explained to startrek.com in 2014. "So I had a silly prejudice against it, which is bizarre because I've probably and happily signed more this, that or the other thing of 'Star Trek' than I have anything of all the other work I've done.

After the end of "Hill Street Blues," he acted in nearly 100 episodes of "Dougie Howser, M.D.," reuniting with Steven Bochco, who co-created both "Hill Street Blues" and the Neil Patrick Harris-star-

He married Florine Caplan, with whom he had two children and four grandchildren.

Sikking had all but retired by the time the box set of "Hill Street Blues" came out. He had fewer but memorable roles after the turn of the millennium, gueststarring on "Curb Your Enthusiasm" and acting in the rom-com films "Fever Pitch" and "Made of Honor." His last roles were as a guest star on a 2012 episode of "The Closer" and in a movie that same year, "Just

Sikking continued to do charity events. He was a longtime participant in celebrity golf tournaments and even once made it to the ribbon-cutting for a health center in an Iowa town of just 7,200

### Also:

LONG BEACH, Calif: Bill Viola, a video artist who combined with director Peter Sellars on a groundbreaking production of Wagner's "Tristan und Isolde" originally seen in Los Angeles, Paris and New York, has died at age 73.

Viola died Friday at his home in Long Beach of Alzheimer's disease, his website announced.

What was called "The Tristan Project" opened in concert form at Los Angeles' Walt Disney Concert Hall in 2004, premiered on stage at the Paris Opéra the following year and was presented in concert at Lincoln Center's Avery Fisher Hall in 2007.

His staging has been revived several times in Paris, as recently as 2023, and versions have been presented in Helsinki; Kobe, Japan; London; Madrid; Rotterdam, Netherlands; St. Petersburg, Russia; Stockholm; Tokyo; and Toronto. Videos were exhibited at New York's James Cohan gallery in 2007.

"I hope that the audience will leave the theater having a deeper understanding of the nature of our short time here on Earth and the importance and power of love and any kind of relationship we're in really with the things and people in the world." Viola said in a 2013 interview with the Canadian Opera Company.



Griff performs at the Reading Music Festival, England, Friday, Aug. 26 2022. The British singer-songwriter released her debut album, 'Vertigo,' on Friday. (AP)



Indian actor Salman Khan pose for a picture during the blessing ceremony of newlywed couple Anant Ambani son of billionaire Mukesh Ambani and his wife Radhika Merchant at Jio World Convention Centre in Mumbai, India, Saturday, July 13. (AP)

### **Variety**

LOS ANGELES: Gru and the minions celebrated a second week in first place at the North American box office this weekend, while a small horror movie called "Longlegs" upset the starry \$100 million "Fly Me

The supremacy of "Despicable Me 4" was hardly a surprise, as the Universal and Illumination franchise added \$44.7 million and pushed the film over \$200 million, according to studio estimates Sunday. But the big upset came further down the charts with "Longlegs" more than doubling the debut of the Scarlett Johansson and Channing Tatum romantic comedy "Fly Me to the Moon.

"Longlegs," an original horror about a serial killer starring Maika Monroe and Nicolas Cage, made an estimated \$22.6 million from 2,510 theaters. That's the best ever start for indie outfit Neon (most famous for releasing the Oscar-winning "Parasite"), which acquired the \$10 million film for distribution. Written and directed by Osgood Perkins, "Longlegs" also scored the best opening for an R-rated film

Neon deployed an innovative marketing strategy for the film, including touches like placing cipher messages in local newspapers and posting a Los Angeles billboard with a phone number that played an "unnerving" message. In its first 48 hours, the number received over 250,000 calls.

"Longlegs" was well-received by critics (it has an 87% on Rotten Tomatoes), but audiences gave it a less enthusiastic a C+ CinemaScore. (AP)

**MUMBAI, India:** A wedding reception on Sunday wrapped up the monthslong celebrations as the youngest son of Mukesh Ambani, Asia's richest man, married his longtime girlfriend with a price tag running into the millions.

The newlyweds were cheered by friends and relatives at Mumbai's Jio World Drive -- a convention center built and owned by the Ambani family - as part of the "Mangal Utsav" (a festival of Bliss), which marked what many have dubbed as the wedding of

**Anant Ambani** tied the knot with Radhika Merchant, daughter of pharma tycoons Viren and Shaila Merchant. The wedding rituals, including exchanging garlands by the couple and walking around the sacred fire, began Friday and were completed early Saturday.
Former British Prime Ministers **Boris** 

Johnson and Tony Blair, as well as Kim and Khloe Kardashian, Priyanka Chopra

### Music

### 'Vertigo' a milestone

### Rising star Griff now has album of her own to tour

LONDON, July 15, (AP): British singer-songwriter Griff's career has been an undeniable whirlwind. Less than two years after releasing her first single - and finishing her A-level exams - she won the Brit Award for Rising Star. Then she opened for Dua Lipa. Then Ed Sheeran. Then Coldplay. Then Taylor Swift.

In between those gigs, solo shows and music releases, she worked on the songs that make up her debut album, "Vertigo," out now.

"The usual steps that you take as a new artist have been a bit, like, upside-down," the 23-year-old, whose full name is Sarah Faith Griffiths, told The Associated Press in an interview. "An album is such a step hitting the ground, and it's such a milestone I've always wanted to get to."

In that sense, this moment feels like a career beginning, she said. The immersive pop album tracks the emotions that come with that kind of whirlwind - alongside those that follow other destabilizing events, like growing up and experiencing heartache.

### Inspiration

Griff said inspiration for the project came, "funnily enough," from navigating a spiral staircase in one of the houses she wrote the album in - in this case, a cottage belonging to the musician and songwriter Imogen Heap. She said the physical reality of the experience easily lent itself to an emotional equivalent. and it's stuck with her ever since.

"That was just a very real, tangible feeling that I have had, and still have, at this stage in my life," she said.

"Tears For Fun" and "Miss Me Too" explore that dizzying emotion through layered productions, informed by the large-scale spaces she's performed in already. "Astronaut" features piano by Coldplay's Chris Martin, who encouraged Griff to rework an initial draft of the song into a ballad. "You said you needed space, go on then, astronaut," she concedes in her signature belt, the grounded approach adding weight to her accusations.

"It's almost like I'm bit greedy with emotions when it comes to songs," she said, describing her desire to pair wrenching lyrics with catchy, upbeat productions. "For me, music is all about moving people and triggering emotion."

The catharsis is shared then the artist and her listeners, she said, an approach Martin has encour-

"He really believes that as creatives and writers, we're just kind of vessels, and creativity will flow through us and ideas will find their way to the right people," she said. "And I think that kind of philosophy is really reassuring.

### Glimpses

Griff succeeds in her mission not only with her sound, but also the visuals she and her team produce. Since the release of the album's lead single, she's consistently worn a spiral in her hair. Song visualizers see her dancing in billowing fabrics on the same spiral drawn in sand. She, like her pop mentors, knows an album "era" is a multimedia endeavor.

Perhaps even more revealing of her inner life, however, are the more casual glimpses of Griff the creator. In preparation for her gig opening for a night of Swift's Eras Tour in London, she documented the process of turning blue and white fabric into a dress inspired by a lyric in Swift's "But Daddy I Love Him.'

"I was always draping bedsheets around myself," she said of her childhood. "I was the only girl -I've got two older brothers and a lot of foster siblings - so that was my way of entertaining myself, playing dress up. I think I just like making things.

As Swift said from the stage: "This girl, she is so creative on every single level."

True to that spirit, Griff says she is ready to keep creating.

"To be totally honest, I feel excited to get back in the studio," she said. "I feel like I've got a lot more to give."

and Nick Jonas, American wrestler and actor John Cena, Bollywood superstars Amitabh Bachchan, Shahrukh Khan and



Salman Khan were among the celebrities who attended the ceremonies on Friday and

India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi blessed the newlyweds at a Saturday reception organized by the Ambanis, highlighting the billionaire's rising clout.

"This is the final and the most auspicious ceremony and the last wedding in our family," The Times of India newspaper quoted Mukesh Ambani. The Ambanis didn't say how much they spent on the festivities that have been going on for months.

During a three-day pre-wedding celebration in March, Rihanna and Akon performed for a star-studded 1,200-person guest list. (AP)

### Music

#### **Star investments**

### Latin singers fuel basketball boom

CAROLINA, Puerto Rico, July 15, (AP): Vianca Braña never used to attend basketball games in her hometown of Carolina, Puerto Rico - or anywhere else in the United States territory. But in recent years, the 23-year-old has left the arena with a hoarse voice, often wearing a T-shirt that reads "Carola," a nickname for her town.

"We started making this fun, and I wanted to represent the town where I'm from," said Braña, who attended her first game the year Puerto Rican reggaeton star **Bad Bunny** bought a team in the island's professional men's basketball league. It was also

around that time that she began placing bets on different teams across Puerto Rico with her girlfriends. Braña's fer-

vor illustrates how Puerto Rico's professional men's basketball



league is experiencing a revival, driven by reggaeton stars like Bad Bunny, Ozuna and Anuel AA, who are stepping into the financial game, buying local teams and helping to stack up a loyal fan base the island hasn't witnessed in over 40 years.

What were once half-empty arenas in Puerto Rico are now packed, filled with families and young fans cheering for their favorite teams, from Los Capitanes de Arecibo in northern Puerto Rico to Los Leones de Ponce in the south.

Attendance more than doubled from 2018 to 2023, skyrocketing from some 480,000 tickets sold to nearly 1 million, according to Puerto Rico's professional men's basketball league, whose digital presence has also soared in the past few years.

#### Revival

A pivotal moment in the league's revival came in 2021, when threetime Grammy winner Bad Bunny became co-owner of Los Cangrejeros de Santurce, along with his manager, Noah Assad.

Bad Bunny's frequent gameday visits sparked a resurgence in Puerto Rico's basketball scene. Other artists like Anuel AA quickly followed, buying Arecibo's Capitanes team before a new owner took over in 2023, and Ozuna acquiring Manatí's team, renaming it Los Osos, in 2022. The league, known as BSN, currently has 12 teams playing, compared with nine just four years ago.

Basketball games have transformed into premier rendezvous events, attracting celebrities like NBA legend LeBron James, former boxer Floyd Mayweather and reggaeton artists including Arcangel and Rauw Alejandro, capturing audiences of all ages hoping to get a glimpse of them.

When Noah and Bad Bunny came along, we generated a lot of noise," said Ricardo Dalmau, president of BSN. "It was an explosion of attention."

Dalmau said local TV ratings also saw an upward tick after they began broadcasting some games in 2021, with the biggest surprise being their largest viewership block: women ages 18 to 49, a new audience that was also reflected in the bleachers. "You never know what artist

you're going to find in the (league)," he said. Before its recent surge in popular-

ity, the league was under financial strain. Although Dalmau did not provide specific numbers, he said there used to be a lot of uncertainty about whether certain teams would participate or whether the league could fulfill players' contracts. "We don't have those problems anymore," he said.

### Attention

Javier Sabath, a popular basketball commentator on the island, said he is witnessing what his father - a sports commentator himself decades ago - describes as the environment in the 1980s, the heyday of the league.

"New generations have never seen this before," Sabath said. "The boom with urban artists revived the Puerto Rican sports history that had been forgotten.

Sabath said the momentum created by artists has fueled fans' excitement beyond just seeing reggaeton stars. "Indirectly, these artists are attracting enough attention to make people interested in our league," he

said. "It's a domino effect." A bittersweet moment took place recently, when Puerto Rico national men's basketball team, composed of several of the league's star players, qualified for the 2024 Summer Olympics in Paris. The victory over Lithuania broke a 20-year drought for the team that last competed in 2004, beating the USA team in the Athens Olympics. It is also a loss for the league's teams playing later in the summer.

#### 'Severe symptoms may require hospitalization'

### Expert tips to prevent heat-related illness, heat stroke

KUWAIT CITY, July 13: Last Friday, temperatures soared above 50 degrees Celsius, as shown by the digital clock at the automatic control tower. Kuwait is facing a severe heat wave with temperatures potentially exceeding 52 degrees Celsius, making this July one of the hottest months globally, according to scientists' predictions, reports Al-

Given this, experts have issued warnings about the health risks associated with extreme heat, such as heat stress, heat stroke, and heat cramps, and have provided 15 tips to mitigate the effects of high temperatures. Preventive health physician Dr. Abdullah Behbehani noted, "There are three medical conditions related to heat waves: heat cramps, heat stress, and the most severe, heat stroke. The risk of heat exhaustion and heat stroke increases with high humidity and strenuous physical activity, especially

#### Heat stress

Dr. Behbehani explained, "Heat stress can progress to heat stroke if untreated, potentially leading to death. The groups most at risk include children, particularly infants, pregnant women, and the elderly. Dehydration is particularly dangerous for children because their bodies cannot regulate temperature as effectively. For the elderly, medications such as diuretics, heart and blood pressure medications, and antihistamines can impair the body's ability to stay hydrated."

He added, "For pregnant women, dehydration and high temperatures can cause serious complications, such as low birth weight, premature birth, or even stillbirth. The mother may also face risks like gestational diabetes, high blood pressure during pregnancy, and premature labor."

Dr. Behbehani advised monitoring temperatures, avoiding outdoor activities during peak heat times, drinking plenty of water and fluids regularly, especially for children and pregnant women, and having a first aid kit available with oral rehydration salts, a thermometer, water, and cloths for cooling.

#### Heat stroke

Internal medicine consultant Dr. Ghanem Salman Al-Salem warned about heat exhaustion and sunstroke.

He explained, "Heat exhaustion occurs when the body loses excessive fluids or salts through sweating. Symptoms include dizziness, headache, intense thirst, low blood pressure, and a significant rise in temperature. Severe symptoms can lead to heart and respiratory system fatigue and kidney failure."

Dr. Al-Salem stressed the importance of taking heat stroke seriously as it can be fatal. "Symptoms include headache, blurred vision, confusion, muscle and nerve spasms, and loss of consciousness," he said.

#### Preventive measures

To avoid heat-related illnesses, Dr. Al-Salem recommended:

Wearing loose, light-colored clothing; avoiding outdoor activities in hot weather; staying out of direct sunlight; exercising indoors in air-conditioned spaces; drinking plenty of fluids;

avoiding energy drinks high in caffeine; keeping indoor environments cool and using sunglasses when outside.

Impact of climate on health Director of the Health Promotion Department, Dr. Abeer Al-Buhu, emphasized the significant impact of climate and weather on human health. "While people can adapt to different climates, extreme short-term fluctuations can cause severe health issues, such as heat stress," she said.

Dr. Al-Buhu highlighted the increasing number of people exposed to extreme heat due to climate change. "Global heat-related deaths among those over 65 have increased by nearly 85 percent between 2000-2004 and 2017-2021. Studies indicate that from 2000 to 2019, nearly 489,000 people died annually due to heat, with signifi-

cant numbers in Asia and Europe.' She pointed out that heat stress is a major cause of weather-related deaths and can exacerbate conditions like cardiovascular disease, diabetes, mental health issues, and asthma.

#### Tips to stay safe in extreme heat Avoid strenuous activity during ex-

treme heat. Stay in the shade and avoid direct

sunlight Spend 2-3 hours in a cool place daily. Stay informed about heat wave

Keep your home cool and minimize

the use of electrical appliances.

Avoid using electric fans if the temperature is above 40 degrees Celsius, as they can heat the body

Limit time spent outdoors if the weather is hot and humid.

Drink plenty of fluids to replace what is lost through sweating. Avoid tea, coffee, and soft drinks as

they can lead to fluid loss. Wear light-colored clothing.

Use sunscreen and wear a hat or use an umbrella. Monitor the weather to plan outdoor

activities accordingly. Keep a first aid kit with rehydration solutions, a thermometer, water, cooling cloths, and a handheld fan or water

Know how to get help and have contact information for the nearest health care center or ambulance service.

Set air conditioners to 27°C and use an electric fan to make the room feel cooler.

Signs of heat exhaustion Dr. Behbehani outlined key signs of heat exhaustion: excessive sweating, cold and clammy skin, chills, fainting, dizziness, fatigue, increased heart rate,

Protect your phone and financial security

weak pulse, low blood pressure upon standing, nausea, headache, and painful muscle cramps.

#### **Clothing recommendations**

He stressed the importance of using sunscreen, wearing hats or using umbrellas, avoiding unnecessary clothing, particularly for children, wearing cotton clothes to reduce skin rashes and absorb sweat, and ensuring clothing is loose.

#### **Dealing with heat stress**

Dr. Behbehani emphasized knowing the symptoms of heat exhaustion and acting quickly by moving the person to a cool place, applying wet cloths to the body, especially the head, neck, armpits, and thighs, and removing unnecessary outer clothing. Some cases may require oral rehydration solutions before reaching a health care facility.

#### Heat stroke and brain damage

Dr. Ghanem Al-Salem explained that if brain temperature exceeds 40 degrees Celsius for more than 5 minutes, permanent damage can occur if not controlled within 30-40 minutes, potentially leading to death or loss of body function, necessitating hospital

#### **Breakthrough method**

### New discovery promises effective weight loss for obese individuals

KUWAIT CITY, July 15: Scientists at the University of California have achieved a breakthrough in weight loss methods for individuals suffering from severe obesity with excessive fat accumulation, reports Al-Rai daily.

They have identified that by suppressing a specific protein, white fat cells can be transformed into calorie-burning brown fat cells. This finding, reported by the New Atlas, highlights the potential for a significant advancement in obesity treatment.

The protein in question, KLF-15, known for its role in cell metabolism, particularly in brown and beige fat cells, was found to influence the cellular function significantly. Without KLF-15, fat cells default to a beige phenotype rather than

remaining predominantly white.

This discovery, published in the Journal of Clinical Investigation, suggests that inhibiting KLF-15 could facilitate the conversion of white fat into brown fat, which is crucial for efficient calorie burning.

Professor Brian Feldman, lead researcher and expert in endocrinology, emphasized that this approach could simplify long-term weight loss efforts. Unlike previous methods that focused on converting stem cells into brown fat, which requires complex procedures, suppressing KLF-15 appears to offer a more straightforward pathway.

Moreover, research on laboratory mice demonstrated that blocking KLF-15 resulted in an increase in sandy-colored fat cells, which are interspersed within white adipose tissue. This shift effectively reduced overall fat stores.

The study also explored the mechanism by which KLF-15 influences fat cell behavior, identifying its control over a receptor called Adrb1. This finding opens doors for potential drug development targeting Adrb1, potentially offering a safer and more effective alternative to current weight loss treatments.

This groundbreaking research underscores the intricate biology of fat metabolism and holds promise for future therapeutic strategies aimed at combating obesity more effectively.

### China's role in global HIV fight recognized

BEIJING, July 15, (Xinhua): China has a very strong commitment to fighting and ending HIV/AIDS, said Winnie Byanyima, executive director of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIVAIDS (UNAIDS).

China's commitment to fighting HIV/AIDS is demonstrated at various levels, from the top leadership to lower-level governments, from institutions to communities and the private sector, the UNAIDS chief said in an interview with Xinhua

Byanyima, who also serves as the under-secretary-general of the United Nations, has just concluded her visit to China to strengthen collaboration and advance shared goals. During her visit, a memorandum of understanding on

strategic cooperation between China and the UNAIDS was signed to boost joint efforts in related fields. Over the past years, the Chinese government and health authorities have attached great importance to HIVAIDS prevention and control, and adopted a series of measures that

have yielded marked results.

Dengue outbreak

### **Experts warn of triple** avian influenza threat

CANBERRA, July 15, (Xinhua): Australia is facing an unprecedented threat from three different strains of avian influenza according to experts from the national science agency.

Debbie Eagles and Frank Wong from the Australian Center for Disease Preparedness (ACPD) at the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) on Monday warned that three strains of the highly pathogenic H7 avian influenza have been detected in Australia in 2024.

The outbreaks have affected poultry farms in the southeastern states of Victoria and New South Wales (NSW) as well as the Australian Capital Territory (ACT), prompting the culling of over 500,000 chickens.

Wong told the Australian Associated Press (AAP) that experts have not been able to identify a reason behind the simultaneous outbreaks.

"There could be many reasons. We don't really know. The wild bird dynamics at a particular point in time, climate, changes in perhaps weather patterns or just coincidence," he said.

The federal government earlier in July committed 6.9 million Australian dollars (4.6 million U.S. dollars) in funding to boost preparations for a possible outbreak of the H5 Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI).

Murray Watt, the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, said at the time that Australia is the last continent to remain free of the strain, which has caused significant deaths of poultry, wild birds and wild mammals around the world.

He warned that H5 HPAI could spread in Australia in the spring when migratory birds arrive in the country.

gue since the start of this year, with an outbreak 3.17 times larger than last year, but there were signs of decreasing in the past few weeks, the Health Ministry said Sunday.

In the first 27 weeks of this year, health authorities registered 520,037 cases of dengue, or 97 percent of the 537,249 infections logged in the entire season starting in epidemiological week 31 of 2023, according to the ministry's National Epidemiological Bulletin.

The highest number of cases was logged in the central region with 60.7 percent, followed by the northwest with 24.1 percent, and the northeast with 13.1 percent

Meanwhile, Ghanaian health authorities said on Sunday that they have confirmed nine cases of dengue in the Eastern

The Ghana Health Service (GHS) said in a statement that it has received confirmation from the Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research (NMIMR) that samples from patients tested positive for dengue.

The GHS said the national surveillance team had detected malaria-like illnesses in some districts of the Eastern Region that were not responding to the recommended malaria treatment.

### **Prevent SIM swapping identity** theft with this expert tech tip

NEW YORK, July 15, (AP): SIMswapping is a growing form of identity theft that goes beyond hacking into an email or sovcial media account. In this case, the thieves take over your phone number. Any calls or texts go to them,

Any protections consumers enabled to secure access to their financial accounts, such as two-factor authentication texts, now can aid attackers and lock out owners

Experts say these scams will only increase and become more sophisticated, while the data show they are on the rise. The FBI Internet Crime Complaint Center reports that SIM-swapping complaints have increased more than 400% from 2018 to 2021, with associated personal losses estimated to be more than \$68 million.

#### Information

Rachel Tobac, CEO of online security company SocialProof Security, says the numbers are probably a vast underestimate because most identity thefts are not reported.

Criminals use personal information about their victims - phone numbers, addresses, birthdays and Social Security numbers - obtained through data breaches, leaks, dark web purchases or phishing scams to impersonate the victims as they contact their mobile

They will claim the original phone and SIM card were damaged, lost or sold accidentally and ask for the number to be associated with a new SIM, or eSIM, card in their possession. Once this is done, the phone number belongs to the criminals, along with the ability to receive text messages or calls to verify accounts

Prevention is the best form of protection, according to cybersecurity experts. The tricks and habits security experts say help prevent SIM-swapping are what they have long been recommending for online security in general. They include the following:

If your credentials are caught in a cyber breach, the hackers could try using the stolen passwords to get into other services to gather the personal data they need to pull off a SIM swap.

If you've been using the same or similar login information for multiple websites or online accounts, make sure



A SIM card is shown next to a cellphone in this photo taken on Tuesday, June 11, 2024 in London. Physical SIM cards are going away, replaced by eSIMs which make switching cell carriers easier. (AP)

to change it. If criminals pilfer your password from one service, they can try it on your other accounts and easily get into all of them. If you find it too hard to memorize your various credentials, consider a password manager. Also use strong passwords that include

letters, numbers and symbols. The longer they are, the better. Some experts say they should be 16 characters. Add biometrics or multifactor au-

thentication apps and devices that do not involve texting. These methods often use separate login methods and encryption that are not tied to your phone's identity, making them more difficult for criminals to access. AT&T also advises contacting your

carrier to set up a unique passcode to prevent significant account changes such as porting phone numbers to another carrier. Your carrier may already have other protections in place to protect against SIM swapping, so it's worth calling them to ask.

Criminals will use email or text messages to try to trick you into giving them your personal and financial information or to expose your workplace to possible attacks, and it's incredibly effective.

In its annual State of the Phish report, the cybersecurity firm Proofpoint found a majority of data breaches across the world still center on human

If you suspect you have received a possible phishing message or email, report it. Most of the popular email platforms have buttons or functions specifically for reporting phishing attempts. If you're at work, follow the advice from your company's information security team.

All major U.S. carriers have web pages advising victims how to report a SIM fraud.

But an Associated Press reporter, who recently was hit by such an attack, advises that victims should be diligent in working with the carrier to fix the issue. Filing complaints with the Federal Trade Commission, the Internet Crime Complaint Center or with their state attorneys general can possibly expedite recovery efforts.

If card payment numbers were stolen, inform your bank or credit card company, explaining that your card is at risk of fraud and asking the company to alert you to any suspicious activity.

You can also notify credit agencies, including the three main firms: Equifax, Experian and TransUnion. They can freeze your credit, which restricts access to your credit report and makes it hard to open new accounts or issue a fraud alert and will add a warning to your credit report encouraging lenders to contact you before lending money.







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

### **Boston and Clark score 17 each as Fever beat Lynx**

### Magbegor scores 18, Horston adds 16 as Storm dispose of Dream

SEATTLE, July 15, (AP): Ezi Magbegor scored 18 points and Jordan Horston added 16 to lead five Seattle players scoring in double figures and the Storm beat the Atlanta Dream 81-70 Sunday.

Jewell Loyd had 14 points and seven assists, Sami Whitcomb scored 13 and Nneka Ogwumike finished with 10 points, 12 rebounds, two steals and two blocks for the Storm (16-8).

Atlanta cut its deficit to a point on two occasions early in the fourth quarter but the Storm answered each time and used a 13-2 run, beginning with two free throws by Loyd with 5:33 to play, that gave Seattle its biggest lead of the game when Horston's layup capped the spurt and made it 81-67 with 1:42 remaining.

Atlanta (7-16) has lost seven straight games and 10 of 11. Rhyne Howard, the 2022 WNBA rookie of the year and a two-time WNBA All-Star, has missed 10 consecutive games since she suffered an ankle injury during a 68-55 loss to the Minnesota Lynx on June 19 in Minneapolis. The Dream's 78-74 win at Connecticut on June 28 is their only victory since Howard went down.

Maya Caldwell scored a career-high 19 points to lead the Dream and Aerial Powers added 14 points, Tina Charles and Allisha Gray scored 12 apiece.

#### Fever 81, Lynx 74

In Minneapolis, Kelsey Mitchell scored 21 points, and Aliyah Boston and Caitlin Clark finished with 17 points to help the Indiana Fever beat the Minnesota Lynx

Boston grabbed a career-best 16 re-

#### **BASKETBALL**

bounds and blocked four shots for the Fever. NaLyssa Smith added 11 points. Indiana (11-14), which lost 10 of

its first 13 games but has won eight of 12 since, has won back-to-back games and three of its last four.

Clark set up Boston for a layup before Katie Lou Samuelson fed Boston for another basket inside to give the Fever a four-point lead with 2 minutes to go. Kayla McBride cut the deficit to a point with a 3-pointer just 8 seconds later but Clark was fouled and made two free throws to make it

77-74. Mitchell swooped in to block a layup attempt by Alanna Smith with 22 seconds remaining, was fouled and hit two free throws to make it a five-point game with 16 seconds left and Clark made two fouls shots to cap the scoring 6 seconds later.

Alanna Smith had 18 points, eight rebounds and four steals despite being forced to the bench by foul trouble in the second half for Minnesota (16-8). Bridget Carleton tied her career high with five 3-pointers and finished with 17 points, seven rebounds and six as-

#### Aces 89, Mystics 77

In Washington, A'ja Wilson scored 28 points and grabbed 17 rebounds, Kelsey Plum scored 22 points and the Las Vegas Aces rallied from a 13-point second-quarter deficit to beat the Washington Mystics for their fourth win in a row.

Tiffany Hayes tied her season best with 17 points and added a seasonhigh five assists for Las Vegas (16-7).

The Aces - who started the season 6-6, matching their loss total from the 2023 regular season in the first 12 last 11 since the return of point guard Chelsea Gray. The 2022 WNBA Finals MVP returned from a foot injured (suffered in the 2023 Finals) on June 19 and Las Vegas has nine wins by 10plus points since her debut.

Plum hit a driving layup about three minutes into the second half to give the Aces a 44-43 lead, their first since 2-0, and Wilson took over, scoring 14 points and grabbing eight rebounds in the third quarter as Las Vegas took a 65-62 lead into the fourth and never again trailed.

Ariel Atkins tied her career high with six 3-pointers and finished with a career-best 36 points on 13-of-25 shooting for Washington (6-18).

#### Sun 96, Mercury 69

In Uncasville, Rachel Banham scored a career-high 24 points, hitting eight 3-pointers to match the Connecticut record, and help the Sun beat the Phoenix Mercury.

Banham, who was 8 for 11 from behind the arc, matched Shekinna Stricklen's mark. She was one short of the WNBA record.



Minnesota Lynx forward Dorka Juhasz (14) is pressured by Indiana Fever forward Aliyah Boston (7), (left), and Fever guard Caitlin Clark (22) during the fourth quarter of a WNBA basketball game in Minneapolis. (AP)

DeWanna Bonner added 17 points and Brionna Jones had 16 for the Sun (18-5). DiJonai Carrington had 12 points and 11 rebounds.

The game saw the return of Diana

Taurasi, Brittney Griner and Natasha Cloud. Taurasi (left leg) and Cloud (left knee) missed the team's previous game against Indiana on Friday. Griner injured her right hip in that game.

## Power wins IndyCar Series race at the Iowa Speedway



Will Power celebrates with his crew after winning an IndyCar auto race at Iowa Speedway in Newton, Iowa. (AP)

### Race ended with a 4-car crash on last lap

NEWTON, Iowa, July 15, (AP): It was Will Power's turn Sunday for Team Penske success at Iowa Speed-

Power broke through at the 0.875-mile oval, gaining his first IndyCar Series win at Iowa in the race that ended with a four-car,

last-lap crash. Power had already crossed the finish line when Sting Ray Robb's car flipped after clipping the car of Alexander Rossi coming out of the second turn. The car slid on its top down the backstretch while Rossi's car collided with the cars of Kyle Kirkwood and Ed Carpenter, with Carpenter's car ending up on top of Kirkwood's.

### **CAR RACING**

Robb flashed a thumbs-up sign as he was taken on a stretcher to an ambulance. He was then flown to Mercy Medical Center in Des Moines for further evaluation, although IndyCar Series officials said he was in good

Power held off second-place driver Alex Palou by 0.3915 seconds. Scott McLaughlin, who won Saturday's race in the doubleheader, finished third.

Power, who led 50 laps of the 250lap race, has always been fast at the 0.875-mile oval - he has won seven poles here in his career - but had only five podium finishes in 18 starts. He finished 18th in Saturday's race after starting fourth.

But this was a weekend when Penske drivers reached milestones at a track where the team has had so much

### Uganda name 2024 Rugby Africa Cup squad

The winner of that contest will face the victor Namibia or Burkina Faso in

KAMPALA, July 15, (Xinhua): Uganda's national rugby union coach has announced the country's squad for the upcoming 2024 Rugby Africa Cup.

The tournament, set to take place from July 20 to 28 at the newly refurbished Nelson Mandela Stadium in Kampala, will feature eight teams

competing for the title. Fred Mudoola unveiled the Uganda squad on Sunday night, highlighting a blend of experienced and youthful players. "We have won this title once before, and hosting the tournament gives us an excellent opportunity to

success. McLaughlin picked up his

first career oval win on Saturday, and

then Power got his victory on a track

that underwent partial repaving in the

the semifinals. The other quarterfinals feature Kenya versus Senegal and Algeria facing Cote d'Ivoire.

Namibia, who defeated Kenya in the final last year, hold the record with nine Rugby Africa Cup titles. South Africa have won three titles, while Kenya and Morocco have each won twice. Uganda and Zimbabwe have each won the Cup once.

**Uganda squad:** Forwards: Nathan Bwambale,

ing room. It was Power's 43rd career

Faragi Odugo, Jude Juuko, Asuman Mugerwa, Santos Senteza, Mike Otto, Saul Kivumbi, Charles Uhuru, Eliphaz Emong, Robert Aziku, Julius Opio, Brian Wandera, Byron Oketayot, Sydney Gongodyo, Moses Zziwa, Alex Aturinda, Mark Omoding Backs: Conrad Wanyama, Pool Kalungi, Ivan Magomu, Joseph Aredo, Innocent Gwokto, Jones Kamiza, Phillip Wokorach, Timothy Kisiga, Arnold Ocen, Joseph Oyet, Shakim Ssembusi Reserves: Edward Ememu, Blair Ayebazibwe, Ebber Aturinde, Robin Odrua, Nicholas Kato, Haruna Muhammad

IndyCar win, his first on an oval since winning at Pocono in 2019.

It was the ninth Penske win in IndyCar races at the track and the third



Alex Palou (10) leads Will Power during an IndyCar auto race at Iowa Speedway in Newton, Iowa. (AP)

victory for the team at the track this season - Ryan Blaney won the NAS-CAR Cup Series race in June.

Power, who started 22nd on Sunday, was able to move to second place on the first round of pit stops, then took the lead on lap 209 after his second pit stop three laps earlier that was almost nine-tenths of a second faster than Palou's.

The concerns all weekend that the partial repaving in the turns that had occurred in May would turn the oval into a one-groove track continued Sunday. There was little change among the top 10 drivers until the first round of pit stops that began on lap 94, and that was when Palou was able to get the lead.

Palou stayed out until lap 100, and as he was coming down pit road, Agustin Canapino spun coming out of the pits, bringing out a yellow flag and giving Palou an advantage over the cars that had pitted. Power did not pit until after the caution came out, and he came out of the pit sequence in second place behind Palou.

### **Deadline for tests elapsed July 4**

### Technicality rules Kenyan 'sprinter' out of Paris Oly

NAIROBI, July 15, (Xinhua): Kenyan sprinter Kevin Kipkorir has been ruled out of the 2024 Paris Olympic Games over what officials are blaming on a "technicality".

Athletics Kenya (AK) and the Anti-Doping Agency of Kenya (ADAK) were at pains to explain how the 4x400m athlete failed to travel to France at the very last minute, each pointing fingers at the other.

Had it all gone according to plan, Kipkorir, 28, the Kenyan 400m champion, would be training alongside Kenya's advance party that has already arrived at their official pre-Olympics training camp in Miramas, southern France.

#### **OLYMPICS**

"I was called to Kenya's team camp. I was surprised on the last day when people were expected to travel to Miramas, Paris, I heard I wasn't in the team. I had to visit the AK offices and I was told that I hadn't been tested fully. But I have been tested and I have all the papers," the devastated 28-year-old told journalists.

He had spent two weeks at the local training camp in Kenya's capital Nairobi, only to be told he would not be on the advance party that started departing for France a week ago.

According to AK, Kipkorir did not meet the required number of doping tests, a delay they attributed to the ADAK, which has denied responsi-

ADAK CEO Sarah Shibutse told local TV station NTV on Sunday evening that Kipkorir has three tests: two out of competition and one in competition, noting that the deadline for the Athletics Integrity Unit (AIU) to test athletes going for the Olympics was July 4.

"AK told us about this athlete on July 4, telling us this athlete has been included in the team. We checked and found he didn't meet the requirements," Shibutse said.

Kenya's head of mission Barnaba Korir told the same channel that there was a test that came in less than 21 days, as prescribed by World Athlet-

"And that is why they said, okay, if that is the case, it means that as per those rules, he is not qualified to run unless the federation appeals as an extraordinary thing that [he] happened to be allowed to go," Ko-

Kipkorir's case has brewed a storm on social media and other online chat rooms over which organization is to blame for the mix-up that has left the runner, who quit his job at a supermarket to prepare for the Olympics, out of the Games.

Kenya remains in Category A of the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) nations with the highest risk of doping, meaning its athletes must have three no-notice out-of-competition tests within a year to be entered at the Olympics.

The deadline for all three tests elapsed on July 4.

Kipkorir has competed in AK local meetings, the National Championships, Olympic Trials, and World Relays in the Bahamas, and the African Championships in Douala, Cameroon, this season.

He won the Olympic Trial in Nairobi to seal his place at Paris.

### **Cummins to miss Australia's** tour to England and Scotland

MELBOURNE, Australia, July 15, (AP): World Cup-winning skipper Pat Cummins will be rested for Australia's upcoming limited-overs tour to Britain and Mitchell Starc will miss the Twenty20 portion of the trip as part of a workload management program.

Australia is scheduled to play three T20s against Scotland and five one-day internationals against England in September.

Cricket Australia said Cummins' absence was part of a "pre-planned, long-term load management strategy" as part of preparations for the Champions Trophy next year.

Mitchell Marsh, who led Australia at the recent T20 World Cup in the United States and Caribbean, will be captain for the tour.

Veteran opener David Warner has retired and wicketkeeper Matthew Wade wasn't selected, with selectors looking at the future.

Young batter Jake Fraser-McGurk was included in both the ODI and T20 squads after being a designated traveling reserve for the T20 World

Cup.
"This tour gives us a great opporate new players tunity to bring in some new players in the absence of David Warner and Matthew Wade, as well as giving some senior players time to prepare for the home summer and a busy first half of next year," George Bailey, Australia's selection chairman, said.

The likes of Fraser-McGurk,

Spencer Johnson, Xavier Bartlett and Aaron Hardie "are exciting prospects to join the likes of Cameron Green, Nathan Ellis and Josh Inglis in the white ball setup," Bailey said. "With the Champions Trophy next year ... there has been a lot of planning invested into these next six

"That has included gradual integration of new players into our white ball squads who have earned international opportunities via excellent

### **CRICKET**

Australia is the World Cup champion in the 50-over format and holder of the World Test Championship title, but didn't reach the semifinals of the T20 World Cup.

T20 squad: Mitch Marsh (captain), Xavier Bartlett, Cooper Connolly, Tim David, Nathan Ellis, Jake Fraser-McGurk, Cameron Green, Aaron Hardie, Josh Hazlewood, Travis Head, Josh Inglis, Spencer Johnson, Marcus Stoinis, Adam

ODI squad: Mitch Marsh (captain), Sean Abbott, Alex Carey, Nathan Ellis, Jake Fraser-McGurk, Aaron Hardie, Cameron Green, Josh Hazlewood, Travis Head, Josh Inglis, Marnus Labuschagne, Glenn Maxwell, Matthew Short, Steve Smith, Mitchell Starc, Adam Zampa.

### **Change Name**

I, am LAXMAMMA BATHALA, Holder of indian passport no.T0705883, having permanent address of Agraharam, Mangampet Village, Obulavaripalli Mandal, Annamayya District, Andhra pradesh, India., Pin: 516105, residing in Kuwait at present, hereby declare that henceforth my name will be read as under. Given name: LAKSHMI DEVI And Surname: BATHALA,

### Thrillers, surprises likely amid France, Italy dominance

BEIJING, July 15, (Xinhua): As the world eagerly anticipates the Paris 2024 Olympic Games, the fencing events promise to be among the most thrilling. With the competition set in the historical and cultural heart of France, the Grand Palais will provide a spectacular backdrop. Host nation France and Italy have historically been dominant forces in fencing, and Paris 2024 is expected to be no different, as these two are the only teams that have registered the maximum quota of athletes per National Olympic Committee (NOC) - a

total of 18 fencers, nine per gender. Buoyed by the support of the home crowd,

France is expected to shine in every weapon category with their blend of seasoned veterans and rising stars, including Tokyo 2020 gold medalist Romain Cannone and world champion Yannick Borel, who is known for his powerful style and consistency. Six-time World Cup winner Manon Apithy-Brunet will also be aiming to improve on her women's sabre bronze from Tokyo.

Italy, who leads the all-time Olympic fenc-

ing medal table, is expected to bounce back after falling flat in Tokyo with only two silver and three bronze medals. Rio 2016 champion Daniele Garozzo and current world No. 1 Tommaso Marini will be key contenders for gold in the men's foil. On the women's side, world champions Arianna Errigo and Alice Volpi, as well as 22-year-old Martina Favaretto, are all formidable competitors.

Italy's biggest rival in the foil events is the United States. Lee Kiefer became the first American to win an individual foil gold in Tokyo after stunning Olympic champion Inna Deriglazova of Russia. Her husband Gerek Meinhardt, an International Fencing Federation Hall of Famer, will be making his fifth Olympic appearance after claiming two team bronzes in 2016 and 2021.

Hungary's rich fencing tradition continues with strong contenders in the men's sabre and epee. Star fencer Aron Szilagyi achieved an unprecedented three consecutive golds in the men's individual sabre at the London, Rio and Tokyo Olympics.

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The honored athletes pose for a group photo.

#### **Kuwait Winter Games Club honors 22 athletes**

KUWAIT CITY, July 15: The Kuwait Winter Games Club recently celebrated and honored a group of its outstanding high school male and female players for the academic year 2023/2024. This group includes 22 athletes from various sports within the club.

Fuhaid Al-Ajmi, Chairman of the Board of Directors, emphasized the club's annual commitment to recognizing its members, particularly those excelling in both academics and athletics across the five sports the club oversees. This initiative aims to motivate players to strive for academic excellence alongside their athletic endeavors, believing that success in academics positively influences their athletic performance.

Al-Ajmi expressed profound gratitude to Sheikh Jaber Bandar Al-Sabah, the honorary president of the club, for sponsoring and attending the ceremony. He also praised the support of Hamed Al-Hazeem, the Deputy Director General of the General Sports Authority for the Sports for All Sector, who attended and contributed to the event.

Fatima Al-Issa, a Kuwaiti national team figure skater, shared her and her peers' joy and appreciation for the club's initiative, recognizing it as a significant encouragement for both academic and athletic excellence. The ceremony was also attended by club board members. team managers, and the parents of the honored students.

**Best of the Rest** 

Shaqiri ends int'l career: Switzerland forward Xherdan Shaqiri

ended his national-team career at

nounced the news nine days after his 125th game for Switzerland, which ended in a penalty shootout loss to England in the European

Coming on as an extra-time sub-

stitute, the former Liverpool and

Bayern Munich player struck the

England crossbar direct from a corner in the 1-1 draw before scoring

Shaqiri got just one start in five Euro 2024 games and scored one

of the best goals of the tournament

It was his seventh major tourna-

ment since going to the 2010 World Cup as an 18-year-old. That was the

only tournament where Shaqiri did

Müller quits national team:

Germany forward Thomas Müller

announced his retirement from in-

ternational soccer on Monday after

The 34-year-old Bayern Munich

"It always made me very proud to

striker played 131 times for his

play for my country. We celebrated

together and sometimes shed a tear

together," he said in a video posted

on YouTube. "I would like to say

thank you to all the fans and my

Germany teammates for their sup-

port over the years. Take the enthu-

siasm and joy of this year's Euros

Germany was as a substitute in the

host nation's quarterfinal loss to

eventual Euro 2024 winner Spain.

Müller's international debut came in 2010 in a 1-0 loss to Argen-

tina. He played in four World Cups and four European Championships.

Kambwala joins Villarreal:

joined Villarreal from Manchester

United on Monday after agreeing a

transfer fee, which was reportedly

worth 11.5 million euros (\$12.6

Kambwala joined United from Sochaux in 2020 and had one year

made 10 first-team appearances for

United, including three starts in the

thanks of everyone at Manchester

United, and our very best wishes

for the next chapter of his career,'

'Fewer problems in Euros':

German authorities had fewer se-

curity problems and crimes to deal

with than they expected at the Euro-

pean Championship, the country's

top security official said Monday.

The tournament ended on Sunday

with Spain beating England 2-1 in

the final in Berlin and no reports of

serious disturbances. That capped a

month-long event which mostly saw

only isolated and relatively minor

incidents, a contrast with violence

Germany's Interior Ministry said

that about 2.6 million people attend-

ed matches in the 10 host cities, and

another 6 million watched games in

Over the course of the tourna-

ment, it said, there was a total of

about 170 arrests and 320 temporary

detentions. Police recorded about

2,340 offenses linked to the tourna-

ment, including some 700 involving bodily harm and 120 thefts. There

were about 140 cases involving vio-

lence against police officers. (AP)

at some past tournaments.

the designated fan zones

United said in a statement. (AP)

"Willy leaves with the sincere

19-year-old Kambwala

remaining on his contract.

The clubs did not disclose the

Willy Kambwala

Müller's final appearance for

his penalty kick in the shootout.

against Scotland.

not score. (AP)

2014 World Cup title.

with you.

Center back

five-year contract.

Premier League.

country, scoring 45 goals.

Championship quarterfinals.

The Chicago Fire playmaker an-

#### **Shaogin clinches first major title**

### Olympians take gold at IFSC Climbing World Cup

PARIS, July 15, (Xinhua): The 2024 IFSC Climbing World Cup Chamonix concluded in Chamonix, France, with several Olympic hopefuls taking gold.

In the men's speed climbing event, world record holder and Paris Olympic contender Samuel Watson of the United States had a consistent run during the knockout stage with three climbs under 4.90 seconds, the fastest being 4.83 seconds, just 0.04 seconds shy of the world record.

In the final, Watson faced off against China's rising star Wang Xinshang. Both athletes made mistakes in their last climb, but Watson emerged victorious with a time of 6.24 seconds, while Wang finished in 7.76 seconds, securing the silver medal.

### **CLIMBING**

After the competition, Watson commented on his recent training efforts to enhance climbing stability. "I've been working on my consistency with a boring two months training, well boring is not the right word, but tedious training cycle where I tried to work hard every day and I was looking forward to this trip so much," the 18-year-old said. "Having consistent 4.8's and near the world record is a dream for sure and shows I am in the right place," he added.

In the lead event, Watson's compatriot Collin Duffy claimed victory in the men's category, while the women's title was claimed by Japan's Ai Mori, who is also heading to the Paris Olym-

In the women's speed climbing event, China's Zhang Shaoqin won her first gold medal in a major international competition after beating Poland's Natalia Kalucka with a 6.60-second run.

The 24-year-old Zhang, who had previously won the women's team relay at the Hangzhou Asian Games, demonstrated remarkable consistency, clocking sub-6.80second times in all four elimination rounds, with her best being 6.58 seconds.

Zhang missed the opportunity to qualify for the Olympics, but she was still pleased with the progress she had made in recent months. "I'm so happy. I broke my personal best today," the 24-year-old said after the Chamonix final. "I really like this place, it is definitely my place of luck," she added.

### **Abdullah commends Amir's** support for Kuwaiti athletes



Bashar Abdullah with representatives of Al-Qadisiyah, Al-Salmiya, Al-Arabi and Al-Tadamon clubs.

KUWAIT CITY, July 15: Acting Director General of the Public Authority for Sports, Bashar Abdullah, expressed his deepest thanks and gratitude to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, for his unwavering support and care for athletes.

This was conveyed during his presentation of the honors for the His Highness the Amir Cup Championship to representatives of Al-Qadisiya (the defending champion), Al-Salmiya (the runner-up), and Al-Arabi and Al-Tadamon (the third-placed clubs) for the 2023-2024 sports season. The ceremony was attended by Salah Al-Qenaei, the Secretary-General of the Kuwait Football Association.

Bashar Abdullah emphasized that the Authority is committed to implementing the directives of His Highness the Amir by supporting young athletes at both local and international levels to elevate Kuwait's standing in global sports arenas and properly

qualify the athletes.

He stated, "His Highness the Amir's honoring of the first-place winners of His Highness's Cup is an incentive for all players to exert more effort and dedication to achieve achievements and victories.

Bashar Abdullah also conveyed the greetings of Dr. Amthal Al-Huwaila, Minister of Social Affairs, Childhood and Family Affairs, and Minister of State for Youth Affairs, who affirmed her support for all athletes and the implementation of the General Sports Authority's strategy to develop sports in the coming period, based on the aspirations of the political leadership.



Gold medalist Janja Garnbret of Slovenia (C), silver medalist Luo Zhilu (L) of China and bronze medalist Seo Chaehyun of South Korea attend the awarding ceremony for the women's lead event at the IFSC World Cup Wujiang 2024 in Suzhou, east China's Jiangsu Province. (Xinhua)

### World swimming body eyes more anti-doping tests of Chinese team before Paris Olympics

GENEVA, July 15, (AP): Chinese swimmers going to the Paris Olympics are undergoing increased drug testing of at least eight times this year before the Games, World Aquatics said on

The Chinese swim team in Paris is set to have 11 athletes who tested positive for a banned heart medication in 2021, six months before the Tokyo Olympics. They avoided being suspended. In Tokyo, the swimmers won three gold medals.

A Chinese state-backed investigation in June 2021 blamed mass contamination by food in a hotel kitchen though without evidence to prove it. The case was not publicly revealed until reporting three months ago by the New York Times and German broadcaster ARD.

The World Anti-Doping Agency has been widely criticized - and targeted by a United States federal investigation - for accepting the explanation in 2021 when travel to China was not possible during the COVID-19 pandemic. A WADA-appointed prosecutor in Switzerland last week cleared the Montreal-based agency of bias toward China in a report that had a limited remit.

Swimming's governing body also appointed a panel to study how it handled the case three years ago, including following WADA at the time by not challenging the Chinese claim at the Court of Arbitration for Sport

The panel's 11-page report with recommendations was published on Monday, 12 days before swim events start in Paris at La Defense Arena. It detailed a promise of more anti-doping tests for some countries ahead of the Olympics and especially China.

World Aquatics said "a certain number of athletes from specific nations will be tested four times" since the start of the year by the Lausanne-based International Testing Agency, which runs anti-doping programs for many Olym-

Chinese athletes competing in Paris 'will be tested by the ITA no less than eight times during this same period," the world swim body said. Those samples would ideally not be collected by the Chinese anti-doping agency and also not be tested by laboratories in

### Kuwait make winning start

AMMAN, July 15, (KUNA): Kuwait defeated China 28-24 in its opening match of the 18th Asian Youth Handball Championship, held in Amman, Jordan.

Qaid Al-Adwani, Head of the Kuwaiti delegation, commended the players' efforts and technical skills

#### HANDBALL

in remarks to KUNA. He noted that the Kuwaiti team is competing in a challenging group that includes Iran and China.

Following the game, Tayseer Al-Mansi, President of the Jordanian Handball Federation, named Kuwait's Abdulaziz Al-Najjar as the man of the match.

This championship serves as a qualifying event for the 25th IHF Championship in Poland in 2025.



A Kuwaiti player makes a goal attempt against China.

Men's Junior (U21) Handball World

## Robert 'wins' **Scottish Open**

Els claims major senior title

NORTH BERWICK, Scotland, July 15, (AP): Robert MacIntyre won an Open that felt like a major to him Sunday when he made a 22foot birdie putt on the final hole for a 3-under 67 to win the Scottish Open, becoming the first Scot in 25 years to win his national open.

MacIntyre seized on a huge break on the par-5 16th when he realized he was standing on a sprinkler head in rough so deep he could barely see his ball. He received a free drop in shorter grass and blasted his approach from 248 yards to 6 feet for eagle to tie Adam Scott for the lead.

#### **GOLF**

His birdie putt took one last turn before falling, and MacIntyre dropped his putter and turned to a delirious Scottish gallery with a sweeping uppercut to celebrate.

The 27-year-old from the tiny coastal town of Oban won for the second time this year, also capturing the Canadian Open - the fourth-oldest championship in golf - last month. Colin Montgomerie in 1999 was the last Scot to win the Scottish Open.

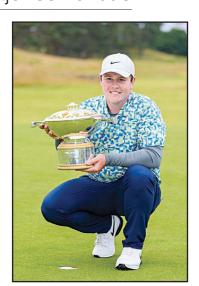
British Open, the final major of the year, across Scotland at Royal Troon. It has been just over a century since a British player won at Troon. But this felt just as big to the little lefty. Scott closed with a 67.

And next week is the big one - the

Rory McIlroy closed with a 68 and tied for fourth, his first appearance since he lost a late lead in the U.S Open last month at Pinehurst No. 2.

Ernie Els won the Kaulig Companies Championship for his first senior major title, closing with a 2-under 68 for a one-stroke victory over Y.E. Yang at breezy Firestone.

A stroke behind defending champion Steve Stricker entering the round, Els rebounded to par the final two holes after hitting in the water and making a



Robert MacIntyre poses with the Genesis Scottish Open trophy after he wins the Genesis Scottish Open 2024 golf tournament in North Berwick, Scotland. (AP)

bogey on the par-5 16th. Yang bogeyed the par-4 18th in a 66.

Els became the PGA Tour Champions' first three-time winner this season, winning for the sixth time on the 50-andover tour. The 54-year-old South African has won four regular major championships - the U.S. Open in 1994 and '97 and the British Open in 2002 and '12.

Els finished at 10-under 270 after opening with rounds of 68 and 64. The Hall of Famer earned \$525,000 and a spot in The Players Championship in March.

Jerry Kelly, the 2020 and 2022 champion, was third at 7 under after a 69. Stricker, also the 2021 winner at Firestone, shot 73 to tie for fourth at 6

Harry Hall chipped in for birdie from 45 feet on the third hole of a playoff to win the ISCO Championship for his first PGA Tour title.

The 26-year-old Englishman closed with a 3-under 69 to get into the playoff with Matt NeSmith, Pierceson Coody, Zac Blair and Rico Hoey. They finished at 22-under 266 on Keene Trace's Champions Course in the event co-sanctioned by the European tour.

### **Financial demands cited**

### Kazma forego Saad signing

### **By Hasan Musa**

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 15: Kazma Club has decided against signing Saad Al-Rosan, a player from Al-Hussein Irbid and Ma'an Clubs and a member of the Jordanian national team, citing financial disagreements.

Team coach Mohamed Dehelis emphasized the urgent need for a defender and has been reviewing CVs to identify the best-suited candidate.

Currently, "Orange" boasts four foreign players: Algerian Reda Bencha, Brazilian Rafael Guimaraes ("Dodo"), Jordanian Ahmed Arsan, and Colombian Hansel Zapata. Kazma recently strengthened its squad with Al-Nasr's Mishaal Al-Shammari and extended contracts with team captain Nasser Al-Faraj, Sharida Al-Shraida, Mohamed Al-Azmi, and goalkeeper Faisal Al-Subaie.

The Al-Tadamon Club delegation heads to Alexandria, Egypt, for a training camp ahead of the 2024-2025 season. Returning to the Zain Premier League, Al-Tadamon aims to secure a successful season and avoid relegation.

Under the leadership of Portuguese coach Joao Motta, assisted by national coach Jamal Al-Qabandi, Al-Tadamon has bolstered its roster with local and international talent. International signings include Chadian professionals Casimir Ninga, Portuguese Boubakar Djalo, and Senegalese trio Aboubacar Keita, Mami Saher, and Ibrahima Gueye.

Domestically, Al-Tadamon has secured Abdullah Al-Enezi from Al-Qadisiyah and other players from various clubs. The team plans to play four friendly matches during their camp before returning home in late July.

Meanwhile, the Al-Qadisiya delegation has arrived in Cairo for a preparatory camp scheduled until the end of the month. The team will engage in three friendly matches as part of their preparation under the guidance of coach Mohamed Al-Mashaan. Al-Qadisiyah will participate in the Gulf

### SOCCER

Club Championship after a lengthy absence and commence their local season against Kuwait on August 8 in the Zain Premier League.

In other news, Al-Kuwait has resumed daily training following a successful friendly match against Turkey's Amed FK, which ended with a 2-0 victory for Al-Abyad. The match was part of its training camp in Turkey as it prepares for the upcoming



Kazma coach Mohamed Dehelis



Spain's Mikel Oyarzabal, (center), scores his side's second goal during the final match between Spain and England at the Euro 2024 soccer tournament in Berlin, Germany. (AP)

# Sports

### **Latest sports scores at — http://sports.arabtimesonline.com**

Messi exits final with apparent leg injury

### **Argentina win back-to-back Copa America titles**

MIAMI GARDENS, July 15, (AP): Lionel Messi pumped his arms. The trophy bounced up and down in his grasp. Tears of frustration from an hour or so earlier had turned to laughs and hugs for the two-time Copa America champion and World Cup winner.

Messi was forced to watch much of the second half and extra time because of a leg injury. Still, Argentina won its second straight Copa America championship, beating Colombia 1-0 on Lautaro Martínez's 112th-minute goal.

"Leo is the greatest player in history," Argentina coach Lionel Scaloni said through an interpreter. "He never wants to leave the pitch. He has a swollen ankle and wants to keep playing. I prefer those players. He wants to play not because he is egotistical or selfish. He wants to keep playing because he doesn't want to leave his teammates. ... He was born to be on the pitch."

Messi appeared to sustain a noncontact injury while running and falling in the 64th minute. The eight-time Ballon d'Or winner covered his face with his hands as he sat on the bench and sobbed.

Martínez later ran to that bench to hug his 37-year-old captain after the goal that propelled Argentina to its record 16th Copa title.

Appearing to be limping after the final whistle sounded well past midnight, Messi beckoned for his senior teammates to lift the trophy with him: 36-year-old Nicolás Ottamendi and Ángel Di María, who is retiring from the national team. As white confetti cascaded, the trio hugged.

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"The truth is, it's hard to describe," Di Maria said. "It was written like that. I told the guys last night at dinner that I dreamt it. That's why I said it was my last Copa America. I dreamt we made it to the final and we won it so I could go out this way.

"I'll be always grateful to this generation who gave me everything, helped me win what I always wanted and to-day, I am leaving like this," Di Maria said. "It could not be better."

In a match that started 1 hour, 22 minutes late because of crowd trouble at Hard Rock Stadium, Argentina won its third straight major title following the 2021 Copa America and 2022 World Cup and matched Spain, which won the 2008 and 2012 European Championships around the 2010 World Cup.

Argentina also stopped Colombia's 28-game unbeaten streak dating to a 1-0 loss to Albiceleste in a February 2022 World Cup qualifier, also on a Martínez goal.

Martínez entered in the 97th minute Sunday and scored from Giovani Lo Celso's perfect pass after Leandro Paredes stripped the ball from a Colombian with a sliding tackle near the center stripe. Paredes exchanged passes with Martínez, then threaded the ball to Lo Celso, who one-timed a through ball as Martínez sprinted past defender Carlos Cuesta.

Martínez ran onto the ball, took a touch that sent him into the penalty area and struck a right-foot shot through the upraised arms of sliding goalkeeper Camilo Vargas for his 29th international goal, his tournament-high

Colombia coach Néstor Lorenzo said many Colombia players finished with severe cramping. Temperatures were in the upper 80s with humidity around 73%

"It is not easy to play a final. It's not easy for anyone," Lorenzo said through an interpreter. "They played six matches in 21 days and started feeling the results. They all left feeling cramps, some of them in both legs. They all left the pitch feeling the wear down and the tiredness.'

Making his 39th and possibly last Copa America appearance, Messi had one goal in the tournament. He went down in the 36th minute after his left ankle was caught by Santiago Arias but walked back onto the field three minutes later.

Messi looked to the bench as soon as he fell to the field in the second half, appearing to know his tournament was over. He took off his right boot as he walked off and slammed it in frustration, and his ankle appeared

With his right foot bare, he stood by the bench and raised his arms while teammates ran onto the field when Martínez scored.

The start was delayed from 8 p.m. EDT to 9:22 p.m. because of crowd control issues outside the stadium, including troves of fans breaching security gates at a venue to be used for the 2026 World Cup.

Days after Uruguay players were

involved in a brawl with Colombia fans following their semifinal match in Charlotte, North Carolina, video showed fans climbing fences and railings to get inside the championship match, with officials unable to keep track of who had purchased tickets and who didn't.

**Editor-in-Chief** 



Argentina's Lionel Messi holds the trophy as celebrating with teammates after defeating Colombia in the Copa America final soccer match in Miami Gardens, Fla. (AP)

### Real Madrid back to work

MADRID, July 15, (Xinhua): Real Madrid begin training for the 2024-25 season on Monday, looking to repeat last season's domestic and European double and with an attack that looks on paper to be arguably the best in Eu-

Kylian Mbappe will be presented as a new Real Madrid player in a packed Santiago Bernabeu Stadium on Tuesday, while 17-year-old Brazilian international Endrick will become another new arrival for the coming season after celebrating his 18th birthday next

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They join a side that already contains Vinicius Jr, Rodrygo, Brahim Diaz and Jude Bellingham, with Turkish international Arda Guler also available after impressing at the end of his first, injury-hit season at

It's going to be a slow start for coach Carlo Ancelotti, however, the European Championship and Copa America mean he only has six firstteam players available for the first day back to work.

A fit-again Thibaut Courtois, Fran Garcia, Lucas Vazquez, Jesus Vallejo, Dani Ceballos and Brahim take to the pitch at their Valdebebas training ground, with members of the Real



Kylian Mbappe of France reacts after losing a semifinal match between Spain and France at the Euro 2024 soccer tournament in Munich, Germany. (AP)

making up the numbers.

Only two players have left the squad in the close season, with forward Joselu moving to Qatar and experienced Spain international defender Nacho Fernandez going to play in Saudi Ara-

Mbappe and Endrick should more than cover from Joselu, although the club may consider moving into the transfer market to replace Nacho, especially as it's not certain when David Alaba will recover after his knee injury

## Spain win record fourth Euro title as England suffer another painful loss



Spain's Alvaro Morata holds the trophy as he celebrates with his teammates after winning the final match between Spain and England at the Euro 2024 soccer tournament in Berlin, Germany.

### Oyarzabal the unlikely match-winner

BERLIN, July 15, (AP): Spain is the king of European soccer for a record fourth time. For England, it's another agonizing nearmiss in the team's decadeslong tale of underachieve-

Completing a tournament the team dominated from start to finish, Spain beat England 2-1 in the European Championship final with Mikel Oyarzabal the unlikely match-winner in the 86th minute.

Oyarzabal, a backup striker who came on as a substitute for captain Alvaro Morata, slid in to poke home a left-wing cross by Marc Cucurella, just when the game at Berlin's Olympiastadion seemed destined for extra time.

England, the birthplace of soccer, is still without a major title in the men's game since winning the 1966 World

Airport Road, Shuwaikh

Cup and its players watched on forlornly as Morata raised aloft the silver trophy to backdrop of confetti and fireworks inside the stadium built for the 1936 Olympics.

Add 2024 to the titles won by Spain in 1964, 2008 and 2012.

Lamine Yamal, the prodigy who turned 17 on Saturday and is the youngest player to have appeared at a European Championship, set up Wil-

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liams' goal with an inside run before passing across the face of the area. The two wingers have become the poster boys of an exciting, multicultural team that reflects Spain's changing demo-

Yamal's mother is from Equatorial Guinea and his father is from Morocco, while the 22-year-old Williams has Ghanaian parents who made the long journey to Europe looking for a better

HE FIRST ENGLISH LANGUAGE DAILY IN FREE KUWAIT

life. To make it to Spain, they had to ride on the back of a crowded truck and walk barefoot through the Sahara



England's Ollie Watkins, (left), duels for the ball with Spain's Dani Carvajal during the final match between Spain and England at the Euro 2024 soccer tournament in Berlin, Germany. (AP)

Unlike his brother Inaki, who is a Ghana international, Nico chose to play for Spain and will now be regarded as a national hero there.

Spain is back as a major player in senior soccer after winning both the Women's World Cup - also against England - and the men's UEFA Nations League in 2023.

Since 2001, Spanish men's teams have won 23 consecutive major finals in club and international soccer.

Spain won all seven games at this European Championship - an unprecedented feat - and broke the record for goals scored in a single tournament,

There were joyous scenes after the final whistle, with defender Dani Carvajal piled on by jubilant teammates after slumping to the ground. Spain coach Luis de la Fuente was thrown into the air by his players. Both Cucurella and Yamal led Spain's players in jumping over the advertising boards to reach the red-and-yellow-clad Spanish fans in the stadium's east end.

After getting his medal, the teenager turned and shook his fist in celebration, stuck his tongue out and showed off a beaming grin. By then, Yamal and his team mates were wearing Spain jerseys with "Kings of Europe" and the number "4" on the back.

Meanwhile, fans who had watched the game on a big screen in Madrid celebrated wildly, chanting "champions, champions" in Spanish. It was a great sporting day for the nation, with Carlos Alcaraz winning the Wimbledon men's singles title for a second straight year hours before the Euro 2024 final.

As for England, the men's team has now lost back-to-back Euro finals - it was defeated in a penalty shootout by Italy on home soil in the final in 2021 - and this was another painful loss for a team that will have gone six decades without a major title by the next World

Cup.
England's women have been more successful, though, winning the European Championship in 2021 and reaching the World Cup final two years later.

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