

ARAB TIMES

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



Scan the OR code to access the Arab Times WhatsApp Channel

FRIDAY-SATURDAY, JUNE 14-15, 2024 / ZUL HIJJAH 8-9, 1445 AH

emergency number 112

NO. 18621

150 FILS

A happy Eid Al-Adha to all

The Arab Times will be off the news-stands from Sunday till Tuesday. The next issue of the paper will appear on the stands on Wednesday, June 19. — See you then

AMIR ALLOCATES FUNDS FOR 49 FIRE VICTIMS; REPATRIATION PLANNED

Electrical fault behind Mangaf blaze

■ 45 Indians, 3 Filipinos identified among dead

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

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

KUWAIT CITY, June 13: The Public Prosecution has ordered the provisional detention of a citizen and some expatriates on charges of manslaughter and accidental injury as a result of negligence in security and safety measures to prevent fire.

This is to complete the investigation procedures regarding the incident of a building fire in Mangaf, which resulted in the death of 49 expatriates and injuries to 49 others.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah ordered allocating a sum of money for each of the 49 deceased from the blazed Mangaf apartment building, said First Deputy Premier Sheikh Fahad Yousuf Al-Sabah on Thursday.

In a press release after an inspection tour of properties violating safety and building codes, Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousuf, also Minister of Interior and Minister of Defense, underlined that the bodies of the victims will all be transferred back to their homeland onboard Kuwaiti military airplanes.

The Philippines' Department of Migrant Workers Undersecretary, Hans Leo Cacdac, has confirmed that three Filipinos are among those dead in the Mangaf fire.

Repatriation

Cacdac has instructed the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) and the Migrant Workers Office in Kuwait to closely work with the Embassy of the Philippines, under the leadership of Ambassador Jose Cabrera, in taking the necessary measures for the repatriation of the remains of the three Filipinos.

First Deputy Prime Minister, Interior and Defense Minister Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousuf Al-Sabah announced that 48 of those who perished in the fire have been identified. He said 45 of those who died are Indians and three are Filipinos. He added the authorities are still exerting tremendous efforts to identify the remaining body.

In latest developments, the General Fire Force disclosed that the fire that engulfed a building in Mangaf on Wednesday was caused by an electrical short circuit. According to a press statement, the Accident Investigation Department's teams concluded their technical inspections, which included analyzing samples of fire debris and conducting interviews with witnesses present during the incident. Their investigation determined that the fire originated in the security guard's room located on the ground floor of the six-story building.

The specialists from the Investigations Department meticulously examined the site to ascertain the exact cause of the fire. Their findings unequivocally pointed to an electrical short circuit as the root cause. This discovery underscores the importance of adhering to electrical safety protocols to prevent such tragic in-

cidents in the future. Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousuf on Thursday headed an overall inspection campaign on illegal Interior Minister leads inspection campaign

PAM tightens oversight of expat housing safety

Citizen, expats detained over fire tragedy

Kuwait Municipality shuts 568 basements





First Deputy Prime Minister, Defense Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Fahad Yousuf Al-Sabah leads an inspection campaign on illegal properties across Kuwait, accompanied by Minister of Public Works and Minister of Municipality Dr. Nora Al-Mashaan. The campaign covered areas including Al-Mangaf, Al-Mahboula, Khaitan, and Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh.



Photo by Mohamad Morsi Teams from the Interior Ministry, Kuwait Municipality, Kuwait Fire Force, Ministry of Electricity and Water and Public Authority for Manpower take part in the inspection campaign.

properties in many areas in Kuwait. The minister, accompanied by Minister of Public Works and Minister of Municipality Dr. Nora Al-Mashaan began their inspection campaign in Al-Mangaf, Al-Mahboula, Khaitan, and Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh.

The Interior Ministry, Kuwait Municipality, Kuwait Fire Force, Ministry of Electricity and Water and Public Authority for Manpower took part in the campaign.

Kuwait Municipality declared on Thursday its teams had shut down 568 irregular basements of residential and commercial buildings in the past ten months.

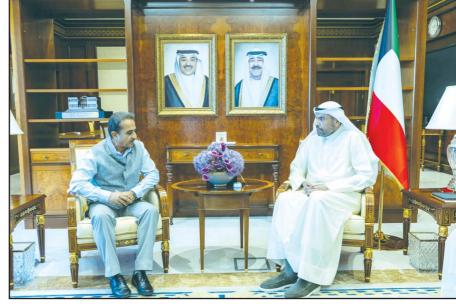
The personnel issued 1,639 citations and "blocked" 596 properties. Moreover, up to 189 basements packed with various unlicensed

items had been evacuated. The declaration came against the backdrop of a fiery fire that gutted an apartment building in Al-Mangaf, leaving massive damage and taking 49 lives. In response, the authorities vowed to clamp down on any misuse of properties.

Following the recent fire incident in Mangaf, the Public Authority of Manpower (PAM) intensified its campaigns in labor accommodations, reports Aljarida daily.

According to informed sources in PAM, the National Center for Health and Safety affiliated with PAM will launch extensive campaigns

Continued on Page 5



Kuwait's Minister of Foreign Affairs meets with Indian Minister of State for External Affairs.

Kuwait, India ministers meet over Mangaf tragedy

Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahyav met with Minister of State for External Affairs Kirti Vardhan Singh, Thursday, at the Ministry headquarters.

The Indian minister of state, along with a delegation, is currently on a visit to the country.

Minister Al-Yahya offered his sincere condolences and sympathy to the families of the Indian victims in the building that caught fire in Al-Mangaf on Wednesday, affirming the government's keenness to follow up on the condition of the injured, providing them with full medical care and wishing them a speedy recovery. He stressed that the concerned authorities of the State of Kuwait are doing everything necessary to determine the circumstances and causes of the horrific incident and that justice will take its course with transparency and integrity.

For his part, the Indian Minister commended the rapid response and presence of the concerned officials at the scene, appreciating the government's follow-up on the injured, and the direct communication of Kuwaiti's Foreign Affairs Ministry with the Indian embassy. (KUNA)

PAM, private sector tackle Kuwaiti hiring

Benefits draw Kuwaitis to public jobs

KUWAIT CITY, June 13: The Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) has conducted several meetings with different private institutions to figure out the reasons behind their unwillingness to hire Kuwait workers in case PAM increases the percentage, reports Al-Rai daily.

According to informed sources, banks constituted the majority of the participants in the discussions, as the banking field is considered the most attractive field



KUNA photo Traditional hand weaving skills on display at Kuwait's Sadu Society live show held Wednesday. - See Page 4

in the private sector for Kuwaiti graduates. As per reports issued by national banks union, almost 12,200 Kuwaiti citizens are working at private banks as of the end of December 2023, making up 77 percent of the total bank workers. This percentage is higher than the one determined by PAM. Increasing the percentage of Kuwaiti workers in private banks requires enhancing the establishment of sustainable projects that will allow banks to increase the banking business so that more number of national workers can be received. The sources explained that indus-

trial businesses were also part of the discussions and questions were raised about the reasons behind the hesitation among citizens to join this field.

Representatives of Kuwait Industries Union affirmed their keenness to increase the number of national workers but highlighted that there are some challenges associated with the

implementation. They explained that the generous benefits provided by the government

Continued on Page 5

Newswatch

KUWAIT CITY: First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousuf Saud Al-Sabah met with Minister of State for External Affairs Kirti Vardhan Singh. Thursday, along with his entourage



The Ministry of Interior said in a statement that Sheikh Fahad Yusuf pressed during meeting his heartfelt sincere solace for the

Salo victims of the fire that gutted a building in Al-Mangaf and wished the injured quick healing.

The Indian minister expressed gratitude to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and the State of Kuwait for the humanitarian action, relieving the victims, aiding their next of kin, and caring for the injured.

The statement added that Minister Sheikh Fahad separately hosted member of the Philippine Congress Ron Salo and accompanying officials who presented condolences on the fire victims. Moreover, the two sides discussed some issues of common interest. (KUNA)

Sweltering heat, humidity to grip Kuwait casionally shifting to southeasterly at

KUWAIT CITY, June 13, (KUNA): Abdulaziz Al-Qarawi, Director of the Meteorological Department, announced on Thursday that the weather over the weekend will be very hot during the day and hot to warm at night, with an increase in humidity and chances of light fog formation in coastal areas.

In a statement to Kuwait News Agency (KUNA), Al-Qarawi noted that Kuwait is currently influenced by the extension of the Indian Monsoon Low. This brings a relatively hot and humid air mass with northwesterly winds, oclight to moderate speeds, sometimes becoming active. The general weather during this period, including the days of Eid, will remain very hot during the day and warm at night. Friday's Weather:

Daytime: Very hot and relatively humid in coastal areas with northwesterly to variable winds, turning northeasterly in coastal areas later, at light to moderate speeds (8 to 32 km/h). Maximum temperatures: 47-49°C. Sea condition: Light to moderate waves (1 to 4 feet).

Evening: Warm and humid in coastal areas with variable to southeasterly winds at light to moderate speeds (8 to 28 km/h). Minimum temperatures: 28-31°C. Sea condition: Light to moderate waves (1 to 3 feet).

Saturday's Weather:

Daytime: Relatively hot and humid, especially in coastal areas, with northwesterly to southeasterly winds at light to moderate speeds (10 to 38 km/h). Maximum temperatures: 46-48°C. Sea

Continued on Page 5



Minister of Foreign Affairs meets with US Ambassador to Kuwait.

Kuwait FM, US envoy discuss bilateral ties

KUWAIT CITY, June 13, (KUNA): Kuwait's Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya met on Thursday with US Ambassador to Kuwait Karen Sasahara at his office in the ministry headquar-

The foreign minister and the US ambassador, in their discussions, dealt with bilateral relations and strategic cooperation between the two countries, as well as latest regional and international developments, particularly current events in Gaza.

Expected weather for next 24 hrs: By Day: Very hot with light variable wind to light to moderate northwesterly wind, with speeds

of 08-32 km/h. By Night: Hot to rather hot and

Weather relatively humid over coastal areas with light to moderate north-

westerly wind to light variable wind, with speeds of 08-28 km/h. Max Exp

Station Min Rec **Kuwait City**

28 Kuwait Airport Abdaly 31 Jahra Salmiyah Nuwaisib 42

Wafra

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

HH Crown Prince, Prime Minister congratulate education minister

HH Amir congratulates Dr Al-Adwani on success of high-school exams

KUWAIT CITY, June 13, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, on Thursday, sent a cable of congratulations to Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research Dr. Adel Al-Adwani on the success of Grade 12 exams for the scholastic year 2023-2024.

His Highness the Amir praised efforts exerted by the ministry officials on all levels, in preparing, correcting, and evaluating the tests, and all the facilities they offered to the students, wishing for further success and prosperity to the graduates in their future.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, sent a cable of congratulations to Minister Dr. Adel Al-Adwani on the success of Grade 12 exams for the scholastic year 2023-2024

His Highness the Crown Prince praised efforts exerted by the ministry officials on all levels, in preparing, correcting, and evaluating the tests, and all the facilities they offered to the students, wishing for further success and prosperity to the graduates in their fu-



One of the students

Also, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, sent a cable of congratulations to minister of education on the success of Grade 12 exams for the scholastic year 2023-2024.





Photos by Samer Shagair

Left-right: Some of the students who have passed their Grade 12 exams pose with their parents.

Minister Boushahri eyes tertiary treated water for cosmetic crops

Citizen Service Center opens at Jaber Al-Ahmad

By Mohammed Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 13: Minister of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy and Minister of State for Housing Affairs Dr. Mahmoud Boushahri said **Director of the Water Fill**ing Stations Department at the Ministry of Electricity and Water Eng. Falah Al-Subaie studied the possibility of storing tertiary treated water produced by the Ministry of Public Works in water filling stations in the governorates to be used in cosmetic crops on roads and public areas as a way to solve the 'crops death' crisis.

KUNA photo

Boushahri made the announcement during the opening of the Citizen Service Center and Training Center in Jaber Al-Ahmad

recently. He explained that through the proposal, the State no longer needs to establish other specialized stations for such water and it could be supplied throughout the day for

cosmetic crops. He called for the speedy completion of this study to determine the extent this idea can be applied in stations, especially since the country is advanced in the process of storing and distributing fresh

He also highlighted the importance of the training centers established by the ministry's Customer Service Sector, indicating these centers aim to educate the people about the importance of rationalizing energy consumption.

Emphasized

He emphasized the need to instruct the industrial and commercial sectors to operate air conditioners at 25 degrees Celsius; affirming the ministry spares no effort in providing its services to various sectors, and that rationalization contributes to reducing consumption during peak periods by approximately 30 percent.

He appreciated the efforts of the Customer Service Sector and the major role it plays in providing various services to citizens and transferring those services electronically.

Moreover, Assistant Undersecretary for the Customer Service Sector Eng. Falah Al-Mutairi affirmed the sector's commitment to develop the skills and capabilities of its employees through specialized training courses.

He pointed out that the opening of the Training Center in Jaber Al-Ahmad is a clear evidence of the ministry's interest in developing the capabilities of national professionals, as the center has been optimally prepared with the latest modern training techniques.

He added the opening of customer service centers will continue, especially in remote areas, to ease procedures for citizens and expatriates on one hand, and to increase energy bill payment collection rates on the other hand.



Minister of Finance Dr Al-Mudhaf during the meeting with US congressman French Hill.

Kuwait. US discuss combating money laundering

Minister of Finance and State Minister for Economic and Investment Affairs Dr. Anwar Al-Mudhaf discussed combating illegal financing and money laundering with visiting US congressman French

Financial terrorism, as well as future of virtual currencies and its effect on financial inclusion were also discussed during Al-Mudhaf's meeting with Hill, who is serving as Vice Chairman of the House Financial Services Committee and Chairman of

the subcommittee tasked with overseeing all areas related to digital assets and financial technology, relayed a ministry-issued statement on Thursday.

Minister Al-Mudhaf spoke of the legal grounds. which Kuwaiti financial establishments are built on, the adopted practices and supervision they undergo, highlighting state efforts on reforming public

budget structure and rebuilding the economy.
US Ambassador to the country Karen Sasahara attended the meeting. (KUNA)

بوم اللاجئ العالمي **WORLD REFUGEE DAY** (M) UNHC (ii) UNHCR (M) UNHCR (M) UNHCI UNHCF UNHCR

Minister of Foreign Affairs and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development, Abdullah Al-Yahya in a group photo during the celebration of World Refugee Day.

Ceremony held to mark World Refugee Day

Kuwait committed to help most vulnerable people across the world, says FM Al-Yahya

KUWAIT CITY, June 13, (KUNA): Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya on Thursday affirmed the State of Kuwait's permanent commitment to helping the most vulnerable people across the world within the approach toward a world where no one will be without shel-

Minister Al-Yahya was speaking on the occasion of World Refugee Day (falling on June 20), at a ceremony involving the UN Higher Commissioner for Refugees, held at the headquarters of Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED). Also attending was the GCC Secretary General Jassem Al-Budaiwi, KAFED's Acting Director General Walid Al-Bahar and heads

of diplomatic missions in Kuwait. This ceremony, held under the theme, "the Kuwait of development and humanity," affirms solidarity of the country, along with the international community, with the refugees worldwide.

The world nowadays is witnessing humanitarian crises of unprecedented dimensions, leading to a staggering number of the relocated estimated at 120 million, said the minister, also KFAED's chairper-

Conflicts and wars have increased in the Arab region causing tremendous humanitarian and social catastrophes, and drastic decline in development, and internal and external displacement of millions of people, he said, citing the extraordinary conditions in Sudan, Syria and occupied Palestine. According to the UNRWA, some six million Palestinians are recorded as refugees. It will go down in history that more than two million relocated Palestinians in Gaza have been subjected to genocide and torture, minister Al-Yahya stated.

He also noted that KFAED had given direct aid to millions of afflicted peoples, recalling that Kuwait had allocated USD 1.9 billion to relieve the Syrian refugees

Kuwait is proud of its strong partnership with the UNHCR, he said, indicating that via this relationship, it had offered funding to build houses and attend to the refugees' needs in various spots of the world.

Concluding his speech, the minister affirmed that Kuwait would continue relieving peoples suffering from the dire impact of conflicts and natural disasters.



Cyprus Ambassador to Kuwait Michael Mavros.

Deputy FM receives Cyprus, Korean envoys

By Ahmed alsarraf ongratulations on the success of

Kuwaiti Deputy Foreign Minister Ambassador Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ah-

mad Al-Sabah Wednesday received

Cyprus Ambassador to Kuwait Michael Mayros and discussed bilateral ties and

Other Voices

issues of common interest

Cyour party, for the third time in the parliamentary elections, the largest in history, with over 640 million voters My relationship with India, its citi-

zens, and culture dates back to my childhood days over 70 years ago, with my English language teacher "John." extending to "Kumar," the accountant in my father's office, and becoming a part of my life thereafter.

During my work at the Gulf Bank

six decades ago, I received much attention from my Indian colleagues. From them, I learned work ethics, acquired English proficiency, and learned tolerance and love, leading me to leave the job, migrate, and



alsarraf

return to my homeland, collaborating with several Indians from diverse backgrounds to establish a successful trading company, which, thanks to them, became the largest in its field after 35 years.

Dear Sir, your first and second terms as Prime Minister were marked by economic miracles that rightfully positioned India where it belongs.

However, those achievements were marred by bleak periods we never wished to see in India, a country with a rich history of coexistence, tolerance, brotherhood, renunciation of violence, and advocacy for peace!

In recent years, the extremism of the Hindu majority has intensified, affecting various other friendly Indian communities.

I do not wish to assume that you sought to exploit religious sentiment to gain more popularity and subsequent votes, but undoubtedly, this factor has gained you significant political leverage, even if unintentionally

However, you know well that these are short-term gains, which may result in dangerous repercussions in the future, exacerbating internal peace issues. The fragility between the Hindu majority and the Muslim minority, now in a defensive position, may lead to massacres and further extremism.

which you and the friendly Indian peo-

Also, Ambassador Sheikh Jarrah

Jaber on Wednesday received Ambas-

sador of Korea to Kuwait Chung Byungha on the occasion of the end of his term as his country's ambassador to Kuwait. (KUNA)

ple can well do without. The election results have demonstrated the majority's rejection of the religious rigidity pursued by your party, which is an independent referendum in itself, a warning sign that extremism and minority hostility will not yield reassuring consequences, nor are they in the best interest of the great

Indian nation. A significant indicator is the recent significant drop in the Bombay Stock Exchange and the anticipated rise in

unemployment and inflation rates. In an article published recently in The New York Times, the author described the elections as "the greatest show on earth," a diverse and democratic spectacle, especially considering it took place in a troubled region hos-

tile to freedoms and democracy. I am unsure how democracy could be unfit for Kuwait, as some claim, while being suitable and beautiful for a small country like Luxembourg, nestled in the heart of advanced and affluent Europe, with an area of 51 sq kilometers and a

population of 140 thousand. Similarly, it suits India, the country with the lowest per capita income, the largest area and population globally, and the most diverse country on earth, with its languages, religions, and cul-

India is the birthplace of Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhism, with the largest Muslim population compared to any other country, where Christianity existed 2000 years ago, hosting the oldest Jewish temples.

The Dalai Lama resides there, and Zoroastrianism thrived in its plains from Persia. Armenians, Syrians, and others lived in its fields, and it was the world's largest economy for 1500 years of the last millennium. It elected three Muslim presidents,

and a Sikh served as its Prime Minister. Its ruling party leader was an Italian Catholic woman, and Mrs. Gandhi was its Prime Minister, with a rocket scientist as its president. Yet, democracy would not suit a

country like Kuwait?! What happened in India, and before that in Luxembourg, and dozens of other countries. should inspire us to continue on our democratic path after amending the constitution... for the better.

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

diwaniya والنية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

'Nationality is loyalty and belonging ... not frivolity or cloaking'

"IN all countries, citizenship symbolizes an individual's bond to the state and can be either an entitlement or an acquisition. Entitlement to citizenship is based on specific foundations, whereas its acquisition can occur for various reasons," columnist Dr. Muhammad Al-Maqati wrote for Al-Jarida daily.

"All legal systems recognize these two paths to obtaining citizenship, each

with distinct characteristics, effects, and legal consequences.

"Kuwait, recognizing the sovereign and legal significance of citizenship due to its close connection to national identity, enacted Law No. 15 of 1959 regard-

ing citizenship.

"This law serves as a fundamental and decisive framework for clarifying Kuwaiti citizenship, entitlement, and acquisition, outlining the conditions, controls, and procedures governing its acquisition and loss. It also specifies the necessary reasons for continuing to enjoy citizenship, ensuring that the law aligns with contemporary and modern standards.

"One of the law's virtues is its clear distinction between rightful Kuwaiti citizenship (by establishment or originality) in its first and second articles, and acquired citizenship, detailing its controls, reasons for acquisition, conditions for continuation, and circumstances for loss or withdrawal.

"This meticulous legal framework raises the question: how did tampering with nationality and subsequently national identity occur despite such stringent regulations? Tampering occurred in several ways:

■ Political or arbitrary naturalization: The illegal acquisition of citizenship without meeting the law's conditions and controls, often in direct violation of it. ■ Dual citizenship: Violating the law, leading to the legal loss or lapse of

■ Forgery: Using fraudulent methods to forge nationality. ■ False affiliation: Assuming a different lineage to obtain citizenship.

"His Highness the Amir summarized these issues in his speech, highlighting the need to reconsider these negative phenomena, stating: 'Whoever entered the country unannounced, and unjustly disguised himself in the guise of its nationality, and whoever assumed a lineage other than his own, or who held dual nationality, or who was tempted to take the path of forgery to obtain it... these negative phenomena will not remain and will be reconsidered'

A virtue of the Kuwaiti legal system, similar to comparative legal systems, is that crimes of forgery, fraud, and deception, including citizenship cases, are not subject to the statute of limitations as per Law No. 15 of 1959 and the frequent rulings of the Court of Cassation.

"Moreover, the framers of the national constitutional phase, free from electoral interests and focused solely on Kuwait's supreme interest, drafted Article 82 of the Constitution.

'This article restricted National Assembly membership to original Kuwaitis and their descendants, clarifying this in the explanatory memorandum to avoid granting this right to naturalized individuals, regardless of the passage of time. "They also enacted Election Law No. 15 of 1962, preventing naturalized

individuals from voting until ten years after naturalization, a period extended to twenty and then thirty years by subsequent generations for sovereign reasons. "This is upheld by Law No. 32 of 1995, which implicitly repealed Law No. 44 of 1994, and by Decree Law No. 5 of 2024, issued following His Highness

the Emir's directives on May 10, 2024. "Law No. 44 of 1944, which attempted to infiltrate the Constitution's provisions for electoral motives, was contrary to the will of the Constituent As-

"Defending this latter course, though a respected opinion, undermines the true protection of Kuwaiti nationality from political tampering and incorrect interests, as opposed to the constitutional, logical, and sovereign foundations established by the Constituent Assembly, articulated by the late Chairman Abdul Latif Thunayan Al-Ghanim in his 1981 article.

"Finally, protecting Kuwaiti nationality from such deviations ensures its integrity, safeguarding it from undue political influences and maintaining the sovereign interests of Kuwait.'

Also:

"It is no longer a secret to anyone that most cooperative societies have deviated from their path and no longer consider the interests of their founders, shareholders, who have become reluctant to buy from them for many reasons. It has become noticeable recently, despite the huge number of cooperative societies in Kuwait and their obtaining many privileges from the state, there is an increase in competitive central food and consumer markets in Kuwait that did not exist in this form two decades ago," columnist Talal Matar Al-Wardan wrote for Al-Qabas daily.

"Is it competition, or have most associations breached their duty towards their shareholders? Without a doubt, they have come to see nothing but exaggerated profitability, not to mention the poor services of many of them, negligence in their markets, and violations.

"By not setting prices for products, even though there is oversight over them, but oversight is invisible and unheard, as violations are many and the voices of shareholders are not heard by most of those concerned in the Ministry of Commerce and the Ministry of Social Affairs.

"It does not seek to provide food or consumer products of high quality or

competitive prices, and is concerned only with profit. What is strange is that what we used to buy when we were young from elderly saleswomen outside school, such as Chinese sweets for two pennies, became available to children in cooperative societies without the supervision of the Ministry of Commerce, because it has harmful effects, not to mention how these materials are allowed to enter Kuwait, and they are according to health standards that must be considered by the Ministry of Health.

The head of the family now cannot prevent, as most of the association branches are now selling these colorful and poor products without supervision. "The boards of directors are the only ones who make profit, and I wish it

were a profit for shareholders. Some coops did not provide profits to their shareholders, although previously coops used to organize trips to perform Umrah rituals, and I do not see this as one of the goals of the associations. "The work entrusted to it is to reduce prices and provide high quality prod-

ucts compared to other competing markets, as well as paying attention to the region in terms of services for the association's squares and making it an outlet for the association's patrons. Profits exceed hundreds of millions. Where do these large amounts go? Is there strict control over it?

'Although coops have independent legal personalities, and we generally oppose state interference in their operations, the principle of "whatever your brother hates is not heroic" applies here.

"The state has the right to supervise and monitor these associations to ensure their operations are sound. The work of boards of directors is voluntary, and cannot be left unchecked.

"Past experiences have shown financial and administrative violations in sev-

eral associations, leading to many being referred to prosecution. Therefore, we propose the establishment of an accounting body, supervised by the state, to oversee these funds. The responsibility for protecting citizens' funds lies with the state, as the councils only manage and do not have the right to tamper with the shareholders' funds.

"Despite the associations having a union capable of developing them independently of state interference, utilizing their enormous capabilities and substantial funds, this potential has unfortunately not been realized.

"While the union previously fulfilled its role in a somewhat satisfactory manner, its impact is now negligible. Each association operates independently, resulting in noticeable price differences and varying standards of products.

These standards are often not worthy of being present in Kuwait, let alone in associations whose primary goals are to improve service, quality, and price. This issue is complex and cannot be fully addressed in a single article. May God guide us in this matter."

— Compiled by PFX Fernandes



Firemen putting out the blaze to the vehicles in Jleeb area



Photos by Rizk Taufiq

Firefighters after putting out the blaze in Shuwaikh Industrial Area...

Fire breaks out in shopping center

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

With the temperature rising and after the fire in the Mangaf area, firefighting teams put out today afternoon a fire that broke out in a store in one of the famous commercial markets in the Shuwaikh Industrial Area, resulting in major material losses without any hu-

The General Fire Department said: The fire brigades were able to fight the

blaze and control it without causing any human casualties. Assistant Director of Capital Security, Brigadier General Talal Al-Enezi, Lieutenant Colonel Othman Fawzi, and firefighters, medical and traffic emergency personnel, were present at the fire site, who closed the roads leading to the market site in order

to preserve safety of everyone.
On the other hand, fire brigades also controlled a fire in a number of vehicles in the Jleeb area without causing any

Call to release military personnel

Mol takes action against landowners involved in narcotics manufacturing

KUWAIT CITY, June 13: First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense, and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahd Yousef Saud Al-Sabah brought to the attention of the Cabinet of Ministers that certain agricultural landowners have been found to be engaging in the storage and manufacturing of narcotic substances and psychotropic drugs within their holdings, intending to trade and distribute them within the country, reports Al-Qabas daily.

In response, the Council of Ministers has decided to task Dr. Mahmoud Abdulaziz Bushehri, the Minister of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy, and the Minister of State for Housing Affairs, who oversees the Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR) to do that is all necessary to revoke the ownership of these agricultural plots from their current

This action comes after evidence has confirmed their involvement in activities that contravene the laws, regulations, and established controls governing their use.

Bid to spend Eid with kin: Undersecretary of the National Guard Lieutenant General M. Hashem Al-Rifai issued a decision to release the military personnel detained under disci-plinary penalties on the occasion of Eid Al-Adha, so they can spend the Eid holiday with their families, reports Al-Anba daily.

In a press statement, the National Guard disclosed this is in compliance with the directives of National Guard Chief His Highness Sheikh Salem Al-Ali and his deputy, Sheikh Faisal Al-Nawaf.

The statement added that His Highness Sheikh Salem Al-Ali extended his warmest congratulations and blessings to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah -- the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled, and the commanders and forces of the National Guard on the occasion of Eid Al-Adha.

He prayed to Allah to shower everyone with goodness, righteousness and blessings; and perpetuate the blessings of security and safety throughout the precious country under the wise leadership of HH the Amir.

Psychiatrist's 15-year absence results in 5-yr jail, KD 1mn fine

Detention of terrorist network of three extended

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, June 13: The Criminal Court sentenced a Kuwaiti psychiatrist to five years in prison and fined him KD1 million for receiving his salary while he was abroad for 15 years. The Ministry of Health's Legal Department revealed

that a Kuwaiti psychiatrist employed at the ministry, has been absent from work for 15 years and he was outside the country, yet he continued receiving his full salary in collusion with another employee. As a result, a report was submitted to the Public Prosecu-

tion. The Criminal Investigation Department conducted investigations and looked into the psychiatrist's movements into and out of the country, leading to the discovery that he resided in another country for 15 years while receiving full salary.

Terrorist network of 3: The detention renewal judge extended the detention of a terrorist network of three citizens until June 27 to continue interrogating them. State Security officers arrested the citizens who recruited

and invited others to fight with ISIS, incited others to overthrow the regime, and planned to target Shiites and American forces in Saudi Arabia.

Woman released on bail: The detention renewal judge decided to release a female citizen on bail of KD300 and to extend the detention of five other citizens - including two customs employees - until June 27, pending investigations into their attempt to smuggle one million Lyrica pills worth KD2 million.

Case files indicate that officers from the Drug Control General Department in the Criminal Security Sector at the Interior Ministry arrested six citizens (five men and one woman) in possession of approximately one million Lyrica pills, which they tried to smuggle into the country through Kuwait International Airport. Two of the accused are employed at Kuwait General Administration of Customs (KGAC).

The suspects and the confiscated pills with an estimated value of KD2 million were referred to the concerned authorities.

Action against school tests theft: The public prosecution ordered on Thursday detention of Ministry of Education's personnel and the head of the "secret printing house" for stealing the high school tests for the scholastic year 2023-2024.

The prosecution said on its X account that the detainees were interrogated and addressed with the charges, adding that the legal proceedings against the suspects would continue.

The charges include divulging information and money laun-

Regulations on window tinting: The Ministry of Interior has clarified the regulations regarding vehicle window tinting, stating that tinting is permissible for side and rear windows only, reports Al-Seyassah daily. However, it is essential to ensure that the total tinting, in-

cluding both factory and additional tinting, does not exceed Furthermore, the installation of reflective and opaque shades

is strictly prohibited. Any form of tinting or obstruction on the windshield is prohibited. These measures aim to maintain safety standards and visibility for drivers on the road.

Ruling on June 20: The Criminal Court scheduled a session for June 20 to rule on a State security case involving former MP Hamad Al-Olayan, who is accused of interfering in and challenging the powers of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

The court also rejected the request of Al-Olayan's lawyer

Al-Olayan appeared before the court in the first trial session, during which he denied interfering in the powers of His Highness the Amir and criticizing His Highness' decisions.

The Public Prosecution had charged Al-Olayan based on the fact that on April 15, 2024; in the State Security Service Department, he publicly and in writing challenged the rights and powers of His Highness the Amir, defamed the Amiri entity and attacked the authority of HH the Amir by posting certain phrases on his personal social media account as indicated in

Decision issued to renew panels' tasks

Kuwaitization of supervisory jobs in co-operative societies

Undersecretary of Ministry of Social Affairs Khalid Al-Ajmi has issued a decision to renew the terms of the committees that are tasked with implementing the regulations related to the Kuwaitization of supervisory jobs in cooperative societies in coordination with the relevant institutions, reports Al-Anba daily.

Al-Ajmi explained that the decision is based on the directives issued by the Minister of Social Affairs, State Minister for Family and Children Affairs, and State Minister for Youth Affairs Amthal Al-Huwaila to expedite the implementation of the plan for the Kuwaitization of the jobs in cooperative societies.

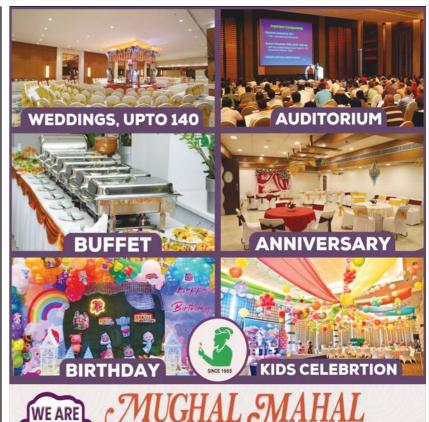
He affirmed the keenness of the Ministry of Social Affairs to enhance the role of national workers and its commitment

KUWAIT CITY, June 13: The acting to the directives of the Council of Ministers to give priority to citizens for em-

> Meanwhile, Al-Shahed daily reported that the Ministry of Social Affairs issued strong-worded warnings to the cooperative societies that are not committed to the decisions related to the Kuwaitization of supervisory jobs.

> Such a circular from the ministry was issued after it was discovered that some cooperative societies did not take necessary action to nationalise jobs and in fact, the number of expatriate workers in those co-ops had increased.

> In this regard, the Undersecretary of Ministry of Social Affairs Khalid Al-Ajmi said the ministry will contact the Kuwaiti applicants for jobs in cooperative societies in order to fix a date for their interview.





Weddings Seminars Conferences Celebrations

Sea view | Ample car parking

For more enquires Call: 23911174 / 23911175 Mr. Jack: 97644421

> Email: fahaheel@mughalmahal.com info@mughalmahal.com

'Cultural heritage and craftsmanship are key to Kuwaiti identity'

Kuwaiti Sadu Society holds traditional weaving exhibition at UNESCO

KSHR calls for safer housing conditions after a tragic fire

Employers urged to improve worker's accommodations

KUWAIT CITY, June 13: The Kuwait Society for **Human Rights (KSHR)** extends its deepest condolences to the families and relatives of the victims of the tragic Mangaf fire, which claimed the lives of several workers while they were in their accommodation, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

This painful and heartbreaking incident underscores the urgent need to address the issue of decent housing for workers, which should be recognized as a fundamental human right rather than a

This incident serves as a stark reminder of the critical importance of providing decent housing for workers. Adequate living conditions are essential for the dignity, health, and safety of all workers. The Society emphasizes that employers have a responsibility to ensure that the accommodation they provide meets international standards for labor and workers'

In light of this tragedy, the Kuwait Society for Human Rights urges employers to take immediate action to improve the standards of workers' housing.

This includes and ensuring safety by implementing comprehensive systems in all workers'

Ministry announces opening of new schools for academic year 2024/25

KUWAIT CITY, June 13: Under the guidance of the Minister of Education and the Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, Dr. Adel Al-Adwani, the Ministry of Education is pleased to announce the opening of 19 new schools across various educational regions in preparation for the

upcoming academic year 2024/2025. Capital Educational District: four primary schools -- Boys' Primary School in Jaber Al-Ahmad, Girls' Primary School in Jaber Al-Ahmad; Kindergartens --

Kindergarten 1 and Kindergarten 2 Jahra Educational District: seven primary schools -- Boys' Primary School in Al-Mutlaa, Girls' Primary School in Al-Mutlaa, Boys' Middle School, Girls' Middle School and Boys' Secondary School and Girls' Secondary School

Kindergartens in Al-Mutlaa -- Reopening of Kindergarten in Sa'ad Al-

Al-Ahmadi Educational Zone: four new schools -- Kindergarten in Al-Wa-

fra, Kindergarten in Sabah Al-Middle Schools -- Boys' Middle School in Al-Wafra, Girls' Middle School in Al-Wafra

Farwaniya Educational Zone: three new schools -- Boys' Middle School in Sabah Al-Nasser,

Girls' Middle School in Sabah Al-Nasser and Boys' High School in West Abdullah Al-Mubarak These new educational institutions

are part of government's ongoing commitment to provide quality education and expand educational opportunities for students.

The ministry looks forward to welcoming students to these new facilities and continuing the mission to foster a supportive and enriching learning environment.

accommodations.

This should include the provision of fire extinguishers, air purification devices, fire detection systems, and direct alarm systems to prevent similar accidents in the future.

This is in addition to adhering to international standards and recommendations issued by the International Labor Organization (ILO) concerning workers' housing and safety; providing decent accom-

modation and improvement of living conditions for workers, ensuring that all accommodations are safe, healthy, and dignified.

The Kuwait Society for Human Rights calls on all employers and relevant authorities to prioritize the well-being and safety of workers by adopting these measures. It is essential to prevent such tragedies and to uphold the fundamental rights of all Kuwaiti Sadu Society held a live show on Wednesday at the headquarters of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and a "Ragoum" exhibition of the distinctive artworks made by students as part of an innovative educational

The Head of the Sadu Society, Sheikha Bibi Duaij Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, told KUNA that this educational initiative led by the Society emphasizes the importance of preserving traditional hand weaving skills along with the values rooted in precision and dedication as essential elements of cultural heritage and identity

She added that this program was designed "specifically for Ministry of Education schools," explaining that it features a curriculum prepared "meticulously" by the Sadu Society

She said that the initiative included specialized training workshops for the Department of Art Education, where teachers were trained on skills related to Sadu weaving in its his-



Head of the Sadu Society, Sheikha Bibi Duaij Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and the Permanent Representative of the State of Kuwait to UNESCO, Dr. Adam Al-Mulla.

torical and cultural context.

In a similar statement to KUNA, the Permanent Representative of the State of Kuwait to UNESCO, Dr. Adam Al-Mulla, expressed his happiness at the participation of the Sadu Society and the Ministry of Education in this event, stressing that

such participations reflect the extent of Kuwait's keenness to move forward in enhancing effective cooperation with the sectors of education, culture, social sciences and humani-

Al-Mulla stressed the importance of encouraging young people to work handcrafts, innovation and perseverance in highlighting the Kuwaiti cultural heritage so that it is known

locally, regionally and globally. Along with Sheikha Bibi Duaij Al-Sabah, Many Kuwaiti officials participated, a member of the Kuwaiti Sadu Society, the general coordinator of the (Training the Trainer in Textile Art) program, Hanan Al-Kazemi, the technical supervisor for artistic education in the Ministry of Education, Umaima Malallah, and the technical advisor for artistic education in the Ministry of Education, Hamad Al-Hamad.

The exhibition includes a live display of the traditional art of weaving, in addition to distinctive artistic works performed by eighth grade students through the joint program that was included in their curricu-

20 vital service buildings underway

PAHW signs a KD 1.6 million contract to build fire station in northern Al-Mutlaa

KUWAIT CITY, June 13, (KUNA): The Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW), announced, Wednesday, that it has signed a contract to set up the Northern Fire Station in Al-Mutlaa, with a total value of KD 1.685 million about (USD 5.5 million).

In a statement, Acting General Manager of the Authority, Rashid Al-Enezi, said that this center is the second in the area, taking into consideration the approach to complete public service buildings in conjunction with citizens' housing, to provide their needs.

The project execution was was set at 545 days, he explained, adding the PAHW is following up on construction of 20 service buildings in t N9, N10 districts, each includes a health center,

> ambulance, central market, shops. police station, municipal building, social unit, community development center, post office, and an office for the Ministry of Trade and Industry.

Other 20 service buildings are being constructed among N5, N6, N7, N8, N9, N10 and N12 districts, including six kindergartens, two elementary schools, two middle schools, and nine stores in addition to a gas branch, a telephone exchange building and post office, he added.

The Authority has completed construction of 116 buildings in the area, containing 20 schools, 26 mosques, three health centers, two ambulance centers, 20 stores, two central markets, four gas branches, two police stations, in addition to citizen service center and a fire station, two buildings for each of the municipality, the social unit, the community development center, and a post office, Al-Enezi said.

The electricity was received in 114 buildings, as 99 buildings were handed over to the beneficiary entities, representing various service buildings in the city in coordination with the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy, he added.

Future goals highlighted

Kuwait's Amiri Award honors top factories

KUWAIT CITY, June 13: During the sixth session of the Amiri Award for Distinguished Factories, the Acting Director General of the Public Authority for Industry, Muhammad Al-Adwani, emphasized the national industrial sector's competitiveness on an international scale, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The forum, held at the Authority's theater, provided winners with a platform to share their success stories and participation experiences.

Al-Adwani highlighted the Authority's commitment to collaborating with industrial institutions to align with global advancements, serving the industrial strategy and Kuwait Vision 2035. He urged Kuwaiti industrial establishments to embrace a culture of excellence and continuous development to benefit both themselves and the country.

Expressing gratitude to His Highness the Amir for sponsoring the award, Al-Adwani expressed pride in the winning establishments of the sixth and previous sessions. Following the forum, he reiterated the award's significance as an incentive for industrial entities to pursue further development.

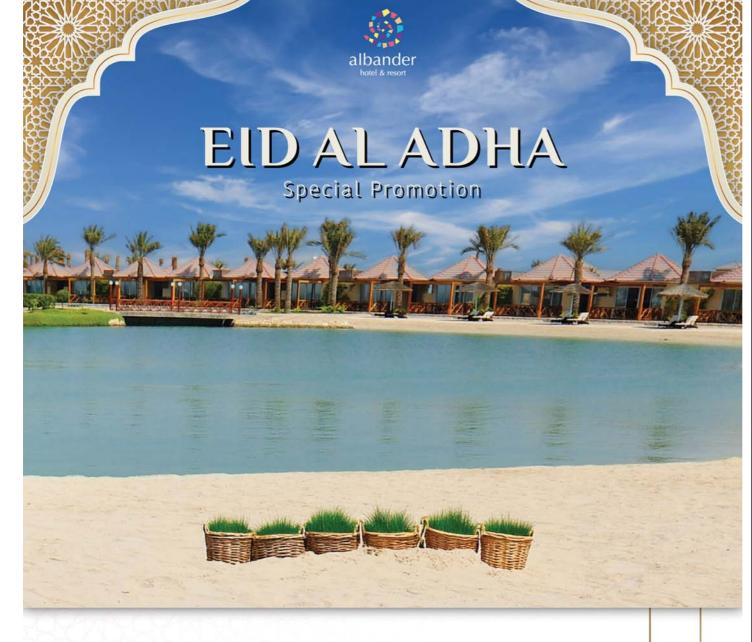
Al-Adwani affirmed upcoming sessions

would witness developments aimed at enhancing the industrial sector's contribution to the gross domestic product, supporting Kuwait's transformation into a regional and global financial hub, and ensuring food security. The Industry Authority's official spokes-

person, Walid Al-Majni, reiterated the Authority's commitment to supporting and advancing Kuwait's industrial sector in line with international standards. He emphasized the forum's objective to

facilitate the exchange of industrial experiences, particularly focusing on the challenges and gains experienced by winning factories. Al-Majni noted the forum's role in encour-

aging broader participation from both largescale factories and small to medium-sized industrial establishments, reflecting growing interest and momentum in the competition.



Room Promotion

From June 12th - 22nd of June 2024

Book for One-night (Inclusive of breakfast)

(Inclusive of breakfast)

2 Bedroom Chalet (4 persons)

Queen Cabana (2 persons) BHD 76.230 BHD 170.247

Book for Two nights and get 10% discount (Inclusive of breakfast) (Non-refundable/Non-Cancellable)

Book for Three nights and get 20% discount Queen Cabana (2 persons) per night.

Queen Cabana (2 persons) per night.

2 Bedroom Chalet (4 persons) per night

BHD 61.000 net

BHD 153.222

BHD 69.000 net

2 Bedroom Chalet (4 persons) per night BHD 136.198

Food & Beverage Promotion

- First three days of Eid, at the Fish Market Restaurant warmly welcomes everyone to enjoy
- · 15% discount on Room Service

(Non-refundable/Non-Cancellable)

 First three days of Eid, lunch Buffet will be served at Café Marisol Restaurant with price of BD6.500 per person. Starts from 12:30 PM to 16:00 PM.

Terms and conditions apply



Minister of Social Affairs, Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah with Lebanese Minister of Social Affairs Dr. Hector Hajjar at the headquarters of the Permanent Delegation of Kuwait to the United Nations

Advancing mutual aid initiatives

Kuwait and Lebanon strengthen social affairs ties in UN meeting

NEW YORK, June 13, (KUNA): Kuwait Minister of Social Affairs, Family, Childhood, and Minister of Youth Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah discussed bilateral relations and issues of common interests with the Lebanese Minister of Social Affairs Hector Hajjar.

The discussion took place during Dr. Al-Huwailah's meeting with Minister Hajjar on Wednesday at the permanent Kuwaiti mission to the United Nations.

Both parties emphasized the deep and strong bonds between the two countries and the distinctiveness of the relations, especially in fields related to social affairs and issues concerning people with disabilities.

The meeting also discussed the ongoing cooperation between the relevant authorities and agencies in both countries, and ways to support and enhance this cooperation further in the future.

Tel: +973 17701201 - Ext. 351 | Email: reservation@albander.com | www.albander.com | 🚹 🖸 @albanderhotelandresort

Eid Al-Adha greetings

On the occasion of Eid Al-Adha, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China in Kuwait Zhang Jianwei issued a press statement, extending his warmest wishes to the leaders and people of Kuwait.

In the press statement, the ambassador said, "On behalf of both myself and the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Kuwait, I extend heartfelt congratulations to His Highness the Amir of the State of Kuwait, Sheikh Mishaal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince, Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah, and His Highness the Prime Minister, Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, as well as the people of Kuwait, on the occasion of Eid Al-Adha.

May His Highness the Amir, His Highness the Crown Prince, and His Highness the Prime Minister enjoy good health, happiness, and prosperity.

I extend my wishes to the people of Kuwait for further progress, joy, and welfare. May the State of Kuwait continue to be blessed with

security, prosperity, and stability. China and Kuwait enjoy a deep long-standing friendship, and bilateral relations characterized by consistent development.

Since 2022, President Xi Jinping of China and His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Mishaal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah met twice, reaching significant agreements aimed at enhancing the relationship between China and Kuwait.

I would like to confirm that the government of China is ready to work with the Kuwaiti government to implement these important agreements concluded by the leadership of the two countries, as well as to continue consolidating mutual political trust, increasing exchanges and cooperation, and enhancing communication and coordination regarding regional and international issues.

Thanks to the joint efforts exerted by both sides, I have complete confidence that the partnership will see further enhancement in the developing strategy between China and Kuwait.

In conclusion, on this joyous occasion, I extend my heartfelt wishes for Eid Al-Adha to be filled with goodness, prosperity, and blessings for the Arab and Islamic nations. May the State of Kuwait and its friendly people achieve all the progress and prosperity they aspire to.'

On the occasion of the advent of the Blessed Feast of Sacrifice, we are delighted to congratulate all our Mus-

lim brothers around world, especially in the Arab countries particularly in the Arab states. Wishing them peace, prosabundance.



off the specter of war, killing, and destruction from them all. We ask God Almighty to always

Imploring God Almighty to ward

gather us with you for the good,

Continued from Page 1

Continued from Page 1

Sweltering heat.

condition: Light to moderate waves (1

larly in coastal areas, with southeast-

erly to variable winds at light to mod-

erate speeds (8 to 32 km/h). Minimum

temperatures: 27-31°C. Sea condition:

Light to moderate waves (1 to 4 feet).

to public sector workers including

salaries, leaves, and allowances are

beyond the capabilities of private

companies, as the latter cannot af-

ford to provide similar benefits. This

is the main reason why citizens are

eager to obtain jobs in the public sec-

tor rather than in the private sector.

Also, most of the jobs in the indus-

trial field are technical and require

hard work, which the citizens are

not interested in. They instead pre-

fer comfortable jobs in public sec-

tor institutions. Another challenge is

the lack of regulations to prioritize

national products, similar to those

applied in other GCC countries that

pushes products of the private sector

sector suggested the formation of a

committee by the Cabinet with rel-

evant ministers such as minister of

Education, minister of Commerce

and Industry, state minister for Cabi-

net Affairs, director general of PAM, director general of Civil Services

Commission (CSC), President of Ku-

wait University and Chairman of the

Board of Private Universities, in addi-

tion to the undersecretaries of the rel-

evant ministries, in order to prepare

a strategy to address the educational

outcomes to fit the labor market's de-

catalyst system for the companies that

hire the highest number of national

employees, adding that this catalyst

system may include allocating a quota

of the public tenders and developmen-

tal projects for those companies.

They also suggested providing a

Representatives of the private

to the forefront.

Benefits draw

Evening: Warm and humid, particu-

and may He return the Blessed Feast of Sacrifice to all with prosperity and blessings.

How desperately we need today to regain the spirit of the festivals we celebrate, so that we may please the Almighty God, through living the values of tolerance, encounter, and fraternity. We ask God Almighty to pour His wisdom upon all the leaders of the Arab countries, especially the Arab Gulf, so that they may always be a beacon guiding everyone towards encounter, cooperation, and fraternity for the sake of peace.

And see you soon, where the joy and beauty of the festivals gather us. + Bishop Aldo Berardi, O.S.S.T. Apostolic Vicar of Northern

HE Belinda Lewis, His Majesty's Ambassador to the State of Kuwait, said "On the occasion of Eid al-Adha, I would like to extend my gratitude to Kuwait's leadership, Government and people for their enduring friendship, which now stretches back more than 125 years, and wish everyone celebrating continued health, happiness and prosperity. Eid Mubarak.'

Congratulation message of H.E. Mr. Sarmen Baghdasarian, Ambassador of the Republic of Armenia, on the occasion of Eid al-Adha.

I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to the Emir of the State of Kuwait H.H. Sheikh

Sabah,

Crown

Sabah

Al

and



Kuwait on Eid Al-Adha. As we come together to celebrate the spirit of sacrifice, generosity, and unity, we hope that this joyous occasion will bring pros-

perity, peace, and harmony to all. In these challenging times, let us reaffirm our commitment to fostering mutual understanding, respect, and friendship between our countries. May this Eid al-Adha reinforce our collective resolve to work hand in hand towards a brighter, more inclusive future for all

Wishing a blessed Eid filled with joy, abundance, and blessings.

The Embassy of the Republic of Honduras presents its compliments to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as to all the Diplomatic and Consular Missions and International Organizations accredited to the State of Kuwait.

On the occasion of Eid Al-Adha Al Mubarak, the Embassy extends Sincere greetings to you, your families as well as to the members of the Embassy wishing you many happy and prosperous returns.

The Embassy of the Republic of Honduras avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as to all the Diplomatic and Consular Missions and International Organizations accredited to the State of Kuwait, the assurances of its highest consideration.

Electrical fault

Continued from Page 1

in labor accommodations in all governorates of Kuwait especially those known to house large numbers of workers. The campaigns are aimed at ensuring the buildings meet the safety and health measures, and to figure out to what extent the contracting companies and employers are committed to the set conditions. This is intended to ensure the protection of the lives and properties of expatriate workers.

The sources affirmed that PAM will impose the law strictly, and apply tough penalties on all violating parties.

They explained that the penalties include blocking the company's file and suspending its license. The law has authorized granting inspectors judicial arrest authority in order to enter labor accommodations and make sure they meet the relevant criteria. The inspecting teams will issue warnings and give a short grace period after which they will come back to check if the violations have been removed. If not, the teams will issue citations and refer them to the relevant authorities for necessary legal action.

The sources said the Planning and Development Department in PAM recently launched a new online service titled "Convenient labor housing" based on its concern about employers commitment to providing adequate housing for their workers, especially those registered under government contracts.

They highlighted PAM's regulation that employers are not to collect any money from the laborers for housing. as per the ministerial Decision No.

Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya and Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi visited Al-Adan Hospital to see the injured people in the tragic fire that broke out at a workers' building in Al-Mangaf, south of Kuwait City Wednesday.

In a press statement, the Foreign

Ministry confirmed the government's commitment to providing highest healthcare services for the injured people and wished them a speedy re-

Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya spoke to Ministry of Ex-

KRCS reaffirms its commitment to 'humanitarian aid' for all refugees

Global efforts intensify

KUWAIT CITY, June 13, (KUNA): The Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) confirmed on Thursday its continuation of providing humanitarian aid to all refugees and displaced people around the world in accordance with the principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

Deputy Chairman of the Association's Board of Directors, Anwar Al-Hasawi, told Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) on the occasion of "World Refugee Day" that the number of refugees in the world is constantly increasing due to the nature of disasters and escalating crises. He called for highlighting an important issue, which is the return of refugees to their home-

Al-Hasawi added that the importance of this international occasion lies in reminding the relevant authorities in the international community of the suffering of refugees and displaced people around the world and the difficulties and humanitarian challenges they face in their perilous asylum journey. He pointed out that the number of refugees and displaced people who were forced to leave their homes due to wars and violence increased to 120 million people around the world at the end of last April, according to the "Global Trends" report for the year 2024, which is issued annually by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

He appealed to the relevant organizations and authorities to quickly establish a specialized body to spread awareness among refugees, praising the role of international organizations and components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in dealing with this file and the continued cooperation between the association and the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Ku-

He expressed his concern about the current situation of refugees, especially displaced Palestinians, and the challenges they face, stressing the continuation of providing support to the UNHCR and its projects through a humanitarian partnership aimed at alleviating the suffering of refugees and forcibly displaced Al-Hasawi stated that the Kuwait

Red Crescent was honored on the sidelines of the celebration held by the Commission in cooperation with the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development on this occasion, in view of its support to refugees and displaced people in many countries of the world, particularly the Rohingya and Syrians in Jordan and Lebanon, as well as the displaced

ternal Affairs of India Subrahmanyam Jaishankar Wednesday, and conveyed the government and citizens' deep condolences over the death of 49 expatriates in a fire that broke out in a residential building in Al-Mangaf, south of Kuwait city.

Al-Yahya expressed sincere sorrow and deep sympathy to the families of the victims, and wished fast recovery of the victims.

He emphasized that Kuwait was utilizing all resources to care for the injured and meet their health and medical needs.

Interior Undersecretary General Sheikh Salem Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah on Wednesday visited Mubarak Hospital to check on condition of persons injured in the apartment building fire that occurred in Al-Mangaf earlier in the day.

Officials from the Ministry of Health briefed the minister on their condition after they were injured in the flames of the fire that gutted the apartment building and claimed 49 lives.

Kuwait awoke early Wednesday with the tragic news about a deadly fire gutting an apartment building in the residential district of Al-Mangaf, located south of the capital, Kuwait City. As the hours passed, the casualty

toll kept climbing until late in the day, when the Ministry of Interior declared that the latest update showed that at least 49 people perished in the flames that were fought by firemen who hurried to the scene, where their blazes stained the facade of multi-story building with charcoal soot.

All injured people have been taken to several nearby hospitals, including Adan and Jahra hospitals, for necessary medical treatment, Major General Eid Al-Owaihan, the chief of the ministry's Criminal Division, said in a statement to Kuwait TV. He confirmed that rescuers and medical emergency teams had scrambled to the scene to

aid the victims. Among the officials who had hurried to the scene was Kuwaiti First Deputy Prime Minister, Defense Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Fahad Yousuf Al-Sabah who warned that any building violation would be addressed without prior warning as of Thursday. "As of tomorrow (Thursday), the Municipality and its teams will respond to all violations at all apartment buildings without



President of Boa

Part of the Kuwait Red Crescent honor received by the Deputy Chairman of the Society's Board of Directors, An-

gee Day is celebrated on June 20 of each year and is devoted to rewhose lives in their homelands are threatened, highlighting their suffer-

them with more assistance, under the auspices of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

Minister to landlords: Remove discarded & used items from premises immediately

KUWAIT CITY, June 13, (KUNA): Minister of Public Works and Minister of Municipality Dr. Noura Al-Mashaan on Thursday warned landlords of buildings to remove used and discarded items from the premises immediately.

The minister, who was speaking to journalists as she toured several residential districts to shame offenders at the residential and commercial buildings, was accompanied by the First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and Interior Minister Sheikh Fahad Yusuf Saud Al-Sabah.

The law will be directly exacted upon the violators, the minister warned as she and the accompanying officials examined the breaching cases in Al-Mahboula, Al-Mangat and Jleeb Al-Shoyoukh.

Misplaced discarded items must be removed instantly, she stressed disclosing that power supply had already been cut off from buildings where such dumping was discovered.

Envoy praises Kuwait-Russia collaboration

Russian Embassy celebrates National Day

KUWAIT CITY, June 13: The Russian Embassy in the State of Kuwait celebrated the National Day with a message of friendship and coopera-

In his address, the Russian ambassador to Kuwait HE Vladimir Zheltov extended his "sincere gratitude to HE Sadiq Maarafi, Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kuwait, esteemed Kuwaiti friends, and all honorable guests, for joining the Russian National Day celebrations."

The Russian envoy said, while having been observed since the early 1990s, the roots of Russian statehood run deep, spanning over a millennium.

He went on to say, Russia's rich cultural and religious heritage has shaped a unique civilization known as "the Russian World," with a distinct identity and history encompassing epochs such as Ancient Rus' (including Kievan Rus'), the Moscow Tsardom, the Russian Empire, and the Soviet Union, culminating in the present-day Russian Federation.

Throughout history, he added, Russia has been a prominent player on the world stage, rightfully earning its place among the great powers as a permanent member of the UN Security Council.

It has valiantly thwarted the ambitions of self-proclaimed world conquerors like Napoleon and Hitler, while also lending significant support to national liberation movements across Asia, Africa, and Latin America, combating Western colonialism and advocating for equality and freedom.

As humanity grapples with new threats and challenges, Russia advocates, he said, for a fair multipolar world order that respects the sovereignty and interests of all states, large or small.

In a shifting global landscape, characterized by the decline of Western-centric dominance, Russia champions true equality and non-interference in internal affairs, standing against the imposition of pseudovalues by the collective West. Russia's relationship with the Arab

world, including Kuwait, is built on mutual respect and benefit. Kuwait holds a special place as the first Arab Gulf state to establish diplomatic ties with Russia in 1963, marking its sixtieth anniversary last year. The wisdom and pragmatism of

Kuwait's leadership are deeply appreciated, fostering fruitful cooperation in various fields such as trade, economics, energy, defense, and humanitarian endeavors, he said. The significant increase in Ku-

waiti visitors to Russia underscores the growing bonds between our nations, with optimism for further growth and strengthening of relations in the future.

prior warning," the minister told reporters while inspecting the fire site. The owner of the blaze building will

be kept in custody until investigations into the causes of the fire are over, the





Photos lehab Qurtal

Lebanese Embassy Diwaniya

Photos during the celebration.

By Fares Al-Abdan

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 13: "We are always honored by the presence of this large number of loved ones and friends -- whether they are diplomats or Kuwaiti and Lebanese people residing on this good land," says Chargé d'Affaires of the Lebanese Embassy Ahmed Arafa.

Arafa made the statement at an event organized by the embassy with a big number of Arab and foreign diplomats; including Lebanese Consul Mia Al-Adam, Commercial Attaché Shadi Abu Daher, members of the Lebanese community and several citizens in attendance.

He added: "This is our second gathering in what we call greetings to the High Leadership and to the government.' He concluded: "We are al-

openness.'

ways happy to have these good faces with us. Everyone is welcome here.'

the 'Diwaniya' of the Lebanese

Embassy, which was named

like this in line with the beau-

tiful tradition of the Kuwaiti

society and the authenticity

rooted in the people of Kuwait,

which also reflects the generos-

ity and open nature of its peo-

ple. We, as Lebanese, are not

far from this authenticity and

He disclosed that "we wanted

to hold this humble meeting be-

fore the start of summer, and Eid

Al-Adha. We hope it will be a

blessed Eid for all our people

in Kuwait. We also extend our

and Jahra.

Later in the day, Kuwait's Public Prosecutor declared starting an investigation into circumstance of the fire that tore through the building housing

Awadhi said hospitals received 56 people affected by the fire. He said the cases were distributed to hospitals of Adan, Mubarak Al-

Kabeer, Farwaniya, Jaber Al-Ahmad

Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-

foreign workers.

World News Roundup

Europe

NATO defense ministers in Brussels: NATO defense ministers gathered Thursday in Brussels hoping to agree on a new plan to provide long-term security assistance and military training to Ukraine amid Russia's full-scale invasion, after Hungary promised not to veto the proposal as long as it's not forced to take part.

The ministers are meeting over two days at NATO headquarters in Brussels in the last high-level talks before a summit hosted by US President Joe Biden in Washington on July 9-11, where the military organization's leaders are expected to announce financial support for Ukraine. Ukraine's Western allies are trying to bolster their military support as Russian troops launch attacks along the more than 1,000-kilometer (620-mile)

front line, taking advantage of a lengthy delay in U.S. military aid. European Union money was also held up by political infighting.

NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg, who is chairing Thursday's meeting, said that Ukraine's beleaguered armed forces need longer-term predictability about the kinds of weapons, ammunition and funds they can expect to receive.

Stoltenberg "The whole idea is to minimize the risk for gaps and delays as we saw earlier this year," Stoltenberg told reporters. The hold-up, he said, "is one of the reasons why the Russians are now able to push and to actually occupy more land in Ukraine." (AP)

EGJ fines Hungary \$216m for asylum law: The European Union's top court ordered Hungary to pay a fine of 200 million euros (\$216 million) on Thursday for persistently breaking the bloc's asylum rules despite a previous European Court of Justice ruling, plus an additional 1 million euros for every day it fails to comply going forward.

Hungary had not implemented a 2020 ruling from top EU judges in Luxembourg, the ECJ wrote in a press release. "That failure, which consists in deliberately avoiding the application of a common EU policy as a whole, constitutes an unprecedented and extremely serious infringement of EU law."

Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán slammed the ruling as "outrageous and unacceptable."
Hungary's anti-immigrant government has taken a hard line

on people entering the country since well over 1 million people entered Europe in 2015, most of them fleeing conflict in Syria.

The case concerns changes Hungary made to its asylum system in the wake of that crisis, when some 400,000 people

passed through Hungary on their way to Western Europe. (AP)

Poland reintroduces restrictions: Poland on Thursday re-

introduced restrictions on movement along parts of the border with Belarus because of increased migration pressure that has involved violence against Polish security officials.

The ban taking effect Thursday will be valid for 90 days and

affects 60 kilometers (37 miles) of the land border between NATO member Poland and Belarus, an autocratic state aligned with Russia. The border between Poland and Belarus runs for about 400 kilometers (250 miles).

The government of Prime Minister Donald Tusk says that the purpose of the so-called buffer zone is to ensure the safety of outsiders, as well as the border guards, soldiers and police who work in the area. It also says it seeks to limit the activities of human smugglers who have been facilitating irregular migration at that border. Residents and those working or studying in the area will be able to access the border areas, but others will require permits. (AP)

Heat forces authorities to shut down Acropolis: Authorities in Greece are closing down the Acropolis in Athens during the afternoon on Thursday for a second day as the country

swelters under unseasonably high temperatures.

The Culture Ministry said the hilltop citadel, which is Greece's most popular ancient site, would be closed from midday to 5 p.m. (0900-1400 GMT) because of the heat.

All other archaeological sites in the Greek capital will be closed during the same hours. People who have booked visits for that period can use their tickets later in the day, the ministry said. Temperatures are expected to exceed 40 C (104 F) on Thursday in much of central and southern Greece, including greater Athens, the Cyclades islands and Crete.

Officials are on heightened alert for wildfires, which plague Greece every summer. (AP)

Starmer to end era of gestures if he wins: The left-of-center politician aiming to become Britain's prime minister in three weeks' time said Thursday he will lead a government that's both "pro-business and pro-worker" and restore stability after years of economic and political turmoil.

Labour Party leader Keir Starmer said that if he's elected on July 4, he will end the "desperate era of gestures and gimmicks" of the Conservative Party's turbulent tenure. Launching Labour's election manifesto in the northwest England city of Manchester, Starmer said a Labour government would "stop the chaos, turn the page and start to rebuild our country."

the chaos, turn the page and start to rebuild our country." Next month British voters will elect lawmakers to fill all 650 seats in the House of Commons, and the leader of the party that can command a majority - either alone or in coalition - will become prime minister. Labour currently has a double-digit lead in opinion polls over Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's governing Conservatives, who have been in power for 14 years under five different prime ministers. (AP)

rs. (AP)

Germany's govt proposes new law: Germany's defense minister announced on Wednesday plans for new legislation that would help refill the depleted ranks of the armed forces to bolster the country's defense capabilities. Boris Pistorius said the proposed bill would allow the government to send letters to all young men who turn 18 - about 400,000 every year - asking about their willingness and ability to serve in the military.

Under the law, those who receive the letter would have to fill out the questions. The army would then invite those interested in serving for a medical checkup and choose the most qualified to serve in the military for a period of 6-23 months.

The campaign is part of efforts to boost active forces numbers to 203,000 from the current just under 181,000 figure. Germany had over 500,000 troops during the Cold War. (AP)

Slovakia plans to boost politicians' protection: Slovakia's government approved a package of measures on Wednesday meant to boost security for leading politicians and others following an assassination attempt on populist Prime Minister

Robert Fico.

The measures need approval by Parliament, where the three-

party coalition government has a majority.

One proposal says authorities would have the right to ban protest rallies in front of politicians' homes. Demonstrations also wouldn't be allowed within 50 meters (yards) of the seat of government and president. The Interior Ministry would identify and prepare long-term residences for the prime minister, president and parliamentary speaker. (AP)

Austria to hold parliamentary poll on Sept: Austria's government, nearing the end of its five-year term, announced Wednesday the Alpine country's next parliamentary election will be held on Sept 29.

This comes in the wake of a narrow win by the far-right Freedom Party over Chancellor Karl Nehammer's conservative Austrian People's Party in last week's European Parliament election which saw hard-right parties achieving major gains across the 27-nation bloc.

gains across the 27-nation bloc.

The Freedom Party took 25.4% of the vote on Sunday, taking first place in a nationwide election for the first time. It was followed by the People's Party with 24.5%. (AP)



Cars go through flooded streets on Stirling Road near Federal Highway in Hollywood, Fla on June 12. Inset: Matthew Koziol, Matías Ricci, Manuel Ricci and Raúl Fernández travel by raft through a flooded street caused by heavy rain on North Bay Road in Sunny Isles Beach, Fla on Wednesday. (AP)

After rare flash flood emergency, Florida prepares for more heavy rainfall

A tropical disturbance has brought a rare flash flood emergency to much of southern Florida as residents prepared to weather more heavy rainfall on Thursday and Friday

Wednesday's downpours and subsequent flooding blocked roads, floated vehicles and delayed the Florida Panthers on their way to Stanley Cup games in Canada against the Edmonton Oilers.

The disorganized storm system was pushing across Florida from the Gulf of Mexico at roughly the same time as the early June start of hurricane season, which this year is forecast to be among the most active in recent memory amid concerns that climate change is increasing storm intensity.

intensity.

The disturbance has not reached cyclone status

and was given only a slight chance to form into a tropical system once it emerges into the Atlantic Ocean after crossing Florida, according to the National Hurricane Center.

"Regardless of development, heavy rainfall is forecast to continue across portions of the Florida peninsula during the next few days," the hurricane center posted on its website Wednesday. (AP)



United States Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin, left, arrives for a bilateral meeting on the sidelines of a NATO defense ministers meeting at NATO headquarters in Brussels on June 13. (AP).



Menendez



America

Baltimore port fully reopens: Commercial shipping traffic through the Port of Baltimore is expected to return to normal levels next month, officials said Wednesday, after the channel fully reopened this week for the first time since the collapse of the Francis Scott Key Bridge in March.

"I've been waiting to say this for every day for the last 11 weeks: Maryland, the Fort McHenry Channel is fully cleared, and the Port of Baltimore is reopened for business," Gov **Wes Moore** said at a waterside news conference to highlight the milestone. As the governor spoke, a passing ship

blasted its horn.

Behind him, giant cranes lifted shipping containers from the deck of a docked cargo ship and deposited them on land.

Many shipping companies rerouted their cargo to other ports following the deadly collapse in March. The deadly disaster halted most maritime traffic through Baltimore's busy port as crews worked around the clock to clear an estimated 50,000 tons of fallen steel and concrete from the Patapsco River. (AP)

Woman with gun arrested: A woman armed with a handgun was taken into custody after an hourlong standoff at the FBI building in Seattle on Wednesday, authorities said.

The woman walked into a publicly accessible area where people have to wait to be buzzed into the lobby, according to FBI spokesperson Steve Bernd. She pointed the gun at herself, the Seattle Police Department said in an emailed statement. A hostage negotiation team eventually persuaded her to lay the gun at her feet and surrender.

The FBI has reported an uptick in the number of threats against bureau personnel and facilities in the last few years. A man armed with an AR-15 rifle and a nail gun tried to breach the FBI's Cincinnati field office in 2022 and was killed hours later after

Politics

US prez faces 1st lawsuit over new asylum crackdown

Hollywood A-listers line up behind Biden

WASHINGTON, June 13, (AP): When Robert De Niro showed up outside a Manhattan courthouse to decry Donald Trump as his New York hush money trial was winding down, it sparked a life-imitates-art screaming match with a nearby group of the former president's supporters.

"You are gangsters!" De Niro, who starred in "Goodfellas" and won an Oscar for "The Godfather Part II," shouted at the Trump backers.

There are plenty more Hollywood storylines still to come in the 2024 campaign: Celebrities are increasingly lending their star power to President Joe Biden, hoping to energize their fans to vote for him in November and to entice donors to pony up for his reelection effort.

. Soliciting

On Saturday, A-listers George Clooney and Julia Roberts will team up with former president Barack Obama at a Biden fundraiser in Los Angeles, where the three will be interviewed by late-night talk show host Jimmy Kimmel. Roberts and Kimmel have already begun soliciting donations via text for Biden, who is skipping a weekend peace conference on Ukraine being held in Switzerland to attend the event.

Director Steven Spielberg is involved in storytelling efforts for the Democratic National Convention in August. Lenny Kravitz, Barbra Streisand and James Taylor have all performed for Biden donors.

formed for Biden donors.

Others who've sent fundraising emails, organized events or otherwise lent their support include Connie Britton of "The White Lotus" fame, singersongwriter Carole King, "Bridgerton" creator Shonda Rhimes, singer Christina Aguilera, "The Equalizer" actress

Queen Latifah and "Star Wars" actor Mark Hamill, who turned up in the White House briefing room last month to personally praise the president.

And, in another instance blurring lines between real life and make-believe, during a fundraiser at the home of veteran actor Michael Douglas, Biden, the actual president, congratulated the star of the 1996 hit "The American President" on his fictional administration's success.

For all the celebrity supporters, though, there's little expectation they can determine votes. Rather, they are seen as having the ability to inject excitement that helps energize supporters.

Lexi Underwood, whose credits include the streaming series "Little Fires Everywhere," calls acting a "contact sport" that allows her to interact with the public and makes her determined to use her influence responsibly. She has participated in a recent virtual "Students for Biden" event and traveled to Nevada to appear at campaign events focused on women's health issues.

n women's health Responsible

"I'm very fortunate to have certain eyes on me," said Underwood, 20. "I feel really responsible to make sure that what I put out there, either people are being informed on things that they weren't previously informed on, or that I'm motivating them to get out there and vote."

Biden's campaign says its chief focus is finding authentic and trusted messengers who can promote the president's policy achievements and raise the alarm about GOP "extremism," and that means deploying everyday supporters as well as famous ones. It has produced ads featuring a Pennsylvania union worker, a Black entrepreneur in

Detroit and women adversely affected by strict abortion limits in Texas.

Fai Nelson, a human resources worker who attended a recent Vice President Kamala Harris event in Prince George's County, Maryland, said celebrity voices can make a difference "if they can touch the audience."

"It's whether the message is relative to the said of the sai

"It's whether the message is relevant," said Nelson, 42.

During the pandemic-era campaign of 2020, Biden's campaign featured celebrities in scores of virtual events that showed the importance of staying flexible so that stars can present themselves in the most authentic ways.

Also:

WASHINGTON: A coalition of immigrant advocacy groups sued the Biden administration on Wednesday over President **Joe Biden's** recent directive that effectively halts asylum claims at the southern border, saying it differs little from a similar move by the Trump administration that was blocked by the courts.

The lawsuit - filed by the American Civil Liberties Union and others on behalf of Las Americas Immigrant Advocacy Center and the Refugee and Immigrant Center for Education and Legal Services, or RAICES - is the first test of the legality of Biden's sweeping crackdown on the border, which came after months of internal White House deliberations and is designed in part to deflect political attacks against the president on his handling of immigration.

"By enacting an asylum ban that is legally indistinguishable from the Trump ban we successfully blocked, we were left with no choice but to file this lawsuit," said Lee Gelernt, an attorney for the ACLU.

a standoff with authorities. (AP) $\ \square$

Rep's ex-husband pleads guilty: The ex-husband of US Rep Lauren Boebert pleaded guilty to reckless endangerment Wednesday after separate altercations with

his ex-wife at a local restaurant and their son at home earlier this year, according to online court documents.

A January argument between the congresswoman and Jayson Boebert at a restaurant that allegedly got out of control led



The Ambassador of the Republic of Cuba, Ismara Mercedes Vargas Walter accompanied by Victor Manuel Brizuela Fonseca presents her credentials to Britain's King Charles III during a private audience at Buckingham Palace, London on June 12. (AP)

to charges against Jayson Boebert for disorderly conduct, trespassing and obstruction of a peace officer, court documents show. Those charges were dismissed as part of a plea deal, according to the online records.

Days later, Jayson Boebert allegedly got into the physical fight with his son, leading to the reckless endangerment charge Jayson Boebert pleaded guilty to along with three other charges - prohibited use of a weapon, harassment and third-degree assault - that were dismissed as part of the plea, court documents show. (AP)

NJ top federal prosecutor testifies:

New Jersey's top federal prosecutor testified Wednesday at Sen **Bob Menendez** 's bribery trial that the Democrat sought to discuss the prosecution of a New Jersey real estate developer with him before recommending him to the post after Joe Biden won the 2020 presidential election.

US Attorney Philip R. Sellinger's revelation in testimony that will continue on Thursday represented the second time in the five-week-old Manhattan federal court trial that a top law enforcement figure has said Menendez sought to speak about a criminal case affecting a New Jersey businessman.

Last week, a former New Jersey attorney general testified that Menendez twice confronted him about a pending criminal case affecting a New Jersey businessman, and both times the attorney general refused to discuss the subject. (AP)

Africa

Peacekeepers deployed

More than 80 dead in Congo boat accident

KINSHASA, Congo, June 13, (Agencies): A boat carrying more than 270 passengers has capsized on a river near Congo's capital of Kinshasa, leaving more than 80 dead, President **Félix Tshisekedi** said Wednesday.

It was the latest deadly boat accident in the central African country where overloading is often blamed, including in February when dozens lost their lives after an overloaded boat sank.

A statement quoting Tshisekedi said the locally made boat capsized late Monday in Maï-Ndombe

province along the Kwa River. The boat was carrying 271 passengers to Kinshasa

when it broke down due to an engine failure, according to the UN-backed Radio Okapi, citing Ren Maker, the water commissioner in the Mushi district where the accident happened.

Eighty-six of the passengers died while 185 managed to swim ashore, some 70 kilometers (43 miles) near the closest city of Mushie, Maker said.

He said the boat hit the edge of the river bank and broke up. Congolese officials have of-

ten warned against overloading and vowed to punish those violating safety measures for water transportation. But in remote areas where most passengers come from, many are unable to afford public transport for the few available roads.

UN sends peacekeepers: UN peacekeepers have been deployed to protect civilians from fighting between armed groups in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), a UN spokesman said on

Farhan Haq, the deputy spokesman for UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, said members of the Zaire and CODECO armed groups clashed at a mining site about 40km from Bunia in Ituri province. Peace-keepers from the UN mission in the DRC, known as

MONUSCO, were dispatched to protect civilians. Several civilian casualties were reported, Haq said. "A team comprising civilian and military staff also conducted a mission to the Bikima area, about 65km southwest of Bunia, to engage with community members and displaced civilians impacted by attacks from the ADF (Allied Democratic Forces)," he said. "Over 700 families fled their homes due to ADF attacks in March and April."

The spokesman said that since May 25, a series of ADF attacks in Ituri and North Kivu provinces claimed the lives of more than 100 civilians.

The eastern DRC has been wracked for years by attacks from various armed groups, some allegedly financed by neighboring countries, in apparent attempts to reap benefits from the rich mineral wealth in the region.

SAfrica parties cobble together unity govt: South African lawmakers are expected to elect the country's president on Friday after being sworn in at the first sitting of Parliament that will also reveal the kind of unity government the ruling African National Congress has managed to cobble together after losing

its majority for the first time since 1994. The lawmakers are also expected to elect Parliament's new speaker and deputy speaker, choices that will be determined by negotiations that have taken place between the ANC and opposition parties since the country's election results were declared nearly two

Parties are under pressure to conclude negotiations by Thursday to fulfill the constitutional requirement to swear in lawmakers and elect the president within 14 days of election results being declared.

The African National Congress won 40% of the national vote during the country's highly contested elections, followed by the Democratic Alliance with just over 21% and the newly formed uMkhonto weSizwe Party with about 15% of the vote in their first-ever

The ANC has opted to form a national unity government that will include most political parties that contested the elections instead of a straightforward coalition with a few parties.

However, initial negotiations have laid bare the deep divisions between South Africa's political parties, with some already rejecting the proposed unity government while others have agreed to be part of it.

The ANC's national executive committee, the party's highest decision-making body between conferences, will meet in Cape Town on Thursday to finalize the agreements it has made with the other parties and will make an announcement afterwards.

On Wednesday, the Inkatha Freedom Party, the fifth-biggest party with 3.85% of the vote, confirmed it had decided to join the national unity government that will be led by the ANC.

It said it had also started negotiations to form a coalition with the ANC and the Democratic Alliance in the KwaZulu-Natal province where the MK Party got

"We will participate in the government of national unity for the sake of our country and for the sake of our people, who want life to continue with a stable government that will address their challenges," said IFP president Velenkosini Hlabisa.

Artifacts returned to Uganda: The University of Cambridge has repatriated more than three dozen traditional artifacts to Uganda in a major act of restitution welcomed by the local officials who sought them.

Some of the objects were shown exclusively to AP journalists on Wednesday. The British university returned the 39 items, which range from tribal regalia to delicate pottery, to the East African country on Saturday.

The items remain the property of the collection of the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology at Cambridge, which is loaning them to Uganda for an initial period of three years, said Mark Elliott, the museum's senior curator in anthropology.

Elliott described it as "very much a museum-tomuseum collaboration" that stems from years of talks about the possibility of returning objects deemed "exceptionally powerful and exceptionally sensitive to communities whose belongings they were.

The objects, selected by Ugandan curators, represent a small fraction of about 1,500 ethnographic objects from Uganda that Cambridge has owned for a century. Cambridge acquired most as donations from private collections, and many were given by an Anglican missionary active in Uganda in the 1890s and early 20th century.

Úganda was déclared a British protectorate in 1894. Independence came in 1962.



Police clear the streets during clashes with anti-government protesters outside Congress, where lawmakers debate a reform bill promoted by Argentine President Javier Milei in Buenos Aires, Argentina on June 12. (AP)

Milei's radical overhaul advances in Argentina's Senate

Argentina's Senate narrowly approved President Javier Milei 's sweeping proposals to slash state spending and boost his own powers on Thursday, handing the libertarian leader a much-needed first legislative victory even as opposition senators scrapped an income tax package and tweaked some contentious parts of the plan.

Senate president Victoria Villarruel, the vice president, used a tie-breaking vote to give provisional

approval to two bills after a daylong heated debate while thousands of protesters poured into the streets, burning cars and throwing Molotov cocktails. Hundreds of federal security forces pushed back with tear gas and water cannons.

In a marathon article-by-article voting session that stretched into Thursday morning, the Senate advanced the most critical parts of Milei's plans to trim the fiscal deficit, incentivize foreign investment and

privatize some state companies in a bid to overhaul

Argentina's long-troubled economy.

The state reform bill needs to pass a further reading in the lower house in the coming weeks before it becomes law. It is highly likely that the lower house will approve the changes. It marked a major boost to Milei, whose radical efforts to overhaul the government and economy have run into tough resistance in Argentina's opposition-dominated Congress. (AP)



Military delegates chat before the closing session of the National People's Congress at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing on March 11. Chinese state media said on June 13 that a military history buff found a collection of confidential documents related to the

country's military in a pile of old papers he bought for under \$1. (AP)



Lat/Am

Widespread outage in Puerto Rico: A widespread power outage hit Puerto Rico Wednesday night, leaving more than 340,000 customers without electricity after two of the US territory's power plants shut down.

The capital San Juan was left without power, as well as neighboring municipalities including Bayamón, Caguas and Caro-

Luma Energy, which operates transmission and distribution for Puerto Rico's power authority, said on X that the outage was tied to an issue with the power plants' transmission lines. It provided a statement to The Associated Press saying it was investigating the outage that coincided with the shutdown of units operated by Genera PR, which operates and maintains state power generation units.

Gov Pedro Pierluisi condemned the outage and said he was demanding answers and solutions from Luma and Genera PR.

"The events that have been occurring in recent weeks with our electrical system are unacceptable," he posted on X. "While it is true that we have old plants and transmission lines in terrible condition, the people continue to suffer the consequences of the lack of sense of urgency that private operators are demonstrating." (AP)

Remains of some miners found: Mexican authorities announced Wednesday that they found the remains of some of the 63 miners who were trapped 18 years ago in a coal mine in northern Mexico.

The accident occurred at the Pasta de Conchos mine in the state of Coahuila, which borders Texas, on Feb. 19, 2006. Of the 73 miners on duty, eight survived with serious burns, and two bodies were recovered.

The Interior ministry said Wednesday that after years of searching they were able to locate "the first human remains" in one of the mine's chambers, but they did not specify when the remains were recovered

The accident is considered one of the biggest mining tragedies in the country. It wasn't until 2020 when President AnAsia

Myanmar army emptying villages

UNC probes inter-Korea border incidents

TOKYO, June 13, (Agencies): The US-led UN Command (UNC) said Thursday it is investigating a series of incidents at the inter-Korean border earlier this week, including a border incursion by North Korean troops and South Korea's resumption of anti-Pyongyang broadcasts, the Seoul-

based Yonhap News Agency reported. 'We take our mission seriously at the UN Command and are currently investigating the recent issues with utmost diligence," the Command said. "Our actions are in strict accordance with the Armistice Agreement as we work towards de-escalating the situation to ensure peace and stability in the region. We continue to call on the DPRK (North Korea) to return to dialogue using our established mechanisms," it said.

The UN Command is an enforcer of the armistice that stopped the fighting in the 1950-53 Korean War, overseeing activities inside the Demilitarized Zone -- a buffer zone between the two Koreas since the three-year conflict ended without a peace treaty.

On Sunday, some 20 North Korean soldiers crossed the Military Demarcation Line inside the zone before retreating northward after the South fired warning shots, according to Seoul's military. The incursion came just hours before the South resumed anti-Pyongyang broadcasts via loudspeakers toward the North for the first time in six years in response to the North's recent launches of trash-carrying balloons. Since May 28, the North is estimated to have launched more than 1,600 balloons in response to anti-Pyongyang leafleting by activists in South Korea.

Myanmar army emptying villages: Myanmar's military has been emptying villages on the outskirts of the capital of the western state of **Rakhine** as part of an evident effort to defend

drés Manuel López Obrador made a prom-

ise to recover the bodies that the process be-

gan. Three consecutive governments opted

Rights groups urge Thailand not to extradite Vietnamese activist

BANGKOK, June 13, (AP): Human rights groups urged Thailand on Thursday not to extradite a Vietnamese activist detained in Bangkok, saying he could be at risk if

handed back to Vietnam. Y Quynh Bdap, who had United Nations refugee status in Thailand, was picked up by local police on Tuesday, the day after he had met with Canadian Embassy officials as he pursued asylum there, according to the Peace Rights Foundation, a Thai organization that had been in contact with him.

The co-founder of the Montagnards Stand for Justice group was convicted in absentia in Vietnam in January on allegations that he was involved in organizing anti-government riots in Vietnam's central highland province of Dak Lak last

Vietnamese authorities had been making inquiries in Thailand about him, with Thailand's assistance, which sent him into hiding six months ago, Bdap said before his arrest in a video statement.

Bdap is now being held in a Bangkok prison awaiting an extradition hearing, which could take about a week, according to Human Rights Watch.

Also:

DENPASAR, Indonesia: A court on the Indonesian tourist island of Bali on Thursday began the trial of an Australian man who faces up to 12 years in prison if convicted of possessing methamphetamine under the country's tough drug laws.

Troy Andrew Smith, from Port Lincoln in South Australia, was arrested on April 30 after police raided his hotel near Kuta beach, a popular tourist spot, and seized 3.15 grams (0.1 ounce) of crystal methamphetamine from his room, authorities said.

against expected attacks by a powerful rebel group that has captured most of the surrounding area, according to residents, a local activist group and media reports on Tuesday.

The action over the past few days to defend the state capital, Sittwe, came a week after the Arakan Army. the ethnic armed organization of the state's Muslim Rohingya minority, vowed to capture the army outposts in the city.

'Secrets found in old papers': Chinese state media said Thursday that a military history buff found a collection

dangerous and costly, with no guarantee of

success. But victims' relatives continued to

press authorities on the issue over the years.

of confidential documents related to the country's military in a pile of old papers he bought for under \$1.

The collector reported the documents to security units after recognizing their sensitive nature.

The reports didn't say what the documents were or whether anyone had been arrested, other than to say two people involved in the secondhand book and magazine business involved were being questioned.

The purchaser, identified only as a retiree surnamed Zhang, is an avid fan of military history and soon realized that the items contained information stamped as confidential.

ity Commission, the nation's public utility known as the CFE, in charge of the dig -

mining and burning coal to reach the long-

buried miners. (AP)

Russian warships reach Cuba: A fleet of Russian warships reached Cuban waters on Wednesday ahead of planned military exercises in the Caribbean in what some see as a projection of strength as tensions grow over Western support for Ukraine.

Three ships slowly crossed the mouth of the Havana Bay accompanied by small boats that guided them through the narrow channel. The flagship frigate, adorned with the Russian and Cuban flags, was greeted by 21 cannon salutes. Sailors in dress uniform stood in military formation as they approached the island.

A nuclear-powered submarine was expected to arrive behind them.

The US military expects the exercises will involve a handful of Russian ships and support vessels, which may also stop in Venezuela. Russia is a longtime ally of Venezuela

and Cuba, and its warships and aircraft have periodically made forays into the Caribbean. But this mission comes less than two weeks after President Joe Biden authorized Ukraine to use US-provided weapons to strike inside Russia to protect Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-largest city, prompting President Vladimir Putin to suggest his military could respond with "asymmetrical steps" elsewhere in the world. (AP)



South African Democratic Alliance opposition leader John Steenhuisen, (center), arrives at the formal announcement of the results in South Africa's general elections at the National Results Operations Center in Johannesburg, South Africa on June 2. South African lawmakers are expected to elect the country's president on June 14 after being sworn in at the first sitting of Parliament that will also reveal the kind of unity government the ruling African National Congress has managed to

cobble together after losing its majority for the first time since 1994. (AP)

- Nikkei 225

Boursa Kuwait emphasizes global investor engagement

Stock exchange hosts 13th institutional day in London

KUWAIT CITY, June 13, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait is committed to providing investment opportunities in the Kuwait finance market and in the listed companies for investors from all corners of the globe, the head of the bourse markets division Noura Abdulkarim has affirmed.

Abdulkarim, in a statement marking "the institutional day" workshop held in London on Wednesday, has affirmed the approach to communicate with the international investment community, "which is a basic matter to achieve sustainable development in the market.'

She has also affirmed that the search will continue for attaining the market liquidity and transparency and lure more foreign investments.

For his part, Naim Azadeddine, the bourse company director, said that the workshop was an oppor-tunity to shed light on the bourse company's financial and operating performance, promote its reports about governance, social and environmental responsibilities at the international level, thus mirroring the story of success for privatizing the

Samer Al-Abed, the Chief Executive Officer at HSBC, said the Kuwaiti bourse plays a pivotal role in promoting the Kuwaiti financial market and diversifying the national economy, in addition to its contributions to achieving the new Kuwait 2035 vision.

Also:

KUWAIT CITY: The Boursa Kuwait commenced its thirteenth institutional day in London alongside the Gulf Stock Exchanges Conference, facilitated by HSBC, a leading European bank, running from June 10 to 13, reports Al-Qabas daily.

This esteemed event convened six companies from the "First" Market, including Boursa Kuwait, the National Bank of Kuwait, Kuwait Finance House, Mezzan Holding Company, Jazeera Airways, and Human Soft, with distinguished international entities such as investment banks. asset management firms, sovereign ension funds.

Through over 50 face-to-face meetings, institutional investors gained valuable insights into the financial performance and strategic initiatives of listed companies.

Noura Al-Abdulkarim, Head of the Markets Sector at the Kuwait Stock Exchange, affirmed the exchange's commitment to offering investment opportunities in the Kuwaiti financial market, attracting interest from global investors. Al-Abdulkarim emphasized the importance of continuous efforts to enhance market liquidity, transparency, and foreign investment attraction.

Boursa Kuwait utilized the platform to showcase its recent achievements and future plans, underscoring its commitment to market growth and development. The recent listing of Al-Bayut Investment Holding Group Company in the Premier Market signifies a positive step towards expanding the market's breadth and increasing investment opportunities.

Naeem Azad Al-Din, CFO of Boursa Kuwait, highlighted the significance of corporate days in the exchange's strategy, showcasing the success story of its privatization and positioning Kuwait as a leading fi-

Kuwait launches 'Major State Development Projects Forum'

KUWAIT CITY, June 13: The inauguration of the 'Major State Development Projects Forum' marked a pivotal moment in Kuwait's development trajectory, reports Al-Qabas

Held under the patronage of Dr. Noura Muhammad Al-Mashaan, Minister of Public Works and Minister of State for Municipal Affairs, the event epitomized a collaborative effort between the Union of Kuwaiti Engineering Offices and Consulting Houses, the General Secretariat of the Supreme Council for Planning and Development, and the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority.

Representing the forum's sponsor, Engineer Eid Al-Rashidi, Acting Undersecretary of the Ministry of Public Works, conveyed a message echoing the core principles of transparency, achievement, and sustainability, which underpin the vision of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishaal Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

Al-Rashidi emphasized the imperative for collective action from all societal forces to pave the path towards a prosperous future.

The forum's timing holds particular significance as government agencies formulate their programs and plans to drive sustainable development.

Al-Rashidi underscored the necessity of innovative approaches and leveraging past experiences to meet the evolving demands of contemporary generations.

He highlighted the dual challenge of addressing internal and external pressures, urging alignment with global standards in sustainability, investment, and governance. The forum serves as a platform to bridge internal gaps by harnessing local expertise and attracting global invest-

Al-Rashidi stressed the importance of adhering to international standards in various developmental aspects, particularly in tenders and contracts, to facilitate Kuwait's integration into the

nancial hub in the Middle East.

Samer Al-Abed, CEO of HSBC Bank Kuwait, lauded Boursa Kuwait's participation in the confernce, emphasizing its pivotal role in Kuwait's economic diversification and development. HSBC Bank reaffirmed its commitment to supporting Kuwait's growth and promoting in-

vestment opportunities. The Gulf Stock Exchanges Coninterconnected global landscape.

Vice Chairman of the Board of
Directors and Group CEO of the National Bank of Kuwait, Issam Al-Saqr, reiterated the bank's commitment to supporting Kuwait's

national development plan. Al-Saqr emphasized collaboration between government agencies, private institutions, and financial entities to tackle economic challenges and execute strategic projects.

Echoing this sentiment, CEO of Kuwait Finance House - Kuwait, Khaled Al-Shamlan, highlighted the institution's dedication to leveraging its financial capabilities to drive development across vital sectors. Al-Shamlan emphasized KFH's pivotal role in financing major projects and fostering partnerships between the public and private sectors.

Dr. Khaled Mahdi, Secretary-General of the Supreme Council for Planning and Development, emphasized the importance of aligning development plans with the nation's growth objectives. Mahdi stressed the need for concerted efforts across legislative, supervisory, and executive bodies to cultivate Kuwaiti human capital and attract international invest-

Badr Al-Salman, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Federation of Kuwaiti Engineering Offices and Consulting Houses, emphasized the critical role of the private sector in national development. Al-Salman underscored the importance of integrating private sector efforts with public sector initiatives to stimulate productivity and create an enabling environment for investment.

The forum's overarching goal is to stimulate economic growth, attract investments, international empower the private sector to contribute to Kuwait's sustainable development. With a focus on major state projects, the forum aims to chart a course towards Kuwait's resurgence and leadership in regional development initiatives.

ference served as a platform for representatives from Gulf stock exchanges to engage with international investors, fostering partand driving growth in regional financial markets. Boursa Kuwait's participation underscores its dedication to collaboration and growth in the Gulf region, supported by its longstanding partnership with HSBC Bank.

OPEC, US inventory data drive oil price increase

Kuwait oil price surges to \$84.23 per barrel amid global market optimism

KUWAIT CITY, June 13: The Kuwait Petroleum Corporation reported a significant uptick in the price of a barrel of Kuwaiti oil, soaring by \$1.67 to \$84.23 in yesterday's trading, compared to \$82.56 last Monday,

reports Al-Jarida daily.

Global oil markets experienced a bullish trend on Wednesday morning, buoyed by optimism from the US Energy Information Administration and the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) regarding increased demand. Data revealing a larger-than-expected decline in US crude oil inventories further supported the

The Brent crude futures climbed by 50 cents to \$82.42 per barrel, marking a 0.6 percent increase, the while US West Texas Intermediate crude futures saw a rise of 62 cents to \$78.52, representing a 0.8 percent surge.

The Energy Information Administration revised its global oil demand growth forecast for 2024 to 1.10 million barrels per day, up from the previous estimate of 900 thousand barrels. OPEC maintained its projections for robust global demand, particularly in the second half of the year, citing expectations for increased travel and

Analysts attributed the rise in crude oil prices to OPEC's sustained demand growth forecast, with anticipated demand primarily driven by China and other

emerging economies. Meanwhile, US crude oil inventories reportedly declined by 2.428 million barrels in the week ending June 7, surpassing analysts' expectations. In China, stable consumer price inflation in May and a slowdown in producer price declines suggested the need for additional measures to support domestic demand and economic

Iraq's Ministry of Oil reaffirmed its commitment to compensating for any excess production since the beginning of the year, pledging to adhere to the agreed production level of four million barrels per day for June and subsequent months. The ministry emphasized its dedication to compensating for surplus production during the designated compensation period, extending until the end of September 2025.

Refinery project advances with feasibility study

Kuwait's KIPIC pursues financing for \$10b Al-Zour Petrochemical Project

KUWAIT CITY, June 13: The Kuwait Integrated Petroleum Industries Company (KIPIC) is actively pursuing financing for the anticipated \$10 billion Al-Zour petrochemical project, reports Al-Qabas daily quoting MEED

The Al-Zour petrochemical project, slated to be integrated with the \$16 billion Al-Zour refinery, has encountered significant delays in recent years.

KIPIC, the main investor, has yet to finalize its investment decision and has not disclosed the approval timeline for the project's tender submission.

Also known as the Zicup Integrated Complex Upgrade Program or the Al-Zour Petrochemical Refinery Integration Project, the endeavor aims to enhance the conversion of low-sulfur fuel oil (LSFO) from the refinery into higher-value petrochemical products while ensuring sufficient production of LSFO for local energy needs. Earlier this year, KIPIC announced

plans to commission a detailed feasibility study for the project, with a duration of one year and a lump sum contract basis. The study aims to optimize local

refining capacity, maximize conversion capabilities, and enhance energy integration between refining and petro-Seeking financing for the project is

deemed critical for its advancement, with Kuwait aiming for a financing arrangement similar to that of the Clean Fuels Project, which modernized Kuwait's major oil refineries. Italian export credit agency Sace played a pivotal role in securing a \$625 million loan for the Clean Fuels Project, facilitating its realization.

KPC, Korea Nat'l Oil Corporation ink MoU on strategic oil storage According to the statement, Sheikh

KUWAIT CITY, June 13, (KUNA): Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Korea National Oil Corporation (KNOC) to store four million oil barrels in South Korean Ulsan city.

In a statement to KUNA on Wednesday, KPC mentioned that the MoU is in application of corporation strategy on storing oil near vital markets to guarantee Kuwaiti oil supply in Asian continent. Signing the MoU is KPC Presi-

dent Sheikh Nawaf Saud Al-Sabah, and KNOC chief Dong Sub Kim in Seoul, the South Korean capital.

Nawaf voiced his pride in the relations between the two countries, especially as South Korea is Kuwait's second largest receiver of Kuwaiti oil with 19 percent of total oil exports. KPC's official, Sheikh Khaled

Ahmad Al-Sabah mentioned that the marketing sector succeeded in creating strategic storage opportunities, adding that this MoU comes after success in providing storage space in Japan. Kuwait's total crude oil exports

and products to South Korea reached a total of 286.2 million barrels in 2022 to 2024.

In January 2023, MEED disclosed the withdrawal of US-based Fluor and South Korea's SK Engineering and Construction from the bidding process for the Al-Zour petrochemical complex. This development occurred after Quebec had pre-qualified bidders for the project in April 2021. It published a list of bidders eligi-

ble to bid on the three main packages of the project. The original list of the groups pre-qualified to submit bids for the first and second packages included the following: Tecnicas Reunidas (Spain)/Sin-

opec Engineering Company (China). Samsung Engineering (South Korea)/CTCI Company (Taiwan)/ Consolidated Contractors Company

■ Fluor (United States)/Daewoo Engineering and Construction (South

Korea)/Chinese Huanqiu Contracting and Engineering Company. ■ Saipem (Italy)/Hyundai Engi-

neering and Construction (South Ko-■ Technip Energy (France).

■ SK Engineering and Construction

(South Korea)/Petrovac (United King-■ GGC Company (Japan).

The scope of the first package in-

cludes gasoline and olefins units, and its value was estimated at \$4 billion. and is also known as the Gasoline Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) 5011 package.

Jeel Weyay app revolutionizes youth banking experience

Weyay Bank wins 'Most Innovative App for Young People' Award at The Innovators 2024

KUWAIT CITY, June 13: Weyay Bank, Kuwait's first digital bank, has been honored with the prestigious "Most Innovative App for Young People" award at Global Finance's annual Innovators Awards for 2024. The accolade recognizes Weyay's relentless commitment to revolutionizing Kuwait's banking landscape by catering to the evolving needs of the digital-native generation through its new innovative banking app designed specifically for 8- to 14-yearolds, Jeel Weyay.

Since its inception in 2021, Weyay Bank has been at the forefront of digital banking innovation, redefining traditional banking norms to provide a hassle-free, 24/7, and paper-free banking experience tailored specifically for the youth demographic. By seamlessly integrating cutting-edge technology with



Weyay Bank wins 'Most Innovative App for Young People' award.

customer-centric solutions, Weyay but has earned unparalleled recognition for its advanced contributions to the banking industry.

Weyay's disruptive approach to banking is evident in its Jeel Weyay app, designed to empower young users with financial independence and literacy from a young age. The Jeel feature, a card and app for children as young as 8 years old, simplifies banking language and adopts a friendly, jargonfree approach, making it accessible and engaging for young customers. With its unique blend of user-friendly design and comprehensive parental controls, Jeel Weyay represents the next generation of kid-friendly banking, setting a new standard for innovation in the industry.

Weyay Bank's win at The Innova-tors 2024 reaffirms its position as a

trailblazer in digital banking innovation, cementing its legacy as a pioneer in Kuwait's banking landscape. As the financial industry continues to evolve, Weyay remains steadfast in its mission to redefine banking for the digital age and empower young people to thrive in an increasingly digital world.

For more information about Weyay Bank and its innovative banking solutions, please visit www.weyaybank.

About Weyay Bank: Weyay Bank is Kuwait's first digital

bank, launched in 2021 with a mission to revolutionize the banking experience for the digital-native generation. Through its innovative app, Weyay provides a hassle-free, 24/7, and paper-free banking experience tailored specifically for the needs of young customers.

BCG report highlights Al's crucial role

Mideast continues year-on-year growth with AuM reaching \$2.3 trillion in 2023

DUBAI, June 13: Boston Consulting Group (BCG) has released its 2024 Global Asset Management Report, highlighting the Middle Eastern asset management sector's significant contribution to the industry's growth. According to the report, the region's Assets Under Management (AuM) surged by 13%, rising from \$2 Trillion in 2022 to \$2.3 Trillion in 2023, emphasizing the sector's pivotal role in the global asset management landscape.

BCG's latest report, "AI and the Next Wave of Transformation," comprehensively analyzes how artificial intelligence reshapes the asset management industry. The report surveyed asset managers who collectively oversee over \$15 Trillion in assets and reveals a strong consensus among industry leaders that a shift toward AI-driven management is essential.

"After a year marked by significant advancements in generative AI, we are starting to see its effects across industries," says Lukasz Rey, Managing Director & Partner and Middle East Head of Financial Institutions at BCG. "As the asset management sector faces growing

structural challenges, embracing artificial intelligence is no longer optional but necessary for maintaining competitiveness. By investing in AI-driven productivity, personalized product offerings, and the expansive potential of private markets, asset managers can navigate the slowing growth in traditional areas and spearhead innovative, scalable solutions.

A Well-Executed AI Strategy Can **Drive Growth**

Investing in AI is crucial as the technology evolves rapidly, and asset managers must act now to avoid falling behind. The report outlines three major themes that should top the leadership agenda to thrive in the years ahead: productivity, personalization, and private markets. These areas, accelerated by AI and its subset, Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI), are critical for asset managers to enhance operations, develop tailored products, improve customer experiences, and adapt to new pressures on allocation and risk management strategies, collectively referred to as the "three P's." Here's how AI can be utilized in each



Lukasz Rey, Managing Director and Partner BCG.

• Productivity: AI enhances productivity in asset management by automating and optimizing routine tasks and complex processes. It facilitates faster decision-making and improves operational efficiencies across various func-

tions of asset management firms. For instance. AI can automate data analysis, optimize trade executions, and streamline reporting and compliance workflows. This reduces operational costs and frees human resources to fo-

■ Personalization: AI significantly advances the personalization of client services in asset management. AI can understand and accurately predict client needs and preferences by analyzing large data sets. This capability allows asset managers to tailor investment products and interactions to individual client profiles. AI-driven tools can manage personalized portfolios at scale, offering individualized investment solutions that were previously only feasible for high-net-worth individuals or institutional clients. AI can enhance the customer experience through more targeted marketing and by providing real-time, personalized advice and insights.

■ Private Markets: AI can transform deal sourcing and due diligence processes in private markets. By processing and analyzing vast amounts of unstructured data, AI can identify investment opportunities faster and assess potential deals with greater precision. AI tools aid asset managers in conducting thorough due diligence, risk assessment, and valuation tasks more efficiently, accelerating the

investment cycle and potentially increasing returns. Additionally, AI can assist in managing and optimizing the performance of investments in private markets by providing insights beyond the scope of traditional analytical methods. Integrating AI into asset manage-

ment operations within the framework of the three P's-enables firms to enhance efficiency and capitalize on new opportunities. Middle Eastern countries have strived

towards positioning themselves as leaders in AI preparedness, however, more can be done to recognize the potential benefits of early adoption and innovation. By integrating AI into their economic frameworks, these countries can work towards significant workflow transformations, enhancing the synergy between AI-driven solutions and human creativity. Asset management firms in the Middle East that effectively integrate these technologies can enhance efficiency, personalize client experiences, and capitalize on new opportunities. Such firms can maintain competitiveness and contribute to the region's evolving status as an AI innovation and implementation center.

future of Musk and Tesla are on the line this week as shareholders vote on massive pay package

If Tesla shareholders vote against restoring Elon Musk's \$44.9 billion pay package Thursday, the CEO could deliver on threats to take artificial intelligence research to one of his other companies. Or he could even could walk away

If they approve the all-stock compensation package that was thrown out by a Delaware judge in January, it would almost guarantee he would remain at the company he grew to be the world leader in electric vehicles, shifting to Al and robotics including autonomous

vehicles, which Musk says is Tesla's future.

But even with reapproval at Thursday's annual shareholders' meeting, which many analysts say is likely, there would be uncertainty. Musk has threatened on X, his social media platform, to develop Al elsewhere if he doesn't get a 25% stake in Tesla (He owns about 13% now). Musk's xAl recently received \$6 billion in funding to develop artificial

Wedbush Analyst Dan Ives said he ex-

pects the package to be overwhelmingly reapproved, ending a lot of uncertainty with Musk. "This issue has been an overhang on Tesla's stock, and this will be important to move this distraction in the rearview mirror," Ives wrote in a note to

Shares of Tesla Inc. have slumped more than 30% this year with the company warning of "notably lower" sales growth in 2024.

Also on the shareholder ballot is the related issue of moving the electric vehicle maker's legal home out of Delaware to Texas.

The move is designed to escape from the Delaware court's oversight and possibly a ruling from Chancellor Kathaleen St. Jude McCormick that invalidated Musk's pay package. In a January opinion on a shareholder lawsuit, the judge determined that Musk controlled the Tesla board and is not entitled to the landmark package once worth nearly \$56 billion.

Multiple institutional investors have come out against that sizeable payout, some citing falling vehicle sales, price cuts and the tumbling Tesla stock price. But Tesla's top five institutional shareholders, Vanguard, BlackRock, State Street, Geode Capital, and Capital Research either said they don't announce their votes or wouldn't comment. They control about 17% of the votes.

Erik Gordon, a business and law pro-fessor at the University of Michigan, said individual shareholders are likely to vote for the package, and they own more than half of Tesla's shares. (AP)

Commission unveils plan for imposing additional tariffs on Chinese EVs

EU's best-laid plan for economic boom is teaming with China

BEIJING, June 13, (Xinhua): Despite China's repeated and earnest calls for resolving trade friction through dialogue, the European Commission unveiled on Wednesday its plan to levy provisional additional tariffs of up to 38.1 percent on Chinese-made electric vehicles (EVs), a move that is almost certain to undercut the momentum of bilateral economic coopera-

Although the EU spent several months mulling over the tariff issue and delayed the announcement for several days, the decision is still far from being wise, given the crucial nature of China-EU relations and their extensive economic and trade collaborations.

The European Commission chose to announce the decision after the conclusion of the European Parliament elections, revealing the nature of the anti-subsidy probe as a politically motivated move. Leading European automakers have repeatedly voiced their opposition against the additional tariff plan.

Prominent European political figures, including German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, also opposed the tariff hikes, calling for free trade. The EU, which often falls victim to trade protectionist measures from countries like the United States, has claimed itself to be a strong advocate of open and fair trade. However, its decision today is nothing but self-contradictory.

As major open markets and proponents of globalization, China and the EU have industrial, supply and value chains that are intricately interwoven, rendering them mutually indispensable. This is vividly illustrated in the automotive sector. European car brands enjoy considerable favor among Chinese consumers. Meanwhile, Chinese automakers have, after years of investment and technology upgrading, garnered an advantage in electric vehicles, and have gained trust, popularity and admiration among

The EU should have respected the prowess of the Chinese EV industry, whose integrity and expertise cannot be denied. Self-interested actions would ultimately defeat their own purpose. The burden of protectionism advocated by a few politicians would ultimately fall on ordinary citizens, increasing their financial strain and lowering their quality of life. It will also disrupt the EU's green transformation agenda and global collabora-

UK economy flatlined in April in a blow to the governing Conservatives ahead of the election

LONDON, June 13, (AP): The British economy failed to grow in April, official figures showed Wednesday, in a blow to Prime Minister Rishi Sunak who has made the return of growth and a generally calmer economic backdrop a

central pillar of the Conservative Party's election campaign.

The Office for National Statistics said wet weather dampened consumer spending and construction during the month. The flat monthly reading came after a 0.6% increase during the first quarter of the year, which Sunak has made much of on the campaign trail following a period of muted growth.

Though monthly figures are vulnerable to short-term factors, the flat reading is likely to be used by opponents of the Conservatives in the run-up to the

While Treasury chief Jeremy Hunt insisted the "economy is turning a corner," his opposite number in the Labour Party Rachel Reeves said the "econ-

The latest growth figures come a week before the next round of inflation

tion efforts in tackling climate change. Such outcomes are undesirable for all parties involved.

Ĉhina and the EU are the world's second- and third-largest economies. They are each other's second-largest trading partners, with trade volume translating to an exchange of about 1.5 million U.S.

Disputes and frictions may be inescapable between different economies. But in light of their economic structure and sheer size, China and the EU are best served by teaming up on major economic and trade issues.

data and the Bank of England makes its next interest rate decision.

Hopes within the Conservative Party that the bank would lower its main interest rate from the 16-year high of 5.25% have diminished after inflation failed to fall as much as hoped in April. Though inflation is down at an annual rate of 2.3%, it remains slightly above the bank's target and is expected to tick up slightly in coming months.

High interest rates - which cool the economy by making it more expensive to borrow - have helped ease inflation, but they've also weighed on the British

"A June interest rate cut looks improbable, with the Bank of England likely to be a little wary of shifting policy in the middle of a general election campaign," said Suren Thiru, economics director at the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales.

On Tuesday, Sunak pledged to cut taxes and reduce immigration in the Conservative Party's manifesto for government if reelected. Labour, which is ahead in opinion polls, is due to publish its manifesto on Thursday.

It would be more cost-effective for the EU to draw on China's advantages in order to develop its own EV industry.

The trade and economic relations between the EU and China are at an important crossroads, and it is crucial for the EU to demonstrate a strategic and long-term vision. The regional bloc seemed to have left some room for the two sides to continue their consultations to find a proper solution and avoid the worst scenario. It is hoped the EU will make some serious reconsideration and stop going further in the

NYC considers ending broker fees for tenants

NEW YORK, June 13, (AP): It's a familiar and agonizing experience for legions of New York City renters: before moving into a new apartment, a tenant must first shell out thousands of dollars in fees to a real estate broker, even if that person was hired by the landlord.

The hefty one-time payments, known as broker fees, are ubiquitous in New York but nearly unheard of anywhere else. In most other cities. landlords cover the commission of agents working on their behalf.

But legislation backed by a majority of the New York City Council would require landlords who hire brokers to pay their fees, marking a potential sea change in one of the country's most expensive housing markets.

Renters, who make up more than two-thirds of city households, are hailing the latest attempt at reform. At a hearing Wednesday, many New Yorkers recalled paying hefty fees to brokers who appeared to do little more than open a door to an apartment or direct them to a lockbox.

"In most businesses, the person who hires the person pays the person," said Agustina Velez, a house cleaner from Queens who said she recently paid \$6,000 to switch apartments. "Enough with these injustices. Landlords have to pay for the services they use.'

But the proposal has triggered fierce opposition from New York's real estate industry.

Ahead of the hearing, hundreds of brokers gathered to voice their objections at a rally organized by the Real Estate Board of New York, the industry's powerful lobbying group.

Through hours of testimony, they warned the legislation would sow chaos in the rental market and decimate the livelihoods of the city's roughly 25,000 real estate agents. Many predicted landlords would pass on the costs of paying brokers to tenants through increased rents or keep apartments off the market altogether.

"This is the start of a top-down government-controlled housing system," said Jordan Silver, a broker with the firm Brown Harris Stevens. "The language is so incredibly vague we actually have no idea what this would look like in the world."

The bill's sponsor, City Councilman Chi Ossé, has said he was moved to act following a recent apartment search that was "tiring, treacherous, and competitive." Another local official, Brooklyn Borough President Antonio Revnoso. testified that he'd once paid a \$2,500 fee to a broker he never met.

Their frustration was echoed at Wednesday's hearing by dozens of ordinary renters, along with a mix of labor unions, housing policy groups and some prominent business leaders. Critics said paying brokers' fees serves as a barrier to those who'd otherwise move to the city while preventing low-income New Yorkers from moving to new homes.

Such broker fees were previously banned in 2020 under a package of renter protection laws passed by the state. But they were quickly reinstated following a lawsuit led by the Real Estate Board of New York.

Fed sees 'some progress' on inflation but envisions just one rate cut this yr

The scaled-back estimate comes as a surprise

WASHINGTON, June 13, (AP): Federal Reserve officials said Wednesday that inflation has fallen further toward their target level in recent months but signaled that they expect to cut their benchmark interest rate just once this year.

The policymakers' forecast for one rate cut was down from their previous projection of three cuts, because inflation, despite having cooled in the past two months, remains persistently above their target level.

The scaled-back estimate for rate cuts came as something of a surprise, given that the government reported earlier Wednesday that consumer inflation eased in May more than most economists had expected. That report suggested that the Fed's highrate polices are succeeding in taming inflation.

Financial markets took encouragement, though, from the policy statement the Fed issued after its latest meeting ended, which underscored that it sees progress in its fight against high inflation. Broad stock indexes rose sharply, and bond yields fell in response.

The policymakers, as expected, kept their key rate unchanged Wednesday at roughly 5.3%. The benchmark rate has remained at that level since July of last year, after the Fed raised it 11 times to try to slow borrowing and spending and cool in-

Whenever the Fed does begin to reduce its benchmark rate, now at a 23-year high, it would eventually lighten loan costs for consumers, who have faced punishingly high rates for mortgages, auto loans, credit cards and other forms of bor-

The central bank's rate policies over the next several months could also have consequences for the presidential race. Though the unemployment rate is a low 4%, hiring is robust and consumers continue to spend, voters have taken a generally sour view of the economy under President Joe Biden. In large part, that's because prices remain much higher than they were before the pandemic struck. High borrowing rates have imposed a further finan-

Speaking at a news conference after the Fed meeting ended, Chair Jerome Powell seemed to downplay the significance of the policymakers' collective forecast of just

Biden's grip on panel that backs renewables extended

Senate confirms new energy regulators

WASHINGTON, June 13, (AP): President Joe Biden's grip on a key federal energy commission will last beyond his first term, giving a boost to the Democrat's push for renewable energy regardless of the election results in November.

The Senate moved to ensure that political reality as lawmakers approved two new members of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and set up a vote on a third new panelist as soon as Thursday.

Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., said confirmation of the three nominees would allow FERC to "keep its quorum and continue its mission of providing Americans with affordable, reliable,

safe energy.' The five-member commission oversees natural gas pipelines and other energy infrastructure, including transmission of electricity across state lines. The panel approved a long-awaited rule last month making it easier to transmit renewable energy such as wind and solar power to the electric grid - a key part of Biden's goal to eliminate greenhouse gas emissions economy-wide by 2050. The rule is aimed at boosting the nation's aging power grid to meet surging demand fueled by huge data centers, electrification of vehicles and buildings, artificial intelligence

Earlier this week, the agency approved a request by the nearly \$8 billion Mountain Valley Pipeline to begin sending natural gas across rugged mountainsides in West Virginia and Virginia, despite longstanding objections from environmental groups, landowners and some elected officials.

On Wednesday, the Senate approved the nominations of Democrat David Rosner and Republican Lindsay See for three and fouryear terms, respectively, on the commission. Senators also limited debate on Democrat Judy Chang's nomination to a five-year term. A final vote on Chang's nomination to replace Democrat Allison Clements could occur as soon as

If approved as expected, the vote would give Democrats a working majority on the commission until at least June 2026, when the term of Democratic Chairman Willie Phillips is set to expire.

"A fully seated, bipartisan FERC provides more opportunity for advancing long-lasting, sensible energy infrastructure policy," said West Virginia Sen. Joe Manchin, a Democrat-turned-independent who chairs the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee.

"When it comes to fairly assessing all interests, five heads are better than one," Manchin said Wednesday. "Bringing together five different people, with five different life experiences and perspectives, helps ensure that all affected interests will be heard and fairly considered and assessed" by the energy commis-

Rosner, See and Chang "are very different people, from very different backgrounds," said Manchin, who supported all three nominees. "What matters most is their willingness to work with one another, to consider and assess fairly different interests and points of view, and to put partisan passions aside in favor of the public interest.'

Rosner, a former FERC staffer, has spent the past two years on Manchin's Democratic staff on the energy committee. See, who serves as solicitor general for the state of West Virginia, argued the state's case challenging a major U.S. Environmental Protection Agency rule on power plant pollution before the Supreme Court. Chang, of Massachusetts, is a former undersecretary of energy and climate solutions for the state government.

Manchin said he knows Rosner well: "I have seen firsthand his expert knowledge on energy issues, his fairness, his nonpartisan approach to every problem we've had, and his ability to work with both sides on these issues, and he's done that tremendously.3

Manchin, a political moderate who plays a crucial role on energy issues, called See "a very capable and experienced lawyer" who is "well-qualified to serve on the com-

mission.' Chang, who now teaches at Harvard's Kennedy School, led energy policy under Republican Gov. Charlie Baker. "I can think of no better preparation for serving on a bipartisan commission than working for a Republican administration in a very blue state," Manchin said.

Rosner's nomination was approved, 67-27, while See won approval, 83-12.

Democratic Sen. Tim Kaine of Virginia opposed both nominations, saying he continued to be unhappy about federal approval of the Mountain Valley Pipeline, a longtime Manchin priority.

"I voted no on rubber-stamping the same old people to FERC,'

Kaine said in a statement.

causing a recession. But inflation came in unexpectedly high in the first three months of this year, delaying hoped-for Fed rate cuts and potentially imperiling a soft landing.

As part of the updated quarterly forecasts the policymakers issued Wednesday, they projected that the economy will grow 2.1% this year and 2% in 2025, the same as they had envisioned in March. They expect core inflation to be 2.8% by year's end, according to their preferred gauge, up from a previous forecast of 2.6%. And they project that unemployment will stay at its current 4\% rate by the end of this year and edge up to 4.2% by the end of 2025.

The expectation that the unem-

"By so many measures," Powell said, "the labor market was kind of overheated two years ago, and we've seen it move back into much better balance between supply and de-

one rate cut in 2024. That forecast is derived from the individual predictions of 19 policymakers, and Powell noted that 15 of the officials projected either one or two rate cuts this year.

"I would look at all of them as plausible," he said.

"No one," the Fed chair added, "brings to this a really strong commitment to a particular rate path. It's just what they think in a given moment in time.

Economists say two rate cuts, with the first one coming as early as September, are still possible despite the central bank's prediction of just one.

"I don't think September's off the table," said Matthew Luzzetti, chief U.S. economist at Deutsche Bank. "To get there, you'd have to have a string of inflation reports like the one we got this morning.

At his news conference, though, Powell cautioned, "We'll need to see more good data to bolster our confidence that inflation is moving sustainably toward 2%.

He also underscored that with the

economy still overall healthy, Fed

officials feel little urgency to cut

rates.
"What we've been getting is inflation, with good progress on inflation, with growth at a good level and with a strong labor market," the Fed chair said. "Ultimately, we think rates will have to come down to continue to support that. But so far they haven't had to."

Uncertainty over when borrowing rates might come down is keeping some consumers on edge, especially those seeking to buy a home who face painfully high mortgage rates, now averaging around 7%.

David Goines, who owns a fourbedroom, two-bath mobile home in Lexington, Oklahoma, began looking for a new house last year but was put off by the elevated mortgage

"Once we calculated what our payments would be for the house that we were looking at, it was just unfeasible," he said. Goines, a 36-year-old information

technology director, has been holding out hope that rates would ease this year. He's still waiting.

"We're pretty pessimistic of the rates even getting down to 5% in the next 12 months," he said. "Right now, we're just pretty much stuck.' On Wednesday morning, the gov-

ernment reported that inflation eased in May for a second straight month, a hopeful sign that an acceleration of prices that occurred early this year may have passed. Consumer prices excluding volatile food and energy costs - the closely watched "core" index - rose just 0.2% from April, the smallest rise since October. Measured from a year earlier, core prices climbed 3.4%, the mildest pace in three years.

"We welcome today's (inflation) reading and hope for more like that,' Powell said. Inflation has tumbled from a peak

of 9.1% two years ago. The policymakers now face the delicate task of keeping rates high enough to slow spending and fully defeat high inflation without derailing the economy.

Measures of inflation had cooled steadily in the second half of last year, raising hopes that the Fed could achieve a rare "soft landing," whereby it would manage to conquer inflation through rate hikes without ployment rate will remain around those low levels indicates that the officials believe that while the job market will gradually slow, it will remain fundamentally healthy.

What's On





Photos during the campaign

Company supports needy families with Eid clothes through LOYAC collaboration

talabat and LOYAC cooperate in 'Farhat Al-Eid' initiative

KUWAIT CITY, June 13: Reaffirming its role as a leader in corporate citizenship, tech pioneer, talabat, recently partnered with non-profit organization for community empowerment, LOYAC, to support the "Farhat Al-Eid" initiative. This effort, part of talabat's community engagement program, aimed to celebrate Eid Al-Adha with needy families in Kuwait by providing Eid clothes for their children. Volunteers from LOYAC and talabat's employees took 125 children on a fun shopping spree at a major department store in Kuwait, for children to buy new Eid garments

talabat and LOYAC's "Farhat Al-Eid" initiative seeks to alleviate the financial burden on needy families by providing new Eid clothes for their children, bringing joy through an exciting shopping tour. Volunteers from talabat and LOYAC guided the children, supervised by their families, in choosing from a wide variety of new clothes. The children selected beautiful dresses for girls and traditional, elegant outfits for boys, along with shoes and accessories

Commenting on the collaboration, Abdullah Al-Mansour, Director of Communications, Public Affairs, and Corporate Responsibility at talabat Kuwait, said, We are proud to join LOYAC in this wonderful initiative, which puts smiles on the faces of children as they choose their Eid clothes. At talabat, we believe in the power of such activities to enhance social solidarity.'

He added that this contribution is part of talabat's ongoing social commitment, as it continues to adopt initiatives and partake in community engagements that improve quality of life and promote equality among society.

Al-Mansour also highlighted the initiative's impact on a corporate level, noting

how involving talabat employees in volunteer activities fosters team spirit and provides them with opportunities to directly contribute to community service.

Concluding his remarks, Al-Mansour said: "The experience was truly special for our employees who participated and witnessed the children's enthusiasm during the shopping tour, which brought them great happiness from contributing to others' joy, and that is the spirit of talabat"

Nadia Al Marzouq, Head of Media and Public Relations at LOYAC, expressed appreciation for talabat's support and active participation in the success of the "Farhat Al-Eid" initiative. She emphasized the importance of such partnerships in achieving a sustainable positive impact on society and enhancing social responsibility in the private sector.

This humanitarian act of kindness from both talabat and LOYAC's teams also had a significant impact on the children's parents by relieving the financial burden of buying new clothes for their children for Eid Al-Adha, allowing the entire Kuwaiti society to share in the holiday joy. The parents expressed deep gratitude to talabat and LOYAC for this timely and generous initiative, which helped ease their financial challenges.

It is worth mentioning that this initiative is part of a series of social activities and contributions by talabat in charitable and humanitarian work, a key pillar of its comprehensive social responsibility program. The company consistently seeks to support and engage with the community on various occasions, making a positive and sustainable difference in the lives of individuals and families, and setting a role model among private sector institutions for community commitment.

Forum discusses AI's impact on Kuwait's healthcare sector

ABCK-AmCham Kuwait explores Al's role in Kuwaiti education

KUWAIT CITY, June 13: American Business Council - American Chamber of Commerce Kuwait (ABCK-AmCham Kuwait) successfully hosted "The Future of AI: Revolutionizing Industries in Kuwait," forum, an event dedicated to exploring the transformative impact of artificial intelligence (AI) on key sectors in Kuwait, particularly education and healthcare. The event took place at Four Seasons Hotel, bringing together leading experts, industry professionals, and stakeholders to discuss the opportunities and challenges of AI integration in these critical

The forum commenced with a welcome address by Alqabandi, who served as the MC for the event, representing ABCK-AmCham Kuwait. Algabandi set the tone for the day by highlighting the significance of AI in shaping the future of Kuwait's industries and introduced the day's agenda, packed with insightful panel discussions and expert presentations.

The Education panel focused on the impact of AI on education, moderated by Mr. Alaeddine Karim, Chair of ABCK-AmCham Kuwait's IT/Cybersecurity Focus Group and the Country General Manager for Microsoft Kuwait. Mr. Karim delivered the opening remarks, emphasizing the importance of AI in transforming educational paradigms and setting the stage for an engaging discussion.

The Education Panelist included: Dr. Iyad Abu Doush, Professor of Computer Science at the American University of Kuwait, who shared his expertise in digital accessibility and the



Photo of the forum.

role of AI in supporting students with

Mr. Naeem Mirza, Vice President, Sales | Robotics & AI at Ai Doctrine, who discussed the integration of AI and robotics in education to promote neurodiversity and enhance learning

Mr. Ali Fenjan, Instructor in Computer Science and Engineering at the American International University, who explored AI's role in cybersecurity education and practical applications for students.

Ms. Mona Salem, Acting General ICT Supervisor at the Ministry of Education, who highlighted the integration of technology in education, teacher training, and the potential of AI to

revolutionize the overall learning ex-

The Healthcare panel delved into the practical applications of AI in healthcare, moderated by Dr. Mussaad Al-Razouki, Operating Partner at Deerfield Management in New York. Dr. Al-Razouki's opening presentation provided valuable insights into current trends and future potential of AI in healthcare, setting a strong foundation for the panel discussion.

The Healthcare Panelist included: Ms. Lama Chalhoub, Kuwait, Bahrain, and Qatar Lead at MSD, who discussed AI's role in expanding access to critical medicines and vaccines and its impact on medical innovation.

Mr. Alaeddine Karim, Country Man-

ager at Microsoft Kuwait office, who highlighted the transformative role of Al software in offering streamlined solutions to the healthcare sector.

Dr. Faisal Al-Refaei, Chief Operating Officer and Acting Director General at the Dasman Diabetes Institute, who highlighted AI's potential impact on the role of healthcare professional's skills and training, patient care, and ethical considerations.

The event concluded with a lively Q&A session, where attendees engaged with the panelists, followed by the presentation of plaques to the moderators and panelists in recognition of their valuable contributions. Mr. Alaeddine Karim provided the closing remarks, summarizing the key takeaways from the discussions and emphasizing the importance of continued collaboration to harness AI's full potential.

ABCK-AmCham Kuwait extends its heartfelt gratitude to all speakers, panelists, and attendees for their active participation and insights, making the The Future of AI: Revolutionizing Industries in Kuwait" forum a resounding

About ABCK-AmCham Kuwait: Established in 1985, ABCK-AmCham Kuwait is a non-profit organization composed of Fortune 500 corporations, small and medium-sized companies, and prominent business leaders and entrepreneurs, both American and Kuwaiti. ABCK-AmCham Kuwait serves as an advocate for American interests in the state of Kuwait. For more information, please visit our website atwww.amchamkuwait.org or follow us on social media @abck1985.

ESK Holding recognized for innovation and digital transformation

Mercedes Vazquez of ESK Holding Kuwait wins tech entrepreneur award

MANAMA, June 13: Mercedes Vazquez General Manager of ESK Holding, Kuwait has been awarded the Tech Entrepreneur of the Year Award at The Power List Awards 2024 in the Kingdom of Bahrain. This honor reflects Mercedes' innovative vision and leadership in the tech industry, driving significant advancements, inspiring future entrepreneurs, fostering international strategic alliances and encouraging more women to join the technology industry

Under the patronage of His Excellency Ali Bin Saleh Al Saleh, Chairman of the Kingdom of Bahrain's Government Entity Shura Council, Mercedes Vazquez General Manager of ESK Holding received the "Technology Entrepreneur of the Year" award, speaking at the gala that took place in the Kingdom of Bahrain's capital Mercedes commented: "This regional recognition symbolizes such a humbling moment as a result of relentless efforts and sacrifices throughout my journey in advancing to bridge the digital divide through education, harnessing Responsible Digital Transformation for a resilient digitized knowledge-based economy that supports Nation-wide visions for a resilient, robust, secured and digitally-enabled prosperous future for everyone advancing & relentlessly advocating for the role of women in technology by enabling women accel-



Photo during the event.

erating the pace of progress in resilient digital infrastructure, catalyzing change, tech and innovation to build a more just and equal world. This award also symbolizes a beacon of hope and opportunity to every girl and women who's striving to make their mark in the technology industry"

Speaking at the event, Mr. M. A. Sridhar, CEO of Roshcomm, the event organizer, said, "Mercedes Vazquez has won the much-coveted Tech Entrepreneur Award of the Year Award at The PowerList Awards 2024. The Awards entries were reviewed through a rigorous and impartial judging process by an independent Panel of Jury comprising of esteemed experts in various fields located in Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, UAE, USA and Canada. The PowerList Awards continues to provide a platform to recognize good practices and inspire change, by recognizing the best and brightest.'

The Power List Awards Middle East are a means to honor and spotlight the exceptional work done by individuals and organizations across various industries within the Middle East region. These awards serve as a platform to acknowledge the trailblazers, innovators, and leaders who have made a significant impact. Other awardees at the 2024 The Power List awards are: Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, STC Bahrain, Bapco, Johns Hopkins Aramco Healthcare (JHAH) & Bahrain Chamber of Com-

merce & Industry.
About ESK Holding - ESK Holding is an innovative digital transformation company based in Kuwait that builds bridges with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Specialized in: Responsible AI, Advanced Space Technology, Geospatial Intelligence, Sentiment Analysis & Business intelligence& pioneering nation-wide upskilling and reskilling initiatives while fostering international alliances to strengthen global cooperation and advancing security, technology for all, world-class skilling development to bridge the digital divide, create jobs, foster generational prosperity, innovate, strengthen capabilities in gender equality through technology and innovation, and to better respond to tomorrow's challenges, today.

For inquiries, please contact: press@esk-holding.com

Bank ensures uninterrupted service

Warba ready to serve clients during 'Eid Al Adha' holiday

KUWAIT CITY, June 13: Warba Bank will continue to provide services to its valued clients during the official holiday of Eid Al Adha, from Saturday, June 15, until Tuesday, June 18, through the Airport T4 branch to facilitate the provision of services, in addition to the calling service via the call center 1825555, through social media platforms or via the Internet and the Warba Bank application.

Mr. Abdullah Nasser Al-Shuail, Senior Director of Branches and Private Banking Services at Warba Bank noted that the Bank is ready to serve its clients by providing all banking services during this holiday. Al-Shuail added that Warba clients have additional technical advantages, as they can perform some of the basic banking operations via smart phones through the unique Warba Bank application.

The Bank will return to operate at all of its branches immediately after the holiday, starting from Wednesday, June 19, in allgovernorates of Kuwait. Warba Bank is one of the banks that



Mr. Abdullah Nasser Al-Shuail

has achieved great successes in a short period, as it occupied a leadership position in the field of Islamic digital banking services for individuals, and it is one of the largest local banks in the number of shareholders, and these are among the most prominent components that make the Bank close to all members of society

ABK announces its official closure days on occasion of 'Eid Al Adha'

KUWAIT CITY, June 13: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) extends its greetings to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah as well as the government, people, and residents of Kuwait on the occasion of Eid Al Adha, hoping it bestows an abundance of

ABK discloses that its branches will be closed from Sunday, 16 June 2024 to Tuesday, 18 June 2024, to resume operations on Wednesday, 19 June 2024. During this time, ABK's newly launched digital branch in Al Khiran mall will be functional to service customers from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.

The Bank has also confirmed its full operational readiness to serve customers 24/7 via its various digital platforms throughout the holiday. This includes Online Banking via eahli. com, Mobile Banking through the ABK app, as well as the Bank's call center Ahlan Ahli 1 899 899 and its ATM network.



Eid Al Adha poster by ABK.

'Draw odds with less deposit'

ABK announces KD 10,000 Alfouz weekly draw winner

KUWAIT CITY, June 13: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) announced Juzar Mohammed Bankodawala, as the KD10.000 Alfouz weekly draw winner on Monday, 10 June 2024, whereby the draw was held under the supervision of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

Since its launch, the Alfouz account continues to offer an impressive weekly draw of KD10,000. The Bank has recently expanded its offering by adding a new alluring monthly draw of KD20,000, and an exceptional quar-

terly draw of KD100,000. The account also retains its hallmark mega annual draw of a KD5,000 monthly salary for ten years. Further-

more, the Bank now offers customers an increased opportunity to win for every KD10 as opposed to KD100 pre-

ABK encourages everyone to open an Alfouz draw account and/or increase their balances to have more chances in winning in the upcoming weeklydraw winner announcement, which will take place on Wednesday, 19 June 2024. The higher the deposits, the higher the chances to win.

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



Alfouz draw winner

AUK honors long-serving employees

KUWAIT CITY, June 13: The American University of Kuwait (AUK) hosted its annual dinner at Crown Plaza to celebrate the institution's administrative achievements and accomplishments. The event—organized by the University's Human Resources Department-was attended by staff, faculty, and members of the president's cabinet.

The event recognized and awarded employees who completed 5, 10, 15, and 20 years of service at AUK. These awards celebrated their enduring commitment and significant contributions

to the University's growth and success. AUK president, Dr. Rawda Awwad, who was one of the honorees for serving 20 years at the University, conveyed her gratitude towards AUK employees in her opening statement, "This year has shown again our strength, resilience, and unity within our university community, despite the challenges. Together, we have embraced new opportunities, made every attempt at trying to support one another, and achieved extraordinary results. Thank you for everything that you do day-in, and day-out. Thank you



Dr. Rawda Awwad giving her speech.

for your patience and for your shared success, thank you for your dedication, and thank you for your belief in that we can always be better and do better."

HR senior director, Paul Bassil, highlighted the importance of these annual dinners, "The annual employee dinner holds great significance for us as it provides a valuable opportunity to foster employee engagement, strengthen team spirit, and show appreciation for the hard work and dedication of the employees. It also serves as a platform to communicate company values, recognize achievements, and build morale within the organization."

Françoise Hardy, French singing legend, dies at 80

PARIS, June 13, (AP): Françoise Hardy, a French singing legend and pop icon since the 1960s, has died. She was 80.

Her son, musician Thomas Dutronc, announced her death on social media, sharing a poignant photo of himself as a child with his mother. Hardy had lymphatic cancer since 2004 and died Tuesday.

Born on Jan. 17, 1944, in Paris, Hardy's career began in 1962 when she recorded her first single, "Tous les garçons et les filles," at the age of 18. The song, which she wrote and composed, quickly became a hit, marking her rise as a key figure in the yé-yé movement, a French response to rock 'n' roll.

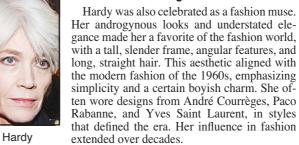
Her lyrics often captured the angst and longing of adolescence, resonating deeply with young audiences. Her melancholic and introspective tone set her apart from the more exuberant pop music of her peers.

Hardy's influence extended far beyond France. In 2023, she was the only French artist named in Rolling Stone magazine's list of the 200 greatest singers of all time. Her ethereal voice and distinctive beauty captivated audiences, earning her praise from music legends such as Mick Jagger, Bob Dylan and David Bowie.

"I was passionately in love with her. Every male in the world, and a number of females, also were," Bowie once said.

Hardy had a unique approach to songwriting, emphasizing the importance of melody in her creative process. Speaking to the Associated Press in 1996 about writing songs, she explained, "I always put the words on the music. It's always like that. I don't write before, and then, I'm looking for music. First, I get the music and (then) I try to put words on it." That method contributed to the distinctive quality of her music, blending poetic lyrics with evocative melodies.

Elegance



Hardy's relationship with fellow musician Jacques Dutronc was a significant part of her life and work. They met in the mid-1960s and had a son, Thomas, in 1973. Although their relationship faced challenges, including Dutronc's infidelities and their eventual separation, it deeply influenced her music. Their lives - residing on separate floors of the same Parisian building - mirrored their bittersweet

partnership, which was reflected in Hardy's songs. She also had a keen interest in astrology, authoring several books on the subject and hosting radio shows. Her lyrics and public persona often reflected her introspective nature and fascination with

the celestial. Hardy's battle with cancer was long. She endured numerous treatments, including radiotherapy, which left her deaf in one ear. Despite her health struggles, she continued to produce music, with her final album, "Personne d'autre," released in 2018. This album, marked by its contemplative themes and collaboration with the Finnish indie band Poets of the Fall, confronted issues of mortality.

Tributes have poured in from across the globe. French Culture Minister Rima Abdul Malak hailed her as "an eternal legend of French songs," while fellow musicians like Carla Bruni, Michel Polnareff, and Étienne Daho expressed their deep sorrow and admiration. International artists, including Blur's Graham Coxon and Public Enemy's Chuck D, also paid their homage.

Reflecting on her lifelong love for melodies, Hardy once said, "All my life, I've been on the lookout for beautiful melodies. Listening to them puts me in seventh heaven."

Variety



This image released by A24 shows Julia Louis-Dreyfus in a scene from 'Tuesday.' (AP)

Film

Film breaks boundaries with unique narrative

'Tuesday' offers unique take on death

By Lindsey Bahr

Death has taken many forms in cinema. It's been Bengt Ekerot. Ian McKellen. John Cleese. Even Brad Pitt with blonde highlights. But in "Tuesday," filmmaker Daina O. Pusić's bold, fantastical and affecting debut, death looks like a lot like a macaw

that's seen better days. Covered in a thick layer of grime and oil with patches of feathers missing, "Tuesday's" Death can be as big as a room or as small as an ear canal. Its booming, gravelly voice (that of actor Arinzé Kene) sounds ancient and otherworldly. And it all adds up to something profoundly unsettling. Not exactly a comforting welcome into the afterlife, or whatever comes

"Tuesday," expanding nationwide Friday, is about death, and acceptance, between a mother and her dying daughter. But this is no Hallmark affair fitting for a sympathy card. It is prickly, wry, somewhat unsentimental, a bit gritty and awfully painful at times. Or maybe it's just uniquely British. And you may just find yourself in a puddle of your own tears as a result.

Now, in terms of cinematic emotional blackmail, a parent coming to terms with a child's imminent death is pretty much in the red zone. That sort of setup could produce involuntary tears from an audience regardless of the level of talent involved. Thankfully for us, there is immense creativity and vision both in front of and behind the camera, including not just the writer-director but the special effects experts responsible for Death as well as the haunting and innovative sound design.

Lola Petticrew plays the titular Tuesday, a teen with a "Breathless" pixie cut, a love of jokes and rap music and a terminal illness that has bound her to an oxygen tank and the use of a wheelchair. Her mother, Zora (Julia Louis-Dreyfus), has entirely disconnected from the situation. She tiptoes around the house waiting for the nurse, Billie (a lovely Leah Harvey), to do the caretaking. She stays out all day, pawning household items for cash to pay for the care, ignoring Tuesday's calls and occasionally falling asleep on park benches.

At home, she doesn't want to talk to Tuesday about anything real - the death, her job, their precarious financial position - it's all been deeply repressed and

compartmentalized and is making everyone crazy. The day we meet Zora and Tuesday is the day Death arrives. Billie has left Tuesday on the patio for just a minute to start a bath. All of a sudden, the girl who was just joking around is having an episode, gasping for air, when the macaw lands by her side. Death is actually the first character introduced, in an unnerving series of deaths setting an ominous tone that will loom throughout. Some are ready to go, begging for relief. Some are just scared. And all have the same outcome once he's put his wing around them.

Conversation

Tuesday, however, decides to tell a joke. This disarms Death (who bursts out laughing) and suddenly they're in conversation together. She gives him a bath, puts on some music and asks a favor: She'd like

to say goodbye to her mom first. Death obliges. Of course the story both is and isn't that simple. "Tuesday" becomes some strange combination of body horror, fairy tale, domestic drama and apocalypse thriller. It is weird and transfixing - never predictable and never boring. Louis-Dreyfus is both chilling and deeply empathetic as this woman who has been paralyzed by grief even before it's happened. She seems to be preparing for her own death in a way, unable and unwilling to process a life without her daughter who, at this point, doesn't even realize that her mother still loves her. Petticrew holds her own, going head-to-head with Louis-Dreyfus at her cruelest, exhibiting a wisdom beyond her years and fitting of a person who's had to grow up and face death far too

"Tuesday" is ultimately a cathartic affair, whether death is top of mind at the moment or not. And it announces the arrival of a daring filmmaker worth fol-

"Tuesday," an A24 release in theaters nationwide Friday, is rated R by the Motion Picture Association for language. Running time: 111 minutes. Three and a

the event promoted outstanding

Chinese animations during Mifa

running from Tuesday to Friday.

half stars out of four.

Also:

LOS ANGELES: Quincy Jones has been nominated for seven Oscars in the past 55 years, including best original score, best song, and even best picture. Although he's never collected a competitive statuette during the Academy Awards, this November he'll receive an honorary Oscar from the Academy's Board of Governors in recognition of his contributions to the

Jones, casting director Juliet Taylor, filmmaker Richard Curtis and James Bond producers Michael G. Wilson and Barbara Broccoli will all be honored at this year's Governors Awards, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences said Wednesday.

Jones, who has contributed to films like "In Cold Blood," "The Wiz" and "The Color Purple," and Taylor, whose casting credits include "Taxi Driver," "Annie Hall," "Sleepless in Seattle" and "Schindler's List," will receive Academy Honorary Awards. Most honorary Oscar recipients have not yet won a com-

petitive Oscar. Curtis, the "Notting Hill" and "Love Actually" filmmaker, will get the Jean Hersholt Humanitarian Award for his charitable efforts. A co-founder of Comic Relief UK and USA, he has helped raise more than \$2 billion over the past 40 years. Jones was given the Hersholt award in 1994.

The Irving G. Thalberg Memorial Award will go to EON Productions' Wilson and Broccoli, whose 007 credits include "Casino Royale," "Skyfall" and "No Time To Die." Broccoli's father, Albert "Cubby" Broccoli, was given the Thalberg award in 1981.

"The recipients of this year's Governors Awards have set the bar incredibly high across their remarkable careers, and the Academy's Board of Governors is thrilled to recognize them with Oscars," Academy President Janet Yang said in a statement. "Their profound love of cinema and indelible contribution to our art form make these five individuals truly deserving of these honors." (AP)

ANNECY, France: Dozens of outstanding Chinese animations were presented here on Wednesday, attracting industry partners and animation lovers attending the Annecy International Animation Film Festival and Market (Mifa) held in eastern France.

Based on the theme of "crossing mountains and seas to embrace the diversity of civilizations,'



Kobayashi

present a unique cultural experience and artistic journey to the

Directed by the State Council Information Office of China, the Chinese National Radio and Television Administration, and organized by the China Animation Association, this event aims to

Outstanding animation works like "Stories of Dunhuang", "Boonie Bears-Time Twist", "Legendary Su Dongpo", "Blades of the Guardians" and works from about 11 Chinese companies were presented during the event. "I'm attracted to Chinese animation and impressed by its visual quality, colors, effects and touching history," Hadrien Aim, a college

global animation community.

student who majors in 3D animation, told Xinhua during his visit to the China pavilion at Mifa.

"The progress of China's animation is very fast, they have expanded the production and increased its quality," Mohammad Sarshar, CEO of Shams Animation of Iran, told Xinhua, adding that he was interested in the cooperation opportunities between China and Iran. (Xinhua)



BEIJING: Domestic teen comedy "Be My Friend" continued to lead

the box office chart on the Chinese mainland on Wednesday, official

The movie generated about 6.19 million yuan (870.321 US dollars)

in box office revenue on the day,

data from the China Movie Data

"Be My Friend" tells the story

of a teenage girl, raised by a single

It was closely followed by the

domestic crime comedy "Walk the

LOS ANGELES: After organizers

for Nathan's Famous Fourth of

July hot dog-eating contest said

this year because of a deal with

announced a new hot dog-eating

Chestnut and his "fiercest rival."

Chestnut, a 16-time hot dog-

eating champion, will face off with his frequent Nathan's competitor,

Takeru Kobayashi, in a live Netf-

lix special on Sept. 2, the streamer

The contest, titled "Chestnut vs.

Kobayashi: Unfinished Beef," will

feature the two chowing down on

all-beef hot dogs, likely in a nod to

reports that Chestnut's rival brand

which makes plant-based hot dogs.

Major League Eating, the organi-

deal is with Impossible Foods,

zation that oversees the Nathan's

contest, announced Tuesday that

Chestnut's deal was an "exclusivity"

issue, saying that it was his decision

to step back from the competition

he has participated in since 2005.

"We love him. The fans love him,"

said George Shea, a Major League

Eating event organizer, adding: "He

Chestnut disputed that he made

the choice, saying on the social

platform X that Nathan's and Ma-

jor League Eating made the deci-

sion, adding that it would "deprive

fans of the holiday's usual joy and

He also wrote that fans could

"rest assured" that they would

see him east again soon, adding: "STAY HUNGRY!" (AP)

made the choice."

entertainment."

announced Wednesday.

a rival brand, Netflix swiftly

competition that will feature

Joey Chestnut wouldn't compete

Line," which raked in box office

sales of 6.1 million yuan on the

same day. (Xinhua)

mother, who travels back in time

to understand her mother's past.

Information Network revealed.

data showed.

People & Places

Media

Deception, integrity

Ozy Media faces trial: From buzz to belly-up

NEW YORK, June 13, (AP): For nearly a decade, Ozy Media projected an image of new-media success.

The company boasted big-name interviews, an Em-

my-winning TV show, a buzzy music and ideas festival and impressive numbers to show prospective investors - until it imploded in 2021 amid doubts about

its audience size, viability and basic integrity.

Those doubts are now at the center of a federal criminal trial. Founder Carlos Watson and Ozy are fighting charges of conspiracy to commit fraud.

Even after numerous other public and court reckonings for Silicon Valley companies that went from ballyhooed to belly-up, it's hard to forget the moment in Ozy's downfall when co-founder Samir Rao impersonated a YouTube executive to talk up the company to prospective investors.

Watson's and Ozy's lawyers blame any misrepresentations solely on Rao, who has pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit fraud and to identity theft. The defense also has claimed that prosecutors are casting commonplace entrepreneurial puffery as a crime and singling out Watson, a Black founder in a tech world where African American executives have been disproportionately few.



"I am not now and never have been a 'con man," he declared when indicted last year.

Prosecutors and Rao, their star witness, say Ozy shredded the line between hopeful hype and baldfaced deceit.

"We told so many lies to so many different people," Rao testified after recounting how a teetering company concocted rosy financials in a desperate bid to lure investors and stay in business.

Content

The hope was to enable "a diverse audience, to consume, hopefully, a different, more meaningful kind of content," he said. But "survival within the bonds of decency, fairness, truth, it morphed into survival at all

costs and by any means necessary."

Ozy was founded in 2012 on a Millennial-friendly premise of providing a fresh, sophisticated-but-notstuffy take on politics, culture and more - billed as "the new and the next" - while amplifying minority and marginalized voices.

A Harvard and Stanford-educated son of two South Florida teachers, Watson had worked on Wall Street, started and sold a test-prep company and anchored on MSNBC. He conceived of Ozy and then recruited Rao, a former finance-world colleague, after a chance meeting at a Chipotle restaurant in Silicon Valley, according to Rao.

Ozy debuted with a website, newsletters and a bang: Former President Bill Clinton was one of its first interviewees. The company expanded into podcasts, events and TV shows, winning a 2020 Emmy for the Watsonhosted "Black Women OWN the Conversation," on the Oprah Winfrey Network. The annual Ozy Fest in New York's Central Park drew big names ranging from John Legend to a pre-presidency Joe Biden.

The company attracted a roster of major advertisers, clients and grants, according to testimony. But behind the scenes, prosecutors say, Ozy started bleeding money in 2018 and began trying to save itself with

The company told a prospective investor it "finished 2017 with approximately 12 million in revenue" but gave its accountants a number under \$7 million. The gaps widened with the years, yawning to as much as \$53 million-vs.-\$11 million for 2020, according to testimony and documents shown at trial.

Meanwhile, Ozy frequently delayed paying vendors and rent, borrowed against future receipts to get pricey cash advances and struggled to make payroll, former finance vice president Janeen Poutre testified.

The defense portrayed the cash scrambles as the growing pains of a successful startup.

"Ozy Media did not defraud its investors or anyone else," said the company's lawyer, Shannon Frison.

Watson lawyer and Harvard Law School Professor Ronald Sullivan Jr. said his client "believed every number that he gave every investor." Sullivan suggested revenue figures could vary depending on whether they account for such "in-kind" income as trading ads with another outlet.

Poutre testified that auditors rarely agree to count such revenue and she did not feel Watson was always honest. "I don't know where his numbers came from I know where my numbers came from," she said. The alleged schemes went beyond questionable numbers.

While trying to get Ozy a bank loan in 2020, Rao faked a contract saying that Winfrey's OWN network had renewed "Black Women OWN The Conversation" for a second season. When the bank wanted information directly from the network, Rao set up a phony email account for a real OWN executive and used it to offer the bank "background on the transaction."

Investment

Rao told jurors that Watson verbally approved the charade. Jurors saw a text message from Watson exhorting Rao to "be bold, get it done," but the "it" wasn't specified. Ultimately, witnesses said, neither the loan nor the show renewal happened.

Rao's infamous phone call came the next year as Ozy sought an investment from Wall Street giant Goldman Sachs. He'd falsely claimed YouTube was paying for Watson's eponymous talk show. When Goldman bankers wanted confirmation, he downloaded a voice-modifying app and pretended to be a YouTube executive on a call with them.

But the bankers were wary, the real YouTube exec soon found out and Watson told Goldman Sachs and Ozy's board that his co-founder had suffered a mental

The investment didn't materialize, but Goldman Sachs continued advertising with Ozy after the episode, Rao said.

Rao told jurors he was taking antidepressants but was not having a psychiatric crisis when he made the call. Watson was present and coaching him via text message, Rao said.

"I am a big fan of Carlos, Samir and the show," reads one text, which Rao explained as Watson feeding him a line for his phony persona to say. Then Watson urged, "use the right pronouns. You are NOT OZY," among other messages.

Watson's lawyer said the Ozy founder stumbled upon Rao's deceit midstream, was appalled and signaled him to hang up.

The defense has emphasized that Rao drafted a

2021 letter - ultimately unsent - saying the phone ruse was his alone. Rao told jurors he wrote it to protect the company.



Victor Alli, from left, Hannah Dodd, Tom Verica, Jessica Madsen, Harriet Cains, Emma Naomi, Ruth Gemmell, Luke Thompson, Betsy Beers, Sam Phillips, Luke Newton, Joanna Bobin, Simone Ashley, Dominic Coleman, Nicola Coughlan, Golda Rosheuvel, Shonda Rhimes, Hannah New, Adjoa Andoh, Jess Brownell, Claudia Jessie, Kathryn Drysdale, Nne Ebong, Daniel Francis and Florence Hunt pose for photographers upon arrival at the season three part two screening of the television series 'Bridgerton', in London, Wednesday, June 12. (AP)



Alicia Vikander attends the 'Firebrand' premiere during the Tribeca Festival at BMCC Tribeca Performing Arts Center on Tuesday, June 11, in New York. (AP)





Variety

LOS ANGELES: The 1975's Matty Healy and model Gabbriette Bechtel are engaged, accordingly to Healy's mother, the English actor **Denise Welch**.

Welch, a regular panelist on the ITV talk show "Loose Women," confirmed the news Wednesday on the **U.K.** program.

"I've obviously known for a few weeks that Matty got engaged," she said, "And I woke up this morning to the fact that they put it on Instagram.

On Tuesday night, Bechtel posted an Instagram story showing her left hand adorned with a big black gem ring on her ring finger. She captioned the image: "Marrying The 1975 is very Brat," tagging Healy's account. It's an apparent reference to Charli XCX's latest album, "BRAT" -Healy and Bechtel were seen in attendance at her show in New York that night - and the fact that Charli is engaged to The 1975's George Daniel. Healy then shared the image on his own Instagram story.

"Instagram official!" Welch continued. "He's got engaged to Gabriella Bechtel - Gabbriette, she's known as. And (the) black diamond, he had it made for her. And we are, I couldn't be more thrilled." (AP)

NEW YORK: The Tony Awards are Sunday with a familiar host and a new venue, Lincoln Center's David H. Koch Theater in **Manhattan**. Here's a guide on what to look for and what to expect.

Academy Award winner and Tony nominee Ariana DeBose, who hosted the last two ceremonies, returns this year and will produce and choreograph the opening number. Other hosts who have done it multiple times include Angela Lansbury Hugh Jackman, Neil Patrick Harris and James Corden. DeBose was praised for keeping last year's show afloat without a script during the Hollywood writers strike.

The three-hour main telecast will air on CBS and stream on Paramount+ starting at 8 p.m. Eastern, with a free pre-show - where some technical awards will be handed out - on Pluto TV at 6:30 p.m. That pre-show - officially called "The Tony Awards: Act One" - will be hosted by **Ju**lianne Hough and Utkarsh Ambudkar.

Presenters include Angelina Jolie, Nick Jonas, Idina Menzel, Ashley Park, Jim Parsons, Wendell Pierce, Ben Platt, Cynthia Erivo, Jesse Tyler Ferguson, Josh Gad, Renée Elise Goldsberry. Sean Hayes, Taraji P. Henson, Julianne Hough, Jennifer Hudson, Pete Townshend, Tamara Tunie, Adrienne War-

Television

Don't compromise yourself: Coughlan

'Bridgerton' cast offer dating advice

LONDON, June 13, (AP): The stars of "Bridgerton," Netflix's Regency-era drama rife with romance and heartbreak, offered some dating and relationship advice for fans looking for

Nicola Coughlan and Luke Newton. who play Penelope Featherington and Colin Bridgerton, dominate the third season's storvline with their friendsto-lovers story arc. At Wednesday's London premiere for the second part of season 3, which hits Netflix on Thursday, the pair joked about how fans often suspect that they are dating in real life because of their on-screen chemistry

Relationship

"We can't do anything," Coughlan quipped after noting that it's often a "reflex" for her to interact with Newton in a friendly manner because they've known each other and worked together for many years. Newton said that the speculation points to fans' investment in their characters' relation-

ship.
"It's really sweet, it's so lovely that there's that much thought into it and how much they ship Colin and Pen,' he said. "It's a beautiful thing."

With their character's dreamy (and steamy) relationship attracting so much attention, Coughlan offered some advice to viewers looking for their own storybook romance.

"Don't compromise yourself," she said. "Wait for the right person because you're worth it.'

Newton said he "agreed with all of the above." Here's the advice the rest of the cast shared for the romantics watching "Bridgerton":

Simone Ashley, who plays Kate Bridgerton and was at the heart of the second season's storyline, said watching the show makes viewers "want to fall in love.

"It's very hopeful, and it makes you believe. It really captures your imagination and your heart again," Ashley said. "The same feeling that the show brings - pass that on to someone else. Make someone else feel as amazing as the show makes you feel.'

Golda Rosheuvel, who plays Queen Charlotte, said communication is "everything" in a relationship and noted that in this season, communication is vital to keeping Colin and Penelope's relationship alive. "Love wins every time," she added.

The show's creator, Shonda Rhimes, said fans should "raise (their) standards." She noted that the men on "Bridgerton" are "supportive and loving and all know how to dress and dance," adding that she wants "to feel like those guys are out there.'

Ruth Gemmell offered some simple, maternal advice, much like her character, Lady Violet Bridgerton, would: "Be true to yourself."

Claudia Jessie, who plays Eloise Bridgerton, shared some wisdom that diverged from the idealist advice some of her co-stars gave, saying, "Romanticism has probably messed us up a bit."

"The majority of your life is going to be figuring out domestic things and that's really not sexy and it's boring, but it's really a massive part of life," she said. "So romance, whilst it's beautiful, don't rely on it for the rest of your life."

Newcomer Hannah Dodd, who took over the role of Francesca Bridgerton this season, laughed when asked about dating advice.

"Don't ask me that," she said, seeming to allude she might be seeking dating advice, as well.

While his character Lord Marcus Anderson may seem like a bit of a player, Daniel Francis shared some sage advice on how to find a good match.

"There's three things: Know what you want, know why you want it ... and this is a tricky one for a lot of people, but I truly believe in this - you got to make sure you're fishing in the right pond," he said.

Also:

LOS ANGELES: Sony Pictures Entertainment is getting into the exhibition business. The studio behind recent films like "Bad Boys: Ride or Die" and "The Garfield Movie" has acquired the distinctive theater chain Alamo Drafthouse Cinema, the companies said Wednesday. Included in the deal is the genre film festival Fantastic Fest.

Sony said it will continue to welcome content from all studios and distributors at the dine-in theaters.

Alamo Drafthouse was founded in 1997 as a single screen, family-owned repertory theater in Austin, Texas, and has grown to 35 locations in North America. It distinguished itself in the exhibition landscape with drinks, dinein food service and a cool vibe that became a favorite of cinephiles.

"We are beyond thrilled to join forces with Sony Pictures Entertainment to expand our company vision to be the best damn cinema that has ever, or will ever, exist now in ways we could only ever dream of." Alamo Drafthouse founder Tim League said in a statement. "They have a deep respect and understanding of cinema's ability to both drive growth and create lasting cultural impact which aligns perfectly with everything Alamo Drafthouse stands for.

Experience

For Sony, the Drafthouse acquisition is also tied into its experiences initiatives, including its Wheel of Fortune Live! Traveling tour and the Wonderverse space in Chicago. Ravi Ahuja, the president and chief operating officer of Sony Pictures Entertainment, also noted that the studio's Crunchyroll films are particularly aligned with the interests of Drafthouse fans. Alamo Drafthouse has seen its ups

and downs over the years. In March 2021, the company filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy, closed some locations and canceled plans to open new ones. Alamo emerged from bankruptcy at the end of May 2021, under the ownership of League, Altamont Capital Partners and Fortress Investment Group. Michael Kusterman, a former executive at Caveman Foods, was named Alamo CEO. He will remain, heading the newly established Sony Pictures Experiences division and reporting to Ahuja, the statement

ren, Patrick Wilson, Anthony Ramos, Andrew Rannells and Jeffrey Wright.

The casts of new musicals and revivals will be performing numbers and medleys hoping to transform TV viewers into theatergoers. Eddie Redmayne will be the super-creepy

emcee of "Cabaret at the Kit Kat Club"; Jonathan Groff, Lindsay Mendez and Daniel Radcliffe will perform for "Merrily We Roll Along" and look for some circus thrills when the musical "Water for Elephants" gets its spotlight. Other shows performing include



This image released by Polk & Co. shows Maleah Joi Moon, (left), and Chris Lee during a performance of 'Hell's Kitchen.' Tony Awards are on Sunday, June 16, with familiar host and new venue. (AP)

"Hell's Kitchen," "Illinoise," "Suffs," "The Outsiders" and "The Who's Tommy." In a last-minute switch, CBS made room for "Stereophonic," the raved-about new play with music by former Arcade Fire's Will Butler. AP)

ORLANDO, Fla.: Gov. Ron DeSantis' appointees on Wednesday gave final approval to an agreement that buries the hatchet between Disney and the governing district for Walt Disney World, which the Florida governor took over after the company two years ago publicly opposed a state law critics dubbed "Don't Say Gay."

The five DeSantis-appointed board members to the Central Florida Tourism Oversight District unanimously voted to approve a 15-year development deal in which the district committed to making infrastructure improvements in exchange for Disney investing up to \$17 billion into Disney World over the next two decades.

The agreement followed a detente in March in which both sides agreed to stop litigating each other in state court and work towards negotiating a new development agreement and a new comprehensive plan no later than next year. The district provides municipal services such as firefighting, planning and mosquito control, among other things, and was controlled by Disney supporters before the takeover by the DeSantis appointees. (AP)

Dr. Waters emphasizes blood donation beyond World Blood Donor Day

Blood donation simple for donors, lifesaving for recipients

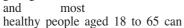
CLEVELAND, June 13: As the World Health Organization (WHO) this year celebrates the 20th anniversary of World Blood Donor Day on 14 June, an expert from global health system Cleveland Clinic points out that for healthy individuals, the process of blood donation is simple for individuals, but can be lifesaving for many recipients.

"Hospitals are always looking to increase their blood supplies," says Thomas Waters, MD, emergency medicine physician with Cleveland Clinic. "Blood that is donated can be used for patients who are undergoing surgery, for trauma patients safely donate blood, although they who've had a significant injury or

patients with medical conditions such as cancer or thalassemia that might require a transfusion." Most donors

do not experience any discomfort after blood, giving most





should check their local health authority's guidelines for exceptions, says Dr Waters.

While a key objective of World Blood Donor Day is to highlight the continuous need for regular, unpaid blood donation to achieve universal access to safe blood transfusion, the WHO reports an encouraging global increase in blood donations. According to the health body, an increase of 10.7 million blood donations from voluntary unpaid donors from 2008 to 2018 was reported by 119 countries. The highest increase of voluntary unpaid blood donations was in the South-East Asia Region (127%) followed by the Region of the Americas (81%) and Africa (81%).

The most common type of blood requested by hospitals is type O, and especially O negative, which can be given to almost all individuals, making it useful in transfusions where time is of the essence. However, Dr. Waters adds that hospitals still need donations of all blood types to maintain healthy supplies.

For those who've never donated, the blood donation process is relatively simple, according to Dr. Waters. "Approaches may differ by location, but typically, you'll complete a donor registration, then go over your health history and do a mini physical. From there, a medical professional will hook you up for the blood draw, which normally takes eight to 10 minutes," he says. "However, if you're donating platelets, red cells or plasma, it can take up to two hours.

According to Cleveland Clinic, because a healthy body continues to make blood, new red blood cells will replace those that were donated in approximately four to six weeks. It is safe to donate whole blood every 56 days, but could be sooner or longer depending on the type of blood component that is donated.

Dr. Waters has some advice for those who may be nervous to donate: "There are a lot of people out there who are afraid of needles, so understandably it can be a scary event to undertake," he said. "But it is safe, it's very simple, it's relatively painless, you'll feel a little pinch. It only takes a few minutes and, again, it can be life-saving for someone who needs a transfusion.'

Hope for better vaccines

Past COVID infections may help ward off certain colds

NEW YORK, June 13, (AP): If you've been sick with COVID-19, you may have some protection against certain versions of the common cold.

A new study suggests previous COVID-19 infections lower the risk of getting colds caused by milder coronavirus cousins, which could provide a key to broader COVID-19 vaccines.

"We think there's going to be a future outbreak of a coronavirus," said Dr. Manish Sagar, senior author of the study published Wednesday in the journal Science Translational Medicine. "Vaccines potentially could be improved if we could replicate some of the immune responses that are provided by natural infection.'

Condition

The study looked at COVID-19 PCR tests from more than 4,900 people who sought medical care between November 2020 and October 2021. After controlling for things like age, gender and preexisting conditions, Sagar said he and his colleagues found people previously infected with COVID-19 had about a 50% lower chance of having a symptomatic coronavirus-caused common cold compared with people who were, at the time, fully vaccinated and hadn't yet gotten COVID-19.

Several viruses cause colds; coronaviruses are thought to be responsible for about 1 in 5 colds.

Researchers linked the protection against coronavirus-caused colds to virus-killing cell responses for two specific viral proteins. These proteins aren't used in most vaccines now, but researchers propose adding them in the future.

"Our studies would suggest that these may be novel strategies for better vaccines that not only tackle the current coronaviruses, but any potential future one that may emerge," said Sagar of Boston Medical Center

Dr. Wesley Long, a pathologist at Houston Methodist in Texas who was not involved in the study, said the findings shouldn't be seen as a knock against current vaccines, which target the "spike" protein studding the surface of the SARS-CoV-2 virus that causes COVID-19.

These vaccines, he said, are "still your best defense against severe CO-VID-19 infection, hospitalization and death.

But he added: "If we can find targets that cross-protect among multiple viruses, we can either add those to specific vaccines or start to use those as vaccine targets that would give us broader-based immunity from a single vaccination. And that would be really cool."

FDA warns

Target JN.1 strain for fall's vaccines

WASHINGTON, June 13, (AP): Government advisers said it's time to update the recipe for the COVID-19 vaccines Americans will receive in the fall -- targeting a version of the everevolving coronavirus called JN.1.

While COVID-19 cases currently are low, more surges are inevitable and manufacturers need time to brew shots for fall. Moderna, Pfizer and Novavax all have tested doses updated to match the JN.1 variant that became dominant last winter.

But just a few months later, numerous offshoots of JN.1 already are on the rise, prompting Moderna and Pfizer to also test a slightly different vaccine formula targeting what's now the most common US subtype, called KP.2.

That made for a tough choice as the Food and Drug Administration decides the final recipe. FDA's advisers voted Wednesday that the next vaccine should come from the JN.1 "lineage' or family. Then FDA vaccine chief Dr. Peter Marks challenged them to be more specific about exactly which variant to target, wondering if KP.2 was a better option.

"If this evolves further in the fall, will we regret not having been a little bit closer?" Marks said, likening the choice to how he always picks the "freshest" milk with the longest expiration date in the grocery store.

But KP.2 isn't likely to still be the biggest threat by fall, the panel responded. Having to make the choice now, they preferred the parent JN.1 variant itself rather than trying to predict which of its descendants was most likely to increase in the coming

Subvariants

"Having a vaccine that's the trunk of the tree rather than the branches makes sense to me," because it would offer some cross-protection to other subvariants that emerge, said one adviser, Dr. Melinda Wharton of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Health officials have told Americans to expect a yearly update to COVID-19 vaccines, just like they get a new flu shot each fall designed to match as best as possible the currently spreading strains. Even though just about everyone has either been infected or had at least one round of COVID-19 vaccinations, the coronavirus keeps churning out new varieties that can dodge prior immunity -- and protection also wanes over time.

One tech tip: Say goodbye to roaming fees

Use a roaming eSIM on your summer travels to avoid cellphone data fees

LONDON, June 13, (AP): For summer trips overseas, a smartphone is essential for most people. How else will you check Google Maps to find your Airbnb, post an Instagram video from the Eiffel Tower, or WhatsApp friends and family back home?

Of course, if you're using apps that gobble up data while traveling in a foreign country, there's always a risk of racking up hefty roaming fees from your phone carrier. The solution? An international travel eSIM for your smartphone.

How do you use this technology? Here are some tips.

If you've ever bought a new cellphone, you're probably familiar with the SIM card. Short for subscriber identity module, the SIM is a little chip the size of a fingernail that fits into a slot on most phones. Without it, you couldn't get cell service because it contains your account information and phone number. But physical SIM cards are slow-

ly being replaced by eSIMs - the e stands for embedded - built into newer phones. These digital versions do the same thing and can make life easier, though people used to physical SIMs might find them confusing at first.

They make switching cell carriers easier. And if you've bought a new phone recently, you might not even have a choice: Apple got rid of the SIM card tray starting with the iPhone 14 released in September 2022.

Compatible

They're especially beneficial for travelers. If you've got a compatible cellphone, you can add an eSIM from a virtual carrier that has better data roaming rates than your home network. Many phones will allow you to add more than one eSIM, making it easy to switch back and forth, or - for phones with the capability - use two at the same time.



A SIM card is shown next to a cellphone in this photo taken on Tuesday, June 11, in London. Physical SIM cards are going away, replaced by eSIMs which make switching cell carriers easier. (AP)

Think of the convenience: Gone are the days of arriving in a strange country after a long flight, looking for a local phone company's airport kiosk, carefully popping open the SIM tray with a pin to swap in the new chip, and trying not to lose the existing one.

The eSIM market is booming. Kester Mann, director of consumer research at CCS Insight, says there are dozens of providers that can be found online, with names like Nomad, Holafly, Easysim, Airhub and Airalo. "These guys have a role to play be-

cause I think they offer a very affordable and attractive opportunity for international travelers," Mann said. The boom means there's plenty of

competition keeping rates low. Prices are typically clearly displayed online, either through a menu of packages on the provider's website or a calculator based on the amount of data needed and trip length.

Some 800 carriers support eSIMs, ac-

cording to CCS, so international coverage is extensive. Traveling to Europe and need data for a month covering 30 countries? Airalo offers, for example, 10 gigabytes at \$37 while Holafly's package has unlimited data for 69 euros (\$75).

Problems

For an upcoming trip to Prague, I bought 5 gigabytes of data for just \$5 from Global Yo. I was slightly put off by some negative reviews professing problems buying, installing or activating the company's eSIMs, but I didn't have any problems myself.

You'll need a phone that's unlocked for use with different wireless carriers. If you're not setting up a new phone, the typical activation method is with a OR code, or a more conventional string

of numbers and letters. If you're planning a trip and are buying one in advance, it's a good idea to print it out if you don't want to activate right away. questions. (AP)

For iPhones, go to your Settings menu, then to either the Cellular or Mobile Service section, then tap Add eSIM. You'll be prompted to scan the code, or manually enter it. The process is similar for Android users. Samsung has a guide for Galaxy devices, and Google has a help page for Pixel users, while eSIM carriers have step-by-step instructions. Apple has a YouTube video, as well as tip sheets on using eSIMs for international travel and on using two eSIMs simultaneously.

If you've got a phone that supports dual eSIMs, you "can pick potentially the best network based on price and or coverage" while traveling, said Mann. Some carriers have their own apps

to manage eSIMs and track data usage. More than 200 devices support the technology, CCS Insight says. U.K. phone company Vodafone has a list of compatible devices. Or dial (asterisk)#06# - an EID code indicates it's

compatible. For iPhone users, it's any model released since the XS, XS Max or XR, as well as recent iPads. They're compatible with any Samsung Galaxy devices released since 2020, and Google Pixel 4 and newer models will work; some Pixel 3 devices also support them.

First check your own carrier's roaming costs for the places you're visiting. Sometimes it's not worth it.

"Roaming costs these days are far lower and less prohibitive than they once were," said Mann. They've even been abolished for European Union residents crossing the 27-nation bloc's internal borders. But travelers in Britain, which has left the EU, are facing them again for travel to the continent.

Is there a tech challenge you need help figuring out? Write to us at onetechtip@ap.org with your

What happened to the likes?

X now hiding which posts you like from other users

NEW YORK, June 13, (AP): Social media platform X is now hiding your likes.

In an update posted on the platform formerly known as Twitter earlier this week, X's engineering team said it would be "making Likes private for everyone to better protect your privacy." That means that users will still be able to see their own likes, but others will not - putting an end to a feature that many had long used.

The change went into effect Wednesday. As of the afternoon, the "Likes" tab appeared to only be available on users' own profile page. But when visiting other accounts, that tab is no longer available.

Users also received a pop-up notification that seemed to suggest the change would result in more user engagement.

"Liking more posts will make your 'For you' feed better," the message read.

According to the engineering team's update, like counts and other metrics for a user's own posts will still show up under notifications. Posts still appear to show how many likes they have - but the author will be the only person who can see a list of those who

The option to hide likes was previously just available to paying Premium subscribers. When X announced that option in September, it said users could "keep spicy likes private by hiding your likes tab."

The hidden like count is one of many changes that have come to the platform since billionaire Elon Musk purchased it for \$44 billion in 2022. Beyond a new name and logo, other changes include doing away with the once-coveted blue checks for non-Premium users - and then restoring them to some.

The in-app changes have seen mixed receptions on the platform. In the early days of X stripping the verification badges from prominent officials and news organizations, for example, many voiced misinformation concerns.







www.shifaaljazeera.com.kw

The 32-team event, up from seven, is slated for June-July 2025

Expanded Club World Cup in '25 faces legal challenge by players' unions

DUSSELDORF, Germany, June 13, (AP): Soccer players' unions legally challenged FIFA on Thursday for expanding the Club World Cup.

The 32-team event, up from seven, is slated for June-July 2025 in the United States despite world players' union FIFPRO raising concerns about the increasing physical and mental demands on players.

FIFPRO's European arm said member unions in England and France filed a claim against FIFA at the Brussels Court of Commerce, and challenged FIFA's "decisions to unilaterally set the international match

The English Professional Footballers' Association said the case would "challenge the structure of football's broken calendar and enforce the rights of players to take protected

The Brussels court is being asked to refer the case to the European Court of Justice.

"Players and their unions have consistently highlighted the current football calendar as overloaded and unworkable," FIFPRO Europe said in a statement

FIFA revealed details of its ex-

panded Club World Cup in December. FIFPRO quickly opposed the plans, which it said showed a "lack of consideration for the mental and physical health of participating play-

SOCCER

ers, as well as a disregard for their personal and family lives.

FIFPRO said unions believe decisions like the expanded Club World Cup "violate the rights of players and their unions.

FIFA said the timing of the month-

long tournament, during the offseason for many major leagues around the world, would ensure sufficient rest for players.

That assertion is disputed.

"Once preparation periods and travel are included, the tournament is likely to create up to six weeks of additional work to be added to an already crowded schedule," FIFPRO Europe said. "The role of FIFPRO Europe and its members is not to favor or oppose one competition over another. However, in the wider context of the global football calendar, the new FIFA Club World Cup is

seen by players and unions as representing a tipping point."

FIFA says the international match calendar is published after consultation with the relevant stakeholders.

Staging the Club World Cup in 2025 means top players face three straight years of major competitions during the usual offseason, given the European Championship and Copa America are being staged this year and the next World Cup is in 2026.

"Since all attempts at dialogue have failed, it is now up to us to ensure that the fundamental rights taking the matter to the European courts and thus to the ECJ," FIF-PRO Europe president David Terrier said. "It's not a question of stigmatising a particular competition, but of denouncing both the underlying problem and the straw that broke the camel's back.

Despite the opposition of FIFPRO, the European Clubs Association has said the Club World Cup was "fantastic news for club football in gen-

The Associated Press contact FIFA



A file photo of Amir Cup champions Al-Qadsiya celebrating.

Italy 'top' the European Athletics **Champ'ships tally with 24 medals**

Hosts win men's 4x100m relay

ROME, June 13, (Xinhua): Host Italy won the men's 4x100m relay, the last race at the European Athletics Championships, here on Thursday, topping the tally with 24 medals.

The five-day championships in Rome's Stadio Olimpico, the last major European athletics competition before the start of the Paris Olympics next month, marked 50 years since the last time Rome hosted the prestigious event.

The Italian team claimed the 4x100m relay title in 37.82 seconds, only 0.32 seconds slower than its winning time at the Tokyo

ATHLETICS

Olympics three years ago. Three of the four Italian sprinters had been crowned at Tokyo 2020, including Marcell Jacobs, who earlier took the men's 100m gold in a seasonbest 10.02 seconds.

In the medal standings, Italy was followed by France with 16 medals and Britain with 13.

In the middle distances, 23-yearold Jakob Ingebrigtsen of Norway won his third consecutive double victory at the European Championships in the 1,500m and the 5,000m. In Rome, he won the 1,500m in a championship record of 3 minutes 31.95 seconds.

Ingebrigtsen, the defending Olympic champion in the 1,500m and the two-time defending world champion at 5,000m, is expected to compete in both events at Paris

As for other highlights, Italy's Gianmarco Tamberi, the defending Olympic and world champion in the high jump, added the third European gold medal to his collection with a jump of 2.37 me-

In the men's 4x400m relay, Belgium won in 2:59.84, while the Netherlands took home the title in the women's event in 3:22.39. The Dutch team was anchored by Femke Bol, who earlier won the women's 400m hurdles in 52.49 seconds. Bol won both the 400m and the 400m hurdles at last year's World Championships.

Italy's Nadia Battocletti won the women's 5,000m with a championship record of 14:35.29 and triumphed in 10,000m in 30:51.32.

Britain's Dina Asher-Smith clinched the women's 100m title in 10.99 seconds, 0.04 seconds ahead

of Ewa Swoboda of Poland. Ash-

Intensive training for Kuwait youth team ahead of Gulf Championship

By Khaled El Anzi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 13: The Kuwait youth basketball team has been placed in Group A alongside Qatar and the UAE for the Gulf Youth Championship under 18 years, which serves as the Asian Cup Qualifiers. Group B comprises of Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and Oman. The tournament, hosted by the Kuwait Basketball Association, will take place from July 29 to August 3. According to the tournament format, two teams from each group will advance to the semi-finals.

Thamer Al-Shanfa, Secretary of the Kuwait Basketball Federation, announced that the Kuwaiti youth national team is rigorously preparing for the Gulf Cup tournament, which will be hosted in Kuwait from July 29 to August 3, with all Gulf Cooperation Council countries participating.

Al-Shanfa mentioned that the youth team has started training in the Al-Ittihad Hall at the Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Indoor Sports Complex a few days ago, under the guidance of the technical staff led by Bahraini coach Salman Ramadan and with the full preliminary squad in attendance.

er-Smith was also part of the gold

medal winning team in the wom-

en's 4x100m relay, which finished

in 41.91 seconds ahead of France

and the Netherlands. Britain's time

was the fastest in Europe so far this



Kuwait youth team preparing for the championship.

He added that the national team will continue its local training sessions until July 10, after which they

BASKETBALL

will embark on an external training camp in Turkey for 16 days. The final list of players representing the national team in the tournament

Swiss sprinters won the men's

and women's 200m. Timothe

Mumenthaler finished first in the

men's event in 20.28 seconds

ahead of Italy's Filippo Tortu,

who ran the anchor leg on the Ital-

ian 4x100m relay team. Mean-

Filippo Tortu of Italy celebrates after winning the gold medal in the men's 4 X 100 meters relay final at the European Athletics Championships in Rome. (AP)

their home fans. while, Muhinga Kambundji took the women's 200m gold in 22.49 seconds in a photo finish over Britain's Daryll Neita, who was just

will be announced after the camp.

Al-Shanfa explained that the

Federation has devised a robust

preparation plan for the team, given

that the top two teams will qualify

for the Asian Championship in Jor-

dan this September. Both the Fed-

eration and the players are eager to

win the title, especially as the tour-

nament will be held in Kuwait, al-

lowing them to compete in front of

0.01 seconds behind. Alexander Doom of Belgium won the men's 400m in 44.15 seconds, while Natalia Kaczmarek won the women's 400m in 48.98 seconds.

Yemaneberhan Crippa of Italy won the men's half-marathon in 1:01:03, one second ahead of teammate Pietro Riva and four seconds ahead of Germany's Amanal Petros. Karoline Bjerkeli Grovdal of Norway grabbed the women's half-marathon title in a championship record time of 1:08:09.

Greece's Miltiadis Tentoglou set a championship record of 8.65m in winning the men's long jump.

Estonian Johannes Erm won the decathlon with 8,764 points in one of the strongest performances of the year so far, while Belgium's Nafissatou Thiam won the women's heptathlon with 6,848 points, a championship record.

The next host of the biennial European Athletics Championships will be Birmingham, Britain.

Al-Qadisiya to represent Kuwait in Gulf Club Cup Championship

By Hassan Musa Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 13: The Football Association has announced that Al-Qadisiya will represent Kuwait in the 2024 Gulf Club Cup Championship as the champion of the 2023-2024 HH the Amir Cup, with Al-Salmiya Club selected as the reserve

The Federation previously confirmed that Kuwait SC and Al-Arabi will participate in international tournaments under the Asian Football Confederation's umbrella for the 2024-2025 season. Kuwait SC, as the Zain Premier League champion, will compete in the AFC Champions League 2 playoffs, while Al-Arabi, the league runner-up, will participate in the group stage of the Asian Challenge Cup

The Gulf Club Cup competition is set to make a comeback after a nineyear hiatus. The tournament will feature eight teams, with one team from each Gulf country nominated by their respective local federations.

Al-Qadisiya has previously won the

Gulf Club Cup twice, first in 2000 and again in 2005, marking the last victory

for Kuwaiti teams in the tournament. The competition will follow a group stage format, with teams divided into two groups of four. The top two teams from each group will advance to the semi-finals, where the first place team from one group will face the second place team from the other group, and vice versa.

In May, the Executive Office of the Arabian Gulf Cup Federation approved the tournament's return, scheduled to

SOCCER

start on September 24, coinciding with the start of the Asian Championships. The final match is set for April 25,

Al-Shabab was the last team to win the tournament in 2015, defeating Omani side Al-Seeb on penalties (4-3).

Additionally, Al-Qadisiya has officially announced the acquisition of Salmiya players Moaz Al-Dhafiri and Athbi Shehab.

Pulisic offsets Rodrygo's goal as US gain 1-1 draw vs Brazil

ORLANDO, June 13, (AP): Four days after one of their worst matches, Christian Pulisic and the U.S. soccer team stopped an 11-game losing streak to Brazil with a spirted 1-1 draw that left them with a positive mindset heading into the Copa America.

Pulisic scored in 26th minute to offset Rodrygo's 17th-minute goal and Matt Turner had 11 saves, the most for an American goalkeeper since Tim Howard's 15 in the second-round loss to Belgium at the 2014 World Cup. "It's obviously a huge bounce back

performance for us," Turner said. "We really stared in the face of adversity and we were able to bounce back a few days later. And in tournament play that's so, so important because not every result, not every call is going to go your way and you have to be able put things behind you.

Rebounding from a 5-1 loss to Colombia last weekend, the Americans are now 1-18 with the draw against Brazil, getting their only win in a 1998 CONCACAF Gold Cup semifinal. The Seleção had 61% of possession,

SOCCER

outshot the U.S. 24-12 and had a 9-0 advantage in corner kicks.

"We feel like we made a little step. It's not a huge step, but it's a little step to be able to play against an amazingly talented Brazil team and bend but not break and I think give them problems, as well," U.S. coach Gregg Berhalter said. Among six invited guests to the

Copa America, the U.S. opens against Bolivia on June 23 and then plays Panama and Uruguay. Brazil, which last won the South American title in 2007, has first-round matches against Costa Rica, Paraguay and Colombia.

"It just puts us in a good place," American defender Tim Ream said. "Obviously, it's a good result going into tournament play and I think that's what we needed." The game drew a mostly pro-Brazilian crowd of 60,016 to Camping World Stadium, the largest attendance for a U.S. national team game in Florida. Yunus Musah nearly put the U.S. ahead in the fifth minute with a 25-yard shot that hit the crossbar and ricocheted off the back of goalkeeper Alisson and away from the net.

Brazil went ahead when Turner took a back pass from Ream and sent the ball upfield for Musah, who was switching off. Brazilian midfielder Bruno Guimarães intercepted with a header toward Raphinha, who fed



U.S. forward Christian Pulisic looks to control an overhead pass as he moves to the goal against Brazil during the second half of an inter-national friendly soccer match in Orlando, Fla. (AP)

Rodrygo with a diagonal pass for his sixth international goal, an 8-yard shot past Turner's left arm.

Pulisic was pulled down by João Gomes at the edge of the penalty area and slotted a free kick through the defensive wall and past Alisson's right hand for his 29th goal in 68 international appearances.

Turner made excellent stops on 17-year Endrick in the 70th, Rodrygo in the 74th and Vinícius Júnior in the 87th, then punched away Andreas Pereira's free kick in the sixth minute of stoppage time. Alisson denied Pulisic in the 68th and Brenden Aaronson in the 80th.

The U.S. again used rainbow numbers for Pride Month, this time on jerseys that were largely blue with a low white diagonal slash and a small amount of red at the bottom.

Berhalter made two changes from Saturday's 5-1 loss to Colombia, inserting forward Ricardo Pepi and Musah for Folarin Balogun and Johnny Cardoso. All 11 starters played for European clubs - just six of 154 starting positions have been filled with Major League Soccer players for the 14 matches the full pool has been available since the 2022 World Cup, including three of 110 since Berhalter returned as coach.

The U.S. had not played at the former Citrus Bowl since Berhalter made his first international start in an exhibition against Sweden on Jan. 24, 1998.

Brazil coach Dorival Júnior changed 10 of 11 starters from Saturday's 3-2 win over Mexico, keeping Alisson as the only holdover.

Best of the Rest

Herrera extends deal: Athletic Club Bilbao on Thursday informed that veteran midfielder Ander Herrera has signed a new one-year contract to stay at the club for the 2024-25 sea-

The former Manchester United and Paris Saint Germain player, who will be 35 years old when the new season kicks off in August, rejected the chance to return to Zaragoza, where he began his career, to stay for a third campaign in Bilbao.

Although the two previous seasons of his second spell at the San Mames Stadium have been interrupted by injury, Herrera made 23 appearances in La Liga last season, along with four in the Copa del Rey as the club won that title for the first time in 40 years to assure a place in Europe. (Xinhua)

Fonseca named Milan coach:

Paulo Fonseca was hired as AC Milan's coach on Thursday and charged with forming a more competitive challenge to city rival and Serie A champion Inter Milan.

Fonseca, who signed a three-year contract, replaces Stefano Pioli, who left the club at the end of the recent season after a nearly five-year stint that included the 2022 Serie A title.

Milan finished second in Serie A last season but was a distant 19 points lost the second meeting 2-1 in April.

behind Inter. Milan was routed by Inter 5-1 in the derby in September and

Dawri Zain celebrates season's top athletes



Waleed Al Khashti and Al Mutairi with the Excellence Awards winners.

Company holds Excellence Awards ceremony in partnership with KFA

KUWAIT CITY, June 13: For the second year running, Zain held its prestigious Excellence Awards ceremony to recognize the top athletes of the recently concluded 2023-2024 football season of the Zain Premier League (Dawri Zain). During the event, the very best players were recognized on stage for their top performance, after having won the affection of thousands of fans throughout

the season. The special event was held at the Regency Hotel, attended by Zain Kuwait Chief Corporate Affairs and Relations Officer, Waleed Al Khashti, Kuwait Football Association Vice Chairman, Haief Al Mutairi, KFA Board Member, Fatima Hayat, KFA Secretary-General, Salah Al Qenaei, Deputy General Manager of the Public Sports Authority - Sports for All Division, Hamed Al Hazeem, Al Qabas and SHASHA Managing Director, Nasser Al Momen, Zain and KFA officials, along with members of the local sports community and local and regional sports media. The event was presented by popular sports influencer Musaad Al Fouzan.

During the ceremony, Zain and the KFA took to the stage to celebrate and award the top performers of the 2023-2024 season with the cash prizes announced at the season's kick-off last year. The recognition came after the technical committee officially announced the winners on-stage, after which they were presented with the following cash

encouragement contributes to elevating the league's performance and sports sector. Kuwait Football

Association

local athletes and believes that such

In addition to the above, Zain also formed a special committee to outpresented a weekly Player of the line the standards and criteria on which the prize winners were Round Award – Premier League (KD 500) and a weekly Player of selected. The committee is memthe Round Award - First Division bered by former international players and experts Abdulaziz Hamadah League (KD 200). Winners in these (committee head), Hamad Al Enzi, two categories were previously Ahmad Mousa, Hussain Hakem, announced by Zain. The company and Hussain Al Mutairi. Zain also presented a Best Photo of the extends its thanks to the committee Season Award (KD 1000), dedicatfor their efforts in selecting the wined to photographers, which was ners throughout the season. won by Faisal Al Loughani.

The event also witnessed awarding



Waleed Al Khashti speaking at the event.

bringing even more excitement to all fans. For this reason, the company has pledged not only to continue this support but has also added new prize categories to reflect its interest in shouldering the local Prior to the season's kickoff, the

Winner	Club	Award
Mohammed Daham	Kuwait SC	Season's Best Player (KD 10,000)
Bader Al Mutawa	Qadsia SC	Season's Top Scorer - Locals (KD 2500)
Yousef Nasser	Kuwait SC	Season's Top Scorer - Locals (KD 2500)
Mohammed Daham	Kuwait SC	Season's Top Scorer - Locals (KD 2500)
Hamza Khaba	Arabi SC	Season's Top Scorer - Pros (KD 5000)
Saud Al Houshan	Kuwait SC	Season's Best Goalkeeper (KD 5000)
Nabeel Maloul	Kuwait SC	Season's Best Coach (KD 3000)
Muath Al Osaima'	Salmiya SC	Season's Best Rising Star (KD 2000)



Haief Al Mutairi speaking at the event.

the top three winners of the Zain Fantasy League for the 2023-2024 season. The new season of the online competition was kicked-off by Zain last year to bring local sports to the digital scene. Over 6000 players signed up to play, and the three top winners were awarded as follows: first place winner Mutlaq Salman (KD 5000), second place winner Ahmad Sanasiri (KD 3500), and joint third place winners Shadi Makki and

Aysha Al Hamad (KD 750 each). With this prestigious awards ceremony, Zain has successfully concluded the second season of its strategic partnership with the Kuwait Football

throughout the 2022-2026 seasons. This season, the competitions included the Kuwait Premier League (Dawri Zain), won by Kuwait SC, H.H. the Amir's Cup, won by Qadsiya SC, and

Association, which

to SHASHA, the leading local streaming platform, for the distinguished experience of broadcasting Dawri

continues

Zain's matches this season. The latest streaming technologies were used to

the Zain First Division League, won by Yarmouk SC. Under this partnership, Zain's role centered around three main areas: supporting athletes with cash prizes, launching social events and interacting with fans at stadiums, and the first-ever Fantasy Football League in Kuwaiti football's history. These contributions and more went in line with the KFA's vision to bolster the local football scene.

Zain also extended its appreciation



Zain team at the event.



Bader Al Mutawa and Mohammed Daham winners of the season's Top Scorer Award.

role in developing the local sports air matches and analysis studies with the best sports pundits to fans through and youth sectors, and it makes this SHASHA's digital platforms. belief a reality by sponsoring and Zain firmly believe that the prisupporting some of the biggest vate sector has a vital and active sports programs in the nation.



Mohammed Daham winner of the Best Player in the Season Award.



Saud Al Houshan winner of the Best Goalkeeper



India's Jasprit Bumrah throws the ball towards the stumps in an attempt to run-out United States' Steven Taylor during the ICC Men's T20 World Cup cricket match between United States and India at the Nassau County International Cricket Stadium in Westbury, New York. (AP)

Sports

Latest sports scores at — http://sports.arabtimesonline.com

India dominate US to reach Super 8

West Indies hold off New Zealand

WESTBURY, June 13, (AP): There was no upset this time for the United States as the home team was easily beaten by cricket heavyweight India at the Twenty20 World Cup.

Suryakumar Yadav's half-century powered India to a seven-wicket win over the U.S., which had shocked Pakistan last week.

With the win, India reached the Super 8 round. The U.S. can advance by beating Ireland on Friday.

In a later match at Brian Lara Stadium in Trinidad, Sherfane Rutherford scored an unbeaten 68 from 39 deliveries to help the West Indies in their great escape - the co-hosts beat New Zealand by 13 runs.

The Caribbean lineup, 149-9 in its 20 overs, was 76-7 before its Ru-

CRICKET

therford-led recovery. Alzarri Joseph snared four New Zealand wickets and Gudakesh Motie took three - including New Zealand captain Kane Williamson for 1 - to restrict the Black Caps to 136-9 in reply.

On Long Island, Yadvav's 50 runs came off 49 balls and included two boundaries and two sixes. He put on 72 runs off 65 balls in an unbeaten fourthwicket stand with Shivam Dube, who scored 31 not out as India finished with 111-3 in 18.2 overs in reply to 110-8 by the United States.

Left-arm pacer Arshdeep Singh returned figures of 4-9 - including two wickets in the first over - to restrict the co-hosts after India had won the toss and opted to field at the Nassau County International Stadium. India was in early trouble in its chase as Indian-born medium pacer Saurabh Netravalkar continued his golden run for the Americans.

After bowling the co-hosts to the upset over Pakistan, he celebrated the wickets of Indian superstars Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli.

Kohli was caught behind for a golden duck - dismissed off the first delivery he faced - in what surely will become a career highlight for Netrav-

Terzic resigns as Dortmund coach

DORTMUND, Germany, June 13, (AP): Edin Terzic resigned as coach of Champions League runner-up Borussia Dortmund on

Terzic said he wanted Dortmund to start a "new era" with a new coach but there was no immediate word on a successor amid reports in German media that his assistant Nuri Sahin could take over.

Terzic's last game in charge was the 2-0 loss to Real Madrid in the Champions League final at London's Wembley Stadium on

"After the game at Wembley, I asked for a meeting with the club's senior management team, because after 10 years at BVB (Dortmund) - including five on the coaching staff and two and a half as head coach - I feel that the club's new era should begin with a new man on the touchline," Terzic said in a club statement.

"Everyone close to me knows that this has been a very difficult decision for me to take over the last few weeks, but after intensive discussions my fundamental feeling has not changed."

alkar. Sharma (3) fell to a slower delivery as Netravalkar finished with 2-18 in four overs. Rishabh Pant scored 18 off 20 balls batting at No. 3 before he was bowled by Ali Khan delivery. With India struggling at 39-3 in 7.3 overs, the U.S. team momentarily

home team's fortunes around, going to the crease with the West Indies reeling at 22-4 after 5.4 overs. Rutherford scored 18 off the last over that culmi-

strong possibility it will not make the second round. If Afghanistan beats three-time runner-up New Zealand will be out of contention.



Boston Celtics guard Jaylen Brown (7) goes up for a shot against Dallas Mavericks forward Maxi Kleber (42) and guard Kyrie Irving, (right) during the first half in Game 3 of the NBA basketball finals in Dallas. Celtics' Jay-



Milos Vucevic, welcomes the President of the International Aquatics Federation, Captain Hussein Al-Musallam.

Serbia PM receives Al-Musallam

BELGRADE, June 13: The Prime Minister of the Republic of Serbia, Mr. Milos Vucevic, welcomed the President of the International Aquatics Federation, Captain Hussein Al-Musallam, in the Serbian capital, Belgrade.

The discussion focused on future cooperation between Serbia and the International Federation to advance water sports globally and explore how Serbian sports expertise and capabilities could contribute to this effort.

Captain Hussein Al-Musallam expressed his sincere gratitude to the Republic of Serbia for its interest in World Aquatics hosting the Championships in the future and for its support in promoting and developing water sports worldwide.

Al-Musallam highlighted that the International Federation is dedicated to the advancement of aquatic sports and aims to organize championships at various stages across different conti-

Thursday.

raised visions of an even bigger shock.

Left-hander Rutherford turned the nated with a six and a boundary.

The loss left New Zealand with a Papua New Guinea on Thursday,



son Tatum is at left. The Celtics won 106-99. (AP)

when he'll be 39. It will also test young talents like striker Alejandro Garnacho and mark the national team's goodbye to veteran Ángel Di María.

DALLAS, June 13, (AP): Jayson Tat-

um and Jaylen Brown shared a long

hug after helping Boston avoid the big-

gest collapse in an NBA Finals game

on the brink of joining the litany of

big-name predecessors to put a banner

had 30 and the Celtics held off a furi-

ous Dallas rally to move to the verge

of a record 18th championship with a

106-99 victory over the Mavericks on

Brown finished with eight rebounds

and eight assists as the Celtics ex-

tended their franchise record with a

10th consecutive playoff victory and

moved to 7-0 on the road this postsea-

son. They can win the series and break

a tie with the Lakers for most NBA

championships with a victory Friday

blowing a 21-point lead with 11 min-

these playoffs without Kristaps Por-

zingis after the 7-foot-2 Latvian was

ruled out before the game because of a

rare tendon injury in his lower left leg

of the series appears in doubt, but it

might not matter. None of the previ-

ous 156 teams to face a 3-0 deficit

has rallied to win an NBA playoff

comeback to avoid the big hole - 13

years after Dallas had the biggest

fourth-quarter rally in the play-by-play

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina, June

13, (AP): Lionel Messi won the World

Cup in 2022, won the Copa America

in 2021, and wants to show he has the

South American soccer championship

as the defending champion but with a

team that's slowly starting to rejuve-

The tournament, which starts on

June 20 in the United States, will

gauge whether Messi will still be able

to play at the next World Cup in 2026,

SOCCER

Argentina heads into this month's

hunger to win some more.

The Mavs almost pulled off a crazy

The status of Porzingis for the rest

utes to go.

sustained in Game 2.

And Boston can forget about nearly

Boston also improved to 10-1 in

Wednesday night for a 3-0 lead.

above the parquet floor back home.

The reward? The Celtics stars are

Tatum scored 31 points, Brown

since at least 1997.

Argentina won its 15th Copa America title three years ago, amid the COV-ID-19 pandemic, by beating Brazil 1-0 in the final. That tournament served as a springboard for its triumphant run to the World Cup title a year later in

In a game that seemed over early in the fourth, the score was stuck on 93-90 for more than three minutes. That included when Doncic was called for a

the challenge, since it meant trying to save their superstar from disqualifica-

Messi and defending champions Argentina

still hungry for titles ahead of Copa America

Argentina is still counting on several

players who won those titles with Ar-

gentina, but with key additions when

the team opens play on June 20 against

In this file photo, Argentina's Li-

onel Messi controls the ball during a qualifying soccer match for the

FIFA World Cup 2026 against Uru-

guay at La Bombonera stadium in

Buenos Aires, Argentina. (AP)

era of the NBA Finals (since 1997) when a 15-point comeback in Game 2 started its run to the franchise's only title against Miami.

Boston led 91-70 at the end of a

West Indies' Sherfane Rutherford bats during the men's T20 World Cup cricket match between the West Indies and New Zealand at the Brian Lara Cricket

Academy, Tarouba, Trinidad and Tobago. (AP)

Doncic fouls out and Mavericks fall into a 3-0 hole

Celtics on verge of a record 18th championship

20-5 run early in the fourth quarter before Dallas answered with a 22-2 spurt to get within a point with 3 1/2 minutes remaining. Problem was, Luka Doncic picked

up his sixth foul with 4:12 remaining when a challenge was unsuccessful before Kyrie Irving, who scored 35 points, hit a jumper to get Dallas

Tatum and Brown saved the Celtics from there, with some help from Derrick White, who scored 16. Those

BASKETBALL

three combined for the remaining 13 Boston points to get the Celtics within a victory of their first title since 2008, and just the second since 1986.

The Celtics have led 3-0 in the NBA Finals only once, finishing off the Lakers in a sweep in 1959. The first step for Dallas is trying to avoid getting swept in a seven-game

series for just the second time in franchise history.

blocking foul on a driving Brown. The Mavs had nothing to lose with 'The first match is very important'

Fans anxious to see if Germany can fire up Euro 2024 in opener against Scotland

MUNICH, June 13, (AP): The sound of bagpipes, and men in kilts on the streets of Munich - Scotland is in town and the excitement is ramping up ahead of the European Championship curtainraiser on Friday.

Host nation Germany plays Scotland at Allianz Arena in the opener of the month-long tournament.

The final is in Berlin on July 14 and Germany is even keener to get there after three straight fiascos at major tournaments that has forced its fans to readjust their expectations of the men's national team.

"It's been up and down for us all the way here and that's why we have to be humble. The first match is very important and then we'll see what happens during the rest of the tournament.

A good first match and group stage would set off a new wave of excitement in Germany, even though scenes similar to when it brilliantly hosted the 2006 World Cup (and reached the semifinals) are hard to imagine in a changed political landscape.

While the Scots are out in droves in Munich, proudly wearing their team jerseys (many combined with kilts), there is hardly a sighting of a Germany shirt or flag. Political extremists are flourishing, anxiety pervades the

Canada in Group A. Peru and Chile are

Messi will turn 37 during the Copa

America, which will also mark the first

time he'll play a major event since leav-

ing European soccer. He scored 15 goals

The Argentina captain has struggled

with muscular injuries since the World

Cup, but has not said when he expects

Di María scored in both the winning

Copa America and World Cup finals,

but the veteran striker has decided to

end his national team career this year

I wear the Argentina shirt. With all the

pain in my soul and feeling a lump in

the throat, I bid farewell of the most

beautiful thing that happened in my ca-

reer," Di María said at the end of 2023

Di María is fourth on the list in ap-

pearances for Argentina, playing in

138 matches since his debut in 2008.

He played in the last four World Cups

and was also in the squad that won the

Olympic gold medal at the 2008 Bei-

on his social media channels.

"Copa America will be the last time

to retire from the national team.

in the United States.

jing Games.

in 14 matches for Inter Miami this year.

also in the group.

country, and the national team has under-performed. It is understandable the home fans are going about their daily life in contrast to the partying

visitors. While the Germans are bemused by their raucous Scottish counterparts, there should still be plenty of more colors on matchday

Germany went out at the group stage of both previous World Cups and was eliminated by England in the round of 16 at Euro 2021. But defeat to Scotland would be a shock, even though the Scots have improved a lot in recent years.

"It's going to be an amazing experience ... being part of that kind of opening ceremony," Scotland forward Ryan Christie said when asked about playing the opening match.

SOCCER

"Germany, an amazing team. All the international teams go through peaks and drops in form. But when these big tournaments come up, the big teams normally show up most of the time. So it will be a really tough

Hungary and Switzerland are also

Having failed to reach the Euros from 2000-16, Scotland has qualified for back-to-back tournaments and the next aim is to reach the knockout stage for the first time.

That's the dream," Christie said. "To everyone around Scotland, it would mean the world, a massive kind of footballing country. If we come out of the group stages, that's the furthest Scotland will have ever been in a major tournament.

"So, you know, it puts us down in history as the most successful Scottish team ever, and that's the kind of motivation right there. We've got a huge belief in ourselves, with this squad of players, that we can really do a lot of damage to other teams and hopefully do well when we go to these big tournaments."

Scotland showed during the qualifying campaign it can surprise, in beating Spain and Norway.

However, Scotland has won only one of its last 13 matches against Germany and that was more than 25 years ago, 1-0 in a friendly in April

Plus, Germany has another, rather more unusual motivation to win the trophy on its own turf. Deniz Undav has said he will shave

the head of fellow Germany forward Thomas Müller if the team becomes European champion.

IGUAGE DAILY IN FREE KUWAIT

Editor-in-Chief

ARAB® TIMES

Editorial Office: Airport Road, Shuwaikh

Advertising: Tel: 24813815 Fax: 24845708 P.O. Box 2270, 13023 Safat, Kuwait E-mail: arabtimes@arabtimesonline.com E-mail: advt@arabtimesonline.com

Annual Subscriptions:

Individuals KD 45/- Companies and Official Departments KD 75 Airmail charges extra for Fax: 24839487

AHMED AL JARALLAH

Telephone: 24813566 & 24849144 Fax: 24818267

Tel: 24849144