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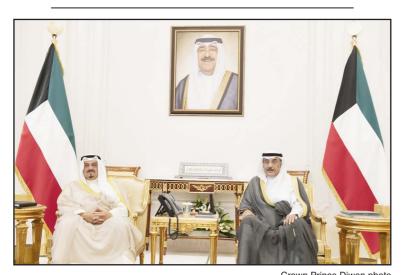
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## **Amir receives Crown Prince, PM**



Amiri Diwan photo His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace on Wednesday His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.



Crown Prince Diwan photo His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace Wednesday His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

#### **Cornerstone of oil strategy**

## Al-Zour marks milestone with 615,000 bpd output

KUWAIT CITY. June 19. (KUNA): Kuwait's Al-Zour refinery stands as among the region's most impactful oil projects, besides being the cornerstone of state-run Kuwait Petroleum Corporation's (KPC) future plans and strategies that aim to ratchet up oil refining capacity, the facility's fully-operational output has reached 615,000 barrels per day (bpd).

The refinery, some 90 kilometers south of Kuwait City, has long been one of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's core concerns, as evidenced by his attendance of a lavish ceremony last month to mark the facility's operation at full ca-

Ranked seventh in the world's list of the biggest oil refineries based on daily capacity, a statistic that shows the sheer magnitude of the facility, Al-Zour looks poised to propel KPC to regional prominence given its contributions towards bringing the company's major goals to fruition, which subsequently triggers a positive ripple effect on the national economy

On the intricacies of Al-Zour's daily output, the refinery churns out some 86,000 bpd of premium Naphtha, in addition to 99,000 bpd of jet fuel and 147,000 bpd of lowsulfur diesel, respectively, all the while keeping carbon emissions in check in line with Kuwait's commitment towards environmental sustainability goals.

With its operation at full-fledged capacity, Al-Zour refinery will now be able to boost Kuwait's competitiveness in the global market though its production of oil-based products of sublime quality, with KPC chief executive Sheikh Nawaf Al-Sabah saving the nation will now "reap the benefits" of the facility, chief among them being a sharp rise in Kuwait's crude oil exports.

He went on to say that he was "proud" of the dedication and commitment of KPC's national workforce, saying their experiences in handling such a critical project would serve them well over the course of their professional careers, enabling them to better deal with future endeavors.

Echoing his sentiments, Wadha Al-Khatib, acting chief executive of KPC affiliate Kuwait Integrated Petroleum Industries Company, said the opening of Al-Zour refinery would "usher in a new era" in Kuwait's oil industry, in addition to a "launchpad" for greater output capacity in line with environment safety standards.

Some 30 countries from across the world have become the beneficiaries of the rise in Kuwaiti oil exports, while Al-Zour has boosted total refining capacity from 800,000 bpd to a million and 415 thousand bpd, the official underlined, giving due credit to the national workforce for coping with the arduous journey that culminated in the facility's full-fledged operations.

## 52°C heat spurs power outages across Kuwait

Around 40 areas hit as calls for energy conservation echo

By Mohammad Al-Musleh, Abdel Nasser Al-Aslami and Mohammed Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, June 19:** Around 40 areas across Kuwait witnessed a power outage on Wednesday due to some transformers being out of service as a result of the increase in air temperature.

The affected areas include Abdullah Al-Mubarak, Abdullah Port, Andalus, Ardiya, Bneid Al-Gar, Dasma, Al-Dhahr, Faiha, Fahaheel, Farwaniya, Funaitees, Hawally, Hattin, Ishbiliya, Jaber Al-Ali, Jabriya, Khaitan, Khaldiya, Mangaf, Mansouriya, Nuzha, Oyoun, Qadsiya, Rabiya, Al-Rai, Rawda, Rehab, Rumaithiya, Saad Al-Abdullah, Sabah Al-Salem, Al-Salam, Salmiya, Salwa, Shamiya, Shuwaikh Industrial Area, South Surra, Subhan, Surra, Umm Al-Hayman, Waha and Yarmouk.

Earlier, citizens reported about a power outage in Block One in Saad Al-Abdullah expressing their hope and confidence in the ability of the Ministry of Electricity to immediately address the problem. Then, electricity was restored in some parts of Block 12 in Salmiya, specifically Nasser Al-Badr Street, Avenue 10, after the emergency teams dealt with the out-

The ministry revealed that the power outage is due to high temperature that breached 50 degrees Celsius on Wednesday; thereby, increasing pressure on the electrical network. It added this is expected in light of the increased loads and pressure on the electricity network due to rising temperatures and increasing demand for energy. It affirmed that emergency teams were immediately dispatched to the stations that caused the outages to repair the fault and restore power.

In a related development, the Meteorological Department at the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) announced that Kuwait recorded a temperature of 52 degrees Celsius.

Head of the Marine Forecast Unit at the Meteorological Department Yasser Al-Balushi revealed in a statement to the newspaper that the temperature ranged between 51 to 52 degrees Celsius in most land and open areas. He explained that the noticeable rise is due to the presence of air mass resulting from the extension of the Indian monsoon low; along with the extremely hot, fast and dusty northwesterly winds

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Interior said that due to the power outage in some areas and the resulting stoppage of traffic lights at some intersections, the General Traffic Department (GTD) immediately provided traffic patrols to manage the affected areas. It urged road users to take caution and follow the instructions of the security personnel to guarantee the safety of everyone.

Official sources from the Ministry of Electricity and Water disclosed that the failure of a power generation unit in South Zour Station with a capacity of 300 megawatts was behind the out-



Seeking relief from scorching heat, a young man cools off with water as Kuwait hits 52°C on a blistering Wednes-



Photo by Samer Shiker

Khaitan shops forced to close as Kuwait grapples with power outage.

ages in different parts of the country. They added this is one of the old stations with eight units whose lifespan ended, affirming that the ministry recently signed a contract to carry out the maintenance works.

Another official source from the ministry said "many countries around the world are resorting to a programmed voluntary power cut in order to ration consumption, but we have not taken such a decision yet. We hope we will not be forced to take this step. The cooperation of consumers will greatly help in rationalizing consumption and avoiding programmed disconnection. There have been calls for the ministry to intervene in order to regulate consumption in other ministries and agencies that do not require the use of electricity throughout the day, as it is a more valid option than programmed disconnection for citizens." Prior to the outages, Minister of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy and Minister of State for Housing Affairs Dr. Mahmoud Bushehri assured the public about the stability of the country's

electrical energy situation. He emphasized that the ministry is fully equipped with the necessary capabilities and personnel to meet the nation's electricity demands and handle any potential emergencies resulting from increased loads due to high

temperatures. During his inspection visit to the National Control Center to oversee operations and management of the national electricity grid -- from production facilities to consumer distribution, Bushehri urged consumers to practice energy conservation during peak hours, specifically from 11:00 am to 5:00 pm. He highlighted that such efforts significantly contribute to sustainable electricity usage.

Acting Undersecretary of the ministry Eng. Haitham Al-Ali joined the minister in this visit. They reviewed the readiness of the electrical network to manage high loads expected during the summer season.

The inspection covered key operational rooms; such as the computer room, communications room, and the control and monitoring center, all essential for monitoring and managing the electricity network effectively.

In addition, the electricity consumption index neared the orange zone at

15,844 megawatts on Tuesday. **Continued on Page 5** 

Oil sector slump drives decline

Kuwait's economy contracts 4.35% in Q4 2023

#### Newswatch

VIENNA: Kuwait on Wednesday urged the international community to step up efforts and put an end to what it called the "aggressive" war against the Gaza Strip, subsequently putting the Palestinians out of their misery.

Vowing to keep aid to the Palestinians intact, Kuwait's permanent representative to the United Nations Nasser Al-Heyn told the UN Human Rights Council that Israeli occupation forces continue to wage a "destructive" war against the Palestinians, lamenting the silence of the international community.

He went on to say that the situation continues to exacerbate as a result of the impeded delivery of aid to the Palestinian enclave, calling or the immediate relief to be given to innocent civilians there. (KUNA)

**DUBAl:** A bulk carrier sank days after an

attack by **Yemen**'s Houthi rebels believed to have killed one mariner on board, authorities said early Wednesday, the second ship sunk in the rebels' campaign. The sinking of the Tutor in the Red

Sea marks what appears to be a new escalation by the Iranian-backed Houthis in their campaign targeting shipping through the vital maritime corridor over the Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip.

The attack comes despite a monthslong U.S.-led campaign in the region that has seen the Navy face its most-intense maritime fighting since World War II, with near-daily attacks targeting commercial vessels and warship. (AP)

UNITED NATIONS: The Sudanese government accused the United Arab Emirates on Tuesday of fueling the 14-month war in the African country by providing weapons to a rival paramilitary force. The UAE dismissed the allegation as "ludicrous," calling "a shameful abuse by one of the warring parties.'

The clash came during a U.N. Security Council meeting at which Assistant Secretary-General Martha Pobee warned that atrocities are being committed along ethnic lines in Sudan's western Darfur region. (AP)

TEHRAN: The death toll of the earthquake that hit Iran's northeastern city of Kashmar on Tuesday has risen to four, according to Iranian authorities.

"The toll of victims has risen to four and 120 others have been injured," Kashmar's Governor Hajatollah Shariatmadar was quoted as saying by Iran's official news agency (IRNA).

Earlier in the day, Iranian authorities announced that an earthquake measuring five degrees on the Richter scale had hit Kashmar City in the country's northeastern Razavi Khorasan province, 1:24 am local time. (KUNA)





Photos by Mahmoud Jadeed

Kuwaiti pilgrims receive warm embraces and a festive welcome from family and loved ones upon their return to Kuwait International Airport after completing Hajj. – See Also Page 2

### Kuwait welcomes back pilgrims after Hajj

Kuwait International Wednesday received Kuwaiti pilgrims after performing Hajj for the

Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) is working with full ca-

pacity to facilitate the return of the guests of Almighty Allah from the Holy Land of Makkah, through coordination with Kuwaiti Hajj cam-

The DGCA announced Tuesday

that the total number of flights allocated for the return of pilgrims from Saudi Arabia will reach 38 flights, starting from the June 19th, and will continue for three days.

KUWAIT CITY, June 19: In the fourth quarter of 2023, Kuwait's gross domestic product (GDP) at constant prices experienced a decline of 4.35 percent compared to the same period in the previous year, reports Al-Seyassah daily.
The GDP was recorded at

10.33 billion dinars (\$33.77 billion), down from 10.80 billion dinars (\$35.31 billion) in the fourth quarter of 2022. This decline was primarily attributed to a 6.4 percent decrease in the added value of the oil sector, influenced by reduced crude oil production quantities. Additionally, the non-oil sector's added value decreased by 2.3 percent during the same period.

The breakdown of contributions to the economy in the fourth quarter of 2023 showed that oil and natural gas extraction activities, along with related services, contributed 49.7 percent.

The manufacturing including oil refining activities, contributed 8.5 percent, while public administration, defense,

**Continued on Page 5** 

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

By Night: Hot to rather hot with

Weather light variable wind to light to moderate northwesterly wind, with speeds of 08-28 km/h.

Max Exp Station **Kuwait City** 

**Kuwait Airport** Abdalv Jahra Salmiyah Nuwaisib Wafra

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

#### **HH Crown Prince and Prime Minister send greetings**

## HH Amir congratulates South African president on re-election

KUWAIT CITY, June 19, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a congratulatory cable to South African President Cyril Ramaphosa, on his re-

His Highness the Amir wished President Ramaphosa success and longlasting health, and the country of South Africa and its people, further progress and prosperity.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Crown

Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent a cable to South African President Cyril Ramaphosa, congratulating him on his re-election. The Crown Prince wished the president good health, and the country of South Africa and its

people, further progress and prosperity.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah also sent a cable to South African president, congratulating him on his re-election.

## 25 flights bring home thousands of Kuwaiti pilgrims from S. Arabia

Kuwait airport eases all entry procedures for pilgrims





Photos by Mahmoud Jadeed

Top and above: Pilgrims being received by their family members at the Kuwait International Airport after their return from Hajj.

**Kuwait preps for talks with Philippines** 

### Lifting of ban on recruitment of Filipino domestic workers eyed

KUWAIT CITY, June 19: According to a specialist in domestic labor affairs Bassam Al-Shammari, the meeting between the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousuf Al-Sabah and the Philippine Congressman and Chairman of Committee on Overseas Workers Affairs Ron P. Salo contributed to settling part of the Kuwait-Philippines domestic labor

dispute, reports Aljarida daily. Al-Shammari explained that an official delegation from the Philippines will soon visit Kuwait to hold discussions with relevant Kuwaiti institutions regarding the cancellation of the ban and the resumption of export of domestic labor from the Philippines. If the ban is lifted, domestic labor offices are prepared to travel to Manila to finalize job orders.

Kuwait's labor market is experiencing a shortage of Filipino domestic workers, who are highly preferred for their convenience, education, and familiarity with Kuwaiti customs. Currently, there are 200,000 Filipino domestic workers, constituting 50 percent of the total domestic

Al-Shammari anticipated that the upcoming meetings would cover several issues, such as the management of shelters operated by the Philippines Embassy in Kuwait, expediting the resolution of labor disputes to ensure workers receive their entitlements like indemnities and timely salaries, safeguarding their documents including civil identity cards and passports, and improving the shelters for domestic workers managed by the Public Authority of Manpower (PAM).

He revealed that the delegation from the Philippines that visited Kuwait in response to the recent fire incident in Mangaf also visited the shelter center operated by PAM where laborers reside until their issues are resolved, adding that they made sure the residents are receiving appropriate care.

### Int'l Day of Countering Hate Speech

### **UN Representative in Kuwait calls for** concerted efforts to fight hate speech

KUWAIT CITY, June 19, (KUNA): The UN Secretary-General's Representative and Resident Coordinator Ghada Al-Taher on Tuesday underlined the need to step up efforts to fight hate speech amid accelerating political, economic, social, mili-

tary and ideological conflicts.

The UN official made the call in a statement to KUNA to mark the International Day of Countering Hate Speech, which falls on June

She added that

the conflicts had triggered a crisis of displacement and asylum in conflict-hit regions, not to mention a racial, ethnic and cultural crisis, and had even heightened social, economic and demographic pressure, buoyed up by media discourses that instigate division and hatred.

She noted that widespread digital platforms had led to shaping the discourse and restoring the ideological system among the recipients, particularly young people, billing them as a driver of political, social, religious and racial conflicts.

Al-Taher stressed that this discourse is driven by such conflicts, be they internal, regional or international, adding that media messages, via such platforms, had culminated in various patterns of hate waves, leading up to a disastrous human atmosphere and aggravated gaps among people as well as disequilibrium among the segments of the same national fabric.

She went on to say that the United Nations (UN) had declared June 18th as the International Day of Countering Hate Speech as a priority for creating a closer and more tolerant global atmosphere. She regarded this occasion as an opportunity to promote the No to Hate Campaign through mass media and social media, focusing on the role of young people in

fighting this phenomenon. In this regard, Al-Taher quoted UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres as having underlined the need to involve youth in UN efforts in fighting hate



**By Mohammad Al-Musleh** 

The airport eased all the entry procedures for the pilgrims -- from the time they got off the plane until they left the airport gates.

Arabia.

A total of 25 flights from Jeddah with thousands of pilgrims on board arrived on Wednesday. The first flight by Saudi Airlines arrived at 12:30 pm with about 250 pilgrims on board.

A number of officials from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) warmly welcomed the pilgrims and followed up the entry procedures to ensure the smooth flow of movement inside the airport.

Pilgrims on board Kuwait Airways flights were received in the passenger terminal (T4), Jazeera Airways flights in terminal (T5), and Saudi Airlines and Flynas flights in the main passenger terminal (T1).

#### **Barriers**

DGCA placed barriers throughout the reception area until the point where the pilgrims exited the airport in order to prevent crowding of those receiving pilgrims. The airport's entrances and ex-

its witnessed the heavy presence of security and traffic personnel to guarantee the smooth flow of traffic, reduce congestion in front of the departure and arrival halls, and to organize the parking process designated for loading pas-

sengers. The arriving pilgrims confirmed that Hajj this year was easy and simple, praising the role of Saudi authorities and their successful management of pilgrims' affairs and facilitating Hajj rituals

for them without obstacles. They indicated that the excellent organization by the Saudi authorities contributed to overcoming the difficulties, especially during the stoning ritual. They affirmed that the Kuwaiti Hajj delegation was in constant contact with the Hajj caravans to check on the Kuwaiti pilgrims and provide them with all assistance in terms of medical and ser-

vice aspects. Pilgrim Umm Khaled affirmed her happiness in performing the Hajj rituals, saying: "My happiness is indescribable. Since entering the Holy Land, we have been feeling joyful despite the fatigue and hot weather, but closeness to Allah alleviated our fatigue."

She indicated that the Saudi authorities played a major role in facilitating the performance of the rituals, "as we did not find any crowding during the stoning ritual, except for the farewell circumambulation, but those in charge were worthy of appreciation for facilitating the movement of pilgrims."

Pilgrim Abdullah Al-Fadaani said: "Praise be to Allah, we performed the Hajj rituals and returned to the country safely. We ask Almighty Allah to accept our obedience and we praise Him for performing the Hajj. The Hajj rituals this year were more than excellent, and that the Saudi authorities provided all facilities and services so that the rituals could be performed to perfection and at ease."

Shafi Al-Mazal confirmed that Hajj procedures were eased this year, without any noteworthy observation. He praised the role of the Kuwaiti Hajj delegation, which did not fail to monitor the Kuwaiti pilgrims and provide them with all services.



His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Al-Ahmad Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah chairs the weekly Cabinet meeting, June 19.



On June 19, 1961, Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah officially announced the independence of Kuwait after canceling the Kuwaiti-British Treaty that was signed in 1899.

#### A historic turning point in 1961

#### Kuwait celebrates 63rd Independence Day

KUWAIT CITY, June 19, (KUNA): June 19 of 1961 is a pivotal day in the history of Kuwait as it marked the end of the British protection treaty and the emergence of the modern state.

On this day, Kuwait, a newly independent sovereign state, took its first steps in the journey of development. The late Amir Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem had

signed the declaration of independence with the British Government Chief Political Resident in the Arabian Gulf Sir George Middleton. Three years after the declaration, a decree was

signed on May 18, 1964 merging the national day with the day in which Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem assumed office, making it February 25. Celebrations were held on that day as of 1965. Since assuming office in 1950, Sheikh Abdullah

Al-Salem took carefully measured steps paving the way for independence, and achieving stability.

The 15-year reign of Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem, who was dubbed, "father of independence" and "father of constitution" was peppered with achievements.

The State of Kuwait became member in the Arab League on July 20, 1961. Sheikh Abdullah signed decree on August 26,

1961 to hold elections of the Constituent Assembly, mandated with writing the constitution.

The 183-article comprehensive constitution was completed in nine months, it laid the foundations for a sturdy democratic regime putting the Kuwaiti people on a path of progress and prosperity.

On September 7, 1961, an Amiri decree was signed specifying the shape and colors of the Kuwaiti flag, the very first flag to be flown following the independence.

At that time, the State of Kuwait accomplished 43 laws and legislation, including the nationality law, monetary law, passports law and the organization of government departments.

New departments were established in order to cope with the development of the nation, like public works, health, publication, knowledge, municipality, post and telephone, electricity and water,

social affairs, awqaf, radio and television. Over the past 63 years, Kuwait had become reputable for its humanitarian contributions and its levelheaded foreign policy.

Kuwait remains on a steady path of preventative diplomacy, crises mediation and effort contributing to solving outstanding regional and interna-

Bid to assess ongoing work, address any challenges

#### Minister pays surprise visit to care home for disabled

KUWAIT CITY, June 19: The Minister of Social Affairs, Family and Childhood Affairs, and the Minister of State for Youth Affairs, Dr. Amthal Al-Huwaila, conducted a surprise inspection visit to the Care and Rehabilitation Center for the disabled in the Sabahiya area, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The purpose of the visit was to assess the ongoing work and address any challenges faced by the center's employees, visitors, and beneficiaries of its services.

In a press statement, Al-Huwaila emphasized that these surprise tours are part of her regular practice to closely monitor operations, identify any issues encountered by staff and residents of the center, and take proactive steps to resolve them.

During the visit, the minister was briefed by officials on the latest developments aimed at enhancing service delivery to clients and overcoming obstacles





Photo by Rizk Taufiq Dr Al-Huwailah during the visit to care home.

faced by people with disabilities and their families.

Dr Al-Huwaila underscored

the importance of improving

the quality of services, expedit-

ing processes, ensuring swift

completion of transactions, and

fully meeting the needs of the

center's beneficiaries.

The inspection visit reaffirms the government's commitment to enhancing care and support for individuals with disabilities, aiming to optimize their rehabilitation and integration into society.



Left: Interior Minister Sheikh Fahd Yousef pays an inspection tour of the center for residency law violators, and (right) the minister with number of security officers checks one of the buildings in Hawalli.

## طيوانية 🕈 diwaniya

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

## 'Choosing the Crown Prince... a lesson for hasty aspirants'

"THE choice of His Highness the Crown Prince, Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, came as a surprise to all parties (without specifying which)... and at the same time reflects the personality and thought of His Highness the Amir -- may God protect and preserve him -- as he takes us far better than we expected... and these are new signs," columnist Adel Youssef Al-Zawawi wrote for Al-Qabas daily.

"Prominent in the minds of Kuwaiti political leadership was a significant shift in public perception following the pivotal address on June 22, 2022. From then to the present, the course has markedly altered.

"Today, our discussion centers on the lessons from selecting the Crown

Prince, a decision resonated deeply with all aspirants to this esteemed position.

"The process interests divided into factions 'pro' and 'anti' -- setting the stage for a profound and enduring political rivalry at



Al-Zawawi

Abdullah Al-Salem Hall. This rivalry has profoundly impacted parliamentary activities, shifting focus from oversight and legislation to contentious ministerial inter-

'Central to this discussion is the rise to power without regard for established customs, traditions, and ethical stand-

This has led to the erosion of foundational principles painstakingly built over decades of institutional development. In this pursuit, every available and newly contrived tactic has been employed, sparking a frenzied race to dismantle ancestral values in favor of personal ambition.

"The political landscape has witnessed unprecedented displays of power and influence, often devoid of substance. Parachute appointments and meddling in parliamentary candidacies have compromised the integrity of electoral processes.

"Some candidates, mere puppets of influential figures, even dared to challenge the authority of His Highness the Amir, falsely declaring his disapproval of certain contenders for the Crown Prince position.

"Such actions, including controversial amnesties and national identity restorations, have tarnished the reputation of the ruling family and Kuwait itself, inviting international scrutiny and hin-

dering national progress. "His Highness the Amir with his decisive leadership is determined to quell these controversies and misconceptions. His decisive moment arrived with the selection of a Crown Prince, a choice that defied expectations and brought unity and optimism.

'This leader, distant from factional strife, reaffirmed that competence, integrity, leadership, and experience – not conflict and division – are the true

paths to leadership. "Thus, His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah was chosen as Crown Prince, embodying these ideals. His selection promises to unite the ruling family and benefit the Kuwaiti people, reinforcing a vision where leadership is synonymous with service and trustworthiness.

#### Also:

"I hope with all my heart that some of the ministers who were wronged by the poor evaluation and exploitation of some representatives in the recent parliamentary councils, which unfortunately mixed the interests of the nation with their interests, and gave the highest priority to their interests, will be reappointed," columnist Iqbal Al-Ahmad wrote for Al-Qabas daily.

"Ministers who had demonstrated competence and patriotism in their previous roles unfortunately faced challenges during their tenure, particularly when the National Assembly was rife with abuses by certain representatives.

"These ministers, despite their capabilities and loyalty to the country, found themselves targeted for removal, often through dubious means driven by per-

sonal agendas rather than lawful reasons. "It is my earnest hope that in future ministerial appointments, and considering the current absence of the National Assembly from Kuwait's political landscape, these competent ministers will be reinstated.

"Their dismissal was unjustified. based on reasons that often strayed from legal grounds into personal biases or political maneuvering.

"The parliamentary process, which sometimes devolved into strategic ousting or votes of no confidence after interrogations, frequently veered away from public interest and toward private agendas. It became a tool, with cooperation from certain representatives, to unjustly remove ministers, setting examples to enforce compliance rather than uphold justice.

"Numerous male and female ministers who excelled in their duties, demonstrated integrity, and adhered strictly to the law found themselves unable to continue their service due to political games that did not align with their principles.

"They refused to engage in the unethical exchanges demanded by some representatives, who then used their influence to punish these ministers un-

"These ministers were penalized for their commitment to honesty, loyalty to the nation, and refusal to yield to threats or coercion.

"They deserve the opportunity to resume their roles in a supportive environment free from political obstructionism, where their dedication to serving the nation can flourish without fear of reprisal. In conclusion, it is crucial to create a conducive atmosphere for these ministers to return to public service, ensuring that their expertise and dedication benefit Kuwait in various fields, fostering genuine progress and national pride.

"Our heartfelt condolences go out to the families of the victims and those injured in the tragic Mangaf fire. This incident starkly illustrates the consequences of disregarding the law, negligence, and complacency among those entrusted with responsibility.

"It underscores the critical importance of rigorous enforcement, proactive monitoring, and swift, decisive measures against all violators across every sector.

"We urgently urge the current government to intensify its efforts in holding accountable and swiftly punishing all individuals who fail to uphold the law. "Every responsible party must face consequences commensurate with their role, with uncompromising force and urgency, to prevent such devastating incidents from recurring.

'Agriculture Authority, with regards... The decoration and planting on streets and public areas project was launched by His Highness the late Amir Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad, may Allah have mercy on him, to make the country beautiful and elegant," columnist Major General M. Faisal Al-Jazzaf wrote for Al-Seyassah daily.

"However, we now see visual pollution on the streets and public areas due to the miserable condition and utter agricultural chaos. This is the result of negligence. Trees have become an obstacle to drivers, while the irrigation networks are neglected and are unsuitable especially since they waste water, in addition to the

spread of dirt on docks.
"Unfortunately, all this happened due to the absence of follow up and those who are negligent have not been held accountable. From here, we know how many millions the State loses annually, while the goal is to beautify the country and provide comfort for the people, as well as increase the green areas to protect the environment and reduce temperature by planting trees in the desert. Nevertheless, I do not wish to talk about the gardens covered with

negligence and destruction.
"We ask: Where are the follow up and oversight roles of the concerned and responsible party, as they are considered the key? Is there no official who sees the devastation and destruction we see? Where are honesty and responsibility in the job?

"The conversation is long and the regret is greater for some officials in State institutions who do not understand the meaning of responsibility and national honesty

 Compiled by PFX Fernandes and Mahmoud Atevieh

#### Minister tours Hawalli area, law violators' shelter center

### 'Interior' intensifies crackdown on residential offenses

KUWAIT CITY, June 19, (KUNA): First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense, and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah conducted a security inspection in the Hawalli area on Tuesday to address residential violations, as part of ongoing efforts to enforce the law impartially. Sheikh Fahd Al-Yousef emphasized, according to a statement from the Ministry of Interior, the zero-tolerance policy towards violators driven solely by financial gain, disregarding the rights of workers. He underscored that the law ap-

plies universally and will be rigorously enforced without exceptions.

Furthermore, Sheikh Fahd Al-Yousef highlighted the imperative to rectify all residential violations and ensure compliance with property regulations, particularly those misused for purposes other than their designated intent. Earlier in the day, the Minister of Interior had visited a shelter center for individuals violating the country's residency and work laws (Article 20), as part of his comprehensive inspections across ministry sectors.

In a press statement, Sheikh Fahd Al-Yousef expressed commitment to enhancing the living conditions at the shelter center, ensuring adequate provisions, and expediting procedures for the departure of its residents from the country. He commended the collaborative efforts of local entities in supporting the Interior Ministry to equip the center, while emphasizing the stringent security measures and decent living conditions provided

## **Detention of suspects in Mangaf** fire incident extended to 14 days

Judge extends detention of 4 MoE employees over exam leak

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, June 19: The detention renewal judge decided to detain a citizen and a number of expatriates for 14 days to continue investigation on charges of manslaughter and accidental injury as a result of negligence in security and safety measures to prevent the fire that broke out in a building inhabited by foreign workers in Mangaf.

**Detention of 4 extended over exam leak:** The detention renewal judge ordered the extension of the detention of four employees at the Ministry of Education including the head of the confidential printing press for 14 days pending investigation on charges of disclosing confidential information and money laundering in high school exams leakage case.

The Public Prosecution had earlier interrogated the defendants and filed charges against them.

The investigation is still ongoing and six other defendants will appear before the detention renewal judge on Thursday.

2 officers hurt in scuffle with drug peddlers: Two security officers from the Directorate-General for Drugs Control sustained serious injuries while arresting an Iraqi resident involved in drug trafficking in the Jabriya area, reports Al-Jarida daily.

According to details provided by a security source, police officers arrested the Iraqi man in the Raqqa area on charges related to drug trafficking. During interrogation, the suspect confessed to obtaining the drugs from his partner, leading investigators to the partner's residence in an apartment located in Jabriya. Armed with a search and arrest warrant issued by the Public Prosecution, a team of detectives conducted a raid on the apartment of the second suspect and at this time the suspect resisted arrest, breaking a window pane and causing injuries to two detectives during the scuffle.

Despite the resistance, the detectives managed to subdue the suspect and conduct a search of the premises. They discovered a quantity of narcotic hashish weighing a quarter kilo and money believed to be proceeds from drug sales.

Both suspects were have subsequently been referred to the Public Prosecution for further legal proceedings.

As for the injured security officers, the source confirmed that their conditions are stable and not a cause for concern. One officer underwent surgery on his hand, and received 10 stitches, while the other officer received two stitches for

A case has been filed against the suspects with the Public Prosecution as the investigation continues into the incident.

17 warnings issued to buildings: The Public Relations Department of Kuwait Municipality revealed in a press statement that the campaigns conducted by the inspection teams of the Engineering Follow-Up and Monitoring Department have been intensified in collaboration with the Ministry of Electricity and Water, reports Al-Shahed daily.

These campaigns were held in Farwaniya and Mubarak Al-Kabeer governorates, which resulted in the issuance of 17 warnings to investment residential buildings and the disconnection of electricity to a violating building in Sabah Al-Salem.

The violations included the use of the building for unlicensed purposes and illegal constructions.

The campaigns are being conducted under the supervision of the Head of Farwaniya and Mubarak Al-Kabeer Department in Kuwait Municipality Eng. Nawaf Al-Kandari and Director of Mubarak Al-Kabeer Municipality Eng. Mubarak Al-Ajmi.

Reckless driver detained: The General Traffic Department has identified and arrested who was seen in a video clip driving recklessly on public roads and endangering his life and the lives of others, reports Al-Anba daily.

He has been detained at the Central Prison and his vehicle has been impounded for two months. The Ministry of Interior emphasized its zero-tolerance

policy towards reckless behavior and affirmed that it will rigorously enforce traffic laws and regulations to protect

**Two fires controlled:** Yesterday afternoon, personnel from the Directorate-General of Fire Department (DGFD) took control of a fire in the residential building compound in the Farwaniya area, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

No casualties have been reported. In another fire incident, firefighting teams took control of a cruiser fire which was 'parked' in an open area in the Al-Masilah area, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

### 'Fire alarm, regular maintenance must for labor accommodation'

KUWAIT CITY, June 19: According to informed sources, owners of residential buildings where laborers are housed have been asked to install fire alarm systems and conduct regular maintenance, reports Al-Rai daily.

The sources explained that these owners have been asked to sign contracts with companies accredited by Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT) to install and maintain the fire alarm

systems. The new conditions to be implemented by Public Authority of Manpower (PAM) specify the maximum number of laborers to be accomodated in a specific space. However these conditions will

increase the cost for the Haidar companies as they

would need to rent more buildings for accommodating their laborers, which will in turn reflect on costs set by those companies for their services. Even though these conditions will contribute to improving the conditions of the laborers, it will increase the demand for bachelor residential buildings, which will in turn eventually increase the rents.

The owners of such buildings have also been asked to evacuate the flats that were rented out to be used as storage spaces. This will in turn increase the rents of licensed storage spaces that meet the relevant requirements.

Meanwhile, real estate expert Qais Al-Ghanim anticipates a significant increase in interest for storage spaces, following the extensive and intensified campaigns conducted recently by the Ministry of Interior, Kuwait Municipality, and Kuwait Fire Service Directorate.

He stressed the need for the government to solve the problem of lack of storage spaces, which are allowed to be established only in specific areas. Al-Ghanim called for the immediate provision of plots to replace the violating stores that will be evacuated soon, considering the fact that their number is expected to be huge, as most of the current storage spaces include violations.

He explained that there are about 13,000 residential buildings in Kuwait, with many of them mortgaged by banks. If the storage spaces are vacated, owners may face difficulties and risk losing their buildings to banks. Additionally, some owners have manipulated the approved designs of flats by Kuwait Municipality to decrease each flat's space and increase profits. Correcting these manipulations could negatively impact building revenues and decrease their value in the real estate market.

Meanwhile, real estate expert Sulaiman Al-Dulaihan said Kuwait does not have a system in place to record the number of workers residing in each apartment, unlike Saudi Arabia. He suggested that rental contracts should be electronically registered and should specify the number of occupants in each apartment.

In addition, Chairman of the Real Estate Brokers Association Emad Haidar revealed that storage rental rates have surged by 40 percent in recent time, with expectations that they could reach 100 percent if the government fails to offer alternative storage solutions for companies that used to rent basements of residential buildings for this purpose.



#### **Other Voices**

## South Africa's recent elections: A new era of national unity

#### By Nasser Al-Hajeri

South Africa's recent elections have ushered in a significant political transformation, marking a new chapter in the nation's democratic journey. The election results have led to the formation of a government of national unity, a move that many hope will bring stability, inclusivity, and renewed economic growth to the

27.7 million South Africans registered to vote ahead of the elections on May 29th. However, on election day, a mere 16.2 million votes were cast, yielding the lowest voter turnout of 58.64% in South Africa's 30-year democratic history. The African National Congress (ANC), the historical ruling party, faced stiff competition from opposition parties such as the Democratic Alliance (DA) and the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF). For the first time since the end of apartheid in 1994,

the once-dominant party (ANC) needed to enter into negotiations with other parties to form a Government of National Unity (GNU).

The new GNU is composed of the African National Congress, Democratic Alliance, Inkatha Freedom Party, Patriotic Alliance, and GOOD. This GNU aims to bridge the political divides that have often hindered South Africa's progress. President Cyril Ramaphosa, leader of the ANC, has been re-elected to lead this GNU. His leadership is



Al-Hajeri

seen as crucial in navigating the complexities of coalition politics and driving the nation towards a more inclusive and prosperous future.

One of the first major tasks for the new government is the formation of a balanced and effective cabinet. The anticipated new cabinet is expected to reflect the diverse political spectrum of the GNU, incorporating members from all five parties. This inclusive approach aims to ensure that different voices and perspectives are represented in the decision-making process, fostering a sense of collective ownership and responsibility.

Key portfolios such as finance, health, education, and infrastructure are expected to be helmed by experienced and competent individuals from various parties. This strategic allocation of ministries is designed to harness the strengths of each partner, thereby enhancing the

overall effectiveness and productiveness.

KRCS rolls out Eid Al-Adha meat

program for refugees in Jordan

The new government faces significant challenges, including high unemployment and economic inequality. However, there is a cautious optimism that this new government can bring about meaningful change. The spirit of cooperation and shared governance is expected to foster innovative solutions to the country's pressing issues.

In conclusion, South Africa's recent elections have paved the way for a government of national unity, reflecting the electorate's desire for collaborative and inclusive governance. The anticipated new cabinet, with its diverse representation, holds the promise of driving the country towards stability, economic growth, and social progress. As the nation embarks on this new political journey, there is hope that unity and cooperation will prevail, leading to a brighter future for all South Africans.

out Jordan

According to the KRCS statement, the program would benefit around 6,000 individuals through-

The KRCS had launched similar

## **Kuwait's banking sector boasts top** liquidity from varied deposit terms

Total deposits hit 63.9 billion dinars in Q1

KUWAIT CITY. June 19: slightly down from the previous **Total deposits in Kuwaiti** dinars and foreign currency in the banking sector reached 63.9 billion dinars by the end of the first quarter of this year, marking the highest liquidity observed, reports Al-Jarida daily.

This reflects a diverse range of deposit sources spanning terms from one month to over three years. Demand deposits accounted for approximately 13.2 billion dinars, representing mostly cost-free

Term deposits for up to one month totaled about 19.3 billion dinars,

year's peak of 21.2 billion dinars.

Deposits for longer periods varied from one to three months, they rose from 10.3 billion to 11.4 billion dinars, while deposits over three months to six months decreased from 6.8 billion to 5.19 billion di-

There was a notable increase in deposits for periods exceeding six months to nine months, rising from 2.4 billion to 3.3 billion dinars, showing a 37.5 percent increase, indicating a trend towards longerterm investments with attractive returns.

Deposits for periods exceeding nine months to a year grew slightly from 3.2 billion to 3.4 billion dinars. Longer-term deposits from over one year to three years also saw modest growth from 3.2 billion to 3.61 billion dinars, a 10 percent increase.

The smallest growth was observed in deposits maturing over three years, growing by 3 percent from 4.17 billion to 4.3 billion di-

Overall, the sector appears wellpositioned financially with ample liquidity and a balanced distribution of deposit terms, offering competitive rates to both local and foreign customers. This stability is reflected in the reduced interbank market activity, which decreased by 18.4 percent from December 2023 to April 2024, indicating sufficient liquidity across all sectors



AMMAN, June 19, (KUNA): Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS)

launched on Wednesday a program in Jordan to deliver Eid Al-Adha sacri-

ficial meat to Syrian refugees and the

Kuwait Red Crescent Society launched a program in Jordan to deliver Eid Al-Adha sacrificial meat to Syrian refugees and the poor.

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#### **Well-being in summer conditions**

### Dermatology expert emphasizes impact of eczema on skin health

KUWAIT CITY, June 19: According to Dr. Muhammad Al-Adwani, a dermatologist, skin serves as the body's primary defense against external threats like bacteria and viruses, making its integrity crucial, reports Al-Qabas daily. Conditions such as eczema can compro-

mise this defense, manifesting in symptoms like skin dryness, cracking, peeling, and inflammation, which not only affect physical health but also impact psychological wellbeing significantly  $A\bar{s}$  summer approaches and temperatures

rise, eczema patients often experience exacerbations of their condition, including heightened redness, itching, and susceptibility to infections.

Dr. Al-Adwani, highlighted that eczema ranks among the most common skin disorders, often worsening in summer due to heat and inadequate hydration.

Severe cases of eczema can lead to skin barrier damage, reducing its ability to protect against microbial invaders. Despite its physical symptoms, Dr. Al-Adwani emphasized that eczema's psychological toll can sometimes be more severe than its physical effects. However, he reassured that eczema is manageable through effective treatment, which can alleviate symptoms such as itching, bacterial or fungal infections, and skin

Eczema is characterized by red, itchy, dry, and inflamed skin, affecting individuals across all age groups but particularly prevalent among children.

Its severity can be exacerbated by dry skin conditions, which are exacerbated during summer due to factors such as increased sweating and exposure to chlorine in swimming pools. Moreover, indoor environments with air conditioning can worsen symptoms by drying out the skin further.

The exact cause of eczema remains unknown, though it is associated with immune system dysfunction, weakening the skin's natural defenses against environmental allergens and irritants. Genetic factors also play a role in predisposing individuals to the condition.

In conclusion, while eczema poses challenges to both physical comfort and psychological well-being, comprehensive management strategies can effectively control symptoms and improve quality of life for affected individuals.

Dr Al-Adwani explained said that eczema appears at any age, and is not limited to a certain age group, but it affects children more. He stated that it is not a contagious disease as some people think, and he mentioned that there are several types of eczema, including:

- Endogenous eczema (atopic eczema is more common)
- Exogenous eczema (contact) ■ Cholestatic eczema (varicose veins ·
- varicose eczema) ■ Stasis dermatitis (congestion eczema
- gravitational dermatitis gravitational ec-

#### ■ Seborrheic eczema.

He explained that the severity of eczema ranges from mild to severe, and varies greatly from one person to another. The most prominent symptoms are skin dryness, redness and irritation of the skin, severe itching, skin color change, rough spots or crusts appear on the skin and swelling of

A person with eczema may suffer from the following complications:

Neurodermatitis, a disorder caused by severe skin itching that causes the skin to thicken and change color; viral or bacterial skin infections resulting from ulcers and skin wounds, especially when scratched severely and psychological complications of the disease, such as depression and anxiety disorders, are very tiring and reduce the patient's quality of life, so it is necessary to follow up with a dermatologist and seek medical care.

Dr. Muhammad Al-Adwani outlined various treatment approaches for eczema, tailored to the severity of the condition and the patient's specific needs.

For mild to moderate cases, topical ointments are commonly prescribed to soothe and heal affected areas of the skin. In more severe instances, where eczema significantly impacts the patient's quality of life, treatment options may include biological therapies administered via injections.

Dr. Al-Adwani noted that biological injections have shown excellent results in managing severe eczema.

In addition to topical and biological treatments, alternative therapies such as anti-allergic medications (like antihistamines) are used to alleviate itching, a common symptom of eczema.

If a bacterial infection complicates the eczema, antibacterial ointments may also be prescribed to address the infection and prevent further complications.

Dr. Al-Adwani emphasized the critical role of hydration in eczema treatment, highlighting its importance as a fundamental aspect of recovery and long-term management of the condition.

Proper hydration helps restore and maintain the skin barrier, which is crucial for protecting against irritants and maintaining overall skin health. Dr. Al-Adwani provided important tips

for eczema patients to prevent complications and effectively manage their symp-Regular Dermatologist Visits - Ensure

regular appointments with a specialist dermatologist to monitor the condition and adhere to the treatment plan. This helps improve treatment outcomes and prevents worsening of the condition.

Avoid Irritants - Stay away from potential triggers such as clothing made from wool and direct use of aromatic substances on the skin, which can exacerbate eczema and increase its severity.

Moisturize Frequently - Apply moisturizer to the skin three to four times daily to maintain hydration and protect against dryness. Dry skin aggravates eczema symptoms, so consistent moisturization is crucial.

Use Gentle Soap - Use mild, chemicalfree soap for hand and body washing to avoid further irritation to sensitive skin affected by eczema.

Apply Sunscreen - Protect the skin from sun damage by applying sunscreen with a high SPF (protection factor) of at least 50 percent, as ultraviolet rays can worsen ec-

zema symptoms. Avoid Allergens - Identify and avoid allergens that trigger eczema, such as certain foods (especially those high in sugars), animal dander, and pollen.

Bathe Wisely - Take lukewarm baths instead of hot showers, and limit bathing time to prevent drying out the skin, which can aggravate eczema.

Avoid Temperature Changes - Rapid changes in temperature can trigger eczema flare-ups, so try to maintain a consistent environment and avoid sudden exposure to extreme temperatures.

#### **Panelists share stories of resilience and success in diverse sectors**

## ABCK-AmCham hosts 'Stories of Leadership from Women in Kuwait and Gulf'

KUWAIT CITY, June 19: The American Business Council - American Chamber of Commerce Kuwait (AB-CK-AmCham Kuwait) in partnership with leading biopharmaceutical company MSD successfully hosted the Stories of Leadership from Women in Kuwait and the Gulf'', at the prestigious Waldorf Astoria Hotel. The event drew a diverse and influential audience to celebrate and discuss the remarkable achievements of women leaders in the

The event commenced with a welcome note from Aisha Algabandi, who highlighted the event's significance in celebrating and elevating Kuwaiti and Khaleeji women who have made significant strides in leadership roles.

The program began with Ms. Lama Chalhoub, Kuwait, Bahrain, and Qatar Lead at MSD, sharing inspiring insights from her career, including the importance of allyship and support on the leadership journey. She also touched on the significant transformation that Kuwait has witnessed in recent years, reflecting a positive shift towards gender equality.Lama's extensive experience and achievements set a motivational tone for the event, as she called for the pursuit of a future where no one suffers the consequences of preventable

Stories of Leadership of Women in

This session featured a panel moderated by Dr. Arezou Harraf, Founder and CEO of Learn & Evolve LLC and Vice Chair of ABCK-AmCham Ku-

wait. Distinguished panelists included: ■ Dr. Lubna Al-Kazi, Professor at Kuwait University and Founder and



Participants at the symposium - 'Stories of Leadership from Women in Kuwait and the Gulf' - hosted by ABCK-AmCham Kuwait, pose for a group photo.

Director of the Women's Research and Studies Center, which is presently in charge of implementing the gender component of the Kuwait National Development Plan and the Vision 2035 of New Kuwait.

■ Dr. Manal Al-Hasawi, Founder and Managing Partner of Think Tank Strategy Consulting and Chairman of the Kuwait Society for Strategic Planning. She has been advising government members on strategy development, implementation and communication for change for over 10 years.

■ Ms. Shaima bin Hussein, Managing Partner at H projects and Chairperson of the Association of Small & Medium Enterprises of Kuwait. Her main focus is on women's financial literacy, educating them on the fundamentals of investment and financial planning.

The panelists shared their unique

journey as women in leadership positions, insights, and the challenges they have overcome, providing the audience with inspiring stories of resilience and success from diverse perspectives.

Empowering Women's Health: Taking Control and Thriving:

The second session focused on women's health, moderated by Stephanie Tasrini, Associate Director for Communications at MSD in the GCC region. Esteemed panelists included: ■ Dr. Hamad Bastaki, Head of the

Communicable Disease Control Division at the Ministry of Health in Kuwait. With extensive experience in public health, Dr. Bastaki has significantly improved vaccination coverage and digitalized vaccination records in Kuwait.

■ Dr. Fatheya Salama, Director of Sidra Pharmacy. Dr. Salama is a highly

accomplished healthcare professional with over 23 years of experience in hospital pharmacy and leadership.

Ms. Lama Chalhoub, Kuwait, Bahrain, and Qatar Lead at MSD, who discussed the importance of women taking ownership of their health for better public health, given the central role they play in the wellbeing of their families and communities

This session emphasized the importance of taking control of women's health and thriving. Before the panel discussion began, a poll was conducted to engage the audience, and a video on HPV awareness was shown.

Both sessions featured Q&A segments, providing attendees with opportunities to gain further insights from the speakers. The event wrapped up with recognitions and a group photo, followed by closing remarks by Dr. Arezou Harraf, expressing gratitude to all attendees and participants for their engagement and contributions. The event ended with a networking lunch, providing attendees an opportunity to connect and further discuss the day's inspiring

The 'Stories of Leadership from Women in Kuwait and the Gulf' highlighted the significant contributions of women leaders in the region and emphasized the importance of empowering future generations. The event provided a platform to explore and educate the audience on HPV awareness, advocacy, and the unique experiences of women in leadership. ABCK-AmCham Kuwait is proud to have facilitated such an impactful event, fostering dialogue and inspiration among the region's

#### **Economic feasibility, safety measures**

## Municipality issues update on Mubarakiya and Metro project

KUWAIT CITY, June 19: The Kuwait Municipality has provided clarifications regarding Mubarakiya Markets Development Project and the status of the Kuwait Metro project in response to inquiries from Municipal Council member Eng Alia Al Farsi, reports Al-Jarida daily.

Firstly, regarding the Mubarakiya Markets Development Project, Municipality Director Eng Saud Al-Dabbous affirmed that the project's feasibility study was conducted independently of the Kuwait Metro

He emphasized that the development project is viable and feasible on its own merits, even without the Metro project. However, the presence of the Metro would enhance the attractiveness of the area and improve its economic and financial feasibility further.

Concerning safety measures at the Darwazat Al-Abdul Razzaq site, Al-Dabbous assured that comprehensive security measures have been implemented. These include external fencing, barriers, structural supports for roofs and walls, night lighting, and organized patrols to oversee

safety protocols both inside and outside the construction site.

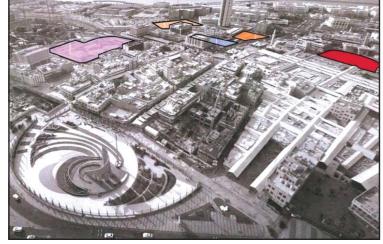
Regarding the reopening of the surface intersection, Al-Dabbous clarified that this falls under the jurisdiction of the Public Authority for Roads and Land Transport.

As for the underground tunnel used for pedestrian traffic, which is currently closed for repair and rehabilitation, he stated that the rehabilitation work is ongoing as per the mandate given by the Council of Ministers.

He added, PART is expected to hand over the project to Kuwait Municipality once surface intersection repairs are completed.

Subsequently, the Municipality will commence the rehabilitation and development of the tunnel, a process expected to take approximately 12 months from the project handover date.

These statements from Kuwait Municipality underscore their commitment to managing and progressing urban development projects and ensuring public safety while coordinating with relevant authorities for infrastructure improvements **Kuwait City** 



Bird's eveview of the model of the development of Al-Mubarakiya markets.

## Forum puts emphasis on government commitment for significant milestone

Gov't and stakeholders align for transparent growth

By Mohammed Ghanem Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, June 19:** The State Development **Projects Forum recently** concluded with a strong emphasis on the government's commitment to achieving significant milestones in Kuwait's development landscape.

Here are the key points and outcomes from the forum:

Government of Achievement -- The forum highlighted that the current government is focused on delivering tangible outcomes, echoing the call by His Highness Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad for increased efficiency and a resultsoriented approach.

Vision and Priorities -- Secretary General Dr. Khaled Mahdi emphasized the prioritization of completing ongoing development projects and liquidating delayed projects. This approach aligns with Kuwait Vision 2035, which views the private sector as crucial for driving forward the vision's initiatives.

Private Sector Engagement -- Engineer Badr Al-Salman, head of the Federation of Kuwaiti Engineering Offices and Consulting Houses, underscored the vital role of the private sector in supporting and implementing major state projects. He noted the need for collaboration to overcome obstacles related to contract management, supervision, and implementation.

Collaborative Efforts -- The forum served as a platform for stakeholders from government sectors, oil industry, private enterprises, banking, and investment sectors to discuss challenges and opportunities. Panel discussions focused on enhancing transparency, achieving project milestones, and en-



Dr. Khaled Mahdi and Engineer Badr Al-Salman mediate as the heads of the dialogue session.

suring sustainability in line with the principles of the new era.

Conclusion and Outlook -- The conclusion of the forum marked a commitment to transparency, achievement, and sustainability as guiding principles for future endeavors in Kuwait's development. It set the stage for continued collaboration and concerted efforts to realize the goals set forth during the discussions.

Overall, the forum emphasized a proactive approach by the government and stakeholders to foster an environment conducive to robust development, economic growth, and efficient project implementation in Kuwait.

## Kuwait ranks 37th on global competitiveness chart: IMD

KUWAIT CITY, June 19: Kuwait has improved its global ranking to 37th place according to the Global Competitiveness Yearbook report issued by the International Institute for Management Development (IMD), reports Al-Seyassah daily.

This positions Kuwait among

67 of the world's most competitive countries. Within the Arab world, Kuwait secured the fifth position in the competitiveness index for 2024.

The UAE led the Arab countries at 7th globally, followed by Qatar at 11th, Saudi Arabia at 16th, and Bahrain at 21st.

#### **New location to enhance rainwater management**

### Municipality approves Nuwaiseeb drain site

#### By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 19: Kuwait Municipality has approved the request of the Public Authority for Roads and Transportation (PART) to allocate a site for the drained path in the sea -- 4.55 kilometers long and 25 meters wide -- to drain rainwater in Nuwaiseeb chalets

This is part of the consultative agreement on studying, designing and preparing contractual documents, and supervising the implementation and maintenance of rain drainage systems in northern, southern and western urban areas.

The newspaper obtained a copy of the Municipality's letter approved by Director General Saud Al-Dabbous stating: "The requirements stipulated in the responses of members of the Subcommittee on Public Facilities and Services during its meeting July 27, 2021 must be fulfilled.

This is in addition to coordinating with the committee before implementation, as well as the need to submit a comprehensive study on the environmental and social impact of the project, and to authorize the competent departments to modify the dimensions and area of the site up to the maximum of the designated areas in the event that it conflicts with any existing infrastructure or for any regulatory reasons during installation."

ing that power stations have a capacity

a concern over potential strain on the electrical network components; such as cables and distribution stations, which could lead to malfunctions or

expatriates to adopt energy and water conservation measures, particularly during peak times. Recommendations include turning off air conditioners in unoccupied areas and using energyefficient lighting and appliances to alleviate pressure on the network, sources added.

#### Stay vigilant in accessing financial services online

## **ABK** shares summer travel banking tips

KUWAIT CITY, June 19: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) has reaffirmed its strong support for the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) and Kuwait Banking Association (KBA) 'Let's Be Aware' banking awareness campaign by providing essential summer travel banking tips. With the summer season in full swing, ABK aims to empower customers with valuable information on managing financial transactions abroad, reinforcing its dedi-

Ahmad AlDuwaisan, Acting CEO-Kuwait at ABK, stated, "As travellers embark on their summer plans and journeys, it is important to secure financial practices to protect against potential risks during summer travel."

cation to safeguarding personal and

banking data.

To enhance customers' banking experience and ensure peace of mind for customers, ABK offereda series of useful tips. Firstly, before kicking off their summer adventure, customers should inform ABK about their travel plans. By notifying the Bank of their destination and travel dates, they can prevent any interruptions in accessing their accounts while abroad.

Furthermore, customers are en-



Ahmad AlDuwaisan, Acting CEO -Kuwait at ABK.

■ 'It is important to secure financial practices to protect against potential risks during summer travel

couraged to enable push notifications on the ABK app to stay informed about account activities and receive real-time alerts to monitor financial transactions seamlessly. The Bank advises customers to use their debit, credit, or prepaid cards for transactions and to avoid carry-

AlDuwaisan highly advised to stay vigilant when accessing financial services online while traveling. He shared, "Use secure Wi-Fi networks, avoid public computers for banking transactions, and doublecheck website URLs to prevent

ing large amounts of cash for added

falling victim to cyber threats." Should an unforeseen circumstance arise where customers require urgent assistance, ABK highly recommends saving its contact information in order to provide immediate support.

By sharing these practical summer travel banking tips, ABK demonstrates its ongoing commitment to promoting awareness and ensuring the safety and security of customers' personal and financial information. ABK remains dedicated to fostering a trusted banking environment that prioritizes customer well-being and financial protection.

For more information on managing finances during summer travel or to explore ABK's range of innovative banking solutions, visit eahli.com or contact Ahlan Ahli 1 899 899. Stay informed, stay secure, and enjoy a worry-free summer getaway with ABK's support.

#### **Kuwait's economy**

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

and social security activities contributed 12.5 percent. Financial intermediation activities contributed 8.6 percent, and the services sector, encompassing education, health, social work. restaurants, hotels, real estate, rental activities, and community services, contributed 17.8 percent.

On a quarterly basis, Kuwait's economy showed growth, with a GDP increase of 5.52 percent in the third quarter of 2023, amounting to approximately 9.79 billion dinars.

At current prices, Kuwait's GDP in the fourth quarter of 2023 declined by 4.6 percent to 12.88 billion dinars, same quarter of 2022. The oil sector's contribution at current prices decreased by 8.6 percent annually to 6.08 billion dinars, while the non-oil sector's contribution slightly decreased by 0.7 percent to 6.80 billion dinars.

compared to 13.50 billion dinars in the

These figures illustrate the economic challenges Kuwait faced in 2023, particularly in its oil sector, amidst global economic fluctuations and production adjustments.

#### 52°C heat

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

Sources from the ministry reassured the public that current production exceeds peak consumption levels; statof 18,600 megawatts, supplemented by 500 megawatts through the Gulf Cooperation Council Interconnection Authority (GCCIA). Despite this surplus, there remains

fires during peak demand periods. Sources urged both citizens and

### **World News Roundup**

#### Europe

#### **Davey embraces stunts**

### EU criticizes France for 'excessive debt'

BRUSSELS, June 19, (AP): The European Union's executive arm on Wednesday criticized France for running up excessive debt, a stinging rebuke at the height of an election campaign where President Emmanuel Macron is facing a strong challenge from the extreme right and the left.

The EU Commission recommended to seven nations, including France, that they start a so-called "excessive deficit procedure," the first step in a long process before any member state can be hemmed in and moved to take corrective action.

"Deficit criteria is not fulfilled in seven of our member states," said EU Commission Vice President Valdis Dombrovskis, pointing the finger at Belgium, France, Italy, Hungary, Malta, Slovakia and Poland, in addition to France.



For decades, the EU has set out targets for member states to keep their annual deficit within 3% of Gross Domestic Product and overall debt within 60% of output. Those targets have been disregarded when it was convenient, sometimes even by countries like Germany and France, the biggest economies in the bloc. This time, however, Dom-

brovskis said that a decision "needs to be done based on, say, facts and whether the country respects the treaty, reference values for a defi-cit and debt and not based on the size of the country."

The French annual deficit stood at 5.5% last year. Over the past years, exceptional circumstances like the COVID-19 crisis and the war in Ukraine allowed for leniency, but that has now come to an end.

Still, Wednesday's announcement touched a nerve in France, after Macron called snap elections in the wake of his defeat to the hard right of Marine Le Pen in the EU parliamentary polls on June 9.

Le Pen's National Rally and a new united left front are polling ahead of Macron's party in the elections, and both challengers have put forward plans where deficit spending to get out of the economic rut is es-

In the election campaign, Macron's camp could use the wrist-slap as a warning that the extremes will drive France to ruin, while the opposition could claim that Macron had overspent and still impoverished the French, leaving them no choice but to spend more still.

Despite the rebuke over excessive debt, EU Economy Commissioner Paolo Gentiloni stressed France was also moving in the right direction to address certain "imbalances," sending a "message of reassurance" to the EU institutions.

The International Monetary Fund forecasts that the French economy will grow at a relatively sluggish 0.8% of GDP in 2024, before rising to 1.3% in 2025.

And unlike the measures imposed on Greece during its dramatic fiscal crisis a decade ago, he said that excessive austerity was not an answer for the future.

He also disputed a claim that it was austerity itself drove voters to veer to the extreme right, pointing out that lenient budget conditions had been in force for the past years and still allowed the hard right to come out as victors in many member states.

French police kills attacker: A French police officer in the northern suburbs of Paris opened fire and killed an attacker on Wednesday who assaulted a cleaning worker with a screwdriver and also injured another police officer, police said.

The cleaning worker suffered "several blows" with the screwdriver, but the extent of the injuries wasn't immediately clear, police said.

A police officer who sought to intervene also suffered an arm injury, police said.

Another officer then opened fire, killing the attacker, police said.

Police said they had no other immediate information about the attack in the Paris suburb of Aubervilliers, including about the attacker's gender or possible

Davev embraces stunts: Most politicians try to avoid slips, stumbles and undignified photos. Not Ed

The leader of Britain's centrist Liberal Democrats has turned the country's six-week general election campaign into a showreel of self-deprecating fun.

Davey, 58, has tumbled off a paddleboard into England's biggest lake, screamed atop a rollercoaster, splashed down a waterslide, careened downhill on a bike and tackled an assault course. He's also built sandcastles, made pancakes, competed in wheelbarrow races and had a summer fashion makeover on morning television.

The zany stunts are the party's answer to its electoral challenge: It's not easy being the third- or fourth-placed runner in a two-horse race between the U.K.'s two main parties, the ruling Conservatives and their rival, the Labour Party. It's even harder if, like Davey, you lead a moderate party in an age of extremes.

"We can marry having a bit of fun with some serious messages," Davey said during a campaign stop in Carshalton, on the outskirts of London. "When I fell off a paddleboard in Lake Windermere, yeah everyone thought it was a laugh, but actually it was making a serious point about sewage.

Davey's party was long the third-largest in Britain's Parliament, but in recent years sank to fourth place behind the Scottish National Party.

**US soldier convicted of theft:** A court in Russia's far eastern city of Vladivostok on Wednesday convicted a visiting American soldier of stealing and making threats of murder, and it sentenced him to three years and nine months in prison.

Staff Sgt. Gordon Black, 34, flew to the Pacific port city to see his girlfriend and was arrested last month after she accused him of stealing from her, according to U.S. officials and Russian authorities.

Russia's state news agencies Tass and RIA Novosti reported that the judge in Pervomaisky District Court in Vladivostok also ordered Black to pay 10,000 rubles (\$115) in damages. Prosecutors had asked for a sentence of four years and eight months in prison.

Black's case occurs amid tensions over Russia's arrests of American journalists and other US nationals as the fighting in Ukraine continues.

Russia has jailed a number of Americans, including corporate security executive Paul Whelan and Wall Street Journal reporter Evan Gershkovich.



The Spanish Airforce 'Patrulla Aguila' (Eagle Patrol) aerobatic team flies over the Royal Palace during commemorations marking the 10th anniversary of the proclamation of Spain's King Felipe VI, in Madrid, Spain on June 19. Inset: Spanish King Felipe, (second Teft), and Princess Leonor, (left), wave next to Queen Letizia, (third left) and Princess Sofia during the ceremony of the Royal Guard. (AP)



Britain's Prime Minister Rishi Sunak speaks to farmers as he campaigns on a farm near Barnstaple on June 18 in North Devon, United Kingdom. North Devon has been held by the Conservative Party since the 2015 general election. (AP)





### **America**

NY house collapse injures 11: A house collapsed in Syracuse, New York, on Tuesday, injuring at least 11 people, of-

Firefighters responded to multiple 911 calls of what sounded like an explosion at a two-story house at around 4 pm, Syracuse Fire Chief Michael Monds told reporters at the scene.

Firefighters arrived to find many of the victims already in the front yard but had to pull at least one youth out of a car buried in the rubble, he said.

The residents, a mix of children and adults, were taken to Upstate University Hospital, and two of them were in very serious condition, Monds said. Fire officials said all 13 residents had been accounted for as of Tuesday evening, The Post-Standard reported. Monds said police and fire officials will

that responding firefighters also encountered downed power lines and a heavy odor of natural gas at the scene. Mayor of New York is Eric Adams. More than 50 firefighters responded to the collapse and had to be rotated in and out due to the extreme heat that bore down

on Syracuse and other parts of the country

Tuesday, Monds said. (AP)

be investigating what caused the collapse of the home, which dates to 1920. He noted

Firefighters battle blaze: A massive fire broke out at a building supply warehouse on Chicago's west side Tuesday

smoke that was visible for blocks. Chicago Fire Department officials posted on X just after 6:30 pm that firefighters had responded to the fire at the Commercial Pallet warehouse and discovered pallets in

evening, creating a massive plume of black

Footage from WMAQ-TV showed a plume of smoke billowing over the neighborhood.

The television station reported that the fire had forced commuter trains in the area to stop but there had been no reports of injuries. A message left for the fire department seeking more details wasn't immediately returned. (AP)

St Louis police kills juvenile: St Louis police shot and killed a juvenile after he allegedly led them on a chase in a stolen ve-

#### **Politics**

#### **Ex-president declares 'I love Milwaukee'**

### Biden again calls Trump 'convicted felon'

McLEAN, Va., June 19, (AP): US President Joe Biden again taunted Donald Trump as a "convicted felon" during a high-dollar fundraiser Tuesday, saying his likely opponent in November's election is waging an "allout assault" on the US legal system.

Tuesday's event with former President Bill Clinton raised \$8 million for Biden's reelection campaign. That's part of a roughly \$40 million sum raised by Biden and his top surrogates over the last five days, according to the campaign. The vast majority came from Saturday's glitzy fundraiser with movie stars and former President Barack Obama in Los Angeles that raised more than \$30 million. First lady Jill Biden also has been on her own personal fundraising swing that has brought in \$1.5 million.

Biden and Clinton, who appeared together with Obama at a March fundraiser at Radio City Music Hall in New York, headlined Tuesday's event, held at the home of former Virginia Gov. Terry McAuliffe, a longtime Clinton adviser. Author John Grisham, Jill Biden and former first lady Hillary Clinton also attended the event in McLean, Virginia, a tony Washington suburb.

Biden told a backyard crowd of about 450 that Trump was desperate and "the threat Trump poses in a second term will be greater than his first," while referencing the former president's 34 felony convictions in a New York hush money case.

"For the first time in American history, a former president is a convicted felon," Biden said, adding, "But, as disturbing as that is, more damning is the all-out assault Trump is making on our system of justice.'

Biden has for weeks personally decried the former president for claiming that the case against him was politically motivated, saying "it's reckless, it's dangerous, it's irresponsible for anyone to say this was rigged just because they don't like the verdict." But Biden's campaign has launched a \$50 million ad buy through the end of June that includes its first television ad highlighting Trump's conviction, signaling they see the case as an issue of political

hicle and pointed a gun at them, police said

A police spokesperson said that anti-

crime task force officers spotted the stolen

strength heading into Election Day. Before Biden took the stage, McAuliffe joked that the gathering he helped organize competed with the Hollywood big bucks.

"We don't need all those movie stars and jugglers and singers and farm animals, whatever they got," McAuliffe said of the Los Angeles event. He also laughed when declaring to

Biden: "When you win again, I am offering myself right now. ... I will mow the lawn at the White House.' Hillary Clinton compared herself in 2016 to Cassandra in Greek mythology, who could see the future but

I felt in 2016, when I was raising the alarm about Donald Trump.' Now, though, she said: "We can all understand how dangerous it would be ever to entrust him and his allies and

wasn't believed, saying, "That's how

his enablers to lead our country. He did such tremendous damage."

Clinton said it was hard to understand why people who lived through the COVID-19 pandemic and Trump's presidency could still support the Republican, but "sadly, there are many of our fellow Americans who seem willing to take that risk." She also called Trump a "clear and present danger."

Bill Clinton thanked donors for their money and said of the Biden campaign, "They will do a good job spending it." He said of Biden, "I've watched him do this job with standards and values and with great impact."

Biden reelection campaign spokesman Kevin Munoz said: "Our supporters understand the stakes. The cash we raised since Friday means more ads, more organizers, and more direct contacts with the voters who will decide this close election in November - meanwhile Trump continues to scramble after having zero resources or presence in battleground states Last weekend's Los Angeles event

which also featured actors George Clooney and Julia Roberts in addition to Biden and Obama - was the largest single fundraiser in Democratic Party history. Biden has ramped up his fundraising

vehicle around 1 pm and tried to pull it over. Officers managed to spike the vehicle's tires and after it stopped, two juveniles got out

N I (WNC 1-3-07 VEM 12-16-22 PROTEC KIDS NOT GUNS 61.08 12-16-22

People stop at the site of a memorial at Benito Juarez Community Academy high school in Chicago on Dec 19, 2022, days after teens were shot there, two of them fatally. A teenager who pleaded guilty to a 2022 shooting near the Chicago high school that killed two teens and wounded two others has been sentenced to more than four decades in prison on June 17. (AP)

sprint as Trump shows signs that he is gaining ground in the money game. For instance, Trump raised \$50.5 million at an April gathering of major donors at the Florida home of billionaire investor John Paulson.

The Trump campaign and the Republican National Committee say they've raised \$141 million in May, padded by tens of millions of dollars in contributions that flowed in after Trump's guilty verdict in his criminal hush money trial. The Biden campaign has yet to release its May fundraising

#### Also:

RACINE, Wisconsin: Former US president Donald Trump on Tuesday repeatedly praised Milwaukee just weeks before it hosts the Republican National Convention, playing cleanup after he reportedly used the word "horrible" in talking about swing-state Wisconsin's largest city.
"I love Milwaukee," Trump told the

crowd in nearby Racine, Wisconsin. He was reported to have used the word in a closed-door meeting with Republicans in the US House. Several of his allies who were in the meeting later suggested he was talking about crime and voter fraud. Wisconsin is one of a handful of

battleground states likely to determine this year's presidential race. It was one of the so-called Democratic "blue wall" states that Trump narrowly won in 2016, paving the way for his surprise victory. **Biden** flipped the state back in 2020, and both campaigns are targeting it heavily this year. Trump's Tuesday event in down-

town Racine had the feel of a small town Fourth of July celebration. Before the presumptive GOP nominee's arrival, country music blared from speakers as Trump and American flags waved near a harbor overlooking Lake Michigan. Families gathered under trees, trying to avoid the 83-degree heat while eating tacos and sipping

"Wisconsin is Trump country" was written across a large sign as supporters began to gather on the grass, wearing red, white and blue.

The spokesperson said both of the juveniles were armed. During a foot chase, one of the juveniles

pointed a gun at an officer, who shot him, the spokesperson said. The juvenile died at

The other juvenile fell and still held a gun when he was taken into custody, the spokesperson said.

The name and age of the person killed has not been released. Police didn't say if the juvenile fired any shots. The officers

A third juvenile who was in the vehicle did not run and was cooperating, police said. (AP) 

Teenager sentenced: A teenager who pleaded guilty to a 2022 shooting near a Chicago high school that killed two teens and wounded two others has been sentenced to more than four decades in prison.

A Cook County judge sentenced Christian Acevedo, 18, after he pleaded guilty Monday to two counts of murder and one count of attempted murder in the Dec. 16, 2022, shooting outside the Benito Juarez Community Academy.

The shooting on Chicago's southwest

side killed Brandon Perez, 15, and Nathan Billegas, 14, and injured two other teens shortly after classes were dismissed.

Acevedo, who was 16 at the time, was charged as an adult in February 2023 in the

#### **Africa**

#### Ramaphosa sworn in

## Chad ammo depot explosions kill nine

N'DJAMENA, Chad, June 19, (AP): Nine people were killed and more than 40 injured when a fire set off explosions at a military ammunition depot in

Chad's capital, an official said Wednesday.
Government spokesperson Abderaman Koulamallah said 46 people were being treated for various injuries after the explosions jolted residents from their sleep late Tuesday in the Goudji district of the capital, N'Djamena. The situation has been brought under control, Koulamallah said.

The explosions lit up the sky as thick smoke covered the clouds in the West African nation, setting off frantic efforts to extinguish the fire as residents fled their homes for safety.



The cause of the fire was not immediately clear, and President Mahamat Deby Itno said an investigation would be conducted.

"Peace to the souls of the victims, sincere condolences to the bereaved families and quick recovery to the injured," Deby said on Facebook. He later visited the scene of the accident as well as hospitals where

the injured were being treated. People living in the area panicked, thinking the explosion was an armed attack,

resident Oumar Mahamat said. Local media reported the blasts started just before midnight as nearby buildings shook and ammunition was thrown from the depot with explosive force.

#### Scattered

Authorities called on residents to stay out of the area, which was taken over by security forces gathering the scattered artillery shells.

Allamine Moussa, a resident, called on the government to "come to our aid urgently" after he and other residents fled their homes.

"Many families have recorded deaths and it's sad,"

Chad, a country of nearly 18 million people, has been reeling from political turmoil before and after a controversial presidential election that resulted in Deby Itno's victory. He had led the country as interim president during the period of military rule that followed the death of his father in 2021.

Cameron Hudson, an Africa expert at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, said the explosions might not be entirely coincidental and "feels more like a message" to the government, which has been embroiled in internal political tensions and as well as regional tensions over the war in neighboring

Recent claims about Chad's alleged involvement in the war in Sudan create an untenable position at home for Deby Itno, said Hudson, a former US official. "A house divided cannot stand."

JOHANNESBURG: Cyril Ramaphosa was sworn in for a second term as South Africa's president on Wednesday in a ceremony in the administrative capi-

Ramaphosa is now set to appoint a Cabinet in a new coalition government after his African National Congress party lost its parliamentary majority in an

He was reelected president by lawmakers on Friday with help from the main opposition party and a smaller third party that have joined the ANC in a coalition agreement to co-govern Africa's most industrialized

Ramaphosa was sworn in at the Union Buildings, the seat of government, by Chief Justice Raymond

Current and former African heads of state and diplomats were among many guests and dignitaries who attended the inauguration as Ramaphosa begins what promises to be a tough final term in office. He will have to guide the first coalition government in which no party has a majority in South Africa's democratic history after the ANC lost its 30-year political dominance. At least three parties will make up what the ANC is calling a government of national unity, with more invited to join.

Dignitaries attending the inauguration included King Mswati III of Eswatini, Nigeria President Bola Tinubu, Zimbabwe President Emerson Mnangagwa and former Kenya Prime Minister Raila Odinga.

NAIROBI, Kenya: More than 200 protesters have been arrested in Kenya's capital, Nairobi, in ongoing protests against proposed tax hikes in a finance bill that is due to be tabled in parliament.

Civil society groups said that demonstrations and a planned sit-down outside parliament buildings will continue despite the arrest of 210 protesters.

Nairobi Police Commander Adamson Bungei on Tuesday said that no group had been granted permission to protest in the capital. The right to peaceful protests is guaranteed in the Kenyan Constitution, but organizers are required to notify the police beforehand. Police generally give a go-ahead unless there are security concerns.

Police hurled tear gas canisters at hundreds of demonstrators on Tuesday, forcing businesses to temporarily close because of fears over looting.

A lawyer, Wanjohi Gachie, said that he was protesting on behalf of all Kenyans who would be potentially burdened by the tax hikes.

"I'm requesting the police not to arrest or beat us, because we are fighting for their rights as well," he

Some major tax proposals in the bill were dropped after a Tuesday morning meeting between ruling party lawmakers and President William Ruto. The chairperson of the finance committee, Kuria

Kimani, said the proposal to introduce a 16% valueadded tax on bread had been dropped. Other levies that had prompted debate and have been amended include a proposed 2.5% motor vehicle

annual tax that was to be placed on insurance. A proposed tax on goods that degrade the environment will also be amended to apply only to imported goods to encourage local manufacturing.

Rights group Amnesty Kenya said that its staff members observing the protests were arrested. "We demand the immediate and unconditional release of all arrested protesters and observers," the

group said. Kenya Law Society President Faith Odhiambo said that police used tear gas on lawyers at a Nairobi police station as they sought to see their clients.

Ruto last month defended the proposed taxes, saying the country must be financially self-sustaining.



Russian President Vladimir Putin, (right), and North Korea's leader Kim Jong Un attend the official welcome ceremony at the Kim II Sung Square in Pyongyang, North Korea, on June 19. (AP)



Demonstrators run from police as they protest against proposed tax hikes in a finance bill that is due to be tabled in parliament in Nairobi, Kenya on June 18. More than 200 protesters have been arrested in Kenya's capital, Nairobi, in ongoing protests against proposed tax hikes in a finance bill that is due to be tabled in parliament. (AP)



Lat/Am

Guatemala heavy rains kill 8: Eight people have died and five others have been injured so far during the rainy season in

Guatemala, authorities said on Tuesday. According to the National Coordination for Disaster Reduction, the rains have affected 1,910,493 people, displaced 1,789, and put another 1,164 at risk. Approximately 1,800 homes have suffered damage.

Of the dead, three occurred in Jutiapa, two in Quiche, and one each in Suchitepequez, San Marcos, and Guatemala.

The heavy rains in recent days in Guatemala and a considerable part of Central America are due to the usual monsoonal rotation that occurs every winter (rainy season) in the region, causing heavy precipita-tion between May and October, according to Guatemala's National Institute of Seismology, Volcanology, Meteorology, and

In neighboring El Salvador, 11 people have died over the past week. Both countries have canceled school, and El Salvador has opened shelters for the displaced.

Two weather systems - one along Guatemala's Pacific coast and the other in the Gulf of Mexico - have brought saturating rains to southern Mexico and Central America. Guatemala's National Coordinator for

Disaster Prevention, or CONRED, confirmed that the three men drowned in the Pulula river, in the municipality of Jalpatagua, in southern Guatemala near the border with El Salvador. Video on Monday night showed a man trying to escape the current in the swollen

save him. The father of one of the three men ran to help them, while he shouted for them to swim against the current. The force of the water was relentless and the three men drowned while onlookers screamed.

river, while two men jumped in to try to

The rains have also collapsed and destroyed roads and caused flooding.

Guatemalan President Bernardo Arévalo supervised the repair of the country's main highway towards the Pacific on Tuesday. Heavy rain caused the highway to col-

El Salvador also continues to deal with the impact of the storms. Interior Minister Juan Carlos Bidegaín said that authorities have prepared 125 shelters nationally, of which 58 were active. They were sheltering more than 1,800 people. (Agencies)

Quake hits Northern Peru: An earthquake with a magnitude of 5.9 jolted Northern Peru at 02:22 GMT on Tuesday, the GFZ German Research Centre for Geo-

sciences said. The epicenter, with a depth of 10.0 km,

#### Asia

#### **US approves new \$360m arms sale to Taiwan**

## NKorea and Russia sign partnership deal

SEOUL, South Korea, June 19, (AP): Russian President Vladimir Putin and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un signed a new partnership that includes a vow of mutual aid if either country is attacked, during a Wednesday summit that came as both face escalating standoffs with the West.

The deal, which the leaders said covered areas including security, trade, investment, and cultural and humanitarian ties, could mark the strongest connection between Moscow and Pyongyang since the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991. Both leaders described it as a major upgrade of their ties.

#### Concerns

The two met as Putin visited North Korea for the first time in 24 years. The summit came as the US and its allies express growing concerns over an arms arrangement in which the country provides Moscow with badly needed munitions for its war in Ukraine in exchange for economic assistance and technology transfers that could enhance the threat posed by Kim's nuclear weapons and missile program.

Kim said that the deal was the "strongest ever treaty" between the two nations, putting the relationship at the level of an alliance, and vowed full support for Russia's war in Ukraine. Putin said that it was a "breakthough document" reflecting shared desire to move relations to a higher level.

The North Korean leader gave Putin a lavish welcome, meeting him at the airport Tuesday night, where the two shook hands, hugged twice and then rode together in a limousine in a huge motorcade that rolled through the capital's brightly illuminated streets, where buildings were decorated with giant Russian flags and portraits of Putin.

After spending the rest of the night at a state guest house, Putin attended a welcoming ceremony at the city's main square, filled with what appeared to be tens of thousands of spectators, including children holding balloons and people wearing coordinated t-shirts in the red, white and blue of the Russian and North Korean flags. Huge crowds lined up on the streets to greet Putin's motorcade, chanting "Welcome Putin" and waving flowers and North Korean and Russian flags.

## **Manila demands Beijing return** rifles and pay for boat damage wounded a number of Filipino navy personnel, including one who lost his right thumb, two Philippine se-

MANILA, Philippines, June 19, (Agencies): The Philippine military chief demanded Wednesday that China return several rifles and equipment seized by the Chinese coast guard in a disputed shoal and pay for damage in an assault he likened to an act of piracy in the South China Sea. Chinese personnel on board more

than eight motorboats repeatedly rammed then boarded the two Philippine navy inflatable boats Monday to prevent Filipino navy personnel from transferring food and other supplies including firearms to a Philippine territorial outpost in Second Thomas Shoal, which is also claimed by Beijing, according to Philippine officials.

After a scuffle and repeated collisions, the Chinese seized the boats and damaged them with machetes, knives and hammers. They also seized eight M4 rifles, which were packed in cases, navigation equipment and other supplies and

Putin and Kim saluted an honor guard and walked across a red carpet. Kim then introduced key members of his leadership including Foreign Minister Choe Son Hui; top aide and ruling party secretary Jo Yong Won; and the leader's powerful sister, Kim Yo Jong.

As the talks began, Putin thanked Kim for North Korea's support for his war in Ukraine, part of what he said was a "fight against the imperialist hegemonistic policies of the US and its satellites against the Russian Federation."

#### Also:

WASHINGTON: The Biden administration on Tuesday approved a new \$360 million weapons sale to **Taiwan**, sending the island hundreds of armed drones, missile equipment and related support material, the State Department said in a statement that is sure to draw condemnation from China.

The announcement was not unexpected but it comes at a time of high tension between Washington and Bei-

A team of Haitian police commanders on

Tuesday met Kenya's inspector general of

police ahead of a planned deployment to the

violence-hit Caribbean country expected to

take place by the end of June.

why. She will continue to serve as vice president. We thank her for her service," Garafil said.

jing, which regards Taiwan as part of

its territory and has vowed to consoli-

"She declined to give a reason

curity officials told The Associated

on Tuesday.

The two officials spoke on condition of anonymity because of a lack of authority to discuss the sensitive conflict publicly.

**MANILA, Philippines:** Philippine Vice President **Sara Duterte** on

Wednesday tendered her resigna-

tion as secretary of the Department of Education, Presidential Commu-nications Office Secretary **Cheloy** 

In a statement, Garafil said Du-

terte tendered her resignation as a

member of the cabinet during the

visit to the presidential palace.

Garafil said.

date by force if necessary. The sale includes 291 Altius-600M systems, which are unmanned aerial vehicles, or drones, with warheads. It also includes 720 Switchblade drones known as "extended-range loitering munitions," the State Department said.

It said the sale "serves US national, economic, and security interests by supporting the recipient's continuing efforts to modernize its armed forces and to maintain a credible defensive capability." It will "help improve the security of the recipient and assist in maintaining political stability, military balance, and economic progress in the region," the department said.

Taiwanese President Lai Ching-te thanked the US for approving the latest arms sale to Taiwan during a press conference Wednesday in Taipei. He said such authorizations help to maintain peace and stability in the Taiwan

was initially determined to be at 3.80 degrees south latitude and 76.28 degrees west longitude. (Xinhua)

Haiti police meet Kenya commander:



President of the Central Tibetan Administration, Penpa Tsering, (left), speaks to Democratic former US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi as Republican Rep Michael McCaul, (center), looks on at a public event during which the US delegation was felicitated by the President of the Central Tibetan Administration and other officials at the Tsuglakhang temple, in Dharamshala, India on June 19. A bipartisan United States congressional delegation met with the Dalai Lama on Wednesday at his residence in India's Dharamshala, sparking anger from China which views the exiled spiritual leader of Tibetan Buddhism as a dangerous separatist. (AP)

tinational peacekeeping mission with officers drawn from several countries to combat gang violence in Haiti that has left thousands of people dead and forced more than 360,000 others to flee their homes. "We are counting on your support," Hai-

tian Police official Joachim Prohete told

Kenya's Inspector Japhet Koome in a meeting in Nairobi, as police clashed with antitaxation protesters in the streets. "We are ready and committed to come

over and assist whenever needed," Koome told the Haitian delegation in return.

The Haitian police also met commanders of the 1,000 Kenyan officers who will be deployed as part of the multinational peacekeeping mission.

Kenya will also host Haitian police for training, and the delegation in Nairobi on Tuesday visited the barracks where drills will take place. Kenvan police said.

President William Ruto last week said Kenya will honor its commitment to restore peace in the Caribbean nation. US President Joe Biden during Ruto's state visit in May expressed deep appreciation for Kenya's planned deployment.

The deployment that was set to take place in May was postponed to allow completion of bases where the officers will operate from and the procurement of key equipment including vehicles.

Haiti has endured poverty, political instability and natural disasters for decades. International intervention in Haiti has a complicated history. A UN-approved stabilization mission to Haiti that started in June 2004 was marred by a sexual abuse scandal and the introduction of cholera, which killed nearly 10,000 people. The mission ended in October 2017. (AP)

#### oil surges

The price of Kuwaiti oil went up by USD 1.21 to USD 85.71 per barrel on Tuesday as opposed to USD 84.50 pb last Friday, said Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) on Wednesday.

The prices of the Brent Crude and West Texas Intermediate globally went up by USD 1.08 and USD 1.24 each to settle at USD 85.33 per barrel and USD 81.57 pb respectively. (KUNA)

- Nikkei 225

DUBAI

**JAPAN** 

The Gulf countries have been making significant strides in their energy transition efforts despite their heavy reliance on oil and gas, which currently accounts for 70 percent of their exports, reports Al-Qabas daily.

According to a recent report on the Gulf Business website, these nations are actively

pursuing ambitious plans to integrate renewable energy into their energy portfolios, marking a shift towards more sustainable and low-carbon economies

For instance, the UAE has set a target to have 44 percent of its total energy coming from renewable sources by 2050. Similarly, Saudi Arabia aims to achieve 50 percent of its energy capacity from renewables by 2030. These targets underscore their commitment to reducing carbon emissions and promoting sustainability through investments in solar, wind, and hydrogen technologies. Key investments highlighted in the report include Riyadh's pledge of over \$186 billion towards the green economy with a goal of achieving zero carbon emissions by 2060. Abu Dhabi plans to invest \$163 billion in renewable energy to achieve zero emissions by 2050

Gulf countries accelerate renewable energy transition

Oman, on the other hand, is focusing significantly on hydrogen investments and aims

to become a major exporter of green hydrogen by the end of this decade.

The Gulf countries possess several factors conducive to rapid adoption of renewable energy, including abundant solar resources and attractive investment opportunities in clean energy projects. Transitioning from fossil fuels to sustainable energy sources is seen as crucial for meeting global goals of achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2050. Natural gas is also viewed as a transitional fuel that can facilitate this shift more

The UAE, for instance, is heavily investing in nuclear power, solar energy plants, and sustainable transportation infrastructure. It hosts the first nuclear power plant in the Arab world and is home to some of the largest solar power plants globally, such as the Noor Complex, Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Solar Park, and Masdar City.

**Market** Movements

Change Closing pts +4.44 3,988.22 +88.65

38,570.76

PHILIPPINES - PSEi

19-06-2024

Change Closing pts 6,366.03



KUWAIT CITY, June 19: Gold

prices declined as the precious

metal continued to correct follow-

ing recent strong gains, with mar-

ket focus shifting to upcoming US

economic data and statements

from Federal Reserve officials on

potential interest rate adjustments,

Spot gold prices dropped by 0.3

percent to \$2,311.4 per ounce.

This decrease represents a 6 per-

cent decline from its recent peak of

\$2,449.89 per ounce reached on

reports Al-Jarida daily.

## **Boursa Kuwait indices fall amid** profit-taking before Eid Al-Adha

Market value drops 80 mln dinars, down 0.19%

#### By Mahmoud Shendi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, June 19:** In the lead-up to the Eid Al-Adha holiday, the Boursa Kuwait experienced a decline in its main indices primarily due to profit-taking activities and portfolio adjustments.

The total market value of stocks decreased by 0.19%, equivalent to 80 million dinars, ending the week at 41.449 billion dinars compared to the previous week's 41.529 billion dinars.

Specifically the Premier Market Index closed at 7,654.83 points, down 0.19% from the previous session, reflecting a decrease of 14.45 points; the General Market Index concluded at 7,033.58 points, marking a decline of 0.16% or 11.58 points.

The Main Market Index saw a slight decrease of 0.04%, losing 2.53 points to settle at 5,971.95 points; the Main 50 Index also ended in the red, dropping by 0.24% or 14.02 points to finish at 5,791.95 points.

Sector-wise, trading witnessed declines in 7 sectors, notably in energy which saw a decrease of 5.64%. Conversely, 6 sectors, led by healthcare, recorded gains

with an increase of 2.64%.
The stock "Thuraya" experienced the largest weekly decline at 17.78%, while "Kuwait Al Sakab" led the rises

with a notable increase of 51.45%. Despite the overall decline in indices, new listings such as the Bayut Investment Company contributed posi-

tively to investor confidence. The market also saw significant trading activity with Gulf Bank leading in volumes to 947.21 million shares

## Boursa Kuwait shows decade-long concentration in large companies

A total of 64.86 thousand transac-

tions were executed, reflecting an

8.66% decrease compared to the previ-

ous week. In terms of international fac-

tors, the week was marked by the US

Federal Reserve's decision to maintain

interest rates, hinting at a potential re-

KUWAIT CITY, June 19: The Kuwaiti stock market has been experiencing a notable concentration of investments and market value in a limited number of large companies over the past decade, reports Al-Jarida daily.

This phenomenon is significant as it impacts the strategies of active money managers, raises questions about market efficiency, and influences the overall economy

#### The following are the concentration trends in the **Boursa Kuwait (2014-2024)**

Dominance of Large Companies -- The largest company in the Boursa Kuwait has consistently held a significant portion of the total market value, ranging between 14.3 percent and 27.9 percent over the years.

The top 5 companies collectively accounted for 39.1 percent to 59.3 percent of the total market value.

The top 10 companies represented between 54.1 percent and 69.3 percent of the market value during the period. Sector Dominance -- The banking sector stands out as the

largest sector in terms of market capitalization within the KSE. Leading companies include Kuwait Finance House, National Bank, Boubyan Bank, Zain Telecommunications,

#### Impact on investment strategies

Active vs. Passive Management -- With a few large-cap companies dominating the market, it becomes challenging for actively managed funds to outperform benchmark indices like the Boursa Kuwait Index.

Diversification Concerns -- Concentration limits diversification, a crucial risk management strategy for investors. Over-reliance on a few companies exposes investors to

both volume and liquidity, supported

by strategic decisions including plans to align with Islamic Sharia provisions.

decreased by 3.17% to 235.91 million

dinars, with a 3.29% decline in trading

Throughout the week, total liquidity

higher volatility associated with these firms.

#### **Economic Implications**

Efficient Capital Allocation -- Concentration may lead to less efficient capital allocation, potentially hindering economic growth and innovation.

Market Depth and Competition -- Fewer IPOs and less competition from smaller firms could affect market dynamism and competitiveness.

#### **Recommendations and Policy Considerations**

Encouraging Diversification -- Encourage family-owned businesses and successful operational companies to list on the stock exchange. Offer incentives for new companies to go public, thereby increasing the diversity of listed entities. Consider offering shares of successful government-

owned companies through IPOs to broaden market partici-

■ Prioritize companies listing on the stock exchange in government tenders, fostering market liquidity and investor confidence. Learning from regional examples it is vital to look to suc-

which has attracted a wide range of operating companies, enhancing market efficiency and diversity. In conclusion, while concentration in a few large companies may reflect strong fundamentals and growth potential, it's crucial to strike a balance that supports both market

cessful models such as the Saudi Arabia Stock Exchange,

Encouraging a diverse range of companies to participate in the stock market can foster competitiveness, innovation, and sustainable economic growth in Kuwait.

performance and broader economic development.

duction later in 2024.

The Kuwait Stock Exchange continued to attract foreign investments, with significant inflows totaling 93.3 million dinars in the first five months of the year, underpinned by active institutional and corporate buying activities

#### Pending contract finalization

Platinum edges up

Gold prices retreat amid

US economic data focus

## **UPAC** floats 'best bid' Messila Beach project

Economic turmoil deepens as

KUWAIT CITY, June 19: United Projects for Aviation Services Company (UPAC) has received notification from the Tourism Projects Company regarding the outcome of the bid submitted for the Messila Beach Site Project (Plage 2), for a proposed duration of 17 years, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a statement to the Kuwait Stock Exchange, UPAC clarified that it has been informed that its submitted offer was deemed the most favorable among those have been submitted by others.

However, UPAC emphasized

SANAA, June 19, (AP): Yemen's Houthi rebels and its internationally

recognized government are locked

in a fight for control of the country's

banks that experts warn is threatening

to further wreck an economy already

The rivalry over the banks is throwing Yemen's financial system into

deeper turmoil. Already, the Houthis

who control the north and center of

the country and the government running the south use different currency

notes with different exchange rates.

The escalating money divide is

eroding the value of Yemen's cur-

rency, the riyal, which had driven up

prices for clothing and meat before

the Islamic holiday of Eid al-Adha

For weeks, Yemenis in Houthi-

controlled areas have been unable

to pull their money out of bank sav-

ings accounts, reportedly because the

Houthi-run central bank, based in the

capital, Sanaa, has stopped providing

liquidity to commercial and govern-

ment banks. Protests have broken out

in front of some banks, dispersed by

ever since the Iranian-backed Houthi

rebels took over Sanaa and much of

Yemen's north and center in 2015.

The Saudi-backed internationally rec-

ognized government and its nominal

ally the Southern Transitional Coun-

cil, a group supported by the United

Arab Emirates, govern the south and

much of the east, centered in the southern port city of Aden.

world's poorest country before the

war began. Punitive actions by each

side against the other's banks over the

past week now threaten to undermine

merchants' ability to import food and

basic commodities and to disrupt the

transfer of remittances from Yemenis

"All these factors will likely deep-

Yemen was already the Arab

Yemen has been torn by civil war

started on Sunday.

security forces.

They also run rival central banks.

crippled by nearly a decade of war.

that this notification does not establish a contractual obligation or guarantee of contract execution, nor does it confer any rights until the actual contract is finalized.

May 20, amidst a surge driven by

non-yielding safe-haven demand, despite challenges from a stronger

US dollar and rising interest rates.

in spot trading, down by 1.1 per-

cent to \$29.18 per ounce, influ-

enced by the retreat in both gold

Platinum, on the other hand,

edged up by 0.4 percent to \$968.23

per ounce, while palladium experienced a 1 percent decline to

and copper prices.

\$879.35 per ounce.

In contrast, silver prices also fell

UPAC further stated that, as of the current moment, this notification has no significant impact on the company's financial position.

In its latest financial report, UPAC reported a 5.10% increase in profits for the first quarter of 2024, reaching 616.89 thousand dinars compared to 586.95 thousand dinars in the same quarter of

Challenges faced by young job seekers highlighted in survey

## MENA graduates prefer tech & finance industries, report Bayt.com & YouGov

DUBAI, June 19: The 2024 Fresh Graduates in the MENA Survey by Bayt.com, the Middle East's #1 job site, and market research agency You-Gov, was conducted to help identify which industries are most appealing to fresh graduates in the MENA region and to describe some of the challenges young job seekers face when looking

for a job. Interestingly, more than 4 in 5 respondents (82%) are satisfied with the quality of higher education they received. Of these, 35% of the total number of respondents stated that they

#### are 'very' satisfied. **Top Hiring Industries**

This year, many industries in the MENA are thriving with new career opportunities for fresh graduates. Advertising/ Marketing/ Public Relations (25%), Healthcare/Medical Services (14%), Military/ Defence/ Police (13%), and Banking/ Finance (13%) emerged as the top hiring sectors.

Respondents believe that some industries hire more fresh graduates than others because of lower salary expectations (42%), while (37%) believe that certain industries hire more young graduates because they are able to handle more challenges.

In the MENA, Advertising/ Marketing/ Public Relations (22%) emerged as the most appealing industry to fresh graduates from a career point of view, followed by IT/Internet/e-commerce (19%), and Business Consultancy

Ola Haddad, General Manager at



Ola Haddad

Bayt.com, states: "Our latest Fresh Graduates Survey reveals how young job seekers and recent graduates view the job market and identify the most attractive industries from their perspective. Bayt.com offers a range of tools to help fresh graduates build their CVs, improve their skills, and broaden their professional expertise.'

#### **Most In-Demand Skills in the** Workplace

When asked about the top skills required to excel in the workplace, respondents mentioned computer skills (53%) as the most important, followed by interpersonal/ team skills and communication skills (both at 39%). In terms of their abilities, respondents rate themselves highly across most skills. Respondents across MENA consider their interpersonal/ team playing skills (89%), communication skills (86%), and flexibility/ adaptability to change (85%)to be 'good' or 'very good.'

#### **Jobs for Fresh Graduates**

Most MENA graduates (43%) feel that the biggest challenge they face when searching for a job is not knowing how to approach the job search effectively. Not knowing how to find relevant jobs (43%) is also an obstacle. Nearly two-thirds (63%) of graduates said they acquired work experience during or before college.

The nature of the job or being passionate about the job (46%) emerges as the single most important factor for MENA respondents when selecting a job. Nearly three-quarters (74%) of fresh graduates expect to be offered a basic salary for their first job, and 45% expect to get personal medical insur-

When asked what they would do if they did not find a job in their exact target job role/ industry, more than half of the MENA fresh graduates (54%)said they would keep looking until they did, while 28% said they would start looking into another role/ industry of their choice.

Zafar Shah, Account Director at YouGov said, remarks: 'The Fresh Graduates Survey offers valuable insights into aligning recruitment efforts with the aspirations of recent graduates in the MENA region. The findings reveal an increasing openness among employers to hire fresh graduates, reflecting a significant change in the skills demanded in our digital age."

Data for the Fresh Graduates in the MENA Survey was collected online between 16th May and 31st June 2024. Results are based on a sample composed of respondents from the following countries: UAE, KSA, Ku-

#### abroad, on which many families dewait, Qatar, Oman, Bahrain, Lebapend, said Edem Wosornu, director non, Jordan, Iraq, Palestine, Syria, of operations and advocacy for the U.N. humanitarian coordination of-fice known as OCHA. Egypt, Sudan, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, and Libya.

#### en poverty, worsen food insecurity and malnutrition, and increase reliance on humanitarian assistance," she told a U.N. Security Council briefing on Thursday. The dispute could escalate to the point that banks in Houthirun areas are barred completely from international financial transactions, which she said would have "cata-

strophic ramifications."

The internationally recognized government moved the central bank to Aden in 2016, and since then began issuing new banknotes to replace worn-out riyals. Houthi authorities,

Yemen's banks vie for control which set up their own central bank in Sanaa, banned the use of the new

> money in areas under their control. In March, the Houthi-controlled central bank announced it was rolling out its own new 100-rival coins. The international community and Yemen's recognized government denounced the move, saying the Houthis were trying to set up their own financial system and warning it will deepen Yemen's economic divide.

Adding to the confusion, the bills have different exchange rates - riyals issued in Sanaa go for about 530 to the dollar, while those from Aden are around 1,800 to the dollar.

In response, the Aden-based central bank gave banks 60 days to relocate their headquarters to the southern city and stop operating under Houthi policies, or else risk facing sanctions related to money laundering and antiterrorism laws.

The central bank was "forced to make these decisions, especially after the Houthi group issued their own currency and took unilateral steps towards complete independence from the internationally recognized Central Bank in Aden," said Mustafa Nasr, an economic expert and head of the Studies and Economic Media Center SEMC.

No banks met the deadline - either because they needed more time or because they feared Houthi sanctions if they moved, Nasr said.

When the deadline ran out last week, the central bank in Aden banned dealing with six banks headquartered in Sanaa, meaning currency exchange offices, money transfer agencies and banks in the south could no longer work with them.

In retaliation, the Houthi-run central bank in Sanaa banned all dealings with 13 banks headquartered in Aden. That means people in Houthicontrolled areas can't deposit or withdraw funds through those banks or receive wire transfers made through them.

Even as the fight for control is going on, both sides are facing a cash crunch. The Houthi government has few sources of foreign currency and its new coins aren't recognized outside its territory. In January, the United States des-

ignated the Houthis as a global terror group in response to the rebels' attacks on shipping in the Red Sea and Arabian Sea. The Houthis say the attacks are in retaliation for the Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip. Because of the U.S. decision, banks around the world might be concerned and reluctant to continue any financial dealings with banks that have headquarters under Houthi control, said Youssef Saeed, a University of Aden economic professor.

#### Türkiye eyes BRICS for economic opportunities and influence ANKARA, June 19, (Xinhua): Türkiye's heightened interest in BRICS ades, and Türkiye wants to be a part of the vast opportunities that the bloc platforms like BRICS. Fidant also at-

stems from its desire to be part of the growing economic potential of the bloc, which offers new opportunities for cooperation and development, analysts said.

During an official visit to China in early June, Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan expressed his country's pursuit of new opportunities for cooperation with different partners in

tended the bloc's foreign ministers meeting in the Russian city of Nizhny Novgorod on June 10-11.

Experts said that it is uncertain whether Türkiye will join the bloc at the moment, but as the economic bloc continues to grow, Türkiye will want to benefit from the development opportunities it provides.

"BRICS is likely to dominate the global economy in the coming decpresents in a multipolar world," Ali Oguz Dirioz, an associate professor of international relations at Ankara's TOBB University of Economics and Technology, told Xinhua.

He said that the participation of middle powers like Türkiye could enhance BRICS's importance, as these nations seek a multipolar world order not dominated by superpowers.

The global economy is increasingly leaning towards the South Pacific region, where growth is significantly higher. Therefore, Türkiye cannot be indifferent to these developments, Dirioz added.

tion to Europe, as Türkiye is a longstanding member of NATO and Euro-

Meanwhile, he emphasized that "any potential decision (to join BRICS) would not be made in opposi-

#### **London Stock Exchange reclaims top spot**

The UK's main stock market retook its crown as Europe's most valuable for the first time in nearly two years, data shows. BBC reported.

The total value of companies listed on the London Stock Exchange (LSE) hit USD 3.18 trillion on Monday, overtaking the USD 3.13 trillion total value of companies listed in Paris, according to Bloomberg data.

Both valuations have shifted since and remain close, but analysts describe it as a milestone, as they say the French market has slumped because of the uncertainty around the upcoming elections, while the UK market is recovering after several years of underper-

The LSE had been Europe's largest stock market for many years before November 2022 when it was overtaken.

Analysts at the time blamed LSE's performance on the fallout from former Prime Minister Liz Truss' mini-Budget, a weak pound, recession fears and Brex-

#### **UK inflation falls to BoE's 2% target rate**

Inflation in the U.K. returned to the Bank of England's target rate of 2% for the first time in nearly three years, official figures showed Wednesday, a development that has been seized on by the governing Conservative Party that its economic plan is "working" ahead of the July 4

The Office for National Statistics said inflation, as measured by the consumer prices index, fell to 2% in the year to May from 2.3% the month before with food prices providing the biggest downward

Though the decline merely means that prices are rising at a slower rate than they have for the past few years during one of the cost of living crisis, Conservative Prime Minister Rishi Sunak sought to take credit for the fall,

contribution.

corner. However, Rachel Reeves, who will become Treasury chief if the main opposition Labour Party wins the election,

and argued it was further evidence

that the "economy has now turned a

said working people are "worse off," with mortgage rates higher than they have been for years and taxes at a 70-year

high.
The fall in inflation follows nearly three years of above-target inflation. The last time inflation was at 2% was in July 2021 before prices started to shoot up, first as a result of supply chain issues during the coronavirus pandemic and then by Russia's inva-sion of Ukraine, which pushed up energy costs. (AP)

#### Still-high inflation curbs spending

## US retail sales rise a meager 0.1% in May from April

NEW YORK, June 19, (AP): Consumers barely increased spending in May from April as still high prices on groceries and other necessities and high interest rates

Retail sales rose 0.1% in May, below the pace that economists projected, the Commerce Department said Tuesday. And April sales were revised downward - a 0.2% decline, from unchanged. Sales rose 0.6% in March and 0.9% in February. That comes after sales fell 1.1% in January, dragged down in part by inclement weather.

Excluding gas prices and auto sales, retail sales rose the same amount Retail sales in May, in part, were depressed by falling gas prices. Excluding sales from gasoline, sales were up 0.3%. The national average price for a gallon of

unleaded gasoline was \$3.45 as of Monday; a month ago, it was \$3.59, AAA said. Government retail data isn't adjusted for inflation, which was unchanged from April to May, according to the latest government report. High inflation helps to inflate retail sales figures.

Still, economists said the report reflected an increasingly cautious consumer. But they point to a silver lining: a weaker-than-expected retail sales report increases the likelihood that the Federal Reserve will start to cut interest rates in a

"Consumer spending is cooling in a fairly orderly fashion," said Jeffrey Roach, chief economist for LPL Financial in Charlotte, North Carolina. But he added, "So far, the economy could pull off a soft landing, especially if the Fed is quick to adjust policy as conditions change.'

The report showed mixed performances for various categories. While auto and vehicle dealer sales rose, areas related to home sales fell.

Sales at clothing and accessory stores rose 0.9%, while electronics and appliance stores posted a 0.4% gain. Online sales rose 0.8%. But business at building

The retail sales data also offers only a partial look at consumer spending because it excludes things like travel and lodging. However at restaurants, the lone ervice category tracked in the monthly retail sales report, sales fell 0.4% in May.

A strong job market and rising wages have fueled household spending but spending remains choppy in the face of rising credit costs and still high inflation, though it has eased. To give shoppers some relief, Target, Walmart and other chains have rolled out price cuts - some permanent, others temporary, heading

Earlier this month, the government reported that America's employers added a robust 272,000 jobs in May, accelerating from April and an indicator that companies are still bullish enough in the economy to keep hiring despite stubbornly high interest rates. The government's report on consumer inflation last week, showed how inflation cooled substantially in May, as the cost of gasoline, new cars, and

Consumer prices excluding volatile food and energy costs - the closely watched "core" index - rose 0.2% from April to May, the government said last week. That was down from 0.3% the previous month and was the smallest increase since October. Measured from a year earlier, prices increased 3.3%, less than the 3.6%

Federal Reserve officials said last week after the report came out 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.

Still, anxiety over still stubborn inflation helped drive down U.S. consumer sentiment for the third consecutive month. The University of Michigan's consumer sentiment index, released Friday in a preliminary version, dropped to 65.6 this

Retail executives say shoppers are still buying, but they're being choosy about what they spend their money on.

Darren Rebelez, president and CEO of Ankeny, Iowa-based Casey's Casey's General Stores, Inc. which operates more than 2,600 convenience stores in 17 Midwestern states, noted shoppers remain resilient, but the company is also in a sweet spot. Roughly 25% of the chain's customers have household income of less than \$50,000, and seven of the bottom 10 most affordable states are in the stores' footprint so customers can stretch their dollars further.

Still, Rebelez says customers are making choices like shifting away from candy because of skyrocketing cocoa prices and moving into baked goods like cookies, brownies and donuts. They're also buying less bottled soda in favor of cheaper

"They're not giving up on their indulgences," he said. "They're just choosing to spend it differently so they can get a little more value for the money.

Companies are also ramping up experiences as customers shift more of their money to services over buying stuff.

This spring, Lowe's Inc, the nation's second-largest home improvement retailer behind Home Depot, signed a multiyear agreement with Argentine professional soccer player Lionel Messi, Inter Miami CF and the upcoming soccer tournament Conmebol Copa América USA to play a role in its marketing and advertising campaigns.

Lowe's is hoping to win over soccer fans with signage and in-stadium activations and community programming at a time when many shoppers are jumping around to different home improvement retailers for their projects and show no signs of loyalty. For example, select Lowe's stores will host Conmebol Copa

#### Study released

## are flattening

MILAN, June 19, (AP): The post-pandemic surge in global sales of luxury handbags, shoes and apparel is set to stall this year amid a creativity crisis and price hikes as brands shift focus to the biggest spending customers, a new study by the Bain consultancy said Tuesday

Bain is forecasting flat worldwide luxury sales in 2024 following a slight first-quarter dip, according to the study commissioned by the Altagamma association. The consultancy cited political uncertainty during a presidential election year in the United States as well as economic uncertainty in China that has brought on a phenomenon of "luxury shaming.

Beyond socioeconomic factors and rising geopolitical tensions, the slow-down is also partly "self-inflicted," said Bain partner Claudia D'Arpizio.

She cited a "creativity crisis," in the sector, as a number of major fashion houses are transitioning creative directors, and a new focus on the super-wealthy customers, at the expense of the aspirational middle class and Gen-Z youngsters who fueled growth before the pandemic.

"There is a lack of clarity for many of these brands. They are making attempts to regain focus. It is five, six brands under turn-around, big ones. This is not helping the overall excitement," D'Arpizio told The Associated Press. "This is a supply-driven industry. When you have the brands really in tune with customer needs, it usually reacts quickly.'

She said some "tweaks" are needed on strategy and price points, adding that "you can't grow without the middle class and younger generations.

Among major fashion houses, Gucci and Moschino have made runway debuts of their new creative directions, while the first Valentino collection by the new creative director hits the runway in September. Chanel has the position to fill after the incumbent resigned earlier this month.

While inflation is one element of price hikes, D'Arpizio said brands are also refocusing on the estimated 6 million to 8 million consumers at the top of the pyramid as they search for better profit margins. At the same time, there has been less rejuvenation in the offerings.

Steep price increases for items that don't show significant innovation, and feel like something they have seen before, leaves customers "upset and

Flat global luxury sales forecasts follow a pent-up post-pandemic spending surge that pushed sales during the 2021-23 period up 24% over 2019 levels.

Last year, sales of personal luxury goods grew by 4% to 362 billion euros (about \$388 billion) from 349 euros in 2022, due largely to a resurgence of U.S. and Asian tourism to Europe fueling purchases. Add in luxury travel, fine art, cars and vachts, the vast global luxury market expanded to 1.5 trillion euros last year - highlighting a trend toward experiences over tangible goods.

## Luxury sales Chinese economy extends its upward trend amid policies to prop up growth

Faster growth in consumption became a highlight in May

#### BEIJING, June 19, (Xinhua): The Chinese economy extended an upward recovery trend in May, as shown by faster consumption growth and steady expansion in industrial production, latest government

Important economic indicators rebounded during the month amid government measures to prop up growth and promote high-quality development, National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) spokesperson Liu Aihua said at a press conference in Beijing on Monday.

data showed.

According to Liu, a consumption rebound supported by the May Day holiday, along with improved data for exports and imports as well as the services industry, helped boost the economy during the month. "Driven by such factors as macroeconomic policies taking effects, improving external demand and the May Day holiday, the services industry, consumption as well as imports and exports all rebounded in May.

Despite the complex and grave external environment and effective domestic demand remaining insufficient, Liu told the press that the Chinese economy has maintained a "generally stable trend."

**Faster consumption growth** 

Faster growth in consumption became a highlight last month. In May, retail sales of consumer goods expanded 3.7 percent year on year to 3.92 trillion yuan (about 551 billion U.S. dollars). On a month on month basis, consumer goods retail sales rose 0.51 percent from the previous month.

"Due to the May Day holiday, the effective trade-in policy of exchanging old consumer goods for new ones, and the early start of the June 18 online sales promotion, the year-on-year growth rate of consumer goods retail sales in May were 1.4 percentage points higher compared to the previous month," Liu said.

Services consumption boomed as a result of robust travel during the holidays, which pushed up demand for cultural and tourism-related services, Liu said.

Upgraded consumption also pushed up retail sales of product categories including sports and recreational goods, cosmetics, communication equipment, as well as household appliances and audio-visual equipment to grow 20.2 percent, 18.7 percent, 16.6 percent and 12.9 percent, respectively.

New energy passenger vehicle



Egyptian mechatronics engineer Mahmoud El-Komy works at his office in Tanta city, northern Egypt. Mahmoud El-Komy has invented a robot that can extract potable water by condensing humidity in the air and turn it into drinking water using artificial intelligence. (Xinhua)

technology ecosystem provide significant opportunities to position the continent as a leader in technological innovation and sustainable development. The continental development

**Artificial intelligence can empower continent's workforce** 

agency further underscored the need to invest in digital infrastructure and human capital, including education initiatives. It stressed the crucial imperative of ensuring that AI development is inclusive and tailored to the continent's unique needs and challenges.

Noting that the impact of AI on the emerging future will be a consequence of many factors, including technological and policy decisions, the agency said getting to a better future will require carefully designed policies and regulations that foster the development of AI while keeping the negative effects in check.

The white paper, among other things, recommended that Africa needs a strong infrastructure and a skilled workforce to maximize the benefits of AI. It called for the essential need to introduce national and regional AI policies focused on inclusive education, worker protection, and stakeholder involvement.

The agency further called for human-centered design, noting that AI should complement human skills, not replace them.

It added that training data and AI tools should be developed with African contexts in mind, underscoring that cooperation among stakeholders is key to responsible AI development that respects local

knowledge and traditions.

transactions in China were also robust last month, growing 38.4 percent year on year, Liu said, citing data from the China Automobile Dealers Associa-

tive AI presents a powerful tool for

shaping a dignified future of work

It said by proactively addressing

the challenges and harnessing the

opportunities, Africa can lever-

age AI to drive economic growth,

empower its youthful workforce,

and become a leader in socially

responsible AI development. Afri-

ca's young population and vibrant

The services industry in general reported growth last month, with the sub-indices for information transmissionsoftwareinformation technology services, leasing and business services, transportwarehousingpostal services, as well as the wholesale and retail trade, all reporting faster year-on-year growth in May.

Meanwhile, online retail sales surged 12.4 percent year on year in the January-May period, the data showed. **Industrial production expands** 

In May, the value-added industrial output went up 5.6 percent year on year, or 0.3 percent up month on

Specifically, the industrial valueadded output in the manufacturing sector grew 6 percent, and that for hightech manufacturing surged 10 percent year on year. "3D printing equipment, new energy vehicles, and integrated circuits grew 36.3 percent, 33.6 percent, and 17.3 percent, respectively," said Liu, who also revealed that profits of industrial enterprises hit more than 2.09 trillion yuan during the JanuaryApril period, up 4.3 percent year on

Industrial production has grown at a fast rate since the start of the year amid the nation's efforts to push forward industrial transformation and upgrade, Liu said. "Going forward, there are many favorable factors to promote the rapid growth of industrial production. These include better production expectations from enterprises and improving industrial profits.'

Furthermore, the gradual implementation of policies such as large-scale equipment renewals will add new impetus to industrial production, Liu

From the perspective of foreign trade, China's goods imports and exports increased by 8.6 percent yearon-year in May, 0.6 percentage points faster than the previous month, data showed.

**Braving challenges** 

NBS data on Monday showed that the nation's property market remained a drag on the economy.

The nation's fixed asset investment in the first five months of the year grew 4 percent year on year. If deducting investment in the property sector, the nation's fixed asset investment during the period would have otherwise grown 8.6 percent, Liu said.

The floor area of new home sales went down 20.3 percent in the first five months year on year, with sales value also down 27.9 percent.

The property market is still in the process of readjustment, Liu said.

In mid-May, Chinese authorities unveiled a raft of tailored measures in the face of a cool down in the sector, including cutting down payment ratios, abolishing the commercial mortgage rate floors for first and second homes, and establishing a re-lending facility that supports local state-owned enterprises to use those funds to buy commercial homes for affordable housing.

"The policies and measures take time to make an impact on the market," Liu said, adding that the government will strive to implement the policies and measures already rolled out and explore new approaches to destock home supplies and stabilize the

The data also showed that in May, the surveyed urban unemployment rate stood at 5 percent, unchanged compared to the previous month and 0.2 percentage points lower compared to May 2023.

However, Liu explained that China still faces challenges in employment both because of the many jobs the country will need to generate for job seekers and the structural issues in the employment market.

**Économic rebound to continue** "Going forward, driven by the de-

velopment of new quality productive forces in accordance with local conditions, we expect new industries, new business formats and new business models to give rise to a growing number of new businesses and new jobs,"

Recently, the World Bank raised its forecast for China's 2024 economic growth to 4.8 percent, 0.3 percentage points higher from the previous forecast. The International Monetary Fund also revised up China's economic outlook to 5 percent, 0.4 percentage points higher than the previous forecast, Liu said.

"International organizations and institutions have raised their forecasts for China's economic growth, which fully demonstrates the confidence in China's economic growth prospects," Liu said.

Based on analyses of production, consumption, and government policy support, the economy is expected to continue to rebound and improve, she

## Int'l bank card organizations improve payment services in Chinese market

BEIJING, June 19, (Xinhua): International bank card organizations such as Mastercard and American Express have accelerated efforts aimed at optimizing payment services in China, in order to satisfy ever-growing payment needs in the deepening opening-up process of the

world's second-largest economy. Motivated by the advantages of operating in the large-scale Chinese market, global bank card companies have been constantly enhancing their services, ranging from expansion of the scope of cooperating merchants to the upgrading of payment limits on

In the latest move to expand its business layout in China, Mastercard NetsUnion Information Technology (Beijing) Co., Ltd. (Mastercard NetsUnion). a joint venture of Mastercard and NetsUnion Clearing Corporation, has introduced a brand new bank card called China Mastercard, taking this step just over a month after it officially launched its bank

card clearing operations on May 9. Currently, China Mastercard holders not only have the ability to shop at more than 100 million merchants around the world, but can also add the card to Chinese e-commerce platforms such as Alipay, WeChat, JD.com and

Meituan as well as overseas digital wallets, said Zheng Xiaofei, CEO of Mastercard NetsUnion.

In addition, the company has also cooperated with more than 30 digital wallet platforms in expanding shopping scenarios for its customers from daily consumption to merchandise such as automobiles and real estate.

In the future, the company plans to promote contactless payment methods while continue to cooperate with digital wallet platforms and bank card issuers in order to improve the convenience and security of its payment ser-

"We are very optimistic about the Chinese market which is large enough, and we are confident to do business well here," said Ling Hai, who is chairman of Mastercard NetsUnion. Ling added that the joint venture will provide more differentiated and refined services and deliver expanded technology relevant to the bank card clearing business.

Ling believes that there are quite a few favorable conditions for developing businesses in China at the moment. On the one hand, booming international tourism and e-commerce activities have promoted more vigorous demand for crossborder payments in the Chinese market.

On the other hand, the time is right for Mastercard NetsUnion to beef up its business layout in China, as the country is building a payment ecosystem that is fully-accessible, diversified and "more compatible with the rest of the world." Mastercard is the second overseas

bank card clearing institution to enter the Chinese market, following American Express. Express (Hangzhou) Technology Service Co. Ltd., a joint venture of American Express and Lianlian in China, has cooperated with a number of banks and non-bank payment institutions to expand the scope of businesses accepting American Express bank cards in the Notably, a number of world-famous

hotels, duty-free shops, and catering businesses have already accepted domestic and overseas versions of American Express bank cards.

The opening up of the bank card clearing market is an important part of the opening up of China's financial industry. In recent years, China's financial regulators have set equal standards for foreign and domestic bank card clearing institutions in terms of setting-up conditions and procedures as well as business management, while making it easier for such institutions to apply for licenses.

## What's On

#### **Kuwait Dive Team removes sunken boat from Fahaheel waters**

## NBK continues environmental support through Kuwait Dive Team

KUWAIT CITY, June 19: Underscoring its constant dedication to supporting all initiatives that promote sustainability and environmental conservation, National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) continues sponsoring Kuwait Dive Team (KDT) in its efforts to protect and rehabilitate the marine environment including islands and coral reefs, and removing harmful waste to preserve marine biodiversity.

In continuation of these efforts, KDT lifted a sunken boats endanger the marine ecosystem and organisms as they contain fuel and oils, in addition to obstructing maritime navigation.

On this occasion, Talal Al-Turki, Executive Manager, head of Public Relations & Event Management at National Bank of Kuwait said, "We, at NBK, always seek to leverage our role as one of the leading corporations in social responsibility by introduc-

ing a variety of initiatives and programs across different fields, especially the environment."

Talal Al-Turki

"All awareness campaigns promoted on the social media pages of the bank and KDT aim to increase awareness of the importance of the environment and environmental



National Bank of Kuwait staff with Kuwait Dive Team.

preservation. Additionally, these campaigns highlight KDT's valuable contributions in the protection and restoration of the marine ecosystem, as well as encourage volunteering in serving the marine environment by preparing national cadres specialized in marine operations and maintenance of mooring buoys around coral reefs," he mentioned.

"Our partnership with KDT aligns with our strategy to

adopt environmental governance best practices, through a set of initiatives launched by the bank to promote sustainability, deepen environmental culture, and create awareness and interest in maintaining a clean, pollutionfree environment," he emphasized.

Since the beginning of this year, Kuwait Dive Team lifted 56 tons of marine debris in 33 operations, with the participation of 800 volunteers. They also removed 28 tons of harmful waste in 18 operations on the coasts, ports and islands, in cooperation with government agencies, 7 tons of abandoned fishing gear, and recovered 3 boats and a marine vessel of 21 tons. On the other hand, the team organized many awareness sessions and workshops with 300 participants to raise awareness on the importance of marine ecosystems and how to protect them.

It is worth mentioning that NBK regards environmental and climate issues as key priorities and therefore organizes awareness campaigns on its social media platforms to increase awareness on the importance of the environment and environmental conservation. Furthermore, the bank's sponsorship of Kuwait Dive Team has significantly contributed to protecting and restoring the marine ecosystem in Kuwait through many activities, including protecting coral reefs, cleaning beaches, establishing fish colonies, and lifting sunken ships and boats.

#### **Bank boosts digital banking experience**

## KIB reveals winners of 'Win with KIB Rewards' campaign

KUWAIT CITY, June 19: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) has announced the draw winners of its new 'Win with KIB Rewards' campaign for the month of May. Running monthly until the end of the year, the campaign aims to reward customers who use KIB's Banking App to open an Al Dirwaza account, issue a Multicurrency prepaid card, or open a

deposit investment of any kind. The first batch of winners who won up to 15,000 reward points each are Jassim Tarakmah, Afnan Mohammad, Mou-Abdulaziz Alk-

Al-Khrayef

teety, Mohamed Abdelrahman, Fahad Alduaij, Maha Alkharraz, Abdullah Alshammari, Imran Hassan, and Ali Almutawaa.

Aldosari,

Commenting on the occasion, Nawaf Al-Khrayef, Assistant General Manager of the Retail Banking Department at KIB, said: "We are delighted to congratulate the first group of winners in this exceptional campaign, which is a great opportunity to reward our customers for their loyalty. We will continue our efforts to provide innovative banking solutions that meet their aspirations and fulfill all their needs, enhancing their overall banking experience and lifestyle, in line with our 'Bank for Life' slogan." He added: "At KIB, we remain committed to adopting our comprehensive strategy aimed at providing the best banking benefits particularly with regard to the KIB Rewards Program, in addition to encouraging all customer segments to use our digital platforms to complete their financial transactions with utmost convenience and ease.

Customers can qualify for and participate in the draws by using the KIB Banking App to open an AlDirwaza account, issue a Multicurrency prepaid card, or open a deposit investment of any kind. Winners can redeem their

reward points on KIB's rewards online market platform, which features an extensive list of participating outlets, including electronics services, retail products, and e-vouchers, and much

In addition to this and numerous other campaigns, KIB offers a wide variety of products with unparalleled benefits. Those who open an Al Dirwaza account can enjoy weekly and monthly draws, with one chance to enter the draw for every KD 1 deposited, culminating in a Mega Draw. The Multicurrency prepaid card offers a great deal of flexibility, allowing customers to use six currencies simultaneously and choose from a total of 12 currencies. Additionally, deposits starting from KD 1000 are given competitive profit rates.

The Bank encourages its customers to stay informed about the campaign's latest developments and news, as well as to learn more about the KIB Rewards Program, by following its social media

accounts and visiting its website.

It is worth mentioning that KIB spares no effort in launching initiatives and campaigns that reward its customers, while continuously striving to enhance the quality of its banking products and services. The Bank aims to elevate its banking experience by complementing digital financial solutions with attractive rewards, maintaining its leading position as a reliable partner in



Kuwait International Bank 'Win with KIB Rewards' program.





Photos during the beach and coral reefs cleaning campaign.

KFH partners with Scientific Center for environmental month initiatives

## **Kuwait Finance House launches beach cleaning campaign**

KUWAIT CITY, June 19: As part of the "We Are Generation Restoration" environmental month campaign, Kuwait Finance House (KFH) has launched the Kuwait islands' beach and coral reefs cleaning campaign in collaboration with the Scientific Center, a subsidiary of Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences

KFH's commitment to participate in these environmental initiatives is part of its strategy, social responsibility and pioneering role in sustainability. These efforts also align with KFH's (Keep it Green) initiative, a collection of environmental protection projects.
Coinciding with the World Environ-

ment Day in June, the partnership will include various activities, events, and initiatives that are geared towards raiservation through all means.

KFH continues its ceaseless effort of supporting the environment by solidifying its societal contributions through partnerships, initiatives, and campaigns related to preserving Kuwait's environment and disseminating awareness. These efforts are in line with "Keep It Green" initiative which includes environmental activities held throughout the year and in various

## **Open Al Najma account easily with CBK Mobile App**

### Al-Tijari announces winner of Al-Najma Account

KUWAIT CITY, June 19: Commercial Bank of Kuwait conducted the weekly draw for Al-Najma Account on Wednesday June 19, 2024. The draws were conducted in the presence of Ministry of Commerce and Industry representative Mr. Mansour Al-Dhafiri.

The result of the draw were as follows: 1. Al Najma weekly draw - the prize of 5,000/- Kuwaiti Dinars went to the winner Mr. Zahgar Asham Makar

The Bank stated that Al-Najma Account prizes are distinguished by the diversity of prizes throughout the year clarifying that the account offers weekly prize of KD 5,000/-,

monthly prize of KD 20,000/- and a semi-annual prize of KD 500,000 in addition to the mega annual prize of KD 1,500,000. Al-Najma Account can be opened by depositing KD 200, d customer should maintain a minimum amount of KD 200 to be eligible to enter all draws on Al-Najma Account prizes.

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

As for the chances of winning, the more balance a customer

maintains in Al Najma Account, the more chances the account



Al-Najma Account poster.

Experience innovation with Samsonite's EVOA Z luggage

Newly elected executive committee members (from left to right): CA Jatin Bagaria (Excom Member), CA Manish Chaturvedi (Excom Member), CA Shailesh Laddhad (Excom Member), CA Sweta Chipra (Excom Member), CA Umesh Soni (Treasurer), CA Aditya Vikram Dhanuka (Chairperson), CA Rabin Gonsalves (Immediate Past Chairperson), CA Rohit Agarwal (Vice Chairperson), CA Firoz Ali (Excom Member), CA Venkata Ramana Badida (Secretary), CA Andaleeb Girkar (Excom Member)

## KCICAI holds successful general assembly

KUWAIT CITY, June 19: The Kuwait Chapter of The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (KCICAI) successfully held its 17th Annual General Assembly Meeting at the Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel, Kuwait. Over 100 esteemed members graced the event, setting the stage for an exciting new chapter in the organization's journey.

Under the stewardship of outgoing Chairperson CA Rabin Gonsalves, the meeting was kicked off by CA Rohit Agrawal, expressing gratitude and raising the anticipation. Treasurer CA Umesh Soni's meticulous financial reportage for the term 2023-24 set the tone for transparency and accountability. Members unanimously embraced the financial statements for the term 2023-24, signaling a robust start to the proceedings. In a testament to continuity and excellence, CA Gaurav Handa was reinstated as the auditor for the forthcoming term 2024-25, ensuring the

highest standards of financial integrity. Reflecting on a year of unparalleled achievements, CA Rabin Gonsalves illuminated the gathering with a dazzling

array of the chapter's activities. From enlightening Continuing Professional Education (CPE) events to impactful health, social, and CSR initiatives, KCICAI's footprint resonated with purpose and progress. Noteworthy highlights included record-breaking CPE hours totaling over 2750, a testament to the chapter's commitment to professional development.

Furthermore, the chapter's unwavering support for the ICAI course and facilitation of examinations in Kuwait saw a surge in student participation, marking a pivotal milestone in nurturing future accounting luminaries.

CA Rabin further expressed his heartfelt gratitude to the entire team, past chairpersons, sponsors, and media partners for their steadfast support of the chapter and its initiatives.

As the baton of leadership passed hands, incoming Chairman CA Aditya Vikram Dhanuka heralded a new dawn of innovation and inclusivity. His heartfelt tribute to CA Rabin Gonsalves and the outgoing Executive Committee set the stage for an electrifying introduction of the new guard.

The newly elected executive committee, comprising visionary leaders from diverse backgrounds, stands poised to steer KCIČAI to greater heights. With CA Aditya Vikram Dhanuka at the helm, and stalwarts like CA Rohit Agarwal, CA Venkata Ramana Badida, and CA Umesh Soni by his side, the stage is set for a transformative journey ahead.

The newly elected executive committee will be assisted by the following members who volunteered into the various Sub committees to serve the fraternity.

The meeting concluded with a resounding call to action, as CA Rohit Agarwal closed the proceedings with a flourish. As the curtain falls on this momentous occasion, KCICAI invites all its members and fellow professional colleagues to join hands in shaping a future where excellence knows no bounds.

For more information about KCICAI and upcoming events, visit icaikw.org and be part of the journey towards ex-

## Samsonite unveils redesigned EVOA Z

KUWAIT CITY, June 19: In a world where travel is not just a journey, but a purpose, Samsonite's EVOA Z is not merely a luggage line, but a marriage of design innovation and unmistakable distinction. With its harmonious blend of iconic style and smart sophistication, EVOA Z redefines the boundaries of travel gear while embracing a timeless, classic, and minimalist chic ethos, where even the smallest details become an exquisite part of your journeys.

■ The Evolution of a Masterpiece As the second generation of the iconic EVOA line, the EVOA Z encapsulates the very essence of Samsonite's DNA - Minimal, Iconic, Modern, and Evolutionary. With the introduction of a new finely brushed texture and the distinctive aluminium logo bar seamlessly integrated with the corner protector, this latest collection is a truly versatile offering for anyone who wants to add a touch of style and so-

phistication to their travels. ■ Integrated Details with Fine

Brushed Texture Bring along a world of sophistication on your travels as our latest design seamlessly integrates meticulous details with a new fine brushed texture, creating a luggage that looks and feels unmistakably premium – where every touch reflects precision and adds a tactile dimension to your experience.

■ New Logo Bar and Execution The evolution of our brand is reflected in the introduction of a sleek new logo bar that embodies modernity and style, it enhances the overall aesthetics, leaving an indelible mark of sophisti-

■ Design Component and Brand Consistency

We believe in the power of cohesive design, and the EVOA Z doesn't disappoint. Subtle and elegant lines add grace and purpose, and all our design components are strategically curated, ensuring brand consistency that stays true to the Samsonite ethos of timeless class.

■ Innovations for Smoother Journeys Despite its elegant minimalist style, the EVOA Z boasts a range of innova-



Samsonite launches EVOA Z: Sophistication redefined.

tive features to empower your journeys. From the patented Aero-Trac™ Whirl Suspension Wheel system, to the strategically placed integrated hanging hook, every aspect has been thoughtfully crafted to deliver effortless navigation and convenience.

■ Aero-Trac™ Whirl Suspension

Wheel Say goodbye to bumpy rides and hello to a new era of travel comfort Samsonite's revolutionary wheel technology effectively minimises rolling vibration and noise, and delivers the unrivalled stability and manoeuvrability to effortlessly glide over any surface.

■ Integrated Aluminium Logo Bar More than just a logo, the Samsonite name is a statement of quality and sophistication. The integrated aluminium logo bar is sleek, stylish, and rugged, and built to last across all your travel adventures.

■ Integrated Hanging Hook

Experience ultimate travel convenience with the integrated hanging hook on the trolley housing. Simply pop it open to hang your coat, jacket, or other belongings and free up your hands while ensuring that everything stays within easy reach.

■ Fresh New Colours for Any Taste With fresh new colour variations, the new EVOA Z luggage collection offers a dynamic range of styles to cater to all genders. With a brushed finishing texture highlighted by a subtle toneon-tone colour presentation, the EVOA Z line comes in a choice of 3 elegant colours: Champagne, Blue and Black. ■ Product Summary

EVOA Z is more than luggage; it's an embodiment of classic style and modern sophistication. As the secondgeneration of the iconic EVOA line, it blends timeless design with cuttingedge innovation, resulting in a versatile collection that redefines travel for those seeking sophistication in every detail.

Samsonite offered customers an innovative pop-up experience at the 360 mall, designed to revolutionize how travelers interact with their luggage. This immersive pop-up featured dynamic surfaces replicating real-life travel scenarios, allowing visitors to test Samsonite's renowned durability, functionality, and style. This unique experience highlighted Samsonite's commitment to providing travelers with solutions that excel in the most demanding circumstances.

## Japanese 'beat poetry' icon Kazuko Shiraishi dies at 93

TOKYO, June 19, (AP): Kazuko Shiraishi, a leading name in modern Japanese "beat" poetry, known for her dramatic readings, at times with jazz music, has died. She was 93.

Shiraishi, whom American poet and translator Kenneth Rexroth dubbed "the Allen Ginsberg of Japan," died of heart failure on June 14, Shichosha, a Tokyo publisher of her works, said Wednesday.

Shiraishi shot to fame when she was just 20, freshly graduated from Waseda University in Tokyo, with her "Tamago no Furu Machi," translated as "The Town that Rains Eggs" - a surrealist portrayal of Japan's wartime destruction.

With her trademark long black hair and theatrical delivery, she defied historical stereotypes of the silent, non-assertive Japanese woman. "I have never been anything like pink," Shiraishi wrote in her poem. It ends: "The road / where the child became a girl / and finally heads

for dawn / is broken.' Shiraishi counted Joan Miro, Salvador Dali and John Coltrane among her influences. She was a pioneer in performance poetry, featured at poetry festivals around the world. She read her works with the music of jazz greats like Sam Rivers and Buster Williams, and even a free-verse homage to the spirit of Coltrane.

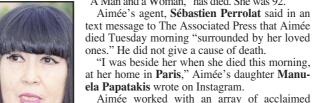
Born in Vancouver, Canada, she moved back to Japan as a child. While a teen, she joined an avant-garde poetry group.

Shiraishi's personality and poems, which were sometimes bizarre or erotic, defied Japan's historical rule-bound forms of literature like haiku and tanka, instead taking a modern, unexplored path.

Rexroth was instrumental in getting Shiraishi's works translated into English, including collections such as "My Floating Mother, City" in 2009 and "Seasons of Sacred Lust" in 1978.

Over the years, her work has been widely translated into dozens of languages. She was also a translator of literature, including works by Ginsberg. In 1973, Paul Engle invited her to spend a year as a guest writer at the International Writing Program at the University of Iowa, an experience that broadened her artistic scope and helped her gain her poetic voice.

Anouk Aimée, the radiant French star and dark-eyed beauty of classic films including Federico Fellini's "La Dolce Vita" and Claude Lelouch's "A Man and a Woman," has died. She was 92.



at her home in Paris," Aimée's daughter Manuela Papatakis wrote on Instagram. Aimée worked with an array of acclaimed

directors, including Jacques Demy, Bernardo Bertolucci, Jacques Becker, Robert Altman and Sidney Lumet. She was perhaps best known for 1966's "A Man and a Woman," in which she

starred opposite Jean-Louis Trintignant as a widow who meets a widower race-car driver (Trintignant) at the board-

ing school where each has a child attending. The film was an enormous success, winning the Palme d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival. Aimée won a Golden Globe for her performance and was nominated for an Oscar. The film won Academy Awards for

Lelouch's screenplay and for best foreign language film. But Aimée's career spanned seven decades - she reunited with Lelouch and Trintignant for 2019's "The Best Years of a Life" - and across that time remained a uniquely elegant and enigmatic presence. She stared in Fellini's "La Dolce Vita" (1960) as the seductive socialite Maddalena and again in the director's "8 1/2" (1963) as the estranged

wife of Marcello Mastroianni's filmmaker. Fellini once said Aimée "represents the type of woman who leaves you flustered and confused - to death." He said she belonged among the pantheon of cinema's "great, mysterious queens," comparing her to

Greta Garbo, Marlene Dietrich and Joan Crawford. "A film is always much richer when actors have the confidence not to explain, but just to do; when they feel secure enough to leave things open," Aimée told The Guardian in 2007.

Aimée was born Nicole Françoise Florence Dreyfus on April 27, 1932, to actor parents Henri Dreyfus (who acted under the name Henry Murray) and Genevieve Sorya. At the age of 13, Aimée was walking down a Paris street when the director Henri Calef stopped her and asked if she would like to be a movie. Aimée later said she was on the way to see "Double Indemnity" with her mother.

Aimée took her character's name, Anouk, from her first film: "The House Under the Sea." "Aimée" - the French word meaning "loved" - came from the poet Jacques Prévert who co-wrote her first lead role in 1951's "The Lovers of Verona," a modern-day "Romeo and Juliet."

Following "La Dolce Vita," Aimée starred in Jacques Demy's "Lola" (1961) a New Wave soap opera about a cabaret entertainer with a string of lovers. "Lola," Demy's first film, was less appreciated at the time but is now considered a standout of French New Wave cinema.

#### **Variety**



This image released by Focus Features shows Tom Hardy in a scene from 'The Bikeriders.' (AP)

Film

LOS ANGELES, June 19, (AP): Jeff Nichols had

dreamt of making a film about a 1960s motorcycle

Danny Lyon's book "The Bikeriders," a New Jour-

nalism-style account of the Chicago Outlaws Motor-

cycle Club in the mid-1960s. He saw it as a story

about rebels, romantics, frauds and the end of an era.

would be to film the motorcycles in motion.

But he didn't quite realize just how terrifying it

The bikes were vintage. The actors, including

Austin Butler and Tom Hardy, would be riding at

high speeds. And there would be no helmets. At

some point, one of his stunt coordinators just came

out with it: "There is no way to make this 100%

The obsession started when he first cracked open

clubs for over 20 years.

Jeff Nichols' 20-year dream comes to life

'Bikeriders' channels 1960s rebel vibes

#### tin Timberlake was charged early Tuesday with drunken driving in a village in New York's Hamptons, after police said he ran a stop sign and veered out of his lane in the posh seaside summer retreat.

Timberlake, 43, told the officer he had one martini and was following some friends home, according to the documents. After being arrested and taken to a police station in nearby East **Hampton**, he refused a breath test, said the court papers, which listed his occupation as "professional" and said he's "self-

The 10-time Grammy winner was released without bond later Tuesday morning after being arraigned in Sag Harbor. He was charged with a driving-whileintoxicated misdemeanor, and his next court date was scheduled for July 26, the **Suffolk County** district attorney's office said.

Edward Burke Jr., a local lawyer representing Timberlake declined to comment Tuesday other than to confirm the star doesn't need to appear in person for his next court date. Timberlake's California-based representatives didn't return multiple requests for comment Tuesday.

of curiosity seekers to the village's quaint Main Street, with many taking photos in front of the brick municipal building throughout the day. (AP)

said Tuesday he is looking forward to returning to work after he toppled off a London stage mid-

performance and was hospitalized. McKellen, 85, said he was "hugely indebted" to medics who

SAG HARBOR, N.Y.: Pop star Jus-

The boy band singer-turned-solo star and actor was driving a 2025 BMW in Sag Harbor around 12:30 a.m. when an officer stopped him and determined he was intoxicated. according to a court document.

"His eyes were bloodshot and glassy, a strong odor of an alcoholic beverage was emanating from his breath, he was unable to divide attention, he had slowed speech, he was unsteady afoot and he performed poorly on all standardized field sobriety tests,' the court papers said.

The arrest brought a steady stream

**LONDON:** Actor Ian McKellen

treated him after the tumble on

safe. They went for it. The danger was kind of the point. And everyone made it out unscathed. "The Bikeriders" (racing into theaters nationwide Friday) is a rare summer gem: An original film with stars (including Jodie Comer, Michael Shannon, Norman Reedus and Mike Faist), cool cred, pathos and a clear-eyed wistfulness for a brief moment and employed." a type of guy.

'This is a film that's really about nostalgia," Nichols said. There is a sadness that comes with that. But there's also a joy in remembering it. Nichols has always had luck with casting, get-

ting movie stars in his films right as they're about to break big (like Jessica Chastain in "Take Shelter"). For "The Bikeriders," it was Butler. "Elvis" had yet to come out, but when he met him, he was certain: This is a movie star.

"I read a lot of scripts and this one just felt different," Butler said. "It felt full of humanity and these cinematic moments...I felt like I was being invited into this other world. And he was one of the coolest

characters I've ever read." Butler's Benny is also the most enigmatic of the bunch: A guy whose face is never shown in Lyon's book and who is never interviewed - just talked about.

"I love how Jeff talks about him as being this empty cup that everybody wants to fill with their own expectations and their own responsibilities. He doesn't want any of that," Butler said. "That's when

he wants to cut loose and be free." Nichols wanted Benny to be bottled up until the end and remembered telling his star to "pull it back"

"Like, stop smiling," Nichols laughed. "When that

kid smiles the whole world smiles.' But he soon realized that was missing the point of casting someone like Butler - an emotive actor with a big heart. "That character got better because of him,"

Nichols said. One of Nichols' biggest breakthroughs was when he realized the narrator should be Kathy, who falls for Benny at first sight and gets wrapped up in the

#### Character

"She just pops off the page," Nichols said. "She's witty, she's introspective, she's self-deprecating, she's infuriating at times. She is a real person."

Comer saw in her a fascinating character, an "ordinary" but still extraordinary person that reminded her of women she knew growing up in Liverpool. She worked tirelessly to nail Kathy's very specific working-class Chicago accent.

But on another level, she was just a better voice for what he wanted to say.

"The ultimate truth, and a subtext of the film, is that men are really bad at sharing their emotions,' he said. "Observing this group in the hands of a male narrator I think would be really boring.

"The Bikeriders" is a work of fiction. Nichols didn't want to be the historian of the Outlaws, a group which still exists. He mostly wanted to capture this time and culture and evoke the feeling he got when he opened that book so many years ago.

But he also draws heavily on Lyon's images, some of which are recreated, and reporting. Much of

Wednesday were canceled after

the accident and are scheduled to

The stage and screen veteran,

Kathy's dialogue are things the real Kathy, who was married to Benny, said. Hardy's character Johnny was also apparently inspired by the Marlon Brando film "The Wild One" to start the club. He was the leader and also a bit of a fraud - a suburban dad with a real job on the side.

Nichols chose to make the film in color, instead of mimicking Lyon's famous use of black-and-white photography.

"They're beautiful, but they are romanticized," Nichols said. "I think when you put them in color, they become less affected. They become more real-

Like Butler, Hardy came into the film with some motorcycle know-how. But neither would describe it as a leg up - antique bikes are a different beast. "It just happens to be a convenience because I can

ride as opposed to lying about skiing," Hardy said. Still, once they got it down it could be rather exciting. "It was exhilarating riding in a giant group," But-

ler said. "You feel the energy of every motorcycle coming together." Comer said riding on the back of Benny's bike, in

the Cincinnati night with engines roaring and street lights twinkling, was "a really magical kind of movie moment.'

And the danger was ever-present. But it also resulted in some real movie magic, like the near-impossible recreation of one of Lyon's most famous photographs with a single rider speeding across the Ohio Bridge.

In the film, Butler is the rider. They had shut down a bridge. They couldn't do it more than twice (both logistically and because they couldn't risk anything with their star). They had a 35mm film camera mounted on a car with a moving crane, attempting to

speed alongside Butler. "All of a sudden we lock in the cameras in the right spot, the bridge is in the right spot, Austin looks back, then he drives off," Nichols said. "And you're

like (expletive): 'We got it."

Monday night during a performance of "Player Kings" at London's Noel Coward Theatre.

"They have assured me that my recovery will be complete and speedy and I am looking forward to returning to work," he said on the social media platform X, formerly known as Twitter.

Performances on Tuesday and



McKellen

who played Gandalf in the "Lord of the Rings" films, cried out in pain after the fall, according to a BBC journalist at the theater. McKellen was playing the roguish John Falstaff in "Player

resume on Thursday.

Kings," an adaptation of William Shakespeare's two "Henry IV" history plays, directed by Robert Icke. (AP)

**BEIJING:** The 30th Beijing International Book Fair commenced in Beijing on Wednesday, drawing a wider participation of foreign

exhibitors compared to last year. With an expanded exhibition area of 55,000 square meters this year, the five-day event has gathered around 1,600 exhibitors from 71 countries and regions, showcasing 220,000 Chinese and foreign publications to visitors, according to the organizers.

#### **People & Places**





**Louis Vuitton** 

#### **Ode to multiculturalism**

### Pharrell's show honors 'human skin' diversity

PARIS, June 19, (AP): In the run-up to the Paris Olympics, Louis Vuitton celebrated the beauty of humans and their skin in a star-studded menswear showcase at the headquarters of the UN cultural agency UNESCO in Paris. Models wearing garb in all the hues of human flesh paraded around a giant globe on grass patterned in Vuitton's signature Damier

check, creating a visual symphony of diversity.

"It was an homage to human beings," said menswear designer Pharrell Williams on Tuesday night, who namechecked the Summer Olympics, for a show that felt like a journey across continents against a backdrop of the Eiffel Tower and a giant shell globe. "It went from black to dark brown to brown to light brown to beige, a little bit of gray. and then finally to white," the singer-turned-couturier said of

the spring display celebrating diversity. The spectacular collection prominently featured checks in shades of green, blue, and black, drawing inspiration from the designs of Air Afrique luggage. This airline, which operated from the 1960s and for decades, has become a symbol of diasporic creativity, according to Vuitton. With contribu-tions from creatives like Lamine Diaoune and Djiby Kebe,

Williams infused the collection with a sense of global unity.

Inspired by the UN cultural headquarters populated with ambassadors, Williams explored various archetypes. The diplomat was featured in deep, rich tones of 1970s-inflected tailoring. The explorer appeared in sturdy yet stylish outerwear,

including utility jackets and vests. The dandy, another key figure, strutted down the Damiercheck grass runway in jackets and coats adorned

with rhinestones and pearl embroidery.

Set against a dramatic sky, with shifting clouds and fluttering world flags, the collection's progression of colors mirrored the diversity of the models, moving from darker to lighter tones. This gave way to a more integrated mix tones. This gave way to a more integrated mix, symbolizing multicultural harmony. This theme

extended to the garments, which included pixelated python skin patterns and world maps centered on Africa. A reinterpretation of the Damier pattern featured pale brown checks with multicolored accents. Soccer ball leather designs paid tribute to the world's favorite sport.

Enamel maps were embedded in buttons, and the LV logo appeared subtly embossed on materials. Intricate details like black-on-black embroidery and crystal and pearl accents added layers of sophistication.

It also featured a range of luxury accessories, including vintage-inspired designs in soft leather with oversized monogram patterns and aged leather trims.

#### Also:

**NEW YORK:** When Team USA walks with the world's athletes at the Paris Olympics' opening ceremony, they'll be doing so in snappy tailored navy blazers from Ralph Lauren - and blue jeans.

Just regular, everyday denim blue jeans.

Ralph Lauren, which unveiled Tuesday its ninth turn creating Olympic parade looks for the Americans, is billing the pairing as "unexpected" yet classic.

David Lauren, the company's chief branding and innovation officer and its founder's son, was unbothered by the casualness of blue denim.

"We work very closely with Team USA to make the athletes feel at once dressed up, feel like a team, but at the same time comfortable and very distinctively American," he told The Associated Press on Monday during a media preview at the company's posh New York headquarters.

#### **Variety**

**LOS ANGELES:** Migos rapper Quavo's quest to transform his nephew Takeoff's tragic shooting into a force for change convened with a summit against gun violence on what would have been the late rapper's 30th birthday.

Quavo held the inaugural Rocket Foundation Summit at the Carter Center in **Atlanta** on Tuesday - the same day as Takeoff's birthday. The music performer was joined by Vice President Kamala Harris in a fireside chat during the one-day summit, which included panel discussions about gun violence prevention and youth

Louis

Vuitton

**Louis Vuitton** 

For Quavo, it's been a rough road since Takeoff's untimely death in

2022. But many of his family members - including his nephew's mother - often encourage him to keep pushing forward.

**Louis Vuitton** 

"It's super hard every day. I'm still crying. I'm still grieving. I'm still mourning," said Quavo, who along with his family launched the Rocket Foundation in honor of Takeoff and committed millions to invest into community violence intervention.

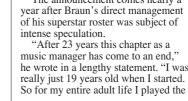
Last year, the Grammy-nominated

Black Caucus legislative conference where he met with political figures including Harris and Greg Jackson, who is now the deputy director of the White House Office of Gun Violence Prevention after his stint with the

rapper attended the Congressional Community Justice Action Fund. (AP)

**Louis Vuitton** 

**NEW YORK: Scooter Braun, one of** the most recognizable names in the





role of an artist manager on call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. And for 20 years I loved it. It's all I had known. But as my children got older, and my

**Louis Vuitton** 

Above and below: Models wear

creations as part of the Louis Vuitton

Spring Summer 2025 collection, that was presented in Paris, France, Tuesday, June 18, 2024. (AP)

Louis **Vuitton** 

personal life took some hits.
"Every client I have had the privilege of working with has changed my life, and I know many of them are just beginning to see the success they deserve," he continued. "I will cheer for every single one of them." (AP)

#### MAYVILLE, N.Y.: The New Jersey

man accused of repeatedly stabbing author **Salman Rushdie** is not interested in an offered plea deal that would shorten his time in state prison but expose him to federal prison on a separate terrorism-related charge, his

lawyer said Tuesday. Hadi Matar sat silently in Chautauqua County Court as lawyers outlined a proposal they said was worked out between state and federal prosecutors and agreed to by Rushdie over the past

several months. The agreement would have Matar plead guilty in Chautauqua County to attempted murder in exchange for a maximum state prison sentence of 20 years, down from 25 years. He would then also plead guilty to a yet-to-befiled federal charge of attempting to provide material support to a designated terrorist organization, which could result in an additional 20 years,

attorneys said. (AP) 

**BEIJING:** Fifteen individuals from 12 countries have been given the Special Book Award of **China**, the highest award that honors foreigners in the publishing sector, for their outstanding efforts at telling China's stories to the world.

The awardees, who have paid continuous attention to China's development and made in-depth research into Chinese culture, have translated, published and created a number of books telling the world the stories of the Communist Party of China and the Chinese people.

They have helped make the country better known to the world and promote cultural exchanges and mutual learning, according to the awarding ceremony of the 17th Special Book

Award of China held on Tuesday. Since it was initiated in 2005, a total of 203 translators, publishers and writers from 63 countries have won the award. (Xinhua)





**Louis Vuitton** 

music business known for representing artists like Justin Bieber and Ariana Grande, will no longer work as a

music manager. On Monday, the executive and entrepreneur announced the news on his Instagram page. Instead, he will focus his attention on his current roles: As a board member of Hybe, and CEO of Hybe America, the **South Korea** 

entertainment company.

The announcement comes nearly a year after Braun's direct management of his superstar roster was subject of

"After 23 years this chapter as a music manager has come to an end," he wrote in a lengthy statement. "I was really just 19 years old when I started.



#### 'Mental well-being key to healthy aging'

## Lower your fall risk as you get old with these simple steps

NEW YORK, June 19, (Agencies): One in four older adults in the US will fall each year, putting them at risk of injury, broken bones and even death.

Falls are a growing public health concern as the country's population sees record numbers of people turn 65 - now and in the future. But common as falls may be, they are not inevitable.

"The more work we do, the more we realize that that healthy aging doesn't have to include falling," said Cara McDermott, who researches falls at Duke University School of Medicine.

Here are some recommendations on how to reduce your risk of falling. Start with how your house is set up: Consider removing small area rugs,

Then, aim for providing extra stability in places where its easier to lose your balance. Install railings on both sides of the stairs, a grab bar in a bathroom and no-slip strips on wood or tile floors.

change out dim lighting and don't put

pots and pans in hard-to-reach places.

It's also important to keep your home clean: Don't leave items on the floor, and clean up spills before they dry up and become harder to deal



A woman walks to her room at a senior care home in Calistoga, Calif., on Dec. 5, 2019. (AP)

with

Consider using a walker or cane to keep you stable, but make sure it's right for your height and that you know how to we it respectly.

know how to use it properly.

The National Institute on Aging has a full guide on its website with tips on how to fall-proof your home,

room by room.

Go back to the basics with New-

ton's first law: A body in motion stays in motion. That is, staying active can help prevent future issues - even if you've fallen before and are worried that it might happen again.

Many exercises that can help prevent falls, even if you have limited mobility, like chair yoga, tai chi and walking.

"It doesn't mean that you have to

go out and start running marathons or anything like that, but simply (do) functional exercises," McDermott,

Make exercising fun and social by doing it with others in a group setting

or playing with grandchildren.

The key: Know your limits and do

what your doctor says is right for you.

Many medications can have side effects like light-headedness, sleepiness or other things that impair your balance.

McDermott said older adults should talk to their primary care doctor about all of the medications they are on - and how they may work in combination. A primary care doctor or pharmacist can see the whole picture and help find alternative medications that won't throw you off bal-

But, she added, "I would never, ever recommend that somebody discontinue a medication without talking to their prescriber first."

Changes in hearing, vision and other senses are common as you age and can contribute to falls. Make sure to have your hearing and vision tested regularly.

Bone health matters, too.
The Mayo Clinic estimates 10 mil-

lion Americans have osteoporosis, which weakens the bones and makes it more likely to break something when you fall.

Taking Vitamin D and calcium can help improve bone health, and if needed, your doctor can test your bone density and recommend treat-

Knowing that falls might be a combination of causes, do some of the previous suggestions to lower your

And, if you do fall, let your doctor know - even if it seems minor. A fall can have wide-reaching implications and you'll want to address the root cause to keep it from becoming

"Maybe it is a one-time thing, but get it checked out anyway," McDermott said.

#### Also:

**SHANGHAI:** Chinese researchers have found that mental well-being is associated with healthy aging regardless of socioeconomic status and it plays an important role in promoting longevity and resilience in aging, the China Science Daily reported Tuesday

The research team from the Shang-

hai Jiao Tong University School of Medicine analyzed the effects of mental health on various aging outcomes using publicly available genetic data from populations of European descent.

The analysis of multiple datasets, including one with up to 2.3 million people, showed that individuals with better mental well-being tended to experience healthier aging, characterized by increased resilience, higher self-rated health levels and greater longevity.

The researchers also found that income, education and occupation are all related to better mental health, with increased income having the strongest association. In addition, reducing sedentary lifestyles and smoking, along with increasing the intake of cheese and fruit, may contribute to better mental well-being and healthing.

The findings underscored the necessity of integrating mental health support into public health policy and aging research. The research team also noted that interventions to promote mental health may be a viable strategy to enhance healthy aging across different groups of people.

#### New heart failure treatment being tested

## Multikine treatment cuts death risk for head and neck cancer patients

VIENNA, Va., June 19, (AP): CEL-SCI Corporation has announced the Company's Chief Scientific Officer, Dr. Eyal Talor, delivered a presentation titled "Neoadjuvant Immunotherapy for Head and Neck Cancer: Low Tumor PD-L1 Expression - IT-MATTERS – RCT" at the International Drug Discovery Science & Technology (IDDST) 20th Annual Congress in Budapest, Hungary on Tuesday, June 18. Dr. Talor presented during the Cancers/Tumors session which he chaired along with Dr. Elizabeth Tran of Purdue University.

Multikine\* (Leukocyte Interleukin, Injection) is the first investigational pre-surgical cancer drug intended for use in newly diagnosed locally advanced resectable head and neck cancer. There is extensive affirmative safety and efficacy data from 750 patients who have been treated with Multikine. A randomized, controlled, Phase 3 trial (RCT) in head and neck cancer revealed that Multikine significantly increases overall survival in patients with low levels of tumor cell PD-L1 expression in contrast to checkpoint inhibitors (e.g. Keytruda, Opdivo) which show longer survival benefit in patients with a higher level of tumor cell PD-L1 expression. Tumor cell PD-L1, also known as Programmed Death-Ligand 1, is a protein that plays a crucial role in immune system regulation. It is the target pathway for immune checkpoint inhibitors, a major class of immune-oncology drugs which work by blocking the interaction between tumor cell PD-L1 and the PD-1 receptor on immune effector cells, thereby favoring immune evasion by the tumor.

"The survival benefit of Multikine we observed from previous data for the same study population is much higher than that which will be required to be successful in the confirmatory study," stated Dr. Talor.

BaroPace Inc. has announced its Phase I first-in-human trial of PressurePaceTM, its patent-pending pacemaker control algorithm for the treatment of heart failure with preserved ejection fraction (HFpEF), met both its primary endpoints of quality of life (Minnesota Living with Heart Failure Questionnaire) and exercise tolerance (Low Level Bruce Protocol Treadmill Exercise Test) and secondary endpoints of 6-Minute Walk Time, and NYHA Score compared to placebo (standard pacing). The PressurePaceTM system wirelessly links a pacemaker, a blood pressure cuff, and the PressurePaceTM algorithm, a real-time, closed-loop system of therapy for patients with HFpEF.

RelieveHFpEF-II was a 7-week trial conducted in India at four major medical centers using dual chamber pacemakers manufactured by Shree Pacetronix Ltd, India. After baseline assessments, sixteen patients were randomized to one of two three-week treatment arms: standard pacing, or BaroPacing utilizing the PressurePaceTM algorithm.

Blood pressure was measured using 24-hour blood pressure monitoring at baseline, after each treatment arm, and twice daily in-home using a blood pressure cuff. Clinically important changes in blood pressure as-

1.28bn cases: WHO

## **Snoring linked to high blood pressure: study**

CANBERRA, June 19, (Xinhua): Australian research has found a link between snoring and elevated blood pressure.

According to the study, which was conducted by sleep scientists from Flinders University in South Australia, people who regularly snore at night are more likely to have elevated blood pressure and uncontrolled hypertension.

Hypertension occurs when the pressure in a person's blood vessels is too high. It can cause serious damage to the heart and lead to heart attack, stroke, heart failure and heart disease.

The study found that 15 percent of 12,287 participants

snored for more than 20 percent of the night on average over a six-month monitoring period and that those with high snoring levels had a 3.8 mmHg higher systolic blood pressure and 4.5 mmHg higher diastolic blood pressure than participants who did not snore.

The Flinders University study was the first to use multiple night home-based monitoring technologies over a prolonged

period to investigate the link between snoring and hypertension. The participants in the study were middle-aged and 88 percent were male.

"For the first time, we can objectively say that there is a significant connection between regular nighttime snoring and high blood pressure," Bastien Lechat, lead author of the

research from the College of Medicine and Public Health at Flinders University, said in a media release on Wednesday. "These results emphasize the significance of considering snoring as a factor in healthcare and treatment for sleep-related issues, especially in the context of managing hyperten-

The World Health Organization estimates that 1.28 billion adults aged 30-79 years worldwide have hypertension and that 46 percent of adults with hypertension are unaware they have the condition.

sociated with BaroPacing were also noted, including a drop in systolic blood pressure in hypertensive patients to the range associated with optimal mortality rates, and an overall narrowing of pulse pressure, thought to be beneficial in heart failure.

The average percentage of BaroPacing for the treatment arms' duration was 12% suggesting that inducing persistent elevation of heart rate in HFpEF patients who may also have coexistant cardiovascular disease is unnecessary. No adverse events were reported from PressurePaceTM therapy.

Experts warn on unproven treatments

## **Stem cell therapy promises Life Without Pain! But at what cost?**

NEW YORK, June 19, (AP): The mailings promised "Life Without Pain!" via stem cell injections or IVs administered in a patient's own home. The allure was obvious: more than 20% of US adults endure chronic pain.

The flyers invited Iowans to free dinners across the state. Afterward, sales people traveled to potential customers' homes for high-pressure pitches disguised as pre-screenings, according to prosecutors. More than 250 people signed up, paying \$3,200 to \$20,000 each for a total of \$1.5 million. For this, a nurse practitioner came to their homes to administer injections and IVs filled with stem cells derived from umbilical cords.

Yet experts and regulators have alternately labeled such treatments as ripoffs, scams or simply unproven. In some cases, studies have documented real harm.

#### Lawsuit

Last fall, Iowa's attorney general sued two proprietors responsible for the mailings in her state, naming a Minnesota man who hosts a Christian entrepreneurship podcast and his Florida business partner for allegedly deceiving consumers, many of them elderly.

In bringing the lawsuit, Iowa joined attorneys general in New York, North Dakota, Georgia, Nebraska, Arkansas and Washington state who have sued businesses alleging they fraudulently promoted unproven stem cell treatments

Stem cells have long fascinated researchers because of their ability to reproduce and, in some cases, transform into other cell types. Because of this, they are thought to hold the potential for treating many diseases and injuries.

But the FDA has approved only a handful of such therapies, and only for certain forms of blood cancer and immune system disorders. Stem cells are considered experimental for most uses, despite being marketed as a treatment for everything from autism and emphysema to sports injuries.

The FDA has repeatedly warned Americans to be wary of businesses hawking unapproved, unproven and



A court exhibit from a lawsuit filed by Iowa Attorney General Brenna Bird is seen on a laptop computer, Wednesday, May 8, 2024, in Urbandale, Iowa. (AP)

costly stem cell therapies, which occasionally have caused blindness, bacterial infections and tumors.

In a 2020 notice, the agency expressed concern about patients being misled about products that are "illegally marketed, have not been shown to be safe or effective, and, in some cases, may have significant safety issues."

#### Vision

Dr. Jeffrey Goldberg, chair of ophthalmology at the Byers Eye Institute at Stanford University, whose work has documented vision loss in some patients treated with cells removed from patients' own bodies, processed and reinjected, lamented that people are "desperately willing to shell out large sums of money for unproven and in some cases, explicitly sort of sham,

so-called therapeutics."

Since August 2017, the FDA has issued about 30 warning letters regarding the unproven treatments.

ing the unproven treatments.

Experts, including Dr. Paul Knoepfler, a stem cell researcher at the University of California at Davis, and Leigh Turner, a bioethicist at the University of California, Irvine, are among

those who have raised alarm that such federal action is too little to regulate a US industry which Turner estimated in 2021 topped 2,700 clinics.

Because states can seek substantial fines against wayward operators, Turner said their legal actions offer promise.

"If you look at them collectively, they might over time start to have an impact," he said.

The FDA offers training to attorneys general pursuing such cases. Dr. Peter Marks, director of the FDA's Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research, said federal regulators partner with state law enforcers in a "shared mission."

That puts people like Iowa Attorney
General Brenna Bird on the front lines.
Last year Bird brought the case

Last year, Bird brought the case over mailers offering Iowans a painfree life, naming the now dissolved Biologics Health and Summit Partners Group, which operated under the name Summit Health Centers, as defendants. The state also sued the companies' proprietors: Rylee Meek, of Prior Lake, Minnesota, and Scott Thomas, of Thonotosassa, Florida.







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

#### Irving sounds ready to keep chasing titles in Dallas

## Celtics look to become 1st repeat NBA champs since 2018

## Smith sets a world record in 100 backstroke at U.S. Olympic trials



Regan Smith swims during the Women's 100 backstroke finals Tuesday, June 18, 2024, at the US Swimming Olympic Trials in Indianapolis. (AP)

#### 'That was part of the plan'

INDIANAPOLIS, June 19, (AP): No one was beating Regan Smith in her signature event.

Bouncing back from a closebut-no-Olympics call in her first race, Smith set a world record in the women's 100-meter back-

#### **SWIMMING**

stroke at the U.S. swimming trials on Tuesday night.

Smith touched in 57.13 seconds, easily beating the mark of 57.33 set a year ago by Australia's Kaylee

"That was part of the plan," said Smith, who is heading to the Olympics for the second time. "I'm so

Smith bounced back emphatically after getting edged for a spot on the U.S. team in the 100 butterfly, where she finished third behind Gretchen Walsh and Torri Huske.

Flipping to her back, Smith set the second world record of the trials, following Walsh's mark in the as the favorite for gold in Paris. semifinals of the 100 fly.

Smith won a bronze medal in the 100 backstroke at the Tokyo Olympics. She's now established herself



Zach Harting is introduced before a men's 200 butterfly semifinals heat Tuesday, June 18, 2024, at the US Swimming Olympic Trials in Indianapolis. (AP)

Katharine Berkoff claimed the second expected Olympic spot for

the U.S. with a time of 57.91.

In the night's other final, Bobby Finke earned the right to defend the 800 freestyle gold he won in Tokyo with a time of 7 minutes, 44.22 sec-

Finke had to work hard to get to the wall ahead of 18-year-old Indiana phenom Luke Whitlock, who set a national age-group record at 7:45.19 and will likely head to his first Olympics with the second U.S.

No one else was within 4 seconds of the top two.

Whitlock splashed the water emphatically after going virtually stroke-for-stroke with the reigning Olympic champion.

Two of America's biggest swimming stars, Caeleb Dressel and Simone Manuel, had impressive debuts at the trials, though there's still work to do to make it back to the Olympics.

Dressel was the third-fastest qualifier in the preliminaries and semifinals of the men's 100 free-

style, both times finishing behind Jack Alexy and Chris Guiliano. The tattooed Floridian will have to beat at least one of them in the final Wednesday night to earn a chance to defend his Olympic title in that

Manuel was the fastest qualifier in the women's 100 free preliminaries and took the second spot behind Torri Huske in the semifinals.

Dressel and Manuel are both coming back from long layoffs that cast doubts over whether they'd be able to qualify for Paris.

The winner of five gold medals at the Tokyo Olympics, Dressel walked away in the midst of the 2022 world championships, later revealing he needed an extended break to rekindle his love for the

Manuel, the first Black female swimmer to capture an individual gold medal, was diagnosed with overtraining syndrome ahead of the last Olympics. She barely managed to qualify for the U.S. team, then shut down all physical activity under a doctor's care to allow her body to

## BOSTON, June 19, (AP): It took more BOSTON, June 19, (AP): It took more than a decade, savvy front office and draft moves, and some free agency luck for the Celtics to ultimately build the roster that brought an end to their 16-year championship drought. But with NBA Finals MVP Jaylen Brown already locked up long-term and fellow All-Star Jayson Tatum set to join him in the \$300 million club this summer Boston doesn't have nearly as

summer, Boston doesn't have nearly as much work to do this offseason to keep together a core that is set up to become the first team since the 2018 Golden State Warriors to repeat as champions.

In the euphoria of locking up the franchise's record-breaking championship, Celtics majority owner Wyc Grousbeck gave president of basketball operations Brad Stevens a shoutout for finishing a process that began when Stevens was originally hired as Boston's coach in 2013.

"We all watched the team the last few years. Great teams, but not quite there," Grousbeck said. "And Brad was brilliant. We knew we needed to make changes ... and he got it done.'

Moving away from longtime executive Danny Ainge - the architect

#### **BASKETBALL**

of Boston's 2008 championship Big 3 of Paul Pierce, Kevin Garnett and Ray Allen - in favor of the 44-year-old Stevens was bold. Now, just three years after being pulled off the sideline, Stevens has made good on the belief that ownership had in him.

He did it by taking the war chest of draft picks Ainge left him and borrowing from the aggressiveness his predecessor was known for to immediately

It started coyly with a February 2022 trade deadline acquisition of Derrick White, a young defensive-minded reserve with San Antonio.

Then, following the loss to the Warriors in the Finals, he steered the team through the suspension and ultimate departure of coach Ime Udoka for having an inappropriate relationship with a woman in the organization.

Facing a franchise-altering moment, Stevens leaned on his gut, elevating back bench assistant Joe Mazzulla to the top job.

Then, after a conference finals loss to Miami last season, he did what was originally unthinkable by trading veteran leader Marcus Smart and reigning NBA Sixth Man of the Year Malcolm Brogdon in separate deals that brought in 7-footer Kristaps Porzingis and defensive stalwart Jrue Holiday.

The pair turned out to be the missing links for a team that, including the playoffs, finished 80-21 this season, placing it second in team history behind only the Celtics' 1985-86 championship team that finished 82-18.

It also marks the first time in seven seasons the team with the best record during the regular season went on to win the title.

Most importantly, Boston is set up to keep the current core intact for the foreseeable future.

2029. Tatum is eligible to sign a fiveyear supermax extension this summer that will be worth a record \$315 million and run through 2031. White, who is set to be a free agent in 2025, can ink a four-year deal worth about \$125 million this offseason.

The remaining returning starters, Holiday and Porzingis, have already been extended through 2028 and 2026, respectively.

While some tough, luxury tax decisions could be looming in a few seasons, it's a team constructed to win

Brown said it's left everyone poised

Boston Celtics guard Jrue Holiday (4) drives to the basket as Dallas Mavericks forward P.J. Washington, right, defends during the first half of Game 5 of the NBA basketball finals in Boston. (AP)

to defend their title next season and beyond.
"I think we have an opportunity. I

think we definitely have a window," he said. "We take it one day at a time. We definitely have to make sure we stay healthy. But, we'll enjoy the summer, enjoy the moment, and then we get right back to it next year."

Kyrie Irving is a year away from having the option to leave the Dallas Mavericks, and at that point would be closing in on his longest stint anywhere since asking out of Cleveland, where he was drafted, in 2017.

Yet the mercurial guard sounded as if Dallas could be his basketball home well beyond 2025 after losing the NBA Finals in five games to the Boston Celtics in his first full season with co-star Luka Doncic. "I see an opportunity for us to really build our future in a positive manner where this is almost like a regular thing for us, and we're competing for championships," Irving said after Dallas' 106-88 loss in Game 5.

Irving jilted Boston in free agency in 2019 and has been steadfastly booed by Celtics fans since then. His 3 1/2 seasons in Brooklyn were filled with mostly self-inflicted drama, to the point that he finally asked for a trade after doing the same to break away from LeBron James and the Cavaliers.

When the Mavs acquired the eighttime All-Star at the deadline last year, Irving's reputation around the league was in tatters. Things have changed in 16 months.

"From a spiritual standpoint, I think enjoyed this journey more than any other season, just because of the redemption arc and being able to learn as much as I did about myself and my teammates and the organization and the people that I'm around," Irving said. "It's a lot of good people here, so it makes coming to work a lot of fun."

Doncic's player option is a year after Irving's, following the 2025-26 season. And every other rotation player in the playoffs except for guard Derrick Jones Jr. is under contract next season. The Mavericks don't have much

room to maneuver under the salary cap, but they will have the nagging question of whether a more dangerous third scoring option is the missing piece. The 25-year-old Doncic is entering

his prime in a difficult Western Conference, with two trips at least to the West finals in the past three seasons.

But Dallas was a surprise team both times, and couldn't stick around past five games. The next level would be getting this far without being a surprise, perhaps as the favorite to win the

Such progress might be required to keep Irving and Doncic together beyond 2025-26, or to keep Doncic in Dallas as long as retired star Dirk Nowitzki stayed - a record 21 seasons with the same franchise.

#### **Mercury top Liberty**

## Sun beat Sparks for 10th straight time

UNCASVILLE, June 19, (AP): De-Wanna Bonner scored 16 points, Alyssa Thomas had 11 points, seven rebounds and seven assists and the Connecticut Sun beat the shorthanded Los Angeles Sparks 79-70 on Tuesday night for their 10th straight victory in the series.

The game was marred by an apparent knee injury to Los Angeles rookie Cameron Brink. Brink, the No. 2 overall pick in the WNBA draft, fell awkwardly on a drive to the basket in the first quarter and did not return. Once over to the sidelines, Brink hobbled toward the locker room before a pair of Sparks personnel lifted her off her feet and carried her

Connecticut (13-1) is off to its best 14-game start in franchise history. The Sun haven't lost to the Sparks since July 30, 2020.

All five Sun starters scored in double figures. Tyasha Harris had 14 points, Brionna Jones added 13 and DiJonai Carrington 12.

(4-11) with 14 points and seven assists. Li Yueru added 11 points off the bench and Rickea Jackson scored Connecticut led 39-28 at halftime

as both teams shot at least 50% from

the field. The Sparks fell behind by

Aari McDonald led Los Angeles

turning the ball over 14 times in the first half.

The Sun closed the third quarter

#### **BASKETBALL**

on a 10-0 run for a 15-point lead and cruised in the fourth. The Sparks finished with 22 turnovers.

Brittney Griner and Diana Taurasi each scored 19 points to lead six Phoenix players in double figures and the Mercury beat the New York Liberty 99-93 on Tuesday night in a game that featured a WNBA record 33 made 3-pointers.

Griner made a layup to give Phoenix a 92-89 lead and then blocked a shot by Breanna Stewart at the other Taurasi added a 3-pointer to



Connecticut Sun's DiJonai Carrington drives to the basket during a WNBA basketball game against the Chicago Sky, July 12, 2023, in Chicago. Not even a WNBA basketball game is an escape from the arguments and polarization that are so common in American life these days. (AP)

make it 95-91 and Griner put back her own miss with 29.1 seconds left to restore a four-point advantage.

The 33 3-pointers came on 72 attempts, with New York tying the franchise record of 18. The Liberty (12-3), who had an eight-game winning streak snapped, had three players with at least four made 3-pointers, led by Stewart's 4-of-4 shooting.

Betnijah Laney-Hamilton made New York's 18th 3-pointer to get within 86-85. But the Liberty missed their final four from long distance to come up just short of a league record.

Phoenix (8-7) earned its first win against the Liberty since Aug. 6, Kahleah Copper and Rebecca Al-

len each added 17 points for Phoenix. Sophie Cunningham had 13 points and Natasha Cloud scored 11.

Stewart scored 28 points and Sabrina Ionescu had 19 points, seven rebounds and eight assists for New York. Jonquel Jones had 17 points, and Kayla Thornton and Laney-Hamilton each added 12. Courtney Vandersloot did not play for a fifth straight game due to personal rea-

Phoenix went on an 11-0 run late in the second period to take its first lead, 42-41, since it was 20-19. The Mercury led 50-46 at the break.

### Rauf defends his actions

## Williamson likely to relinquish **New Zealand cricket captaincy**

WELLINGTON, New Zealand, June 19, (AP): Kane Williamson is expected to relinquish the captaincy of the New Zealand cricket team in Twenty20 and one-day internationals after rejecting a new, full contract with New Zealand Cricket.

The 33-year-old Williamson instead has chosen to sign a casual contract which will allow him to play in Twenty20 leagues overseas.

Williamson said he remains committed to the Black Caps, though his long-term future is doubtful if he is no longer fully contracted to the national body.

New Zealand isn't scheduled to play any test cricket for several months but overseas tournaments might clash with New Zealand's domestic schedule.

Weenink said Williamson's decision might help prolong his international career.

But New Zealand fans might be angered by Williamson's move which comes after the Black Caps' worst performance at a white-ball World Cup. New Zealand was the first team to be eliminated from the current Twenty20 World Cup in the United States and West Indies after heavy losses to the West Indies and Afghanistan.

The Black Caps came into the tournament with little preparation because of the unavailability of players who were involved with the Indian Premier

Williamson will continue to receive a retainer from New Zealand Cricket while on a casual contract but will not be among New Zealand's 20 fully

contracted players.

contract, though NZC said it does not want such arrangements to be common.

Pakistan fast bowler Haris Rauf defended his actions after a video of an altercation between him and a group of men in the United States during the Twenty20 World Cup was shared on social media Tuesday.

The video shows Rauf rushing across a hedge to confront several men after they apparently said something to upset him, with his wife and one of the men trying to hold him back. After some pushing and shoving, Rauf went back across to hedge to the sidewalk where his wife had remained.

#### CRICKET

The Pakistan Cricket Board strongly condemned the incident and demanded an apology from the men involved in altercation with Rauf.

Pakistan failed to qualify for Super Eight at the T20 World Cup after losing group games against the U.S. and rival India. Pakistan finished with four points after their victories against Canada and Ireland but finished behind the U.S., the co-host playing in its first World Cup. Rauf picked up seven wickets in four matches at an

economy rate of 6.73. Pakistan allrounder Shadab Khan also took to X to defend his teammate.

for performances," Shadab wrote. "It is not OKAY to attack anyone personally in their family's presence. How would u feel if someone attacked u personally while with family?"

#### China to face France, US, Serbia in group stage BANGKOK, June 19, (Xinhua): champions were eliminated in the The 12 qualified teams for Paris erlands and the Dominican Re-

China's women's volleyball team will face host nation France, defending Olympic champions the United States and reigning world champions Serbia in the first stage of the Paris Olympics.

China's team is eyeing a rebound from its worst ever Olympic performance in Tokyo last time, where the three-time Olympic The 2024 Paris Olympics will be

China's 11th consecutive Olympic appearance in women's volleyball since their debut in Los Angeles in 1984, when they also won gold for the first time, before also standing atop the Olympic podium at Athens 2004 and Rio 2016 respecwere drawn into three pools of four at Wednesday's drawing ceremony in Bangkok, ahead of the FIVB Women's Volleyball Nations League (VNL) Finals. Apart from France, the United

States, China and Serbia in Pool A, Brazil, Poland, Japan and Kenya were drawn into Pool B, while Italy, Türkiye, the Nethterfinals. The Olympic volleyball tourna-

ment at Paris 2024 will take place from July 27 to August 11 at the South Paris Arena in the French capital.

public are in Pool C. The pool winners, the pool runners-up and the two best-ranked third-placed teams will advance to the quar-

> Fast bowler Lockie Ferguson is reportedly also to be seeking a casual

"It is the right of fans to criticize us

#### **Laporte resumes training with the team**

## Italy, Spain meet for 5th European Championship in a row

(AP): Defending champion Italy plays Spain on Thursday in one of the most anticipated games at Euro 2024. Spain leads Group B ahead of Italy on goal difference after both teams won their opening games. Croatia and Albania are the other teams in the groupin Gelsenkirchen.

Italy survived a scare against Albania when Nedim Bajrami scored after 23 seconds - the fastest goal in Euros history. A 2-1 come from behind win avoided embarrassment for Luciano Spalletti's team.

There were no such concerns for Spain after a dominant 3-0 win against World Cup semifinalist Croatia.

Italy beat Spain on penalties in the semifinals of the last Euros after a 1-1 draw through extra time at Wembley Stadium. The team, then coached by Roberto Mancini, also needed penalties to beat England in the final.

Build up to the last game in Gelsenkirchen - Ŝerbia vs. England - had been overshadowed by concerns about fan violence. Eight people were temporar-

#### SOCCER

ily detained following a brawl between fans. There has been less focus on potential security issues ahead of this

Spain defender Aymeric Laporte has resumed training with the squad following a muscular issue.

Italian media has speculated about Spalletti making changes ahead of the Spain game and the potential for Gianluca Mancini and Bryan Cristante to be brought into his starting line up.

This is this the fifth Euros in a row that Spain and Italy have met, with two wins each going into Thursday's

With 46% of possession against Croatia, Spain failed to dominate the ball for the first time in 136 competitive games.

Italy is going for a record-equalling third European Championship title. Spain and Germany have also won three titles. Italy could also become only the second team to win back-toback Euros after Spain in 2008 and At 16 years, 338 days, Spain's

Lamine Yamal became the youngest player to appear at a European Championship in his team's 3-0 win over Croatia. "Right now Spain, are better than

us in terms of individual players. We will have to bring the Italian spirit into play; we will need to struggle togeth-- Italy midfielder Davide Frattesi.

"I remember a friendly against Portugal before the last Euro and there was a part of the fanbase who weren't happy and whistled us.

Now we, the media and the fans all share a lot of pride and ambition in what we're doing. We're all rowing in the same direction." - Spain goalkeep-

England faces Denmark on Thurs-



Spain's Mikel Oyarzabal takes part in a training session at his base camp in Donaueschingen, Germany ahead of their Group B soccer match

against Italy at the Euro 2024 soccer tournament. (AP)

#### Messi praises the strength of rivals

BUENOS AIRES, June 19, (Xinhua): Lionel Messi has praised the strength of South America's national teams, stressing that Argentina will need to be at their best to secure back-to-back Copa America titles in the United

The Albiceleste are vying to become the first team to successfully defend their Copa America title while simultaneously holding the World Cup trophy.

"Today, we can say that we are the best because we are the world champions," Messi said in an interview broadcast on Argentine television on Tuesday.

"But that does not make us believe that we are going to win this Copa America. It is going to be very close and all the teams are difficult." Argentina will meet Canada in the opening match of the world's oldest continental football competition in Atlanta, Georgia, on Thursday before also facing Chile and Peru in the group stage.

Messi singled out Ecuador as a possible dark horse to win the tournament while also praising Colombia, Uruguay and Brazil.

"Ecuador has a generation of very good players who are intense, physically strong and have a clear plan," the 36-year-old In-

ter Miami forward said. "Then there's Colombia, Uruguay and Brazil. Neymar has had a tough year and it's a shame he won't be here [because of a knee injury]. But Brazil always produces players that are able to step up. Brazil is like Argentina: they will also be one of the favorites.

day as the leader of Group C at the European Championship after a 1-0 win over Serbia. Denmark was denied by Slovenia's late leveler in a 1-1 draw also on Sunday. They meet in Frankfurt at the Waldstadion where kickoff is at 6 p.m. local time (1600 GMT).

Here's what to know about the match: Denmark's need for a win is greater, ahead of a final Group C game against

a physically imposing Serbia team. The teams renew their rivalry from a Euro 2020 semifinal played three years ago at Wembley Stadium. England won 2-1 after extra time, sealed when Harry Kane followed up his penalty being saved by Kasper Schmeichel to score when the ball rebounded to him.

Denmark did not easily forget how England got that decisive spot-kick, for a foul awarded against defender Joakim Mæhle - "a penalty which should not have been a penalty," coach Kasper Hiulmand said then.

There is a familiarity between the squads with teammates at Manchester United, Crystal Palace and Brentford

Gareth Southgate is coaching England at his fourth tournament and will be less troubled than analysts and fans about the manner of victory over Serbia. England eased its way through the group stage at Euro 2020 - making at least two changes between each game - did not concede a goal, then accelerated through the knockout rounds.

Southgate's main call could be if Trent Alexander-Arnold's long-range passing is retained in central midfield alongside Declan Rice. Recent debutants Kobbie Mainoo and Adam Wharton are options.

England's preferred left back Luke Shaw is still not involved in team training, and Kieran Trippier is set to continue on his less favored flank.

## **AFC Champions League boosts** prize to \$12 million for winners



AFC Champions League trophy.

KUALA LUMPUR, June 19: The Asian Football Confederation announced that the winner of the new elite AFC Champions League will receive a significant support package of at least \$12 million, marking a milestone in club football development across Asia.

The tournament, kicking off its preliminary round in August, is central to a major developmental initiative encompassing 27 clubs from 12

#### SOCCER

countries, including Japan, South Korea, Australia, and Saudi Arabia. This prize represents a threefold increase over what Al Ain, UAE,

earned in the previous format of the AFC Champions League last May. Five clubs will vie in the prelimi-

nary qualifiers from August 6 to 13,

with two advancing to join the 22 directly qualified clubs in the main

Al-Gharafa of Qatar will take on the winner between Shabab Al-Ahly of the Emirates and an as yet undetermined Iranian team, while Shandong Taishan of China will face Thailand's Bangkok United in the Eastern Division.

The main round draw, dividing clubs into West and East sections, will take place on August 16, with matches scheduled from September 16 to February 19 next year.

The top eight teams from each division will progress to the round of 16, playing home-and-away fixtures, with winners advancing to finals series hosted in a single country.

Saudi Arabia has been chosen to host the quarter-finals, semi-finals, and finals from April 25 to May 4

## Croatia & Albania draw at Euro 2024, leaving both in difficult Group B spot



Georgia's goalkeeper Giorgi Mamardashvili jumps for a header along with Georgia's Guram Kashia in the final seconds of a Group F match between Turkey and Georgia at the Euro 2024 soccer tournament in Dortmund, Germany. (AP)

#### Guler enhances reputation with goal for Turkey

HAMBURG, Germany, June 19, (AP): Croatia and Albania drew 2-2 at Euro 2024 on Wednesday in the first ever competitive match between the two Balkan teams.

Croatia tried to set the pace from the start, but it was Albania's Qazim Laci who scored first, heading in a cross from the right flank in the 11th minute.

Andrej Kramaric equalized about half an hour into the second half and an own goal by Klaus Gjasula made it 2-1 for Croatia just two minutes later.

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Gjasula redeemed himself by scoring Albania's equalizer in extra time. The result leaves both Croatia and

Albania in a precarious situation in Group B after they lost to Spain and Italy, respectively, in their first

With Kylian Mbappe about to join a throng of attacking superstars at Real Madrid, Arda Guler faces an even tougher fight to break through at Europe's top team.

The Turkey teenager might just succeed on the evidence of his explosive debut in international tournament

The 19-year-old Guler enhanced his reputation as one of Europe's brightest young talents by curling home a brilliant second-half goal to help Turkey beat tournament debutant Georgia 3-1 in a European Championship thriller.

Guler brought a strong end to his first season at Real Madrid to the Euros by cutting in from the right and



Asani during a Group B match between Croatia and Albania at the Euro 2024 soccer tournament in Hamburg, Germany. (AP)

bending a fierce shot into the top corner in the 65th minute, regaining the lead for Turkey at 2-1 to become the youngest ever debut scorer at the Euros - surpassing Cristiano Ronaldo from 2004.

Substitute Kerem Aktürkoğlu scored a breakaway goal in the final seconds of stoppage time for Turkey's third, settling a back-and-forth Group F match in Dortmund which featured fan disorder before kickoff and was played in the most febrile and intense atmosphere.

This was a nation-stopping moment for Georgia, a South Caucasus country of 3.7 million people that is making its debut in an international tournament since independence from the Soviet Union in 1991, amid protests and political turmoil back home.

Georgia's players dealt admirably with an intimidating atmosphere created by Turkey's fans and responded to Mert Muldur's volleyed finish for the Turks in the 25th with an equalizer by Georges Mikautadze in the 32nd.

Guler's intervention was crucial, though, and it was the latest in a string of outside-of-the-area strikes at these Euros. It also was another demonstration of his talent that was on display when he scored five goals in five games to finish a Spanish league season of which he missed the majority because of injury. He was an unused substitute in the Champions League final that Madrid won.

Whether he finds game time even harder to come by next season following the arrival of Mbappé and Brazil forward Endrick remains to be seen. Real Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti will be aware he has a gem on his hands in Guler, who said he received a message from the Italian after the

"Ancelotti is motivating me a lot," Guler said. "Of course I'm happy to

have scored my first goal for Turkey - I hope this first match shows us the way forward."

Georgia, at No. 75 the lowestranked nation at Euro 2024, could easily have snatched a point from a game played at a frenetic pace that never let up.

In stoppage time and with its goalkeeper Giorgi Mamardashvili upfield in search of a goal, Georgia whipped in a free kick that evaded everyone and struck the post before a shot from the rebound was cleared off the

The resulting corner - sent in with Mamardashvili still up in the box was cleared and Aktürkoğlu had the freedom of Westfalenstadion to run through unchallenged to sidefoot the The final whistle was blown upon

the restart and Turkey's players gathered in front of their jubilant fans to celebrate. In the last Euros in 2021, Turkey arrived as many pundits' highly fancied outsiders and flopped, losing all three of its group games.

This time could be different, with Italian coach Vincenzo Montella having selected an exciting squad with the second-youngest average age at the tournament.

Guler is the shining light among them, his goal capping a performance that saw him set up five chances in total and excel with technique and creativity.

Georgia's superstar is Khvicha Kvaratskhelia and the Napoli winger was kept relatively quiet, until the last few minutes when he was involved in many of his team's attacks.

Georgia wound up hitting the goal frame twice in that frantic late wave Giorgi Kochorashvili also did so after a solo run - and its players fell to the ground in despair at the end.

#### **Teammates stay positive**

## Soccer world awaits update on Mbappé nose injury

PADERBORN, Germany, June 19, (AP): The soccer world is waiting to discover how long France superstar Kylian Mbappé will be out of the European Championship after breaking his nose.

The diagnosis is fairly encouraging from two of his teammates.

"A fractured nose isn't the end of the world," midfielder Adrien Rabiot said Wednesday through a translator at a new conference in Paderborn, where France holds its training sessions," and Kylian should be with us pretty soon.

William Saliba said he spoke to Mbappé and the Real Madridbound striker was feeling a "bit better" ahead of undergoing more tests on the nose injury sustained in the team's Group D opener against Austria, which France won 1-0.

Mbappé broke his nose when his face collided with the shoulder of Austria defender Kevin Danso. Blood was seen pouring from Mbappé's badly swollen nose, turning parts of his white France jersey red. He will have to wear a face mask if he plays on at the tournament, France said.

France's next match is against the Netherlands on Friday and the team has yet to officially confirm whether Mbappé is available.

"I saw him this morning, he was a bit better," Saliba said through a translator. "I think he was off to do more tests. I don't know anything

"But when I saw him this morning, he was a bit better.' Rabiot has compared the injury to

one suffered by his teammate at Ju-

esny. The Poland international broke his nose against Torino in April, underwent surgery and was back in the team the following week. The widespread expectation is that

ventus, goalkeeper Wojciech Szcz-

Mbappé will play a further part at Euro 2024, especially since France's win over Austria means the team is

likely to advance to the knockout

Kylian Mbappe of France holds his nose after suffering an injury during a Group D match between Austria and France at the Euro 2024 soccer tournament in Duesseldorf, Germany. (AP)

stage, which begins on June 29.

France will not be playing its match in the round of 16 before June

Rabiot stressed he didn't know how long Mbappé will be out, but said "playing without Kylian could be tough. "He is a very important teammate

and he is our captain, so it will have an effect on us, but also for the opponents - it will be different for them to prepare their game," Rabiot said.

'I'm not going to hide it, we definitely want him to play. (But) looking at who we have on the bench, I think we have what it takes to re-

#### SOCCER

place Kylian. If he's not there, it's going to be a bit more tough but I trust all the great players we have on the team.

Olivier Giroud and Randal Kolo Muani are the options to come in for Mbappé, who was nominally a center forward against Austria but was given license to roam to the left or right. It was from the right wing where he played in the cross for the only goal - a header into his own net by Maximilian Wober.



Turkey's Baris Alper Yilmaz is challenged by Georgia's Guram Kashia during a Group F match between Turkey and Georgia at the Euro 2024 soccer tournament in Dortmund, Germany. Turkey won 3-1. (AP) – **See Page 15** 

# Sports

### **Latest sports scores at — http://sports.arabtimesonline.com**

Tournament features 320 athletes from 36 Asian countries

## **Kuwait hosts prestigious Asian Fencing Championship**

KUWAIT CITY, June 19: Kuwait is set to host the premier fencing event in Asia, the Asian Fencing Championship Kuwait 2024 for men and women, under the patronage of Dr. Amthal Hadi Al-Huwaila, Minister of Social Affairs, Labor, Family and



Hamad Al-Awadhi, Secretary of the Kuwaiti Fencing Association and Director General of the Asian Fencing Championship.

State for Youth Affairs. The championship will take place from June 22 to 27 at Hall No. 4 at the International Fairgrounds in the Mushrif area.

Hamad Al-Awadhi, Secretary of the Kuwaiti Fencing Association and Director General of the Asian Fencing Championship, has invited all forms of media to attend a press conference at 6 pm at the Failaka Hall in the Radisson Blu Hotel. The conference will cover the details, conditions, and instructions of the tournament.

#### **FENCING**

During the press conference, Al-Awadhi will unveil the new logo of the Kuwaiti Fencing Federation. A dinner party will follow, celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Federation's founding, with prominent international sports figures in attendance.

Al-Awadhi announced that the tournament will commence next Saturday, featuring 320 athletes from 36 Asian countries. He emphasized that this event is the most significant



Male and female fencers pose for a group photo with officials.

fencing competition in the Gulf region and the Middle East.

He noted that the organizing committees have worked diligently over the past six months to ensure the championship reflects the development of fencing in Kuwait and showcases its capability to host major international events.

Top fencing champions from South Korea, Japan, China, Hong Kong, and Kazakhstan will participate, aiming to earn points to improve their international rankings. This championship also serves as vital preparation for the 2024 Paris Olympics.

The fencing team of Kuwait has prepared with a training camp in

Italy. Twenty-four Kuwaiti athletes, including Yousef Al-Shamlan, who recently qualified for the 2024 Paris Olympics, will compete. Al-Awadhi expressed optimism about their chances of reaching the podium.

## Portugal secure last gasp win over Czechs

Ronaldo makes history at Euro 2024

LEIPZIG, Germany, June 19, (AP): Cristiano Ronaldo became the first player to feature at six European Championship tournaments when he captained Portugal to a 2-1 win over the Czech Republic in their opening game.

The 39-year-old Ronaldo, who made his tournament debut at Euro 2004 where Portugal reached the final, already had the records for the most goals (14) at the tournament, while he extended his appearance record to 26 games. He helped Portugal win the title at Euro 2016.

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He warmed up for this edition with two goals as Portugal defeated Ireland 3-0 in its final preparation

"Another chapter in our history begins today," Ronaldo wrote on X before the match. "I fondly remember my first day with the national team, a journey full of challenges and victories. Now I have the honor of being alongside a team of champions, full of talent and determination. With everyone's strength and support, we're turning dreams into reality. Together let's fight for another triumph. United, we're unstoppable."

He was stopped by Czech goalkeeper Jindrich Stanek on Tuesday. Stanek pulled off a string of saves to



Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo raises a fist after a Group F match between Portugal and Czech Republic at the Euro 2024 soccer tournament in Leipzig, Germany. (AP)

thwart the Portuguese - and Ronaldo in particular - who dominated the game with nearly three quarters of the ball possession.

Ronaldo was a threat throughout and earned praise from Czech coach Ivan Hasek after the match. "It's really incredible that at his

age he is this dangerous and fruitful

in every game. He really showed his qualities," Hasek said. "Hats off to him, he's one of the best of all Ronaldo was the joint-top scorer at Euro 2020 with five goals - the same

as Czech forward Patrik Schick, who also played Tuesday. Ronaldo previously scored against the Czech Republic at the 2008 and 2012 editions of the tournament.

Altogether, the five-time Ballon d'Or winner has 130 goals in 208 games for Portugal since making his debut as an 18-year-old under Brazilian coach Luiz Felipe Scolari in August 2003.

Ronaldo just finished the club season setting a goal-scoring record 35 goals in the Saudi Pro League for runner-up Al-Nassr. He had an action-packed season, with four hat tricks and one red card. He was also suspended for an obscene gesture in February at Al-Shabab fans who were chanting longstanding rival Lionel Messi's name.

Ronaldo joined Al-Nassr in January 2023 after an acrimonious exit from Manchester United while he was at the 2022 World Cup in Qatar. It was his second stint at the English club after successful spells at Juventus and Real Madrid, where he won the Champions League four times. He also won it in 2008 in his first stint at United.

Portugal defender Pepe became the oldest player to feature at a European Championship

Pepe was 41 years and 113 days old, taking the record from the previous holder, Hungary goalkeeper Gábor Király. Király was 40 years and 86 days old when he played against Belgium in the round of 16 at

Euro 2016. It came just days after Spain's Lamine Yamal became the youngest player to feature at the tourna-

ment. The Brazil-born Pepe was 24 when he made his Portugal debut under Scolari in November 2007 when he was still a Real Madrid player. He has made 138 appearances for Portugal, scoring eight goals, getting 25 yellow cards.

## **Al-Jahra Club 'appeals' for urgent**

Season in peril, Kuwait Football Association steps in

resolution amid registration crisis

KUWAIT CITY, June 19: Mubarak Al-Jadaan, Deputy Head of the Jahra soccerl team, has appealed to His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmed Al-Abdullah, the Minister of Social Affairs, Family and Child Affairs, and the Minister of State for Youth Affairs, Dr. Amthal Hadi Al-Huwaila, to urgently address and resolve the ongoing issues at Al-Jahra

The club has been unable to register both local and foreign players since the dissolution of its Board of inability to register new players has persisted since January, posing a significant challenge as the club lacks a

#### SOCCER

functional management board. Without resolution, the club will remain unable to register new players.

Kuwait Football Association is actively seeking solutions, recognizing the urgency as teams are set to begin training by the end of June or early July. Meetings with Al-Jahra officials are planned to address the

Al-Jadaan emphasized that the resolution lies with the General Sports Authority, which needs to grant "signature approval" to the previously invalidated Board of Directors after a judicial ruling restored

He highlighted that other clubs have already started preparations for the new season, focusing on senior stages. Some of Al-Jahra's players are transferring to other clubs due to the lack of direction for the first team, which currently lacks a coach or medical staff because of administrative constraints.

He warned that player withdrawals might be inevitable due to the lack of contracts, as mandated by the Football Association. Al-Jadaan questioned who would accept that Al-Jahra Club might miss prestigious tournaments, including the Cup of His Highness the Crown

Team Manager Abdulaziz Madloul expressed his concern, calling



A file photo of Al-Jahra Club players and officials celebrating.

Kuwaiti shooters clinch silver at

ISSF Shooting World Cup in Italy KUWAIT CITY, June 19, (KUNA): prising Joel Smith and Vincent Han-Duaij Al-Otaibi, Chairman of the Kuwait Shooting Sport Club (KSSC), announced on Wednesday that Kuwaiti national team shooters

### **SHOOTING**

Abdullah Al-Tarqi and Iman Al-Shamaa secured a silver medal at the

International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup held in Italy. Al-Otaibi informed the Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) that Al-Shamaa and Al-Tarqi clinched the

silver medal, finishing second be-

hind the United States team com-

cock, who claimed the gold medal, and ahead of the Swedish team. He commended the efforts of

Kuwaiti shooters Al-Shamaa and Al-Tarqi in the tournament, highlighting that the KSSC is actively preparing Kuwaiti shooters aiming to qualify for the upcoming Olympic Games in Paris 2024.

Al-Otaibi attributed the continued success of Kuwaiti shooters to the strong support from the country's leadership and the backing of the General Sports Authority. He pledged increased efforts to secure more achievements for Kuwaiti sports in future sporting events.

the potential withdrawal unfortunate news for both Jahra fans and the broader Kuwaiti football community. He stated that the invalidation of the elected Board of Directors in January 2023 had forced the team to withdraw to maintain its ability to register players.

Madloul asked, "Who benefits from the issues plaguing Jahra Club?" He urged those responsible for hindering the club's interests to reconsider their decisions to allow Al-Jahra, the only club representing the largest governorate in the country, to thrive.

In a related context, Jahra Club President Khalaf Al-Sahu refuted claims about the club's withdrawal from local competitions, asserting that such statements are false. He confirmed that the team would participate in the new season, pending a court decision in 10 days regarding the eligibility of the current council led by him. Al-Sahu also mentioned that all games canceled by the invalidated council would be reinstated.

## Disabled fencing team prepares in Cairo for worlds

KUWAIT CITY, June 19: Kuwait disabled fencing team delegation departed for Cairo, Egypt, to commence a training camp scheduled until July 1. This preparation is in anticipation of their participation in the World Fencing Championships set to take place in Warsaw, Poland, from

The championship will feature 155 athletes from 45 countries competing across fencing disciplines including epee and saber, with events in men's singles, women's singles, and men's team categories.

Representing the team is Saad Al-Ajmi as president,

supported by administrators Saad Al-Hajri and Basma Al-Haif, along with Coach Khaled Al-Sarraf and a squad of six players: Sulaiman Al-Tamimi, Kholoud Al-Mutairi, Aisha Matar, Fahad Al-Bastaki, Fahad Al-Ansari, and Salem Saleh.

#### **FENCING**

Saad Al-Ajmi emphasized that the Cairo training camp will focus on intensive sessions aimed at achieving peak performance readiness for the upcoming challenges.



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