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# **KUWAIT, PHILIPPINES COMMIT TO DOMESTIC WORKERS AGREEMENT** Kuwait lifts ban on Filipino workers

Philippine Embassy welcomes decision to reinstate Filipino worker recruitment

#### By Marlon Aquino Malinao

Managing Editor, Arab Times

KUWAIT CITY, June 24: First Deputy Premier and Minister of Defense and Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousuf Al-Sabah recently met with Philippines Department of Migrant Workers Undersecretary Bernard Olalia to discuss resuming recruitment of workers from the Philippines.

In an official statement on 'X' account, the Public Relations and Security Media General Department of the Interior Ministry confirmed Monday that Kuwait and the Philippines have agreed to lift Kuwait's recruitment ban, allowing entry and work visas for Filipinos.

The department revealed that the State of Kuwait and the Republic of the Philippines issued a joint statement confirming that the two sides held a meeting Sunday afternoon at Seif Palace. The statement attributed the decision to the friendly relations between the two countries, as well as their commitment to strengthen this relationship.

The statement enumerated the salient points agreed on during the meeting: 1. Lift the ban imposed by Kuwait, and allow the issuance of all entry and work visas to Filipinos.

2. Allow the recruitment of domestic workers who previously worked abroad.

3. Establish a joint technical working committee whose members are from the concerned authorities in both countries. This committee shall meet periodically to address labor-related issues and other concerns that might surface in the future. In terms of resolving the issues by the Joint Technical Working Committee, the Kuwaiti and Philippine governments af-

**Continued on Page 5** 

firmed their commitment to the Domestic Workers Employment Agreement that the two governments signed in 2018.

'Implement renewable energy purchase'

**Kuwait power consumption stabilizes** 

# HH the Amir's courageous measures

## rescued us from parliamentary tyranny amid extreme summer temperatures

#### By Ahmed Al-Jarallah

**Opinion** 

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

IT IS necessary to be fair in examining the current reality that Kuwait is experiencing, and how things have changed for the better.

Nonetheless, more is needed in order to overcome the accumulations of the past stage, which lasted for about 40 years, and then start

If there is a will and a decision, the people will support and rejoice over the achievements, no matter how simple they may be at first; because they will accumulate over time and become large, benefiting the nation and the people, especially after many years of decline and attempts to undermine the Con-

stitution according to theories that prevent any progress in the

They portrayed the Constitution as if it is Divine Scripture, while the parliamentarians and those who benefited from the constitutional loopholes imposed restrictions that only exist

in their inner circles or serve their personal or parties' interests.

Al-Jarallah

limit the powers of the ruler.

In another year, when the press began to

Since that day, a saying has been repeated in the diwaniyas and the press: "There are 51 amirs in Kuwait -- one at Seif Palace and the rest in the National Assembly." This was a catalyst for utter chaos and bigger corruption, which almost threatened the fate of the country. Thus, the people started to ask the leadership and those who have the solution to take

Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah had repeatedly warned the National Assembly and the Council of Ministers against taking the wrong path and to not exploit influence for personal goals, but they continued doing so. This prompted the last treatment, which is cauterization. This time it was done with the wisdom of His Highness the Amir who

#### **Continued on Page 5**

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KUWAIT CITY: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent on Monday a cable to Qatar's Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, congratulating him on the 11th anniversary of assuming post.

of Qatar during the reign of Sheikh Tamim, saying that the fellow Gulf country had bolstered its status on the regional and international arenas. He wished Sheikh Tamim and the Qatari people fur-

His Highness the Amir commended the achievement

ther progress and development.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah also sent on Monday a cable to Qatar's Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, congratu-

lating him on the 11th anniversary of his reign. In the cable, His Highness the Crown Prince lauded the achievement of Qatar and Sheikh Tamim, affirming that the fellow Gulf country had become a beacon of develop-

Therefore, they sought to impose laws that

Muslim Brotherhood, some parliamentarians supporting that group demanded the imposition of a law preventing His Highness the Amir from donating more than \$5 million as per the agreement of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries to help Egypt get out of the crisis. Note that such amount is a loan, not a gift.

shed light on the disgraceful practices of the parliamentarians and their exploitation of the mission entrusted to them by the people just to serve their personal interests, they proposed a law prohibiting criticism of the National Assembly and the parliamentarians. They demanded for amendment of the Constitution and imprisoned anyone who did so for five years. They were seeking for parliamentary tyranny that no other country in the world had ever witnessed. This means they wanted to stop the hand of the ruling house, and then seize the powers of HH the Amir and the executive authority.

decisive steps.

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal treated the source of the defect through

## ahmedaljarallah@gmail.com

ment and progress known to the region and the world. He wished the Qatari leadership and people evermore progress and development. (KUNA)

**DUBAl:** A possible attack by **Yemen**'s Houthi rebels on Monday targeted a ship further away from nearly all of the previous assaults they've launched in the Gulf of Aden, officials said, potentially part of a widening escalation by the group.

The attack comes as the U.S. has sent the USS Dwight D. Eisenhower back home after an eight-month deployment in which it led the American response to the Houthi assaults. Those attacks have reduced shipping drastically through the route crucial to Asian, Middle East and European markets in a campaign the Houthis say will continue as long as the Israel-Hamas war in the **Gaza Strip** rages on. (AP)



Kuwait's Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya at the 19th Asia Cooperation Dialogue ministerial council in Iran.

#### Gaza at 'high risk' of famine despite increased aid: experts

## Kuwait urges ceasefire and aid flow in Palestine

TEHRAN, June 24, (Agencies): Kuwait's Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya underlined Monday the necessity of putting an end to Israeli occupation's massacres and violations in Palestine, and welcomed the Security Council's approval of ceasefire resolution stipulating withdrawal of occupation forces, allowing for repatriation of Palestinians, and guaranteeing flow of aid.

Al-Yahya made these remarks at the 19th Asia Cooperation Dialogue ministerial council in Iran, affirming Kuwait's intent on boosting joint work and cooperation between member states, especially as Kuwait hosted the first ACD meeting and is home to its headquarters.

The Foreign Minister commended all efforts supporting Palestinian cause, arriving at just permanent peace and achieving the legitimate aspirations of Palestinian people. Concluding his statement, Minister Al-Yahya

called on member states to actively strengthen partnership, cooperation, and turning this dialogue into a regional organization. Meanwhile, the Solidarity Association for So-

cial and Cultural Development (Tadamon)'s President Alaa Maqboul said that the association began the distributing Eid Al-Adha sacrificial meat in the West Bank in cooperation with Kuwait's International Islamic Charity Organization (IICO).

The President told KUNA that the project was

executed under the slogan (your sacrifice is a ritual and feeding), and the meat was distributed to the families of orphans registered with it.

Nearly 250 families, who have lost a breadwinner and keep facing great difficulties, have benefited from the project. He stated that a committee was formed to supervise the work in the field of sacrifices in Nablus Governorate, and to ensure the distribution of sacrifices to the largest possible number of beneficiaries.



Palestinians loot a humanitarian aid truck as it crossed into the Gaza Strip in Rafah, on Dec. 17, 2023. An influx of aid appears to have eased a hunger crisis in northern Gaza for now, but the entire territory remains at 'high risk' of famine after Israel's offensive in Rafah caused massive displacement and the disruption of aid operations in the south, a draft report said Monday. (AP)

The association's administration expressed their gratitude for implementing such projects due to their importance and their great role in supporting charitable work and supporting needy families.

In latest development, an influx of aid appears to have eased a hunger crisis in northern Gaza for now, but the entire territory remains at "high risk" of famine after Israel's offensive in Rafah caused displacement and the disruption of aid operations in the south, a draft report said Monday.

The report by the leading international authority on the severity of hunger crises said nearly everyone in Gaza is struggling to get enough food and that more than 495,000 people, or greater than a fifth of the population of 2.3 million, are expected to experience the highest level of starvation in the coming months.

That's despite months of U.S. pressure on Israel to do more to facilitate aid efforts, the installation of a \$230 million U.S.-built pier that has been beset by problems and repeated airdrops by multiple countries that aid agencies say are insufficient to meet vital needs.

Israel invaded Gaza after Hamas' attack on Oct. 7, in which Palestinian militants killed around 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and abducted about 250. The war has killed more than 37,000 Palestinians, according to the Gaza Health Ministry, which doesn't say how many were civilians or fighters.

Israel imposed a complete siege on the territory at the start of the war and has only gradually eased it under pressure from Washington. The war has destroyed most of Gaza's capacity to produce its

The latest findings come from the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, or IPC, an initiative first set up in 2004 during the famine in Somalia that now includes more than a dozen U.N. agencies, aid groups, governments and other bodies. The Associated Press obtained a draft of its latest report, the final version of which is set to be released Tuesday.

In its last report, in March, the IPC said that famine was "imminent" in northern Gaza, which has suffered widespread destruction and which Israeli troops have surrounded and largely isolated since the earliest days of the ground invasion. That report said that around a third of Gaza's population was experiencing stage 5 hunger - the highest level of starvation.

In April, after Israeli strikes killed seven aid workers and sparked international outrage, Israel promised to ramp up aid, and it later opened additional land crossings in the north.

By Mohammed Ghanem Al-Seyassah/Arab Times

Staff KUWAIT CITY, June 24: Al-

though temperatures continued to rise above 50 degrees Celsius, the power consumption index has now stabilized, reaching the green zone with peak consumption of 16,468 megawatts.
Sources from the Ministry of

Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy attributed this stabilization to the addition of 500 megawatts to the electricity grid two days ago, following the completion of maintenance works at South Zour station. They also cited efforts to rationalize electricity consumption in government agencies and raise public awareness about the importance of conservation, aided by media campaigns.

Sources clarified that the power consumption indicator being in the green zone does not mean the end of the planned power cutoff throughout the summer season. They hinted that the ministry could resort to this measure in case of high consumption or any emergency. They also emphasized the need to continue the of housing areas, particularly since the ministry set the peak hours from 11:00 am to 5:00 pm.

On the other hand, Head of Kuwaiti Society for Sustainable Energy Eng. Souad Al-Hussein said the government's intention to purchase renewable energy from citizens is an ambitious plan and could greatly contribute to rationalizing traditional energy produced from fossil fuels on one hand, and increasing production capacity on the other hand. He said this trend has not been applied until now, stressing there has been an unjustified delay. "If only this was implemented three years ago, we would have had power surplus that could be exported," he asserted.

He further clarified that purchasing renewable energy from citizens will contribute to reducing the consumption of one house from 30 percent to 40

#### **Continued on Page 5**

#### Day by Day

LIFE is full of experience and wisdom. However, it is also full of stones that someone has to watch out for and avoid. As an alternative, collect these stones and make your stairs to stay on top.

The question is: Do we have plenty of time to collect such stones and construct the stairs out of them? All we need is patience and awareness. Hopefully, we can figure out what life requires.

Yet tomorrow is another day.

**Zahed Matar** 

Regulation breaches

## **Kuwait Municipality blocks** 245 buildings in Farwaniya

KUWAIT CITY, June 24, (KUNA): The Kuwait Municipality said it has blocked 245 buildings in Farwaniya Governorate this month due to their incompliance with relevant regulations.

The move came following intensive field tours by the municipality's supervision team for buildings nationwide to check for construction regulation violations, chief of Farwaniya Municipality's engineering supervision department Jassem Al-Khuder said in a press statement.

The inspection tours are also intended to make sure that homeowners comply with the rules of engineering licenses

**Continued on Page 5** 



Municipality team during a field tour in Farwaniya.

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 light to moderate northwesterly wind, with speeds of 10-30 km/h. Max Exp Station

**Kuwait City** 

Weather

Salmiyah Nuwaisib Wafra

**Kuwait Airport** 

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

#### Dr. Al-Awadhi meets with a number of Bahraini health officials

## 'Kuwait keen on bolstering health cooperation with Bahrain'

#### By Khloud Al-Enezi

MANAMA, June 24, (KUNA): Minister of Health, Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi praised historical and close ties between the State of Kuwait and the Kingdom of Bahrain on Sunday, expressing wishes to achieve more fruitful cooperation that contributes to developing health services and raising the standards of health care for citizens of the two coun-

In a statement to KUNA, Dr. Al-Awadhi made his remarks on the occasion of his visit to the Kingdom, which is within the framework of strengthening bilateral relations and continuous coordination between the two countries in the health and medical fields.

The minister added that during his meeting with a number of Bahraini health officials, led by the Chairman of the Supreme Council of Health, Lieutenant General Dr. Sheikh Mohammad bin Abdullah Al-Khalifa, and the Bahraini Minister of Health, Dr. Jalila bint Al-Sayid, discussion focused on health issues of common interest.

The minister noted that the meetings emphasized the importance of enhancing cooperation in the fields of health care and exchanging expertise, including successful experiences in addressing health challenges.

The minister expressed his thanks to the Kingdom, represented by its leadership and people for the warm welcome, wishing it further progress and prosper-

He also expressed his admiration for the academic and educational level provided by the Arabian Gulf University, during his visit to the university, where he met with the university's President, Dr. Saad Al-Fuhaid, a number of faculty members, and a group of Kuwaiti students studying there.



Minister of State for Municipal Affairs Dr Noura Al-Mashaan in a group photo during her visit to the Municipal Council, Monday.

#### **Several other issues discussed**

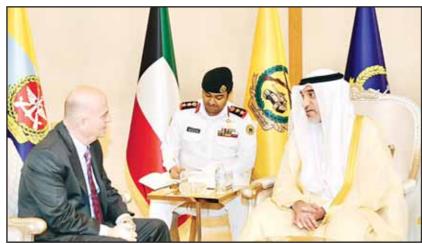
## First Deputy PM discusses co-op with Croatian and Iranian envoys

KUWAIT CITY, June 24, (KUNA): First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and Minister of Interior Affairs Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah received on Monday the Croatian and Iranian ambassadors to discuss cooperation and several topics of common interest.

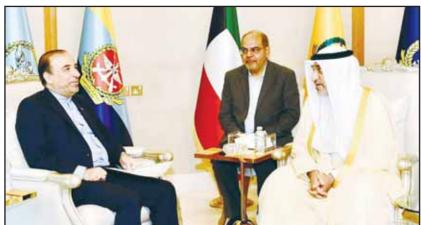
This came in a statement by the Ministry of Defense, saying that Sheikh Fa-

had Al-Yousef received Croatian Ambassador to Kuwait Amir Muharemi, and later received Iranian Ambassador to Kuwait Mohammad Toutounchi, each separately in his office in the ministry's headquarters.

It added that during both meetings, all sides discussed cooperation, topics of common interest and latest regional and international developments.



Croatian Ambassador Amir Muharemi.



KUNA photos

Iranian Ambassador Mohammad Toutounchi.

#### Six winners announced

### Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait spreads joy with the exciting A+ Student account prizes

KUWAIT CITY, June 24: As part of its continuous efforts to reward its loyal customers and demonstrate its commitment to youth, Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) announced the six fortunate winners of KD 50 Trolley vouchers as part of the A+ Student account quarterly draw.

ABK is pleased to congratulate Mohammed Rabea Ajaj Sah, Abdullah Tajaddin, Taihbah Mohammad Yousef Eissa, Rashed Abdullah Mohammad Faraj, Abdullah Attaallah Enad Alenezi, and Munierh Madian Daief.

As ABK gears up for its next draw,



Marafi

it invites everyone to brace themselves for even more worthwhile prizes, promising two winners the chance to win KD 250 vouchers from Oula fuel each. The stakes are also high as the third draw beckons a tempting KD 700

worth of Apple gifts, while the grand finale offers one lucky recipient an unforgettable journey to any dream destination.

And that's not all! ABK ensures A+ Student account holders are pampered with a 30% discount on Talabat during weekends, an enticing 25% discount at Trolley's Mubarak Al Abdullah and Egaila branches,



ABK's A+ Student account draw.

and an exclusive opportunity to get complimentary VOX Cinemas tickets through the Bank's exciting ongoing 'Buy One Get Two Free' offer.

Commenting on the campaign, Johair Marafi, General Manager of Retail Banking at ABK, said, "Join us in celebrating these winners and ABK's steadfast commitment to evolving in harmony with our customers' needs." She continued, "We are dedicated to crafting innovative products, services, and solutions tailored to all customer segments. Students hold a special place for the Bank, and we are thrilled to shower them with exclusive offers and discounts in collaboration with esteemed partners across various sectors."

Don't miss out! Stay connected with ABK on social media for the latest marketing efforts and seize the opportunity to revel in ABK's year-long promotions!

# **Municipal Affairs minister urges** speeding up projects' execution

Dr Al-Mashaan visits Municipal Council

By Inaas Awadh Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff **KUWAIT CITY, June** 

24: Minister of Public Works and Minister of State for Municipal Affairs Dr. Noura Al-Mashaan has stressed the need to strengthen cooperation between the State Ministry of Municipality and the Municipal Council to expedite the implementation of vital development projects in the country.

In a statement on the sidelines of her recent visit to the council, coinciding with its first regular session for the third round chaired by Abdullah Al-Mahri; Al-Mashaan explained that the visit is an opportunity to exchange views and discuss the latest developments and challenges that the two institutions are currently facing, as well as ways to enhance cooperation to achieve the country's comprehensive development goals.

She expressed appreciation for the important role that the council plays in the development of the society and in protecting the environment. She underscored the need to fortify channels of communication and cooperation between the ministry and the council in order to integrate their roles and accelerate the implementation of priority municipal

She discussed several future projects and initiatives during the visit with the aim of improving infrastructure and municipal services, while enhancing community participation. She also emphasized the importance of technology, digital transformation and innovation in developing the municipal sector and providing better services to people.

#### **Appreciation**

On the other hand, Chairman of the Municipal Council Abdullah Al-Mahri expressed his appreciation for Al-Mashaan's visit, which reflects the true spirit of partnership between the ministry and the council.

He confirmed the council's commitment to supporting the efforts of the ministry and to work together in improving municipal services and the quality of life in cities and other areas.

In a related development, the council discussed the following in its first session for the third

■ Requests of the Ministry of Finance to transfer a land in Al-Rai measuring 706,000 square meters, and allocate part of housing site no. 47 located in front of Shaheed Park in Mirqab-Block 2 measuring 51,000 square meters for the benefit of the ministry – particularly the State Treasury - to pay the actuarial deficit of the Public Institution for Social Security (PIFSS), while adopting the Kuwait Municipality's conditions for approving these





Photos by Mahmoud Jadeed

Some more photos from the Municipal Council meeting.

#### **Other Voices**

#### A tribute to Ambassador Claire Le Flecher: enhancing bonds between France & Kuwait

#### By Nasser Al-Hajeri

s Claire Le Flecher's tenure as the French Ambassador to Kuwait comes to an end, it is fitting to reflect on her significant contributions and celebrate the deepening of the Franco-Kuwaiti relationship under her leadership. Appointed in late 2021, Le Flecher has worked tirelessly to enhance diplomatic, economic, cultural, and educational ties between the two nations, leaving a lasting legacy.

From the outset, Ambassador Le Flecher prioritized strategic dialogues at the highest levels. Her efforts were instrumental in elevating the France-Kuwait Strategic Dialogue to a ministerial level, with the first meeting held in 2022. This ensured that key dimensions of bilateral relations, including trade, in-



vestment, and cooperation, were addressed comprehensively. This dialogue facilitated increased French exports to Kuwait, ranging from aeroplanes and electrical materials to luxury fashion items, and bolstered Kuwaiti investments in France.

One of the hallmark initiatives of Le Flecher's tenure was the launch of the France-Kuwait Friendship Society in 2023. Aimed at gathering private actors and civil society from both countries, this society is presided over by Mohamed Al Sager from the Kuwaiti side and Mrs. Dominique Sénéquié from the French side. This initiative has significantly strengthened the sociocultural and economic bonds between the two

Le Flecher's tenure saw a significant enhancement in educational and cultural exchanges. Recognizing the importance of cultural diplomacy, she actively promoted French language education in Kuwait, with French becoming the second foreign language taught in Kuwaiti secondary schools. Her initiatives to increase Kuwaiti

requests. It stressed the need to

coordinate with the ministries of

with the Public Authority for

Roads and Transportation (PART)

and other concerned authorities

to modify the metro campus in a

student mobility to France have opened new avenues for academic collaboration and crosscultural understanding.

Ambassador Le Flecher has also made notable strides in increasing the activity of the Francophonie in Kuwait. She promoted the idea that Kuwait could join the Francophonie organization and established monthly Francophone diwaniyas to further this cause. Additionally, she distinguished herself as the ambassador who visited the most diwaniyas during Ramadan, with 113 visits in 2024 alone. She also opened a Ladies Diwaniya on Wednesdays, fostering greater in-

clusivity and cultural exchange. Economic cooperation was another cornerstone of Le Flecher's ambassadorship. She played a pivotal role in facilitating key commercial deals, such as the delivery of Airbus aircraft to Kuwait Airways. This move not only enhanced trade but also underscored the robust economic partnership between France and Kuwait. Furthermore, Le Flecher's commitment to sustainable energy solutions saw French companies collaborating with Kuwaiti entities in the fields of hydrogen production and solar generation, aligning with global sustainability goals.

Ambassador Le Flecher placed a strong emphasis on military cooperation. This included high level exchanges between senior military authorities, training, and military exercises such as Pearl of the West. The 1992 defence agreement between France and Kuwait, the oldest in the Gulf region, has cemented a unique bond following the liberation of Kuwait in 1991-1992. Ambassador Le Flecher reaffirmed France's commitment to continuing and developing this crucial defence relationship.

As Ambassador Claire Le Flecher departs, her legacy of strengthened bilateral relations, increased cultural and educational exchanges, and robust economic and military cooperation will undoubtedly continue to shape the future of Franco-Kuwaiti ties. Her dedication and achievements serve as a beacon of effective diplomacy

and international friendship.

services and adhere to their replans related to the metro campus quirements, if any, before utilizing the site. Authorize the admincisions that contradict this. istration to move and modify the shape and boundaries of the site in the event of conflict with any existing infrastructure or for any regulatory reasons, and fix the site of Electricity. with the final coordinates as per the agreement that the ministries nary meeting for the third session of services and the concerned auand nominated council member thorities will reach. Coordinate

while canceling any previous de-■ The proposed addition of

way that does not conflict with the

location, and amend the cadastral

space for a modern laboratory building for water analysis in Shuwaikh, affiliated with the Ministry

■ Minutes of the first extraordi-Aliaa Al-Farsi as member of the

Council Bureau. ■ The council demanded for an update on the response of PART to the issue of repairing the lower part of Abdul Razzaq Gate, Kuwait City and the Mubarakiya Markets Development Project.

The council deferred discussion on the invitation to the 11th meeting of the Capital Governorate Committee for the second session of the 13th legislative term and approved the election of the chairman and rapporteur of the subcommittees for the governorates.

The council also postponed talks on the request of the Ministry of Oil undersecretary to allocate the land of the oil complex in Shuwaikh for the establishment of the headquarters of the Ministry of Oil and Kuwait Petroleum Corporation.

## diwaniya 🕈 حيوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

## 'Outcome of Iran presidential elections will likely shape it's political trajectory'

crash on his return from neighboring country celebrations has triggered a process to elect a new leader. This election involves six candidates selected by the General Leader, all of whom share a similar political orientation and are supporters of the Supreme Leader and the current regime's philosophy," columnist Abdullah Bishara wrote for Al-Qabas daily.

"From the information available about the candidates, it appears that the selection process has become less tolerant of diversity in work styles and differences in consensus-building mechanisms and the content of candidates' statements. This suggests a narrowing of the field in terms of ideological and operational diversity among those vying for the pres-

"This scenario underscores the controlled nature of Iranian elections, where candidates aligned with the ruling ideology are favored, reflecting a prior-

itization of continuity and adherence to the current regime's principles. The outcome of these elections will likely shape Iran's political trajectory and its domestic and international policies in

the coming years.
"During former president Ahmadinejad's tenure, Iran experienced a notable shift characterized by his outspoken and confrontational rhetoric. Ahmadinejad's approach was characterized by

strong language, hard-line stances against perceived enemies of the Iranian revolution, including the United States and other opponents whom he viewed as plotting against Iran. This aggressive stance aimed to defend the revolution's principles and deter external interference.

"However, Ahmadinejad's assertive rhetoric and confrontational policies did not always align with the leadership of the Iranian revolution. His presidency prompted concerns and increased caution regarding diplomatic statements emanating from Tehran.

"The leadership recognized that a more measured diplomacy, aimed at winning over skeptics and reassuring the international community, would be more beneficial than the provocative behavior that marked Ahmadinejad's presidency.

"This period underscored a strategic recalibration within Iran's leadership, emphasizing the importance of balanced diplomacy and avoiding unnecessary confrontation. It reflected a recognition that while defending revolutionary principles is crucial, engaging in diplomatic outreach and managing international relations with prudence is equally vital for Iran's long-term interests and stability.

"In the early 21st century, Iranian diplomacy underwent significant changes under new presidential leadership. These leaders introduced a more pragmatic approach to Iran's foreign policy, emphasizing realism and adopting a flexible and composed stance towards neighboring countries, particularly the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states.

'Instead of escalating confrontations, Iran began prioritizing efforts to foster understanding and build trust. This shift in strategy aimed to alleviate regional tensions and enhance Iran's acceptance within the region. It led to increased communication and cooperation, particularly with GCC countries, despite fundamental differences in ideology and strategic

"At the same time, Iran maintained its commitments to its regional allies and influence networks in countries like Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, and Yemen (with support for the Houthis). This demonstrated Iran's resolve to uphold its strategic interests and regional influence while simultaneously engaging in diplomatic efforts aimed at easing regional tensions.

'This approach underscored Iran's ability to balance its revolutionary ideals with practical diplomacy, acknowledging the realities of regional geopolitics. By pursuing a path of dialogue and cooperation alongside maintaining strategic partnerships, Iran sought to strengthen its position and influence in the Middle East, navigating complex regional dynamics with a nuanced and pragmatic approach.

"From these observations, a regional system has emerged characterized by principles of coexistence, emphasizing respect for sovereignty, non-interference in internal affairs, and the containment of sectarian incitement.

"Reflecting on my tenure as Secretary-General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), I witnessed firsthand the dynamics between Iran and the GCC states. Iranian diplomats at the United Nations often referred to the GCC as the "Gulf NATO," reflecting their perceptions and concerns about the Council's objectives, particularly during Ahmadinejad's presidency, marked by confrontational rhetoric.

"Today, both Iran and the GCC countries recognize that soft diplomacy is the most effective mechanism for managing their relations. There is a mutual understanding that Iran seeks to expand its influence not only in areas where it already holds sway but also in new domains potentially involving the Cooperation Council.

"The evolution from past tensions to current diplomatic approaches highlights Iran's refined diplomacy, shaped by its experiences and engagements across various regions. This includes its deepened involvement in East Asian affairs and its strategic interactions with major powers like China and Russia.

Iran has learned from past missteps, such as the fallout from incidents like the Argentine scandal, which underscored the risks of aggressive approaches.

"In essence, the shift towards soft diplomacy reflects a strategic recalibration aimed at promoting stability and cooperation in the region, fostering dialogue rather than confrontation. This ongoing evolution underscores Iran's adaptation to complex international dynamics while safeguarding its strategic interests and regional influence through diplomatic

"Despite political and media hyperbole about Iran's efforts to uphold the Iranian Revolution's goals, Iran's substantial and enduring treasury, amassed since the Persian Empire, underscores its financial strength. The Shah's regime fell in 1979 due to Iran's departure from realism. Despite the Shah's confidence in the regime's stability, he was overthrown, believing in its integrity and serving as a faithful guardian.

"The goals of the Iranian Revolution remain unchanged under the Supreme Leader's guidance. The elected president oversees internal implementation, particularly in development and infrastructure secu-

"Globally, Iran's support for Yemen's Houthi regime against American and British naval forces reflects its confrontational stance, endorsed by the Supreme Leader. The president lacks influence over the revolution's goals or elections, merely executing orders from the Supreme Leader, mobilizing the Revo-

lutionary Guard as its protector and ambassador.
"The Revolutionary Guard dominates military matters, shielded by Iranian diplomacy defending its actions, like in Lebanon and Syria. It maintains alliances with Baghdad and backs the Houthis against Yemen's legitimate regime and Western naval pow-

ers.

"Looking ahead to Tehran's presidential elections,

the limitations of con-Iran's leadership recognizes the limitations of confrontational diplomacy with many nations, including the US and its European allies. Instead, Iran seeks acceptance through ties with China, Russia, and North Korea, alongside improved relations with the Gulf Cooperation Council nations.

"Despite diplomatic moderation, Iran faces criticism for shielding the Revolutionary Guard from oversight, placing it under the Supreme Leader's direct control for foreign interventions. The president's role remains minimal in military affairs, underscoring Iranian diplomacy's constraints and the Guard's unchecked actions.

Ultimately, Iran's presidential elections and the elected president's role are confined to soft diplomacy, exerting minimal influence on Iran's global and regional strategies. This status quo will persist under the current Supreme Leader's guidance.'

#### Also:

"When Superman first appeared, many children mimicked him by tying tablecloths or bed-sheets around their necks and jumping out of windows. This phenomenon arose because the cinematic images of that era were less clear, lacking the digital precision of today's technology that mimics reality. This trend not only impacted cinema and television but also influenced electronic games," columnist Suad Fahd Al-Mojil wrote for Al-Qabas daily.

"In the early days of cinema, a century and a half ago, the public's introduction to moving images included a scene of a train approaching the screen causing excitement and fear among viewers who imagined the train coming towards them. This illustrates how the imagination could be stirred by early visual media, despite no real danger being present.

"Today, technological advancements have greatly enhanced the realism of images, particularly affecting childhood development, where experts note that young children up to age five often cannot distinguish between reality and imagination. Video games, in particular, pose risks due to their lifelike graphics, sometimes surpassing the clarity seen in cinematic

"Viewers now interact intensely with televised content, engaging deeply with characters and events due to the heightened clarity and precision of modern visual media. This interaction is most pronounced in cinema, where the immersive experience can significantly influence emotions and perceptions.

"Furthermore, modern media -- whether in cinema, advertising, or news -- tends to homogenize cultural perspectives, erasing differences across global audiences. Yet, this influence remains a curated and non-neutral process, carrying its own intellectual, cultural, and political biases.

"The relationship between reality and imagination has become increasingly complex with advancements in technology and artificial intelligence. Today, these technologies can stimulate imagination to a degree where distinguishing reality from fiction becomes challenging, posing significant implications for mental health and cognitive processes, such as the reflective function, essential for discerning truth.

"In conclusion, as technology evolves, the line between reality and imagination blurs further, challenging human perception and cognition. The ongoing integration of smart technologies, capable of mimicking human thought and imagination, underscores a transformative era akin to the Superman generation's fantasies becoming tangible reality."

— Compiled by PFX Fernandes

#### Traffic police detains 47 persons

## **GTD** issues 37,831 traffic violations during Eid

**By Munif Naif** 

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

KUWAIT CITY, June 24: During the recent Eid holiday, the General Traffic Department under the guidance of Major General Yousef Al Khadda, Assistant Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior for Traffic and Operations Affairs, was active in enforcing traffic regulations.

They reported issuing a total of 37,831 traffic violations. Additionally, 101 vehicles and 110 motorcycles were impounded due to violations, and 47 individuals were detained by traffic police for serious offenses.

Among the significant actions taken, 26 juveniles were arrested for driving without a valid license and subsequently referred to juvenile prosecution.

Furthermore, the department's operations led to the apprehension of 7 individuals in an abnormal state, 3 suspects allegedly in possession of narcotics, as well as the identification and pursuit of 55 vehicles and 12 individuals wanted in connection with various legal cases.

This comprehensive effort highlights the ministry's commitment to maintaining public safety on Kuwaiti roads and enforcing traffic laws during festive periods like Eid.

GTD also handled 2,777 calls including 215 collisions that resulted in injuries and 968 minor road accidents, 12 individuals wanted by law for involvement in various cases were arrested, 55 vehicles wanted by law according to judicial rulings were impounded

and seven individuals in abnormal condition were arrested.

Meanwhile, from June 16-22, the Flying Squad issued 12,524 violation citations, impounded seven vehicles and carried out 1,328 security operations that resulted in the arrest of 111 individuals wanted by law, 24 Residency Law violators and 73 individuals who failed to present a valid identifica-

It also referred 66 individuals to the Drug Control General Department (DCGD), impounded 150 vehicles wanted by law as per court decisions and referred them, as well as their drivers, to the concerned institutions; in addition to dealing with nine fights and 311 cases of providing assistance



Al-Jarida photo

Driving test candidates wait for their turn under the scorching heat.

#### **Call for sun protection measures**

## Candidates for driving test demand shade amid 'soaring temperatures'

KUWAIT CITY, June 24: In the Hawalli, Farwaniya, and Mubarak Al-Kabeer governorates, persons undergoing driving tests have raised concerns and appealed to the General Traffic Department regarding the lack of adequate protection from the sun while waiting in open courtyards, reports Al-Jarida

With temperatures soaring, candidates have requested the authorities to build sheds to shield them from the intense sunlight during their test sessions. According to the daily, candidates

have expressed their frustration with

the current conditions, highlighting the daily discomfort they endure under the scorching sun as they wait for their turn for driving test.

These areas, managed by driving education companies, were expected to provide suitable accommodations considering the fees paid by candidates for renting vehicles to undertake the tests or for the option to use their parents' vehicles for the examination.

The situation underscores a perceived gap in the administration's responsiveness to the needs of candidates, especially amid ongoing advancements in technology and infrastructure development within the traffic and operations sector.

Despite discussions about technological advancements and modernization initiatives, practical improvements in testing facilities and procedures have not kept pace with the evolving road infrastructure across the country.

The appeal for umbrellas reflects broader concerns about the adequacy of facilities and services provided during driving tests, highlighting the need for enhanced measures to ensure candidate comfort and safety amidst climatic challenges.

# **Court jails former MP to** 4 years with hard labor

Egyptian's 5 year prison term upheld in ISIS case

By Jaber Al-Hamoud, Munif Naif Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

**KUWAIT CITY, June 24:** The Criminal Court, headed by Justice Nayef Al-Dahoum, sentenced former MP Walid Al-Tabtabaei to four years in prison with hard labor for transgressing the powers of His Highness the Amir and misusing the mobile phone.

Al-Tabtabaie is currently serving

During the trial, Al-Tabtabaei denied the charge of transgressing the powers of His Highness the Amir through his post on 'X' after His Highness the Amir's speech on dissolving the National Assembly. Regarding the social media posts

attributed to him, Al-Tabtabaei pointed out that one of these posts is incorrect and that it was photo-shopped; indicating he has adversaries who fabricated the post. The court stated in the merits of

its ruling that the position of His Highness the Amir is revered and surrounded by a fence of deterrent punishment for anyone who dares to violate his rights. If pardon does not yield results, there is no way to deter him except with the sword of the law.

Encroachments &

violations removed

KUWAIT CITY, June 24:

The Kuwait Municipality

launched a significant cam-

paign aimed at enforcing the

law and safeguarding state

property by removing en-

croachments and violations,

An official source within

the municipality informed

the daily that the operation

began in the Al-Mutla'a

residential area, targeting en-

croachments that were estab-

lished even before residents

Diwaniyahs (traditional gathering places) located across the street from residential

properties were instructed to be dismantled immediately.

However, Diwaniyahs posi-

tioned in front of homes or

within the property owner's

designated setback were not

subject to removal orders at

Real estate owners in pri-

vate and model housing are-

as were urged to proactively

address any violations on

their properties to avoid fac-

ing penalties and fines asso-

ciated with removal efforts.

Municipality's initiative un-

derscores its commitment to

upholding regulations con-

cerning state property and

ensuring compliance among property owners in various

residential zones.

In summary, the Kuwait

this time.

The source detailed that the campaign included the removal of numerous encroachments. Specifically,

moved into their homes.

reports Al-Qabas daily.

Whoever deviates from the law has no one to blame but himself if he is like the accused who claims reform and teaches the youth. He makes laws and his criminal record is drafted with the ink effect of his action, repeating the crime again and again, despite being pardoned previously, the court added.

Egyptian gets 5yr jail over ISIS: The Court of Cassation has upheld the ruling of a lower court, which sentenced an Egyptian to five years in prison, followed by deportation for inciting others to join the ISIS and to fight along with its fighters. Case files indicate that the defend-

ant committed the abovementioned crimes through his supervision of chat groups on Telegram and sending songs and video clips. This is in addition to encouraging a juvenile in a mosque in Salmiya to join ISIS.

During investigations, the accused confirmed his belief in ISIS' idea of declaring others infidels, even if they are Muslims.

Knife seized from wanted man: A citizen wanted by law was arrested while he was in an abnormal condition on Subbiya Road.

A security source revealed that police officers patrolling the road noticed a vehicle parked in an unusual manner. They immediately started investigating the owner of the vehicle, leading to the discovery that he is wanted by law for involvement in an undisclosed crime. The officers also found a cleaver and a knife in his pos-

A case was registered and the citizen was referred to the concerned authorities, along with the confiscated 

KD 800 stolen from car: A citizen filed a case against an unknown person who allegedly stole about KD800

According to a security source, the citizen reported that he went to a wedding hall in Jahra and when he to his vehicle he w prised to find the side window of the car shattered. He then realized that somebody stole the money he left in

A case was registered and investigations are ongoing to arrest the thief.

Worker seriously injured: An Egyptian construction worker was admitted to the intensive care unit at Jahra Hospital after falling from a house he was working on in Mutlaa. It has been reported that the Egyp-

tian suffered from serious injuries as he fell from a higher part of the house under construction.

A case was registered and investigations are underway to establish the circumstances leading to the accident.



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## **Future Generations Fund faces** 'challenges' for renewed vision

Strategic revamp eyed amid fiscal pressures

**KUWAIT CITY, June 24:** The Future Generations Fund of Kuwait, established in 1976, has played a crucial role in managing surplus oil revenues for long-term investment, reports Al-Jarida daily.

Originally designed to safeguard Kuwait's wealth for future generations, the FGF was influenced by the success of the earlier Kuwait Investment Office, the world's first sovereign wealth fund. Over decades, the Fund has accumulated substantial assets, pivotal in funding Kuwait's reconstruction post the Iraqi invasion of 1990.

However, challenges arose as oil price volatility and rising government expenditures strained the Fund.

Initially mandated to receive 10% of government revenues, this contribution was later halted due to fiscal pressures. Moreover, to alleviate budget deficits, assets from the General Reserve Fund were transferred to the FGF, altering its intended role as an independent financial entity.

Given these shifts, there is a growing consensus on the need to revamp the Fund's strategy. Suggestions include establishing a new investment fund af-filiated with the Fund, akin to models seen in Singapore and the UAE, which could spearhead economic development initiatives locally. Such a fund would focus on strategic investments in sectors crucial for economic diversification, job creation, and revenue generation beyond oil.

Key principles for this revamped fund would include:

Professional Management and Governance -- Ensuring the fund is managed by professionals with robust governance structures to enhance transparency and mitigate corruption risks.

Clear Investment Objectives -- Defining investment criteria aligned with national economic priorities, such as



School honors top students.

#### **Top students honored**

The Fajr Al-Sabah National Secondary School celebrated the achievements of its top students from the scientific branch of the general sec-

ondary school, reports Al-Jarida daily. Maryam Imad, Lynn Nasser, and Khadiia Reda were honored for achieving first place with a perfect

job creation, economic multiplier effects, import substitution, and export enhancement.

Long-term Vision -- Emphasizing long-term investments in infrastructure and large-scale projects that yield sustainable economic benefits, complemented by smaller projects to support local enterprises.

Strategic Partnerships -- Collaborating with local and international private sectors and infrastructure funds to leverage expertise and optimize returns.

Sectoral Focus -- Prioritizing investments in critical sectors like transportation (e.g., railways, metro), energy (including renewables), and industrial projects (such as petrochemical complexes), which are essential for economic growth and diversification.

score of 100%

The school administration extended their congratulations to these outstanding students, wishing them continued success and excellence as they move forward to the university stage and beyond, aiming for a bright future ahead.

Stability and Security of Returns --Investing in infrastructure funds and regional projects to ensure stable and secure returns, while diversifying risks

**Evaluation and Impact Measurement** Implementing metrics to assess the socioeconomic impact of investments, including job creation, GDP contribution, and technological advancement.

By realigning the Fund's strategy along these lines, Kuwait aims to mitigate dependency on oil revenues, foster sustainable economic growth, and secure its financial future.

This strategic overhaul would require legislative support, expert consultation, and careful implementation to achieve desired developmental outcomes while safeguarding the fund's integrity and purpose.

#### **Farewell meeting with Ambassador Miguel Moro Aguilar**

## Spain is an important partner in railway project: Sheikh Mubarak Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah

KUWAIT CITY, June 24: His Excellency Sheikh Mubarak Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah visited the office of the Spanish Ambassador to Kuwait, His Excellency Miguel Moro Aguilar, to bid him farewell on the occasion of the end of his tenure in Kuwait, which extended for four years, and was full of hard work and the pursuit of converging of views between the two friendly nations for the benefit of both parties. Sheikh Mubarak Abdullah Al-

Mubarak Al-Sabah expressed his thanks to the Ambassador for his excellent performance during his time in his second homeland of Kuwait, especially the beginning of his tenure was associated with a critical period, he presented his credentials during the Covid corona health crisis, that caused the closure of outlets of life worldwide, and he proved with his terrific work his ability to overcome all difficulties, and during the meeting, means of strengthening trade relations were discussed, particularly in the field of renewable energy where the potential for collaboration is very important, as Kuwait declared its commitment to enhancing it to reach 15 percent by year 2030. In this regard, for example the Spanish company TSK developed the solar energy plant in Al Shaqaya, which is considered one of the largest high quality projects in the region.

Moreover, the cultural cooperation, exchange of visits, and benefiting from



His Excellency Sheikh Mubarak Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah with Spanish ambassador His Excellency Ambassador Miguel Moro Aguilar

mutual experiences in the fields of writing and creativity in all fields were also discussed. Sheikh Mubarak noted the importance of Kuwait Airways opening a direct line to Madrid and Barcelona in the last two years as a boost for closer collaboration in new areas as health, sports, shopping or nature tourism.

The Spanish ambassador conveyed to Sheikh Mubarak his deep appreciation for his continuous support and friendly attitude in this period, and stated that Spain and Kuwait enjoys a

strategic partnership, which is bound to grow significantly in the next few years, if we all make the right decisions and take the appropriate steps. And, Sheikh Mubarak stressed the importance of strengthening cooperation in the railway project that Kuwait is adopting with the cooperation of its neighbors from the Gulf countries because of their great experience in this field in Spain and in regional markets as Saudi Arabia, stressing that Kuwait seeks to achieve an unprecedented development renaissance under the direction of His Highness the Amir, Sheikh Mishaal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and His Highness the Crown Prince, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

Further, His Excellency Ambas-sador Miguel Moro Aguilar said that economic and trade relations between Kuwait and Spain have increased drastically with the continuous growth in the Spanish exports, reaching 394 million euros in 2022, and Spanish imports from Kuwait have also increased by 150 percent, especially petroleum products, noting that there are about 14 Spanish companies working in Kuwait on projects in various fields. And in regard to tourism, he mentioned that tens of thousands of Kuwaitis visit Spain every year, and many of them own private properties, especially in the south of the country



The Minister of Information reviews the preparations for the celebrations of Kuwait as the Capital of Arab Culture and the Capital of Arab Media 2025.

## **Al-Mutairi reviews preparations to** celebrate Capital of Arab Media '25

KUWAIT CITY, June 24, (KUNA): Kuwaiti Minister of Information and Culture Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi reviewed on Sunday the preparations of the supreme committee to celebrate Kuwait as the Capital of Arab Culture and Media

During the meeting, the activities, programs, and necessary procedures and preparations related to the two occasions were reviewed to highlight the pioneering cultural and media role of Kuwait in the Arab world.

The meeting discussed the coordination mechanism with all relevant authorities in the country for their participation in the activities of the two events. It also touched on follow-up supervision of the development of media, marketing and promotional plans for the two events.

## **Eligible candidates for re-engagement**

## Ministry of Education taps retired professionals to fill teaching gaps

KUWAIT CITY, June 24: The Ministry of Education is pursuing the assistance of Kuwaiti educational professionals whose services have concluded, including retirees from recent years, to address staffing shortages in

schools. According relevant Al-Rai, departments have compiled a detailed outlining specific areas where the expertise of re-tired Kuwaiti teachers can be utilized. Minister of Edu-

Dr Al-Adwani

cation and Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, Dr. Adel Al-Adwani, initiated this study in response to identified shortages, particularly in scientific subjects.

He emphasized the urgent need for collaboration with the Civil Service Commission to explore how retired Kuwaiti educators can contribute to maintaining educational standards and supporting national workforce development.

Dr. Al-Adwani also stressed the importance of establishing clear criteria for eligibility, such as the health status of retired staff members and their disciplinary records, ensuring that only suitable candidates are considered for re-engage-

In coordination with the public education and administrative sectors, the Ministry is evaluating the potential of employing retired Kuwaiti experts in specific disciplines identified in the recent announcement for non-Kuwaiti applicants.

These disciplines include English, French, mathematics, science (physics, chemistry, biology, geology), philosophy, Arabic language, computers, social studies, Islamic education, decoration, and electricity.

Expanding market opportunities

#### **Investment company explores potential IPOs** for medium-sized family-owned enterprises

KUWAIT CITY, June 24: A prominent investment company in the financial market is currently evaluating several medium-sized family-owned firms with the intention of preparing them for listing on the stock exchange, reports Al-Jarida daily.

According to financial sources, there is growing interest in second-tier family companies that are operationally sound but require capital enhancement and adjustments to meet listing criteria.

Reports indicate that a financial advisory team is conducting thorough assessments of approximately four companies to determine their readiness and requirements for listing.

Concurrently, these firms are engaging with regulatory authorities to seek preliminary opinions and ensure compliance with applicable conditions, procedures, and controls.

Regulatory bodies have shown openness to expanding the market base, emphasizing market development as a key objective that positively impacts market dynamics. Additionally, there are indications that some subsidiaries of already listed companies are also

poised for separate listings or integration into existing entities through indirect processes.

The upcoming wave of IPOs is expected to feature medium-sized companies priced at levels conducive to attracting a broader base of individual investors. This strategy targets inclusion in the main 50 and main markets, aiming to diversify investor participation and capitalize on existing liquidity seeking viable investment opportuni-

In contrast to previous experiences where high-priced stocks faced challenges with individual investors, current IPOs are anticipated to yield profit margins ranging from 5% to 10%. Mediumcapitalization companies historically demonstrate strong demand and achieve profitability goals, making them attrac-

tive investment prospects. The market's substantial idle liquidity underscores the potential for ongoing investment opportunities throughout the year, contingent upon the availability of reliable, operational companies that meet investor criteria and regulatory standards.



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#### **Enhancing cross-cultural communication**

## AUK's Faculty Speaker Series explores English as Soft Power

KUWAIT CITY, June 24: The American University in Kuwait (AUK) recently concluded its Spring 2024 Faculty Speaker Series (FSS) with an insightful session titled "English as a Soft Power - Ukrainian Perspective." The virtual event, held via Zoom, featured Dr. Serhii Petrenko from Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv as the esteemed speaker.

Dr. Petrenko, an associate professor at the Department of Foreign Languages, brought his expertise in linguistics and international relations to the forefront, shedding light on the pivotal role of English language proficiency in fostering cross-cultural understanding and promoting public diplomacy.

The session commenced with a warm welcome from Dr. Salime Smadi, professor of organizational behavior, who expressed gratitude to Dr. Petrenko, as well as Dr. OlhaSeheda from the Embassy of Ukraine, for their participation.

Dr. Petrenko's presentation delved into the multifaceted aspects of English as a soft power tool, emphasizing its significance in cultural exchange and public diplomacy. Drawing on his extensive experience in teaching

English for Academic Purpose (EAP) and English for Specific Purposes (ESP), Dr. Petrenko explored practical implications for Kuwaiti students amidst the prevalent presence of English in Kuwait.

Attendees were actively engaged throughout the session, which included interactive elements such as discussions on the associations with AI-generated images and the examination of various dimensions of soft power in diplomacy. Dr. Petrenko elucidated on the pillars of soft power, highlighting culture, values, and foreign policy as key components.

The presentation underscored the vital roles of language in diplomacy, ranging from negotiation to fostering cross-cultural understanding. Petrenko advocated for innovative English language teaching approaches, including backward planning, projectbased learning, and the Dogme approach, to enhance students' language skills effectively.

FSS serves as a platform for intellectual discourse and knowledge exchange, reaffirming AUK's commitment to academic excellence and global engagement.



Screenshot of zoom lecture.

# **Audit Bureau raises critical gas loss** issues at KIPIC LNG import facilities

Urgent calls for accountability amid environmental concerns

**KUWAIT CITY, June 24: The Audit Bureau's observations** regarding the liquefied natural gas (LNG) import facilities of the Kuwait Integrated Petroleum Industries Company (KIPIC) highlight several critical issues related to gas losses and opera-

tional practices, reports Al-Jarida daily.

gas loss quantities.

ered to the network.

**Specific Observations** 

tributes to environmental damage.

The following are the key points based on the Bureau's findings and KIPIC's responses:

Gas Losses and Control Issues

Quantitative Lack of Control -- The Audit Bureau noted a significant amount of liquefied natural gas losses totaling 1,609 million cubic feet during the fiscal year 2022-2023, costing approximately

\$6.53 million. This highlights a lack of stringent control over

Absence of Approved Loss Limits -- There were no

defined permissible quantities or percentages for gas losses approved by Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) and

KIPIC management. Monthly losses at times reached 232

million cubic feet, which constituted 3.25% of the gas deliv-

Burning of Gases -- A substantial portion of the losses,

amounting to 450.1 million cubic feet (73.9% of total losses),

was attributed to burning gases such as torch gas and fire gas.

This practice not only leads to financial losses but also con-

Unspecified Lost Gas Quantities -- Approximately 159

million cubic feet (26.1% of total losses) were classified as

unspecified and unaccounted for. These quantities sometimes

appeared as negative values in monthly reports, indicating

discrepancies and irregularities in gas accounting

## Council set to convene a workshop on addressing environmental challenges

KUWAIT CITY, June 24: The Environmental Affairs Committee of the Municipal Council is set to convene a workshop on tire landfills and their implications for public health and environmental safety, Wednesday, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The workshop, spearheaded by Eng Alia Al Farsi, Chairperson of the committee, aims to explore sustainable solutions for tire recycling with a goal of achieving zero waste.

In a press statement, Al-Farsi highlighted several key points to be discussed during the workshop. Notably, she emphasized the potential of fine tire waste in the asphalt industry as a viable solution.

Demonstrative experiments in Kuwait have shown that using tire waste to fill dangerous potholes offers a quick and cost-effective remedy. This approach also reduces the need for trans-

porting waste over long distances, which is currently necessary between tire collection points and

The workshop's agenda includes an assessment of the current state of tire waste management, locations for tire collection, and the logistics involved in transporting them to Salmi landfills

Additionally, discussions will cover the allocation of lands for waste collection, challenges faced by recycling factories, and the underlying causes of frequent landfill fires and toxic emissions.

Al-Farsi emphasized that twelve governmental, private, and public benefit entities have been invited to participate. These include the Public Authority for Industry, the Environment Public Authority, the World Health Organization, tire recycling facilities, the Kuwait Green Building Council, the Kuwaiti Society for Environmental Protection, the General Fire Force, the Fatwa and Legislation Department, as well as representatives from the ministries of Health, Interior, and Public Works.

The workshop underscores Kuwait's commitment to addressing environmental challenges associated with tire waste through collaborative efforts across various sectors. It seeks to foster dialogue, share insights, and formulate effective strategies towards sustainable tire recycling practices and environmental protection.

Audit Bureau's Recommendations The Bureau demanded that KIPIC define permissible gas loss quantities and percentages; obtain approval from KPC and company management for these limits; specify the authorized job titles responsible for approving these limits; identify the causes of gas losses and hold accountable those responsible if losses exceed approved limits; implement technical measures to reduce the burning of gases, thereby minimizing financial and environmental losses and investigate and explain the reasons behind negative gas quantities reported in certain months to ensure accurate gas import and delivery

KIPIC responded by stating that it is currently conducting a study to establish gas loss rates according to international standards aimed at achieving the lowest possible loss rate and once the study is completed, KIPIC plans to seek approval from KPC and its management for these standards.

KIPIC is also implementing an initiative to replace the burning of torch gas with nitrogen gas, which is expected to reduce environmental losses.

Regarding negative gas quantities, KIPIC explained that these discrepancies occur due to metering issues aligned with approved supplier tables. They are working to rectify these screpancies to ensure accurate gas quantity controls.

In conclusion, the Audit Bureau's findings underscore the need for KIPIC to enhance control mechanisms over LNG import facilities to minimize losses, comply with approved limits, and mitigate environmental impact.

KIPIC's initiatives and responses indicate efforts to address these concerns through improved standards, technological upgrades, and better operational practices.

Ext: 3148 www.auk.edu.kw

## KIB announces winners of Al Dirwaza account's weekly draw

KUWAIT CITY, June 24: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) announced the winners of the weekly draw held under the Al Dirwaza account's 2024 campaign, which is distinguished by the highest number of winners throughout the year. The fourth weekly draw, based on customers' May deposits, recently took place in the presence of representatives from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, as well as representatives from the Bank.

The KD 1,000 prize was awarded to Asma Jassem Mohammad Gholoum, Khaled Abdullah Khaled Alajmi, Maha Homoud Muhameed Alotaibi, Sabry Hussain Amin Mahmoud, and Mohammad Adnan Zaki Alhassan, whilst the KD 500 prize was awarded to Mohammad Rajaei Mohammad Ramadhan, Laila Murad Hajy Ashkenani, Azeezah Yousef Oambar Jaafar, Ahmad Yaquob Ahmad Alsharrah, Abdullah Nader Abdulrahman Alawadhi, Zahrah Abdullah Ghuloum Ali, and Mohammed Omar Rateb Aljohary.

It serves to note that AlDirwaza account is a savings account for individual customers, based on the Wakala investment principle. It is considered one of the best saving accounts of its kind in the sector, with annual expected profits of up to 2% disbursed on a monthly basis, where the customer gets an expected profit of 2% for the first 3 months from the account opening date and up to 1% expected rate onward.



Al Dirwaza account's flyer.

The expected profits are automatically deposited into the customer's account within the first day of the beginning of each month.

Al Dirwaza account holders are eligible to enter the weekly, monthly and annual draws when maintaining at least KD 100 in their account. For the weekly and monthly draws, each KD 1 that has completed a full month's cycle in the account will count for one chance, and chances are calculated based on the lowest monthly balance preceding the draw. As for the mega draw, chances are calculated for each KD 1 that completes a two-month cycle in the account – based on the lowest two monthly balances prior to the

Al Dirwaza account is also in compliance with the provisions of Islamic

## MoH targets social media drug sales

KUWAIT CITY, June 24: The Ministry of Health has coordinated with the concerned authorities, including the Ministry of Interior, to arrest social media site owners who promote the sale of banned medicines, reports Al-Anba daily quoting

Sources disclosed the Health Ministry took this step after noticing an increase in

against the cash collateral in the ac-

count. To open the account and participate in its draws, a minimum of KD

100 is required and can only be with-

drawn upon account closure.

the phenomenon of displaying and selling banned medicines on some social media sites. Sources pointed out the Health Ministry is closely monitoring such activities, in coordination with the concerned authorities like the Cybercrime Department in the Interior Ministry to investigate, control and refer these sites to the judici-

Sharia and approved by the KIB's Sharia Supervisory Board. Furthermore, the account comes with a wide range of benefits, including the ease of opening the account, which does not require a salary transfer, and the customer's ability to open it remotely without visiting a branch through KIB Online on the Bank's website or KIB Mobile application on smartphones. Additionally, Al Dirwaza account automatically grants customers instant issuance of an ATM card, with a KD 2,000 ATM daily withdrawal limit, as well as the ability to issue credit cards



First Deputy Prime Minister, Secretary of Defense and Secretary of the Interior during his meeting with the Deputy Secretary of Migrant Labor of the Republic of the Philippines.

#### **HH the Amir's**

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

the suspension of seven articles of the Constitution related to the National Assembly – a move welcomed by the people who were burned by the fire of parliamentary practices devoid of logic.
On the other hand, these measures

did not limit freedom of expression and opinion. The press is still playing its role in revealing any defect in State facilities. Rather, it has become more free and social media has not been subjected to any harassment; except with regard to violating the Amiri entity and the powers of His Highness the Amir, which are punishable by the Constitution and the law.

Yes, the measures taken by His Highness the Amir stopped the encroachment on the powers of other authorities and prevented the dominance of one component over another.

It is true that there are no parties in Kuwait, but the parliamentarians' practices were more fatal to the national fabric than the partisan chaos. They fanned the flames of tribalism and sectarianism, which began to raise their flags above the flag of Kuwait. For those who have not realized this, it means threatening the fate of the

Today, we have started to witness the fruits of the courageous and resolute Amiri measures. Institutions have begun to organize their work so that Kuwait truly returns to being the 'Pearl of the Gulf', and even a jewel in the crown of the Arab world.

#### **Kuwait Municipality**

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

and the number of allowed stories, he

He vowed that the municipality would take the necessary legal action against law-breakers.

#### **Kuwait lifts**

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

Moreover, in a statement to Arab Times, the Philippine Embassy affirmed that it welcomes the lifting of the visa ban on Filipino citizens and the return of Filipino workers to Ku-

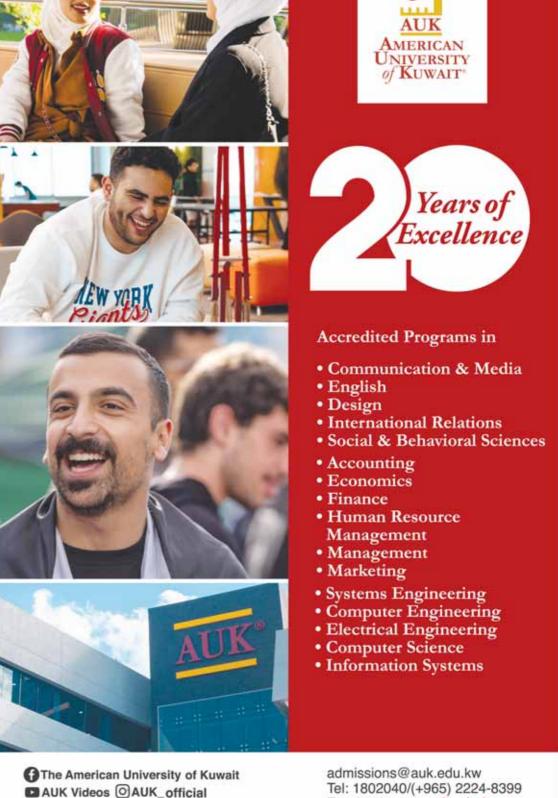
The Embassy added it looks forward to the enhancement of the bilateral relationship between the two friendly countries with forthcoming meetings and discussions that will take up and address the outstanding labor issues and concverns to the satisfaction of both parties, and for the mutual benefit of workers and em-

#### **Kuwait power**

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

percent, which will be beneficial for the general energy production in the country; that is, if the experiment is generalized to all homes. He said a house measuring more than 400 square meters needs approximately KD 10,000 to install a small renewable energy system, such as solar panels. He added this necessitates the establishment of a fund to support the trend among citizens by granting them an interest-free loan in order to encourage them to adopt this general and urgent trend, specifically in the next stage, when successive power consumption hikes are expected. "Perhaps, what the country is currently going through is the greatest example of the facts we are presenting here," he added.

He continued saying that the State has obligated the commercial and industrial sectors to produce 10 percent of their energy consumption through renewable energy systems in future **AUKtweets** 



The American University of Kuwait received its Institutional Accreditation from the Private Universities

Council (PUC), Ministry of Higher Education in the State of Kuwait, and has a Memorandum of

Understanding and Cooperation with Dartmouth College (Hanover, N Hampshire - USA).

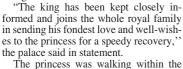
## **World News Roundup**

#### Europe

'Princess Anne sustains minor injuries': Princess Anne sustained minor injuries and a concussion following an incident on an estate in southwest England, the Buckingham Palace said

The 73-year-old sister of King Charles III was hospitalized as a precautionary measure for observation and is expected to make a full recovery, the palace said, adding the incident happened on Sunday on the Gatcombe Park estate.

Though the exact cause of the injuries is unconfirmed, there were horses in the area. Her medical team said that her head injuries were consistent with a potential impact from a horse's head



protected perimeter of the estate when the incident occurred, Britain's Press Association said. Emergency service were called to the

estate and she was treated at the scene before being transferred to Southmead Hospital in Bristol. Her husband, Vice Princess Anne Admiral Tim Laurence, accompanied her.

Anne is one of the hardest working members of the royal family, having stepped in and taken more duties in light of Charles' cancer diagnosis. Her engagements for the days ahead will be postponed and she will not attend the state dinner being held in the honor of the emperor of Japan. (AP)

France poll pledges threaten to bust 'budget': The promises are appealing -- and expensive.

Vying to oust the centrist government of President Emmanuel Macron in an upcoming two-round parliamentary election June 30 and July 7, French political parties of both the far right and far left are vowing to cut gasoline taxes, let workers retire earlier and raise wages.

Their campaign pledges threaten to bust an already-swollen government budget, push up French interest rates and strain France's relations with the European Union.

"The snap election could well replace Macron's limping centrist government with one led by parties whose campaigns have abandoned any pretense of fiscal discipline," economist Brigitte Granville of Queen Mary University of London wrote Thursday on the Project Syndicate website.

The turbulence began June 9 when voters handed Macron a defeat at the hands of Marine Le Pen's hard right National Rally party in EU parliamentary elections. (AP) 

Russia's Dagestan holds day of mourning: Russia's southern region of Dagestan held the first of three days of mourning Monday following a rampage by Islamic militants who killed 19 people, most of them police, and attacked houses of worship in apparently coordinated assaults in two cities.

Sunday's violence in Dagestan's regional capital of Makhachkala and nearby Derbent was the latest that officials blamed on Islamic extremists in the predominantly Muslim region in the North Caucasus, as well as the deadliest in Russia since March, when gunmen opened fire at a concert in suburban Moscow, killing 145 people.

The affiliate of the Islamic State group in Afghanistan that claimed responsibility for March's raid quickly praised the attack in Dagestan, saying it was conducted by "brothers in the Caucasus who showed that they are still strong.

The Washington-based Institute for the Study of War argued that the Islamic State group's North Caucasus branch, Vilayat Kavkaz, likely was behind the attack, describing it as "complex and coordinated."

President Vladimir Putin had sought to blame the March attack on Ukraine, again without evidence and despite the claim of responsibility by the Islamic State affiliate. Kyiv has vehemently denied any involvement. (AP)

Russia summons American ambassador: The Russian Foreign Ministry summoned the American ambassador on Monday to protest what it says was the use of US-made advanced missiles in a Ukrainian attack on Russian-annexed Crimea that reportedly

killed four people and wounded more than 150. Washington "has effectively become a party" to the war on Ukraine's side, the ministry said in a statement, adding, "Retaliatory measures will certainly follow." It did not elaborate.

There was no immediate comment from US or Ukrainian officials. The Associated Press could not independently verify Russia's claims about the missiles used.

Kyiv's forces have relied heavily on Western-supplied weaponry since Russia's invasion more than three years ago. The military aid has been crucial in allowing Ukraine to hold the Kremlin's army at bay, with few major changes along the 1,000-kilometer (620-mile) front line in eastern and southern Ukraine for many months. (AP) 

'War-torn country won't seek discount': Ukraine's top official for Europe says the war-torn country is on an "irreversible" course of Western integration after the European Union agreed to formally start entry negotiations this week.

The decision to launch accession talks this week is a "big day" for her country, Olga Stefanishyna, the deputy prime minister for European and Euro-Atlantic integration, said

"This is the utmost will of the Ukrainian people. And this is the irreversibility. And you've seen Ukrainians stand up for their choice," Stefanishyna said, speaking in Kyiv Sunday.

It was her first interview since being appointed chief negotiator for EU accession. EU member countries agreed Friday to start entry talks

with Ukraine and Moldova - overcoming vocal opposition from Hungary which takes over the EU's rotating presidency on July 1. The process of joining varies for each country but could take years. Turkey started its accession talks almost two decades ago and is still waiting for full membership. (AP) 

NMacedonia parliaments OKs center-right govt: North Macedonia's center-right leader secured parliamentary approval to lead a new coalition government in a vote late Sunday.

Hristijan Mickoski, 46, faces significant challenges in his four-year term in office - above all to advance the small Balkan NATO member's lengthy efforts to join the 27-nation European Union.

At the same time, his VMRO-DPMNE party's nationalist bent is antagonizing neighboring members of the affluent bloc, in stark contrast to the previous center-left government it defeated in May's national elections.

A total 77 lawmakers in the 120-seat house voted in favor of the new government, and 22 voted against. The remaining 21 lawmakers were absent during the ballot.

Mickoski's VMRO-DPMNE-led coalition gained 43% of the vote on May 8, winning 58 seats - three short of a governing majority. Mickoski then struck a deal to form a government with an ethnic Albanian and a leftist party, which together have 20 seats. (AP)

77 migrants rescued from yacht: A group of 77 migrants were rescued off a crippled sailing yacht after a large overnight operation in the southern Aegean Sea, Greek authorities said Monday. Nobody was reported missing or injured following the rescue between the islands of Amorgos and Astypalaia, Greece's coast guard said.

Three coast guard vessels, four merchant ships in the area and two smaller private boats took part in the rescue after passengers on the yacht phoned emergency services

The nationalities of the migrants were not immediately known. All were taken to Naxos in the Cyclades island group, where they were given temporary shelter.

It was unclear where the migrants had departed from. They were rescued on a route typically used by smuggling gangs to ferry migrants from Turkey to Italy, avoiding tightly patrolled waters around Greece's eastern Aegean islands. (AP)



President Donald Trump, (left), and Democratic presidential candidate former vice president Joe Biden speak during the debate in Nashville, Tenn on Oct. 22, 2020.

The clash between Biden and Trump on June 27, 2024, may be the most consequential presidential debate in decades. (AP)



Lithuania's President Gitanas Nauseda, (left), and Spain's King Felipe VI review an honor guard during a wel-come ceremony at the Presidential palace in Vilnius, Lithuania on June



Blangiardi

Newsom

**America** 

**St Louis shooting kills 1:** One man is dead and five others have been wounded in a downtown St Louis shooting, police

Police believe women were fighting in a park when men stepped in and drew firearms, according to a statement from St. Louis police.

The man who died likely was in his midtwenties and has not been identified yet, police said. Five others were hospitalized with ounshot wounds, including an 18-year-old

from St Louis County in critical condition. The others are in stable condition and have been identified by police only as a 21-year-old St Louis woman, a 23-yearold St Louis man, a 24-year-old St Charles man and a 22-year-old University City man.

Lifeguard dies in shark attack: A professional lifeguard died after he was attacked by a shark while surfing off the island of Oahu in Hawaii on Sunday afternoon, authorities said.

City and County of Honolulu Ocean Safety lifeguard Tamayo Perry, 49, died in the attack near Goat Island, Shayne Enright of the Honolulu Emergency Services Department said in a statement.

Honolulu Ocean Safety and the city's fire, police and emergency medical services departments responded to Mlaekahana Beach on Oahu's North Shore just before 1 p.m. after a caller reported seeing a man who appeared to have suffered shark bites, Enright said.

Lifeguards brought Perry to shore by jet ski and paramedics assisted with the death pronouncement, Enright said.

Perry, who worked as a lifeguard on the North Shore, began his career with the Ocean Safety department in July 2016, Enright said. Ocean Safety personnel posted shark warnings in the area following the attack, Enright said.

Honolulu Ocean Safety Acting Chief Kurt Lager said Perry was "a lifeguard loved by all." "Tamayo was a legendary waterman and highly respected," Honolulu Mayor Rick Blangiardi said, calling Perry's death "a tragic loss." (AP) 

Man charged in shooting: A 36-yearold Philadelphia man was charged Sunday with attempted murder in connection with a

#### **Politics**

#### Former first lady Melania stays out of public eye

## Biden, Trump work to win over Ga voters

FAYETTEVILLE, Ga., June 24, (AP): US President Joe Biden and former president Donald Trump will meet for their first general election debate Thursday in Georgia, the battleground that yielded the closest 2020 margin of any state and became the epicenter of Trump's efforts to overturn Biden's election.

Now, in their rematch, Georgia will test which man can best assemble a winning coalition despite their respective weaknesses. Each must persuade grumpy voters in places like Fayette County, a suburb south of Atlanta, that they're less frightening than the alter-

Trump, the presumptive Republican nominee for the third consecutive time, has been convicted of felony crimes and awaits sentencing and three more criminal trials, including in Atlanta. That legal peril could exacerbate his struggles with moderate Republicans and independents, some of whom abandoned him as he helped dismantle the constitutional right to an abortion and refused to accept defeat in 2020.

Biden, the Democratic incumbent, has presided over an inflationary economy, struggled with a Middle East war that divides Democrats, and failed to resolve immigration problems along the southern U.S. border. He faces potential defections from nonwhite and younger voters.

#### **Overheard**

One of Georgia's richest counties, Fayette has long housed retirees and Delta Air Lines workers seeking homes near Atlanta's airport. Now it's also a bastion of Georgia's state-subsidized movie industry. At the Trillith development, a rapidly growing highend town and movie studio, workers can be overheard discussing the latest Captain America movie being filmed

Like other Atlanta suburbs, the 120,000-resident county has been angling left. Democrats haven't yet deposed Fayette's Republican majority, but they got close in December 2022, when Democratic US Sen Raphael Warnock won 49.5% of Fayette's votes in defeat-

ing Republican Herschel Walker.
"We do believe that the pathway to the presidency comes right through Fayette County this year," said Joe Clark, chair of the Fayette County Democratic Party and a Fayetteville City Council member. The Trump campaign on June 13

shooting that critically wounded a police of-

ficer after a traffic stop, police said.

Ramon Rodriguez Vazquez also faces

charges that include aggravated assault and

opened its first Georgia campaign office in Fayetteville.

"They want to try to flip our county," warned Brian Jack, a former Trump aide who recently clinched the GOP nomination for a Republican-leaning congressional seat.

Statewide, Republicans say Georgia still tilts toward them. Yes, Democrats won statewide four times in Georgia, starting with Biden in 2020, continuing as Jon Ossoff and Warnock swept to twin victories in a 2021 runoff that clinched Democratic control of the US Senate, and culminating in Warnock's reelection in 2022. But GOP Gov. Brian Kemp won a second term as governor in 2022 over Democrat Stacy Abrams by a comfortable margin, sweeping down-ballot offices along the way.

Lauren Groh-Wargo, Abrams' top strategist, said Democrats were slow to engage in Georgia in 2020. Both sides have been spending heavily this year.

"This is the first time since the 1990s that Georgia has been a top-tier battleground state for the presidential on both sides of the aisle, from the beginning of both campaigns," Groh-Wargo said.

#### Rematch

Both sides have work to do. Many voters. Democrats and Republicans. say they're dispirited by the Trump-Biden rematch. Some say they're not sure that they will even vote.

Robert Kennedy Jr's independent bid is another wildcard. Kennedy hasn't been certified for the ballot, but he could make Georgia even harder to

Some formerly solid Republicans have taken to splitting their tickets. Trump and Walker showed weakness in metro Atlanta even as Kemp remained strong. Quentin Fulks, a southwest Georgia native who is Biden's principal deputy campaign manager and steered Warnock's 2022 campaign, estimates that Warnock won 9% of Republican voters.

"Candidate quality matters," said Republican strategist Brian Robinson. Trump ignited "a real realignment" that drew working-class voters without college degrees toward Republicans, Robinson said, but has pushed away college-educated voters.

Some of those voters "still want to vote for Republicans or are willing to," but only in the right circumstances. In Georgia's Republican presidential pri-

The 31-year-old officer and his partner

stopped a car carrying four people shortly

before 8 pm Saturday in the Kensington

home invasion, police said.

mary in March, about 78,000 voters most in metro Atlanta - voted for Nikki Haley over Trump even after Haley suspended her campaign. Haley's total was more than six times Biden's 2020 Georgia victory margin.

Fayette ranks seventh among Georgia's 159 counties in voters who backed Kemp but not Walker. Haley won 13.2% statewide, but nearly 19%

in Fayette County.
Rhonda Quillian, shopping at a Peachtree City farmer's market, backed Haley. She says neither Biden nor Trump feel like an option for her. She's considering not voting at all.

Quillian said she liked Trump's policies after she voted for him in 2016, but soured on him, especially after the Jan. 6, 2021, Capitol riot.

#### Also:

WEST PALM BEACH. Fla: After Melania Trump missed key events in her husband's presidential bid earlier this year - from the kickoff of the 2024 election in **Iowa** to **Donald Trump**'s Super Tuesday victory party - reporters asked the former first lady whether she planned to hit the campaign trail. Her response: "Stay tuned."

But since making that comment in March, after she and Donald Trump voted in Florida's primary, Melania Trump has largely refrained from public appearances. The few exceptions have included a couple of fundraisers in April and their son's high school graduation.

The former first lady noticeably did not accompany the presumptive Republican presidential nominee on any of the days of his more than monthlong hush money trial in New York. She was not there last month for the guilty verdict or the following day for his remarks at Trump Tower. She also did not appear June 14 at a 78th birthday party organized for Trump by his fan club, or at any of the campaign rallies he has held in recent months.

Her absence during the trial and for other important moments is unusual, said Katherine Jellison, a professor of history at Ohio University who studies first ladies. But Jellison said maybe it should not come as a surprise as Melania Trump seems reluctant to follow the traditional public role of a politician's wife. As first lady, she also kept a low profile and she was not a regular presence on her husband's losing 2020 presidential campaign.

neighborhood of northeast Philadelphia, the city's police commissioner, Kevin Bethel, told reporters late Saturday night.

The officers were taking inventory of the vehicle when they saw someone with a gun holster, Bethel said. That person fled, firing three times and hitting one officer in the neck, he said. The wounded officer was taken to Temple University Hospital in critical condition, Bethel said during a news conference outside the hospital.

The shooting suspect and all of the people who were in the car "as well as a person of interest who was involved in the shooting" were in custody, Bethel said. (AP) 

Newsom to deliver speech: California residents will be able to watch Gov. Gavin Newsom's State of the State address online this week, his office said Sunday.

After sending the text of the address to the state Legislature Tuesday morning, Newsom will record the speech on video. "His pre-recorded speech will premiere

simultaneously across the office's social media channels and website," Newsom's office said in a statement. The remarks will be available to stream

on YouTube, Facebook and X at 10 a.m. Tuesday. (AP)



Crews compete at the 2024 Vancouver International Dragon Boat Festival in Vancouver, Canada on June 22. (Xinhua)

#### Lat/Am

#### **Colombia car bomb kills 3**

#### Argentina prez meets Germany's chancellor

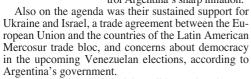
MEXICO CITY, June 24, (Agencies): Argentina's self-described anarcho-capitalist President Javier Milei met with German officials on Sunday in Berlin, part of his ongoing lap of Europe which has been greeted with both celebration and outrage.

In a meeting with German Chancellor **Ölaf Scholz** on Sunday, the two leaders discussed Argentina's radical economic shifts and "the importance of having critical minerals" - likely Argentina's vast stores of lithium used in the global energy transition - wrote Manuel Adroni, a spokesperson for Milei, in a statement on Sunday.

"The meeting between President Milei and Chancellor Scholz and their teams showed two leaders with a convergent vision, with the same principles and values in international politics

and focused on solving key geopolitical challenges for the West," Adroni wrote. The German government

said in a short statement Sunday the leaders spoke about the repercussions Milei's drastic economic cuts could have on Argentines and said Scholz reminded Milei of the importance of maintaining "social cohesion" while the leader attempts to control Argentina's sharp inflation.



Center-left leader Scholz's politics and style contrast sharply with those of the Argentine president.

Milei, a right-wing figure known for his unfiltered way of speaking, was elected last year on the promise to fix Argentina's troubled economy and to "make Argentina great again.

#### Measures

His austerity measures have fueled waves of mass protests in the South American nation, with protesters saying cuts have put the poor even more at risk and have endangered public universities. Milei has also drawn the ire of human rights activists after he called abortion "murder" and lambasted the country's feminist movement as a "cult of a gender ideology.

Scholz's spokesperson, Steffen Hebestreit, said Friday it would be a "very short working visit, expressly at the wish of the Argentine president" and that there had been a "clear refusal" by Milei to hold a news conference. A greeting with military honors and a joint news conference that the German government originally announced were later canceled.

The meeting came after Milei accepted an award from the neoliberal Augusto von Hayek Foundation in the German port city of Hamburg on Saturday for "freeing the population from shackles" and restoring "hope." In a speech as he accepted the award, Milei declared he was defeating the "socialists" with "the largest fiscal adjustment in history of Argentina." He was met with chants of "freedom!" in Spanish.

Meanwhile there were small protests outside both the awards ceremony and the meeting between Milei and Scholz, with demonstrators carrying signs reading "down with Milei, down with the far-right government"

and "Argentina is not for sale" in Spanish and German. The award and demonstrations have underscored Milei's reputation as a globally polarizing figure, fueling the adoration of some and hatred of others.

The trip in Germany comes after a controversial trip to Spain, where Milei made no plans to meet with senior government officials, amid a diplomatic crisis

engulfing the long-standing allies.
Instead, Milei met with Madrid's powerful rightwing regional president, Isabel Díaz Ayuso, who is an outspoken opponent of Spain's center-left Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez. Milei was met by cheering crowds in some parts of Madrid.

Milei has generated a number of diplomatic spats with his outspoken style and controversial opinions since becoming president last December.

#### Also:

**BOGOTA:** Three people were killed and nine others injured in a car bomb attack in the Colombian city of **Taminango** in the southern department of Narino on Friday, local authorities said Saturday.

In a statement, Luis Alfonso Escobar, the governor of Narino, confirmed that the killed were two citizens and a young police officer, expressing his categorical rejection of "this demented act."

President Gustavo Petro expressed condolences to the bereaved families in a post on his account on X, warning the criminals "who choose the path of war

over peace" will "bear the full burden of the law." The shock wave of the car bomb, detonated near the police station of El Remolino in the rural area of Taminango, also affected several houses and vehicles.

Fernando Latorre, the mayor of Taminango, told local media that this police station suffered two other attacks in the past year, in addition to various murders, calling for "security to be strengthened to give peace to the local inhabitants.

CARACAS, Venezuela: Eight of 10 candidates in Venezuela's upcoming presidential election, including President Nicolás Maduro, signed an agreement binding them to respect the results of the contest as

announced by electoral authorities. The agreement put forth by Venezuela's electoral body could end up being insignificant: The government has a history of testing and breaching the terms of agreements and the document wasn't signed by Edmundo González Urrutia, the only opposition candidate with a real chance of ending Maduro's quest for a

third term on July 28. "Now, it is the document of the electoral arbiter. Whatever the electoral arbiter says, amen," Maduro told reporters after the signing ceremony. "I call on all Venezuelans to support this document and to respect the electoral arbiter, the National Electoral Council, and that its word be sacred."

The electoral body has long been stacked with allies of the ruling party who function as a tool of Maduro's government, bending rules in favor of preferred candidates and blocking the participation of the opposition.

González in a statement said an "agreement can never be imposed unilaterally" and "must emerge from a respectful dialogue between the parties." He said the government has already violated an agreement it entered into with the opposition coalition he represents, including by rescinding an invitation to the European Union to send a mission of electoral observers and by increasing "the persecution against leaders and supporters of our campaign."



Firefighters work at the site of a burnt lithium battery manufacturing factory in Hwaseong, South Korea on June 24. Inset: South Korean Prime Minister Han Ducksoo, (top center), arrives at the site of a fire at a lithium battery manufacturing factory. (AP)



Argentina's President Javier Milei. right), and Stefan Kooths, Chairman of the Hayek Society, stand together on the occasion of Milei being awarded the Hayek Medal of the Friedrich August v Hayek Society in Hamburg, Germany on June 22. (AP)



Kagame

#### Africa

10 parties to join SAfrica govt: South Africa's ruling African National Congress (ANC) announced that a total of 10 political parties with seats in Parliament have agreed to join the ANC-led government of national unity (GNU).

"Following two weeks of intense engagements, 10 of the 18 parties with seats in the National Assembly have signed the GNU Statement of Intent, indicating their willingness to cooperate to put the people of South Africa first," the ANC said on Saturday.

The 10 parties include the ANC, Democratic Alliance, Patriotic Alliance, Inkatha Freedom Party, GOOD, Pan Africanist Congress of Azania, Vryheidsfront Plus, United Democratic Movement, Rise Mzansi and Al Jama-ah.

Together, these parties secured over 70 percent of the votes in the 2024 elections, ensuring broad representativity and a strong mandate to govern. They have agreed to be bound by the foundational principles outlined in the Statement of Intent and to work together to pursue its objectives, according to the ANC. The ANC also said it remains in open

communication with other parties that have not joined the GNU. In the general elections on May 29, the ANC secured 159 out of the 400 seats in the

National Assembly, falling below the 50 percent needed to maintain its 30-year-old outright majority in the lower house of parliament for the first time. (Xinhua) 

Campaigns begin in Rwanda: Campaigning started Saturday in Rwanda ahead of next month's presidential and legislative

Three presidential candidates are in the race including incumbent President Paul Kagame of the ruling Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF), Frank Habineza of the opposition Democratic Green Party of Rwanda and Philippe Mpayimana, an independent candidate.

Kagame, who has been in power since 2000, launched his campaign in Musanze district, northern Province, where he told a huge rally that the RPF politics is about ensuring the development of all Rwandans without leaving anyone behind.

"Democracy is about personal choice of what you want and freedom of choice. In (a) democracy no one chooses for you, and that should be clear ...that choice depends on Rwanda's uniqueness," he said to applause from the crowd.

more will be achieved," Kagame told thousands of supporters dressed in party colors. The RPF candidate will address rallies at 19 campaign sites during the three-week

"We overcame a lot together, and so much

Asia

## 'North Korea resumed launches of balloons'

## SKorea lithium battery factory fire kills 22

SEOUL, South Korea, June 24, (AP): A fire likely sparked by exploding lithium batteries swept through a manufacturing factory near South Korea's capital on Monday, killing 22 mostly Chinese migrant workers and injuring eight, officials said.

The fire began after batteries exploded while workers were examining and packaging them at the second floor of the factory in Hwaseong city, just south of Seoul, at around 10:30 a.m., fire officials said, citing a witness. They said they would investigate the cause of the blaze.

#### **Briefing**

The dead included 18 Chinese, two South Koreans and one Laotian, local fire official Kim Jin-young told a televised briefing. He said the nationality of one of the dead couldn't be immedi-

In the past few decades, many people from China, including ethnic Koreans, have migrated to South Korea to seek jobs. Like other foreign migrants from Southeast Asian nations, they often end up in factories or in physically demanding and low-paying jobs shunned by more affluent South Koreans.

Kim also one factory worker remained out of contact and rescuers continued to search the site. He said that two of the eight injured were in serious conditions.

The fire started at one of the factory buildings owned by a company named Aricell. Kim said the victims likely failed to escape via stairs to the ground. He said that authorities will investigate whether there were fire extinguishing systems at the site and if they worked.

Kim said a total of 102 people were working at the factory before the fire occurred.

Prime Minister Han Duck-soo, the country's No. 2 official, and Interior and Safety Minister Lee Sang-min visited the site later Monday. Han asked officials to provide government assistance for funeral services and support programs for victims' relatives, according to Han's office.

TV footage also showed President Yoon Suk Yeol, wearing a safety helmet and a mask, visiting the site with other officials. Monday's blaze is one of the deadli-

est in South Korea in recent years. In 2020, a fire at a warehouse be-

ing built in Icheon city, south of

RPF's manifesto for the next five years

unveiled earlier this year will be to build on

campaign trail.

Thai FM to visit Cambodia

#### **Poland's President Duda visits China**

BEIJING, June 24, (Agencies): Poland's President Andrzej Duda is in China on a visit that brings the leader of a NATO member to a country that has backed Russia in its full-on invasion of Ukraine.

"I am trying to maintain friendly relations with China, Poland has always had decent relations with China and I would like that to be continued," Duda said in an inter-view on private Radio Zet on Fri-

day.

He was scheduled to meet with
Chinese leader Xi Jinping on Monday and has said peace in Ukraine will be discussed.

Asked if he believes that China is holding a key to peace in the Russia-Ukraine conflict, Duda said: "I think that to a large degree, yes."

the fighting, it has blamed NATO's expansion for provoking Russian President Vladimir Putin into launching the invasion and has maintained robust trade and diplomatic relations with Moscow. Poland borders Ukraine and has provided refuge for those fleeing the fighting and maintained a hard line against further expansion of Russian aggression. Duda said he will also talk to Xi

about Belarus exerting migration pressure on the border with Poland, as a form of hybrid war that also includes cyberattacks.

Duda will also seek a visa waiver for Poles traveling to China and will seek possibilities of increasing Poland's exports there, to balance their trade relations.

#### Also:

PHNOM PENH: Thai Foreign Minister Maris Sangiampongsa will pay an official visit to Cambodia on June 27, said a Cambodian foreign ministry's press statement on Mon-

During the visit, Maris Sangiam-Cambodian Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sok Chenda Sophea, discussing bilateral ties and regional cooperation. The senior Thai diplomat is also

scheduled to pay courtesy calls on Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet and Senate President Samdech Techo Hun Sen.

Seoul, killed 38 construction workers. In 2018, 46 people died after a fire ripped through a small hospital with no sprinkler systems in the southern city of Miryang. In 2008, 40 workers, 12 of them ethnic Koreans with Chinese nationality, died after a fire and accompanying explosions tore through a refrigerated warehouse in Icheon city.

South Korea has struggled for decades to improve safety standards and change widespread attitudes that treat safety as subservient to economic progress and convenience.

#### Also:

SEOUL. South Korea: North Korea resumed launches of balloons likely carrying trash toward South Korea on Monday night, South Korea's military said, in the latest round of a Cold Warstyle campaign on the Korean Peninsula.

The launches came days after North

at achieving sustainable development and

better quality of life for every Rwandan, ac-

cording to the party's chairperson.

Korean leader Kim Jong Un and Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a major defense deal that observers worry could embolden Kim to direct more provocations at South Korea. A statement from South Korea's

Joint Chiefs of Staff said the North

Korean balloons were moving south. It said earlier Monday that the military was closely monitoring North Korean moves because northerly or northwesterly winds, favorable for the balloon launches, were forecast. The statement asked South Korean

citizens not to touch North Korean balloons and report them to military and police authorities. The military didn't say how it would respond to new balloon launches. Starting in late May, North Ko-

rea launched a series of balloons that dropped manure, cigarette butts, scraps of cloth, waste batteries and vinyl in various parts of South Korea.

mocracy, following criticism about his long

stay in power. He won the last election in 2017 for a seven-year term with 98.63 per-

cent of the vote, according to official data.

seven-year third term in 2017. (Xinhua)

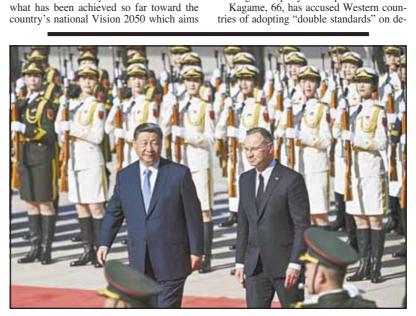
Kagame is seeking reelection following a 2015 constitutional amendment that allowed him to run for three more terms. The constitutional changes allowed Kagame to run for a

Aid worker charged: Authorities in the Central African Republic charged a European aid worker who was arrested last month with terrorism and undermining state secu-

rity, the public prosecutor's office said. Martin Joseph Figueira, a Belgian-Portuguese consultant for the American nongovernmental organization FHI360, has been accused of being in communication with armed groups to plot a coup, thereby jeopardizing national security.

On Friday, the prosecutor charged him with six crimes, including undermining the internal and external state security, as well as terrorism. If found guilty, he faces a sentence of forced labor for life.

Among Figueira's alleged crimes, the prosecutor's office listed "the existence of several contracts with the leaders of armed groups, supply of strategic information on the different positions of the Central African Armed Forces (FACA), money and weapons, being identified as an alleged employee of an American non-governmental organization carrying out research on Fulani herders." (AP)



Chinese President Xi Jinping, (left) and Poland's President Andrzej Duda review the honour guard during the welcome ceremony at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, on June 24. Duda is in China on a visit that brings the leader of a NATO member to a country that has backed Russia in its full-on invasion of Ukraine. (AP)

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# **Kuwait Airways reaps benefits** of new ticket pricing strategy

Airline ensures compliance with aviation regulations and market demands

**KUWAIT CITY, June 24:** The results of the travel ticket price processing committee formed by the **Board of Directors of Ku**wait Airways Company recently began to reap the fruits of its work, which appeared clearly on the ground through the positive results it achieved that led to reaching the desired goals in treating the previously applicable prices.

The decision of the Board of Directors of Kuwait Airways to form this committee came in implementation of the directives of the political leadership to harness all capabilities to serve our valued citizens and customers and give them broader options and opportunities to suit their aspirations.

In this regard, the Chairman of the Board of Directors, Captain Abdul Mohsen Salem Al-Faqaan, said that the signs of the committee's work began to be reflected on the ground by the company's executive management, as the travel ticket price processing committee accomplished what was required of it in a short period of time, which included many research procedures and examination of defects in Pricing processes and developing solutions that are in line with the company's available capabilities. Through it, it achieved positive results in line with market data, whether regionally or globally, indicating that the committee worked on developing several recommendations, the most important of which is changing the pricing policy and providing competitive prices in addition to providing different offers over several periods and ensuring that prices are available to the public, and finally changing the policy. Travel agent



Chairman of the Board, Captain Abdul Mohsen Salem Al-Fagaan

#### Al-Faqaan:

- Harnessing all capabilities to serve citizens and customers.
- Positive results from the ticket price processing
- committee. ■ Restructuring the pricing and revenue management sector through national
- competencies. Achieving balance in ticket prices to achieve profitability and customer satisfaction.

ticket prices, through gradual stages in the re-pricing process to ensure the correct and balanced workflow

Al-Fagaan stated that Kuwait Airways, through the committee, has been constantly restructuring the pricing and revenue management sector of the Networks and Lines Department and developing a dynamic, variable and advanced pricing policy by selecting national competencies and cadres with experience



Kuwait Airways' fleet aircraft.

in the national carrier and providing them with opportunities to develop a strategic plan in line with Market

He added, "Kuwait Airways has recently focused on developing reservations, pricing, and network planning systems in line with the latest systems in the world of aviation and the commercial air transport sector."

Al-Faqaan added, saying: "Kuwait Airways is keen to offer tickets in a way that suits the competitive market and according to the market share, with its full commitment to aviation regulations and procedures, especially in light of the tangible support that Kuwait Airways is witnessing from the General Administration of Civil Aviation, which has had a positive impact on Cooperation at various

Al-Faqaan pointed out that the prices of travel tickets in general vary from one season to another and based on the concepts of supply and demand, indicating that the company was keen to achieve balance in the sales process by reaching profitability and ensuring the continued preservation and satisfaction of valued customers, especially since Kuwait Airways is considered a category of companies. The airline is characterized by its luxury character due to the distinguished and exceptional services it provides to valued customers, in addition to its seat space, as well as its being the national carrier of the State of Kuwait, which makes the responsibility greater in providing the best services and keeping up with developments in the world of aviation. Including providing the best prices, whether by offering discounted prices or presenting offers on an ongoing basis through Kuwait Airways Holidays office, which offers distinct travel packages with the aim of ensuring access to the various segments of travelers on board Kuwait

It is worth noting that Kuwait Airways recently launched its new prices in addition to offers for travelers through its participation in one of the exhibitions specialized in tourism and travel, where the company achieved remarkable success through the arrival of a large number of exhibition visitors and benefiting from the offers presented by the Kuwait Airways Holidays Office, especially the launch of its latest campaign by offering... Price offers on various distinguished sum-

#### GCC growth forecast cut to 2.2%

## ICAEW report predicts slow recovery for Mideast in '24

KUWAIT CITY, June 24: The latest Economic Insight report for the Middle East, commissioned by ICAEW and compiled by Oxford Economics, predicts a slow recovery for the region in 2024 due to extended oil production curbs. The GCC growth forecast has been revised down to 2.2% from 2.7% three months ago, though non-energy sectors remain resilient, including in Bahrain and

The OPEC+ group's extension of voluntary output cuts through Q3 implies a delayed recovery in GCC energy sectors. GCC oil output will now shrink by 2.6% this year instead of the 1.3% expansion forecasted three months ago. Saudi Arabia, which is cutting production to the greatest extent, will see oil activities contract by 5% this year, down from a predicted growth of 0.7% three months ago. However, as voluntary production cuts are reversed in 2025, energy sectors will begin making positive contributions to GCC growth.

Qatar's GDP growth projection for this year stands at 2.2% and is expected to rise to 2.9% in 2025. In contrast, Bahrain's GDP growth is 3.1% this year, but is expected to slow to 1.4% in 2025.

Since Qatar is not involved in the OPEC+ production quotas, its gas sector is a priority, with authorities doubling down on the North Field gas expansion project, promising a positive mediumterm impact. Bahrain, on the other hand, continues to diversify its economy and reduce reliance on oil revenues. Last year its non-oil growth grew by 3.4%, accounting for nearly 84% of GDP.

High-frequency data paints a positive outlook for non-energy sectors across the GCC. In Saudi Arabia, investments are expected to flow into key sectors supporting giga-projects, including construction, manufacturing, and transpor-

Strong momentum in the sports and entertainment sector will also be seen as the country's transformation continues. The hospitality sector will likely follow, with tourism remaining key to Saudi's growth agenda. Tourism is a strategic sector in other countries too, and will remain a key growth driver. Tourism activity has rebounded strongly, with record visitor numbers across the GCC in 2023, extending into this year.

Non-oil economies will continue to grow despite the GCC's fiscal positions deteriorating. Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and Kuwait will likely see budget deficits this year and next as the current oil price level is below the fiscal breakeven point. However, the overall GCC budget position will likely remain in surplus, bolstered by strong financial standings and favourable credit ratings, allowing continued access to funding from capital markets and IPOs.

Hanadi Khalife, Head of Middle East, ICAEW, said: "While geopolitical risks present headwinds for the GCC and wider Middle East, we are encouraged by the ongoing commitment to diversification and sustainability targets. Qatar, for example, became the first GCC sovereign to issue green bonds despite not having explicit net-zero



Hanadi Khalife - Head of Middle



Scott Livermore - ICAEW Economic Advisor and Chief Economist and Managing Director at Oxford Eco-

targets.Bahrain is also aligning its non-oil economic growth with its Economic Vision 2030 and COP28 commitments to reduce carbon emissions by 30% by 2035.

Scott Livermore, ICAEW Economic Advisor, and Chief Economist and Managing Director, Oxford Economics Middle East, said: "Although the region faces escalating pressures amid slowing global economies, the GCC remains relatively positive due to strong bilateral deals and investment. Qatar recently signed a 20-year supply contract with India for 7.5 million tonnes of liquefied natural gas annually, and a 27-year contract with Taiwan for 4 million tonnes. "Bahrain has also seen significant investment growth following the launch of the Golden License initiative in April 2023, which requires a minimum investment of US\$50mn and the creation of at least 500 iobs. Bahrain's financial services sector contributed nearly 18% of GDP, surpassing oil, which contributed 16%.'

The GCC inflation forecast for 2024 has been lowered by 0.3 percentage points to 2.2% this year, with a further slowdown to 2.1% expected next year. Excluding housing rents in some countries, notably Saudi Arabia, inflationary pressures remain contained, with rates below 2% in all GCC countries except Kuwait and the UAE.

Given the exchange rate pegs against the US dollar, GCC central banks tend to track the US Federal Reserve's policy rates. The US Federal Reserve is expected to begin gradually cutting policy rates in September, totalling a 150bps reduction by the end of 2025.

## Banking sector supports real estate with KD 2 bln

CMA approves treasury share transactions for listed companies

**Kuwaiti Competition Authority reviews** 

economic concentration applications

## Kuwait real estate contracts reach KD 126.29 mln in June

ports Al-Seyassah daily. According to a post on the social networking site "X" by the agency, the following applications were re-■ Domo Toico SRL (Milan) and

KUWAIT CITY, June 24: The Ku-

waiti Competition Protection Au-

thority has announced the receipt of

three applications for completing the

economic concentration process, re-

Kiko S.p.A. (Bergamo Joint Stock Company) have applied for Domo Toico SRL to acquire 70% of Kiko S.p.A.'s shares. ■ Richemont Italia Holding

applied for Richemont Italia Holding S.P.A. to acquire 100% of Vernier S.p.A. Italia's capital. ■ Duet Political Middle Pedic

S.P.A. and Vernier S.p.A. Italia have

(France) has applied to acquire 51% of Nasco France's capital.

It's worth noting that Law No. 72 of 2020 defines economic concentration operations as a significant change in control over the relevant

Meanwhile, the Al-Jarida daily said, the CMA has approved requests from 69 listed companies to activate their rights to buy and sell treasury shares since the beginning of the year. This represents 47.5% of the total 145 listed companies. These approvals allow companies to engage in transactions involving their treasury shares after meeting all regulatory conditions.

Treasury shares serve several strategic purposes for companies. They can be utilized to settle debts, facilitate swap operations during KUWAIT CITY, June 24: From ■ 80 contracts for private real es-June 9 to June 13, 2024, the total valtate with a total value of 37.72 milue of real estate contracts registered lion dinars.

■ 36 contracts for investment properties amounting to 64.72 million dinars.

■ 4 contracts for commercial properties valued at 23.85 million

Notably, there were no registrations for industrial properties, coastal strips, craftsmen areas, or exhibitions during this specific period.

In another sector-related develop-

ment, the banking sector significantly supported real estate entities with total facilities amounting to approximately two billion dinars during the first four months of 2024. This figure represents 25% of the total banking facilities extended during the same period, which amounted to 8.2 billion dinars.

These figures reflect the ongoing activity and investment within Kuwait's real estate market, supported by both private transactions and substantial financial backing from the banking sector.

acquisitions, and even be allocated to employees through stock option programs.

with the Kuwaiti Ministry of Justice

amounted to approximately 126.29

million dinars, reports Al-Seyassah

According to statistics from the Real

Estate Registration and Documentation

Department, a total of 120 contracts

were recorded across the six governo-

The breakdown of the contracts

rates of Kuwait during this period.

Additionally, companies use treasury shares to stabilize their stock prices in the market, reduce capital by cancelling shares, issue bonus shares, and enhance earnings per share by decreasing the number of outstanding shares.

Companies may seek approval to buy back or sell up to 10% of their shares, often to address liquidity issues or for financial restructuring. Some companies collaborate with market makers licensed as investment firms to maintain liquidity and balance demand for their shares by lending treasury shares.

Furthermore, companies have leveraged treasury shares to distribute profits to shareholders, converting them into cash through sales operations. However, regulations prohibit trading in treasury shares during financial statement disclosure periods, ensuring transparency and preventing market manipulation.

The CMA has recently expanded

the permissible uses of treasury shares, including options such as offsetting losses, reducing capital, and distributing profits. Official approvals for dealing in treasury shares are valid for six months, and companies are required to report all transactions annually to the Authority.

In conclusion, treasury shares play a pivotal role in corporate finance strategies, offering companies flexibility in capital management, shareholder relations, and strategic financial operations under regulatory

## KIPIC faces delays in Al-Zour Petrochemical Complex upgrade tender

KUWAIT CITY, June 24: The Kuwait Integrated Petroleum Industries Company (KIPIC) has encountered delays in its plans to float a tender for a detailed feasibility study concerning the upgrade of the Al-Zour Integrated Petrochemical Complex, reports Al-Qabas daily.

Originally scheduled for April as per the company's annual plan, the tender has yet to be floated, according to MEED sources.

The feasibility study, anticipated to span one year and be contracted on a lump sum basis, holds strategic significance. It aims to assess optimal methods for converting low-sulfur fuel oil (LSFO) from the refinery into higher-value petrochemical products. Concurrently, it seeks to ensure sufficient production of LSFO for the Ministry of Electricity and Water, which utilizes it as fuel for power generation.

KIPIC's annual plan underscores the study's alignment with strategic goals to enhance domestic refining capacity to 1.6 million barrels per day by 2025, emphasizing maximum conversion capabilities and efficient use of domestic heavy oil. The overarching objective is to meet local energy demands and integrate refining and petrochemical operations within

However, challenges persist with the broader Al-Zour petrochemical complex project, valued at \$10 billion, which is intended to complement the \$16 billion Al-Zour refinery. Significant delays have plagued these ventures in recent years, compounded by uncertainties surrounding final

investment decisions and project timelines. Moreover, Kuwait's ongoing efforts to secure funding for the Al-Zour project underscore persistent hurdles in advancing these critical infrastructure initiatives. The delays raise concerns about potential further setbacks and the possibility of reevaluating the entire project scope before progressing to tendering major contracts.

KIPIC aims to enhance its refining and petrochemical capabilities through strategic studies and infrastructure expansions but challenges in project execution and funding continue to pose significant obstacles to achieving these objectives within anticipated timelines.

#### Central Bank of Kuwait bonds

The Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) announced the most recent issues of CBK Bonds

KUWAIT CITY, June 24: and related Tawarruq at a total value of KWD (240) millions for (3) months with Rate of Return (4.375%).

#### **Strategic European expansion**

#### Kuwait Petroleum International's role in sustainable aviation fuel

#### By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 24: The Kuwait Petroleum International (Q8) CEO is set to inaugurate two clean energy projects in Italy on June 26

This move is part of Kuwait Petroleum International's ongoing expansion of investments in Italy, following their recent agreement to acquire a 50% stake in Ecofox, an Italian company specializing in organic fuels manufacturing.

Kuwait Petroleum International already owns over 2,800 fuel stations across Italy and holds a 50%

stake in the Milazzo refinery. Their footprint extends across Europe with more than 4,700 fuel stations and significant involvement in supplying aircraft fuel globally, servicing over 70 airports worldwide. The sources also revealed that

Kuwait Petroleum International completed its first blending process for Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) at its import station in Le Havre, France, by the end of 2023. SAF is noted for its role in substantially reducing carbon dioxide emissions throughout its lifecycle, up to 90% compared to traditional jet fuel.

Looking ahead, the company aims to establish blending facilities in key aviation fuel markets to further support the industry's goals of achieving carbon neutrality by 2050.

This initiative underscores Kuwait Petroleum International's commitment to advancing sustainable energy solutions and its strategic expansion in the European market.

## Currencies play big role in global economic dynamics: MEC report

KD benefits from stable economy

KUWAIT CITY, June 24: The recent report from Middle East Economy (MEC) highlights the importance of currencies in global economic dynamics, emphasizing how strong currencies reflect stability and growth prospects while currency depreciation can lead to economic instability and reduced expectations, reports Al-Qabas

The report evaluates several of the strongest global currencies relative to the US dollar, a benchmark for global trade:

Kuwaiti Dinar (1 dinar=3.25 dollars) -- Known for its stability and strong value, the Kuwaiti dinar benefits from a stable economy driven by significant oil exports. Its fixed exchange rate and stringent monetary policies by the Central Bank of Kuwait contribute to its resilience against market risks, attracting foreign investment.

Bahraini Dinar (1 dinar=2.65 dollars) -- Used exclusively in Bahrain, the Bahraini dinar is pegged to the US dollar and supported by oil exports. Foreign presence further bolsters its position as one of the strongest currencies globally.

Ômani Riyal (1 riyal=2.59 dollars) -- The Omani Riyal derives strength from its oil and gas exports, positioning it among the strongest currencies worldwide.

Jordanian Dinar (1 dinar=1.41 dollars) -- Despite lacking significant oil exports, Jordan's diversified economy supports a stable exchange rate for the Jordanian dinar against the US dollar.

British Pound Sterling (1 pound=1.26 dollars) -- Fueled by robust commercial activities and London's status as a financial hub, the British pound remains resilient despite recent fluctuations, retaining its global trading prominence.

Gibraltar Pound (1 pound=1.26 dollars) -- Linked to the pound sterling, the Gibraltar pound benefits from Gibraltar's status as a financial center and tourist destination.

Cayman Islands Dollar (1 Cayman Islands dollar=1.21 dollars) -- As a major international financial center, the Cayman Islands dollar is recognized for its stability and strength.

Swiss Franc (1 franc=1.12 dollars) -- Considered a safe haven currency, the Swiss franc's strength is bolstered by Switzerland's wealth, political stability, and global financial

Euro (1 euro=1.06 dollars) -- The Euro, utilized across the European Union, is a significant reserve currency despite facing challenges that impact its valuation.

US Dollar: Although widely circulated and a major reserve currency globally, the US dollar ranks lower due to factors like low interest rates, trade imbalances, and higher inflation rates compared to other strong currencies.

Each currency's ranking underscores its economic underpinnings, geopolitical significance, and role in global trade and finance, reflecting varying influences and strategic positions in the international financial landscape.

#### 2nd co to do so in past year

#### EV maker Fisker files for 'bankruptcy protection'

DOVER, Delaware, June 24, (AP): Electric vehicle maker Fisker filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection, the second electric startup to do so in the last year as even industry leaders struggle to lure more buyers beyond the early adapters of the technology.

Fisker Group Inc. said in a filing with the U.S. Bankruptcy Court in Delaware that its estimated assets are between \$500 million and \$1 billion. It estimated liabilities are between \$100 million and \$500 million, with between 200 and 999

"Like other companies in the electric vehicle industry, we have faced various market and macroeconomic headwinds that have impacted our ability to operate efficiently," the company said in a prepared statement late Monday. "After evaluating all options for our business, we determined that proceeding with a sale of our assets under Chapter 11 is the most viable path forward for the company.'

The 7-year-old electric car company was founded by designer Henrik Fisker, who has been its chairman and CEO. He designed the company's 2022 Ocean all electric SUV as well as the luxury plug-in hybrid Karma that was launched in 2011. Fisker is also known for leading the development of the BMW Z8 sports car. It is the second automotive venture led by Henrik Fisker to fail.

Fisker, based in Manhattan Beach, California, and other startups like Lordstown Motors Corp., sought to take on industry leaders like Tesla, and big automakers in Detroit, which have entered the market aggressively.

However, EV sales have slowed as manufacturers have attempted to push electric vehicles into the mainstream. Those sales have been curbed both by a lack of infrastructure, as well as rising inflation that have made taking on car loans more expensive.

Electric vehicles grew only 3.3% to nearly 270,000 during the first three months of this year, far below the 47% growth that fueled record sales and a 7.6% market share last year, according to J.D. Power. The slowdown, led by Tesla, confirms automakers' fears that they moved too quickly to pursue EV buyers. The EV share of total U.S. sales fell to 7.15% in the first quarter.

That has led to huge price cuts and job cuts at leading companies like Tesla.

Another electric startup, Rivian, said this year that it was pausing construction of its \$5 billion manufacturing plant in Georgia to speed production and save money

Lordstown sought bankruptcy protection last summer, as it dealt with funding difficulties.

## **German economy slowly** 'emerging' from crisis

BERLIN, June 24, (Xinhua): Germany's economy is expected to grow by 0.4 percent in 2024, from the previously predicted 0.2 percent, according to the ifo Institute for Economic Research on Thursday. Europe's largest economy was "slowly working its way out of the crisis," said Timo Wollmershaeuser, deputy director of the ifo Center for Macroeconomics and Surveys, in a statement.

Although companies' assessment of the current economic situation remains poor, expectations for the coming months have increased in all sectors, according to ifo. Additionally, energy costs for industry have continued their downward trend and are now at 2020 levels.

According to official figures by the Federal Statistical Office (Destatis). This development was driven by price declines of over 10 percent for natural gas and electricity. The lower energy costs are making production in Ger-

many more profitable again, allowing companies to work off high order backlogs, ifo reported. At the same time, energyintensive industries can expand output again. With a predicted 1.5 percent growth in global trade, ifo

expects Germany's export industry to bolster the country's economy this year, while export and investment demand in Europe are not likely to pick up before the end of the year. Germany's weakening construction industry, on the other

hand, is likely to continue its downward trend "and suffer a

strong setback," the institute noted. Germany's housing crisis persists, with building permits for apartments declining steadily in recent years. In April, only 17,600 apartments were granted permits, down 17 percent year-on-year, according to official figures.

This announcement is prepared for promotional purposes and does not omit any essential information related to the investment in the financial security subject of this announcement.

## Invitation to participate in the capital increase of **Arabi Group Holding Company K.P.S.C**



The Board of Directors of Arabi Group Holding Company K.P.S.C (the "Issuer") would like to invite the shareholders who are registered on the share register of the Issuer at the end of trading on June 27, 2024 ("Record Date") and the holders of the Pre-emption Right who received the Preemption Right ("Pre-emption Right") during the subscription period to subscribe in the increase of the Issuer's share capital by 172,962,242 ordinary shares ("Issue Shares") with a nominal value of KWD 17,296,224.200 at an Issue Price of 210 fils per Issue Share (including the nominal value and the issuance premium) during the Offering Period commencing June 30, 2024 (inclusive) and closing on July 21, 2024 (inclusive until 1 PM) according to the following terms:

#### Overview of the Offering:

Arabi Group Holding Company K.P.S.C

**Commercial Registration Number:** 

Total Value of the Offering:

#### Offering Price:

KWD 36,322,070.820

210 fils per share (including the nominal value of 100 fils and the issuance premium of 110 fils)

#### Eligible Shareholder:

Eligible shareholders are the holders of Pre-emption Right whose names are in the register of shareholders of the Issuer with the register holder Kuwait Clearing Company K.S.C.C. at the close of trading on Boursa Kuwait on the Record Date of June 27, 2024, or those who obtained Pre-emption Right, whether by trading or waiver during the Pre-emption Right trading period.

For clarification, any trading in the Issuer's shares before the Record Date which is not fully settled at Boursa Kuwait by the Record Date and thus not recorded in the Issuer's shareholder register will not be considered in determining the eligible shareholders listed in Issuer's shareholder register on the Record Date.

Eligible shareholders, new shareholders, or others.

#### **Entitled Shares:**

Eligible shareholders and those holding Pre-emption Right are allocated Issue Shares in proportion to their shareholding in the Issuer as of the Record

#### Minimum Subscription:

**Issuance Manager & Subscription Agent:** Ahli Capital Investment Company K.S.C.C (ABK Capital)

#### Clearing and Depository Agent: Kuwait Clearing Company K.S.C.C.

**Subscription for Additional Issue Shares:** 

Remaining unsubscribed Issue Shares, if any, shall be allocated to the subscribers who have requested an additional number of Issue Shares than the number allotted to them, on the basis of the ratio of the number of additional shares remaining to the number of additional shares that the subscribers requested to subscribe to and distributed proportionately among them

#### Offering Period:

The Offering Period will commence on June 30, 2024 (inclusive) and ends on July 21, 2024 (inclusive until 1 PM).

#### Pre-Emption Rights Trading Period:

Commences on June 30, 2024 (inclusive) and ends on July 14, 2024 (inclusive).

#### Pre-Emption Rights ISIN Code: KW0000160158

Risk Factors There are some risks related to investing in the Issue Shares, such as Economic Risks - Risks related to the outbreak of COVID-19 - Risks relating to the Issuer - Risks the Issuer is exposed to associated with expansion into new markets, start-up or early stage businesses and acquisition of new companies and businesses - Risks associated with the foreign exchange rate - Risk of financial market disruptions -Risk of not sustaining Issuer's historic level of growth which could impact its profitability - Competition from global competitors - Risks stemming from legal and regulatory systems creating an uncertain environment for investment and business activities - Risks related to Kuwait and the Middle East and North Africa region - Risks related to changes in significant accounting standards and new standards - Risks associated with the loss of Issuer's key personnel - Operational Risk - Cyber Security Risk - Reputational Risk - Regulatory risks related to the Issuer - Risk of Bankruptcy - Force Majeure - Risk of investing in securities in developing and emerging markets - Risks related to suitability of Investment - Risks related to liquidity and volatility in the share price - Risks related to profit distributions - Risks of a reduction in the current ownership percentage - Risks of unprofitability or not exercising Preemption Right - Risks of insufficient demand for Pre-emption Right or the Issuer's shares, or withholding from subscribing - Risks of speculation in Pre-emption Right - Risk of taxation on payments of Issue Shares - Risk of introduction of Corporate Income Tax and Value Added Tax - Risk of Law Change - Risk of application of the Kuwaiti income tax regime on stock dividends - Risk of the GCC countries forming a monetary union.

#### Subscription Instructions

Cash subscription amounts will not be accepted. Subscription amounts must be paid in full to the Clearing and Depository Agent, depending on the method of subscription, via K-NET or Bank Transfer (as a net amount without charges by both the transferring and receiving banks) to the Issuer's account that is designated for subscription (without any interest), based on the following:

- 1. Login to the Subscription Platform via the link: https://www.ipo.com.kw or through the IPO Kuwait mobile
- In the event the Subscriber is an individual, he/she shall enter the civil identification number. The system shall then verify whether the Subscriber is eligible for Subscription or not.
- In the event the Subscriber is a legal entity or a company, the Subscriber shall enter the commercial registration number. The system shall then verify whether the Subscriber is eligible for Subscription or not.
- Record the number of shares to be subscribed for.
- The Subscriber must make the payment through either K-NET service or Bank wire transfer as follows:

#### For Subscribers paying through K-NET service, the Subscriber shall:

Pay from their own account (no other person may pay on behalf of the Subscriber except in the cases provided

Subscribers are advised to confirm with their bank that their payment limit on their K-NET card will enable them to pay for their subscription.

#### For Subscribers paying through Bank wire transfer, the Subscriber shall:

: ABK CAPITAL ARABI SUBSCRIPTION ACCOUNT

Print the Subscription Application Form and visit their own bank and submit a copy of the Subscription Application Form printed from the above link and transfer the amount required to the Subscription Bank Account (net amount without any charges by the transferring bank and the receiving Bank) stated below:

: AL AHLI BANK OF KUWAIT - Head Office Branch Name of Bank

: 9000148600011

Account number

: KW74ABKK0000000009000148600011 **IBAN** : ABKKKWKWXXX **SWIFT** 

Beneficiary Reference/

Description

: Shareholder civil identification (for Citizens and Residents)/ passport (for nonresidents and non-citizens)/ commercial registration number (for corporates) + subscriber contact number

The Subscriber shall upload the copy of the original deposit voucher of the amount transferred from his/her own bank in addition to the documents listed in item "Documents required to be submitted with applications to subscribe" stated in the Prospectus relating to the Offering through the electronic link that will be sent from the Subscription Website to the Subscriber via his/her e-mail and a text message sent to the registered phone.

The Clearing and Depository Agent shall send an email confirmation to the Subscriber in case of a successful Subscription.

Failure of any Subscriber to submit a duly completed Subscription Application Form (together with all applicable supporting documentation thereto) to the Subscription Platform, after the transfer or deposit of the subscription monies as required in the Prospectus relating to the Offering, shall render the Subscription Application Form of a Subscriber null and void. Subscription monies shall not be accepted in cash.

#### Documents required to be submitted with applications to subscribe :

The Subscription Application Form must be submitted through the Subscription Website along with the following documentation, as applicable to the nature of and payment method chosen by the Subscriber:

#### a) Individual Subscribers

- Signed Subscription Application Form
- Copy of personal civil identification card
- Copy of passport to verify the signature
- Copy of the bank transfer receipt
- Copy of the IBAN number Copy of special legal proxy for subscribing in shares (for proxy subscriber)
- Copy of certificate of guardianship for orphans
- Copy of certificate of guardianship for minors
- Copy of a succession/inheritance deed for beneficiaries
- Copy of guardianship court order

#### b) Corporate Subscribers

- Signed Subscription Application Form
- Copy of the bank transfer receipt Copy of the IBAN number
- Copy of the Authorized Signatories Certificate or the Extract of the Commercial Register; as the case requires
- Copy of the personal identification card of the authorized signatory Non-Kuwaiti Subscribers

Non-Kuwaiti Subscribers (whether corporates or individuals, as the case may be) are required to provide the equivalent of the aforementioned documentation as issued by their jurisdictional authorities if they do not have Kuwaiti issued documentation.

#### **Subscription Information**

The necessary information regarding the investment in the Issue Shares is included in the Prospectus.

For further details on the subscription and any risk factors, please refer to the downloadable/printable version of the Prospectus relating to the offering on the Issuer's website (www.arabigroup.com), Issuance Manager & Subscription Agent's website (www.abk-capital.com), Subscription Platform (www.ipo.com.kw), or Boursa Kuwait's website (www.boursakuwait.com.kw)

The terms and conditions in the Prospectus and the Subscription Application Form shall apply. You are hereby advised to seek the advice of an advisor licensed by law and which specializes in advising on the subscription prior to making a decision to subscribe.

Prior to investing in any Issue Shares, prospective investors should carefully consider all other information contained in the Prospectus relating to the Offering including all risk factors, and seek professional advice before investing. For further details on the risk factors, please refer to the Prospectus relating to the Offering found on the websites mentioned in this announcement. This announcement does not contain all the information that prospective investors should consider before deciding to invest in the Issue Shares and does not purport to be complete. The Capital Markets Authority and all other Regulatory Bodies in Kuwait assume no responsibility whatsoever

for the contents and accuracy of this announcement or any damages resulting from relying on any part of this

Issuance Manager & Subscription Agent Ahli Capital Investment Company K.S.C.C



For Inquiries, please contact: Call Center: +965 1 832 832 Email: ABKC\_MO@abkuwait.com

In the event of any discrepancy between the Arabic and English announcements, the Arabic version prevails.

#### **Intensive 6-month bootcamp for new grads**

## Kuwait Finance House concludes Forssah training program for employees

KUWAIT CITY, June 24: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) successfully concluded its Forssah program, designed to attract and develop highachieving Kuwaiti graduates. The program equips participants with the technical and practical skills they need through its specialized tracks in Forssah Tech and Forssah Business.

KFH's Executive Management attended the closing and honoring ceremony, including Group Chief Human Resources and Transformation Officer, Zeyad Abdullah AlOmar and Group Chief Technology, Digital Transformation and PMO Officer, Haytham Alterkait. Other KFH officials were also present.

Through a collaboration with CODED Academy, EMERITUS Training, and KTech Institute for Private Training, 39 KFH employees participated in the Forssah program this year. The rigorous six-month program included a combination of theoretical and practical workshops and training, designed to develop the employees' technical and business skills to make them well-rounded professionals.

Group Chief Human Resources and Transformation Officer, Zeyad AlOmar, emphasized KFH's wealth of expertise across various fields and its commitment to supporting and developing its talented employees at all levels. He highlighted the Forssah program as a key initiative with significant potential to positively impact participants.

"We were committed to ensuring the program incorporated the latest information technology and its applications in banking, reflecting KFH's position as a world-leading





Zeyad Abdullah AlOmar, Haytham Alterkait, and officials from CODED in honoring graduates.

Islamic financial institution. This strengthens trainee capabilities while enhancing the bank's performance, allowing us to maintain KFH's leadership locally and globally," AlOmar added.

He emphasized the significant contribution of the Forssah program, launched by KFH in 2009. This program, featuring comprehensive training programs, has fostered the development of a highly

skilled generation of employees. Furthermore, Forssah undergoes continuous development to keep pace with the latest industry re-

FORSSAH

quirements, solidifying its position as an exemplary training path. AlOmar expressed his confidence that KFH's investment in these training programs will yield significant benefits in the future.

Group Chief Technology, Digital Transformation and PMO Officer, Haytham Alterkait, emphasized KFH's commitment to continuous employee training and development. This comprehensive approach aims to enhance employee expertise, contribute to both individual and organizational growth, and ultimately deliver exceptional customer service. He further highlighted that these programs foster creativity, cultivate future leaders, and equip them to navigate the evolving landscape of the times and labor market, ensuring KFH's continued leadership.

Alterkait stressed the importance of empowering employees. He emphasized providing them with the necessary technological tools and motivating them to innovate and share their creative ideas. This is especially crucial in today's era of rapid change and development, driven by advanced technology, digitization, artificial intelligence, machine learning, cybersecurity, cloud computing, data, and more.

Alterkait emphasized the importance of KFH's employee training and development for enhancing customer experience. He explained that by equipping employees with the latest skills. KFH can innovate services that streamline customer interactions. This is especially crucial in today's fast-paced environment, where ensuring a safe and high-quality customer experience requires continuous im-

#### 'Bank serves as role model in delivering social responsibility through constant contributions'

## NBK's initiative fulfills young cancer patient's architectural dreams

KUWAIT CITY, June 24: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) always seeks to bring a smile to the faces of children with cancer, by supporting them and realizing their dreams through its 'I Dream to Be' initiative, which has been ongoing for 12 years.

In this context, the bank granted the wish of Joud Al Merai, a 12-years old girl, who is undergoing treatment at NBK Children's Hospital, to become an architect and décor professional, as she has a sense of creativity and is fond of design since an early age.

To this end, NBK's team took child Joud on a tour in KAYAN Architects, in coordination with company's owner, Bashar Al Salem, for designing sketches, interacting and teaching her some tips and techniques. Following that, NBK's team accompanied Joud to Hassan Abul's Showroom where she picked and designed a whole space including carpets, sofas, curtains, chairs and lamps. She also got the chance to design her dream home with architects on the computer as she picked several materials to be used in it.

The 'I Dream to Be' initiative aligns with NBK's commitment to deliver its social responsibility through unwavering contributions bolstering its position as the leading bank in social responsibility in Kuwait, especially in chil-

dren's healthcare. On this occasion, Joanne Al Abdul Jaleel, NBK Public Relations Manager at National Bank of Kuwait said, "At NBK, we take pride in the 'I Dream to Be' initiative, which has fulfilled the dreams of many children and given them hope, and every time we fulfill a



NBK grants Joud's wish to be an architect and décor professional.

children's dream, we feel proud of this initiative that brings a smile to the faces of children and their families.

"NBK's social contribution is not limited to financial support, but also addressing children's psychological and moral needs to help them through these difficult times, as the bank makes its utmost endeavors to grant children's wishes, bring joy to their hearts, enhance their vision for the future, and give them happiness and hope for a bright tomorrow, she noted.

"NBK serves as a role model in de-

livering social responsibility through constant contributions on all levels, especially healthcare services, and the activities and initiatives to develop the healthcare system in NBK Children's

Hospital," she emphasized. 'Seeing children recover and the joy on the faces of their families encourages us to do our utmost endeavors to further advance the 'I Dream to Be' initiative. NBK also continues to support the hospital by developing all units and providing comprehensive care that transcends treatment services by organizing a variety of entertainment activities that bring joy and happiness to children and their families," she mentioned

NBK stands out with a rich record of various pioneering humanitarian and social initiatives, showing unwavering dedication to extending all sorts of support to children. Additionally, it continuously organizes many visits to childcare institutions to foster a culture of community service and raise awareness of social responsibility, underscoring a deeply rooted approach which it always seeks to promote.

# Yellen announces \$100m fund for affordable housing efforts

Housing costs surge amidst supply shortages

WASHINGTON, June 24 (AP): The Biden administration is announcing new steps to increase access to affordable housing as still-high prices on groceries and other necessities and high interest rates have dramatically pushed up the cost of living in the post-pandemic years.

Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen will promote the new investments on Monday during a visit to Minneapolis. The investments include providing \$100 million through a new fund over the next three years to support affordable housing financing, boosting the Federal Financing Bank's financing of affordable housing and other meas-

The increased attention to home prices comes as the housing crunch becomes an increasing issue in this year's general election campaign.

"We face a very significant housing supply short-fall that has been building for a long time," Yellen says in remarks prepared for delivery Monday afternoon. "This supply crunch has led to an affordability crunch.'

Yellen says the Democratic administration is "pursuing a broad affordability agenda to address the price pressures that families have been feeling.'

Both homebuyers and renters are facing increasing housing costs that skyrocketed after the pandemic. According to the Case-Shiller 20-City Composite Home Price Index, home prices increased by 46% between March 2020 and March 2024. A new Treasury analysis shows that over the past two decades, housing costs have been rising faster than

Meanwhile, sales of previously occupied U.S. homes fell in May for the third straight month as rising mortgage rates and record-high prices discouraged many prospective homebuyers during what's traditionally the housing market's busiest period of the year.

For low-income Americans, statistics from the National Low Income Housing Coalition show that nationally there is a shortage of more than 7 million affordable homes for the more than 10.8 million extremely low-income U.S. families. And there is no state or county in the country where a renter working full-time at minimum wage can afford a twobedroom apartment, according to the group.

It is becoming a crisis in some cities. For instance, on Martha's Vineyard in Massachusetts the cost of housing has become a public safety issue as it becomes difficult to attract and retain correctional officers and 911 dispatchers.

President Biden and presumptive GOP nominee Donald Trump have put forward a variety of proposals on how to make life more affordable for average Americans, from Trump proposing to make tips tax-free for workers and Biden pursuing a plan to cut student loan payments for borrowers. A representative from the Trump campaign did not respond to an Associated Press request for comment.

But increased housing costs have some economists predicting the crunch may not end until the Federal Reserve lowers its key interest rate, which remains at 5.3%.

Sal Guatieri, a senior economist at BMO Capital Markets Economic Research, wrote Friday that little change is expected in the housing market "until the Fed reduces policy rates.' Diane Yentel, president and CEO of the National

Low Income Housing Coalition, said the White House has made efforts to prevent evictions and address the housing crisis, "but there is much more work still to be done.' Yentel said congressional action is needed to

"quickly enact transformative and badly needed housing investments. Only through a combination of administrative action and robust federal funding can the country truly resolve its affordable housing

In her speech, Yellen is to call on Congress to pass Biden's proposed budget, released in March.

The budget calls on Congress to provide a tax credit for first-time homebuyers and includes a plan to build more than 2 million homes. It would expand the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit.

The Biden administration has taken other steps to boost the housing supply, including launching a multi-agency effort to encourage states and cities to convert more empty office buildings into housing units, with billions of federal dollars available to help spur such transitions.

În July 2023, the Department of Housing and Urban Development provided communities with \$85 million to reduce barriers to affordable housing, such as zoning restrictions that in some places have become a hurdle to increasing the supply and density of affordable housing.

#### **Kuwait tops Bahrain's inward FDI stocks**

## Bahrain attracts record FDI inflows of \$6.8 billion in '23

MANAMA, June 24: The island nation of Bahrain has secured a record-breaking USD 6.8 billion in Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows in 2023, according to the latest World Investment Report (WIR 2024) by the United Nations Conference of Trade and Development (UNCTAD). The figure tops the previous record set in 2 marking a mammoth increase of 148%. This contributed to the growth of cumulative inward FDI stocks, which climbed from USD 36.2 billion in 2022 to USD 43.1 billion.

Marking one of the highest ratios in the world, Bahrain's FDI stocks relative to GDP stood at 99.7% as of the end of 2023, a figure significantly higher than the global average of 46.9%. According to Bahrain's Information & eGovernment Authority, the top countries contributing to Bahrain's FDI stocks as part of a diverse portfolio include Kuwait (36%), Saudi Arabia (23%) and the United Arab Emirates (10%).

H.E. Noor bint Ali Alkhulaif, Minister Sustainable Development and Chief Executive Bahrain Economic Development Board (Bahrain EDB) said:"The milestone FDI inflows attracted in 2023 reflects the strength of Bahrain's value proposition and continued standing as a trusted destination of choice for regional and global investors seeking best value operating costs in a strategic location that serves as an ideal gateway to the region and beyond.

The island nation continues to cement its reputation as an attractive hub for investments, where the government continues to prioritise the ongoing development of forward-looking regulatory frameworks alongside the implementation of strategic economic plans to encourage economic growth and

diversification. Bahrain's nominal GDP increased from around USD 11billion in 2003 to over USD 43 billion in 2023, marking an average annual growth of 7%, surpassing the global average of 5%. In addition to securing healthy economic growth, Bahrain's economy also diversified, the financial services sector overtook the oil sector as the highest contributor to real GDP standing at 17.8% in 2023, marking a milestone achievement.

The Minister of Sustainable Development and Chief Executive of Bahrain EDB added, "Backed by an agile government, highly skilled bi-lingual talent pool, and financially liberal environment, Bahrain has proven itself as a leading investment destination enabling leading companies to benefit from a business-friendly environment. At Bahrain EDB, we continue to tactically work towards attracting increased investments from priority markets, supported by Team Bahrain, in the interest of sustaining economic growth and diversifi-

Attracting a total of USD 2.4 billion in investments from 9 major projects and set to generate 3,000 job opportunities, the Golden License has been a pivotal initiative launched in Bahrain in April 2023, which has successencouraged increased regional and international investments. Spanning across various sectors, the latest projects awarded a Golden License in2024 include Bahrain Titanium, the first facility of its kind in the region set to be established by Interlink Metals & Chemicals, the construction of the first greenfield head office of National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) outside of Kuwait, the development of a data centre facility and international submarine cable by Beyon, and the development Bahrain Marina.



Bahrain Bay Skyline

The young pianist told Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) of her overwhelming joy for representing Geneva's Conservatoire alongside her peers, as the institute is the oldest in Switzerland and one

Behbehani answered a question on the musical pieces that have influenced her saying that she has been moved by the work of Mozart, Beethoven, Haydn and other classical music geniuses.

She spoke to KUNA of her recent visit to Mozart's home turned museum, where she also attended a concert, and voiced her hope for a chance to play at Vienna or Salzburg's Opera

The 15-year-old Rawan discovered her passion for classical music at the ripe age of six, and despite her youthful career, she has already been awarded 13 international prizes.

She performed with an orchestra for four times, including a per-



KUNA photo Young Kuwaiti pianist Rawan Behbehani with her Russian composer instructor.

formance in Kuwait with Prague's philharmonic orchestra at the age of 10, a performance in Geneva at 12, and on Omani women day at the local opera house in 2022.

Upon realizing her talents, Rawan's family made sure to create the proper environment to cultivate her gift. About five years ago, the family moved to Switzerland for Rawan to pursue her passion in a place where classical music thrives.

**BEIJING:** The Beijing Youth Orchestra, a new ensemble featuring student musicians, is expected to perform at Carnegie Hall, a prestigious concert venue in the **United States**, in August.

The orchestra, jointly curated by China's National Center for the Performing Arts (NCPA) and the Beijing Municipal Education Commission, comprises 131 musicians from the Central Conservatory of Music and two middle schools in Beijing.

At the invitation of Carnegie Hall, the ensemble, along with six other youth orchestras from across the world, will participate in World Orchestra Week, presenting New York audiences with both Western and Chinese orchestral works, according to an NCPA

The young musicians will also engage in a series of exchange activities during their stay in the United States, the statement noted.

The year 2024 marks the 45th anniversary of the establishment of China-U.S. diplomatic relations. The trip by the young musicians represents an effort by the NCPA to promote cultural exchanges between the two countries.

#### **Variety**



This image released by Focus Features shows Jodie Comer (left) and Austin Butler in a scene from 'The Bikeriders.' (AP)

#### Film

'Bikeriders' explores birth of subculture

The Pixar sequel collected \$100 weekend, according to studio estimates Sunday, setting a new follow-up frame in theaters. The

have had better second weekends. In just a week and a half, "Inside Out 2," starring **Amy Poehler** as Joy, Maya Hawke as Anxiety and Lewis Black as Anger has become 2024's highest-grossing film to date with \$724.4 million globally, including \$355.2 million in **US** and Canadian theaters. That passes the \$711.8 million worldwide total of "Dune: Part Two." "Inside Out 2" will likely blow through the \$1 billion mark in about a week, which

The record haul for "Inside Out 2," though, recalled past years when \$1 billion grosses were more commonplace for the Walt Disney Co. It is also a much-needed blockbuster for Pixar, which after experimenting with direct-to-streaming releases, reconsidered its movie pipeline and

approach to mass-audience appeal. Now, "Inside Out 2," which dipped a mere 35% from its \$154 million domestic debut, is poised to challenge "The Incredibles 2" (\$1.2 billion) for the all-time top grossing Pixar release. It could also steer the venerated animation factory toward more sequels. Among its upcoming films is "Toy Story 5," due out in 2026.

For theater owners, "Inside Out 2" could hardly have been more needed. But it also reminded exhibitors of how feast-or-famine the movie business has become in recent years. Since the pandemic movies like "Barbie," "Spider-Man: No Way Home" and "Top Gun: Maverick" have pushed ticket sales to record heights, but fallow periods in between box-office sensations have grown longer. Ticket sales over Memorial Day last month were the

worst in three decades. Some of 2024's downturn can be attributed to release-schedule juggling caused by last year's writers and actors strikes. The biggest new release over the weekend was **Jeff Nichols**' motorcycle

**NEW YORK:** Weekend number two was just as joyous for "Inside

million in ticket sales in its second record for an animated movie in its previous best second weekend for an animated title was the \$92 million for "The Super Mario Bros. Movie." Only six movies ever

would make it the first film since "Barbie" to do so.

till images have been a source of wonder and mythology in the films of Jeff Nichols. "Mud," Nichols' Twain-soaked Mississippi fable, seemed derived from the magical sight of a boat held

aloft by a tree. "Loving," about a '60s interracial marriage, took inspiration from tender Life magazine photographs taken of the real-life couple. Nichols' latest, "The Bikeriders," is based on photographer Danny Lyon's 1968 book of the same name, for which he spent four years with a Chicago motorcycle

**By Jake Coyle** 

It's not hard to see what Nichols saw in Lyon's black-and-white stills. There's the stylish raw materials - the chrome bikes, the slicked back hair, the black leather jackets. But there's also a just emerging antiauthoritarian, easy-riding spirit and camaraderie. Like the central figures of "Loving," they are classically drawn outsiders who encapsulate something glorious and uneasy about freedom in America.

In the exhilarating first half of "The Bikeriders," which opened in theaters Friday, Nichols is less compelled to build a narrative around his bike gang, the Vandals (based on the Outlaws) than summoning an intoxicating atmosphere reminiscent of those old photographs. "The Bikeriders" eventually becomes saddled with heavier plot mechanics - you can almost sense his riders growing weary from having to strap narrative devices onto their bikes. The movie wants to ride, but it's not sure how much story to pack for the trip. But this is a vivid dramatization of the birth of an American subculture.

The framing device Nichols settles on is Lyon, himself, played by Mike Faist, who's conducting interviews for his book. His conversations with a woman named Kathy ( Jodie Comer ) bookend and sporadically narrate the movie.

Kathy, also based on a real person, seems at first an unlikely spokesperson for the gang. She speaks

with a thick Illinois accent (an actorly distraction throughout) and has no affection for motorcycle riders. But one night at a bar, she sees Benny ( Austin Butler ) across the smokey room and, even if she doesn't admit it at that moment, falls for him. Again, it's not hard to see why. Butler is by now well removed from Elvis Presley but the suppleness with which he can sink into mid-century America is no less apparent. Benny drives Kathy home, parks his bike outside the place and patiently waits for her boyfriend to skip town.

Nichols' latest is a journey through Americana and identity

Nichols, a devotee of films like "Hud" and "Cool Hand Luke," is a filmmaker who works very consciously within classic American idioms. In Butler he has his James Dean, making Tom Hardy his Marlon Brando. Hardy plays Johnny, Benny's best pal and the one who starts up and presides over the Vandals. (The "whaddya got" clip of Brando from "The Wild One" is even briefly seen on a small TV in "The Bikeriders.")

#### Lifestyle

The Vandals, as a club, start about as simply as kids might call a tree house to order. They're a bunch of guys who like riding motorcycles and like talking about them. Simple as that. But men come like moths to a flame, attracted by the tough lifestyle, the cool jackets with patches and a way out of mainstream America. Among them are Cal (Boyd Holbrook), Cockroach (Emory Cohen), Funny Sonny (Norman Reedus) and Zipco (Michael Shannon).

"Obscenity and motorcycles travel hand in hand," someone says, with pride.

The early days of the group are, it would seem, a lot of fun. Barroom brawls and riding carefree through corn fields. Most of these guys don't have much, but they have each other. And their loyalty

Kathy isn't so sure sure. She watches the growing gang - a completely male bunch - with skepticism and fear for Benny. (In a scene teased in the film's

cost about \$35 million to produce,

was originally to be released by

opening, he's beaten badly enough to be hospitalized.) Sometimes, they throw down purely for fun.

They are the original Fight Cub. But soon, Kathy isn't the only one with doubts at what they've created. As their gang grows, what the Vandals embody is less clear, even to Johnny and Benny. Some of the new entrants are coming straight back from Vietnam. Their old hijinks give way to more serious crimes. In one chastening scene, Kathy finds herself very nearly assaulted by its members. The gang - and all its posturing of toughness - begins to feel more like a trap for even its leader. Benny is drawn into a choice between the Vandals and Kathy. The homoerotic subtext is understated but not ignored; when Benny and Johnny discuss their future together, they do it gently and intimately, in the dark, like a secret confession.

As the Vandals' original ideals disintegrate, it can feel like "The Bikeriders" gets locked into a familiar "Goodfellas"-like structure, but with a telling shift in narrator for a drama that's ultimately about masculinity. This is a movie that's juggling a lot of contradictory ambitions. It wants to be authentic but it wants to tell a grand America saga. It wants mythology but also naturalism. It's those instincts that have made Nichols one of the most essential filmmakers of his generation, even if the results have sometimes been underwhelming by a hair. Even his best, most firmly rooted films ("Take Shelter," "Mud") strive for a balancing act that can be elusive.

But I think it's those dual impulses - and, again, all the cool jackets - that makes "The Bikeriders" work. The movie is unabashedly romantic about the Vandals but it's equally dubious about the rugged masculinity they embody, too. "The Bikeriders" has its hands firmly on the throttle just it does the brakes.

"The Bikeriders," a Focus Features release, is rated R by the Motion Picture Association for language throughout, violence, some drug use and brief sexuality. Running time: 116 minutes. Three stars out of four. (AP)

gang drama "The Bikeriders," a film originally slated to open in 2023 before the actors strike prompted its postponement.

"The Bikeriders," starring **Jodie** Comer, Austin Butler and Tom Hardy, came in on the high side of expectations with \$10 million from 2,642 venues in its opening weekend. "The Bikeriders," which



Disney before New Regency took it to Focus Features last fall. (AP)

**BOSRA, Syria:** The ancient city of Bosra in southern Syria, a testament to civilizations spanning millennia, is locked in a new battle

-- preserving the precious heritage from the ravage of yearslong war. Enlisted in the UNESCO World

Heritage Sites, Bosra's history dates back to 1500 BC, with Nabateans, Romans, Byzantines, and Islamic Caliphates all leaving their mark. Today, the city boasts a well-preserved Roman theater, a panoramic citadel, and a unique mosque, alongside temples, baths, and ancient city walls. During Roman rule in the second century AD, Bosra rose to prominence as the regional capital. Alaa Al-Salah, director of the Bosra Archaeological Site, described a meticulously planned city mirroring Rome itself, complete with a grid layout, roads, theaters, a hippodrome, and baths. (Xinhua)



## People & Places

#### **Fashion**

#### **Cultural fusion shines**

#### Vogue World celebrates French style, Olympics

PARIS, June 24, (AP): French singing star Aya Nakamura warbled. Kendall Jenner and Gigi Hadid rode horses. While Venus and Serena Williams and Katy Perry modeled on the cobbles. This was Paris' Place Vendome as never seen before.

On International Olympic Day, Vogue World took over the last day of Paris Fashion Week's menswear collections with a show-cum-spectacle themed around

The rare event blended athleticism, French fashion, and pure, unadulterated razzmatazz from the past century - marking 100 years since the last Games in Paris in 1924. The event also referred back to June 23, 1894, the day on which the founder of the modern Olympics, French nobleman Pierre de Coubertin, launched the International Olympic Committee.

Here are some highlights of



collections Sunday Matching different sports

to different eras and styles, the high-octane collection extravaganza felt like a polished Broadway musical - with amazing clothes - as the sun set on Paris' magnificent Place Vendome.

For the third Vogue World event, following a New York street fair in 2022 and a tribute to London's theater scene

in 2023, the show dovetailed with the Paris Games - celebrating all things French and runway. Fashion designs were showcased to a backdrop of tap dancing, pirouetting red-wine-holding waiters, and even models clutching baguettes.

Tracing a century, each decade was paired with a designer and style era. The '20s was cycling and featured white coats by designers such as Chanel and Schiaparelli. The '30s was "track and field" by Balenciaga. The '40s, the era that gave the bikini to the world, featured "aquatics" by Jacquemus. The '50s brought "equestrian" styles shown through the prism of the decade-defining New Look by Dior. The '60s was Courreges' fencing looks.

#### Spectacle

By the time the '70s came up with choreographed Givenchy-fueled "gymnastics," some journalists had completely forgotten to keep taking notes, caught up in the intoxicating sight of the choreographed spectacle on the picturesque plaza, whose star-filled front row, including Pharrell Williams, rivaled even the stars that trod the boards (cobbles).

The '80s focused on martial arts and the '90s on soccer, with a reinterpretation of late icon Azzedine Alaia's tricolor dress. Cheers rose when the Williams sisters appeared for the "tennis" section, Venus in a bold figure-hugging mermaid dress and Serena warrior-like in a black, utilitarian split gown.

The finale featured breakdancing. The atmosphere was electric, serving as an unofficial kickoff for the Paris Games, which will run from July 26 to Aug. 11.

Under the lofty ceiling of the historic La Poste du Louvre - Paris' most emblematic Haussmannian post office that was recently renovated - Japanese it-brand Sacai held its latest collection. Designer Chitose Abe, renowned for her approach of "hybridization," continued to merge disparate elements into singular, eyecatching pieces, making them look like one thing from the front and another from the back.

Twists were evident throughout the show. Pleats as seen on white, red carpet tuxedo shirts - were creatively reimagined as billowing white floppy tubular skirts and white boho toggle tops. In darker colors, these off-kilter styles channeled a preppy look, complemented by sheeny leather loafers. Indeed, preppy and military details - Abe's signatures - were on full display in the funky collection. White shirts, thickrimmed spectacles, and pinstripes ticked the preppy box; while chunky round shoulders and thick layering ticked the military one.

The collection also highlighted Abe's knack for blending the traditional with the modern. Denim. colorful patterns, and huggable knits provided a welcome touch of softness against the harder-lined

In an age dominated by email and heightened environmental awareness, the fashion industry's antiquated system of invitations remains largely untouched.

Season after season, gasoline-guzzling couriers crisscross Paris, personally delivering elaborate, often handmade show invites. Top fashion houses compete for the most imaginative and wacky ideas, often hinting at the runway collection's theme.

Pharrell Williams' invitation for his UNESCO show was a Louis Vuitton embossed Apple AirTag, reminiscent of a royal mint memento. Loewe's invite came as a giant colored leather square pocket, too large for any conventional letterbox. Dior Men's opted for a leather pencil case, topped with a sketch of the collection's referenced artist and ceramicist, Hylton Nel. In contrast, Vogue World embraced eco-friendliness with a simple QR code sent via email.

#### Elegance

Madame Woo of Wooyoungmi is renowned for her fusion of Parisian - or European - elegance and Korean cultural heritage. The South Korean designer's creations blend traditional elements from her homeland with a contemporary, open-minded view of culture. On Sunday, her show was a testament to this.

Leather Derby shoes were effortlessly paired with cropped Renaissance laced pants adorned with traditional decorative neck beading.

Other looks masterfully combined the rugged allure of the American Wild West with details like decorated belts and a perforated long coat, reminiscent of fashion-forward leather hide.

Madame Woo often transforms utilitarian basics into luxurious, tactile masterpieces, as seen in previous collections featuring lush blue velvet chore coats and fine brushed suede uniform jackets. Cropped black leather biker pants and a Wooyoung-

mi logo-emblazoned baseball top on Sunday ensured that, despite the rich cultural references, eclecticism was the name of the game this spring.

Cultural fusions mixing Eastern and Western dress, as well as preppy and military styles hit Paris Fashion Weeks menswear shows on their final day Here are some highlights of spring 2025 collections

on Sunday: du Louvre - Paris' most emblematic Haussmannian

Under the lofty ceiling of the historic La Poste post office that was recently renovated - Japanese it-brand Sacai held its latest collection. Designer Chitose Abe, renowned for her approach of "hybridization," continued to merge disparate elements into singular, eye-catching pieces, making them look like one thing from the front and another from the back.



US singer Billie Eilish is sitting on a ledge of a staircase railing known as the 'Billie Eilish wall', in Berlin Friday, June 7. The artist wants to draw attention to her new album 'hit me hard and soft' during a promotional campaign. (AP)



Joey King poses for photographers at the photo call for the film 'Despicable Me 4' on Sunday, June 23, in Paris. (AP)





#### **Variety**

**BEIJING:** Domestic drama film "Moments We Shared" topped the box office chart on the Chinese mainland on Sunday, data from the China Movie Data Information Network showed.

The film tells a story about a young man who manages to live a quiet life in the company of his grandmother and friend in a small town after he escapes from city life. The teen film pocketed 64.28 million yuan (about 9.03 million US dollars) in revenue.

It was followed by Disney and Pixar's animated film "Inside Out 2," which generated a daily box office earning of 25.21

US action crime production "Bad Boys: Ride or Die" starring Will Smith and Martin Lawrence came in third, grossing 8.42 million yuan on the day.

The total box office revenue on the Chinese mainland on Sunday stood at 132.13 million yuan. (Xinhua)

LOS ANGELES: In "Land of Women," Eva Longoria plays Gala, a New Yorker who is living the good life one day, and the next is left with her husband's massive debt after he disappears. She flees to northern Spain with her mother and teenage daughter. The fish-out-of-water series is based on a popular novel and was created for TV by the prolific Spanish TV producer Ramón **Campos**. The dialogue is a combo of English, Spanish and Catalan - a language spoken in northeastern Spain. "One of the

big sources of comedy is miscommunica-

told TV critics earlier this year. The "Land

of Women" debuts Wednesday on Apple

tion and this is ripe for that," Longoria

TV+. Shows like "CSI" prompted an interest in forensics, not to mention crime-solving. Now, the franchise creator is behind a non-scripted version called "The Real CSI: Miami." The show looks at how science was used to solve true crime cases. It premieres Wednesday on CBS and will stream

on Paramount+. Much like Hulu's take on Catherine the Great in "The Great," a new Prime Video series called "My Lady Jane" is an irreverent telling of the story of **Lady Jane Grey**. At 17, Grey became Queen for nine days before her half-sister Mary stole her support and her crown. She was then sent to the Tower of London where she was executed. "My Lady Jane" debuts Thursday. (AP)



## Music

#### A playlist of 2024's potential hits from various genres

## The 2024 song of the summer?

NEW YORK, June 24, (AP): Since the beginning of time or, at least, pop music, only a few have earned the designation of "song of the summer."

These are the earworms that lodge deep into the brain, pushing past genre preferences and reminding listeners: A hit is a hit. With so much variety, though, it's getting harder to crown a single song of the summer. So The Associated Press is offering 2024 predictions across categories - with past win-

ners for reference. We're a few decades removed from the Y2K era of off-kilter pop songs with nonsensical lyrics atop sunny productions. But no one told Sabrina Carpenter, whose hit "Espresso" is a shot of wake-up juice, equal parts clever and totally unserious. "Espresso" makes a one-woman argument for

disco-informed radio pop's endurance.

Past champion: "Wide Awake," Katy Perry (2012)

Before it even released, it seemed likely a Post Malone team-up with Morgan Wallen would result in a No. 1 record. "I Had Some Help" introduced Post Malone's foray into country and, with some help indeed from the biggest name in contemporary country music, was an instant success. There's no denying that honkytonk hook, Malone's autotuned vibrato or the singalong chorus. Past champion: "You're Still the

One," Shania Twain (1998)

Drake and Kendrick Lamar reignited a once-dormant feud earlier this year, launching diss track after diss track. None hit quite like Lamar's ferocious "Not Like Us," which became Lamar's fourth No. 1 on Billboard's Hot 100. The messaging - all West Coast fire in an "us vs. them" anthem - really works.

Past champion: "Obsessed." Mariah Carey (2009)

In an ideal world, every country station would play Shaboozey's "A Bar Song (Tipsy)" once an hour, on the hour. Until then, its social media virality will have to do the trick. With its inspired interpolation of J-Kwon's "Tipsy," the song has all the makings of a modern classic, with an easy-torally-around narrative following a hardworking protagonist easing his troubles on a bar stool.

Past champion: "Trap Queen," **Fetty Wap (2015)** "Lunch," from Billie Eilish's new al-

**XIAMEN:** The "Looking China Youth Film

Project" on Saturday kicked off its cultural

experience activities in Xiamen University

in east China's Fujian Province.

bum, "Hit Me Hard and Soft," is a PG-13. The once-in-a-generation performer has come a long way from the macabre humor, off-kilter beats and Invisalign slurps that made her a star. Instead, "Lunch" is a delicious, sapphic anthem.

Past champion: Tegan and Sara (2007)

It's in the title. Sexyy Red, with her distinctive flow and quotable bars not exactly safe for work, has taken over. "Get It Sexyy" is a theme song for her dominance and a confident mantra for everyone planning to hit the dance

Past champion: "Lose Control," Missy Elliott feat. Ciara & Fat Man

Scoop (2005) Take one of the biggest names in regional Mexican music, Peso Pluma, bring in one of the biggest Brazilian pop-funk stars, Anitta, and you've got yourself a sweaty reggaetón banger. "Bellakeo" is a song for both the club

and corner store, oozing with flirtation.

Past champion: "Where the Party At," Jagged Edge and Nelly (2001)

Chappell Roan has long had a knack for candor in her theatrical, cheeky songwriting, emphasized by sometimes-yodeling vocals. But she's only recently started receiving mainstream attention for her full-throated, bighearted queer love anthems. "Good Luck, Babe!" is a kiss-off-and-a-half - perfect for screaming along to while driving down an empty street in Roan's native Midwest or getting ready with the girls for the drag club.

Past champion: "Signed, Sealed, Delivered I'm Yours," Stevie Won-

Every song of the summer list requires a real tearjerker. Within the first few seconds of Zach Bryan's "Pink Skies," the acoustic guitar, harmonica, and raspy narrative will have you breaking out the tissues. "The kids are in town for a funeral," he sings. "So pack the car and dry your eyes." He's an expert at writing a novel in few words, a song so good it charts without traditional support.

Past champion: "Run-Around," Blues Traveler (1995)

"Million Dollar Baby" feels like it came out of nowhere - as so many TikTok smashes do - but its continued endurance since April is notable. Plus, it shares a title with a very famous film, and that's always fun.

Past champion: "Breakfast at Tiffany's," Deep Blue Something (1995)

If Zach Bryan's "Pink Skies" is a little too raw for you, Benson Boone's "Beautiful Things" offers a glossy alternative. There isn't a hint of edge in his soft pop-rock, but there is a lot of

Past champion: "Boy's a Liar PT. 2," PinkPantheress, Ice Spice (2023)

Every summer, Taylor Swift's fans anoint their own pick. This time around, it has to be "Fortnight" from "The Tortured Poets Department." Enter "I love you / It's ruining my life," into the pantheon of Swiftisms that would make for

an amazing AOL away message (R.I.P.).

Past champion: "Karma," Taylor Swift (2023)

Beyoncé released "Act ll: Cowboy Carter' with the declaration: "This ain't a Country album. This is a 'Bevoncé' album." But she certainly wove the genre in, reclaiming country music as a Black woman. The first taste came in the form of "Texas Hold 'Em" - ideal listening, whether you're headed to the beach or rodeo.

Past champion: "What's Love Got to Do With It," Tina Turner (1984)

There's always one song that's part joke, full hit. Enter "The Spark," an Irish collaboration between some remarkably talented kids from Cork and Lisdoonvarna, written for Cruinniú na nÓg, a day meant to celebrate children's creativity. These kids have produced an empowering electro-club banger for all ages.

Past champion: "The Margarita Song," That Chick Angel, Casa Di & Steve Terrell (2023)

Of all the songs on Ariana Grande's "eternal sunshine," "We Can't Be Friends (Wait For Your Love)" is the Europop exemplar. It explodes into a string crescendo, electronic sounds effortlessly blending into organic ones, lyrically highlighting a relationship on the outs. It's a gorgeous and devastating listen in the tradition of another queen of summertime sadness bangers, Robyn.

Past champion: "Call Your Girlfriend," Robyn (2010)

Charli XCX's latest album, "Brat," oscillates between hedonism and anxiety. "360" is a hot girl club classic squarely in the first category - all sexy showboating and futuristic production.

Ten young filmmakers from the United States, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Fiji are involved in the project, which will run till July 6. Paired with Chinese youth,



Rebecca Lovell, (left), and Megan Lovell of Larkin Poe perform during the Off North Shore: Skokie Music Festival on Friday, June 21, in Skokie, III. (AP)

they will head to cities such as Xiamen, Quanzhou, Zhangzhou and Sanming to film a 10-minute documentary, telling their stories about Fujian's unique customs and cultural heritage Jay Hughlan Hubert, an American

professor with the University of Colorado Colorado Springs and instructor of the project in Fujian, said that it is a valuable form of international cultural exchange.

"It is not just an opportunity for foreign and Chinese students to work together and make meaningful documentaries about China and the Chinese culture. It's really an honor for these students from abroad to come here and learn about the incredible history and all the great things that make China so wonderful and meaningful," Hubert said.

Haden Garcia Gillespie, one of the participants from the United States, said that his film topic is going to be porcelain carving, which is used on the temples' rooftops in Fujian.

"I'm really excited to follow the craftsmen who make them and learn their stories," said Gillespie, expressing that he is open to new experiences and new friends and hopes to learn more about the Chinese culture. (Xinhua)

#### Untreated sunburn could lead to dehydration and heat-related illness

## Dermatologist advises when to seek medical care for sunburns

CLEVELAND, June 24: With residents and holidaymakers in the Northern Hemisphere often enjoying summer outdoors, an expert from global health system Cleveland Clinic is urging them to recognize the signs of a severe sunburn, and to know when to seek medical care.

"Most of the time we are worried about the long-term effects of sunburn such as skin cancer development, that is, basal cell and squamous cell from accumulative UVA exposure and melanoma from acute burns/ UVB exposure. However, there are health impacting consequences even immediately after the acute sunburn," says dermatologist Amy Kassouf,

"You don't need to see your healthcare provider for every sunburn. A small patch of first-degree sunburn – the least severe type – does not typically cause serious health issues," Dr. Kassouf explains. "However, as your skin continues to react to ultraviolet (UV) radiation, you may develop concerning symptoms. Getting medical care when needed can prevent some of those serious conditions from developing.

According to Dr. Kassouf, sunburns are similar to thermal burns - the kind caused by touching hot surfaces, liquids, steam or flames. Although they don't go as deep as thermal burns, they are more damaging to a

She recommends consulting a healthcare provider in several instances, such as having a first-degree burn all over the body, which increases the risk of developing a heat-related illness; a large area of blistered skin, which increases the risk of infection; or symptoms of sickness or dehydration, such as fever, chills or faintness.

"Blistering skin means there's more damage in the deeper layers of your skin," Dr. Kassouf adds. "You're more likely to dehydrate, become feverish and develop inflammation. That's when you need to seek medical care."

Dr. Kassouf adds that a second-degree sunburn can also cause health issues including dehydration, sun poisoning, heat exhaustion, heat stroke and infection.

**Dehydration** 



Badly burned skin no longer holds moisture in your body, so you may dehydrate. Signs that you're severely dehydrated could include dry mouth or thirst; inability to urinate or dark-colored urine; constipation; disorientation or confusion; dizziness, especially when rising to stand; exhaustion; and headache or confusion.

> Sun poisoning is almost like an allergic reaction to a sunburn, Dr Kassouf says. Essentially, the extreme exposure to UV radiation causes skin inflammation. The main difference between sun poisoning and a typical sunburn is the additional symptoms an individual may develop with sun poisoning, including a burning sensation; chills; extreme thirst; itchiness; nausea or a rash.

Heat exhaustion

Dr. Kassouf points out that a person does not need to be in extreme heat to develop heat exhaustion. Severe sunburn causes a loss of body fluids that can lower blood pressure and blood volume. The first symptom is fatigue. In addition to feeling tired, a person may also experience dizziness; intense thirst; feeling faint; fever; headache; or sweating heavily.

Heatstroke

Heatstroke happens when the body can no longer control its temperature, Dr. Kassouf says, warning that the condition can cause permanent disability or even death if not treated quickly. It typically begins as heat exhaustion, but the symptoms rapidly worsen and may include extreme sweating or hot, dry skin (if dehydrated); loss of consciousness; mental impairments such as confusion and slurred speech; seizures; or very high body temperature (over 40 degrees Celsius).

"The danger of developing an infection is typically greater a few days after the burn, when the blisters are breaking and there are exposed lower layers of skin," Dr. Kassouf says. Telltale signs of infection can includean increase in redness, pain, and swelling; a severe fever; or a covering of pus or crust over the open site.

Why it's important to seek medical care for a sunburn

Dr. Kassouf urges people not to ignore the early signs of dangerous sunburn. "See your provider if you have any signs of dehydration, sun poisoning, heat exhaustion or heatstroke. The symptoms of these health conditions go far beyond sunburn discomfort, can last much longer — and may even cause lasting damage," she says.

"When your sunburn is serious, your skin is no longer a strong protective barrier for your body," Dr. Kassouf reiterates."You might develop symptoms of heat-induced trauma, such as dehydration, low blood pressure and shock. But it all starts with the sunburn, and shade alone is not a reliable way to prevent overexposure to the sun. Be sure to take preventative steps such as wearing sun protective clothing, hats and sunblock."

'Expand tirzepatide use'

## Obesity medication may treat sleep apnea: study

NEW YORK, June 24, (AP): A popular obesity drug may help treat a dangerous disorder in which people struggle to breathe while they sleep, a new study finds.

Tirzepatide, the medication in the weight-loss drug Zepbound and also the diabetes treatment Mounjaro, appeared to reduce the severity of sleep apnea along with reducing weight and improving blood pressure and other health measures in patients with obesity who took the drug for a year.

Eli Lilly and Co., the drug's maker who paid for the research, has asked the Food and Drug Administration to expand use of the drug to treat moderate to severe sleep apnea, in which people stop and start breathing during sleep, a spokesperson said Friday. A decision is expected by the end of the year.

But an outside expert cautioned in an editorial that more research will be needed to tell if the drug can be used as "a sole treatment" for obstructive sleep apnea, which occurs when tissue in the throat relaxes and collapses during sleep, fully or partially blocking the airway.

#### **Sleepiness**

It affects an estimated 20 million Americans and can cause shortterm issues such as snoring, brain fog and daytime sleepiness but also severe long-term issues such as heart disease, dementia and early death.

The research, published Friday in the New England Journal of Medicine and presented at a medical meeting, included nearly 500 people diagnosed with obesity and sleep apnea. Half of them used what's typically known as a CPAP machine that feeds oxygen through a mask to keep airways open during sleep. The other group included people for whom a CPAP machine had failed or wasn't tolerated.

The study found that patients in both groups who got weekly injections of tirzepatide reduced the number of episodes per hour in which their breathing slowed or stopped completely during sleep by about half to nearly 60%, compared to about 10% in people who got a dummy drug. Up to half of the patients taking tirzepatide reduced the apnea episodes enough to potentially resolve the disorder, compared with up to 16% of those using the placebo medication, according to the research.

On average, patients who took tirzepatide also lost between 18% and 20% of their body weight and showed improvements in blood pressure and a condition in which blood oxygen drops during sleep. Patients also reported better sleep and fewer sleep disturbances, the study found.

#### Research

The new research shows that tirzepatide is "a more effective knife in the drawer," for treating sleep apnea, said lead author Dr. Atul Malhotra, a sleep medicine specialist at the University of California, San Diego.

In an accompanying editorial, Dr. Sanjay Patel, a sleep medicine specialist at the University of Pittsburgh, cautioned that whether tirzepatide can treat sleep apnea in real-world patients "remains unclear" because of the way improvement is measured. He also noted that cost and access remain obstacles to using tirzepatide and that the addition of the drug as a treatment could exacerbate racial and other disparities in addressing sleep apnea.

Dr. Paul Peppard, a sleep medicine researcher at the University of Wisconsin who was not involved in the study, said losing weight has long been recommended as a way to reduce the severity of sleep apnea by expanding lung capacity, reducing fat in the airways and improving oxygen usage. While diet and exercise can spur weight loss and reduce the consequences of the disorder, the ongoing obesity epidemic in the US proves that shedding pounds is difficult for many people, he said. In such cases, medications such as tirzepatide can help.

"I expect that these drugs could be used as a tool to treat many of the established outcomes of obesity," Peppard said.

# **Seeking eternal youth? Try gym** and weight-resistance training

Consult doctor before starting a new exercise routine

TOKYO, June 24, (AP): Here's the message from Dr. Marcas Bamman, a physiologist with decades of research into aging who preaches the benefits of weight-resistance training for those who are getting up there.

We're talking 60-plus - women and men. And we're talking about hitting the gym and weight training. Don't be put off, Bamman says.

"Resistance training is in many ways the true fountain of youth," Bamman said in an interview with The Associated Press. "I like to say the fountain of youth is the water cooler in the gym."

Of course, there are biological limits. But Bamman says the bulk of agerelated decline in strength, flexibility and endurance is behavioral - putting too few demands on the body, not too

#### Muscle

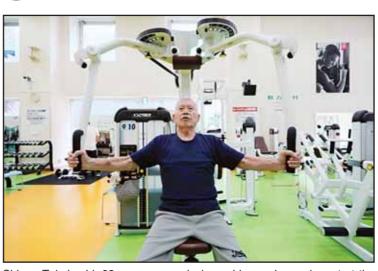
"When I tell somebody that in four to six months your strength and muscle mass and overall muscle function is going to elevate to the levels of people 30 to 35 years younger, that hits home," he said.

So you know you're too sedentary and the birthdays keep piling up. You suspect resistance training would be beneficial. But perhaps you're intimidated. Don't be.

Check with medical professionals to make sure there are no health problems that stand in your way. Then find a gym. Larger gyms offer

a social component with things to do on a day off from weight training. And Bamman suggests getting a trainer

"It's actually quite safe, but it does require proper progression," Bamman said. "You have to have a good in-



Shigeo Takahashi, 83, uses a pec deck machine as he works out at the Fukagawa Sports Center in Tokyo, June 12. If you are getting up there in years, weight-resistance training might deliver unexpected benefits. (AP)

structor who can teach the movements properly."

Bamman, a research scientist at the Florida Institute for Human & Machine Cognition, said finding a fully qualified trainer can be tricky.

"We need more rigorous certification of trainers," he said. "The problem is that you can go online tonight and pay \$50 and get some certification as a trainer."

Bamman suggests resistance training twice a week. Three times is even better, and he recommends For instance, work out on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, and let Tuesday and Thursday be days of rest.

He suggests 10 different exercise movements - eight is sufficient. Do 10 repetitions of each movement. Do this three times, described as three sets. Then move on to the next movement. When you reach the 10th repetition,

you should feel you can't do many more. If you could have done 10 more reps, you might want to increase the resistance. Bamman says machines are better

for beginners, but free weights - barbells or dumbbells - may be more effective as you gain confidence.

minute warmup - on the treadmill, sta-

tionary bike or elliptical machine - to

get the blood flowing. You can add a

health care professionals "who baby seniors." Of course, common sense is required. "Our human body is a demand-

ter in Tokyo.

based system," he explained. "If you chronically impart a low demand on tne body we have adaptations to low demand. That's why we lose muscle mass, that's why we get weaker. We're

few minutes on the mat for stretching

"Sometimes you see people who sit

Women may benefit from resistance

'Women are on a disadvantaged

on the machine, do a set and then play

with their phone for three or four min-

training even more than men because

it's a way to fight osteoporosis, the loss

trajectory for bone loss, particularly

in susceptible areas such as the hips

and lower back," said Bamman, who

completed his doctorate at the Uni-

versity of Florida College of Medi-

for both sexes are really important.

There are no sex differences in the

ability to respond. In gaining muscle

mass and strength in untrained people,

sistance training about 20 years ago.

"I saw the men in the gym and thought I could do that, too," she said,

speaking at a municipal recreation cen-

In a few words: Use it or lose it.

Bamman cautions against pam-

pering yourself and criticized even

Yasuko Kuroi is 72 and started re-

men and women track the same.

"But the strength-training benefits

utes. We like to keep them moving."

and abdominal work.

of bone density.

Then come the weights

## NY targets 'addictive' social media feeds for kids

NEW YORK, June 24, (AP): New York Gov. Kathy Hochul on Thursday signed a bill that would allow parents to block their children from getting social media posts suggested by a platform's algorithm, a move to limit feeds critics argue are addictive.

Under the legislation, feeds on apps like TikTok and Instagram would be limited for people under age 18 to posts from accounts they follow, rather than content suggested by an automated algorithm. It would also block platforms from sending minors notifications on suggested posts between midnight and 6 a.m.

Both provisions could be turned off if a minor gets what the bill defines as "verifiable parental consent.

The law does not take effect immediately. State Attorney General Letitia James is now tasked with crafting rules to determine mechanisms for verifying a user's age and parental consent. After the rules are finalized, social media companies will have 180 days to implement the regulations.

"We can protect our kids. We can tell the companies that you are not allowed to do this, you don't have a right to do this, that parents should have say over their children's lives and their health, not you," Hochul, a Democrat, said at a bill signing ceremony in Manhattan.

The signing is the first step in what is expected to

be a drawn out process of rule making, and a probable lawsuit from social media companies to block

NetChoice, a tech industry trade group that includes X and Meta, has criticized the legislation as

'This is an assault on free speech and the open internet by the State of New York," Carl Szabo, vice president and general counsel of NetChoice, said in a statement. "New York has created a way for the government to track what sites people visit and their online activity by forcing websites to censor all content unless visitors provide an ID to verify their age.'



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# Yang wins first major title Scheffler clinches 6th trophy of year at Travelers

Amy Yang, of South Korea, holds the trophy after winning the Women's PGA Championship golf tournament at Sahalee Country Club in Sammamish, Wash. (AP)

SAMMAMISH, June 24, (AP): Amy Yang built a huge lead and survived a couple of late mistakes to win her long-awaited first major title on Sunday, a three-shot victory in the KPMG Women's PGA Championship.

Yang closed with an even-par 72 at Sahalee to finish at 7-under 281. She was nearly flawless for the first 15 holes and reached 10

#### **GOLF**

under for the tournament for a seven-shot lead before running into a little bit of trouble, dropping three shots in two holes. None of her pursuers was able to mount a significant charge.

At age 34, Yang is the oldest major winner on the LPGA Tour since Angela Stanford won the 2018 Evian Championship at age 40.

Yang's sixth LPGA victory was her first since last year's CME Group Tour Championship, which was also the most recent victory by a South Korean player. She earned a spot in the Paris Olympics, where she will represent South Korea for the third



Scottie Scheffler reacts after winning the Travelers Championship golf tournament at TPC River Highlands in Cromwell, Conn. (AP)

Lilia Vu and Jin Young Ko each shot 71 to tie for second at 284. Vu shot three rounds under par, but couldn't overcome a 75 in the first

Scottie Scheffler beat Tom Kim with a par on the first playoff hole to win the Travelers Championship on Sunday - waiting out a disruption by climate protesters who sprayed powder on the 18th green - for his sixth

That's the most in one PGA Tour season since Tiger Woods won six in 2009 and the most by a player before July since Arnold Palmer in 1962.

It was Scheffler's fourth victory of the year in the PGA Tour's \$20 million signature events, earning him a payday of \$3.6 million. He also won the Masters and The Players Cham-

Scheffler closed with a 5-under 65 to post 22-under 258 at the TPC River Highlands. After the disruption on the 18th, which delayed play for about five minutes after police tackled the protesters, Scheffler left a 26-foot putt from the fringe on the edge of the cup and tapped in for par. Kim then made a 10-foot birdie putt for a 66 to catch Scheffler.

The hole location on the 18th was moved for the playoff to avoid the parts of the green affected by the protesters. Scheffler hit his approach to 11 feet while Kim found a plugged lie in the front bunker and made bogey. Scheffler two-putted for par and

Tyrrell Hatton won the inaugural LIV Golf Nashville on Sunday, easily holding off Jon Rahm and two-time U.S. Open champ Bryson DeChambeau for the Englishman's first victory since January 2021 at Abu Dhabi.

Hatton took a three-stroke lead into the round, and shot a 6-under 65 to polish off a six-stroke win over Sam Horsfield at The Grove.

This was Hatton's ninth event since joining LIV Golf, and a tie for fourth had been his best finish. His lone PGA Tour victory was the 2020 Arnold Palmer Invitational. With captain Rahm shooting a 68, Hatton helped Legion XIII also win its third

Rahm played his first event since an infection on his left foot kept him out of the U.S. Open after withdrawing from LIV Golf Houston during the second round. He tied for third with DeChambeau (68), Joaquin Niemann (62) and Lee Westwood

Guido Migliozzi of Italy holed a 7-foot birdie putt on the par-5 18th and then birdied it twice more in sudden death to win the KLM Open in a three-man playoff on Sunday.

Migliozzi birdied two of his last three holes for a 1-under 70, joining Marcus Kinhult of Sweden and Joe Dean of England, who earlier birdied the 18th and each posted a 68.

All three players birdied the 18th on the first playoff hole, but the Italian was the only player who managed birdie on the second extra hole, two-putting from about 60 feet for his first European tour victory in nearly two years.

Migliozzi and Dean earned the two spots available for the British Open next month at Royal Troon through the Open Qualifying Series. Dean earned the exemption over Kinhult based on a better world ranking.

Johnston clinches first trip

## Manuel earns individual race at Olympics

INDIANAPOLIS, June 24, (AP): Simone Manuel was feeling a bit down as she prepared for her final shot to swim an individual event at the Paris Olympics.

So she pulled out some video of her greatest hits.

Talk about a confidence boost. The first Black female swimmer

to win an individual gold medal at the Olympics, Manuel earned an individual spot on the final night of the U.S. swimming trials with a victory in the 50-meter freestyle

Coming back from over training syndrome, which hampered her preparations leading up to the Tokyo Games, Manuel won the frantic dash from one end of the pool to the other in 24.13 seconds.

Speaking of winners, Bobby Finke will head to the Olympics looking to defend his titles in the two longest freestyle events.

He won the final event of the trials, blowing away the field in the 1,500 freestyle with a time of 14 minutes, 40.28 seconds. He already had qualified in the 800 free, the other event he won in Tokyo.

The real race was for the final

spot on the Olympic team between David Johnston and Luke Whitlock. They were neck and neck nearly the entire race, before Johnston started to pull away with six laps remaining.

Whitlock nearly caught him with a stunning final sprint, but Johnston barely held on to clinch his first trip to the Olympics in 14:52.74. Whitlock touched right behind him at 14:53.00.

Whitlock will still be in Paris, having earned a spot in the 800

#### **SWIMMING**

Manuel had already clinched a spot at her third Olympics on the 4x100 freestyle relay, but now she's got an event all to herself. Walsh claimed the second spot in Paris at 24.15, beating out Abbey Weitzeil (24.26) and Torri Huske

Manuel will try to add to an already impressive resume, highlighted by her starring role at the the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Games when she captured two gold med-

als and two silvers. Manuel's times began to slip

China bags 12 Paris spots at Olympic Qualifier Series



Thomas Heilman swims during a Men's 200 butterfly preliminary heat at the US Swimming Olympic Trials in Indianapolis. (AP)

ahead of the pandemic-delayed Tokyo Games. After she stunningly failed to qualify in the 100 freestyle, she revealed that she had been diagnosed with overtraining syndrome.

Manuel bounced back to earn a spot in the 50 freestyle, but she didn't advance to the final at the Olympics. Her only medal was a bronze anchoring the 4x100 free

After the games, Manuel was ordered by her doctor to shut down all physical activity until her body healed. She finally returned to the pool in early 2023, but didn't event attempt to qualify for the world championships last summer.

But a move to Arizona, where

she trained under Michael Phelps' longtime coach Bob Bowman began to pay dividends Now, she's got another Olympic race to show for it after coming up

place showing. When she made the team in the 50 free three years ago, it felt like the longest lap of her life.

short in the 100 free with a fourth-

She had that same feeling again Sunday, her arms churning and legs kicking in swimming's most hectic event.

after his first two events of the trials produced crushing disappoint-He turned to a football analogy to motivate himself, which seemed

appropriate with the trials being

Johnston had that same feeling

held at the cavernous home of the NFL's Indianapolis Colts. Finke will head to the Olympics with much higher expectations than he faced in 2021, when he stunningly claimed the 800-1,500

double. Now, he's the guy with the target on his back.

But he'll worry about that another day. About halfway through his 1,500 victory, he began thinking of all the things he wanted after the race.

The OQS, hosted in Shanghai and Budapest, repre-

sents a significant milestone in athletes' journeys to-

wards Paris 2024, serving as the ultimate qualification

stage for these four sports. Over 150 athletes secured

In sport climbing, China's Pan Yufei and Luo Zhilu

secured Olympic quotas in men's and women's Boul-

der & Lead, respectively. Additionally, Wu Peng and

Zhou Yafei each clinched gold and silver medals in the

men's and women's speed climbing events, securing

In women's skateboarding, Cui Chenxi, Zeng Wen-

hui, and Zhu Yuanling earned spots in the women's

street event. 12-year-old Zheng Haohao narrowly se-

In breaking, Qi Xiangyu and Zeng Yingying ob-

tained spots in the men's and women's events, respec-

tively, while Sun Jiaqi and Deng Yawen qualified for

With these additions to previously secured spots,

China now holds seven sport climbing spots, four

skateboarding spots, three breaking spots, and two

However, several top athletes faced disappoint-

ment in the OQS. Tokyo Olympic champion Momiji

Nishiya of Japan unexpectedly missed qualifying for

Paris after competing in Budapest. Tokyo Olympic

men's champion Logan Martin of Australia and wom-

en's champion Charlotte Worthington of Britain did

not secure direct spots in the BMX freestyle event.

However, they still have opportunities as the remain-

ing freestyle BMX spots are not allocated directly to

individual athletes but will be determined by their Na-

freestyle BMX spots for the Paris Olympics.

Olympic quota places through this series.

cured a spot in the women's park event.

their spots for Paris 2024.

the women's freestyle BMX.

tional Olympic Committees.

#### American on mission to lift up entire sport

## Lyles shows his flash, speeds through finals to earn spot at Olympics in 100



Noah Lyles celebrates after winning the men's 100-meter final during the U.S. Track and Field Olympic Team Trials in Eugene, Ore. (AP)

EUGENE, June 24, (AP): The bright red running suit, the white pearls and the gold medal said it all.

Noah Lyles is the flashiest, and the fastest, sprinter in the United States - maybe even the world.

We'll all get to find out later this summer in Paris thanks to a come-from-behind victory for Lyles in the 100 meters at U.S. track trials Sunday - a 9.83-second sprint that secured his spot at an Olympics where he has his sights set on electrifying his sport.

"This was basically the plan, and the plan is working right

Lyles came from the back half of the field to match his best time ever in the sprint that crowns the Fastest Man in

He beat 200-meter specialist Kenny Bednarek by .04. Fred Kerley, the 2022 world champion, finished in third and will also go to Paris. Christian Coleman, the 2019 world champ, was in the lead with about 30 meters left but finished fourth.

The Lyles win makes the American sprint favorites 2 for 2 after three days of these trials. It comes a day after Sha'Carri Richardson also lived up to expectations and won the women's 100 to earn her trip to Paris.

#### **ATHLETICS**

Both of these sprinters shine in their own way. Lyles is on a mission to lift up an entire sport that has been dimmer ever since Usain Bolt exited stage right after the Olympics

In keeping with that theme, the 26-year-old Lyles showed up to Hayward Field in a neatly tailored sports coat and pants and was handed a briefcase containing his freshly pressed racing uniform. He wore white pearls for the race, and when he was introduced, he leaped and jumped about 30 yards down the track, imploring the crowd to get on its

Snoop Dogg was in the house and has taken in some of the action with Lyles' mother, who is almost as entertaining to watch as her son; up in the stands, she fell to her knees after Noah reeled in Kerley to his right, then Coleman and

"Every step I took felt more powerful than the last," Lyles said. "I was like 'I got this race.' I told myself I wasn't going

to ease up. But he did, lifting his index finger in the air just before the line and beating his chest after he crossed it.

This marks the first national title in the 100 for Lyles, who

has three 200-meter world titles but reimagined his goals after a disappointing third-place finish at the Tokyo Games in that race. Last summer, the world saw the work start to pay Lyles won the world championship at 100, 200 and the

4x100 relay last year in Budapest. His 100 time on a cool, still night in Eugene matched the mark he ran to win worlds. If he can pull off the triple again, he would be in company with Bolt, the Jamaican great who went 3 for 3 all three times he raced at the Olympics.

"He's the package," Lyles' coach Lance Brauman said. "That doesn't mean that we don't have to do some things to get better and keep going forward. But he enjoys that part of it. He loves to be at the track. He loves to be at training. I mean, he loves the race. It's just who he is."

Lyles, who races next weekend for a spot in the 200, might even be in the mix to win four medals. No. 4 could come in the 4x400, and if he does that, he would be in the company of the likes of Carl Lewis and even Jesse Owens. Pole vaulter Sam Kendricks remains jaded toward the Olympic movement, but will not decline his spot at the Paris Games. Kendricks, who won his event at trials on Sunday, missed out on competing at the Tokyo Games due to a positive COVID-19 test.

"I love this sport. I love competing," Kendricks said. "I love putting on Team USA. I've always loved that - I joined the freakin' Army because I love this country. I'm super excited about all that.'

But he does not think the Olympics should be the be-all, end-all destination for athletes such as himself.

"I think it's is too far gone," he said. "It's not a good place to point our young people. It's actually self-deprecating. Four-time Olympian Kara Winger is back. Winger retired shortly after winning a silver medal at

world championships in Eugene in 2022, but recently decided to start throwing the javelin again. She recorded a throw of 63.22 meters (207 feet, 5 inches)

at a meet last month and says she believes she can reach 64 meters, which would give her the Olympic standard and probably the top-three finish she would need to make the

Her event starts next Friday.

"I'm not a 'practice' thrower," she said. "If I don't get it, it would probably be because of something mental.

Quincy Wilson will have a few stories to tell when he heads back to high school. Like the one about how he raced for a chance to go to the Olympics. The 16-year-old who attends the Bullis School in Mar-

yland earned a spot in the 400-meter final after his run of 44.59 seconds held up and was one of the best two marks among sprinters who didn't finish in the top two over the three semifinals.



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Must be presentable and neat

· Desired age: between 25 and 45 • Transferrable Residency #18 or 20

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Shaab Bahri, Block 8, Mohamed Darwiche Al-Aradi Street

#### upcoming Paris 2024 at the conclusion of the Olympic Qualification Series (OQS) final round on Sun-

BUDAPEST, June 24, (Xinhua): Twelve Chinese

athletes secured Olympic spots in BMX freestyle,

breaking, sport climbing, and skateboarding for the

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#### **Pulisic helps US breeze past Bolivia**

## Nunez on target as Uruguay make winning Copa start

MIAMI GARDENS, June 24, (Agencies): Maximiliano Araújo scored when he sent a long-range shot into the top far corner in the 16th minute, Darwin Núñez and Matías Viña added late goals and Uruguay beat Panama 3-1 in its Copa America opener.

Seeking a record 16th Copa America title, Uruguay dominated with 20 shots, including seven on target. Amir Murillo scored late into stoppage time for Panama.

The match drew 33,425 to Hard Rock Stadium, home of the NFL's Miami Dolphins. The stadium is the site of the July 14 final and seven games during the 2026 World Cup.

The United States defeated Bolivia 2-0 in Sunday's earlier Group C game at Arlington, Texas.

Uruguay plays Bolivia at East Rutherford, New Jersey, on Thursday, when Panama faces the U.S. in Atlanta. The group ends July 1 with a U.S.-Uruguay game at Kansas City, Missouri, and a Panama-Bolivia match in Orlando, Florida. The top two teams move on to the quarterfinals

Uruguay is tied with Argentina for a record 15 Copa America titles but hasn't advanced past the quarterfinals



Tim Weah of the United States jumps to control the ball during a Copa America Group C soccer match against Bolivia in Arlington, Texas. (AP)

since winning its last championship in

Panama failed to get past the group phase in 2016, its only previous appearance as a guest at South America's championship.

"I think we were too cautious in front of this team," Panama coach Thomas Christiansen said through an interpreter. "At some points we had a certain level of fear. The second half was a bit different. We had opportunities. We played a bit higher and did well. That's what I told the players. Even though we lost against one of the favorite contenders, we are a team that remains eager." Araújo scored the first goal after he received a pass from Viña from just outside the penalty area, took a touch and turned. He tapped the ball twice and curled a leftfooted shot past goalkeeper Orlando Mosquera's outstretched left arm for his second goal in nine international appearances.

#### **SOCCER**

Núñez made it 2-0 in the 85th minute after Panama turned over the ball in the center circle. Nicolás de la Cruz played a long cross to Araújo, whose header deflected off a shoulder of Murillo to Núñez. He volleyed from 12 yards for his 12th goal in 24 appearances, his ninth in his last six matches.

Viña boosted the margin to 3-0 with a header from de la Cruz's free kick in the first minute of stoppage time, out-jumping defender Abdiel Ayarza for

his first international goal.

Murrillo cut back the ball for space in the fourth minute of stoppage time, sending Araújo spinning, and beat goalkeeper Sergio Rochet from 15 yards in the fourth minute of stoppage time for his ninth goal.

Uruguay has undergone a rebuilding process under Argentine coach Marcelo Bielsa after the retirement of Edinson Cavani and Diego Godín, and a young roster has shown its ability to contend. Uruguay beat Lionel Messi and Argentina and also Brazil



Panama's Jose Rodriguez (left), and Uruguay's Maximiliano Araujo battle for the ball during a Copa America Group C soccer match in Miami Gardens, Fla. (AP)

in World Cup qualifiers, then routed Mexico 4-0 in a friendly early in June.

Christian Pulisic scored one goal and set up another as the United States began their Copa America campaign with a 2-0 victory over Bolivia here on

Pulisic put his side ahead in the third minute at AT&T stadium when he played a one-two with Tim Weah from a corner before curling a shot into the far corner while running away from

The 25-year-old AC Milan attacker then set up Folarin Balogun to drive home a low finish just before halftime.

The tournament hosts were in cruise control in the second half and were

rarely threatened by their South American rivals, who had just three shots on target for the match.

We came out flying with a lot of intensity," Pulisic said after the match. "Obviously an early goal helped us a lot, but all around it was a pretty domi-

nant performance. "We could have scored a few more

to put it away, but all in all it was a really good start to the tournament. We should build some confidence from this; the games are going to get harder from here so we've got to be ready.' The United States will play Panama in Atlanta in their next match on Thursday while Bolivia will meet Uruguay in New Jersey the same day.

# **England, South Africa secure** spots in T20 World Cup semis

West Indies, US eliminated

BRIDGETOWN, Barbados, June 24, (AP): Fast bowler Chris Jordan got a hat trick and the American cricket team lost five wickets in six balls as England secured its spot in the semifinals of the Twenty20 World Cup.

Defending champion England crushed the United States by 10 wickets with 62 balls remaining in their last Super Eight game.

#### **CRICKET**

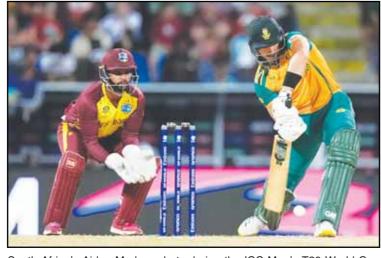
South Africa sealed a place in the semifinals for the first time since 2014 when it beat co-host the West Indies by three wickets in a thrilling rain-affected match at North South, Antigua. They will go through along with England from Group 2

Both co-hosts, the West Indies and United States, now have been elimi-

Jordan, who replaced pacer Mark Wood, grabbed four wickets off five balls in his last over to dismantle the U.S. for 115 runs in 18.5 overs and become the first Englishman to claim a hat trick in T20 internationals. He finished with 4-10 in 2.5 overs on the Caribbean island of Barbados where he

Captain Jos Buttler then smashed 83 not out off 38 balls, including five sixes in one over against left-arm spinner Harmeet Singh, as England raced to 117-0 in 9.4 overs.

England, which also beat West Indies, finished the Super Eights with two big wins and a healthy net run-rate of 1.992. Its massive win over the U.S.



South Africa's Aiden Markram bats during the ICC Men's T20 World Cup cricket match between the West Indies and South Africa at Sir Vivian Richards Stadium in North Sound, Antigua and Barbuda. (AP)

means South Africa, which is unbeaten in six games but has a net run-rate of 0.625, must avoid defeat against tournament co-host West Indies in Sunday's other game to qualify with England for the semifinals.

England squeezed the Americans in the middle overs through impeccable leg spin from man-of-the-match Adil Rashid (2-13 in four overs) as Liam Livingstone (1-24) also bowled well after Buttler won the toss and elected to field. Rashid, who didn't concede a

boundary, bowled two perfect googlies that baffled captain Aaron Jones (10) and top-scorer Nitish Kumar (30).

The sensational collapse began at the end of the 18th over when Jordan caught Harmeet Singh at long-off - off Sam Curran's full toss - and then bowled a pulsating 19th over.

Corey Anderson (29) holed out a pacey full toss from Jordan at the start of the over. Jordan's third ball sent Ali Khan's off stump cartwheeling. Jordan then had Nosthush Kenjige pinned leg before wicket off a sharp incoming delivery and got his hat trick by uprooting Saurabh Netravalkar's middle stump to end the match.

Jordan is the second bowler at this World Cup after Pat Cummins to record a hat trick. The Australian fast bowler took back-to-back hat tricks against Bangladesh and Afghanistan. Buttler smashed seven sixes and six

boundaries. Phil Salt (25 not out) happily gave the strike to his skipper. The Americans' fairy-tale World

Cup debut, which included a historic victory against heavyweight Pakistan earlier in the tournament, ended with three straight Super Eight losses.

Jones said his team ran out of steam against South Africa, West Indies and England in the Super Eight stage after his sensational power-hitting earned the U.S. two back-to-back wins over Canada and Pakistan in the first two

games during the group stage.
At North Sound, Antigua, tall fast bowler Marco Jansen became a hero with the bat as South Africa clinched its place in the semifinals with a thrilling three wicket win over the West Indies in a rain-affected match.

For almost an hour as heavy rain fell in the middle of the match at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium, both teams were in an anxious limbo.

The West Indies had made 135-8 after being sent in and South Africa was 12-2 after two overs when a squall of heavy rain and wind passed across the ground. When the players returned, three overs had been lost and South Africa was chasing 123 from 90 balls.

The Proteas seemed to be coasting towards victory at 77-3 in the eighth over. But the West Indies produced an extraordinary performance to force the match into the last over.

Earlier, Jansen had been injured in a collision with Kagiso Rabada while fielding. By a quirk of fate it was those two players who found themselves at the crease as the match reached its climax.

nine balls when Rabada came out to bat. He hit a four from the last ball of the penultimate over to leave the Proteas needing five runs from six balls. Jansen then smashed the first ball of the last over for six to win the match and finish 21 not out.

Earlier, Roston Chase made 52 from 42 balls and shared a 81-run third wicket partnership with Kyle Mayers which provided the heart of the West Indies innings. Mayers, who was making his first appearance at the tournament as a replacement for the injured Brandon King, opened the innings and made 35 from 34 balls.

#### South Africa needed 12 runs from camp in Bosnia.

Kuwait SC has renewed the contracts of Sami Al-Sanea and Youssef Nasser for another season. Negotiations are ongoing for the renewal of Mohammed Freih, Mishary Ghannam, and Fahd Hammoud. Additionally, a contract with Argentine professional

The technical and administrative staff has scheduled the start of the first team's training for tomorrow, with plans to leave for a European training camp in mid-July. Kuwait SC is focusing on the AFC Champions League 2 qualifying round, with a challenging match against Bahrain's Al-Ahly on August 14th.

Al-Nasr has bolstered its squad with the acquisition of striker Fawaz

# Mbilish, player Ahmed Yahya, and

The first training session of Al-Nasr.

## Abdullah 'appointed' as Acting Director of PAYS

KUWAIT CITY, June 24: The Minister of Social Affairs, Family and Childhood Affairs, and Minister of State for Youth Affairs, Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah, has appointed Bashar Abdullah as the Acting Director of the Public Authority for Youth and Sports

. Abdullah, who has been serving as the Deputy Director of the General Youth Authority for Sports Affairs, will take on his new role effective immediately. Bashar Abdullah joined the Authority early last year as the Deputy Direc-

Talal Jaza from Kuwait SC. It has also

new additions join Fawaz Al-Rashidi,

Fahd Al-Salama, Saad Al-Adhab, and

Al-Jahra goalkeeper Hamad Al-Kha-

lidi, who were previously contracted.

Al-Nasr was the first team to com-

mence training for the new season,

starting the day before yesterday un-

der the leadership of coach Zaher Al-

Adwani and with the attendance of 23

players. Al-Adwani emphasized the

importance of adhering to the techni-

cal and administrative staff's instruc-

tions and encouraged players to strive

for top performance to achieve the

Al-Nasr is planning an external

camp in the second week of July, with

Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan, being

**Best of the Rest** 

Varga needs surgery: Hungary

forward Barnabás Varga was set

to undergo surgery Monday after

breaking several facial bones in a

collision with Scotland's goalkeep-

er during their game at the European Championship. The Group A match

on Sunday was halted for nearly 10

minutes so Varga could get treat-

ment after colliding with Angus

Gunn midway through the second

ried off on a stretcher and taken to

a Stuttgart hospital. Surgery was

"He is fine, conscious and wait-

ing to be operated," team spokesman

Gergo Szabo told The Associated Press. "He will have to spend a few

days in the hospital but it would be

a dramatic stoppage-time goal from

Hungary went on to win 1-0 with

irresponsible to say anything now."

scheduled for Monday afternoon.

The 29-year-old Varga was car-

the most likely location.

best results.

goalkeeper Badr Al-Ajmi.

tor for Competitive Sports.

## **Clubs gear up for new season** with 'strategic' preparations

By Hassan Musa

KUWAIT CITY, June 24: Local clubs are gearing up for the 2024-2025 season by developing comprehensive plans and preparation programs, securing contracts with both local and international players to bolster their squads

Al-Arabi, also known as "Al-Akhdar," has kicked off its preparations for the upcoming season. The General Director of the Football Sector, Khaled Al-Fabadi, recently met with the tech-

ahead of the new season.

#### SOCCER

nical and administrative staff of the first team to finalize the preparation program. This meeting also aimed to organize administrative and technical tasks and outline the goals and work strategy before training begins and the team heads to their planned foreign

Training sessions are set to start next Saturday at Al-Sahel Stadium, pending the completion of maintenance at Sabah Al-Salem Stadium. Al-Arabi expressed gratitude to Al-Sahel Club, especially Secretary Abdul Latif Al-Anazi and head of the football apparatus, Dr. Ahmed Ajab, for allowing them to use their facilities in "Abu Halifa."

Sergio Vitura will soon be announced.

#### substitute Kevin Csoboth to leave it with a chance of advancing at Euro 2024, though Varga will play no further part. (AP) Pei joins Shaanxi: China's thirdtier soccer club Shaanxi Union announced on Monday that former

Chinese national team member Pei Shuai has joined the club from the Chinese Super League (CSL) side Qingdao West Coast. The 30-year-old began his career with Changchun Yatai in 2011. Be-

fore leaving Yatai for Tianjin Quan-jian in 2017, Pei scored seven goals in his 141 appearances.
In 2017, Pei joined the Chi-

nese national team, participating in the China Cup. Since 2020, Pei has played for Shenzhen FC and Qingdao West Coast. (Xinhua)

## **Herta finishes second for Andretti Global**

## Palou reclaims IndyCar championship lead

MONTEREY, June 24, (AP): Twotime IndyCar champion Alex Palou reclaimed the lead in the points standings by winning from the pole Sunday at Laguna Seca Raceway.

Palou, now a two-time winner on the permanent road course, has finished on the podium in all four of his career starts at the California track. His win there in the 2022 season finale was believed to be the catalyst for him changing his mind to leave Chip Ganassi Racing for a move to Arrow McLaren Racing.

It is the second win of the season for the Spaniard, not counting his victory in the \$1 million exhibition race in March. He wasn't able to explain his dominance on the 11-turn, 2.238-mile jewel of a road course.

Palou lost the lead exiting the first turn of the race to Kyle Kirkwood but reclaimed it through strategy. He then had to hold off Herta, who was in fuel-saving mode at the end of the race, through three late cautions. Palou ultimately led 48 of 95 laps.

"I did a mistake and lost the lead. I was not really happy with myself at the beginning and the team had to do a really risky strategy, too risky," Palou said. "It was too risky, but it worked out." Colton Herta finished second for Andretti Global and Alexander Rossi finished third to earn his first podium of the season - and only his second overall since joining Arrow McLaren. Rossi, who is also from Califor-

nia, led 10 laps. Herta led eight. Romain Grosjean was fourth in his best finish since joining Juncos Hollinger Racing this year. It was

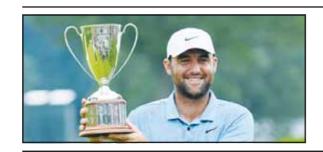
the best finish ever for a JHR driver. Kirkwood of Andretti faded to fifth. He was followed by Scott Dixon of Ganassi and then Will Power of Team Penske. Power had held a five-point lead over Palou in the standings prior to Sunday's race. It was an OK Arrow McLaren de-

but for 19-year-old Palo Alto native Nolan Siegel, who was just hired for the seat earlier this week. The youngest driver on the grid spun off the track and into the gravel to draw a full-course caution on a restart midway through the race. He finished 12th after starting

23rd and was the "biggest mover of the race." Siegel is the third driver in the No. 6 this season as the ride was supposed to go to Palou, who changed his mind in a breach of contract dispute with McLaren. The team then hired David Malu-

kas, who broke his wrist in a moun-

tain biking crash one month before the season opener.



Scottie Scheffler holds up his trophy after winning the Travelers Championship golf tournament at TPC River Highlands in Cromwell, Conn. (AP) - See Page 14

## **Latest sports scores at — http://sports.arabtimesonline.com**

Gold for Hang and Hong

## Sheikh Al Qasimi applauds Kuwait's hosting of Asian Fencing Championships

#### KUWAIT CITY, June 24: For the second consecutive day, the Asian Fencing Championships for men and women, hosted by Kuwait, continued at Hall No. 4 at the International Fairgrounds in the Mishrif area. The event will run until next Thursday, featuring 350 male and female fencers from 36 countries.

On the second day of competition, Hang Ho Wai from the Hong Kong national team clinched the gold medal in the men's épée competition. His compatriot Ng Ho Tin took silver, while Japan's Kumata Akira and Kazakhstan's Sertay Yerlik shared the bronze.

In the women's events, South Korea's Hong Sina won the gold medal in the foil competition. Japan's Kikuchi Komaki secured the silver medal, and the bronze medals were awarded to China's Wang Yuting and Japan's Ueno Yuka. Sheikh Salem Al-Qasimi,

President of the Asian and Arab Fencing Federations, praised the organization of the tournament and expressed confidence in the Kuwaiti Federation's strategy for hosting such a significant event. He noted the high level of competition and hoped for even greater excitement in the remaining days of the tournament. Al-Qasimi highlighted that Kuwait's successful hosting of this major continental event sets a precedent for other federations to follow, paving the way for future achieve-

#### **FENCING**

He added, "Fencing is becoming increasingly popular in Asia and is garnering significant attention, similar to its global presence. Asian fencers are now a formidable presence in Olympic competitions. As an Asian federation, we aim to achieve even more success, particularly in the upcoming Olympic Games in Paris 2024."

The Board of Directors of the Kuwait Fencing Federation held a ceremony at the Abdul Hussein Marafi Hall in the Radisson Blu Hotel to honor Sheikh Salem Al-Qasimi, President of the Asian and Arab Fencing Federations. The tournament referees, technical and administrative committees, and volunteers were also recognized for their contributions. The ceremony concluded with a dinner party in honor of the attendees.

#### England seek to solidify top spot

COLOGNE, Germany, June 24, (AP): England plays Slovenia in its final Group C game at Euro 2024 on Tuesday. Negativity has surrounded Gareth Southgate's team following its unconvincing 1-1 draw with Denmark, but England still tops the group on four points and a draw will be enough to guarantee it advances to the round of 16.

England's 1-1 draw with Denmark has sparked heavy criticism of the team, despite it topping Group C and being likely to progress even if it loses to Slovenia. While England could still fin-

#### **SOCCER**

ish third, four points has always been enough to advance to the knockout phase of the Euros as one of the best third-placed

England beat Serbia 1-0 in its opening game.

Winning the group would mean England faces one of the best third-placed teams from Group D,

Slovenia - on two points - goes into the game knowing it could finish top or bottom of the group, depending on results.

Slovenia has drawn against Denmark and Serbia in its other games in Group C.

All 26 players in England's squad trained on Monday, with speculation Luke Shaw could play for the first time at these Euros, having missed the end of the season with injury.

Southgate may decide to make a change in midfield after experimenting with defender Trent Alexander-Arnold in a holding role. Conor Gallagher could partner Declan Rice instead.

Harry Kane scored a recordextending 64th goal for England in the game against Denmark.

Slovenia is playing in only its second Euros and is still waiting for its first win.

# **Last-gasp Germany finish top of Group A** as Hungary wreck Scotland last 16 hopes



Scotland's goalkeeper Angus Gunn, top, punches the ball over Hungary's Roland Sallai, bottom, during a Group A match between Scotland and Hungary at the Euro 2024 soccer tournament in Stuttgart, Germany. (AP)

Füllkrug denies impressive Switzerland victory

Youth team opens against Oman

## **Kuwait kick off West Asian Championship campaign**

By Hassan Musa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 24: The Kuwait under-19 youth football team begins its journey in the West Asian Championship in Taif, Saudi Arabiay, facing the Oman at 5:00 pm in the first group stage. Host Saudi Arabia and Yemen Group A lineup.

In a press conference, Croatian Blue coach Dario Pesic expressed his wellwishes for all teams participating in the tournament, highlighting the value of the experience for his team. Pesic emphasized that this championship marks an important step towards its goals, as it prepares for the Asian Cup qualifiers. He noted that these young players are being groomed to eventually represent the senior national team.

Pesic underscored the importance of the match against Oman, viewing it as a crucial opportunity for the team to perform well and gain valuable experience. Last week, Al-Azraq held a training camp in Egypt, where it played a friendly match against the Egyptian

group game.



The Kuwaiti players hold their final training session before their opener

youth team, which ended in a 0-4 loss. The Croatian coach called up 28 players for the tournament, including Youssef Sabah, Ahmed Khurshid, Jassim Shamouh, Abdullah Al-Ayoub, Abdullah Fares, Miqdad Safar, Abdul-

Wahab Jassim, Youssef Majed, Hussein Al-Kankouni, Talal Al-Matroud, Abdul-Wahab Al-Shalal, Jassim Matar, Abdul-Aziz Abdeen, Fadel Al-Sarraf, Ahmed Boodai, Mohammed Al-Omran, Turki Al-Yousef, Omar

A, behind first-place Germany and

The match was overshadowed by a

serious-looking injury to Barnabás

Switzerland.

Al-Azmi, Montaser Suleiman, Bandar Qannas, Eid Talal, Thamer Al-Sulaili, Khaled Al-Kharqawi, Abdullah Al-Sarraf, Muhammad Arhama, Muhammad Al-Surai'i, Saud Al-Kandari and Jassim Al-Anazi.

The youth team is following a longterm preparatory program. After the West Asian Championship, it will return to Kuwait for local training before

#### **SOCCER**

heading to Serbia on July 17 for an external camp lasting until August 6. This camp will help it prepare for the Asian Cup qualifiers, which Kuwait will host in September. It will compete in Group C against South Korea, the UAE, Lebanon, and the Northern

Mariana Islands. Following the Serbia camp, the team will participate in a four-team friendly tournament in Azerbaijan over two weeks before returning to Kuwait to play two trial matches before starting

the Asian Cup qualifiers.



Switzerland's Breel Embolo, (left), fights for the ball with Germany's Jonathan Tah during a Group A match between Switzerland and Germany at

half. The Hungary forward was taken to hospital and will likely need an operation after fracturing several

Varga will take no part in the rest of the tournament should Hungary's three points be enough to reach the round of 16 at Euro 2024 as one of the four best third-place teams - which it might not know until Wednesday when the final round of group games finishes.

The whole stadium looked on in concern after Varga collided with Scotland goalkeeper Angus Gunn. His teammates held up blankets to shield the player as he was tended to by medical staff and both sets of fans applauded when Varga was stretchered off after a delay of around 10 minutes.

Germany topped the group after a late goal saw it rescue a 1-1 draw against Switzerland. Scotland was eliminated after fin-

ishing last in the group, with just one point from a draw against Switzerland. It was humiliated 5-1 by Germany in the Euro 2024 opener.

#### SOCCER

FRANKFURT, Germany,

June 24, (AP): They all jumped for the ball in a

frantic late push for the

goal that would save Germany from its first loss at

the European Champion-

ship, against an impressive

Defender Nico Schlotterbeck

leaped up, next to the even more

imposing center-back Antonio Rü-

diger, who reached highest of all.

In front of them both was substi-

The German trio was circled by

three Swiss opponents trying to protect

a 1-0 lead two minutes into stoppage

time. Six pairs of feet off the ground in

unison, straining to be the one to head

It was Füllkrug who won the con-

test, guiding the ball crossed from

another substitute David Raum back

across Switzerland goalkeeper Yann

Sommer into the top corner of the net.

Germany had already advanced to

the round of 16 before kickoff Sunday,

but a draw felt like a win in the cir-

cumstances and kept the momentum of

impressive wins against Scotland and

Switzerland team.

tute Niclas Füllkrug.

The match ended 1-1.

Hungary.

Switzerland impressed while protecting a 28th-minute goal from Dan Ndoye's clever volleyed shot, and chasing a bigger lead. A second goal was denied by a marginal offside ruling against Ruben Vargas and a fine save by Manuel Neuer from Xhaka's shot.

The point for each team ensured Germany finished top and Switzerland second in Group A. Hungary took third place in the standings with an even later stoppage-time goal to beat Scotland 1-0 in Stuttgart.

Germany now goes to Dortmund for a round of 16 game Saturday against the runner-up in Group C. That opponent can be any of the four teams -England, Slovenia, Denmark or Serbia - playing their final round of Group C games on Tuesday.

Switzerland heads to the Olympic

Stadium in Berlin to open the round of 16 on Saturday against the runner-up in Group B, likely Italy or Croatia. They meet Monday in their decisive

for the first time in its history. Coach Murat Yakin suggested Late substitute Kevin Csoboth Switzerland had earned the right to scored his first international goal in the make a higher-ranked opponent con-10th minute of stoppage time as

cerned about Switzerland's goal was made in Bologna, the upstart Italian club that has qualified for its first Champions League entry next season.

Ndoye timed his run to meet a floated pass across the goalmouth from his Bologna teammate Remo Freuler. The attack began when Fabian Rieder, making his first start since the 2022 World Cup, won the ball in the German half and then fed Freuler.

A video review had denied Germany taking the lead in the 17th. Robert Andrich's long-range shot bounced up and over the dive of Sommer, but the VAR team alerted Italian referee Daniele Orsato to an earlier foul in the goalmouth by Jamal Musiala.

A dramatic stoppage-time goal saw Hungary beat Scotland 1-0 at the European Championship to wreck its opponent's hopes of reaching the knockout stage of a major tournament

the Euro 2024 soccer tournament in Frankfurt, Germany. (AP)

## ARAB® TIMES

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