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PM OUTLINES NEED TO ATTRACT FOREIGN INVESTMENT
Assembly to review '23-'27 work plan

'Correcting the course: A product-based economy and sustainable wellbeing'

KUWAIT CITY, July 17, (Agencies): The National Assembly is set to hold Tuesday a special session to look into government work plan for the 17th legislative term (2023-2027).

The work plan, titled 'Correcting the course: product-based economy and sustainable wellbeing' consists of five axes, each diverging into various programs and projects reflecting government objectives of development and addressing citizens' priorities.

The five axes aim to improve living conditions, boost government efficiency and intensify productivity.

The axes split into public finance stability, economic agenda, creation of job opportunities and skill-set development, sustainable prosperity and strong human capital, and a more product-based government.

Article (98) of the Kuwaiti constitution stipulates that each ministry submits to National Assembly action plan for the assembly to reply with notes.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah highlighted in speech on occasion of work plan submission, the government's keenness on cooperation with the legislative branch all for the good and benefit of the people.

National Assembly Speaker Ahmad Al-Sadoun was handed Sunday the government work plan by Deputy PM and State Minister for National Assembly Affairs and Cabinet Affairs Essa Al-Kandari.

His Highness the Prime Minister, Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, has spoken of the need for the private sector to fulfill its role under the effective control of the state, towards sustainable development, and added the state must create an atmosphere of confidence and reassurance to encourage local investment and attract foreign capital, reports Al-Rai daily.

Opinion

O world's women, Kuwait welcomes you, as long as you are not pregnant

By Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

WE start by asking, just like others who are asking - What does Kuwait benefit from preventing pregnant women from entering the country, and not allowing those who have reached the age of 60 years to obtain a visit visa? Does this help in reviving the economic movement in the country?

Who invented this idea that indicates a lack of knowledge of what benefits the country?

Did those concerned with this decision meet the hotel owners and commercial establishments to inquire or at least learn from them about what stimulates the economic movement? Or was it a joke that was cracked in a diwaniya about the idea of banning pregnant women, in which the joke was a comment on the suspension of visit visa, but the concerned official took that joke seriously, because it was made in an "active" diwaniya?

Whoever recommended this thought he had nailed it, but he missed to specify in which trimester should the ban be imposed.

In this regard, here is a fact - Whoever wants to visit Kuwait must buy a ticket, stay in a hotel, spend money, use taxis, and many other benefits that accrue to the national economy. Also, this visitor may be looking to explore investment opportunities in the country, even if he is 60 or 65 years old, and has much more experience than those with university degrees, or being a doctor.

Perhaps, this person was told that the traditional Kuwaiti food and the silver pomfret are considered as medicine for many diseases that people suffer from. Nonetheless, we still beg to ask about the wisdom behind this condition, which is a unique invention of Kuwait, which no other country in the world imposes such a condition on visitors.

Also, in this regard, the concerned authority did not specify which university certificate a visa applicant in question should have. Is it for fishing fish or shrimp, cooking or frying? This is because whoever invented this formula must be a doctor in the science of law, economics, and investments, or believes that Kuwait is a "Garden of Eden" where only holders of degrees and non-pregnant women can enter.

In any case, thanks to His Highness the First Deputy and Minister of Interior Sheikh Talal Al-Khalid for suspending this decision, as this decision indicates the extent of backwardness that pervades state institutions, as if no one realizes the harm that Kuwait sustains from such decisions, or benefits. It is also for this reason that matters are only solved once they happen.

In the past 20 years, decisions were issued that made Kuwait the laughing stock of the world, especially the Gulf countries. At a time when the world is opening up to each other, countries are seeking to stimulate their tourism movement, and billions of dollars annually enter their domestic product, Kuwait continues to do the opposite.

Its "short-sighted" consultants come up with decisions that do not ride on the rainbow, and do not cross the minds of young children. In the end, the country groans from the economic pains that it suffers from due to old age, after some officials closed it with a "padlock and key."

Is it with such a backward mentality that Kuwait plans to compete with neighboring countries to become a global financial and commercial center? Is it not in all the Gulf countries that are more prosperous than Kuwait that manages industries and trade, and the majority of facilities are foreigners residing in them? Do they not help in strengthening the economies of those countries?

Whoever believes the saying that "Kuwait is different" and works according to it is the one who seeks more backwardness of the state. For this reason, why don't you close all the ports, expel the residents, or raise a banner on the ports - "O women of the world, if you want to visit Kuwait, abort your pregnancy"?

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News watch

ISTANBUL: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan travels to Saudi Arabia on Monday in a three-stop tour of Arabian Gulf states to seek trade and investment opportunities for Turkey's floundering economy.

Erdogan will arrive in Jeddah accompanied by an entourage of some 200 businesspeople, according to the Foreign Economic Relations Board of Turkey. He is expected to meet King Salman and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman. Business forums have been arranged in Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates during Erdogan's three-day trip.



Erdogan

"We are hoping to improve our relations and cooperation in many fields. We will focus on joint investment and commercial initiatives to be realised in the upcoming period," Erdogan told reporters in Istanbul before leaving.

The visit comes as Turks are hit with sales and fuel tax hikes that Finance Minister Mehmet Simsek has said are necessary to restore fiscal discipline and bring inflation down. (AP)

ISLAMABAD: The top military leadership of Pakistan and neighboring Iran agreed to step up cooperation and intelligence sharing and take "effective actions" to prevent attacks by separatist militants along their porous border, Pakistani officials said Monday.

The agreement was reached during a visit by Pakistan's powerful army chief Gen. Asim Munir to Tehran over the weekend, officials said. Munir traveled to Tehran on a two-day visit following a surge in attacks in the country's southwestern Baluchistan province, which shares a long border with Afghanistan and Iran.

Pakistan's relations with Iran have witnessed ups and downs in recent years because of cross-border attacks by Pakistani militants. Small separatist groups have been behind a long-running insurgency calling for gas and oil-rich Baluchistan's independence from the central government in Islamabad. (AP)

CAIRO: A five-story apartment building collapsed Monday in the Egyptian capital of Cairo, leaving at least nine people dead, authorities said, as rescuers searched through the rubble.

Building collapses are common in Egypt, where shoddy construction and a lack of maintenance are widespread in shantytowns, poor city neighborhoods and rural areas.

The state-run MENA news agency reported that rescue teams recovered at least nine bodies from under the rubble of the building in Cairo's neighborhood of Hadaeq el-Qubbah, roughly 2 miles (3.2 kilometers) from the city's center. (AP)

ROME: Italian health officials intensified heat warnings Monday as southern Europe began a brutally hot week with temperatures expected to top 40 Celsius - or 104 Fahrenheit - on a continent already sizzling under the sun and overburdened by tourists.

The health ministry urged regions to beef up house-call services so older people don't have to go out if they need medical care and to set up dedicated heat stations at hospitals to treat emergency cases.

The ministry also issued 10 recommendations to protect elderly people, the sick and pets from the heat, urging people to stay indoors during the hottest hours, drink at least 1.5 liters (nearly half a gallon) of water a day and refrain from strenuous exercise at peak daylight times. Local celebrities went on state-run RAI television to read the recommendations aloud, in hopes of spreading the message. (AP)

Day by Day

SINCE 1992 Kuwait has seen 14 parliaments, 34 governments during which hundreds of parliamentarians and government elite have crossed the paths; and we are witnesses to what happened between 'this and that'.

Every day in our political life we see fights between deputies and ministers or among ministers and parliamentarians themselves. As a result 400 draft laws are collecting dust in the drawers. Have the public affairs suffered? Or is it forbidden to talk about this subject?

The courts are handling hundreds of cases of corruption. The prisons are filled with prisoners of opinion. They are put behind bars for expressing their opinions. Even when someone apologizes, the person is sent to trial. Do we have answers to what is going on? ... Yet tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar

ABK holds General Assembly meeting, approves KD 50 million capital increase

— Details Page 8 —



Smoke spreads during a wildfire in Belen, near Iskenderun, southern Turkey, Sunday, July 16, 2023. (AP)



People jump in the water to cool off on a sweltering hot day in the Mediterranean Sea in Beirut, Lebanon, Sunday, July 16, 2023. Temperatures were forecast to reach as high as 40 degrees Celsius, 104 Fahrenheit, in some parts of Lebanon. (AP)

Salaries

Speaking at the inauguration of the Government Action Program, the Prime Minister said, the government has not lost sight of the social and basic needs of life, saying the government's work program includes setting up an integrated framework for reviewing public sector salaries by updating the study of the strategic alternative, in a manner commensurate with merit and productivity, while stimulating the trend towards working in the private sector to rationalize the cost on the state's public finances.

He went on to say, the program also includes 30 legislative requirements for its implementation, in addition to that it includes 13 projects to raise Kuwait's educational rating, 9 to raise the health rating, and 15 projects to improve the quality of life of citizens and enhance their wellbeing, in addition to 36 projects valid for private sector participation and public subscriptions.

This is in addition to the launch of a standard central platform for government procurement and linking all government agencies with it to ensure the best prices and benefit from the advantage of collective procurement, and the approval of ceilings for public expenditures for the medium-term within budgets that are according to prudent discretionary frameworks; preparing a general framework for restructuring the subsidy model towards achieving more justice, transparency and efficiency, while directing it to the needy groups, issuing a general framework to address the foundations of the pension insurance system in all its organizational fields, aiming to eliminate the actuarial deficit and improve the financial performance of the institution to ensure its sustainability and independence from the state's public finances.

Pricing

He added, it also includes issuing a general framework for periodically reviewing and re-pricing the state's real estate taking into account the foundations of justice and productivity rates, launching a pricing mechanism for public services, fees and irregularities (which is developed and reviewed periodically), and issuing a general framework for corporate tax, including legislative requirements and implementation mechanisms, in accordance with best international practices and the approval of the public debt law and the framework regulating it, while linking it to projects of added economic value.

The program, he said, includes the opening of the new Kuwait International Airport building T2 and its operation through the international airports management, the launch of the joint Gulf rail link project and the preparation of railway stations in Nuwaiseeb and Shaddadiya, as well as the opening of Kuwait City for air cargo in partnership with an international operator.

It also includes the inauguration of the railway line between the State of Kuwait and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, with the development of tourism and logistical infrastructure in the surrounding region, the completion of the development, construction and operation of the Mubarak Al-Kabeer Port project through global partnerships, and the increase of the capacity for air traffic from 240,000 to 650,000 landing and take-off flights gradually through the development of 3 runways at the Kuwait International Airport, the Premier added.

With regard to the energy sector, the program includes raising the production of free gas (excluding the Divided Zone) from 521 million cubic feet per day to 930 million cubic feet per day, and preparing the integrated infrastructure for the offshore Durra field.

Continued on Page 3

New campaign to impose Islamic dress

Morality police back on the ... beat

DUBAI, July 17, (AP): Iranian authorities on Sunday announced a new campaign to force women to wear the Islamic headscarf and morality police returned to the streets 10 months after the death of a woman in their custody sparked nationwide protests.

The morality police had largely pulled back following the death of 22-year-old Mahsa Amini last September, as authorities struggled to contain mass protests calling for the overthrow of the theocracy that has ruled Iran for over four decades.

The protests largely died down earlier this year following a heavy crackdown in which over 500 protesters were killed and nearly 20,000 detained. But many women continued to flout the official dress code, especially in the capital, Tehran, and other cities.

The morality police were only rarely seen patrolling the streets, and in December, there were even some reports - later denied - that they had been disbanded.

Authorities insisted throughout the crisis that the rules had not pillar. Iran's clerical rulers view the hijab as a key pillar of the Islamic revolution that brought them to power, and consider more casual dress a sign of Western decadence.

On Sunday, Gen. Saeed Montazerolmahdi, a police spokesman, said the morality police would resume notifying and then detaining women not wearing hijab in public. In Tehran, the men and women of the morality police could be seen patrolling the streets in marked vans.

Late Saturday, police arrested Mohammed Sadeghi, a young and relatively unknown actor, in a raid on his home that he appears to have broadcast on social media. Earlier, he had posted a video in response to another online video showing a woman being detained by the morality police. "Believe me, if I see such a scene, I might commit murder," he said.

The website of the semi-official Hamshahri daily, which is affiliated with the Tehran municipality, said he was arrested for encouraging people to use weapons against the police.

The battle over the hijab became a powerful rallying cry last fall, with women playing a leading role in the protests. The demonstrations quickly escalated into calls for the overthrow of Iran's clerical rulers, whom the mostly young protesters accuse of being corrupt, repressive and out of touch. Iran's government blamed the protests on a foreign conspiracy, without providing evidence.

Several Iranian celebrities joined the protests, including prominent directors and actors from the country's celebrated film industry.

diwaniya



A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

'New specializations vital to keep pace with future & labor market'

"THE Civil Service Bureau announced that there are no jobs available in the petroleum engineering sector, and therefore the College of Engineering and Petroleum must cancel the petroleum engineering major, so that petroleum engineering students, after their graduation, do not fall into a trench of difficulty due to the lack of jobs for them in future in the labor market," columnist **Fawaz Ahmad Al-Hamad** wrote for **Al-Qabas** daily.

"The engineering majors are announced by the Civil Service Bureau and for which there is no need in the current labor market, such as media, history, international relations, philosophy, political science, geographic information systems, petroleum and natural gas engineering, industrial and systems engineering, industrial and administrative engineering, chemical engineering, mechanical engineering, jurisprudence and principles, comparative jurisprudence and Islamic politics.

"On the other hand, the Civil Service Bureau announced the bachelor's majors for which there is a need in the current labor market, are human medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine, medical laboratories, radiology, physiotherapy, speech and hearing, graphics, psychology, physics, libraries and information, communications engineering, computer engineering, civil engineering, sociology, electrical engineering, applied statistics, biology, chemistry, mathematics, computer science, English and allied medical sciences.

"It is noted that there are many vacancies related to medical professions of all kinds, and the lack of majors related to new information systems, such as cybersecurity, robotics, software engineering, data science, network security, artificial intelligence, 3D printing, the Internet, and other specializations related to modern technology.

"Kuwait is an oil producing country, however, it does not need a specialization in petroleum engineering at the present time, and it is also noticeable that there are no new technological specializations available, and accordingly it becomes clear to us that our educational system needs a lot of development and modification by adding new specializations to keep pace with the future and the labor market.

"We all have to admit first that there is a big problem in our educational system, and the absence of an approved link between the Ministry of Education and Higher Education and universities with the Civil Service Bureau. We do not want the years of study and education to be wasted for our students, and after fatigue and graduation they are surprised and shocked that there are no jobs available for them in the labor market.

"The educational system in Kuwait needs to be restructured by canceling specific disciplines and introducing new ones in order to keep pace with global development, and for Kuwait to be in the ranks of developed countries.

"Gentlemen, the government and the National Assembly should cooperate and coordinate with the Civil Service Bureau, the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, and universities, to find quick and appropriate solutions to the problems of new specializations for which there is no need in the labor market, so that students choose the appropriate specializations, for which there is need in the labor market.

"There are new global technological variables that have led to a significant change in the needs of the labor market, and the need for new jobs in line with technology and the new developed technological world has emerged."

Also:

"It is crystal clear that the cooperation between the two authorities is evident and the gap has narrowed or rather disappeared, and the tangible positive change in the parliamentary behavior that took place in last Thursday's session has become the talk of the town, and the best evidence of a real possibility to cross into the new era that every citizen dreams of, that is if the intentions are clear and we follow the same path that we started with," columnist **Abdul Wahaab Al Issa** wrote for **Al-Jarida** daily.

"After decades of shackle-like laws that increased the operational burdens of the government which had ballooned to the point that it was unable to see develop, the National Assembly, in its new spirit, has begun to approve laws -- an approach that is in line with most of the world's parliaments, which have consistently passed legislation aimed at achieving 'a small oversight government and a large operational private sector'.

"However, laws alone are not sufficient, unless the government translates them into a smooth transition in the form of the comprehensive operational process in the state for the benefit of the private sector. In order to make the best use of what was approved in Thursday's fruitful session that wrote a document for the birth of a new spirit in constructive cooperation, I see that there are important main points that we must take into account, foremost of which is the mortgage law and

the need to take advantage of the banks' glutted liquidity to fill the liquidity deficit in the Credit Bank; because -- in short -- we do not want housing cities in which the citizen is unable to purchase suitable housing.

"We also see that the gradual expansion of "Afia" insurance is a praiseworthy direction that is badly needed, provided that this is not accompanied by a similar expansion in government health services, as their expansion together would represent a great danger to the state's public treasury.

"As for the Kuwaiti private sector, after all eyes are directed towards it to carry out its duty and contribute to the desired development plan, it must fully prepare for the gigantic opportunities that will be seen if stability is written for this council, and government looks for success in what we all aspire to, but this sector must, at the same time, realize that this support will not be a call for a free ride.

"What is required of him is to contribute to enhancing public finance revenues and creating jobs for citizens."

"The Public Authority for Agriculture Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR) announced a few days ago that fishing for mullet is permitted in Kuwaiti territorial waters, except Kuwait Bay, and within three miles from the coasts and around Kuwaiti islands," columnist **Khalid Alarafa** wrote for **Al-Anba** daily.

"In the same period last year, we touched on the scarcity of mullet in the fish market and the high prices at the beginning of the season. At the time, we asked the competent authorities to address the problem and determine the reasons behind the scarcity of fish despite the breeding season, as well as the high prices. Unfortunately, no one paid attention. The season ended then without any solution.

"Now that we are at the beginning of mullet fishing season once again, the scarcity problem re-emerged. The fish stalls are almost empty up to this day. Some fishermen claimed this is due to problems related to the allocation of fishing places -- the major reason behind the scarcity of mullet.

"The PAAAFR must clarify the issue and speak with full transparency. Is the scarcity due to the reason that some fishermen mentioned or there other things behind the fabrication of problems aimed at raising prices under the pretext of low supply and high demand?"

"We hope that the authority will take action, as the high fish prices problem that the citizens are currently facing includes local and imported varieties. For instance, the price of zubaidi increased to KD14 some months ago.

"We have not witnessed any significant step by the competent authorities in terms of accountability and enforcement of the law. PAAAFR and the Ministry of Commerce should solve the price problem, stop those trying to control the fish market, monitor the daily auctions, hold all those who raised prices accountable, and control the brokers' work in markets.

"Does a non-Kuwaiti have the right to work as a broker and hold or organize auctions? If the answer is 'no', what is the role of the regulatory authorities, which supervise auctions and are run by non-Kuwaitis?"

"The recently ratified laws on the establishment of residential cities and adding Kuwaiti housewives to the beneficiaries of the health for retirees (Afia) are the first fruits of cooperation between the lawmakers and the government that are thankful for such cooperation," columnist **Dr Turki Al-Azmi** wrote for **Al-Rai** daily.

"I read the law on adding Kuwaiti housewives to the Afia beneficiaries and I found that the four additional categories are linked to the Kuwaiti Aid Law -- married Kuwaiti women who reached the age of 55!

"While the law stipulates that it is permissible to add other segments through a ministerial decision, I think the term 'Kuwaiti housewives' should include all non-working Kuwaiti housewives who have children without the age requirement ... It is supposed to be associated with the presence of children to honor Kuwaiti women for raising children in a very sensitive situation that led to negative behaviors, because mothers are preoccupied with monitoring the children.

"The National Assembly members must continue cooperating with the government for achievements to see the light as per the priorities that parliamentarians promised to achieve.

"One side should not provoke the other. No authority should be intransigent towards any proposal ... Dialogue, transparency and good intentions are shortcuts to achievement.

"We want a better standard of living, education and healthcare. Most importantly, we want a source of national income other than oil in order to enjoy development projects based on investment strategies, which will restore the status of Kuwait as the pride of the Gulf."

— Compiled by **Mai Elsoukary**



KUNA photo

HH the Crown Prince while receiving the President of the Asian Olympic Council Sheikh Talal Fahad.

HH Crown Prince receives Asian Olympic Council president

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received Monday the President of the Asian Olympic Council Sheikh Talal Fahad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

His Highness the Crown Prince wished Sheikh Talal success in his new post and to serve Asian sports. (KUNA)

16 pct of males complain of impotency in Kuwait: expert

'60% related to diabetes and obesity'

KUWAIT CITY, July 17: The head of the urology unit at the Jaber Armed Forces Hospital, **Dr. Muhammad Al-Ghanim**, said the percentage of male infertility in Kuwait, according to the latest statistics, is about 16 percent, and that about 60 percent of this percentage is related to diabetes and obesity, reports **Al-Jarida** daily.

Al-Ghanim told the daily, that most of them complain of poor sexual ability and this is due to the inflammation of the peripheral nerves that leads to impotence in men because of the inability of the arteries to pump enough blood. This is in addition to the venous leakage in the blood vessels of the sex organ. He added that other causes that lead to impotence in men is diabetes and low levels of the male hormone testosterone. Premature ejaculation is also one of the problems associated with diabetes.

Infertility

He stated that cases of male infertility are either in the form of a low number of sperm count or because of their movement being affected, or because of their absence. He pointed out that cases of absence and methods of using the developed surgical microscope will be addressed, as well as the negative repercussions of varicocele, and the impact of lifestyle and obesity in this regard.

He explained that one of the reasons for not having children is also the reflux of semen into the urine, which often affects diabetics, pointing to the importance of highlighting the analyzes that should not be overlooked to analyze the disease.

He advised diabetic patients to avoid the issue of declining sexual ability, the need to monitor and control the disease, pointing out that there are several treatments for this condition, the first of which is traditional treatment by taking erectile dysfunction pills, and there is also a treatment for low male hormone, until we reach the needles.

Al-Ghanim indicated that there is a suction device that can be used to treat impotence, but in cases of severe weakness, the patient may need a prosthetic device operation, and prosthetic device operations are the ideal solutions for treating severe impotence cases that occur due to various causes.



Al-Rai photo

Firefighters putting out fire.

No casualties reported

Acting on information firefighters rushed to an unidentified location in Jahra and put out fire, reports **Al-Rai** daily.

The daily said the fire destroyed a

pile of discarded trees and worn out tires near the Jahra water pump. The fire was put out by fire engines from Al-Jahra Al-Harfi, and Al-Isnad.

No casualties have been reported.

Majority of Kuwaitis who got married in '22 are graduates

KUWAIT CITY, July 17: The newly released marriage statistics, for 2022, shows a majority of Kuwaiti women tied the knot between the age of 20 and 24 years, while among men it is from 25 to 29 years, reports **Al-Qabas** daily.

The figures issued by the Central Administration of Statistics on marriage and divorce rates for 2022 showed 3,358 Kuwaiti women, in the age group of 20-24 years, got married in 2022, while 3,149 Kuwaiti women in the age group of 25-29 years got married during the same period.

On the other hand, most Kuwaiti males who got married in 2022 were in the age group of 25-29 years followed by the age group of between 30-34 years, with 1,973

Kuwaitis tying the knot.

It was remarkable two Kuwaiti girls who got married under the age of fifteen, while 937 women in the age group of 15-19 years also got married in 2022, and there were 78 Kuwaitis of the same age group who got married during the same year.

The figures showed that in the age group of 45 years and over, the number of married Kuwaiti women reached 328, while the number of Kuwaiti men in the same age group was 884.

With regard to the educational level, the figures showed that the majority of married Kuwaiti couples were university graduates -- 5,482 females and 4,590 males.

Assembly to

Continued from Page 1

Speaking of the economic projects, the Prime Minister said, the program includes the inauguration of the Northern Economic Zone and the Abdali Special Economic Zone, and the allocation of the Northern Shuaiba plant project for generating electric power and water distillation.

The program includes the establishment of the Kuwait Post Company and a company to manage fixed communications networks and optical fibers, the launch of the comprehensive national project for digital transformation, the issuance of the national strategy for privatization, and the development of a general framework

aimed at qualifying 6 projects for partnership between the public and private sectors on an annual basis, as well as the establishment of a public authority to manage and invest state real estate, in addition to To launch a national framework for Kuwaitization and launch a comprehensive framework for the restructuring of public government agencies.

The program also includes the issuance of the real estate financing law, the distribution of 15,094 residential plots in "South Saad Al-Abdullah" and "South Khairawan", the preparation of 1036 plots of land for distribution to priority sectors in Al-Shaddadiya Industrial City, as well as the launch of the Sabhan project with 96 industrial plots for the localization of food industries, in addition to looking into the activity of small projects in Mina Abdullah.

'Twitter user to be detained for 21 days'

KUWAIT CITY, July 17: The Public Prosecution decided to detain Twitter user **Hamed Bouyabes** for 21 days pending investigation on the case of insulting a sisterly country, reports **Al-Rai** daily.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Justice has released its semi-annual statistics on cases filed at the Court of First Instance, reports **Al-Qabas** daily.

The daily obtained a copy of the statistics, revealing that the number of criminal cases filed at the First Instance Court

in the first six months of 2023 reached 1,591; 16 state security cases; 486 domestic violence cases; 12 money laundering cases; 954 juvenile cases; 531 information technology cases; 46 cases against lawyers; 298 traffic violation cases; 2,196 environmental cases; 908 check cases; and 4,864 passport related cases.

The ministry reaffirmed its commitment to simplify procedures, ease litigation and develop judicial structures.

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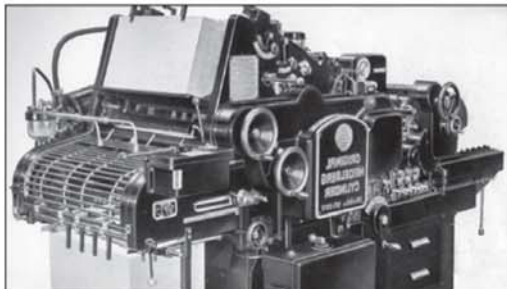
Mohammed Saleh and Reza Yousuf Behbehani Company, one of Kuwait and the Region's most successful companies commemorates a series of achievements and accomplishments, and is celebrating its 60th years anniversary this year. In 2006 - 2010 - 2011, the company was acknowledged as the largest standalone GMC dealer in the world by General Motors and honored for their achievements and many successes over the years.



Passion for attracting international agencies from the outset

The company was formed as a result of the ambition and determination of the two brothers, Mohammed Saleh Yousuf Behbehani and Mohammed Reza Yousuf Behbehani who joined forces to establish a company that attracted international agencies from varied business industries around the world.

The two brothers acquired the agency of Heidelberg, a world-renowned German company that is specialized in printing equipment, so as to become the prime importer of quality printing products as well as printing maintenance services. The acquisition of the global printing company proved to be a success as the demand for printing services in Kuwait increased from both



• A picture of the first German Heidelberg printer models in Kuwait

government as well as private sectors especially newspapers, magazines and commercial printing presses that experienced a boom in printing and production in Kuwait during the period. Soon, the company also acquired the agency of wireless communication devices as well as the agencies of luxurious and renowned Swiss watch manufacturers. Due to their honest and planned business strategies, the two brothers turned their attention towards the automotive industry obtaining the agency of Beaumont vehicles as well as General Motors' Acadian vehicles in the year 1964.



• Jewellery



• Watches

In the following years, the company acquired several automotive agencies such as Buick, GMC, Subaru, SEAT, Isuzu Trucks in addition to Pirelli tires and an airline venture and multiple



• A picture of an old Buick car in Kuwait

agencies for high-end Swiss Watches alongside with high-end jewelry brands.

In the year 1967, the company consolidated its business with GMC and Buick acquiring the agency of their models. That year also witnessed the company's proliferating success due to industrial developments, technological advancements in the country and strategic marketing planning. These were the factors that elevated the company's status and paved way for many accomplishments that included a growing network of showrooms, maintenance centers, spare parts divisions and accessories stores that the company was keen on launching across Kuwait.



• Jasem Behbehani and Adel Behbehani receiving an award from General Motors

Wisdom and experience to reach the top

The vision and foresight of the founders combined with their vast administrative experience complimented their keen sense of strategy, quality products and services due to which the company excelled above its competitors and earned the trust of its customers. Mohammad Saleh & Reza Yousuf Behbehani's success reached one of its many peaks as it became the leading vehicle agency in Kuwait with a record-breaking sale of 1,920 Buick cars in the year 1992.

The company currently has the most up-to-date and luxurious headquarters that is at par with regional and international standards. The company also takes great pride in having the most advanced automotive maintenance centers in the Middle East, in addition to its Quick Maintenance Centers that are equipped with the latest technologies and a highly skilled



• GMC Showroom at AIRai

and knowledgeable team of professionals in all aspects of its business be it sales, technicians, supervisors or other members of the organization who work in line with the latest development programs, administrative effectiveness and efficiency as well as technical precision.



• Pirelli Tires Center at Shuwaikh, Fourth Ring Road

Just before the Gulf War, the company had acquired the agency of Jeep and this venture continued to flourish even after the blessed liberation of Kuwait. The two brothers also established a bottling company that distributed several famous soda drinks such as 7Up, Orange Crush and Like Cola. It was the efficiency of this company that led to the success and popularity of 7Up in Kuwait. The company capitalized on this venture by bottling several brands of juices such as Shereen, Ghalia and many others that continue to this day.

Diversity in specializations and expansion of strategic partnerships

Apart from owning a large number of subsidiaries and smaller companies, Mohammad Saleh & Reza Yousuf Behbehani are also the founding members and shareholders of Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait, Kuwait Insurance Company and Commercial Facilities Company and participants in Kuwait's



• Maersk Shipping Agency

various economic sectors including being the founding members and shareholders of one of the leading worldwide shipping companies - Maersk, Kuwait. In addition to its sundry agencies and companies, Mohammad Saleh & Reza Yousuf Behbehani has many aspirations and ambitions for the future that require extensive research and planning before implementation.

Achievements we are proud of

Mohammad Saleh & Reza Yousuf Behbehani is one of the first companies honored by General Motors for its outstanding performance in sales and customer service. Furthermore, the company holds the record for most sales of the GMC Envoy in 2004 and 2005. The company was honored by General Motors as the largest stand-alone GMC dealer in the world in 2006. Today, Mohammad Saleh & Reza Yousuf Behbehani is considered amongst the largest Kuwaiti companies that are known on a regional and global level.



• Mr. Mohammed Saleh and Mr. Mohammed Reza receiving an award from the President of General Motors

During the past five years, Mohammad Saleh & Reza Yousuf Behbehani has been awarded the "Chairman's Challenge Award," General Motors' most prestigious award, from 2003 until 2007. Apart from receiving recognitions for being the largest stand-alone GMC dealer in the world in 2006 - 2010 - 2011, the company was also honored with the "Grandmasters Dealer Award" in 2010.

Our customers are the source of our inspiration and distinction

Mohammad Saleh & Reza Yousuf Behbehani has always been dedicated to establishing open channels of communication with its customers as well as providing them with the best quality service. The company is committed to enhancing its services to suit its customers' lifestyle and satisfying every moment of their experience with the company, be it during the company's after-sales services, at showrooms and branches or its specialized maintenance centers that, apart from being the largest in the region, provide customers with the utmost convenience and the latest technological and vehicle maintenance advances in the market in an eco-friendly, efficient environment.



• A multi-storey car parking, which is the first and largest of its kind in Kuwait

BEHBEHANI

Mohammad Saleh & Reza Yousuf Behbehani Co. W.L.L.



بَهَبَهَانِي

شركة محمد صالح ورضا يوسف بهبهاني ذ.م.م.

Together We Thrive & Progress



Meaningful discussion on how LNG can better serve the world

Qatar to host Int'l convention for Liquefied Natural Gas in 2026

'Cyber Security Center to create nat'l system to strengthen Kuwait's economic prosperity'

System protects national interests from internal and external cyber risks

By Hammad Al-Mutairi

KUWAIT CITY, July 17, (KUNA): The Head of the National Center for Cyber Security, Major General, Eng. Mohammad Bouarraki, affirmed the center's keenness to build a leading and effective national system that supports and enhances development, prosperity and economy in Kuwait.

During an interview with KUNA Monday, the system would protect Kuwait's national interests from internal and external cyber risks and threats in cooperation and coordination between the center, the concerned authorities and friendly countries.

He also noted that the main goal of the National Center for Cyber Security, which was established under Decree No. 37 of 2022, is to create a national umbrella that is responsible for securing and protecting information networks, telecommunications, information systems, collecting and exchanging information operations using any electronic means.

Moreover, he said that the center also aims to develop cybersecurity teams, provide the necessary support and counseling, and coordinate response efforts.

He stated that the center also help prevent any attempts to hinder, disrupt or sabotage the vital infrastructure, communications networks and information systems in the country and take what is necessary to deal to confront all online threats, whether from inside or outside the country.

Strategy

On the center's strategy, he pointed out that it is emanating from the vision Kuwait 2035, to help create a safe and flexible cyber space that supports and enhances development, prosperity, economy and protect national interests.

Bouarraki said that the active national governance aims to create a legislative environment that protects national interests and supports and enhances development and prosperity and the development of an organizational environment that regulates the relationship, responsibilities and specializations between the center and various state institutions and create active national leaders.

Furthermore, he noted that the aim of cooperation with local and international companies is to enhance information and criminal exchange at the local and international levels, stressing the importance of raising and strengthening the level of cyber security culture in the country.

The Major General also stressed the importance of the commitment of the



Ceremony honoring graduates of first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation courses for employees of the Commercial Real Estate Company.

Ministry aims of reaching emergency site fast

MoH to inaugurate two first aid centers in Sept

KUWAIT CITY, July 17, (KUNA): Undersecretary of the Ministry of Health for Supportive Medical Services Affairs Dr. Yacoub Al-Tamar announced the inauguration of two first aid centers, one in the university city Al-Shaddiya and the Boulevard center next September, bringing the total number of first aid centers to 84.

Al-Tamar said in a speech during a ceremony honoring graduates of first

aid courses and cardiopulmonary resuscitation for employees of the commercial real estate company today, Monday, that the ministry is keen to expand emergency centers in the country with the aim of reaching the emergency site as soon as possible.

Al-Tamar added that this course comes within the context of completing the Ministry's plan and program to spread health awareness of the im-

portance of knowing the role of first aid in saving lives, pointing out that this batch is the first of future courses to support public education on the importance of first aid in order to achieve safety.

He noted the importance of specialized training courses in first aid according to correct scientific bases in order to preserve lives, looking forward to increasing such training

courses to achieve the goal of "a paramedic" in every home.

He praised the important societal role played by the heroes of the Medical Emergency Department by educating citizens and residents on the importance of knowing the basics of first aid, which some may think is simple and easy, and a person needs to be a specialist in this field, but it is necessary for everyone, whether a specialist or a non-specialist.

For his part, the Director of the Medical Emergency Department, Dr. Ahmed Al-Shatti, said in a similar speech that the number of graduates reached 76 from the employees of Al-Tijaria Real Estate Company, who passed four training courses, two in Arabic and two in English, within three weeks.

Skills

He praised the efforts of the employees in the Medical Emergency Department in serving the community, stressing the importance of knowing these skills and keenness to spread them to achieve the slogan "Seven minutes save a life", as it is a message to the trainees on how to deal with emergency situations to save a person.

In turn, the Executive Vice President of the Administrative and Legal Affairs Group in the Commercial Real Estate Company, Muhammad Ghazanfari, affirmed the company's keenness to continue cooperation with the Ministry of Health to repeat such important courses, pointing out that it is the beginning and work is continuing through a long-term strategy to train all employees of the company in its various facilities.



Part of the tribute



Part of first aid

KUNA photos

'Tunisia keen on creating investment-attractive environment for all'

Talks in Kuwait focused on cementing co-op: Tunisian FM

By Nasser Al-Khamri

KUWAIT CITY, July 17, (KUNA): Tunisian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Migration and Tunisians Abroad Nabil Ammar said Sunday that his meetings with Kuwaiti officials tackled efforts to expand economic, cultural and scientific cooperation.

The meetings were also a good opportunity to update Kuwait officials on the situation in Tunisia and the challenges facing the North African nation, Ammar said in an interview with KUNA before concluding his one-day official visit to Kuwait.

He reiterated that Tunisian-Kuwaiti relations are solid and based on shared visions, especially in foreign policy.

Tunisian and Kuwaiti foreign policies focus on finding peaceful solutions to crises and take into consideration the humanitarian aspects

of any conflict, he said.

On the Kuwaiti investments in Tunisia, Minister Ammar said his country is keen on creating an investment-attractive environment for all, especially for Kuwaiti investors and is determined to reform laws to increase foreign investments.

Regarding his country's vision of the situation in the region, especially Libya and Sudan, Ammar emphasized that Tunisia seeks to bring the views of the conflicting parties closer and backs reconciliation efforts to restore stability in these two brotherly countries.

During his visit to Kuwait, Minister Ammar met Speaker of Kuwait's National Assembly Ahmed Al-Saadoun, Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and several state officials.



Tunisian Minister of Foreign Affairs during interview with KUNA.

DOHA, July 17, (KUNA): Qatar announced on Monday that it will host the 21st International conference and Exhibition on Liquefied Natural Gas in 2026 (LNG 2026).

The conference is a leading world event in the LNG industry that showcases the continued growth and development of the sector worldwide.

According to the Qatari News Agency (QNA), QatarEnergys Manager of Public Relations and Communication Lolwa Salat said in her speech during a special handover ceremony at the conclusion of LNG 2023 in Canada that "we are full of excitement to be able to welcome you all in Qatar in 2026."

Energy security

QNA pointed out that Salat looked forward to engaging in a meaningful discussion on how LNG can better serve the world and how to ensure equitable access to energy, and greater energy security for all.

The LNG Conference and Exhibition is held every three years alternating between exporting and importing countries.

The event is organized by the International Gas Union, the Gas Technology Institute, and the International Institute of Refrigeration, and is considered as the premier event for the world's LNG industry, featuring the largest number of high-level LNG industry leaders as plenary speakers.

Skillssets

OAPEC 'underscores' equipping workforce

KUWAIT CITY, July 17, (KUNA): OAPEC Secretary General Jamal Al-Loughani affirmed Sunday the organization's intent on improving level of the workforce equipping them with necessary skillsets to address climate change issues as integral part to achieving sustainable development goals.

Al-Loughani, upon inaugurating Arab commissioner's 16th regional training workshop on climate change, highlighted the importance of such a workshop and the issues it delves into.

The Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries, seeks to address a number of essential topics, for instance latest developments on Paris agreement negotiations, response measures, adaptation, alleviation, finance and technology.

Workshop

The workshop, over three days, aims to develop Arab commissioner negotiation skills, readying for upcoming COP28, set to be held in Dubai expo city next November.

Gulf Cooperation Council Energy department Chief Dr. Mohammad Al-Rashidi told KUNA that the Gulf region is perhaps one of the world's most susceptible areas to economic and environmental effects caused by climate change.

He stressed the necessity of integration and boosting joint projects to support technical innovation in field of renewable energy, as well as investing in clean energy and focusing on human capital and import chains.

Dr. Al-Rashidi expressed hope that this congregation facilitates the exchange of expertise, ideas and experiences.

The workshop is done in cooperation with a host of Arab and international organizations including League of Arab States, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), UN environment program, and UN Education, Science and Culture Organization (UNESCO).

TGS presents Nada Faris

KUWAIT CITY, July 17: This Thursday, The Guest Show (TGS) is very happy to present Nada Faris, an extraordinary young Kuwaiti.

Nada is a writer, poet, creative writing teacher and coach and a lot more. She has authored three international books including Fountain of Youth, a 2016 Vine Leaves Vignette Collection Awards semifinalist (Vine Leaves Press, 2016, Australia), poetry and numerous essays on culture and politics all of which have been widely published.

Over the years, Nada has been recognized for her work on different platforms. In 2015 and 2016, she joined the Board of Trustees for the Cultural Circle Prize for the Arabic Short Story (Almultaq), the first international award for short story collections in Arabic. In 2018, she received an Arab Woman Award from Harper's

Bazaar Arabia as an Inspirational Woman for her impact on Kuwait's creative sector. Nada is a voracious reader and creative. She holds an MFA in Creative Writing from Columbia University (concentration in poetry and translation). That is not all. Nada is also a member of the International Coaching Federation and as a coach works with creatives, graduate students, writers, and other artists hoping to become professional at their chosen crafts.

At present, Nada is looking forward to the publication of her translated work 'Lost in Mecca' written by the remarkable Bothayna Al-Essa.

In this episode of The Guest Show, Nada Faris and Chaitali B. Roy come together to talk about Anglowaiti literature, writing in English in Kuwait, and about her personal and professional journey as a creative.



The Guest Show poster

KD 50 million capital increase approved

ABK holds Extraordinary General Assembly Meeting

KUWAIT CITY, July 17: "The ABK Group is committed to strategic plans that ensure sustained positive performance, generate value for shareholders, and achieve the highest levels of profitability. This commitment is accompanied by a dedication to staying abreast of local, regional, and global developments in the banking sector," said Mr. Talal Reza Behbehani, Chairman of ABK.

Mr. Behbehani made these remarks during ABK's Extraordinary General Assembly Meeting held at the Bank's headquarters. The meeting, attended by 92.18% of shareholders, approved a capital increase from KD 187.43 million to KD 237.43 million, amounting to KD 50 million. It also authorized the Board of Directors to call for an increase in the issued and paid-up capital, decide on share issuance premium and determine its value to be added to the nominal value of the increased shares. Additionally, amendments to Article 6 of the Memorandum of Association and Article 5 of the Bank's Articles of Association were approved.

Mr. Behbehani expressed sincere gratitude for the considerable trust placed in the Board of Directors by shareholders. He assured that the capital increase of KD 50 million would be invested prudently and optimally, ensuring the accomplishment of the Group's objectives and enhance the regulatory capital ratio.

The Chairman emphasized, "The Group stands to greatly benefit from the capital increase as it will be strategically invested in enhancing operations, introducing new banking products and solutions, and actively participating in financing local development projects. These measures are aimed at continuously adding value to all stakeholders."

Moreover, he highlighted that the Group consistently evaluates strategies to ensure sustainable profitability and growth across all financial indicators. He highlighted that the capital increase is a testament to the proactive stance of the Board of Directors and the Executive Management, who continuously monitor developments and tackle challenges while upholding the utmost security standards. This will undoubtedly have a positive impact



Right to left: Loai Muqames, Talal Behbehani and Fawzy Al Thunayan.

on the Group's competitiveness in the Kuwaiti banking sector, as well as the regional markets it operates in, including Egypt, the UAE, and the Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC) branch.

Mr. Behbehani affirmed that the Group remains vigilant in capitalizing on emerging opportunities in both local and global markets, bolstering investor confidence in its capabilities and potential. By providing top-tier banking and financial services, the Group aims to strengthen this trust. This success is underpinned by a highly skilled team of experts who contribute to the mutual benefit of all involved parties across various levels.

Mr. Behbehani expressed deep gratitude for the unwavering support ABK receives from esteemed institutions, such as the Central Banks of Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, and Egypt. He emphasized the Group's unwavering commitment to

strictly adhere to all procedures and measures that contribute to fortifying the resilience and prudence of the banking sector in these countries.

Following the Chairman's speech, Mr. Loai Muqames, CEO-Kuwait of ABK, remarked that the capital increase is a result of a series of recent positive developments. These serve as testament to ABK's continuous efforts to enhance profitability and market presence in the markets it operates in.

Commending the exceptional efforts exerted by ABK's dedicated staff, Mr. Muqames assured that the Bank is fully poised and equipped to harness the opportunities arising within the banking industry. These advancements undoubtedly contribute to perpetuating continuous growth across all financial indicators, thereby fulfilling the needs of both valued customers and esteemed shareholders.

Furthermore, Mr. Muqames articulated, "The Group persistently

attains growth across all its operations, positioning itself as a prominent leader and competitor amidst the ever-evolving landscape of the banking sector both domestically and internationally. With unwavering dedication, we aim to consistently yield positive outcomes that align with the aspirations of our esteemed shareholders in the upcoming period."

Moreover, he emphasized that the capital increase will fortify the Group's capital foundation and enhance its Capital Adequacy Ratio (CAR). He also underscored ABK's resolute commitment to implementing its transformative strategy in a manner that positively impacts both shareholders and customers.

Mr. Muqames elucidated that once all related procedures are finalized, the Group will be equipped to offer new products and services

that augment customer value, elevate levels of innovation within the banking sector, and substantially invest in digital services. Doing so would allow for comprehensive solutions to be provided to stay in stride with the rapid pace of change.

Additionally, Mr. Muqames highlighted a plethora of operational advancements that have transpired in recent times, most notably the successful closure of joint facilities totaling \$600 million through the Group's DIFC branch last June.

He proceeded to affirm the Group's unwavering commitment to its ongoing digital transformation journey, which has already yielded noteworthy results. Manifesting this commitment, ABK proudly inaugurated its pioneering digital branch at Al Khiran Mall.

This momentous milestone marks a leap in offering comprehensive banking services to local custom-

ers, further solidifying the Group's position as an innovative financial services provider in the region.

Since its establishment in 1967, ABK has progressed to become one of the leading Kuwaiti banks in the region that is today known for offering a simpler banking experience. The Bank offers personal, corporate, and private banking of which includes a wide array of products and services. ABK also provides a broad range of local, regional, and global investment solutions and services through its subsidiary, ABK Capital. Enjoying equal stability and strength, the Bank also offers the convenience of banking across the region, servicing other markets in Egypt and the UAE.

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

Kamco Invest 'receives' Best Debt Bank in the Middle East

Award given by Global Finance

KUWAIT CITY, July 17: Kamco Invest, a regional non-banking financial powerhouse with one of the largest AUMs in the region, received the "Best Debt Bank in the Middle East" from Global Finance, announced last April. Abdullah M. AlSharekh, Managing Director of Markets and Investment Banking, received the accolade at a recent award ceremony held in London.

Global Finance highlighted that Kamco Invest's selection for this award was based on a multi-criteria approach that includes reviewing market share, number and size of deals, service and advice, structuring capabilities, distribution network, efforts to address market conditions, innovation, pricing, after-market performance of underwritings and market reputation.

The Debt Capital Markets team took on the role of Joint Lead Manager as well as Joint Bookrunner on three bonds and sukuk issuances in Kuwait and the UAE in 2022 worth USD1.2bn, in addition to one debt advisory transaction. The transactions included USD650mn International Debt Issuances and a KWD165mn debt issuance, the largest KWD denominated corporate bond ever issued. The Company has recently co-managed the KWD103.1 million Sukuk issuance for Kuwait Projects Company (Holding) KIPCO, the first Kuwaiti Dinar denominated corporate Sukuk.

In 2021, the team closed ten debt transactions worth USD3.7bn, managing nine bond and sukuk issuances in Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Oman, and Bahrain, in addition to one debt advisory transaction worth USD330mn. The issuances included six USD international debt issuances and three KWD denominated debt issuances worth USD3.4bn. A notable transaction in 2021 was the pioneering role structuring an innovative debt capital instrument for the local capital market, the first bond issuance by an insurance company and first perpetual bond issu-



Alsharekh receiving the award.

HSBC Kuwait named Best Investment Bank for the fourth consecutive year

KUWAIT CITY, July 17: HSBC has been named the Best Investment Bank in Kuwait for the fourth year in succession at the Euromoney Middle East Awards for Excellence, 2023.

This recognition came in addition to three other wins for HSBC across the Middle East, including Best Bank for Transaction Services & Best Bank for Financing in Middle East. HSBC was also named the Best Investment Bank in Saudi Arabia.

Samer Alabed, CEO of HSBC Kuwait, said: "This award is a clear reflection of our ambition to be the preferred international banking partner for our clients and our goal to be the best international investment bank in the Middle East. HSBC has been a leader in financing, capital markets and investment banking activity in Kuwait,

supporting our clients to execute complex transactions and navigate volatile



Samer Alabed - CEO, HSBC Kuwait

ance denominated in Kuwaiti Dinar, representing an important milestone in Kuwait's capital market.

After receiving the award, AlSharekh expressed his pride in this honor, which is considered a testament

to the hard work and relentless efforts exerted by the team to solidify our pioneering role in regional markets. He said, "Year after year, we strengthen our position among the most active companies in investment banking, es-

pecially in the debt capital markets in the region. The year 2022 was another record-breaking year for the Investment Banking business at Kamco Invest in terms of the total value of deals we completed."

international markets. We have also played a market leading role in facilitating access of international investors to the country, which has been a key priority for many of our clients since Kuwait was included in the widely-tracked MSCI Emerging Market investment index."

HSBC Kuwait is a committed partner to the country's growth agenda, providing a full suite of investment banking services to support clients across the economic spectrum, including government related entities, local corporates and financial institutions. As a strategic priority, HSBC focuses on its strengths to deliver outstanding results for clients, such as leveraging its unique global network and expertise to support access to capital markets.

Strategy to counter potential risks

KIB participates in Reinvent Forum Milan 2023 by Qoros

KUWAIT CITY, July 17: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) recently participated in Reinvent Forum Milan 2023, an international banking and insurance innovation event organized by Qoros, during which it presented a joint case study with ebankIT entitled "Humanizing the 'Bank for Life' Digital Experience." The Bank's participation reflects its strong commitment to incorporating the principles of sustainability, innovation, and digital transformation into the fabric of its corporate practices.

During his participation in the conference as a representative of KIB, the General Manager of Digital Transformation and Innovation Department, Mohamed El-Sharif, said: "KIB considers this global event a prestigious platform that showcases the steps of the banking sector's transformational journey. The Reinvent Forum is also an important opportunity for us to share visions and ideas on how to reshape banking services through digitization and innovation."

El-Sharif added that KIB spares no effort in implementing its strategy aimed at facing potential risks. It continues to consolidate its advanced position in this field, as it is among the first banking institutions to adopt a proactive innovation approach to face challenges through its digital channels and effective online services. In addition, the Bank focuses on human inter-



Mohamed El-Sharif

action, especially when it comes to complex financial operations and providing personal banking advice. He stressed that the KIB team present in the branches and customer service centers is always ready to provide any assistance and meet the needs of customers, whatever the circumstances.

El-Sharif emphasized that the strategic approach behind KIB's banking services puts it at the forefront of banks with high flexibility compared to other banking institutions in the market, both locally and globally, including new banks. He said that despite the intense and increasing competition at different levels in the banking sector, KIB is committed to prioritizing investment in research and development to enhance digital solutions and maintain its competitive advantages and leading position.

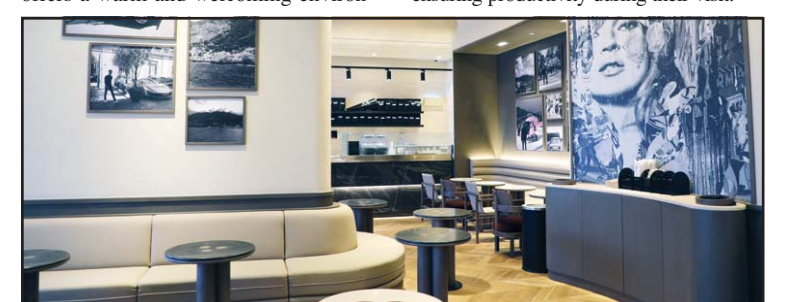
Joe & The Juice launches 3rd store

KUWAIT CITY, July 17: Joe & The Juice, founded in Copenhagen in 2002 by Kasper Basse, and franchised by Ali Abdulwahab Al Mutawa Commercial Co. (AAW) in Kuwait, has opened its third store at The Walk Mall in Ardiya, marking the global debut of the cafe's new store concept. The cafe is known for serving the finest, high-quality, natural, and organic ingredients in its freshly prepared juices, shakes, coffee, and sandwiches. The opening event was attended by the global team of Joe & The Juice and AAW management team, including Mr. Faisal Al Mutawa, and Mr. Khalid Faisal Al Mutawa.

Joe & The Juice's new store concept offers a warm and welcoming environ-

ment that seamlessly blends Danish design with a contemporary aesthetic, creating a functional and minimalist space for customers. While retaining its signature vibrant touch of pink, the cafe's interior decor exudes depth and warmth through the use of neutral color palettes and textures.

The new store is infused with details that create a homey atmosphere, while also incorporating a twist of innovation. It caters to customers, especially school students, who rely on power-hungry devices by incorporating thoughtful additions such as wireless charging tables and power outlets in every corner. This feature allows customers to easily charge their devices, ensuring productivity during their visit.



Joe & The Juice Ardiya Branch.

BUSINESS

KFH honors employees' kids for academic excellence

Kuwait Finance House (KFH) honored staff's children who scored 90% and above in high school.

43 high school toppers were honored in a special ceremony as part of KFH commitment to supporting its employees and their families in various aspects of their life.

In his speech at the ceremony at Arraya Ballroom, KFH Group Chief Human Resources and Transformation Officer, Zeyad Abdullah Al Omar congratulated the honorees for the success they have achieved and the efforts they have made during the

past years, extending his thanks to their parents for their support. He expressed his confidence that they will continue their outstanding performance in both their academic and professional journey.

Al Omar stressed the significance of engagement with the employees and their families in such events, noting that the success of the students reflects the role parents play in supporting the aspirations of their children and contributing to fulfilling their ambitions.

He pointed out that KFH, as a leading financial institution, considers its employ-

ees and their families an integral part of the growth and success of the Bank.

He explained that the next stage poses different challenges in all aspects, and therefore requires dedication, hard work and knowledge in their chosen line of study that would suit the market requirements so that students would be successful in their post-graduation careers.

He went on to emphasize the importance of setting clear academic and professional goals, continuing the learning journey, and honing their skills in for sustained success.



KFH Group Chief Human Resources and Transformation Officer, Zeyad Abdullah Al Omar addressing the gathering.

Containers in 10 locations at Zain megastores and Kuwait University

Zain launches sustainable initiative to recycle used books

KUWAIT CITY, July 17: Zain today announces the launch of a new sustainable community initiative to recycle used books and papers. The company has provided containers in 10 different locations at Zain megastores and in Sabah Al Salem University City in Shadadiya. The move comes in collaboration with Enviroserve, Kuwait's first-of-its-kind recycling facility.

This initiative aims at raising social awareness about the crucial topic of environmental sustainability, as well as providing real-world solutions to encourage the community to adopt positive practices that contribute to lessening the effects of climate change. The campaign coincides with the recent end of the academic year, where tons of books and papers are thrown away in waste bins.

Zain provided containers to collect books, papers, and documents at 7 of its megastores across the nation: main branch in Shuwaik, Jahra



Zain book recycling 2023

co-op branch, Adan co-op branch, Farwaniya co-op branch, New Kout Mall branch, Bibi Tower branch in Salmiya, and Mishref co-op branch. The company also joined forces with Kuwait University to provide 3 containers at Sabah Al Salem University City in Shadadiya.

To make this initiative a success, Zain has collaborated with Enviroserve, Kuwait's first-of-its-kind recycling facility. Books and papers will be collected on a regular basis from Zain megastores and Kuwait University and sent to Enviroserve's facility to be recycled and repurposed, ultimately contributing to the campaign's goals to lower carbon emissions and tackle climate change.

Zain puts environmental sustainability at the forefront of its priorities, as its social message seeks to create a culture of sustainability within the community by advocating practices like reducing consumption, recycling, using renewable sources of energy, and more.

In one of its recent sustainable projects, the company presented its very own recycled shopping tote bags made entirely out of Zain's outdoor billboard ads. The bags were offered to customers for their shopping needs in place of plastic bags to encourage

sustainable shopping and raise environmental awareness.

Extends

Zain's part does not stop at raising awareness and launching environmental programs, but also extends to reducing its own footprint. The company continues to exert more efforts into reducing the environmental footprint of its operations, including preserving natural resources, reducing energy consumption, recycling waste, implementing green solutions for water and electricity management, monitoring the company's overall effects on climate change, and more.

Through its corporate sustainability and social responsibility strategy, Zain is committed to building climate change scenarios that are aligned with the Paris Agreement (2015) to reduce carbon emissions and mitigate physical and environmental risks. The company is well aware of the ur-

gent need to tackle the climate crisis the world is facing today.

Zain has scored A- through its participation in the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP), a reflection of its success in meeting the standards and requirements of the project. Zain is also one of the few companies in the region's markets to have a membership in the CDP.

Zain established an array of initiatives across its operating companies, including the distribution of reusable bags to all employees, and installing water coolers to reduce the use of plastic bottles. The company also developed its first comprehensive Scope 3 inventory process aligned with the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Protocol guidelines for a more accurate and transparent evaluation of its value chain emissions. This allows it to not only disclose and report in a more concise manner but be able to identify areas in which it can reduce its GHG emissions.

Zain continues to address its strategic approach to addressing climate change under its sustainability strategy. Climate change is a pillar on which the organization has set three focus areas where Zain can address its negative impacts on the environment and create positive ones: Network & Energy Consumption, Strategy & Communication, and Waste Management & Circular Economy.

Enviroserve is considered the first-of-its-kind recycling facility in Kuwait. With the support of the National Fund for Small and Medium Enterprises Development, Enviroserve continues its mission to tackle the e-waste problem, help enterprises and individuals to reduce their negative impact on the environment, and raise awareness of climate change within the community. The facility collects over 2 tons of waste every day and has over 17 years of experience in this industry.



The Burgan Bank team at the job fair organized by AUM.

Promotes banking awareness

Burgan Bank continues to support 'Let's Be Aware'

KUWAIT CITY, July 17: As part of its efforts to contribute to the success of the Central Bank of Kuwait and Kuwait Banking Association's "Let's Be Aware" campaign, Burgan Bank continues to fulfill its duty in promoting financial awareness through various community events, such as its participation in the recent job fair organized by the American University of the Middle East (AUM) and the fourth blood donation campaign in partnership with Ahmedi Governorate. The goal is to enhance the level of financial literacy among all members of the community through these events and activities. This step falls within the framework of the bank's ongoing comprehensive program for social responsibility, which is considered the cornerstone of its continuous success and sustainable growth.

During its presence at both events, the Burgan Bank team took part in a full-fledged awareness program to provide attendees with a thorough overview about the rights and responsibilities of all banking customers. In addition, the team highlighted the prevailing challenges facing financial institutions and their customers and how to manage them.

Caution

These recommendations included being aware of traditional scams and phishing attacks, practicing caution in maintaining the secrecy of personal information in the dealings with the bank, and having knowledge of the proper methods to file and process complaints.

Mrs. Kholoud Rida AlFeel, Group Head - Marketing and Communications at Burgan Bank, said: "Banking and financial proficiency are more essential today than ever before, as financial products and services have become more easily accessible to all community segments. This is coupled with the rise in financial fraud, which has become a global phenomenon and is here to stay. Our role as a responsible bank is to equip our customers with the understanding and skills needed to make sound financial decisions and avoid falling victim to scams. In addition, we strive to improve the financial culture of our customers and the entire community by utilizing our sponsorship and participation in various activities and events to promote the 'Let's Be Aware' campaign's key messages."

AlFeel added: "As part of our support for the awareness campaign, we made sure to distribute financial awareness brochures through these events. We also utilized our social media channels to inform our current and potential customers about the key messages of CBK's banking awareness campaign, with the aim of engaging the community on a wide scale. These efforts align with Burgan's social responsibility program and

relentless efforts to ensure a seamless banking experience for all its customer segments."

Moreover, the Burgan team also explained how to deal with banks through different banking channels and across various financial services, from using bank cards and credit cards to depositing funds and taking out loans. Another topic that the team shed light on involved the accessible services, products and solutions designed for the Bank's specially-abled customers, as well as their rights.

As one of the leading financial institutions in Kuwait, Burgan Bank continues to endorse all the initiatives organized by the Central Bank of Kuwait, with the purpose of achieving higher levels of financial literacy, inclusion, and awareness across all segments of society.

Established in 1977, Burgan Bank is currently the third-largest bank by assets in Kuwait. From its earliest days, the Bank has significantly focused on the corporate and financial institution sectors, in addition to diversifying its offering to cater to its growing retail and private banking customer base.

Burgan Bank has majority-owned subsidiaries, collectively known as the "Burgan Bank Group", in the MENA region. This Group is supported by one of the largest branch networks across the region and includes: Gulf Bank Algeria - AGB (Algeria), Tunis International Bank - TIB (Tunisia), and the fully owned Burgan Bank Turkey. Furthermore, Burgan Bank has a presence in the UAE through its corporate office, Burgan Financial Services Limited.

The Bank has continuously improved its performance over the years, through an expanded revenue structure, diversified funding sources, and a strong capital base. The adoption of state-of-the-art services and technology has positioned it as a trendsetter in the domestic market and within the MENA region. Moreover, Burgan Bank's brand has been built on a foundation of real values - trust, commitment, excellence, and progression - which serve as a reminder of the high standards to which the Bank always aspires. In fact, the Bank's core philosophy of 'Driven by You' is the foundation on which its products and services are continuously developed.

The Bank obtained the ISO/IEC 27001: 2013 Information Security Management Systems certificate (ISMS) and was re-certified with the prestigious ISO 9001:2015, making it one of the few banks in the GCC and Kuwait to receive such certification for five consecutive times. The Bank also has the distinction of being the only Bank in Kuwait to have won the JP Morgan Chase Quality Recognition Award for twenty consecutive years.

Bank's vision is to be leading Kuwaiti Bank of the Future

Gulf Bank wins Excellence in Data Innovation Award at Finnovex '23

KUWAIT CITY, July 17: The eighteenth 2023 Finnovex Awards Summit, Qatar, awarded Gulf Bank with The Prestigious Excellence in Data Innovation Award, in recognition of its unparalleled excellence in leveraging data to drive transformative change and create new opportunities in the banking industry.

Gulf Bank has proven to be at the forefront of cutting-edge data practices, setting a remarkable example for others to follow, through initiating various data-driven programs, trainings and competitions such as the data Ambassadors program, Data literacy trainings and Fekrety Innovation tournament.

Aws Al Ansari, Manager of Digital Transformation and Innovation Unit, received the award on behalf of Gulf Bank, which was held at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel Doha, Qatar, where industry leaders and experts gathered to celebrate excellence and innovation in the financial sector.

During the ceremony, Al Ansari reviewed Gulf Bank's pioneering experience in enhancing the role of data and innovation within the bank and beyond - serving as an example in optimizing the use of data, for encouraging and promoting data-driven innovation, and for introducing the important role that both data and innovation play in the future of the banking sector.

Data Ambassadors Program

As part of its continuous efforts to establish its position as the bank of the future in Kuwait, Gulf Bank succeeded in graduating over 200 employees from the Data Ambassadors Program in the years 2022 and 2023, which the first of its kind data and analytics program in Kuwait, that aims to upskill and empower employees to use advanced data science.

Fekrety Innovation Tournament

In order to stimulate innovative and creative ideas, Gulf Bank launched its first edition of the Fekrety Innovation Tournament, which aims to foster innovation amongst all bank employees - giving them the opportunity to be heard, and to bring forth positive, valuable changes to the bank, the industry, and the wider community. Fekrety Innovation Tournament aligns with Gulf Bank's 2025 Strategy and Kuwait Vision 2035 - where innovation is considered a key pillar that is required to adopt smart and digital technologies and to help create services that contribute towards supporting the economy and improving the quality of life.

Gulf Bank's vision is to be the leading Kuwaiti Bank of the Future. The Bank is constantly engaging and empowering its employees as part of an inclusive and diversified workplace in recognition of every employee's role in delivering customer excellence and serving the community at large. With its extensive network of branches and innovative digital services, Gulf Bank is able to give its customers the choice of how and where to conduct their banking transactions, all while ensuring a simple and seamless banking experience.

Gulf Bank is committed to main-



A photo from the event.

To provide more localized solutions to firms

KPMG in Kuwait & ServiceNow sign strategic partnership deal

KUWAIT CITY, July 17: KPMG in Kuwait and ServiceNow entered a strategic partnership which would allow them to combine their technologies, industry expertise and design to support organizations in their digitization journey and to achieve operational resilience and agility. The alliance already existed globally and its activation in the Middle East will aim at providing more localized solutions to deliver superior experiences for businesses' as well as their customers and employees.

The collaboration will enable KPMG and ServiceNow to support organizations grappling with challenges stemming from the rising demands of their clients and workforce for more agile service delivery, improved employee experience and changing service delivery environments across front-, middle-, and back-office functions.

Speaking on the occasion, Majid Makki, Partner and Head of Management Consulting Technology Advisory, KPMG in Kuwait, said, "The needs of the digital era are complex and constantly changing. Organizations across the world are finding it challenging to maintain their pace for digitalization and we want to help them address that. This collaboration will allow us to leverage our combined experience and insight to meet evolving client expectations, increase speed to market, and make for business and strategic growth."

The KPMG Connected. Powered. Trusted. framework leverages the ServiceNow® Platform to help organizations with their transformation for the digital era. The framework is

designed to support clients in ensuring improved operational resilience as well as agility to navigate uncertainties.

The recently published KPMG Kuwait CEO Outlook 2022-23 highlighted that emerging/disruptive technology poses the biggest risk to organization growth. At the same time, the report also found that more than 70% of the CEOs in Kuwait were placing more capital in buying new technology to achieve their growth and transformation objectives.

"We recognize that concerns in emerging technologies are inclusive of healthcare practitioners and will, therefore, continue striving to address them in a responsible, secure and sustainable manner, with innovation and improved user experience at the helm of it," added Makki.

Earlier this year, KPMG was named ServiceNow's 2023 Worldwide Transformation Partner of the Year and Worldwide Industry Solutions - Healthcare Partner of the Year. The awards came in recognition of the game-changing digital solutions and industry-leading innovations that KPMG has been delivering to help transform organizations and drive significant client outcomes and better patient experiences.

Together with ServiceNow, KPMG member firms are supporting

healthcare organizations pursue their digital transformation goals, putting patients at the heart of it. These digital solutions help clients become borderless organizations, facilitating interaction between people and technology to make for new levels of productivity and better experiences, while unlocking value at each step of the healthcare journey.

The ServiceNow Global Alliances and Channel Ecosystem organization identifies the achievements made by industry-leading Partners that have helped propel ServiceNow's growth trajectory by driving meaningful business outcomes for joint customers. The 2023 awards are based on Partner performance in the previous year and are evaluated on the basis of the following key parameters: revenue contribution/growth, business innovation with associated digital transformation impact, product line expansion, workflow and skill competencies growth.

After the signing, KPMG professionals will be working hand in hand with ServiceNow teams to support organizations in automating, modernizing and consolidating their service-management processes by enabling visibility into their tech infrastructure.

"We are hopeful that together we can help you maximize organizational transparency and work together to create intelligent strategies that can augment your investments, make for better experiences and unlock modern advancements that will aid in the transformation of your business - today and tomorrow," concluded Makki.

taining robust developments in sustainability at environmental, social and governance levels through di-

verse sustainability initiatives, strategically selected to benefit the Bank both internally and externally. Gulf

Bank supports Kuwait Vision 2035 "New Kuwait" and works with various parties to achieve it.

Sageworks Massage Therapy eases strain

Sageworks Massage Therapy, a wellness practice based in Fredericksburg, VA is customizing its services to counter the emotional stress and muscle tension caused by prolonged desk work, exacerbated by the remote work phenomenon.

Three years into the widespread adoption of work-from-home, many employees are struggling. A survey from the American Psychological Association found 70% of adults have reported significant stress due to the change in work lifestyle.

Sageworks Massage Therapy is crafting so-

lutions specifically designed to meet the needs of remote workers. This includes extended hours and making ongoing care accessible, explains AJ Centore PhD, Director at Sageworks. "We need to be available when remote workers need us. That means early mornings, lunch breaks, and evenings." Centore also states, "Remote workers need ongoing care to counter the physical toll on their bodies, so we made scheduling repeat sessions simple and economical."

The practice offers a broad range of techniques, including Swedish massage, deep tis-

sue massage, and trigger point therapy, which are shown to decrease stress levels and alleviate discomforts associated with prolonged sitting and desk work. But Sageworks has also introduced "The Trifecta," a combination of hot stone treatment, a hot towel service, and aromatherapy added to every massage session. Centore explains, "Hot stone, hot towel, and aromatherapy are typically paid enhancements, but they're so beneficial we've made them complimentary for everyone. We're spreading the word that massage isn't a once-a-year treat, but an important part of one's self-care." (AP)



Sageworks Massage Therapy room.

The Conversation

Isolation drives disease and shortens life spans

Curing US loneliness epidemic would make us healthier, fitter

By Clay Marsh

West Virginia University

The Conversation is an independent and nonprofit source of news, analysis and commentary from academic experts.

A national health advisory issued by US Surgeon General Vivek Murthy on May 3, 2023, sheds light on the urgent public health issues of loneliness and isolation.

The report reflects Dr. Murthy's personal and professional experience with the damaging health impacts of loneliness. As surprising as it sounds, social isolation and loneliness have the same effect on human health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day, which is to say, it can shorten life span by up to 15 years.

I'm a leader in academic and clinical medicine and I served as the COVID-19 czar for the state of West Virginia, so I have experience in thinking about public health emergencies and how to fix them.

Let's first look at the problem and then examine some solutions and what the nation would gain by implementing them.

Defining the issue

Loneliness and social isolation are widespread. A 2021 survey by Cigna shows nearly 1 in 6 Americans reported feeling lonely or isolated. That means these conditions likely affect either you or someone you know.

In the same survey, young adults were nearly twice as likely as those over age 65 to report feeling lonely or isolated. In addition, 75% of Hispanics and 68% of Black or African American people reported these conditions, as did a majority of lower-income respondents and single parents.

While there are no definitive explanations for these high numbers, experts have suggested several possible determinants: the mobility of the population, the shift from in-person to remote work and learning since the beginning of the pandemic, and the deep divides in society caused by and irresponsible news sites. To grab the attention of viewers, some advertisers and media leaders understand that human beings are biased toward messages that activate fear and loss. In fact, the scientific term "aversion bias" demonstrates people are twice as fearful of loss as happy for gain.

When we feel socially isolated and lonely, our vigilance for threat activates our core survival instincts, which are rooted in evolutionary times. For early humans, being accepted and belonging to a group or community were key factors in survival. Being separated or ousted from one's tribe meant almost certain death.

Thriving relationships became critical to human feelings of safety and well-being. In fact, longevity studies consistently find that the strength of one's lifelong relationships is the most important driver of a long and healthy life.

Stress and loneliness are connected

The human nervous system is bal-

anced into two modes: the "fight or flight" of the sympathetic system and the "rest and digest" of the parasympathetic system.

Loneliness and isolation drive unbalanced activation of the sympathetic nervous system, leading to hypervigilance, or scanning the environment for threats. Once this threat response is activated, people see their environment as unsafe, leading to release of hormones that interfere with our trust and pleasure responses. As this stress-response heightens, people experience surges in hormones that elevate their heart rate and blood pressure.

Over time, release of these hormones damages our blood vessels, heart, brain, blood and liver and our metabolic and musculoskeletal systems. Much like a car engine that is continually over-revved, our body's systems begin to break down and our perceived experience of pain is heightened.

Feelings of worthlessness and fear increase the risk of substance use, mental health challenges, a variety of chronic diseases and obesity - all of which can contribute to a reduced life span.

In other words, loneliness and isolation drive disease and shorten life spans through unbalanced activation of the sympathetic nervous system induced by the perception of threat and chronic stress.

Of course, stress can also lead people to isolate themselves, so the effects do go both ways.

Finding relief

A primary solution to loneliness and social isolation is meaningful social connection.

Societal connections boost our perceptions of psychological and physical safety, worth and value and enhance feelings of belonging and contributing.

These critical relationships branch out from our families to our friends to form networks of trust and community. These networks of relationships are termed "social capital."

Princeton University economists Anne Case and Angus Deaton hypothesize that the reduction of social capital and hope stemming from the loss of jobs in Appalachia and the Ohio River Valley from 1999 to 2013 was a key driver of deaths from overdose, suicide and liver disease in these areas.

So what can be done to address the loneliness epidemic?

In his Framework for a National Strategy to Advance Social Connection, Murthy provides a practical call for action to address the public health problem of social disconnection and to strengthen social connection and community. These strategies include being open to new relationships, reconnecting with friends and distant family members and serving others by volunteering. The framework includes shareable tools and resources for individuals and organizations to invest in community-based social relationships and improve their community's mental health. (AP)

Test uses prognostic, predictive value of biomarkers

Menarini launches new test to detect 'hard-to-treat cancers'

'TMAs rare disease'

Oxford's Nanopore tech to improve patient outcomes in kidney disease

BOLOGNA, Italy, July 17: Menarini Silicon Biosystems (MSB), a pioneer in liquid biopsy and single cell technologies, has announced the availability of its new Cellsearch CTC lab service to detect expression of the Delta-Like Ligand 3 (DLL3) protein in tumor cells circulating in the bloodstream. This biomarker is mainly expressed in difficult-to-treat cancers. The new MSB lab service opens the door to the development of further minimally invasive tests that leverage the prognostic and predictive value of biomarkers in medical settings with high unmet needs.

According to Ralf Schoenbrunner, Chief Global R&D Officer of Menarini Silicon Biosystems, "We have the capability to develop such tests very quickly. This is important because new biomarkers are helping clinical researchers to determine treatment response in oncology trials, as well as guide physicians in their selection of therapies to improve outcomes in cancer patients. Making new biomarker assays quickly available is key to enable this progress."

Aggressive

Lung cancer is the second most common cancer worldwide with over 2.2 million cases in 2020. Small cell lung cancer (SCLC) represents about 15% [1] of these cancers and is more aggressive than the more prevalent Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer (NSCLC) and often diagnosed in the late stage of the disease. DLL3 is an inhibitory ligand of the Notch receptor whose overexpression on the surface of neuroendocrine neoplasms (NENs) is associated with the formation of high-grade neuroendocrine tumor types such as SCLC. The DLL3 biomarker is of great interest because it is highly expressed in the tumor tissue of patients with SCLC and other NENs but minimally in normal tissue. For this reason, scientists worldwide are increasingly investigating DLL3 proteins as they could represent clinically actionable targets.

CTCs in the bloodstream represent a premetastatic population involved in tumor dissemination. The fact that DLL3 positivity may be associated with more aggressive disease, strongly supports the clinical relevance of enumeration and characterization of CTCs that express this protein.

In addition, the new Cellsearch CTC test that detects this biomarker has the great advantage of being minimally

MONTPELLIER, France, July 17: SeqOne has announced the results of a long-standing research collaboration with Pr. Laurent Mesnard, Co-Director of the French National center for Thrombotic MicroAngiopathies (CNR-MAT), aimed at improving the diagnosis and management of patients suspected of suffering from thrombotic microangiopathies and atypical Hemolytic syndrome (aHUS). The program involved using Oxford Nanopore's revolutionary technology to sequence patients at the bedside, dramatically reducing turnaround times to obtaining actionable insights. Patients were sequenced using Oxford Nanopore's adaptive sampling option that makes it possible to target the parts of the genome of interest for thrombotic microangiopathies (TMAs) and modify the read-depth to explore in detail the regions that contain complex mutations that are hard to detect using standard methods. This Oxford Nanopore-based analysis was compared with traditional short read sequencing approaches in order to establish a benchmark against current standards of care and hence quantify benefits of nanopore sequencing. So far, the program, has analyzed 15 patients demonstrating the potential of the approach and highlighting the following benefits when compared with short read sequencing:

- Significantly faster turnaround times of under three days from sample collection to clinical report versus 3-4 week turnaround using outsourced short read sequencing
- Reliable detection of complex variants such as those affecting alternative complement pathways that are often duplicated
- Detection of certain types of variants, notably CFH/CFHR1 hybrid gene mutations that cannot be detected using traditional short-read technology
- A clear indication of those patients who will respond to one of the drugs that have proven effective in treating this disease; vitamin B12 in Cobalamin III deficiency or Eculizumab in case of complement alternate pathway dysregulation associated aHUS.

Diagnose

TMAs, such as aHUS, are rare diseases primarily affecting the kidney. They are hard to diagnose using traditional methods as they present as a number of nonspecific symptoms, such as severe hypertension, acute kidney injury/failure in the context of mechanical anemia and thrombocytopenia. TMAs lesions can be associated with many diseases and some genetic disorders linked to aHUS. Molecular diagnoses, in particular in genes associated with alternative complement pathway regu-

lation, make it possible to identify patients that suffer from this condition as well as informing on possible therapeutic options for TMA/aHUS.

"It is clear that a cost effective, rapid technology that can sequence long fragments of DNA, such as those provided by Oxford Nanopore and a robust interpretation solution such as SeqOne are necessary to extract the full potential of third generation sequencing technology in nephrology and aHUS" said Pr Laurent Mesnard, the PI heading the study.

In order to support the program, SeqOne implemented an Oxford Nanopore compatible long-read support capable of managing adaptive sampling data. SeqOne is a CE-IVD compliant platform that simplifies the analysis and interpretation of the data enabling the rapid interpretation of patient files which in turn maximizes efficiencies and enables management of higher caseloads.

"SeqOne is convinced both of the clinical potential of Oxford Nanopore's technology as well as the benefits of bedside sequencing enabled by Oxford Nanopore's hyper-cost-effective sequencing solutions" said Nicolas Philippe, CEO of SeqOne. "We are investing heavily to provide the best interpretation solution for the data provided in support of this exciting initiative".

invasive, standardized and allows for the dynamic real-time quantification of CTCs. It is based on the CELLSEARCH CTC platform, first and only clinically validated, FDA-cleared system for identification, isolation, and enumeration of CTCs in patients with metastatic breast, castration-resistant prostate or colorectal cancer. This is the first time that the Cellsearch platform is being made available for biopharma companies, who are focusing on developing treatments for lung cancer and other NENs.

According to Fabio Piazzalunga,

President and CEO of Menarini Silicon Biosystems (MSB), "Our unique CELLSEARCH technology allows us to utilize any type of tumor protein marker to characterize CTCs. This broadens the portfolio of Menarini Silicon Biosystems' commercially available assays and demonstrates this technology's ability to accommodate other targets in which pharma companies may be interested."

CTC phenotypic characterization has the potential to not only support biopharma companies in their clinical

development programs but in the future will also allow for decision making on personalized therapeutic strategies in an increasingly larger range of tumor types. This will help to avoid delays in needed therapies, minimize patient exposure to unnecessary medical strategies and reduce the high costs of inappropriate care.

MSB offers unique rare cell technologies and solutions that provide clinical researchers with access to unparalleled resolution in the study of cells and their molecular characterization.

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Editorial cartoonists' firings point to decline of opinion pages

NEW YORK, July 17, (AP) — Even during a year of sobering economic news for media companies, the layoffs of three Pulitzer Prize-winning editorial cartoonists on a single day hit like a gut punch.

The firings of the cartoonists employed by the McClatchy newspaper chain last week were a stark reminder of how an influential art form is dying, part of a general trend away from opinion content in the struggling print industry.

Losing their jobs were Jack Ohman of California's Sacramento Bee, also president of the Association of American Editorial Cartoonists; Joel Pett of the Lexington Herald-Leader in Kentucky and Kevin Siers of the Charlotte Observer in North Carolina. Ohman and Siers were full-time staffers, while Pett worked on a free-lance contract. The firings on Tuesday were first reported by The Daily Cartoonist blog.

"I had no warning at all," Ohman told The Associated Press. "I was stupefied."

McClatchy, which owns 30 US newspapers, said it would no longer publish editorial cartoons. "We made this decision based on changing reader habits and our relentless focus on providing the communities we serve with local news and information they can't get elsewhere," the chain said in a statement.

There's a rich history of editorial cartooning, including Thomas Nast's vivid takedowns of corrupt New York City politicians in the late 1800s and Herbert Block's drawings of a sinister-looking Richard Nixon in The Washington Post.

At the start of the 20th century, there were about 2,000 editorial cartoonists employed at newspapers, according to a report by the Herbert

Block Foundation. Now, Ohman estimates there are fewer than 20.

The last full-time editorial cartoonist to win a Pulitzer was Jim Morin of the Miami Herald in 2017. Since then, owing to the diminishing number of employed cartoonists, the Pulitzers have broadened the category in which they compete and renamed it "Illustrated Reporting and Commentary."

While written editorials can sometimes be ponderous and intimidate readers, the impact of a well-done cartoon is instantaneous, Pett said.

"Usually when you look at an editorial cartoon, it's (done by) some guy like you who is pissed who can draw," he said. "It's just relatable."

While economics is clearly a factor in an industry that has lost jobs so dramatically that many newspapers are mere ghosts of themselves, experts say timidity also explains the dwindling number of cartoonists. Readers are already disappearing, why give them a reason to be angry?

Pett has been involved in a battle with Daniel Cameron, Kentucky's attorney general and a Republican candidate for governor. Cameron, who is Black, has accused Pett of being a race-baiter in his cartoons and called for his firing at a news conference - not knowing that hours earlier, his wish had been granted, said Pett, a Pulitzer winner in 2000.

Guidelines

His bosses never told him to avoid cartoons about Cameron, but gave him a series of guidelines, Pett said. For instance, he was told not to depict Cameron wearing a MAGA hat backward.

"There's a broader reluctance in this political environment to make people mad," said Tim Nickens, retired editorial page editor at the Tampa Bay Times in Florida. "By definition, a provocative editorial

cartoonist is going to make somebody mad every day."

Pett agrees. "I could have looked at the guy who fired me and said, 'I'll do it for free,' and they would have said no," he said.

McClatchy insists that local opinion journalism remains central to its mission. The Miami Herald, a McClatchy newspaper, won a Pulitzer this year for "Broken Promises," a series of editorials about a failure to rebuild troubled areas in southern Florida.

In the current atmosphere, however, opinion is less valued. Gannett, the nation's largest chain with more than 200 newspapers, said last year the papers would only offer opinion pages a couple of days a week. Its executives reasoned that these pages were not heavily read, and surveys showed readers did not want to be lectured to.

That also meant less room for cartoons.

The reasoning is there are plenty of places to find opinion online, particularly on national issues. Political endorsements are more infrequent at newspapers. In 2020, only 54 of the nation's top 100 newspapers endorsed a presidential candidate, down from 92 in 2008, according to the American Presidency Project at the University of California, Santa Barbara.

"When publications really don't stand for anything in an editorial sense, that's damaging, whether the pieces are widely read or not," said Rick Edmonds, media business analyst at The Poynter Institute.

While the idea may be to steer clear of polarizing national issues to concentrate on local concerns, the irony is that newspapers that still want to use cartoons will be forced to turn more to syndicated services, whose pieces primarily deal with national or international issues.

Media

Variety



This image released by Paramount Pictures shows Shea Whigham in a scene from 'Mission: Impossible - Dead Reckoning, Part One.' 'Mission: Impossible' debuted with \$80M over five days, igniting box office but missing expectations. (AP)

Film

Netflix spinoff is tedious and gratuitous

Cheap thrills in 'Bird Box Barcelona'

By Lindsey Bahr

It's funny to think back to December 2018, that pre-pandemic world, when everyone decided that they wanted to spend their holiday breaks watching a terrified, blindfolded Sandra Bullock try to escape a mysterious force that compels people to suicide. Before "Tiger King," before "Squid Game," "Bird Box" was a phenomenon for Netflix. Sure, they self-report their numbers and keep metrics like viewing hours, households and watches intentionally vague, but they also don't tout all their movie-star driven pictures like that: "Bird Box" was an unambiguous hit.

Was it because the movie was good? Watercooler worthy? A universal love for Bullock? Maybe it was just something new that everyone in the house could agree on. It's fascinating and frustrating to see movies, good and bad, that came and went in their time in the past 30 years hitting a nerve with the culture at once because they happen to be on Netflix. "Bird Box" may not have been a great film, but it was exciting and intriguing enough at the exact right moment, with a good cast and all the dressings of a Hollywood movie from its director (Suzanne Bier) to its score by Trent Reznor and Atticus Ross. And it had a sheen of "edginess," that can-you-believe-it factor that would benefit "Squid Game" later.

It's not a surprise that Netflix wanted to capitalize on that popularity, even five years later, but "Bird Box Barcelona" is not it. The film, currently streaming, boasts some impressive action sequences but its reliance on the shock value of the suicides wears thin, becoming both tedious and gratuitous as the movie stretches on and on and on.

This story, written and directed by David and Alex Pastor, is set an ocean away from the first film. It also embraces dual timelines that meet up to reveal some sort of truth about the protagonist, Sebastian (Mario Casas) and his young daughter Anna (Alejandra Howard). He, like everyone, is haunted by what's happening and searching for some kind of meaning behind it. Sebastian is an unreliable protagonist with some secrets, too - maybe he's not even a good guy. Why, very

early in the film, when telling some randoms on the street that he knows where a generator is, does he say he's alone when Anna is standing right next to him?

This post-apocalyptic world is as bleak and inhumane as it gets - especially with factions of city-dwellers led by a priest (Leonardo Sbaraglia) convinced that this version of death is the only true way to salvation. The one grace in the movie is an English psychiatrist Claire (Georgina Campbell) who seems to be the only real human around, but unfortunately she's been sidled with a cliché de-facto mother plot caring for a very thinly drawn young German girl, Sofia (Naila Schuberth), who has lost her mother.

I suppose no one who is coming to "Bird Box Barcelona" has or had much of a problem the suicide hook, but it is as cut-rate as it gets. There is no thrill, entertainment or insight to be gleaned in watching the myriad ways people can die by their own hand. It's just awful, and this is not a film that is interested in grappling with the trauma in any interesting or helpful way. Instead it is two hours of unpleasant drudgery.

And, unfortunately, like many horror movies before it, more information and explanations about the mysterious suicidal forces at large does not enhance the suspense for the audience. Instead, it just makes everything dumber.

"Bird Box Barcelona," a Netflix release currently streaming, has not been rated by the Motion Picture Association. Running time: 110 minutes. One star out of four.

Also:

LOS ANGELES: Leonardo DiCaprio will fund scholarships and a climate education program at the UCLA-based elementary school where he was once himself a scholarship student, the actor and the college said Tuesday.

The Leonardo DiCaprio Scholarship fund and the Climate Justice Education Program are set to begin in the forthcoming school year at the UCLA Lab School.

"I was fortunate enough to attend the Lab School due to the generous contributions of UCLA donors, and my experience profoundly transformed my

worldview," DiCaprio said in a statement to The Associated Press. "I am proud to have the chance to pass on my experience to those who might otherwise miss out on this opportunity, and to help create a program that will help guide the next generation of climate warriors."

The school aims to provide innovative educational techniques for its students - whose ages range from 4 to 12 - that outside teachers can come to study.

DiCaprio's scholarship fund will give its students who need financial aid, which he got as a child when he went to the school in the 1980s, and will help the school to maintain the diversity it seeks. About 40% of its students need financial help.

"This scholarship fund will provide many children access to UCLA Lab School, just as Leo had," said Dr. Eric Esrailian, a professor in UCLA's Health Sciences department and a longtime friend of DiCaprio.

The new and separate climate education program will seek to teach students from pre-Kindergarten through sixth grade about the science behind climate change and about the policy and leadership needed to address it. The school has sought to use its location, next to a creek amid redwoods on the Los Angeles university campus, to become a hands-on site for environmental teaching.

DiCaprio, 48, has long been an outspoken advocate for addressing the climate crisis.

Esrailian said the program "will position children - both at the Lab School and beyond - for a more sustainable and healthy life for themselves and for our planet."

The amount of the donations behind the programs was not made public, but officials said generations of students will be the recipients.

"Expanding access to high-quality education and helping young people recognize the need to protect our planet are critical goals for our institution," UCLA Chancellor Gene Block said in a statement.

DiCaprio, the Oscar-winning star of "Titanic," "Once Upon a Time in Hollywood," "The Revenant" and "The Departed," will next appear in "Killers of the Flower Moon," directed by his frequent collaborator Martin Scorsese.

Features

ARABIC TIMES

TUESDAY, JULY 18, 2023

"Oppenheimer" - looms, "Mission: Impossible" should play well for weeks to come.

"This is a global franchise. It's going gangbusters and its going to play for a long time. Quality always wins in the end," said Chris Aronson, distribution chief for Paramount.

"Dead Reckoning," Aronson



Aronson



McQuarrie

said, met or exceeded the studio's expectations.

"In international markets, in like-for-like markets, we're 15% ahead of 'Fallout,' and that's taking China out," added Aronson. "Domestically, we're over 3% ahead of 'Fallout' for the first five days. To beat its predecessor is phenomenal, especially in this

environment."

Cruise, the so-called savior of movie theaters last year, traveled tirelessly to again pump life back into a summer box office that's been sluggish. After a splashy world premiere in Rome with a red-carpet on the Spanish Steps, Cruise and McQuarrie surprised theaters in Atlanta, Miami,

Toronto and Washington D.C. in the days ahead of opening.

"Dead Reckoning" hit theaters at a crucial mid-summer period for Hollywood, and not just because of the SAG-AFTRA strike which began Thursday. "Mission: Impossible" launched a week before one of the biggest box-office show-downs of the year. (AP)

People & Places

Music

Music streams hit 1tr1

Alejandro's reggaeton reaches new heights

'Playa Saturno' by Rauw Alejandro (Sony Music Latin/Duars Entertainment)

Puerto Rican musician **Rauw Alejandro** has always had his eye on the future — taking familiar genres and contorting them into something novel.

At the beginning of his career, that meant R&B-informed reggaeton when the rest of the industry leaned into "popetón," a tried-and-true pop formula. Alejandro takes dem bow, the four-on-the-floor, three-beat percussive pattern that lays the foundation for many Urbano Latino genres (that's the "boom-chk-boom-chk" to the untrained ear), and manages to stretch the sound into new, experimental heights. And maybe to the furthest corners of the galaxy, as his extraterrestrial concept album suggests.

Released as a surprise spinoff to his 2022 album "Saturno", Alejandro's fourth full-length, "Playa Saturno," is an idyllic soundtrack for a beach party in outer space, a collection of songs that demonstrate Alejandro's keen ear and respect for those performers who laid the path for his success.



Alejandro

The Queen of Reggaeton, Ivy Queen, appears on "Celebrando"; the pair harmonize on the song's ascendant bridge. Spanish popstar Miguel Bosé appears on the retro-reggaeton "Si Te Pegas"; Mexican singer Junior H brings his corridos tumbados to "Picardía." Puerto Rican duos Jowell y Randy and Negro y Dálmata also make an appearance, on "Ponte Nasty" and "No Me La Molesté" respectively, bringing classic Boricua reggaeton to Alejandro's modern audience.

In fact, much of "Playa Saturno" hits like a musical history lesson across the Caribbean: It's heard in the steel drums of "No Me Sorprende" and the vocal melodies in "Hoy Aquí," made contemporary by a retro-futuristic, synth-heavy production style.

A spinoff album is a tricky thing. There's an expectation that these songs could be a collection of sub-tracks that didn't make the original release, but that is not the case here. "Playa Saturno" is an alternative storyline in a larger musical universe. If there is a misstep, it's in the similarity between "Hoy Aquí" and "Lejos Del Cielo" from "Saturno," but coincidences can be expected when working in the same sonic template.

The successes of "Playa Saturno" far outweigh those moments: Particularly "Baby Hello," the electro-pop lead single in collaboration with Argentine producer Bizarrap, known for his viral BZRP Music Sessions on YouTube. It's innovative pop music, a late song of the summer contender for those looking to party among the stars. If space is the final frontier, Alejandro's album serves as a reminder that there's a lot more to discover — and the boundlessness of his music is a reflection of that fact.



"Imagination," Peter Lewis (OMAD Records)

Peter Lewis bridges the past and future on "Imagination," his music evoking the 1960s as his lyrics look toward eternity.

Lewis, 77, was a founding member of Moby Grape, the supremely talented **San Francisco** band that was cursed by bad decisions, bad habits and bad luck but did release a classic album in 1967 during the Summer of Love.

Lewis had the most elegant voice in a group with four fine singers, and on "Imagination" his gentle tenor turns back the clock. It's frayed but arresting, and his flair for melody remains intact. "Remember how it was back in the day," Lewis sings, and he also ponders the universe, the meaning of life, what's to come and beer shampoo.

Co-producer **John DeNicola** helps find a common thread in the album's wide range of musical styles. "Just Like Sunshine" benefits from Lewis' 12-string guitar, and "If I Just Had You" features Dion-esque doo-wop vocals. The trippy "Frank Zappa's Ghost" and stacked harmonies of "La Mujer" echo Lewis' former band, as does the sweet country ballad "When You Come Back to Me," and the earnest, bluesy benediction "Saying Goodbye."

"We've got to love each other," Lewis sings, "while we still can." Time is relentless, but for a moment it sounds like 1967.

Also:

LOS ANGELES: Is non-English language music the future of the music business? Perhaps.

The global music industry surpassed 1 trillion streams at the fastest pace, ever, in a calendar year, Luminate's 2023 Midyear Report has found. The number was reached in three months, a full month faster than 2022.

Global streams are also up 30.8% from last year, reflective of an increasingly international music marketplace.

Additionally, Luminate found that two in five - or 40% - of US music listeners enjoy music in a non-English language. And a whopping 69% of US music listeners enjoy music from artists originating outside of the US.

According to the report, Spanish, French, Japanese, Korean, Italian, German, and Arabic are the most popular languages for non-Anglophonic music among US music listeners, with Latin genres and K-pop leading the charge.

"Specifically, our streaming data shows that Spanish and Korean language music are the most popular when taking a look at the top 10,000 most streamed songs (audio and video combined) during the first half of 2023," says **Jaime Marconette**, Luminate's senior director of music insights and industry relations.

"Furthermore, Spanish-language music's share of that top 10,000 has grown 3.6% since 2021, while English-language music's share has dropped 4.2% in that same time," he says.

That is reflected in Luminate's 2023 Midyear Top Albums chart, where Bad Bunny's spring 2022 album "Un Verano Sin Ti" still breaks the top 10 a year later (the chart factors in a combination of album sales, on-demand audio/visual sales, and digital track sales). When "top albums" are defined by physical and digital sales exclusively, K-pop dominates, taking up six of the top 10 spots.

"K-pop fans are, unsurprisingly, some of the most enthusiastic fans across physical formats," Marconette says.

Luminate found that K-pop fans are 69% more likely to purchase vinyl and 46% more likely to purchase CDs than the average US music listener in the next 12 months.

One in four K-pop fans has purchased a cassette in the last 12 months. (AP)



Jane Birkin poses for photographers at the photo call for the film 'Jane By Charlotte' at the 74th international film festival, Cannes, southern France, Thursday, July 8, 2021. France's Culture Ministry and French media say singer and actress Jane Birkin has died at age 76. (AP)

Obituary

Macron hails style icon as a 'complete artist'

Actor, singer Birkin dies aged 76

PARIS, July 17, (AP) — Actor and singer Jane Birkin, who made France her home and charmed the country with her English grace, natural style and social activism, has died at age 76.

The London-born star and fashion icon was known for her musical and romantic relationship with French singer Serge Gainsbourg. Their songs notably included the steamy "Je t'aime moi non plus" ("I Love You, Me Neither"). Birkin's ethereal, British-accented singing voice interlaced with his gruff baritone in the 1969 duet that helped make her famous and was forbidden in Italy after being denounced in the Vatican newspaper.

The style Birkin displayed in the 1960s and early 1970s - long hair with bangs, jeans paired with white tops, knit mini dresses and basket bags - still epitomizes the height of French chic for many women around the world.

Birkin was also synonymous with a Hermes bag that bore her name. Created by the Paris fashion house in 1984 in her honor, the Birkin bag became one of the world's most exclusive luxury items, with a stratospheric price tag and years-long waiting list to buy it.

In her adopted France, Birkin was also celebrated for her political activism and campaigning for Amnesty International, Myanmar's pro-democracy movement, the fight against AIDS and other causes.

"You can always do something," Birkin said in 2001, drumming up support for an Amnesty campaign against torture. "You can say, 'I am not OK with that.'"

She joined five monks on a march through the Cannes Film Festival in 2008 to demand that Myanmar let

foreign aid workers into the country to help cyclone victims.

In 2022, she joined other screen and music stars in France in chopping off locks of their hair in support of protesters in Iran. Charlotte Gainsbourg, Birkin's daughter with Gainsbourg and also an actor in her own right, cut off a snippet of her mother's hair for the "HairForFreedom" campaign as Iran was engulfed by anti-government protests.

French President Emmanuel Macron hailed Birkin as a "complete artist," noting that her soft voice went hand-in-hand with her "ardent" activism.

"Jane Birkin was a French icon because she was the incarnation of freedom, sang the most beautiful words of our language," he tweeted.

Timeless

French media reported that Birkin was found dead at her Paris home. The French Culture Ministry tweeted that Birkin died Sunday. It hailed her as a "timeless Francophone icon."

Culture Minister Rima Abdul Malak called Birkin "the most French British person" and "the emblem for a whole epoch who never went out of fashion."

Outside Birkin's home on Paris' Left Bank, fans mourned her death.

"She was a poet, a singer, an artist," said Marie-Jo Bonnet. "She gave the best of herself and that's marvelous."

Birkin's early movie credits included "Blow-Up" in 1966, credited with helping introduce French audiences to her "Swinging Sixties" style and beauty.

Birkin and Gainsbourg met two years later. She remained his muse even after the couple separated in 1980.

She also had a daughter, Kate, with

James Bond composer John Barry. Kate Barry died in 2013 at age 46. Birkin had her third daughter, singer and model Lou Doillon, with French director Jacques Doillon.

Birkin suffered from health issues in recent years that kept her from performing and her public appearances became sparse.

French broadcaster BFMTV said Birkin suffered a mild stroke in 2021, forcing her to cancel shows that year. She canceled her shows again in March due to a broken shoulder blade.

A return to performing was put off in May, with the singer saying she needed a bit more time and promising her fans she would see them again come the fall.

Despite her decades-long screen and music career, Birkin suspected that, for some people, the bag named after her might be her most famous legacy.

The fashion accessory was born of a fortuitous encounter on a London-bound flight in the 1980s with the then-head of Hermes, Jean-Louis Dumas. Birkin recounted in subsequent interviews that they got talking after she spilled some of her things on the cabin floor. She asked Dumas why Hermes didn't make a bigger handbag and sketched out on an airplane vomit sack the sort of bag that she'd like.

Dumas then had an example made for her and, flattered, she said yes when Hermes asked whether it could commercialize the bag in her name.

In a CBS Sunday Morning interview in 2018, Birkin joked that it might be what she's best known for.

"I thought, 'Oh gosh, on my obituary, it will say, 'Like the bag' or something,'" she said. "Well, it could be worse."



Lena Kristin Ellingsen, (left), and Trond Fausa Aurvag pose for photographers upon arrival at the premiere for the film 'Oppenheimer' on Thursday, July 13, in London. (AP)



Dobson



Eaton

Variety

BURBANK, Calif: Fans who agree Disneyland is indeed the happiest place on Earth will soon be able to take home more than a souvenir.

A passionate collector has brought Disney magic to a sprawling 30,000-square-foot (2,800-square-meter) building in Burbank, California, where fans can hear birds chirping in the Enchanted Tiki Room section or giggle at the animated ghosts from the Haunted Mansion ride as they preview more than 1,500 items up for auction later this month.

Joel Magee has been building his collection of more than 6,000 items — including costumes, rare posters, and life-size vehicles from rides like Dumbo and Peter Pan — for 30 years, and he's finally ready to share some of it with the public.

"I'm one of those guys — go big or go home. And if you don't have the biggest, then it ain't the best," Magee told The Associated Press in a recent interview, as fans milled about the exhibit. Magee's is the largest individually owned Disneyland/Disney Park collection in the world.

"It's really kind of exciting. This is the first time that all of my things have been in the same room at the same time," he said.

Magee is known in the collectible industry as "the toy scout," and has amassed a huge collection of toys and Disney items. He says he watched "The Wonderful World of Disney" on TV every week as a kid but had never been to the park and never thought about collecting until he was at a toy show where he met a man selling Disneyland artifacts and got hooked.

"At the time, I couldn't afford too much. I bought a couple of pieces, but that's where it all began," Magee said. "In my travels as 'the toy scout,' I meet people all over the country and for the last 25 years, they've just been bringing me all their stuff and here it is today."

The items for sale are as small as a trading card and as large as a 1917 Model T moving van from Disneyland's original Main Street that Magee says Walt Disney created himself.

Mike Van Eaton is the co-owner of

Van Eaton Galleries, which is running the auction. (AP)

RALEIGH, NC: An ongoing investigation by North Carolina's Department

of Labor found that a large crack in the support column of a towering roller coaster had been visible for at least a week before the amusement park shut it down for repairs.

"It looks like maybe six to 10 days



The historic Princess Diana black sheep jumper is on display at the auction house Sotheby's in London, Monday, July 17. The 'Worn on Several Occasions & Adored by the Fashion Icon' jumper will be on auction headlining Sotheby's inaugural fashion icons sale in New York this September at an Estimate of \$50,000 - 80,000, 38,000-61,000 pounds. (AP)

prior, some pictures had been taken that shows the beginning of the crack, and then by obviously last Friday, the thing was completely severed," Labor Commissioner **Josh Dobson** said in an interview with The Associated Press.

Charlotte-based Carowinds amusement park came under investigation this week after a video surfaced online of an operational roller coaster with a large crack in one of its columns. The footage of Fury 325, known as a "giga coaster" due to its dramatic height of 325 feet (99 meters), showed a key support beam bending with the top visibly detached as cars packed with unsuspecting passengers barreled by at speeds of up to 95 mph (150 kph).

Carowinds, which straddles the North Carolina and **South Carolina** line, has announced plans to repair the ride and says it will implement additional inspection procedures. A park spokesperson did not immediately respond Friday to an email seeking comment on the commissioner's observations.

The park's maintenance team and the ride manufacturer, **Switzerland**-based Bolliger & Mabillard, determined this week that a fracture had formed along a weld line in one of the steel support columns. It plans to remove and replace the column and expects a new one — engineered by the same manufacturer — to be delivered to the park next week. (AP)

Health

Reduce kids' exposure

EPA targets harmful 'lead dust' in homes

NEW YORK, July 17, (AP) — The Biden administration has moved to reduce children's exposure to lead, proposing stricter limits on dust from lead-based paint in older homes and child-care facilities.

Declaring that "there is no safe level of lead," the administration estimates that the proposed rule would reduce lead exposure for approximately 250,000 to 500,000 children under the age of six each year.

That's important because health scientists have said for some time there is no safe level of lead in a child's blood. Lead's damage to the brain is well known: It takes points off IQ, deprives kids of problem-solving abilities, and can make it harder to learn to read. But it also affects other organs, including the liver and kidneys.

"This proposal to safely remove lead paint along with other efforts to deliver clean drinking water and replace lead pipes will go a long way toward protecting the health of our next generation of leaders," Janet McCabe, deputy director of the Environmental Protection Agency, said in New Jersey, where the proposal was announced.

Paint that contains lead was banned in 1978, but because paint is applied in layers and then chips off or is sanded off during remodeling, more than 30 million American homes are believed to still contain it.

The proposed rule targets levels of lead dust. Currently 10 micrograms per square foot is considered hazardous on floors, and a concentration 10 times that high is considered hazardous on window sills. The new rule brings both of those down to no detectable lead.

Apart from what constitutes a hazard, the proposed rule would reduce what's allowed when a lead contractor, often called a lead abatement contractor, finishes work on a property where lead has been a problem. These levels would be 3 micrograms per square foot on the floor and 20 micrograms per square foot on sills.

Public health experts celebrated the announcement, calling the proposed rule long overdue.

Poisonous

Dr. Philip Landrigan noted the government has gradually been reducing the standard for what counts as poisonous levels of lead in the blood of children, with the most recent change occurring two years ago. But the EPA announcement marks an effort to take more preventive action, he said.

"When you are relying on the blood lead level in children to indicate whether there is lead in the environment, we are basically using the children as canaries in the mine," said Landrigan, a Boston College biology professor who directs the schools Program for Global Public Health and the Common Good.

"This way we actually dealing with the source, as opposed to the consequences of exposure," he said.

But Cindy Lehnhoff, director of the National Child Care Association, worried that the rule change could hurt child care centers that are already struggling financially - especially those in low-income neighborhoods, where the facilities tend to be older.

"No doubt they would be the ones most affected by this change," Lehnhoff said by email. "I certainly hope our U.S. legislators realize that this rule needs to be backed up with money to make it happen."

David Rosner, a public health historian at Columbia University and expert on the history of lead regulation in the United States, expressed surprise at the EPA announcement, given that new environmental regulations have become more difficult and controversial in recent years. "It's nice that they are trying to move at least on this one, obvious, long-term problem that we've had for a century," Rosner said.

He applauded the rule as an overdue overdue recognition that no level of lead exposure is safe for children.

Bruce Lanphear, a lead poisoning expert at Canada's Simon Fraser University, said the current standard "was based on what was thought to be feasible rather than on science," and this corrects that.

But Rosner also noted it is currently just a proposal and will likely face opposition from landlords and others who will likely lament the cost of more aggressive cleanups.

"It will be interesting to see what politics play out," Rosner said.

Meanwhile, a bill that would require the replacement of lead pipes across Rhode Island over the next decade has been approved by state lawmakers.

The bill that passed the House recently would create a lead water supply replacement program for both public and private service lines, with a requirement that all affected lines be replaced within 10 years. The Senate previously approved the bill.

Under the bill, financial assistance for lead pipe replacement would be provided through the Rhode Island Infrastructure Bank, including no-cost options for property owners. To help develop the state's workforce, the legislation would set requirements for water suppliers and contractors to participate in apprenticeship programs.

Also:

LONDON: The World Health Organization said more than two dozen cats have been infected with bird flu across Poland, but no people appeared to have been sickened.

In a statement on Monday, the UN health agency said it was the first time so many cats had been reported to have bird flu over such a wide geographical area in a single country, amid an unprecedented global outbreak of the latest version of the H5N1 version of the disease.

WHO said that late last month, Polish authorities informed agency officials of the unusual deaths of more than 45 cats in 13 geographical regions of the country. Testing last week found that 29 had H5N1.

As of June, the most recent variant of H5N1 has been reported in birds and other animal species in Asia, Africa, Europe and the Americas. Since 2020, WHO said a dozen human cases have been reported.

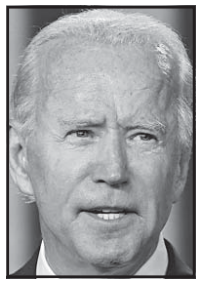
Scientists worry that rising cases of H5N1, particularly in animals that have frequent contact with humans, might lead to a mutated version of the disease that could spread easily between people, triggering another pandemic.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, many experts had suspected that the next global outbreak would be sparked by H5N1. But while bird flu has killed hundreds of millions of birds globally, it has sickened fewer than 900 people since 2003 and has not been able to spread easily among humans.

WHO said it was unclear how the domestic cats in Poland became infected with bird flu and said officials were still investigating possible sources of exposure, including contact with wild birds that are known to carry H5N1. The agency said the risk of people in Poland being infected with bird flu was "low" and "low to moderate" for people exposed to cats, including cat owners and veterinarians.

Last week, WHO and partners warned that the increasing numbers of mammals infected with H5N1 were unusual. Experts have previously cautioned that pigs, which are susceptible to flu viruses from both humans and birds, might act as a "mixing vessel," leading to the emergence of mutated viruses that could be lethal to people.

Since last year, authorities in 10 countries have reported bird flu outbreaks in mammals, including farmed mink in Spain, seals in the US, and sea lions in Peru and Chile.



Biden



People walk along a trail as the sun sets, Sunday, July 16, in Death Valley National Park, Calif. Death Valley's brutal temperatures come amid a blistering stretch of hot weather that has put roughly one-third of Americans under some type of heat advisory, watch or warning. (AP)



A municipal worker disinfects dead pelicans on San Pedro beach in Lima, Peru, on Dec. 1, 2022. The World Health Organization said more than two dozen cats have been infected with bird flu across Poland, but no people appeared to have been sickened. In a statement on Monday, July 17, the UN health agency said it was the first time so many cats had been reported to have bird flu over such a wide geographical area in a single country, amid an unprecedented global outbreak of the latest version of the H5N1 version of the disease. (AP)

Discovery

Dino bone bed uncovered: Long before the Chesapeake Bay or I-95 corridor etched the land that would be Maryland, an enormous carnivorous dinosaur lived and died here.

About 115 million years later, staff and volunteers at Prince George's County's Dinosaur Park say they have unearthed a tibia, or shin bone, belonging to that apex predator of the early Cretaceous Period.

Officials announced this week that the recovery of the fossil and others nearby elevate the park's classification to a bone bed, the first discovered in Maryland since 1887. Paleontologists define a bone bed as containing one or more species within a geological layer.

Scientists and volunteers have gently pried fossilized teeth, vertebrae and scales belonging to a variety of dinosaur species from the iron-rich bone bed in Laurel since 2018.

Paleontologist J.P. Hodnett, a program coordinator for the park, was among the group that initially discovered the tibia during a dig on April 22. He believes it belonged to an Acrocanthosaurus, making it the largest theropod fossil discovered in eastern North America.

"This is something paleontologists pray for," Hodnett said. "To find them (bones) in a concentration like this is fantastic."

The fossils will be cleaned, examined and cataloged into the museum system for the Prince George's County Department of Parks and Recreation.

"Typically, only one or two bones are found at a time, so this new discovery of a bonebed of fossils is extremely important," said Matthew Carrano, a paleontologist with the Smithsonian, in a news release. "It is certainly the most significant collection of dinosaur bones discovered along the eastern seaboard in the last hundred years."

The scientific community's knowledge of dinosaurs in the eastern United States is lacking, said Thomas R. Holtz Jr., a paleontologist working for the University of Maryland's Department of Geology. (AP)

Quake triggers tsunami advisory: A 7.2 magnitude earthquake triggered a brief tsunami advisory for southern Alaska late Saturday, but the advisory was canceled about an hour later, monitoring bodies reported.

The earthquake was felt widely throughout the Aleutian Islands, the Alaskan Peninsula and Cook Inlet regions, according to the Alaska Earthquake Center.

In Kodiak, Alaska, sirens warned of a possible tsunami and sent people driving to shelters late at night, according to video posted to social media.

The United States Geological Survey wrote in a social media post that the earthquake occurred 106 kilometers (65.8 miles) south of Sand Point, Alaska, at

Climate

July has been getting hotter

Earth sizzled to global record in June

NEW YORK, July 17, (AP) — An already warming Earth steamed to its hottest June on record, smashing the old global mark by nearly a quarter of a degree (0.13 degrees Celsius), with global oceans setting temperature records for the third straight month, the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has announced recently.

June's 61.79 degrees (16.55 degrees Celsius) global average was 1.89 degrees (1.05 degrees Celsius) above the 20th Century average, the first time globally a summer month was more than a degree Celsius hotter than normal, according to NOAA. Other weather monitoring systems, such as NASA, Berkeley Earth and Europe's Copernicus, had already called last month the hottest June on record, but NOAA is the gold standard for record-keeping with data going back 174 years to 1850.

The increase over the last June's record is "a considerably big jump" because usually global monthly records are so broad based they often jump by hundredths not quarters of a degree, said NOAA climate scientist Ahira Sanchez-Lugo.

"The recent record temperatures, as well as extreme fires, pollution and flooding we are seeing this year are what we expect to see in a warmer climate," said Cornell University climate scientist Natalie Mahowald. "We are just getting a small taste for the types of impacts that we expect to worsen under climate change."

Temperature

Both land and ocean were the hottest a June has seen. But the globe's sea surface - which is 70% of Earth's area - has set monthly high temperature records in April, May and June and the North Atlantic has been off the charts warm since mid March, scientists say. The Caribbean region smashed previous records as did the United Kingdom.

The first half of 2023 has been the third hottest January through June on record, behind 2016 and 2020, according to NOAA.

NOAA says there's a 20% chance that 2023 will be the hottest year on record, with next year more likely, but the chance of a record is growing and outside scientists such as Brown University's Kim Cobb are predicting a "photo finish" with 2016 and 2020 for the hottest year on record. Berkeley Earth's Robert Rohde said his group figures there's an 80% chance that 2023 will end up the hottest year on record.

That's because it's likely only to get hotter. July is usually the hottest month of the year, and the record for July and the hottest month of any year is 62.08 degrees (16.71 degrees Celsius) set in both July 2019 and July 2021. Eleven of the first dozen days in July were hotter than ever on record, according to an unofficial and preliminary analysis by University of Maine's Climate Re-analyzer. The Japanese Meteorological Agency and the World Meteorological Organization said the world has just

US heat wave: Death Valley visitors drawn to the hottest spot on Earth

DEATH VALLEY NATIONAL PARK, Calif., July 17, (AP) — As uninviting as it sounds, Death Valley National Park beckons.

Even as the already extreme temperatures are forecast to climb even higher, potentially topping records amid a major US heat wave, tourists are arriving at this infamous desert landscape on the California-Nevada border.

Daniel Jusehus snapped a photo earlier this week of a famed thermometer outside the aptly named Furnace Creek Visitor Center after challenging himself to a run in the sweltering heat.

"I was really noticing, you know, I didn't feel so hot, but my body was working really hard to cool myself," said Jusehus, an active runner who was visiting from Germany. His photo showed the thermometer reading at 120 degrees Fahrenheit (48.8 degrees Celsius).

Most visitors at this time of year make it only a short distance to any site in the park - which bills itself as the lowest, hottest and driest place on Earth - before returning to the sanctuary of an air-conditioned vehicle.

This weekend, the temperatures could climb past 130 F (54.4 C), but that likely won't deter some willing to brave the heat. Signs at hiking trails advise against venturing out after 10 a.m., though nighttime temperatures are still expected to be over 90 F (32.2 C). The hottest temperature recorded at Death Valley was 134 F (56.6 C) in July 1913, according to the National Park Service.

Other parks have long-standing warnings for hikers. At Grand Canyon National Park in Arizona, officials are cautioning people to stay off the trails for most of the day in

the inner canyon, where temperatures can be 20 degrees hotter than the rim.

In west Texas, Big Bend National Park near the Rio Grande is expected to be at least 110 F (43.3 C). The National Weather Service has said it's best to just stay off the trails in the afternoon.

The precautions vary across parks and landscapes, said Cynthia Hernandez, a park service spokesperson. Certain trails might be closed if conditions are too dangerous. Alerts and restrictions are posted on websites for individual parks, Hernandez said.

Preliminary information from the park service shows at least four people have died this year from heat-related causes across the 424 national park sites. That includes a 65-year-old man from San Diego who was found dead in his vehicle at Death Valley earlier this month, according to a news release.

Death Valley National Park emphasizes self-reliance over expectations of rescue. While rangers patrol park roads and can assist motorists in distress, there's no guarantee lost tourists will get aid in time.

More than 1.1 million people annually visit the desert park, which sits over a portion of the California-Nevada border west of Las Vegas. At 5,346 square miles (13,848 square kilometers), it's the largest national park in the Lower 48. About one-fifth of the visitors come in June, July and August.

Many are tempted to explore, even after the suggested cutoff times. Physical activity can make the heat even more unbearable and leave people feeling exhausted. Sunbaked rocks, sand and soil still radiate after sunset.

even hotter than this year.

While El Nino and its cooling flip side, La Nina, "have a big impact on year-to-year temperatures, their effects are much smaller over the long run than human-caused warming," said climate scientist Zeke Hausfather of Berkeley Earth and the tech company Stripe. "Back in 1998, the world had a super El Nino event with record global temperatures; today the temperatures of 1998 would be an unusually cool year. Human-driven climate change adds a permanent super El Nino worth of heat to the atmosphere every decade."

Global and Antarctic sea ice levels were at record lows in June, NOAA also said.

"Until we stop burning fossil fuels, this will only get worse," Climate scientist Friederike Otto of the Imperial College of London said in an email. "Heat records will keep getting broken, people and ecosystems are already in many cases beyond what they are able to deal with."



Carrano



Holtz

Unimak Pass, but Kodiak Island and the Kenai Peninsula were not expected to be impacted.

The Hawaii Emergency Management Agency said shortly after the tsunami warning went out that there was no threat to the islands.

There were an estimated eight aftershocks in the same area of Alaska, including one measuring 5.0 magnitude within three minutes of the original earthquake, KTUU-TV reported. (AP)

'Huge opportunity for the sport to grow'

Men to compete in artistic swimming at Paris Olympics



China team members hold up their gold medals after winning the team acrobatic final of artistic swimming at the World Swimming Championships in Fukuoka, Japan. US and Japan completed the podium. (AP)

FUKUOKA, Japan, July 17, (AP): Snicker if you wish. Guffaw for good measure. Bill May and other male synchronized swimmers - now called artistic swimmers - have heard the put-downs before.

But they're getting the last laugh.

Men have competed in synchro at the lower levels for decades. Now they're being included in the Olympics, meaning next year's Summer Games in Paris.

"I think it's a huge opportunity for the sport to grow and attract more men," May told the Associated Press at the World Aquatics Championships. "By keeping men out you're limiting the sport. By including men you're going to see an upshift in the popularity and the numbers."

OLYMPICS

May looks like a lean bodybuilder. He was among the first men to compete when synchro was included in the worlds for the first time in 2015. And he worked for 17 years at Cirque du Soleil doing water-themed shows. He has come out of competitive retirement for a chance to compete at the Olympics.

"There has always been that misconception that it's a female-only sport, or that it's for wimps, or that it's not a difficult sport," the 44-year-old May said. "Anyone that has anything negative to say about the sport - boy, female, anyone. Just try it and you'll know it's the most difficult sport in the world."

This is not the synchronized swimming that your parents or grandparents watched - the water ballet that made few waves below the flowery rubber caps and permanent



Kenneth Gaudet of United States competes in the men's solo technical final of artistic swimming at the World Swimming Championships in Fukuoka, Japan. Gaudet won silver. (AP)

England recall James

MANCHESTER, England, July 17, (AP): James Anderson is back in England's team for the fourth Ashes test against Australia starting Wednesday in Manchester.

The 40-year-old seam bowler, who was rested for the third test in Leeds, returns to the team in place of Ollie Robinson, the England and Wales Cricket Board said Monday.

It is the only change to the side that defeated Australia by three wickets at Headingley, a result that cut England's deficit to 2-1 in the five-match series.

smiles. It's estranged from the sport introduced at the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics.

The acrobatic team event, in particular, features lifts, throws and flips, and diving routines launched off the shoulders of teammates treading water below. It's gymnastics on water and concussions are a risk.

Interested men often confront the stereotypes.

Beginning in elementary school, 18-year-old American Kenny Gaudet dreamed of being a synchronized swimmer. He made it, but it wasn't easy.

"It makes me emotional just to think about the problems we all went through and the struggles we all had just to get a chance to swim

and do what we love," said Gaudet who competed at this year's worlds.

"So much bullying. So much slander. So much hate," he added. "Just because of my gender, just because I'm a male in artistic swimming. When I first started I wanted to quit so many times. Growing up my peers would ask why I'm doing a female sport, why am I being like a girl and degrade me for doing what I love to do."

One aspect of Adam Andrasko's job as the head of USA Artistic Swimming is recruiting men. He said there are about 100 participating in the United States, up from 25 just four years ago.

Rookie Norrman 'scrambles' in playoff for 1st PGA Tour victory

Stricker wins third PGA Tour Champions major of year

NICHOLASVILLE, Ky., July 17, (AP): Vincent Norrman lipped in an 8-footer for bogey on the 72nd hole to get into a playoff, then scrambled for par on the same hole in sudden death on Sunday to beat Nathan Kimsey and win the Barclays Championship, his first PGA Tour victory.

The 25-year-old Norrman, a tour rookie who played one year at Florida State after four years at Division II Georgia Southwestern, won in his 23rd career start. The Swede closed with a 66 at Keene Trace to finish at 22-under 266.

Kimsey, a 30-year-old European tour player from England who made his PGA Tour debut in this co-sanctioned event, shot 64 to post 22 under and waited to see if it would be good enough. It didn't look promising with Norrman and Trevor Cone at 23 under.

But Cone yanked his tee shot into tall grass well left of the green on the par-3 16th, leading to double bogey. That opened the door for Norrman, who hit fairway wood off the 18th tee and went well left into an awkward lie. He still had 57 yards for his third shot, missed the green from there and then chipped well past the hole. His bogey putt caught the lip on the right side and dropped.

In the playoff, Norrman again went left of the tee, missed the green to the right and chipped to 2 feet.

Kimsey hit his tee shot into thick rough on the right, just missing the water, and failed to get up-and-down from a bunker well short of the green. He was seeking to become the first player to since Jim Benepe at the 1988 Western Open to win his PGA Tour debut.

Cone shot 68 and finished one shot shy of the playoff alongside Adrien Saddier (66), a European tour player from France.

Linn Grant won her first LPGA Tour title after an outstanding start to her career in Europe, enduring a charge from U.S. Women's Open champion Allisen Corpuz and closing with a 3-under 68 for a three-shot victory in the Dana Open on Sunday.

The 24-year-old Grant has five victories on the Ladies European Tour but did not play in the United States until this year, when the U.S. dropped its COVID-19 vaccination requirement for foreign travelers. The Swede did not disclose her reasons for remaining unvaccinated, calling it a private matter.



Linn Grant of Sweden poses with the winner's trophy after the final round of the Dana Open golf tournament at Highland Meadows Golf Club in Sylvania, Ohio. (AP)

Grant entered the day with a six-shot lead after a 62 on Saturday. She parred her first seven holes, chipped in for birdie from behind the green on the par-3 eighth, and still led by six at the turn. But Corpuz, a week after she won at Pebble Beach for her first LPGA title, made it interesting with birdies on four of the last five holes to shoot 65 and get within two shots.

Grant saved par on the par-4 16th and finished with a birdie on the par-5 18th, reaching the green in two with a 3-wood that she didn't think she could get there. Her four-day total at Highland Meadows was 21-under 263.

A week after her triumph at Pebble Beach, Corpuz did not shoot worse than 68 over four rounds in Ohio.

Lindy Duncan also closed with a 65 and was alone in third, six shots back. Xiyu Janet Lin (67) and Stephanie Kyriacou (69) were another shot behind.

Steve Stricker won his third PGA Tour Champions major of the year, capping off a dominant weekend at Firestone with a 4-under 66 on Sunday for a three-shot victory in the Kaulig Companies Championship.

Stricker was five shots off the lead after a second-round 73, but closed with rounds of 65-66 for an 11-under 269 total. David Toms shot a final-round 65 to finish alone in second at 8 under.

GOLF

The 56-year-old Stricker won the Regions Tradition in May, then triumphed two weeks later at the Senior PGA Championship. He has five victories this year on the over-50 tour and a lead of more than \$2 million over second-place Bernhard Langer on the Charles Schwab Cup money list.

Stricker earned a spot in next year's Players Championship. This event was previously known as the Senior Players Championship.

Stricker played his first 13 holes in 3 under before his only bogey of the day on the par-4 14th. But he responded with a lengthy putt for birdie on the par-4 15th and a wedge to 2 feet for birdie on the par-5 16th.

Stricker has seven career majors on the PGA Tour Champions, tied with Hale Irwin for fourth all-time. Langer has the most with 12, including this year's U.S. Senior Open.

Harrison Frazer shot 70 and tied for third with K.J. Choi (68) and Ernie Els (68). Langer (66) finished alone in sixth, six shots back.

Nicholas Lindheim closed with a 6-under 66 for a two-shot victory in The Ascendant presented by Blue, the third Korn Ferry Tour win for the 38-year-old veteran.

Lindheim finished at 20-under 268 at TPC Colorado. Max Greyselman (66) was second at 18 under and Parker Coody (67) was another shot back.

Lindheim eagled the par-4 third hole in his bogey-free round.

Third-round leader Alejandro Tosti shot 71 and finished in a tie for fourth with Tim Widing (70).

Nelly Korda won for the first time this year when she closed with a 2-under 71 to win the Aramco Team Series-London by four shots on the Ladies European Tour. It comes one week after Korda tied for 64th in the U.S. Women's Open at Pebble Beach.

Casey Jarvis closed with a 1-under 69 for a one-shot victory in the Euram Bank Open in Austria, giving the 19-year-old South African his first title on the Challenge Tour. ... Davis Lamb won his second straight event on the PGA Tour Canada, closing with a 7-under 63 for a one-shot victory over David Kim (62) in the Quebec Open.

The final round of the Hartford Health-Care Women's Championship on the Epson Tour in Milford, Connecticut, was suspended because of bad weather before the leaders teed off. The tournament will conclude on Monday.

July Room Promotion

Weekdays (Saturday - Wednesday)	
Queen Cabana (2 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.	2 Bedroom Chalet (4 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.
NOW	NOW
BHD 61.000/-net	BHD 136.198/-net
Weekends (Thursday & Friday)	
Queen Cabana (2 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.	2 Bedroom Chalet (4 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.
NOW	NOW
BHD 69.000/-net	BHD 153.222/-net

Promo period from 4th - 31st July 2023

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Spain's Carlos Alcaraz returns to Serbia's Novak Djokovic in the final of the men's singles on day fourteen of the Wimbledon tennis championships in London. Alcaraz held onto No. 1 in the ATP rankings on Monday by virtue of his victory over No. 2 Novak Djokovic in the Wimbledon final. (AP)

Sports

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Mexico edge Panama to win Gold Cup

Giménez stars

INGLEWOOD, Calif., July 17, (AP): Eight months and two coaches after Mexico crashed out of an embarrassing World Cup, most of the same players triumphantly raised the CONCACAF Gold Cup amid confetti and raucous cheers Sunday night.

El Tri has reversed its fortunes with stunning speed, and its winning goal at SoFi Stadium came on an end-to-end play that was every bit as dramatic.

Late substitute Santiago Giménez scored after an electrifying sprint in the 88th minute, and Mexico won the Gold Cup for the record ninth time with a 1-0 victory over Panama.

After Edson Alvarez slid to block Iván Anderson's cross in the Mexico penalty area, Orbelín Pineda dribbled away and made a tremendous pass into the center circle. Giménez, the 22-year-old Feyenoord forward, dribbled past Harold Cummings and outraced Cummings and Fidel Escobar into the penalty area.

Giménez scuffed a bouncing left-foot shot over goalkeeper Orlando Mosquera for his fourth goal in 18 international appearances and his second of the tournament.

SOCCER

"It's the biggest moment of my career," Giménez said. "I just tried to get down the field quickly. We followed our principles throughout the game, and they worked perfectly. The result was great, because there were a lot of competitive teams in this tournament."

The goal by the Argentina-born Giménez, who came on only three minutes earlier, set off a frenzied celebration at a Southern California stadium packed with fans celebrating Mexico's revival in this biennial CONCACAF tournament. After Mexico was eliminated in the group stage of the World Cup for the first time since 1978, El Tri rebounded with an excellent tournament under interim coach Jaime Lozano, who took over the beleaguered program only a month ago after a Nations League loss to the U.S.

"Today the environment was like being in a World Cup," said Lozano, whose contract is only for this tournament. "It wasn't like a Gold Cup. I'm dreaming after I saw a stadium like we saw today, and to provide people with the happiness we've seen. Again, the team gave everything. We knew that we were writing history, and you have to take these opportunities."

Mexico, which allowed just two goals in its matches, has won this tournament more than all other nations combined. The U.S. has seven Gold Cup titles and Canada one.

Giménez's heroics ended an inspiring Gold Cup run by Panama, which upset the U.S. in the semifinals to earn its third appearance in the final. Los Canales couldn't get several solid scoring chances past veteran Mexican goalkeeper Guillermo Ochoa.



Mexico players celebrate with the winner's trophy after beating Panama 1-0 after the CONCACAF Gold Cup final soccer match in Inglewood, Calif. (AP)



Mexico's Cesar Montes (top), heads the ball over Panama's Cecilio Waterman during the second half of the CONCACAF Gold Cup final soccer match in Inglewood, Calif. (AP)

Panama also lost the Gold Cup final in 2005 and 2013, both to the U.S.

While the Gold Cup is notorious for featuring half-strength national teams, Mexico began the final with eight starters who also started at last year's World Cup.

Messi introduced by Miami and MLS

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla., July 17, (AP): Lionel Messi walked out from behind a curtain, took a few steps along a rain-slicked runway set up over the field at Inter Miami's stadium and headed toward David Beckham for a big hug.

His journey was complete. Inter Miami's wait was over.

At long last, Messi has arrived.

Inter Miami - after years of plotting, pleading and hoping - introduced arguably the game's biggest star on Sunday night, presenting their new franchise player with his pink No. 10 jersey that millions of people will be buying over the coming weeks and months.

"I'm sure we're going to have many wonderful experiences," Messi told the crowd.

Sunday was the first one. Almost every seat was filled despite horrible weather conditions that delayed the show, and nobody seemed to mind soaking rain that pounded down throughout the evening.

"I'm very much moved to be here in Miami, to be with you," Messi said. "I want to thank you, all of you, on behalf of my family, for the kindness that you have given me."

Beckham, the team's co-owner and

president, had huge dark blotches on his blue blazer because of the rain.

It was going to take more than a downpour to ruin this party, one where fans roared and music boomed.

"Tonight is a typical Miami welcome for one of the greatest players to ever have played the game," Beckham said during the telecast of the show. "The fact that we have our fans in here, celebrating this moment... this is what we have created and we're very proud of that."

SOCCER

Added primary owner Jorge Mas: "When David and I first met and we dreamt of what Inter Miami represents, it started off with the freedom to dream. And we dreamed of not only bringing elite players and the best players but the best player to ever don boots - and his name is Lionel Andrés Messi."

When Inter Miami began floating the notion that it would be the team to land Messi and bring the World Cup champion to Major League Soccer, there were no shortage of people who were, to put it mildly, skeptical about how realistic a plan that was.

Among them: MLS Commissioner Don Garber. Yes, even the man running the league had a bit of doubt.

Not anymore. Messi to Miami isn't just crazy talk. It happened, with Messi now tasked to lift a team that currently has the fewest points in the MLS standings and is mired in an 11-game winless streak.

SPEED SKATING

Al-Ajmi said that these four players attended an intensive training program in Korea before the tournament for a period of ten days to develop their technical abilities. Kuwait Winter Games Club is keen on participating in the international games that help boost cooperation between Asian countries and help raise the Kuwaiti flag.



Kuwait's Adeb Halawa displays his award after finishing second in Short Track.

Gold for Malaysia's Ammar

Halawa clinches silver in Korea Int'l Tournament

SEOUL, July 17, (KUNA): Kuwait speed skater Adeb Halawa won silver medal in Korea International Tournament in the Short Track (500 meters) category.

In a statement for KUNA, the Head of Kuwait Winter Games Club Fhaid Al-Ajmi said in a statement that this achievement came after a strong competition with Malaysian player Adem Ammar who won first place, Qatari player Ahmad Al-Majed who came out third and Kuwait's Mohammad Al-Nouri who came out fourth.

GALLE, Sri Lanka, July 17, (AP): Pakistan's middle-order staged a fighting comeback from a shaky start to finish Day 2 of the first test against Sri Lanka on 221-5, trailing by 91 runs on Monday.

After a century by Dhananjaya de Silva helped Sri Lanka post 312 in its first innings, Pakistan slipped to 101-5 in the afternoon session with left-arm spinner Prabhath Jayasuriya claiming three scalps on his happy hunting ground.

It looked as if the tourists were going to concede a big first-innings lead but Saud Shakeel and Agha Salman counter-attacked in fine style.

The pair added an unbeaten 120 for the sixth wicket with some entertaining stroke-play. They didn't allow Sri Lanka's spinners to settle and put the loose balls away thanks to clever use of the feet.

Both batters were so positive that Pakistan was scoring at a rate of 4.91 an over.

Sri Lanka lead by 91 runs

Pak stage comeback after top-order collapse

Asian Table Tennis Youth tourney kicks off with Kuwait participation

DOHA, July 17, (KUNA): The 27th Asian Table Tennis Youth Championship kicked off Monday in the Qatari capital, Doha, with the participation of 24 countries including Kuwait.

In remarks to KUNA, Vice President of the Kuwaiti Federation, Dr. Saud Al-Sarbel, confirmed the Kuwaiti team's readiness to participate in the championship, expressing his aspiration for the Kuwaiti team to achieve positive results during the tournament.

He also noted that the main goal of the participation is to develop the players for future events and interact with different high-level players.

The preliminary round competitions for the teams will be held tomorrow with the second and third rounds, while the quarter and semi-final rounds will be held the day after tomorrow. The final matches of all categories will be held on Wednesday, followed by the coronation ceremony.

Only 75 overs of the scheduled 98 were possible as rain again played a part, just like it did on Day 1. When play ended early, Shakeel was un-

beaten on 69 off 88 deliveries with six fours while Salman ended on 61 not out from 84 balls with six fours and a six.

Sri Lanka tried several bowling changes but was unable to find the breakthrough.

The left-handed Shakeel made his test debut eight months ago but has already become an integral part of the Pakistan side, having struck one hundred and six half-centuries in six tests.

Earlier, Jayasuriya drew Abdullah Shafique on to the front foot before some extra turn took the outside edge and he was caught at first slip for 19.

The arm ball accounted for captain Babar Azam when he was caught behind off bat and pad for 13, while former skipper Sarfaraz Ahmed missed a sweep shot and was adjudged leg before wicket for 17. Shan Masood fell for 39 and Imam ul-Haq for 1.

CRICKET

"Saud and Agha have made subtle changes to their batting that have helped them to score quickly and put us in a good position," Masood said.

"We like to play a brand of cricket which helps us to win. Galle is a wicket where one ball has your name on it. When test matches are moving at a fast rate it is important that you keep pace." Jayasuriya, the fastest Sri Lankan to 50 wickets in tests, has now taken 49 in Galle in six tests.

Sri Lanka was bowled out in the last over before lunch after resuming on 242-6.