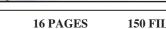


THE FIRST ENGLISH LANGUAGE DAILY IN FREE KUWAIT Established in 1977 / www.arabtimesonline.com



Growth to slow

KUWAIT CITY, May 3, (Agencies): The International Monetary Fund (IMF) revealed in its recent Regional Economic Outlook (May 2023) that inflation is lower in a number of oil-

exporting countries, including Ku-The report cited factors leading to lower inflation in these countries

compared to other parts of the world;

such as "subsidies and caps on cer-

tain products, strengthening of the

US dollar (to which many of the

countries peg their currencies), and limited share of food in the consumer

It also disclosed that in the Gulf

Cooperation Council (GCC) member-states, "non-oil primary balances

(as a percentage of non-oil GDP) re-

mained broadly unchanged in 2022 relative to 2021. Despite a substan-

tial increase in oil revenues -- about

four percentage points of GDP on av-

erage, primary current expenditures remained broadly stable. Most countries avoided procyclical spending, except for Kuwait and Saudi Arabia,

entirely reflecting higher capital ex-

penditures. Overall, oil exporters have increased their buffers, as evi-

denced by improved fiscal balances in 2022 and some countries repaid public debt like Kuwait and Oman."
Also, "real GDP growth for

MENA oil exporters is expected to slow from 5.7 percent in 2022 to 3.1 percent in 2023 (and to broadly maintain that pace in 2024) as the main driver of growth in most oil exporters

shifts to nonhydrocarbon activities,

reflecting agreed oil production cuts.
Non-oil GDP is forecast to expand at a healthy clip in 2023 (about 3.7 percent), broadly unchanged from 2022,

as the positive momentum in the re-

tail and service sectors; particularly in Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates, is sustained thanks to abundant liquidity and continued re-

Economies across the Middle East and Central Asia will likely slow this

year as persistently high inflation and

rising interest rates bite into their

post-pandemic gains, the International Monetary Fund said Wednesday.

Outlook blamed in part rising energy

costs, as well as elevated food prices,

for the estimated slower growth. The

report said that while oil-dependent

economies of the Gulf Arab states

and others in the region have reaped

the benefits of elevated crude prices,

other countries - such as Pakistan -

unprecedented flooding last summer

The regional slowdown also comes

as an explosion of fighting in Sudan

between two top rival generals - who

only a year ago as allies orchestrated a

military coup that upended the African

threatens a nation where IMF and World

Rising interest rates, used by cen-

tral banks worldwide to try to stem

inflation's rise, increase the costs of

borrowing money. That will affect

nations carrying heavier debts, the

'Go First' lands

NEW DELHI, May 3, (AP): No-frills

Indian air carrier 'Go First' filed for

bankruptcy and suspended its flights

for three days starting Wednesday,

causing hardships for thousands of

site on Tuesday said the cancellations

were caused by operational reasons.

"A full refund will be issued to the

In a message to employees on

Tuesday, airline chief Kaushik Kho-

na said Pratt & Whitney had failed to

supply it with replacements for faulty

aircraft engines, the Press Trust of In-

dia news agency said. Pratt & Whit-

ney, an American aerospace manu-

facturer with global operations, had

Khona said the carrier was doing

everything possible to navigate the

situation with utmost care and con-

no immediate comment.

cern for all staff.

original mode of payment shortly,'

the statement said.

A statement on the carrier's web-

country's transition to democracy

Bank debt relief remains on hold.

IMF warned.

or as economic woes worsened.

The IMF's Regional Economic

form momentum.'

price index basket.

THURSDAY, MAY 4, 2023 / SHAWWAL 14, 1444 AH

emergency number 112

NO. 18281

Oil exporters offset core inflation in ME

Poll on June 6

Cabinet clears election decree

By Saeed Mahmoud Saleh Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, May 3: The Council of Ministers has approved the draft decree on holding the National Assembly election on June 6, 2023.

The council took the decision during its extraordinary meeting on Wednesday, affirming the draft decree has been forwarded to HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

According to official sources, the filing of candidacies will start on Friday; adding that the council also decided to suspend work in ministries and other public institutions on the day of election.

Earlier, the Kuwaiti Cabinet held on Wedneschaired by Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. Following the meeting, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs

Dr. Khaled Al-Fadhel revealed that the Cabinet had approved a draft decree calling for electing members of the 17th legislative term of the National Assembly on June 6, 2023, forwarding

Opinion

the document to His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

The Cabinet took a decision to suspend work at government entities and public institutions during the Election Day with certain bodies working on that day according to the nature of their work, said the minister.

He added that the Cabinet also allocated roles and responsibilities to run the elections via forming a committee led by the Interior Ministry and including the memberships of the Ministries of Justice, Information, Education, Social Affairs, and Health in addition to the Municipality of Kuwait.

In a related development, senior officials in the ministries of Interior, Justice, Information, Education and Health; as well as the Kuwait Municipality, had a meeting Wednesday to coordinate their efforts in ensuring the smooth flow of procedures during the registration of

They also discussed the allocation of schools that will be used as polling centers on Election

Meanwhile, former MP Khalil Abul announced that he will not run for the upcoming election; while a number of former MPs intend to contest the election including Muhammad

Continued on Page 4



IT is finally official that the National Assembly has been dissolved. As usual, the two authorities - executive and legislative - are in confusion despite the fact that Kuwait has been on a march of democratic

work for six decades. It appears that Kuwait is yet to enter the era of political stability, given that it is unreasonable that the average age of the National Assembly is about nine months. Only five parliaments have so far managed to complete their entire legisla-

By Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

tive term. This defect stems from the lack of ability to put an end to the crisis despite the clarity of the Constitution in the text regarding the cooperation of the constitutional authorities. Also, the parliament has a parallel authority, which is imposed upon any law after a month of not being signed by the head of state, who is constitutionally the head of all authorities.

Here, Kuwaitis forget that article 174 of the Constitution stipulates, "... A proposal for the amendment of this Constitution shall not be permissible before the lapse of five years from the date of its coming into force.

Since 1962 until today, the problems arising from its implementation have not been considered. Work has been done to develop it in order to consolidate stability in the country.

In all the ancient democratic countries of the world, the Constitution is reviewed every once in a while, especially when an obstacle arises that prevents the authorities from exercising their role.

This is the case in France when President Charles de Gaulle realized in 1958 that the state was heading towards chaos as a result of the inability of institutions to solve their problems, and the collapse of The Fourth Republic. He therefore launched a political process that ended in a new Constitution, which is currently in

As for Italy, which was reeling from governmental chaos as a result of disagreements between the House of Representatives and the Council of Ministers, 45 governments were formed within 77 years. The government was only a year and seven months old when it realized that the only solution was to amend the Constitution, which it did the last time in 2012. This led to its political stability.

Today, we are heading towards new elections, the fifth in ten years, which is a step followed every time things go back to square one as a result of the lack of cooperation between the government and the National Assembly.

This made the people weary of the constant confusion, the suspension of development and projects, and the decline in the standard of living due to the failure to pass laws that revive the national economy.

According to the results of the past ten years, the situation will not change, because the obstacle is not in the candidates or the selection of ministers only, but in the electoral system, and the almost absolute constitutional power of the repre-

Continued on Page 4

Email: ahmed@aljarallah.com Follow me on:







KUWAIT CITY: Representing His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sa**bah** and his accompanying delegation are to leave for the **UK** on Thursday to attend **King** Charles III's coronation ceremony. (KUNA)

BEIRUT: The United States and Turkey on Tuesday slapped sanctions on two al-Qaedalinked militants believed to have raised monev for two militant groups operating in Syria the U.S. Treasury said.

The announcement followed another joint move by Washington and Ankara four months ago, when they sanctioned a network of people and companies accusing of helping deliver funds to the extremist Islamic State

One of the two sanctioned on Tuesday was a Syria-based militant, identified as Omar al-Sheak. He is suspected of assisting in the financing of Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, a key al-Qaeda-linked group in Syria's rebel-held northwestern Idlib province. (AP)

ANKARA: Turkey has closed its airspace to

flights by Armenian aircraft in retaliation for the erection of a monument in the Armenian capital that Ankara says honors people responsible for the killings of Turkish officials, Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said Wednesday. In an interview with NTV television, Cavu-

soglu warned that Turkey would take further measures if the monument in Yerevan is not

The move comes as Turkey and Armenia, which have no diplomatic relations, had been engaged in talks to normalize ties and put decades of acrimony behind. They appointed special envoys who have held several rounds of talks. Their discussions had resulted in an agreement to resume charter flights between Istanbul and Yerevan.

The two countries have a more than century-old bitter relationship over the deaths of an estimated 1.5 million Armenians in massacres, deportations and forced marches that began in 1915 in Ottoman Turkey. (AP)

UNITED NATIONS: The United Nations announced Tuesday night that its premier prize for press freedom has been awarded to three

imprisoned Iranian female journalists "for

their commitment to truth and accountability. The winners are Niloufar Hamedi who broke the news that 22-year-old Mahsa Amini died last September while being held by the morality police for wearing her headscarf too loosely, and Elaheh Mohammadi who wrote

Amini's death touched off months-long protests in dozens of cities across Iran. The demonstrations posed one of the most serious challenges to the Islamic Republic since the 2009 Green Movement protests drew millions to the streets. (AP)

AMMAN: Jordanian Foreign Minister Ayman Al-Safadi stated Wednesday that the Arab Track aims to find a political solution to ridding Syria of "terrorism" and putting an end to the presence of militias and foreign forces on its land, allowing for the safe return

A statement by the foreign ministry mentioned that this came in a phone call between the Jordanian and Russian top diplomats where the two-handled outcomes of a Syriacentered Amman consultative meeting.

Al-Safadi asserted in the phone call that the political solution, in accordance with the Jordanian-Saudi initiative, must safeguard the territorial unity and sovereignty of Syria, and rectify the crisis' humanitarian, political, and security ramifications, achieving the aspirations of the Syrian people. (KUNA)



Sudanese evacuees wait before boarding a Saudi military ship to Jeddah port, at Port Sudan, Sudan, late Tuesday, May 2, 2023. Many are fleeing the conflict in Sudan between the military and a rival paramilitary force. (AP)

Saudi cultural attaché office attacked

Crowds swell Sudan's main port

CAIRO, May 3, (Agencies): Exhausted Sudanese and foreigners joined growing crowds at Sudan's main seaport Tuesday, waiting to be evacuated from the chaos-stricken nation. After more than two weeks of fighting, areas of the capital of Khartoum appear increasingly abandoned.

The battle for control of Sudan erupted on April 15, after months of escalating tensions between the military, led by Gen. Abdel-Fattah Burhan, and a rival paramilitary group called the Rapid Support Forces, commanded by Gen. Mohamed Hamdan

Other nations have tried to convince the two generals to stop the fighting and come to the negotiating table. The government of South Sudan, which officially split from Sudan in 2011, said Tuesday that the two rival generals have agreed in "principle" on a weeklong cease-fire starting on Thursday, and on engaging in peace talks. The statement did not elab-

orate on the possible venue or timing for the talks. South Sudan President Salva Kiir spoke with both Burhan and Dagalo over the phone, the government said in a statement. There was no immediate comment from either the army or the para-

military. trucks for Sudan's northern border with Egypt. Many others headed to Port Sudan, on the country's Red Sea coast. The relative calm of the port city, from which many foreign governments have evacuated their citizens, seemed the safer option.

"Much of the capital has become empty," said Abdalla al-Fatih, a Khartoum resident who fled with his family to Port Sudan on Monday. He said they had been trapped for two weeks, and that by now, everyone on his street had left.

Continued on Page 4



This still image from video released by the U.S. Navy shows the Panama-flagged oil tanker Niovi surrounded by Iranian Revolutionary Guard vessels in the Strait of Hormuz, May 3, 2023. (AP)

Blast rattles Guard base

Tehran takes another tanker

DUBAI, May 3, (AP): Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard seized a Panamanian-flagged oil tanker in the strategic Strait of Hormuz on Wednesday, the second such capture by Tehran in under a week amid heightened tensions over its nuclear program.

The taking of the oil tanker Niovi renewed concerns about Iran threatening maritime traffic in the strait, the narrow mouth of the Arabian Gulf through which a fifth of all crude passes. It also comes amid the disappearance of a crude oil tanker in southeast Asia believed to be carrying Iranian crude oil amid reports it may have been seized by the United States.

The U.S. Navy published surveillance footage shot by an aerial drone of about dozen Guard vessels swarming the tanker on Wednesday morning. The drone had been on a routine patrol in the area and saw the seizure, though the Navy did not receive a distress call from the Niovi itself, 5th Fleet spokesman Cmdr. Timothy Hawkins said.

Those Guard ships "forced the oil tanker to reverse

course and head toward Iranian territorial waters off the coast of Bandar Abbas, Iran," the Navy said.

"Iran's actions are contrary to international law and disruptive to regional security and stability,' the 5th Fleet said in a statement. "Iran's continued harassment of vessels and interference with navigational rights in regional waters are unwarranted, irresponsible and a present threat to maritime security and the global economy.

Iran acknowledged the seizure, with the judiciary's Mizan news agency quoting the Tehran prosecutor's office as saying that a judge ordered it impounded over an unspecified complaint.

Shipping registries show the Niovi as managed by Smart Tankers of Piraeus, Greece. A woman who answered the phone at the firm declined to immediately comment on the seizure. The Niovi had been coming from dry-dock repairs in Dubai, bound for Fujairah on the eastern coast of the United Arab

Continued on Page 4

Day by Day

WRITER Naguib Mahfouz once saw a child selling sweets at a traffic light, so he wrote: 'The dream of every child is a piece of candy'

I ask Mr Mahfouz, 'How many children and how many young people must have sold their dreams, and perhaps their future and worldly life too?

Life is harsh. We are all creations of God, right? Don't we believe in destiny, whether it is good or it is bad?

May God have mercy on Naguib Mahfouz. He took his tears with him to his grave, while the child he saw selling candy at a traffic light is now drinking tea in a five-star

hotel in the capital. ... Yet tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar

Expected weather for the next moderate freshening over coastal Abdaly

By Day: Rather hot with moderate to fresh northwesterly wind with speeds of 20-50 km/h with a chance for rising dust.

By Night: Mild with light to

Weather areas northwesterly wind with

speeds of 12-40 km/h. Station **Max Exp Kuwait City** 36 **Kuwait Airport**

Jahra Salmiyah Ahmadi Nuwaisib Wafra

18 23 31 24 34

CIVIL ID STATUS INQUIRY: https://e.gov.kw/sites/kgoenglish/Pages/eServices/PACI/CiviIIDStatus.aspx

Indians' growth rate climbs to 965,744

Kuwaiti citizens population in gradual decline: PACI

KUWAIT CITY, May 3: The statistics issued by the Public Authority for Civil Information show the rate of growth of citizens in 1990 was 0.040, in 1995 it reached 0.035, in the year 2000 the rate recorded a decrease of 0.033, and in 2005 it recorded a rate of 0.029, in 2010 it recorded 0.029, and in 2010 it reached 0.026, recording its lowest decrease in 2020 at 0.022, reports Annahar daily.

The index also showed a decline in the rates of individuals in the Kuwaiti family, as the rate was 6.44 in 1995, 5.24 in 2000, 5.02 in 2005, 4.93 in 2010, 4.77 in 2015, and 4.60 in 2020.

In another indicator issued by PACI, it was found that the Indian community represents 20.39% of the average size of the non-Kuwaiti population, as their numbers jumped from 181,832 people in 1990 to 965,744 in 2022.

The Public Authority for Civil Information said in a statement the addition of two new indicators in the population and labor force indicators section through the statistical services website, as part of its efforts to update its website to keep pace with the requirements of its visitors and update its data.

The Public Relations Department indicated that the new update contains two new indicators, the first of which is the growth rates of the Kuwaiti population according to different years.

As for the other indicator, it provides the rate of increase of non-Kuwaitis over the years, with the possibility of identifying specific nationalities to display the evolution of their numbers.

Update

On the other hand, PACI has issued an update on the data of the statistical services website up to December 31, 2022.

In another report, the Public Authority for Civil Information (PACI) revealed that the average increase in the Kuwaiti population in the year 2022 amounted to 28,700 compared to the previous year, with an estimated increase of 0.019 percent, reports Al-Qabas daily.

In its report on demographics for the year 2022, PACI stated that the total number of citizens rose to 1.5 million, which is an increase of 28,700 compared to the year 2021.

The total population of Kuwait as of the end of last year was 4.7 million peo-

According to the report, 17 communi-

ties residing in Kuwait achieved an increase in the number of children, while three communities witnessed a decrease in the number of children - Ethiopia, Afghanistan, and Iran.

The total population of non-Kuwaitis reached 3 million and 219,000, of which 2.99 million are distributed among 20 nationalities in the country.

Communities

Indians top the list of communities residing in Kuwait, with a total of 965,700, followed by the Egyptian community with 655,200, and then the Philippines, Bangladesh, Syria, Saudi Arabia and Sri Lanka.

The rate of Kuwaitis over 15 years of age and those who do not participate in the labor market because they are students, full-time houseworkers, or retirees with income is 35 percent.

About 33 percent of Kuwaitis belong to the category of those who do not contribute to economic activity due to their young age. Only 32 percent of Kuwaitis are within the labor force.

When comparing the size of different communities residing in the country and the size of their contribution to the labor market, 87 percent of the people of the Indian community are involved in the labor market, followed by Egyptians with 74 percent. The percentage of Filipino and Bangladeshi workers increased to 97 percent of their total number in the country.

Of the Syrian community, only 40 percent are part of the Kuwaiti labor market, compared to 52 percent of Saudi nationals, and 94 percent of the Sri Lankans.

With the exception of the family sector workers (domestic labor), PACI indicated that the total number of workers in Kuwait amounts to 2.05 million workers, and 24 percent of them work in the government sector.

According to the statistics, Kuwaitis are in third place with 22 percent of the total number of workers in the public and private sectors, preceded by Indians and

Kuwaitis represent 77.2 percent of the total number of workers in the government sector. They are the highest percentage in this sector. However, they are in fourth place in the private sector, constituting just five percent of the total number of workers. Workers from India, Egypt and Bangladesh top the number of workers in this sector with a total of about 68 percent.



KUNA photo Kuwaiti Scouts Association taking part in Arab scouts forum in Morocco.

Kuwait scouts in Arab forums

The Kuwaiti Scouts Association (KSA) is eager to take part in the forums held at the Arab countries as they have a key role in enhancing bonds of cooperation among Arab youth, KSA board of directors' member Najm Abdullah said Mon-

Speaking to KUNA in a statement on the sidelines of the Arab scouts forum in Morocco, Abdullah said this participation helps cement the value of voluntary action, tolerance and coexistence among different societies

Taking part in such forums is based on "our faith in the importance of noble goals and principles" aiming to build individual's personality to help his/her society, he said.

The forum, which includes 350 persons representing different Arab scouts associations, has several purposeful

activities and workshops, he Abdullah. Being held under the patronage of Morocco's King VI Mohammad, the forum kicked off Saturday and will run until May 5. (KUNA)

'Disbursement starts soon'

Plan to help debtors discussed

sources from the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Minister of Social Affairs and the Minister of Women and Childhood Affairs Eng. Mai Al-Baghli held a meeting earlier this week with a special committee, which was formed to follow up the work of the debtors' campaign titled "Your support is a joy for them", to approve the final mechanism for disbursement according to the priorities set on the target groups, and to send a letter regarding the matter to the Ministry of Justice that includes the final outcome of the campaign, in addition to specifying the date for the start of disbursement, the estimated number of beneficiaries, and setting the maximum debt limit not exceed-

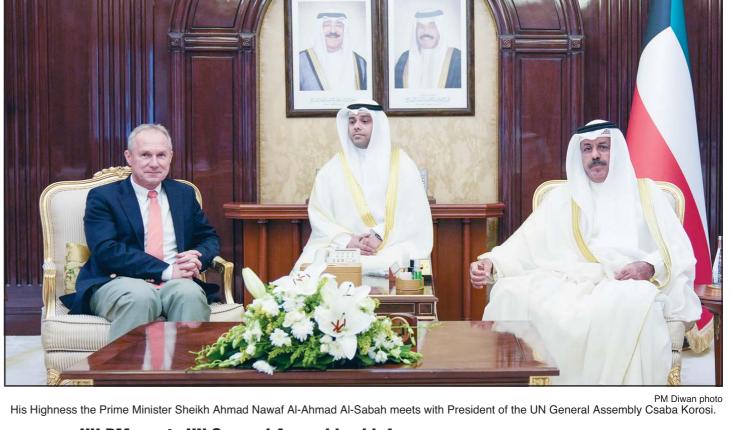
KUWAIT CITY, May 3: According to

ing KD 5,000, reports Al-Anba daily. The sources said they expect the disbursement process to start this week, provided that Minister Eng. Al-Baghli will be provided with the final report on the number of beneficiaries from the cam-

They indicated that a study is being prepared in the ministry to approve the debtors' campaign annually as a permanent project, such as the fundraising project during the month of Ramadan, provided that special mechanisms for implementation are approved annually.

The campaign "Your support is a joy for them", organized by the Ministry of Social Affairs with the cooperation of the Ministry of Information and the Ministry of Justice during the last five days of the month of Ramadan, has succeeded in collecting an amount of KD 11,441,745 from 59,252 donors.

Minister Eng. Mai Al-Baghli has formed a specialized committee to set the criteria for identifying the debtors who benefit from the campaign, according to priorities advanced by the elderly and women who have files in the "Civil Execution" department.



HH PM meets UN General Assembly chief

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, in presence of Foreign Minister Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, met with President of the UN General Assembly Csaba Korosi and his accompanying delegation at Bayan Palace on

His Highness the Prime Minister's Office Director Hamad Bader Al-Amer and Assistant Foreign Minister for International Organizations Abdulaziz Saud Al-Jarallah attended the meeting. His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah also received on Wednesday GCC Secretary-General Jassim Al-Budaiwi. (KUNA)

Bid to alleviate global pain

KRCS, IFRC to join efforts

KUWAIT CITY, May 3: The Secretary-General of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Jagan Chapagain, praised the role of the State of Kuwait in the field of humanitarian and relief work, when it comes to dealing with crises and disasters, and community participation, reports Al-Rai daily.

After his meeting with the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Kuwait Red Crescent Society, Dr. Hilal Al-Sayer, Chapagain told the Kuwait News Agency that the KRCS has a long history of honorable work in supporting the state's efforts in relief work and facing crises and disasters, in addition to its participation in supporting the efforts of the International Committee of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.

He added that the Society is one of the most active members of the IFRC, whether in the countries of the region or in areas where crises are widespread and in which the

It is an example to follow and reflects the distinction and leadership of Kuwaiti humanitarian work, he said.

He mentioned that the KRCS is one of the active and supportive national societies for the directives of the International Movement of the Red Crescent and the Red Cross to achieve its goals and principles, including providing support and assistance to the needy and those affected by manmade crises and natural disasters.

Appreciation

He pointed out that he follows up with appreciation the KRCS field activities in the Yemeni, Sudanese and Syrian arenas, keeping pace with the humanitarian situation and dealing with it with responsibility and high efficiency.

Shapagain said that his meeting with Dr. Hilal Al-Sayer dealt with ways to enhance cooperation and joint coordination in many humanitarian issues and crises, particularly the issues of refugees and displaced persons, and the efforts exerted by both sides to alleviate their suffering and improve their living conditions.

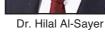
He pointed out that he also presented the role of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in confronting crises, disasters and wars, in addition to exchanging the experiences and capabilities of the Federation's national societies in various countries of the world.

For his part, Al-Sayer stressed that the Society attaches great importance to the areas of cooperation and coordination with international humanitarian organizations, especially the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent for the benefit of humanity, praising the role of the IFRC in terms of international humanitarian aid and its development projects in countries that are subject to cri-

He went on to say that the Kuwait Red Crescent Society is looking forward to strengthening its partnership with the IFRC and the Red Crescent and working together to improve the conditions of those affected by humanitarian

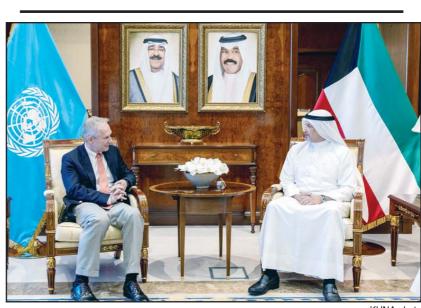
He reviewed the humanitarian and development efforts of the Society on many issues and countries, including its efforts to help Syrian refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, the Rohingya, Yemen and Turkey.







Jagan Chapagain



Foreign Minister Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah in talks with the President of the 77th session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA) Csaba Korosi.

FM meets UNGA president

Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah met Wednesday with the President of the 77th session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA) Csaba Korosi at the ministry's office, during his official visit and

the accompanying delegation to Kuwait. During the meeting, they reviewed the close ties that bind Kuwait with the UN and its specialized agencies, discussing topics and issues on UNGA's agenda, upcoming events, and coordi-

nation in this regard. The meeting also dealt with frameworks for enhancing joint international cooperation and advancing effective

mechanisms to perpetuate the UN's objectives in establishing international peace and security, support efforts for sustainable development and climate change, as well as the latest regional and international developments.

From his side, Korosi commended the close joint work that links Kuwait with the UN, noting Kuwait's prominent and distinguished role in the international community, citing Kuwait's pioneering humanitarian role and what it has always done towards supporting regional and international efforts aimed at enhancing security and establishing the values of peace around the world. (KUNA)

MoE starts new work routine

Flexible work hours in 3 shifts

KUWAIT CITY, May 3: The Minister of Education and Higher Education Dr. Hamad Al-Adwani issued a decision specifying the new "flexible" official working hours in the Ministry of Education. It was decided that the working hours would be in three shifts, and it entered into force on Tuesday, May 2, 2023, reports Al-Qabas daily.

According to the decision, the official working hours are "flexible" in accordance with the provisions of this decision during the days from Sunday to Thursday of each week at a rate of seven hours per day in the following manner:

1) The shift from 7:00 am to 2:00 pm applies to these sectors of the ministry -

• The public education sector and its affiliated departments and all educational ar-

• The private and qualitative education sector and its affiliated departments. • The Administrative Affairs and Admin-

istrative Development Sector and its affiliated departments. • Financial Affairs Sector and its affili-

ated departments. 2) The shift from 7:30 am to 2:30 pm applies to the following sectors of the ministry - The Legal Affairs Sector and its affiliated

Educational Media.

• The educational facilities and planning sector and its affiliated departments.

• The educational development sector and its affiliated activities and departments. • The educational research and curricula sector and its affiliated departments.

3) The shift from 8:00am to 3:00 pm applies to the following sectors of the ministry • The Office of the Minister of Education and the Department of Public Relations and

• The National Commission for Education, Science and Culture (UNESCO) and

the Supreme Education Council. • The undersecretary sector and its affili-

ated departments. The Minister of Education stated that this decision does not prejudice the grace period prescribed for the employee at the beginning of working hours (30 minutes) or the grace period prescribed for female employees at the end of working hours (15 minutes) or the permission system or other rules or provisions stipulated in Civil Service Council's Resolution No. 41/2006, except for cases issued by the Public Authority for the Disabled Affairs.

diwaniya وانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

'PM should prep integrated plan to tackle school absenteeism'

"AFTER the end of the current Eid al-Fitr holiday last Tuesday, a long discussion took place between me and my daughter, who is studying in the twelfth grade of science stream about working hours on Wednesday after the Eid holi-

day," columnist **Dahem Al-Qahtani** wrote for **Al-Qahas** daily.

"While she was very sure that most of the students would be absent, and that the committed ones will not have the opportunity to study, I was adamant

that the Ministry of Education and schools would not equate those who adhered to and those who disregarded the school systems.

"Kuwait suffers from fundamental problems related to education, which are not limited to the fact that the Minister of Education is appointed randomly -- in most cases -- without being a politician interested in education, but rather goes beyond that to reach most leadership positions, and for this we find that absence of correct educational administration which unfortunately has

become the general feature in education in Kuwait. "Add to this the culture of absence that most schools and most teachers. How many warnings have been issued about the danger that the total days of non-study

during the mid-year vacation extend to a month and a half for primary schools, and a month for the rest of the schools. "However, it seems that most school administrations considered this an easy

matter to work on, and shorten the school year so that it is not stressful. "You may hear statements from the minister of education or the undersecretaries of the ministry holding the students and their families responsible, but the bitter truth is that the responsibility should be borne by the minister, the

undersecretaries, most of the school administrations, and most teachers. "Now what is the solution to this dilemma? There is no doubt that the issue is related to general culture in the first place, as the culture of absence requires a radical and serious treatment based on distinguishing the diligent students in the matter of attendance first, and punishing the non-compliant second, and establishing the principle that lessons are taught in full, even if attendance is limited to one male or female student.

Of course, there are other educational measures known to the people in the field to distinguish the committed teachers from the non-compliant teachers, who incite male and female students to be absent in the days before and after the events, so that they, as educational staff, have more days off.

"The current Prime Minister must prepare an integrated plan to control this matter from independent specialists to be applied in the Ministry of Education,

without waiting for solutions from the minister of education and the undersecretaries of the ministry. The Prime Minister must know that in the end, the Kuwaitis will hold him fully responsible for every shortcoming.

"How is it possible to limit the growing and changing racist self in its expressions according to the prevailing circumstance?" columnist Muzaffar Abdul**lah** wrote for **Al-Jarida** daily.

"We remember here what befell the expatriates during the corona pandemic and its aftermath, and today we remember the hateful calls made by "educated intellectuals" who are at the forefront of the public scene, demanding that naturalized persons be prevented from participating in parliamentary elections. Here we have observations on this rotten and defunct proposition.

"First: Such an insane proposition is not consistent with global trends towards freedoms and rights, and reversing it will cost the state an exorbitant international bill.

"Second: People like these, some of whom present themselves as liberals, tend to focus on absurd matters and distance themselves from the facts that led to the sabotage of the political scene out of cowardice on their part and out of fear of confrontation.

"Accusing naturalized persons of sabotaging Parliament does not have a single scientific evidence or supporting statistic behind it. Rather, the sabotage happened before the naturalized political participation that led to major crimes against the homeland, including the disasters of the Al-Manakh market, thefts of public money, the destruction of the constitution and the establishment of the National Council! But cowardice and flattery have images and colors.

"Third: For such failed calls -- because those who stand behind them are outcasts and isolated people -- there is a public opinion that confronts them, starting from the head of government all the way to honorable deputies in the parliament, and a broad public opinion that rejects this discrimination and stinky ideas, and we all remember the monstrous law called "genetic fingerprinting that almost exhausted Kuwait internationally and locally because of the evil mentality that stands behind it, and how His Highness the late Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad, may God rest his soul, repelled it in 2016.

"Fourth: Despair reaches some of them, especially during periods of internal political turmoil or near the period of parliamentary elections.

"To win over some voices, and we are accustomed to this, from people with political ambition who are not stopped by national or legal scruples, but this time we are facing "people of thought" who lead - free of charge or for the benefit of no one – such rotten intellectual trends that one of us is ashamed to

speak about openly.

"Kuwait is for everyone, this is how it began and this is how it will continue. As for your alleged fears, they are the making of those you fear and are afraid to point your fingers and pens towards them, relying on the declining and paid media that afflicted the country and grabbed your dirty ideas to spread them in

"The absence of investment opportunities for middle-income earners has prompted some of them to look for such opportunities in non-traditional areas. While e-commerce platforms such as Amazon and Ebay have emerged, making it easier for merchants to display their products in online stores, some are using these platforms to invest in Lego pieces," columnist Abdulghafor Hajiya wrote for Al-Anba daily.

"When I visited Minnesota earlier, I went to a complex that consists of indoor amusement parks - one of which belongs to Lego. This company produces building blocks that children play with. In the Lego store, many people were looking for a newly released Lego set. I asked one of them why and he said he has been investing in Lego blocks for 10 years!

'As an economic researcher, his response piqued my interest. I started looking into this type of investment. I found some research on Lego investment published in economic scientific journals. One of the studies revealed that the average annual increase in the value of some groups is eight to 11 percent, while the average horizon of the investment ranges from five to

"I also contacted one the investors through social media. He disclosed that he invests in Lego, Funko Pops, Pokemon cards, professional basketball cards, American football and so on.

"Regarding the Lego investment, it became clear to me that the value of a set is related to the popularity of the franchise associated with it, such as Star Wars and the Marvel series, as well as the validity of the storage box — meaning its original condition, year of issue and possibility of reissue. There are mathematical equations to calculate the fair value and return with the expectation to reach the price of potential stability.

"I can imagine the success of this type of investment in Kuwait due to the absence of investment alternatives to preserve wealth and protect it, at least from inflation factors. Perhaps, the Ministry of Commerce should consider developing the legal environment to activate this type of investment here.

— Compiled by Ahmed Al-Shazli

Mol takes steps to protect Kuwait from drugs spread

'Tackling crimes, theft, traffic violations priority'



Left: The Datura plant and the EPA offices

Pain reliever, says EPA

'Datura' used in folk medicine

KUWAIT CITY, May 3: In the wake of a video clip warning of the poisonous properties of the Datura plant (seeds), the Environment Public Authority said "the Datura plant is a genus of wild plants found everywhere in Kuwait. It is an annual herbaceous plant belonging to the Solanaceae family, reports Al-Rai daily

"It has a height of 30 to 150 centimeters, and it has large white flowers. Datura innoxia, and this plant is used in folk medicine as an analgesic and pain reliever in general," said EPA sources.

The same sources pointed out that "the authority had previously issued a press release in 2019 warning citizens and residents not to approach or eat this plant due to the toxicity of the seeds, as this plant grows naturally on street sidewalks and gardens after

News in Brief

Exam cheats case to court: The Public Prosecution has decided to refer the case of student fraud, in which 13 people are accused including officials, teachers and mediators of bribery and selling test papers, to the Criminal Court, reports Al-Jarida daily quoting informed sources. The sources said that the Public Prosecution Office is working to list the names of about 20,000 students in the eleventh and twelfth grades for the academic years 2020-2021 and 2021-2022, in "WhatsApp" groups during which exam leaks were monitored, and it will send a memorandum of their names to the Ministry of Education to work on it.

Those involved will be asked to retake their exams or cancel the academic year they passed after it was proven that they were involved in fraud. The sources added that the Prosecution has decided not to involve the students, whose numbers exceed 20,000, in the accusation, and to simply assign their matter to the Ministry of Education to deal with it.

Ice-cream carts targeted: Joint inspection campaigns organized by the concerned authorities in cooperation with the Ministry of Interior that targeted ice-cream carts in Hawalli and the Capital Governorates resulted in the issuance of 70 violations, reports Al-Rai daily.

50 countries allow Kuwaitis: The Consular Affairs Sector at the Ministry

of Foreign Affairs recently issued a summer and travel season bulletin for the year 2023; detailing the visa application procedures for Kuwaitis who intend to travel to various countries, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The bulletin includes the list of 199 countries that allow Kuwaitis to enter their territories by obtaining an entry visa through the embassies, airports or official websites; as well as the countries which do not allow entry for Kuwaitis.

A total of 50 countries allow Kuwaitis holding ordinary passports to enter without visa — 10 European countries, three Australian territories and its neighboring countries, six Asian countries, four African countries, 13 from the Americas and 14 Arab countries. On the other hand, 43 countries grant visa upon arrival to Kuwaitis or through official websites; while 106 countries require Kuwaitis to obtain visa from their embassies.

Social reward for students: The Dean of Student Affairs at the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training, Dr. Abdul Karim Al-Areer, continues to receive applications for the social reward for new students who have joined the second semester 2022/2023 through the Authority's website until Thursday, May 11, reports Al-Jarida daily.

Al-Areer indicated, in a statement to the daily, that "no amount will be disbursed retroactively to students unless it is submitted before the above mentioned date.'

KUWAIT CITY, May 3: At a time when society has become concerned about the continued targeting of Kuwait with drugs, Al-Qabas learned that the First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Interior and Acting Minister of Defense Sheikh Talal Al-Khaled has issued instructions to the senior officials of the Ministry of Interior and related sectors to continue the fruitful efforts that resulted in seizing unprecedented quantities of drugs during the last period which target our youth.

An informed security source told the daily that the phenomenon of drug abuse and promotion, which has increased dramatically in recent times, is one of the issues that drains a lot of effort, money and even souls, especially among young people.

The source added that the Ministry of Interior is keen to

follow up on this phenomenon, try to eliminate it and dry up its sources, and harness all capabilities and means to enhance means of control and prevention through security and awareness campaigns directed at youth and adolescents, fruitful cooperation with various state institutions, and border and entry control.

Explained

The source explained that the security recommendations and directives from the minister to the senior officials call for increasing intensive coordination with the security services in friendly and brotherly countries, in order to prevent the smuggling of any drugs into the country, especially after monitoring international gangs aiming to flood Kuwait with poisons, and

destroy its youth with drugs and psychotropic substances.

The source revealed that the Research and Studies Center in the Ministry of Interior, which enjoys direct support from the First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Interior and Acting Minister of Defense made it clear through statistics and data related to crimes and cases that it reports to senior security leaders, that drug crimes and thefts of all kinds, recklessness, and violating traffic rules are the most common and most dangerous crimes in Kuwaiti society.

The source called on everyone to cooperate with the security men to preserve the civilized appearance of the country, and not hesitate to call to report any negative phenomena or request humanitarian, security or traffic assistance, on the emergency phone 112, which operates around the clock.

The most important measures to combat drugs include increasing security control at all ports of the country, coordination with external security agencies, intensifying security and awareness campaigns, establishing an integrated security database and cooperation with all state institutions

Mol says Interpol red 'notice' suspect held

KUWAIT CITY, May 3, (Agencies): Kuwait's Interior Ministry said on Tuesday a male suspect accused of "premeditated murder" on Interpol's red notice has been arrested.

Preparations are underway to extradite the individual to his home country in cooperation with Kuwait's Foreign Ministry, read a press statement by the ministry. The arrest of the suspect was carried out in a collaborative and information-sharing effort between Kuwait's MoI and Interpol.

In another story the Ministry of the Interior announced that the criminal security sector, represented by the General Department of Criminal Investigation, Arab and International Criminal Police Department (Interpol) managed to arrest an internationally wanted suspect against whom an international red notice was issued on charges of premeditated murder, re-

The Security Media Department stated that this comes within the framework of cooperation, coordination and exchange of information between the Ministry of Interior in the State of Kuwait and the International Organization of Interpol.

The sources added that coordination is underway between the ministries of Interior and Justice in the two countries to hand him over to the authorities of his country, in coordination with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in accordance with the applicable international legal frameworks.

Other Voices

We need to stimulate pain of people with conscience

By Ahmad alsarraf

During the climax of the uprising in Tunisia, Egypt, Syria, Libya and Yemen, member of Muslim Brotherhood Tariq Al Suwaidan said on July 13, 2013, "May Allah Almighty support the uprising in Tunisia, Egypt, Syria, Libya and

During a TV interview he said, "I have a message to the scholars supporting the rulers who guide the people to be obedient to them, there

is no obedience to the rulers.' another

meeting, Suwaidan addressed ple saying, "If your rights are not given to you, you must fight and pay the price with your blood to obtain them by all means.'



On another occasion, he said in reply to a question, "I have not called for peaceful action in Libya. Muammar Al Gaddafi had to be confronted by weap-ons. I realized the names of some individuals of the early groups in Libya as I have trained some of them.' The positions of Al Suwaidan to-

wards the Arab uprising have completely changed either because of his history or because of finding out some facts which were covered.

He appeared on media stressing that he is against the uprising because they are devastating and cause damages and catastrophes to the people.

He also denied being among the founders or those who call or support uprisings either financially or militarily. He affirmed that he had nothing to do with those uprisings. I think it is part of the right of the people supporting Al-Suwaidan to be informed about the reasons behind the dramatic change in his attitudes.

Someone, identified only as (A) has obtained the Kuwaiti citizenship. He was in Kuwait Army, his wife was born in 1947 and he has 3 children. The first one

identified as (S) and the second, identified as (T) were born in 1946. Miraculously, they were born one year earlier than their mother. The second miracle is that the third son was born in 1947, the same year his mother was born. Their affairs were exposed, and often

by sheer coincidence, and it was revealed that their nationalities had been forged, so they all fled the country, but soon two of them returned to the country, after some military leaderships changed, and the third died abroad, and since then a lot of water has passed under the bridge! Accidently, the case was found out.

The three sons left Kuwait, one of them passed away abroad while two of them came back to Kuwait after some reshuffle at military institution. The urgent question is how admin-

istration and morals in Kuwait have reached such deteriorated level. Why we have not heard anything about punishing those officials who, illegally, granted precious Kuwaiti citizenship?

How such fake documents have not been found out in the right time and how the officials did not notice the birth date of the mother and her children. How the two brothers were allowed to come back to Kuwait? Has the Kuwaiti citizenship been given to them?

Because of the absence of the institution that we can address, we only address the people who have a conscience to stimulate their reaction to what they have read and recall what was said by Chairman of the Founding Council and Chairman of the Constituent Assembly and Chairman of the Constitutional Drafting Committee, before 40 years ago, late Abdullatif Al-Ghani.

He said, Instead of making progress, the National Assembly is getting backwards because of the random granting of Kuwaiti nationality which increased the number of citizens from 120,000 to 600,000 in 20 years. According to natural increase, the number should be 270,000 just 5 percent per year." Al-Ghanim said most of those who are granted Kuwaiti citizenship are illiterate and they have become a liability for the nation instead of benefitting the country.

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Terrace Mall Salmiya, overlooking Gulf Road Salem Al Mubarak Street 9222 4674 / 75 @@exotica_kw

860 driving licenses pulled in Q1 of '23 over violations

Committee formed to investigate violations at PAI

KUWAIT CITY, May 3: The General Traffic Department announced the withdrawal of 860 driving licenses from violators during the first quarter of 2023, for varying periods starting from 3 months and up to a year, up to

a final withdrawal based on the points systems for violators of the traffic laws, reports Al-Anba daily.

Major Abdullah Bu Al-Hassan said holding the phone in hand and talking while driving carries a two-point penalty because as per re-

ports there is a link between the most dangerous accidents when motorists are distracted while using phones Bu Al-Hassan told Al-Anba daily that the first

Al-Hassan

withdrawal is for those who have collected 14 points, and the driver's license is withdrawn for 3 months, and if he/she commits other violations and 12 points are added to the total the license is withdrawn for 6 months, and if another 10 points are added to this total the license is withdrawn for 9 months to a year in case the violations are repeated and if more 8 points are added to the total number of points the license is withdrawn perma-

The person has then to reapply for the license from scratch adding that in the event of final withdrawal of license from expatriates, the conditions of the ministerial decision apply.

It is noteworthy that serious violations such as crossing the red light and speeding automatically carry a four-point penalty for each violation.

Probe panel formed: The Minister of Commerce and Industry and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Public Authority for Industry,

Audiences of His Highness the Crown Prince

KUWAIT CITY, May 3, (KUNA): His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received His Highness Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad

Al-Sabah at Bayan Palace on Wednesday His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal also received on Wednesday GCC Secretary-General Jassim Al-Budaiwi.

Muhammad Al-Aiban, has formed an investigation committee to look into violations related to the work of the Public Authority for Industry headed by Counselor Abdul Latif Hussein, reports Al-Jarida daily

Its term of office is six months from the date of its first meeting, and it has the right to request an extension. The Board of Directors of the Public Authority for Industry includes the results of what was revealed to it and what it sees as suggestions and recommendations regarding deficiencies and determining who is responsible for it, (if any).

The members of the committee includes Abdul Mohsen Al-Babtain as Vice-Chairman, Abrar Al-Ajeel, Abdul-Rahman Al-Ansari, Badr Buskandar, members, and Saad Al-Hooli as Rappor-

The task is to investigate any deficiencies that may be revealed to it during the performance of the tasks entrusted to it; listing the incidents that violate laws, regulations, and decisions, and determining who caused them and who is responsible for them, and whether those incidents occurred intentionally or negligently, and the consequent damage to public funds;

This is in addition to submitting recommendations related to the legal and administrative measures to be taken against the person responsible for any deficiencies, if any.

The committee meets at the invitation of its chairman or his deputy in his absence, and its meeting is not valid unless attended by the majority of the members, provided that the chairman or his deputy is among them in his absence, and the committee issues its decisions by the majority of the members present, and in the event of equal votes, the side in which the chairman or his deputy in the event of his absence.

The minutes, the work of the committee, and

its recommendation are attached to the report submitted by it to the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Public Authority for Industry.

The committee sets the system it deems appropriate to carry out its work, and in order to accomplish its tasks, it may seek the assistance of whomever it deems experienced and specialized from within or outside the Public Authority for

Promotions okayed: The administrative sector in the Ministry of Education said it has never turned down request from the Civil Service Commission to appoint engineers in the teaching profession as teachers of physics, chemistry, computer and mechanics, reports Al-Rai daily quoting education sources

The sources explained that appointments in the Ministry of Education are open to this date, whether in the educational or administrative sector, stressing that the job needs of teachers are done according to the specializations specified by the public education sector, while the administrative jobs are according to the nominations that come from the CSC.

On the other hand, the source stated that the administrative sector has completed the procedures for promoting 40,000 employees on seniority basis in accordance with the conditions specified by the CSC, the most important of which is obtaining an efficiency rating of at least a good rating and punctuality in attendance.

The source stated that there are other promotions expected early next July, as the administrative sector is working to prepare the lists of those who are eligible and their number exceeds 30,000. pointing to the completion of the promotion of 4,000 employees by selection last March.



National Day greetings

HH Amir congratulates Poland

Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a congratulatory

cable on Wednesday to President An-

drzej Duda, on his country's National Day, wishing him good health.

ister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ah-

mad Al-Sabah sent a congratulatory cable to President Andrzej Duda, on

his country's National Day.

Also, His Highness the Prime Min-

KUWAIT CITY, May 3, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf

Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on

Wednesday sent a congratulatory ca-

ble to Polish President Andrzej Duda,

on his country's National Day, wishing him good health and Poland and

its people further progress and pros-

Meanwhile, His Highness the Crown

Part of the meeting between Assistant FM, Ambassador Hayat and the Indian Min-

Kuwait Assistant FM, Indian State Minister discuss bilateral relations

NEW DELHI, May 3, (KUNA): Kuwaiti Assistant Foreign Minister for Asian Affairs Ambassador Sameeh Hayat and Indian Minister of State for External Affairs Meenakashi Lekhi discussed on Wednesday, bilateral relations and ways to enhance them.

The meeting was held at the Indian Foreign Ministry's headquarters, where Ambassador Hayat handed Lekhi a written letter from Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah addressed to Indian Foreign Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar regarding bilateral relations between the two friendly

countries and ways of developing them, Ambassador Hayat told KUNA by phone.

According to the ambassador, both sides reviewed issues of mutual concern and the latest developments of regional and international issues.

The meeting was attended by Kuwaiti Ambassador to India Jassim Al-Najem and the Indian Ambassador to Kuwait Dr.

Ambassador Hayat and the Kuwaiti delegation arrived in India on Tuesday on an official visit to participate in the fifth round of political negotiation between the foreign ministries of both countries.

O leadership ...

Continued from Page 1

There is no doubt that "returning to the people" is the golden rule upon which His Highness the Amir relied as the reason for the dissolution of the 2020 parliament. His Highness the Crown Prince had announced it on his behalf, but this necessitates understanding the causes of

As most segments of society are calling for the suspension of the National Assembly after the problems it caused, the leadership must exercise its powers and work to correct the constitutional imbalance.

The leadership has full powers in this regard in order to get out of this crisis and avoid continuing to live lows to catch our breath."

The rope will not break, and the state is slowly dying as a result of spinning in the circle of political friction between the government and the parliamentarians.

Poll on

Continued from Page 1

Hayef, Obaid Al-Wasmi, Salman Al-Azmi, Muhammad Al-Mutair, Adel Al-Damkhi, Ahmed Lari, Khalid Al-Omaira, Jenan Bu Shehri, Muhammad Al-Mahan, Soud Al-Asfour, Abdullah Al-Tamimi, Nasser Al-Dousari, Mubarak Al-Tasha and Ali Al-Qattan.

It is expected that candidates will reduce their campaign expenses in this election, considering campaigns have become a heavy burden because of the frequent elections – thrice within two and a half years. As observed during the 2022 election, the campaign cost was 30 to 50 percent lower than the previous elections. This seems to be the trend now, especially since former MPs, Abdulkareem Al-Kandari, Abdullah Al- Mudhaf, Mehalhal Al-Mudhaf and Muhannad Al-Sayer announced that their campaigns will be limited to visiting diwaniyas and using

social media platforms.

Former MP Jenan Bu Shehri supports the idea, pointing out the candidates must hold social meetings in their diwaniyas to touch base with the voters.

Moreover, constitutional expert Professor Muhammad Al-Muqatei called on the Ministry of Interior to intensify its efforts in combating election-related anomalies like vote-buying, tribal primary elec-tions, fake candidacies and withdrawal of candidacies. He also stressed the need to close land borders three days before the

Crowds swell

Continued from Page 1

When they arrived in Port Sudan after a 20-hour journey, they found thousands, including many women and children, camping outside the port area. Many had been in the open air for more than a week, with no food or basic services in the sweltering heat. Others crowded into mosques or hotels inside the city.
In other news, the UN's humanitarian

chief arrived in Sudan's main seaport on Wednesday, as thousands of Sudanese and foreign nationals gathered there in hopes of fleeing the conflict-torn east African country.

Martin Griffiths, the under-secretary general for humanitarian affairs and emergency relief coordinator at the UN, tweeted that his visit to the city of Port Sudan is to affirm the body's commitment to the Sudanese people.

His arrival came on the last day of a shaky truce, meant to expire at midnight, that has done little to quell the fighting.

It also comes amid increasing concern about the humanitarian situation for those trapped and displaced by the fighting, which is the result of a power struggle between the country's two top generals. But questions remain over how UN agencies can operate with limited staff and supplies.

Elsewhere, the Kuwaiti Foreign Ministry on Wednesday strongly denounced a recent attack on the Saudi Cultural Attaché office in Sudan, in which gunmen looted equipment and cameras and stole property.

The ministry said in a press statement that this internationally criminalized act is a blatant breach of all international norms, international law and 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, which prohibits attacks on diplomatic missions and grants their properties com-

plete protection and immunity.

The ministry called on all Sudanese parties to immediately take all necessary measures to protect diplomatic missions' headquarters and ensure the safety of diplomatic facilities and their staff and punish those involved in this attack.

It, further, voiced Kuwait's solidarity with and support to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and all security and legal measures it may take to protect the safety of its diplomatic missions.

Tehran takes

Continued from Page 1

Emirates without carrying any cargo, according to the data firm Refinitiv.

Last week, Iran seized an oil tanker carrying crude for Chevron Corp. of San Ramon, California, amid wider tensions between Tehran and the U.S. over its nuclear program. The Advantage Sweet had 23 Indians and one Russian on board.

Iran has accused the Advantage Sweet of colliding with another vessel, while offering no evidence to support its claim. Iran has offered a variety of unsupported claims in the past when seizing foreignflagged ships amid tensions with the West.

The taking of the two tankers in under a week comes amid the disappearance of the Marshall Island-flagged Suez Rajan, which had been in the South China Sea off Singapore for over a year after a report alleged it to smuggling sanctioned Iranian crude oil. Tracking data for the Suez Rajan last showed it off East Africa, moving in a direction that could take it to the Americas.

The Financial Times, as well as the maritime intelligence firm Ambrey, both have reported the Suez Rajan was seized on order of American authorities. The ship's manager has not responded to queries from The Associated Press about the status of the ship. U.S. officials also have not commented.

Also:

DUBAI: An explosion on Tuesday evening struck a base in Iran belonging to the country's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard, killing two workers, local media reported. There was no word on any damages in the blast.

The state-run IRNA news agency said the explosion occurred during a "movement of ammunition" at the Guard base on the outskirts of the city of Damghan, in northern **Semnan** province.

The report offered no other details about the source of the explosion. IRNA added that he incident was under inves-



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Minister Hamad Abdulwahab Al-Adwani attended as guest of honor

South African Embassy in Kuwait celebrates National Day

KUWAIT CITY, May 3: The South African Embassy in Kuwait celebrated the country's National Day at the Salwa Al-Sabah Ballroom of the Marina Hotel in Salmiya.

The event was attended by a number of ambassadors accredited to Kuwait, dignitaries, invited guests and the media fraternity. The guest of honor was Minister Hamad Abdulwahab Al-Adwani.

Speaking on the occasion Ambassador of South Africa to Kuwait HE Dr Maneli Genge said South Africa also celebrated 29th Freedom Day which falls on the 27th of April every year, to commemorate South Africa's first democratic elections that took place in 1994, and to celebrate the birth of democracy.

This day, he said, is commemorated to honor those unsung heroes who fought for our freedom and paved the way for an equal, representative and non-racial nation.

The South African government, he said, continues to work towards building a prosperous South Africa that is at peace with itself and the world and contributes to a better Africa and a better world for all

Cultural

South Africa and Kuwait enjoy strong cordial diplomatic relations anchored on three pillars, i.e. political, economic and cultural in addition to sharing a common vision to further enhance the existing relations on a mutually beneficial basis, which would contribute to the achievement of South Africa's National Development Plan – Vision 2030 and to the Kuwait Vision 2035 ob-

To this end, he went on to say, South Africa and Kuwait have signed an Agreement for the establishment of the Joint Commission for Cooperation (JCC), which is expected to be launched in South Africa during the

The two countries have also signed a number of bilateral agreements and Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) and negotiations are also underway to conclude other Agreements/MoUs in agriculture, education, tourism fields, amongst others.

On the economic front, "our current trade relations with Kuwait are showing steady increase over the years and both countries are committed to grow these relations to greater heights for the wellbeing of our economies and







Photos during the event.

peoples. There are still vast opportunities for increased trade between our two countries," saying South Africa prides itself on its business/investment value proposition

(quality, capability, value for money, returns on investments, etc.) available opportunities in various sectors of

South Africa is one of the most promising emerging markets with a unique combination of highly developed first world economic infrastructure. A number of Kuwaiti investors have invested in the tourism, hospitality and real estate sectors of our economy. South Africa offers foreign investors opportunities in the agriculture/agro-processing, mining, manufacturing, services, energy, infrastructure development and tourism sectors, amongst others, he said.

Investment

In his opening address at the 5th South Africa Investment Conference held recently in South Africa President Cyril Ramaphosa announced that the Investment Conference has continued to evolve and grow over the past five years and most importantly is the impact these investments have made on the lives of South Africans.

He went on to say, South Africa is open for business and is working on attracting more foreign investors to invest in various sectors including: mining, agricultural and agro-processed products, livestock, pharmaceuticals and medical equipment, healthcare services, engineering and construction, real estate development, banking services, and storage and logistics services.

Affectionately known as 'The Rainbow Nation', due to its diverse nature of its citizens South Africa has 11 official languages with numerous traditional/cultural encounters to be experienced.

South Africa will continue to expand trade and investment opportunities with its partners, as we look into attracting more investment into the South African economy. Respectively, South Africa has signed and ratified the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Agreement. AfCFTA (One of the flagship projects of the African Union's Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want.)

"South Africa is privileged to chair for the third time since we were invited to join BRICS in 2010, under the theme "BRICS and Africa: Partnership for Mutually Accelerated Growth, Sustainable Development, and Inclusive Multilateralism. Our vision is of BRICS providing global leadership and serving as the catalyst for sustained and mutually beneficial global growth and sustainable development as well as driving inclusion of the global South in all global systems," the South African envoy

'Avoid falling victim to information hacking'

Campaign about safe use of Internet

KUWAIT CITY, May 3: Director General of the Directorate General of Public Relations and Security Media at the Ministry of Interior Major General Tawheed Al-Kandari warned people against dealing with any suspicious and unsafe messages or links sent by strangers via social media in order to avoid falling victim to information hacking, reports Aljarida daily.

On the sidelines of the launch of the Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) campaign titled "Together for a Safer Cyberspace for Our Children" at the Avenues Mall with cooperation of the Ministry of Interior, Major General Al-Kandari told KUNA that the campaign aims to educate parents about the dangers of cyberspace, on how to safely use the Internet and applications to prevent cybercrime, and the correct behavior to adopt when their children are subjected to cyberbullying or cybercrime.

He indicated that cybercriminals promote harmful games, applications and websites through which the victim can be accessed by these criminals by infiltrating computers and stealing personal information.

Major General Al-Kandari stressed the need to download original antivirus software so as not to get hacked of personal information, cover the computer camera when playing the game, and adhere to the legal age allowed to open accounts on social networking sites and electronic games.

Regarding phishing, he stated that the process is done by deceiving children and adolescents who use email messages into clicking on links, attachments, or text messages, and others.

Major General Al-Kandari appealed to everyone to protect children from blackmail via the Internet using pictures or personal information in exchange for money or performing immoral acts.

The activities of the campaign, which was implemented by the Ministry of Interior with the cooperation of the Kuwait Oil Company (KOC), were launched this weekend. The campaign was aimed to educate parents about the dangers of cyberspace (the Internet), ways to safely use the network and its applications, to prevent cyber crimes, and to act correctly when their children are subjected to cyberbullying or any other means of cybercrime.

Meanwhile, Director of Public Relations at KOC Muhammad Al-Basri explained that the objectives of the event included spreading community awareness among the children and parents about the dangers of cyberspace, how to safely use the network, and prevent any intrusions targeting children.

The solution to the phenomenon of intrusions targeting children and the elderly is to conduct more awareness campaigns that would explain these risks and ways to avoid them.

Dangers

He said, "KOC adopts everything that serves society. With the cooperation of the Ministry of Interior, an awareness campaign titled "Safe Cyberspace" has been launched. It explains the dangers of cyberspace, through the team's presence in major markets, distribution of brochures, and meetings between specialists, citizens and residents.

In addition, Major Sarah Jamil from the Security Media Department of the Ministry of Interior stressed that "Safe Cyberspace" is a joint awareness campaign between the ministry and KOC.

She explained that it aims to raise the level of awareness among Internet users and spread messages to parents and children about the need to know the dangers of the Internet and the criminal acts through the Internet.

The focus during the campaign is on parents to monitor their children and know what they are doing while using the network and the sites they use, and to protect them from any dangers in the cyber world.

KIA says no loans for new SMEs businessmen until further notice

No increase in capital flows

KUWAIT CITY, May 3: The Kuwait Investment Authority has informed the senior officials of the National Fund for the Development and Welfare of Small and Medium Enterprises that they will continue to stop receiving requests for financing new projects and that capital flows from the **General Reserve Fund to Small** and Medium Enterprises will not be increased during the coming period than previously planned, reports Al-Rai daily.

The sources indicated that the response of the KIA came based on an inquiry from fund officials about the possibility of re-receiving new financing requests after a continuous hiatus since 2022, as it was confirmed that no new loans were granted to the initiators who were not contracted until further notice, specifically until the submission of a study that identifies the target segment - owners of SMEs -- to be financed, and confirms the ability to follow up on the work of the initiators.

The Authority confirmed the continuity of the contents of the correspondences that took place between the two parties, during which it referred to previous meetings that were held between its officials and the fund's management to discuss financial obligations and the financial statements of the National Fund from June 30, 2020, through which it was found that the default rate during the period before the Corona pandemic, reached 60 percent.

Gulf remains safe from global economic slowdown

Seven Kuwaitis join list of 100 most powerful Arab personalities in 2023

KUWAIT CITY, May 3: According to the Gulf Business seven most powerful Kuwaitis in the world of the economy are on the list this year for shaping growth in the region, including seasoned business leaders, in addition to prominent figures in industry, sports, entertainment and culture from all over the world -- across the region and

The seven most powerful personalities include the CEO of the Kuwait Stock Exchange Company, Muhammad Al-Osaimi who topped the list; CEO of Al-Shaya Group, Muhammad Al-Shaya; Vice-Chairman and CEO of Zain Group, Badr Nasser Al-Kharafi and the CEO of Al-Ghanim Industries, Qutayba Al-Ghanim. This is in addition to Wadha Al-Khatib, the CEO of Kuwait National Petroleum Company; Tariq Sultan, CEO and Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors of Agility and Sheikha Al-Bahr, Deputy CEO of the National Bank of Kuwait Group.make the list of the 100 most powerful Arab personalities for the year '23.

Muhammad Al-Osaimi, CEO of Boursa Kuwait, Muhammad Al-Osaimi, topped the list of the most powerful Kuwaiti personalities for the year 2023, as he came in 25th place in the "Gulf Business" list of the 100 most powerful Arab personalities; Muhammad Al-Shaya is in second place in Kuwait and 42nd on the list; in third place in Kuwait and 43rd on the list, is Vice Chairman and CEO of Zain Group Badr Nasser Al-Kharafi, in fourth place in Kuwait and 61st on the list is the CEO of Alghanim Industries Group, Kutayba Alghanim; in fifth place is a Kuwaiti and 66th on the list is Wadha Al-Khatib, CEO of the Kuwait National Petroleum Company, Tariq Sultan is in sixth place in Kuwait and 72nd on the list. He is the CEO and Vice Chairman of Agility and in seventh place and 79th on the list, is Sheikha Al-Bahr, Deputy CEO of the National

Returning to the "Gulf Business" list of the 100 most powerful Arab personalities, the Arabs have reached new heights in 2022 from space exploration and entertainment maps, and continue to make ripples in the meeting room and beyond, and this year's list includes 12 new participants who left their mark through exemplary contributions in various fields.

From building some of the world's most ambitious infrastructure projects to hosting back-toback United Nations Climate Change Conferences (COPs) and a listing boom that saw IPOs in the Middle East oversubscribe over of \$18 billion.

The Gulf region remains relatively safe from the global economic slowdown, geopolitical tensions and fluctuations in financial markets, with real GDP growth expected to moderate for the region from 6.1% in 2022 to 3.4% in 2023, according to the International Monetary Fund.

The region is expected to post its strongest economic growth in a decade, underlining the performance of sovereign wealth funds and accelerating investments in technology, sustainability, advanced industrial manufacturing and tourism.

Dr Cerf recognized as one of 'the fathers of Internet'

Kuwait Informatics Prize honors American Internet pioneer

KUWAIT CITY, May 3 ,(KUNA): His Highness Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah Information Prize recognized in its 16th edition, Wednesday, the American Internet expert Dr. Vinton Cerf, allocating the highest appreciation award (Medal of Informa-

The honoring came in recognition of his achievements that contributed to serving humanity and his distinguished role in the development and spread of global Internet policy and standards, the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Award, Sheikha Aida Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah said in a state-

Dr. Cerf will be receiving the Medal of Informatics during the annual ceremony that will be held under the patronage of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf



Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Informatics Award, Sheikha Aida Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah

Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah at Bayan

Sheikha Aida Al-Sabah praised Dr. Cerf's great contributions to the development of the Protocol of Data Transfer Control (Internet Protocol), one of the foundations for establishing and operating the Internet and designing its digital structure.

Vinton Gray Cerf, born on June 23 1943, is an American Internet pioneer and is recognized as one of "the fathers of the Internet", sharing this title with co-developer

He has received honorary degrees and awards that include the National Medal of Technology, the Turing Award, the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the Marconi Prize, and membership in the National Academy of Engineering.



Winner of the Medal of His Highness Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah Informatics Award, Dr. Vinton Cerf



The Guest Show poster

TGS presents AI Sayegh

This Thursday, The Guest Show (TGS) on Radio Kuwait presents the ever smiling and down to earth Batoul Al Sayegh, President of Kuwait Textile ARTS Association (KTAA).

As a journalist, I have been closely associated with KTAA, a non-profit organization made up of textile artists from around the world. No where else have I seen this kind of talent, commitment and sisterhood formed by art.

Every year, KTAA holds its annual exhibition

and this year's is no exception. On May 3 & 4, members of public can visit the Al Funoon Hall at Dahiya Abdullah Salem to see some exquisite works of art from 9 am to 1 pm and 4 pm to 9 pm. In this episode of TGS, Chaitali B Roy speaks to Batoul Al Sayegh about her journey with tex-



oil up

The Kuwaiti oil price rose by three cents to USD 80.97 pb on Tuesday against USD 80.94 pb last Friday, Kuwait Petroleum Corporation an-

nounced on Wednesday. At international markets, forward Brent crude contracts fell by USD 3.99 to USD 75.32 pb, and the West Texas Intermediate crude nosedived by four US dollars to USD 71.66 a barrel. (KUNA)

US job openings dip to 9.6 million

U.S. job openings fell in March to the lowest level in nearly two years, a sign that the American labor market is cooling in the face of higher interest rates

Employers posted 9.6 million vacancies in March, down from nearly 10 million in February and lowest since April 2021. The Labor Department's Job Openings and Labor Turnover Summary, out Tuesday, showed that layoffs rose to 1.8 million, the highest level since December 2020. The number of Americans quitting their jobs - a sign they have confidence they can find better pay or working conditions elsewhere - dropped to 3.9 million, lowest since May 2021.

The American job market is strong but losing momentum. The Federal Reserve has raised its benchmark interest rate nine times in just over a year in a bid to rein in inflation that last year hit a four-decade high. (AP)

Emirates suggest more airline alliances possible

The president of long-haul carrier Emirates suggested on Tuesday that it could reach deals with more firms to share routes after the start of a similar arrangement with U.S.-based United

Tim Clark, who joined the airline in 1985 when it was first launched, also suggests Emirates remains ready for expansion as the carrier again takes flight following the grounding during the height of the coronavirus pandemic.

Speaking to journalists at the Arabian Travel Market in Dubai, Clark said that the United deal - as well as one with Air Canada - showed that

carriers were no longer just looking at Emirates as a "dastardly competitor." U.S. airlines had complained for years about unequal competition from Mideast carriers, describing them as receiving unfair government subsidies to operate.

Emirates, though owned by Dubai's hereditarily ruled government, always denied having an unfair advantage. United had been one of the American firms challenging Emirates, though a deal in recent years saw the dispute dropped. United now flies as well to Dubai, a destination it abandoned in 2016 amid the dis-

Market Movements

03-05-2023

UAE JAPAN **PAKISTAN**

Change Closing pts +0.06 3,577.77 - Nikkei +0.12 29.157.95 KSE 100 42,087.93

PHILIPPINES - PSEi SAUDI Tadawul **EGYPT** EGX 30

Change Closing pts -0.996,606.69 -1.30 11.073.17 17,295.27 Business

Asian markets track Wall Street decline

Stocks drift, banks steady ahead of Fed

NEW YORK, May 3, (AP): Stocks are drifting Wednesday ahead of what Wall

Street hopes will be the last hike to interest rates for a long time. The S&P 500 was up 0.1% in midday trading after slumping the prior day. The Dow Jones Industrial Average was down 9 points, or less than 0.1%, at 33,675, as

of noon Eastern time, while the Nasdaq composite was 0.3% higher Eli Lilly rose 5.4% after reporting encouraging results from a study of a treatment for Alzheimer's disease, and bank stocks were recovering some of their steep slide from a day before, while oil prices continued to fall. But the market's spotlight is squarely on the Federal Reserve, which later in the afternoon will announce its latest move to combat high inflation.

The wide assumption is that the Fed will lift its key overnight interest rate again to its highest level since 2007. More important is what clues the Fed gives about

The hope across Wall Street is that this will mark the end of the Fed's fastest flurry of rate hikes in decades, which would give breathing room to financial markets and the economy. But the Federal Reserve is in a tight spot, with no easy answer

Higher rates have helped bring inflation down, but it's still too high and hurting households trying to keep up. Lower-income households have been squeezed particularly hard. At the same time, high rates have also sharply weakened swaths of the economy and raised worries about a recession later this year.

The banking system is feeling some of the fiercest pressure of high rates, and three of the four largest U.S. bank failures in history have come within the last two months. Investors have been hunting for other potential weak links, with the harshest scrutiny on small- and medium-sized banks that could see a sudden exodus of customers

Shares of PacWest Bancorp, Western Alliance Bancorp and other rivals were rising Wednesday, a day after seeing trading of their stocks get halted amid steep slides. PacWest rose 3.7%, and Western Alliance gained 3.1%

Some of the market's sharpest action was among companies reporting their results for the first three months of the year.

Kraft Heinz rallied 4.4% after beating analysts' forecasts for profit and revenue. Online dating company Match Group rose 2.1% after topping profit expectations. The majority of companies have been turning in better profits than feared so far. But expectations coming into this reporting season were low given the effects of much higher interest rates and a slowing economy. S&P 500 companies are still

likely on the way to reporting a second straight quarter of profit drops. That's why much attention has been on what companies say about upcoming trends. Advanced Micro Devices fell 8.6% despite reporting stronger profit and revenue than expected. It gave a forecast for revenue in the current quarter that fell short of some analysts' expectations.

Europe

European shares opened higher Wednesday following losses in Asia ahead of a decision on interest rates by the Federal Reserve.

U.S. futures rose while oil prices were little changed. Markets in Japan and China were closed Wednesday for holidays.

As worries over struggling banks and a slowing economy pile up, a political stalemate has left the U.S. edging ever closer to what would be a catastrophic default on government debt.

The CAC 40 in Paris advanced 0.5% to 7,425.17. Britain's FTSE 100 gained 0.5% to 7,813.37.

Asia

Asian shares declined Wednesday, tracking losses on Wall Street ahead of a decision on interest rates by the Federal Reserve.

Markets in Japan and China were closed Wednesday for holidays. In Hong Kong, the Hang Seng index lost 1.6% to 19,608.54. South Korea's Kospi shed 0.9% to 2,500.50 and the S&P/ASX 200 in Sydney declined 1.1% to 7,184.90. India's Sensex lost 0.4% and shares also fell in Taiwan and Southeast Asia.

In other trading Wednesday, U.S. benchmark crude oil lost 3 cents to \$71.63 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. It tumbled \$4 on Tuesday. Brent crude, the basis for pricing international oils, gained 3 cents to \$75.35 per barrel.

Currencies

The dollar fell to 136.07 Japanese yen from 136.54 yen late Tuesday. The euro rose to \$1.1019 from \$1.1003.

'Pioneer of Al' leaves Google, warns of technology's dangers

Hinton points to 'bad actors'

WASHINGTON, May 3, (AP): Sounding alarms about artificial intelligence has become a popular pastime in the ChatGPT era. taken up by high-profile figures as varied as industrialist Elon Musk, leftist intellectual Noam Chomsky and the 99-year-old retired statesman Henry Kissinger.

But it's the concerns of insiders in the AI research community that are attracting particular attention. A pioneering researcher and the so-called "Pioneer of AI" Geoffrey Hinton quit his role at Google so he could more freely speak about the dangers of the technology he helped create.

Over his decades-long career, Hinton's pioneering work on deep learning and neural networks helped lay the foundation for much of the AI technology we see today.

There has been a spasm of AI introductions in recent months. San Francisco-based startup OpenAI, the Microsoft-backed company behind ChatGPT, rolled out its latest artificial intelligence model, GPT-4, in March. Other tech giants have invested in competing tools - including Google's

Some of the dangers of AI chat-bots are "quite scary," Hinton told the BBC. "Right now, they're not more in-telligent than us, as far as I can tell. But I think they soon may be."
In an interview with MIT Technol-

ogy Review, Hinton also pointed to "bad actors" that may use AI in ways that could have detrimental impacts on society - such as manipulating elections or instigating violence.

Hinton, 75, says he retired from Google so that he could speak openly about the potential risks as someone who no longer works for the tech giant.

"I want to talk about AI safety issues without having to worry about how it interacts with Google's business," he told MIT Technology Review. "As long as I'm paid by Google, I can't do that.'

Since announcing his departure, Hinton has maintained that Google has "acted very responsibly" regarding AI. He told MIT Technology Review that there's also "a lot of good things about Google" that he would want to talk about - but those comments would be "much more credible if I'm not at Google anymore.

Google confirmed that Hinton had retired from his role after 10 years overseeing the Google Research team in Toronto.

Hinton declined further comment Tuesday but said he would talk more about it at a conference Wednesday.

At the heart of the debate on the state of AI is whether the primary dangers are in the future or present. On one side are hypothetical scenarios of existential risk caused by computers that supersede human intelligence. On the other are concerns about automated technology that's already getting widely deployed by businesses and governments and can cause real-world harms.

"For good or for not, what the chatbot moment has done is made AI a





Computer scientist Geoffrey Hinton, who studies neural networks used in artificial intelligence applications, poses at Google's Mountain View, Calif, headquarters on March 25, 2015. Hinton, a computer scientist known as the 'pioneer of artificial intelligence,' resigned in 2023 from his high-profile job at Google specifically to share his concerns that unchecked AI development could threaten humanity. (AP)

The Conversation

Small businesses seek to avoid possible credit crunch as Fed preps to raise rates once more

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

By D. Brian Blank, Mississippi State University and **Brandy Hadley,**

Appalachian State University

Small businesses - the heartbeat of the U.S. economy - are beginning to feel the pinch of tighter credit conditions as the Federal Reserve continues to increase borrowing costs.

A flurry of headlines in recent weeks has suggested a credit crunch - meaning the availability of lending gets scarcer - is already happening.

That's in large part brought on by

the actions of the Federal Reserve, which has been raising borrowing costs for companies and consumers for over a year in an effort to tame inflation and is poised to raise rates by another quarter point on May 3, 2023. Concerns about the availability of credit have also risen as a result of a spate of bank failures, including that of First Republic on May 1.

A decline in the availability of loans and other financing poses problems for all types of companies. But this can be particularly detrimental to small businesses, which have limited resources to sustain their growth and rely heavily on regional bank financing, currently the most stressed pocket of lending.

Despite their size, small businesses typically defined as companies with under 500 employees - are a very important part of the U.S. economy.

Almost all of them, however, employ fewer than 20. And yet collectively they account for half of all private-sector workers and 44% of private-sector output.

And virtually all for-profit companies are considered small businesses.

Small businesses don't borrow a lot of money, with the average size of their debt just US\$195,000. Altogether, though, it really adds up. At the end of 2022, small businesses owed nearly \$18 trillion in debt.

About 70% of small businesses have at least some outstanding debt, which they use to help cover basic operating expenses like wages, rent and inventory, as well as to invest in new equipment and the like. After individual savings, the second-most common source of capital to start a business is loans from a bank, so the ability to access capital is crucial for businesses - a lack of financing is often cited as the primary reason for failure.

While large companies have a range of financing options at their disposal, such as raising capital by selling stock or issuing convertible bonds, small businesses generally rely on bank loans for over 90% of their financing.

Consequently, if bank lending becomes harder to come by, they may need to cut spending or seek alternative sources of more expensive capital to continue investing and expanding. This could have implications for employment and commercial real estate, leading to further slowdowns in

national conversation and an international conversation that doesn't only include AI experts and developers,'

Science and Technology Policy and its push to craft guidelines around the responsible use of AI tools. "AI is no longer abstract, and we have this kind of opening, I think, to have a new conversation about what

said Alondra Nelson, who until Feb-

ruary led the White House Office of

we want a democratic future and a non-exploitative future with technology to look like," Nelson said in an interview last month.

A number of AI researchers have long expressed concerns about racial, gender and other forms of bias in AI systems, including text-based large language models that are trained on huge troves of human writing and can amplify discrimination that exists in

society.

"We need to take a step back and really think about whose needs are being put front and center in the discussion about risks," said Sarah Myers West, managing director of the nonprofit AI Now Institute. "The harms that are being enacted by AI systems today are really not evenly distributed. It's very much exacerbating existing patterns of

The Conversation

5 essential reads on what's at stake

Yellen puts US Congress on notice over impending debt default date

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

By Matt Williams

awmakers have been given notice of a new deadline if they are to avoid Lawmakers have been given house 3. and adamaging default on U.S. debt: June 1, 2023.

If Congress fails to raise the nation's borrowing limit by that date, Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen warned, then the federal government risks being "unable to continue to satisfy all of the government's obligations."

Giving herself a little wiggle room by saying that it is pretty hard to work out the exact date of default, Yellen was clear on the potential impact: "If Congress fails to increase the debt limit, it would cause severe hardship to American families, harm our global leadership position, and raise questions about our ability to defend our national security interests

The warning may spur leaders in Congress into action. House Speaker Kevin McCarthy fired the starting pistol on negotiations over the debt ceiling in April, laying out the criteria under which Republicans would accept an increase. But McCarthy's proposals - which have since passed a narrow vote in the House - have been shot down by the Biden administration for having strings attached that Democrats deemed unacceptable.

Explaining why the U.S. has a debt ceiling in the first place - and why it is a constant source of political wrangling - is a complicated matter. Here are five articles from The Conversation's archive that provide some of the

So, some basics. The debt ceiling was established by the U.S. Congress in 1917. It limits the total national debt by setting out a maximum amount

Steven Pressman, an economist at The New School, explained the original aim was "to let then-President Woodrow Wilson spend the money he deemed necessary to fight World War I without waiting for often-absent lawmakers to act. Congress, however, did not want to write the president a blank check, so it limited borrowing to US\$11.5 billion and required legis-

Since then, the debt ceiling has been increased dozens of times. It currently stands at \$31.4 trillion - a figure already reached. As a result, the Treasury has taken "extraordinary measures" to enable it to keep borrowing without breaching the ceiling. Such measures, however, can only be temporary - meaning at one point Congress will have to act to lift the ceiling or default on its debt obligations, which is expected to happen in July or

How bad could it be if the U.S. does default on its debt obligations? Well, pretty bad, according to Michael Humphries, deputy chair of business administration at Touro University, who wrote two articles on the consequences.

"The knock-on effect of the U.S. defaulting would be catastrophic. Investors such as pension funds and banks holding U.S. debt could fail. Tens of millions of Americans and thousands of companies that depend on government support could suffer. The dollar's value could collapse, and the U.S. economy would most likely sink back into recession," he wrote.

And that's not all. Such a default could undermine the U.S. dollar's position as a "unit of account," which makes it a widely used currency in global finance and trade. Loss of this status would be a severe economic and political blow to the U.S. But Humphries conceded that putting a dollar value on the price of a default is hard:

The truth is, we really don't know what will happen or how bad it will get. The scale of the damage caused by a U.S. default is hard to calculate in advance because it has never happened before."

Many of these concessions are known, such as allowing a single member of the House to call for a vote to remove him as speaker. But there many be others that remain secret and could be influencing McCarthy's decisionmaking, argued Stanley M. Brand, a law professor at Penn State and former general counsel for the House. These could make it much harder to reach a

deal with Biden over the debt ceiling.

"Some of the new rules spawned by McCarthy's concessions may appear to democratize the procedures for considering and passing legislation. But they are likely to make it difficult for members to get the working majority necessary to pass legislation," Brand explained. "That could make things such as raising the statutory debt ceiling, which is necessary to avert a government shutdown and financial crisis, and passing legislation to fund the government, difficult."

Another condition McCarthy agreed to in January is to push for a "balanced budget" within 10 years.

The U.S. government hasn't had a balanced budget since 2001, the year President Bill Clinton left office. Linda J. Bilmes, a senior lecturer in public policy and public finance at Harvard Kennedy School who worked in the Clinton administration from 1997 to 2001, explained how they achieved that rare feat and why it's unlikely to be repeated today.

"Back in 1997, after the smoke cleared, both the Clinton administration and the Republicans in Congress were able to claim some political credit for the resulting budget surpluses," she wrote. "But - crucially - both parties recognized that a deal was in the best interest of the country and were able to line up their respective members to get the votes in Congress needed to approve it. The contrast with the current political landscape is stark." (AP)



Chairman of the Board of Directors, Dr. Mahmoud Ahmed Abdel Rahman



Chief Executive Officer, Eng. Mazyad bin Nasser Al-Harbi

KD 86.6 mn stc's revenues for the first 3 months of '23 with KD 8.2 mn net profit

Revenues increased by 12.7%

■ Revenue increased by 12.7% to reach KD 86.6 mn

■ EBITDA increased by 6.4% to reach KD 21.6 mn

stc's customer base increased by 16.4% to reach 2.4 mn customers

■ Net profit increased by 7.3% to reach KD 8.2 mn

KUWAIT CITY, May 3: Kuwait Telecommunications Company (stc), a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and platforms to customers and enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, announced its financial results for the three months period ended 31 March 2023, highlighting the most significant achievements, financial and operational performance in addition to the social initiatives made by the company during the first three months of 2022.

The financial results for three months period ended 31 March

KD 86.6mn Revenues KD 21.6mn EBITDA

KD 8.2mn Net Profit 8 fils per share Earnings per share

KD 435.7mn Assets KD 219.7mn Shareholders' equity

220 fils per share Book value per

2.4mn customers Customer base

Commenting on the announcements of these results, Dr. Mahmoud Ahmed Abdulrahman, stc's Chairman, stated:"stc achieved a number of financial and operational achievements during the first three months of 2023through offering a package of integrated offers and digital services to its customers from the individual and enterprise sectors. This comes from stc's concern to meet the needs of its customers in light of the competition that the ICT and telecommunications sectors are witnessing in Kuwait, not

to mention the increasing demand for the digital communications and IT services. Supported by its corporate strategy and the strategic expansion process, stc is keen to keep pace with the rapid changes in the telecommunications sector especially that of the enterprise sector, to sustain its market share by upgrading its services and enhance its customer experience by relying on its solid infrastructure.'

Commenting on stc's financial position as of March 31, 2023, Dr. Abdulrahman said: "stc's total assets reached KD 435.7 mn by the end of March 2023, while total shareholders' equity increased by 2% reaching KD 219.7 mn. Whereby, stc has a strong solvency position among its peers in the Middle East.

With regards to stc's CSR framework, Dr. Abdulrahman commented: "Q1 2023 witnessed a number of community and interactive activities aimed at promoting a culture of social responsibility and developing the concept of sustainability within the local community.In line with the Company's integrated CSR program, stc launched a series of campaigns and initiatives in collaboration with various charitable organizations, as well as institutions in the government and private sectors respectively. The objective of these various initiatives was to make effective and positive contributions in the society while engaging with different sections of the community and spreading awareness on important causes that

affect the community. ste's CSR program has focused on activating sustainable development partnerships with the public and private sectors and strengthening the relationships with local communities in addition to increasing community awareness of the concept of social responsibility. We are proud of the steady growth and diversity of stc's corporate social responsibility framework, which addresses core issues across our main pillars: education, health, sports, environment, entrepreneurship and youth development."

Commenting on stc's major milestones during the first quarter of 2023, Eng. Maziad Alharbi, stc's CEO stated: "stc's robust results which were achieved in both the individual and the enterprise sectors through its subsidiaries specialized in the ICT and business solutions have contributed in enhanc-

ing its financial and operational performance. Whereby, stc achieved outstanding results during the first three months of 2023, which enabled the Company to maintain its competitive position in the ICT sector. Throughout 2023, stc was keen to update its digital transformation strategy in order to encounter the latest developments in the telecommunications sector and support the Company to provide a variety of high quality services aimed at meetings the needs of its individual and enterprise customers as well as exceeding their expectations. Accordingly, stc strives for capturing all the available potential opportunities that would support the key pillars of its corporate strategy focused on leading the ICT sector in Kuwait. This is driven by stc's future vision of the digital solutions through creating unparalleled dazzling opportunities to deliver the most advanced and best-in-class services in order to expand its presence in the individual and enterprise sectors and build a strong customer base in addition to increasing its market share."

Commenting on the announcement of company's financial results for the three months period ended March 31, 2023, Eng. Maziad Alharbi said: "stc managed to generate good financial results leveraging its internal capabilities to meet the anticipation of the Company's shareholders and enrich its product portfolio through the implementation of a productive and digital operating model which would enable the Company to deliver the latest innovative solutions in the ICT sector. Whereby, stc's total revenue reached KD 86.6 mn in the first three months of 2023 with growth rate of 12.7% compared to KD 76.8 mn during the same period in 2022. This increase is attributed to stc's services and smart packages designed to cater the demands of most segments of our individual customers. Not to mention stc's emphasis on the providing digital services to the enterprise segment and delivering integrated technical solutions to companies from all sectors in addition to driving its operations into new areas of sustainable growth through a series of innovative initiatives aimed at improving its operational efficiency, delivering the best services and products that meet its customer's needs, as well as supporting the company's advanced infrastructure with the best and widest

5G coverage" Alharbi added: "These outcomes resulted in agrowth of EBITDA by 6.4% to reach KD 21.6 million in the first quarter of 2023 compared to KD 20.3 million in the same period of 2022. As a result, the company's net profit during the three months period ended 31 March 2023 reached KD 8.2 million compared to KD 7.7 million during the same period in 2022.stc's customer base reached approx.2.4 million customers at the end of March

Alharbi noted: "at stc, we are committed to constantly update our financial and operational plans in order enhance the Company's ability and reach the optimal as well as the most efficient cost optimization process. This, in turn, would aid stc keep abreast with the latest developments in the telecommunications sector to boost profitability levels in addition to achieving the desired financial and operational results, which enables the Company to maintain the liquidity of its cash flows."

About stc

Kuwait Telecommunications Company (stc) is a Kuwaiti shareholding company incorporated pursuant to Amiri Decree No. 187 on 22 July, 2008, to operate and manage the third GSM mobile network in Kuwait as per Law No. 2 of 2007. Accordingly, stc launched its operations in December 2008 and was listed on Boursa Kuwait in December 2014. It is a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and platforms to customers and enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, and is a subsidiary of stc Group. stc has rapidly reached a leadership stance in the market

through its customer and employee centric strategy.

stc offers an innovative range of world-class products, services and solutions with high quality, that cater to the customers' needs and demands, both for individuals and enterprises (solutions by stc). In 2019, stc acquired 100% of the share capital of the Internet Service Provider, Qualitynet General Trading and Contracting

Company (solutions by stc) in Kuwait. stc offers high internet speeds due to the implementation of the most advanced 5G network and deployment of the largest network nationwide.

stc seeks to support several initiatives within its social responsibility programme that support various initiatives in the areas of health, education, environment, sports and entrepreneurship that benefit society and employees.

Q1 - 2023



Kuwait Telecommunications Company (stc) is pleased to announce to its shareholders that the company has achieved a net profit of KD 8.2 million (earnings per share 8 fils) for the three months period ended 31 March 2023.

The Board of Directors of



31 March 2023

Subscribers

16.4%

Million



stc headquarters

new reversal by Twitter after move sparked withdrawal

In an about-face, Twitter says it has restored free access to a key tool for verified government and "publicly owned" services so they can tweet weather, transit and other alerts after New York City's transit agency said earlier this week it would no longer use the platform

for its service advisories.

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority is among count-less official and unofficial accounts that abruptly lost access to Twitter's API, or application programming interface, to send out automated alerts about service changes and emergencies last week. By Thursday afternoon, senior executives agreed to cease publishing service

alerts to the platform altogether. The decision put the country's largest transportation network among a growing number of accounts, from National Public Radio to Elton John, who have

reduced their Twitter presence or left the platform since its takeover by Elon Musk.

Twitter had signaled that the days of private accounts disseminating troves of information at no cost may be ending. Last month, the company announced a new pricing system that would charge for access to its API, which is used by accounts that post frequent alerts, such as transit and weather agencies. (AP)

Chegg's stock plunges on fears of competition

Shares of the education technology company Chegg lost nearly half their value Tuesday after its CEO warned that OpenAl's free ChatGPT service was cutting

into its growth.
Chegg CEO Dan Rosensweig told investors on a conference call Monday that early in the year, the company was meeting expectations for new sign-ups for its educational services. But that shifted in recent months.

"Since March we saw a significant spike in student interest in ChatGPT," Rosensweig said. "We now believe it's having an impact on our new customer growth rate.

Chegg shares tumbled 48% to close Tuesday at \$9.08. The stock traded above \$100 in early 2021 as most students were still stuck at home attending class online during the pandemic.

Rosensweig said students who normally pay for Chegg's

service around midterms or finals were reluctant to pay for subscriptions when there was a free site for them to use.

ChatGPT quickly became a global phenomenon after its November launch. Some school districts have blocked access to it because it had sparked a panic among some educators with the ease with which it could answer take-home test questions and assist with assignments. (AP)

Gulf Bank holds first quarter 2023 earnings webcast

'Our loan book is performing well, and it remains the core driver of the Bank's growth'

KUWAIT CITY, May 3: Gulf Bank held its investors webcast on Tuesday, May02, 2023, to present and discuss the Bank's financial performance for Q1-2023. The webcast was organized by EFG Hermes and presented by Waleed Khalid Mandani, Deputy and Acting Chief Executive Officer of Gulf Bank, and David Challinor, Chief Financial Officer of Gulf Bank. The discussion was moderated by Dalal Al-Dousari, Head of Investor **Relations at Gulf Bank.**

Operating Environment

Mr. Waleed Khalid Mandani commenced the webcast with key updates regarding Gulf Bank's operating environment for Q1-2023. Mandanistated, "During the first Quarter of this year, the Central Bank of Kuwait has raised the discount rate by another 50 basis points, bringing the discount rate to 4%, which is higher than the pre-covid level of 3%. This most recent move and previous rate actions by the Central Bank of Kuwait were not in tandem with the US Fed interest rate hikes, indicating the independence and resilience of the Kuwait economy, supported by its stable and strong fundamentals. This plays out well with Gulf Bank's Kuwait-focused strategy and is evident from our first quarter results for 2023. We have demonstrated excellent progress in our strategy to drive growth and maintain good asset quality.

Mandani added: "We have demonstrated excellent progress in our strategy to drive growth and maintain good asset quality.Our loan book is performing well, and it remains the core driver of the Bank's growth. This growth is supported by and comfortable capital position."

It is also worth noting that during the first quarter of 2023, Gulf Bank had partnered with KAMCO Invest, as a lead manager, in the issuance of United Real Estate Company's KD 80 million bonds. This was the largest Kuwaiti Dinar denominated bond issuance within the real estate sector.

Solid Financial Performance Mr. Mandani summarized Gulf Bank's Q1-2023 results with six key

messages:



Waleed Khalid Mandani

1. Net profit grew by 15% for the first quarter of 2023, to reach KD 17.3 million in comparison to KD 15 million reported in the first quarter of 2022

2. Return on average equity increased to 9.9% for the first quarter of 2023 up from 9.2% at the same period last year.

3. Gross customer loans reached KD 5.1 billion, an increase of KD 286 million or 6% compared to the first quarter of 2022. This growth was mainly supported by our Consumer segment.

4. The quality of our loan book remains resilient, as our non-performing loan ratio (NPL) for the first quarter of 2023 is at 0.8%, together with a strong NPL coverage ratio of 692% including total provisions and collaterals.

5. The relaxed capital regulatory minimums that were introduced in 2020 are now completely restored to their pre-covid levels starting from first of January 2023. With that, at the end of the first quarter of 2023, our Tier 1 ratio had a buffer of 187 basis points, and our capital adequacy ratio had a buffer of 207 basis points. These buffers have allowed the Bank to grow its businesses in line with its strategy.

6. Gulf Bank remains an 'A' rated ank by major credit rating Our current position stands as fol-

• Moody's Investors Service maintained the Long-Term Deposits Rating of "A3" with a "Stable" outlook.

• Capital Intelligence affirmed the Bank's Long-Term Foreign Currency Rating of "A+" with a "Stable"

• Fitch Ratings affirmed the Bank's Long-Term Issuer Default Rating at "A" with a "Stable" outlook, with Viability Rating of



David Challinor

'bbb-' **Increasing Profitability**

Gulf Bank's CFO, Mr. David Challinor, discussed Gulf Bank's O1-2023 results in details by saying: "Net profit grew from 15.0 to 17.3. The increase of 2.3 was mainly driven by an increase of 2.6 in net interest income which was driven by strong loan growth from last year coupled with the impact of the rate hikes. Also, higher non-interest income of 2.3 due to improved fee and dividend. This was offset by an increase in our operating expenses of

ments of 0.9. Mr. Challinor highlighted onthe Return on Equity and said: "Return on Equity improved by 0.7% to reach 9.9%. It's also worth noting that Q1 2023 represented the 7th consecutive quarter of profit

1.6 and total provisions and impair-

Gulf Bank's Financial Position Mr. Challinor also explained Gulf Bank's financial position. He presented the Bank's mix of assets and highlighted its changes over the last 12 monthsby saying: "Our total assets increased by 328 or 5% to reach 6.8 billion. This was largely driven by a 257 or 5% increase in Net Loans." He continued: "Loans and Advances to customers grew by a year on year, supported by both our Corporate and Consumer segments although at a much faster pace from the Consumer segment as we recorded very strong growth of 12% year on year."

On Customer deposits, Mr. Challinor stated: "Customer Deposits declined by 2% year on year to reach 4.2 billion. We saw our CASA ratio decline to 35.3% in first quarter of 2023 versus 41% of last year, however, remains stable in comparison to December 2022.



Dalal Al -Dousari

The decline is due to migration to term deposits due to the higher rate environment.'

On medium-term borrowing, Mr. Challinor said: "We have increased our medium-term borrowings by 120% year on year which resulted in further diversification of our funding profile and improvement in overall duration.

Regulatory Capital

On Gulf Bank's capital, Mr. Challinor said: "Our Tier 1 ratio was 13.9%, which is above our regulatory minimum of 12%. Our Capital Adequacy Ratio of 16.1% is well above our regulatory minimum of

Mr. Challinor also indicated that as of 31 March 2023, the Bank's risk weighted assets grew by 6%, mainly driven by year-on-year growth in the loan book

On the Bank's leverage ratio, Mr. Challinor said: "Our leverage ratio as of 31 March 2023 was 9.3%, which is at similar levels to same period of last year, and well above the 3% regulatory minimum."

Regarding the liquidity ratios, Mr. Challinor stated: "Our quarterly average daily Liquidity Coverage Ratio, which was 279%, and the Net Stable Funding Ratio was 109%. It's worth noting that both ratios are still well above regulatory minimums of 100%." He also added: "Also, the previous relaxed regulatory minimums for the Liquidity Ratios and Capital Adequacy

Ratio have now been completely restored back to the pre-covid levels at the start of Q1 2023."

Q&A

Following the management presentation of Gulf Bank's performance for Q1-2023, the call was open for participants questions. Ms. Dalal AlDousari, head of Investor Relations at Gulf Bank, moderated the Q&A session.

Margins

The Q&A session started with a question about margins and if there is any pressure to increasing funding cost and CASAMr. Challinor responded: "The NIM's was pressured in Q1, and we saw a drop on a consecutive quarterly basis, even though year on year its increased.In Q1, all the various regulatory liquidity ratios were reinstated to their pre-Covid levels. So, for example, the Loan to Deposit ratio, which was at 95% for the full year 2022, was lowered to the pre-Covid maximum of 90%. This caused upward pressure on the cost of deposits, particularly at the one-year tenure, as banks in market offered very attractive rates to customers to move to the new regulatory ratios" Mr. Challinor added: "The good news is we did see the monthly growth in interest expense slow during the quarter so our view would be we are potentially getting close to a top in the cost of funds, at current discount rate levels. There hasn't been a CBK discount rate increase since January, so it remains to be seen whether there will be more increases in 2023. We have our retail book continuing to reprice for loans moving past the 5-year tenure so that will act to increase the overall asset yield of the portfolio and support margin expansion. Also, our CASA levels have remained stable this quarter at 35%." He also added: "I think, as I said on the Q4 2022 call, we should expect to see some level of margin expansion in 2023 but the exact quantum and specific timing across quarters is very

difficult to say in this environment." **Loan Book Growth**

A question was raised regarding the loan book growth and whether to expect the pace of growth to slow down with the rate hikes Mr. Challinor commented: "I think it's useful to discuss the retail and corporate books separately." Mr. Challinor added: "On the retail side, we grew our book by 0.8% in Q1 against a

system that showed zero growth. Clearly the higher rate environment is curtailing growth in the market. But our strategy remains, which is to grow faster than the market in retail, which we did in 2022, and we are continuing this trend into 2023. So, our outlook is that we expect to continue to outperform the market in retail, albeit at a lower headline pace than what we saw in 2022 due to a slowing market." He also Added: "On the corporate side, we saw limited draw downs from existing customers, and given where rates are at, some customers paid down existing debt. I've said before the strategy with corporate is one of optimization, so we're looking to improve the overall return on the book including generating more fee income which we did in the quar-

Improved Asset Quality A question was raised regarding

credit cost and asset quality and the driver of the improvement and if there is any pressure on provisions. Mr. Challinor commented: "In Q1 we took total specific provision of KD14.2m and had strong recoveries of KD 7m which resulted in a net credit cost of KD 7.2m. This translates into a cost of risk of 56 basis points. So, the net credit costs continue to be very low and the trend from 2022, where we saw a full year 50 basis point cost of risk, is continued." Mr. Challinor continued: "Now, in terms of the Specific Provision of KD 14.2m about half related to provisioning requirements in respect of the ageing of existing NPL's. The other half related to additional conservative measures we decided to take given the uncertainty of the higher rate environment. So specifically, we fully provided all impaired retail loans that were currently in the 50% provision bucket and wrote them off from an accounting perspective. But clearly any collections on these in the future will be booked as recoveries. And we also increased coverage on a corporate loan. So, the important point is the KD14.2m in Q1 is not indicative of what I would see as the future run rate for the quarterly specific provision, as half of it related to what I believe were one-off conservative measures."He also continued: "When we look at how the loan book is currently performing, the good news is, despite the higher rate environment, the quality of the loan portfolio continues to remain very resilient. Not only are all the asset quality metrics in excellent shape, but the underlying NPL generation in Q1 was only KD 6m, which on a portfolio of KD 5.2bn of customer loans, and given where rates now are, is an exceptional great result. In fact, this level of quarterly NPL generation is lower than any time in at least the last 3 years and is half the average quarterly generation for the 2022 year. Also, the stage 2 percentage also continues to be very low at only 4.8%. And our buffer over IFRS 9 provisioning requirements of KD139m or 46% is now the highest it's ever been since the introduction of IFRS 9." **Operating Expense** A question was raised regard-

ing cost to income ratio trend. Mr. Challinor commented: "Operating expenses were up 8% year on year, but they were down 8% from Q4 2022. In fact, the Q1 23 number of KD21.4m is lower than what we saw in Q2 22." He continued: "The cost to income ratio is currently at 46%. Which is down from the fourth quarter 2022 level of 47.8%. We're likely to have less volume related costs in 2023 but we still have the transformation ongoing. I've said before, following the completion of the transformation we will look to extract cost and efficiency benefits. Having said that, we continue to optimize the cost and revenue base in order to help drive meaningful improvements in operating profits.'

Business Collaboration

A question was raised on the latest update on proposed business collaboration with ABK. Mr. Mandani commented: "The most recent disclosures Gulf Bank made in relation to the potential collaboration between Gulf Bank and ABK was on November 23, 2022. The disclosure stated that Gulf Bank obtained the approval of the Central Bank of Kuwait regarding the engagement of McKinsey & Company as the Bank's consultant to carry out the feasibility study."He added: "We will disclose any future material information in this regard as and when it becomes available."

The Conversation

Number of tweets mentioning 'SVB,' increased sharply

Twitter played a role in the 'collapse' of Silicon Valley Bank – new research

By Tony Cookson, University of Colorado Boulder and Christoph Schiller, Arizona State University

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

The Research Brief is a short take about interesting academic work.
Prior to Silicon Valley Bank's March 10, 2023, collapse, conversations on Twitter among investors about the bank spiked - helping fuel the SVB bank run. As we explain in our new working paper, "Social media as a bank run catalyst," those tweets also destabilized other financial institutions with weak balance sheets.

The number of tweets mentioning "SVB," the bank's stock ticker, increased sharply on March 9 around 9 a.m EST. That was roughly two and a half hours before tweets mentioning "SVB" or "Silicon Valley Bank," which were part of a more generalinterest discussion, began.

That spike in investor tweets coincided with the rapid drop in the bank's stock price on March 9, which continued in after-hours trading and before the market opened the next morning. Trades in SVB's stock were halted on March 10, the day the bank collapsed.

Together with several other colleagues, we grouped U.S. banks by the number of tweets posted about them and by their vulnerability to a potential bank run. To measure vulnerability, we multiplied losses the banks incurred due to the string of interest rate increases that began in March 2022 by the proportion of their deposits that were below the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp.'s insurance limit of \$250,000 per account.

We found that shares of banks with a lot of Twitter activity in January and February incurred much larger declines in March. This effect was stronger for the group of banks with the most vulnerability. One of them was First Republic Bank, which subsequently failed on May 1.

When we looked at what happened to the stocks of all the banks with vulnerable balance sheets from March 6 to March 13, the one-third of banks with the most tweets experienced declines in their share prices on average about twice as large as the others.

U.S. policymakers have acknowledged that social media may have played a role in Silicon Valley Bank's

Existing knowledge about bank runs comes mainly from banking distress during the Great Depression. Back then, word of mouth, media coverage and public signals, such as long lines outside of banks, spread panic among bank customers.

The breadth of the audience and the quick spread of ideas make social media distinct from newspapers and broadcast news since traditional media outlets mostly rely on one-way communication from official sources to the general public. This will surely remain an important issue for banks, especially as other financial institutions face issues similar to those that felled SVB.

A report on SVB's failure that the Federal Reserve released on April 28 underscored many of the points we made in our paper. It highlights poor risk management by SVB in combination with a large fraction of depositors concentrated in the Silicon Valley startup community, who are often very active and highly connected on social

Another team of scholars, led by University of Pennsylvania finance professor Itamar Drechsler, determined that the recent growth of uninsured deposit accounts can destabilize banks.

As ongoing research by a team of researchers at Columbia University and the University of Chicago suggests, this risk may further be amplified by the rise of fully digital banks and mobile banking apps.

Depositors who rapidy withdrew money from SVB also reportedly relied on private communication channels, such as group text messages, Slack and WhatsApp, as well as phone calls, to share their fears and concerns. But since there is no publicly available data, it is hard to find out what role those other less formal conversations played in precipitating the SVB bank PARIS, May 3, (AP): Opponents of a law that would raise the retirement age in France from 62 to 64 are making

Opponents make last-ditch

'effort' to stop pension law

last-ditch plans to prevent the change that is set to take effect in September. The country's main labor unions on Tuesday called for another round of nationwide demonstrations and strikes on June 6. May Day protests across France on Monday drew either 800,000 people - that's according to French authorities - or 2.3 million people, which was the estimate given

France's top constitutional body is expected to rule Wednesday on a request from opposition lawmakers to start a lengthy process that could ultimately lead to a bill or a referendum to restore the minimum retirement age of 62.

by organizers.

With President Emmanuel Macron having demonstrated his determination to press on with the unpopular pension reform, here's a look at the next steps for his government and the plan's op-The Constitutional Council's role

is to assess whether the opposition's request over bringing the retirement age back to 62 meets the legal conditions for a potential referendum. If so, supporters would have nine months to collect signatures from at least 4.8 million, or 10%, of voters. Macron's government would then

be able to choose between sending the opposition's text to parliament for debate and eventually a vote, or waiting for six months to put the measure before voters in a referendum in six months. The proposal would only go to a national referendum if it were not debated by lawmakers.

However, the Constitutional Council rejected a similar proposal in April. The authors have revised the measure to add language stating that a change in the financing of France's pension system is needed.

Regardless of what the council decides Wednesday, its ruling would not suspend the law that Macron's government pushed through by using a special constitutional authority to raise the retirement age without a final parlia-In a televised speech last month, the

French leader made clear his intention to move on to other topics now that his pension law was enacted. Macron said he heard people's anger

but insisted that the law was needed to

keep the pension system afloat as the population ages.

He announced negotiations to start this month on "key issues" such as improving employee wages, career progressions and working conditions, including for older workers, in the hope these would persuade some unions to get back to the negotiating table.

Last week, Macron's government presented its road map for the coming months, with the aim of getting greater support for future bills. Parliament is set to debate a major military bill by the end of the month. Legislators will then examine a gov-

ernment proposal on profit-sharing by companies with more than 11 employees. The proposal is intended to turn into law an agreement that unions and employers' organizations signed in February. Unions argue the higher retirement

age erodes hard-won rights for workers. The date they chose for the next nationwide protests is two days before the lower house of France's Parliament plans to debate a legislative proposal to bring back the retirement age back to 62.

A group of opposition lawmakers has championed the proposal, which is separate from the one before the Constitutional Council, in the hope that most members from the left and the right would vote in favor. Macron's centrist alliance lost its majority in the National Assembly last year.

Yet there's no guarantee such move will succeed, because some opposition lawmakers from the conservative party are in favor of the change.

In a statement Tuesday, unions said they would work together to issue common proposals to address employee concerns over "wages, working conditions, health at work, social democracy, gender equality and the environment

"There's deep mistrust, and dialogue can only be restored if the government proves its intention to finally take into account unions' proposals,

Opponents are also expected to stage more "casserolades," or scattered protest actions in which they bang pots and pans to make noise near sites Macron and his government members are

"We will not turn over a new leaf as long as the pension reform is not withdrawn," the head of the hard-left CGT union, Sophie Binet, warned Monday.

KFH offers 'Rafaa' plan

Considering its pioneering role in offering unique solutions and innovative products, Kuwait Finance House (KFH) has continued its distinction in fulfilling customers aspirations and providing

the best investment plans and solutions according to the highest international standards.

KFH is keen to meet customers' desires to secure a better future of the family. As big steps require early planning, KFH offers the "Rafaa" plan, which is a long-term investment plan to cover the expenses of your children's marriage to be ready for the happiest moments. Among the conditions of the investment plan is that the age of the son or daughter be less than 20 years, and the age of the cus-

tomer must range between 21 and 61 years. The investment period ranges from 4 years to 25 years. The investment plan "Rafaa" advantages include the following: the investment amount or monthly payments may be amended at any time and the amounts shall be automatically transferred on monthly basis from the customer account to the flexible investment plan "Rafaa" account. Also, the customer can withdraw 60% of the balance in the first year and 60% every year after the first withdrawal. The customer can automatically increase the monthly investment amount once every two years. It is possible to deposit specific financial payments in addition

to the monthly deductions without affecting the schedule of the investment plan. The saving amount and accrued profit during the investment period shall fall due upon expiration of the investment plan. The investment plan can be cancelled at any time and the invested amount and profits accrued on the date of closing shall be refunded to the customer.

Long term investment plans provided by "KFH" encourage and inspire customers to enhance future planning and saving culture, determine family spending priorities and enhance chances of increasing family income through innovative and flexible solutions with rewarding investment returns.



KFH's 'Rafaa' plan flyer

Company promotes quality education and learning

KIPCO supports AUK's 'EDUCON 2023' global engineering education confab

KUWAIT CITY, May 3: KIPCO – Kuwait Projects Company (Holding) - was the Premier Sponsor of the IEEE Global Engineering Education Conference, EDUCON 2023, hosted by the American University of Kuwait. The support comes as part of the company's efforts to promote quality education and learning.

The conference, which took place from May 1-4, is the fourteenth in a series that rotate in Europe and the MENA region. This is the first time that it is held in Kuwait. The event catered to more than 200 researchers, industry representatives, members of academia and students par-



A photo from the event.

ticipating from 50 countries. The workshops and technical sessions focused on aspects of engineering education.

Opening

Speaking at the opening of the event, KIPCO's Group Senior Vice President - Corporate Communications and Investor Relations, Ms Eman Al Awadhi said:

Education is an important pillar of KIPCO's portfolio, and the establishment of AUK in 2003 marked our entry into this sector. Since then, we have been contributing to the education of young people in Kuwait through our network of K-12 schools and this university, shaping the future of the country through the quality of learning that we offer. We pride ourselves on upholding a culture of freedom of thought and expression, respect for individual rights and cultural diversity in our institutions.'

She added: "Throughout the years, we have strongly supported AUK's efforts to engage with the education community and leave its mark in the field. We are delighted that EduCon is being hosted here this year, where participants will not only have the opportunity to present their work and exchange ideas, but also present the latest research topics in engineering education.

Kuwait Projects Company (Holding) - KIPCO - is a holding company that focuses on investments in the Middle East and North Africa. Its strategy of acquiring, building, scaling and selling companies in the MENA region has worked successfully for over 30 years.

KIPCO's main business sectors are financial services, energy, media, real estate, industry and education. KIPCO's financial service interests include holdings in commercial banks, insurance companies, asset management and investment banking.

Dedicates platform for charity

talabat concludes Ramadan program with great success

KUWAIT CITY, May 3: As we approach the end of the holy month of Ramadan. We at talabat, the leading e-commerce platform in Kuwait and the region, would like to take a moment to reflect on the month and the programs that we have undertaken to give back to community.The program included the distribution of food baskets, Iftar meals and in addition to participating in numerous charitable and social events.

Talabat Managing Director, Bader Al-Ghanim said that "talabat is proud to be a leading pioneer in social development through its CSR programs. "This program aims to maintain deeper relationships with the communities we operate in, through the introduction of multiple initiatives and projects that aim to nurture individuals and families and provide the necessary support to their goals of decent living," he added. We are incredibly proud of our employees, partners, and customers who have supported us in these efforts. It is through our collective actions that we can make a difference and create a better world for

Tec for good

Talabat signed an agreement with Give, a non-profit company that aims to improve the process of electronic donation to charities in Kuwait, for its social responsibility campaign during the holy month of Ramadan and Eid Al-Fitr. Through the month of Ramadan 16,350 Iftar meals were donated by talabat app users to different charities.

Food Basket

"The Food Basket" initiative was launched with the goal of providing food assistance to families and individuals in need during the month of Ramadan. Through talabat's platform, customers were able to easily donate food baskets to the Kuwait Red Crescent Society, which were then distributed to more than 400

Iftar

talabat has distributed over 10,000 pre-iftar packs daily to their network of riders from various talabat mart essential food items to help them break their fast. Additionally, Symphony Hotel for its riders.As well 200 full iftar meals were distributed to street cleaners in various locations around kuwait.

Volunteers

As they do every year, talabat employees participated in the Ramthan initiatives by conducting visits to various areas to do good deeds. This comes in light of talabat keenness to promote volunteerism among its employees by reinforcing participation in various humanitarian and social activities.

Break Your Fast

Talabat distributed fast breaking meals to drivers at strategic locations. This initiative is aimed at reducing traffic accidents during the holy month of Ramadan, especially around iftar time as drivers attempt to reach their destinations before iftar time, resulting in traffic viola-

Gergean

Talabat launched a group of fun activities During Girgian for chil-

Ghabgha with the Media

Talabat held a Ghabga for the media representatives in Four Seasons Hotel Kuwait on the 30th of March. During which it hosted a number of media professionals who are considered key partners in the development of talabat. The event was organized in celebration of the holy month of Ramadan and in recognition of the ongoing support and

To conclude, talabat social efforts have witnessed high praise and shall continue its social participations and strategic initiatives and support all voluntary work initiatives.





Photos from the Ramadan activities

locations. These packs included Talabat organized a two-day iftar at

dren at various locations around

efforts made by the media sector.



Nurtured

El-Sherbini added: "Human capital is to be continuously nurtured and developed, and that's what we aim to do through our multiple development programs: invest in our most promising talents by helping them grow on both the personal and professional levels. We thank all our executives and senior leaders for their unwavering continued support, we strongly appreciate the efforts exerted by our Ro2ya pioneers, and we look forward to witnessing their impact on Burgan's success and the banking sector as a whole." Solution (012)

Despite the unique challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, Burgan Bank launched the first batch of Ro2ya in 2020 as a progressive solution in response to the swiftly changing market demands that pushed for the digitization of its processes, products, and services

Commenting on Ro2ya, Mr. Bashar



Burgan Bank's Ro2ya graduates

Bank's 52 talents successfully conclude program

Burgan celebrates its Ro2ya graduates

KUWAIT CITY, May 3: Burgan Bank recently celebrated the graduation of 52 aspiring Burgan talents who have successfully concluded the first round of the Bank's dynamic talent development program, Ro2ya, each completing their relevant learning path.

The graduation ceremony, which was held at Dar Al-Athar, was attended by Mr. Fadel Mahmoud Abdullah Acting Departs Comme Cliff Faces lah, Acting Deputy Group Chief Executive Officer & CEO – Kuwait, and Chief Corporate Banking Officer, and Mrs. Halah Mohammad El-Sherbini, Group Chief Human Resources and Development Officer at Burgan Bank, alongside Burgan's top management, colleagues, and family members who were at hand to show support for the

into the future by implementing the latest in learning and talent develop-

at Marina Hotel.

African products.

On this occasion, Mohamed Haris, the Director of Lulu Hypermarket Kuwait, conveyed his national day wishes to the Ambassador of the republic of south Africa to Kuwait H.E. Dr. Manelisi Genge. The participation of Lulu Hypermarket in the event was well-received by attendees, who appreciated the opportunity to learn more about South African products available in Kuwait. Commenting on the event, Director

KUWAIT CITY, May 3: Lulu Hypermarket Kuwait joined the South Afri-

can Embassy in Kuwait to celebrate

the South African National Day on

May 2, 2023. The event was held at the Salwa Sabah Al Ahmad Ballroom

During this occasion The Embassy

in Kuwait organized an exhibition to

showcase the various South African

products available in Kuwait. Lulu Hy-

permarket attended the exhibition and

showcased its range of imported South

Lulu Hypermarket Kuwait has its

own procurement sourcing center in South Africa, which allows them to

import more than 1000 South African

products from over 100 brands. These

products include groceries, fresh pro-

Conveyed

duce, and many other items.

said, "We are honored to be a part of

Al-Qattan, Talent Empowerment Sen-

ior Manager at Burgan Bank said: "In

today's fast-paced market, it is crucial

for organizations to be nimble in their

response to and adoption of new digital

solutions that guarantee accurate, fast,

and seamless delivery of services to the

market. However, state-of-the-art so-

lutions alone can't rally organizations

to success without an equally efficient

workforce that designs, refines, and delivers these services. That's why we

continue to place talent development at

the core of our organizational success

strategy, ensuring a more promising path for the staff on an individual level

and for Burgan Bank as an institution.'

deliver on the Bank's strategic busi-

ness objective of retaining and grow-

In this light, Ro2ya was designed to



South African products showcased

Lulu Hypermarket participates in S.

Africa's 'National Day' celebrations

ing its exceptional and most promising talents while attracting the best candidates in the market to the Burgan family. While this promised to fortify Burgan Bank's position as a market leader in Kuwait's financial and banking sector, it also aimed to advance the level of knowledge and skill available within the national pool of talent. Designed with the Bank's diversity

of talent cohorts and their different needs in mind, Ro2ya presents three learning paths that serve different career paths and aspirations: Eagles, Arrows, and Sprouts. Along all paths, program participants receive dedicated guidance that is tailored to their personal needs and professional aspirations. This is further enriched by the invaluable collaborations signed with



local and international universities and business schools, whose learning materials and approaches ensure profound personal and professional growth for all program participants.

Following the astounding success of the program's first batch, Burgan Bank launched Ro2ya in its second batch in October, which welcomed 45 talents aboard the program's paths, Arrows and Sprouts. With this program and a wide range of other similar efforts, Burgan Bank continues to lead the efforts on developing Kuwait's national talents, with a motivation to elevate the national market's competitiveness, paving the path for bigger successes and a stronger domestic economy.

The Conversation

Toxicologist explains how to decode package inserts

Prescription drugs' fine print vital for safety, effectiveness

Colorado State University

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

Many adults take prescription drugs, and usage rates are continually increasing. With approximately 1.3 million emergency department visits in the US caused by adverse drug events each year, patient education is becoming increasingly important.

All prescription drugs come with instructions on how to safely and effectively use them. Depending on the medication, there may be several types of information included: the patient package insert, medication guide and instructions for use. One or more of these documents could be folded up in the box or attached as a printed page provided by your pharmacist.

You can listen to more articles from The Conversation, narrated by Noa,

I am a scientist who studies how drugs and other chemicals affect human health. While they may look intimidating, package inserts - and particularly the prescribing information - can help patients better understand the science inside the pill bottle and blister pack, among others.

An often overlooked part of the package insert is the prescribing information. Though written primarily for health care professionals, it contains a wealth of information regarding the ways in which the medication interacts with the body.

If the prescribing information was not included with your prescription, you can often find a copy on the National Institutes of Health's DailyMed website or other drug information

As an example, let's consider one of the most widely prescribed medications in the US, atorvastatin (Lipitor). Among other effects, it reduces elevated levels of cholesterol overall as well as levels of low-density lipoprotein cholesterol - LDL, or "bad" cho-

Information

Reading the insert can answer a few important questions about the drug. If you'd like to follow along, a copy of the prescription information for Lipitor can be found here.

To answer this question, you can refer to the "Mechanism of Action" and "Pharmacodynamics" subsections of the prescription insert.

The mechanism of action and pharmacodynamics are related concepts. The mechanism of action describes the chemical and molecular interactions that cause a drug's therapeutic or toxic effects. Pharmacodynamics refers to "what the drug does to the which includes th of action as well as how other factors like drug concentration influences its

Often the mechanism of action of a drug is related to how it interacts with cell receptors and enzymes involved in mediating specific signals and biochemical reactions in the body.

In the case of Lipitor, the prescribing information tells us three important things about how the drug works. First, the liver is the primary site that produces cholesterol in the body and the area the drug is meant to target. Second, the drug works by inhibiting an enzyme involved in cholesterol production called HMG-CoA reductase. And third, the drug increases the number of LDL cholesterol receptors on cell surfaces, ultimately increasing the catabolism, or metabolic breakdown,

of LDL cholesterol.

let's start with some background information in the "Pharmacokinetics" subsection.

as "what the body does to the drug." It focuses on four major processes the body undergoes in response to the gets into the body; distribution, or how converted into other chemical forms; and excretion, or how the drug is eliminated from the body.

differently in different people.

subsection.

does not specifically say where the drug the volume of distribution is 381 liters. The volume of distribution is the body overall to its concentration in the bloodstream. For reference, the drug warfarin, which prevents blood clots, is tightly bound to proteins in the blood and has a volume of distribution of only 8 liters. On the other hand, chloroquine, fat, has a value of 15,000 liters.

most drugs come from the chemical compound it's made of, many break down into active metabolites in the body that also have some relevant biological effects

Some medications are administered in an inactive form called a prodrug that the body converts into metabolites with the desired therapeutic effects. Drugmakers generally use prodrugs because they have better pharmacokinetics - such as improved absorption and distribution in the body - than the

In the case of Lipitor, the "Metabolism" subsection under "Pharmacokinetics" tells us that the drug is broken down into several products and that these metabolites contribute signifi-

this case is its half-life, which is the length of time required for the concentration of the drug to decrease to half of its initial amount in the body. Information about a drug's half-life is found in the "Excretion" subsection

Absorption

mately 14 hours. If you were to stop taking the medication, 97% of the drug would be gone from your blood after

and rate at which a drug is absorbed into the body in several ways, including changing the acidity of the digestive system, altering the release of bile and increasing blood flow to the gut.

For Lipitor specifically, the answer

Before we answer this question,

Pharmacokinetics can be thought of chemical: absorption, or how the drug the drug is dispersed throughout the body; metabolism, or how the drug is

The pharmacokinetics of a drug are determined by factors related to the chemical itself and the person taking the medication. For instance, disease state, age, sex and genetic makeup can all cause the same medication to work

Now, let's look at the "Distribution"

For Lipitor, the prescription insert goes in the body, but it does note that ratio of the amount of the drug in the blood. A value greater than about 30 liters suggests that the drug has entered body tissues and is not confined to the an antimalarial drug that enters body

Though the therapeutic effects of

active form of the drug.

cantly to its therapeutic effect.

A key drug property to consider in under "Pharmacokinetics."

about three days, or five half-lives.

The prescription insert provides another interesting piece of information: because Lipitor's active metabolites have a longer half-life than the drug itself, the half-life for its cholesterol enzyme inhibiting effects is 20 to 30 hours. This means that the drug's effects may last even after the drug itself

is out of your system. Eating food can change the amount

Consumers have limited info on products' ingredients

Body lotions, mothballs & other widely used products contain toxic chemicals

By Robin Dodson, Boston University; Megan R. Schwarzman, University of California, Berkeley, and Ruthann Rudel,

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

Northeastern University

onsumer products released more than 5,000 tons of chemicals in 2020 inside California homes and workplaces that are known to cause cancer, adversely affect sexual function and fertility in adults or harm developing fetuses, according to our newly published study.

We found that many household products like shampoos, body lotions, cleaners and mothballs release toxic volatile organic compounds, or VOCs, into indoor air. In addition, we identified toxic VOCs that are prevalent in products heavily used by workers on the job, such as cleaning fluids, adhesives, paint removers and nail polish. However, gaps in laws that govern ingredient disclosure mean that neither consumers nor workers generally know what is in the products they use.

For this study we analyzed data from the California Air Resources Board (CARB), which tracks VOCs released from consumer products in an effort to reduce smog. The agency periodically surveys companies that sell products in California, collecting information on concentrations of VOCs used in everything from hair spray to windshield wiper fluid

We cross-referenced the most recent data with a list of chemicals identified as carcinogens or reproductive/developmental toxicants under California's right-to-know law, Proposition 65. This measure, enacted in 1986, requires businesses to notify Californians about significant exposure to chemicals that are known to cause cancer, birth defects or other reproductive harms.

We found 33 toxic VOCs present in consumer products. Over 100 consumer products covered by the CARB contain VOCs listed under Prop 65. Of these, we identified 30 product

types and 11 chemicals that we see as high priorities for either reformulation with safer alternatives or regulatory action because of the chemicals' high toxicity and widespread use.

Our study identifies consumer products containing carcinogens and reproductive and developmental toxicants that are widely used at home and in the workplace. Consumers have limited information about these products' in-

We also found that people are likely

"Absorption" subsection under "Pharmacokinetics." Food decreases the rate

and extent of Lipitor's absorption but

doesn't significantly affect LDL cho-

Interestingly, the insert also states

that the blood concentration of the drug

is significantly lower when taken in the

evening than in the morning, but reduc-

tion in LDL cholesterol levels is the same

lesterol reduction.

Armis identifies riskiest medical and IoT devices in clinical environments

Nurse call systems could pose threat to hospitals

CHICAGO, May 2: HIMSS - Armis, the leading asset visibility and security company, has released new research identifying the top connected medical and IoT devices that are exposed to malicious activity in clinical environments. Data analyzed from the Armis Asset Intelligence and Security Platform, which tracks over three billion assets, found nurse call systems to be the riskiest* IoMT device, followed by infusion pumps and medication dispensing systems. When looking at IoT devices, IP cameras, printers and Voice Over Internet Protocol (VoIP) devices are topping

By 2026, smart hospitals are expected to deploy over 7 million IoMT devices, doubling the amount from 2021. Medical and non-medical devices are increasingly connected, automatically feeding patient data from monitoring devices into electronic records. These connections and communications within a medical environment help improve patient care but also make it increasingly vulnerable to cyberattacks, which could result in the interruption

Upon a comprehensive analysis of the data from all connected medical and IoT devices on the Armis Asset Intelligence and Security Platform, ■ Nurse call systems are the riskiest

several noteworthy conclusions can be

connected medical device, with 39% of them having critical severity unpatched Common Vulnerabilities and Exposures (CVEs) and almost half (48%) having unpatched CVEs.

■ Infusion pumps are second, with 27% having critical severity unpatched CVEs and 30% having unpatched CVEs.

■ Medication dispensing systems are in third place, with 4% having critical severity unpatched CVEs, but 86% having unpatched CVEs. Moreover, 32% run on unsupported Windows versions.

■ Almost 1 in 5 (19%) connected medical devices are running unsupported OS versions

■ More than half of IP cameras we monitored in clinical environments have critical severity unpatched CVEs (56%) and unpatched CVEs (59%), making it the riskiest IoT device.

■ Printers are the second riskiest IoT device in clinical environments, with 37% having unpatched CVEs, and 30% having critical severity unpatched

■ VoIP devices are in third place. Although 53% of them have unpatched CVEs, only 2% have critical severit-

2-pyrrolidone and ethylene gylcol,

are listed under Prop 65 because they

are reproductive or developmental

"These numbers are a strong indicator of the challenges faced by healthcare organizations globally. Advances in technology are essential to improve the speed and quality of care delivery as the industry is challenged with a shortage of care providers, but with increasingly connected care comes a bigger attack surface," said Mohammad Waqas, Principal Solutions Architect for Healthcare at Armis. "Protecting every type of connected device, medical, IoT, even the building management systems, with full visibility and continuous contextualized monitoring is a key element to ensuring patient safety.

Armis secures all medical assets and patient care environments in some of the largest healthcare delivery organizations around the world:

"Armis appeared to be a good alternative for us because it immediately provided us with visibility into what devices were plugging into the network. It shows us how they are interacting with each other, creates alerts based on observed behavior and enforces firewall rules based on those alerts," said Brian Schultz, Director of Network Operations and Security, Burke Rehabilitation Hos-

co-exposed to many hazardous chemicals together as mixtures through use of many different products, which often contain many chemicals of health concern. For example, janitors might use a combination of general cleaners. degreasers, detergents and other maintenance products. This could expose them to more than 20 different Prop 65-listed VOCs.

Similarly, people experience aggregate exposures to the same chemical from multiple sources. Methanol, which is listed under Prop 65 for developmental toxicity, was found in 58 product categories. Diethanolamine, a chemical frequently used in products like shampoos that are creamy or foamy, appeared in 40 different product categories. Canada and the European Union prohibit its use in cosmetics because it can react with other ingredients to form chemicals that may cause cancer.

Some chemicals, such as N-methyl-

The upshot of all of this is written

on the drug label on the outside of the

package: Lipitor can be taken with or

without food. Morning or evening is

not specified, but the recommendation

is to take it at the same time every day.

in ways that affect their safety and ef-

ficacy. For instance, two drugs may

Drugs can interact with one another

regardless of when the drug is taken.

toxicants. Yet they appeared widely in goods such as personal care products, cleansers and art supplies that are routinely used by children or people who are pregnant. Regulations Our findings could help state and

federal agencies strengthen chemical regulations. We identified five chemicals - cumene, 1,3-dichloropropene, styrene - as high-priority targets for risk evaluation and management under the Toxic Substances Control Act by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Our analysis of the CARB data on

volatile toxicants does not paint a complete picture. Many toxic chemicals, such as lead, PFAS and bisphenol A (BPA), don't have to be reported to the

rely on the same enzyme system in

the body to break them down. Taking

them at the same time can ultimately

lead to higher-than-anticipated levels

can be found in the "Drug Interac-

Information to answer this question

One of the drug categories of con-

cern for Lipitor are "strong inhibitors

of either or both drugs in the body.

tions" section.

not volatile, meaning that they don't readily turn from liquid to gas at room temperature. In addition, we were not able to identify specific products of concern

Air Resources Board because they are

because the agency aggregates data over whole categories of products. Studies have shown that women generally use more cosmetic, personal care and cleaning products than men,

so they are likely to be more highly exposed to harmful chemicals in these categories. Further, women working in settings like nail salons may be ex posed from products used both personally and professionally. Research by members of our team

has also shown that product use varies by race and ethnicity, partly due to racialized beauty standards. Policy interventions could be tailored to prioritize these potentially more-highly exposed groups. (AP)

of CYP 3A4," an enzyme that plays a key role in metabolizing many drugs. Because Lipitor itself is broken down by this enzyme, taking it alongside drugs that inhibit CYP 3A4, such as the antibiotic clarithromycin or the fungal infection drug itraconazole, can lead to its increased concentration in the blood and potentially result in ad-







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Late-night TV shows go dark as writers strike for better pay

LOS ANGELES, May 3, (AP): Hollywood writers picketing to preserve pay and job security outside major studios and streamers braced for a long fight at the outset of a strike that immediately forced latenight shows into hiatus, put other productions on pause and had the entire industry slowing its roll.

The first Hollywood strike in 15 years commenced Tuesday as the 11,500 members of the Writers Guild of America stopped working when their contract expired.

The union is seeking higher minimum pay, more writers per show and less exclusivity on single projects, among other demands - all conditions it says have been diminished in the content boom of the streaming era.

"Everything's changed, but the money has changed in the wrong direction," said Kelly Galuska, 39, a writer for "The Bear" on FX and "Big Mouth" on Netflix, who picketed at Fox Studios in Los Angeles with her 3-week-old daughter. "It's a turning point in the industry right now. And if we don't get back to even, we never will.'

The last Hollywood strike, from the same union in 2007 and 2008, took three months to resolve. With no talks or even plans to talk pending between the WGA and the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers, which represents studios and productions companies, there is no telling how long writers will have to go without pay, or how many major productions will be delayed, shortened or scrapped.

'We'll stay out as long as it takes," Josh Gad, a writer for shows including "Central Park" and an actor in films including "Frozen," said

from the Fox picket line.

The AMPTP said in a statement that it presented an offer with "generous increases in compensation for writers as well as improvements in streaming residuals" and was prepared to improve its offer "but was unwilling to do so because of the magnitude of other proposals still on the table that the guild continues to insist upon.'

The writers were well aware that a stoppage was likely. Yet the breakoff of contractual talks hours before a deadline that negotiations in previous years have sailed past for hours or even days, and the sudden reality of a strike, left some surprised, some worried, some deter-

'When I saw the refusals to counter and the refusing to even negotiate by the AMPTP, I was like on fire to get out here and stand up for what we deserve," Jonterri Gadson, a writer whose credits include "A Black Lady Sketch Show," said on a picket line at Amazon Studios as she held a sign that read, "I hate it here."

All of the top late-night shows, which are staffed by writers that pen monologues and jokes for their hosts, immediately went dark. NBC's "The Tonight Show," Comedy Central's "Daily Show," ABC's Jimmy Kimmel Live," CBS' "The Late Show" and NBC's "Late Night" all

made plans for reruns through the week.

NBC's "Saturday Night Live," which had been scheduled to air a new episode Saturday, will also go dark and air a rerun, and the two remaining episodes in the season are in jeopardy.

The strike's impact on scripted series and films will likely take longer to notice - though some shows, including Showtime's "Yellowjackets," have already paused production on forthcoming seasons.

If a strike persisted through the summer, fall TV schedules could be

Streaming has exploded the number of series and films that are annually made, meaning more jobs for writers. But writers say they've been made to make less under shifting and insecure conditions that the

upended. In the meantime, those with finished scripts are permitted to

ers were joined by more prominent peers like playwright and screenwriter Tony Kushner ("The Fabelmans") and "Dopesick" creator Dan-

Union members also picketed in New York, where less known writ-

Some actors including Rob Lowe joined the picket lines in support

in Los Angeles. Many striking writers, like Gad, are hybrids who com-

Speaking from his acting side, Gad said of his fellow writers, "We are nothing without their words. We have nothing without them. And

so it's imperative that we resolve this in a way that benefits the bril-

liance that comes out of each of these people."

The other side of his hyphenated role could be in the same space

soon, with many of the same issues at the center of negotiations for both the actors union SAG-AFTRA and the Directors Guild of Ameri-

continue shooting.

bine writing with other roles.

ca. Contracts for both expire in June.

ny Strong

WGA called "a gig economy inside a union workforce." The union is seeking more compensation for writers up front, because many of the payments writers have historically profited from on the back end - like syndication and international licensing - have been

largely phased out by the onset of streaming. Galuska said she is among the writers who have never seen those kind of once common benefits.

Variety



This image released by Polk & Co. shows the cast during a performance of 'Some Like It Hot.' (AP)

Stage

With songs by Marc Shaiman and Scott Wittman and

starring Christian Borle and J. Harrison Ghee, who all

got nominations, the show follows two musician friends

who disguise themselves as women and join an all-girl

band to flee Chicago after witnessing a mob hit. Like

the movie, there are men in dresses trying to pass as

women. But this time, the dress awakens something in

Ghee's character, akin to a transformation from a cater-

to create human-scaled characters going through some

under attack and its message of self-acceptance and

respect for all was echoed across Broadway, from a re-

The musical comes at a time when trans rights are

Three shows tie with 9 nominations each

and his wife of nearly 19 years, Christine Baumgartner, are divorcing, a representative for the actor said Tuesday.

Costner and Baumgartner, a model and handbag designer, began dating in 1998 before get-

They have two sons, ages 14 and 15, and a 12-year-old daughter

for Costner, 68, the Oscar and Emmy winning star of TV's "Dances With Wolves," "The Bodyguard" and "Bull Durham." Costner also has four adult

ships. (AP)

LOS ANGELES: Upon further review, this year's Super Bowl

Nielsen released a revised number of 115.1 million for Fox Sports' broadcast of the Kansas City Chiefs' 38-35 victory over the Philadelphia Eagles in Febru-

The previous record was the 2015 game between New England and Seattle at 114,442,000 viewers, not including streaming. It also supplanted the 2017 Super Bowl between Atlanta and New England (113,668,000) as the most-watched of Fox's 10 Super

Nielsen revised this year's original figure of 113.1 million by 2 million after a review that revealed encoding irregularities as well as issues with out-of-home measurement.

"I really appreciate their diligence in conducting the review and coming to the most correct number possible. Super Bowl Sunday is the most difficult day for them because you have not just the scale but people are watching on English and Spanish, in and out of home, online and all of that has to be stitched together into a credible number. I give them

LOS ANGELES: Kevin Costner

"It is with great sadness that circumstances beyond his control have transpired which have resulted in Mr Costner having to participate in a dissolution of marriage," Costner's publicist Arnold Robinson said in a statement.

together.

It was the second marriage "Yellowstone" and films including

ended up setting a viewer record.

Bowls.

credit for acknowledging the issue,

NEW YORK, May 3, (AP): "Some Like It Hot," a Broadway musical adaptation of the cross-dressing movie comedy that starred Tony Curtis and Jack Lemmon, waltzed away Tuesday with a leading 13 Tony Award nominations, putting the spotlight on a show that is a sweet, full-hearted embrace of trans rights.

ting married at his Colorado ranch

pillar to a butterfly. "The only thing we wanted to do was to be honest and we wanted to treat these characters with dignity. said Matthew López, who wrote the Tony-nominated book with Amber Ruffin and has a Tony already for the play "The Inheritance." "Sometimes the best way to treat a character with dignity is to let them be flawed children from previous relationand scared and funny and brave and human. So one of the things that was really, really important to us is just

vival of "Parade" to a Black actor-led "Death of a Salesman" to the new play "Ain't No Mo" and new musical "Kimberly Akimbo." "I think the pandemic put a lot of things in perspective, both in terms of improvements we needed to make in the community and also just the way that everybody's feeling about the world and about being a

extraordinary experiences.

human," said Ben Platt, nominated for "Parade," "The art people are making has a real urgency and a real purpose. Three shows tied with nine nominations each: "& Juliet," which reimagines "Romeo and Juliet" and adds some of the biggest pop hits of the past few decades, "New York, New York," which combined two gen-

erations of Broadway royalty in John Kander and Lin-

Manuel Miranda, and "Shucked," a surprise lightweight

'Some Like It Hot' leads Tony Award noms

musical comedy studded with corn puns. Betsy Wolfe, in her eighth Broadway show, earned her first nomination in "& Juliet," playing Anne Hathaway, Shakespeare's wife. The actor had just dropped her daughter, almost 3, off at ballet class on Tuesday morning. "I hope she addresses me properly now when I see her," she joked.

In the musical, playwright David West Read took an original story using "Romeo and Juliet" as a launch pad and mixed in hits by Swedish super-producer Max Martin, including Brittney Spears' "Oops! ... I Did It Again," Katy Perry's "Roar" and Bon Jovi's "It's My Life." The musical imagines a happier ending for Juliet after a journey of self-discovery.

"It's a beautiful story about second chances, which honestly is what we're all going through right now,' said Wolfe. "We've all been given a second chance after this time we've all been through. And so to have a musical that allows us all to celebrate in each individual way that we need to celebrate is really, really special and timely.

Musical

The critical musical darling "Kimberly Akimbo," with Victoria Clark playing a teen who ages four times faster than the average human, rounds out the best musical category, and earned a total of eight nominations.

Clark, who was nominated for best lead actress in a musical, hopes to add a second Tony to her trophy case, having previously won one in 2005 for "The Light in the Piazza." But more than that she hopes more attention will be paid to her show, which she calls a "little under the radar.'

"It's a special event that celebrates our collective humanity," she said. "It doesn't say life is perfect. The show doesn't say there aren't going to be strange and horrible people in your life. It doesn't say life is going to be easy. But it does say life is worthwhile. And I think that is a message that we need to get out there. Life is worth living.

In the best new play category, nods were distributed to Tom Stoppard's "Leopoldstadt," which explores Jewish identity with an intergenerational story, and "Fat Ham," James Ijames' Pulitzer Prize-winning adaptation

of Shakespeare's "Hamlet" set at a Black family's barbecue in the modern South.

The rest of the category is made up of "Ain't No Mo," the short-lived but critical applauded work by playwright and actor Jordan E. Cooper, Stephen Adly Guirgis Pulitzer Prize-winning play "Between Riverside and Crazy" and "Cost of Living," parallel stories of two caretakers and their respective patients.

"Ain't No Mo," which earned six nominations, be-

gins with the United States government emailing every Black citizen with the offer of a free plane ticket to Africa, and each scene explores how various personalities respond to the offer.

Cooper learned he's been nominated twice - as best playwright and as lead actor - while visiting his childhood home in Texas. He and his family learned of his triumph in the living room where, as a 6-year-old, he put on his first plays.

"It is a little bittersweet," Cooper said. "We only got a chance to do about like 60 performances and this cast and this creative team were like some of the most talented you've ever seen. It was unfortunate that people don't get a chance to experience it because we really felt like it was something special. Audiences felt like it was something special. And it's just so beautiful to know that the work that we put in - that blood, that sweat and tears - are not in vain.

"Parade," a doomed musical love story set against the real backdrop of a murder and lynching in Georgia in pre-World War I, earned six nods, including for Platt, hoping to win a second Tony after his triumph in 2017 with "Dear Evan Hansen," and rising star and first-time

nominee Micaela Diamond. Jessica Chastain, an Oscar-winner for "The Eyes of Tammy Faye," got her first Tony nomination for a stripped down version of "A Doll's House" and Wendell Pierce, who won a Tony for producing "Clybourne Park," earned his first nomination as an actor on Broadway for a blistering revival of "Death of a

Salesman.' When Pierce heard the news, he wept. The actor, best known for his role as Bunk on the HBO drama "The

Continued on Page 12

being transparent about it and get to the most correct number they can get to," said Fox Sports Executive Vice President Michael Mulvihill, who is head of strategy and analytics.

The review was initially triggered when NFL Network was credited with over 1 million viewers during the game at a time when



Baumgartner

their usual number is 80,000. A second review found errors with out-of-home measurement. (AP)

DES MOINES, Iowa: Patch, sporting a jean jacket as she strutted down the runway, was crowned the winner of Drake University's Beautiful Bulldog Contest.

The 2-year-old English bulldog beat out 28 other contestants from six states to win the top prize. The bulldog is Drake's mascot and the contest kicks off the Drake Relays track and field competition happening later this week. Events will take place at the university's stadium just west of downtown Des Moines.

Patch's entry seemed to get a boost when she carefully ambled through a hoop on the runway, bringing cheers from a crowd of spectators. Her owners, Jennifer Hinton and Joel Kornder of Johnston, Iowa, said they had worked on the hoop routine for months ahead of the competition.

People & Places

Stage

'KPOP' earns 3 nods

Chastain receives her first Tony nomination

Continued from Page 11

Wire," said his emotions were "the culmination of years of work that can have an impact on people." He added: "Getting that recognition from your colleagues, I did not know how profoundly moving it would be. And I burst into tears. But they were tears of joy.'

Pierce will face-off against both stars of Suzan-Lori Parks' "Topdog/Underdog" - Yahya Abdul-Mateen II and Corey Hawkins - as well as former "Will & Grace" star Sean Hayes from "Good Night, Oscar," and Stephen McKinley Henderson, who earned his second nomination for "Between Riverside and Crazy," having gotten one in 2019 for "Fences."



DeBose

her Broadway debut - although her play, "Prima Facie," did not get a best new play nod - and Audra McDonald, who has won six Tony Awards can extend her reign if she beats Comer as best leading actress in a play for "Ohio State Murders." The last slot in the category went to Jessica Hecht, staring in the play "Summer, 1976."

Jodie Comer, the three-time Emmy nominated star of "Killing Eve" earned a nomination in

Another show that closed quickly nevertheless picked up nominations - "KPOP," which put Korean pop music on Broadway for the first time. "KPOP" got three - including best original score. Andrew Lloyd Webber's frothy and widely panned

"Bad Cinderella" earned zero nods, as did "A Beautiful Noise, The Neil Diamond Musical," a stage biography of the singer-songwriter who has had dozens of top-40 hits. Hollywood's Oscar Isaac and Rachel Brosnahan in "The Sign in Sidney Brustein's Window" were left off the list of nominees, but Samuel L. Jackson earned his first Tony nod for "August Wilson's The Piano Lesson.

Two well-received revivals from the late Stephen Sondheim - "Sweeney Todd" with Annaleigh Ashford and Josh Groban, and a star-studded "Into the Woods," were recognized. "Sweeney Todd" received eight nominations including for Groban and Ashford, and "Into the Woods" earned six, including for Brian d'Arcy James and Grammy Award-winning Sara Bareilles, her third Tony nomination.

"Almost Famous," the stage adaptation of Cameron Crowe's autobiographical coming-of-age story, earned just one nomination - for music by Tom Kitt and lyrics by Crowe and Kitt. And choreographer Jennifer Weber had two reasons to smile Tuesday: Weber earned nominations for "& Juliet" and "KPOP," her first Broadway

Among the haul for "Some Like It Hot" was a nomination for Ghee for best actor in a musical. Ghee and Alex Newell, who got a best supporting actor nod for "Shucked," both became the first nonbinary actors nominated for a Tony. (Last year, composer and writer Toby Marlow became the first out nonbinary nominee, going on to win for "Six.")

Ariana DeBose will host the June 11 awards celebration from New York City's United Palace theater live on CBS and on Paramount+. It is her second-straight stint as host.

Nominations

Select nominations for the 2023 Tony Awards, announced Tuesday.

- Best Musical: "& Juliet," "Kimberly Akimbo," "New York, New York," "Shucked," "Some Like It
- Best Play: "Ain't No Mo," "Between Riverside and □ Best Revival of a Play: "Fat Ham," "Leopoldstadt."

 ■ Best Revival of a Play: "August Wilson's The Piano Lesson," "A Doll's House," "The Sign in Sidney Brustein's Window," "Suzan-Lori Parks' Topdog/Underdog.
- Best Revival of a Musical: "Into the Woods," "Lerner & Loewe's Camelot," "Parade," Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street.'
- Best Performance by an Actor in a Leading Role in a Play: Yahya Abdul-Mateen II, "Suzan-Lori Parks' Topdog/Underdog;" Corey Hawkins, "Suzan-Lori Parks' Topdog/Underdog;" Sean Hayes, "Good Night, Oscar;" Stephen McKinley Henderson, "Between Riverside and Crazy;" Wendell Pierce, "Arthur Miller's Death of a Salesman."
- Best Performance by an Actress in a Leading Role in a Play: Jessica Chastain, "A Doll's House;" Jodie Comer, "Prima Facie;" Jessica Hecht, "Summer, 1976;" Audra McDonald, "Ohio State Murders."
- Best Performance by an Actor in a Leading Role in a Musical: Christian Borle, "Some Like It Hot;" J. Harrison Ghee, "Some Like It Hot;" Josh Groban, "Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street;" Brian d'Arcy James, "Into the Woods;" Ben Platt, "Parade;" Colton Ryan, "New York, New York."
- Best Performance by an Actress in a Leading Role in a Musical: Annaleigh Ashford, "Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street;" Sara Bareilles, "Into the Woods;" Victoria Clark, "Kimberly Akimbo;" Lorna Courtney, "& Juliet;" Micaela Diamond, "Parade."
- Best Performance by an Actress in a Featured Role in a Musical: Julia Lester, "Into the Woods;" Ruthie Ann Miles, "Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street;" Bonnie Milligan, "Kimberly Akimbo;" NaTasha Yvette Williams, "Some Like It Hot;" Betsy Wolfe, "& Juliet."
- Best Performance by an Actor in a Featured Role in a Musical: Kevin Cahoon, "Shucked;" Justin Cooley, "Kimberly Akimbo;" Kevin Del Aguila, "Some Like It Hot;" Jordan Donica, "Lerner & Loewe's Camelot;" Alex Newell, "Shucked."
- Best Performance by an Actress in a Featured Role in a Play: Nikki Ćrawford, "Fat Ham;" Crystal Lucas-Perry, "Ain't No Mo';" Miriam Silverman, "The Sign in Sidney Brustein's Window;" Katy Sullivan, "Cost of Living;" Kara Young, "Cost of Living."
- Best Performance by an Actor in a Featured Role in a Play: Jordan E. Cooper, "Ain't No Mo';" Samuel L. Jackson, "August Wilson's The Piano Lesson;" Arian Moayed, "A Doll's House;" Brandon Uranowitz, "Le-
- opoldstadt;" David Zayas, "Cost of Living."

 Best Direction of a Play: Saheem Ali, "Fat Ham;" Jo Bonney, "Cost of Living," Jamie Lloyd, "A Doll's House;" Patrick Marber, "Leopoldstadt;" Stevie Walk-
- er-Webb, "Ain't No Mo';" Max Webster, "Life of Pi."

 Best Direction of a Musical: Michael Arden, "Parade;" Lear deBessonet, "Into the Woods;" Casey Nicholaw, "Some Like It Hot;" Jack O'Brien, "Shucked;" Jessica Stone, "Kimberly Akimbo."
- Best Choreography: Steven Hoggett, "Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street;" Casey Nicholaw, "Some Like It Hot;" Susan Stroman, "New York, New York;" Jennifer Weber, "& Juliet;" Jennifer Weber, "KPOP."



Soprano Ailyn Pérez as Mimi, (left), and tenor Joshua Guerrero appear during the final dress rehearsal of a revival of Claus Guth's production of Puccini's 'La Bohème' at Paris' Opéra Bastille, on on April 29, 2023. (AP)



Alejandra Castro, a writer on Netflix's "Selena: The Series," holds a sign at a strike rally outside Warner Bros. Studios, May 2, in Burbank, Calif. The first Hollywood strike in 15 years began Tuesday as the economic pressures of the streaming era prompted unionized TV and film writers to picket for better pay outside maior studios. a work stoppage that already is leading most late-night shows to air reruns. (AP) — Details Page 11





GloRilla

Variety

MEMPHIS, Tenn: A shot was fired at a Memphis television station on Tuesday, but no one was wounded, the station said. The suspect then hid in a nearby business before he was arrested about two

hours later, police said. WHBQ, the Fox affiliate in Tennessee's second-largest city, reported that the shot was fired about 11:30 am. The bullet came down outside the front door of the lobby of the building, which is in a commercial area near the University of Memphis campus.

Police said the armed suspect went into a nearby hamburger restaurant, and authorities advised the public to stay out of the area. The university and Memphis police said about two hours later that the suspect had been taken into custody. No injuries were reported, Memphis police

The university issued an advisory telling students and faculty to shelter indoors. It later said that normal campus activity could resume.

The station said employees were evacuated to a parking lot for about 30 minutes after the shot was fired, while police secured the area.

"We are all back inside the building now and are still safe," the station said in a news story posted on its website. The suspect first approached a station

employee outside of the gate wanting to talk, the station said. The suspect then showed the employee that he had a gun. Police did not release any immediate information about the suspect.

Memphis Police Department Deputy Chief Stephen Chandler told reporters that it was not clear if the shot was fired intentionally or by accident. He said the shot was fired with an "AR-style rifle" and the bullet hit glass and a desk. An apartment complex and businesses

near the station were evacuated. Chandler said crisis negotiators spoke with the suspect while he was inside the restaurant and helped take him into custody "He wanted to meet with media. He

had a message to send out," said Chan-

Opera

Pre-premiere show receives standing ovations

'La Bohème' in space returns to Paris

NEW YORK, May 3, (AP): Claus Guth was pleased with initial reaction to his outer space version of Puccini's "La Bohème" at a special pre-premiere show limited to people under age 28.

"They were extremely euphoric," he said. "It was an amazing performance with standing ovations.

Three nights later at the official opening of the Paris Opéra's first new "Bohème" in 22 years, a highprofile occasion featuring conductor Gustavo Dudamel's formal company debut, the response was far different.

"The real premiere was bizarre because some people freaked out so early that Dudamel had to stop conducting once because there was just

too much booing," Guth recalled. That uproar on Dec. 1, 2017, weighed on the German director's mind when he arrived at the Bastille Opéra last week to supervise the first revival of his staging, which opened Tuesday night for a run of 12 performances through June 4.

Soprano Ailyn Pérez takes over as the terminally ill seamstress Mimì, tenor Joshua Guerrero is the poet Rodolfo and Michele Mariotti will be in the pit. Posters of the moonscape set used in the final two acts have been plastered throughout the Paris Métro for months.

Puccini set the first and fourth acts in a Parisian garret, the second at the Latin Quarter's Café Momus and the third at Paris' Barrière d'Enfe, beginning the drama on Christmas Eve 1837 and ending it months later.

Guth envisions the action unfolding across an unspecified future, perhaps 50 years from now or possibly 1,000.

Set designer Étienne Pluss, taking inspiration from Stanley Kubrick's "2001: A Space Odyssey, " created a doomed spaceship on a raked stage for the first two acts and a bleak planet for the final two - substituting ashes for snow in Act 3. He estimated nearly 200 LED and neon lights were used. This was his first project with

'When I thought two times about this and I listened once again to the opera, I really thought it was what Puccini could have dreamed to imagine, because he's speaking already about this in his music," Pluss said.

Indelible images of inconsolable isolation were created by Pluss, Eva Dessecker (costumes), Fabrice Kebour (lighting), Teresa Rotemberg (choreography) and Arian Andiel (video). Men in space suits amble in low-gravity gaits and nap in sleep pods, mixed in among a hallucinatory spectacle: a boy with large red balloon, an illuminated yellow Chinese dragon, acrobats, juggling waiters and a stiltwalker.

Mission

Mimì wears a red dress and Musetta emerges from a shiny curtain to sing her waltz while hugging a stripper pole, twirling a feather boa and peeling off a dressing gown and long gloves, as if in a Paris nightclub. A body double dancer hangs outside a window in an extravehicular repair mission.

Supertitles tell the audience they are viewing Day 126 of a mission: "Expedition in danger - off course - engines inoperative - life-support resources almost exhausted." The landlord, Benoit, is dead before the opening note and his lines reassigned. By Day 159, the musician Schaunard and philosopher Colline have expired, too. There are doppelgängers and an invented white-faced mime Rodolfo imagines, sort of a herald of death.

These are all apparitions of Rodolfo's distant youth. As he approaches his end, Mimì's spirit lives.

"I think for the newcomer this will be tricky to figure out," Pérez said. "He's outlining the solitude, the despondency of being alone - really, really alone. It kind of allows the audience to see physically something happening beyond the music. And it

leads an audience to sort of go with the story and use their own imagina-

Stéphane Lissner, preparing to start his term as Paris Opéra director, hired Guth for the project about a decade

"I told Lissner I love this piece, but I hate this stupid cliches about artists, which were probably never true and are not true now," Guth said. "The realistic story is just an occasion Puccini uses to create this music.'

He read the 1851 book "Scènes de la vie de bohème (Scenes of Bohemian Life)" by Henri Murger, much originally published in the magazine Le Corsaire and adapted into a play, 'La Vie de la bohème" by Murger and Théodore Barrière. With librettists Luigi Illica and Giuseppe Giacosa, Puccini turned the story into an opera that premiered in 1896.

"It is actually the story of two old men sitting in the countryside at the end of their lives and looking back at their crazy, wild lives in Paris a long time ago. And so this combination gave me the idea, OK, let's go one step further: Where could this longing or this remembering better times how to get that more extreme?" Guth

"And so it entered at some point in combination of this storyline and the music this idea to say maybe Paris or the Earth doesn't exist anymore because we ruined it and now I have people somewhere out in space that on a realistic level have a problem on their ship and are close to dying. So what do you do when your time is limited? You try to think of the precious moments.'

His production, preserved in a video recording of the Dec. 12, 2017, performance, is among the boldest reconceptions since Dorris Dörrie's 2005 staging of Verdi's "Rigoletto" at Munich's Bavarian State Opera was set on the Planet of the Apes.

Sonya Yoncheva retains vivid memories after singing Mimì at Guth's production premiere.

dler, without providing details about what the suspect wanted to say. (AP)

LOS ANGELES: A deadly stampede that

killed three at a rap concert in upstate New York was likely exacerbated by a

crowd of people trying to get into the venue just as thousands of concertgoers who were inside were trying to exit, according to a report released Tuesday by public safety officials.

The crowd surge erupted at GloRilla's March 5 show, held in a decommissioned



Kenny Loggins performs at the 2023 New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival on April 30, 2023, at the Fair Grounds Race Course in New Orleans. (AP)

armory in Rochester.

Concertgoers told investigators that people panicked after hearing noises that sounded like gunfire. The investigation turned up no physical or video evidence, nor eyewitness accounts of gunshots, leaving the cause of the stampede unexplained.

But the report, released by Rochester police, described a chaotic situation at the Rochester Main Street Armory in the final minutes of the show.

With about 20 minutes remaining before the concert's end, as many as 200 fans were still outside the venue, trying to get inside. Some people said they had VIP tickets. Eventually, almost the whole crowd was able to "overtake security" and get inside the building foyer, police said.

"Security attempted to create a stronghold on the inner, wooden doors, to maintain this crowd in the entryway,' the police report said. As the concert concluded at around 11 pm, thousands of people trying to exit met the crowd trying to get in, the police report said. "This 'traffic jam' is one of the likely contributing factors to the stampede as people still within the main concert hall began to push toward the front doors."

The findings were made public a day after city officials announced that investigators had found no basis for criminal charges related to the disaster. (AP)

Climate

Bye-bye blue flame?

Climate talks see push for renewables target

BERLIN, May 3, (AP): Germany called Tuesday for governments around the world to work on setting an ambitious target for renewable energy that would "ring in the end of the fossil fuel age" and help prevent dangerous global warming.

Speaking at the start of a two-day meeting in Berlin attended by dozens of top climate envoys, German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock said the world needs to sharply cut greenhouse gas emissions to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit).

"But we also know that not all countries are prepared to do so," she said. "That is why I want to open the debate (...) on whether we should and can reach a target on renewables at the next climate conference."

Baerbock's proposal flips the script on a previous push to set a deadline for phasing out all fossil fuels, which faced stiff re-



sistance from major oil and gas exporting nations. They instead back the idea of capturing planet-warming emissions as a way to reducing greenhouse gas in the atmosphere. Experts say such technologies, known as carbon capture and storage, are aren't proven at scale and could require huge investments at the expense of cheaper alternatives such as solar and wind power.

Addressing officials from about 40

Kerry countries attending the annual Petersberg Climate Dialogue in the German capital, Baerbock said that renewables such as solar and wind power are already the most cost-effective form of generating energy in most places around the

"Our goal for the (climate conference) in Dubai must be to ring in the end of the fossil fuel age," she said.

Summit

The idea received a cool response from the United Arab Emirates, which is hosting this year's UN climate summit.

"In a pragmatic, just and well-managed energy transition, we must be laser-focused on phasing out fossil fuel emissions, while phasing up and scaling up viable, affordable zero-carbon alternatives," said Sultan al-Jaber, a minister and oil company executive who is set to preside over the Nov. 30-Dec. 12 climate summit. He placed particular emphasis on the word "emissions" as he spoke.

"We know that the energies used today will continue to be part of the global energy mix for the foreseeable future," he added. "As such, we will work with the world to decarbonize the current energy system while we build a new one, capable of transitioning even the most heavy-emitting industries."

The UAE has invested heavily in renewable energy. Along with serving as CEO of the Abu Dhabi National Oil Co., al-Jaber is chairman of state-owned renewable energy company Masdar, which is building wind and solar parks around the world.

US climate envoy **John Kerry** has described al-Jaber as "a terrific choice" to chair the COP28 summit, noting his commitment to reduce emissions. Environmental campaigners are more critical, however, pointing out that the Abu Dhabi National Oil Co. is expanding production, helping make the UAE one of the world's top 10 oil producers.

LIN Secretary General Antonio Guterres has called for an

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has called for an end to all fossil fuel use, which is blamed for the majority of global warming that has occurred since the start of the industrial era, warning that otherwise the goal of limiting temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 Fahrenheit) may be missed. But so far only coal has been put on notice, with a commitment by nations two years ago to "phase down" its use.

Environmental campaigners say solutions also need to be found for millions of workers in the coal, oil and gas industry if it is to be wound down successfully, as well as alternative sources of energy for billions of people around the world who still rely on cheap fossil fuels.

"What we need to see coming out of COP28 is not just about fossil fuel phaseout, but equitable phaseout of fossil fuels," said Harjeet Singh, head of global political strategy at Climate Action Network International.

Action Network International.

Baerbock said a pledge for rich nations to provide \$100 billion annually to poor countries by 2020 will meet its target for the first time this year.

A separate fund to help nations hit by climate disasters, agreed at last year's climate talks in Egypt, is still being set up. US climate envoy John Kerry has said the total amount needed to help all countries make the economic transition to a green economy will run into the trillions of dollars. Experts say that in addition to aid, large sums will need to come from the private sector. Other sources such as carbon taxes on air and sea travel have also been floated.

Also

NEW YORK: New York state is banning natural gas stoves and furnaces in most new buildings, a policy that's part of a national movement aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions

The law negotiated by Gov. **Kathy Hochul** and her fellow Democrats in the Legislature is part of the state budget and puts New York in the forefront of states targeting emissions from buildings. When the phase-in starts in 2026, newly constructed buildings will have to forego fossil fuel equipment in favor of devices like induction ranges and heat pumps that run on electricity.

The state mandate applies only to new construction and does not affect existing buildings.
"I want to be very clear. I know people love to misinterpret

"I want to be very clear. I know people love to misinterpret this, but people with existing gas stoves, you're welcome to keep them," Hochul told reporters Tuesday, before lawmakers began voting on the budget.

"This is where our nation has to go eventually," she said "But I want to make sure that it's not a bumpy road to the transition"

The budget bill with the ban was approved by lawmakers Tuesday night. Other budget bills still needed to be considered.

Government efforts to wean society off of fossil fuel-burning equipment - especially gas stoves - have been slammed by Republican officials and other opponents as heavy-handed infringements on consumer choice. But environmentalists say climate goals can't be reached without addressing homes and businesses.

The new construction mandate avoids - at least for now - the more politically fraught issue of replacing existing fossil fuel equipment. But critics say it will add costs to new construction and put more strain on the electrical grid, while still limiting options for buyers of newly constructed homes.

"Why shouldn't people have a choice on how to heat their home?" asked Republican Assemblyman **Phil Palmesano**.

The measure will prohibit the installation of fossil-fuel equipment in new buildings, starting in 2026 for structures of seven stories or less. The ban for larger buildings starts in 2029

There are number of exemptions, such as for emergency backup power and for commercial food establishments, laboratories and car washes.

Advocates say New York is the first state in the nation to adopt such a law. Though **Washington** state recently approved codes that will require the installation of heat pumps in most buildings.

Also, more than 80 local governments in the United States have approved all-electric new construction requirements, with many of them municipalities in **California**, according to the Building Decarbonization Coalition.

New York City begins phasing in its rules for all-electric new construction next year.

The focus on new construction - instead of existing buildings - is seen as a logical first step to meet broader emissions reduction goals. New York's long-term emissions goals include a 40% reduction by 2030 and an 85% reduction by 2050, compared to 1990 levels.



Visitors watch flowing data sculptures at the exhibition 'Refik Anadol. Machine Hallucinations' at the Kunstpalast art museum in Duesseldorf, Germany, Tuesday, May 2. Turkish artist Refik Anadol used a machine learning framework to let Artificial Intelligence use two million images captured and recorded by the International Space Station (ISS) and Hubble space telescopes as well as the Magdalena Ridge Observatory (MRO) to create artwork where invisible data becomes visible to the human eye, offering a new narrative of the digitalised world. (AP)



In this March 1, 2010 file photo, from the US Fish and Wildlife Service, a bi-state sage grouse, (rear), struts for a female at a lek, or mating ground, near Bridgeport, Calif. For the third time since it first proposed listing the bi-state sage grouse as a threatened species in 2013, US wildlife officials are considering again whether the bird found only along the California-Nevada line deserves protection under the Endangered Species Act. (AP)





Mullen

Albanese

Discovery

Explorers find WWII ship: A team of explorers announced it found a sunken Japanese ship that was transporting Allied prisoners of war when it was torpedoed off the coast of the Philippines in 1942, resulting in Australia's largest maritime wartime loss with a total of 1,080 lives.

The wreck of the Montevideo Maru was located after a 12-day search at a depth of over 4000 meter (13,120 feet) — deeper than the Titanic — off Luzon island in the South China Sea, using an autonomous underwater vehicle with inbuilt sonar.

There will be no efforts to remove artifacts or human remains out of respect for the families of those who died, said a statement Saturday from the Sydney-based Silentworld Foundation, a not-for-profit dedicated to maritime archaeology and history. It took part in the mission together with Dutch deep-sea survey specialists Fugro and Australia's Defense Department.

"The extraordinary effort behind this

"The extraordinary effort behind this discovery speaks for the enduring truth of Australia's solemn national promise to always remember and honour those who served our country," Australian Prime Minister **Anthony Albanese** said. "This is the heart and the spirit of Lest We Forget."

get."

The Montevideo Maru was transporting prisoners and civilians who were captured after the fall of Rabaul in Papua New Guinea. The ship was not marked as carrying POWs, and on July 1, 1942, the American submarine Sturgeon, after stalking the ship through the night, fired four torpedoes, which found their target, sinking the vessel in less than 10 minutes.

Those killed included 1,080 people from 14 nations, including 979 Austral-

ians.

"Families waited years for news of their missing loved ones, before learning of the tragic outcome of the sinking," said Silentworld director **John Mullen**. "Some never fully came to accept that their loved ones were among the victims. Today, by finding the vessel, we hope to bring closure to the many families devastated by this terrible disaster." (AP)

Bird protection sought: For the third time in a decade, federal wildlife officials are contemplating whether the bi-state sage grouse deserves protection under the

Endangered Species Act.

Conservationists blame "political gamesmanship" for leaving the bird in regulatory limbo since 2013. The US

The Conversation

Cancer's evolution drives drug resistance

Different cancers need different care

By Joshua Warrick, David DeGraff and Monika Joshi

Penn State

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

Cancer is an evolutionary disease. The same forces that turned dinosaurs into birds turn normal cells into cancer: genetic mutations and traits that confer a survival advantage.

cancer: genetic mutations and traits that confer a survival advantage.

Evolution in animals is largely driven by mutations in the DNA of germ cells - the sperm and egg that fuse to form an embryo. These mutations may confer traits that differ from those of the offspring's parents such as larger paws, sharper teeth or lighter hair color. If the change is beneficial, like a mutation that lightens the hair of a rabbit living in a snowy climate, the animal is better able to survive, mate and pass on its mutated gene to the next generation. Such changes accumulate over millions of years, eventually turning, for example, dinosaurs into bluebirds.

Cancer arises by these same evolutionary pressures, but at the level of individual cells within a person's body. Instead of animals fighting for survival in a harsh environment, cells compete for space and nutrients. Because different organs are composed of different kinds of cells, cancers arising from different organs differ from one another in appearance and behavior and in how well they respond to treatment.

We are a team of oncologists, pathologists and translational scientists who work together to study how cancers evolve. We believe that understanding evolution is key to understanding how cancer arises and how to treat it.

Human cells are normally in a constant state of death and renewal. Old cells die and are replaced by new ones. These phases of death and renewal are usually orderly, with cells cooperating in a complex process that provides them with proper nutrition and replaces them at a constant rate, maximizing the overall function of the organ they make up.

Mutations disrupt this orderly process. Changes to the cell's DNA alter the proteins that comprise the cell's structure and govern its behavior, sometimes in ways that lead it to duplicate itself faster than its neighbors, resist normal death signals and sequester nutrients for itself.

The immune system attacks and

kills mutant cells in most cases. However, if one survives and duplicates itself many times over, it can form a tumor made of multiple mutant cells. These tumor cells continue to reproduce and mutate, evolving until the tumor ultimately gains the ability to spread throughout the body.

Cancer detected at the earliest stages of this evolution can be treated more effectively than cancer at more advanced stages. This observation underlies the effectiveness of cancer screening programs in reducing cancer rates.

Ing programs in reducing cancer rates.

For example, colon cancer begins as a polyp, a small tumor on the interior surface of the colon that is harmless on its own but may eventually evolve and gain the ability to invade the colon wall and spread throughout the body. Precancerous polyps are easily removed during colonoscopy screenings, preventing them from evolving to invasive colon cancer.

In general, cancers from different organs look distinct from one another and contain different proteins. This leads to variations in how they behave.

Functions

Under the microscope, cancer looks like a distorted and disorganized version of the normal tissue from which it arose. Cancer cells tend to contain the same set of proteins as those in healthy organs, and likewise continue to perform many of the same functions. For example, prostate cancer contains large amounts of androgen receptors, proteins that bind to testosterone and drives cells to grow and survive. Androgen receptors both enable normal prostate function and drive growth of prostate cancer.

Tumors arising in a given organ also tend to have mutations in the same set of genes, even among different patients. For example, around half of patients with melanoma, an aggressive type of skin cancer, have a mutation in the BRAF gene that enhances cell growth and survival. In contrast, BRAF mutations are rare in lung cancer.

Cancers also differ in the number of mutations they contain, and this number is strongly associated with the organ from which they arise. The prevalence of mutations is also influenced by mutations in genes that control DNA repair. For example, thyroid cancers typically have a low number of mutations while colon cancers have many mutations, a number that is increased dramatically in tumors that have lost

genes involved in DNA repair.

Because of these substantial differences in proteins and mutations, tumors from different organs respond

differently to treatment. For example, the majority of patients with testicular cancer can be cured with traditional chemotherapy combined with surgery. However, thyroid cancer and melanoma respond minimally to chemotherapy and require different approaches. Radioactive iodine can only be used to treat thyroid cancer because only thyroid cells take up iodine as part of their usual function.

Tumors that contain a large number of mutations often respond well to immunotherapies that help the patient's immune system attack cancer cells. This is because the immune system sees tumors with more mutations as more foreign and thus mounts a greater response against them. For example, melanoma and bladder and lung cancers respond well to immunotherapy, particularly those that have lost DNA repair function. In contrast, prostate cancer, which often harbors a low number of mutations, has typically responded poorly to immunotherapies.

Treatment can also push cancer to evolve further, gaining advantageous mutations that help them survive and resist therapy.

For example, a subset of lung cancers is driven by mutation in a gene called EGFR. These are treated with a group of drugs that block the protein the mutant EGFR gene encodes for, slowing the cancer's growth. Lung cancers treated with these drugs often develop a new EGFR mutation called T790M that confers resistance to most EGFR inhibitors. However, researchers have developed another drug that inhibits proteins with T790M and other EGFR mutations more broadly, improving survival for patients with these types of lung cancers.

Similarly, metastatic prostate cancer is often treated with drugs that block androgen receptors, because it depends on them for growth and survival. Over time, the tumors evolve in response to these drugs and develop mutations that change the androgen receptor, massively increase the amount of androgen receptor they produce or, in some cases, completely change their appearance and protein content so they no longer rely on androgen receptors to survive. In these instances, patients require different therapies to overcome resistance. (AP)

Fish and Wildlife Service said it's doing a fresh review after a federal judge ruled last May that the Trump administra-

tion acted illegally when it withdrew the most recent proposal to list the species as threatened.



Wind turbines turn behind a solar farm in Rapshagen, Germany, Oct. 28, 2021. Germany has called for governments around the world to work on setting an ambitious target for renewable energy that would 'ring in the end of the fossil fuel age' and help prevent dangerous global warming. (AP)

found in just two states — Nevada and California — in the high desert along the Sierra Nevada's eastern front. A formal listing could bring restrictions on development, as well as prevent livestock and off-road vehicles from entering the bird's habitat.

"Maybe the third time will be the

The hen-sized flightless bird can be

"Maybe the third time will be the charm for getting this population segment the protection it so clearly deserves," said Laura Cunningham, California director of the Western Watersheds Project.

the Western Watersheds Project.

"None of the science shows that the bi-state birds have benefited from the service's dithering," she said.

The population is down to some 3,300 birds, about half what it was 150 years ago, and conservationists say they likely suffered additional losses as a result of one of the snowiest Sierra winters in modern history.

The bi-state grouse is a cousin of the

greater sage grouse found across 12 western states from Oregon to South Dakota. Threats to its survival include urbanization, livestock grazing, wildfires, climate change and ravens who eat their eggs.

The Fish and Wildlife Service is accepting public comment through June 23 and intends to make a new listing determination by May 2024. (AP)

DeNA Baystars beat Hiroshima Carp before record crowd

Bauer picks up victory in debut with Yokohama

YOKOHAMA, Japan, May 3, (AP): After cheerleaders welcomed him, after receiving the largest ovation of any Yokohama player at the start of the game, Trevor Bauer delivered what was expected on Wednesday in his debut with the Yokohama DeNA Baystars.

Bauer pitched his first official game in just over 22 months after the Los Angeles Dodgers released him earlier this year following claims of sexual assault and domestic violence

Bauer, scattered seven hits in 7 innings, allowed one run, struck out 9 and threw 98 pitches in a 4-1 victory against the Ĥiroshima Carp before 33,202, which the team said was a re-

The highlight might have been Bauer's batting.

Pitchers still bat in Japan's Central League, where the DH is not used. Bauer grounded out once and put down a perfect sacrifice bunt in the fifth, which led to Yokohama's goahead run. He also struck out.

The only blemish was a a basesempty home run in the second to fellow American Matt Davidson, who played with Bauer with the Cincinnati Reds in 2020.

BASEBALL

"My ex-teammate got me," Bauer said. "I don't know how far it went. I talked to him before his next at-bat and I said: 'Why do you have to do that to

Bauer's first game has been long awaited in Yokohama, which has not won the Japanese season championship since 1998. Bauer is expected to deliver with the team now leading the Central League.

Osaka club Orix leads the Pacific

"I felt great," Bauer said. "I just felt normal, the body felt good: command, velocity, results. All good. It was a

He even tried a few words of Japanese, addressing the fans after the game. Roughly translated he said: "I win in Yokohama."

Fans applauded and understood immediately. He said teammates were teaching him.

"I have to make sure they're not telling me to say something wrong,'

Bauer was asked by Japanese reporters what he was thinking about just

Rays 'down' Pirates in

before the game. His reply suggested he was feeling some pressure.

"My nose started bleeding," he said. "That's what was on my mind coming

to the field." Yokohama signed Bauer for a reported \$4 million, and he also gets millions more in termination pay from the

Billboards all over town announced his arrival, including a seven-story poster that went up Wednesday on the side of a Yokohama department store.



Yokohama DeNA BayStars pitcher Trevor Bauer delivers a pitch against Hiroshima Carp during a baseball game in Yokohama, near Tokyo. (AP)

PSG suspend Messi for unapproved trip

Openda scores again, Lens push for CL spot

TOULOUSE, France, May 3, (AP): Loïs Openda continued his scoring spree as Lens beat Toulouse 1-0 on Tuesday to keep the pressure on second-place Marseille in the race for automatic Champions League qualifi-

Third-place Lens trails Marseille by one point and can overtake the southern team when they play on Saturday.

SOCCER

Openda, who scored twice in a 3-0 win over Monaco in the last round, brought his season tally up to 18 goals when he found the net in the 33rd minute after Massadio Haïdara's cross.

The 23-year-old Belgium forward has scored six goals in his past six league games.

Toulouse couldn't maintain its momentum from winning the French Cup on Saturday night, when it routed Nantes 5-1. Toulouse is in 13th place and is nine points clear of the relega-

Change Name

No. Z5184717 (write full name as per

present passport) do hereby change

name) MITHIYA (as Surname) for all

purposes. I will henceforth be known

in the name SAKINA MITHIYA

(write full name as changed now)

and I also undertake to carry out

this name change in all my documents.

Driving license

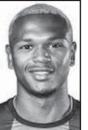
Transferable residency

my name to SAKINA (as Given

I, SAKINA holder of Passport

Paris Saint-German leads Marseille by five points.

Lionel Messi was suspended by Paris Saint-Germain for taking a trip to Saudi Arabia without the



club's permission, a person with knowledge of the situation told The Associated Press on Tuesday. person

would not specify the length of the suspension,

though French media reported it to be two weeks. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to publicly discuss the matter

A two-week suspension would mean Messi would miss PSG's next two games. L'Equipe and RMC Sport both reported the suspension without

The person told the AP that the World Cup champion won't be allowed to train or play with the team and won't be paid during his suspen-

PSG had denied Messi's request to make the trip, the person said.

The 35-year-old Messi has a commercial contract with Saudi Arabia to promote tourism in the Middle Eastern

The suspension comes at a delicate time as the French club had hoped to extend the Argentine star's contract beyond this season.

Messi's trip followed PSG's surprise 3-1 loss to Lorient on Sunday, leaving the defending champions with a five-point lead over Marseille with five games left in the season. Messi played the full game.

L'Equipe had reported that PSG coach Christophe Galtier pledged to give his players two days off - Monday and Tuesday - if they beat Lorient. Instead, the team trained on Monday and

Gracia fired

Leeds hire Allardyce as manager

of the season after the relegation-threatened club fired

manager Javi Gracia.

team in the Premier League.

SOCCER

and after winning only three

Leeds lost five of its seven games in April and conceded 23 goals in that period - the most allowed in a single month in Premier League history. Gracia's last game proved to be the 4-1 loss at Bournemouth on Sunday. The team is in fourth-to-

last place in the standings, only out of the relegation zone on goal difference with four games remaining.

earn more than 3 million pounds (\$3.75 million) if he keeps Leeds in the Premier League. It is his ninth managerial job in the top division and the sixth time he has been hired during a season, both of which are

gle that runs through your veins when you take over a football club," Allardyce said in an interview with British radio station talk-SPORT, which was given before his appointment was officially announced.

'medalist' Bowie dies

WASHINGTON, May 3, (AP): Tori Bowie, the sprinter who won three Olympic medals at the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Games, has died. She was 32.

Bowie's death was announced Wednesday by her management company and USA Track and Field. No cause of

Bowie, a three-time Olympic medalist and two-time world champion," USA Track and Field CEO Max Siegel said in a statement. "A talented athlete, her impact on the sport is immeasurable, and she will be greatly missed,"

Growing up in Sandhill, Mississippi, Bowie was coaxed into track as a teenager and quickly rose up the ranks as a sprinter and long jumper. She attended Southern Mississippi, where she swept the long jump NCAA championships at the indoor and outdoor events in 2011.

Rio Olympics, where she won silver in the 100 and bronze in the 200. She then ran the anchor leg on a 4x100team with Tianna Bartoletta, Allyson Felix and English

Gardner to take gold. championships in London. She also helped the 4x100 matchup of top teams

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla., May 3, (AP): Harold Ramírez homered and drove in two runs to lead the Tampa Bay Rays over the Pittsburgh Pirates 4-1 on Tuesday night in a matchup of teams with the top two records in the major leagues.

Ramírez drove in the game's first run with an RBI single in the fourth and boosted the lead to 4-1 with a solo homer in the sixth against Roansy Contreras (3-2). Contreras allowed four runs and six hits in 5 1/3 innings.

Tampa Bay left-hander Josh Fleming left in the fifth after taking Ke'Bryan Hayes' hard-hit single off his left foot. The Rays said initial images didn't show a fracture.

Orioles 11, Royals 7

In Kansas City, Ryan Mountcastle hit two-run homers in consecutive innings and finished with five RBIs, Adley Rutschman had four hits and drove in a run, and the streaking Baltimore earned its 16th win in the last

Tyler Wells (2-1) allowed three hits over six innings but they were all homers: Bobby Witt Jr.'s leadoff rocket, a two-run homer by MJ Melendez and a solo shot by Salvador Perez. Wells also walked three and struck out four.

Ryan Yarbrough (0-4) matched a Royals record by striking out the first five Baltimore batters, including Mountcastle, before things fell apart in the fourth. The power-hitting first baseman followed a double by Rutschman with his first two-run homer, and Yarbrough was pulled after 3 2/3 innings as the Orioles batted through the lineup and scored five times.

Braves 6, Marlins 0

In Miami, Bryce Elder outpitched NL Cy Young Award winner Sandy Alcantara by throwing seven innings of three-hit ball and Atlanta shut out

Ozzie Albies homered and doubled. while Ronald Acuña Jr. doubled, drove in a run and stole his NL-leading 14th base for the Braves. Elder (3-0) struck out six and induced 10 groundouts in his longest start of the season.

Alcantara (1-3) has a 7.40 ERA and lost three of his four starts since throwing a complete game shutout against Minnesota on April 4.

Rockies 3, Brewers 2

In Denver, Elías Díaz homered and drove in the go-ahead run with an eighth-inning single, and Colorado has won its last two home games after dropping seven straight at Coors Field. Rookie shortstop Ezequiel Tovar

hit his first major league home run for Colorado. C.J. Cron led off the eighth with a double off Peter Strzelecki (2-1), and

Díaz singled to bring home pinch-runner Yonathan Daza. Justin Lawrence (1-1) worked a scoreless eighth and Pierce Johnson

handled the ninth for his fourth save.

Rangers 6, Diamondbacks 4 In Arlington, Ezequiel Duran hit a

go-ahead, two-run homer in the sixth inning, and Texas matched its longest winning streak of the season at four.

Marcus Semien and Travis Jankowski cut the deficit to 4-3 with RBI singles in the fifth off Zac Gallen, who entered the game with a 28-inning scoreless streak, the longest in the big

Scott McGough (0-3) relieved to start the sixth and allowed a two-out single to Jonah Heim. Duran drove a 1-1 fastball 431 feet to center for his third homer this season and a 5-4 lead. Duran finished a triple shy of the cycle. Brock Burke (2-0) pitched 1 1/3 hitless innings, and Will Smith got four outs for his fourth save.

Red Sox 7, Blue Jays 6

In Boston, Connor Wong hit two homers, including a tie-breaking solo shot in the eighth, to help Boston rally Masataka Yoshida and Christian

Arroyo also homered for Boston and the Red Sox tied a season-high for hits with 14, including four by Wong. Wong also had a double in the sec-

ond that bounced just below the yellow line at the top of Fenway Park's iconic left-field wall. Reliever Richard Bleier (1-0) got

up his first save. Erik Swanson (1-1) Daulton Varsho hit a three-run homer for the Blue Jays in the sixth and Vladimir Guerrero Jr. finished with a

the win and Josh Winckowski picked

White Sox 3, Twins 2, 10 innings In Chicago, Andrew Benintendi robbed Carlos Correa of a homer and hit a game-ending single in the 10th inning, and Chicago earned its second straight win after a 10-game losing streak.

Braves shut out Marlins

pair of singles and two RBIs.

Hanser Alberto opened the 10th on second as the automatic runner and advanced on Elvis Andrus' sacrifice. Tim Anderson bounced to shortstop and Benintendi lined a clean single into left against Caleb Thielbar (0-1). Eloy Jiménez homered and Michael

Kopech pitched six effective innings for the White Sox. Jimmy Lambert (2-1) pitched a

scoreless 10th for the win, which came

hours after the White Sox made 11 roster moves. Minnesota wasted another stellar performance by Joe Ryan, who pitched six scoreless innings. Ryan allowed

one hit, struck out seven and walked two, lowering his ERA to 2.37. Giants 2, Astros 0

In Houston, Anthony DeSclafani pitched eight scoreless innings and Camilo Doval completed the three-hitter to lead San Francisco over Houston. Blake Sabol had an RBI double and

Thairo Estrada added two hits to help San Francisco snap a four-game skid. DeSclafani (3-1) had retired 11 in

a row after a double by Yanier Diaz with one out in the third before Yordan Alvarez doubled with one out in the seventh.

But he was left stranded when DeSclafani retired José Abreu and Kyle Tucker to end the inning.

BASEBALL

Houston rookie Hunter Brown (3-1) yielded four hits and two runs while the loss in 4 1/3 innings.

Reds 2, Padres 1, 10 innings

In San Diego, Jonathan India singled in the go-ahead run on Luis Garcia's first pitch of the 10th inning and Cincinnati snapped San Diego's threegame winning streak.

India's single to left off Garcia (1-3) brought in automatic runner Matt Alexis Diaz walked Trent Grisham

opening the bottom of the inning but then struck out Fernando Tatis Jr., retired Manny Machado on a fly ball to left and caught Juan Soto looking at strike three to earn his fifth save.

Derek Law (1-4) pitched the ninth for the win.

Michael Wacha held the Reds to two hits in six shutout innings and Nick Martinez pitched a perfect seventh before Cincinnati tied it 1-1 with two singles in the eighth. TJ Friedl singled with one out, stole second and scored on Jake Fraley's two-out base hit to

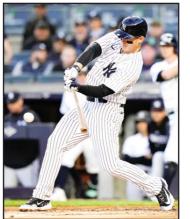
Angels 5, Cardinals 1

In St. Louis, Taylor Ward capped a four-run first inning with a three-run homer, Patrick Sandoval combined with three relievers on a four-hitter and Los Angeles beat St. Louis to extend the Cardinals' losing streak to four.

Mike Trout walked against Steven Matz (0-4) with one out in the first, Hunter Renfroe singled and Anthony Rendon hit a go-ahead single.

Sandoval (3-1), coming off a victory over Oakland, won back-to-back starts for the first time since last May. Making his first appearance against the Cardinals, he allowed three hits and three walks in five-plus innings with four strikeouts.

Chris Devenski, making his second appearance since he was brought up from the minors, relieved with two on in the sixth and pitched a perfect sev-



New York Yankees' Anthony Rizzo hits a single during the first inning of a baseball game against the Cleveland vGuardians in New York. (AP)

MLB Results/Standings

Standings from the MLB games on Tuesday.	WASHINGTON,	May	3, (AP)	: Resu	ılts and		
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Nationals 4, Cubs 1

In Washington, Alex Call hit a tworun double during a three-run seventh inning, and Washington beat Chicago.

CJ Abrams had the tiebreaking RBI single in the seventh off Keegan Thompson (1-2) as part of a 3-for-3 night. Victor Robles followed with an infield hit and Call doubled to the gap in left-center to make it 4-1.

Trevor Williams, a former Cub, pitched into the sixth inning for Washington and departed with a 1-0 lead. Hunter Harvey (1-1) got the final out of the seventh, then allowed two baserunners in the eighth but got out of the inning when he caught Patrick Wisdom looking with a 98 mph fastball. Kyle Finnegan finished for his sixth

Cubs right-hander Hayden Wesneski allowed one run on five hits over six

Yankees 4, Guardians 2

In New York, Willie Calhoun snapped a seventh-inning tie with his first home run for New York, which beat Cleveland to stop a four-game

Gerrit Cole settled down after a rocky

start and rookie Anthony Volpe homered

in the sixth to begin New York's comeback from a two-run deficit. Cole struck out eight in six innings and remained unbeaten in seven starts this season with a 1.35 ERA. The

right-hander needed 69 pitches to get through the first three innings but threw only 39 over the next three. With one out in the seventh, Calhoun lined an 0-2 curveball from

James Karinchak (0-4) to right field for his first major league home run since April 11 last year with Texas. Wandy Peralta (2-0) got two outs and Michael King worked 1 2/3 hitless

innings for his second save, striking

Mariners 2, Athletics 1

In Oakland, AJ Pollock homered to break up a combined no-hit bid with one out in the eighth inning and Jarred Kelenic added an RBI double as Seattle rallied past Oakland.

Oakland's Mason Miller pitched

seven no-hit innings in his third major league start. He struck out six and walked four and was removed after 100 pitches. Richard Lovelady (0-1) took over in

the eighth with a 1-0 lead but took his his first loss with the A's.

Seattle's Bryce Miller retired his first 16 batters in his major league debut before Tony Kemp singled on a shoulderhigh pitch in the sixth. After a wild pitch and a flyout, Esteury Ruiz hit an RBI double to put Oakland ahead.

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LONDON, May 3, (AP): Sam Allardyce made an unlikely return to the Premier League on Wednesday when the 68-year-old former England coach was hired by Leeds until the end

Allardyce's last coaching role was at West Bromwich Albion for the second half of the 2020-21 season, when he failed in his shortterm mission to keep the

That hasn't stopped Leeds from turning to Allardyce, previously regarded as a survival specialist, as the replacement for Gracia, who leaves after two months in the job

of his 12 games in charge.

According to British newspaper The Times of London, Allardyce will

"Obviously there's a tin-

US sprinter, Olympic

"USATF is deeply saddened by the passing of Tori

Bowie turned in an electric performance at the 2016

A year later, she won the 100 meters at the 2017 world

Titans top order tumbles against Capitals pace

Delhi stun Gujarat by 5 runs in Indian Premier League

AHMEDABAD, India, May 3, (AP): Last-place Delhi Capitals knocked off mighty Gujarat Titans by five runs in a low-scoring game Tuesday in the Indian Pre-

Little-known Aman Khan (51) lifted Delhi from a precarious 23-5 to 130-8 with his first-ever half-century in any format after captain David Warner won the toss and elected to bat on a wicket where fast bowlers found plenty of assistance.

Gujarat's top-order also stumbled against Delhi pace before captain Hardik Pandya's unbeaten 59 went in vain as the experienced Ishant Sharma got the key wicket of Rahul Tewatia (20) in the last over to restrict the home team at 125-6.

"Our bowlers were absolutely amazing," Warner

said. "With Ishant forever getting younger and coming out and delivering, it's amazing to see him. How much did he hold his nerves there at the end, credit to him."

Tewatia brought down the target to 12 off the final six deliveries by smashing three successive sixes off

CRICKET

Anrich Nortje's last three deliveries in the penultimate over, but spliced an easy catch at extra cover off Sharma's length ball to give Delhi its third win in the last four matches.

Gujarat still sits pretty atop the table with 12 points

Mohammed Shami (4-11) bowled four brilliant overs at a stretch upfront that knocked off Delhi's toporder and Warner was run-out in a mix-up with Priyam Garg in the second over.

Shami had Phil Salt caught at covers off the first ball before finding outside edges of Garg, Rilee Rossouw and Manish Pandey's bats with his impeccable lengths.

But Aman revived Delhi's hopes by sharing two half-century stands with Axar Patel, who made 27, and Ripal Patel (23).

Gujarat also had a disastrous start when Wriddhiman Saha was caught behind without scoring off left-arm fast bowler Khaleel Ahmed and Nortje had impact player Shubman Gill caught in the cover off his first

Sharma bowled Vijay Shankar with a superb knuckle ball that took the pace of the ball and David Miller left Gujarat in deep trouble at 32-4 when he went for an overambitious ramp shot against Kuldeep Yadav and was clean bowled without scoring.

Abhinav Manohar (26) put the chase back on track with Pandya, who completed his half-century off 44 balls with seven fours, but Delhi kept its nerves in the death overs against Tewatia's late charge to pull off

"I tried my best but could not capitalize," Pandya said. "It boils down to me. We were hoping to get a couple of big overs in the middle but at that point of time we could not get rhythm."

'Epic return' by Pavelski goes to waste as Stars lose Game 1

Bobrovsky, Panthers beat Leafs



Seattle Kraken right wing Jordan Eberle (7) look for the loose puck as Dallas Stars' Radek Faksa (12) helps against the pressure in the second period of Game 1 of an NHL hockey Stanley Cup second-round playoff series, Tuesday, May 2, 2023, in Dallas. The Stars' Jake Oettinger, and Miro Heiskanen (4) look on at the play. (AP)



Florida Panthers goaltender Sergei Bobrovsky (72) makes the stop on Toronto Maple Leafs defenseman Morgan Rielly (44) during the second period of Game 1 of an NHL hockey Stanley Cup second-round playoff series in Toronto, Tuesday, May 2, 2023. (AP)

Gunners keep title fight alive

Arsenal dismantle Chelsea 3-1

LONDON, May 3, (AP): Arsenal kept the Premier League title fight alive by beating up on a Chelsea team that seems to be in need of life support under Frank Lampard.

Arsenal returned to the top of the standings - for a day at least - by dismantling Chelsea 3-1 at the Emirates Stadium on Tuesday to end a four-game winless run that saw its control of the title race slip away.

The Gunners channeled

SOCCER

their disappointment over last week's 4-1 loss to rival Manchester City into a dominant first-half display, going 3-0 up inside 34 minutes as Chelsea slumped to a sixth straight loss in all competitions under Lampard.

Martin Odegaard scored two nearly identical goals and Gabriel Jesus added the third minutes later. The visitors offered little in response until Chukwunonso Madueke pulled one back in the 65th but never came close to staging a comeback as the hosts saw out the game.

"We came out with a different spirit, a different team to last time (against City)," Odegaard told Sky Sports. "It hurt after the (City) game and we used this anger and the disappointment in this game to bounce back."

Arsenal was coming off the loss to City and a run of three straight draws before that. But Mikel Arteta's team couldn't have asked for much easier opposition as it tried to get back on track.

"If we want to have any chance to win the league, we had to win today," Arteta said.

Granit Xhaka created the two opening goals in similar fashion, sending a low cross into the box from the left to pick out Odegaard, who beat goalkeeper Kepa Arrizabalaga with his left foot both times.

That took any remaining air out of a Chelsea team that has nothing to play for and is languishing in 12th place under its third manager of the season in Lampard, who is set to leave at the end of the campaign.

Jesus slotted in the third just three minutes after Odegaard's second following a rebound.

Lampard gave former Arsenal striker Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang a rare start, but the Gunners' early domination meant that four of the forward's first seven touches in the game were kickoffs. He was taken off at halftime.

"First-half performance wasn't good enough. In every way," Lampard said. "We were nice to play against, in every way. ... If you play like that, you get what you

Arsenal missed two good chances to extend the lead after the break as Thiago Silva cleared a header from fellow center back Gabriel off the line in the 50th and Kepa saved a low shot from Xhaka three minutes later.

Madueke gave Chelsea a bit of hope as he got behind Oleksandr Zinchenko to meet a ball over the top and beat Aaron Ramsdale from close

While Chelsea's intensity increased after that, Ramsdale didn't have another save to make until Kai Havertz tried a shot from a difficult angle in injury time.

DALLAS, May 3, (AP): Joe Pavelski became the oldest player ever with a four-goal game in the NHL playoffs, and did it in his return two weeks after going into concussion protocol.

And that still wasn't enough for the Dallas Stars.

"Epic. Epic. Ashamed we wasted it and didn't win," Stars coach Pete DeBoer said. "That's on our group because, you know, he more than do his part. He tried to drag us to a win.'

The 38-year-old Pavelski scored all four of their goals, including two in the third period to force overtime, before the Stars lost 5-4 to Seattle in Game 1 of their second-round series on Tuesday night.

"It's just Joe. I'm not surprised. I should be, everybody should be," DeBoer said. "He's the oldest guy on the sheet of ice tonight and he's by far the best player on either team. But that's just Joe.'

Pavelski wasn't on the ice when Yanni Gourde scored an unassisted goal 12:17 into overtime. The veteran center was only able to look up in disbelief from the bench when the game ended.

After taking a big hit and banging his head hard on the ice in the opener of the first-round series against Minnesota on April 17, Pavelski missed the last five games of that series. He was set for a return in Game 7 against the Wild, but that wasn't needed when the Stars wrapped up that series in six games. "I think over the last few days there's definitely a sense of clarity that kind of came back and I felt confident," Pavelski said.

Only 2 1/2 minutes into his first game back, he scored on his first shot - a 25foot wrister to put the Stars ahead 1-0. He

ICE HOCKEY

scored on a pass from Mason Marchment. while Max Domi got the secondary assist.

"It was exciting to be back. First lap in warmups, I felt a little shot of adrenaline right there. I was excited," Pavelski said. Starting the game was just as much fun. We battled all night. It was a good game, and we were right there. It's a tough loss.

About 10 minutes after his first goal, with Seattle even at 1-1, Pavelski scored again from about the same distance with a redirect of Thomas Harley's shot. The Kraken then scored three goals in a 68-second span to take a 4-2 lead.

Pavelski notched his second career postseason hat trick midway through the third period when he knocked in a rebound after captain Jamie Benn's shot. He got the tying fourth goal with 6 1/2 minutes left in regulation, when he swatted a puck into the net out of mid-air after Jani Hakanpaa's shot ricocheted off the stick of Adam Larsson into the air toward

The four goals extended Pavelski's record for U.S.-born players to 68 career playoff goals. At 38 years, 295 days old, Pavelski surpassed Maurice Richard's four-goal game at 35 years, 245 days in Game 1 of the 1957 Stanley Cup Final. Pavelski also matched the franchise record for most goals in a playoff game -Denis Gurianov had four in 2020.

It was also Pavelski's 170th career postseason game. He is one of only five players to play that many without winning a Stanley Cup.

The Stars became only the fourth team to lose a playoff game when having a player score at least four goals. They were the first since the New York Islanders lost to the Capitals in 1993. Pavelski was on the ice for the game's opening shift, though he wasn't immediately inserted back on the top line. He was with Marchment and Domi, like he was when he went through a full practice Monday.

Tyler Seguin, who scored four powerplay goals in the six-game series against Minnesota, stayed on the top line with Jason Robertson and NHL playoff scoring leader Roope Hintz. Seguin had moved up to that line after the 38-year-old Pavelski got hurt.

Panthers 4, Maple Leafs 2

Sergei Bobrovsky made 34 saves, Matthew Tkachuk had three assists and the Florida Panthers survived a squandered two-goal lead to defeat the Toronto Maple Leafs 4-2 on Tuesday night in opening game of their second-round playoff series.

Šam Bennett had a goal and an assist and Carter Verhaeghe and Nick Cousins also scored for Florida. Aleksander Barkov had two assists.

Matthew Knies had his first NHL goal and Michael Bunting also scored for Toronto. Ilya Samsonov stopped 24 shots. Game 2 of the best-of-seven series is Thursday.



Delhi Capitals' Ripal Patel plays a shot during the Indian Premier League cricket match between Gujarat Titans and Delhi Capitals in Ahmedabad, India, Tuesday, May 2, 2023. (AP)

'It's been a long time coming'

Embiid earns first NBA MVP trophy

WASHINGTON, May 3, (AP): Joel Embiid began the long process toward NBA MVP as a towering soccer prospect in Africa who never picked up a basketball until he was a

Once he changed sports for good, Embiid became a generational - albeit often-injured - talent. And, the affable center quickly became the face of the Philadelphia 76ers rebuilding effort more commonly known as The Process. He embraced the nickname and is introduced before every home game as Joel "The Process" Embiid

Embiid can now add MVP.

The All-Star center and two-time league scoring champion, Embiid, who had long lobbied for the award, earned his first NBA MVP trophy Tuesday night, topping two-time winner Nikola Jokic of the Denver

The 29-year-old from Yaoundé, Cameroon, averaged 33.1 points to win his second straight scoring title, averaged 10.2 rebounds and tied a career high with 4.2 assists per game. Embiid has been sidelined with a sprained right knee that cost him one game of the playoff sweep against Brooklyn and the opening game of the Eastern Conference semifinals against Boston, which was won by Philadelphia on Monday night.

Jokic finished runner-up in the MVP voting, and Giannis Antetokounmpo of the Milwaukee Bucks was third. Embiid received 73 first-place votes. Jokic received 15 first-

place votes, and Antetokounmpo got 12. "It's been a long time coming," Embiid said, "A lot of hard work, I've been through a lot. I'm not just talking about basketball. I'm talking about my life. My story. Where I come from. How I got here and what it took for me to be here.

The 76ers watched on TV in Boston and erupted in applause and started chanting "MVP! MVP!" as the big man buried his head in his hands as he sat in a chair in the team hotel. Embiid was in tears as teammates James Harden, Tobias Harris and Tyrese Maxey mobbed him in celebration.

Embiid then vowed "I'll be back" for the playoff series against the Celtics.

But as for Game 2 on Wednesday night?

'We shall see," Embiid said. Play or not, there will be raucous celebration for Embiid once the 76ers return home

Friday night for Game. 3. Embiid has been determined to win -- and campaigned for -- the MVP trophy for years. The third overall pick of the 2014 draft, Embiid missed his first two full seasons with injuries before settling in as one of the top big men of his generation. He was at his best this season when he totaled three 50-point games, including a career-high 59 against Utah in November. He had 13 total 40-point When Embiid totaled 52 points and 13

rebounds in a win against the Celtics in April, coach Doc Rivers boldly declared, The MVP race is over. Embiid certainly didn't argue that night with his coach or Sixers teammates who

stumped on his behalf. "They're probably right," Embiid said.

"But we have bigger goals in mind." His durability played a factor in the vote. Embiid played in 66 games, the secondhighest total of his career, even though he has again has been hit with injuries in the play-

BASKETBALL

Embiid is the first 76er to win league MVP since Allen Iverson in 2001. Julius Erving in 1981, Moses Malone in 1983 and Wilt Chamberlain from 1966-1968 are other 76ers to win NBA MVP awards.

Embiid's injury, though, could be the deciding factor in the 76ers' chase for the NBA championship. The Sixers are trying to win their first NBA title since 1983 and advance past the second round for the first time since 2001 - which was the last time a Sixer won the MVP award.

Allen Iverson was named league MVP in 2001. Other 76ers to capture the league's top individual award: Julius Erving, 1981; Moses Malone, 1983; and Wilt Chamberlain, 1966-

Embiid, who graduated from a Florida high school and played a season in college at Kansas, has been every bit the dominant force in the NBA over the past seven seasons. Once the poster child for load management, Embiid has played 134 regular-season games the last two seasons and his 30.6 points last season made him the first international player ever to win an NBA scoring title. He's a six-time All-Star and was runner-up each of the last two seasons to Jokic.



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Golden State Warriors' Andrew Wiggins (left), tries to stop Los Angeles Lakers LeBron James during the second quarter of an NBA basketball Western Conference semifinal game in San Francisco. (AP)

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LA Lakers strike first against Warriors

Knicks even Eastern Conference semi series

SAN FRANCISCO, May 3, (AP): Anthony Davis had 30 points, 23 rebounds, five assists and four blocked shots, LeBron James added 22 points and 11 rebounds dueling with Stephen Curry in their latest postseason showdown, and the Los Angeles Lakers held off a late flurry by the Golden State Warriors to win an entertaining Game 1 in the Western Conference semifinals 117-112 on Tuesday night.

Jordan Poole missed a 3-pointer to tie it with 9.7 seconds left as the Warriors' rally in the closing minutes fell short. Curry's 3 with 1:38 left tied the game, then D'Angelo Russell answered right back before Davis blocked a shot by Curry moments later. James missed the first of two free throws with 1:05 to go.

BASKETBALL

Poole's 3 with 2:48 remaining cut the Lakers' lead to 112-109, and James was called for traveling with 1:53 left

For all-time scoring leader James and Curry - who has the most 3-pointers ever - this is a new chapter in the long rivalry between the superstars after they faced off in four straight NBA Finals from 2015-2018 while James played for Cleveland.

Curry scored 27 points, Splash Brother Klay Thompson had 25, and Kevon Looney grabbed a career-high 23 rebounds for his fourth game of this postseason with 20 or more. He also had 10 points and five assists. Thompson made a 3 with 5:19 to go that cut the Lakers' lead to 112-104.

The defending champion Warriors will try to even the series in Game 2 on Thursday night back on their home floor at Chase Center, where LA fans could be heard chanting "Let's go Lak-

ers!" after the final buzzer. Curry's 3 with 9:38 left got Golden State within 99-95, but the Lakers responded with two straight scoring possessions, including James' layup with

8:38 remaining. Davis dominated from the opening tip, making 9 of his first 10 shots, while Rus sell scored 19 points and dished out six

assists against his former team. James' 3-pointer with 5:23 left in the third put the Lakers ahead by 10, 86-76. Then Thompson's snazzy behind-the-back pass led to a dunk by Gary Payton II over James with 3:48 to go as Golden State cut it to 86-80 and forced a Lakers timeout.

The Lakers finished off Memphis in six games Friday night and had a couple of extra recovery days to get ready as Golden State was pushed to the distance by the young Sacramento Kings and won Game 7 on Sunday. The Warriors were the first reigning champion to come back from behind 2-0 and win a playoff series.

Curry went off for a playoff careerhigh 50 points, an NBA record for a Game 7. Warriors coach Steve Kerr said he thought his team had an advantage having just played two days earlier.

But the revamped Lakers took it to Golden State just as they did winning the final three regular-season matchups - and Los Angeles is a far different team than the one that lost 123-109 here on Oct. 18 to start the season.

The franchises' first playoff matchup since 1991 didn't disappoint. They hadn't played on the postseason stage since "Run TMC" Warriors led by Tim Hardaway, Mitch Richmond and Chris Mullin lost in the Western Conference semifinals to Magic Johnson and

James Worthy. Thompson was determined to come out hot in Game 1 after calling his 4-for-19 day in Game 7 on Sunday at Sacramento "disgusting." He's been waiting his whole life to play the Lakers on the big stage, too, and scored 18

by halftime with four 3s. He, Curry and Poole each made six 3-pointers after a season in which all three reached 200 3s and Thompson 301.

Golden State is the sixth seed and the Lakers No. 7, marking the first time a No. 6 seed has home court in the second round since the sixth-seeded Houston Rockets against the No. 7

Seattle SuperSonics in 1987. Curry dropped to 15-8 against James

in the playoffs. Looney is leading the NBA in rebounds this postseason. He had seven rebounds by the 4:31 mark of the first and 13 by halftime on the way to double-digit rebounds in his sixth straight playoff game - with four 20-plus rebound performances.

He grabbed 106 rebounds in seven games against Sacramento, including 90



Kuwait's national figure skating team with the training staff.

Kuwait participates in In't figure skating event in UAE

Kuwait's figure skating team will and will last for three days

participate in the 2023 UAE International Championship in the emirati city of Al Ain, next Thursday,

The championship will attract 267 female players from Arab and foreign countries, with the Kuwaiti Leah Al-Qabandi, Lara Al-Barrak, Sama Juragh, Juri Al-Mulla, Laila Al-Farsi and Dana Al-Mutlaq.

Kuwait Winter Sports Club Chairman Fahad Al-Ajmi, speaking to

KUNA, stressed the importance of par-

Al-Ajmi explained that the Kuwaiti team is completely prepared for the

Kuwait Winter Sports Club Chairman Fahad Al-Ajmi.



New York Knicks guard RJ Barrett reacts in the second half of Game 2 in the NBA basketball Eastern Conference semifinals playoff series against the Miami Heat at Madison Square Garden in New York. (AP)

with 34 on the offensive end and 27 assists in the final five games of that series.

Knicks 111, Heat 105

In New York, Jalen Brunson scored 30 points and keyed the run the New York Knicks needed just in time to get by a Miami Heat team playing without Jimmy Butler, evening the Eastern Conference semifinals at a game apiece with a 111-105 victory.

Julius Randle returned from a sprained left ankle that sidelined him in Game 1 with 25 points, 12 rebounds and eight assists, and RJ Barrett scored 24 points for the No. 5-seeded Knicks. Josh Hart finished with 14 points, 11 rebounds and nine assists.

But it was Brunson, who pointed the blame at himself and said he had to be better after going 0 for 7 from 3-point range in the opener, who made the biggest plays in a game the Knicks trailed much of the way.

Caleb Martin scored 22 points in place of Butler for the Heat, who host Game 3 on Saturday afternoon. They will hope to have Butler, the leading scorer in the playoffs who sat out after spraining his right ankle late in their 108-101 victory in the opener. team including Hessa Al-Saraawi, Sarah Al-Lahou, Dalal Al-Bader,

ticipation of Kuwaiti players in this tournament to enhance their performance levels, saying that the Kuwaiti team will arrive in the UAE on Thursday.

event thanks to recent intensive training, praising the players' commitment and keenness. (KUNA)

Real Madrid fall, Elche relegated

Late winner by Alba moves Barca closer to league title **Kudermetova defeats Pegula to reach semis**

MADRID, May 3, (AP): Barcelona kept wasting its chances against 10man Osasuna at Camp Nou. Its top attackers all squandered

deadlock, with Ansu Fati, Pedri, Ousmane Dembélé and Robert Lewandowski failing to find the target despite clear chances.

It took a veteran defender to come through and move the Catalan club a step closer to its first Spanish league title in four years.

Jordi Alba scored an 85th-minute winner not long after coming off the bench to give Barcelona a hardfought 1-0 win against 10-man Osasuna on Tuesday.

The victory gave Barcelona a 14-point lead over second-place Real Madrid, which later lost 2-0 at Real Sociedad. The combination of results means that the Catalan club can clinch the title as early as next weekend.

"It was a very big step for us, but we suffered too much, wasted too many clear chances to score," Barcelona coach Xavi said.

SOCCER

Both Madrid and Osasuna are focused on Saturday's Copa del Rey final between the clubs in Seville. Madrid is also focused on the semifinals of the Champions League against Manchester City, with the first leg taking place in Madrid on May 9.

Osasuna coach Jagoba Arrasate rested several regular starters against Barcelona ahead of the club's first Copa final since 2005.

Barcelona last won the league in 2019 to cap a run that included eight league titles in 11 seasons. That was the team's last league trophy with Lionel Messi, who left in 2021 amid the club's financial struggles to join Paris Saint-Germain.

It was Barcelona's third straight win at home. It had gone through a tough stretch recently but victories against Atletico Madrid and Real Betis at Camp Nou helped it maintain its comfortable lead at the top.

Osasuna played a man down from the 26th after central defender Jorge Herrando, who was making his firstdivision debut, was shown a straight red card for pushing Pedri from behind to stop a breakaway. The ensuing free kick taken by Raphinha glanced off the crossbar.

MADRID, May 3, (AP): Veronika Kudermetova 26-year-old Kudermetova had reached reached the semifinals of a WTA 1000 event for semifinals this year, in Adelaide and Doha. She

the first time by upsetting third-seeded Jessica Pegula 6-4, 0-6, 6-4 at the Madrid Open on Wednes-

The 12th-seeded Kudermetova sealed her victory with an ace on her second match point to set up a semifinal match against either No. 1 Iga Swiatek or Petra Martic, who will play later Wednesday.

Pegula was trying to reach her second consecutive final in Madrid. She was runner-up to Ons Jabeur at the clay-court tournament last year. It was the fourth consecutive three-set win for Ku-

"I feel so happy and proud of myself, because every match I played three sets," the fifth-ranked Kudermetova said. "Before this match, every match was almost three

hours. Today, only two hours, I feel fresh." She had reached three quarterfinals at WTA 1000 level or above, all in 2022, including at Roland Garros for her best run at a Grand Slam. The entered the tournament in Madrid on a four-match losing streak.

Pegula struggled on her serve and showed frustration at times, including by knocking her racket onto

TENNIS

the ground. She was broken three times in both the first and third sets, though needed only 22 minutes to get through the second as Kudermetova won only

The last player to reach the Madrid semifinals by winning four straight three-set matches was Dominika Cibulkova in 2016, when she was runner-up to Simona Halep.

The other women's semifinal match will be played between second-seeded Aryna Sabalenka and ninthseeded Maria Sakkari.

place.

Pedri had nearly scored from close range before the red card, but Barcelona wasn't able to create many more significant chances in the first half after going a man up, finishing with no attempts on target going into the break.

Frenkie de Jong, Fati, Dembélé and Lewandowski all came close in the second half before the 34-yearold Alba finally broke the deadlock with a low shot with the outside of his left foot after a set up by De Jong inside the area. Alba had entered the match less than 10 minutes earlier.

It was the 25th clean sheet in the league for Barcelona, which had lost playmaker Gavi in the 36th with an apparent muscle injury. He was replaced by Fati.

Osasuna had won three of its last five league matches but was coming off a home loss against Sociedad.

Sociedad later hosts Madrid hoping to strengthen its hold on fourth place and the final Champions League place. It has a five-point gap to fifth-place Villarreal, which visits relegation-threatened Valencia on Wednesday.

It was the second straight win for fourth-place Sociedad, which is unbeaten in four consecutive games. It opened an eight-point gap to fifth-place Villarreal, which visits relegation-threatened Valencia on

Last-place Elche became the first team relegated to the second division after a 2-1 loss at Almeria. The result left the club with 16

Former Madrid player Takefusa

Kubo scored in the 47th and Ander

Barrenetxea added another goal

in the 85th as Sociedad gave Ma-

drid its second loss in three league

rounds and strengthened its hold

on the final Champions League

Madrid played a man down from

the 61st after defender Dani Carvajal

was sent off for a foul. The defend-

ing champions were coming off a 4-2 win against Almeria but had lost

4-2 at Girona in the previous round.

points, 17 behind 17th-place Valencia, the first team outside the relegation zone. Elche, with only three wins from

33 matches, hadn't played in the second division since 2019-20. It routed Rayo Vallecano 4-0 in the previous round to end a run of six consecutive losses.

Almeria, which had lost three of its last four matches, moved to 14th place, three points clear of the relegation zone.

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Barcelona's Ansu Fati (left), attempts a shot at goal in front of Osasuna's

Iker Munoz during a Spànish La Liga soccer match between Barcelona and

Osasuna at the Camp Nou stadium in Barcelona, Spain. (AP)

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